

## **2018 NAIOP Georgia School Challenge – Case Study**

Bruce Coleman is a former hippie. Now in his late 60s, he has taken up residence in Lawrenceville, Georgia, the county seat of Gwinnett County. Coleman recently retired from his highly successful logistics firm and has decided to invest his wealth in real estate. Two principles guide his investment approach: 1) to create a sustainable income stream for his four children; and 2) to focus on recycling improved properties in Gwinnett County that are abandoned or underutilized.

Gwinnett County is one of 29 counties in the Atlanta MSA. The 2016 population was estimated at 907,135. Approximately 350,000 work in the county, making it far more than a bedroom community. Founded in 1818 and named for Button Gwinnett, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, the county has 16 municipalities and possibly the most diverse population in the region. According to the 2015 American Community Survey, the ethnic composition of Gwinnett County is 41.2% white, 24.2% black, 20.3% Latino, and 11.0% Asian. Foreign-born persons comprise an estimated 24.6% of the county's population.

Coleman has amassed a \$50 million war chest. He has been troubled by the travails of Gwinnett Place Mall, the many empty big-box stores throughout the county, and the bias toward new development rather than optimizing the use of already improved properties. He is driven by the love for his adopted hometown and a deep-seated concern for sustainability and effective use of resources. He is also very mindful of the rapid pace of technological change, particularly the widespread impact of e-commerce.

Your team has been retained by Coleman to provide investment counsel. Decisions about timing, degree of leverage, financing sources, product diversification, use of economic incentives, target areas, and asset repositioning are your purview. Coleman has given you three months to prepare a comprehensive report that outlines plans for this \$50 million, aptly named The Bicentennial Fund.