



City of Decatur

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The City of Decatur, Georgia

Report of Results 2006



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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 survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality survey methods and 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 re-weighted to reflect the proper demographic composition of the entire community.

The National Citizen Survey™ customized for this jurisdiction was developed in close cooperation with local jurisdiction staff. The City of Decatur staff selected items from a menu of questions about services and community problems; they defined the jurisdiction boundaries NRC used for sampling; and they provided the appropriate letterhead and signatures for mailings. City of Decatur staff also determined local interest in a variety of add-on options to The National Citizen Survey™ Basic Service.

UNDERSTANDING THE RESULTS

Survey Administration

Following the mailing of a pre-survey notification postcard to a random sample of 1,200 households, surveys were mailed to the same residences approximately one week later. A reminder letter and a new survey were sent to the same households after two weeks. Of the mailed postcards, 60 were undeliverable due to vacant or “not found” addresses. Completed surveys were received from 469 residents, for a response rate of 41%. Typically, the response rates obtained on citizen surveys range from 25% to 40%.

It is customary to describe the precision of estimates made from surveys by a “level of confidence” (or margin of error). The 95 percent confidence level for this survey of 1,200 residents is generally no greater than plus or minus 5 percentage points around any given percent reported for the entire sample.

The results were weighted to reflect the demographic profile of all residents in the City of Decatur. (For more information on the survey methodology, see Appendix B. A copy of the survey materials can be found in Appendix C.)

Survey Validity

The question of survey validity has two parts: 1) how can we be confident that the results from our sample are representative of the results we would have gotten had we administered the survey 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, we use the best survey research practices for the resources spent to assure that the results from the sample reflect the opinions of residents in the entire jurisdiction. These practices include:

1. Using a mail-out/mail-back methodology, which typically gets a higher response rate than phone for the same dollars spent.
2. Selecting households at random within the jurisdiction.
3. Over-sampling attached units to improve response from hard-to-reach, lower income, or younger apartment dwellers.

4. Selecting the respondent within the household using an unbiased sampling procedure¹.
5. 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.
6. Soliciting response on jurisdiction letterhead signed by the highest ranking elected official or staff member.
7. Providing a self-addressed, postage-paid return envelope.
8. Offering the survey in Spanish when appropriate and requested by City officials.
9. Using the most recent available information about the characteristics of jurisdiction residents to re-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 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), her memory of the actual behavior (if it is not a question speculating about future actions, like a vote), her confidence that 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

¹ The birthday method requests 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.

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 fire fighters, 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, we have argued that resident opinion is a perspective that cannot be ignored by government administrators. Elsewhere we have written, "If you collect trash three times a day but residents think that your trash haul is lousy, you still have a problem."

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 is one we did not want to dismiss 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, we have 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.

For two of the items related to crime victimization and crime reporting, “don’t know” responses were not removed. These questions were not evaluative; rather, respondents were asked if they or any member of their household had been a victim of a crime within the last year. If they were, they were then asked whether the crime had been reported to police.

Putting Evaluations Onto a 100-Point Scale

Although responses to many of the evaluative questions were made on a 4 point scale with 4 representing the best rating and 1 the worst, many of the results in this summary are reported on a common scale where 0 is the worst possible rating and 100 is the best possible rating. If everyone reported “excellent,” then the result would be 100 on the 100-point scale. Likewise, if all respondents gave a “poor” rating, the result would be 0 on the 100-point scale. If the average rating for quality of life was “good,” then the result would be 67 on a 100-point scale; “fair” would be 33 on the 100-point scale. The 95 percent confidence interval around an average score on the 100-point scale is no greater than plus or minus 5 points based on all respondents.

COMMUNITY LIFE

The National Citizen Survey™ contained many questions related to the life of residents in the community. Survey participants were asked to rate their overall quality of life, as well as other aspects of quality of life in Decatur. They also evaluated characteristics of the community, and gave their perceptions of safety in the City of Decatur. The questionnaire assessed use of the amenities of the community and involvement by respondents in the civic and economic life of Decatur.

Quality of Life

When asked to rate the overall quality of life in Decatur, 40% of respondents thought it was “excellent.” Only 1% rated overall quality of life as “poor.” All of the responses of residents who had an opinion about the overall quality of life in Decatur are shown in Figure 1 below. Other ratings can be seen in the figures on the following page.

Figure 1: Overall Quality of Life in Decatur

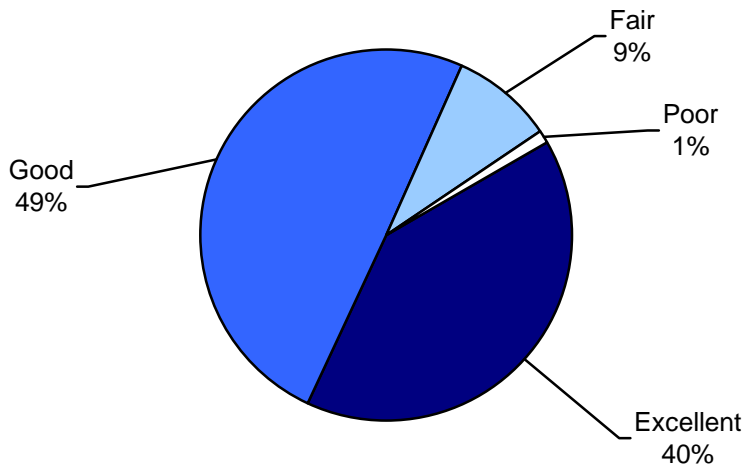
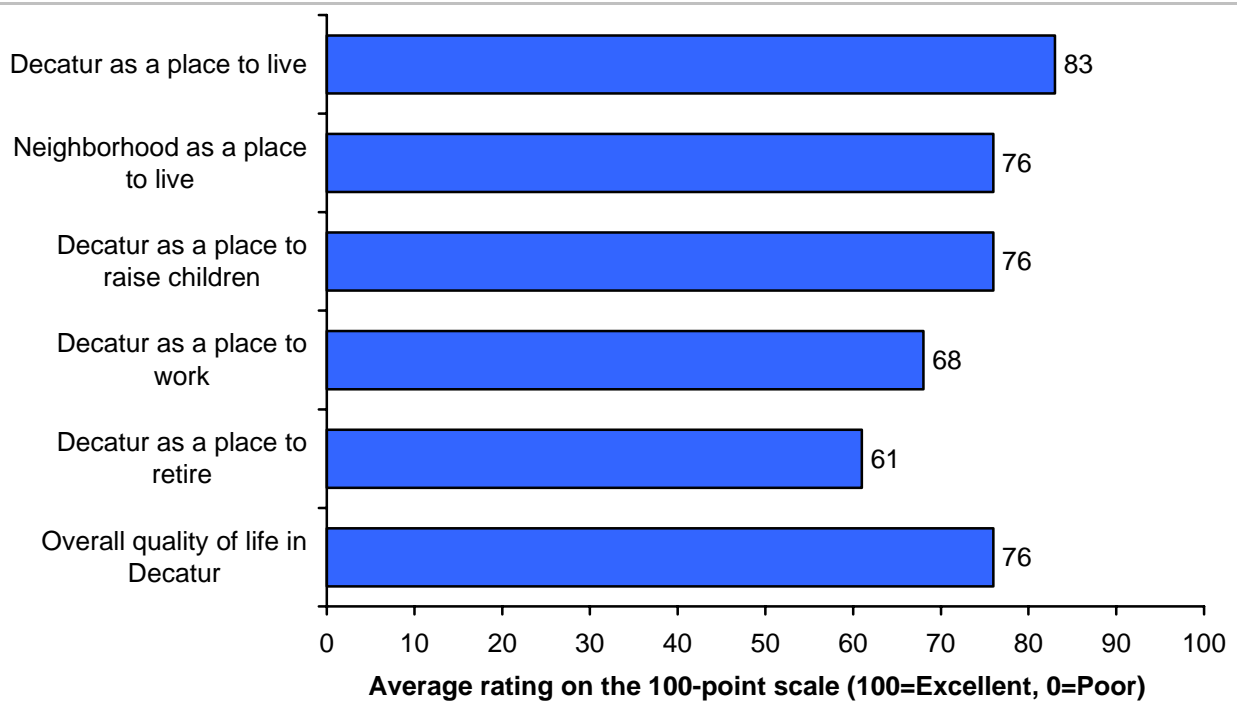


Figure 2: Quality of Life Ratings



Quality of Life Ratings

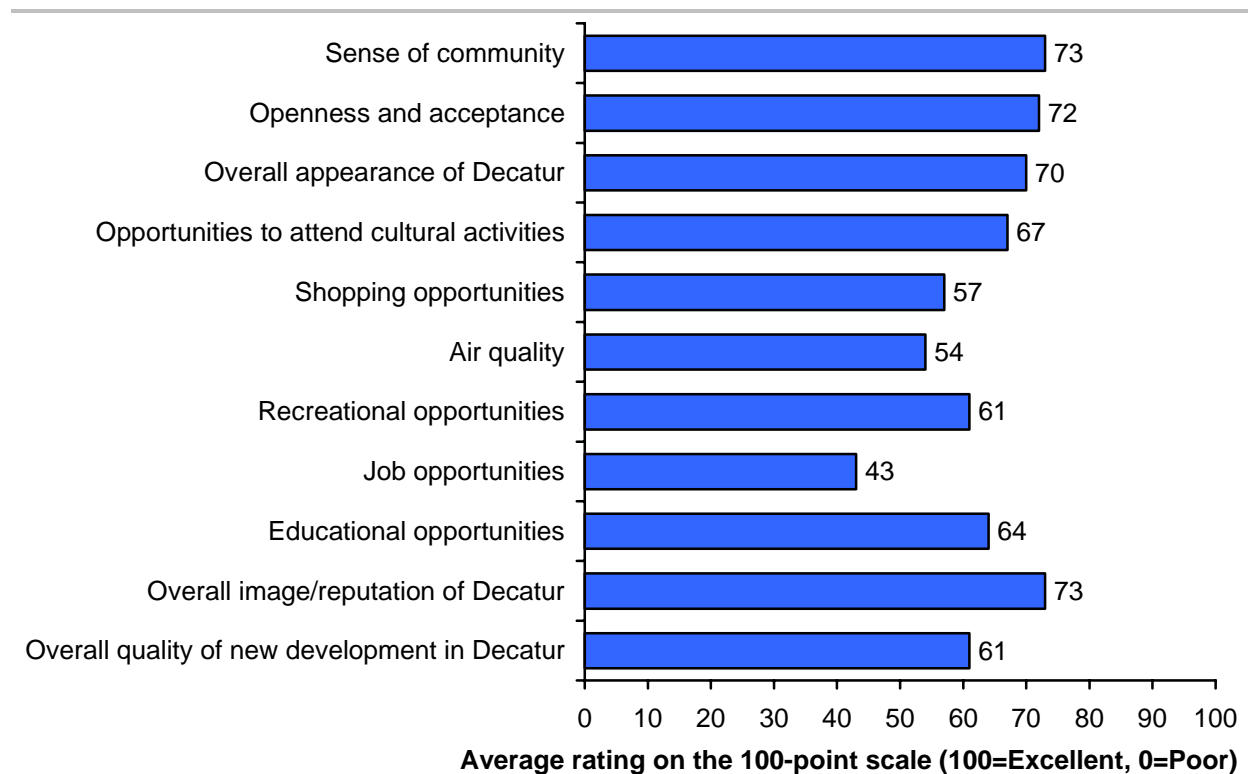
| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Total | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor) |
|---|-----------|------|------|------|-------|---|
| How do you rate Decatur as a place to live? | 57% | 35% | 6% | 1% | 100% | 83 |
| How do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live? | 43% | 45% | 11% | 1% | 100% | 76 |
| How do you rate Decatur as a place to raise children? | 41% | 49% | 8% | 2% | 100% | 76 |
| How do you rate Decatur as a place to work? | 31% | 46% | 17% | 6% | 100% | 68 |
| How do you rate Decatur as a place to retire? | 29% | 36% | 24% | 11% | 100% | 61 |
| How do you rate the overall quality of life in Decatur? | 40% | 49% | 9% | 1% | 100% | 76 |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

Ratings of Community Characteristics in Decatur

The highest rated characteristics of Decatur were sense of community, overall image/reputation of Decatur, and openness and acceptance. When asked about potential problems in Decatur, the three concerns rated by the highest proportion of respondents as a “major problem” were taxes, traffic congestion, and too much growth. The rate of population growth in Decatur was viewed as “too fast” by 48% of respondents, while 3% thought it was “too slow.”

Figure 3: Characteristics of the Community: General and Opportunities



Characteristics of the Community: General and Opportunities

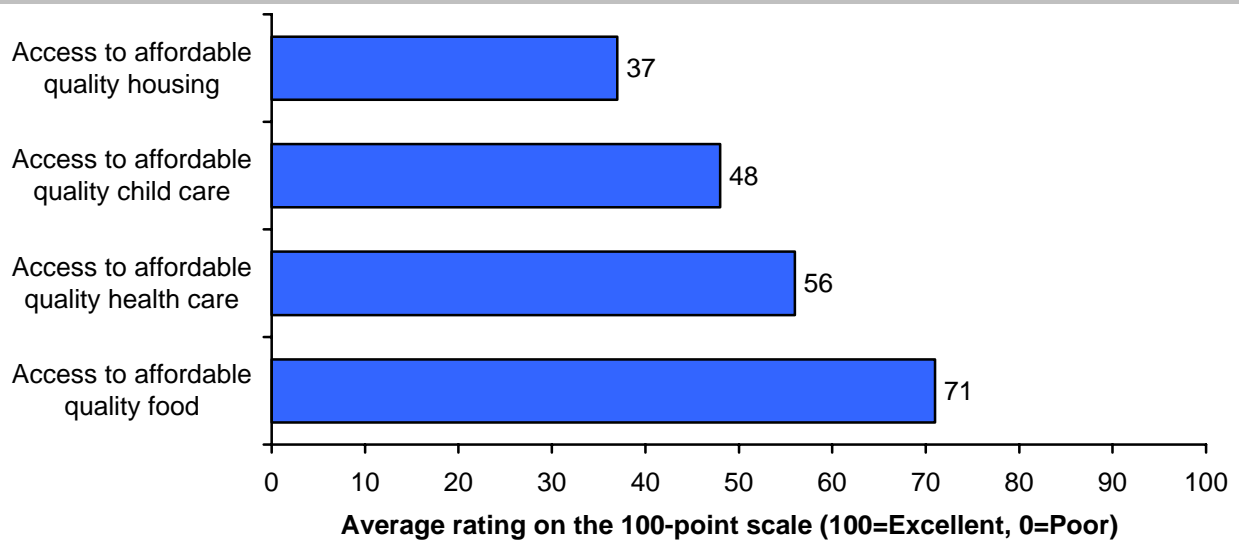
| Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Decatur as a whole: | | | | | | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor) |
|---|-----------|------|------|------|-------|---|
| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Total | |
| Sense of community | 38% | 46% | 14% | 2% | 100% | 73 |
| Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds | 37% | 45% | 15% | 2% | 100% | 72 |
| Overall appearance of Decatur | 23% | 63% | 14% | 0% | 100% | 70 |
| Opportunities to attend cultural activities | 25% | 53% | 20% | 2% | 100% | 67 |

Characteristics of the Community: General and Opportunities

| Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Decatur as a whole: | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Total | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor) |
|---|-----------|------|------|------|-------|---|
| Shopping opportunities | 16% | 45% | 33% | 7% | 100% | 57 |
| Air quality | 9% | 50% | 36% | 5% | 100% | 54 |
| Recreational opportunities | 21% | 47% | 28% | 4% | 100% | 61 |
| Job opportunities | 5% | 35% | 43% | 17% | 100% | 43 |
| Educational opportunities | 21% | 55% | 19% | 5% | 100% | 64 |
| Overall image/reputation of Decatur | 33% | 55% | 11% | 1% | 100% | 73 |
| Overall quality of new development in Decatur | 19% | 50% | 23% | 7% | 100% | 61 |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

Figure 4: Characteristics of the Community: Access

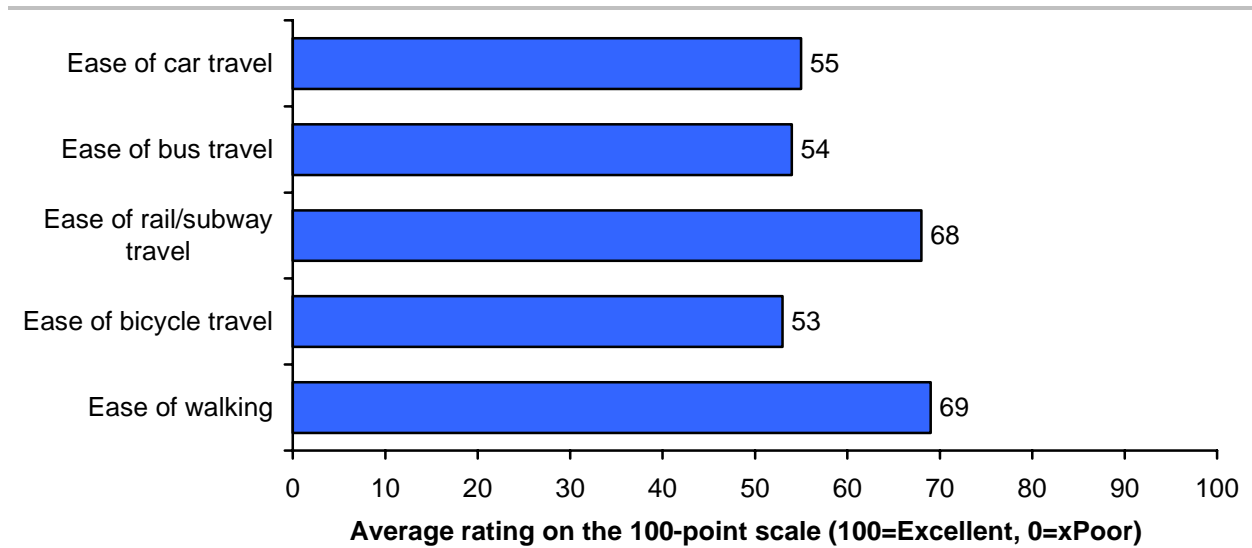


Characteristics of the Community: Access

| Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Decatur as a whole: | | | | | Total | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor) |
|---|-----------|------|------|------|-------|---|
| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | | |
| Access to affordable quality housing | 7% | 27% | 38% | 28% | 100% | 37 |
| Access to affordable quality child care | 12% | 39% | 32% | 17% | 100% | 48 |
| Access to affordable quality health care | 15% | 47% | 26% | 11% | 100% | 56 |
| Access to affordable quality food | 32% | 52% | 12% | 4% | 100% | 71 |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

Figure 5: Characteristics of the Community: Mobility



Characteristics of the Community: Mobility

| Please rate each of the following characteristics as they relate to Decatur as a whole: | | | | | | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor) |
|---|-----------|------|------|------|-------|---|
| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Total | |
| Ease of car travel in Decatur | 14% | 47% | 29% | 10% | 100% | 55 |
| Ease of bus travel in Decatur | 15% | 45% | 28% | 12% | 100% | 54 |
| Ease of rail/subway travel in Decatur | 28% | 52% | 16% | 3% | 100% | 68 |
| Ease of bicycle travel in Decatur | 14% | 47% | 23% | 16% | 100% | 53 |
| Ease of walking in Decatur | 36% | 43% | 16% | 6% | 100% | 69 |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

Figure 6: Ratings of Potential Problems in Decatur

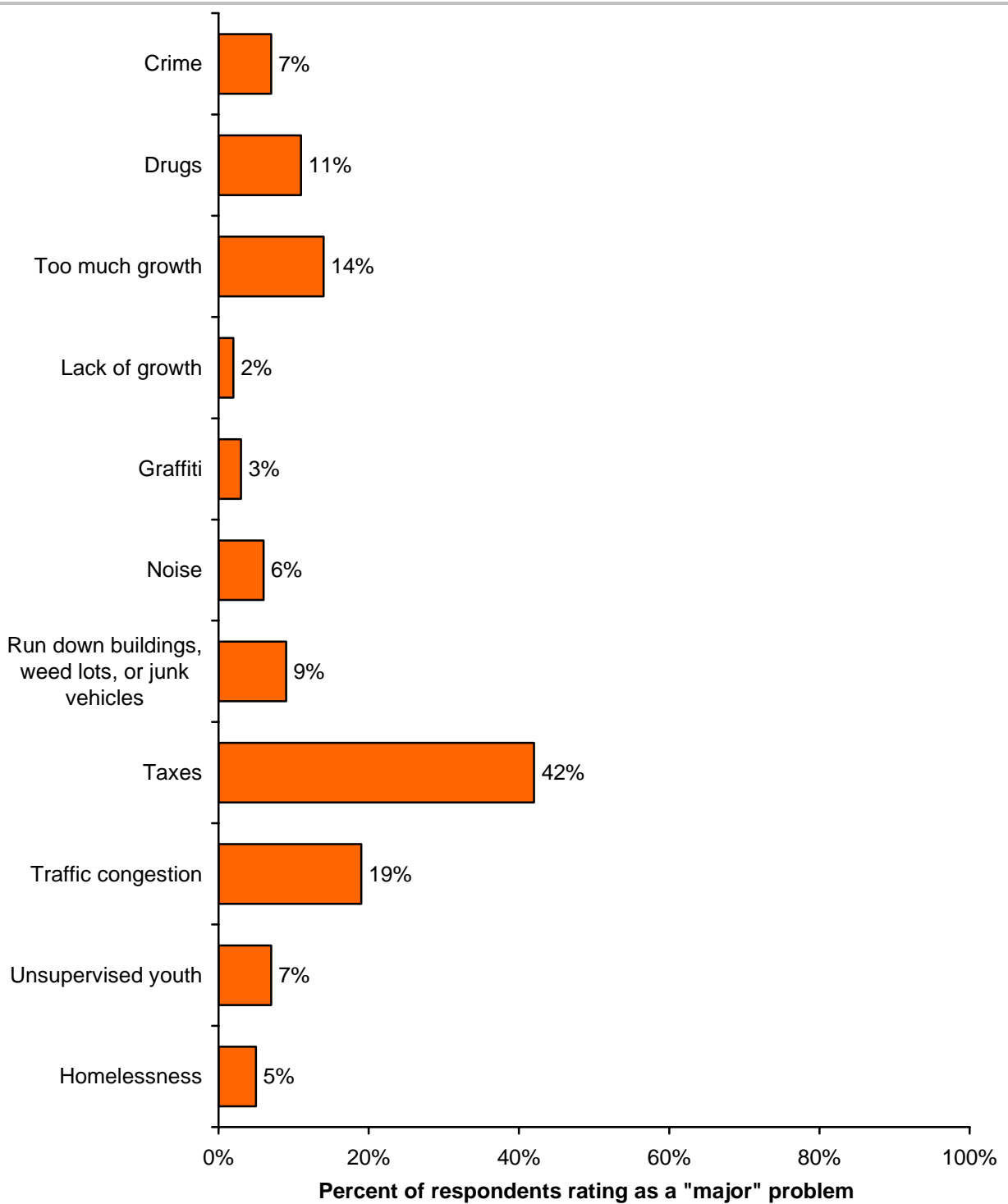
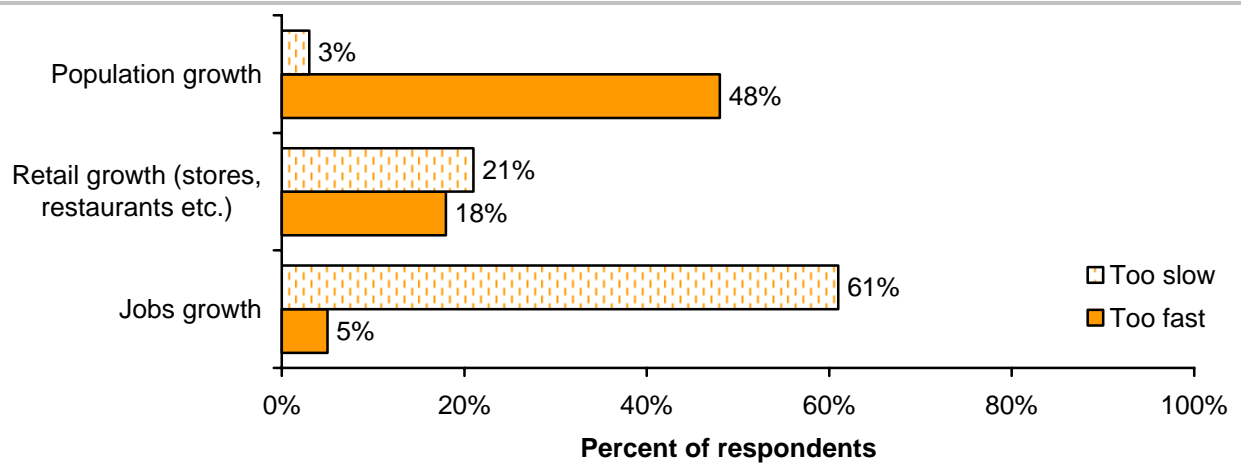


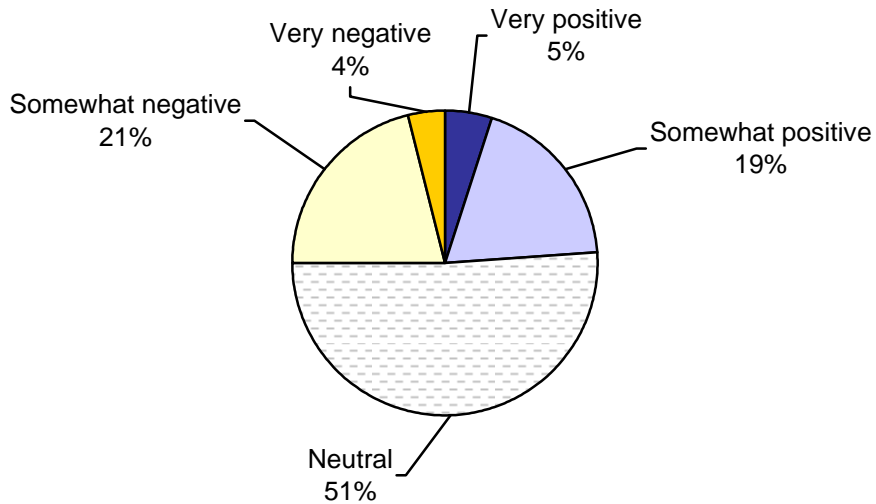
Figure 7: Ratings of Rates of Growth in Decatur



Twenty-four percent of Decatur residents expected that the coming six months would have a somewhat or very positive impact on their family, while 25% felt that the economic future would be somewhat or very negative.

Figure 8: Perceptions of 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...



Perceptions of Safety

When evaluating safety in the community, 81% of respondents felt “somewhat” or “very safe” from violent crimes in Decatur. In their neighborhood after dark, 78% of survey participants felt “somewhat” or “very safe.”

As assessed by the survey, 10% of households reported that at least one member had been the victim of one or more crimes in the past year. Of those who had been the victim of a crime, 72% had reported it to police.

Figure 9: Ratings of Safety from Various Problems in Decatur

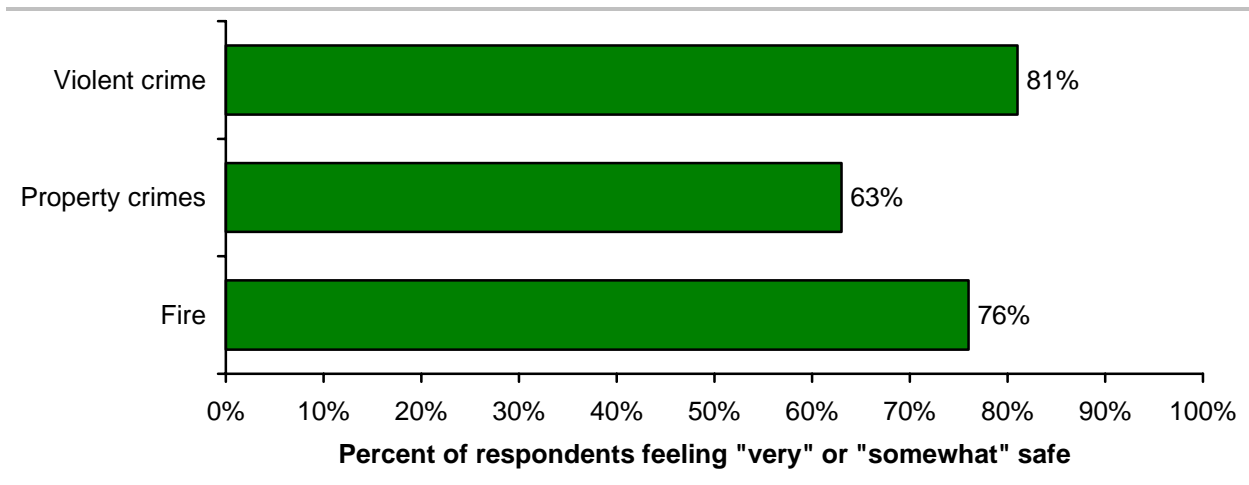


Figure 10: Ratings of Safety in Various Areas in Decatur

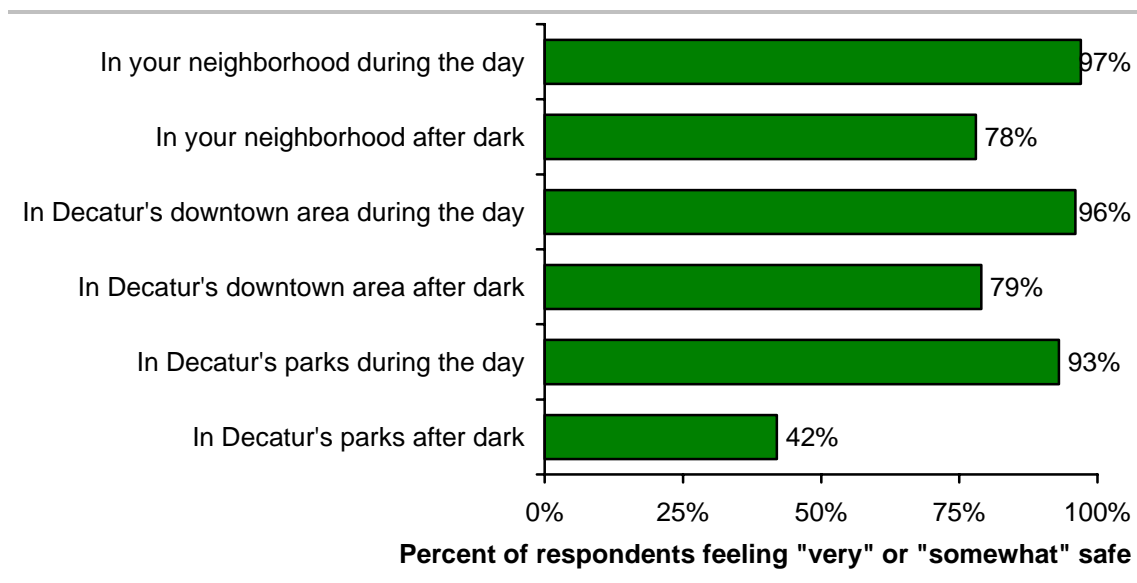


Figure 11: Percent of Respondents' Households That Were Victim of a Crime in the Last 12 Months

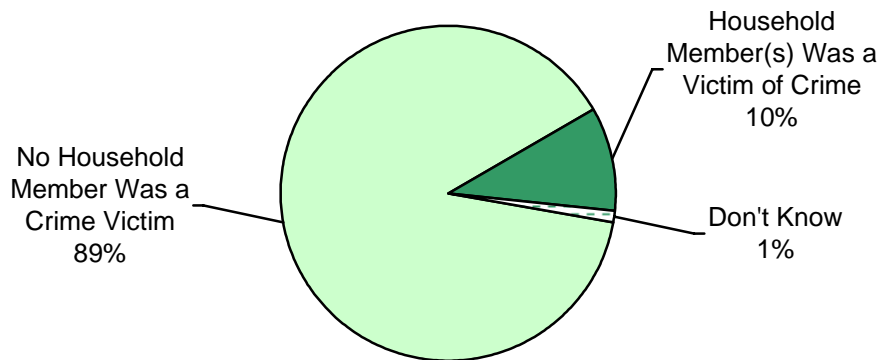
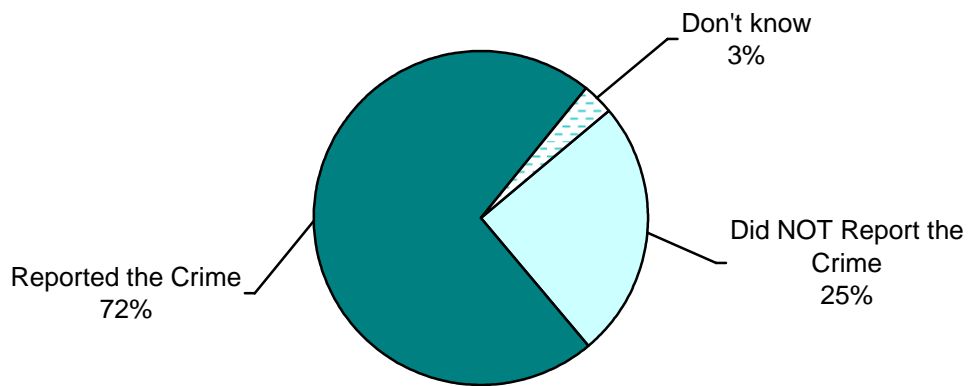


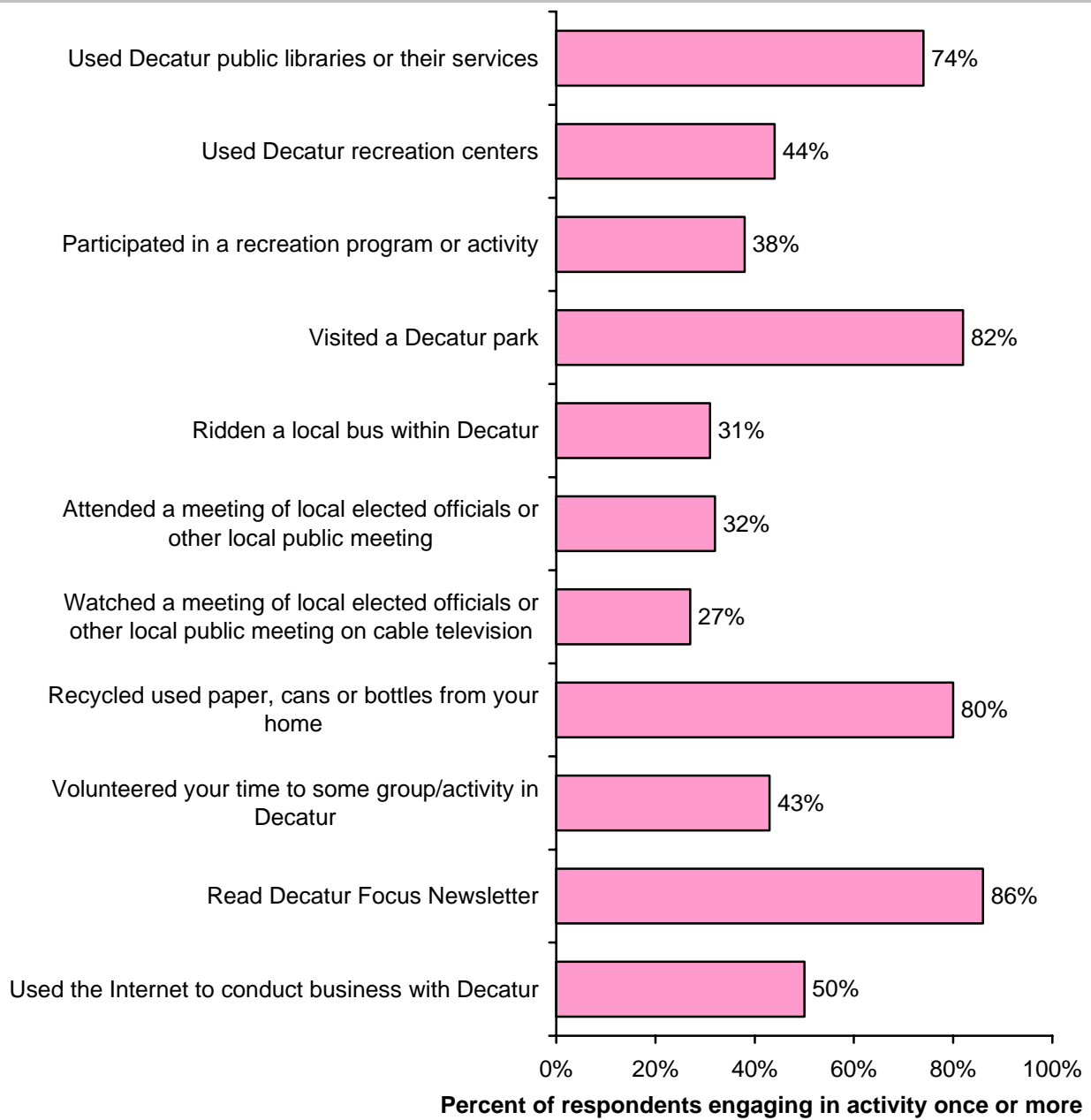
Figure 12: Percent of Respondents' Households That Were Victim of a Crime Who Reported the Crime



Community Participation

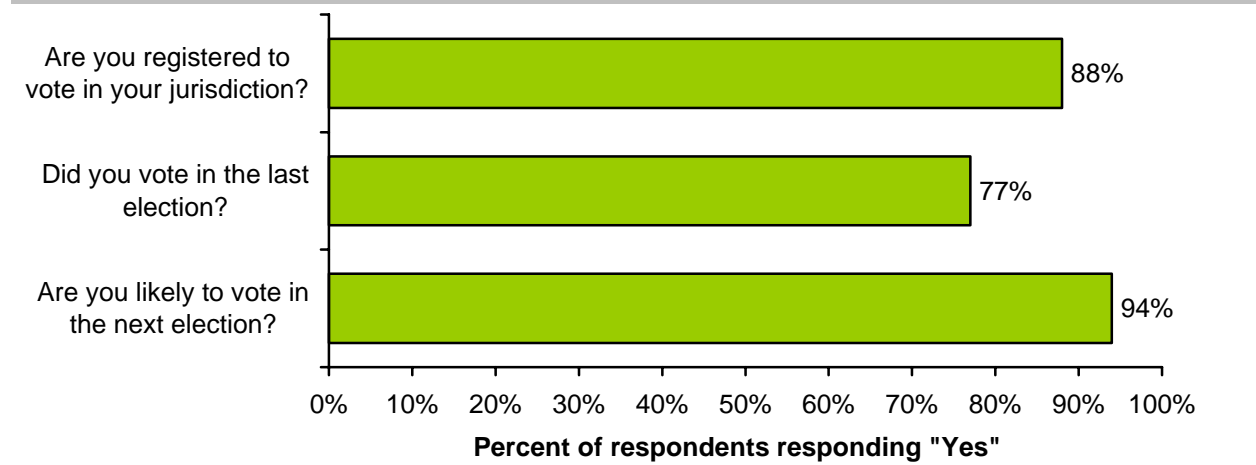
Participation in the civic, social and economic life of Decatur during the past year was assessed on the survey. The proportion of respondents engaging in various activities is shown in the chart below. Among those completing the questionnaire, 82% reported visiting a park in Decatur in the past year and 32% had attended a meeting of elected officials or other local public meeting.

Figure 13: Percent of Respondents Engaging in Various Activities in Decatur in the Past Year



Voter status was also estimated,² with 77% saying that they had voted in the last election.

Figure 14: Voter Status and Activity



Voter Status and Activity

| | No | Yes | Total |
|--|-----|-----|-------|
| Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction? | 12% | 88% | 100% |
| Did you vote in the last election? | 23% | 77% | 100% |
| Are you likely to vote in the next election? | 6% | 94% | 100% |

² In general on a survey, a greater proportion of people will report having voted, than actual voting records verify.

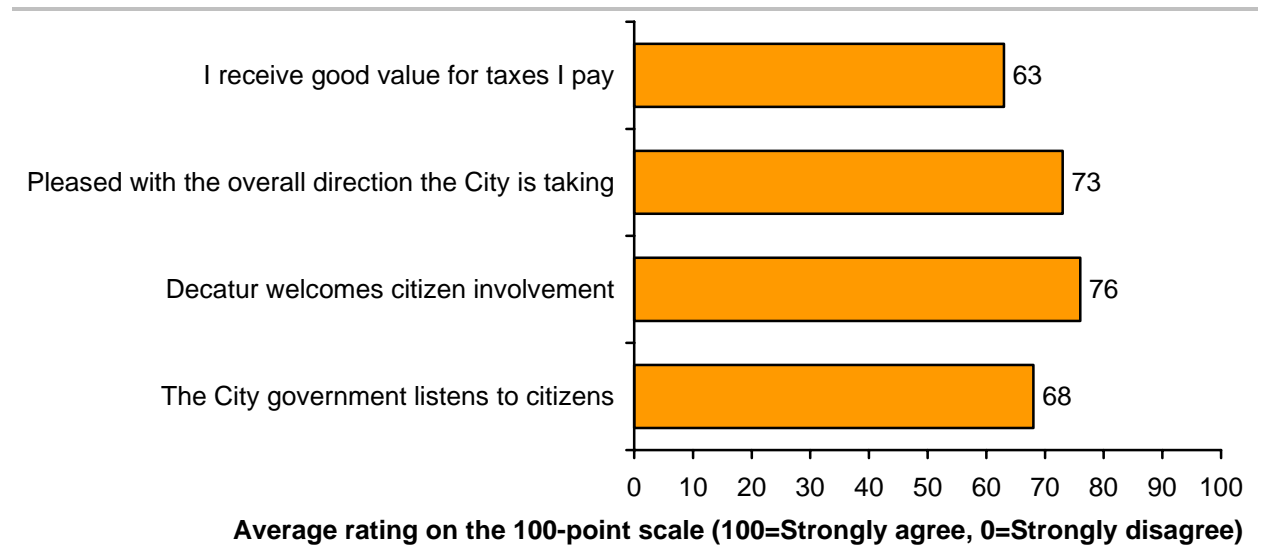
LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Several aspects of the government of the City of Decatur were evaluated by residents completing The National Citizen Survey™. They were asked how much trust they placed in their local government, and what they felt about the services they receive from the City of Decatur. Those who had any contact with a City of Decatur employee in the past year gave their impressions of the most recent encounter.

Public Trust

When asked to evaluate whether they felt they received good value for taxes they pay, residents gave an average rating of 63 on a 100-point scale.

Figure 15: Ratings of Public Trust



Ratings of Public Trust

| Please rate the following statements: | Ratings | | | | | Total | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Strongly agree, 0=Strongly disagree) |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|---|
| | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | | |
| I receive good value for the City of Decatur taxes I pay | 15% | 48% | 16% | 13% | 7% | 100% | 63 |

The City of Decatur Citizen Survey

Local Government

Ratings of Public Trust

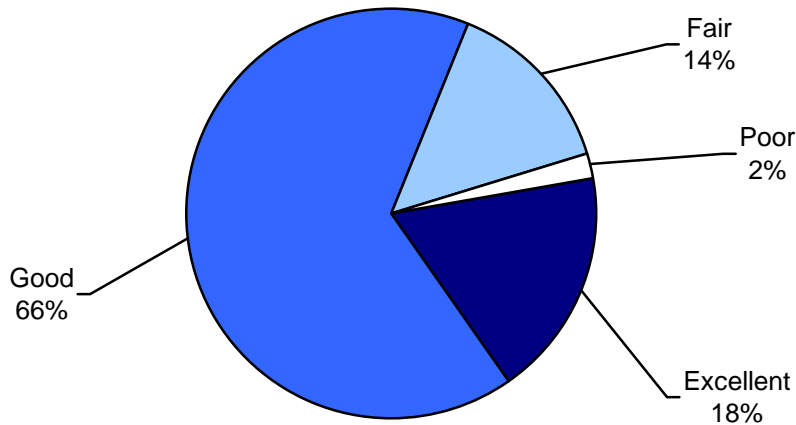
| Please rate the following statements: | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Total | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Strongly agree, 0=Strongly disagree) |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|---|
| I am pleased with the overall direction that the City of Decatur is taking | 30% | 45% | 13% | 9% | 2% | 100% | 73 |
| The City of Decatur government welcomes citizen involvement | 36% | 39% | 19% | 5% | 1% | 100% | 76 |
| The City of Decatur government listens to citizens | 25% | 38% | 25% | 8% | 5% | 100% | 68 |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

Service Provided by Decatur

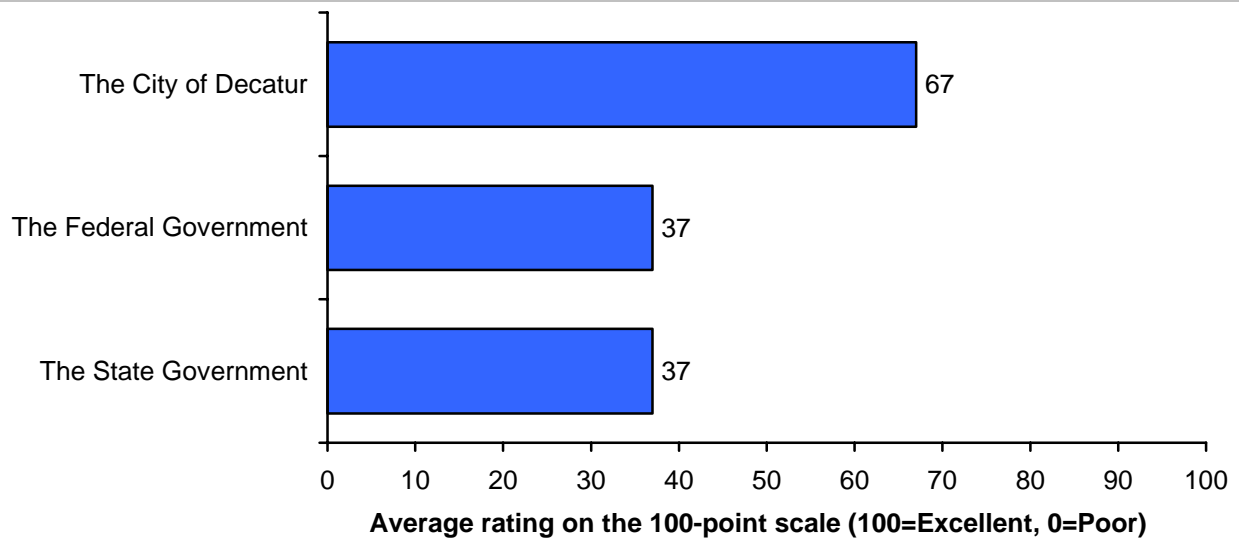
The responses of residents with an opinion about the overall quality of services provided by Decatur are shown in Figure 16 below. These responses result in an average rating of 67 on the 100-point scale. Average ratings given to specific services are shown on the following pages.

Figure 16: Overall Quality of Services Provided by the City of Decatur



On average, residents of Decatur gave the highest evaluations to their own local government and the lowest average ratings to the federal and state governments.

Figure 17: Rating of Overall Quality of Services Provided by Various Levels of Government

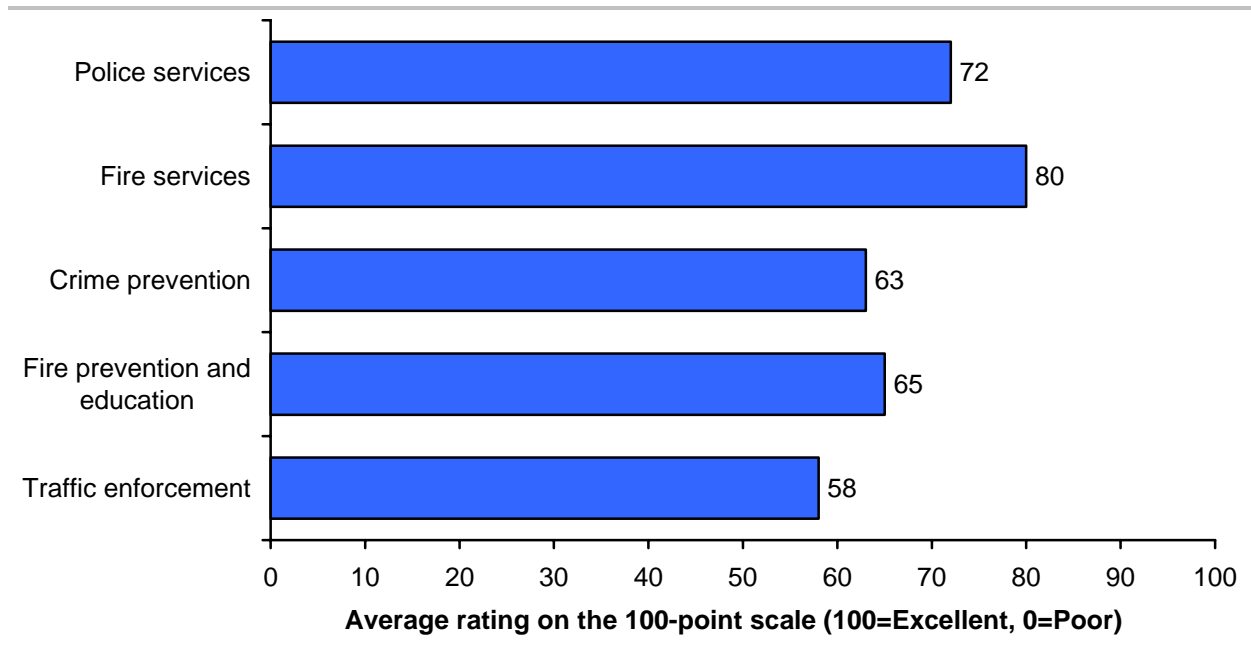


Overall Quality of Services: City of Decatur, Federal Government and State Government

| Overall, how would you rate the quality of services provided by... | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Total | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor) |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|-------|---|
| The City of Decatur | 18% | 66% | 14% | 2% | 100% | 67 |
| The Federal Government | 4% | 27% | 46% | 23% | 100% | 37 |
| The State Government | 3% | 26% | 48% | 23% | 100% | 37 |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

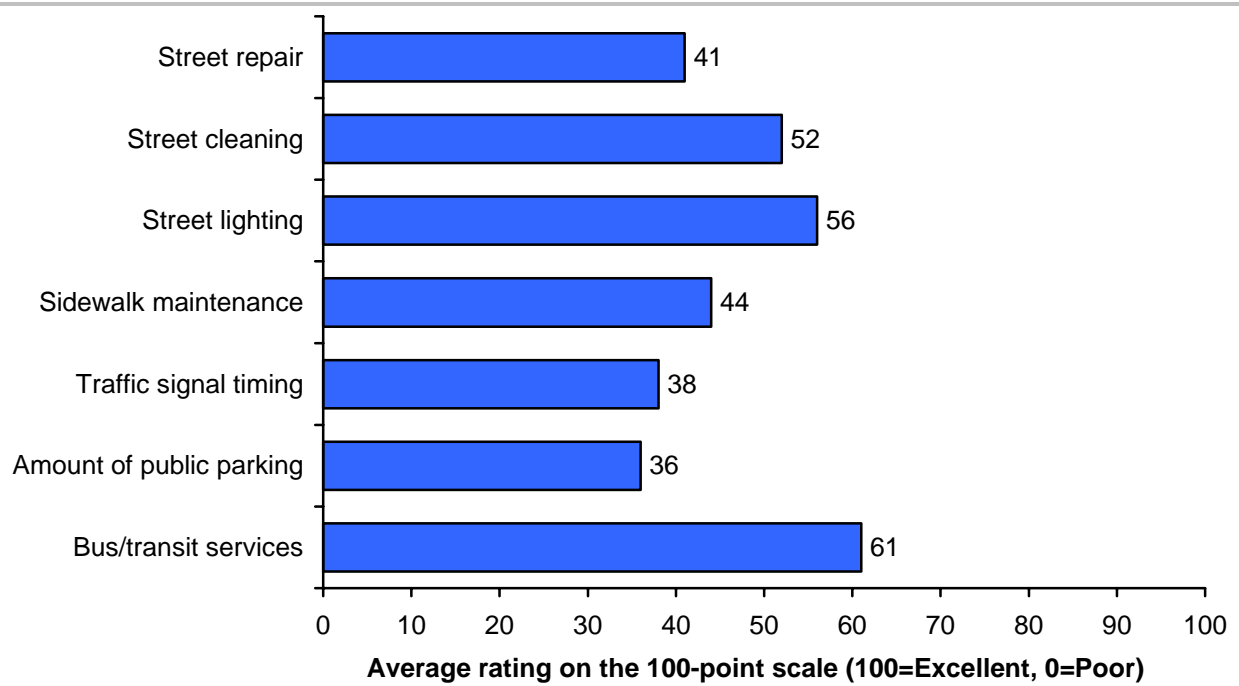
Figure 18: Quality of Public Safety Services



| Quality of Public Safety Services | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|-------|---|
| How do you rate the quality of each of the following services? | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Total | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor) |
| Police services | 36% | 48% | 13% | 3% | 100% | 72 |
| Fire services | 45% | 48% | 6% | 0% | 100% | 80 |
| Crime prevention | 19% | 54% | 23% | 4% | 100% | 63 |
| Fire prevention and education | 24% | 51% | 22% | 3% | 100% | 65 |
| Traffic enforcement | 17% | 46% | 30% | 7% | 100% | 58 |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

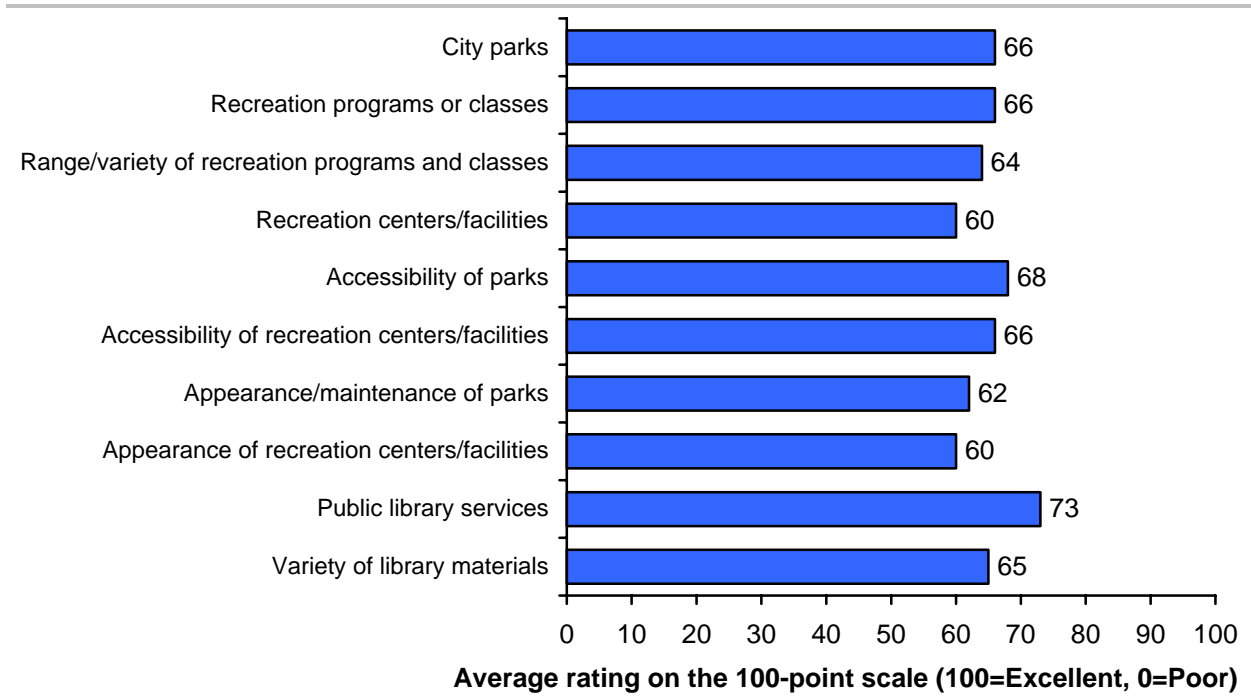
Figure 19: Quality of Transportation Services



| Quality of Transportation Services | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|-------|---|
| How do you rate the quality of each of the following services? | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Total | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor) |
| Street repair | 9% | 28% | 41% | 22% | 100% | 41 |
| Street cleaning | 15% | 39% | 32% | 14% | 100% | 52 |
| Street lighting | 17% | 46% | 28% | 10% | 100% | 56 |
| Sidewalk maintenance | 8% | 36% | 35% | 21% | 100% | 44 |
| Traffic signal timing | 7% | 32% | 32% | 30% | 100% | 38 |
| Amount of public parking | 6% | 24% | 40% | 30% | 100% | 36 |
| Bus/transit services | 20% | 50% | 23% | 7% | 100% | 61 |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

Figure 20: Quality of Leisure Services

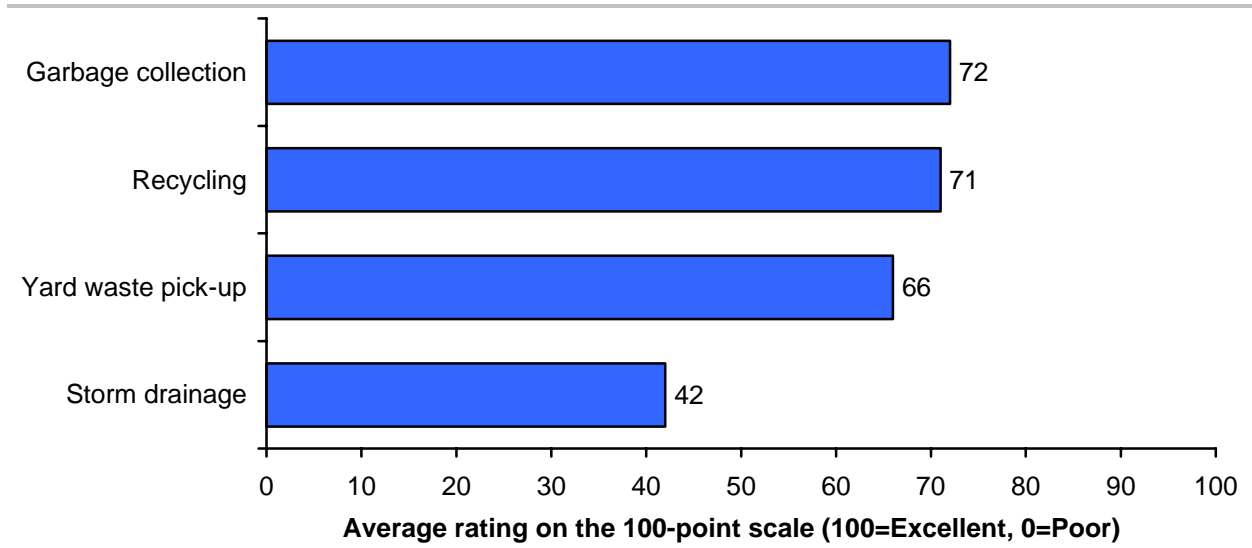


Quality of Leisure Services

| How do you rate the quality of each of the following services? | | | | | Total | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor) |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|-------|---|
| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | | |
| City parks | 22% | 56% | 20% | 2% | 100% | 66 |
| Recreation programs or classes | 24% | 54% | 19% | 4% | 100% | 66 |
| Range/variety of recreation programs and classes | 21% | 54% | 20% | 5% | 100% | 64 |
| Recreation centers/facilities | 17% | 49% | 29% | 5% | 100% | 60 |
| Accessibility of parks | 26% | 54% | 17% | 3% | 100% | 68 |
| Accessibility of recreation centers/facilities | 24% | 52% | 21% | 3% | 100% | 66 |
| Appearance/maintenance of parks | 19% | 54% | 23% | 4% | 100% | 62 |
| Appearance of recreation centers/facilities | 14% | 55% | 27% | 4% | 100% | 60 |
| Public library services | 35% | 51% | 11% | 3% | 100% | 73 |
| Variety of library materials | 25% | 51% | 19% | 5% | 100% | 65 |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

Figure 21: Quality of Utility Services

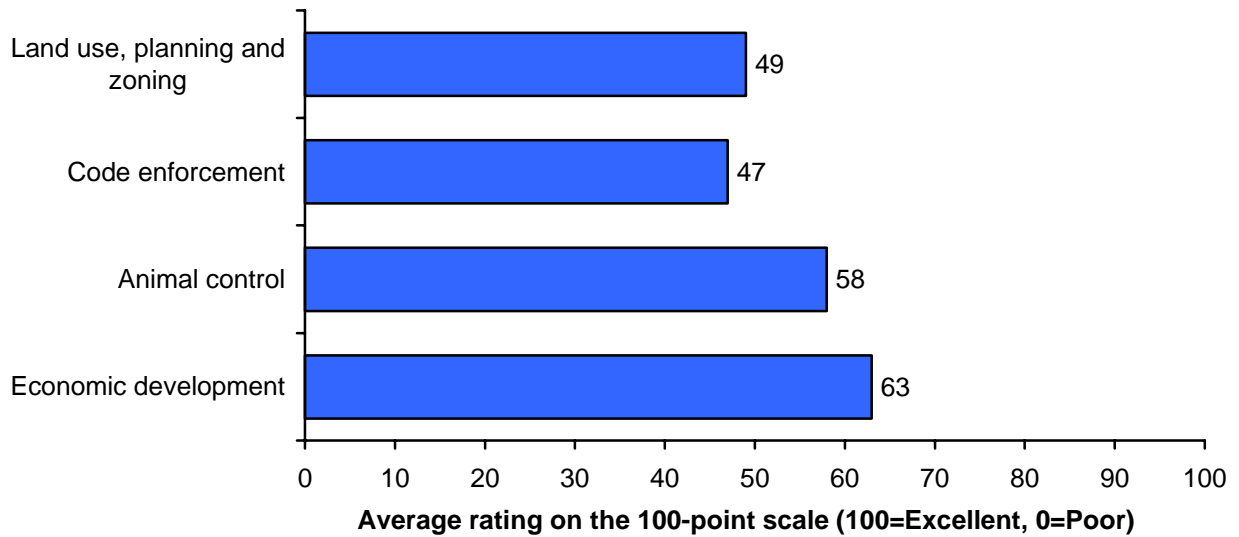


Quality of Utility Services

| How do you rate the quality of each of the following services? | | | | | Total | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor) |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|-------|---|
| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | | |
| Garbage collection | 35% | 50% | 12% | 3% | 100% | 72 |
| Recycling | 38% | 42% | 14% | 6% | 100% | 71 |
| Yard waste pick-up | 33% | 39% | 21% | 7% | 100% | 66 |
| Storm drainage | 6% | 34% | 39% | 20% | 100% | 42 |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

Figure 22: Quality of Planning and Code Enforcement Services

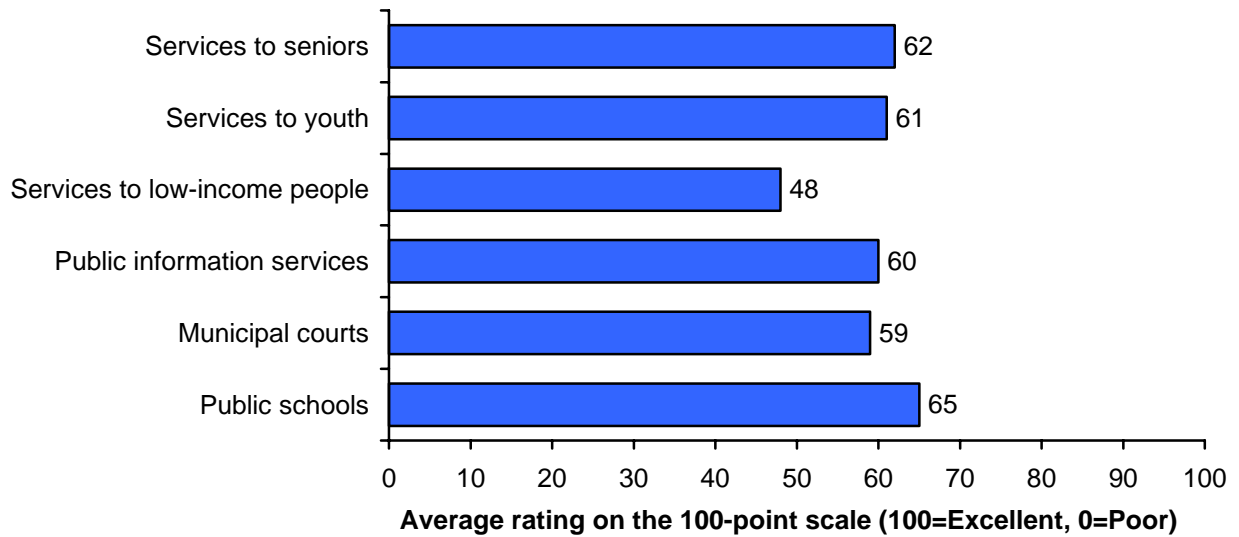


Quality of Planning and Code Enforcement Services

| How do you rate the quality of each of the following services? | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Total | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor) |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|-------|---|
| Land use, planning and zoning | 11% | 40% | 36% | 13% | 100% | 49 |
| Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc) | 9% | 39% | 35% | 17% | 100% | 47 |
| Animal control | 15% | 54% | 22% | 10% | 100% | 58 |
| Economic development | 18% | 56% | 21% | 4% | 100% | 63 |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

Figure 23: Quality of Services to Special Populations and Other Services



Quality of Services to Special Populations and Other Services

| How do you rate the quality of each of the following services? | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Total | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor) |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|-------|---|
| Services to seniors | 21% | 52% | 20% | 8% | 100% | 62 |
| Services to youth | 18% | 50% | 28% | 4% | 100% | 61 |
| Services to low-income people | 14% | 34% | 32% | 20% | 100% | 48 |
| Public information services | 15% | 54% | 27% | 4% | 100% | 60 |
| Municipal courts | 18% | 49% | 26% | 8% | 100% | 59 |
| Public schools | 30% | 43% | 19% | 8% | 100% | 65 |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

The City of Decatur Employees

Impressions of the City of Decatur employees were assessed on the questionnaire. Those who had been in contact with a City of Decatur employee in the past year (53%) rated their overall impression as 69 on a 100-point scale.

Figure 24: Percent of Respondents Who Had Contact with a City of Decatur Employee

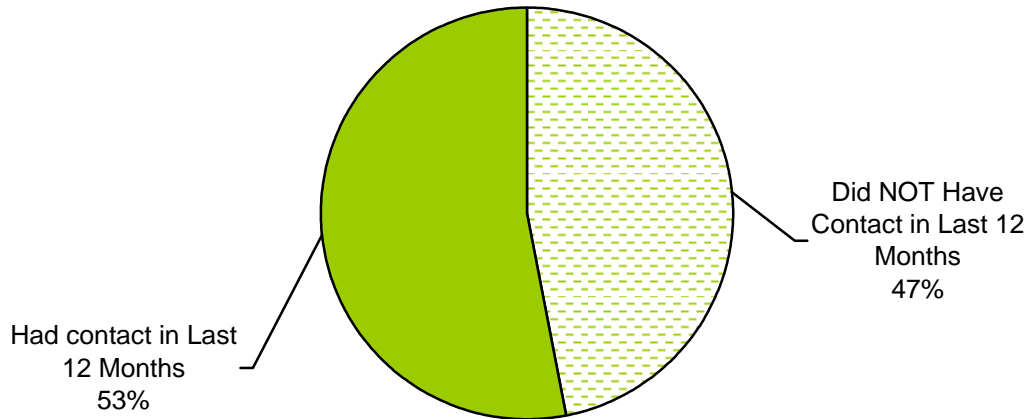
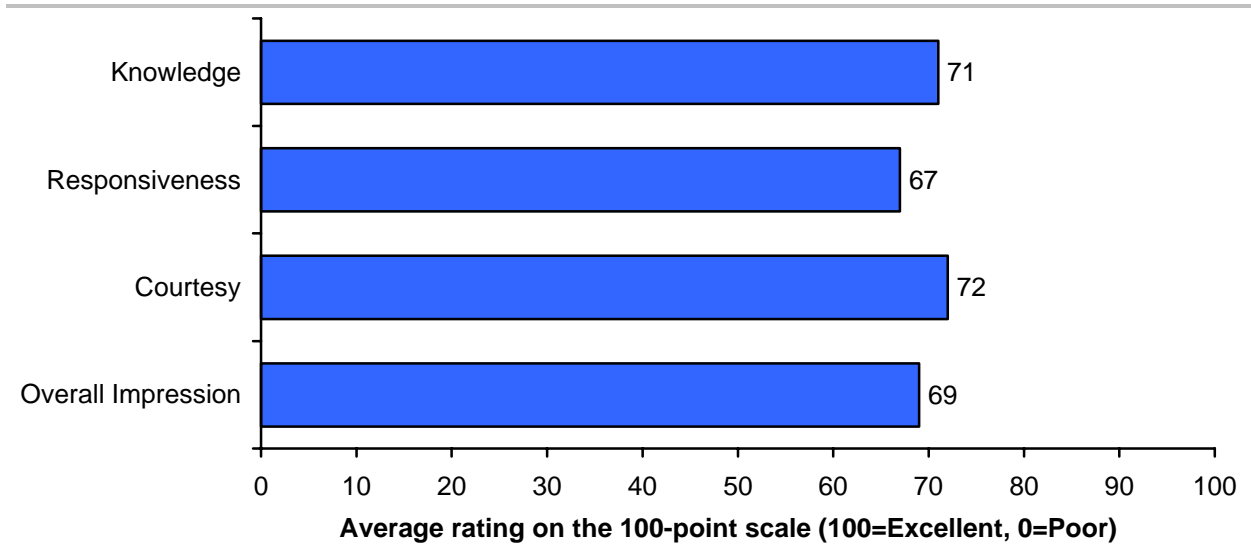


Figure 25: Ratings of Contact with the City of Decatur Employees



Ratings of Contact with City of Decatur Employees

| What was your impression of employees of the City of Decatur in your most recent contact? | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Total | Average rating on a 100-point scale (100=Excellent, 0=Poor) |
|---|-----------|------|------|------|-------|---|
| Knowledge | 34% | 49% | 13% | 3% | 100% | 71 |
| Responsiveness | 33% | 42% | 16% | 9% | 100% | 67 |
| Courtesy | 40% | 41% | 14% | 5% | 100% | 72 |
| Overall Impression | 32% | 46% | 17% | 4% | 100% | 69 |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Three additional questions were asked by the City of Decatur. The results for these questions are displayed below.

Policy Question #1

How likely or unlikely would you be to support a wireless network financed with tax funds that provides wireless communication capacity for public service providers as well as free internet hot spots in the City's business districts?

| | |
|-------------------|------|
| Very likely | 25% |
| Somewhat likely | 39% |
| Somewhat unlikely | 15% |
| Very unlikely | 21% |
| Total | 100% |

Note: "don't know" responses have been removed.

Policy Question #2

To what extent would you support or oppose legislation that would allow low-income single-family property owners to volunteer services in order to reduce their property taxes?

| | |
|------------------|------|
| Strongly support | 40% |
| Somewhat support | 41% |
| Somewhat oppose | 11% |
| Strongly oppose | 8% |
| Total | 100% |

Policy Question #3

To what extent would you support or oppose the adoption of regulations limiting the size of, or additions to a single-family residence, realizing that such restrictions would affect what someone could build on their own property?

| | |
|------------------|------|
| Strongly support | 23% |
| Somewhat support | 33% |
| Somewhat oppose | 24% |
| Strongly oppose | 21% |
| Total | 100% |

APPENDIX A: FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES TO ALL SURVEY QUESTIONS

Question 1: Quality of Life Ratings

| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't know | Total |
|---|-----------|------|------|------|------------|-------|
| How do you rate Decatur as a place to live? | 57% | 35% | 6% | 1% | 0% | 100% |
| How do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live? | 43% | 44% | 11% | 1% | 1% | 100% |
| How do you rate Decatur as a place to raise children? | 32% | 38% | 6% | 2% | 22% | 100% |
| How do you rate Decatur as a place to work? | 20% | 30% | 11% | 4% | 36% | 100% |
| How do you rate Decatur as a place to retire? | 20% | 25% | 17% | 8% | 29% | 100% |
| How do you rate the overall quality of life in Decatur? | 40% | 49% | 9% | 1% | 1% | 100% |

Question 2: 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 | 35% | 43% | 14% | 2% | 6% | 100% |
| Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds | 35% | 43% | 15% | 2% | 6% | 100% |
| Overall appearance of Decatur | 23% | 63% | 14% | 0% | 0% | 100% |
| Opportunities to attend cultural activities | 24% | 50% | 19% | 2% | 5% | 100% |
| Shopping opportunities | 16% | 44% | 32% | 7% | 1% | 100% |
| Air quality | 8% | 47% | 33% | 5% | 7% | 100% |
| Recreational opportunities | 19% | 42% | 25% | 4% | 10% | 100% |
| Job opportunities | 3% | 20% | 25% | 10% | 43% | 100% |
| Access to affordable quality housing | 6% | 24% | 33% | 25% | 12% | 100% |
| Access to affordable quality child care | 4% | 14% | 11% | 6% | 65% | 100% |
| Access to affordable quality health care | 11% | 35% | 19% | 8% | 27% | 100% |
| Access to affordable quality food | 31% | 51% | 12% | 4% | 3% | 100% |
| Ease of car travel in Decatur | 13% | 45% | 28% | 10% | 4% | 100% |
| Ease of bus travel in Decatur | 8% | 23% | 14% | 6% | 49% | 100% |
| Ease of rail/subway travel in Decatur | 25% | 47% | 15% | 3% | 11% | 100% |
| Ease of bicycle travel in Decatur | 10% | 33% | 16% | 11% | 30% | 100% |
| Ease of walking in Decatur | 35% | 42% | 15% | 6% | 3% | 100% |
| Educational opportunities | 15% | 39% | 13% | 4% | 29% | 100% |
| Overall image/reputation of Decatur | 32% | 54% | 11% | 1% | 3% | 100% |
| Overall quality of new development in Decatur | 17% | 45% | 21% | 6% | 11% | 100% |

The City of Decatur Citizen Survey

Appendix A: Survey Frequencies

Question 3: Please rate the speed of growth in the following categories in Decatur over the past two years

| | Much too slow | Somewhat too slow | Right amount | Somewhat too fast | Much too fast | Don't know | Total |
|--|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Population growth | 1% | 1% | 38% | 27% | 10% | 24% | 100% |
| Retail growth (stores, restaurants etc.) | 2% | 16% | 53% | 13% | 3% | 12% | 100% |
| Jobs growth | 4% | 19% | 12% | 1% | 1% | 63% | 100% |

Question 4: To what degree are the following problems in Decatur

| | Not a problem | Minor problem | Moderate problem | Major problem | Don't know | Total |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Crime | 9% | 37% | 34% | 6% | 14% | 100% |
| Drugs | 10% | 21% | 22% | 6% | 41% | 100% |
| Too much growth | 27% | 22% | 23% | 12% | 16% | 100% |
| Lack of growth | 57% | 17% | 7% | 2% | 18% | 100% |
| Graffiti | 32% | 40% | 12% | 2% | 14% | 100% |
| Noise | 30% | 40% | 20% | 6% | 5% | 100% |
| Run down buildings, weed lots, or junk vehicles | 22% | 42% | 20% | 8% | 8% | 100% |
| Taxes | 7% | 13% | 27% | 34% | 20% | 100% |
| Traffic congestion | 13% | 25% | 41% | 18% | 3% | 100% |
| Unsupervised youth | 23% | 29% | 16% | 5% | 27% | 100% |
| Homelessness | 24% | 31% | 14% | 3% | 27% | 100% |

The City of Decatur Citizen Survey

Appendix A: Survey Frequencies

Question 5: Please rate how safe you feel from the following occurring to you 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) | 34% | 43% | 10% | 7% | 1% | 4% | 100% |
| Property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft) | 16% | 44% | 16% | 17% | 2% | 5% | 100% |
| Fire | 34% | 38% | 17% | 5% | 0% | 6% | 100% |

Question 6: Please rate how safe you feel:

| | Very safe | Somewhat safe | Neither safe nor unsafe | Somewhat unsafe | Very unsafe | Don't know | Total |
|---|-----------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|-------|
| In your neighborhood during the day | 74% | 22% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 1% | 100% |
| In your neighborhood after dark | 27% | 50% | 9% | 11% | 2% | 1% | 100% |
| In Decatur's downtown area during the day | 70% | 23% | 3% | 2% | 0% | 2% | 100% |
| In Decatur's downtown area after dark | 24% | 50% | 10% | 9% | 1% | 7% | 100% |
| In Decatur's parks during the day | 54% | 24% | 4% | 2% | 0% | 16% | 100% |
| In Decatur's parks after dark | 4% | 25% | 13% | 20% | 6% | 32% | 100% |

The City of Decatur Citizen Survey

Appendix A: Survey Frequencies

Question 7: During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime?

| | No | Yes | Don't know | Total |
|--|-----|-----|------------|-------|
| During the past twelve months, were you or anyone in your household the victim of any crime? | 89% | 10% | 1% | 100% |

Question 8: If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police?

| | No | Yes | Don't know | Total |
|---|-----|-----|------------|-------|
| If yes, was this crime (these crimes) reported to the police? | 25% | 72% | 3% | 100% |

Question 9: In the last 12 months, about how many times, if ever, have you or other household members done the following things in the City of 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 | 26% | 24% | 30% | 11% | 9% | 100% |
| Used Decatur recreation centers | 56% | 22% | 12% | 5% | 5% | 100% |
| Participated in a recreation program or activity | 62% | 20% | 14% | 2% | 2% | 100% |
| Visited a Decatur park | 18% | 23% | 34% | 11% | 13% | 100% |
| Ridden a local bus within Decatur | 69% | 11% | 10% | 2% | 8% | 100% |
| Attended a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting | 68% | 21% | 9% | 2% | 0% | 100% |
| Watched a meeting of local elected officials or other local public meeting on cable television | 73% | 16% | 8% | 1% | 2% | 100% |
| Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home | 20% | 6% | 10% | 9% | 54% | 100% |
| Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Decatur | 57% | 19% | 13% | 4% | 6% | 100% |
| Read Decatur Focus Newsletter | 14% | 13% | 44% | 15% | 13% | 100% |
| Used the Internet to conduct business with Decatur | 50% | 23% | 18% | 5% | 4% | 100% |

The City of Decatur Citizen Survey

Appendix A: Survey Frequencies

| Question 10: How do you rate the quality of each of the following services in Decatur? | | | | | | |
|---|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------|
| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't know | Total |
| Police services | 31% | 41% | 11% | 2% | 14% | 100% |
| Fire services | 33% | 35% | 5% | 0% | 27% | 100% |
| Crime prevention | 14% | 39% | 17% | 3% | 27% | 100% |
| Fire prevention and education | 13% | 28% | 12% | 2% | 46% | 100% |
| Traffic enforcement | 15% | 39% | 25% | 6% | 15% | 100% |
| Garbage collection | 32% | 46% | 11% | 3% | 9% | 100% |
| Recycling | 33% | 37% | 12% | 5% | 13% | 100% |
| Yard waste pick-up | 24% | 29% | 16% | 5% | 25% | 100% |
| Street repair | 8% | 26% | 38% | 21% | 7% | 100% |
| Street cleaning | 13% | 36% | 29% | 13% | 10% | 100% |
| Street lighting | 16% | 44% | 27% | 9% | 3% | 100% |
| Sidewalk maintenance | 8% | 34% | 33% | 20% | 5% | 100% |
| Traffic signal timing | 6% | 30% | 30% | 28% | 5% | 100% |
| Amount of public parking | 6% | 22% | 38% | 28% | 6% | 100% |
| Bus/transit services | 14% | 34% | 15% | 5% | 32% | 100% |
| Storm drainage | 5% | 28% | 33% | 17% | 17% | 100% |
| City parks | 18% | 47% | 17% | 2% | 17% | 100% |
| Recreation programs or classes | 13% | 29% | 10% | 2% | 46% | 100% |
| Range/variety of recreation programs and classes | 11% | 30% | 11% | 3% | 45% | 100% |
| Recreation centers/facilities | 10% | 28% | 17% | 3% | 43% | 100% |
| Accessibility of parks | 22% | 45% | 14% | 3% | 17% | 100% |
| Accessibility of recreation centers/facilities | 15% | 32% | 13% | 2% | 38% | 100% |
| Appearance/maintenance of parks | 16% | 45% | 19% | 4% | 17% | 100% |
| Appearance of recreation centers/facilities | 9% | 34% | 17% | 2% | 38% | 100% |
| Land use, planning and zoning | 8% | 29% | 26% | 10% | 26% | 100% |
| Code enforcement (weeds, abandoned buildings, etc) | 7% | 30% | 27% | 13% | 23% | 100% |
| Animal control | 11% | 39% | 16% | 7% | 28% | 100% |
| Economic development | 14% | 43% | 16% | 3% | 24% | 100% |
| Services to seniors | 8% | 19% | 7% | 3% | 64% | 100% |
| Services to youth | 8% | 22% | 12% | 2% | 57% | 100% |
| Services to low-income people | 5% | 12% | 11% | 7% | 64% | 100% |

The City of Decatur Citizen Survey

Appendix A: Survey Frequencies

Question 10: How do you rate the quality of each of the following services in Decatur?

| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't know | Total |
|------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Public library services | 29% | 41% | 9% | 2% | 18% | 100% |
| Variety of library materials | 19% | 40% | 15% | 4% | 21% | 100% |
| Public information services | 10% | 35% | 17% | 3% | 36% | 100% |
| Municipal courts | 7% | 20% | 10% | 3% | 59% | 100% |
| Public schools | 17% | 25% | 11% | 4% | 43% | 100% |

The City of Decatur Citizen Survey

Appendix A: Survey Frequencies

Question 11: Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by...

| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't know | Total |
|------------------------|-----------|------|------|------|------------|-------|
| The City of Decatur | 17% | 61% | 13% | 2% | 7% | 100% |
| The Federal Government | 3% | 22% | 38% | 19% | 18% | 100% |
| The State Government | 3% | 22% | 39% | 19% | 18% | 100% |

Question 12: Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Decatur within the last 12 months?

| | No | Yes | Total |
|--|-----|-----|-------|
| Have you had any in-person or phone contact with an employee of the City of Decatur within the last 12 months? | 47% | 53% | 100% |

Question 13: What was your impression of the employees of the City of Decatur in your most recent contact?

| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't know | Total |
|--------------------|-----------|------|------|------|------------|-------|
| Knowledge | 33% | 48% | 13% | 3% | 3% | 100% |
| Responsiveness | 33% | 41% | 16% | 8% | 2% | 100% |
| Courtesy | 39% | 41% | 13% | 5% | 2% | 100% |
| Overall Impression | 32% | 45% | 17% | 4% | 2% | 100% |

The City of Decatur Citizen Survey

Appendix A: Survey Frequencies

Question 14: Please rate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

| | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know | Total |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| I receive good value for the City of Decatur taxes I pay | 12% | 38% | 13% | 11% | 6% | 20% | 100% |
| I am pleased with the overall direction that the City of Decatur is taking | 28% | 42% | 12% | 9% | 2% | 8% | 100% |
| The City of Decatur government welcomes citizen involvement | 28% | 30% | 14% | 4% | 1% | 24% | 100% |
| The City of Decatur government listens to citizens | 17% | 26% | 17% | 5% | 3% | 32% | 100% |

Question 15: What impact, if any, do you think the economy will have on your family income in the next 6 months?

| | Very positive | Somewhat positive | Neutral | Somewhat negative | Very negative | Total |
|--|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| 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: | 5% | 19% | 51% | 21% | 4% | 100% |

The City of Decatur Citizen Survey

Appendix A: Survey Frequencies

| Question 16a: Policy Question 1 | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| | Very likely | Somewhat likely | Somewhat unlikely | Very unlikely | Don't know | Total |
| How likely or unlikely would you be to support a wireless network financed with tax funds that provides wireless communication capacity for public service providers as well as free internet hot spots in the City's business districts? | 21% | 33% | 13% | 18% | 15% | 100% |

| Question 16b: Policy Question 2 | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| | Strongly support | Somewhat support | Somewhat oppose | Strongly oppose | Total |
| To what extent would you support or oppose legislation that would allow low-income single-family property owners to volunteer services in order to reduce their property taxes? | 40% | 41% | 11% | 8% | 100% |

| Question 16c: Policy Question 3 | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| | Strongly support | Somewhat support | Somewhat oppose | Strongly oppose | Total |
| To what extent would you support or oppose the adoption of regulations limiting the size of, or additions to a single-family residence, realizing that such restrictions would affect what someone could build on their own property? | 23% | 33% | 24% | 21% | 100% |

Question 17: Do you live within the City limits of the City of Decatur?

| | No | Yes | Total |
|---|-----|-----|-------|
| Do you live within the limits of the City of Decatur? | 11% | 89% | 100% |

Question 18: Employment Status

| | No | Yes | Total |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|-------|
| Are you currently employed? | 25% | 75% | 100% |

Question 18a: Usual Mode of Transportation to Work

What one method of transportation do you usually use (for the longest distance of your commute) to travel to work?

| | |
|---|------|
| Motorized vehicle | 76% |
| Bus, Rail, Subway, or other public transportation | 13% |
| Walk | 4% |
| Work at home | 4% |
| Other | 3% |
| Total | 100% |

Question 18b: Drive Alone or Carpool

| | No | Yes | Total |
|--|-----|-----|-------|
| If you checked the motorized vehicle (e.g. car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc.) box in 18a, do other people usually ride with you to or from work? | 89% | 11% | 100% |

Usual Mode of Transportation to Work, Including Carpooling

| | Usual mode of transportation to work |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Motorized vehicle, no others (SOV) | 68% |
| Motorized vehicle, with others (MOV) | 8% |
| Bus, rail, subway, or other public transportation | 13% |
| Walk | 4% |
| Work at home | 4% |
| Other | 3% |
| Total | 100% |

The City of Decatur Citizen Survey

Appendix A: Survey Frequencies

Question 19: Length of Residency

How many years have you lived in Decatur?

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Less than 2 years | 26% |
| 2 to 5 years | 30% |
| 6 to 10 years | 15% |
| 11 to 20 years | 14% |
| More than 20 years | 15% |
| Total | 100% |

Question 20: Type of Housing Unit

Which best describes the building you live in?

| | |
|--|------|
| One family house detached from any other houses | 47% |
| One family house attached to one or more houses | 10% |
| Building with two or more apartments or condominiums | 40% |
| Other | 3% |
| Total | 100% |

Question 21: Tenure Status

| | Rented for cash or occupied without cash payment? | Owned by you or someone in this house | Total |
|---|--|--|--------------|
| Is this house, apartment, or mobile home... | 42% | 58% | 100% |

Questions 22 to 25: Household Characteristics

| | No | Yes | Total |
|---|-----------|------------|--------------|
| Do any children age 12 or under live in your household? | 82% | 18% | 100% |
| Do any teenagers ages 13 through 17 live in your household? | 93% | 7% | 100% |
| Are you or any other members of your household aged 65 or older? | 82% | 18% | 100% |
| Does any member of your household have a physical handicap or is anyone disabled? | 89% | 11% | 100% |

The City of Decatur Citizen Survey

Appendix A: Survey Frequencies

Question 26: Education

What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

| | |
|--|------|
| 12th Grade or less, no diploma | 5% |
| High school diploma | 7% |
| Some college, no degree | 13% |
| Associate's degree (e.g. AA, AS) | 4% |
| Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, AB, BS) | 30% |
| Graduate degree or professional degree | 42% |
| Total | 100% |

Question 27: Annual Household Income

How much do you anticipate your household's total income before taxes will be for the current year?

| | |
|----------------------|------|
| Less than \$24,999 | 21% |
| \$25,000 to \$49,999 | 22% |
| \$50,000 to \$99,999 | 29% |
| \$100,000 or more | 29% |
| Total | 100% |

Question 28: Ethnicity

| | No | Yes | Total |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|-------|
| Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino? | 96% | 4% | 100% |

Question 29: Race

| What is your race? | Percent of Respondents |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| American Indian or Alaskan native | 4% |
| Asian or Pacific Islander | 4% |
| Black, African American | 22% |
| White/Caucasian | 71% |
| Other | 6% |

Total may exceed 100% as respondents could select more than one category.

The City of Decatur Citizen Survey

Appendix A: Survey Frequencies

Question 30: Age

In which category is your age?

| | |
|-------------------|------|
| 18 to 24 years | 4% |
| 25 to 34 years | 31% |
| 35 to 44 years | 20% |
| 45 to 54 years | 18% |
| 55 to 64 years | 9% |
| 65 to 74 years | 9% |
| 75 years or older | 9% |
| Total | 100% |

Question 31: Gender

| | Female | Male | Total |
|----------------------|--------|------|-------|
| What is your gender? | 60% | 40% | 100% |

Questions 32 to 34: Voter Status and Activity

| | No | Yes | Don't know | Total |
|--|-----|-----|------------|-------|
| Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction? | 12% | 87% | 1% | 100% |
| Did you vote in the last election? | 23% | 77% | 0% | 100% |
| Are you likely to vote in the next election? | 5% | 89% | 5% | 100% |

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.

Sampling

Approximately 1,200 households were selected to participate in the survey using a stratified systematic sampling method.³ An individual within each household was selected using the birthday method.⁴

Survey Administration

Selected households received three mailings, one week apart, beginning February 13, 2006. 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 postage-paid return envelope. The final mailing contained a reminder letter and another survey and postage-paid return envelope. Completed surveys were collected over the following 5 weeks.

Response Rate and Confidence Intervals

Of the 1,140 eligible households, 469 completed the survey providing a response rate of 41%. Approximately 60 addresses sampled were "vacant" or "not found."⁵ In general, the response rates obtained on citizen surveys range from 25% to 40%. The sample of households was selected systematically and impartially from a list of residences in the

³ Systematic sampling is a method that closely approximates random sampling by selecting every Nth address until the desired number of households is chosen.

⁴ The birthday method is a process to remove bias in the selection of 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 but leaving selection of respondent to household members will lead to bias.

⁵ "Eligible" households refer to addresses that belong to residences that are not vacant within the City of Decatur.

United States maintained by the U.S. postal service and sold to NRC through an independent vendor. For each household, one adult, selected in an unbiased fashion, was asked to complete the survey.

In theory, in 95 cases out of 100, the results based on such samples will differ by no more than 5 percentage points in either direction from what would have been obtained had responses been collected from all Decatur adults. This difference is also called a “margin of error.”⁶ This difference from the presumed population finding is referred to as the sampling error. 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.

Weighting and Analyzing the Data

The surveys were analyzed using the SPSS statistical package. Frequency distributions and average (mean) ratings are presented in the body of the report.

The demographic characteristics of the sample were compared to those of the City of Decatur as reflected in the information sent by staff to National Research Center, Inc. When necessary, survey results were statistically adjusted to reflect the known population profile.

Generally, only two variables are used in a weighting scheme. Known population characteristics are compared to the characteristics of survey respondents. Generally, characteristics chosen as weighting variables are selected because they are not in proportion to what is shown in a jurisdiction’s demographic profile and because differences in opinion are observed between subgroups of these characteristics. The socioeconomic characteristics that were used to weight the survey results were gender/age, tenure and race. Other discrepancies between the whole population and the sample were also aided by the weighting due to the intercorrelation of many socioeconomic characteristics, although the percentages are not always identical in the sample compared to the population norms. The results of the weighting scheme are presented in the table on the following page.

⁶ The margin of error was calculated using the following formula: $1.96 * \text{square root } (0.25/400)$. This margin of error is calculated in the most conservative way. The standard error was assumed to be the greatest for a binomial distribution: 50%/50%.

Weighting Scheme for the City of Decatur Citizen Survey

| Respondent Characteristics | Population Norm⁷ | Unweighted Survey Data | Weighted Survey Data |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Tenure | | | |
| Rent Home | 41% | 26% | 42% |
| Own Home | 59% | 74% | 58% |
| Type of Housing Unit | | | |
| Single-Family Detached | 56% | 59% | 47% |
| Attached | 44% | 41% | 53% |
| Ethnicity | | | |
| Non-Hispanic | 98% | 98% | 96% |
| Hispanic | 2% | 2% | 4% |
| Race | | | |
| White/Caucasian | 66% | 77% | 67% |
| Non-White | 34% | 23% | 33% |
| Gender | | | |
| Female | 59% | 63% | 60% |
| Male | 41% | 37% | 40% |
| Age | | | |
| 18-34 | 35% | 18% | 35% |
| 35-54 | 40% | 49% | 39% |
| 55+ | 25% | 33% | 26% |
| Gender and Age | | | |
| Females 18-34 | 21% | 12% | 21% |
| Females 35-54 | 21% | 29% | 20% |
| Females 55+ | 17% | 22% | 19% |
| Males 18-34 | 14% | 6% | 14% |
| Males 35-54 | 19% | 20% | 18% |
| Males 55+ | 8% | 10% | 8% |

⁷ Source: 2000 Census

APPENDIX C: SURVEY MATERIALS

The following pages contain copies of the survey materials sent to randomly selected households within the City of Decatur. All households selected for inclusion in the study were first sent a prenotification postcard informing them that they would be receiving a questionnaire within the following week. A week later, a cover letter and survey were sent, with a postage paid return envelope. Two weeks later a second cover letter and survey were sent. The second cover letter asked that those who had responded not do so again, while urging those who had not yet returned their surveys to please do so.

THE CITY OF DECATUR 2006 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 circle the response that most closely represents your opinion for each question. Your responses are anonymous and will be reported in group form only.

1. Please circle the number that comes closest to your opinion for each of the following questions:

| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't know |
|---|-----------|------|------|------|------------|
| How do you rate Decatur as a place to live? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| How do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| How do you rate Decatur as a place to raise children? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| How do you rate Decatur as a place to work? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| How do you rate Decatur as a place to retire? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| How do you rate 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:

| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't know |
|--|-----------|------|------|------|------------|
| 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 |
| Opportunities to attend cultural activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Shopping opportunities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Air quality | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Recreational opportunities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Job opportunities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Access to affordable quality housing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Access to affordable quality child care | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Access to affordable quality health care | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Access to affordable quality food | 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/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 |
| Educational opportunities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Overall image/reputation of Decatur | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Overall quality of new development in Decatur | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

3. 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 |
|--|------------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|---------------|
| 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 the following problems in Decatur:

| | Not a problem | Minor problem | Moderate problem | Major problem | Don't know |
|---|------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Crime | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Drugs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Too much growth | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Lack of growth | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Graffiti | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Noise | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Run down buildings, weed lots, or junk vehicles | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Taxes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Traffic congestion | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Unsupervised youth | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Homelessness | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

5. Please rate how safe you feel from the following occurring to you 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 |
| Fire | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

6. Please rate how safe 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 |
| In Decatur's parks during the day | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| In Decatur's parks 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

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 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 |
| Recycled used paper, cans or bottles from your home | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Volunteered your time to some group/activity in Decatur | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Read Decatur Focus Newsletter | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Used the Internet to conduct business with Decatur | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

10. How do you rate the quality of each of the following services in Decatur?

| | <u>Excellent</u> | <u>Good</u> | <u>Fair</u> | <u>Poor</u> | <u>Don't know</u> |
|--|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 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 |
| Traffic enforcement..... | 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 |
| 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 |
| Amount of public parking | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Bus/transit services..... | 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 |
| Range/variety of recreation programs and classes | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Recreation centers/facilities..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Accessibility of parks | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Accessibility of recreation centers/facilities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Appearance/maintenance of parks..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Appearance of recreation centers/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 |
| 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 |
| Variety of library materials | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Public information services..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Municipal courts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Public schools..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

11. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the services provided by...

| | <u>Excellent</u> | <u>Good</u> | <u>Fair</u> | <u>Poor</u> | <u>Don't know</u> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 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 |

12. 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 #14 Yes → Go to question #13

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

| | <u>Excellent</u> | <u>Good</u> | <u>Fair</u> | <u>Poor</u> | <u>Don't know</u> |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 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 |

14. Please rate the following statements by circling the number that most clearly represents your opinion:

| | Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------|
| I receive good value for the City of Decatur taxes I pay | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| I am pleased with the overall direction that the City of Decatur is taking | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| The City of Decatur government welcomes citizen involvement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| The City of Decatur government listens to citizens | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

15. 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

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

a. How likely or unlikely would you be to support a wireless network financed with tax funds that provides wireless communication capacity for public service providers as well as free internet hot spots in the City's business districts?

- Very likely
 Somewhat likely
 Somewhat unlikely
 Very unlikely
 Don't know

b. To what extent would you support or oppose legislation that would allow low-income single-family property owners to volunteer services in order to reduce their property taxes?

- Strongly support
 Somewhat support
 Somewhat oppose
 Strongly oppose

c. To what extent would you support or oppose the adoption of regulations limiting the size of, or additions to a single-family residence, realizing that such restrictions would affect what someone could build on their own property?

- Strongly support
 Somewhat support
 Somewhat oppose
 Strongly oppose

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.

17. Do you live within the City limits of the City of Decatur?

- No Yes

18. Are you currently employed?

- No → Go to question #19
 Yes → Go to question #18a

18a. What one method of transportation do you usually use (for the longest distance of your commute) to travel to work?

- Motorized vehicle (e.g. car, truck, van, motorcycle etc...)
 Bus, Rail, Subway, or other public transportation
 Walk
 Work at home
 Other

18b. If you checked the motorized vehicle (e.g. car, truck, van, motorcycle, etc.) box in 18a, do other people (adults or children) usually ride with you to or from work?

- No Yes

19. 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

20. 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

21. 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?

22. Do any children 12 or under live in your household?

- No Yes

23. Do any teenagers aged between 13 and 17 live in your household?

- No Yes

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

- No Yes

25. Does any member of your household have a physical handicap or is anyone disabled?

- No Yes

26. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (mark one box)

- 12th Grade or less, no diploma
 High school diploma
 Some college, no degree
 Associate's degree (e.g. AA, AS)
 Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, AB, BS)
 Graduate degree or professional degree

27. 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 or more

28. Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?

- No Yes

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

- American Indian or Alaskan native
 Asian or Pacific Islander
 Black, African American
 White/Caucasian
 Other

30. 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

31. What is your sex?

- Female Male

32. Are you registered to vote in your jurisdiction?

- No Yes Don't know

33. Did you vote in the last election?

- No Yes Don't know

34. Are you likely to vote in the next election?

- No Yes 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 33031
404/370-4102 ▪ Fax 678/553-6518
info@decaturga.com ▪ <http://www.decaturga.com>

February 2006

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 2006 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William F. Floyd". The signature is fluid and cursive.

William F. Floyd
Mayor



City Commission
509 North McDonough Street
P.O. Box 220
Decatur, Georgia 33031
404/370-4102 ▪ Fax 678/553-6518
info@decaturga.com ▪ <http://www.decaturga.com>

March 2006

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!

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

Sincerely,

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!

Sincerely,



William F. Floyd
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Sincerely,



William F. Floyd
Mayor



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