



Vista Grove 2021: Investing in Our Future

Imagine our community connected by **sidewalks and trails**, walkable and bikeable throughout. Imagine new and flourishing local businesses, along with **new parks, recreation facilities, and greenspace**, and imagine **dedicated elected leadership speaking for us** during this time of great change and preparing us for the future.

Where Can I Learn More?

Join Vista Grove Initiative for one of our **monthly community Zoom meetings** at 7:00 p.m. to learn: How have events in 2020 moved our community closer than ever to a vote on cityhood? How have seasoned local legislators helped move the process forward? What will a **city-county form of government** look like for Vista Grove? How has the map of the proposed new city changed? And why is 2021 shaping up to be a year of such promise for city-county cooperation in DeKalb? The meeting links can be found at www.vistagrove.org/calendar.

How will a City of Vista Grove benefit us?

With a comprehensive, long-term plan, and local leadership to implement it, what we can achieve is enormous, now and for generations to come. As we have seen from the 12 cities already established, being part of that city-county confluence brings us:

- **Community:** A city **strengthens our community and civic identity**. Cities are effectively creating social and physical environments, which strengthen the collective sense of place and belonging, thereby supporting and nurturing individuals, families, businesses, and institutions.
- **Connection:** A city **connects and transforms physical infrastructure**, bringing much needed improvements such as parks and greenspace, roads and drainage, and sidewalks and trails.
- **Communication:** A city ensures that its residents have an opportunity to express their views and that we communicate forcefully, and with a **single representative voice**, on issues of local importance.
- **Coordination:** A city combines locally tuned citizen-driven planning, clear action, and cooperation with DeKalb into a single, integrated aim: community well-being.
- **Compassion:** A city embraces the people it serves, creating a healthy balance between well-being for ourselves and others based on mutual giving, increased goodwill, and the intent to enrich the lives of all.

What services will the City initially offer? It's the "3 P's":

- **Paving:** Maintain and upgrade roads and drainage, while expanding our sidewalks.
- **Planning:** Promote smart and community-supported economic development, while enhancing existing residential areas through coordinated zoning, permitting, licensing, and code enforcement.
- **Parks:** Improve and increase the number of parks, recreational areas, trails, community events, and programming.

How will the new City of Vista Grove work with DeKalb County government?

Like other cities around us, Vista Grove would work in partnership with the county to ensure efficient delivery of public services. The city-county form of government has proven successful in every new city in DeKalb and in neighboring Fulton County. By moving certain services (the 3 P's) closer to the people they serve, it reduces layers of bureaucracy. And there is no overlap: by law, cities and counties are required to have written plans ensuring clear delineation of responsibility and no duplication in services.



What area defines Vista Grove?



Updated Vista Grove Boundaries—As Revised by Our Legislators.

For an interactive map, go to www.VistaGrove.org/new_maps.

What representation does Vista Grove offer?

In Vista Grove (a proposed city of approximately 33,000 at present), we would have a mayor and six council members - that's one council member for about 5,500 people. Council members can only serve for up to three terms and must live in the area they serve. By contrast, the two current Super District DeKalb Commissioners each represent about 370,000 of the county's more than 740,000 residents, and the five District Commissioners each represent about 148,000.

New cities have not raised their tax millage rates, right?

Right. There is NO expectation or reason to believe that property tax rates would increase with Vista Grove! In fact, as demonstrated by the newest cities surrounding our area, none of these cities have increased their tax rates; in fact, in some cases their property tax rate is less than we pay in unincorporated DeKalb. At the same time, the local growth cities create is a rising tide that "lifts all boats," sending funding to the county as a whole and to local schools.

What comes next?

With the continued support of local legislators, building on momentum from 2020, we expect a bill to pass the Georgia General Assembly in early 2021, followed by a **vote on city creation in November 2021**. Voter approval of this legislation would allow for city elections in March 2022, with the city coming into existence in July of 2022.

To make that happen, WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Civic engagement has been the key to other city formations. Are you willing to share your skills, talents, and resources by **volunteering**? If so, go to www.vistagrove.org/volunteer to sign up, or contact our volunteer coordinator, Clarice Belcher clarice33@bellsouth.net or email us: info@vistagrove.org

Follow us on Facebook www.facebook.com/VistaGroveGA and at www.vistagrove.org