



# IMAGINE, INSPIRE, IMPACT.

Partnerships for Successful  
Georgia Cities

## INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS & SOLUTIONS



**Georgia City Solutions (GCS) creates and delivers a wide range of programs through collaborative efforts and strategic partnerships to make a positive impact on the economic vitality and quality of life in cities. Focus Areas Include:**

### Municipal Workforce Development



Recruitment, retention, training, and succession planning are critical to developing a productive workforce in Georgia cities. Yet, cities across the state are finding a limited pool of applicants with the skills, experience, and desire necessary to fill a range of critical positions.

With an eye on the rapidly changing workforce, GCS partnered with the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG) to build the framework within which municipal governments across the state can identify their current and future workforce needs and develop a strategy for meeting those needs going forward. Branded as *Jobs with Purpose: Municipal Workforce Development Initiative*, this program uses our "Georgia Municipal Workforce Development Strategy and Playbook" to assist cities in developing actionable strategies that cities and partner organizations can undertake to strengthen the municipal workforce pipeline along with a specific focus on hard to fill occupations.



**JOBS WITH  
PURPOSE**  
MUNICIPAL WORKFORCE  
DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

### Equity and Inclusion (E&I)



Making sure everyone is included and that every voice is welcomed, respected and accounted for is an active, continuous process requiring a sustained commitment from local leaders. Applying an equity and inclusion lens to municipal operations means identifying opportunities throughout local governance where cities can and must account for the needs of all residents.

Branded as the EMBRACE program, GCS recognizes that cities have different equity and inclusion challenges and strives to provide flexible and scalable programs to meet cities "where they are" to assist them in developing an actionable path forward. We emphasize the importance of working together, valuing differences, and fostering healthy lines of communication to yield sustainable change.

We deliver a variety of training, technical assistance, reports and resources, consultations, and coaching to equip municipal officials and partner organizations with tools to advocate community engagement, equity, and inclusion for the betterment of all.

**EMBRACE**  
Embracing Equity & Inclusion. Celebrating Differences.



# IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE



## Youth Leadership and Engagement



When communities proactively engage their youth, those young people see that they are valued, that their voices are heard and respected, and that their experiences are welcomed and needed in ongoing community discourse. Positive and productive youth engagement builds their confidence and leadership skills, increasing both their influence and their personal stake in their community.

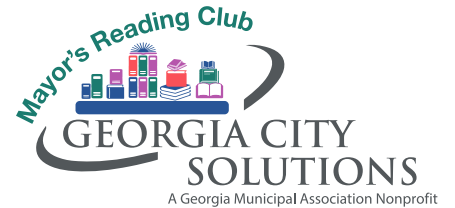


Branded as the ENGAGE program, this joint effort of the Georgia Municipal Association and Georgia City Solutions is focused on helping cities and city officials engage and connect with children and youth in their communities to proactively address the issues they face. GCS and GMA are working together by providing youth engagement tools and resources, developing a "how-to guide" to start a city youth council, convening youth leadership summits/forums, undertaking literacy and mentoring efforts, encouraging increased out-of-school learning and engagement opportunities in cities, as well as facilitating youth workforce development opportunities. With fresh ideas and a perspective that only they can provide, a city's youth can serve an important role in creating healthy, vibrant cities.

## Literacy



Literacy is not just an education issue. It's an economic, workforce, and quality of life issue. Research shows that children who can't read proficiently by the end of third grade are more likely to experience poor health, have discipline problems, and drop out of high school. The Mayor's Reading Club Program aims to improve the literacy skills and success with early reading among children and youth in Georgia cities through encouragement, support, and leadership from city mayors. The goal of the program is to serve as a building



block to a future Literacy Improvement Strategy cohort sponsored by GCS. The program is flexible and promotes partnerships and collaboration between the city, county, schools, libraries, local nonprofits, and the business community. It can be delivered in person, virtual, on-demand, year-round, or other frequencies based on each city-specific program. As part of the program, GCS has commissioned a children's book series to teach young readers about local government.

## OUR IMPACT



Statewide reach -  
**537 cities**  
serving  
**>4.7M residents**



Collaboration with  
**>60 public,  
private &  
nonprofit  
organizations**



Unique  
approach  
to scale, replicate,  
& customize  
**programs**

## ABOUT GCS



Georgia City Solutions, Inc. (GCS) is a 501(c)(3) organization created in 2018 by the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) to help cities address the challenges of intergenerational poverty. Governed by a 12-member Board of Directors and guided by three advisory councils, the work of GCS promotes economic mobility as a means of combating intergenerational poverty.

GCS has successfully launched programs in three initial focus areas, including Equity and Inclusion (E&I), Municipal Workforce Development, and Youth Leadership and Engagement. GCS is helping cities create a path forward with our unique approach of scaling, replicating, and customizing programs to suit the needs of each municipal government and partner organization we work with.



### MEET THE GCS TEAM:

(left to right) Alexandra Campos Castillo, Freddie Broome, Kay Love, Brian Wallace, Nicole Brown

## OUR MISSION

**The mission of Georgia City Solutions (GCS) is to establish and support innovative programs, solutions and research aimed at building vibrant, economically prosperous, and well-managed cities, and improving the quality of life of municipal residents.**

## WHAT WE BELIEVE



Strong, vibrant, and well-managed cities are essential to the quality of life and prosperity of the state of Georgia.



Every city and every resident deserve the opportunity to reach their full potential.



The major challenges which are holding cities and their residents back are grounded in the outcomes of intergenerational poverty.



Comprehensive strategies are necessary to address systemic conditions and policies that foster inequities and perpetuate the outcomes of intergenerational poverty, such as low academic achievement, lack of a trained workforce, and poor health outcomes.



Collaborative efforts and strategic partnerships must be undertaken, which require the active involvement of state and local government officials, as well as the private and nonprofit sectors, academia, the philanthropic community, and individuals impacted by these challenges.



City leaders are well suited to convene stakeholders in their community to tackle serious, persistent community challenges.



The role of GCS is to bridge gaps, not duplicate, by launching and supporting programs through strategic partnerships and by leveraging and coordinating the work of multiple organizations to have a greater impact on GCS focus areas.

