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GWINNETT/METRO ATL NEWS: Keynote Joe Minicozzi Speaks to the Value of
Redevelopment for Gwinnett's Economy



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*Annual forum focuses on the dollar value of 'Redefining Redevelopment'
for County*

(GWINNETT- METRO ATLANTA) November 5, 2013— Partnership Gwinnett, in collaboration with The Council for Quality Growth, hosted the Fifth Annual Redevelopment Forum at the Aurora Theatre in the City of Lawrenceville on Thursday. The event, attended by more than 200 local government officials, private developers, business and community leaders, architects, attorneys and urban planners, focused on the value of redevelopment to Gwinnett's economy and future growth.

Keynote speaker, Joseph Minicozzi, Founder and Principal of Urban 3, joined the Forum to share initial results of a study he conducted using countywide property tax revenue data, offering a comparative analysis of traditional development and mixed-use projects across seven target areas in Gwinnett. The goal of the study is to analyze the true costs and benefits behind development patterns, as well as reveal how the community can be cost effective when creating equitable, viable communities.

"Gwinnett County is ahead of the game in regard to job growth and creation. The next step is to maximize the opportunities redevelopment offers by creating smart mixed-use centers that meet the needs of the workforce these new jobs bring," stated Minicozzi. "Regardless of the size of the community, leaders need to broaden their perspective in tax revenue opportunities."

To illustrate his point, Minicozzi compared real estate development to a full tank of gas in a car, where miles per tank equates to total project value and miles per gallon means tax revenue per acre. "As a whole, we've tended to look at real estate on a miles per tank basis, but our perspective on that vehicle may be different if you look at it for miles per gallon."

Commissioned by the Partnership Gwinnett Redevelopment Task Force, the study specifically focuses on seven sub-areas of Gwinnett County: Gwinnett Place Mall, OFS site, Olympic Tennis Center, Downtown Lawrenceville, Downtown Snellville, Downtown Sugar Hill, and Suwanee Gateway Redevelopment Corridor.

“Redevelopment is an essential element to the growth and success of Gwinnett County. It is our goal to put the policies and procedures in place to cultivate, promote, and encourage revitalization throughout the community,” stated Gwinnett County Board of Commission Chairman Charlotte Nash.

Interactive discussions touched on housing redevelopment trends, a factor that must be considered due to changing demographics. “Gwinnett is well beyond the first phase of suburban development. The County is maturing into a highly diverse community, with a wide range of housing demands that cannot be accomplished with traditional land-use policies,” stated Rick Porter, Owner, Richport Properties, and one of the event’s panelists.

During the final session, Conan Smith, Executive Director, Michigan Suburb Alliance, presented on the precedent-setting program, Redevelopment Ready Communities, and addressed elements of the initiative for implementation in Gwinnett.

The event also offered a platform for the Partnership Gwinnett Redevelopment Task Force to release its new *Gwinnett Community Profiles: [Re]Development Ready* book, profiling top redevelopment sites from 20 communities across the County. The publication also provides a comprehensive overview of the revitalization tools available in the area.

“Our efforts through these many initiatives is to educate leaders, developers, and urban planners throughout Gwinnett and metro Atlanta on how to identify and implement smart redevelopment strategies,” commented Kellie Brownlow, Director of Economic Development, Gwinnett Chamber Economic Development and a leader of the Partnership Gwinnett Redevelopment Task Force.

Panelists also included: Mike Alexander, Research Division Chief, Atlanta Regional Commission; Ken Bleakly, President, Bleakly Advisory Services; David Ellis, Executive Vice President, Greater Atlanta Homebuilders Association; Vaughn Irons, CEO, APD Solutions; John Kelley, VP of Development, North American Properties; Jerald Mitchell, Director of Innovations, Savannah Economic Development Authority; Rick Porter, Owner, Richport Properties; Conan Smith, Executive Director, Michigan Suburb Alliance; Bob Voyles, CEO & Founder, Seven Oaks Properties; and Vicki Lundy Wilbon, Principal and Executive Vice President, The Integral Group.

Among the program’s sponsors and supporters were: The Council for Quality Growth, Georgia Power, Jackson Electric Membership Corporation, the City of Norcross, BB&T, Evermore Community Improvement District, Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District, Gwinnett Village Community Improvement District, Grayson Downtown Development Authority, the City of Lawrenceville, the City of Snellville, the City of Sugar Hill, the City of Suwanee, and the Aurora Theatre.

For more information about the efforts of the award-winning Partnership Gwinnett initiative, please visit www.partnershipgwinnett.com.

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About Partnership Gwinnett

Partnership Gwinnett is Gwinnett’s economic and community development initiative. A public-private partnership, the initiative targets the retention and expansion of existing Gwinnett businesses in addition to the development of new business in five key market segments: Health Sciences & Services; Information Technology; Advanced Manufacturing/ Supply Chain Management; and Corporate Headquarters/Professional Services. The ultimate goal is to promote economic wealth & diversification, increase education and workforce excellence, improve quality of life and heighten visibility through marketing and outreach programs for the entire Gwinnett community. For more information on Partnership Gwinnett, the internationally award-winning community and economic development initiative, please visit www.partnershipgwinnett.com.

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