



CITY OF DECATUR, GEORGIA 2008



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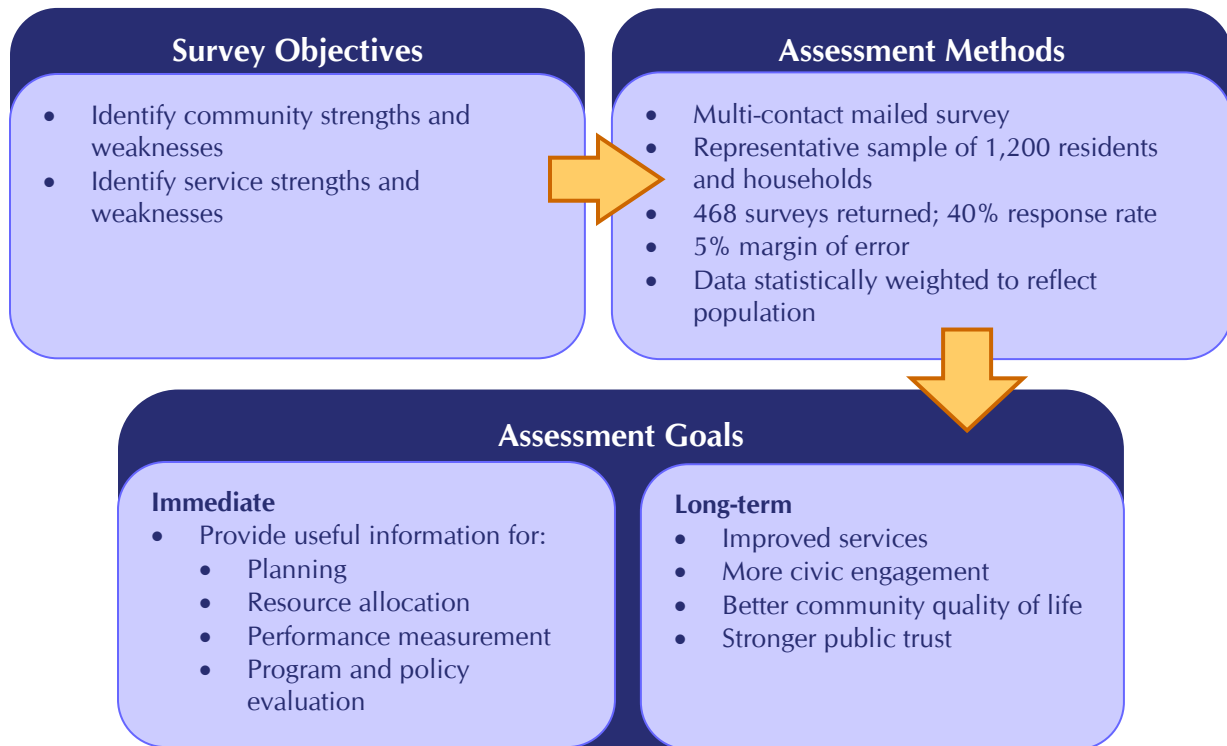
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SURVEY BACKGROUND

ABOUT THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™

The National Citizen Survey™ (The NCS) is a collaborative effort between National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). The NCS was developed by NRC to provide a statistically valid survey of resident opinions about community and services provided by local government. The survey results may be used by staff, elected officials and other stakeholders for community planning and resource allocation, program improvement and policy making.

FIGURE 1: THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™ METHODS AND GOALS



The NCS focuses on a series of community characteristics and local government services, as well as issues of public trust. Resident behaviors related to civic engagement in the community also were measured in the survey.

FIGURE 2: THE NATIONAL CITIZEN SURVEY™ FOCUS AREAS



The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality research methods and directly comparable results across The National Citizen Survey™ jurisdictions. Participating households are selected at random and the household member who responds is selected without bias. Multiple mailings give each household more than one chance to participate with self-addressed and postage-paid envelopes. Results are statistically weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community. A total of 468 completed surveys were obtained, providing an overall response rate of 40%. Typically, response rates obtained on citizen surveys range from 25% to 40%.

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for the City of Decatur was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. Decatur staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems and provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

As shown in Figure 2, this report is based around respondents' reports about eight larger categories: community quality, community design, public safety, environmental sustainability, recreation and wellness, community inclusiveness, civic engagement and public trust. Each section begins with residents' ratings of community characteristics and is followed by residents' ratings of service quality. For all evaluative questions, the percent of residents rating the service or community feature as "excellent" or "good" is presented. To see the full set of responses for each question on the survey, please see Appendix A: Complete Survey Frequencies.

Margin of Error

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys by a "level of confidence" (or margin of error). The 95% confidence interval quantifies the sampling error or precision of the estimates made from the survey results. A 95% confidence interval can be calculated for any question and indicates that for every 100 random samples of this many residents, the population response to that question would be within the stated interval 95 times. The 95% confidence level for the City of Decatur survey is generally no greater than plus or minus five percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample (468 completed surveys).

Comparing Survey Results

Certain kinds of services tend to be thought better of by residents in many communities across the country. For example, public safety services tend to be received better than transportation services by residents of most American communities. Where possible, the better comparison is not from one service to another in the City of Decatur, but from City of Decatur services to services like them provided by other jurisdictions.

Interpreting Comparisons to Previous Years

This report contains comparisons with prior years' results. In this report, we are comparing this year's data with existing data in the graphs. Differences between years can be considered "statistically significant" if they are greater than four percentage points. Trend data for your jurisdiction represent important comparison data and should be examined for improvements or declines. Deviations from stable trends over time, especially represent opportunities for understanding how local policies, programs or public information may have affected residents' opinions.

Benchmark Comparisons

NRC's database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in citizen surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions whose residents evaluated local government services and gave their opinion about the quality of community life. The City of Decatur chose to have comparisons made to the entire database. A benchmark comparison (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked) has been provided when a similar question on the City of Decatur Survey was included in NRC's database and there were at least five jurisdictions in which the question was asked. For most questions compared to the entire dataset, there were more than 100 jurisdictions included in the benchmark comparison.

Where comparisons were available, the City of Decatur results were noted as being "above" the benchmark, "below" the benchmark or "similar to" the benchmark. This evaluation of "above," "below" or "similar to" comes from a statistical comparison of the City of Decatur's rating to the benchmark.

“Don’t Know” Responses and Rounding

On many of the questions in the survey respondents may answer “don’t know.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in Appendix A. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the body of the report. In other words, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

For some questions, respondents were permitted to select more than one answer. When the total exceeds 100% in a table for a multiple response question, it is because some respondents did select more than one response. When a table for a question that only permitted a single response does not total to exactly 100%, it is due to the customary practice of percentages being rounded to the nearest whole number.

For more information on understanding The NCS report, please see Appendix B: Survey Methodology.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report of the City of Decatur survey provides the opinions of a representative sample of residents about community quality of life, service delivery, civic participation and unique issues of local interest. A periodic sounding of resident opinion offers staff, elected officials and other stakeholders an opportunity to identify challenges and to plan for and evaluate improvements and to sustain services and amenities for long-term success.

Most residents experience a good quality of life in the City of Decatur and believe the City is a good place to live. The overall quality of life in the City of Decatur was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 95% of respondents in 2008, and by 89% of respondents in 2006. Almost all 2008 respondents report they plan on staying in the City of Decatur for the next five years.

A variety of characteristics of the community were evaluated by those participating in the study. The three receiving the most favorable ratings were overall image or reputation, sense of community and cleanliness of Decatur. The three characteristics receiving the least positive ratings were availability of amount of public parking, traffic flow on major streets, and availability of affordable quality housing in Decatur.

Many of the community characteristics rated were able to be compared to the benchmark database. Of the 24 characteristics for which comparisons were available, 20 were above the benchmark comparison, one was similar to the benchmark comparison and three were below.

Residents in the City of Decatur were somewhat civically engaged. While only 39% had attended a meeting of local elected public officials or other local public meeting in the previous 12 months, 96% had provided help to a friend or neighbor. A majority had volunteered their time to some group or activity in the City of Decatur.

In general, survey respondents demonstrated strong trust in local government. A majority rated the overall direction being taken by the City of Decatur as “good” or “excellent” in both 2008 and 2006. This was higher than the benchmark. Those residents who had interacted with an employee of the City of Decatur in the previous 12 months gave high marks to those employees. Most rated their overall impression as excellent or good in 2008 and in 2006.

On average, residents gave generally favorable ratings to most of the local government services. Many of the City services rated were able to be compared to the benchmark database. Of the 32 services for which comparisons were available, 28 were above the benchmark comparison, three were similar to the benchmark comparison and one was below.

A Key Driver Analysis was conducted for the City of Decatur which examined the relationships between ratings of each service and ratings of the City of Decatur's services overall. Those key driver services that correlated most strongly with residents' perceptions about overall City service quality have been identified. By targeting improvements in key services, the City of Decatur can focus on the services that have the greatest likelihood of influencing residents' opinions about overall service quality. Services found to be influential in ratings of overall service quality from the Key Driver Analysis were:

- Economic development
- Public schools

For both of these services, the City of Decatur is above the benchmark and should continue to ensure high quality performance.

COMMUNITY RATINGS

OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY

Overall quality of community life may be the single best indicator of success in providing the natural ambience, services and amenities that make for an attractive community. The National Citizen Survey™ contained many questions related to quality of community life in the City of Decatur – not only direct questions about quality of life overall and in neighborhoods, but questions to measure residents’ commitment to the City of Decatur. Residents were asked whether they planned to move soon or if they would recommend the City of Decatur to others. Intentions to stay and willingness to make recommendations provide evidence that the City of Decatur offers services and amenities that work.

Almost all of the City of Decatur’s residents gave high ratings to their neighborhoods and the community as a place to live in 2008 and in 2006. Further, most reported they would recommend the community to others and plan to stay for the next five years.

FIGURE 3: RATINGS OF OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY BY YEAR

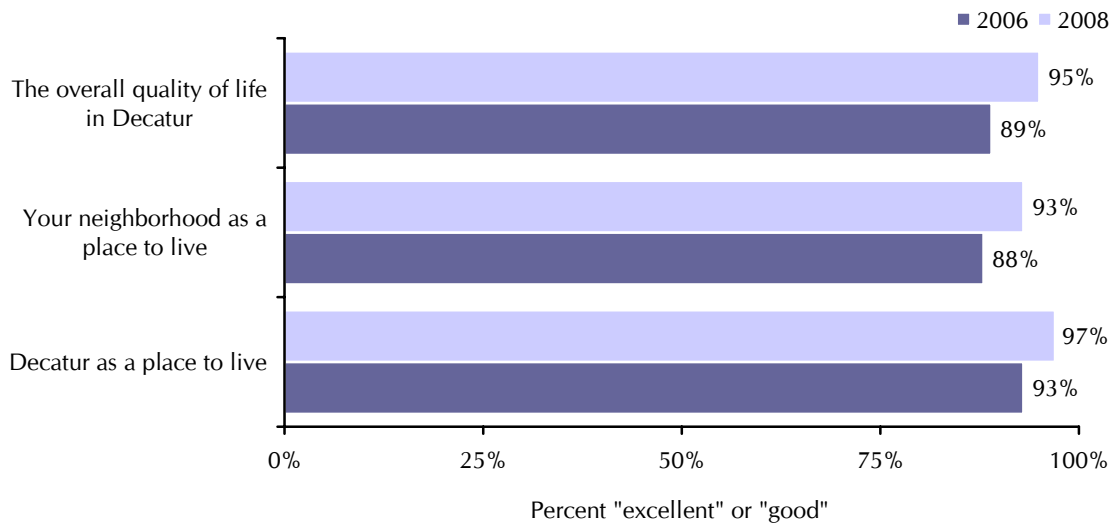


FIGURE 4: LIKELIHOOD OF REMAINING IN COMMUNITY AND RECOMMENDING COMMUNITY BY YEAR

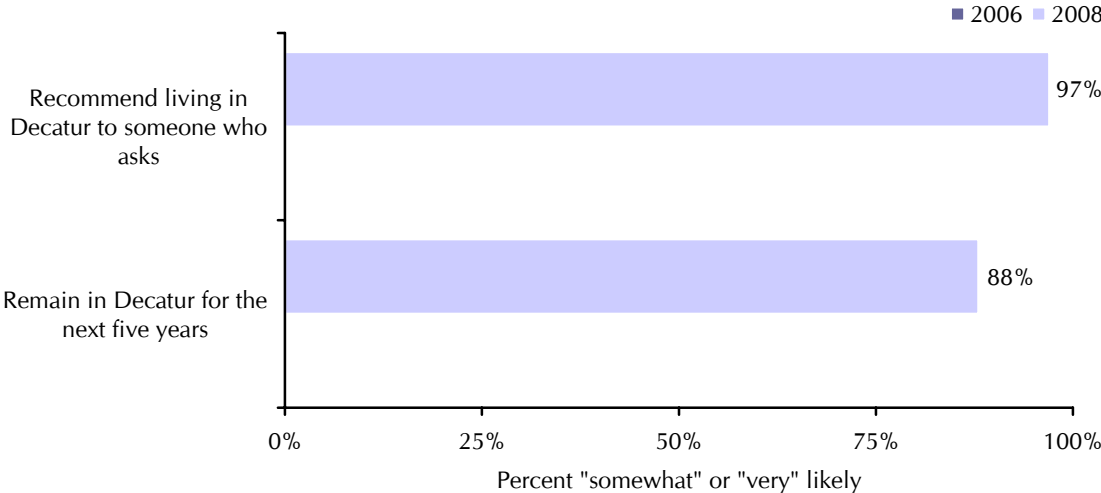


FIGURE 5: OVERALL COMMUNITY QUALITY BENCHMARKS

Overall Community Quality Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Overall quality of life in Decatur	Above
Your neighborhood as place to live	Above
Decatur as a place to live	Above
Remain in Decatur for the next five years	Not available
Recommend living in Decatur to someone who asks	Not available

Overall community quality was compared to survey data from previous years. Average ratings were computed for the previous years' data to make comparison easier. Trends from 2006 to 2008 were generally upward.

COMMUNITY DESIGN

Transportation

The ability to move easily throughout a community can greatly affect the quality of life of residents by diminishing time wasted in traffic congestion and by providing opportunities to travel quickly and safely by modes other than the automobile. High quality options for resident mobility not only require local government to remove barriers to flow but they require government programs and policies that create quality opportunities for all modes of travel.

Residents responding to the survey were given a list of seven aspects of mobility to rate on a scale of “excellent,” “good,” “fair” and “poor.” Ease of walking was given the most positive rating, followed by ease of rail or subway travel. These ratings tended to be higher than the national benchmark and higher than in 2006.

FIGURE 6: RATINGS OF TRANSPORTATION IN COMMUNITY BY YEAR

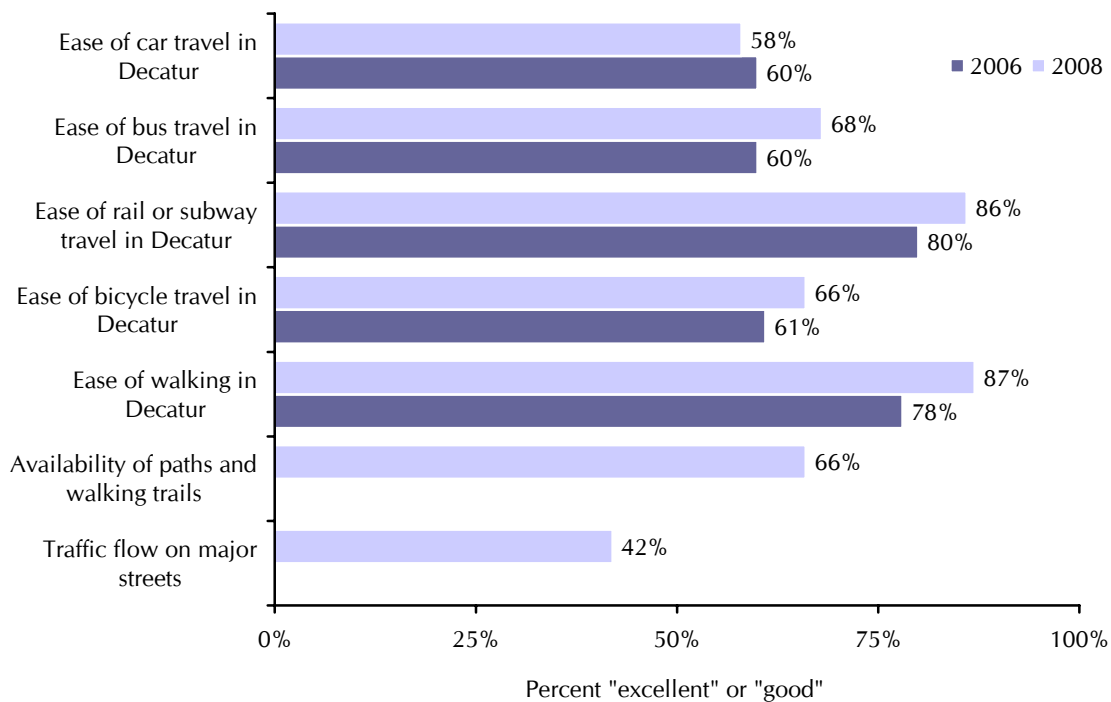


FIGURE 7: COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION BENCHMARKS

Community Transportation Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Ease of bus travel in Decatur	Above
Ease of rail or subway travel by in Decatur	Above
Ease of car travel in Decatur	Above
Ease of walking in Decatur	Above
Ease of bicycle travel in Decatur	Above
Availability of paths and walking trails	Below
Traffic flow on major streets	Similar

Seven transportation services were rated in Decatur. As experienced in most communities across America, ratings tended to be a mix of positive and negative. Five were above the benchmark, and two were below the benchmark. Ratings tended to be trending up from 2006 to 2008.

FIGURE 8: RATINGS OF TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING SERVICES BY YEAR

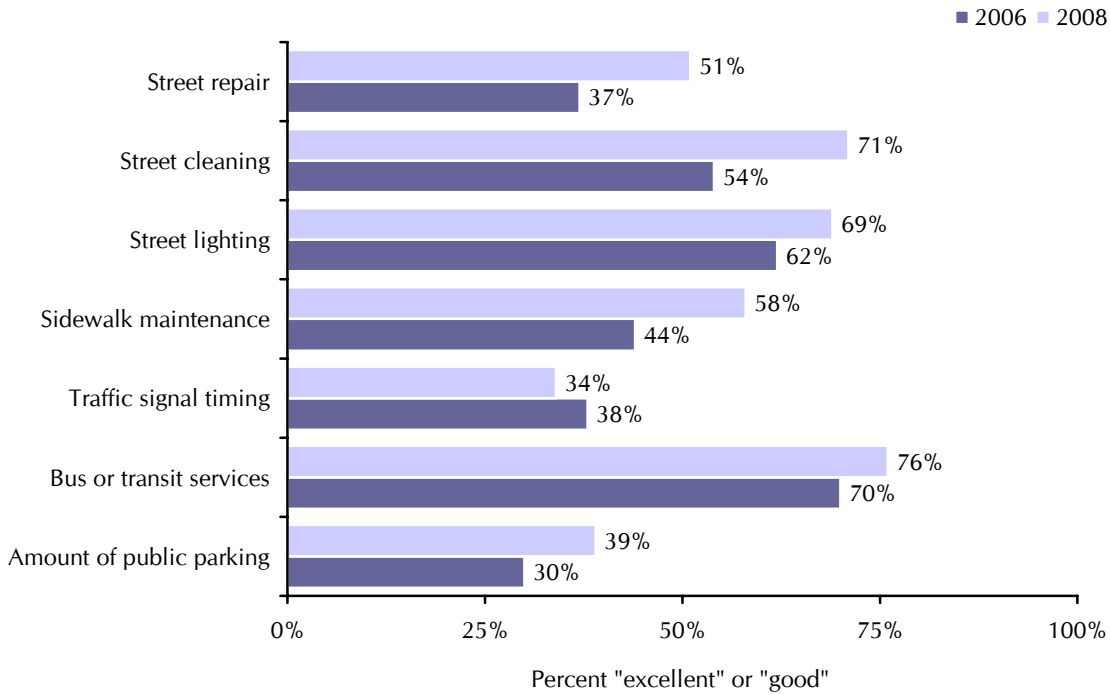


FIGURE 9: TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING SERVICES BENCHMARKS

Transportation and Parking Services Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Street repair /maintenance	Above
Street cleaning	Above
Street lighting	Above
Sidewalk maintenance	Above
Light timing	Below
Bus or transit services	Above
Amount of public parking	Below

By measuring choice of travel mode over time, communities can monitor their success in providing attractive alternatives to the traditional mode of travel, the single-occupied automobile. When asked how they typically traveled to work, single-occupancy (SOV) travel was the overwhelming mode of use. However, 8% of work commute trips were made by public transit, 1% by bicycle and 5% by foot.

FIGURE 10: FREQUENCY OF BUS USE IN LAST 12 MONTHS BY YEAR

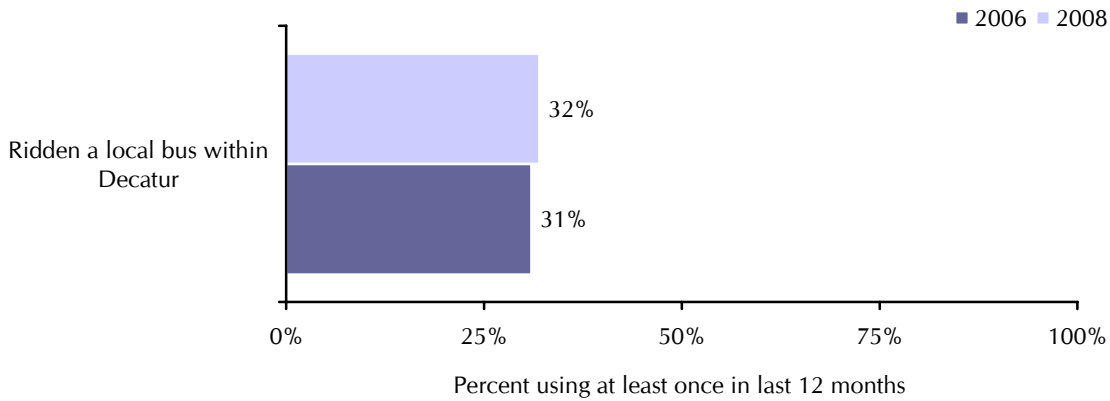
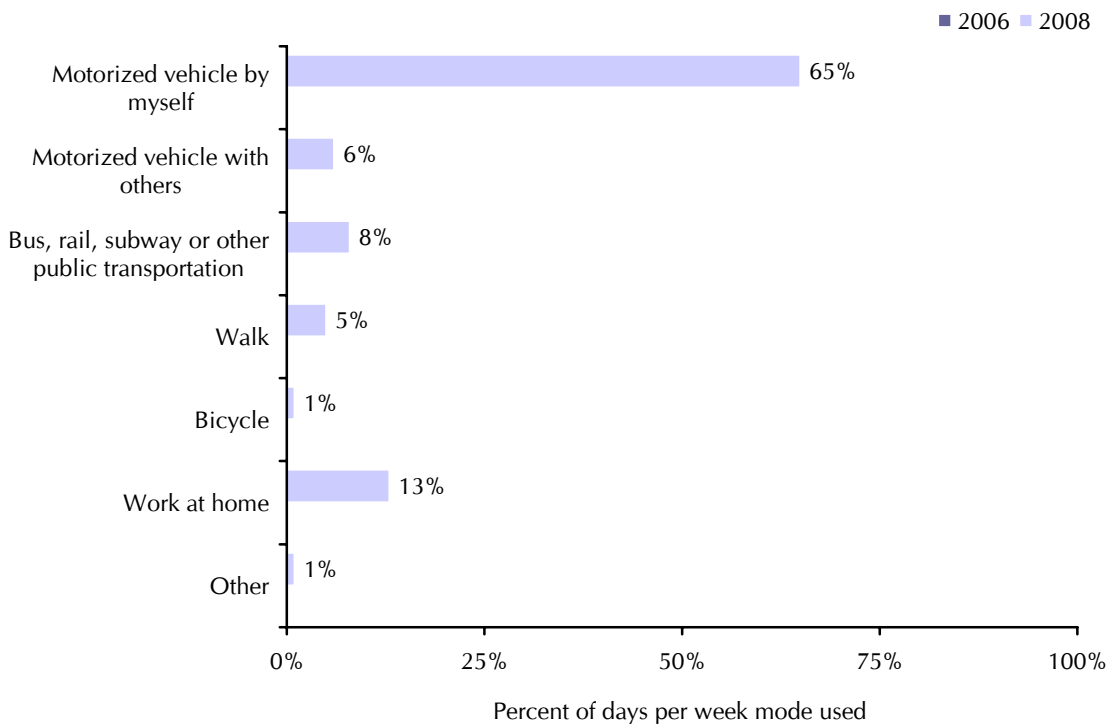


FIGURE 11: MODE OF TRAVEL USED FOR WORK COMMUTE BY YEAR



Housing

Housing variety and affordability are not luxuries for any community. When there are too few options for housing style and affordability, the characteristics of a community tilt heavily to a homogeneous palette, often of well-off residents. While this may seem attractive to a community, the absence of affordable townhomes, condominiums, mobile homes, single family detached homes and apartments means that in addition to losing the vibrancy of diverse thoughts and lifestyles, the community loses the service workers that sustain all communities – police officers, school teachers, house painters and electricians. These workers must live elsewhere and commute in at great personal cost and to the detriment of traffic flow and air quality. Furthermore lower income residents who can sustain in a community with mostly high cost housing pay so much of their income to rent or mortgage that little remains to bolster their own quality of life or local business.

The survey of the City of Decatur residents asked respondents to reflect on the availability of affordable housing as well as the variety of housing options. The availability of affordable housing was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 48% of respondents, while the variety of housing options was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 69% of respondents. The rating of perceived affordable housing availability was better for the City of Decatur than the ratings, on average, in comparison jurisdictions.

FIGURE 12: RATINGS OF HOUSING IN COMMUNITY BY YEAR

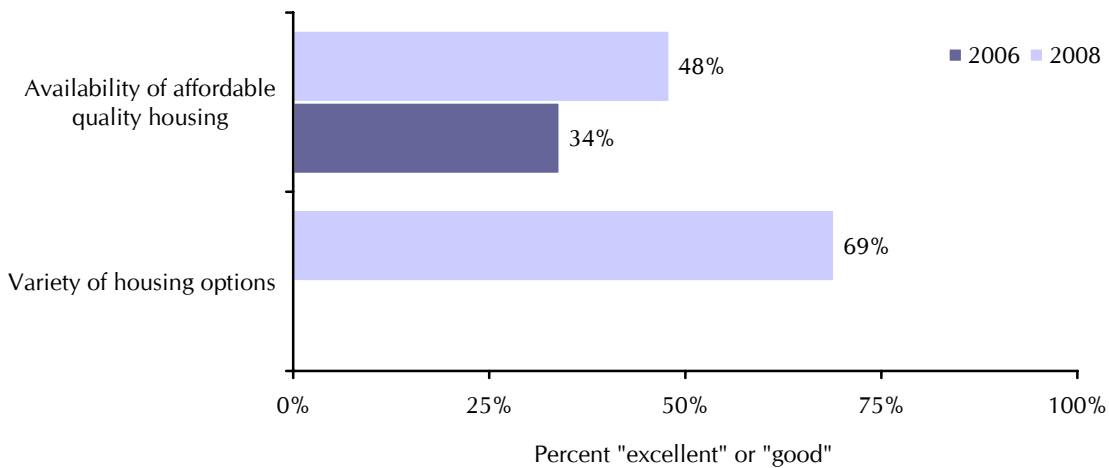
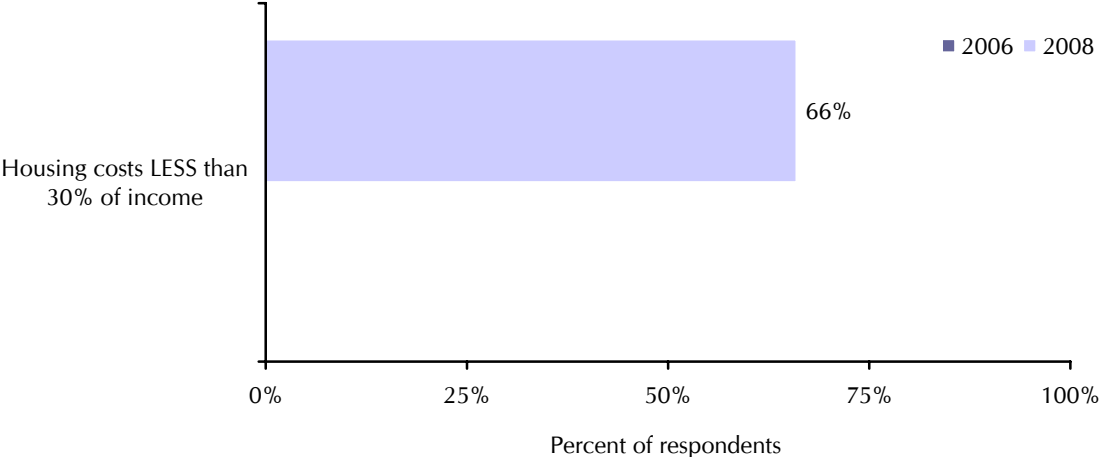


FIGURE 13: HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS BENCHMARKS

Housing Characteristics Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Availability of affordable quality housing	Above
Variety of housing options	Not available

To augment the perceptions of affordable housing in Decatur, the cost of housing as reported in the survey was compared to residents' reported monthly income to create a rough estimate of the proportion of residents of the City of Decatur experiencing housing cost stress. A majority of survey participants were found to pay housing costs of less than 30% of their monthly household income.

FIGURE 14: PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS WHOSE HOUSING COSTS ARE "AFFORDABLE" BY YEAR



Land Use and Zoning

Community development contributes to a feeling among residents and even visitors of the attention given to the speed of growth, the location of residences and businesses, the kind of housing that is appropriate for the community and the ease of access to commerce, green space and residences. Even the community's overall appearance often is attributed to the planning and enforcement functions of the local jurisdiction. Residents will appreciate an attractive, well-planned community. The NCS questionnaire asked residents to evaluate the quality of new development, the appearance of the City of Decatur and the speed of population growth. Problems with the appearance of property were rated, and the quality of land use planning, zoning and code enforcement services were evaluated.

The overall quality of new development in the City of Decatur was rated as "excellent" or "good" by a majority of respondents. The overall appearance of Decatur was rated as "excellent" or "good" by 89% of respondents and was higher than the benchmark. When rating to what extent run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles were a problem in the City of Decatur, 34% thought they were a "major" or "moderate" problem. The service(s) of code enforcement, animal control and land use, planning and zoning were rated above the benchmark. Ratings showed an upward trend when compared to 2006 results.

FIGURE 15: RATINGS OF THE COMMUNITY'S "BUILT ENVIRONMENT" BY YEAR

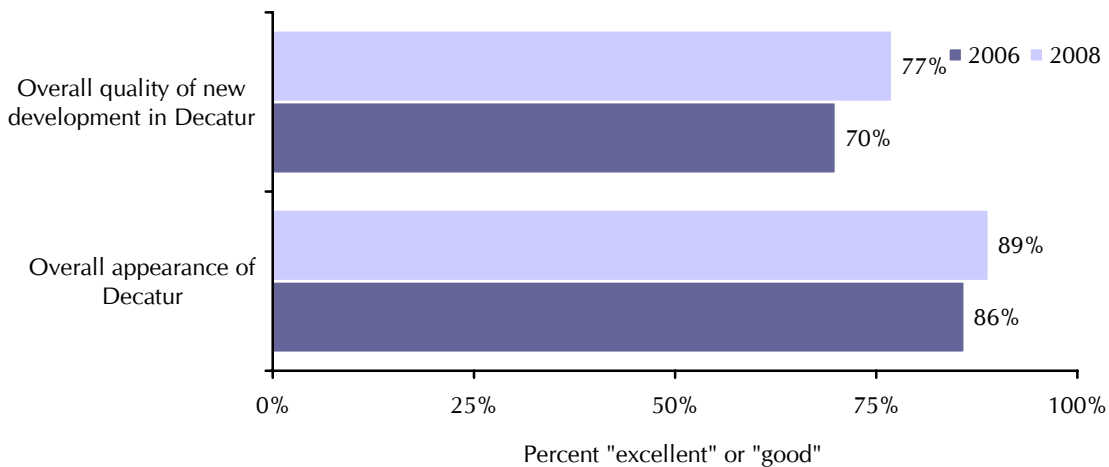


FIGURE 16: BUILT ENVIRONMENT BENCHMARKS

Built Environment Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Quality of new development in city	Above
Overall appearance of Decatur	Above

FIGURE 17: RATINGS OF POPULATION GROWTH BY YEAR

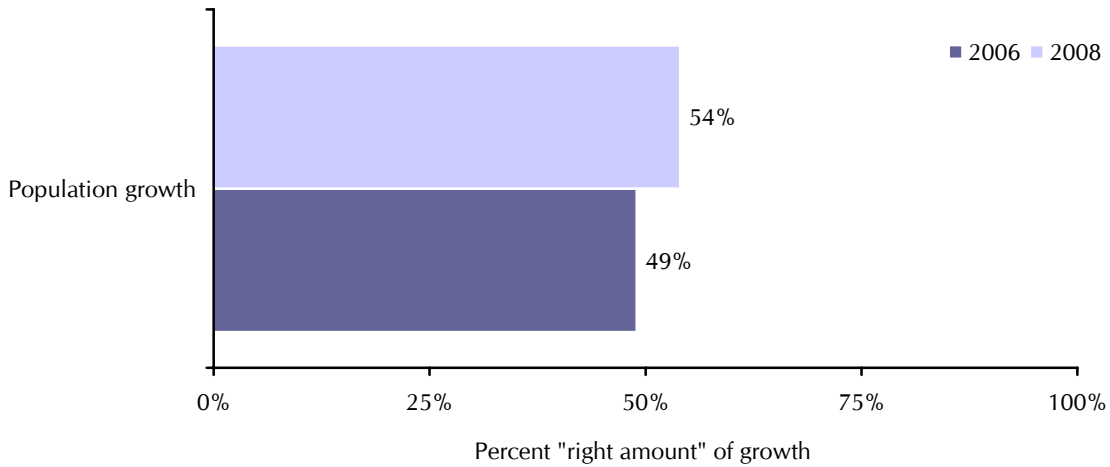


FIGURE 18: RATINGS OF NUISANCE PROBLEMS BY YEAR

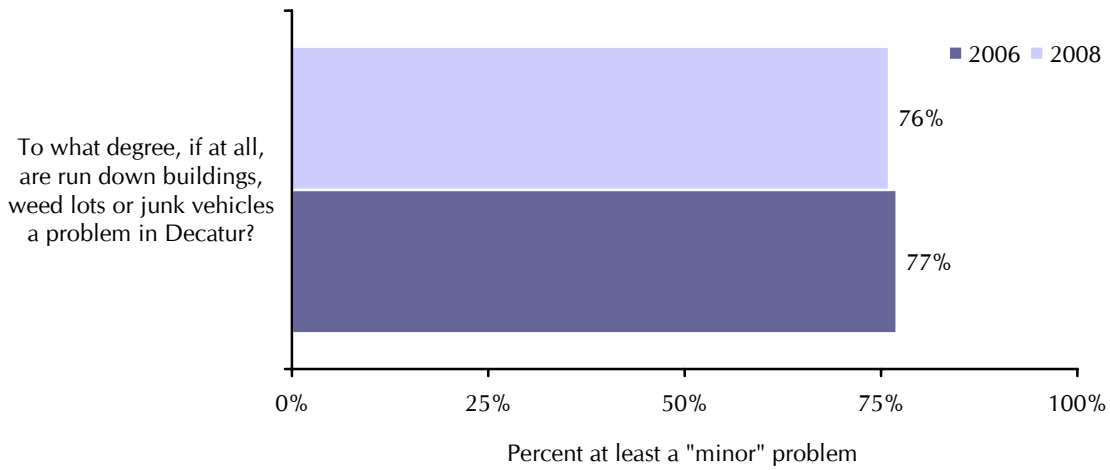


FIGURE 19: RATINGS OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY CODE ENFORCEMENT SERVICES BY YEAR

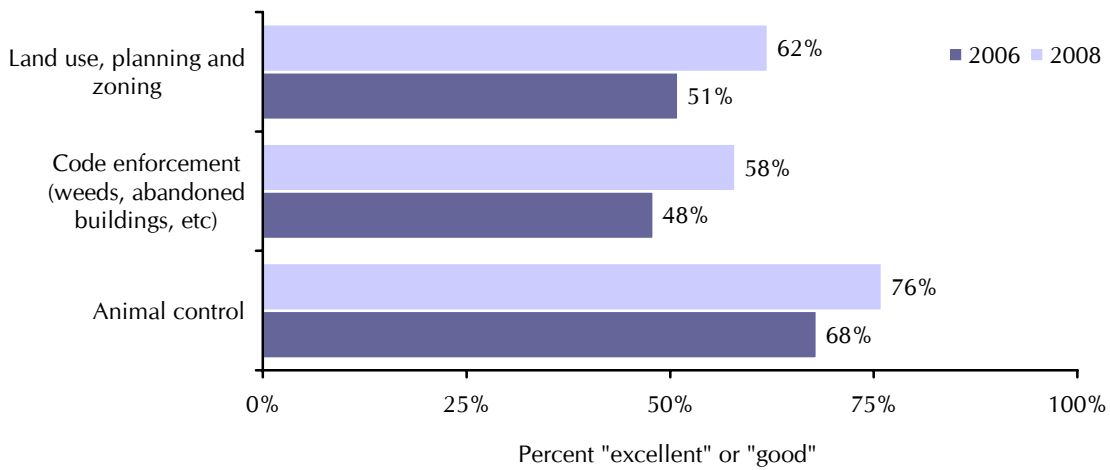


FIGURE 20: PLANNING AND COMMUNITY CODE ENFORCEMENT SERVICES BENCHMARKS

Planning and Community Code Enforcement Services Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Land use, planning and zoning	Above
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	Above
Animal control	Above

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

The health of the economy may color how residents perceive their environment and all the services that local government delivers. In particular, a strong or weak local economy will shape what residents think about job and shopping opportunities. Just as residents have an idea about the speed of local population growth, they have a sense of how fast job and shopping opportunities are growing.

Survey respondents were asked to rate a number of community features related to economic opportunity and growth. The most positively rated features were overall quality of businesses and services and Decatur as a place to work. Receiving the lowest rating was jobs growth.

FIGURE 21: RATINGS OF ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY AND OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

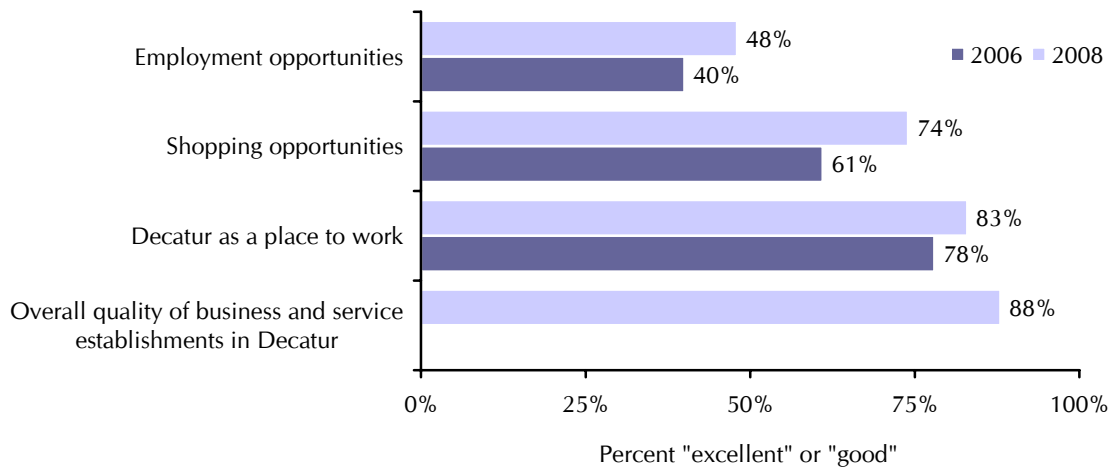


FIGURE 22: ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY AND OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

Economic Sustainability and Opportunities Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Employment opportunities	Above
Shopping opportunities	Above
Place to work	Above
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Decatur	Not available

When asked to evaluate the rate of job growth in Decatur, 32% responded that it was the “right amount,” while 65% reported the “right amount” of retail growth was occurring in Decatur in 2008.

FIGURE 23: RATINGS OF RETAIL AND JOB GROWTH BY YEAR

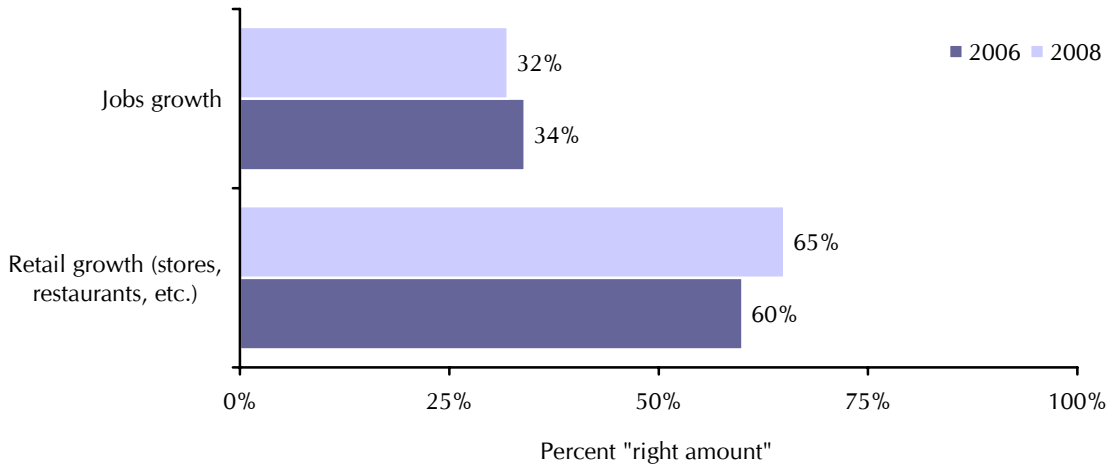


FIGURE 24: RATINGS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES BY YEAR

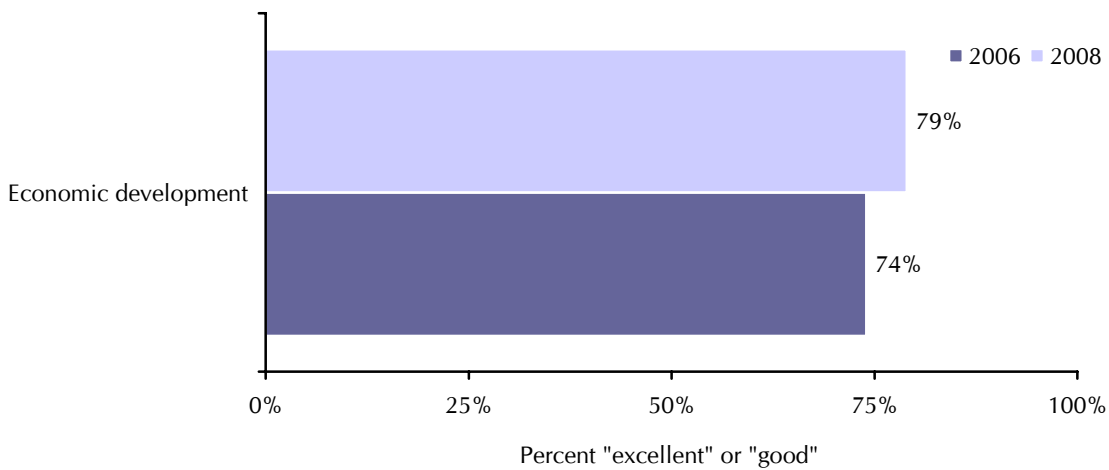
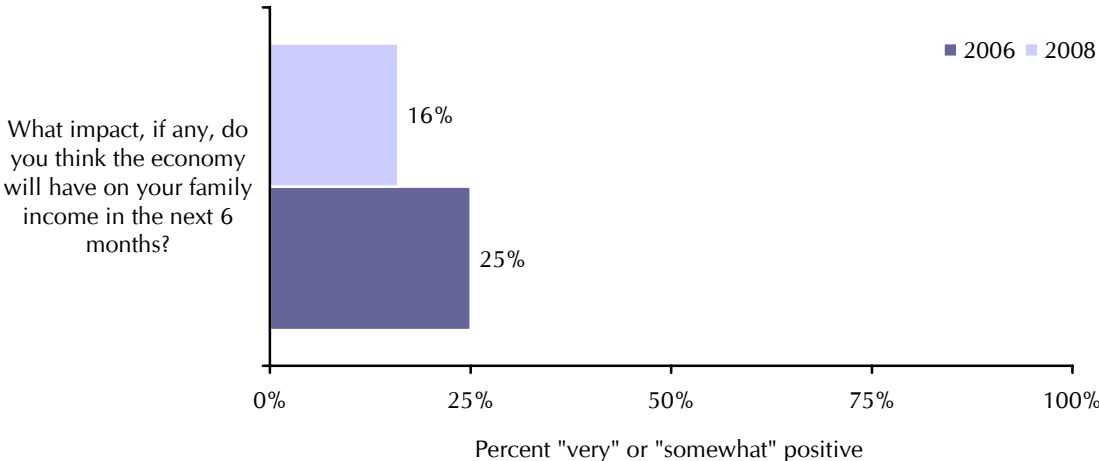


FIGURE 25: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES BENCHMARKS

Economic Development Services Benchmarks	
Economic development	Above

Residents were asked to reflect on their economic prospects in the near term. Sixteen percent of the City of Decatur residents expected that the coming six months would have a “somewhat” or “very” positive impact on their family, while 39% felt that the economic future would be “somewhat” or “very” negative.

FIGURE 26: RATINGS OF PERSONAL ECONOMIC FUTURE BY YEAR



PUBLIC SAFETY

Safety from violent or property crimes creates the cornerstone of an attractive community. No one wants to live in fear of crime, fire or natural hazards, and communities in which residents feel protected or unthreatened are communities that are more likely to show growth in population, commerce and property value.

Residents were asked to rate their feelings of safety from violent crimes, property crimes, fire and environmental dangers and to evaluate the local agencies whose main charge is to provide protection from these dangers. Most respondents gave positive ratings of safety in the City Decatur. Eighty-six percent of those completing the questionnaire said they felt “very” or “somewhat” safe from violent crimes and 83% felt “very” or “somewhat” safe from environmental hazards. Daytime sense of safety was better than nighttime safety and neighborhoods felt safer than downtown.

FIGURE 27: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL PUBLIC SAFETY BY YEAR

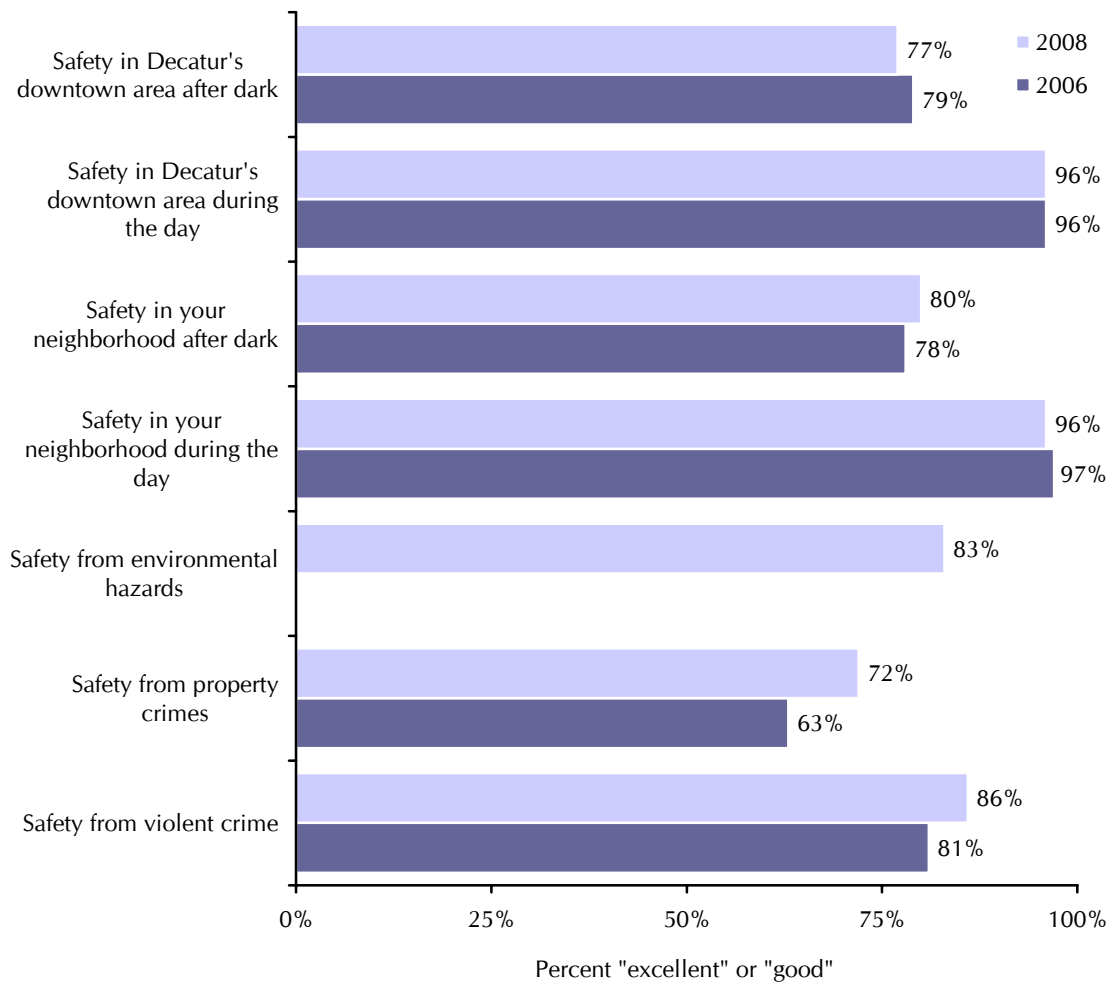
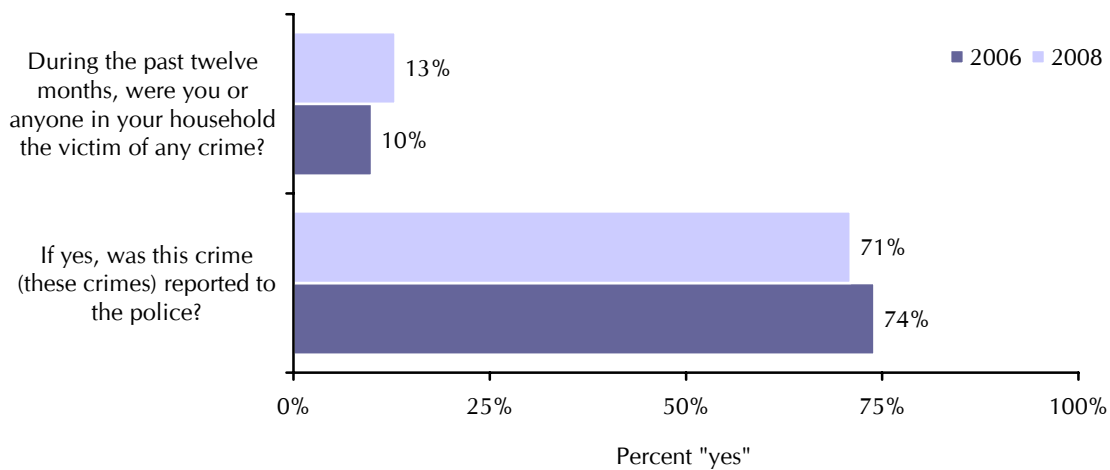


FIGURE 28: COMMUNITY AND PERSONAL PUBLIC SAFETY BENCHMARKS

Community and Personal Public Safety Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Safety in your neighborhood during the day	Above
Safety in your neighborhood after dark	Above
Safety in Decatur's downtown area during the day	Above
Safety in Decatur's downtown area after dark	Above
Safety from violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	Above
Safety from property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	Above
Toxic waste or other environmental hazard(s)	Not available

As assessed by the survey, 13% of respondents reported that someone in the household had been the victim of one or more crimes in the past year. Of those who had been the victim of a crime, 71% had reported it to police.

FIGURE 29: CRIME VICTIMIZATION AND REPORTING BY YEAR



Residents rated seven Decatur public safety services; of these, five were rated above the benchmark comparison and two were rated similar to the benchmark comparison. Fire and police services received the highest ratings, while traffic enforcement and emergency preparedness received the lowest ratings. All were rated higher compared to previous years.

FIGURE 30: RATINGS OF PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES BY YEAR

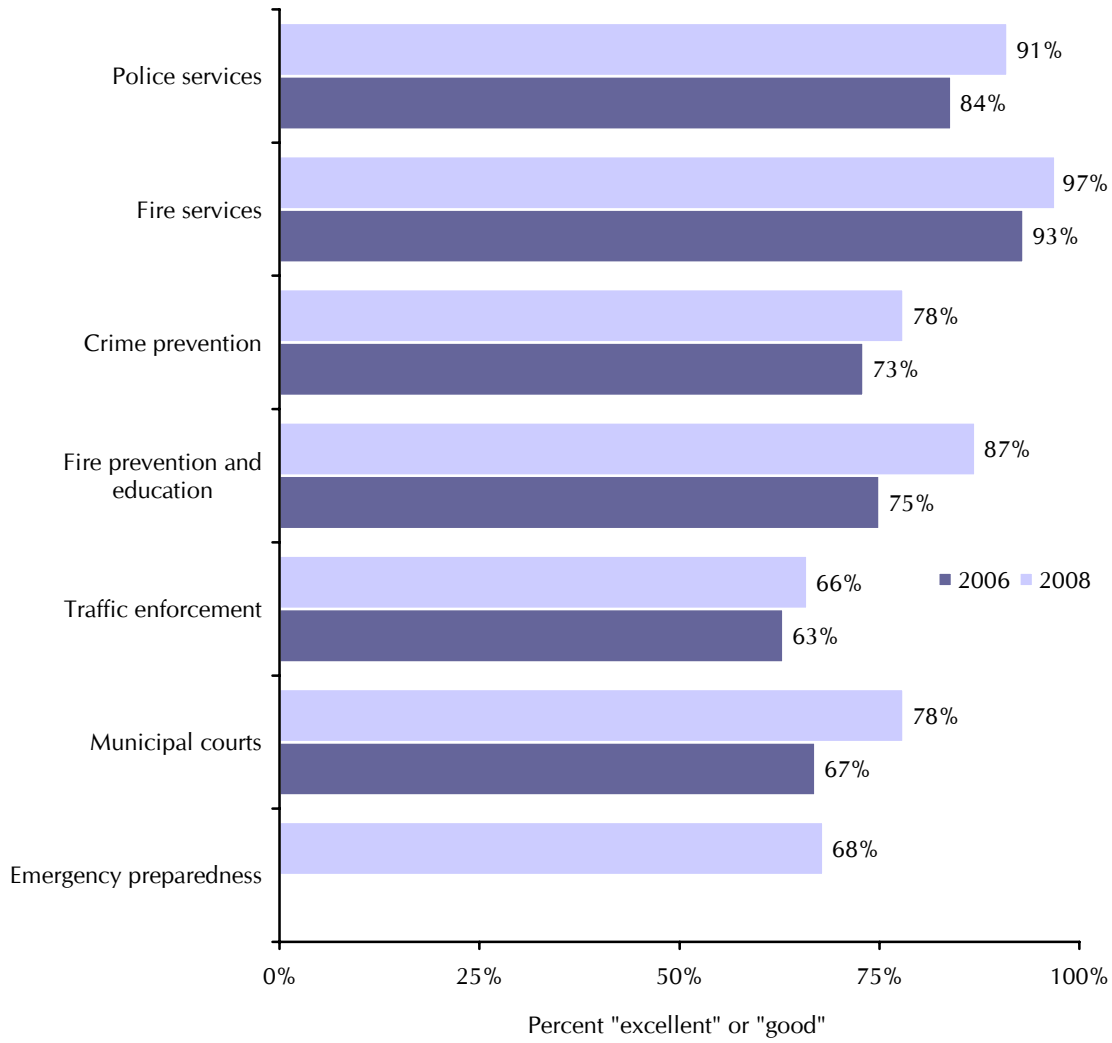


FIGURE 31: PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES BENCHMARKS

Public Safety Services Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Police services	Above
Fire services	Above
Crime prevention	Above
Fire prevention and education	Above
Traffic enforcement	Similar
Courts	Above
Emergency preparedness	Similar

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Residents value the aesthetic qualities of their hometowns and appreciate features such as overall cleanliness and landscaping. In addition, the appearance and smell or taste of the air and water do not go unnoticed. These days, increasing attention is paid to proper treatment of the environment. At the same time that they are attending to community appearance and cleanliness, cities, counties, states and the nation are going “Green”. These strengthening environmental concerns extend to trash haul, recycling, sewer services, the delivery of power and water and preservation of open spaces. Treatment of the environment affects air and water quality and, generally, how habitable and inviting a place appears.

Residents of the City of Decatur were asked to evaluate their local environment and the services provided to ensure its quality. The overall quality of the natural environment was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 78% of survey respondents. Cleanliness of Decatur received the highest rating, and it was above the benchmark.

FIGURE 32: RATINGS OF THE COMMUNITY'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BY YEAR

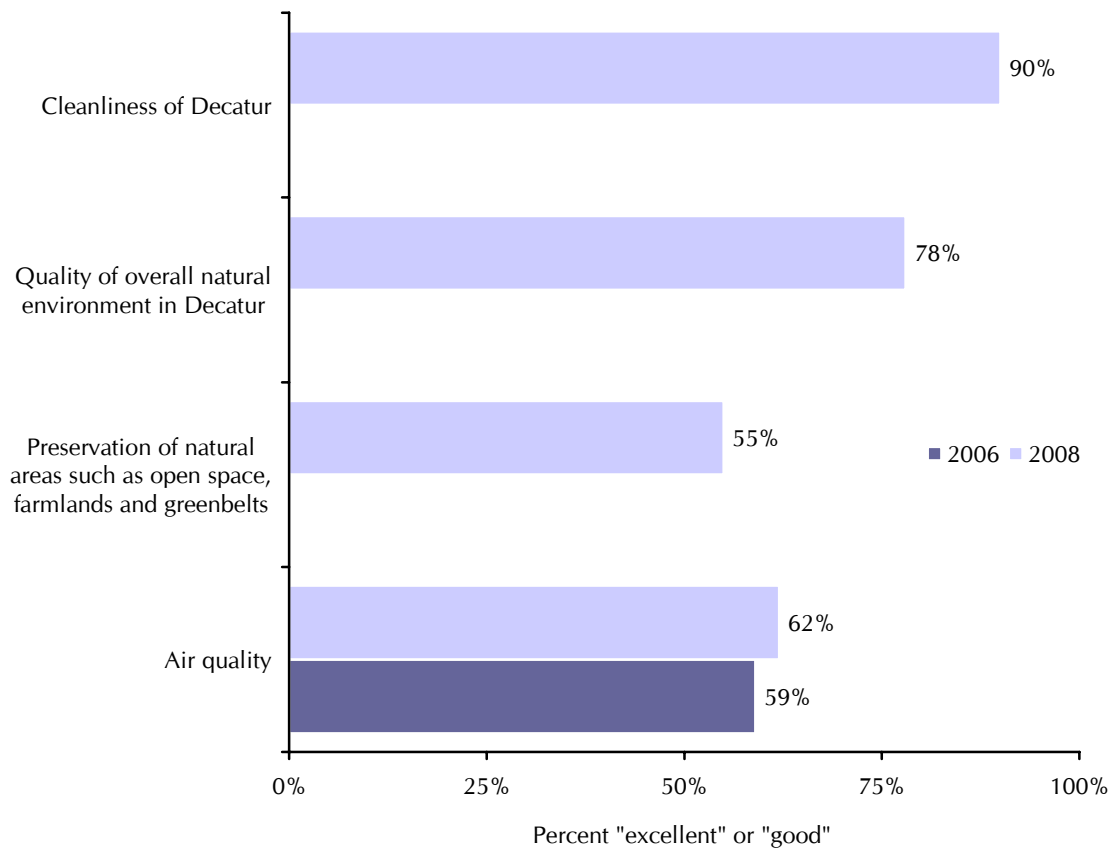


FIGURE 33: COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT BENCHMARKS

Community Environment Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Cleanliness of Decatur	Above
Quality of overall natural environment in Decatur	Not available
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands	Similar
Air quality	Below

All five of the utility services rated by those completing the questionnaire were higher than the benchmark comparison. These service ratings trends were positive when compared to 2006.

FIGURE 34: RATINGS OF UTILITY SERVICES BY YEAR

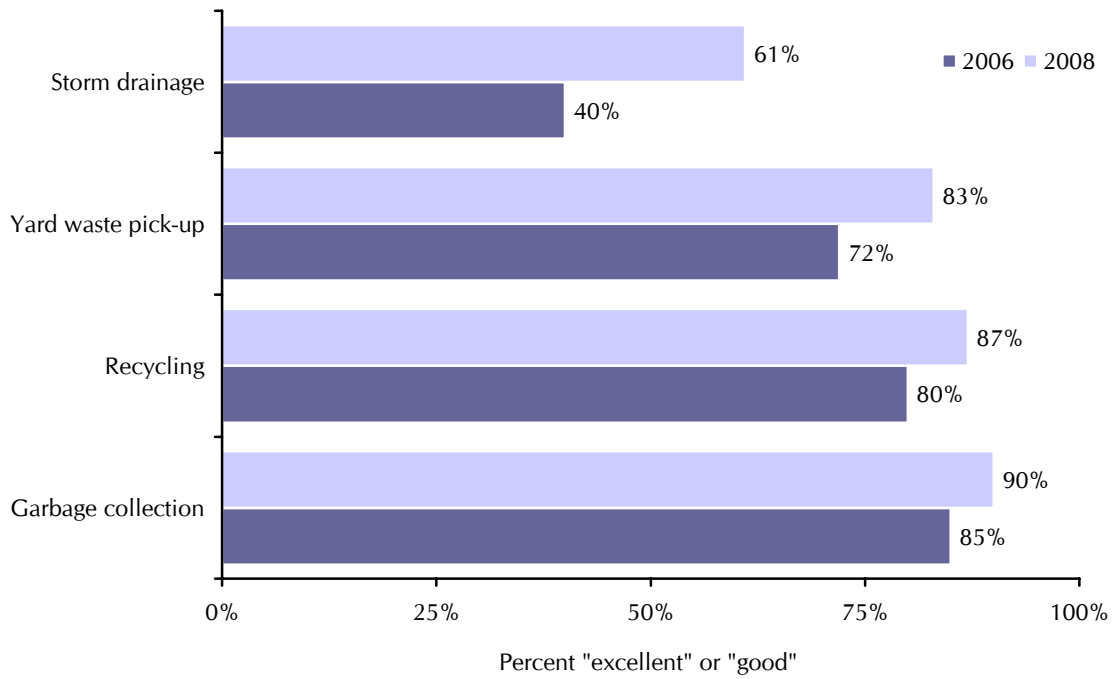


FIGURE 35: UTILITY SERVICES BENCHMARKS

Utility Services Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Storm drainage	Above
Yard waste pick-up	Above
Recycling	Above
Garbage collection	Above

RECREATION AND WELLNESS

Parks and Recreation

Quality parks and recreation opportunities help to define a community as more than the grind of its business, traffic and hard work. Leisure activities vastly can improve the quality of life of residents, serving both to entertain and mobilize good health. The survey contained questions seeking residents' perspectives about opportunities and services related the community's parks and recreation services.

Recreation opportunities in the City of Decatur were rated positively as were services related to parks and recreation. All were rated higher than the benchmark. Parks and recreation ratings have generally increased over time.

FIGURE 36: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

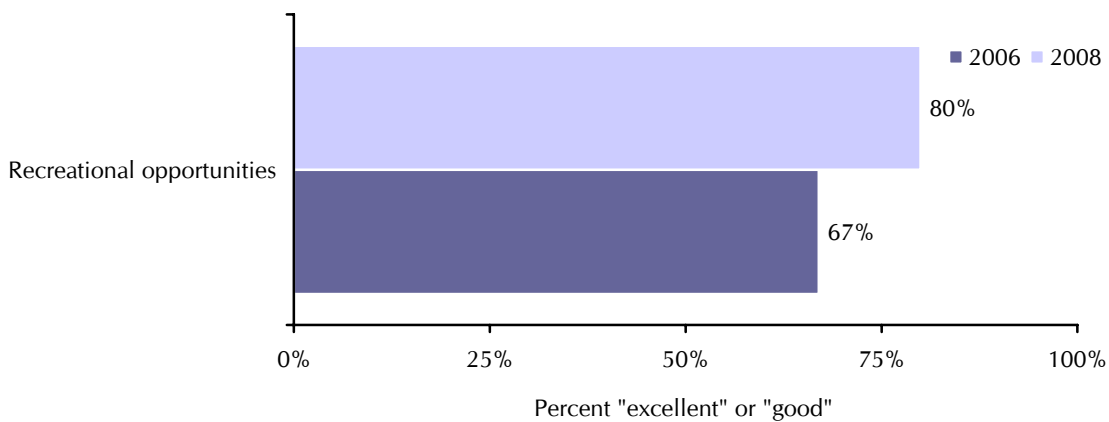


FIGURE 37: COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

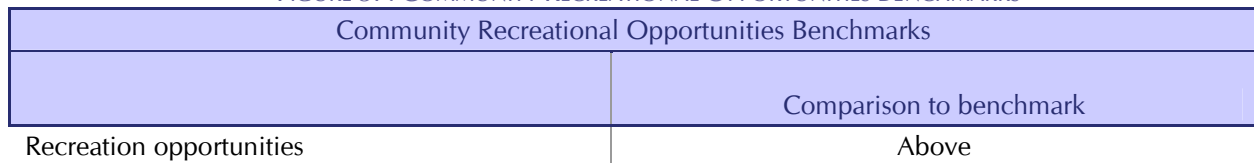


FIGURE 38: PARTICIPATION IN PARKS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

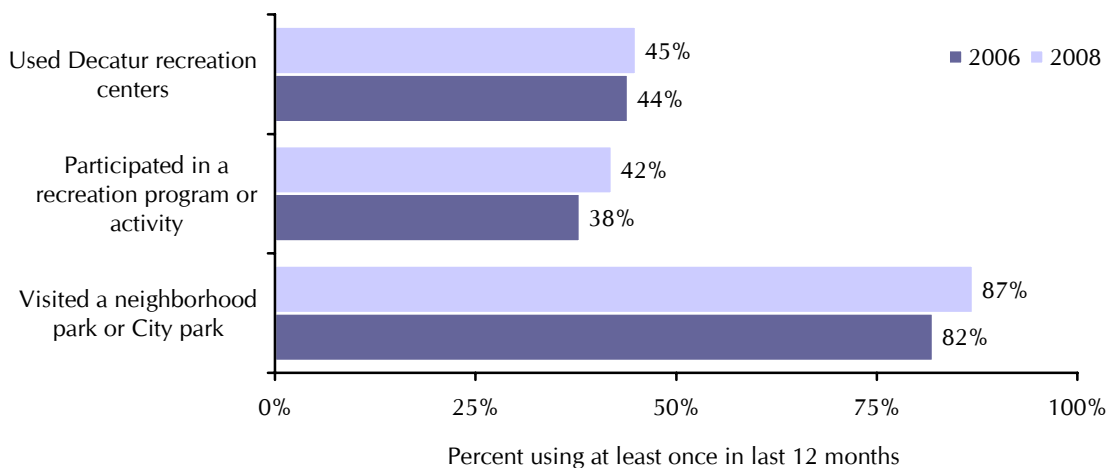


FIGURE 39: RATINGS OF PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES BY YEAR

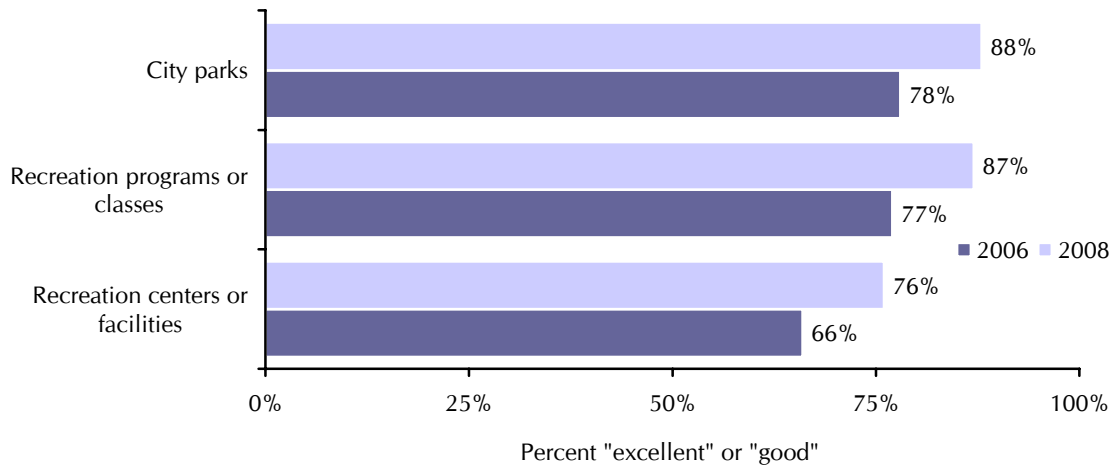


FIGURE 40: PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES BENCHMARKS

Parks and Recreation Services Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
City parks	Above
Recreation programs or classes	Above
Recreation centers or facilities	Above

Culture, Arts and Education

A full service community does not address only the life and safety of its residents. Like an individual who drudges to the office and returns home, a community that pays attention only to the life sustaining basics becomes insular, dreary and uninspiring to business and individuals. In the case of communities without thriving culture, arts and education opportunities, the magnet that attracts those who might consider relocating there is vastly weakened. Cultural, artistic, social and educational services elevate the opportunities for personal growth among residents. In the survey, residents were asked about the quality of opportunities to participate in cultural and educational activities.

Opportunities to attend cultural activities was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 83% of respondents. Educational opportunities were rated as “excellent” or “good” by 83% of respondents. Compared to the benchmark data, educational opportunities and opportunities to attend cultural activities were above the average of comparison jurisdictions.

FIGURE 41: RATINGS OF CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

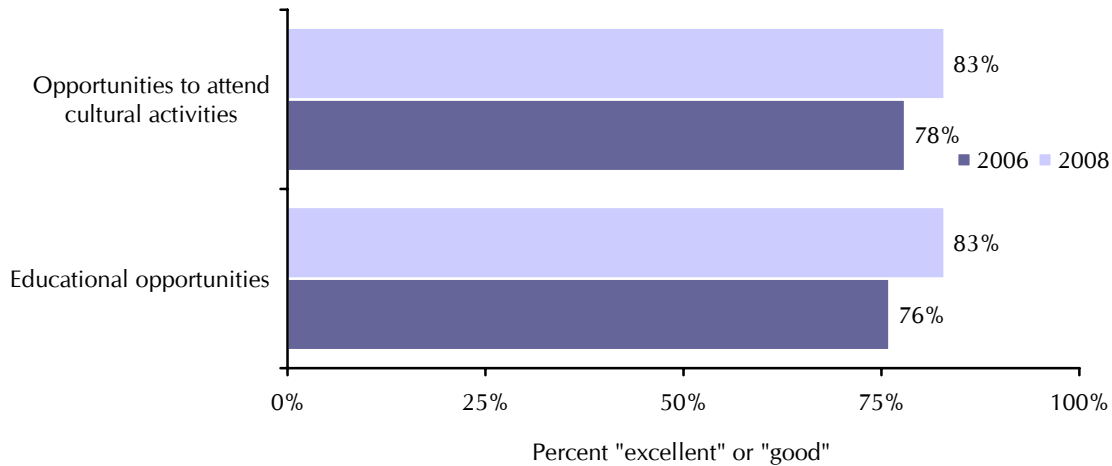


FIGURE 42: CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

Cultural and Educational Opportunities Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	Above
Educational opportunities	Above

FIGURE 43: PARTICIPATION IN CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

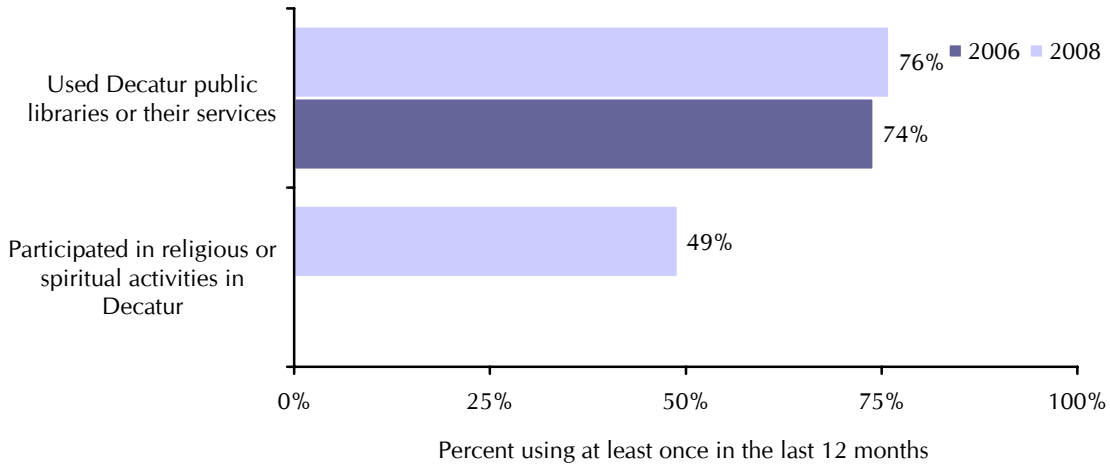


FIGURE 44: PERCEPTION OF CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BY YEAR

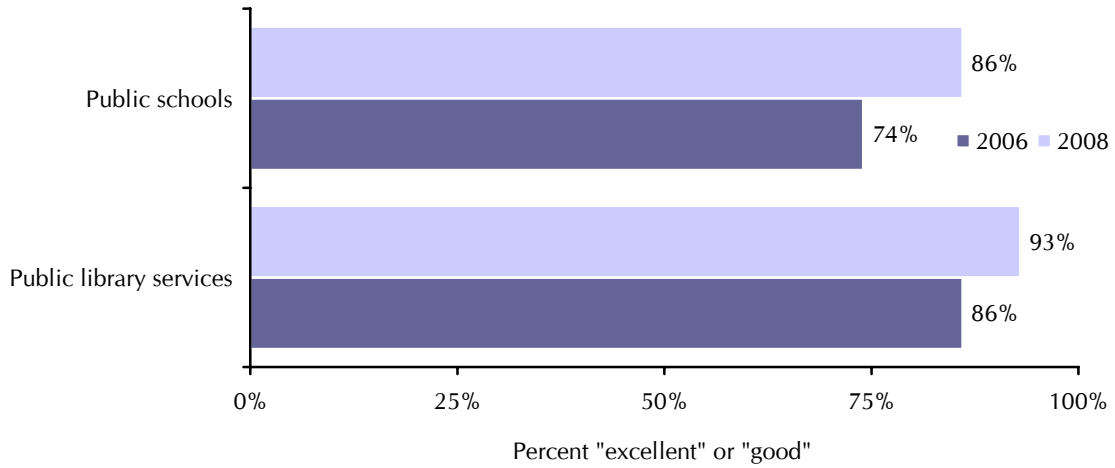


FIGURE 45: CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES BENCHMARKS

Cultural and Educational Services Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Public schools	Above
Public library services	Above

Health and Wellness

Healthy residents have the wherewithal to contribute to the economy as volunteers or employees and they do not present a burden in cost and time to others. Although residents bear the primary responsibility for their good health, local government provides services that can foster that well being and that provide care when residents are ill.

Residents of the City of Decatur were asked to rate the community's health services as well as the availability of health care and quality affordable food. Both were rated above the benchmark.

FIGURE 46: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

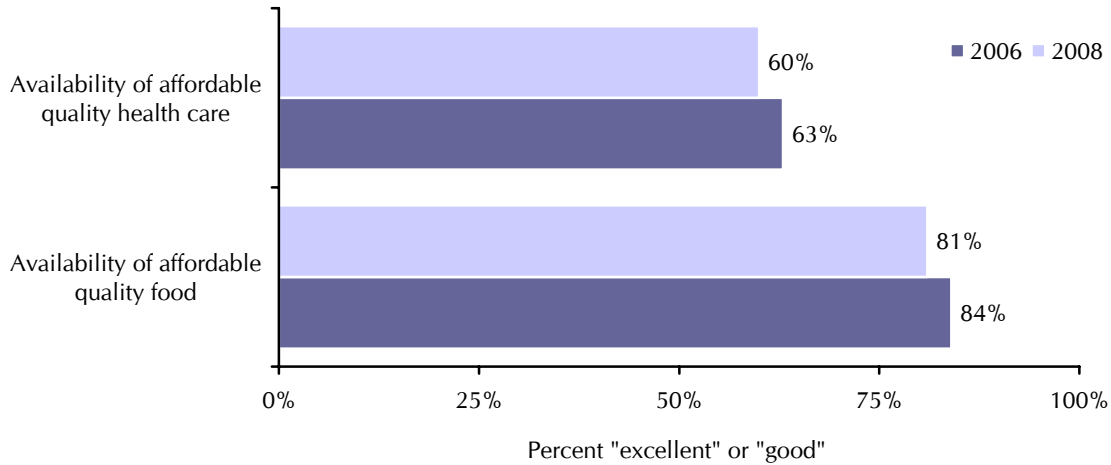


FIGURE 47: COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

Community Health and Wellness Access and Opportunities Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Availability of affordable quality health care	Above
Availability of affordable quality food	Above

Health services were rated above the benchmark.

FIGURE 48: RATINGS OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES BY YEAR

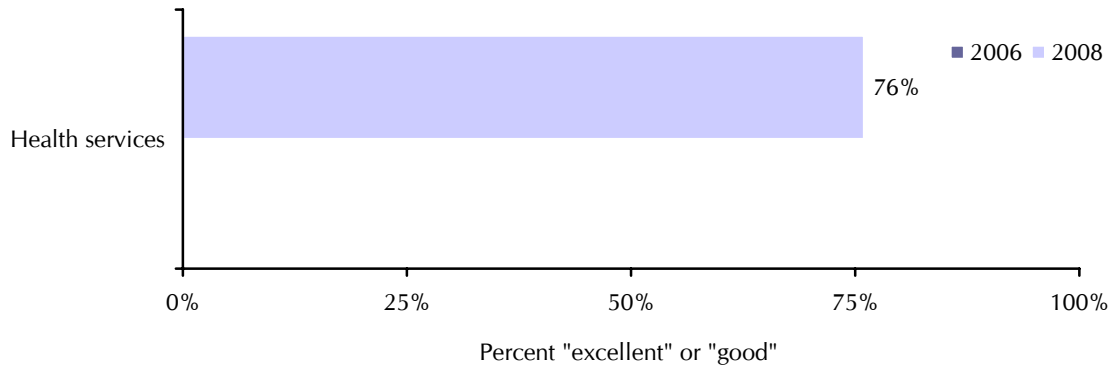


FIGURE 49: HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES BENCHMARKS

Health and Wellness Services Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Health services	Above

COMMUNITY INCLUSIVENESS

Diverse communities that include among their residents a mix of races, ages, wealth, ideas and beliefs have the raw material for the most vibrant and creative society. However, the presence of these features alone does not ensure a high quality or desirable space. Surveyed residents were asked about the success of the mix: the sense of community, the openness of residents to people of diverse backgrounds and the attractiveness of the City of Decatur as a place to raise children or to retire. They were also questioned about the quality of services delivered to various population subgroups, including older adults, youth and residents with few resources. A community that succeeds in creating an inclusive environment for a variety of residents is a community that offers more to many.

A high percentage of residents rated the City of Decatur as an “excellent” or “good” place to raise kids and a majority rated it as an excellent or good place to retire. Almost all residents felt the local sense of community was excellent or good. Most survey respondents felt the City of Decatur was open and accepting towards people of diverse backgrounds. Availability of affordable quality child care was rated the lowest by residents but was higher than the benchmark.

FIGURE 50: RATINGS OF COMMUNITY QUALITY AND INCLUSIVENESS BY YEAR

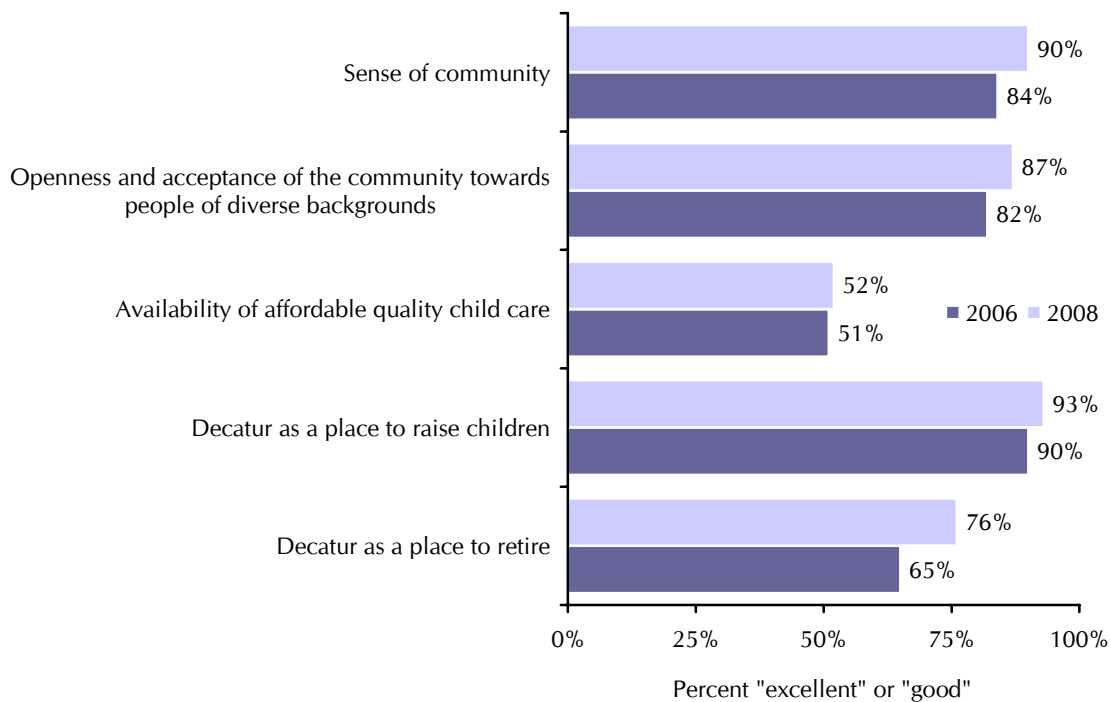


FIGURE 51: COMMUNITY QUALITY AND INCLUSIVENESS BENCHMARKS

Community Quality and Inclusiveness Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Sense of community	Above
Openness and acceptance of the community toward people of diverse backgrounds	Above
Availability of affordable quality child care	Above
Decatur as a place to raise kids	Above
Decatur as a place to retire	Above

Services to more vulnerable populations (e.g., seniors, youth or low-income residents) ranged from 64% to 84% percent with ratings of “excellent” or “good.” All were above the benchmark.

FIGURE 52: RATINGS OF QUALITY OF SERVICES PROVIDED FOR POPULATION SUBGROUPS BY YEAR

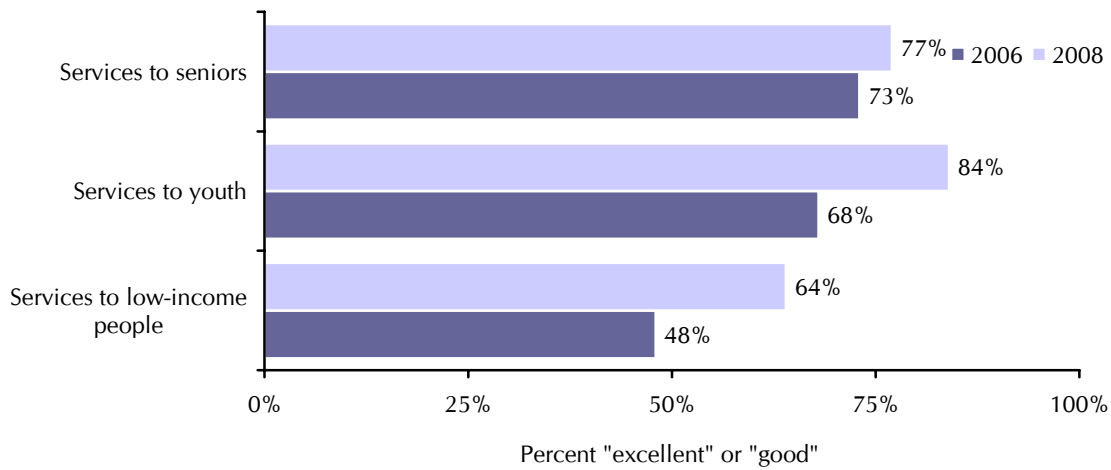


FIGURE 53: SERVICES PROVIDED FOR POPULATION SUBGROUPS BENCHMARKS

Services Provided for Population Subgroups Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Services to seniors	Above
Services to youth	Above
Services to low income residents	Above

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Government leaders, elected or hired, cannot run a jurisdiction alone and a jurisdiction cannot run effectively if residents remain strangers with little to connect them. Staff and elected officials require the assistance of local residents whether that assistance comes in tacit approval or eager help; and commonality of purpose among the electorate facilitates policies and programs that appeal to most and causes discord among few. Furthermore, when neighbors help neighbors, the cost to the community to provide services to residents in need declines. When residents are civically engaged, they have taken the opportunity to participate in making the community more livable for all. The extent to which local government provides opportunities to become informed and engaged and the extent to which residents take those opportunities is an indicator of the connection between government and populace. By understanding your residents' level of connection to, knowledge of and participation in local government, the City can find better opportunities to communicate and educate citizens about its mission, services, accomplishments and plans. This survey information is essential for public communication and for helping local government staff to conceive strategies for reaching reluctant voters whose confidence in government may need boosting prior to important referenda.

Civic Activity

Respondents were asked about the perceived community volunteering opportunities and their participation as citizens of the City of Decatur. Survey participants rated the volunteer opportunities in the City of Decatur favorably. Opportunities to attend or participate in community matters were rated similarly.

FIGURE 54: RATINGS OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

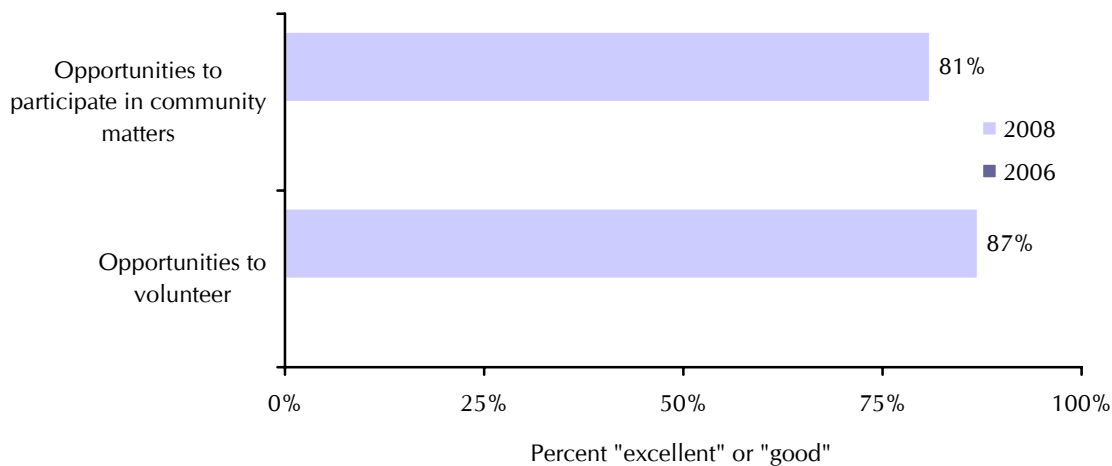
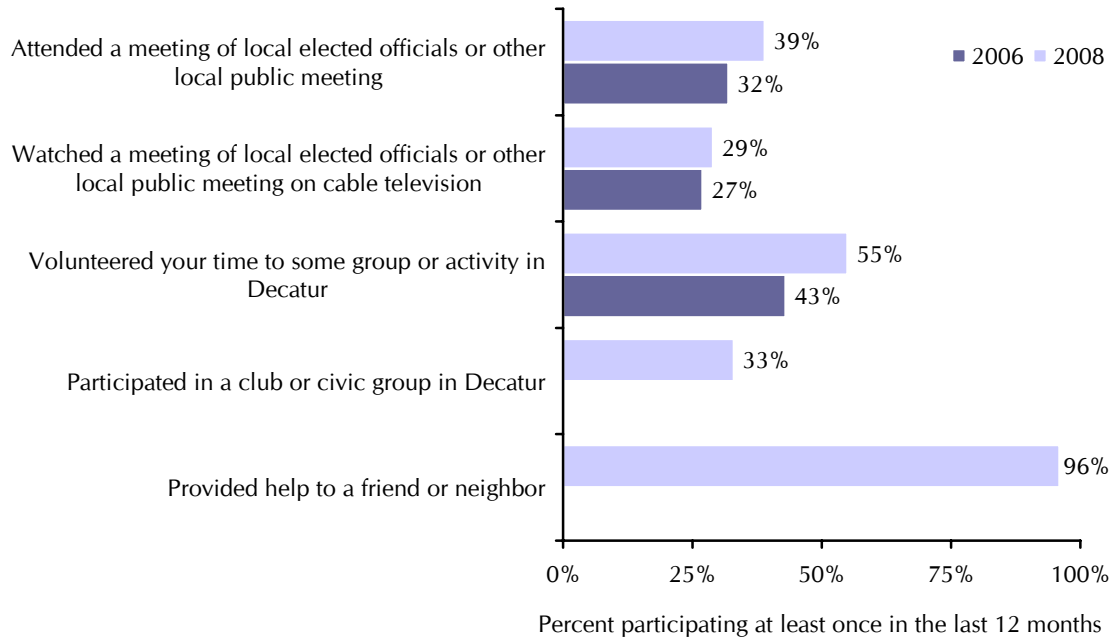


FIGURE 55: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

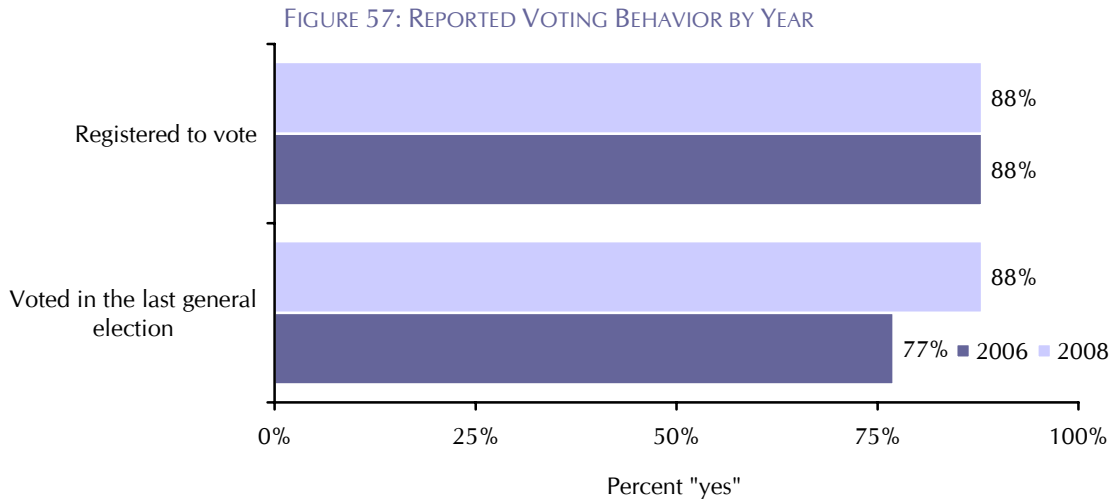
Civic Engagement Opportunities Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Opportunities to participate in community matters	Not available
Opportunities to volunteer	Not available

Most of the participants in this survey had not attended a public meeting in the 12 months prior, but the vast majority had helped a friend or neighbor.

FIGURE 56: PARTICIPATION IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR



City of Decatur residents showed the largest amount of civic engagement in the area of electoral participation. About 88% reported they were registered to vote; 88% indicated they had voted in the last general election.



Information and Awareness

Those completing the survey were asked about their use and perceptions of various information sources and local government media services. When asked whether they had visited the City of Decatur Web site in the previous 12 months, 80% reported they had done so at least once. Public information services were rated favorably compared to benchmark data.

FIGURE 58: USE OF INFORMATION SOURCES BY YEAR

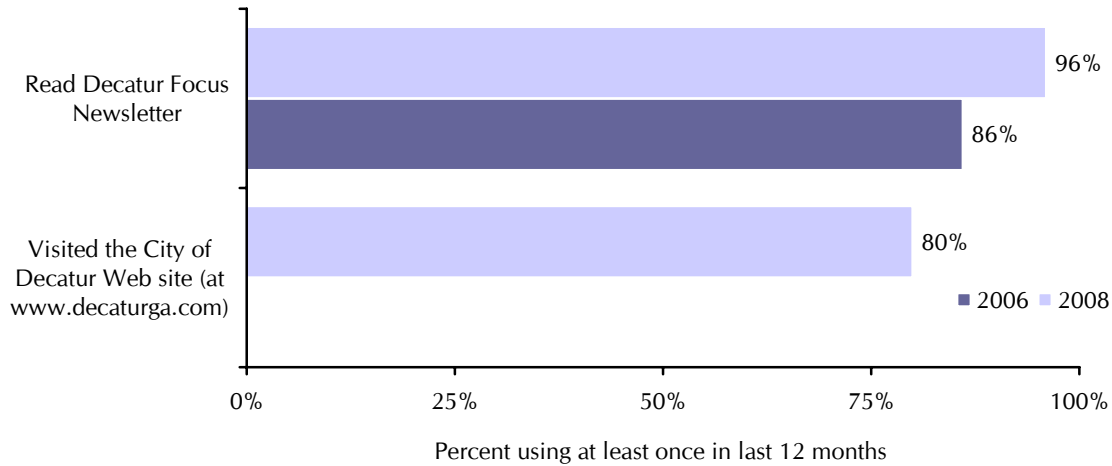


FIGURE 59: RATINGS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEDIA SERVICES AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION BY YEAR

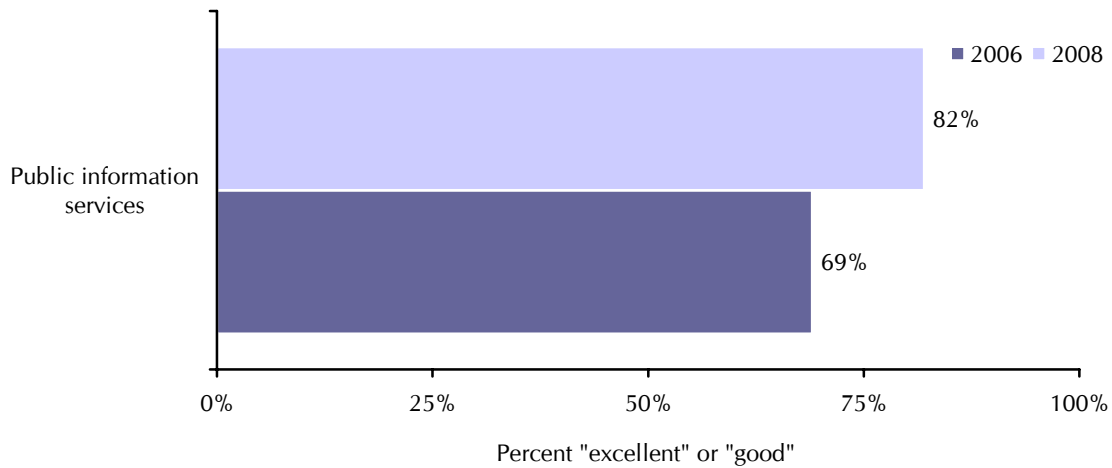


FIGURE 60: LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEDIA SERVICES AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION BENCHMARKS

Local Government Media Services and Information Dissemination Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Public information services	Above

Social Engagement

Opportunities to participate in social events and activities were rated as “excellent” or “good” by 88% of respondents, while a similar proportion rated opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities as “excellent” or “good.”

FIGURE 61: RATINGS OF SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BY YEAR

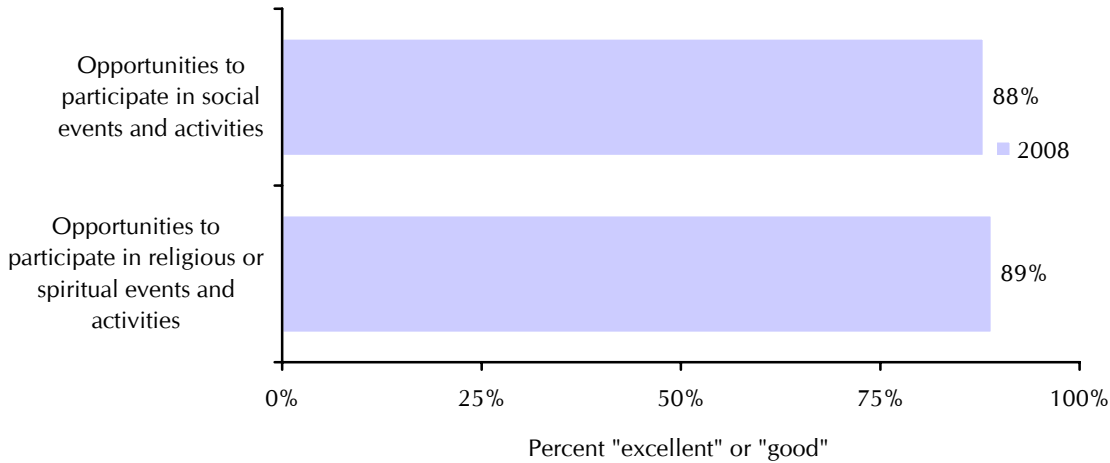
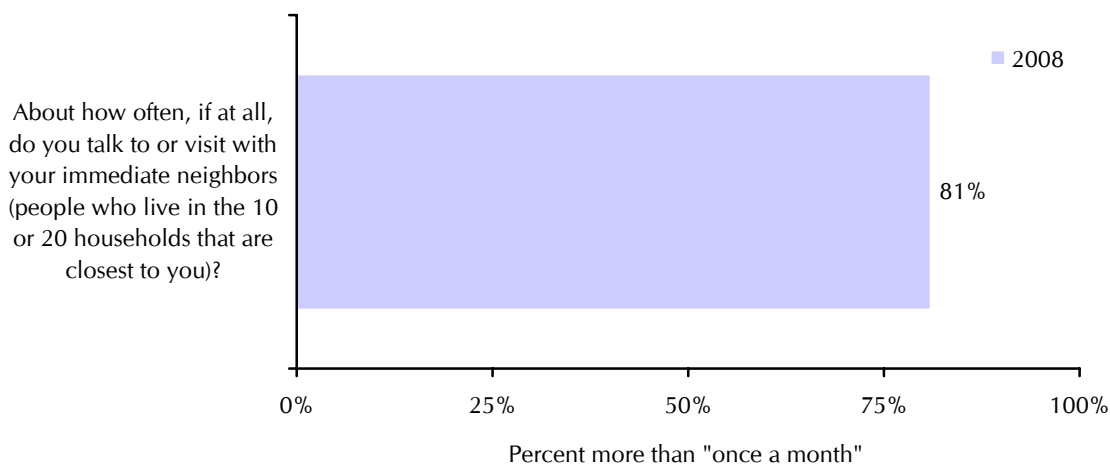


FIGURE 62: SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKS

Social Engagement Opportunities Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	Not available
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual event	Not available

Residents in Decatur reported a [strong/fair] amount of neighborliness. More than 81% indicated talking or visiting with their neighbors several times a week or more frequently.

FIGURE 63: CONTACT WITH IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS BY YEAR



PUBLIC TRUST

Residents are more likely to cooperate with the proposals and policies advanced by their community leaders when trust in local government officials runs high. Trust can be measured in residents' opinions about the overall direction the City of Decatur is taking, their perspectives about the service value their taxes purchase and the openness of government to citizen participation. In addition, resident opinion about services provided by the City of Decatur could be compared to their opinion about services provided by the state and federal governments. If residents find nothing to admire in the services delivered by any level of government, their opinions about the City of Decatur may be colored by their dislike of what all levels of government provide.

A majority of respondents felt that the value of services for taxes paid was "excellent" or "good." When asked to rate the job the City of Decatur does at listening to citizens, 68% rated it as "excellent" or "good."

FIGURE 64: PUBLIC TRUST RATINGS BY YEAR

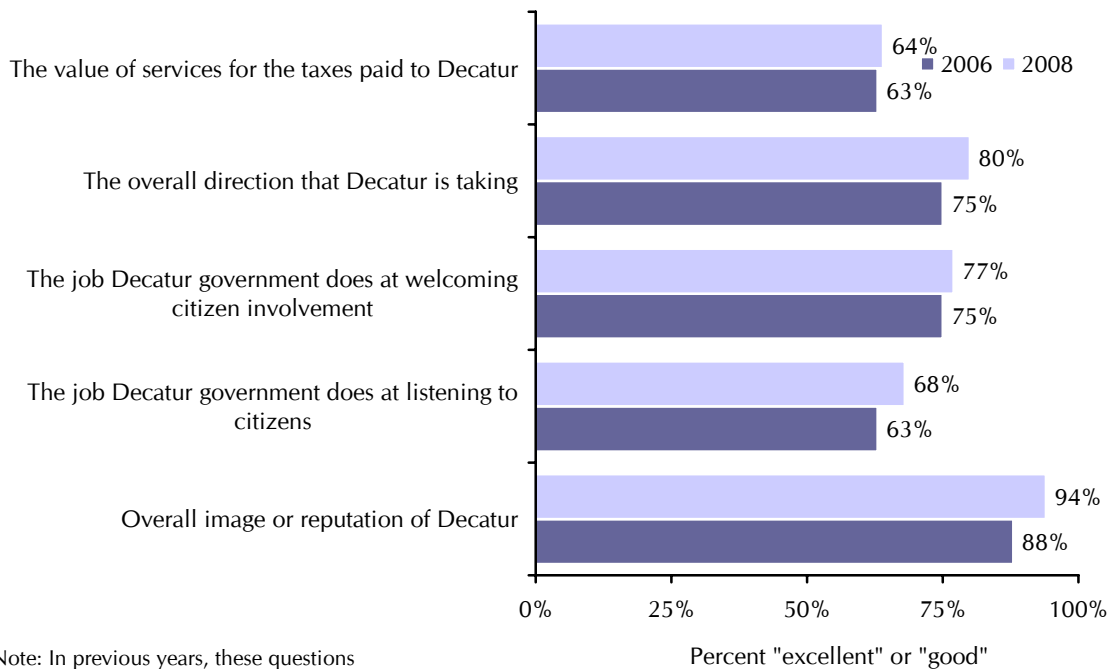


FIGURE 65: PUBLIC TRUST BENCHMARKS

Public Trust Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Value of services for the taxes paid to Decatur	Similar
The overall direction that Decatur is taking	Above
Job Decatur government does at welcoming citizen involvement	Above
Job Decatur government does at listening to citizens	Above
Overall image or reputation of Decatur	Above

On average, residents of the City of Decatur gave the highest evaluations to their own local government and the lowest average rating to the state government. The overall quality of services delivered by the City of Decatur was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 88% of survey participants. The City of Decatur’s rating was above the benchmark when compared to other communities in the database. Ratings of overall City services have increased over the last two years.

FIGURE 66: RATINGS OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS BY YEAR

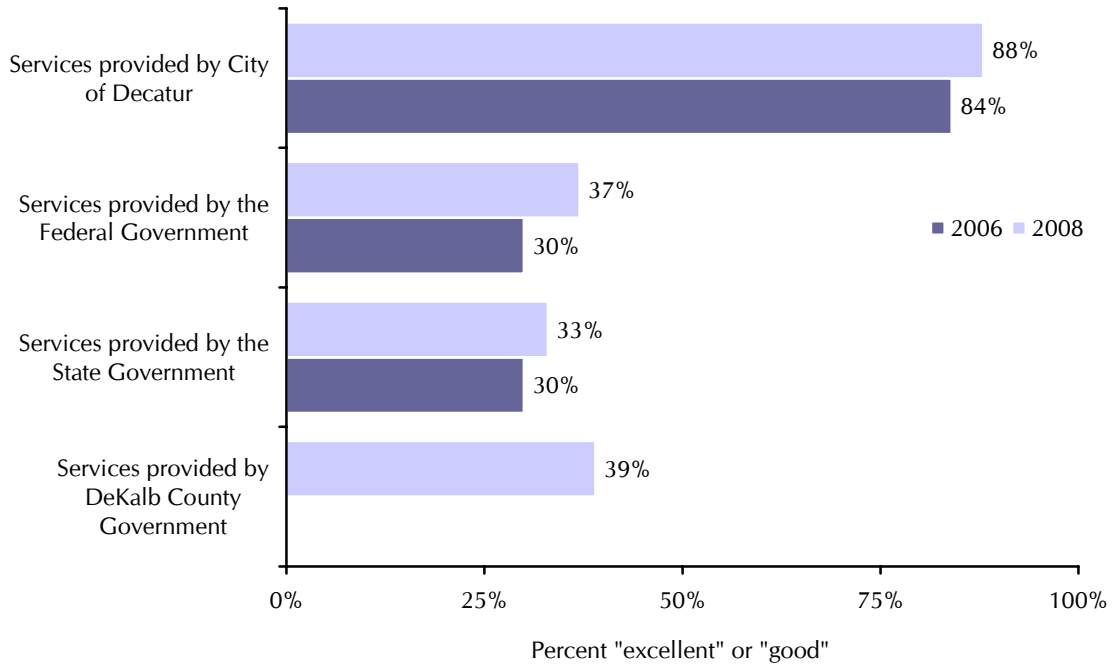


FIGURE 67: SERVICES PROVIDED BY LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS BENCHMARKS

Services Provided by Local, State and Federal Governments Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
Services provided by the City of Decatur	Above
Services provided by the Federal Government	Similar
Services provided by the State Government	Below
DeKalb County government general	Not available

City of Decatur Employees

The employees of the City of Decatur who interact with the public create the first impression that most residents have of the City of Decatur. Front line staff who provide information, assist with bill paying, collect trash, create service schedules, fight fires and crime and even give traffic tickets are the collective face of the City of Decatur. As such, it is important to know about residents' experience talking with that "face." When employees appear to be knowledgeable, responsive and courteous, residents are more likely to feel that any needs or problems may be solved through positive and productive interactions with the City of Decatur staff.

Those completing the survey were asked if they had been in contact with a City employee either in-person or over the phone in the last 12 months; the 61% who reported that they had been in contact were then asked to indicate overall how satisfied they were with the employee in their most recent contact. City employees were rated highly; 77% of respondents rated their overall impression as "excellent" or "good." Employee ratings were higher than the benchmark and were similar to the 2006 ratings.

FIGURE 68: PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS WHO HAD CONTACT WITH CITY EMPLOYEES IN PREVIOUS 12 MONTHS BY YEAR

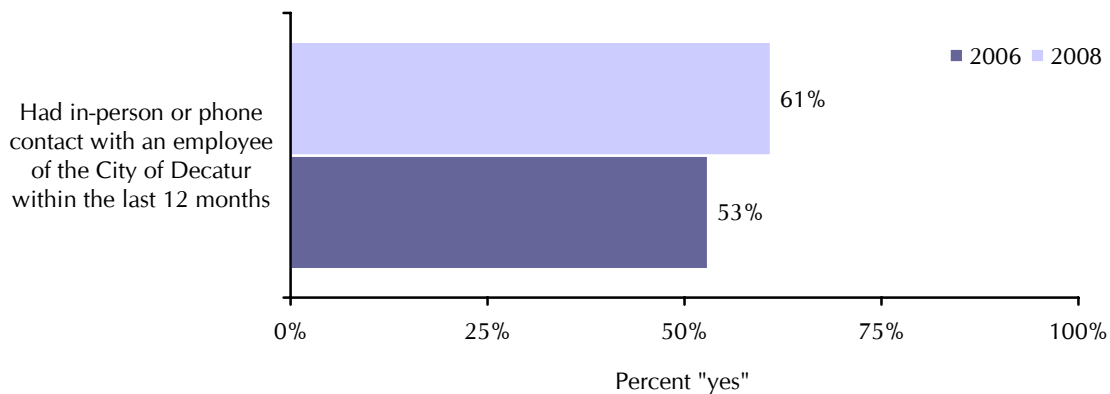


FIGURE 69: RATINGS OF CITY EMPLOYEES (AMONG THOSE WHO HAD CONTACT) BY YEAR

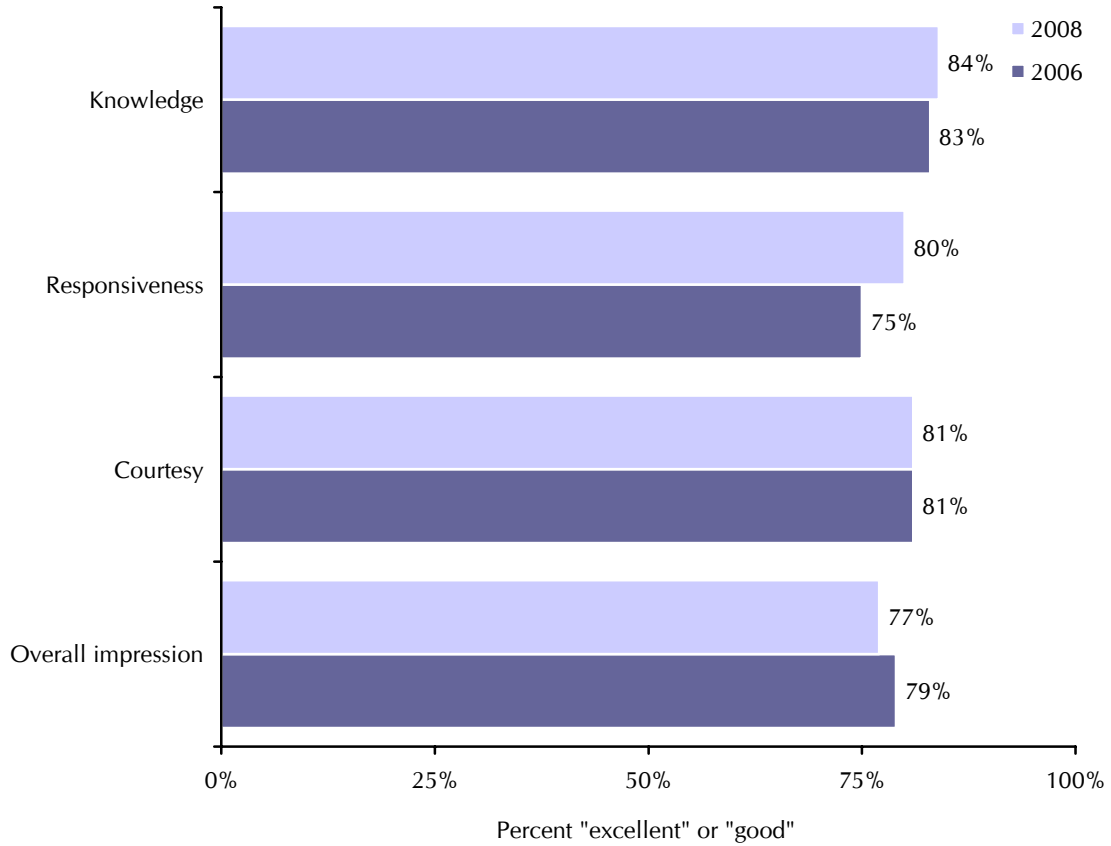


FIGURE 70: RATINGS OF CITY EMPLOYEES (AMONG THOSE WHO HAD CONTACT) BENCHMARKS

Perceptions of City Employees (Among Those Who Had Contact) Benchmarks	
	Comparison to benchmark
City employee knowledge	Above
City employee responsiveness	Above
City employee courteousness	Above
City employee	Above

FROM DATA TO ACTION

RESIDENT PRIORITIES

Knowing where to focus limited resources to improve residents' opinions of local government requires information that targets the services that are most important to residents. However, when residents are asked what services are most important, they rarely stray beyond core services – those directed to save lives and improve safety.

In market research, identifying the most important characteristics of a transaction or product is called Key Driver Analysis. The key drivers that are identified from that analysis do not come from asking customers to self-report which service or product characteristic most influenced their decision to buy or return, but rather from statistical analyses of the predictors of their behavior. When customers are asked to name the most important characteristics of a good or service, responses often are expected or misleading – just as they can be in the context of a citizen survey. For example, air travelers often claim that safety is the primary consideration in their choice of an airline, yet key driver analysis reveals that frequent flier perks or in-flight entertainment predicts their buying decisions.

In local government core services – like fire protection – invariably land at the top of the list created when residents are asked about the most important local government services. And core services are important. But by using Key Driver Analysis, our approach digs deeper to identify the less obvious, but more influential services that are most related to residents' ratings of overall quality of local government services. Because services focused directly on life and safety remain essential to quality government, it is suggested that core services should remain the focus of continuous monitoring and improvement where necessary – but monitoring core services or asking residents to identify important services is not enough.

A Key Driver Analysis (KDA) was conducted for the City of Decatur by examining the relationships between ratings of each service and ratings of the City of Decatur's overall services. Those key driver services that correlated most highly with residents' perceptions about overall City service quality have been identified. By targeting improvements in key services, the City of Decatur can focus on the services that have the greatest likelihood of influencing residents' opinions about overall service quality.

Services found to be most strongly correlated with ratings of overall service quality from the Decatur Key Driver Analysis were:

- Economic development
- Public schools

CITY OF DECATUR ACTION CHART

The 2008 City of Decatur Action Chart™ on the following page combines three dimensions of performance:

- Comparison to resident evaluations from other communities. When a comparison is available, the background color of each service box indicates whether the service is above the benchmark (green), similar to the benchmark (yellow) or below the benchmark (red).
- Identification of key services. A black key icon next to a service box indicates that service is key (either core or key driver)
- Trendline icons (up and down arrows), indicating whether the current ratings are higher or lower than the previous survey.

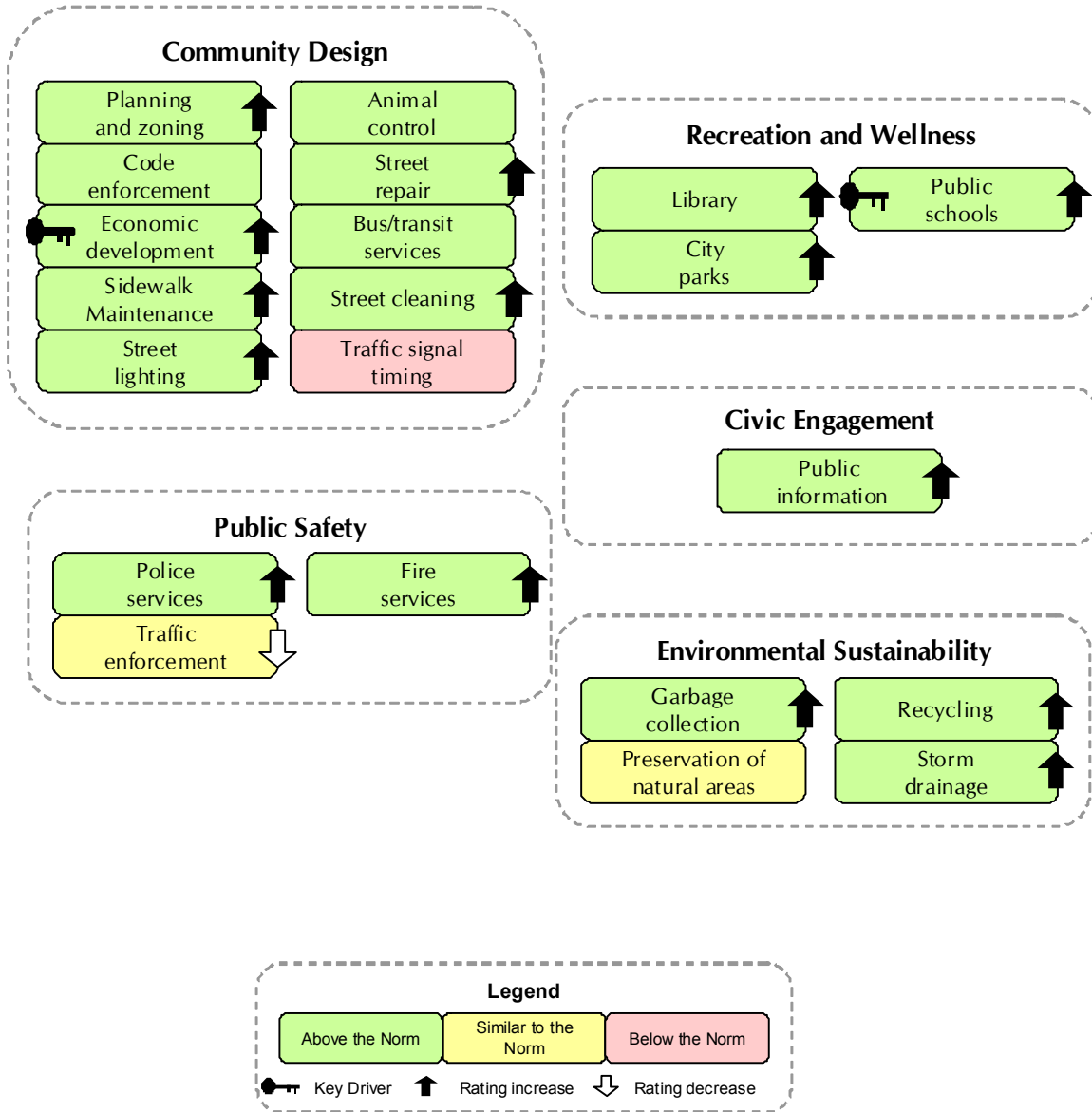
Twenty-one services were included in the KDA for the City of Decatur. Of these, 18 were above the benchmark, one was below the benchmark and two were similar to the benchmark. Ratings for 15 services were trending up and one was trending down, while five remained similar to the previous survey. The two key drivers are shown.

Considering all performance data included in the Action Chart, a jurisdiction typically will want to consider improvements to any key driver services that are trending down or that are not at least similar to the benchmark. In the case of Decatur, no key drivers were below the benchmark or trending lower in the current survey.

Services with a high percent of respondents answering “don’t know” were excluded from the analysis and were considered services that would be less influential. See Appendix A: Complete Survey Frequencies, Frequencies Including “Don’t Know” Responses (beginning on page 60) for the percent “don’t know” for each service.

FIGURE 71: CITY OF DECATUR ACTION CHART™

Overall Quality of City of Decatur Services



Using Your Action Chart™

The key drivers derived for The City of Decatur provide a list of those services that are uniquely related to overall service quality here. Those key drivers are marked by key symbols in the action chart. Because key driver results are based on a relatively small number of responses, the relationships or correlations that define the key drivers are subject to more variability than is seen when key drivers are derived from a large national dataset of resident responses. To benefit the City of Decatur, NRC lists the key drivers derived from tens of thousands of resident responses from across the county. This list is updated every three years so that you can compare your key drivers to the key drivers from the entire NRC data set. Where your locally derived key drivers overlap national key drivers, it makes sense to focus even more strongly on your keys. Similarly, when your local key drivers overlap your core services, there is stronger argument to make for attending to your key drivers that overlap with core services. In the following table, we have listed your key drivers, core services and the national key drivers below and we have indicated the City of Decatur key drivers that overlap core services or the nationally derived keys.

FIGURE 72: KEY DRIVERS COMPARED

Service	City of Decatur Key Drivers	National Key Drivers	Core Services
Code enforcement			✓
Economic development	✓	✓	
EMS			✓
Fire			✓
Garbage collection			✓
Land use planning and zoning		✓	
Police services		✓	✓
Public information services		✓	
Public schools	✓	✓	
Sewer			✓
Storm drainage			✓
Street repair			✓
Water			✓

POLICY QUESTIONS

“Don’t know” responses have been removed from the following questions.

Policy Question 1	
To what degree would you support or oppose the City of Decatur using public funds to assure that quality, reasonably priced housing options exist in the city?	Percent of respondents
Strongly support	35%
Somewhat support	36%
Somewhat oppose	15%
Strongly oppose	15%
Total	100%

Policy Question 2	
Do city facilities, programs and infrastructure exist that would make it easy for the typical Decatur resident to include at least 30 minutes of physical activity, like walking, in their schedules on a routine basis?	Percent of respondents
Strongly agree	38%
Agree	50%
Neutral	8%
Disagree	2%
Strongly disagree	2%
Total	100%

Policy Question 3	
To what degree would you support or oppose the use of public funding to support arts activities, art facilities and public art within the City of Decatur?	Percent of respondents
Strongly support	48%
Somewhat support	38%
Somewhat oppose	8%
Strongly oppose	6%
Total	100%

APPENDIX A: COMPLETE SURVEY FREQUENCIES

FREQUENCIES EXCLUDING "DON'T KNOW" RESPONSES

Question 1: Quality of Life					
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Decatur:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Decatur as a place to live	62%	35%	2%	1%	100%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	57%	35%	7%	0%	100%
Decatur as a place to raise children	58%	35%	6%	1%	100%
Decatur as a place to work	42%	41%	13%	4%	100%
Decatur as a place to retire	36%	41%	15%	9%	100%
The overall quality of life in Decatur	52%	43%	5%	0%	100%

Question 2: Community Characteristics					
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Decatur as a whole:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Sense of community	47%	43%	8%	2%	100%
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	45%	42%	11%	2%	100%
Overall appearance of Decatur	34%	56%	10%	0%	100%
Cleanliness of Decatur	34%	56%	9%	1%	100%
Overall quality of new development in Decatur	22%	55%	19%	4%	100%
Variety of housing options	20%	49%	24%	8%	100%
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Decatur	30%	59%	10%	1%	100%
Shopping opportunities	25%	49%	21%	5%	100%
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	32%	51%	13%	4%	100%
Recreational opportunities	28%	51%	17%	3%	100%
Employment opportunities	12%	36%	36%	16%	100%
Educational opportunities	34%	50%	13%	3%	100%
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	42%	46%	12%	1%	100%
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	43%	46%	9%	2%	100%
Opportunities to volunteer	43%	44%	11%	2%	100%
Opportunities to participate in community issues	35%	46%	16%	2%	100%
Ease of car travel in Decatur	16%	42%	27%	14%	100%
Ease of bus travel in Decatur	18%	50%	25%	7%	100%
Ease of rail or subway travel in Decatur	40%	47%	12%	2%	100%
Ease of bicycle travel in Decatur	21%	45%	22%	12%	100%
Ease of walking in Decatur	41%	46%	9%	4%	100%
Availability of paths and walking trails	19%	47%	26%	8%	100%

Question 2: Community Characteristics					
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Decatur as a whole:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Traffic flow on major streets	6%	36%	36%	22%	100%
Amount of public parking	7%	32%	39%	22%	100%
Availability of affordable quality housing	8%	40%	32%	20%	100%
Availability of affordable quality child care	12%	40%	33%	15%	100%
Availability of affordable quality health care	15%	45%	30%	10%	100%
Availability of affordable quality food	32%	49%	15%	4%	100%
Air quality	12%	51%	30%	7%	100%
Quality of overall natural environment in Decatur	21%	57%	19%	3%	100%
Overall image or reputation of Decatur	44%	50%	5%	1%	100%

Question 3: Growth						
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Decatur over the past 2 years:	Much too slow	Somewhat too slow	Right amount	Somewhat too fast	Much too fast	Total
Population growth	1%	6%	54%	28%	11%	100%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	2%	17%	65%	12%	3%	100%
Jobs growth	22%	45%	32%	1%	0%	100%

Question 4: Code Enforcement	
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Decatur?	Percent of respondents
Not a problem	24%
Minor problem	42%
Moderate problem	30%
Major problem	4%
Total	100%

Question 5: Community Safety						
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Decatur:	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	Total
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	43%	43%	7%	6%	1%	100%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	20%	51%	13%	14%	1%	100%
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	47%	36%	13%	3%	1%	100%

Question 6: Personal Safety						
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	Total
In your neighborhood during the day	73%	23%	3%	1%	0%	100%
In your neighborhood after dark	33%	47%	8%	10%	2%	100%
In Decatur's downtown area during the day	73%	23%	2%	1%	0%	100%
In Decatur's downtown area after dark	32%	44%	11%	10%	3%	100%

Question 7: Crime Victim	
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	Percent of respondents
No	87%
Yes	13%
Total	100%

Question 8: Crime Reporting	
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	Percent of respondents
No	29%
Yes	71%
Total	100%

Question 9: Resident Behaviors						
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Decatur?	Never	Once or twice	3 to 12 times	13 to 26 times	More than 26 times	Total
Used Decatur public libraries or their services	24%	24%	27%	16%	9%	100%
Used Decatur recreation centers	55%	20%	13%	6%	7%	100%
Participated in a recreation program or activity	58%	22%	12%	4%	5%	100%
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	13%	21%	26%	17%	22%	100%
Ridden a local bus within Decatur	68%	12%	9%	4%	7%	100%
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	61%	24%	11%	2%	1%	100%
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	71%	14%	11%	2%	2%	100%
Read Decatur Focus Newsletter	4%	11%	64%	10%	11%	100%
Visited the City of Decatur Web site (at www.decaturga.com)	20%	18%	36%	15%	11%	100%
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	11%	5%	8%	9%	67%	100%
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Decatur	45%	29%	15%	4%	6%	100%
Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Decatur	51%	18%	10%	4%	17%	100%
Participated in a club or civic group in Decatur	67%	14%	13%	3%	3%	100%
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	4%	19%	45%	17%	16%	100%

Question 10: Neighborliness	
About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors (people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you)?	Percent of respondents
Just about everyday	31%
Several times a week	27%
Several times a month	23%
Once a month	6%
Several times a year	6%
Once a year or less	1%
Never	5%
Total	100%

Question 11: Service Quality					
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Decatur:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Police services	40%	52%	7%	2%	100%
Fire services	50%	47%	3%	0%	100%
Crime prevention	23%	55%	21%	1%	100%
Fire prevention and education	26%	62%	12%	1%	100%
Municipal courts	20%	58%	21%	1%	100%
Traffic enforcement	15%	52%	24%	10%	100%
Street repair	10%	40%	38%	11%	100%
Street cleaning	18%	53%	23%	6%	100%
Street lighting	17%	53%	27%	4%	100%
Sidewalk maintenance	15%	44%	29%	13%	100%
Traffic signal timing	6%	28%	35%	31%	100%
Bus or transit services	20%	56%	20%	5%	100%
Garbage collection	38%	52%	6%	4%	100%
Recycling	45%	42%	8%	5%	100%
Yard waste pick-up	36%	47%	11%	6%	100%
Storm drainage	13%	48%	28%	11%	100%
City parks	29%	58%	11%	1%	100%
Recreation programs or classes	28%	59%	11%	2%	100%
Recreation centers or facilities	22%	55%	19%	5%	100%
Land use, planning and zoning	14%	48%	27%	10%	100%
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	13%	45%	29%	12%	100%
Animal control	16%	60%	18%	6%	100%
Economic development	21%	57%	18%	3%	100%
Health services	22%	54%	20%	5%	100%
Services to seniors	28%	49%	20%	3%	100%
Services to youth	25%	59%	12%	4%	100%
Services to low-income people	17%	46%	25%	12%	100%
Public library services	45%	48%	6%	1%	100%
Public information services	26%	56%	16%	2%	100%
Public schools	38%	48%	11%	4%	100%
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	16%	52%	23%	9%	100%
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	12%	43%	32%	13%	100%

Question 12: Government Services Overall					
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
The City of Decatur	33%	54%	10%	3%	100%
The Federal Government	5%	31%	46%	18%	100%
The State Government	4%	29%	52%	14%	100%
DeKalb County Government	5%	35%	41%	20%	100%

Question 13: Contact with City Employees	
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Decatur within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?	Percent of respondents
No	39%
Yes	61%
Total	100%

Question 14: City Employees					
What was your impression of the employee(s) of the City of Decatur in your most recent contact?	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
Knowledge	39%	45%	12%	5%	100%
Responsiveness	41%	39%	15%	5%	100%
Courtesy	46%	35%	13%	6%	100%
Overall impression	40%	37%	17%	6%	100%

Question 15: Government Performance					
Please rate the following categories of Decatur government performance:	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Total
The value of services for the taxes paid to Decatur	13%	51%	26%	10%	100%
The overall direction that Decatur is taking	25%	54%	17%	3%	100%
The job Decatur government does at welcoming citizen involvement	24%	53%	18%	5%	100%
The job Decatur government does at listening to citizens	14%	55%	22%	10%	100%

Question 16: Recommendation and Longevity					
Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely	Total
Recommend living in Decatur to someone who asks	75%	21%	1%	2%	100%
Remain in Decatur for the next five years	64%	24%	6%	6%	100%

Question 17: Community Cooperation in an Emergency	
If public officials asked everyone in Decatur to conserve water or electricity because of some emergency, how likely or unlikely is it that people in your community would cooperate?	Percent of respondents
Very likely	60%
Somewhat likely	34%
Somewhat unlikely	4%
Very unlikely	2%
Total	100%

Question 18: Impact of the Economy	
What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:	Percent of respondents
Very positive	3%
Somewhat positive	11%
Neutral	46%
Somewhat negative	32%
Very negative	7%
Total	100%

Question 19a: Policy Question 1	
To what degree would you support or oppose the City of Decatur using public funds to assure that quality, reasonably priced housing options exist in the city?	Percent of respondents
Strongly support	35%
Somewhat support	36%
Somewhat oppose	15%
Strongly oppose	15%
Total	100%

Question 19b: Policy Question 2	
Do city facilities, programs and infrastructure exist that would make it easy for the typical Decatur resident to include at least 30 minutes of physical activity, like walking, in their schedules on a routine basis?	Percent of respondents
Strongly agree	38%
Agree	50%
Neutral	8%
Disagree	2%
Strongly disagree	2%
Total	100%

Question 19c: Policy Question 3	
To what degree would you support or oppose the use of public funding to support arts activities, art facilities and public art within the City of Decatur?	Percent of respondents
Strongly support	48%
Somewhat support	38%
Somewhat oppose	8%
Strongly oppose	6%
Total	100%

Question D1: Employment Status	
Are you currently employed for pay?	Percent of respondents
No	24%
Yes, full-time	69%
Yes, part-time	8%
Total	100%

Question D2: Mode of Transportation Used for Commute	
During a typical week, how many days do you commute to work (for the longest distance of your commute) in each of the ways listed below?	Percent of days mode used
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc...) by myself	65%
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc...) with other children or adults	6%
Bus, rail, subway or other public transportation	8%
Bicycle	1%
Bicycle	1%
Work at home	13%
Other	1%

Question D3: Length of Residency	
How many years have you lived in Decatur?	Percent of respondents
Less than 2 years	21%
2 to 5 years	29%
6 to 10 years	19%
11 to 20 years	15%
More than 20 years	16%
Total	100%

Question D4: Housing Unit Type	
Which best describes the building you live in?	Percent of respondents
One family house detached from any other houses	56%
House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or town)	8%
Building with two or more apartments or condominiums	34%
Mobile home	0%
Other	2%
Total	100%

Question D5: Housing Tenure (Rent/Own)	
Is this house, apartment or mobile home...	Percent of respondents
Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment	36%
Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear?	64%
Total	100%

Question D6: Monthly Housing Cost	
About how much is your monthly housing cost for the place you live (including rent, mortgage payment, property tax, property insurance and homeowners' association (HOA) fees)?	Percent of respondents
Less than \$300 per month	7%
\$300 to \$599 per month	13%
\$600 to \$999 per month	17%
\$1,000 to \$1,499 per month	17%
\$1,500 to \$2,499 per month	30%
\$2,500 or more per month	17%
Total	100%

Question D7: Presence of Children in Household	
Do any children 17 or under live in your household?	Percent of respondents
No	69%
Yes	31%
Total	100%

Question D8: Presence of Older Adults in Household	
Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?	Percent of respondents
No	82%
Yes	18%
Total	100%

Question D9: Household Income	
How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year? (Please include in your total income money from all sources for all persons living in your household.)	Percent of respondents
Less than \$24,999	20%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	16%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	22%
\$100,000 to \$149,000	22%
\$150,000 or more	21%
Total	100%

Question D10: Ethnicity	
Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?	Percent of respondents
No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	98%
Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	2%
Total	100%

Question D11: Race	
What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race(s) you consider yourself to be.)	Percent of respondents
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3%
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	4%
Black or African American	18%
White	74%
Other	6%
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option	

Question D12: Age	
In which category is your age?	Percent of respondents
18 to 24 years	3%
25 to 34 years	28%
35 to 44 years	23%
45 to 54 years	19%
55 to 64 years	10%
65 to 74 years	8%
75 years or older	8%
Total	100%

Question D13: Gender	
What is your sex?	Percent of respondents
Female	59%
Male	41%
Total	100%

Question D14: Registered to Vote	
Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction?	Percent of respondents
No	12%
Yes	85%
Ineligible to vote	3%
Total	100%

Question D15: Voted in Last General Election	
Many people don't have time to vote in elections. Do you remember voting in the last general election?	Percent of respondents
No	11%
Yes	85%
Ineligible to vote	4%
Total	100%

FREQUENCIES INCLUDING “DON’T KNOW” RESPONSES

These tables contain the percentage of respondents for each response category as well as the “n” or total number of respondents for each category, next to the percentage.

Question 1: Quality of Life												
Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Decatur:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Decatur as a place to live	62%	288	35%	162	2%	11	1%	3	0%	0	100%
Your neighborhood as a place to live	57%	266	35%	163	7%	32	0%	2	0%	0	100%	464
Decatur as a place to raise children	46%	209	28%	126	5%	22	1%	4	21%	97	100%	458
Decatur as a place to work	26%	118	26%	117	8%	36	2%	11	38%	173	100%	455
Decatur as a place to retire	24%	110	27%	125	10%	45	6%	29	33%	151	100%	460
The overall quality of life in Decatur	52%	241	43%	196	5%	23	0%	1	0%	0	100%	461

Question 2: Community Characteristics												
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Decatur as a whole:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Sense of community	46%	212	42%	194	8%	36	2%	7	2%	9	100%
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds	43%	196	40%	180	11%	48	2%	9	5%	21	100%	454
Overall appearance of Decatur	33%	154	56%	256	10%	48	0%	1	0%	1	100%	461
Cleanliness of Decatur	34%	159	55%	256	9%	42	1%	4	1%	3	100%	464
Overall quality of new development in Decatur	21%	95	51%	236	18%	81	4%	18	7%	32	100%	463
Variety of housing options	18%	82	45%	208	22%	99	7%	32	8%	37	100%	459
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Decatur	29%	133	57%	263	10%	46	1%	7	3%	13	100%	462
Shopping opportunities	25%	115	48%	224	21%	96	5%	23	1%	5	100%	463
Opportunities to attend cultural activities	31%	143	49%	225	12%	56	4%	18	4%	18	100%	460
Recreational opportunities	27%	125	49%	225	16%	75	3%	14	5%	25	100%	464
Employment opportunities	7%	33	21%	95	21%	97	9%	42	42%	193	100%	460
Educational opportunities	27%	126	41%	188	11%	50	3%	12	18%	84	100%	460
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	39%	183	44%	202	11%	52	1%	3	5%	23	100%	462
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities	34%	157	37%	171	7%	33	2%	7	20%	91	100%	460
Opportunities to volunteer	37%	169	38%	174	9%	42	2%	7	15%	68	100%	461
Opportunities to participate in community issues	30%	140	40%	186	14%	65	2%	10	13%	60	100%	460
Ease of car travel in Decatur	15%	70	41%	188	27%	122	14%	64	2%	11	100%	456
Ease of bus travel in Decatur	10%	46	29%	131	14%	66	4%	18	43%	196	100%	457
Ease of rail or subway travel in Decatur	36%	167	43%	197	11%	50	2%	8	9%	39	100%	461
Ease of bicycle travel in Decatur	16%	74	34%	155	17%	77	9%	41	24%	113	100%	460
Ease of walking in Decatur	40%	185	46%	210	9%	42	4%	18	1%	5	100%	460
Availability of paths and walking trails	17%	80	43%	195	24%	109	7%	32	9%	42	100%	459
Traffic flow on major streets	6%	27	36%	166	36%	165	21%	98	1%	3	100%	458
Amount of public parking	6%	29	31%	142	38%	173	21%	97	4%	17	100%	459

Question 2: Community Characteristics												
Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Decatur as a whole:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Availability of affordable quality housing	7%	32	34%	156	27%	123	17%	77	15%	69	100%
Availability of affordable quality child care	4%	21	16%	72	13%	59	6%	26	61%	282	100%	459
Availability of affordable quality health care	10%	47	30%	139	20%	93	7%	31	33%	150	100%	459
Availability of affordable quality food	31%	144	48%	221	15%	70	3%	16	2%	9	100%	460
Air quality	11%	51	48%	220	28%	132	7%	32	6%	28	100%	463
Quality of overall natural environment in Decatur	20%	94	55%	256	19%	86	3%	15	2%	11	100%	461
Overall image or reputation of Decatur	43%	199	49%	229	4%	21	1%	6	2%	10	100%	465

Question 3: Growth														
Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Decatur over the past 2 years:	Much too slow		Somewhat too slow		Right amount		Somewhat too fast		Much too fast		Don't know		Total	
	Population growth	1%	4	5%	21	43%	200	23%	106	9%	43	19%	87	100%
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.)	2%	9	15%	70	58%	265	11%	49	3%	13	11%	53	100%	459
Jobs growth	8%	36	16%	75	12%	53	0%	2	0%	0	64%	293	100%	458

Question 4: Code Enforcement		
To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Decatur?	Percent of respondents	Count
Not a problem	22%	102
Minor problem	39%	180
Moderate problem	28%	128
Major problem	4%	18
Don't know	6%	28
Total	100%	457

Question 5: Community Safety														
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Decatur:	Very safe		Somewhat safe		Neither safe nor unsafe		Somewhat unsafe		Very unsafe		Don't know		Total	
	Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	42%	194	42%	196	7%	33	6%	27	1%	3	2%	9	100%
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft)	20%	93	50%	232	12%	57	14%	65	1%	6	2%	9	100%	461
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste	40%	186	31%	144	11%	53	3%	14	1%	3	13%	62	100%	461

Question 6: Personal Safety														
Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:	Very safe		Somewhat safe		Neither safe nor unsafe		Somewhat unsafe		Very unsafe		Don't know		Total	
	In your neighborhood during the day	72%	335	23%	106	3%	13	1%	5	0%	2	0%	2	100%
In your neighborhood after dark	33%	151	47%	215	8%	35	10%	46	2%	8	1%	5	100%	460
In Decatur's downtown area during the day	73%	334	23%	105	2%	11	1%	5	0%	1	0%	2	100%	458
In Decatur's downtown area after dark	31%	145	43%	198	10%	48	10%	45	3%	13	3%	12	100%	460

Question 7: Crime Victim		
During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	87%	400
Yes	12%	57
Don't know	1%	3
Total	100%	460

Question 8: Crime Reporting		
If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	28%	18
Yes	67%	43
Don't know	5%	3
Total	100%	64

Question 9: Resident Behaviors												
In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Decatur?	Never		Once or twice		3 to 12 times		13 to 26 times		More than 26 times		Total	
	Used Decatur public libraries or their services	24%	110	24%	109	27%	127	16%	72	9%	44	100%
Used Decatur recreation centers	55%	251	20%	93	13%	57	6%	25	7%	30	100%	457
Participated in a recreation program or activity	58%	264	22%	102	12%	54	4%	17	5%	22	100%	459
Visited a neighborhood park or City park	13%	62	21%	96	26%	121	17%	80	22%	102	100%	461
Ridden a local bus within Decatur	68%	307	12%	56	9%	40	4%	19	7%	31	100%	452
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	61%	280	24%	112	11%	51	2%	8	1%	7	100%	458
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	71%	328	14%	65	11%	49	2%	9	2%	8	100%	459
Read Decatur Focus Newsletter	4%	20	11%	48	64%	292	10%	46	11%	49	100%	454
Visited the City of Decatur Web site (at www.decaturga.com)	20%	93	18%	83	36%	162	15%	68	11%	49	100%	456
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home	11%	51	5%	24	8%	35	9%	39	67%	304	100%	454
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Decatur	45%	206	29%	133	15%	67	4%	20	6%	29	100%	456
Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Decatur	51%	231	18%	80	10%	47	4%	18	17%	79	100%	455
Participated in a club or civic group in Decatur	67%	305	14%	65	13%	58	3%	14	3%	16	100%	458
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	4%	17	19%	87	45%	205	17%	78	16%	73	100%	460

Question 10: Neighborliness		
About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors (people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you)?	Percent of respondents	Count
Just about everyday	31%	143
Several times a week	27%	123
Several times a month	23%	106
Once a month	6%	29
Several times a year	6%	29
Once a year or less	1%	6
Never	5%	24
Total	100%	460

Question 11: Service Quality												
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Decatur:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Police services	36%	162	46%	211	6%	29	2%	7	10%	47	100%
Fire services	37%	171	35%	161	2%	10	0%	0	26%	117	100%	459
Crime prevention	18%	83	44%	198	16%	74	1%	5	21%	95	100%	455
Fire prevention and education	14%	65	35%	156	7%	30	0%	2	44%	198	100%	452
Municipal courts	8%	37	24%	110	9%	39	1%	3	58%	264	100%	453
Traffic enforcement	12%	53	41%	188	19%	86	8%	37	20%	92	100%	456
Street repair	9%	43	38%	172	36%	163	10%	47	7%	31	100%	457
Street cleaning	17%	79	51%	233	22%	98	6%	26	4%	20	100%	456
Street lighting	16%	75	52%	237	26%	120	4%	16	2%	8	100%	456
Sidewalk maintenance	14%	65	43%	195	28%	127	13%	59	1%	6	100%	452
Traffic signal timing	6%	28	27%	125	34%	155	30%	137	2%	10	100%	454
Bus or transit services	12%	55	34%	156	12%	55	3%	13	39%	176	100%	455
Garbage collection	36%	161	49%	221	6%	28	3%	15	6%	29	100%	454
Recycling	41%	189	39%	176	7%	33	4%	20	8%	37	100%	455
Yard waste pick-up	27%	124	36%	165	8%	39	5%	21	23%	107	100%	457

Question 11: Service Quality												
Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Decatur:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Storm drainage	11%	48	39%	175	22%	101	9%	40	20%	89	100%
City parks	27%	123	54%	244	10%	47	1%	5	8%	34	100%	453
Recreation programs or classes	15%	67	31%	141	6%	26	1%	6	47%	213	100%	453
Recreation centers or facilities	12%	57	32%	144	11%	50	3%	12	42%	191	100%	454
Land use, planning and zoning	11%	48	36%	161	20%	92	7%	34	26%	118	100%	453
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	9%	40	31%	140	20%	91	9%	39	32%	143	100%	452
Animal control	12%	52	42%	189	12%	56	4%	20	30%	134	100%	451
Economic development	17%	74	44%	200	14%	63	2%	11	23%	102	100%	450
Health services	13%	58	32%	144	12%	53	3%	13	41%	187	100%	454
Services to seniors	10%	47	18%	81	7%	34	1%	5	63%	289	100%	456
Services to youth	13%	57	30%	136	6%	27	2%	9	50%	225	100%	454
Services to low-income people	7%	32	19%	84	10%	45	5%	21	59%	265	100%	447
Public library services	38%	172	40%	182	5%	23	1%	4	17%	76	100%	457
Public information services	20%	90	42%	191	12%	53	2%	9	25%	113	100%	457
Public schools	25%	113	31%	142	7%	32	2%	11	34%	153	100%	451
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	10%	44	31%	141	13%	61	5%	25	41%	184	100%	454
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	9%	41	33%	152	25%	114	10%	45	23%	104	100%	456

Question 12: Government Services Overall												
Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	The City of Decatur	32%	145	52%	237	9%	41	2%	11	4%	20	100%
The Federal Government	5%	21	27%	125	40%	182	15%	71	13%	57	100%	456
The State Government	3%	16	25%	115	45%	205	12%	56	14%	64	100%	456
DeKalb County Government	4%	20	31%	140	36%	166	18%	80	11%	50	100%	456

Question 13: Contact with City Employees		
Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Decatur within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	39%	175
Yes	61%	274
Total	100%	449

Question 14: City Employees												
What was your impression of the employee(s) of the City of Decatur in your most recent contact?	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	Knowledge	39%	115	44%	131	12%	34	5%	14	0%	1	100%
Responsiveness	41%	119	38%	111	15%	45	5%	14	0%	1	100%	290
Courtesy	45%	132	35%	103	13%	39	6%	17	0%	1	100%	292
Overall impression	39%	115	37%	109	17%	51	6%	16	0%	1	100%	292

Question 15: Government Performance												
Please rate the following categories of Decatur government performance:	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Don't know		Total	
	The value of services for the taxes paid to Decatur	11%	52	44%	200	22%	100	9%	41	13%	59	100%
The overall direction that Decatur is taking	23%	106	51%	229	16%	73	3%	13	7%	33	100%	454
The job Decatur government does at welcoming citizen involvement	19%	84	41%	185	14%	62	4%	17	23%	104	100%	452
The job Decatur government does at listening to citizens	9%	42	37%	169	15%	67	7%	31	32%	142	100%	451

Question 16: Recommendation and Longevity												
Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:	Very likely		Somewhat likely		Somewhat unlikely		Very unlikely		Don't know		Total	
	Recommend living in Decatur to someone who asks	75%	345	21%	98	1%	5	2%	11	1%	4	100%
Remain in Decatur for the next five years	62%	283	24%	108	5%	25	6%	26	3%	16	100%	459

Question 17: Community Cooperation in an Emergency

If public officials asked everyone in Decatur to conserve water or electricity because of some emergency, how likely or unlikely is it that people in your community would cooperate?	Percent of respondents	Count
Very likely	60%	276
Somewhat likely	34%	158
Somewhat unlikely	4%	19
Very unlikely	2%	7
Total	100%	460

Question 18: Impact of the Economy

What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:	Percent of respondents	Count
Very positive	3%	16
Somewhat positive	11%	52
Neutral	46%	214
Somewhat negative	32%	147
Very negative	7%	34
Total	100%	462

Question 19a: Policy Question 1

To what degree would you support or oppose the City of Decatur using public funds to assure that quality, reasonably priced housing options exist in the city?	Percent of respondents
Strongly support	32%
Somewhat support	34%
Somewhat oppose	14%
Strongly oppose	14%
Don't know	6%
Total	100%

Question 19b: Policy Question 2	
Do city facilities, programs and infrastructure exist that would make it easy for the typical Decatur resident to include at least 30 minutes of physical activity, like walking, in their schedules on a routine basis?	Percent of respondents
Strongly agree	36%
Agree	48%
Neutral	8%
Disagree	2%
Strongly disagree	2%
Don't know	4%
Total	100%

Question 19c: Policy Question 3	
To what degree would you support or oppose the use of public funding to support arts activities, art facilities and public art within the City of Decatur?	Percent of respondents
Strongly support	46%
Somewhat support	36%
Somewhat oppose	7%
Strongly oppose	6%
Don't know	4%
Total	100%

Question D1: Employment Status		
Are you currently employed for pay?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	24%	109
Yes, full-time	69%	316
Yes, part-time	8%	36
Total	100%	460

Question D2: Mode of Transportation Used for Commute	
During a typical week, how many days do you commute to work (for the longest distance of your commute) in each of the ways listed below?	Percent of days mode used
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc...) by myself	65%
Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc...) with other children or adults	6%
Bus, rail, subway or other public transportation	8%
Bicycle	1%
Bicycle	1%
Work at home	13%
Other	1%

Question D3: Length of Residency		
How many years have you lived in Decatur?	Percent of respondents	Count
Less than 2 years	21%	100
2 to 5 years	29%	133
6 to 10 years	19%	86
11 to 20 years	15%	72
More than 20 years	16%	74
Total	100%	466

Question D4: Housing Unit Type		
Which best describes the building you live in?	Percent of respondents	Count
One family house detached from any other houses	56%	261
House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or town	8%	38
Building with two or more apartments or condominiums	34%	158
Mobile home	0%	0
Other	2%	7
Total	100%	463

Question D5: Housing Tenure (Rent/Own)		
Is this house, apartment or mobile home...	Percent of respondents	Count
Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment	36%	164
Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear?	64%	292
Total	100%	455

Question D6: Monthly Housing Cost		
About how much is your monthly housing cost for the place you live (including rent, mortgage payment, property tax, property insurance and homeowners" association (HOA) fees)?	Percent of respondents	Count
Less than \$300 per month	7%	32
\$300 to \$599 per month	13%	59
\$600 to \$999 per month	17%	78
\$1,000 to \$1,499 per month	17%	78
\$1,500 to \$2,499 per month	30%	135
\$2,500 or more per month	17%	77
Total	100%	458

Question D7: Presence of Children in Household		
Do any children 17 or under live in your household?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	69%	322
Yes	31%	142
Total	100%	463

Question D8: Presence of Older Adults in Household		
Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	82%	380
Yes	18%	84
Total	100%	463

Question D9: Household Income		
How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year? (Please include in your total income money from all sources for all persons living in your household.)	Percent of respondents	Count
Less than \$24,999	20%	89
\$25,000 to \$49,999	16%	72
\$50,000 to \$99,999	22%	97
\$100,000 to \$149,000	22%	97
\$150,000 or more	21%	94
Total	100%	448

Question D10: Ethnicity		
Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?	Percent of respondents	Count
No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	98%	443
Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino	2%	9
Total	100%	453

Question D11: Race		
What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race(s) you consider yourself to be.)	Percent of respondents	Count
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3%	12
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	4%	18
Black or African American	18%	83
White	74%	339
Other	6%	29
Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one option		

Question D12: Age		
In which category is your age?	Percent of respondents	Count
18 to 24 years	3%	13
25 to 34 years	28%	132
35 to 44 years	23%	109
45 to 54 years	19%	90
55 to 64 years	10%	46
65 to 74 years	8%	38
75 years or older	8%	36
Total	100%	464

Question D13: Gender		
What is your sex?	Percent of respondents	Count
Female	59%	275
Male	41%	188
Total	100%	462

Question D14: Registered to Vote		
Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	11%	53
Yes	84%	393
Ineligible to vote	3%	14
Don't know	1%	7
Total	100%	466

Question D15: Voted in Last General Election		
Many people don't have time to vote in elections. Do you remember voting in the last general election?	Percent of respondents	Count
No	11%	52
Yes	82%	384
Ineligible to vote	4%	18
Don't know	3%	12
Total	100%	465

APPENDIX B: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The National Citizen Survey™ was developed to provide local jurisdictions an accurate, affordable and easy way to assess and interpret resident opinion about important community issues. While standardization of question wording and survey methods provide the rigor to assure valid results, each jurisdiction has enough flexibility to construct a customized version of The National Citizen Survey™ that asks residents about key local services and important local issues.

Results offer insight into residents' perspectives about local government performance and as such provide important benchmarks for jurisdictions working on performance measurement. The National Citizen Survey™ is designed to help with budget, land use and strategic planning as well as to communicate with local residents. The National Citizen Survey™ permits questions to test support for local policies and answers to its questions also speak to community trust and involvement in community-building activities as well as to resident demographic characteristics.

SURVEY VALIDITY

The question of survey validity has two parts: 1) how can a jurisdiction be confident that the results from those who completed the questionnaire are representative of the results that would have been obtained had the survey been administered to the entire population? and 2) how closely do the perspectives recorded on the survey reflect what residents really believe or do?

To answer the first question, the best survey research practices were used for the resources spent to ensure that the results from the survey respondents reflect the opinions of residents in the entire jurisdiction. These practices include:

- Using a mail-out/mail-back methodology, which typically gets a higher response rate than phone for the same dollars spent. A higher response rate lessens the worry that those who did not respond are different than those who did respond.
- Selecting households at random within the jurisdiction to receive the survey. A random selection ensures that the households selected to receive the survey are similar to the entire population. A non-random sample may only include households from one geographic area, or from households of only one type.
- Over-sampling multi-family housing units to improve response from hard-to-reach, lower income, or younger apartment dwellers.
- Selecting the respondent within the household using an unbiased sampling procedure; in this case, the "birthday method." The cover letter included an instruction requesting that the respondent in the household be the adult (18 years old or older) who most recently had a birthday, irrespective of year of birth.
- Contacting potential respondents three times to encourage response from people who may have different opinions or habits than those who would respond with only a single prompt.
- Soliciting response on jurisdiction letterhead signed by the highest ranking elected official or staff member, thus appealing to the recipients' sense of civic responsibility.
- Providing a self-addressed, postage-paid return envelope.
- Offering the survey in Spanish when appropriate and requested by City officials.
- Using the most recent available information about the characteristics of jurisdiction residents to weight the data to reflect the demographics of the population.

The answer to the second question about how closely the perspectives recorded on the survey reflect what residents really believe or do is more complex. Resident responses to surveys are influenced by a variety of factors. For questions about service quality, residents' expectations for

service quality play a role as well as the “objective” quality of the service provided, the way the resident perceives the entire community (that is, the context in which the service is provided), the scale on which the resident is asked to record his or her opinion and, of course, the opinion, itself, that a resident holds about the service. Similarly a resident’s report of certain behaviors is colored by what he or she believes is the socially desirable response (e.g., reporting tolerant behaviors toward “oppressed groups,” likelihood of voting a tax increase for services to poor people, use of alternative modes of travel to work besides the single occupancy vehicle), his or her memory of the actual behavior (if it is not a question speculating about future actions, like a vote), his or her confidence that he or she can be honest without suffering any negative consequences (thus the need for anonymity) as well as the actual behavior itself.

How closely survey results come to recording the way a person really feels or behaves often is measured by the coincidence of reported behavior with observed current behavior (e.g., driving habits), reported intentions to behave with observed future behavior (e.g., voting choices) or reported opinions about current community quality with objective characteristics of the community (e.g., feelings of safety correlated with rates of crime). There is a body of scientific literature that has investigated the relationship between reported behaviors and actual behaviors. Well-conducted surveys, by and large, do capture true respondent behaviors or intentions to act with great accuracy. Predictions of voting outcomes tend to be quite accurate using survey research, as do reported behaviors that are not about highly sensitive issues (e.g., family abuse or other illegal or morally sanctioned activities). For self-reports about highly sensitive issues, statistical adjustments can be made to correct for the respondents’ tendency to report what they think the “correct” response should be.

Research on the correlation of resident opinion about service quality and “objective” ratings of service quality tend to be ambiguous, some showing stronger relationships than others. NRC’s own research has demonstrated that residents who report the lowest ratings of street repair live in communities with objectively worse street conditions than those who report high ratings of street repair (based on road quality, delay in street repair, number of road repair employees). Similarly, the lowest rated fire services appear to be “objectively” worse than the highest rated fire services (expenditures per capita, response time, “professional” status of firefighters, breadth of services and training provided). Whether some research confirms or disconfirms that relationship between what residents think about a community and what can be seen “objectively” in a community, NRC has argued that resident opinion is a perspective that cannot be ignored by government administrators. NRC principals have written, “If you collect trash three times a day but residents think that your trash haul is lousy, you still have a problem.”

SURVEY SAMPLING

“Sampling” refers to the method by which survey recipients were chosen. All households within the City of Decatur were eligible to participate in the survey; 1,200 were selected to receive the survey. These 1,200 households were randomly selected from a comprehensive list of all housing units within the City of Decatur boundaries. The basis of the list of all housing units was a United States Postal Service listing of housing units within zip codes. Since some of the zip codes that serve the City of Decatur households may also serve addresses that lie outside of the jurisdiction, the exact geographic location of each housing unit was compared to jurisdiction boundaries, using the most current municipal boundary file (updated on a quarterly basis), and addresses located outside of the City of Decatur boundaries were removed from consideration.

To choose the 1,200 survey recipients, a systematic sampling method was applied to the list of households known to be within the City of Decatur. Systematic sampling is a procedure whereby a complete list of all possible items is culled, selecting every Nth one until the appropriate amount of items is selected. Multi-family housing units were over sampled as residents of this type of housing typically respond at lower rates to surveys than do those in single-family housing units.

An individual within each household was selected using the birthday method. The birthday method selects a person within the household by asking the “person whose birthday has most recently passed” to complete the questionnaire. The underlying assumption in this method is that day of birth has no relationship to the way people respond to surveys. This instruction was contained in the cover letter accompanying the questionnaire.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Selected households received three mailings, one week apart, beginning March 12, 2008. The first mailing was a prenotification postcard announcing the upcoming survey. The next mailing contained a letter from the mayor inviting the household to participate, a questionnaire and a postage-paid return envelope. The final mailing contained a reminder letter, another survey and a postage-paid return envelope. The second cover letter asked those who had not completed the survey to do so and those who have already done so to refrain from turning in another survey. Completed surveys were collected over the following five weeks.

SURVEY RESPONSE RATE AND CONFIDENCE INTERVALS

Twenty-two surveys mailed were returned because the housing unit was vacant or the postal service was unable to deliver the survey as addressed. Of the 1,178 households receiving the survey mailings, 468 completed the survey, providing a response rate of 40%. In general, response rates obtained on local government resident surveys range from 25% to 40%.

In theory, in 95 cases out of 100, the results based on the number of responses obtained will differ by no more than five percentage points in either direction from what would have been obtained had responses been collected from all City of Decatur adults. This difference from the presumed population finding is referred to as the sampling error (or the “margin of error” or 95% confidence interval”). For subgroups of responses, the margin of sampling error is larger. In addition to sampling error, the practical difficulties of conducting any survey of the public may introduce other sources of error. For example, the failure of some of the selected adults to participate in the sample or the difficulty of including all sectors of the population, such as residents of some institutions or group residences, may lead to somewhat different results.

SURVEY PROCESSING (DATA ENTRY)

Completed surveys received by NRC were assigned a unique identification number. Additionally, each survey was reviewed and “cleaned” as necessary. For example, a question may have asked a respondent to pick two items out of a list of five, but the respondent checked three; NRC staff would choose randomly two of the three selected items to be coded in the dataset.

Once all surveys were assigned a unique identification number, they were entered into an electronic dataset. This dataset was subject to a data entry protocol of “key and verify,” in which survey data were entered twice into an electronic dataset and then compared. Discrepancies were evaluated against the original survey form and corrected. Range checks as well as other forms of quality control were also performed.

SURVEY DATA WEIGHTING

The demographic characteristics of the survey sample were compared to those found in the 2000 Census estimates. Sample results were weighted using the population norms to reflect the appropriate percent of those residents in the city's population. Other discrepancies between the whole population and the sample were also aided by the weighting due to the intercorrelation of many socioeconomic characteristics.

The variables used for weighting were tenure, housing unit type, race and gender/age. This decision was based on:

- The disparity between the survey respondent characteristics and the population norms for these variables
- The saliency of these variables in detecting differences of opinion among subgroups
- The importance to the community of correct ethnic representation
- The historical use of the variables and the desirability of consistently representing different groups over the years

The primary objective of weighting survey data is to make the survey sample reflective of the larger population of the community. This is done by: 1) reviewing the sample demographics and comparing them to the population norms from the most recent Census or other sources and 2) comparing the responses to different questions for demographic subgroups. The demographic characteristics that are least similar to the Census and yield the most different results are the best candidates for data weighting. A third criterion sometimes used is the importance that the community places on a specific variable. For example, if a jurisdiction feels that accurate race representation is key to staff and public acceptance of the study results, additional consideration will be given in the weighting process to adjusting the race variable.

A special software program using mathematical algorithms is used to calculate the appropriate weights. Several different weighting "schemes" are tested to ensure the best fit for the data.

The process actually begins at the point of sampling. Knowing that residents in single family dwellings are more likely to respond to a mail survey, NRC oversamples residents of multi-family dwellings to ensure their proper representation in the sample data. Rather than giving all residents an equal chance of receiving the survey, this is systematic, stratified sampling, which gives each resident of the jurisdiction a known chance of receiving the survey (and apartment dwellers, for example, a greater chance than single family home dwellers). As a consequence, results must be weighted to recapture the proper representation of apartment dwellers.

The results of the weighting scheme are presented in the following table

Weighting Scheme for the City of Decatur Citizen Survey			
Respondent Characteristics	Population Norm ¹	Unweighted Survey Data	Weighted Survey Data
Tenure			
Rent Home	41%	25%	36%
Own Home	59%	75%	64%
Type of Housing Unit			
Single-Family Detached	56%	52%	56%
Attached	44%	48%	44%
Ethnicity			
Non-Hispanic	98%	98%	98%
Hispanic	2%	2%	2%
Race			
White/Caucasian	66%	80%	70%
Non-White	34%	20%	30%
Gender			
Female	59%	64%	59%
Male	41%	36%	41%
Age			
18-34	35%	21%	31%
35-54	40%	40%	43%
55+	25%	40%	26%
Gender and Age			
Females 18-34	21%	15%	19%
Females 35-54	21%	23%	23%
Females 55+	17%	26%	18%
Males 18-34	14%	6%	13%
Males 35-54	19%	16%	19%
Males 55+	8%	14%	8%

¹ Source: 2000 Census

SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

The survey dataset was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency distributions were presented in the body of the report.

Use of the “Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor” Response Scale

The scale on which respondents are asked to record their opinions about service and community quality is “excellent,” “good,” “fair” or “poor” (EGFP). This scale has important advantages over other scale possibilities (very good to very bad; very satisfied to very dissatisfied; strongly agree to strongly disagree, as examples). EGFP is used by the plurality of jurisdictions conducting citizen surveys across the U.S. The advantage of familiarity was one that NRC did not want to dismiss when crafting The National Citizen Survey™ questionnaire, because elected officials, staff and residents already are acquainted with opinion surveys measured this way. EGFP also has the advantage of offering three positive options, rather than only two, over which a resident can offer an opinion. While symmetrical scales often are the right choice in other measurement tasks, NRC has found that ratings of almost every local government service in almost every jurisdiction tend, on average, to be positive (that is, above the scale midpoint). Therefore, to permit finer distinctions among positively rated services, EGFP offers three options across which to spread those ratings. EGFP is more neutral because it requires no positive statement of service quality to judge (as agree-disagree scales require) and, finally, EGFP intends to measure absolute quality of service delivery or community quality (unlike satisfaction scales which ignore residents’ perceptions of quality in favor of their report on the acceptability of the level of service offered).

“Don’t Know” Responses

On many of the questions in the survey respondents may answer “don’t know.” The proportion of respondents giving this reply is shown in the full set of responses included in Appendix A. However, these responses have been removed from the analyses presented in the body of the report. In other words, the tables and graphs display the responses from respondents who had an opinion about a specific item.

Benchmark Comparisons

NRC has been leading the strategic use of surveys for local governments since 1991, when the principals of the company wrote the first edition of what became the classic text on citizen surveying. In *Citizen Surveys: how to do them, how to use them, what they mean*, published by ICMA, not only were the principles for quality survey methods articulated, but both the idea of benchmark data for citizen opinion and the method for gathering benchmark data were pioneered. The argument for benchmarks was called “In Search of Standards.” “What has been missing from a local government’s analysis of its survey results is the context that school administrators can supply when they tell parents how an 80 percent score on the social studies test compares to test results from other school systems...”

NRC’s database of comparative resident opinion is comprised of resident perspectives gathered in citizen surveys from approximately 500 jurisdictions whose residents evaluated local government services. Conducted with typically no fewer than 400 residents in each jurisdiction, opinions are intended to represent over 30 million Americans. NRC has innovated a method for quantitatively integrating the results of surveys that conducted by NRC with those that others have conducted. The integration methods have been thoroughly described not only in the Citizen Surveys book, but also in *Public Administration Review, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. Scholars who specialize in the analysis of citizen surveys regularly have relied on this work (e.g., Kelly, J. &

Swindell, D. (2002). Service quality variation across urban space: First steps towards a model of citizen satisfaction. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 24, 271-288.; Van Ryzin, G., Muzzio, D., Immerwahr, S., Gulick, L. & Martinez, E. (2004). Drivers and consequences of citizen satisfaction: An application of the American Customer Satisfaction Index Model to New York City, *Public Administration Review*, 64, 331- 341). The method described in those publications is refined regularly and statistically tested on a growing number of citizen surveys in NRC's proprietary databases. NRC's work on calculating national benchmarks for resident opinions about service delivery and quality of life won the Samuel C. May award for research excellence from the Western Governmental Research Association.

The Role of Comparisons

Benchmark comparisons are used for performance measurement. Jurisdictions use the comparative information to help interpret their own citizen survey results, to create or revise community plans, to evaluate the success of policy or budget decisions, to measure local government performance. Taking the pulse of the community has little meaning without knowing what pulse rate is too high and what is too low. When surveys of service satisfaction turn up "good" citizen evaluations, jurisdictions need to know how others rate their services to understand if "good" is good enough. Furthermore, in the absence of national or peer community comparisons, a jurisdiction is left with comparing its fire protection rating to its street maintenance rating. That comparison is unfair. Streets always lose to fire. More important and harder questions need to be asked; for example, how do residents' ratings of fire service compare to opinions about fire service in other communities?

A police department that provides the fastest and most efficient service—one that closes most of its cases, solves most of its crimes and keeps the crime rate low—still has a problem to fix if the residents in the community it intends to protect believe services are not very good compared to ratings given by residents to their own objectively "worse" departments. The benchmark data can help that police department – or any department – to understand how well citizens think it is doing. Without the comparative data, it would be like bowling in a tournament without knowing what the other teams are scoring. NRC recommends that citizen opinion be used in conjunction with other sources of data about budget, personnel and politics to help managers know how to respond to comparative results.

Jurisdictions in the benchmark database are distributed geographically across the country and range from small to large in population size. Most commonly, comparisons are made to the entire database. Comparisons may also be made to subsets of jurisdictions (for example, within a given region or population category). Despite the differences in jurisdiction characteristics, all are in the business of providing local government services to residents. Though individual jurisdiction circumstances, resources and practices vary, the objective in every community is to provide services that are so timely, tailored and effective that residents conclude the services are of the highest quality. High ratings in any jurisdiction, like SAT scores in any teen household, bring pride and a sense of accomplishment.

Comparison of Decatur to the Benchmark Database

The City of Decatur chose to have comparisons made to the entire database. A benchmark comparison (the average rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked) has been provided when a similar question on the City of Decatur Survey was included in NRC's database and there were at least five jurisdictions in which the question was asked. For most

questions compared to the entire dataset, there were more than 100 jurisdictions included in the benchmark comparison.

Where comparisons are available, Decatur results are noted as being “above” the benchmark, “below” the benchmark or “similar to” the benchmark. This evaluation of “above,” “below” or “similar to” comes from a statistical comparison of Decatur's rating to the benchmark (the rating from all the comparison jurisdictions where a similar question was asked).

APPENDIX C: SURVEY MATERIALS

The following pages contain copies of the survey materials sent to randomly selected households within the City of Decatur.



509 North McDonough Street
PO Box 220
Decatur, Georgia 30031

Presorted
First Class Mail
US Postage
PAID
Boulder, CO
Permit NO. 94



509 North McDonough Street
PO Box 220
Decatur, Georgia 30031

Presorted
First Class Mail
US Postage
PAID
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Presorted
First Class Mail
US Postage
PAID
Boulder, CO
Permit NO. 94

Dear Decatur Resident,

Your household has been selected at random to participate in an anonymous citizen survey about the City of Decatur. You will receive a copy of the survey next week in the mail with instructions for completing and returning it. Thank you in advance for helping us with this important project!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William F. Floyd". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names being more prominent.

William F. Floyd
Mayor

Dear Decatur Resident,

Your household has been selected at random to participate in an anonymous citizen survey about the City of Decatur. You will receive a copy of the survey next week in the mail with instructions for completing and returning it. Thank you in advance for helping us with this important project!

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William F. Floyd
Mayor



City Commission
509 North McDonough Street
P.O. Box 220
Decatur, Georgia 30031
404/370-4102 ▪ Fax 678/553-6518
info@decaturga.com ▪ <http://www.decaturga.com>

March 2008

Dear Decatur Resident:

The City of Decatur wants to know what you think about our community and municipal government. You have been randomly selected to participate in Decatur's 2008 Citizen Survey.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the enclosed Citizen Survey. Your answers will help the City Commission make decisions that affect our community. You should find the questions interesting and we will definitely find your answers useful. Please participate!

To get a representative sample of Decatur residents, the adult (anyone 18 years or older) in your household who most recently had a birthday should complete this survey. Year of birth of the adult does not matter.

Please have the appropriate member of the household spend a few minutes to answer all the questions and return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. **Your responses will remain completely anonymous.**

Your participation in this survey is very important – especially since your household is one of only a small number of households being surveyed. If you have any questions about the Citizen Survey, please call (404) 370-4102.

Please help us shape the future of Decatur. Thank you for your time and participation.

Sincerely,

William F. Floyd
Mayor

The City of Decatur 2008 Citizen Survey

Please complete this questionnaire if you are the adult (age 18 or older) in the household who most recently had a birthday. The adult's year of birth does not matter. Please select the response (by circling the number or checking the box) that most closely represents your opinion for each question. Your responses are anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

1. Please rate each of the following aspects of quality of life in Decatur:

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Decatur as a place to live.....	1	2	3	4	5
Your neighborhood as a place to live.....	1	2	3	4	5
Decatur as a place to raise children.....	1	2	3	4	5
Decatur as a place to work.....	1	2	3	4	5
Decatur as a place to retire	1	2	3	4	5
The overall quality of life in Decatur	1	2	3	4	5

2. Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Decatur as a whole:

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Sense of community.....	1	2	3	4	5
Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall appearance of Decatur	1	2	3	4	5
Cleanliness of Decatur	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of new development in Decatur.....	1	2	3	4	5
Variety of housing options	1	2	3	4	5
Overall quality of business and service establishments in Decatur	1	2	3	4	5
Shopping opportunities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to attend cultural activities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recreational opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Employment opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Educational opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to participate in social events and activities	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to participate in religious or spiritual events and activities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to volunteer.....	1	2	3	4	5
Opportunities to participate in community issues.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of car travel in Decatur.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of bus travel in Decatur	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of rail or subway travel in Decatur	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of bicycle travel in Decatur	1	2	3	4	5
Ease of walking in Decatur.....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of paths and walking trails	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic flow on major streets.....	1	2	3	4	5
Amount of public parking	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality housing.....	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality child care	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality health care	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of affordable quality food	1	2	3	4	5
Air quality	1	2	3	4	5
Quality of overall natural environment in Decatur	1	2	3	4	5
Overall image or reputation of Decatur.....	1	2	3	4	5

3. Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Decatur over the past 2 years:

	<i>Much too slow</i>	<i>Somewhat too slow</i>	<i>Right amount</i>	<i>Somewhat too fast</i>	<i>Much too fast</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Population growth	1	2	3	4	5	6
Retail growth (stores, restaurants, etc.).....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Jobs growth.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

4. To what degree, if at all, are run down buildings, weed lots or junk vehicles a problem in Decatur?
 Not a problem Minor problem Moderate problem Major problem Don't know

5. Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel from the following in Decatur:

	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	Don't know
Violent crime (e.g., rape, assault, robbery)	1	2	3	4	5	6
Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft).....	1	2	3	4	5	6
Environmental hazards, including toxic waste.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

6. Please rate how safe or unsafe you feel:

	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Very unsafe	Don't know
In your neighborhood during the day.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
In your neighborhood after dark.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
In Decatur's downtown area during the day.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
In Decatur's downtown area after dark.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

7. During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?
 No → Go to Question 9 Yes → Go to Question 8 Don't know → Go to Question 9

8. If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?
 No Yes Don't know

9. In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members participated in the following activities in Decatur?

	Never	Once or twice	3 to 12 times	13 to 26 times	More than 26 times
Used Decatur public libraries or their services	1	2	3	4	5
Used Decatur recreation centers	1	2	3	4	5
Participated in a recreation program or activity	1	2	3	4	5
Visited a neighborhood park or City park.....	1	2	3	4	5
Ridden a local bus within Decatur	1	2	3	4	5
Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting	1	2	3	4	5
Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television	1	2	3	4	5
Read Decatur Focus Newsletter	1	2	3	4	5
Visited the City of Decatur Web site (at www.decaturga.com)	1	2	3	4	5
Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home.....	1	2	3	4	5
Volunteered your time to some group or activity in Decatur	1	2	3	4	5
Participated in religious or spiritual activities in Decatur.....	1	2	3	4	5
Participated in a club or civic group in Decatur	1	2	3	4	5
Provided help to a friend or neighbor	1	2	3	4	5

10. About how often, if at all, do you talk to or visit with your immediate neighbors (people who live in the 10 or 20 households that are closest to you)?

- Just about everyday
 Several times a week
 Several times a month
 Once a month
 Several times a year
 Once a year or less
 Never

The City of Decatur 2008 Citizen Survey

11. Please rate the quality of each of the following services in Decatur:

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Police services	1	2	3	4	5
Fire services	1	2	3	4	5
Crime prevention	1	2	3	4	5
Fire prevention and education	1	2	3	4	5
Municipal courts	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic enforcement	1	2	3	4	5
Street repair	1	2	3	4	5
Street cleaning	1	2	3	4	5
Street lighting	1	2	3	4	5
Sidewalk maintenance	1	2	3	4	5
Traffic signal timing	1	2	3	4	5
Bus or transit services.....	1	2	3	4	5
Garbage collection.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recycling.....	1	2	3	4	5
Yard waste pick-up	1	2	3	4	5
Storm drainage.....	1	2	3	4	5
City parks.....	1	2	3	4	5
Recreation programs or classes	1	2	3	4	5
Recreation centers or facilities.....	1	2	3	4	5
Land use, planning and zoning	1	2	3	4	5
Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc)	1	2	3	4	5
Animal control	1	2	3	4	5
Economic development	1	2	3	4	5
Health services	1	2	3	4	5
Services to seniors.....	1	2	3	4	5
Services to youth.....	1	2	3	4	5
Services to low-income people	1	2	3	4	5
Public library services	1	2	3	4	5
Public information services	1	2	3	4	5
Public schools.....	1	2	3	4	5
Emergency preparedness (services that prepare the community for natural disasters or other emergency situations)	1	2	3	4	5
Preservation of natural areas such as open space, farmlands and greenbelts	1	2	3	4	5

12. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by each of the following?

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
The City of Decatur.....	1	2	3	4	5
The Federal Government	1	2	3	4	5
The State Government	1	2	3	4	5
DeKalb County Government.....	1	2	3	4	5

13. Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Decatur within the last 12 months (including police, receptionists, planners or any others)?

- No → Go to Question 15 Yes → Go to Question 14

14. What was your impression of the employee(s) of the City of Decatur in your most recent contact? (Rate each characteristic below.)

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Knowledge.....	1	2	3	4	5
Responsiveness.....	1	2	3	4	5
Courtesy.....	1	2	3	4	5
Overall impression.....	1	2	3	4	5

15. Please rate the following categories of Decatur government performance:

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
The value of services for the taxes paid to Decatur.....	1	2	3	4	5
The overall direction that Decatur is taking.....	1	2	3	4	5
The job Decatur government does at welcoming citizen involvement.....	1	2	3	4	5
The job Decatur government does at listening to citizens.....	1	2	3	4	5

16. Please indicate how likely or unlikely you are to do each of the following:

	<i>Very likely</i>	<i>Somewhat likely</i>	<i>Somewhat unlikely</i>	<i>Very unlikely</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
Recommend living in Decatur to someone who asks.....	1	2	3	4	5
Remain in Decatur for the next five years.....	1	2	3	4	5

17. If public officials asked everyone in Decatur to conserve water or electricity because of some emergency, how likely or unlikely is it that people in your community would cooperate?

- Very likely Somewhat likely Somewhat unlikely Very unlikely

18. What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months? Do you think the impact will be:

- Very positive Somewhat positive Neutral Somewhat negative Very negative

19. Please check the response that comes closest to your opinion for each of the following questions:

- To what degree would you support or oppose the City of Decatur using public funds to assure that quality, reasonably priced housing options exist in the city?**
 - Strongly support
 - Somewhat support
 - Somewhat oppose
 - Strongly oppose
 - Don't know
- Do city facilities, programs and infrastructure exist that would make it easy for the typical Decatur resident to include at least 30 minutes of physical activity, like walking, in their schedules on a routine basis?**
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Don't know
- To what degree would you support or oppose the use of public funding to support arts activities, art facilities and public art within the City of Decatur?**
 - Strongly support
 - Somewhat support
 - Somewhat oppose
 - Strongly oppose
 - Don't know

The City of Decatur 2008 Citizen Survey

Our last questions are about you and your household. Again, all of your responses to this survey are completely anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

D1. Are you currently employed for pay?

- No → Go to Question D3
- Yes, full time → Go to Question D2
- Yes, part time → Go to Question D2

D2. During a typical week, how many days do you commute to work (for the longest distance of your commute) in each of the ways listed below? (Enter the total number of days, using whole numbers.)

- Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc...) by myself days
- Motorized vehicle (e.g., car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc...) with other children or adults days
- Bus, Rail, Subway or other public transportation days
- Walk days
- Bicycle days
- Work at home days
- Other days

D3. How many years have you lived in Decatur?

- Less than 2 years 11-20 years
- 2-5 years More than 20 years
- 6-10 years

D4. Which best describes the building you live in?

- One family house detached from any other houses
- House attached to one or more houses (e.g., a duplex or townhome)
- Building with two or more apartments or condominiums
- Mobile home
- Other

D5. Is this house, apartment or mobile home...

- Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment?
- Owned by you or someone in this house with a mortgage or free and clear?

D6. About how much is your monthly housing cost for the place you live (including rent, mortgage payment, property tax, property insurance and homeowners' association (HOA) fees)?

- Less than \$300 per month
- \$300 to \$599 per month
- \$600 to \$999 per month
- \$1,000 to \$1,499 per month
- \$1,500 to \$2,499 per month
- \$2,500 or more per month

D7. Do any children 17 or under live in your household?

- No Yes

D8. Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older?

- No Yes

D9. How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year? (Please include in your total income money from all sources for all persons living in your household.)

- Less than \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more

Please respond to both question D10 and D11:

D10. Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino?

- No, not Spanish, Hispanic or Latino
- Yes, I consider myself to be Spanish, Hispanic or Latino

D11. What is your race? (Mark one or more races to indicate what race you consider yourself to be)

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander
- Black or African American
- White
- Other

D12. In which category is your age?

- 18-24 years 55-64 years
- 25-34 years 65-74 years
- 35-44 years 75 years or older
- 45-54 years

D13. What is your sex?

- Female
- Male

D14. Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction?

- No
- Yes
- Ineligible to vote
- Don't know

D15. Many people don't have time to vote in elections. Do you remember voting in the last general election?

- No
- Yes
- Ineligible to vote
- Don't know

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return the completed survey in the postage paid envelope to:
National Research Center, Inc., 3005 30th St., Boulder, CO 80301



City Commission
509 North McDonough Street
P.O. Box 220
Decatur, Georgia 30031
404/370-4102 ▪ Fax 678/553-6518
info@decaturga.com ▪ <http://www.decaturga.com>

March 2008

Dear Decatur Resident:

About one week ago, you should have received a copy of the enclosed survey. **If you completed it and sent it back, we thank you for your time and ask you to discard this survey. Please do not respond twice.** If you have not had a chance to complete the survey, we would appreciate your response. The City of Decatur wants to know what you think about our community and municipal government. You have been randomly selected to participate in the City of Decatur Citizen Survey.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the enclosed Citizen Survey. Your answers will help the City Commission make decisions that affect our community. You should find the questions interesting and we will definitely find your answers useful. Please participate!

To get a representative sample of Decatur residents, the adult (anyone 18 years or older) in your household who most recently had a birthday should complete this survey. Year of birth of the adult does not matter.

Please have the appropriate member of the household spend a few minutes to answer all the questions and return the survey in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. **Your responses will remain completely anonymous.**

Your participation in this survey is very important – especially since your household is one of only a small number of households being surveyed. If you have any questions about the Citizen Survey, please call (404) 370-4102.

Please help us shape the future of Decatur. Thank you for your time and participation.

Sincerely,

William F. Floyd
Mayor



509 North McDonough Street
PO Box 220
Decatur, Georgia 30031

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