

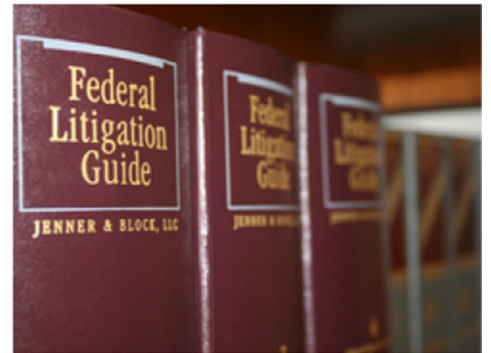
**gwinnett**county



Law Department




# Law Department 2012 Business Plan




September  
2011



# Mission Statement



The mission of the Law Department is to deliver high-quality legal services at a reasonable cost to Gwinnett County, its citizens, elected officials, managers, staff, authorities, and related organizations.



**gwinnett**county

# Our Values

- Integrity
- Accountability
- Professionalism
- Quality
- Efficiency



**gwinnett**county



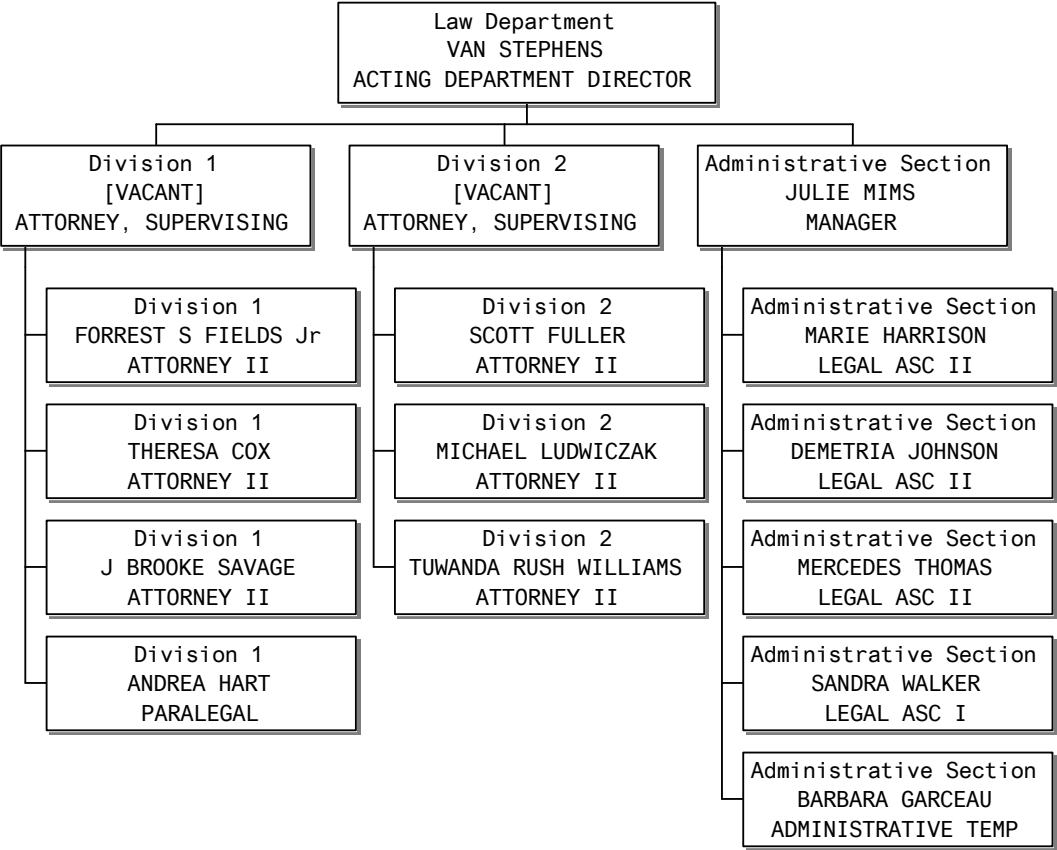
# Staffing Levels

- **2012 Budgeted Positions: 16**
  - 9 attorneys, 1 paralegal, 6 support staff
- **Vacant Positions:**
  - 2 attorneys and 1 support staff (support staff vacancy is currently occupied by a temporary employee) with another support staff vacancy expected in September 2011



# Our Organization

## LAW DEPARTMENT



# Our Services at a Glance

- Provide legal advice to the Board of Commissioners, County Administration, Elected Officials, Departments, Authorities and Boards, and related organizations
- Court/hearing appearances
- Review BOC agenda items
- Oversee zoning and land use matters



**gwinnett**county

# Our Services at a Glance (continued)

- Contract review and negotiation
- Draft legislation/ordinances
- Defend/prosecute litigation
- Provide legal opinions
- Provide assistance with legislative initiatives
- Research feasibility of proposed initiatives



# Organizational Performance / Key Metrics

	2011 Stats	% Increase / Decrease from 2010 Stats
<b>Customer Satisfaction Rating (1-5 scale)</b>	4.9	2.08%
<b># Critical Path Matters Reviewed Jan-Jul 31, 2011</b>	105	41.89%
<b># Assignments Reviewed Jan-Jul 31, 2011</b>	374	-7.20%
<b># Contracts Reviewed Jan-Jul, 31 2011</b>	400	8.11%
<b>% Contracts Reviewed Within 10 Days</b>	93%	-4.12%
<b>% reduction average cost per case for outside counsel (comparing 1st Q 2010 with 1st Q 2011)</b>	\$7,022	-65.46%





# Business Continuity

It is the goal of the Law Department to continue to deliver high-quality legal services. However, reduced resources will continue to impact the department's ability to be as responsive as in past years.

# 2012 Business Challenges

- **Increased Critical Path Matters**
  - The Law Department is called upon to provide prompt advice and assistance. There is a notable increase in the number of time-sensitive matters.
- **Reduced Staffing Levels**
  - The workload is currently distributed among fewer staff members.
- **Complexity of Legal Issues**
  - Legal issues continue to increase in complexity and intensity.

# 2012 Business Objectives

gwinnettcounty

- Ensure that a full range of high-quality legal services continue to be provided
- Process the workload in a manner responsive to the needs of our clients
- Proactively assist Departments in strategic planning
- Remain current in legal skills knowledge, training, and technology

# 2012 Business Objectives (continued)

gwinnettcounty

- Improve efficiency by cross-training and refining internal processes
- Initiate a volunteer program
- Implement revised legal services policies relating to outside counsel

# Major Legal Issues

- Service Delivery Strategy
- Land Acquisition Policy
- Revision of Ethics Ordinance
- Recodification of the County Code of Ordinances
- Solid Waste Plan
- Unified Development Ordinance

# Decision Package:

- Freeze vacant Legal Associate II position in 2012 (-\$53,044)
- Retain current administrative temp to fulfill the vacant Legal Associate II position in 2012 (\$41,200)
- Intention of filling the Legal Associate II position with a full-time permanent employee in 2013
- Cost savings: \$11,844



# Core Budget Changes:

- Indirect Cost Allocation Plan



# Zero-Based Budget:

- **Our general operating budget remains conservative, despite the increase in costs.**



# 2011 Audit Findings

- P-Card Audit
  - Recommendation: Proactively strengthen checks and balances
  - Result: Department Director now reviews and approves all P-card transactions
- Legal Services Audit
  - Recommendations: Form written policies and billing guidelines for outside legal services and revise standard contract
  - Result: Completion expected by end of 2011

# Impact of 2030 Plan

- The Law Department will provide legal advice regarding various aspects of implementation of the 2030 Plan.

# Engage Gwinnett Recommendations

- Compare with peer localities for benchmarking purposes
- Identify best practices of other progressive Internal Services Departments



# Questions?

