

**NAME:** Kirkland Carden  
**PARTY:** Democratic  
**SEEKING:** County Commission, District 1

**1. Why are you seeking your office?**

Modern challenges require modern solutions. I am running for the Board of Commissioners to bring modern solutions to the challenges we face as Gwinnettians. The residents of Gwinnett deserve better public transportation, better public safety, access to clean and affordable housing and our community deserves a better Gwinnett Place Mall area. As your Commissioner, I will bring a zeal for positive change and a commitment to inclusion for Gwinnett County government. Together, we can keep our community strong and vibrant for many years to come.

**2. What do you expect to accomplish if elected?**

I would create a transportation plan that moves people around the county in a manner that encourages resident patronage, with strategic links to metro Atlanta. I would improve public safety and ensure our first responders have the protection and resources required to do their job safely. I would utilize all available county resources to address the many challenges facing the Gwinnett Place Mall area. I am committed to leading our community through the COVID-19 pandemic and working with Gwinnett's business community to safely reopen our local economy.

**3. What distinguishes your candidacy?**

The distinguishing feature of my candidacy is my professional experience in local government. As a former Duluth City Councilmember, I am the only person running who has legislative and policy-making experience. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we're seeing just how important experience is in our elected leaders. Gwinnett County will experience a serious financial crisis. Experts estimate that state and local governments in Georgia could see a \$1.27 Billion dollar revenue shortfall. We must make sure the next District 1 Commissioner has meaningful experience to deal with our revenue shortfalls.

**4. Pick any one issue. Expand on how you will address it.**

Housing patterns have evolved significantly in Gwinnett. It is time we take a comprehensive approach to housing policy. I support the creation of a Housing Master Plan; which would be a long-range planning document that acts as a roadmap for housing in Gwinnett County. This document would put forward new policies that assure an adequate supply of homes at different price points, phases of life and personal taste. It will also assess the physical conditions of existing neighborhoods and provide recommendations to improve our struggling neighborhoods.

**5. Suggest ways to jump-start the economy after COVID-19.**

The next group of Commissioners must work with Georgia's federal and state leadership to ensure our small businesses and workers receive additional assistance as we continue to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. It is imperative that county leadership work with Gwinnett's business community, to enact new policies that help our local businesses recover from the current economic downturn, such as temporary reductions in business fees and raising awareness for SBA loans, CARES Act funding and other forms of relief. With the right local leadership, our small business community will make it through this period of economic hardship.

**6. Please give a 100 word summary on your background**

From an early age, my family taught me the value of hard work and a dedication to public service. I chose a career in public service to serve the community that made me who I am. I received my bachelor's degree in Political Science from Georgia State University, and it is through my experience at GSU, that I have grown as an individual and strengthened my commitment to public service. Immediately after graduation, I began working for Jacobs Engineering Group as an Urban Planner, where I worked in zoning and development. Currently, I work with the Georgia Department of Transportation.