



## Here's the latest plan for Gwinnett Place Mall. Hint: Lots of housing.

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### GWINNETT COUNTY

The team managing the redevelopment of Gwinnett Place Mall foresees replacing the concrete fortress with more than 1,000 apartments.

The team behind the redevelopment of Gwinnett Place Mall has finalized a plan to pitch to county commissioners.

Under the proposed plan, the concrete fortress of Gwinnett Place Mall would be replaced with a ["Global Villages" concept](#), anchored heavily by housing. The 90-acre site would include seven residential nodes around the perimeter of the property. Each residential section would have 150 to 500 apartments — a mix of market-rate and affordable units — and public greenspace.

Gwinnett Place Mall is [one of several shopping malls in metro Atlanta eyed for redevelopment](#) opportunities, as the popularity of online shopping and shifting consumer habits leave retail-heavy developments in a crunch. Redevelopment specialists often incorporate residents into decaying shopping centers as a way to add a built-in customer base.

Edens plans to tear down most of [North DeKalb Mall](#) near Decatur and add 1,700 apartments. Revitalization plans are in the works for [North Point Mall](#) in Alpharetta, [The Mall West End](#) in the namesake Atlanta neighborhood and [Phipps Plaza](#) in Buckhead.

## Gwinnett Place Mall details

The team managing the redevelopment efforts includes county officials, Gwinnett Place CID, Atlanta Regional Commission and planning firm Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (VHB). By the end of August, it expects to compile a more detailed implementation plan with the exact number of residential units, cost estimates for construction and infrastructure needs. County officials will later select development firms with which to partner.

An updated transit center for the county is in the plans. It would service multiple local bus lines and may include a park-and-ride hub and small conference center. Pending further analysis by the county, the center could accommodate a bus rapid transit route — in which buses run mostly in dedicated lanes with signal prioritization — linking Sugarloaf Parkway to Jimmy Carter Boulevard.

Other components of the plan include 50,000 to 100,000 square feet for restaurants and retail, 25,000 square feet of office space, cultural center, central park and a 1.25-mile greenway trail around Ring Road. Macy's, Mega Mart and Beauty Master — all of which own their buildings — would be retained throughout the transformation.

"The focal point will be a new international culture and community center and central park where people who live, work, dine and play in the district can experience and enjoy all the cultures that comprise our diverse community," said [Joe Allen](#), executive director of Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District, in a news release.

## Long-awaited revival

Gwinnett is the most diverse county in the Southeast and leads [metro Atlanta's suburban surge of apartment construction](#). Pleasant Hill Road, dotted by local restaurants offering worldwide cuisine and small businesses, boasts the highest concentration of retail space in Gwinnett. In surveys and interviews, [residents and other community members have stressed the need for a walkable mixed-use destination](#) with efficient transit, jobs and affordable housing.

Opened in 1984, Gwinnett Place Mall started to go downhill in the early 2000s. Investors pumped dollars into the newer Mall of Georgia and Sugarloaf Mills, formerly known as Discovery Mills, while the older mall traded hands and wilted. After revitalization plans promised by private firms fell short, the [county purchased most of Gwinnett Place Mall for \\$23 million in 2020](#) with hopes of creating a space that meshes with 21st-century suburbia.

In April, the team managing the redevelopment shared [two preliminary strategies for repurposing the mall property](#). It took these proposals to the public, whose feedback resulted into the final version, Allen said. Redevelopment specialists who weighed in on the two strategies stressed it will be important to create a public realm, select the right mix of uses and attract both daytime and nighttime populations to bolster the viability.



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