

When the Staten Road Bridge was preparing to reopen in 2009, the official minutes of the Valdosta City Council recorded that the City anticipated complaints about increased traffic on Staten Road and Cherry Creek Road. During that same discussion, Councilman Carroll discussed roadway striping as a means of helping mitigate the **“large increase in traffic once Staten Bridge is opened.”**

That anticipated increase has long since become part of the everyday traffic conditions experienced by residents of this area.

The situation is further compounded by Sallas-Mahone Elementary School immediately east of the proposed development area. Each school day, arrival and dismissal traffic feeds into this same Staten Road/Cherry Creek Road corridor. The nearby Boys & Girls Club of South Georgia adds another source of regular vehicle traffic in the immediate area.

The issue, therefore, is not simply how many vehicle trips 87 additional households might generate during an average day. It is the concentration of those additional trips at a location where commuter traffic, elementary-school traffic, Boys & Girls Club traffic, and existing residential traffic already converge, particularly during morning and afternoon peak periods.

I understand that the revised development plan includes multiple access points, including an entrance directly onto Staten Road and access involving South Lakeshore Drive. Multiple entrances may improve circulation within the development, but they do not eliminate the additional vehicles placed onto the surrounding road network. An entrance directly onto Staten Road/Cherry Creek Road could introduce additional turning and merging movements into an already heavily traveled corridor.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that approval not be based simply upon theoretical roadway capacity. Before approval, a traffic impact analysis should examine actual morning and afternoon peak-hour traffic counts, including school arrival and dismissal periods, and evaluate the additional turning movements associated with each proposed entrance.

Wastewater, Stormwater and Water Quality

I am equally concerned about wastewater, stormwater and water quality.

Cherry Creek is part of a watershed that directly affects the lake adjoining our residential area and ultimately the Withlacoochee River. Residents have repeatedly experienced periods when water-quality concerns interfere with our ability to fish and enjoy the lake.

This concern is not hypothetical. In April 2024, the City reported a sanitary sewer overflow in which approximately 5,000 gallons entered the stormwater system, which the City stated ultimately drains through a detention pond into the Withlacoochee River via Cherry Creek.

More broadly, the City has acknowledged the vulnerability of its wastewater system to excessive infiltration and inflow. In August 2025, for example, the City reported that heavy rainfall caused a hydraulic overload of the sanitary sewer collection system and an overflow at the Withlacoochee Water Pollution Control Plant.

Adding 87 residences means additional wastewater demand as well as new streets, roofs, driveways and other impervious surfaces.

Given the history of wastewater and water-quality problems affecting our area, I believe it is reasonable to require the City and developer to demonstrate that existing wastewater and stormwater infrastructure can accommodate this development without increasing the risk of adverse effects on Cherry Creek, the adjoining lake or downstream waters.