NAME: Ben Ku
PARTY: Democratic
SEEKING: County Commission, Post 2

1.Why are you seeking your office?

I have a vision for a more satisfying government experience. As the incumbent, I have already laid the groundwork for several initiatives to achieve this, however, government moves slowly and I would like to continue serving to see these ideas turn into reality. I will continue to fight for improvements to our infrastructure, inclusion, and innovation. I enjoy serving our vibrantly connected community and I think there's so much more Gwinnett could be doing to be a true trailblazer in government technology, innovation, and customer service.

2. What do you expect to accomplish if elected?

I expect to oversee the development of new transportation, equity, and development plans. I will ensure my ideas for a new 311 system and new county website will be developed in an open and transparent way so that your tax dollar investments will generate a return that can be used by the entire community. And I will ensure that development isn't done without the cooperation and engagement of the community. I am looking forward to guiding Rowen, Gwinnett Place Mall, the Olympic Tennis Center, and OFS properties into developments that are transit oriented and have a true generational impact.

3. What distinguishes your candidacy?

I am still one of the only technology creators in politics. I was the first openly LGBTQ commissioner and one of the first people of color elected to the Gwinnett board of commissioners. If re-elected, I will be the most senior member of the board which means I have the unique perspective of knowing how things used to be done and knowing how much things have changed. My open application process has been adopted by the entire board of commissioners, I was successful at bringing glass recycling back to the county, and I created our communications department.

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

Governments tend to be like a large ship that is difficult to steer. This is a problem in a world where the pace of change is accelerating. Having plans that take 18 months to develop may have worked before, but now, the parameters for the plan are usually outdated before the plan itself is even finished. In the software world, we adapted to an agile software approach to address this situation, and applying that model to government can allow us to be more nimble and adaptable to the ever changing reality.

5. What are your ideas on curbing all the many area-wide shooting?

I was able to create a police citizens advisory committee to discuss, analyze, and debate difficult issues related to public safety. The county has created a public safety community outreach division, and we have been working on actively engaging our community to make sure we continue to reduce crime in the county and stay a leader in public safety in the state. Building community associations and improving communications and customer service will all be necessary to improve public safety in todays world.

6. Please give a 100 word summary on your background

I am the grandson of Chinese immigrants who came to Georgia to engineer the original MARTA heavy rail network. I am a 3rd generation engineer, graduating from Georgia Tech with highest honors having developed some of the first websites on the internet, the first apps on the iPhone, and the first apps in the App Store. I have spent my life identifying problems and using technology to solve those problems and working to enhance our community and government experience. When I was first elected, I was one of the fastest to become a certified county commissioner.