

## **Arena Ground Breaking 2/12/2018 Mayor Pro-Tem Ambrose Clay - Remarks**

Good afternoon! Welcome to all our elected officials, our Hawks Partners, members of the media, friends, and citizens of College Park. What a great day for College Park!

As a relatively new resident, having only arrived in 2005, I want to share with you what this day means to me. For me, today marks another milestone in the pursuit of our vision for a vibrant College Park. This significant financial investment in the addition of a multipurpose arena to our Georgia International Convention Center is but one in a series of strategic decisions made over many

years by our Mayor and Council, and its predecessors - from building the original convention center, to rebuilding it on this site as the airport expanded, to adding the sky train station, and to reacquiring once residential land cleared for compatibility with aircraft noise. These decisions have enabled us to take advantage of our unique proximity and connectivity to our state's greatest physical resource - Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

In addition to being the home for the Hawks G-League games and related events for about 10 percent of the year, the rest of the year, airport connectivity will make it an ideal venue for regional

events. And for our residents and friends in Metro Atlanta, I look forward to having local concerts, and other public and private gatherings. The arena will be complementary to existing activities at the GICC, but it also will be supplementary space for some activities now held in the exhibit halls. This will allow them to be moved to the arena, which will in-turn allow the GICC to take on more corporate business which is currently turned away.

But there are more good things coming! After establishment of the arena, the completion of the pedestrian bridge over Camp Creek Parkway and the development of our land to the north, will provide easy access from this Gateway complex to

downtown. And conversely, it will allow easy access for many of our residents to more affordable basketball and other events. I am so happy to be here at this milestone for our City.

When I retired the second time in Phoenix, my wife said "I want to move back to College Park", and I said "Okay with me, its the friendliest place I have ever visited!" Now with the new arena, I'm hoping we can share that hospitality with many more.

Thank you!