



# FULTON COUNTY TAXPAYERS FOUNDATION

*Non-Profit Advocate Of Lower Property Taxes In Atlanta/Fulton*

December 2006

## **Buckhead, Ansley Park, Morningside & Virginia Highlands Joining The New Milton County?**

The Fulton County Taxpayers Foundation (FCTF) has consistently supported the unity of Fulton County. However, the recent "race-baiting" radio ad broadcast on November 6th, paid for by the committee to elect Fulton County Commission Chairman John Eaves, was so outrageous and shocking that we have decided to survey the FCTF membership to determine what percentage of our members wish to join Milton County. A transcript of the radio ad appears on page 3.

Although John Eaves won the election, the result of the "race-baiting" has been a deluge of phone calls and emails from members of the Fulton County Taxpayers Foundation (FCTF) expressing the desire to join with North Fulton in separating from Fulton County. Many urge that the southern boundary of the proposed Milton County be extended southward to include Buckhead, and possibly Ansley Park, Morningside and Virginia Highlands. Although a survey is helpful, any new county must be approved by the voters.

### **Why Do So Many Favor A New County?**

Here are the words of the AJC editorial, dated October 20, 2006: "With nearly every move it makes,

the dysfunctional Fulton County government takes another step toward its own demise. The county jail has been a public disaster for years. More recently, the county's tax assessment process has been shown to be in shambles. Driven into revolt by high taxes and lack of basic services, most of North Fulton has decided to incorporate into municipalities. Now the north will likely ask the General Assembly to re-create what used to be Milton County. What Fulton County needs is a top-to-bottom analysis of its operations, starting with a serious look at the commission itself." Add to this the divisive racism reflected in the radio ad approved by the Commissioner-Elect John Eaves.

### **What Functions Are Provided By Fulton County & What Is The Cost?**

With the municipalization of Fulton County – Sandy Springs, Johns Creek, Milton, etc. - the "Special Services", i.e., Police, Fire, Parks, Planning and Zoning, Roads, are now provided for by each new city, while the role of Fulton County is confined, for the most part, to the Board of Assessors, Courts, Health & Human Services, Libraries and Sheriff. In addition, Fulton County acts as transfer agent for funding Grady. The tax millage for Fulton County is 11.4 or \$11.40 for every thousand dollars of assessed value or

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### Fulton County

#### Taxpayers Foundation

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26.4% of your total property tax (for those taxpayers living in the City of Atlanta). According to the Georgia Department of Revenue, the Fulton County tax millage rate is among the highest 10 percentile in the State.

## Grady and MARTA

Grady and MARTA – regional services – are funded by Fulton and DeKalb Counties. The taxpayers of Fulton County are contributing \$82,345,000, the second highest item in the General Fund (the highest is the County Sheriff at \$86,433,139). MARTA is funded by a 1% sales tax generating approximately \$200 million annually in Fulton County. In any bill to create Milton County, the obligations of Grady and MARTA should, of course, be honored by North Fulton, but there should also be legislation introduced to make Grady and MARTA regional facilities (which they are) to qualify for additional state and federal funding. Grady offers services which are regional, i.e., Burn Clinic, Cancer Research, Infectious Disease Program, Trauma Clinic, etc., while residents of the eleven-counties Atlanta region utilize MARTA.

## Long Term Debt & Contractual Obligations

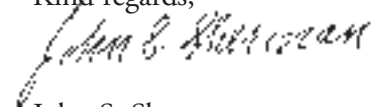
According to the 2006 Fulton County Budget, the County's long term debt and contractual obligations total \$1.112 billion. Here, too, in any bill to create Milton County, the long term debt and contractual obligations should be honored.

## What Are The Factors That Would Influence The Voters?

1. The Dysfunctional Fulton County government.
2. The Cost of Fulton County Government: The Reason Foundation has published the results of county outsourcing, with a saving of 20% to 30% to those counties which outsource specific services. If the outsourcing of Sandy Springs and the planned outsourcing of Johns Creek and Milton are harbingers of what the proposed Milton County might look like, the taxpayers would be benefit from lower taxes.
3. Improving The Quality Of County Services: Performance Standards for every employee would result in fewer but more capable employees for the proposed Milton County. Since each municipality has a police force, there will no longer be a need for Sheriff. The Milton Board of Assessors and the Milton County Clerk will be accountable to the Milton County Manager, serving at the pleasure of the County Manager.

This is a serious decision for the voters. On the one hand, there are those who say "We need fewer government entities, not more." Yet, on the other hand, Fulton County government is, indeed, dysfunctional, and now we are faced with a County Chairman-Elect who approved of a "race-baiting; campaign ad.

Kind regards,



John S. Sherma

# Transcript Of The Radio Ad Run By Chairman-Elect John Eaves

"This is Congressman John Lewis."

"And I'm Mayor Shirley Franklin."

"And I'm Andy Young."

**Lewis:** "On November 7th we face the most dangerous situation we ever have. If you think fighting off dogs and water hoses in the '60s was bad, imagine if we sit idly by and let the right-wing Republicans take control of the Fulton County Commission."

**Franklin:** "The efforts of Martin and Coretta King, Hosea Williams, Maynard Jackson and many others will be lost. That's why we must stand up and we must turn out the vote for the Democrats on Election Day."

**Young:** "And especially for John Eaves for Fulton County Commission chairman. Unless you want them to turn back the clock on equal rights and human rights and economic opportunity for all of us, vote for John Eaves as Fulton County chairman."

**Lewis:** "Your very life may depend on it."

**Eaves:** "This message paid for by the committee to elect John Eaves."

# Survey

- Are you in favor of joining Milton County? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- What is your zipcode? \_\_\_\_\_
- Should Grady become a regional facility? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- Should Marta be regional? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN TO OUR OFFICE**

*Please detach here*

## *Join the Fight For Lower Property Taxes*

I enclose my annual membership of

\$50 Family \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 Patron \_\_\_\_\_ \$200 Corporate Member \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 Corporate Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_  
\$1000 Corporate Champion \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a tax deductible contribution of \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

If you prefer, you can charge your membership or a donation on-line at [www.fcta.us](http://www.fcta.us)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_