



**A New Day in Decatur** ANNUAL REPORT 2016





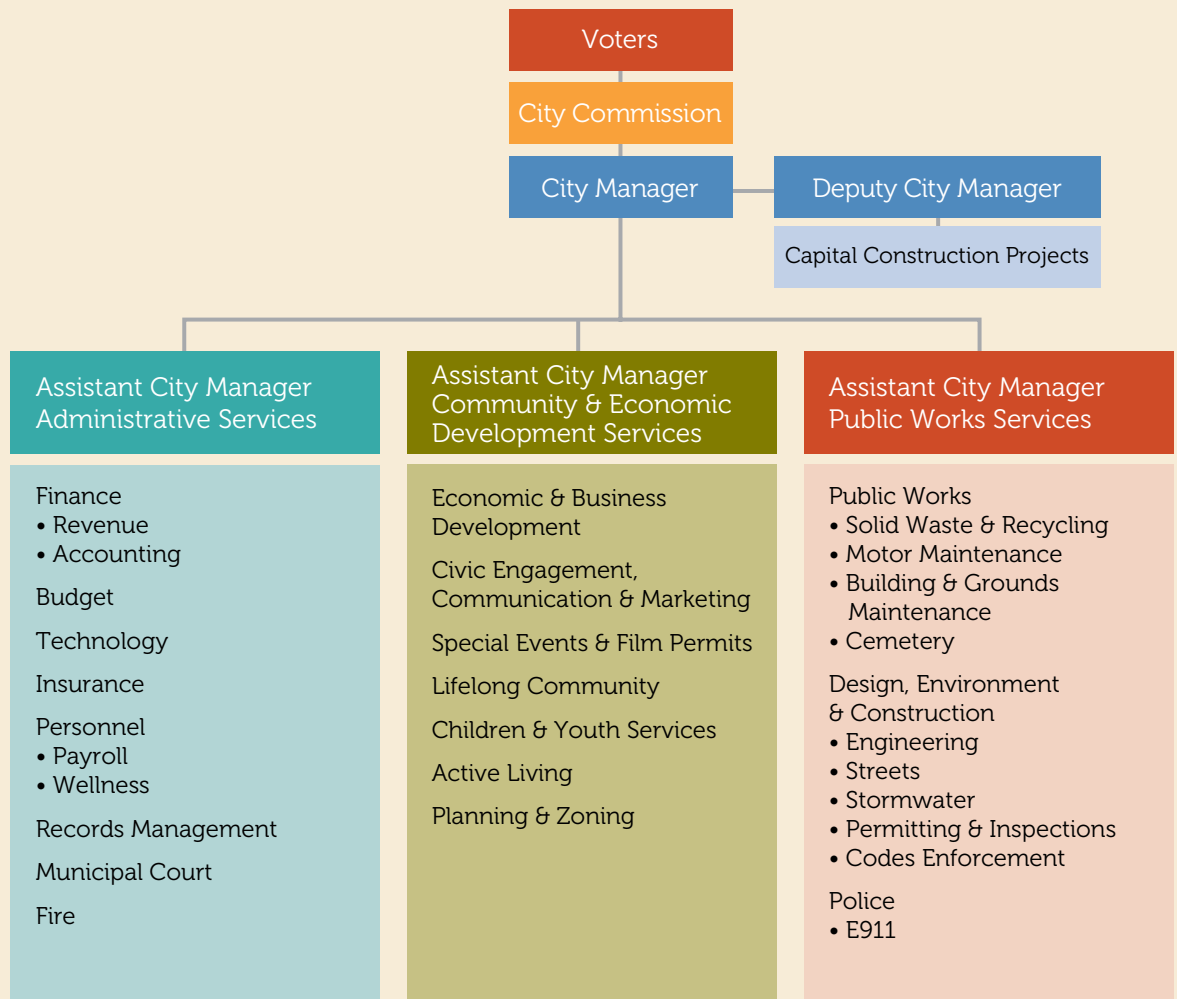
## Say hello to Brian and Tony

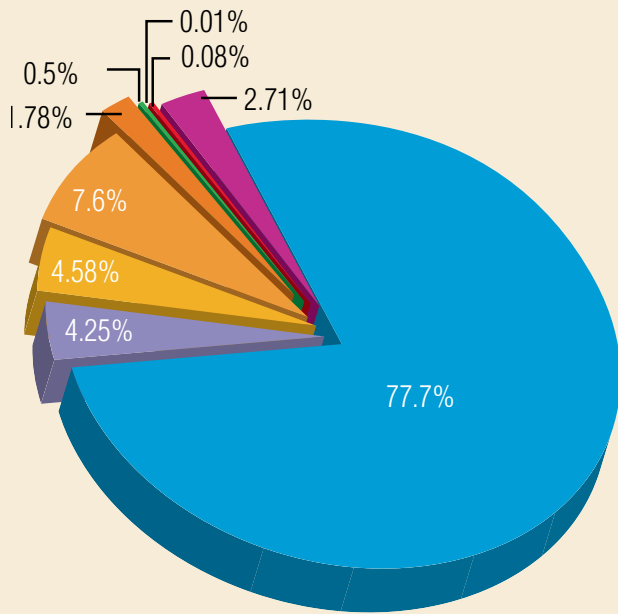
In January 2016, Tony Powers and Brian Smith, two newly elected citizens, joined the Decatur City Commission. Tony filled the At-large seat and Brian filled the District 2 seat. At their first meeting, the commission elected Patti Garrett Mayor and Fred Boykin Mayor pro tem.



# Decatur City Commission

The Decatur City Commission (from left): Mayor pro tem Fred Boykin, Commissioner Scott Drake, Mayor Patti Garrett, Commissioner Brian Smith, and Commissioner Tony Powers





## General Fund Revenues

FY 16-17 Adopted Budget  
Where the Money Comes From

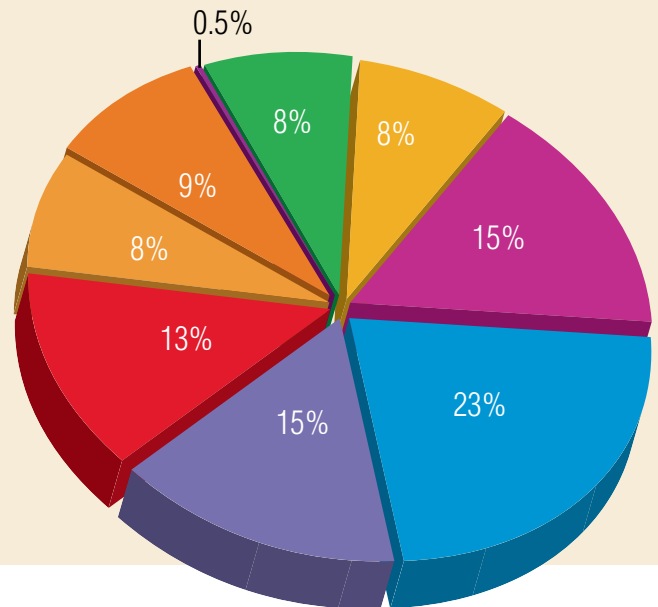
SOURCE	AMOUNT	%
Taxes	18,846,500	77.3%
Licenses, Permits & Inspections	1,031,250	4.2%
Penalties, Fines & Forfeitures	1,110,000	4.6%
Interest	0	0.0%
Charges for Current Services	1,854,250	7.6%
Intergovernmental Revenues	432,700	1.8%
Miscellaneous Revenue	122,000	0.5%
Sale of Fixed Assets	25,000	0.1%
Operating Transfers	(269,000)	-1.0%
Appropriation From (To) Fund Balance	1,224,340	5.0%
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$24,377,040</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## Departmental Expenditures

FY 16-17 Adopted Budget  
Where the Money Goes

DEPARTMENT	AMOUNT	%
GOVERNMENTAL CONTROL	180,600	0.7%
GENERAL GOVERNMENT	1,874,440	7.7%
COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	2,013,620	8.3%
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	3,802,900	15.6%
POLICE	5,739,870	23.5%
FIRE	3,630,150	14.9%
PUBLIC WORKS	3,103,960	12.7%
DESIGN, ENVIRONMENT & CONSTRUCTION	1,936,130	7.9%
ACTIVE LIVING	2,095,370	8.6%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>24,377,040</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Finances



## 2016 CITIZEN SURVEY DATA

### AGE

18 to 24 years	1%
25 to 34 years	25%
35 to 44 years	23%
45 to 54 years	22%
55 to 64 years	12%
65 to 74 years	12%
75 years +	6%

### ETHNICITY

American Indian or Alaskan Native	2%
Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander	7%
Black or African American	13%
White	79%
Other	2%

### RESIDENCE

Single-family detached home	54%
Apartment/condominium/duplex	43%
Other	3%

### RENT/OWN

Rent	36%
Own	64%

### GENDER

Female	57%
Male	43%

# Environment

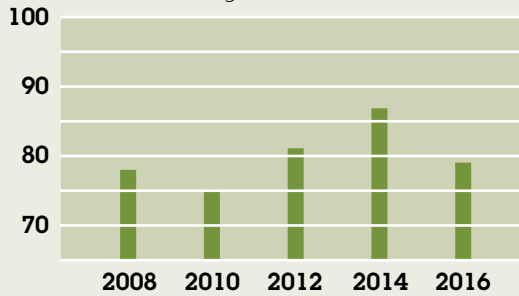
“We are creating an environmental legacy where Decatur leads regionally in using innovative, practical ways of resource stewardship, including minimizing environmental impacts through efficient buildings, urban tree canopy, community agriculture, recycling and composting, and sustainable density that allows for accessible ways to enjoy the city. Our legacy also includes an engaged citizenry that believes firmly in the principles of sustainable living.”

**Mayor Patti Garrett**

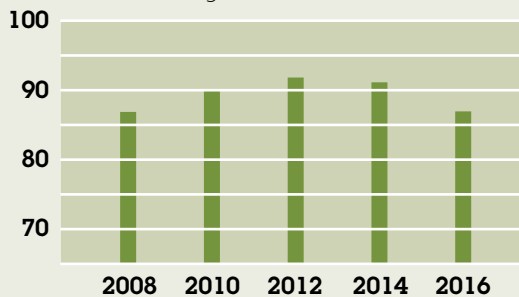


## National Citizen Survey Results

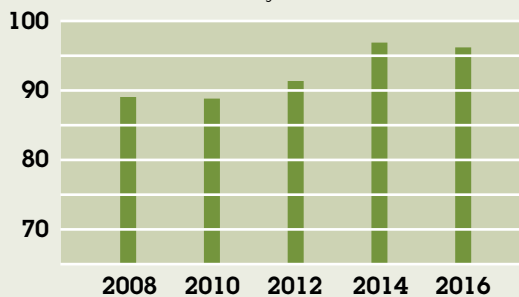
**Quality of overall natural environment**  
(% rated excellent or good)



**Quality of recycling service**  
(rated excellent or good)



**Recycled from home**  
(at least once in the last year)



## By the Numbers

**4** Number of drainage basins in the city

The northside's **Peavine Creek** and **South Fork Peachtree Creek** basins flow into the Gulf of Mexico. On the southside, **Shoal Creek** and **Sugar Creek** basins flow into the Atlantic Ocean.

**33.2** tons of equipment collected in electronics recycling events



In early 2016, the City of Decatur teamed with Trees Atlanta, a local organization specializing in urban tree planting and management, to plant 100 street trees in the city rights of way. Funds to plant new trees were provided by the Tree Bank, a fund set aside specifically for this purpose. Partnering with Trees Atlanta provides the city with access to appropriate and affordable trees, planting by volunteers over the course of a single weekend, and a two-year maintenance guarantee.



# Transportation/ Transit

“Decatur’s Complete Streets Policy (roads should benefit all users – drivers, cyclists and pedestrians) has been an accepted policy for years. Georgia DOT has accepted Complete Streets as well. As we go forward, the issue becomes funding – where does the city (and the state) find the money needed to make the infrastructure changes that make our roads more acceptable to all users? This is a difficult problem because it is expensive to retrofit a street. The other issue is how long it takes to get approval from GDOT to make changes. It has taken nearly 10 years to get approval to start construction on some of our local projects.”

**Mayor Pro Tem Fred Boykin**



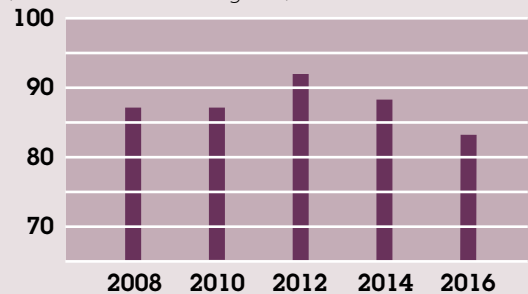
Road safety is a concern for drivers as well as pedestrians and bicyclists. The Complete Streets team in conjunction with the police and public works departments is continuing to push for a citywide speed limit of 25 miles per hour. The Police Department will often place automatic traffic speed signs to notify drivers of their speeds in residential areas. The Police Department will also conduct traffic surveys with a covert traffic data recorder to compile vehicle speed and volume to assist in determining if traffic enforcement, traffic calming, or a combination of the two is needed. The Georgia Department of Transportation has agreed to support traffic calming infrastructure at several intersections on South Candler Street (SR 155) to make crosswalks safer for pedestrians. Traffic calming structures were installed on Sycamore Drive and several streets in the surrounding Decatur Heights community were designated as residential speed zones, which allows strict enforcement of speed limits. In order to help those without transportation move about the city, Decatur continues to support the GO60+ shuttle, which provides senior residents with access to the square, and Emory University’s CLIFF shuttle, which provides a free transportation option between downtown Decatur and the Clifton Corridor.

**The Complete Streets Team strives to make streets accessible and safe for all modes of transportation.**

## National Citizen Survey Results

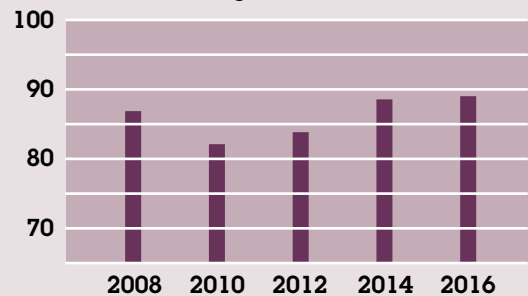
### Ease of walking

(% rated excellent or good)



### Quality of recreation programs/classes

(% rated excellent or good)



## City of Decatur Receives Walking Superstar Award

Greg White and Cheryl Burnette are pictured with Sally Flocks, president and CEO of PEDS, after accepting a PEDS 20 Years Strong Walking Superstar award for the City of Decatur. The presentation highlighted Decatur’s transit-oriented development, the creation of places and activities worth walking to, people-friendly public spaces and the Safe Routes to School program.



# Development/ Economics

“I think our downtown residential population has been a catalyst for strengthening our economic position. These residents help sustain our downtown businesses and will assist in attracting new retail offerings to Decatur. The other exciting opportunity is the addition of office space. With some new office space on the Callaway property and other government/institutional properties changing hands we become more attractive to small- to medium-size companies looking to relocate.”

**Commissioner Scott Drake**

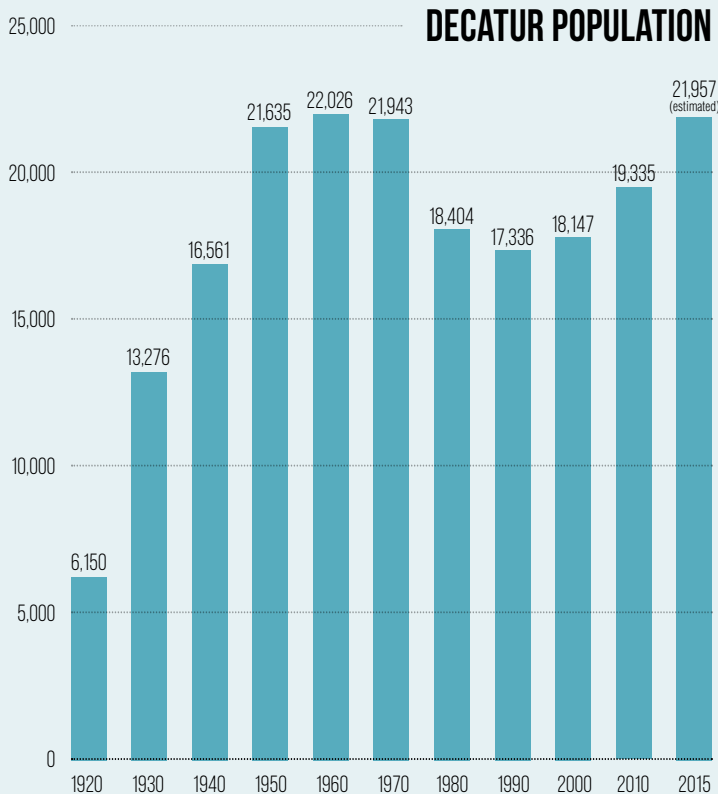


This year Phase II of The Place on Ponce and The Alexan began leasing, marking the continuation of new apartment developments in the city from the previous year. These new rental units fill an identified gap in our housing inventory by creating the first new rental options built since 1999.

The new apartments provide housing options for people who aren't looking to buy a home, and contribute to the city's tax base by redeveloping under-performing surface parking lots. Multi-family residents of condominiums and apartments can walk to basic necessities, like the pharmacy, grocery store and public transit, as well as restaurants, shops, and performance venues. As a result, the number of car trips per day for these residents is considerably lower than those of single-family residents.

The new housing options also create a needed customer base to support our locally owned shops and restaurants. The Place on Ponce is 90-percent-leased and the Alexan is at 60 percent and on track to meet market projections. The ARLO apartment development will begin leasing this summer.

After more than a decade of negotiation and planning, the redevelopment of the Callaway site is scheduled to break ground later this year. Cousins Properties was selected through a competitive process to purchase and develop the five-acre site. The Downtown Development Authority Board worked closely with Cousins to secure an agreement to include a new office building in the development. Decatur has one of the lowest office vacancy rates in metro Atlanta and no office building has been built here since 1991. The Callaway office building offers an opportunity to prove the strength of Decatur's office market and encourage the development of more office space in the future. Maintaining a healthy balance of office, retail/restaurant and residential uses downtown is a critical component of Decatur's Town Center Plan.





# Housing

“Decatur provides a variety of housing options for young and old, new families, or those looking to downsize. Downtown boasts condos and new apartments within walking distance of the iconic square. Glennwood and Winnona Park offer bigger lots to allow families to roam and grow. Oakhurst and Decatur Heights offer choices ranging from small bungalows to modern new construction. At the heart of each and every neighborhood is a connection to schools, family, places of worship, and a vibrant sense of community.”

## Commissioner Tony Powers

In addition to apartments, condos, and single-family homes, other housing options are needed. Accessory dwelling units – additional, self-contained dwellings on single-family lots, are allowed under Decatur’s zoning code and provide an affordable housing option.



Cottage courts, similar to the homes pictured above, are another option. The city is working to design a pilot cottage court community near downtown. Accessory dwelling units and cottage courts are viable housing options that respond to Decatur’s commitment to creating a diverse, lifelong community that meets the needs of residents throughout all stages of life.



## HIGH PERFORMANCE BUILDING STANDARDS:

- 50+** Single family houses and townhomes have been permitted and will be certified.
- 3** Multi-family apartment buildings have been permitted and will be certified Earthcraft multi-family.
- 2** Large mixed-use, multi-family developments will be permitted and certified as LEED Silver when completed.
- 1** Commercial substantial improvement is being permitted and will be certified as Earthcraft light commercial.

SIX WORDS about LEADERSHIP: Enabling others through actions, not words

## 2016 CITIZEN SURVEY DATA

**Children under 17 in your home?**

No **57%** | Yes **43%**

**Residents older than 65 in your home?**

No **79%** | Yes **21%**

# Demographics / Population

“Diversity is what makes our city great. Although our demographics are changing, continuing to be a welcoming community means taking deliberate actions to maintain Decatur’s unique mix of age, race, income, religious, and ethnic diversity. Embracing and celebrating diversity in our community will continue to make Decatur a special place for years to come.”

**Commissioner Brian Smith**



By the Numbers **800** community members invested more than **1,300** hours during the public input phase of the BETTER TOGETHER initiative



The Decatur 101 evening class for 2016 with their T-shirts and diplomas

**1,066** Decatur 101 Graduates 2000-2016



In late 2015 the Decatur City Commission accepted the Better Together Community Action Plan for Equity, Inclusion and Engagement. They also established the Better Together Advisory Board to provide guidance to the City Commission in ways to strengthen our city’s commitment to being a just, welcoming, inclusive, equitable, and compassionate place for all. The creation of the plan generated more civic engagement and public input than any Decatur initiative to date, except for the 2010 strategic planning process, which involved more than 1,500 community members.



# Culture

“Art and design are two of the most important parts of the civic statement that a community makes. Public art provides opportunities for community involvement, conversation and enjoyment. It engages the heart, mind and soul. Public spaces that are well-designed, attractive and inviting communicate a strong, positive message of welcome and accessibility.”

**City Manager Peggy Merriss**



Decatur has a long history of cultivating the arts as a way to engage and connect the city. Our recent focus on public art has captivated our community imagination. The Decatur Arts Alliance has played a leading role in bringing art to the community and transforming areas within the downtown streetscape into whimsical, inviting sites with street performances, sidewalk art, drama and comedy. You might have noticed aardvark, octopus and cobra crossing signs, or tiny “secret doors” to explore at sidewalk level, or a series of literary quotes by everyone from Little Richard to the B-52s posted high on street light poles. Murals are painted on walls throughout the city and more are planned for bridges and viaducts. Watch for new murals on the MARTA bridge at W. Trinity Place and Atlanta Avenue, and on the wall of the ARLO parking deck facing East College Avenue. The Decatur Artway, a popular installation of five public sculptures in downtown Decatur, expands to Oakhurst in late 2016.

Coming soon, “artfully” designed crosswalks up and down Ponce de Leon Avenue, impossible to overlook, that combine two of Decatur’s favorite things — art and walkability.



## By the Numbers

### 5 Decatur Artway Sculptures

- 1. Ver Sacrum**  
Lower MARTA Plaza/Church
- 2. AMUK**  
1 West Court Square near Souper Jenny
- 3. Mortification**  
Upper MARTA Plaza, near Squash Blossom at 113 E. Court Square
- 4. Teapot 50**  
Old Courthouse Square near community bandstand
- 5. This Is Something We Had to Go Through**  
Northeast corner Sycamore Place and Church Street

SIX WORDS about LEADERSHIP: Working together to create great community

## 2016 CITIZEN SURVEY DATA

### Respondents rating Decatur as excellent or good for . . .

Overall quality of life

**95%**

Place to raise children

**97%**

Place to retire

**66%**

Place to visit

**88%**

Opportunities for cultural outings

**85%**

# Decatur Boards and Commissions

The City of Decatur relies on its volunteer boards and commissions to lead and guide the community. Board/commission members are appointed by the City Commission. To apply for a particular board or commission submit a Statement of Interest form to the City Manager's Office. The City Commission interviews potential board members and makes appointments to fill vacancies.

## Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is established by local ordinance. It conducts public hearings on land use and zoning changes, proposed subdivisions of property and proposed planned unit developments, and recommends actions for consideration by the City Commission. It also reviews and recommends changes in zoning regulations and future land-use plans. The Planning Commission meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m.

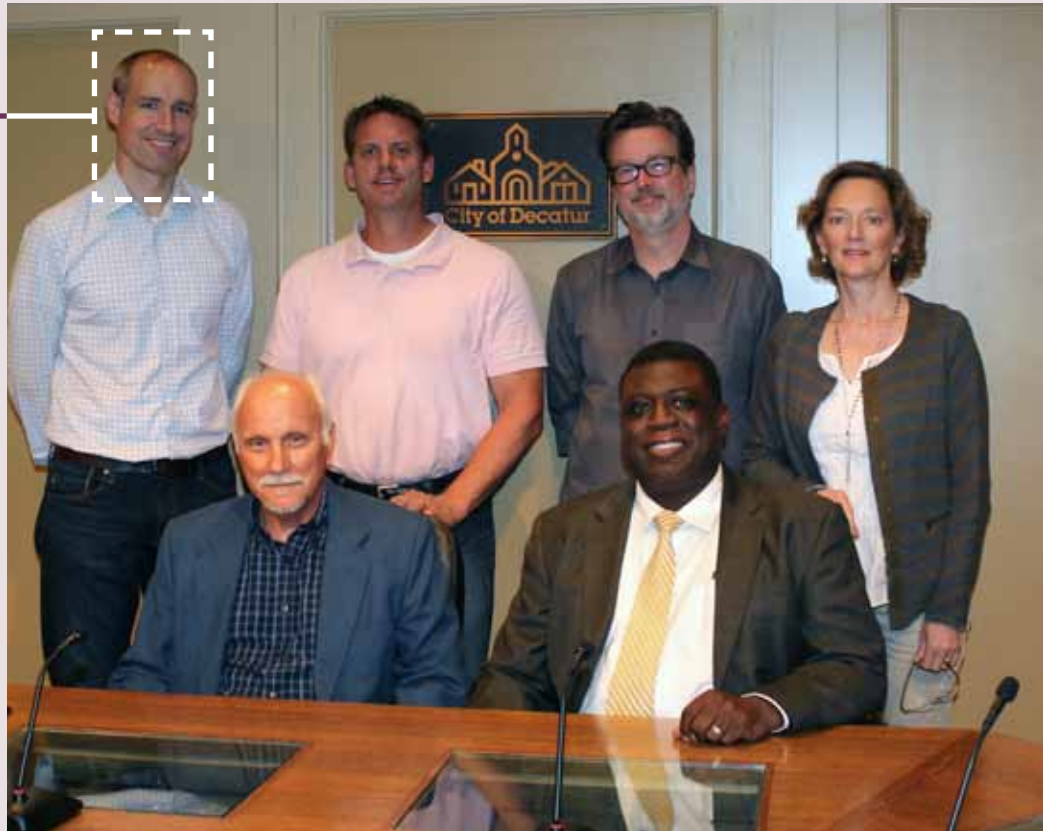
### Members

(clockwise from top left)

Todd Ohlandt  
Mike Travis  
Scott Doyon  
Lori Leland-Kirk  
Harold Buckley, Jr. (vice chair)  
Mark Burnette (chair)  
Melissa Manrow (not pictured)

### From Mark Burnette:

My six-word leadership phrase is **The courage to follow your principles**. I hope that my tenure on the Planning Commission has helped in some small way to make Decatur a better place to live, work, and play.



*Planning Commission Spotlight:*

### Todd Ohlandt

#### Live by example and with integrity

In my short time as part of the Planning Commission, I have contributed time, thought, and perspective in hopes of providing both our community and our elected City Commissioners with rational, consistent recommendations that protect and uphold the vision and spirit of our master plans with regard to land-use, zoning and subdivision inquiries.

The Planning Commission is staffed by Angela Threadgill, 404-371-8386; [Angela.Threadgill@decaturga.com](mailto:Angela.Threadgill@decaturga.com).



# Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals is established by local ordinance. It conducts public hearings on appeals from decisions of the zoning administrator and considers requests for variances from zoning requirements.

## Members

(from left)

Erik Pawloski  
Lindsay Reese  
Seegar Swanson  
Michael Leavey (chair)  
Anthony Lewis (vice chair)



The Zoning Board of Appeals is staffed by Mark Ethun, [mark.ethun@decaturga.com](mailto:mark.ethun@decaturga.com), and John Maximuk, 678-553-6570, [john.maximuk@decaturga.com](mailto:john.maximuk@decaturga.com).

# Historic Preservation Commission

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was established by local ordinance to prepare historic resource surveys, recommend sites and districts for local designation to the City Commission, conduct public hearings on exterior changes to locally designated properties, encourage the use of preservation tax incentives, and educate the public about Decatur's rich history.

Locally designated districts are the McDonough-Adams-King's Highway district, Clairemont Avenue, Ponce de Leon Court, Old Decatur, and Parkwood Historic District. Locally designated properties are the Old DeKalb County Courthouse and the Scottish Rite Hospital.

## Members

(clockwise from left)

Debbie Fritz  
Nick Misner  
Geoff Koski  
Sara Beth Gehl  
Alan Clark (chair)  
not pictured:  
Trent Myers (vice chair)  
Lisa Turner



## Trent Myers

### Encouraging and facilitating our community's growth.

We have helped guide Decatur's rapid growth and redevelopment with sensitivity to preserving and promoting Decatur's historic past.

## Lisa Turner

### Guiding others toward a common goal.

I have helped uphold the wishes of the communities that are in the historic districts by providing knowledge and judgment about changes that will affect their goal of being guardians of historic buildings and neighborhoods.

The Historic Preservation Commission is staffed by Angela Threadgill, 404-371-8386; [Angela.Threadgill@decaturga.com](mailto:Angela.Threadgill@decaturga.com).

# Decatur Downtown Development Authority and Decatur Development Authority

The Decatur Downtown Development Authority and the citywide Decatur Development Authority were established by special state legislation. They are charged with planning, organizing, and financing projects that will revitalize and redevelop Decatur's commercial business districts.

The Downtown Development Authority focuses on the historic commercial downtown central business district and works to market a positive image for the city. The citywide Development Authority was established to build on the success of the Downtown Development Authority. It is empowered to work with neighborhood business districts and other commercial zoning districts in the city.

## Members

(clockwise from left)

- Tony Leung
- John Drake (vice chair)
- Scott Kentner
- Linda Curry
- Bill Floyd
- Chris Sciarrone (chair)
- Fisher Paty (secretary-treasurer)



### DDA Board Spotlight:

## Tony Leung

### Better future for Decatur and residents

Tony Leung and his family have lived in Decatur for 12 years. Their daughter started kindergarten at Winnona Park and has just finished the 11th grade. She traveled to Dallas, Texas, as a member of the Decatur High School Academic Bowl for the nationals.

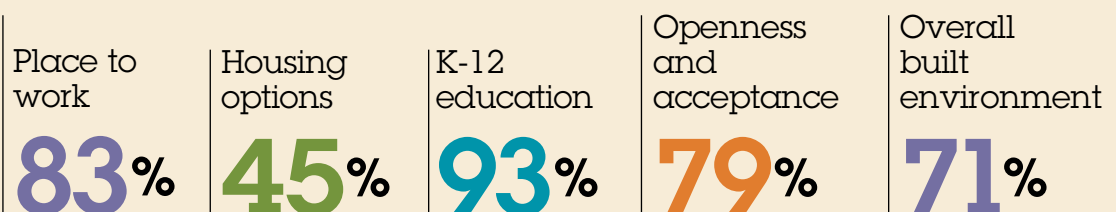
Tony said, "I would like to give back as much as, if not more than, we have received in this city." A landscape architect with an office in Decatur, Tony has

contributed while serving on the DDA by applying what he has learned professionally to the reality of where he lives. His biggest surprise about serving on a city board was "getting to know we are all different . . . a board is made up of a group with different backgrounds, knowledge and viewpoints."

The development authorities are staffed by Lyn Menne, 404-371-8386, lyn.menne@decaturga.com.

## 2016 CITIZEN SURVEY DATA

### Respondents rating Decatur as excellent or good for . . .





# Environmental Sustainability Advisory Board

The Environmental Sustainability Board was established to provide recommendations to the City Commission on the city's environmental regulations, plans, and initiatives and to assist with implementation of city projects that impact the natural environment, to protect and improve the quality of life for citizens and property owners in Decatur. This board has assumed the duties of the Waste Management Advisory Board and the Greenspace Commission.

The board maintains four active committees that are responsible for researching specific issues and making recommendations:

- Buildings and Energy
- Sustainability Education and Outreach
- Natural Systems/Food and Agriculture
- Resource Conservation

Participation on the committees is open to anyone who is interested. For more information contact Lena Stevens, [lena.stevens@decaturga.com](mailto:lena.stevens@decaturga.com), 678-553-6577.

## Members

(from left)

Juliette Apicella, vice chair

Steve Provost

Jill Jordan

Sara Waterson

K.C. Boyce

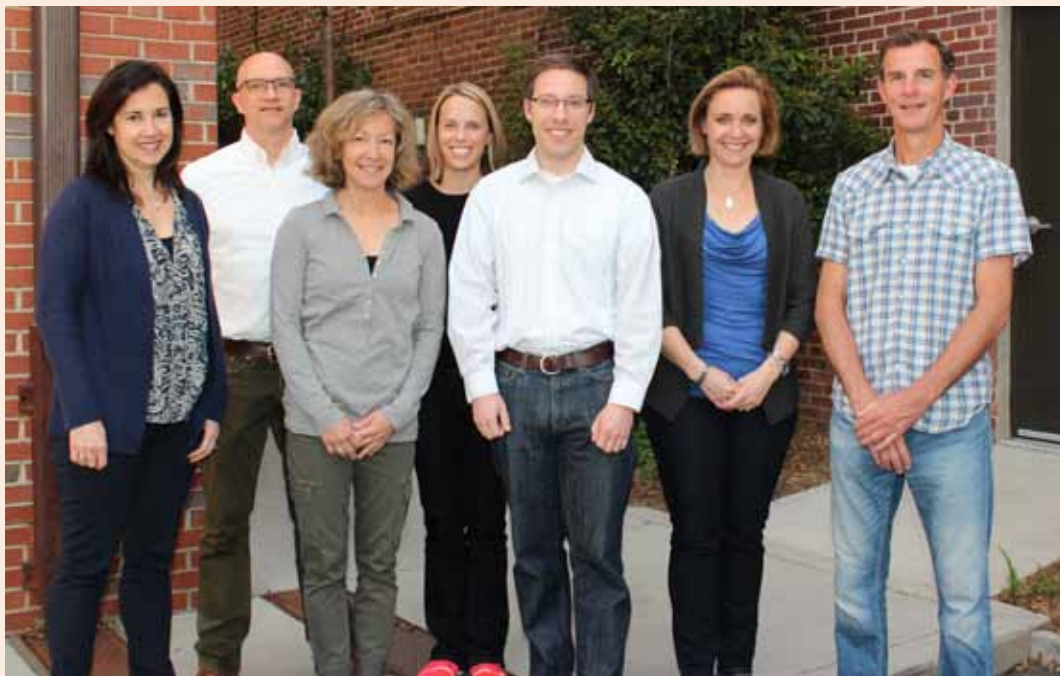
Tiffany Brott

Greg Coleson, chair

not pictured:

Ed Macie

Brendan Gardes



## Six-word stories about sustainability in Decatur:

Green is greater, keeping it Indie-atur  
Live as efficiently as nature works!  
Decatur – the little town that could

## ESB Spotlight:

*Members contributed these stories about serving on the board:*

“It has been a great way to connect and get engaged with my local community . . . my marketing and communications experience has been beneficial to the work of our board.”

“The ESB has allowed me to think critically about the decisions the city makes that impact all residents. . . we all have our own environmental ideals but listening to the viewpoints of other members, as well as citizen feedback, has given me an appreciation for collaboration and compromise.”

“Our work has made Decatur a better place to live.”

“I’m honored to serve . . . board members are both highly collaborative and committed to increasing sustainability initiatives for the benefit of the community.”

“Working with this team has enabled me to think in an integrative way about the relationships between public decisions and environmental outcomes.”

“Serving on the ESB has made me feel very connected to our city government and has opened my eyes to the many important improvement efforts of the city and the community boards.”

# Lifelong Community Advisory Board

In 2013, the Decatur City Commission authorized the creation of a Lifelong Community Advisory Board to assist with the expansion and implementation of the city's lifelong community initiatives, including those in the 2010 Strategic Plan. One component of a Lifelong Community is the ability of its members to age in place.

## Responsibilities include:

- Supporting programs and resources for senior citizens in nonprofit, community, and other organizations.
- Assisting city staff with outreach to senior citizens, people with disabilities, and diverse populations to encourage participation in available programs and to develop new programs.
- Assisting with the implementation of lifelong community initiatives.
- Providing recommendations in all subject areas of lifelong community, including housing, transportation, and mobility.
- Assisting city staff in working with stakeholder groups to implement program objectives and activities.

The board created several committees open to the community, including transportation, housing, taxation and affordability, communication, and Decatur neighbors.

## Members

(from left, back row)	(center row)
Maria Pinkelton	Peg Geronimo
Anne Morris, chair	Maureen Glass
Terri Kruzan, vice chair	Rich Wilinski
Linda Ellis	(front row)
Debra Furtado	Joann Majerscik
Elizabeth Burbridge	Donald Horace
	Fleming James
	Joann Majerscik



## Lifelong Community Advisory Board Spotlight IN THEIR OWN WORDS

**Maria Pinkelton** My background in disability and accessibility adds a voice that takes those needs into account.

**Linda Ellis** Brought a thoughtful voice and an opinion grounded in my particular experience to the conversations, possibilities and challenges our city faces.

**Fleming James** Sharing and discussing everyone's ideas and solutions with careful consideration of costs and possibility for success.

**Maureen Glass** Making neighbors and others aware of efforts to sustain a lifelong community in Decatur by establishing the Third Thursday series, articles in the Focus, and lobbying for tax breaks for seniors.

**Joann Majerscik** Committed to the Decatur lifelong community concept and excited to contribute what I can to make the concept a reality.

**Anne Morris** Time and energy listening to others, researching best practices and identifying ways to make Decatur a community where all people can live a quality of life for as long as they choose.

**Elizabeth Burbridge** Helping Decatur remain a welcoming and positive place for people of all ages, races, abilities and income levels.

**Terri Kruzan** Contributed my knowledge and experience in managing long-term change on a community level.

## Vision

The City of Decatur will be a community where all people can live a quality life for as long as they choose.

## Mission

To engage Decatur in cultivating a viable, diverse, accessible, and connected community that is welcoming to people of all ages, abilities, and incomes.



# Active Living Advisory Board

Active Living Advisory Board members are appointed by the Decatur City Commission to serve as advocates and advisors to the Active Living Division on projects and programs that help citizens safely incorporate physical activity into their daily routines.

## Responsibilities include:

- Assisting city staff with public education and outreach activities that promote physical activity and healthy eating habits.
- Supporting wellness and health promotion in workplaces, schools, and other institutions.
- Assisting city staff with outreach to specific user groups, such as seniors, teens, the physically disabled and diverse populations to encourage an active lifestyle.
- Providing recommendations on creating a city-wide bicycle ridership campaign and a citywide walking campaign.
- Assisting with implementation of the Safe Routes to School program.

The board supports the city's ongoing efforts to improve sidewalks and intersections, calm traffic and expand the network of bike paths and walking trails. It seeks to educate residents about obesity and lifestyle issues and implement programs designed to change behavior and encourage healthier habits. The board welcomes ideas to help make Decatur a model healthy community.

## Members

(from left)

Clay Scarborough  
Wendy Childers  
Michael Harbin  
Kelly Walsh, past chair  
Adam Pinsley

Sally Brozek  
Miriam Vos, chair  
Paul Jacxsens  
Pete Duitsman  
Bill Adams



## Six-word stories from the Active Living Advisory Board:

- Achieving results through collaboration and commitment
- Translating vision into action and progress
- Making a difference close to home.
- Talk the talk; walk the walk

## Active Living Advisory Board Spotlight:

### Wendy Childers

Wendy has served on the Active Living Advisory Board for more than a year and has served as a representative of the board on the pedestrian advisory committee (PAC). In this role, she has acted as a liaison between the board and PAC, sharing communication and attending monthly

meetings and other events sponsored by PAC.

She has spent much of her tenure learning about the activities and subcommittees of the board while also attending meetings and city events. She has used this time and experience to better understand how the city and the board work, and to identify focus areas to which she can contribute.

Wendy said she is "amazed at the expertise, dedication and energy of both board members and the city staff. Both are extraordinarily committed, even in the face of demanding work and home lives."

## Comments from other board members:

"I would like to think that Decatur is a safer, healthier and more fit city as the result of the good work of the Active Living Advisory Board and its committees."

"[Serving on the board] has given me the opportunity to share information and ideas with others committed to supporting and expanding active living opportunities in Decatur and to make others in the community aware of opportunities to be active in Decatur."

"My biggest surprise has been the long-term nature of effecting change, and people's willingness to invest so much time."

# ACCOLADES!

## Decatur Featured Twice in *Georgia Trend*

In the February 2016 issue of *Georgia Trend* magazine, Decatur is cited as one of nine bike-friendly cities in Georgia. The article by Christy Simo notes that bicycle tourism is a growing trend in the state that can help showcase unique outdoor assets and draw people for organized bike rides. It highlighted the Stone Mountain Trail, which is part of the PATH system that goes through Decatur, as a trail to try.

Decatur was also one of four communities featured in an article titled “Cities Mean Business – Four Communities Take Innovative Approaches to Welcoming New Companies,” written by Candice Dyer and Ralph Ellis. The article highlighted Decatur’s “Yes, if” rather than “No, because” philosophy for working with and attracting new businesses, and included Blue Tarp Brewing Company and Three Taverns Brewery as examples.



## Decatur Earns Tech Awards

Decatur earned two awards from the Georgia Technology Authority in 2015, one for Decatur’s migration to the cloud/VOA and the other for the business license renewal webpage.

## Decatur Excels in Performance Management

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) recognized Decatur’s performance management efforts with a Certificate of Excellence in 2015. Jurisdictions meeting the qualifications of the certificate program demonstrate leadership in continuous improvement and community engagement, and serve as examples for other governments to follow.

Decatur is among 33 jurisdictions receiving the Certificate of Excellence – the highest level awarded.

## Decatur Earns Accolades from NRC

Decatur earned the 2015 Voice of the People Award for Excellence in Foundations of Livability and was a finalist for Excellence in Community Engagement, Economy, Education and Enrichment, and Recreation and Wellness from the National Research Center.

Decatur’s recognition is based on responses to the National Citizen Survey, in which residents reported the highest levels of satisfaction in livability, community engagement, economy, education and enrichment, and recreation and wellness compared with all other participating jurisdictions.



## CYS After School Programs Achieve National Accreditation

All of Decatur’s Children and Youth Services after-school programs – Animal Crackers and Whiz Kids at the elementary schools and Project REAL at Renfroe Middle School – earned accreditation from the Council on Accreditation this year. Each of the programs went through the arduous accreditation process that requires assessment of every aspect of the program’s administrative processes, human resource policies and records, and the design and operations of programs. Decatur CYs provides after-school and camp activities for more than 600 children.

## The Internet Loves Decatur!

Decatur was recognized as one of the best suburbs in 35 American cities on thrillist.com. The site acknowledges the city for its “ridiculous food and drink scene that blows away cities five times the size.” Brick Store Pub, The Pinewood, Leon’s Full Service are said to be three of Atlanta’s must-hit bars, and Revival among its top restaurants. The site also recognizes BlueTarp Brewing, Three Taverns Brewery, and Eddie’s Attic.