First chartered as a municipality by the State of Georgia in 1823, the City of Decatur serves as the county seat of DeKalb County, a large, urban county in the Atlanta metropolitan area. After decades of population decline, Decatur's population has been on the increase since 1990 and with about 23,000 persons, it exceeds the previous highest population of 22,000 persons from the 1960 census count. The City currently occupies a land area of approximately 4.4 square miles, making it one of the most densely populated cities in the State of Georgia. However, the City’s commitment to a long-range vision with balanced growth and development has resulted in a community well-known for its high quality of life, vibrant commercial districts and as a great example of Smart Growth in the region.

Decatur’s central location in DeKalb County and proximity to the City of Atlanta and Emory University make the City of Decatur an attractive location for a wide range of professional service, legal, financial, medical and creative/technology businesses. Decatur is home to educational institutions like Agnes Scott College and Columbia Theological Seminary, as well as the headquarters for a number of non-profit organizations including the Task Force for Global Heath. A number of locally-owned restaurants and retail businesses also make the City of Decatur a destination shopping and dining district in metro-Atlanta. The essential nature of these services and the stability of health and education related businesses provide a solid basis for the City’s economic well being.

The City of Decatur centers on a thriving downtown business district that is surrounded by beautiful, historic neighborhoods reflecting a variety of architectural styles. The downtown business district offers a healthy mix of office, retail, restaurant and residential uses designed to encourage walking and an active lifestyle for persons of all ages. New buildings blend with historic commercial buildings and surround a traditional courthouse square that provides a link to the City’s history. Downtown residents in mid-rise, mixed-use condominiums and apartments have created a new type of neighborhood providing an important housing option for empty-nesters and young professionals seeking an urban lifestyle. These residents contribute to the economic vitality of the downtown commercial district. Smaller neighborhood commercial centers scattered throughout the City also contribute to the sense of community and vibrancy of surrounding traditional, single-family neighborhoods by providing opportunities for residents to walk to a variety of shopping and dining options.

The City’s well-regarded local public school system is attracting young families back to the City’s single-family neighborhoods. This influx of school-aged children has resulted in an increase in school enrollment and a long-term strategy to accommodate this growth. The City Schools of Decatur provide one city-wide early childhood education center, five neighborhood K-3 elementary schools, one system-wide 4-5 academy, one middle school and one high school. Major expansions of the middle school and high school are complete...
and a new 3-5 academy will open in time for the 2019-2020 school year.

The City of Decatur is authorized to levy a property tax on both real and personal properties located within its boundaries, and the City provides a full range of municipal services to support its residents, businesses and visitors. These services include public safety, public works, planning and zoning, sanitation, engineering, municipal court, active living, children and youth services, a municipal cemetery and community and economic development. The City also owns a 280-space parking facility and a 25,000 square foot conference center. In addition to these traditional municipal services, the City of Decatur is committed to providing a high quality of life for its residents and supports a volunteer program, an award-winning after school program and a wide variety of special events and civic engagement activities.

The City has three MARTA transit stations and multiple bus routes within its 4.4 square miles, providing direct transit access to downtown Atlanta and Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. In addition to public transit, the City supports and encourages a wide variety of alternative transportation options including walking, bicycling, the Clifton Corridor shuttle to Emory University, as well as the Go60+ Shuttle for senior citizens.

Decatur’s tree-lined streets, strong sense of community, high quality services and nationally recognized public school system continue to draw residents to the City. The City of Decatur has evolved into a highly-livable, small urban city that values its history and enjoys the sophistication and excitement similar to a college town along with all the benefits of living in a major metropolitan area. This balance of urban amenities and small town character has made the City of Decatur an attractive option for creative business owners, entrepreneurs and individuals seeking an opportunity to reside and work in the same community.

History
The City of Decatur, incorporated on December 10, 1823, is named in honor of Commodore Stephen Decatur, a U.S. Naval hero. Commodore Decatur died in 1820 and Congress decreed that his name be honored throughout the nation. As a result more than 40 cities and counties around the United States bear his name and show the western migration of the country during the early half of the 19th century. The City of Decatur, Georgia is the second oldest municipality in the Atlanta metropolitan area and the seat of DeKalb County. Decatur adjoins Atlanta’s city limits and is six miles east of downtown Atlanta.

The courthouse square in downtown Decatur is located on a rise of land where two Native American trails once crossed. The Old Courthouse on the Square is the fourth courthouse building to occupy the square. Historically, the courthouse square served as the community gathering place. Today, it continues as the heart of the community, hosting festivals, special events, providing greenspace and an open space to meet and relax with family and friends. The historic commercial district is a successful example of transit-oriented development and is connected to the city’s surrounding traditional, historic single-family neighborhoods by an expanding network of sidewalks, bicycle lanes and a regional trail system.

Government
The City of Decatur operates under the commission-manager form of government. The City Commission determines the policies of the local government and enacts local laws necessary for the protection of public health, safety and welfare. The City Commissioners provide leadership in identifying community needs and developing programs to meet
community objectives. There are five City Commissioners, elected in nonpartisan elections, for overlapping four-year terms. Two commissioners are elected from the north district, two from the south district and one commissioner is elected at-large, giving every voter in the City the opportunity to elect three of the five commissioners. Every year at its organizational meeting in January, the City Commission elects one of its members to serve as Mayor/Chair of the City Commission. Patricia Garrett was elected Mayor in 2016. She has been a member of the City Commission since 2009. Tony Powers was elected by his fellow commissioners to serve as Mayor pro tem in 2018 and has served on the City Commission since 2016. The other Commissioners are Scott Drake, who was first elected in 2013; Brian Smith, who was first elected in January 2016; and, Kelly Walsh, who was sworn in for her first term in January 2018. It is the responsibility of the Mayor to preside at all meetings of the City Commission. While the Mayor has no veto power, he or she retains the right to vote on all matters brought before the City Commission. The Mayor’s vote carries the same weight as any other Commissioner.

The City Commission appoints the members of a number of volunteer boards and commissions who carry out responsibilities specified by State law, the City Charter, and local ordinances. These boards and commissions include the Decatur Housing Authority, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Decatur Downtown Development Authority, the Planning Commission and the Historic Preservation Committee. Special advisory committees and task forces are also appointed by the City Commission to provide community input on issues and projects as needed. Currently, these boards include the Active Living Board, the Better Together Advisory Board, the Lifelong Community Advisory Board, the Decatur Youth Council and the Environmental Sustainability Board.

The City Commission appoints the Municipal Court judges and the City Attorney, who provides legal counsel for the government. The City Commission also appoints a city manager to provide professional management and direct the day to day operations of the City. The City Manager serves as the Chief Executive and Administrative Officer and is responsible for carrying out the policies and ordinances of the City Commission, for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the government, the appointment of all employees and serves at the pleasure of the commission. The appointment of department heads is subject to confirmation by the City Commission. The current city manager, Andrea Arnold, has served as manager since January 2019, and has been employed with the City since 1997.

**Vision**

The City of Decatur will assure a high quality of life for its residents, businesses and visitors both today and in the future.

Successful organizations have a clear vision of where they are going and how they intend to achieve their mission. The City of Decatur has a long history of engaging residents in crafting a strategic vision for the City – most recently in 2000 and 2010. To support the vision, the City Commission holds an annual working retreat to reflect on past achievements, identify future goals, and discuss challenges to implementing those goals. With the community vision as a guide, City Commissioners must balance the needs of a diverse population, limited financial resources, federal and state mandates and unanticipated infrastructure costs.
In April 2010, the City kicked off the planning process to create the 2010 Strategic Plan for this current decade. An extensive effort was made to ensure broad participation by age, gender, race and geographical location in the planning process and participants generated over 8,000 ideas and comments about issues facing Decatur and hopes and dreams for the City’s future.

Using this information, a plan was crafted that contained goals and tasks grouped into four primary principles that captured a shared vision for our community. These principles are:

- **Principle A** Manage Growth While Retaining Character
- **Principle B** Encourage a Diverse and Engaged Community
- **Principle C** Serve as Good Stewards of the Environment and Community Resources
- **Principle D** Support a Safe, Healthy, Lifelong Community

Ultimately more than 1,500 residents participated in the planning process from general Round Table discussions to Community Academies exploring specific topics to Open Houses where drafts of the plan were presented. Every comment was captured, analyzed and is included in the final report that was adopted in March 2011. The entire plan is available at www.decaturnext.com and includes four principles, 16 goals and more than 80 tasks that are incorporated into the City’s annual work program. Also, the City’s budget is directly linked to the principles and goals of the Strategic Plan to show residents how city resources are allocated to meet the community’s vision and goals.

Now nine years into the implementation of the 2010 ten year plan, City staff is testing an on-line reporting system that will allow residents to track the successful completion of tasks and view the timeline for those that are in progress. The City will kick off the development of a new ten-year strategic plan in 2019 with expanded opportunities for community engagement and public input.

**Performance Management**

A successful organization needs to know how well it is doing towards achieving its vision and goals. The City has developed quantifiable measurements to track how efficiently and effectively the organization is meeting its goals. Selective benchmarking is undertaken during the development of departmental budget requests. Performance measures are reviewed by an interdepartmental committee on a monthly basis to identify successful processes and work on areas that need improvement. Measures are included throughout the budget narrative to illustrate how the City is performing.

Between 2006 and 2016, the City participated in the International City/County Management Association’s (ICMA) Comparative Performance Measurement Program (CPM). CPM provided performance measures in 16 service areas that the City used to evaluate exist-
ing services, to benchmark results with other communities and to exchange best practices within a group of participating jurisdictions. In late 2016, CPM transitioned from being a subscription based service to being a program advisor. Beginning in 2017, the City has embarked on its own comparative program.

Additional information on the quality of services provided by the City is gauged through a biennial citizen survey. The last citizen survey was conducted in February and March 2018 to gauge satisfaction with the community and local government services. This was the City’s seventh citizen survey. The full report is posted, along with the results from previous surveys, on the City’s website at www.decaturga.com.

**Budget**

The annual budget serves as the foundation for the City’s financial planning and control. All work groups submit departmental budget requests by the first week of March. Utilizing the goals and tasks described in the Strategic Plan, the departmental requests are the starting point for developing the proposed budget. Once departmental budgets are submitted, department heads and senior staff meet collectively to review all requests.

The proposed budget is formally presented to the City Commission on the third Monday in May. The operating budget includes both proposed expenditures and revenues. The City publishes a summary of the proposed budget in the official legal organ (currently The Champion Newspaper), makes copies available to the residents of the City, provides copies to the local library and posts the proposed and revised budgets on the City’s website. Public hearings on the proposed budget are held in June. The budget is then legally enacted through adoption of a budget resolution by the City Commission, normally on the third Monday in June but no later than June 30, the close of the fiscal year.

The budget document is a written plan that provides the financial basis for implementing the City’s vision and related goals. It represents city departments’ best efforts at achieving the vision within an environment of competing goals and limited resources.

More information on the budget and the budget process can be found in the Budget Guide under Appendix A.

**Vision Based Budgeting**

As we move toward the completion of the 2010 Strategic Plan and the beginning of the 2020 Strategic Plan, the annual budget continues to serve as the primary implementation tool to bring the community’s vision to life. The Vision Based Budget is a financial planning document that allows the City to connect the community’s vision with the necessary resources (personnel, equipment and funding) required for implementation. It also describes in a narrative and with numbers, the programs, policies and projects identified in the Strategic Plan and each City department’s relationship to them.

The following pages highlight the four principles outlined in the 2010 Strategic Plan plus an additional principle that aims to capture the internal work of the City. Under each principle is a description of how the goals and tasks of that principle are being implemented, past accomplishments, proposed projects for this fiscal year, performance measures and unique partnerships. For more specifics on the role of departments, city programs or partnerships visit www.decaturga.com.
PRINCIPLE A: Manage Growth While Retaining Character

Accommodate commercial and residential growth while retaining Decatur’s unique sense of place within an urban environment.

Four key goals are involved in managing this objective successfully:

- **Goal 1** Retain and enhance the character of existing commercial districts and expand it to new districts
- **Goal 2** Encourage a diversity of business types with particular focus on small businesses and businesses that provide daily needs
- **Goal 3** Protect existing neighborhoods while promoting growth in desired areas and adopting standards that guide future growth
- **Goal 4** Protect and encourage the creative reuse of historic buildings, structures, and places

Maintaining Decatur’s strong sense of community and unique character is an important goal for residents, business owners and visitors, and is central to sustainable growth. The City continues to encourage quality development to maximize value in its commercial districts and to meet the expressed desire to be a lifelong community, which includes promoting local businesses, providing alternate transportation choices and advocating for a variety of housing options. Through sound governance, advocacy, and education, the City continues to encourage protection of historic buildings and the tree canopy which contribute greatly to the livability of the City’s neighborhoods.

**Imagine77**

One of the most monumental decisions made by the City in recent years was the purchase of the former United Methodist Children’s Home, a 77-acre property adjacent to the City’s southeastern border. This purchase began the “Imagine77” planning process, which included the commitment to conserve 22 acres of permanent greenspace, a year-long, community-driven effort to develop a master plan for the site and the annexation of the property now known as Decatur Legacy Park. The Decatur Legacy Park Master Plan, com-
completed in December 2018, sets forth the framework to preserve and reuse existing buildings, provide passive and active recreation opportunities, encourage alternative transportation, establish affordable housing villages and offer a variety of community programs for all ages and abilities.

**New Neighborhoods**

The City’s vibrancy, sense of place and amenities consistently make it one of the best places to live in Georgia. With this desirability comes the challenge to diversify housing options so that the needs of families, senior citizens and younger residents who all wish to reside in diverse, affordable, sustainable and walkable neighborhoods are met. The area south of the Avondale MARTA Station, also known as East Decatur Station, was once a declining light industrial district that is in transformation into a new mixed-use neighborhood guided by an adopted regulating master plan. The Avondale Transit Oriented Development includes Columbia Senior Residents at East Decatur, a 92-unit mixed-income senior apartment community, and Courtland Decatur East, a development with 378 market rate apartments and 21,000 square feet of commercial space. On the western edge of the City’s boundaries, the City collaborated with MARTA, the City of Atlanta, DeKalb County, and the surrounding multi-jurisdictional community to complete the East Lake MARTA Station Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Study, a master planning effort partially funded by an Atlanta Regional Commission LCI grant. The study resulted in a long-term vision that will transform MARTA’s underutilized surface parking lots into a multi-phase, mixed-use, transit-oriented development. The LCI Study will serve as a guide for future development to provide neighborhood-serving businesses, medium density residential options, and buildings scaled to transition appropriately into the adjacent single-family communities.

**Preserving History**

In the upcoming fiscal year, the City will complete a city-wide historic resources survey update, which involves cataloging data on Decatur’s historic properties. These include homes, commercial properties, landscapes and other structures. The information documented in this survey will help guide future re-development by recognizing historic resources and the historical context in which they were built. In addition to updating the inventory, the survey will also encourage residents to understand and appreciate the unique character of the City and its neighborhoods.

**Branding for Business**

A consistent focus throughout the City’s recent past is to encourage thoughtful management of business, office, retail and residential developments in downtown Decatur. After the successful completion of several significant residential and mixed-use projects over the past 20 years, the pendulum is swinging with renewed focus on business and office retention and development in the downtown area to maintain a healthy balance of uses. One of the ways the City will attract businesses and offices is to partner with the Decatur Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to design and implement a branding and marketing campaign specifically targeting office tenants and office building developments. In the upcoming year, the City will enhance its commercial districts by adding banners and street furniture while continuing the regular installation of street trees, bicycle racks and dog waste stations.
FY 2018-2019 Accomplishments

- Held the Decatur Housing Summit, continuing the conversation on housing affordability and setting forth tangible and achievable steps to expand housing options (Goal 3)
- Completed the East Lake MARTA Station LCI Study, creating a vision for new, medium-density, mixed-use development on underutilized surface parking lots (Goal 3)
- Hired a marketing and public relations firm to develop a new Downtown Development Authority logo and a marketing strategy to introduce the City to business leaders looking for office space (Goal 2)
- Developed new community programming, such as the “Buildings, Art and Brew” pub crawl, to promote Decatur’s historic and cultural assets (Goal 4)
- Continued to maintain and improve streetscapes on East Howard Avenue and North McDonough Street (Goal 1)
- Successfully promoted the leasing of street level retail and restaurant vacancies with small, locally owned businesses to retain the lowest vacancy rate in metro Atlanta (Goal 2)

FY 2019-2020 New Projects, Programs, and Policies

- Update the Decatur Historic Resources Survey to reevaluate National Register districts and pursue local designation of individual properties and districts (Goal 4)
- Update tree canopy ordinance (Goal 3)
- Create an affordable housing task force to develop policy and program recommendations to retain and expand affordable housing options in the City (Goal 3)
- Adopt a comprehensive site plan for the affordable housing villages as a supplement to the Decatur Legacy Park Master Plan (Goal 3)
- Partner with City Schools of Decatur to construct a new fiber optic network (Goal 3)
- Begin the next phase of the Atlanta Avenue Railroad Crossing Improvements (Goal 3)
- Install new signs directing people to public parking (Goal 1)

PRINCIPLE A FINANCIAL IMPACT

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Imagine77 stats

- 6 months
- 1,200 comments
- 290 Civic Dinner attendees
- 600 individual meeting attendees
- 6 stakeholder meetings
- 3 potential concepts
- 1 final plan

By the Numbers

- 6 New Phase 4 Decatur Artway Sculptures
  1. Flying
     309 Sycamore St.
  2. Popsicles
     5th Avenue at Oakview Road
  3. Stalemate
     321 W. Hill St.
  4. Here
     321 W. Hill St.
  5. Undulation
     Fire Station No. 2, 356 W. Hill St.
  6. Iliana
     Decatur Public Works, 2635 Talley St.

decaturartsalliance.org/decatur-artway-sculptures
**PRINCIPLE B: Encourage a Diverse and Engaged Community**

Protect and expand diversity among Decatur residents, businesses, and visitors while promoting an innovative, engaged and informed community.

The Strategic Plan includes four goals related to encouraging a diverse and engaged community:

- **Goal 5** Maintain and encourage diversity of race, ethnicity, income, culture, age, family type and other kinds of diversity
- **Goal 6** Strengthen communication and involvement in and among neighborhoods, city government, volunteer boards and commissions, institutions, community organizations, local businesses and Decatur as a whole
- **Goal 7** Support, expand and develop programs, services, events, and opportunities that respond to diverse interests, encourage community interaction, and promote a stronger sense of community
- **Goal 8** Promote a culture of creative innovation and expression

Decatur is a community composed of diverse and engaged individuals proud to be part of an All-America City. To be an All-America City is to be a city focused on celebrating civic engagement, inclusion and a healthy community for all. Decatur received this award in 2018 based on three projects: the Better Together Advisory Board, the Police Department Strategic Plan and the I Am Decatur art installation. The City recognizes the importance and value of diversity and strives to be inclusive in every aspect of its operations.

**Communication is Key**

The City Commission continues to support the “Open Office Hour” program, which gives the opportunity for each elected official to address specific topics and answer questions from the community. The sessions are streamed online on the City’s website, making it easy for community members to view and join the conversation. In the upcoming year, the City will expand the program to include the chairs of the various resident boards and commissions. The City will unveil its Street Sweeper GPS app, providing the community real time information of when and where streets are being swept. Staff also will utilize the app to optimize routes and reduce fuel use. The City also overhauled its website, www.decaturga.com, so that users will have better access to City services beginning later this summer. In addition to improvements to the City’s web presence, community members will also have the option to subscribe to an updated e-newsletter providing news and information through email and social media.

**Plan First, Implement Second**

The City completed numerous transportation-related planning projects over the past year, including the East Lake MARTA Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) study, the Talley Street Multimodal Study and the city-wide Community Transportation Plan update. Now that the plans are complete, guided implementation will begin. The first step includes the new South Columbia Drive/Talley Street/Shadowmoor Drive traffic signal and the South Columbia Drive shared-use path connecting East Decatur Station, Winnona Park and the new Talley Street Elementary School with Decatur Legacy Park.

This year, the City will continue its planning efforts by focusing on the ten-year update to the city-wide LCI Study, the five-year update to the Comprehensive Development Plan,
and most importantly, the 2020 Strategic Plan. The 2020 Strategic Plan will allow the entire community to participate in defining a vision and establishing specific and tangible goals and tasks that will shape the City’s work program and provide a budget framework for the next ten years.

Engaged for Life
The City continues to provide transportation services to Decatur’s seniors with the GO60+ shuttle. Every Wednesday, seniors from the Oakhurst neighborhood can hop on the shuttle to visit various destinations in downtown Decatur, providing the community with greater mobility options and less dependence on automobile transportation. The shuttle provides transportation to and from many active living exercise programs, financial and technological trainings, and events dedicated to seniors. Last year, the City purchased its first wheelchair accessible shuttle bus, which increases the number of community members that can use the GO60+ shuttle. The City is currently working towards becoming an AARP Age-Friendly Community, a designation that is supported by the City’s commitment to being a lifelong community.

Community Service
Approximately 1,100 volunteers participated in the 2019 Martin Luther King Jr. Service Project, which occurs over the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday weekend each January. The project provides home repairs, yard work and weatherization for lower income residents over the age of 62 and helps senior residents live safely, comfortably and affordably in their homes. This year 40 homes were improved during the MLK service project. A Season of Giving/Christmas Decatur continues to have robust support from donors. Although the number of children needing gifts has decreased over the last few years, outreach to older residents, primarily identified in the MLK service project, has increased. This has led to the substantial increase in the number of low income older residents receiving holiday gifts.
Children are Our Future
The City continues to engage its youngest members through programs, events and, specifically, the Decatur Youth Council (DYC.) Last year the DYC participated in the Decatur Legacy Park Civic Dinners, as stakeholders in the Community Transportation Plan update and focused their annual project on planting a fruit orchard at Decatur Legacy Park, using a grant by the Atlanta Local Food Initiative. The grant allowed the group to plant an orchard of pear trees, apple trees, and blackberry bushes at the park, with the number of trees representing the number of children who originally lived at the former United Methodist Children’s Home – 19 pear trees representing the girls and 14 apple trees representing the boys.

The Decatur Police Department will continue to host the ever-popular Junior Police Academy providing opportunities for the City’s youth to interact with police officers. Participation in the academy provides young people with the knowledge to handle police interaction, explains legal facts from fiction and helps participants understand the officer’s point of view. The Decatur Fire Department will continue to provide CPR training to all Renfroe Middle School eighth graders, introduce elementary students to the City’s fire and rescue facilities and equipment, serve as physical education substitutes at City schools and be lunch buddies for those students feeling lonely or left out.

Culture of Equity
The City is committed to equity and inclusion in the community and within the organization. Two racial equity training workshops were conducted last year and similar workshops will be offered again this year. An internal equity team will be formed to assess equity issues and areas for improvement in all aspects of the organization. With assistance and leadership from the Better Together Advisory Board, the City will continue community conversations, establish a racial equity baseline, and introduce monthly book club topics with the help of Little Shop of Stories, a local bookstore.

FY 2018-2019 Accomplishments
• Hosted Open Office Hour sessions with each City Commissioner and the City Manager (Task 6A)
• Updated the New Resident Packet (Task 6A)
• Maintained Foresight Augmented Reality (FAR) devices at Decatur City Hall, Decatur Recreation Center and Ebster Recreation Center to help visually-impaired with wayfinding inside City facilities (Task 5C, 6A, 8D)
• Produced and released recruitment videos for the Police and Fire Departments (Task 5D, 6A)
• Maintained the Decatur Buskers Program (Task 8B)
• Completed redesign of the City website (Task 6A)
• Hosted an Affordable Housing Summit (Task 5A)
• Updated the Community Transportation Plan (Goal 8)
• Engaged with neighborhood leaders through the Decatur Neighborhood Alliance and the Lifelong Community Advisory Board (Goal 6)
• Partnered with the Decatur Arts Alliance to sponsor public art projects like the Look Up art installation and continuation of the Art Way sculpture installations (Task 8B)
• Continued to develop leadership skills and engage members of the new Decatur Youth Council as they learn about city government (Task 7E)
• Began implementation of the Decatur Legacy Park Master Plan with the grant-funded orchard installation and volunteer efforts led by the Decatur Youth Council (Task 7A)
• Purchased ADA approved shuttle bus for use by the GO60+ group (Goal 5E)
FY 2019-2020 New Projects, Programs, and Policies

- Begin the 2020 Strategic Plan public engagement process (Goal 8)
- Host Housing Summit 2.0 following the recommendations of the Affordable Housing Task Force (Task 5A)
- Implement a new City E-Newsletter (Goal 8)
- Host Open Office Hour sessions with chairs of the various resident boards & commissions, City Commissioners and City Manager (Task 6A)
- Complete the Citywide Historic Resources Survey Update
- Receive designation as an Age-Friendly Community from AARP (Task 5E)

**PRINCIPLE B FINANCIAL SUPPORT:**

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**By the Numbers**

- Number of street-sweeping zones: 18
  - Refer to decaturga.com/city-government/city-departments/public-works/street-cleaning-schedule for complete details

- Fruit trees at Legacy Park Orchard: 33
  - 19 pear trees
  - 14 apple trees
PRINCIPLE C: Serve as Good Stewards of the Environment and Community Resources

Practice fiscal, environmental, and organizational stewardship to make efficient use of finite resources through collaboration and conservation.

Five goals were identified in the 2010 Strategic Plan as ways to sustain the City’s natural and built environments and to protect the City’s economic viability:

- **Goal 9** Expand and diversify the City’s revenue base
- **Goal 10** Continue to provide quality services within fiscal limits acceptable to the community
- **Goal 11** Assure the efficient use and coordination of all community facilities by strengthening community partnerships
- **Goal 12** Foster environmental, social, and economic sustainability in all aspects of city life and government practice
- **Goal 13** Protect and restore natural resources, support environmental health and ecological awareness

The intentional stewardship of an urban environment is a balance between sustaining and improving its infrastructure within the confines of its financial means. This requires considering both the short term and long term impacts of policy decisions as well as considering consistency with multiple and varied goals and objectives. Since 2010, the goals of Principle C have been a call to action to manage the natural, physical and financial interests to successfully build upon an already-present philosophy of sustainability with the City of Decatur. Local government has a crucial role in leading the sustainability movement. An ethos of sustainability is equally crucial to building resiliency, which allows a community to quickly recover from an unplanned event such as a tropical storm or a financial recession. Sustainability and resiliency cannot occur without strong partnerships with other community partners. The City of Decatur has a continued commitment to sustaining and strengthening its environment through sound policy, community partnerships that conserve resources and care for the natural world, all within a framework of thoughtful fiscal management.

**Sustainable Infrastructure & Operations**

Achieving long-standing environmental goals remains a priority for the City of Decatur. Year 2 of a two-year storm water master plan update will take much of the data and input collected in Year 1 and will formulate a plan on how to move forward. This plan will impact how the City manages and treats its storm water and waterways. The final product, to be completed in 2020, will build upon sound storm water management practices that span the past 40 years. City departments will continue to look for ways to reduce dependence on the gas- and diesel-powered vehicles and reduce carbon emissions by increasing efficiency in City operations, supporting alternative modes of transportation, and purchasing fuel efficient City vehicles and equipment.

Work will continue on multi-use path connectivity projects on Commerce Drive, South Columbia Drive and Church Street, while a new study will begin to connect downtown Decatur to Oakhurst by way of new protected bicycle lanes on McDonough Street. Connectivity for persons with mobility challenges will also be a focus with the continued installation of new ADA crosswalks as well as updates to building codes that improve home and workplace accessibility. Finally, the Solid Waste Division of the Public Works Department will undertake a study that will explore providing curbside composting services to residents. Citywide composting has the potential to divert significant amounts of food waste from landfills while creating organic byproducts that can replenish the earth in many practical ways.
Partnerships for Progress

The City of Decatur maintains its commitment to managing its fiscal resources through the creation of partnerships with private and public institutions.

The City Manager’s Office and the Community and Economic Development Department have started implementation of the Decatur Legacy Park Master Plan. There will be further consideration into adaptive reuse of the existing park buildings that support the goals of the master plan. The key to the success of long-term sustainability of the property rests in the ability to honor the community’s vision for the Park while fully utilizing the space and generating the revenue necessary to operate the Park’s resources through creative community partnerships.

Several City departments continue to create programs to use City facilities for training staff and partner organizations in-house. Bringing the course instructor to the City rather than sending staff away controls the costs of expenses related to attending conferences and training programs while allowing other local partner organizations to attend. The Police and Fire Departments continue to be successful in holding programs that “Train the Trainer,” meaning that staff and neighboring departments are provided with classes needed to educate their colleagues without having to leave Decatur. Likewise, the Design Environment and Construction Division will be hosting several continuing education classes for code professionals and contractors to learn about upcoming building code changes. Finally, the continued partnership between Children and Youth Services (CYS) Division and the City Schools of Decatur for afterschool care remains a hallmark of efficient city service with nine program sites and a tenth planned for FY 2019-20. With the addition of a tenth site, CYS will be expecting an increase in projected revenues and programming opportunities.

Smart City Technology

Building resiliency to climactic and economic forces through technology improvements is an essential duty of government operations in the 21st century. The City of Decatur and the City Schools of Decatur will build new city-wide fiber optic infrastructure that will greatly increase access to digital technology and help maintain continuity of operations during adverse events. A shared fiber network will provide better performance while at the same time being significantly less expensive to install and operate than two independent systems. The network will provide the infrastructure upon which other wireless technologies can operate such as radios, cameras, and other smart city technologies. In addition to public improvements to fiber technology, the City continues to assist with private fiber infrastructure improvements in the downtown commercial district. Having the most current private infrastructure offers a critical economic development tool that makes the City more competitive as a business relocation and expansion option. The City has installed smart city technology in the form of sensors that count pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile activity in eight different locations in the downtown commercial district. The technology helps the Community and Economic Development Department measure pre-development and post-development activity to understand the effect that mixed-use developments have on transportation options, determine the benefit of major public infrastructure investments in bicycle lanes, sidewalks and intersection improvements, to evaluate consumer trends and to provide empirical data for potential retailers looking to locate to downtown Decatur.

FY 2018-2019 Accomplishments

• Completed the first year of the two-year Storm Water Master Plan (Task 13B)
• Completed the Hampton Inn and Suites on Clairemont Avenue and the Avondale Transit-Oriented Development to increase the revenue base for the City (Task 9C and 9D)
• Approved the Decatur Legacy Park Master Plan (Task 11A and 11B)
• Rezoned the Avondale MARTA Station area from C-3 – Heavy Commercial to MU – Mixed Use, Transit Subarea (Task 9A and 9C)
• Public Works Department accepted the contract to provide city-wide recycling services (Task 10C)
• Planted a Fruit Orchard at Decatur Legacy Park (Task 12C and 12J)
• Annexed 11 properties on Grove Street and East Ponce de Leon Avenue for future commercial use (Task 9B)
• Re-certified at platinum level by the Atlanta Regional Commission’s Green Communities Program. (Task 13C)
• Acquired 13 properties between Dearborn Park and Chevelle Lane to preserve natural open space (Task 13E)
• Completed E911 Surcharge Compliance Review (Task 10C)

**FY 2019-20 New Projects, Programs, and Policies**

• Expand the CYS afterschool program to a tenth site (Task 11A)
• Pursue grant funding to achieve LEED for Cities Certification from the United States Green Building Council (Task 12D)
• Continue to support the redevelopment of underutilized property within the East Decatur area according to the regulating master plan (Task 9C)
• Replace public drinking fountains with refillable water dispensers (Task 12J)
• Begin further study of the existing vacant buildings at Decatur Legacy Park to understand potential adaptive reuses and anticipate required upgrades (Task 9C)
• Promote environmental sustainability issues, including curbside composting study, through Lead for America or similar internship program (Goal 12)

**PRINCIPLE C FINANCIAL SUPPORT:**

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The city has four drainage basins

**NORTHSIDE**
- Peavine Creek Basin
- South Fork Peachtree Creek Basin

**SOUTHSIDE**
- Shoal Creek Basin

By the Numbers:

17

Number of outdoor drinking fountains

15

Number of years city has earned GFOA’s Certificate in Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting
PRINCIPLE D: Support a Safe, Healthy, Lifelong Community

Assure that housing, mobility and support services exist to provide everyone at every age a high quality of life.

Three key goals in the 2010 Strategic Plan address this principle:

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<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>Goal 14</td>
<td>Enhance mobility options within and to Decatur</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 15</td>
<td>Expand the variety of high quality housing options to meet the needs of a diverse community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal 16</td>
<td>Provide programs and services that support and enhance a safe, healthy and active lifestyle</td>
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</table>

Community Athletes

The City’s Active Living Division provides a variety of programs and services that support a safe, healthy and active lifestyle for residents of all ages. This past year the basketball and soccer programs saw the highest participation rates in history. Youth basketball continues to be the most popular sport with over 600 Decatur youth participating. A partnership with the Boys and Girls Club resulted in swim lessons to over 100 children at the year-round, indoor Oakhurst Pool. Sixty percent of the participating children can now swim without assistance.

The adult softball league provides residents, city staff and business owners the opportunity to play softball with 24 co-ed teams competing each year. Other adult activities include pickleball, bridge club and the Silver Spokes adult tricycle class as well as fitness classes and open gym activities. New this year, the Active Living Division offered gymnastics, stunting and parkour classes, women’s volleyball, women’s lacrosse, and the reinstitution of...
the women’s basketball summer league. Archery will soon be offered thanks to a grant from USA Archery that provided the Active Living Division with equipment to start its first-ever archery program.

Quality Care for Decatur’s Children

The afterschool programs offered by the Children and Youth Services (CYS) Division are accredited and serve over 600 children annually. CYS facilitates services to homeless families and partners with the City Schools of Decatur (CSD) to provide nutrition, education and transportation to children and youth in need. CYS continues to hire CSD teachers for afterschool and summer camps. In the upcoming year CYS will offer its tenth program venue as a “Whiz Kids” site and afterschool programs for 3rd – 5th graders at Decatur Legacy Park, as well as at the new upper elementary school on Talley Street.

I Want to Ride My Bicycle

Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure continues to be the focus of capital improvements in the City. The Commerce Drive Cycle Track began construction in April 2019 and will take approximately one year to complete. The completed cycle track will provide a critical link from the North McDonough Cycle Track to the future Church Street Cycle Track and Streetscape project, currently in the rights of way acquisition phase. This cycle track infrastructure will provide community members, including those who are interested but cautious bicycle riders, with a protected north-south bicycle connection through the city.

Sustainable and affordable transportation alternatives that serve a diverse community are welcome with implementation of clear policy and appropriate partnerships. The City Manager’s Office worked with City staff, resident advisory boards, the Georgia Municipal Association and other communities to create an interim operating agreement regulating electric scooters within Decatur. The City is currently in the process of drafting an ordinance to regulate shared mobility devices, which would include electric scooters and electric bikes, taking a positive and proactive approach to the changing transportation technology of the future.

Safety for All

The Decatur Police and Fire Departments offer programs and services that support public education and ensure a high quality of life. Both departments provide training to resident volunteers to serve as additional eyes and ears in the community through the Citizens Assisting Public Safety (CAPS) program. In 2018, 49 community members graduated from the Police CAPS program and 32 graduated from the Fire CAPS program.

The Decatur Police Department offers the Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) course to train women of all ages and abilities in self-defense techniques. Since 2014, 385 women have completed the course. Self-defense training is also offered to children and teens with 600 youth participating in the Revved Up Kids workshops and approximately 140 adults attending the Revved Up Kids parent seminars. The Decatur Fire Department is actively involved in a local teen awareness program, annual food and coat drives and trained technicians help to ensure children’s car seats are installed properly through the Car Seat Safety Program. This past year, the Fire Department completed a successful audit of its Insurance Services Office (ISO) Protection and once again received a Class 2 rating, ultimately allowing Decatur residents and businesses to receive lower insurance premiums for a high level of fire and life safety protection.

Diverse Housing

In November 2018, the City hosted its first ever Affordable Housing Summit to develop a shared understanding of Decatur’s housing context, define affordability as it relates to Decatur and explore viable approaches and strategies. The Summit concluded with ideas for all
100 participants to be a part of local solutions. Direct outcomes from the Summit included developing the Decatur Legacy Park Affordable Housing workshop and the upcoming appointment of an Affordable Housing Task Force that will review the Summit’s recommendations, complete ongoing research and put forth policy and program recommendations to the City Commission. A Housing Summit 2.0 is scheduled to take place in the upcoming year in an effort to continue the process of supporting affordable housing policy changes for the community.

The Cottage Court Pilot Project approved in 2016 and expected to move forward in 2019 will expand workforce and “missing middle” housing options in the City. The pilot project, an initiative of the Decatur Development Authority, is intended to demonstrate the desirability, livability, financial feasibility, and modest development scale of this newly allowed housing type in Decatur. Site work and building construction will begin in late 2019 on an undeveloped site on Commerce Drive. The project includes six new homes that surround a shared green space and ranging in floor area from 460 square feet to 1,100 square feet.

**FY 2018-2019 Accomplishments**

- Implemented Reimagine West Howard improvements (Task 14A)
- Partnered with the PATH Foundation to fund and begin construction of the Commerce Drive Cycle Track (Task 14A)
- Began the civic engagement and design phase of the Atlanta Avenue Railroad Crossing Improvements (Task 14A)
- Implemented traffic calming on Garden Lane, Willow Lane, Brower Street, Garland Avenue, and McClean Street (Task 14D)
- Repaired vertically separated sidewalk panels along South Candler Street, College Avenue, Scott Boulevard and in city parks (Task 14D)
- Completed the Talley Street Multi-Modal Improvements Study (Task 14D)
- Conducted the Parkwood Road Traffic Calming Study (Task 14D)
- Implemented smart city technology to collect counts of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists in the downtown area (Task 14G)
- Hosted an Affordable Housing Summit to discuss important issues related to housing diversity and affordability (Task 15A)
- Partnered with the Decatur Housing Authority to provide temporary housing at Decatur Legacy Park during renovation of Swanton Heights properties (Task 15)
- Opened 92 mixed-income dwellings for senior residents at Avondale Transit Oriented Development (Task 15C)
- Created new CYS programs for CSD Academy School on Talley Street (Task 16C)
- Constructed new arbors at Scott, McKoy and Oakhurst Parks and completed field storage units at Ebster and McKoy Parks (Task 16D)

**TOP 3 YOUTH ATHLETIC PROGRAMS IN 2019**

- SOCCER 554 participants
- BASKETBALL 550 participants
- BASEBALL 220 participants

**TOP 3 ADULT ATHLETIC PROGRAMS IN 2018**

- PICKLEBALL 1,000 participants
- SOFTBALL 243 participants on 27 teams
- WOMEN’S BASKETBALL 72 participants on 6 teams
**FY 2019-2020 New Projects, Programs, and Policies**

- Construct the South Columbia Shared-Use Path (Task 14A)
- Install pedestrian hybrid beacon on Scott Boulevard at Westchester Elementary (Task 14B)
- Implement the East and West Parkwood Drive traffic calming improvements (Task 14D)
- Conduct a North Decatur Road Corridor Study jointly with DeKalb County (Task 14E)
- Recommend adoption of an ordinance regulating usage of shared mobility devices within the City (Task 14G)
- Install the Talley Street/Shadowmoor Drive/South Columbia Drive split-phase traffic signal (Task 14I)
- Support the completion of the Callaway redevelopment project to include 329 apartment units, 34,000 square feet of office and retail space (Task 15C)
- Complete an existing building analysis at Decatur Legacy Park to review accessibility, future adaptive reuse and prospects of offering affordable housing (Task 15E)
- Further enhance the MARTA Plaza as a public space with activities such as yoga (Task 16D)
- Install three outdoor water stations that are pet friendly and include water-bottle filling abilities at McKoy and Harmony Park as well as at the Decatur Square (Task 16D)
- Conduct cycling classes in partnership with Georgia Bikes (Task 16F)
- Partner with City Schools of Decatur to explore viability of speed enforcement cameras in school zones (Task 14D)
- Start construction of pedestrian safety improvements at Clairemont and Commerce and Church Street and Commerce and the Church Street cycle track (Task 14A)
- Complete the update and adoption of the storm water management plan (Goal 15)

**PRINCIPLE D FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

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**By the Numbers**

6 outdoor tornado warning sirens in Decatur
Glennwood Elementary
Westchester Elementary
Oakhurst Elementary
Winnona Park Elementary
Decatur Legacy Park
Decatur Police Station

6 car share locations in the city
PRINCIPLE E: Provide the Necessary Support within City Government to Achieve the Vision and Goals of the Community

Support an innovative and creative work environment that attracts the best employees, provides them with the tools needed to perform their work and sets an expectation of exceptional public service for the community.

The City as an organization functions like towers of building blocks constructed upon a solid base of qualified employees, tools necessary for the job and an emphasis on education, professional development and technical career training. This solid base provides staff with the appropriate resources, skills and training so that City departments and divisions can advance the mission and goals of the community and the Strategic Plan. In addition to moving the City forward, all departments and divisions develop budgets identifying needs (personnel, equipment and/or programs) to bring efficiency and effectiveness to every work day. While these expenditures may not always align with a specific task of the Strategic Plan, Principle E was created to bridge the gap between mission driven performance and an expectation of superior public service.

Goal I: Recruit the best employees possible with knowledge and skills, a commitment to high performance and an appreciation for Decatur’s unique character

Goal II: Retain the best employees by providing just compensation and benefits, the highest level of employee training possible and a commitment to developing leadership potential

Goal III: Provide and maintain the most efficient tools and equipment possible to allow staff to perform their work safely and effectively

Goal IV: Provide attractive, efficient, well-maintained public buildings, parks and facilities as a reflection of our resident’s pride in their community and to provide a pleasant environment for people to enjoy and our employees to work

Goal V: Maintain the highest standards of financial accountability of public funds

Goal VI: Employ technology to provide the highest level of service possible to our residents

The City of Decatur is known for being innovative and progressive in all aspects of government including its staffing philosophies. As the community continues to grow, staff will be challenged to optimize productivity without a proportional increase in resources. This requires City staff to look for opportunities to improve operations and produce innovative ideas within their respective work areas. These opportunities can come in many forms such as improvements/streamlining for personnel, new advanced equipment or smarter technology providing greater workplace efficiency.

Recruiting the Best and Brightest
In order to serve a community comprised of well-informed, educated and engaged residents willing to participate in activities that shape the growth of the city, the recruitment, training and retention of high functioning employees to work in partnership with
residents is essential. Recruitment starts with the City’s Human Resources Division. Human Resources staff work closely with the departments in the City to get an understanding of what type of employees are desired in the various work areas and to find innovative ways to attract the best and brightest employees.

The Decatur Fire and Police Departments recruit new employees utilizing diverse methods such as attending various career fairs and intentionally considering applications from historically diverse colleges. The City recently developed creative recruitment videos for the Police, Fire and Public Works Departments, as well as a video for general employees. As of April 2019, the Police Department recruitment videos have been viewed over 8,000 times.

The Public Works Department employs a hands-on approach for recruitment by hosting a summer work program for local high school students. Each summer, the Public Works Department hires students as crew workers to work in various divisions. The students get a sense of accomplishment while learning about every facet of Public Works. This successful recruiting program has resulted in the hiring of several full time employees some of whom have been promoted to management roles within the department.

**Investing in Our Employees**

Employee retention and training continues to be a priority for the City of Decatur. City employees are offered a wide and diverse array of training and development opportunities including: Racial Equity Training, continuing education for technical disciplines, tuition reimbursement and participation in the E5 Leadership Academy. The E5 Leadership Academy is a nine-month program created by employees for employees as a way to enhance leadership skills and address succession planning tools. The 5 Es are employees, engage, evolve, excellence and effective.

Decatur employees have been and continue to be very active in their respective professional organizations such as National Recreation and Parks Association, Georgia Recreation and Parks Association, Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions, Leadership DeKalb, International City/County Management Association, National Main Street Conference, American Public Works Association, American Planning Association, and Georgia City-County Management Association, which all lead to professionally trained and passionate employees. Many employees hold or have held leadership roles in their respective professional associations. Decatur continues to be recognized as a model community and leading organization as evidenced by awards and recognitions from many of the associations listed above.

**Tools of Success**

In addition to retaining highly qualified personnel, administrative staff recognize the importance of providing employees with the proper equipment to keep the City operating in an efficient, productive manner. By investing wisely in the latest equipment, the City creates a high standard for an efficient and safe environment, both for the employees and the residents they serve. City staff continue to stay up to date on the latest advanced tools and equipment and remain good stewards of City resources by diligent maintenance of all tools, vehicles and equipment.

**Attractive, Efficient, Well-Maintained Facilities.**

The City maintains its commitment to maintaining attractive facilities for employees and the public. The newly acquired Decatur Legacy Park Administration Building was recently refurbished with new furniture, paint, and flooring in the relocated Children and Youth Services Division office. City facilities continue to be regularly inspected to ensure all areas are well maintained for the community and employees.
Staying Connected

In today’s society, technology is at the core of everyone’s daily functions. The City continues to stay up to date on the latest technology front especially in the communication area. How we interact with the residents, visitors and internal staff is ever evolving with social media, new software and faster communication devices. The City is investing in a fiber communication network that will be built in fiscal year 2019-2020. This network will link all City facilities together including the Decatur Legacy Park plus all City Schools of Decatur facilities. When completed, the fiber ring network will create a redundant system that allows the network to continually provide service even if a section of the network is temporarily interrupted. This self-healing system ensures that City staff and facilities will be able to operate and provide services in the event of an emergency.

The Design, Environment and Construction Division began implementing electronic permitting (e-permitting) services for both residential and commercial land disturbance projects in the last fiscal year. The division will continue project implementation and upgrade the computer systems that ensure compatibility with the e-permitting software. This smart city technology provides a more streamlined plan review process between the differing disciplines that review development permits while eliminating some need for paper submittals.

The Automatic Data Processing (ADP) System is a software system the City uses to keep the employees informed on payroll and benefits in the City. The Human Resources division will upgrade the ADP system to become more user-friendly to better disseminate information to the City staff.

FY 2018-2019 Accomplishments

- Implemented E-permitting software for development permits and inspection requests (Goal VI)
- Upgraded the parking metering technology to include an online app feature (Goal VI)
- Purchased new vehicles and equipment to provide efficiency during winter weather events, emergency calls, and recycling pickup (Goal III)
- Completed recruitment videos for several departments that highlight the tasks and function each department provides (Goal I)
- Updated the City’s internal website, DecaturNet (Goal VI)
- Developed 5-year information technology strategic plan (Goal VI)

FY 2019-2020 New Projects, Programs, and Policies

- Upgrade ADP personnel software system to disseminate information to the employee in a user-friendly manner (Goal VI)
- Upgrade the dining room and auditorium in the Decatur Legacy Park Administration Building and install audio visual equipment in both locations to improve their use for public events (Goal IV)
- Complete fiber network construction (Goal VI)
- Complete the E-permitting software implementation (Goal VI)
- Develop cybersecurity incident response plan and train employees on the plan (Goal VI)
- Provide team-building and internal collaboration opportunities, including the internal equity team to assess equity issues and areas for improvement (Goal II)

By the Numbers

14,560
Cumulative number of visitors to Open City Hall online forum, launched October 2008

25
Number of PW summer students since 2010

7
Number of summer students hired for full-time positions

By the Numbers

Number of PW summer students since 2010

Number of summer students hired for full-time positions

By the Numbers

14,560
Cumulative number of visitors to Open City Hall online forum, launched October 2008

25
Number of PW summer students since 2010

7
Number of summer students hired for full-time positions
PRINCIPLE E FINANCIAL SUPPORT:

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Budget Narrative

By the Numbers

7 Facebook pages operated by the City

City of Decatur – Government
Decatur Active Living
Decatur Active Living – Athletics
City of Decatur Children and Youth Services
City of Decatur Fire and Rescue
City of Decatur Police Department
City of Decatur Human Resources
This narrative would not have been possible without the assistance of the following city employees who served on a budget visioning team:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gwen Blackwell</th>
<th>Sherry Jackman</th>
<th>Zack Ray</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Brune</td>
<td>Ash Kumar*</td>
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<td>Aileen de la Torre*</td>
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<td>David Goode</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michelle Hirose*</td>
<td>Vera Morrison</td>
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*team captain