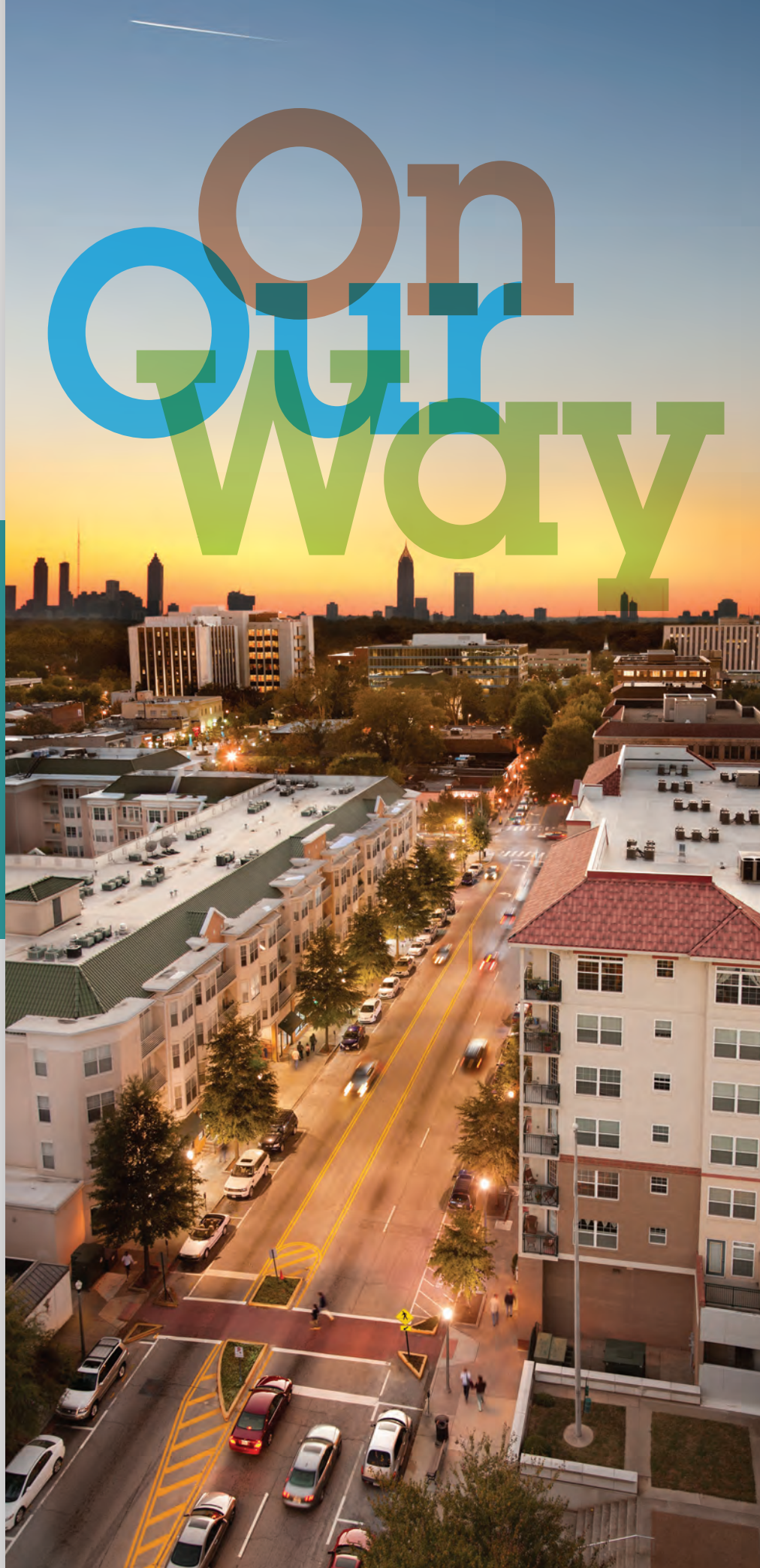




On Our Way

annual report 2011

With a new
strategic plan
in place for the
next 10 years,
Decatur is
already taking
steps that will
shape the
community
in 2020.



2010 Strategic Plan

In March, Decatur's City Commission unanimously adopted the 2010 Strategic Plan, capping a year-long community discussion that resulted in an ambitious update to guide decision-making for the next 10 years and beyond.



Round Tables

The process began with 11 Round Table groups, each meeting three separate times, in which participants discussed what they liked about Decatur and where the city should improve. Each group of 8-10 participants was balanced by age, gender, race and geographical location to encourage broad representation and a variety of perspectives. Major themes and ideas emerged.

In addition to the Round Tables, an interactive website, www.decaturnext.com, provided information and discussion space. Postings and a calendar provided information on upcoming meetings, comments

from the Round Tables and presentation slides from the community. More than 19,700 visits to the website were recorded during the process.

Community Academies

To explore themes that surfaced during the Round Tables requiring more in-depth discussion, a series of Community Academies was convened. Each academy featured fact sheets and objective presenters who provided additional information, offered examples from other cities and raised the trade-offs to be considered.

Attendees then participated in a discus-

The Strategic Plan process is the largest public outreach in Decatur's history. During the 12-month period, more than 1,200 individuals participated in hundreds of meetings (led by 51 volunteer facilitators) and shared thousands of ideas to shape the direction of the Strategic Plan. All public comments were incorporated into the plan to ensure a transparent and inclusive process. The final principles, goals and tasks are the result.



Some of the 51 volunteer Round Table facilitators at the project celebration, August 2010.

DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN THE ROUND TABLES?

Session One themes reflected what attracted citizens to Decatur, what they want in the future, and what they worry about losing:

- The diverse community
- The involved community
- The complete community
- The alternate transportation community
- The responsive and cooperative community

In Session Two, citizens discussed these issues:

- Sustaining and preserving Decatur
- Tending to the natural environment
- Present and future mobility
- Community gatherings and cultural life in Decatur
- The future of housing
- Healthy living

Session Three addressed communication and connection needs:

- Desire for more information, delivered in different ways
- Desire for more citizen engagement, volunteerism and connection
- Desire for more and different groups to be involved and effective

sion exercise based on the information presented with the goal of delving deeper, moving toward consensus and generating more focused comments to help create and refine the draft Strategic Plan's principles, goals and tasks.

Ultimately more than 1,200 residents participated in the planning process from the Round Tables to the Community Academies to the Open Houses where drafts of the plan were presented. Every comment was captured and analyzed and is included in the final report that was adopted in March 2011. The entire plan is available at www.decaturnext.com.

2010-2020 Strategic Plan: On Our Way

The Vision for Decatur is preserved verbatim from the 2000 Strategic Plan. It was confirmed during the update process as relevant and appropriate, and provides a succinct and overarching summary of the principles, goals and tasks described in the plan itself.

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

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



These photos, taken at the strategic planning kickoff event, show that enthusiasm for the project was extremely high from day one.



Strategic planning events were well attended and participants approached their tasks with vigor and good humor. All told, more than 1,200 Decatur residents participated.



RIGHT ON!
THANK YOU
FOR LISTENING TO
THE
ROUND
TABLES!



Learn more about the strategic planning process at decaturnext.com, or scan this code with your smart phone

Manage Growth While Retaining Character



CCP, developer of online computer games, will move into its new office space in the fall.

principle

a

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

This principle is supported through staff teamwork across all city departments. The Community and Economic Development (CED) Department plays a major role in preserving Decatur's character by encouraging high quality design, downtown streetscape improvements and parking management.

The Police Department has expanded its presence throughout the business districts and

commercial areas to assure a strong sense of safety and security for the business community.

The Public Works (PW) Department handles codes enforcement and education, maintains streets and sidewalks, installs new waste and recycling bins, collects litter, and promotes a "clean and green" downtown commercial district.

The full calendar of festivals and events coordinated by CED contributes to Decatur's strong sense of community and unique character. These activities encourage interaction, market a positive image of the city throughout Atlanta and beyond, and introduce potential new customers and clients to Decatur businesses.

While the Planning, Zoning and Inspections (PZI) Division conducts most of the required

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.



The owners of the Brick Store Pub are also the founders of the Decatur Beer Festival, which has donated nearly \$400,000 to local non-profits.

Decatur gracefully mixes the old with the new. Downtown was recently placed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Decatur PD is putting more officers on bicycles and on foot patrol.

The Decatur Old House Fair is a valuable resource for owners of older homes in Decatur and throughout the metro area.



building inspections, the Fire department ensures fire-safe commercial buildings. All city departments participate in reviewing mixed-use development plans to ensure that safety, active living and environmental concerns are addressed. The City's historic preservation program provides design review services in local historic districts, practical preservation information, and tax incentive program facilitation.

New Businesses

Despite the current economic downturn, a number of unique shops and restaurants have opened in the city.

Kismet, a husband-and-wife-owned jewelry store, opened in late winter on Church Street.

Ale Yeah is the first and only shop in the city dedicated to craft beer. Decatur Bikes relocated from Stone Mountain. Burnt Fork BBQ and Big Tex Cantina, owned by local families, are new additions to Decatur's restaurant scene. Three new salons have opened around town: Meldora at College Avenue and Candler Road, Adore Salon next to Ale Yeah, and Marsof on West Ponce behind Café Lily. McGowans Pub has brought life back to a former gallery space in Oakhurst. Deana Levine Photography, Spotlight Boutique and Green Mosaics are great additions to Decatur's retail environment.

Office growth has become a top priority in Decatur's economic development. In March, CCP Games, a Reykjavik, Iceland-based digital

entertainment developer, announced its North American headquarters would move to the Wells Fargo building at 250 E. Ponce de Leon Ave. The company will occupy 40,000 square feet of office space and bring 170 jobs to downtown Decatur. It plans to grow to 300 employees by 2013.

Accomplishments

- Increased police patrols on foot and bicycle.
- Completed W. Ponce de Leon bicycle lanes.
- Secured CCP Games as an office tenant.
- Hosted the third Old House Fair.
- Placed Downtown Decatur on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Cakes & Ale used historic preservation tax credits for new, expanded space.



While renovating their new location in the pedestrian block of Sycamore Street, the owners of Cakes & Ale uncovered a painted advertisement for Mrs. Teele's bakery. The antique artwork has been incorporated into the decor of the new, larger Cakes & Ale.

Bike lanes recently completed on W. Ponce de Leon Avenue reflect Decatur's commitment to providing safe and efficient means to navigate the city without an automobile.

Encourage a Diverse and Engaged Community



Despite snowy conditions and frigid temperatures, the 2011 Martin Luther King Jr. Service Project drew more participants than ever before.

principle

b

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

Community engagement in city operations inspires customer service excellence and creates opportunities for citizen input in planning projects. Our programs and services reflect the values of the community and engage citizens.

We encourage diversity by providing information in a variety of formats, offering a wide range of programs to build community and en-

courage citizen connection with government. From the printed Decatur Focus newsletter to the use of new technology like the city's interactive website, social media outlets and the Open City Hall online forum, Decatur works to keep citizens informed and involved. Festivals and special events, volunteer opportunities and expanded health and fitness programs are all designed to bring together residents from different backgrounds to celebrate and support our community. Our award-winning after-school program works to develop respect for others and appreciation for diversity with our youngest citizens at a very early age.

Administrative Services (AS) provides tax information online and hosts a tax blog. AS

Goal 5 Maintain and encourage diversity of race, ethnicity, income, culture, age, family type and other kinds.

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.



Team Decatur provides residents opportunities to make friends and improve fitness.



At left, an attentive 10th anniversary Decatur 101 class. Below left, Sandi Williams receives her diploma from Linda Harris. Below, a friendly get-together enjoyed at the completion of the program.



Project REAL, the Children and Youth Services after-school program for middle-schoolers, earned accreditation this year.



revenue officers meet with elderly residents to explain homestead exemptions. The Police department uses the CrimeReport.com mapping program and produces reports to show crime statistics. The Planning, Zoning and Inspections Division hosts Homeowners Nights to explain permitting procedures for residents attempting do-it-yourself projects.

Public Works, Fire and Police participate in Touch-A-Truck, an event that allows residents to see and touch the specialized equipment that keeps our streets safe and beautiful. These departments also assist the elementary schools with their Community Helper curriculum.

Hosting the Arts Festival, the Book Festival and other community events requires coordination

among city departments to handle planning, promotion, traffic, safety and waste. Events also depend on the financial support of local businesses and the efforts of hundreds of volunteers for their success.

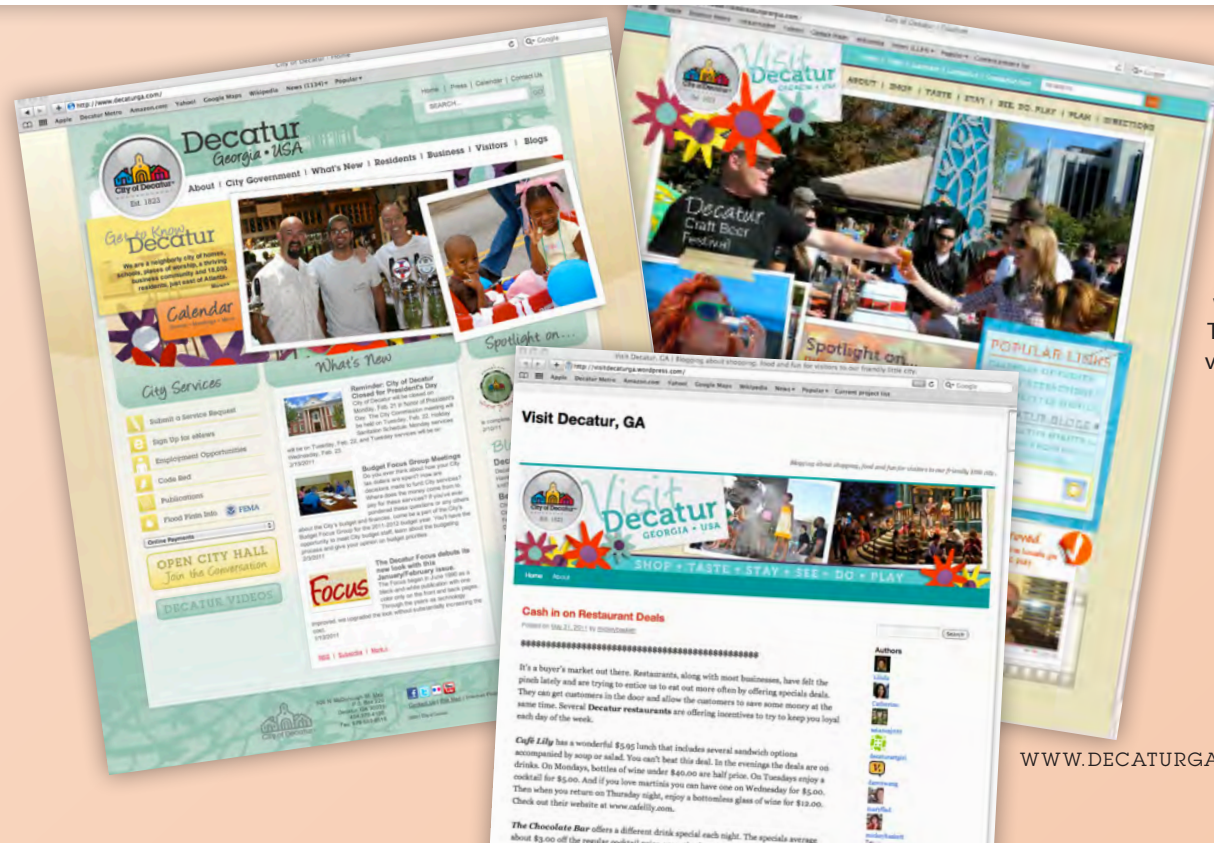
Decatur 101 educates members of the community about city government. This popular series of five classes is offered annually to “put a face” on local government. Each department participates. Graduates go on to serve on resident boards and commissions, seek elected office or volunteer in some capacity with the city.

The Police and Fire departments developed the CAPS (Citizens Assisting Public Safety) program to train residents in emergency management and basic policing. These volunteers help

staff special events and assist in emergencies. In addition, a number of task forces, event committees and neighborhood organizations offer opportunities for residents to stay involved.

Accomplishments

- Developed and launched new City of Decatur website.
- Observed 10th anniversary of Decatur 101.
- Achieved biggest-ever MLK Jr. Service Project.
- Adopted cultural arts master plan.
- Created Team Decatur.
- Received Project REAL after-school program accreditation.
- Established Decatur Tourism Bureau and new Tourism website.



In March, the redesigned www.decaturga.com website went live. At the same time, the city launched the website for the new Decatur Tourism Bureau. You can see it at www.visitdecaturgeorgia.com. There's a tourism blog, too, at visitdecaturga.wordpress.com



Serve as Good Stewards of the Environment and Community Resources

Electronics Recycling Day continues to be a popular event, held twice a year in the upper parking lot at Decatur High School.



principle



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

Decatur's model of sustainability includes four categories: environmental, economic, organizational/institutional and community.

The city relies on individual property taxes for the majority of its revenue because it currently has no access to sales tax revenue. Tax revenue from residential properties represents 85 percent of the city's tax digest and commercial districts contribute 15 percent.

A high percentage of tax-exempt property is located within our city limits, including county government and nonprofit facilities. This limits the city's ability to achieve a better balance between residential property taxes and commercial tax revenue. To expand and diversify the tax revenue base, the Strategic Plan recommends exploring options such as redeveloping commercially zoned properties to their highest use and annexing adjacent commercial properties.

Redevelopment

Redevelopment in commercial areas is a team effort. The Community and Economic Development department and the Decatur Downtown Development Authority work to bring in proj-

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.



PALS Maurice Adams and Frances Spencer with the city's electric panel truck.



Atlanta Regional Commission Chairman Tad Leithead (second from left) congratulates Mayor Bill Floyd, Resource Conservation Coordinator Lena Stevens, and City Manager Peggy Merriss on Decatur's Gold Certified Green Community achievement.



Newly renovated Glenlake Park provides plenty of elbow room for recreational activity.

ects that develop commercial properties to their highest and best use, encourage development on surface parking lots and assure that designs support the community's vision.

The Planning, Zoning and Inspections and Engineering and Stormwater divisions work as a one-stop shop for all construction-related activities to make Decatur an accessible and responsive place for development. These divisions also work to ensure that the quality of construction meets code standards, which helps maintain and improve property values.

Partnerships

A long-standing partnership with City Schools of Decatur helps stretch the taxpayer's dollar to

provide a higher level of service at a lower cost. Children and Youth Services and Active Living share classrooms and playing fields to provide after-school, camp and athletic programs. The new Public Works building will house the City Schools maintenance department, allowing collaboration and shared use of resources.

Environmental Policies

Decatur's Green Team, 15 staff members from various city departments, meets monthly to discuss energy-efficient, environmentally responsible strategies for operations, planning and procurement. Its most ambitious project was switching personnel and payroll processes to a paperless job application and timesheet system.

Accomplishments

- Conducted energy audits of city facilities.
- Made stormwater system improvements.
- Restored stream banks in Glenlake Park.
- Purchased PALS electric truck.
- Adopted a multi-family recycling ordinance.
- Adopted community gardening guidelines.
- Received a Tree City designation from the Arbor Day Foundation.
- Designated a Certified Gold Green Community by the Atlanta Regional Commission.
- Adopted a master plan for Hidden Cove Park.
- Obtained \$1 million in grant funding for transportation and energy-efficiency projects.
- Received ARC's CREATE Community award for the after-school program.

The City Commission approved a master plan for the Decatur Cemetery, the city's largest greenspace, in September 2008. The plan includes a landscape improvement and tree replacement program, improvements to the stormwater system, new walkways, drives and other infrastructure elements, with an emphasis on pedestrian amenities, a "pond side" park, repairs to the historic Old Cemetery and a maintenance plan to address erosion, stream restoration, and development of a more park-like entrance at Church and Bell streets.



Support a Safe, Healthy, Lifelong Community



Learning to swim at Glenlake Pool

principle

d

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

Decatur residents desire more opportunities to walk, bicycle and use transit. Creating safe streets involves construction and maintenance of transportation facilities like sidewalks and bicycle lanes and enforcement of traffic laws and programs to encourage walking and bicycling.

Active Living manages the Safe Routes to Schools program, which provides pedestrian and bicycle safety training for all 4th grade

students in the city schools and also works with parent volunteers to organize walking school buses, bike trains and walk and roll to school days. For adults, Active Living focuses on Team Decatur and the Walk for Lunch program to encourage exercise as part of lifestyle.



The Planning, Zoning and Inspections and Engineering Departments plan, design and oversee transportation projects. Public Works keeps the sidewalks and streets clean. Police provide traffic enforcement, especially in school zones, to ensure that drivers obey the speed limit.

Goal 14

Enhance mobility options within and to Decatur.

Goal 15

Expand high-quality housing options to meet the needs of a diverse community.

Goal 16

Provide programs and services that support and enhance a safe, healthy and active lifestyle.



Jogging at Glenlake Park



Renfroe Middle School students ride to the Georgia Capitol.



Youth Baseball Opening Day ceremonies at Oakhurst Park

The PALS (Parking, Assistance, Liaison with Merchants and Safety) address parking issues at the city's parking meters and report issues such as cracked sidewalks and graffiti.

Significant city park upgrades include improvements at Glenlake Park, McKoy Pool, three dog parks and the Decatur Cemetery. Summer camps are held in the parks and recreation centers and are designed to help youth connect with the outdoors and a physical lifestyle.

Children and Youth Services after-school programs have been recognized for their excellence through accreditation and awards. They provide quality childcare and educational programming for Kindergarten-8th grade youth.

Emergency Services departments are committed to preparedness and ensuring the continuation of services. The Fire Department provides regular fire prevention education programs and the File of Life resident information program, and trains every city staff person in CPR. Police reduce Part 1 crimes by building strong community relationships. Technologies such as Crimereports.com make crime data easily accessible to the public. Out-of-town-check forms available on the city website also help reduce crime in the community.

Other safety measures include the CodeRed emergency notification system, the outdoor tornado warning sirens, and the annual emergency preparedness exercises we conduct. We

have back-up power at city facilities, tire chains for public safety and public works vehicles and AEDs (automated external defibrillators) in all city buildings.

Accomplishments

- Received a \$500,000 Safe Routes to School grant.
- Installed bicycle lanes on W. Ponce de Leon Avenue and W. Trinity Place.
- Installed more than four miles of new and repaired sidewalks.
- Participated in the annual Georgia Rides to the Capitol cycling event.
- Received Silver Level Walk Friendly Community designation.



Red Hatters make the scene at a Decatur Youth Sports baseball game.



Tennis at Glenlake Park

Provide the Necessary Support within City Government to Achieve the Community's Vision and Goals



Stacy Green manages youth athletics for Decatur Active Living.

principle



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

This fifth principle is not included in the strategic plan but has been added here to confirm our commitment to the plan and to identify the internal policies and programs in place that allow us to respond to the vision of our citizens.

For example, if you look at the wiring,

plumbing, heat and structural elements of a house, the components are not visible or glamorous like paint, wallpaper, and drapes. But without them, the structure could not last. The internal programs and operations of the City of Decatur represent these same essential elements. They provide the solid foundation that the organization is built on and allow us to serve our citizens at the high level they expect.

Maintaining a high-performing workforce is part of the organizational sustainability of the city. It involves hiring qualified employees, retaining existing employees and giving employees the tools they need to do an excellent job.

Once we have the best employees in place, we work to keep them. The city has a com-

City Organization Mission

Our mission is to work with the citizens of Decatur to meet the needs of the community while serving all with respect and integrity. We strive to do so with **Competence, Accessibility, Responsiveness and Excellence.** We **Care!**

To **CARE** is to value:

- Honesty and integrity
- Competence and skill
- Dependability
- Respect for other people
- Commitment
- Teamwork and cooperation



Decatur firefighters conduct a CPR training class for the Keenagers senior group at the Decatur Recreation Center.



Decatur staff congratulate Tammy Washington and Greg White for recent awards they've received.

mitment to providing all employees with training opportunities to increase knowledge and encourage creative, innovative thinking throughout the organization. Cross training is encouraged to use staff efficiently and keep employees interested, challenged and engaged in continuous learning.

The level of employee commitment to the organization and to the citizens of Decatur is indicated by the fact that our employees tend to stay with the organization. The average years of service among the city's 205 full-time employees is 10.25. Outstanding public servants are recognized each year with the Thomas O. Davis award from the Decatur Business Association.

We are committed to being good stewards

of the city's resources. Employees strive to keep costs as low as possible while providing the highest and best service possible. The Administrative Services department works to assure that accurate financial records are in place and sound investment decisions are made to protect the city's financial resources. As a result, the city annually receives a clean audit opinion and is recognized by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) with a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting indicating the highest level of fiscal responsibility.

Decatur has a long history of fiscal conservatism that has allowed us to weather the recent economic downturn.

As Decatur moves forward with Strategic

Plan implementation, we will continue to align our internal operations with the vision, principles and goals of our citizens. Although internal programs are often not visible to the community, they are critical to the success of our organization.

Accomplishments

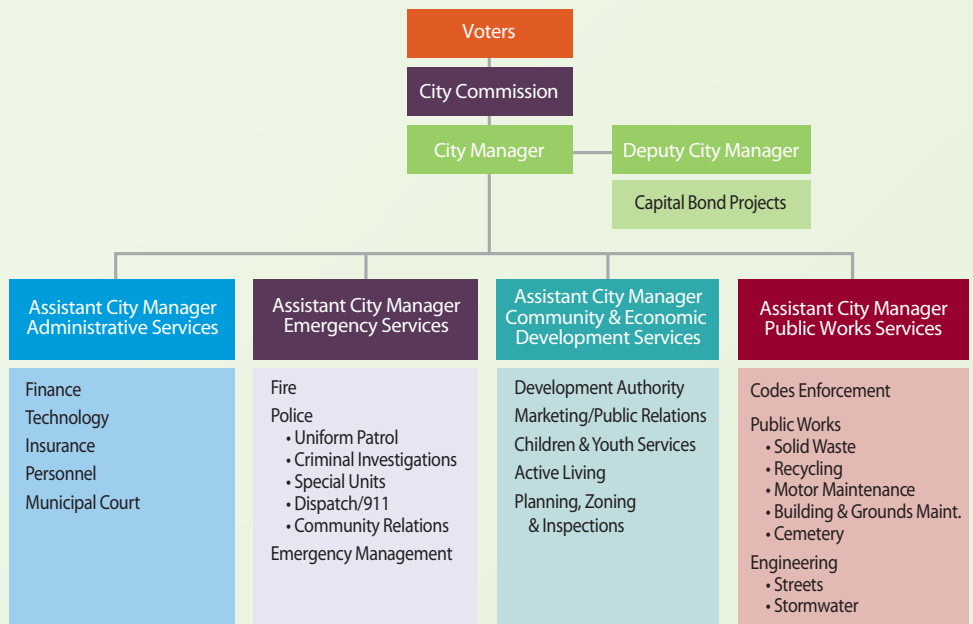
- Upgraded Standard & Poor's bond rating from AA to AA+.
- Received the GFOA Distinguished Budget award.
- Received the ICMA Strategic Leadership & Governance award.
- Provided a \$70 property tax credit to homeowners.



Public Works employees work to clear ice from the pedestrians-only portion of Sycamore Street on the square. Above, a Public Works employee pitches a Pay-As-You-Throw bag. The PAYT program is an ongoing success for Decatur, substantially reducing the amount of refuse taken to the county landfill and reducing Decatur's sanitation expense.

Government

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.



Five city commissioners are elected in nonpartisan elections for overlapping four-year terms. At its organizational meeting in January each year the commission elects one of its members to serve as mayor and commission chair.

Bill Floyd has served as Decatur's mayor since 1999 and has been a member of the City Commission since 1992. At the organizational meeting the commission also elects a mayor pro tem/vice-chair. Jim Baskett has served as mayor pro tem since 2002 and has served as a commissioner since 1996. The other commissioners are Fred Boykin, Kecia Cunningham and Patti Garrett.

The City Commission appoints the Municipal Court judges and a city attorney, who provides legal counsel for the government. Decatur Municipal Court consists of four judges who are attorneys and residents of Decatur. The current judges are Berryl A. Anderson, Edward E. Carriere, Jr., Robert N. Leitch and Rhathelia Stroud. Two substitute judges, Lindsay R.M. Jones and



Decatur's City Commissioners around the city (clockwise, from above left): Mayor Pro Tem Jim Baskett with his grandsons following Decatur Education Foundation's Tour deCatur; Mayor Bill Floyd at the dedication of Sugar Creek Garden; Commissioner Patti Garrett draws first-aid duty at Park Renewal Day; Commissioner Kecia Cunningham with Decatur restaurant owner and 2010 Decatur 101 graduate Marc Brennan; Commissioner Fred Boykin leads a group of cyclists on the Ride to the Capitol.





Environmental Sustainability Board

Seated: Gary Garrett (chair), Steve Provost, KC Boyce, Benjamin Jordan.
 Standing: Tiffany Brott, Greg Coleson, Kristin Rowles, Jill Jordan and Tony Leung



Development Authority Board

Seated: Sheila H. Hunt (chair), Betty Spiker. Standing: John Drake, Fred Cavalli, Chris Sciarrone and John Joyner

Zoning Board of Appeals (not pictured) Mark Burnette (chair), Kyle Williams, Neil Dobbs, Brian Smith and Michael Leavey

Andrew T. Rogers, serve in the absence of the regular judges. The city attorney is Decatur resident Bryan Downs.

City Manager

The City Commission appoints the City Manager, a professional administrator who serves as the city's chief executive officer and chief administrative officer. The City Manager



is responsible for carrying out the commission's policies and ordinances and for overseeing day-to-day operations of the government and the appointment of all employees, with the appointment of department heads subject to confirmation by the City Commission.

The current City Manager, Peggy Merriss, has served as City Manager since May 1993 and has been employed with the city since 1983.

Boards and Commissions

The City Commission appoints members of the Decatur Downtown Development Authority, the Decatur Housing Authority, the Historic Preservation Commission, the Planning Commission and the Zoning Board of Appeals. It also appoints members of resident boards and committees, such as the Active Living Advisory Board and the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Board.



Active Living Board

Parky Rogers, Bill Adams (chair), Wendy Heaps, Sally Brozek, Michael Harbin and Miriam Vos. Not pictured: Mamie Jennings Mabery and Don Rigger

Historic Preservation Commission Board

Seated: Sara Adkins, Andy Rutledge (chair), Ryan Jenkins. Standing: John Keys, Jo Ellen Kuehnel, Alan Clark and Lori Leland Kirk



Planning Commission Board

Seated: Melissa Manrow, Fleur Hartman, Tony Powers (vice chair). Standing: Scott Doyon, Jack Rhodes (chair), Hutch Moore and David Goldberg



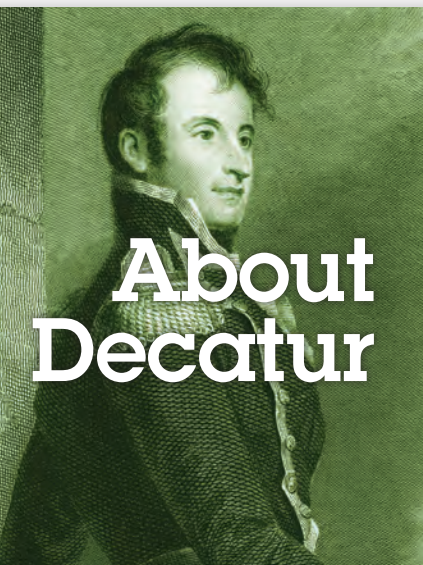
Did you know that the city provides the following services online?

- Submit an employment application (2011)
- View and pay city property taxes (2010)
- Submit a request for service (potholes, out-of-town house check, etc.) (2008)
- Pay a citation (2005)
- Sign up for e-notifications and CodeRed (2008)

What Do Citizens Like Most About Decatur?

Top Five Positive Responses to the National Citizenship Survey, 2006-2010

2010	2008	2006
Sense of Community (100%)	Decatur as a place to live (97%)	Decatur as a place to live (97%)
Openness & acceptance of community towards people of diverse backgrounds (100%)	Safety in Decatur's downtown area and neighborhoods during the day (97%)	Safety in Decatur's downtown area and neighborhoods during the day (96%)
Access to affordable quality food (100%)	Overall image or reputation of Decatur (94%)	Recommend living here to someone who asks (97%)
City welcomes citizen involvement (100%)	Decatur as a place to raise children (93%)	Fire Services (96%)
Quality Economic Development (98%)	Cleanliness (90%)	Overall Quality of Life (95%)



Decatur was incorporated Dec. 10, 1823, and named after Stephen Decatur, a U.S. Naval hero. Commodore Decatur was killed in 1820 and Congress decreed that his name be honored throughout the nation. As a result, more than 40 U.S. cities and counties bear the name Decatur in his memory.

Decatur is the second oldest municipality in the Atlanta metropolitan area and the seat of DeKalb County. It adjoins Atlanta's city limits six miles east of Atlanta's central business district.

The Old Courthouse on Decatur's downtown square sits on a rise of land where two Indian trails once crossed and is the fourth courthouse building to occupy the site. Historically, the square has

served as a gathering place and is still the focus of festivals and other community events today.

Decatur has evolved into a vibrant small urban city that values its history and enjoys the sophistication and excitement of a college town along with all the benefits of being in a major metropolitan area. Its tree-lined streets, strong sense of community, high quality of services and nationally recognized public school system continue to draw residents. Its balance of urban amenities and small-town character make Decatur an attractive option for creative business owners, entrepreneurs and individuals seeking to live and work in the same community.

Population	
2000	18,147
2010	19,335

Census participation	
2000	84%
2010	82%

How Does Decatur Measure Up? Among cities choosing to be judged against others on a variety of criteria, regionally and nationwide, Decatur stacks up nicely

Nationwide

- Welcomes citizen involvement – 1st out of 280 jurisdictions
- Opportunities to participate in community issues – 2nd out of 113
- Opportunities to volunteer – 4th out of 116
- Visited the city's website – 5th out of 111 jurisdictions
- Read the city's newsletter – 15th out of 140 jurisdictions

Southern

- City as a place to live – 1st out of 20 jurisdictions
- Ease of walking – 1st out of 17
- Quality of new development – 1st out of 13
- Place to work – 1st out of 16
- Overall quality of business and service establishments – 1st out of 8
- Safety in downtown during the day – 1st out of 17
- Police Services – 1st out of 23
- Opportunities to participate in community issues – 1st out of 8
- Services provided by the city – 1st out of 25
- Overall direction city is taking – 1st out of 18
- Welcomes citizen involvement – 1st out of 19
- Job government does at listening – 1st out of 19

