
DEKALB COUNTY

W. Burrell Ellis, Jr.
Chief Executive Officer



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CEO BURRELL ELLIS PROPOSES TO TRIM 2009 BUDGET BY AN ADDITIONAL \$7.2 MILLION

Revised Recommendations Address Economic Downturn

DECATUR – Chief Executive Officer Burrell Ellis proposed several recommendations to further trim the 2009 county Budget by \$7.2 million. A reduction in retail sales, property values and construction activity, has caused county revenues to fall. In addition, the creation of the City of Dunwoody and the State’s elimination of the Homestead Tax Relief Grant Credit (HTRG) have put added pressure on county taxpayers.

“DeKalb County has not been immune to the impact of the global economic recession,” says CEO Ellis. “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 percent reduction in permitting fees from the 2008 level.”

To keep the Development Department operating at a minimal level, CEO Ellis has proposed specific recommendations to address the downturn in economic activity and its impact on the County’s Development Department: a loan of \$1.5 million and an additional subsidy of \$1 million from the County’s General Fund, employee furloughs one day per pay period and a 54 percent reduction in force.

“This puts our Development Department at a level consistent with neighboring jurisdictions that have already made similar cuts,” notes CEO Ellis. “Further reduction in our Development Department would be tantamount to declaring a moratorium on development in DeKalb County at a time when we should be investing resources in building infrastructure, creating jobs and stimulating economic activity.”

The Board of Commissioners is considering declaring two unpaid holidays in the remaining portion of the year as a means of funding the transfer of funds to the Development Department. CEO Ellis supports that action. “County government should always tighten its own belt before expecting more from our tax paying citizens. I applaud the Board of Commissioners in working with our administration to develop innovative funding solutions without raising taxes,” said CEO Ellis.

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