

ATLANTA BUSINESS CHRONICLE

Gwinnett Place Mall is mostly empty. Redevelopment could start soon.



Gwinnett County Board of Commission is expected to vote on a plan to redevelop Gwinnett Place Mall.



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Within one or two years, Gwinnett leaders could demolish a dilapidated mall and select a development team to replace it with a lively, walkable district.

Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners is expected to vote Tuesday on a plan to redevelop Gwinnett Place Mall, a [decaying retail fortress surrounded by surface parking](#) on a 90-acre site along Pleasant Hill Road. The [20-year strategy involves creating seven residential villages with up to 3,800 residential units](#), as well as offices, restaurants, shops, greenspace and a cultural center.

Last October, Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District presented the plan to the board. The CID worked with Atlanta Regional Commission, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (VHB) and county officials to come up with a market-driven approach for reimagining the mall. Anchor tenants Macy's, Beauty Master and Mega Mart would remain throughout the \$1 billion transformation.



[Enlarge](#)

Over the next 20 years, Gwinnett Place Mall could be transformed into a walkable project with thousands of residential units, offices, shops, restaurants, greenspace and a cultural center.

Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District

Gwinnett Place Mall, once the de facto downtown area of the county, opened in 1984. It started to languish when Mall of Georgia and other regional malls opened in the early 2000s. The county purchased the core of Gwinnett Place Mall for \$23 million in 2020 after revitalization plans promised by private firms fell through.

The plan would add a street grid to break up the site. Other transportation improvements include a greenway around Ring Road, which encircles the mall, with connections into other trails. Bus rapid transit would connect Pleasant Hill Road to Satellite Boulevard. A new [transit center would serve as a hub](#) for local bus routes.

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

A 100-day action plan under the strategy calls for hiring a project manager, completing a legal review of existing agreements with other property owners, beginning discussions with anchor owners, starting the process to study the need for a new interchange at Interstate 85 and integrating mobility improvements for the mall into a countywide transportation plan.

The county would fund about \$160 million of total project costs. The redevelopment could create up to 3,200 jobs, including 920 on the site itself, according to estimates from a market analysis. Here are the highlights of a timeline of the proposed build-out:

1-2 Years:

- Select and hire a development team
- Establish countywide policy for affordable housing
- Begin construction of new transit center

3-4 Years:

- Build central park and new roadways
- Complete negotiations with first anchor owner to redevelop
- Start building trail around Ring Road

4-7 Years:

- Work with development partners to build first village
- Support development of second village
- Finish negotiations with next anchor owner to redevelop

8-12 Years:

- Create temporary retail project around central park
- Support development of third village and permanent retail
- Build International Community Cultural Center

12-16 Years:

- Work with remaining anchors to finish negotiations

- Support building mini villages
- Build public parking garage

17-20 Years:

- Support development of final villages
- Complete trail around Ring Road