



W. BURRELL ELLIS, JR.
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

June 5, 2009

Dear DeKalb County Employee:

You have, no doubt, heard about the discussion of a workforce reduction within the Development Department. I am writing to personally share with you what is transpiring.

DeKalb County has not been immune to the impact of the global economic recession. Construction activity is significantly down throughout the Atlanta region and across the United States. As a result, revenue from county building permits has decreased. In 2007, the county received \$9.7 million in permitting fees. That amount fell to \$8.3 million in 2008 and was projected to fall to \$8.2 million in our 2009 budget. The reality, based upon our 2009 first quarter results, is far worse. We are now projecting a 46% reduction in permitting fees from the 2008 level.


In 2000, the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association filed a lawsuit against DeKalb County, alleging that the county owed it \$30 million in refunds for overcharging on permits. The lawsuit was eventually settled for \$1.6 million. As a result of that litigation, the county converted the Development Department into a "Special Revenue Fund" which limits the funding of that department to the fees generated by it. Consequently, a significant reduction in permitting fee revenues mandates a reduction in workforce. **Other county departments, however, are supported through the county's tax funds budget and are not being impacted by the reduction in development permitting fees.**

I am aware that employees within the Development Department were asked to pack their belongings and to turn over county equipment prior to a staff meeting that was scheduled for today. Because I had not given prior approval to those actions and because I have not made final decisions related to the manner or magnitude of the proposed reduction in workforce, I directed that any further actions be postponed pending my review. You can expect to receive further details from me next week.

I understand that this is a difficult time for employees of the Development Department. I ask you to be patient and to allow me to review this matter and come back to you next week with specific recommendations and final decisions.

Thank you for your continued support during this uncertain time. Please know that we will continue to act in the best interests of our employees and our citizens as we redefine the county's corporate culture and continue to build a new consensus for a better DeKalb County.

Sincerely,



W. Burrell Ellis, Jr.