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Community Development Department

City of Dallas, GA

129 E. Memorial Dr.

Dallas, GA

**\*\*Subject: Opposition to Annexation and Development of 3097 Cole Lake Rd\*\***

Director Rakestraw,

We are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed annexation by the City of Dallas and subsequent development of approximately 319 acres located at 3097 Cole Lake Rd by David Pearson Communities, Inc. As a resident, property owner and stakeholder in this area, we are deeply concerned about the negative impacts this development would have on our community and our property. We have owned property on Cole Lake Rd since 1965 and have witness growth outcomes both positive and negative in the county. Since that time we have had the pleasure of deer, wild turkey, horses, cattle and now forest outside our windows and across the roadway. If this development is approved, it will be the backside of houses with no buffer. We believe the negative impacts of this development far outweigh any positive impact on us and the Cole Lake Rd community at this time.

**\*\*Traffic Congestion & Safety\*\***

The addition of a 670-unit residential community will significantly increase traffic congestion on our already narrow, hilly and winding road. Paulding County has seen rapid growth, with a 2.35% population increase projected for 2025, continuing a 34.42% increase since 2010. In Georgia, there is an average of 2 cars per household. Many of the secondary roads in the area have remained unchanged for decades. What was once a dirt road, Cole Lake Rd was paved without much consideration given to future growth and traffic demands. This development equates to approximately 1300 more cars on Cole Lake Rd.

Existing property owners in the vicinity have long struggled with dangerous traffic conditions and overcrowding, and an influx of new residents would further exacerbate these issues. The increased vehicle volume on Cole Lake Rd will heighten the risk of accidents, particularly given its limited infrastructure and hilly, winding layout with limited sight distances. County law enforcement has stated in the past the speed enforcement by radar is difficult due to limited sight distance on the road. Additionally, the increase in traffic from the development would almost certainly negatively impact the traffic situation along the Hwy 120 Connector and at the Sudie/61 intersection among others.

My family has personally experienced several accidents caused by vehicles exceeding the speed limit and losing control due to the narrow roadway and limited visibility on Cole Lake Rd resulting in damage on our property. This dangerous roadway is not equipped to handle increased traffic volume, and further residential development would only heighten the risk of accidents and property damage for current residents.

If the development is approved, improvements to the roadway should also not come at the expense of neighboring property owners to the development. Proper acceleration/deceleration/turn lanes should come at the expense of the developer's property and not the existing property owners along Cole Lake Rd. It should also be considered that the developer, if approved, should provide property and right of way for a proper roadway to bypass Cole Lake Rd as much as possible limiting the negative impact on Cole Lake Rd and the existing property owners.

### **\*\*Burden on Schools\*\***

Paulding County's expanding population places increasing strain on educational resources. Local schools are already operating near full capacity, and a surge in new families will result in overcrowded classrooms, stretched funding, and challenges for educators. To maintain quality education, new infrastructure and staffing will be required, which demands significant time and investment from the county and city budgets as well as property owners through school taxes.

### **\*\*Environmental Concerns & Drainage Issues\*\***

The proposed development raises serious flooding and runoff concerns due to the terrain and the addition of impervious surfaces required for such a large number of homes. Our family and other property owners in the area already experience persistent stormwater drainage issues. For us this is attributed to poor runoff management, in part from the 3097 Cole Lake Rd property, as well as a lack of drainage management and roadway engineering. With one of the entrances to the development being feet away from our drive and cleared lots across the street, it will be more of the same.

Despite multiple attempts by the Paulding County Road Department to address the issue, drainage ditches remain too narrow and clogged with sediment/debris, preventing proper water flow. This runoff, at the beginning of Cole Lake Rd, feeds into a natural spring, which in turn flows into Scoggins Lake, Wheeler Lake, and eventually Pumpkinvine Creek. A similar scenario exists on the opposite side of the property with Twilley Lake, Rakestraw Lake, Cole Lake and Lane Creek. I believe the headwaters of Lane Creek are either on the property or in very close proximity. Lane Creek also feeds into Pumpkinvine Creek. Without adequate infrastructure improvements, increased impervious surfaces from the development would worsen flooding risks, degrade water quality, and threaten local ecosystems.

### **\*\*Lack of a Disclosed Drainage Containment Plan\*\***

As of now, David Pearson Communities, Inc. has not disclosed a drainage containment plan to ensure that existing property owners and local waterways (Scoggins Lake, Wheeler Lake, Rakestraw Lake, Twilley Lake, Cole Lake, Lane and Pumpkinvine Creeks) will not be negatively impacted. With a development of this size, how does this impact the Pumpkinvine Watershed Management Plan? It is critical that the City of Dallas require a detailed environmental impact study and stormwater management plan **before** considering annexation approval. Allowing development to proceed without a clear solution for runoff control would increase flood risks and contribute to long-term

### **\*\*High-Density Development & Lot Size Concerns\*\***

The Georgia Department of Public Health recommends a half acre lot size for developments on municipal water and sewer. The proposed development features lots far smaller than half an acre, which raises concerns about overcrowding, lack of green space, and increased runoff risks. High-density residential projects often strain local resources, particularly roads, schools, emergency services, and stormwater drainage systems. Without sufficient planning for sustainable land use, this development will likely have long-term negative impacts on both residents and the environment. We would ask how this development fits in to Dallas' plan for Green Space and Urban Canopy Expansion with the removal of almost 319 acres of trees and so many homes on such small lots?

### **\*\*Planning for Sustainable Growth\*\***

While development is necessary for economic expansion, it must be managed responsibly. Paulding County has partnered with the Georgia Conservancy to create a sustainable growth strategy that balances economic opportunity with environmental preservation. This initiative emphasizes:

- Traffic & Infrastructure Considerations to prevent overwhelming existing roads and public services.
- Green Space Conservation efforts, including 6,909 acres of protected Paulding Forest, which helps mitigate flood risks and improve air quality.
- Land Use Planning that prioritizes **low-impact development**, avoiding the loss of vital green spaces and natural buffers.

### **\*\*Request for Responsible Development\*\***

I urge the Mayor and City Council to carefully reconsider the implications of this annexation and development. Growth and progress are important, but they should not come at the expense of safety, education, environmental stability and the existing property owners. If this type of development is what the city of Dallas wants for it's future, then it should allow high use development construction within its current confines and across the street from your home. It is not a proper function of government to approve such a request for the benefit a developer or to access taxes while giving the finger to a community that **does not want** the development. I respectfully request that the council deny this proposal and explore alternative plans that align with the best interests of our community and the county's long-term sustainability goals.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am willing to participate in any community discussions regarding responsible development in our area and look forward to hearing your response.

Sincerely,

George Larry Hollis

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