



DeKalb County Board of Commissioners
Commissioner Kathie Gannon, Super District 6

August 26, 2011

To the Citizens of North DeKalb, Inc,

First, I applaud you and all citizens who become constructively involved in improving their community. Government does not have the resources to complete everything that everyone wants. The only way to move forward is with citizens working together to find solutions.

There are two concerns regarding cityhood and Brookhaven that I would like to put on the table:

- The first is the relationship of cityhood to specific issues or problems, and
- The second concerns the scope of the study

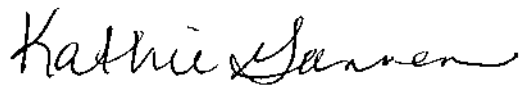
It is important to identify the problems to be corrected so that the community can select the right tool to fix it. The problems to be fixed are not clear. At the community meetings people have asked this question, but it has not been answered. In general terms, I have heard talk about parks, roads and public safety, but I have not heard specifics. What are the problems you are trying to fix?

There are a wide variety of tools and options available to deal with identifiable problems. Cityhood is one way to go, but an additional layer of government may not be the right solution for every problem. If parks are the issue, there are parks authorities and friends of parks programs. If police presence is the issue, we could explore elevated service levels in special tax districts. If zoning is the issue, there are overlays that can be designed specifically for your area. Even if your study shows that it is financially feasible to form a city, how will you know if that is the right solution if you have not identified the problems and explored other options?

My second concern is the narrow focus of the study on financial feasibility. To achieve financial viability, businesses along I-85, Clairmont Road and Buford Highway have been drawn into the proposed city. It appears that a sufficient amount of commercial, retail and apartment properties are being drawn into the city boundaries so that there is the necessary commercial tax base to make a city financially stable. This creates an area that does not have an identity, clearly defined boundaries, or a community of interest.

Therefore, I ask you to expand the scope of your study to include identifying the problems and issues to be corrected with cityhood and the impact of a new city on the taxpayers in all of DeKalb County. It would be best for the Carl Vinson Institute to conduct this analysis so there is consistency in data and assumptions and we do not end up with "dueling" studies by different authors or an apples to oranges situation. It is our understanding from the Carl Vinson Institute that only your organization as the sponsor can authorize the scope to be expanded. DeKalb County could help pay for the expanded scope. The merits of cityhood have a larger context and cityhood has an impact beyond the immediate community affecting all DeKalb county stakeholders.

I look forward to continued discussions and a mutually beneficial resolution.



Kathie Gannon
DeKalb County Commissioner for District 6

cc: CEO Burrell Ellis, DeKalb County
Commissioner Elaine Boyer, DeKalb County District 1
Commissioner Jeff Rader, DeKalb County District 2
Dennis Epps, Carl Vinson Institute
Ted Baggett, Carl Vinson Institute
Laura Meadows, Carl Vinson Institute