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South Fulton. Those two words carry more meaning to me than it does for a lot of other people. It's the place that has provided me with the educational tools I need to succeed and matriculate through college. It's the place that has welcomed my family and me with open arms and communal support. It is the place where the phrase "It takes a village..." is held to its true meaning. For some, it is just an area on the map but for me, its home.

As a resident of South Fulton since birth, my family and I would love nothing more than to see unincorporated South Fulton become its own city. Creating our own city gives us the control needed to make the informal decisions about the businesses, residential structures and the ability to take ownership of how we want to build and operate our city. We would have the ability to input in decisions instead of having to mull through the multiple layers of bureaucracy that can come with being annexed into a larger city or remaining unincorporated. Unincorporated South Fulton is an area that is comprised of long standing community members and I feel confident that we have the financial capabilities to become our own city.

I would be proud to live in a community by having our own Fire, Police, and Parks and Recreations departments. Unfortunately, some people in the community fear becoming a city because they are not sure where the money to have these services would come from. Currently, the 88,000+ residents that make up the unincorporated South Fulton community are provided these services through the SSD (Special Services District) funded by the tax payers in this community. Even though they are concerned with the funding of these services, unincorporated South Fulton becoming a city essentially means that instead of paying taxes for the SSD, that money would be

allocated to our City for emergency services, parks, etc. located in South Fulton but outside of our city limits.

According to the Feasibility Study provided by Georgia State University in 2014, they used an equation to determine whether or not it is a possibility for unincorporated South Fulton County to stand as a city. In the study, they reported that if unincorporated South Fulton were to become a city right now, they would have enough revenue to pay the city bills, increase the Fire Department, Parks and Roads budget and still have a surplus of \$3 million- \$17 million. With this surplus of money, the city would be able to make an impact by allocating more funds to different budgets such as Health and Wellness, Library, Arts and Culture, etc.

Change can be a scary thing, but it is also needed in order to foster growth. Although the way the community is ran now is seemingly efficient, there is always room for improvement. Making unincorporated South Fulton its own city would not only help the residents of the community, it can also help grow the place I will forever call home.