



Special

A rendering of the proposed Acworth/Kennesaw Regional Library consolidation, which would replace two small libraries in the area.

Voters to decide sales tax program

Cobb County voters will be able to choose whether to approve the 2016 Special Purpose Option Sales Tax program on **Nov. 4**.

Approval would enable the county to continue collecting one cent on the existing sales tax, allowing it to remain at 6 cents on the dollar. Four cents of that already goes to the state and the fifth cent goes to education.

District One Commissioner Helen Goreham said numerous improvements have been accomplished through previous SPLOST programs.

"It provides the highest level of service at the lowest cost to the citizens of Cobb County," she said.

Goreham said past improvements provided by the one cent sales tax program have included new fire trucks, needed renovations for various parks and Emergency 911 communications equipment that helped public safety departments work together.

The 2016 SPLOST, if approved, will fund such projects as a new regional library that will replace the smaller Acworth and Kennesaw branches.

The new joint-use facility "not only provides more space, but more technology for citizens," Goreham said.

She said the sales tax will also enable the county to renovate and expand the Public Safety Training Center as well as enlarge the North Cobb Senior Center.

One of the benefits of the SPLOST program is that it allows the county to pay for improvements without having to raise property taxes or borrow money.

"It's pay as you go, so it does not create debt for future generations," she said.



SPLOST 2016

Investing today for a better tomorrow

THE 2016 SPLOST IMPROVEMENTS WOULD INCLUDE:

RENOVATION AND EXPANSION OF PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING CENTER - \$23 MILLION
 WINDY HILL/TERRELL MILL CONNECTOR - \$20 MILLION
 SIDEWALKS IN MABLETON - \$18.5 MILLION
 PUBLIC SAFETY VEHICLES WITH EQUIPMENT - \$12.3 MILLION
 OSBORNE AREA RECREATION/COMMUNITY CENTER - \$10 MILLION
 ACWORTH AND KENNESAW LIBRARY CONSOLIDATION - \$8.64 MILLION
 POLICE PRECINCT 6 (NEW CONSTRUCTION) - \$5 MILLION
 FIRE STATION 29 (NEW CONSTRUCTION) - \$4.36 MILLION
 GRITTERS LIBRARY RENOVATION - \$2.95 MILLION
 EAST MARIETTA LIBRARY RENOVATION - \$8.64 MILLION
 REPLACEMENT FOR WEATHER SIREN EQUIPMENT - \$936,000

(A COMPLETE LIST OF PROJECTS IS AT COBBSPLOST2016.ORG.)

The \$750 million expected to be collected during the six years of the program will be divided among various projects. Each city in Cobb will receive a portion of the sales tax based on its population. Over six years:

- Acworth projects to receive \$21,208,827.
- Austell projects to receive \$6,725,280.
- Kennesaw projects to receive \$31,602,891.
- Marietta projects to receive \$58,353,902.
- Powder Springs projects to receive \$14,231,720.
- Smyrna projects to receive \$52,773,203.

On July 22, the Cobb County Board of Commissioners approved the lists of projects. The complete list can be viewed at cobbSPLOST2016.org.

The deadline to register for the November election is **Oct. 6**. For registration and precinct information, go to cobbelections.org.

Provide your opinion, shape region

There are important issues facing our region, such as strengthening our economy, improving transportation, enhancing quality of life and protecting natural resources. Public input into what should be in the regional plan for metro Atlanta is important. The regional plan is designed to ensure growth, prosperity and a high quality of life for the next 25 years. Through the end of September, Atlanta Regional Commission staff is reaching out to the public to share the vision developed by the ARC board and get feedback and opinions about actions to achieve these goals. One of the ways feedback is being collected is through an online survey available at atlantaregional.com/TheRegionalPlan. You will be able to share what issues you think are most important for our region to consider and which solutions you think will work best.

Express lanes coming to interstate

A new option is on the way to help address some of metro Atlanta's most congested commuter corridors. Georgia Express Lanes are optional toll lanes that will be constructed alongside existing interstates. These lanes provide a choice for drivers to pay a toll to bypass congestion when they desire, offer a clear path for transit operators and add an alternative to the roads that exist today.

Two new express lane projects will break ground this fall. The Interstate 75 South Metro project will bring 12 miles of new express lanes to Clayton and Henry Counties and is expected to open in December 2016. The Northwest Corridor project will add nearly 30 miles of new lanes along I-75 and Interstate 575 in Cobb and Cherokee Counties and is expected to take approximately four years to complete. These lanes will operate just as the I-85 Express Lanes do, relying on variable toll rates that increase during peak travel times and decrease during off-peak times.

For information on Georgia Express Lanes and the various projects throughout metro Atlanta, please visit the Web site dot.ga.gov/expresslanes.



Gary A. Witte

Gardeners' Night Out starts this month

A series of evening monthly programs on gardening will start Tuesday, **Aug. 12**, with "The Annual Sequence of Blooms Beloved by Worker Honeybees" at the East Cobb Regional Library, Marietta. The 7 p.m. event will be led by Master Gardener Rita Buehner.

The Gardeners' Night Out series, sponsored by the Master Gardener Volunteers of Cobb County, will be held once each month through November.

The next event will be "All About Bluebirds – and More" with Master Gardener Jim Bearden at 7 p.m., **Sept. 9**, at the West Cobb Regional Library, Kennesaw. Then the South Cobb Regional Library, Mableton, will host "Trees of our Lives: Small Native Trees for the Landscape" with Master Gardener Dawn Hines at 7 p.m., **Oct. 14**.

The series will wind up at 7 p.m., **Nov. 11** with "Adaptive Gardening – How to Keep Gardening on Your Lifetime Can-Do List" by Master Gardener Joe Washington at the Mountain View Regional Library, Marietta. For library addresses, go to cobbcounty.org.

First aid, CPR class offered for seniors

Adults age 55 and older can take a free CPR and First Aid class 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Friday, **Aug. 15**, at the East Cobb Senior Center. Registration is required.

Cobb County Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs staff will teach basic first aid techniques and life-saving skills so that seniors can protect themselves and their families.

Learn how to recognize the symptoms of heart attack, to do CPR, rescue breathing and how to care for bleeding, burns and fractures. No certification will be provided.

A catered lunch will be served at noon. For more information, call 770-509-4900.



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