

bad PROCESS

In order to support the extra layer of government, cities must have a significant commercial tax base.

When the proposed new city boundaries were drawn, the priority was getting the most commercial property possible, not respecting real community boundaries. The current city proposals—largely drawn by people who do not even live in the proposed cities—disrupt our existing communities, and even cut one park in half.

The process also leaves many of our neighbors in other parts of the county with far less tax base to support the services they need. There still has not been sufficient study of what the effect on the entire county may be.

bad PROSPECTS

Research has shown that fragmented government makes planning and provision of services, like transportation and public safety, much more difficult. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, fragmentation raises costs and slows economic growth.

Most cities pay significantly higher tax rates than residents of unincorporated DeKalb. While some new cities keep property taxes low initially, costs are soaring, leaving cities with the choice to find other ways of getting revenue from citizens or by cutting services.



get INVOLVED

We need to talk to our friends, make calls, knock on doors and make as much accurate information available to our colleagues and neighbors as possible.

1. Join our email list at:
www.dekalbstrong.com
2. Visit our facebook group:
facebook.com/groups/DeKalbStrong
3. Attend our Voter Information Forums and other neighborhood presentations
4. Volunteer to:
 - place a yard sign at your home
 - go door to door & talk with neighbors
 - distribute flyers
 - host an event for your neighbors
 - participate in a fundraiser
 - help setup or staff an event
 - make phone calls
5. Contribute:

**DeKalb Strong
PO Box 215
2897 N. Druid Hills Road
Atlanta, GA 30329**

DeKalb Strong is a group of engaged citizens from across the county working very hard to make positive changes that help fix DeKalb and prevent changes that weaken our county.

DeKalb STRONG

What We Believe ... and Why

The city hood movement, as it has unfolded, is bad policy with consequences for schools, quality of life, and taxes in all of DeKalb County.

We are concerned that the current push for new cities and annexations in DeKalb County is a frenzy of poorly planned land grabbing. We do not oppose cities in general, but cities do not address DeKalb's problems, are not inevitable, and there is no reason we have to create cities now. If cities do form, the process should be fair and equitable and put power in the hands of citizens, not special interests.

***Vote No Thanks
on November 3rd***

DeKalbSTRONG.com

fix DEKALB

The State of Georgia legally requires that counties ensure that eleven municipal services are provided. When cities are created, they are required to provide only three municipal services. In most cases new cities choose the three easiest: Zoning and planning, code enforcement, and parks. Some new cities handle police, but can't afford advanced law enforcement needs such as major crime investigation, SWAT teams, bomb squads, and helicopters.

The result is that a crippled county must continue providing seven or eight essential services. Bottom line: fixing DeKalb County, not weakening it, need to be the priority.

Fix DeKalb First!

***We are strongest together,
and do not need another
layer of government.***

Fortunately, there is progress. Thanks to the hard work of engaged citizens and our local delegation, bills have recently been passed by the Georgia legislature to help reform DeKalb County government by establishing an independent auditor, strengthening the Ethics Board, and instituting a procurement code.

These reforms will remove much of the lack of oversight and accountability that allowed corruption to exist. These are very positive steps, but they will still require energy and engagement among the citizenry to assure that they are implemented in a timely and proper manner. We do not need to waste any more time on the cityhood "solution", which is proven to be a failed strategy. Fix DeKalb First!

bad PROMISES

It's easy to make promises about the benefits of a brand new city. But when we look at the facts and examine the actual track record of the other new cities - we can see they are exaggerations or just plain untrue.

Better Police - UNTRUE

A new city police force would have fewer resources than the county department. City police forces often dedicate significant energy to generating revenue for the city through citations, instead of public safety.

Better Services/Lower Taxes - UNTRUE

A new layer of government isn't free. Fragmented government is less efficient and has significant costs. Cities must resort to additional new fees to help cover extra costs, and governments tend to grow over time.

Property Values Increase - UNTRUE

New cities have formed in areas where property values were already high and booming; cityhood didn't cause property value increases. Instead, existing high property values made the cities feasible. Should there be downward valuations in the future, cities may not be feasible without revenue enhancements. There is no data indicating that cityhood creates higher values.

Need an Identity or Brand - UNTRUE

Identity cannot be imposed on an area by politicians and marketing consultants. Plenty of areas have a strong identity without being a city. Residents and businesses have located in unincorporated DeKalb for generations without new cities or "brands."

Closer Representation - UNTRUE

New cities have had significant problems with corruption and cronyism. Part-time city politicians often get less media coverage and are harder for citizens to keep tabs on.

Solving DeKalb Corruption - UNTRUE

We have been experimenting with creating new cities for ten years now, and it has been ineffective in improving DeKalb County government. 90% of our tax dollars will still go to DeKalb if a new city is voted for, so we should all care about addressing the real problem. Real reform bills were passed this session, which are a good start. We need to focus on solutions, not add more politicians to the mix!

Zoning Improvements - UNTRUE

Cityhood proponents have not made any statements on how they would like to see zoning change. Even if they had a vision, no new cities have been able to make significant changes to zoning ordinances. Novice politicians have, however, made huge mistakes with zoning that have cost citizens significant amounts of tax money.

Avoiding Annexation - UNTRUE

Our legislators have realized that the annexations and cityhood process is broken, and are looking to make major reforms to restore sanity. Municipalization of the entire county is not inevitable, as surveys have shown most residents do not want to be in cities. But if we do not say NO to new cities now, we will spur on the municipalization of the county, and likely lose important tax bases and Druid Hills High School to Atlanta annexation, which will have consequences for schools across central DeKalb.

Road Improvements - UNTRUE

Existing new cities have had more money than unincorporated areas for infrastructure because of the structure of DeKalb's sales tax, which gave disproportionate funds to cities. That formula has been fixed, and newer cities will no longer unfairly benefit.