



BRYAN COUNTY OFFICIALS URGE RESIDENTS, CITY LEADERS TO CAREFULLY CONSIDER ALL ASPECTS BEFORE ANNEXATION

RICHMOND HILL, GA – October 24, 2017 – The city of Richmond Hill's newly developing plan to significantly enlarge its municipal boundaries by annexing 5,013 unincorporated acres could be costly for Bryan County.

While Bryan County commissioners and administrators do acknowledge there are advantages to the annexation, officials wish they'd been consulted earlier in the process as it's not a clear-cut situation for any of the parties involved.

The land is managed by Rayonier Inc. parent company Raydient Places + Properties, which filed the application of annexation that Richmond Hill City Council approved Monday night. If the plan comes to fruition, it would ultimately increase the size of the city by 65 percent – taking it from 14.6 square miles to 22.4 – however, county leaders said that they were not informed or involved as this idea took shape.

“The county came in at the end of the process, though we wish that had not been the case,” County Commission Chairman Carter Infinger said. “We’ve got to be strategic and do what’s right, but it’s got to all be a positive thing. We have to approach this responsibly and really weigh the consequences because there’s a lot at stake here, speaking from a financial point of view and taking into consideration what kinds of affects the annexation could have ten to twenty years from now.”

The county is committed to working in collaboration with the city to reach a resolution that is fair to residents, allows for managed and organized growth, minimizes financial challenges, and retains Bryan County’s integrity and reputation as an economically vibrant location option for industry.

The commission chairman and other county officials urge residents in Richmond Hill and unincorporated areas of Bryan County to weigh in on the annexation and related issues during a public forum at 7 p.m. Nov. 27, even if they hold unfavorable opinions.

“It is vital that infrastructure is in place and that tax dollars are used wisely whether by the county or the city,” according to Infinger, who also reminds the community that every resident of the city of Richmond Hill is also a resident of Bryan County.

“Please, just show up and voice your opinions at the forum – good or bad. We do want to move forward in the process, but we absolutely have got to thoroughly investigate the positive and the negative benefits of this annexation and see what’s best for all our citizens in the county,” Infinger said.

After the forum, the city council will hold two more readings of the annexation request. At that point, a vote may be scheduled.

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