Better Together Advisory Board Accomplishments

2016

* Held first Better Together Advisory Board Meeting in November (C.8)
* Held ½ day facilitated Planning Retreat in December

2017

Focus Area 1 – Support Community Participation and engagement among all members of the city’s population

* Sponsored the Welcoming America Interactive reception on the Community Bandstand with international performers hosting 150 attendees from across the nation (April) (1.B.5)
* Updated the Community Asset Map and used it to invite potential partners to convene a meeting to discuss Better Together initiatives and progress since initial meeting in 2015 (July) (1.C.6)
* Co-Sponsored kick-off reception for Welcoming Week with Welcoming America in the Community Bandstand in conjunction with opening of “I Am Decatur.” Approximately 35-40 people attended. (Sept) (1.B.2)
* Held a Community Conversation & Supper at Ebster Recreation around the “I Am Decatur” photographs with Ed Lee facilitating. Had over 100 registrations and 85 attended. (Sept) (1.B.5)
* The Community Conversations toolkit is in production. (1.B.1 and 1.B.2)
* The Decatur Focus has contained an article about Better Together and its activities in almost every issue in 2017. The website has been updated to include ongoing activities with our board and also links to other partner resources. (1.C.1)
* The Mayor included information about Better Together and its initiatives during the 2017 State of the City Address (1.C.10)

Focus Area 2 – Prioritize racially-just community policing by improving relationships between community members and law enforcement and ensuring all community members are treated in a just way with equity and respect

* The Better Together sub-committee included Jamilah Rashid, Lauren Sudeall Davis and Jon Abercrombie have been meeting regularly with the police to discuss the ongoing efforts. (2.A.1)
* Better Together Advisory Board gave input into information for the suspicious activity flyer. It is currently in production. (2.C.3)
* Better Together and the Police Dept. submitted information for the Decatur Focus with information to residents about training officers receive, especially as it relates to diversity, community policing and mental health. (2.C.6)

Focus Area 3 – Ensure the availability of diverse and affordable housing in order to prevent the displacement of existing residents and provide for a variety of housing types and prices

* Erin Braden, Paula Collins and Syreeta Campbell have been diligent about meeting with various groups including Lifelong Community, Create Community 4Decatur: Black Lives Matter, and others working on this issue. Jon Abercrombie has recently joined this effort.
* This is a complex and challenging issue and one that will take continuous work in stops and starts. We stand ready to jump in when and where needed. The next step is to have a more in-depth meeting with the Lifelong Community Chair, the Chair of their Affordable Housing Committee, and the staff liaisons with our group to map out the strategies needed. The Mayor and Commission are looking to these two groups to help where needed. (2.C.4)

Focus Area 4 – Cultivate a welcoming and inclusive retail environment for serving a diverse clientele

* David Lewicki and Christy Amador met with the Decatur Business Association to let them know who we are and that we are here and available.
* The City contracted with FAR (Foresight Augmented Reality) to install beacons in all city buildings to help guide those who are blind or have issues seeing. The next step is to encourage the retail and restaurant businesses to participate.

Focus Area 5 – Maximize the use of public spaces for the enrichment and well-being of all Decatur residents, workers, and visitors

* Co-Sponsored “I Am Decatur” with photographer Beate Sass pop-up art show with Decatur Arts Alliance and Decatur Education Foundation placed around the Community Bandstand (Sept.) (5.A.2)

Focus Area 6 – Facilitate low-cost transportation options for people of all ages and abilities

* The sub-committee focused on this area met with the Lifelong Community board and determined they were the ones to lead this charge. We stand by ready to help if asked or if needed.