



2014-2015

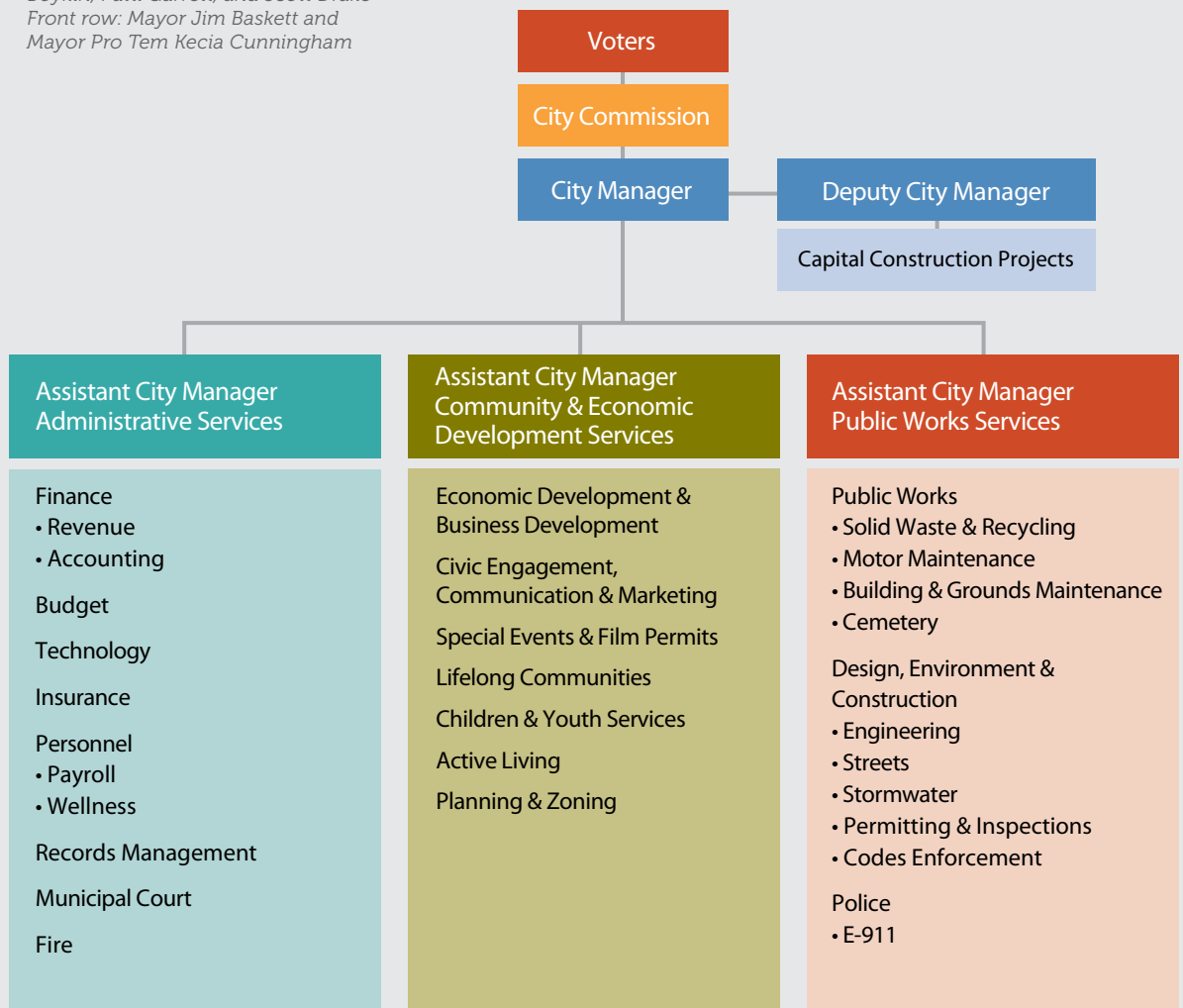


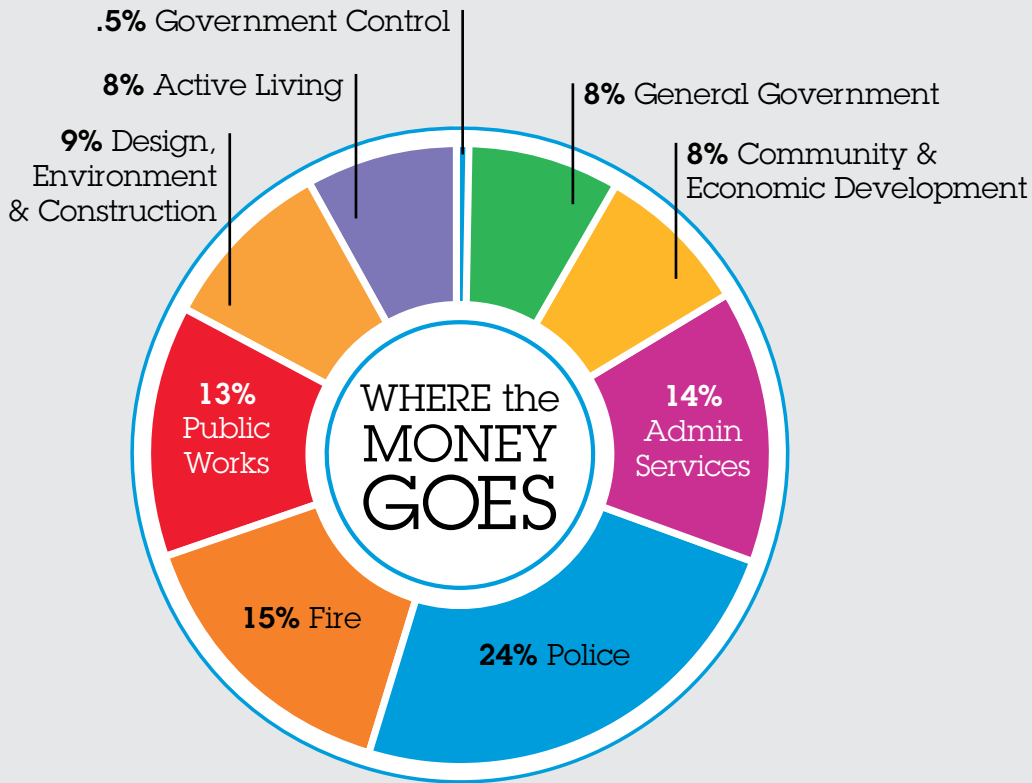
Forward Journey



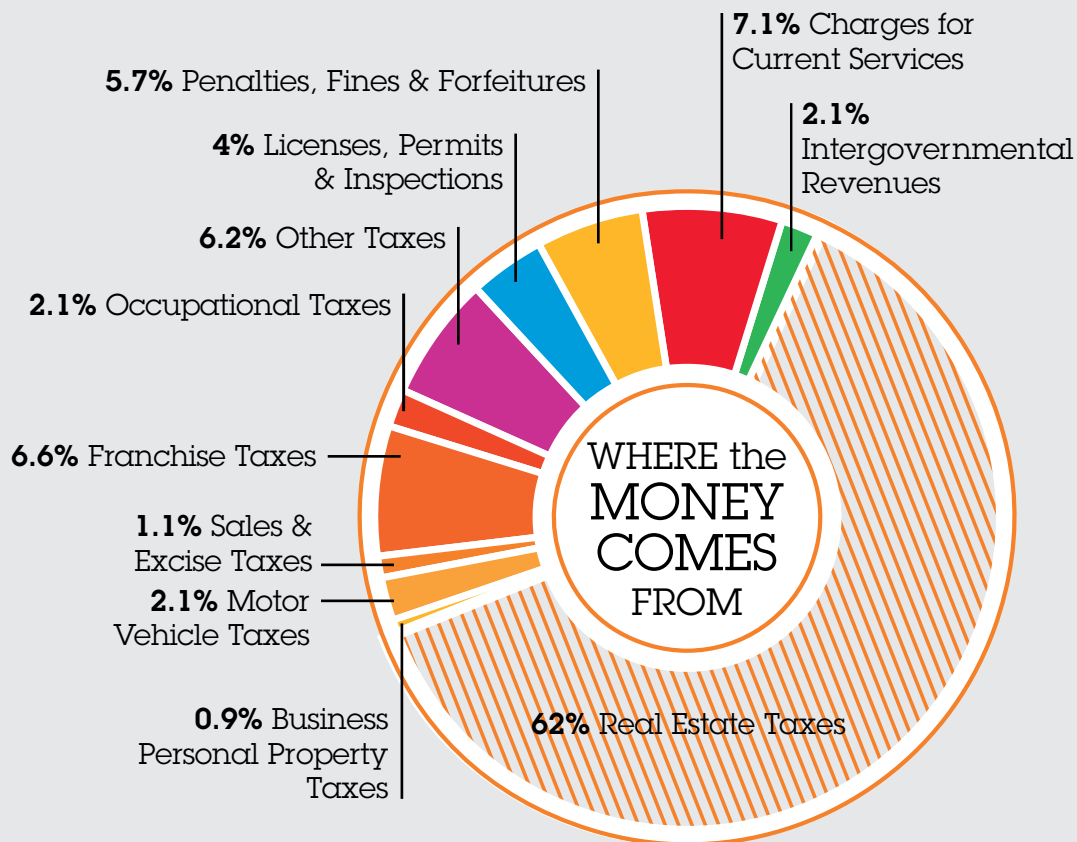
your city commission

Back row: Commissioners Fred Boykin, Patti Garrett, and Scott Drake
 Front row: Mayor Jim Baskett and Mayor Pro Tem Kecia Cunningham





Departmental Expenditures FY 15-16 Adopted Budget



General Fund Revenues FY 15-16 Adopted Budget

MAYOR *Jim Baskett*

After two decades of serving on the City Commission I am still wowed by how much everyone who lives and works in Decatur cares about the community. Whether volunteering for a special event, serving as a Police or Fire C.A.P., or participating in an Open City Hall forum online, the level of engagement is just incredible.

Engagement is what makes everything else, from innovation, performance, and governance to the arts and sustainability, possible. We will continue to have a great quality of life in Decatur as long as engagement remains high.

I love Decatur because of the rich community life my family has enjoyed here for more than 40 years. My daughter went all the way through Decatur city schools and now her twin boys are seventh graders at Renfroe.

When I was 10 years old, I wanted to be an architect. My plan was to go to Georgia Tech and then design and draw the most magnificent buildings in the world.



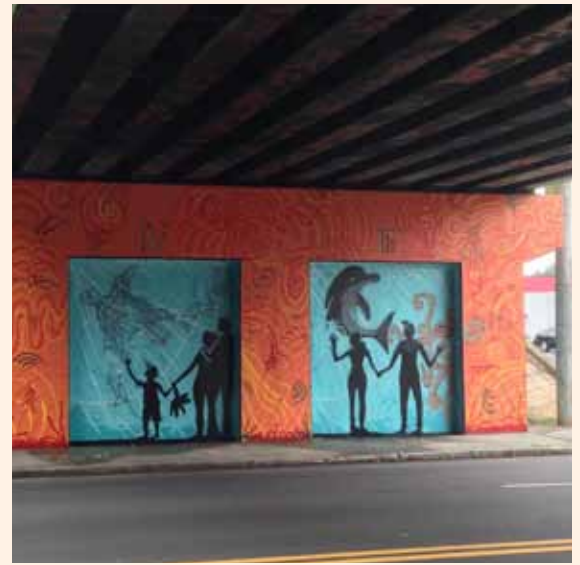
Mayor Jim Baskett recognizes Willie Shoemake for his years of service to Decatur.

volunteers



First-Ever Volunteer Appreciation Event

Decatur's festivals and events could never happen without the enthusiastic efforts of **thousands of volunteers**. In April, the Decatur Business Association, city staff, and the organizers of the city's major festivals and largest nonprofits, threw a party recognizing the efforts of volunteers and their positive impact on life in Decatur. Hundreds gathered to enjoy food and drink provided by local restaurants, music from a live DJ, and plenty of relaxing conversation.



New Underpass Mural Makes a Splash

The **aquarium-inspired mural** was designed in collaboration with a little girl who passes through the train overpass at Commerce and College avenues every day on her way to and from school and wanted to see something more colorful. It was painted by Evan Hynes and Spencer King, local artists and Decatur High School graduates. Another of their murals is located behind the Valero gas station on Atlanta Avenue, on the backside of the building facing the railroad tracks.

educated



First Graders Explore Differences

All five first grade classes at Oakhurst Elementary School partnered with city staff for an **expeditionary learning experience** to answer the question “What contributions can I make to create a positive change in our community?” The students learned about differences people in Decatur might have, including vision, hearing, mobility, and learning differences. They then took field trips, first to the Decatur square and then to Harmony Park in Oakhurst, guided by long-time Oakhurst resident Eli Dodd. Students created a public service announcement featuring the original song “Different Me” and presented their findings to the Decatur City Commission.

Oakhurst first graders tour the square with Mr. Eli.

empowered



Decatur PD Expands Self-Defense Program

This year, the Decatur Police Department has expanded R.A.D. – **Rape Aggression Defense** – a popular and free women’s self-defense course. Five officers are trained instructors (up from three last year), additional equipment has been purchased, and 88 women have completed the training since the first class in February 2014. Sixty-five women are currently on the wait list.



Team Hammerfist (top) and the Defending Divas completed RAD training in 2015.

city of decatur

MAYOR PRO TEM *Kecia Cunningham*

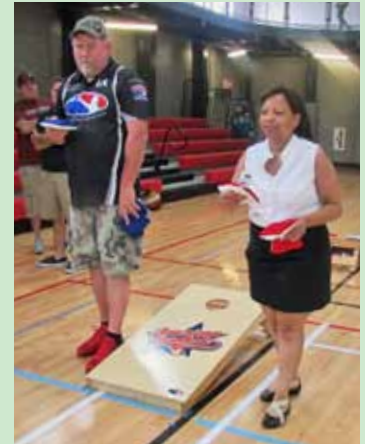
Innovation is something Decatur is known for well beyond our city limits. Those of us who guide and direct the governance of this city are always looking for new and better ways to serve our citizens. When new approaches offer clear benefits we put them into action.

But true innovation comes directly from the community, fueled by individual and group ideas, imagination, commitment, determination, and hard work. Decatur is blessed with plenty of these resources.

The vitality of the business community, the many annual activities on the square and in Oakhurst, the quality of our schools – all attest to the innovative approaches our citizens and businesses take to every area of life.

I love Decatur because there is so much here to see and do – and we are getting more restaurants and a wider variety of retailers every year. Our innovative community attitude must have something to do with that!

When I was 10, I wanted to be a doctor.



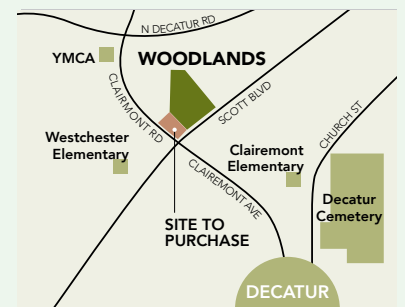
Kecia Cunningham tests her skill at cornhole at the Decatur Recreation Center.



Keeping it Green Indie-catur

Woodlands Garden, 932 Scott Blvd., is raising money to purchase the one-acre corner lot on Scott Boulevard and Clairmont Road immediately adjacent to the existing seven acres of Woodlands green space. The Downtown Development Authority purchased the property from the previous private owner with the understanding that Woodlands would have one year to buy it.

Artist rendering of Woodlands Garden improvement.



collaborative



Mayor Emerita Elizabeth Wilson leads a tour of a Beacon community exhibit.

Sharing Is Caring

As part of our commitment to **work together** to bring the best, most efficient services to Decatur residents, the City of Decatur and City Schools of Decatur now have two shared facilities: the Eloise T. Leveritt building, 2635 Talley St., and the Beacon Municipal Center, at the corner of Trinity Place and Electric Avenue.

City Schools of Decatur moved into their new administrative building, part of the Beacon Municipal Center, in May 2014, with all buildings open and a dedication ceremony in May 2015.

Recalling Beacon

Exhibits about the Beacon community are placed throughout the new center, including the Herring-Trinity Terrace – named in honor of the historic African-American Herring Street School and Trinity High School, which stood on the site. It's free and open to the public during regular business hours.



Maker Space

Decatur Makers converted an unused gymnasium at First Christian Church (across from the post office on W. Ponce de Leon Avenue) into an innovative maker space. The space is used by makers of all ages and for educational programs for City Schools of Decatur students.

Local Coworking

Decatur CoWorks, 708 Church St., opened this year offering flexible work spaces right here in Decatur. The building features shared spaces and private offices for rent.

connected



Google Fiber cupcakes served at the reception following Google's announcement

Google's Superfast Fiber Coming to Decatur

Decaturites from Luddites to the most tech-savvy were thrilled with **Google's announcement** that Fiber is coming. Google is working closely with Decatur leaders and staff on the next steps to build a brand new fiber-optic network capable of delivering gigabit speeds. Google Fiber is an Internet and TV service that provides Internet speeds up to one gigabit per second, along with hundreds of HD TV channels. Google Fiber is currently available in Kansas City, Provo, Utah, and Austin, Texas.

COMMISSIONER *Fred Boykin*

Decatur is a city that provides a high level of services to its residents while always striving to do better. We track performance measures and compare them annually to other, similar cities to make sure our performance is meeting or exceeding state and national standards. In quite a few categories, Decatur sets the standard. It is the partnership of elected officials, city staff and members of the community that make this possible.

I love Decatur because of the great sense of community.

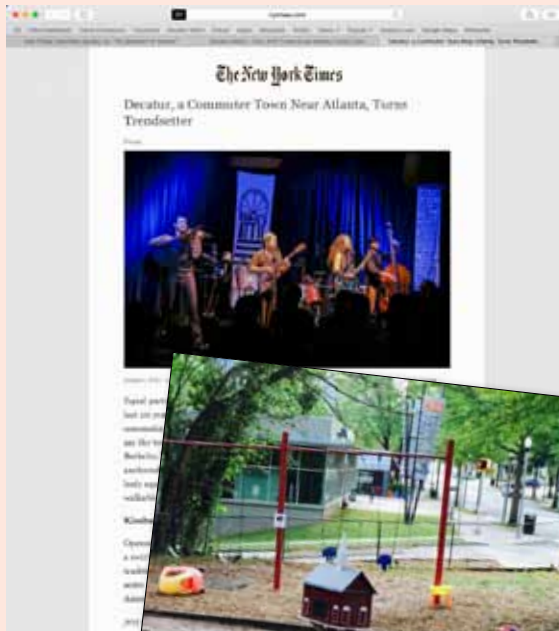
When I was 10, I wanted to be a doctor like my Dad.

Fred Boykin speaks to a crowd of cyclists at the Georgia capitol.



New York Times Likens Decatur to Brooklyn

The New York Times asked, **is Decatur the Brooklyn of Atlanta?** – with not one, but two write ups in recent issues. Local shops and restaurants were spotlighted as well as the beloved Decatur Toy Park.



Kudos for Measurement

Decatur received the ICMA Certificate of Excellence for the city's use of performance measurements. The ICMA (International City/County Management Association) Center for Performance Analytics awards certificates each year to recognize local government performance management programs, encourage comparative analysis, and reward transparency. For more information visit ICMA.org.

City Manager Peggy Merriss and Budget and Performance Measurement Manager Meredith Roark accept their award from ICMA Executive Director Bob O'Neill.

benchmarks

How're We Doing?

We use benchmarks from other cities to answer the question **how does Decatur measure up?**



See the full report at decaturga.com/benchmarks



Online Services

Only Clayton, Mo., could match the number of government services Decatur has made available online.



Police Response

Decatur PD responds faster than any other municipality. Second-place Suwanee takes almost 40 seconds longer.



Tax Exempt

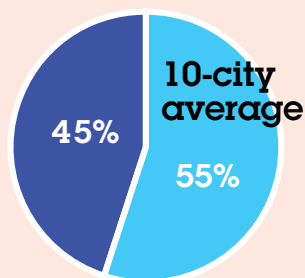
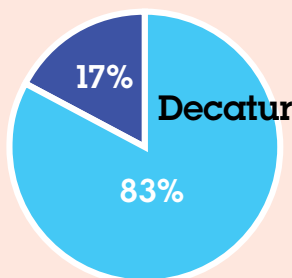
The value of tax-exempt property in Decatur is \$100 million less, on average, than the other cities (\$275.4 million).



Newest Facilities

The average age of Decatur's 10 municipal facilities is the lowest of the cities, which average 37 years.

DECATUR'S TAX DIGEST



■ commercial
■ residential

COMMISSIONER *Patti Garrett*

Walking around the city of Decatur, I am continually struck by the richness added by the presence of art in our community! My favorite new art installations include the new murals on the underpass at the intersection of Commerce Drive and East College Avenue and Decatur's Secret Doors. My six-year-old granddaughter and I went on a door hunt recently when she was visiting. How many have you seen?

How can we all support and enjoy the arts? Participate, just breathe it in and enjoy. And I suggest keeping your eyes open for some new, exciting arts offerings in Decatur in the year ahead. There are some plans in the works that will make you smile!

I love Decatur because it is about community. How can you not love a place where neighbors and friends gather for festivals, concerts, and block parties, or just to share good food and stories.

When I was 10, I wanted to be a dancer. I took modern dance lessons for several years and was on my high school drill team. I still want to be a dancer!



Patti Garrett awards Mary Davis her Hometown Hero medal for 2015.



danceDanceDANCE!

The immersive, participatory danceDanceDANCE! event awakened the possibility of an **eco arts district** along East Howard Avenue. The brainchild of Decatur Planning Director Amanda Thompson, a member of the Zoetic Dance Ensemble, the all-day affair included models of artist micro-housing, artistic interventions on streetlight poles, pop up stages, and dancing in the streets. The centerpiece of the event was the transformation of a vacant building into a theater with performances throughout the evening.

Dancing in the street in front of Kimball House



Holiday Cheer

Deck the halls with **Decatur style!** Decatur artist Nate Nardi created the 2014 City of Decatur holiday ornament, which was unveiled at his Decatur Glassblowing studio during a special event. Nardi showed how the ornaments were crafted during an artist demonstration.

Ornaments were available for sale at the Decatur Visitors Center, 17 Steps, Fabu Face Spa, Greene's Fine Foods, Little Shop of Stories, and Wild Oats and Billy Goats throughout the holiday season.

From left, DAA Board President Doug Aholt, glass artist Nate Nardi, Decatur Commissioner Patti Garrett, and Mayor Pro Tem Kecia Cunningham

artistic



YEA! Event Showcases Decatur's Student Talent



The YEA! Event returned for its second year. The **Young Emerging Artists** market featured art by the under-18 set as well as performances from young musicians.

During the YEA! Event, students from Decatur perform on the community bandstand and participate in an arts and crafts market.

active



Beulah Boys Share the Soul

The first-ever "Senior Day" took place at a DBA Blue Sky concert in September. The Beulah Boys, a local group of soul line dancers, got folks up and moving during the second "Senior Day" concert in May. This was an opportunity for seniors who live in the city to enjoy a free concert on Decatur's downtown square while socializing together.

The Beulah Boys performed and then invited the enthusiastic crowd to join in the fun.

Commissioner *Scott Drake*

I think it's the community participation that makes our city different. Not a day goes by that I don't speak with people in our community about ideas, issues or just observations. We get involved and its constructive involvement that really makes a big difference on how we manage our city.

I love Decatur because it's my home. I was born in this city and can't imagine living any place else. I've seen it grow and change so much since the '70s. I love the history of our city and I'm excited about the direction we are headed.

When I was 10, I wanted to be Dale Murphy and play for the Braves. Actually I wanted to be in left field next to Dale Murphy. I had to settle for left field in the Decatur Recreational Men's Softball League on the Trackside team, but I'm okay with that.



Scott Drake awards Hometown Hero medals to Decatur educators Bill Funk and Gayle Gellerstedt.



Smart911™

Smart911 Rolls Out Local Weather Alerts

Decatur continued to encourage residents to participate in **Smart911** by creating a confidential profile that lets first responders know about special conditions at an address when answering a call. With Smart911, fire and police personnel can know how many people live at a residence and whether there are important medical conditions to consider, and how many pets are in the home. This year, Smart911 also began to replace the city's CodeRed hazardous weather warning system.

UDO Supports Decatur's 2010 Strategic Plan

A Unified Development Ordinance process wrapped up in 2015 with updated zoning, growth, and development regulations to ensure they support broader community goals. The UDO also tidied up inconsistencies and eliminated confusion.



Decatur's Pickett Earns Smart911 Recognition

Smart911 has recognized **Jeremy Pickett** as the Regional Honoree for the Southeast Region in its Smart Telecommunicator Awards 2015. Jeremy was nominated by a fire fighter and won for the region thanks to the many votes of those who love Decatur. The award included a gift of \$500 to be given to a charity of his choice. Jeremy chose the Wounded Warrior Project.

Jeremy (at far right) with the members of the most recent Junior Police Academy class.

walkable

Safeguarding Pedestrians in Decatur

The goals of the **Pedestrian Advisory Committee** are to promote walking and to make the city streets as safe as possible for pedestrians of all ages, focusing on education, engineering, and enforcement. The committee initiated the Bright at Night campaign, which encourages those who walk or run in the dark to wear light colors and use lights so they are visible to others.

The committee has also developed a searchable photo database to assist the city in identifying crosswalks and crossings in need of repair, and helped get more “Walk There” signs placed around the city.



welcoming

Welcome to Decatur, Neighbor

Decatur is the 50th city in the U.S. to become a member of **Welcoming America**, indicating it is a municipality dedicated to welcoming immigrants and committed to adopting policies and practices that promote inclusion within local government and the broader community. Executive Director David Lubell is a Decatur resident and Welcoming America is headquartered at 315 W. Ponce de Leon Ave.



Bicycle patrol on the MARTA plaza

City of Decatur

City Manager *Peggy Merriss*

Sustainability is about making smart, efficient, and effective choices not to waste resources just because we can or because it is more convenient. Sustainability in Decatur only exists when economic, environmental, institutional, and community indicators are all working together to make sure that actions we take today do not impair future generations from experiencing the same or better quality of life than we enjoy during our lifetime. It is not a fad or passing trend – it is a guarantee that there will be a return on investment for the future.

I love Decatur because there's always something going on that amazes me.

When I was 10, I wanted to be a teacher.



Peggy Merriss with Andrea Arnold and Decatur firefighters at an inaugural awards ceremony recognizing those whose actions have saved a citizen's life

*think globally
act Decatur-ly*

Capital Improvements Earn LEED Certification

During 10 years of major capital improvements, every Decatur facility/building has been rebuilt or renovated. It had been 50 years since the last round of building capital improvements and the updated facilities are intended to last another 50 years. City Hall was the first building to be renovated, in 2005. Since then every other city facility has received or is on track to receive LEED silver certification or better for its renovations.

Clockwise, from top left: Decatur Recreation Center, Fire Station No. 2, the Eloise T. Leveritt Public Works Building, and new Police HQ and Municipal Court at the Beacon Municipal Complex





Public Works Award

The **Eloise T. Leveritt Public Works Building** has been selected as one of the American Public Works Association's Public Works Projects of the Year for 2015, a national honor. The award will be presented Aug. 31 at the APWA annual Awards Recognition Ceremony during the 2015 International Public Works Congress and Exposition in Phoenix. apwa.net/congress

The Eloise T. Leveritt Building is shared by City of Decatur Public Works and City Schools of Decatur.



Green Building & Design Magazine Recognizes Decatur Fire Station No. 1

The May/June 2015 issue of *Green Building & Design*, a trade magazine for green building professionals, has recognized **Decatur's Fire Station No. 1** as the second-place winner in its first annual Green Awards. Architects from across the nation submitted their best Atlanta-based building projects completed after Jan. 1, 2013. The submissions were judged on originality in design, function, and sustainability.

About the redesign: The station was built in 1956. The complex redesign, by Smith Dalia Architects – while preserving the building's classic '50s aesthetic – has achieved a 33 percent reduction in energy consumption and a 30 percent reduction in water usage,

Fire Station No. 1 includes a geothermal heating/cooling system

resulting in a 43 percent cost-savings. This achievement earned the project a LEED Platinum rating. Renovations included masonry repair; the replacement of the roof, windows, overhead doors, and interior finishes; and necessary upgrades to both the mechanical and electrical systems.



Active Living Earns Marketing Award

Decatur Active Living received two awards at the Georgia Recreation and Park Association annual conference in November. The Team Decatur 2014 poster won "Marketing and Visibility Award for a Single Event" and the new athletics brochure won for "Multiple Events in the Marketing and Visibility Category." Active Living Director Gregory White is on the board of directors of the organization and several staff members are active committee members.



New Apartments: First for this Millennium

Phase 1 of The Place on Ponce opened this year, marking the first new apartments in Decatur since the Ice House Lofts 15 years ago. This is the first of several new apartment developments slated to open in Decatur, including the Arlo on Trinity Place, the Alexan on Commerce Drive, and yet-to-break-ground senior apartments at the Avondale Station redevelopment.



Love the numbers



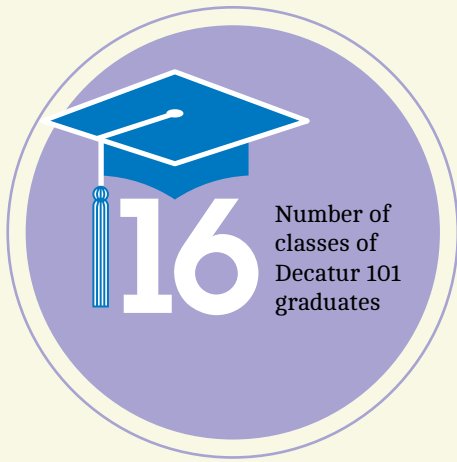
of the City of Decatur since annexing the Parkwood Park neighborhood

102

Pieces of public art in the city's collection

\$700,000

Amount distributed to Decatur-area nonprofits by the Decatur Craft Beer Festival since its inception 15 years ago



130+

years of combined service

to Decatur between the city manager and assistant city managers

3,000+

ask me!
I'm Here to Help

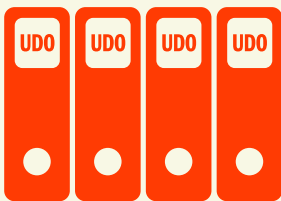
Volunteers contributed 15,000 hours of service to the city's special events in the last two years



police officers

promoted to sergeant or lieutenant in the past year

410



Pages in the Unified Development Ordinance

1982

the year decatur's town center plan

was published, kicking off 30+ years of in-depth, strategic planning in Decatur

P.O. Box 220 ■ Decatur, GA 30030
404-370-4100 ■ DecaturGa.com

