



Strategic Plan 2020–2022

Adopted by Board of Directors August 20, 2019

prepared by [Georgia Center for Nonprofits](#)

Introduction

In 1991, the Gwinnett Coalition started changing lives. After completing the first needs assessment for health and human services in Gwinnett County, the Board of Directors of the Gwinnett Coalition decided to turn this historic document into a living, breathing, dynamic strategic plan. The Gwinnett community rallied around this new concept and organization, resulting in multi-year health and human services strategic plans. Dynamic focus area committees were organized to enact the work.

Fast-forward over two decades, and the Gwinnett Coalition has now completed its seventh multi-year comprehensive health plan. The Gwinnett Coalition continues to engage a record number of volunteers involved among our many committees focusing on our six major areas of: Basic Needs, Community Relations & Engagement, Education, Economic & Financial Stability, Health and Well-being, and Safety. Additionally, the Coalition operates three programs to address specific community needs: Great Days of Service, Gwinnett Helpline, and the County Veterans Resource Center.

Much of the Gwinnett Coalition's success is a result of the thoughtful leadership of our Board of Directors, volunteers, and committees that collaborate to address and develop proactive solutions to address critical community needs. We applaud their efforts and continued work with the Coalition.

The Gwinnett Coalition provides important services and is poised to take on new roles. In order to effectively address challenges and pursue opportunities, the Gwinnett Coalition needed to ensure that it has the capacity, leadership skills, and ability to maintain/grow to take on new, expanded and elevated challenges in the county. New models and roles are needed to achieve our vision, priorities and goals. Given the changing community dynamics and our diverse suite of programs, the time is right to move forward on the next iteration in the Coalition's growth and evolution.

The strategic plan has been a community wide effort with interviews, data research and analysis and focus group to engage as many individuals as possible. The process included both a planning committee and a steering committee, several board meetings and ongoing conversations with key stakeholders. The resulting plan reflects a consensus of those involved in the process and the feedback obtained in the interviews. It provides an organizing model for the coalition to develop that reflects both emerging leadership and consensus about how to lead the county building on the strengths of the coalition.

The plan provides a roadmap for evolving the coalition into a more strategic and impact-oriented process that reflects the leadership model important to the future growth of Gwinnett. This plan calls for the Coalition to evolve into a more tightly focused

organization reflecting the interests of moving strategy into action in priority areas. The steering committee and the planning committee reviewed several organizing models and best practices from seven other jurisdictions. There was resounding consensus in Gwinnet County that the Coalition model shift from its hybrid of planning and service projects to a model of strategy action.

The process also resulted in a review of the governing and committee structure with recommendations for a more typical nonprofit governing board of 21 rather than 56 members and elimination of the committee structure of 18 issue-oriented committees. The plan outlines the goals and objectives for moving the Coalition forward in its evolution to meet the future growth, leadership transitions and diversity of the County.

Mission

Drive positive community impact

Vision

All residents of Gwinnett have the opportunity to thrive

Core Values

In pursuing its mission, the Coalition values:

- Getting input from the community
- A focus on prevention and intervention
- A focus on people as well as agencies
- Providing opportunities for leadership and engagement at every level
- Measuring outcomes and impact
- Sharing information and data, and working together to achieve community level change
- Acknowledging the vital importance of lifelong learning
- Utilizing resources efficiently and collaboratively

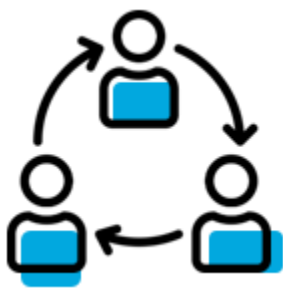
Strategic Direction

The plan is recommending that the Coalition changes its organizing model from a hybrid model of planning and service projects to one of strategic impact. The planning process reviewed three different models and articulated best practice around each of the models. The Coalition was operating in the coalition planning model with some elements of the service project model.

To achieve the stated mission, those involved in the planning process have gained consensus around evolving to a strategic impact model. This approach will prioritize a few strategic issues, leverage expert and community partners to develop solutions, test those solutions, and scale success to effect sustainable systemic change. This model reflects a change for the Coalition in that it would no longer staff and support 18 planning committees but rather the Board would select two or three strategic issues at a time and focus on building out the network of partners to define best practice, develop pilots and achieve strategic solutions based on impact and scale. The Coalition would move away from operating services and would spin off efforts as they mature and become owned by the community.

The recommendation based on input and feedback from the steering committee, planning committee, and board of directors is to move toward this model of coalition building and strategy development.

Strategic Impact Model Components



CONVENE



**IDEATE
& PLAN**



PILOT



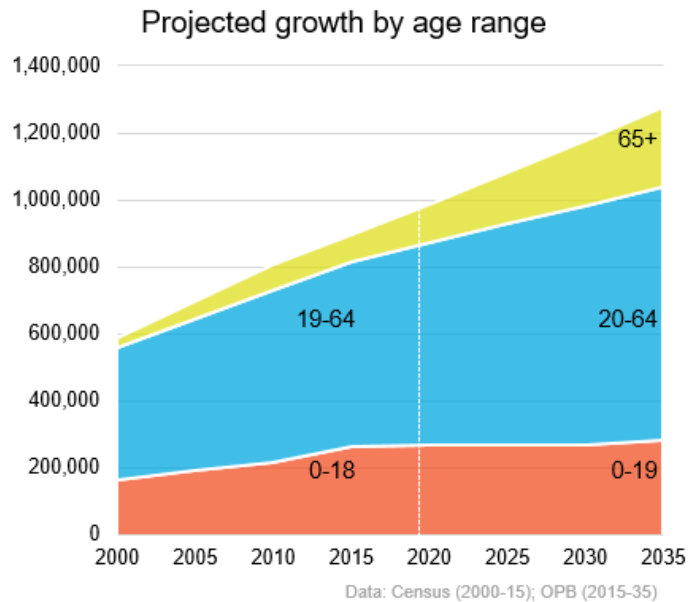
**SCALE &
SPIN-OFF**

Environmental Scan

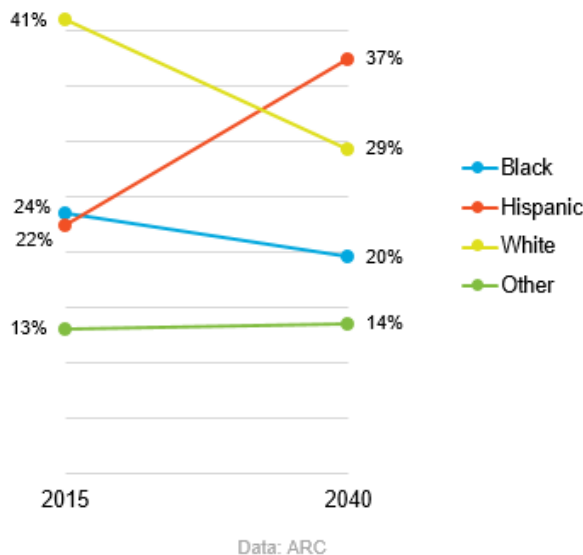
GCN consultants conducted approximately 20 interviews with staff, board members, and external stakeholders; four focus groups; a survey to more than 400 stakeholders; and reviewed demographic and economic data.

I. Data Review

Gwinnett County is in the midst of a demographic sea change. The Governor’s Office of Planning & Budget projects a 43% population increase between 2015 and 2035—380,000 more residents.¹ This projection includes a relatively flat number of youth (0-19) with the highest growth rate among individuals 65 and older.



Projected county composition by race



Equally dramatic, if not more so, are the shifts in racial and ethnic composition. By 2040, it is expected that approximately 37% of Gwinnett will be Hispanic (up from 22%) and 29% will be white (down from 41%).² This is a continuation of trend that has occurred since the 1990s; in 1990, 90% of Gwinnett County identified as white.

¹ Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget: <https://opb.georgia.gov/population-projections>

² Atlanta Regional Commission: <http://www.atlantaregionsplan.org/population-employment-forecasts/>

As the population of the county expands and diversifies, there will be a need for expanded and new ways to communicate with and serve all who live in Gwinnett. Due to an uneven distribution of opportunities—educational, social, and economic—and/or differing life experiences (experienced within Gwinnett or outside), barriers and solutions will differ greatly among population segments. What may work with one group in one geography, may not translate to another.

In benchmarking several Gwinnett indicators against comparable counties,³ we see the following:

Indicator	Gwinnett, GA	Cobb, GA	Arapahoe, CO Metro Denver	Denton, TX Metro Dallas
High School + by 25 (2018) ⁴	88%	91%	92%	92%
Bachelor's + by 25 (2018) ⁴	35%	46%	42%	43%
In labor force 16+ (2018) ⁴	69%	70%	71%	73%
Unemployment rate (2017) ⁵	4.2%	4.1%	2.8%	3.3%
Disconnected youth (2017) ⁵	9.5%	5.8%	6.5%	4.9%
Uninsured children (2016) ⁶	8%	7%	5%	6%
Uninsured overall (2018) ⁴	18%	14%	9%	13%
Free/reduced price lunch (2017) ⁶	54%	46%	41%	32%
Poverty rate (2018) ⁴	11%	10%	8%	7%
Median household income (2018) ⁴	\$64,496	\$72,004	\$69,553	\$80,290
Housing burden (2017) ⁵	34%	29%	34%	29%
Owner-occupied rate (2018) ⁴	67%	64%	63%	65%

Notably, Gwinnett—relative to its comparable communities—has elevated household financial burdens and risks as indicated, and perhaps driven, by lower educational outcomes, higher rates of 16- to 20-year-olds not in school or the labor force, and subsequently lower household income and higher uninsured rates.

While the intent of this strategic planning engagement is to focus *on* the work, not *in* the work, developing an appropriate operational design cannot happen without context. And in Gwinnett, that context is change: demographically, infrastructurally, and politically.

³ Benchmark counties were selected to parallel those used by Partnership Gwinnett in its 2016 “Economic Development Strategy and Implementation Plan”

⁴ US Census Bureau: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/gwinnettcountrygeorgia,cobbcountygeorgia,arapahoecountycolorado,dentoncountytexas/PST045218>

⁵ Federal Reserve Economic Data (FRED): <https://fred.stlouisfed.org>

⁶ County Health Rankings: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>

II. SWOT Analysis

Outside of reviewing public data, interviews, focus groups, and survey responses painted a picture of the internal and external environment in which the Coalition exists and serves. Gwinnett County is undergoing a sea of change in its demographics, its leadership and its economic infrastructure. These changes were evident and clearly expressed in the interviews, focus groups and survey conducted in the planning process. The county is not only growing, it is becoming more diverse and new leadership is emerging in a number of key sectors.

The following is the summary of the SWOT analysis and key information gleaned in the planning process.

Strengths

- The Gwinnett Coalition has a robust history and positive reputation among county leaders
- The Coalition has involved many people in their work
- The organization has positioned itself as a successful convener of the region's nonprofits
- Provides networking opportunities for public, private, and nonprofit leaders
- Some committees work well to organize projects and events around an issue

Weaknesses

- While many individuals are involved in the work of the Coalition, there is an inconsistency among those at the table at any given time
- The organization is not able to articulate impact or lacks impact on key issues
- The board structure is too large and lacks and has an overly complex structure
- The committee model no longer effective
 - Too many committees
 - Purpose/expectations unclear, inconsistent
 - Committee chairs are not as strong as in the past; unclear process for selecting

Opportunities

- County demographics are changing and will continue to change
- County, civic, and nonprofit leadership are changing
- Leaders are looking to the Coalition to act as a convener in the future
- Leaders and stakeholders are seeking impact related planning and convening.

Threats

- Leadership transition at the county, chamber and community levels
- Rapid growth can create more health and human service problems
- Some health outcomes are declining
- Limited public and private funding for planning, convening and coalition building

III. Situational Analysis and Background

In addition to interviews, focus groups, and data review, consultants also identified and compared national models to similar work. To build on identified strengths, leverage its strengths, and capitalize on opportunities, three models were developed based on several cases. One model—based on strategic issues and driving impact—surfaced as the consensus winner among stakeholders engaged in the process. This reflects a national trend among funders and collaboratives alike: moving toward deeper, more focused services to develop comprehensive solutions that address complex community needs.

The framework, to be more fully established in further work, would (1) form strategy groups around priority health and human service-related issues; (2) develop solutions to be tested; and (3) when successful, scale the solutions to improve county-wide systems. This approach to the Coalition’s work would require structural evolutions to the organization to ensure the governance, staffing, and funding appropriately align to achieve the desired impact in Gwinnett. Based on insights from national leaders⁷ and input from local leaders, three goals have been developed to ensure the successful evolution of the organization and that a positive impact is achieved.

⁷ Models include: Alignment Nashville and Alignment USA (Nashville, Tennessee), Capital Crossroads (Des Moines and Central Iowa), Center for Economic Inclusion (Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota), Thriving Together (Phoenix, Arizona), Urban Strategies Council (Oakland, California), Youth Coordinating Board (Minneapolis, Minnesota)

IV. Summary of Survey Results

In April 2019, a survey was distributed to 437 email accounts, comprised of Coalition committee members, board members, staff, volunteers, and community stakeholders (many of whom fit multiple criteria). By the deadline, 111 responses were received and included in the analysis.

Among respondents, more than half represented nonprofits and nearly a quarter represented public agencies.

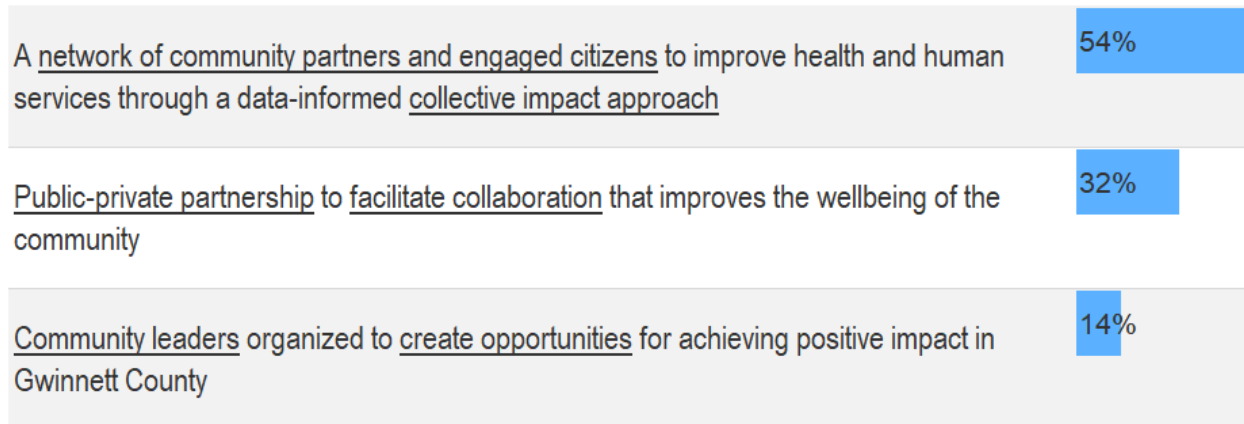
affiliation	percent
Nonprofit	56%
Public agency	23%
Business	14%
Faith-based	11%
None/individual	5%

The survey, in part, solicited feedback on how individuals prioritized roles—both current and potential—that the Coalition does or could fulfill. Topping the list was convening around critical community needs and developing services to increase impact.

Role	Weighted Priority
Convene public, private, and nonprofit agencies to address critical community needs	5.8
Develop shared services to increase impact	5.1
Development of a comprehensive community health plan	5.0
Build public buy-in and civic engagement	4.5
Guide execution of vision and strategy	4.5
Support aligned activities	4.1
Establish shared measurement practices	4.1
Advance public policy	3.0

Popular write-in options included providing capacity-building services, technical assistance, and service delivery coordination.

The survey tested three mission statement-type phrases to better understand the organizations purpose:



Based on knowledge of current services, respondents rated the effectiveness of the following activities:

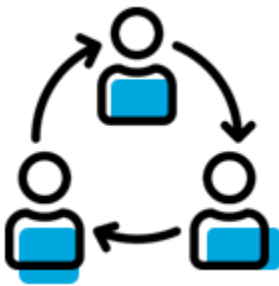
Activity	Not at all effective	Slightly effective	Moderately effective	Very effective	Extremely effective	I don't know	Weighted Score
Serving as a resource of information and referral for individuals seeking assistance		5%	22%	28%	41%	4%	2.96
Engaging the community in meaningful volunteer service	1%	3%	22%	35%	34%	4%	2.90
Networking among government, nonprofit, and business professionals		4%	19%	41%	31%	4%	2.90
Convening private, public, and nonprofit organizations		4%	23%	37%	30%	6%	2.80
Identifying emerging needs	3%	5%	21%	38%	28%	4%	2.74
Planning for community health and human service needs		9%	25%	38%	25%	4%	2.70
Collaboration for coordination of services	2%	8%	28%	30%	28%	4%	2.66
Creating a measurable impact in the community	4%	13%	25%	28%	23%	8%	2.37
Achieving buy-in from community decision-makers	1%	10%	25%	29%	18%	16%	2.22

A stand-out takeaway from the survey results is the juxtaposition of what the Coalition is currently doing well (information/resource hub, coordination of volunteer service, networking) and the roles that were most highly prioritized by the same survey-takers (convene, develop impactful solutions, develop a comprehensive health plan). This seems to represent a desire to increase focus on shared and active development of solutions to achieve systemic change and impact.



Strategic Plan Summary

Strategic Impact Model



CONVENE



IDEATE & PLAN



PILOT



SCALE & SPIN-OFF

Goal 1

Leading Systems Change

The Gwinnett Coalition prioritizes and focuses its efforts on driving impact in critical and complex issues that result in systemic change, moving the issue on key community indicators.

Goal 2

Organizational Alignment for Impact

The Gwinnett Coalition has an appropriate structure and business model to support the organization's mission, new strategy and work.

Goal 3

Sustainability and Funding

The Gwinnett Coalition has the funding to support planning, convening, and the operations structure to support systems change and strategic impact in Gwinnett County.

Goal 1 — Leading Systems Change

The Gwinnett Coalition prioritizes and focuses its efforts on driving impact in critical and complex issues that result in systemic change, moving the issue on key community indicators.

- By 2022, two strategic impact areas are working through pilots and one impact area has a completed plan.
- By 2022 X% of partners/stakeholders can accurately articulate the key strategic priorities
- By 2022, X% of selected outcomes/result measures (determined by strategic issues selected) in the comprehensive community health plan are improved

Objectives

Strategic Impact Model Implementation

- The board adopts the strategic impact model with clear implementation work plans and timeliness
 - Staff prepares and presents to the board an implementation plan with the five steps for Planning, Convening, Ideation, Piloting/Testing, and Scaling.
- The Coalition conducts a rigorous evaluation of the County data to determine five to seven key strategic community issues where trends indicate significant gaps for the county
- Select up to three systemic issues for strategic impact process in FY 2020
 - Develop process and criteria to select issues (importance, feasibility, opportunity)
 - Establish incremental benchmarks/milestones among selected strategic issue areas
 - Setup steering committees in each of the three areas to begin the process of strategic impact planning and action steps
 - Key experts are invited to join working committees to follow the process of reviewing the data, determining best practices, and designing pilot programs
- Evaluate process and design of the comprehensive community assessment and community health improvement plan; revise process to develop more measurable outcomes and strategies for achieving those outcomes

Goal 2 — Organizational Alignment for Impact

The Gwinnett Coalition has an appropriate structure and business model to support the organization's mission and work.

- By February 1, 2020, the organization has new bylaws and a revised structure for the board of Directors with at least 11 members elected.
- By December 31, 2020, new organizational structure and the strategic impact committees are operational
- By 2022, X% stakeholders look to the Coalition for support/technical assistance, strategic guidance, and leadership

Objectives

Reorganized Structure and Business Model

- Restructure and establish appropriate organizational governing structure for revising, streamlining, and empowering the Board of Directors.
 - Determine slots for board and schedule of terms to allow for rotation
 - Revise the bylaws; current board adopts
 - New board elected after bylaws adoption
 - Current Board, Executive Board, and Committees are dissolved
- Eliminate existing committee structure and establish new committee structure to support strategic model; limit organization to seven to nine working committees and/or task forces
- Establish appropriate governance structure with new board to support governing and nonprofit best practices.
 - Elect officers for the board of directors based on new bylaws
 - Create Finance and Governance Committees of the Board with job descriptions and annual work plans
- Develop an Advisory Council with a job description to define advisory role; seek out members from departing board for the Advisory Council
- Review and develop staffing structure to support strategic impact model; determine positions, create job descriptions, and fill positions
- Develop appropriate roundtables for funders and other stakeholder groups to maintain stakeholder engagement.

- Invest in upgraded technology infrastructure and systems to support research, communications, and project management.
- Develop a succession plan for leadership transition
- Revamp branding to reflect change in mission and priorities including identity (e.g., name, logo, online presence)
- Evaluate all programs/projects to determine fit with new mission; establish criteria and develop recommendations for realignment, restructuring, and spinning-off existing programs
 - Evaluate Helpline in light of demographic and technological changes with recommendations regarding fit to new purpose and focus.
 - Determine role of Gwinnett Days of Service in maximizing volunteerism in the community
 - Determine a sustainable model for the Veterans' Resource Center
 - Maintain CEO Roundtable to engage and strengthen nonprofit leadership
- Partner with leadership groups to ensure engagement of emerging leaders as the county leadership changes and evolves

Recommended Structure

Board

1. County Government
2. City Government
3. Health Department
4. Mental Health Provider
5. DFCS
6. Law Enforcement
7. Chamber/Business
8. Faith-Based Rep
9. Media
10. Education
11. Human Services

Other members

- Attorney
- Marketing/Social Media
- Issue Experts
- Finance – CPA
- Community and Business Rep
- Youth Rep

Other groups

- Advisory Council—30 members
- Nonprofit CEO Roundtable
- Funder Roundtable
- Issue-based Roundtable(s)

Goal 3 — Sustainability and Funding

The Gwinnett Coalition has the funding to support planning and convening, and the structure to support systems change and strategic impact in Gwinnett County.

- Diversity of funding streams by 2022:
 - 34% public funding (federal, state, county, and municipal)
 - 33% private and corporate foundation grants
 - 33% individual contributions, special events
- By 2021, \$400,000 annually is raised to fund strategic impact activities for the Coalition
- By 2022, \$X dedicated for the implementation of the new strategic impact model

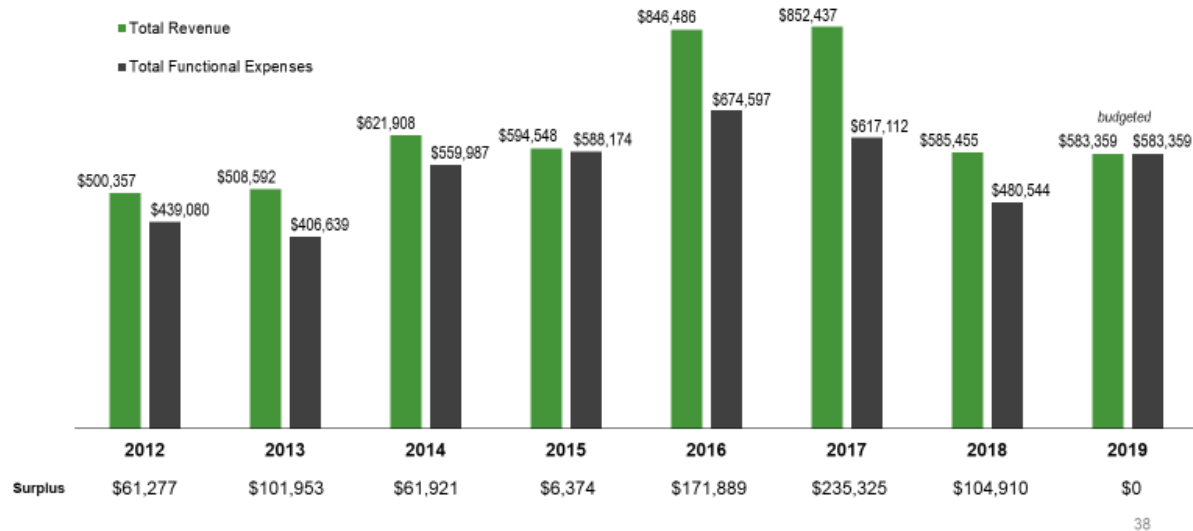
Objectives

Funding to Support the New Model and Work of the Coalition

- Articulate a new funding model for the Coalition which provides direct funding for planning, convening, ideation, and piloting
- Raise funds for (1) operations; (2) strategic issue planning and convening; and (3) implementation and scaling
 - Create annual development plan to support a new funding model for the Coalition
 - Build relationships with county and selected cities for annual funding contracts to support planning and convening role
- Seek national funding sources to support innovation
- Leverage \$150,000 seed money in reserve fund over three years to develop new funding streams
- Board adopts plan and reserve policy to fund operating, risk, endowment, and working capital
- Raise funds to invest in successful pilots
 - A pilot is successful when it is/has (1) achieved sustainability, (2) appropriate capacity, (3) an appropriate infrastructure, and (4) is meeting a need
- Develop business plan and projected ROI of impact-focused activities to build and demonstrate a case for support

Current Funding History

Coalition Financials



Recommended Funding Model

Grants to Cover Planning	\$400,000
Pilots/Projects	\$250,000
Operations/Administration	\$200,000

Acknowledgements

Steering Committee

Dr. Audrey Arona, Gwinnett, Newton, &
Rockdale County Health Departments

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Ellen Gerstein, Gwinnett Coalition for Health and
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Sarah Park, Gwinnett County Government

Chrissy Rosen, Georgia Gwinnett College

Amanda Sutt, Rock Paper Scissors

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Annie Valenty, Childrens Healthcare of Atlanta

Layna Weldon, State Farm

Glenn Wisdom, Gwinnett Place CID

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Todd Cline, Gwinnett Daily Post

William Edwards, Southern Company

Matthew Elder, HomeFirst Gwinnett

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Tina Fleming, Gwinnett County Government

Laura Gibbs, Primerica

Paige Havens, Marketing Consultant

Mary Hester, LAN Systems

Jennifer Hibbard, View Point Health

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Annie Valenty, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

Marty Vogt, United Perimeter Church

Layna Weldon, State Farm

Greg Whitlock, The Whitlock Group

Alvin Wilbanks, Gwinnett County Public Schools

Shevonn Willis, The Smith Willis Firm

Glenn Wisdom, Gwinnett Place CID