



The City of Decatur has a long-term and ongoing commitment to

Sustainability



ORGANIZATIONAL/INSTITUTIONAL 2



COMMUNITY 8

Sustainability occurs when our efforts to support environmental, economic, organizational/institutional and community goals converge. This Annual Report highlights how the city supports sustainability efforts and fulfills the organization's purpose and responsibility.

In the past, the Annual Report has focused on the various departments, their goals and key accomplishments. This year, based on input from focus groups of Decatur residents, we are using a different format and type of information. We are also including some of the results from the 2006 and 2008 Citizen Surveys. Let us know what you think!



ECONOMIC 5



ENVIRONMENTAL 12

► Organizational/Institutional Sustainability

What is Sustainability for Decatur?

Sustainability is often defined as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” To ensure the long-term vitality of our community, the City Commission and staff strive to incorporate the principles of sustainability as they develop and implement public policy.

The City of Decatur has a responsibility to act in a way that sustains the community, the organization and the people within the organization. Sustainability includes efforts to protect and preserve natural resources, maintain economic vitality, support smart growth development, create community, support active living, and provide opportunities to live, work and play.

Sustainability is not a new concept for Decatur. Our Strategic Plan (www.decaturga.com/cgs_citysvcs_ced_strategicplan.aspx), the City Commission's goals and vision, and the organization's implementation plans have been based on making sure we are good stewards of our assets, whether financial, physical or social. As stated in the Strategic Plan, the city's primary purpose is to assure a high quality of life for its residents, businesses and visitors, both today and in the future.

The City of Decatur is charged with providing the best possible services at the least possible costs. This means we must be accountable to our residents, business owners and other taxpayers for providing quality services that reflect the community's willingness to invest. It also means maintaining and supporting an organization that is dedicated to efficiency, transparency and responsiveness.

We provide city services through people and not through products. Being able to provide a stable city government with dedicated and productive employees and responsible operating systems is critical to the sustainability of the community.

City Commission

There are five City Commissioners, elected in non-partisan elections for overlapping four-year terms. At its organizational meeting in January each year, the City Commission elects one of its members to be the mayor/chair of the City Commission. At the same meeting the City Commission also elects a mayor pro tem/vicechair.

It is the responsibility of the mayor to preside at all meetings of the City Commission. The mayor has no veto power but retains the right to vote on all matters brought before the City Commission.

Vision

Successful organizations need to have a clear vision of where they are going and how they intend to achieve their mission.

Beginning in 1999, we engaged in a community-driven strategic planning process that produced the City of Decatur Strategic Plan 2000. The plan is a vision for the city from 2000 through 2010 that combines physical and economic planning with the social goals of the community. The plan continues to provide a framework for decision-making and guidance to the City Commission and community.

Decatur's City Commission, clockwise from bottom left: Mayor Bill Floyd, Fred Boykin, Kecia Cunningham, Mary Alice Kemp, and Mayor Pro Tem Jim Baskett



sustainability

During the community input/data gathering process, the city's vision statement was developed:
The City of Decatur will assure a high quality of life for its residents, businesses and visitors both today and in the future.

Principles, goals and projects that support the vision were developed through a collaboration of residents, government, business and institutional leaders.

The City Commission holds a working retreat annually to reflect on past achievements, identify future goals, discuss challenges to those goals and determine the commission's vision for the city in the context of the overarching strategic plan.

Form of Government

Decatur has operated under a commission-manager form of government since 1920. The Charter of the City of Decatur establishes the City Commission as the governing and legislative authority of the city government. Day-to-day operations of the city's various departments and implementation of policies established by the City Commission are the responsibility of the city manager, a professional administrator appointed by the City Commission.

The elected officials are the community leaders and policy makers who establish a vision for the city and who hire the city manager to carry out policy and ensure that all residents are being equitably served.

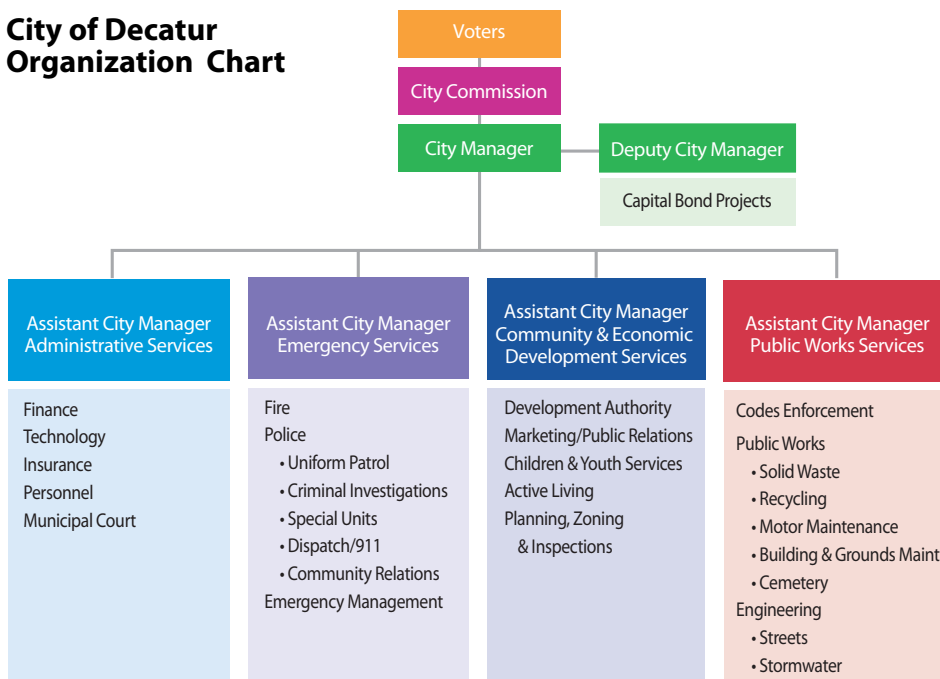
The city manager coordinates the work of department heads and other employees, who help ensure the smooth and efficient delivery of services. The city manager serves at the pleasure of the commission and has responsibility for preparing the budget, directing the day-to-day operations, hiring and firing personnel, and serving as the commission's chief policy advisor.

Decatur's current city manager, Peggy Merriss, has served as manager since May 1993 and has been employed with the city since 1983. She served first as personnel administrator and then as assistant city manager before being appointed city manager.

Performance Measures

In addition to developing and following a vision, a successful organization needs to know how well it is doing towards achieving the vision. As a result, the city has developed quantifiable measures for determining how efficiently and effectively it is meeting its goals.

City of Decatur Organization Chart



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

PERSONNEL

Department	Full Time	Part Time
Governmental control	8	3
Administrative services	10	8
Community & Economic Dev.	7	4
Active Living	8	24
Children & Youth Services	9	73
Planning, Zoning & Inspections	4	2
Police	62	19
Fire & Rescue	39	0
Public Works	44	13
Engineering & Stormwater	15	3
Total	206	149

CITIZEN SURVEY: ORGANIZATIONAL/ INSTITUTIONAL

Overall impression of employees in the City of Decatur

2006 77% rated excellent/good
 2008 77% rated excellent/good

Quality of services provided by the City of Decatur

2006 84% rated excellent/good
 2008 87% rated excellent/good

The value of services for taxes paid in Decatur

2006 63% rated excellent/good
 2008 64% rated excellent/good

Organization

Organizational/Institutional Sustainability *continued*



Much of the city's management team gathered at a recent meeting of the Decatur Business Association to salute Patrick Grier (with plaque, fourth from left), who received the annual Thomas O. Davis Public Servant award.

Decatur's highly visible police force helps to ensure that crime rates remain low in the city.



The city participates in the International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) Comparative Performance Measurement Program, which provides performance measures in 15 service areas for the city to use to evaluate existing services, to benchmark results with other communities and to exchange best practices within a consortium of participating jurisdictions, including a consortium of Metro Atlanta communities.

We have organized an interdepartmental team to collect and submit data on 15 services we deliver. The same information is also collected in more than 180 communities located throughout the United States and Canada, including 12 metro-Atlanta consortium members.

These measures allow us to compare the efficiency and effectiveness of our services to other local governments and give us an opportunity to identify areas in need of improvement. These measures are used in internal management meetings and some are published in the budget document.

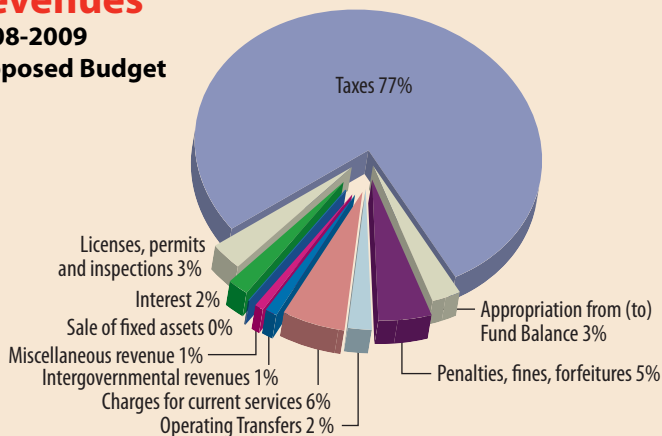
In addition to the ICMA measures, the city received a grant from the Center for Civic Innovation to hold two random-sample focus groups to determine what types of measures citizens were interested in seeing reported.

Respondents were asked how they judge whether or not the City of Decatur is doing a good job. They described a wide variety of city characteristics that serve as indicators of city performance:

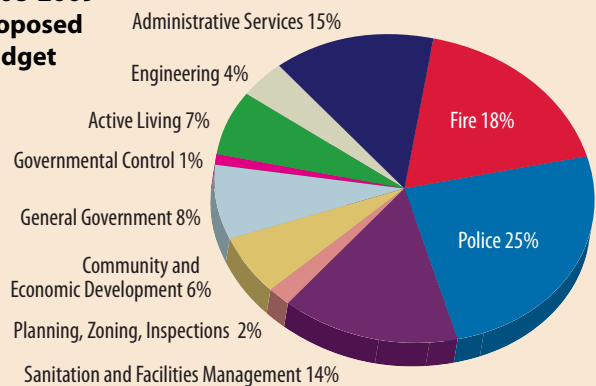
- The city's national ranking as one of the best places in the country to live
- Cleanliness
- Crime rate; how safe they feel (one respondent leaves his back door unlocked)
- Quick police response time
- Youth services and the impact these appear to have on kids growing up in Decatur; e.g., summer camps, after school programs. ("They are growing, not streetwise, but education-wise")
- School achievement test scores
- Well-organized events (well-patrolled, many volunteers)
- New developments
- Few vacant homes or businesses
- Residents who have remained in Decatur for decades

City staff will work to develop performance measures for these indicators over the next year. For more information about the performance measurement program contact Amanda Thompson, Amanda.thompson@decaturga.com

Revenues 2008-2009 Proposed Budget



Expenditures 2008-2009 Proposed Budget



Economic Sustainability

How can we continue to afford the high quality of life we enjoy in Decatur? This question is at the core of economic sustainability. While the city works hard to assure the efficient use of public funds, rising fuel costs and other increases present a challenge as we work to balance the budget and maintain current tax rates.

The primary source of income for the City of Decatur is property tax. The city has no access to sales tax or other forms of revenue, leaving only a tax on property as the primary means to pay for the high level of service our residents expect. Therefore, growing the city's tax digest is essential to maintaining economic sustainability.

Because the city is virtually built out, the best opportunity to grow the tax digest is through higher-density development in the commercial districts – primarily in downtown Decatur.

Development Strategy

Over the past two decades, Decatur has focused on redeveloping the downtown commercial district to its highest and best use. This strategy includes a focus on projects combining office, residential and retail to encourage more pedestrian activity and reduce the number of automobile trips between activity centers.

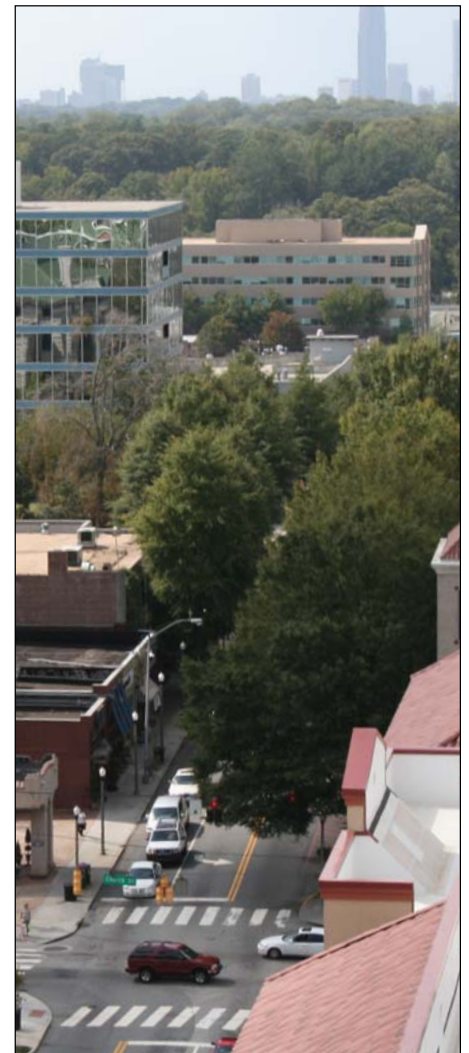
Residential development in the commercial district has helped create a new type of neighborhood in Decatur and provided an opportunity to increase the city's tax digest by growing up instead of growing out. It also provides an opportunity to replace barren surface parking lots with vibrant developments that contribute significantly to the tax base, add foot traffic for restaurant and retail shops, and support the use of transit and walking to meet transportation needs.

Office tenants have transitioned away from companies with large numbers of employees who commuted by automobile to smaller service businesses who have fewer employees per square foot and locate in Decatur because of proximity to their homes.

Retail and restaurant growth around the square and along the Ponce de Leon corridor has created a vibrant downtown commercial district that encourages more pedestrian activity.



Condo developments, like the Talley Street Lofts (above), are changing the look of Decatur.



Decatur's streetscape trees are maturing, blending in with the tree canopy that extends toward Atlanta.

DEVELOPMENT RATE

Decatur's development rate has been slow and steady over the past two decades. It generally takes a project two years from initial planning and approval to completion. This pace allows the city to absorb growth and slowly and consistently implement the goals of the Decatur Town Center Plan.

Town Center One	150 E. Ponce de Leon (Commercial)	1985
DeKalb Chamber Building	750 Commerce Drive (Commercial)	1985
Town Center Two	135 Clairemont (Commercial)	1988
Decatur Holiday Inn/Conference Plaza	130 Clairemont (Hotel)	1988
Clark Harrison Building	330 W. Ponce de Leon (Commercial)	1988
101 Ponce Plaza Building	101 W. Ponce de Leon (Commercial)	1991
CVS/Decatur Square	425 W. Ponce de Leon (Retail)	2000
Ice House Apartments	105 Sycamore Place (Mixed-Use Residential)	2000
Town Square Condominium	225 E. Ponce de Leon (Mixed-Use Residential)	2001
The Clairemont Condos	417 Clairemont (Residential)	2003
Renaissance Condominium	230 E. Ponce de Leon (Mixed-Use Residential)	2005
335 W. Ponce Condos	335 W. Ponce de Leon (Mixed-Use Residential)	2005
The Artisan Phase I	201 W. Ponce de Leon (Mixed-Use Residential)	2006
The Artisan Phase II	201 W. Ponce de Leon (Mixed-Use Residential)	2008
Trinity Triangle	200 block E. Trinity (Mixed-Use Residential)	2010*

*Projected completion date

ANNEXATION

The Decatur city limits have remained roughly the same since the 1920s. Once the commercial hub of DeKalb County, Decatur's current primary land use is residential. The city's main source of revenue is property taxes, so it is important to maintain a strong mix of neighborhood-based residential property and higher density commercial uses.

In 1994, the city's residential property made up about 76 percent of the total tax digest. In 2007, residential property was approximately 85 percent of the total digest. In reviewing the city's future economic sustainability in terms of adequate revenues and reasonable property tax millage rates, it appears that the ability to annex additional land area into the city limits would be supported, particularly to the extent that the commercial property tax base is expanded.

In looking at areas to consider for annexation, several factors are important. Current residents have indicated that maintaining a high quality of life, superior services and a small city "feel" is important. Therefore, an extensive annexation plan that would fundamentally change the existing character of the community would not be desirable. In addition, annexation should offer the potential to reduce the property tax burden for residential property owners both in terms of city operations and school taxes. This means that the annexation should offer long-term revenue benefits that exceed service delivery costs. In addition, the area to be annexed should have a reasonable connection to the existing city limits.

During summer 2008, the city will offer education and information sessions as well as public input opportunities to provide the City Commission with options for consideration in the fall.

RETAIL AND RESTAURANT GROWTH

Economic Development Report

	1996	2007
Restaurants	38	82
Retailers/services	54	101

Recommended minimum and maximum height requirements have resulted in buildings of six and seven stories which helps maintain a human scale for downtown Decatur.

This focus on redevelopment in downtown Decatur has paid off. In the face of the current housing slump, the city saw only slight growth in its tax digest but 80 percent of the new value added was a result of new developments in commercial districts.

While development in the downtown district appears to be progressing quickly, it has actually occurred at a modest rate over the past several decades. There were clusters of years when several projects came on line followed by a slow-down that was usually market-driven.

As Decatur moves forward, redevelopment is expected to occur on the remaining surface parking lots in the downtown district.

New Campuses Downtown

This spring both the Atlanta Institute of Art and DeVry University announced plans to open campus locations in downtown Decatur. These institutions will bring a healthy mix of students as well as faculty and staff to fill office space at West Court Square.

Both organizations made the decision to move into downtown Decatur because many of their students use MARTA and the downtown Decatur station makes for a very easy commute. These developments along with the redevelopment of the East Decatur Station area along College Avenue will help the city grow its tax base to help pay for the cost of providing high-quality service.

Annexing Commercial Property

Another option available to help achieve economic sustainability is to move forward with annexing additional commercial property to the north and east of the city. Additional commercial property would allow for higher-density mixed-use development similar to the downtown redevelopment program. Higher-density residential projects mixed with office, retail and restaurant businesses provide a more efficient service delivery model.

Because this type of development generates few school-aged children, it has a positive impact on the tax base for the school system too. The City Commission has asked city staff to work on annexation options for consideration in autumn 2008.

Accomplishments

- Maintained millage rate.
- Successfully implemented Phase I of the Wayfinding Directional Sign program.
- Brought the Art Institute of Atlanta and DeVry University to downtown Decatur.
- Initiated the development of new design standards for areas where commercially zoned property adjoins residentially zoned property (scheduled completion: December 2008).
- Restructured the recreation program to focus on Active Living. This program is now positioned to address changing demographics and better integrate with Smart Growth Planning and a comprehensive public health initiative.
- Successfully participated in the ING Marathon, winning the \$5,000 second-place prize for best cheering section after winning first place last year.
- Produced another very successful Decatur Book Festival.
- Recruited more than 700 volunteers to participate in the Martin Luther King Jr. Service Project to help make repairs to the homes of lower-income senior citizens; developed a more effective volunteer-driven process for this project and the Season of Giving program.
- Completed an Affordable Housing Market Study to help structure an effective program to assure an adequate supply of affordable housing in the city.
- Registered more than 80 citizens, the largest group ever, for the 2008 Decatur 101 program.
- Received two TE grant funds for intersection improvement to help implement the Community Transportation Plan.

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BUILDING PERMIT SUMMARY

Year	Building Permits Issued	Construction Value
1995	349	\$19 million
2000	688	\$41 million
2005	728	\$92.5 million
2006	753	\$56.5 million
2007	822	\$100 million

NEW CONSTRUCTION AND THE TAX DIGEST

	Reassessment Value	New Value	Total	Percentage New Value
2004	\$21,630,388	\$23,713,455	\$45,343,843	52%
2005	\$35,986,096	\$12,502,050	\$48,488,146	26%
2006	\$63,812,136	\$47,369,459	\$111,181,595	43%
2007	\$5,996,369	\$41,689,291	\$47,685,660	87%
2008	-\$4,138,000	\$32,263,000	\$28,125,000	115%

DECATUR BY THE NUMBERS*

POPULATION GROWTH

Decatur's population has remained relatively unchanged in spite of the construction of new downtown condominiums. This is primarily due to a reduction in household size. Although the number of households has increased, the number of people living in each household has decreased. Decatur's average household size is 2.12 compared to 2.70 for metro Atlanta and 2.58 for the nation.

The city of Decatur accounts for 73.1 percent of the 30030 zip code's population and 2.6 percent of the population of DeKalb County.

	City of Decatur	Zip Code 30030	DeKalb County	Metro Atlanta	United States
2000 population	18,147	24,923	665,865		
2007 (estimate)	17,914	24,493	683,882		
2012 (projected)	17,759	24,125	694,356		
change 2000-2007	-1.3%	-1.7%	2.7%	20.6%	7.0%
change 2007-2012	-0.9%	-1.5%	1.5%	11.5%	4.6%

21% of Decatur's population is under 18

31% of Decatur's population is between 25 and 45

13% of Decatur's population is over 65

Median age in Decatur is 39.0 Atlanta 34.7 United States 37.3

Education and Income

	Decatur	Atlanta	United States
Percent of residents with college degrees	56%	25%	30%
Average household income (2007)	\$82,406	\$76,863	\$66,670
2007 per capita income	\$37,023	\$28,239	\$25,495

Decatur households earning less than \$50,000 44%

Households earning between \$50,000 and \$150,000 45%

Racial Contribution	Caucasian	African-American	Hispanic	Asian	Other
	73%	22.7%	1.8%	1.7%	0.8%

* statistics from Market + Main 2008 study



Wayfinding signage helps visitors find their way around the city's business districts.



The ING Georgia Marathon helps to expose Decatur to metro Atlanta residents and runners from all around the globe.

CITIZEN SURVEY: ECONOMIC

Quality of new development in Decatur

2006	62% rated excellent/good
2008	77% rated excellent/good

Quality of business and services in Decatur

2006	n/a
2008	89% rated excellent/good

Decatur as a place to work

2006	50% rated excellent/good
2008	83% rated excellent/good

Community Sustainability



Gardening at Scott Park is one of the city's many popular summer camps.



Two Decatur residents enjoy some time at one of the city's dog parks.

A commitment to building and sustaining community is a cornerstone of the City of Decatur. We strive to fulfill this commitment by providing opportunities for building and sustaining a healthy, active and engaged community across all social and economic interests.

We pay attention to the unique quality-of-life issues that set us apart from our peers. And we design programs aimed at maintaining a strong sense of community, encouraging good communication with residents and providing opportunities for community interaction.

Decatur's full calendar of festivals and special events strengthens our vitality and sense of community. The Volunteer! Decatur program allows citizens to connect by giving of their time and resources. A commitment to developing an educated and connected citizenry has made the Decatur 101 program, the Citizens Public Safety Academy, and the Decatur Focus popular and effective tools for communicating with residents and businesses.

Our quality-of-life programs are often cited by residents as their reason for moving to and remaining in Decatur. References to the importance of the programs are included in the Strategic Plan. The programs have also received high marks in the two Citizen Satisfaction Surveys.

Active Living

The concepts of Active Living and Lifelong Communities were part of Decatur's Strategic Plan before the catchy names were coined. Active Living refers to creating a community where citizens can make physical activity a part of their everyday lives. Careful planning and proper infrastructure can create a community where walking and cycling between activity centers provide alternatives to driving to a gym for exercise.

The Safe Routes to School program encourages our children to walk to school. Streetscape improvements, bicycle lanes and new downtown housing have dramatically increased pedestrian counts and the number of bicycles throughout the central business district.

To build on this concept, Decatur reorganized the Recreation and Community Services Department into two divisions: Children and Youth Services and Active Living.

The Children and Youth Services division continues to provide first-rate after-school, summer camp and specialty camp programs for the children and youth of Decatur.

The new Active Living division incorporates our traditional recreation and sports activities into a broader program that coordinates existing efforts and develops new opportunities to encourage citizens to lead healthy, active lives.

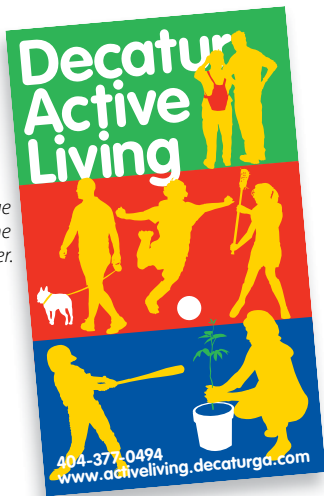
Programs to improve cycling and pedestrian activity will be coordinated through this division as will environmental programs as we create a true active living community throughout Decatur. You can learn more about the active living concept at www.activeliving.org.

Active Living Advisory Board

In support of Decatur's commitment to Active Living, the City Commission created the Active Living Advisory Board, a new opportunity for citizen involvement. This volunteer board will provide advice and support to the Active Living division to better manage and expand city programs that encourage an active, healthy lifestyle for all citizens.

The board will assist with existing programs like Safe Routes to School, help design a citywide health and fitness initiative to be launched in 2009, recommend new programs and assist in the implementation of many of the recommendations found in the Community Transportation Plan.

The board will consist of nine members. Residents who are interested in being considered for membership should complete a Statement of Interest form, available at www.decaturga.com, and send it to the City Manager's Office, P.O. Box 220, Decatur, GA 30031; fax it to 678-553-6518; or scan it and email to info@decaturga.com.



New signage for the Rec Center.

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Affordable Housing Study Summary

The City of Decatur received a grant from the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to conduct an Affordable Housing Study. The focus of the study was to inventory Decatur's existing housing stock, analyze our work force, conduct a survey to determine the profile of people who want to live in Decatur, and then identify the gaps in our housing stock. This project helps implement Goals 4 and 7 of the Strategic Plan and encourages economic and racial diversity.

The study determined that 82 percent of Decatur jobs fall within two categories – Services and Public Administration. This fact isn't surprising considering that Decatur is the county seat of DeKalb County and is home to Agnes Scott College and Columbia Theological Seminary. Salary averages in these sectors are around \$37,000 and a large number of Decatur employees commute to work.

The perception in the market is that Decatur is too expensive to find housing. The study found a surplus in housing options for households making between \$75,000 and \$250,000. Supply is tight for households making between \$50,000 and \$75,000 but housing options do exist for households in this income bracket. The real gap in supply is for households earning between \$35,000 and \$50,000. This gap coincides with the salary range for the majority of those who work here.

The study concludes that most individuals in this income range are renters who are not ready to enter the owner market. There is a real gap in available rental housing in the \$875-\$1,250 range targeting this market.

Offering a wide range of housing options results in a healthy age and income mix and assures that people who work in Decatur also have an option to live here. Providing affordable housing also would help reduce traffic into the city and allow more employees to use alternative transportation for their commute.

A full version of the Affordable Housing Study will be available later this summer.

Wireless Network Now Live

Phases I and II of Decatur's wireless broadband network are now complete and public access has been available since January. Phase I access includes downtown Decatur and the campus of Agnes Scott College. Phase II includes the Ponce de Leon Avenue corridor. Phase III will extend the coverage so that Decatur will provide wireless Internet access for residents, businesses, students, and visitors throughout the city.

Once the project is complete, Decatur will be the only city in the state of Georgia with wi-fi access throughout the city limits.

In October 2006, Decatur was selected to receive grant funding to establish a wireless broadband network or "wi-fi" through the Governor's Wireless Communities Georgia Program. The city has partnered with Agnes Scott College, City Schools of Decatur, Columbia Theological Seminary and the Downtown Development Authority to build the citywide wireless network.

The City of Decatur owns the wireless network and partners with an Internet Service Provider (ISP), Get The Speed, for its operation. There is a fee associated with the service, with a price break for low-income families. For information on how to connect to the network, go to www.wireless.decaturga.com and click on Access Instructions.

Wi-Fi access allows city employees to use the network while they are working outside of their offices in the field. The network is also available free to anyone in the city for two consecutive hours in any 24-hour period.

The goals of the program are to:

- Provide wireless networking for mobile city staff to enhance productivity (police, fire, public works, parking meters, inspections).
- Offer affordable Internet access to students to access homework and school network resources.
- Provide institutional wireless networking beyond campus limits.
- Attract and retain businesses in the commercial business districts.
- Enhance options to live, work, play and learn while in Decatur.



Active living in Decatur is easy. Nearly everything is within walking distance, and streetscape improvements provide a pleasant environment for activity.



Agnes Scott President Elizabeth Kiss, a representative from Governor Perdue's office, and Decatur Mayor Bill Floyd snip a ceremonial wire to launch Decatur's wi-fi network.



Atlanta ranked number 14 in the Brookings Institute's listing of the USA's most walkable cities, thanks in large part to Decatur. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution highlighted Decatur in its reporting of the survey results. Decatur remains a model live, work, play (and walk) community.

Decatur 101: Still a Hit



Decatur 101 offers residents the opportunity to look "under the hood" to learn how the city works. At top, participants show off certificates awarded upon completion of the five-week program. Above, a Decatur 101 class tours the public works maintenance facility on Talley Street.

CodeRed and Emergency Management

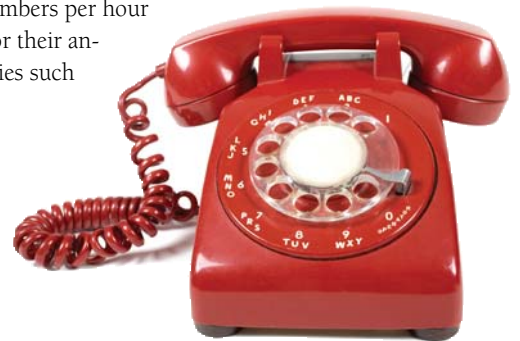
A comprehensive emergency management plan has been created to plan for, respond to, and recover from hazardous events that may affect our community. Emergency Management Services coordinates, using all available city resources, techniques and skills to reduce the probability and impact of extreme circumstances and bring about quick restoration of city services after a disaster.

This year Decatur implemented the CodeRed Emergency Notification System, a high-speed telephone communication service that allows us to quickly notify citizens of situations requiring immediate action.

All city residential phone numbers in the BellSouth/AT&T system should be in the telephone database. All city businesses should register, as well as individuals who have unlisted phone numbers, who have changed their phone numbers or addresses within the last year, and who use cellular phones as their primary home phones.

The system can dial up to 50,000 phone numbers per hour and deliver a recorded message to individuals or their answering machines. It will be used for emergencies such as:

- Drinking water contamination
- Utility outage
- Evacuation notice and route
- Missing person
- Fires or floods
- Bomb threat
- Hostage situation
- Chemical spill or gas leak
- Other emergency incidents where rapid and accurate notification is essential.



Decatur successfully tested the CodeRed system in December. Recently we used the system to notify residents about a sudden decrease in water pressure due to a malfunction at a DeKalb County water treatment plant.

We have heard concerns from residents related to the 999 identification number that flashes on a telephone screen and requesting a way to differentiate between the types of emergencies when information is relayed. CodeRed opted to use a 999 display number rather than an 800 number because so many people automatically ignore 800 messages. Please remember that a 999 display number indicates an incoming CodeRed Emergency Notification call.

When we relayed the information about water pressure, we stated "Important Information" rather than "Emergency Information" at the beginning of the call. We will always do that when the information is deemed necessary but not life-threatening.

Coming Soon...

Decatur will implement a CodeRed Weather Warning system designed to deliver severe weather warnings to residents' telephones within seconds after being issued by the National Weather Service.

The CodeRed Weather Warning system is different from the CodeRed Emergency Notification System in that it will not call everyone in the city. It will only notify the immediately affected areas based on instant satellite feeds. Calls will not be initiated by the city – they will be done automatically by the weather warning system.

The weather warning system requires that residents "opt in" to the service. This will require that residents who wish to participate actually register their telephone numbers. Only residents who register telephone numbers will receive a notification. More details will be provided once the system is operational.

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McKoy Pool Opening

A thunderstorm did not deter the excitement generated by the long-awaited opening of the new McKoy Pool and bathhouse. The pool offers “beach entry” access, making it easier for the very young and also the elderly and handicapped swimmers to enter, bubbler features to entertain younger swimmers, and dedicated lap lanes that can be scheduled for adult-only lap swimming. The rebuilt bathhouse is handicapped accessible and there is expanded surface decking and grass lounging areas.

The \$1 million project was funded by a \$250,000 Community Development Block Grant from the DeKalb County Community Development Department, a \$25,000 contribution from the SDCDC, and proceeds from Decatur Bond Funds.

McKoy Pool provides a slightly different swim experience from Decatur’s two other city-owned pools, giving residents three different swim options within its four square miles. Ebster Pool meets swim team requirements and serves that community need. Glenlake provides a more traditional multi-purpose swimming experience with a deep water option.

Citizens Assisting Public Safety (CAPS)

Decatur created a Citizens Assisting Public Safety (CAPS) program this year. Participants must first attend the Citizens Public Safety Academy (CPSA) and/or Citizen Emergency Response Training (CERT). As CAPS members, they must work at least one four-hour shift monthly and attend in-service training sessions presented by the police and fire departments. To date, 26 CAPS have completed training.

Duties include special events (with a focus on public safety functions), business district patrol (providing a presence on the downtown square, in the Oakhurst business district, and in other commercial districts), and disaster response (assisting public safety personnel).

Future activities include training CAPS participants as child safety seat technicians, crime prevention instructors and role players for police and fire personnel training courses.

CAPS members can be easily identified by their special uniform – a green polo shirt with the CAPS emblem and a baseball-style cap. They made their debut at the ING Marathon where 15 CAPS members assisted with traffic direction and control.

To Do List

- Develop a communications master plan.
- Redesign the city’s website.
- Fund a Retail Market Analysis.
- Expand the Cliff shuttle.
- Develop an Arts Master Plan.
- Continue Decatur 101 and the Decatur Public Safety Academy.
- Replace McKoy Skate Park equipment.
- Renovate the restroom at Ebster Recreation Center, repair and add new steps at Ebster Field, and construct an additional shade structure at Ebster Pool.
- Continue to focus on the CAPS (Citizens Assisting Public Safety) program; train volunteers to help with special events and act as community ambassadors.
- Continue to offer free CPR and basic first-aid courses to residents, neighborhood associations and businesses.
- Continue to provide high-quality accredited after-school and summer programming for children and youth, including those who may be at-risk economically.
- Begin a pilot project to engage a person to act as liaison with the senior community, particularly on issues such as real estate taxes, home repair and maintenance, and security and safety.



At top, Decatur Mayor Bill Floyd and Commissioner Mary Alice Kemp get some assistance in cutting the ceremonial “ribbon” officially opening McKoy Pool, which had been closed for several years because of structural issues. The new McKoy Pool features a “beach” entry, designed so that the very young and the physically disabled can enjoy some time in the cool water on a hot summer day.

CITIZEN SURVEY: COMMUNITY

Decatur as a place to live

2006	92% rated excellent/good
2008	97% rated excellent/good

The overall quality of life in Decatur

2006	89% rated excellent/good
2008	95% rated excellent/good

Opportunities to participate in community issues

2006	n/a
2008	81% rated excellent/good

Opportunities to attend cultural activities

2006	74% rated excellent/good
2008	83% rated excellent/good

Availability of affordable, quality childcare

2006	18% rated excellent/good
2008	52% rated excellent/good

Environmental Sustainability



Decatur's Pay-As-You-Throw program has reduced landfill deposits substantially.



Twice-yearly Electronics Recycling Days are an ongoing and growing success.

Environmental Sustainability is a wise and well-informed way of living and conducting business that ensures a community's quality of life for the future. It requires a strong commitment from city government, residents, and businesses to reduce waste, improve energy efficiency, preserve greenspaces, use nonpolluting transportation alternatives where possible, and participate in other measures to help reduce pollution and keep our environment healthy for future generations.

Waste Management and Recycling

The June 2008 issue of the Decatur Focus highlighted the city's ongoing environmental sustainability initiatives including a history of the Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) and Recycling program – the centerpiece of Decatur's commitment to environmental sustainability.

Now in its 10th year, the PAYT collection program has dramatically decreased landfill deposits and increased the amount of recyclables collected.

With the reduction in residential solid waste and an increase in recycling, Decatur averages a 37 percent reduction in landfill deposits, 12 percent above the state-mandated 25 percent reduction required of all municipalities of solid waste being put into landfills in our communities.

Cleaning, Collecting, Conserving

During the past year Decatur has converted from using traditional chemical-based cleaning products to using environmentally friendly cleaners at city facilities. We provide environmentally friendly hand soaps, general purpose cleaners, recycled paper products, cutlery and drink cups.

We conserve water by capturing rainwater in barrels at the Public Works facility. The rain water has been used to extinguish the holiday bonfire, water plants, and wash garbage trucks.

Decatur applied for and was awarded an "Away from Home" grant from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, which provides recycling collection units to be used at special events. The units made their debut at the Decatur Beach Party and were used during the July 4th celebration.

In addition to being used at Decatur's special events, the units are available to groups hosting special events in the city, thus potentially decreasing the amount of garbage disposed of in the landfill and increasing our recycling rate.

RESIDENTIAL LANDFILL DEPOSITS, IN TONS

Month	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Jul	453.44	462.52	326.46	267.65	313.53	378.02	376.78	340.10	365.63	349.31	320.76
Aug	480.89	422.15	306.48	309.34	343.77	344.56	358.87	346.95	359.27	372.39	340.74
Sep	424.30	383.18	284.30	272.39	329.16	317.53	325.56	328.17	342.98	342.35	318.15
Oct	397.09	387.98	314.19	324.65	357.00	351.53	354.13	337.78	326.44	321.08	331.41
Nov	395.12	356.79	279.78	340.30	316.40	347.27	327.32	320.27	371.13	321.10	314.18
Dec	461.19	407.76	317.10	363.38	340.51	324.81	375.28	388.65	350.15	346.90	309.83
Jan 07	411.26	409.18	273.38	332.97	364.68	356.50	358.60	322.61	340.49	357.08	324.30
Feb	316.37	345.43	259.25	313.68	300.55	282.08	300.49	301.03	290.71	214.18	263.54
Mar	401.49	399.23	305.21	352.04	350.71	351.46	321.90	332.64	353.43	306.43	330.50
Apr	391.18	428.97	329.76	327.30	429.48	400.99	373.29	401.57	397.07	297.26	294.07
May	416.09	405.68	299.55	374.77	362.04	425.50	410.14	335.81	381.90	340.24	318.14
Jun	431.30	443.83	336.57	324.17	355.21	353.63	360.37	380.60	388.39	226.07	349.51
Total	4980	4853	3632	3903	4163	4234	4243	4136	4268	3794	3815
Avg/Mo	415	404	302.67	325.22	346.92	352.82	353.56	344.68	355.63	316.20	317.93

In 1991-92, before recycling efforts took hold in Decatur, landfill deposits totaled 5,462 tons, or 455.71 tons per month.

sustainability

Stormwater Management

Last year Decatur created a Stormwater Management Engineer position to concentrate on promoting environmental sustainability. The creation of this position allows the Stormwater Utility to focus on stormwater problems, including localized flooding and decaying infrastructure, which in turn promotes infrastructure and environmental sustainability.

The Stormwater division maintains and improves the stormwater infrastructure (catch basin, storm lines, inlets, detention ponds, open channels) and water quality (locating and eliminating sources of pollution, reducing erosion) in the city. This provides a safer environment and increased ease of mobility around the city.

Accomplishments

- Completed Phase 1 of the Bond Issue sidewalk improvement program, which installed more than \$277,000 of improvements, both new and replacement sidewalk and the re-stripping of crosswalks throughout the city.
- Began the citizen response sidewalk repair request program.
- Milled, repaired, and resurfaced Mead Road and the portion of McKoy Street south of W. Hill Street, with assistance from the State LARP program.
- Installed four speed tables on Mead Road, relocating one to the main entrance at Oakhurst Elementary to create a raised crosswalk for improved student crossing safety.
- Received a \$1.65 million grant from FEMA for acquisition and removal of four flood plain properties on Westchester Drive along Peavine Creek Tributary.
- Obtained approval from FEMA for a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) to complete a remapping study of the city's floodplains and created a new floodplain map.
- Secured through purchase and donation three new greenspace properties.

To Do List

- Establish a comprehensive Geographic Information Systems (GIS) operation, contracting with a private service provider to secure access to the most flexible and professional services. Our current GIS capabilities are very limited and are mostly applicable to our engineering activities.
- Continue to support recycling activities by expanding the number and type of materials that can be collected, holding two E-Recycling events, and expanding the residential recycling program to multi-dwelling properties.
- Launch LEED-certified capital projects to rebuild Fire Station #2 and make improvements to Fire Station #1.
- Purchase low-emission or hybrid vehicles whenever possible for use in the city fleet.
- Explore partnership opportunities for using bio-diesel fuels.
- Conduct a city-wide historic resources survey to help identify structures, both residential and commercial, that qualify and contribute to the historic feel of the city. Preserving and retaining existing housing stock supports resource conservation.

Environmental Sustainability Board Created

The new nine-member Environmental Sustainability Board combines the responsibilities of the existing Greenspace Commission and the Waste Management Advisory Board, and fulfills the requirements for the establishment of a Stormwater Management Advisory Board.

This volunteer board will provide recommendations to the City Commission regarding the city's environmental regulations, plans and initiatives. In addition, it will 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.

If you would like to apply to be on the Environmental Sustainability Board, complete a Statement of Interest form, available at www.deaturga.com and send it to the City Manager's Office, P.O. Box 220, Decatur, GA 30031; fax it to 678-553-6518; or scan it and email to info@deaturga.com.



In June, the city published this special report as a supplement to the Decatur Focus. It highlights some of the steps the city has taken to ensure its environmental sustainability, and suggests how residents can make a difference.



Crosswalks in the city all received a fresh coat of paint.

Events Geared to Environmental Sustainability

Car Free Day

Decatur began celebrating Car Free Day in September 2005. Car-Free Day aims to reduce excessive automobile use for one day out of the year, and remind the Decatur community that the automobile is not the only or the best way to make many kinds of trips.

The celebration begins with a commitment to reduce your automobile use. You might ride your bike to work, walk to the store, walk to the celebration on the square, share a ride with friends, neighbors or co-workers, use the bus or ride MARTA.

From noon to 1 p.m. on Car-Free Day, the community is encouraged to gather for the Blue Sky Concert and browse through tables set up by various groups including the PATH Foundation and Clean Air Campaign.



Safe Routes to School

The Metro Atlanta Safe Routes to School program is a three-year pilot project at Clairemont Elementary and Glennwood 4-5 Academy. The project seeks to improve the safety of students who walk and bicycle to and from school. At the same time it seeks to increase the numbers of school community members – students, parents, and school staff – who “walk and roll” to school.

The pilot project was funded originally by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) in association with the Federal Highway Administration, and is administered by the Atlanta Bicycle Campaign.

The results from Decatur and the other four school systems in the pilot are now featured in the Georgia Safe Routes to School Guidebook.

The Decatur program has expanded to include Oakhurst Elementary and Winnona Park Elementary schools. Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, the city's Active Living division has incorporated the management and development of the Decatur Safe Routes to School program into its work program.

Georgia Rides to the Capitol

Georgia Rides to the Capitol began in 2006 as a unique annual bicycling event to raise awareness of alternate transportation. Decatur participated in 2007 and 2008, led by Mayor Bill Floyd and Commissioner Fred Boykin.

Hundreds of cycling enthusiasts met in the parking lot of the East Lake MARTA station to ride the approximately five miles to the State Capitol with a police escort. More than 1,200 cyclists riding from Decatur and Roswell converged on the Capitol to raise awareness for alternate and safe transportation routes throughout Atlanta and surrounding areas. Decatur will continue to participate in this annual event

Community Transportation Plan

In April 2008, the City Commission adopted the Community Transportation Plan after two years of intensive public involvement and innovative technical analysis. The support for funding a comprehensive plan came from residents interested in using alternative transportation and the desire to accommodate growth downtown without increased vehicular traffic.

The plan will serve as the guiding document for improvements to the city's streets for the next 20 years. The streets we use every day shape the character of our community. They are public spaces that



sustainability

can encourage interaction with others and provide safe, pleasant connections between destinations.

The creation and support of a healthy and active community is at the heart of the Decatur Community Transportation Plan. Four guiding principles shaped the recommendations in the plan, including the promotion of Health, Choice, Community, and Connectivity. These principles are illustrated in the plan's vision statement:

To create a safe and efficient transportation system that promotes the health and mobility of Decatur citizens and visitors and provides better access to businesses and neighborhoods.

Decatur's Community Transportation Plan has been recognized as a model that other cities throughout the country are beginning to follow. The plan has established a street typology connecting street design to land use, developed measures for bicycle and pedestrian levels of service, and determined the latent demand for bicycle and pedestrian travel.

Its most unique feature is the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) that identifies and measures potential health impacts, both positive and negative, that may result from a particular policy or project recommended in the plan. The HIA focuses on health impacts related to safety, social connections and physical activity as they are affected by the transportation and land use environment.

Key recommendations to promote positive health outcomes from the Community Transportation Plan include:

- Make traffic safety a priority.
- Make connectivity a priority.
- Design intersections to be ADA-compliant and easy to cross.
- Emphasize the mobility of Decatur's most vulnerable populations.
- Continue to partner with schools to promote childhood physical activity.
- Plan for alternate modes of transportation that accommodate commuters and recreational users.
- Develop a community-wide campaign to promote physical activity.
- Make the Community Transportation Plan just one part of planning efforts towards a healthy Decatur.

The Community Transportation Plan is available online at www.decaturga.com.

By encouraging the use of alternative transportation, we reduce our carbon footprint. CO2 emissions from transportation make up 27 percent of Decatur's emissions, the second largest amount after community energy use.

Decatur Receives FEMA Grant to Purchase Properties for Greenspace

The City of Decatur has received approximately \$1,240,000 in federal grant funds to purchase four properties on Westchester Drive that are located seven feet below base flood elevation and have been flooded many times. The houses on the properties will be demolished and the land will be left as open greenspace.

The grant was awarded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA invested more than \$3,240,000 in projects to reduce residential flooding in Decatur, Savannah, DeKalb County and Douglas County. Decatur's grant was the largest of the four awarded.



TRAFFIC REDUCTION

Traffic counts indicate that Decatur's Smart Growth strategy to develop higher-density mixed-use residential projects downtown – together with streetscape improvements and efforts to encourage walking and other transportation options – is paying off with reduced vehicular traffic counts. These lower counts can be attributed to:

- Replacement of large employer tenants with smaller service businesses in downtown office buildings.
- Development of mixed-use residential projects that generate less traffic than more conventional office and retail developments.
- Introduction of the CCTMA (Clifton Corridor Transportation Management Association) Cliff shuttle that has reduced automobile traffic between the Emory University area and the downtown district.
- Relocation of DeKalb's high-volume tag and title office and tax office outside the Decatur city limits.
- Investment in streetscape improvements that have increased walking trips to downtown retailers and restaurants during midday.

SAMPLE COUNTS	2001 volume	2006 volume	Reduction
Church Street at Ponce de Leon Avenue	13,250	10,630	-20%
Clairemont Avenue at Garden Lane	19,879	15,900	-20%
Commerce Drive at Church Street	11,460	10,460	-8%

Clifton Corridor Transportation Management Authority: The Cliff Bus

Average monthly ridership of the Cliff bus, which services Decatur and the Emory University campus, is 16,626, or about 787 riders per day. That represents 390 fewer cars on the road in the morning, and 390 fewer cars on the road in the evening. Ridership to South DeKalb averages 264 per day, reducing morning and evening rush hour traffic by 132 cars each.



Citizen Survey

The city conducted a citizen survey in March and April 2008 to gauge citizens' satisfaction with community and local government services.

This was the city's second citizen survey. The full report on both the 2006 and 2008 results is available online at www.decaturga.com.

Decatur contracted with the National Research Center, Inc., to conduct a survey via mail of 1,200 randomly selected residential addresses in the 30030 zip code. In 2006 we had a response rate of 41 percent and in 2008 the response rate was 40 percent.

Key findings and comparisons are featured here and throughout this annual report.

CITIZEN SURVEY: ENVIRONMENTAL

Recycled used paper, cans, or bottles from your home in the last 12 months

2006	80% at least once
2008	89% at least once

CITIZEN SURVEY: COMMUNITY

Sense of community

2006	78% rated excellent/good
2008	90% rated excellent/good

Openness and acceptance of the community towards people of diverse backgrounds

2006	78% rated excellent/good
2008	87% rated excellent/good

Decatur as a place to raise children

2006	70% rated excellent/good
2008	93% rated excellent/good

Feeling of safety in your neighborhood during the day

2006	97% "very" or "somewhat" safe
2008	96% "very" or "somewhat" safe

In the last 12 months, have you attended one to two public meetings?

2006	63% had attended
2008	24% had attended

CITIZEN SURVEY: ORGANIZATIONAL/ INSTITUTIONAL

Recreational opportunities

2006	61% rated excellent/good
2008	79% rated excellent/good

Quality of recreation programs or classes

2006	42% rated excellent/good
2008	87% rated excellent/good

How do you rate the quality of the following service: Recreation Center/facilities?

2006	38% rated excellent/good
2008	77% rated excellent/good

In the last 12 months, have you visited a Decatur park?

2006	82% visited a Decatur park
2008	86% visited a Decatur park

Street cleaning

2006	49% rated excellent/good
2008	71% rated excellent/good

Quality of garbage collection service

2006	85% rated excellent/good
2008	90% rated excellent/good

Quality of sidewalk maintenance service

2006:	42% rated excellent/good
2008:	59% rated excellent/good

Quality of storm drainage service

2006	33% rated excellent/good
2008	61% rated excellent/good

Quality of police services

2006	84% rated excellent/good
2008	92% rated excellent/good

Quality of fire services

2006	93% rated excellent/good
2008	97% rated excellent/good

Regularly Scheduled City Meetings

Decatur City Commission

First and third Monday each month – 7:30 p.m.

Decatur Board of Education

Second Tuesday each month – 7:30 p.m.

Decatur Downtown Development Authority

Second Friday each month – 8 a.m.

Historic Preservation Commission

Second Tuesday each month – 6:30 p.m.

Decatur Housing Authority

First Wednesday each month – 4:30 p.m.

Planning Commission

Thursday after first Monday – 7:30 p.m.

Zoning Board of Appeals

Second Monday each month – 7:30 p.m.

Environmental Sustainability and Active Living Boards are being formed now. See pages 8 and 13 for details.

Telephone

City of Decatur Departments

Administrative Services	404-370-4100
City Manager.....	404-370-4102
Community and Economic Development.....	404-371-8386
Planning, Zoning and Inspections.....	404-370-4104
Engineering.....	404-377-6198
Fire and Rescue (non-emergency).....	404-373-5092
Mayor/Commissioners	404-370-4102
Police (non-emergency)	404-377-7911
Active Living	404-377-0494
Public Works.....	404-377-5571
Children and Youth Services	404-378-1082

Email

Contact City of Decatur staff using this protocol: firstname.lastname@decaturga.com

WWW.DECATURGA.COM