



City of Decatur

Parks and Recreation Master Plan

2022

FINAL REPORT
MARCH 2023



Recreatur

PLAY. GREEN. DECATUR.

R-23-06

**A RESOLUTION
ADOPTING
THE DECATUR PARKS AND
RECREATION MASTER PLAN**

WHEREAS, the 2021 Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) for the City of Decatur, also known as the City of Decatur Strategic Plan, *Destination: 2030*, identified the need for a greenspace and recreation facilities master plan; and,

WHEREAS, the 2021 CDP serves as a comprehensive long-term guide to growth and development for the entire City of Decatur; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Decatur desires an equitable, sustainable, and interconnected citywide parks system that provides quality experiences to promote healthy living; and,

WHEREAS, government agencies, institutions, community organizations, residents, businesses and property owners were engaged in a one-year planning process with the City of Decatur and the consultant team led by Perez Planning that identified the need to deliver parks and programs that meet the City's changing recreation needs and development patterns; and,

WHEREAS, a draft of the "Recreatur" Parks and Recreation Master Plan was released for public review on February 7, 2023; and,

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan envisions a citywide parks system that enhances lives across communities through equity, sustainability, and connectivity that delivers new recreational experiences and parks where they are needed most; and,

WHEREAS, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan contains findings and recommendations for an implementation strategy as to future actions which aid public policymaking, such as future land use and zoning, and funding sources; and,

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2023, the City of Decatur Planning Commission considered the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and voted unanimously to recommend approval of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the Decatur City Commission finds that the "Recreatur" Parks and Recreation Master Plan furthers the purposes of promoting the health, safety, morals, conveniences, order, prosperity, aesthetics and general welfare of the present and future citizens of the City of Decatur.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Commission of the City of Decatur, Georgia and by the authority of the same, the City Commission does hereby resolve the following:

Section 1: The “Recreatur” Parks and Recreation Master Plan, attached hereto as Exhibit “A,” is hereby adopted as a non-binding guide to future growth and development. Any policy change, if any, based on the recommendations must be enacted by the City Commission through separate legislation.

Section 2: The 2021 Comprehensive Development Plan is hereby amended to incorporate, by reference, the “Recreatur” Parks and Recreation Master Plan attached hereto as Exhibit “A,” as a community plan.

ADOPTED this 20th day of March, 2023.



FOR THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY
OF DECATUR

Patricia M. Savetti

MAYOR

ATTEST:

Meredith Rose

City Clerk

Acknowledgments

CITY LEADERS

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Mayor Pro Tem, At-Large Commissioner

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CONSULTANT TEAM

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SHARE THESE
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City of Decatur
William F. Floyd
Gymnasium
THE "BILL"

HOME
GUEST
BONUS

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Chapter 0

INTRODUCING

RECREATUR



Plan Purpose

Recreatur will provide the City of Decatur with a vision for improving and expanding the city's parks and recreation system for the next ten years and beyond. The plan is the product of a thorough analysis of the city's parks and recreation system and its context within the city, including the department's structure and resources, all facilities and programs, a robust community input process, and industry best practices.

Recreatur - the City of Decatur Parks and Recreation Master Plan - offers a unique opportunity for the city to:

- Expand recreational facilities,
- Protect additional greenspace, and
- Consider community needs through its programming.

Recreatur will also explore opportunities to collaborate with community organizations to respond to as many of the community's goals as possible. Additionally, the city intends to utilize this Parks and Recreation Master Plan for:

- Economic development and redevelopment,
- Land acquisition criteria,
- Greenspace conservation,
- Enhancement of quality of life, and
- Additional priorities as identified within the city's adopted plans.

Lastly, Recreatur will assist the Decatur Parks and Recreation Department achieve accreditation through the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Commission for Accreditation for Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA).

CAPRA provides quality assurance and quality improvement of accredited park and recreation agencies throughout the United States by providing agencies with a management system of best practices. Less than 1% of park agencies across the country have obtained CAPRA accreditation. It is the only national accreditation of park and recreation agencies and is a valuable measure of an agency's overall quality of operation, management, and service to the community. Achieving CAPRA accreditation is the best way to demonstrate that the agency is providing the community with the highest level of service.

BACKGROUND

The City of Decatur has a well-earned reputation for a high quality of life, highlighted by its long-term unofficial slogan “Decatur—Where it’s Greater!” To this end, city leadership has worked hard to maintain a small-town feel centered on a historic downtown surrounded by neighborhoods with tree-lined streets, quaint business districts, high-quality schools, and great parks and recreation facilities.

City Overview

The City of Decatur is located six miles east of downtown Atlanta, the two cities connected primarily by Ponce de Leon Avenue and MARTA’s east rail line.

Long before the “10-minute neighborhood” was a popular buzzword for successful urban development, Decatur residents and leaders worked to build a community where every resident could easily access schools, jobs, shopping, restaurants, and parks, within a short trip from their home.

Decatur was founded in 1823, over a decade before Atlanta. The city serves as the seat of DeKalb County, and numerous government offices are centered around downtown’s Historic Courthouse, completed in 1918. The city is home to Agnes Scott College, and Columbia Theological Seminary, with Decatur High School serving as the city’s sole high school. Additionally, Emory University and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are both roughly two miles to the city’s northwest and serve as major job centers for the area.



Planning for Growth

Like much of the Atlanta metropolitan area, Decatur has seen population growth over the last 20 years, with a rapidly rising growth rate in the last five years. Recognizing these trends, over the last ten years, numerous planning efforts have set a course for managing the city's growth and adapting to the demographic and economic changes affecting the city. However, the ongoing growth has already brought about challenges, including rising housing costs, the resulting displacement of lower income residents, and an increasingly limited supply of available land for development.

The low supply of available land was an issue identified in the city's last Athletic Facility Master Plan (2002), which suggested creative partnerships to help adequately meet the

needs of a growing population already facing shortages of open space and facilities, and accompanying challenges for programs due to lack of available facilities. Because of a growing population with a diverse set of interests and the need to continue to deliver the highest level of service, there is considerable community interest in the future of the city's parks and recreation.

Recreation and Parks for the Future

The 2002 Plan led to numerous improvements in Decatur's recreation facilities. However, after serving as a guide for 20 years, the recreation and parks system is due for a new vision for improving and expanding the system for the next ten years and beyond. Recreatur will establish that vision!



Planning Process

Recreatur follows a four-step strategic planning process, rooted in data and designed for adaptation and flexibility. Each phase of the process builds on the findings and conclusions from the previous phases.

**1**

CHAPTER 1 - Context Analysis examines the existing conditions of both the city and the parks and recreation system within Decatur's existing challenges, opportunities, and vision. This focus includes a review of previously completed plans, Decatur's existing and projected demographics, the state of the department, recreation programs, and parks and recreation facilities.

**2**

CHAPTER 2 - Needs and Priorities Assessment identifies the gaps between the existing and desired conditions of the parks and recreation system. The process is based on a proven "triangulated" approach to identifying needs and priorities. It includes various anecdotal, qualitative, and quantitative methods to determine top priorities from different perspectives.

**3**

CHAPTER 3 - Recreatur Vision outlines a vision for the plan based on:

1. Findings from the first two phases of the process;
2. Best planning practices and principles; and
3. The unique desires and aspirations of the community.

The vision includes a description of the parks and recreation "subsystems", service-delivery models, classifications, and level-of-service metrics. The Long Range Vision also includes an estimate of costs to construct and maintain and sustain the existing system, and construct and maintain the capital improvements and programs identified in the vision.

**4**

CHAPTER 4 - Implementing Recreatur includes a summary of revenue projections, and a phasing/funding plan to implement top priorities based on available and projected funding. The Implementation Strategy also discusses the proposed role of the City, private communities, developers, and other partners in realizing the long-range vision.

Process Overview



Chapter 1

Context

Analysis



Context Introduction

Parks and recreation systems occupy a unique and powerful space between the physical framework of a place and its people. Besides road rights-of-way, parks and recreation facilities are commonly a dominant proportion of a jurisdiction's publicly owned land. In many cases, they are the public places citizens interact with most directly.

Parks provide a critical opportunity to strengthen the fabric of a community, weaving together the social and cultural landscape with the built and natural environment. In a dynamic community like Decatur, understanding the nuances of context is extremely valuable to contributing to the overall success of the plan and its impact within the city.

The complete context for Recreatur is understood through the review and analysis of the following three context elements:



DECATUR'S PLANNED CONTEXT

The plans, initiatives, and projects previously completed for Decatur.



DECATUR'S DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

The characteristics of the existing and projected population of Decatur.



DECATUR'S PARKS SYSTEM CONTEXT

The organization, programmatic, and physical condition of Decatur's existing parks and recreation system.

Decatur's Planned Context

This section provides an overview of Decatur's planned context – plans previously completed for the city - and identifies specific elements that Recreatur should incorporate to begin implementing, and others in progress to continue moving forward.

Plans reviewed:

- Decatur, Georgia Citywide Comprehensive Athletic Facility Master Plan (2002)
- Destination 2030 (2020)
- DECATUR PATH – Connectivity and Implementation Plan (Dec. 2016)
- Decatur Legacy Park Master Plan (2019)
- Decatur Grows Greener – Decatur Environmental Sustainability Plan (2012)
- Decatur Storm Water Master Plan Volume 1: Report (2020)
- The Better Together Community Action Plan for Equity, Inclusion, and Engagement (2015)



Decatur, Georgia Citywide Comprehensive Athletic Facility Master Plan (2002)

Overview:

This is the last Master Plan completed for Decatur Parks and Recreation, which has been guiding the department for the past 20 years. It was a collaborative effort with seven primary partners:

- City of Decatur
- City Schools of Decatur
- Decatur-DeKalb YMCA
- Samuel L Jones Boys and Girls Club
- Columbia Theological Seminary
- United Methodist Children’s Home
- Agnes Scott College

The City of Decatur, UMCH, and Samuel L Jones Boys and Girls Club were identified as holding needed land, while the other organizations were identified as having recreational needs that require land.

Themes / Analysis:

The lack of space for high school and college athletics programs, the overuse of certain facilities, and the need to offer expanded programs and construct new facilities were major themes.

Recommendations / Vision:

Based on the plan’s public input, research, and analysis \$17.7 million worth of recommendations were proposed. Figure 1.2a below identifies the progress of these recommendations.

Figure 1.2a
Progress of Recommendations from Citywide Comprehensive Athletic Facility Master Plan (2002)

PRIMARY CONCEPTS						
Facility	Location	Description	Complete	Progress	Include in Recreatur	Notes
Softball Field(s)	Oakhurst Park	Dedicated softball facility located at Oakhurst Park for use by Decatur High School, Agnes Scott College and the Recreation Department	Built 2008			2 dedicated ballfields, storage building, bleachers, scoreboard, lights. Draft MOU with CSD to help fund field maintenance, ASC as well. ASC Jan-May, DHS July-Oct
Baseball Field	McKoy Park	Dedicated baseball facility located at McKoy Park for use by Decatur High School and the Recreation Department	Major improvements			New lights, scoreboards. MOU in progress. HS Jan-May, Softball leagues May-Aug
Aquatics (Outdoor)	McKoy Park	Replacing McKoy Park pool with interactive water feature	New pool built 2009			Pool and bathhouse renovated, new pool design.

Figure 1.2a (Continued)

Progress of Recommendations from Citywide Comprehensive Athletic Facility Master Plan (2002)

PRIMARY CONCEPTS						
Facility	Location	Description	Complete	Progress	Include in Recreatur	Notes
Multiple	Legacy Park (UMCH)	New community park complex located on the property of the United Methodist Children’s Home -- facilities to include little league baseball fields, passive nature trails and picnic pavilions	Property purchased 2017	Planning stage (Master plan completed in 2018)	All elements	Track and Field facility; XC trail is in use by DHS. Hosted region meets 2020, 2021. Convos with ASC for XC use. Maintenance is ongoing discussion. Funding through CDBG for inclusive playground, construction underway early 2023. CIP funding secure for Sand volleyball.
Aquatics (Indoor)	Samuel L Jones Boys & Girls Club	Shared use of the indoor pool at the Samuel L. Jones Boys and Girls Club by the Decatur High School swim team and the Recreation Department	Purchased			City now operates. DHS uses for swim team
Track	Agnes Scott College	Shared use of the track facility at Agnes Scott College by college, high school and public users		Stalled		Nothing ever materialized. No promise about track at Legacy Park
Aquatics (Indoor)	YMCA	Shared use of the indoor pool at the YMCA by members and senior therapeutic swim patrons		Stalled		No formal agreement ever materialized. DHA agreement with Dynamo Swim Club for HS students. No partnership for Senior Therapeutic
Skate Park	McKoy Park	Development of a new skate park at McKoy Park, in location of existing, underutilized tennis courts	Built 2003			Funding secured for total remodel (\$200k donor). In progress FY 22-23.

Figure 1.2a (Continued)

Progress of Recommendations from Citywide Comprehensive Athletic Facility Master Plan (2002)

PRIMARY CONCEPTS						
Facility	Location	Description	Complete	Progress	Include in Recreatur	Notes
Soccer Field	Ebster Park	Shared use of the existing soccer field at Ebster Park by Decatur High School, Renfro Middle School, YMCA and the Recreation Department	Verbal agreements ongoing			Stormwater vault under field constructed 2015. CIP Funding secured for synthetic turf, lighting. Spring 2023. Coordination with Athletics staff for CSD. MOU needed.
Recreation Center	Decatur Rec Center	Improvements to the Decatur Recreation Center to include expanded programming, office and fitness/wellness space	Total renovation 2013			Located in Historic District. Building gutted, and materials repurposed.
Aquatics (Outdoor)	Glenlake Park	Reconstruction of a new pool at Glenlake Park	Completed 2009			Whole park renovated 2009, new trails, driveway, lights, pavilions, dog park. New pool house. Playground added 2003. Potential to improve gravel parking lot by dog park.
Sidewalks	Citywide	Citywide sidewalk construction and improvements	Ongoing			Sidewalk improvements needed within parks. City doing shaving and improvements along SRTS.
Recreation Rooms	Elementary Schools	Multi-purpose room additions at each elementary school	Agreements ongoing			2 new schools constructed. Talley has gym. 4/5 Academy has multipurpose space
Dog Parks	Adair/Oakhurst/Glenlake	Dog Parks at Adair, Oakhurst and Glenlake Parks	Built 1999			Ongoing erosion issues @ Adair, Glenlake. Volunteer group at Oakhurst

Figure 1.2a (Continued)

Progress of Recommendations from Citywide Comprehensive Athletic Facility Master Plan (2002)

ALTERNATE CONCEPTS						
Facility	Location	Description	Complete	Progress	Include in Recreatur	Notes
Recreation Center	Samuel L Jones Boys and Girls Club	Purchasing the Samuel L. Jones Boys and Girls Club and operating it as a community recreation center	Complete			City maintained fields for years. Pool mgmt began 2017
Recreation Center/ Aquatics (Indoor)	Decatur Recreation Center	Completing a large addition on the existing Decatur Recreation Center inclusive of an indoor competition pool and fitness/wellness activity areas	Canceled			

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS						
Facility	Location	Description	Complete	Progress	Include in Recreatur	Notes
Maintenance	Citywide	The initiation of a park maintenance crew to handle general upkeep of park facilities	In progress			Parks maintenance still handled by Public Works. New Facilities Maintenance Operations Manager position starting 2023. Goal to build Parks and Rec team
Maintenance	Athletic Fields	The establishment of a turf maintenance contract to handle all athletic field maintenance thereby guaranteeing a consistent level on all athletic fields throughout the community	Completed			Completed for shared use softball/ baseball fields. Ebster, McKoy, Glenlake, Oakhurst
Branding	Citywide	The development of park amenity and sign standard program to create a consistent look and identity for all parks in Decatur	In progress, initiated 2018		Yes	Replaced most old entry signs starting 2018. Need more wayfinding signs

Figure 1.2a (Continued)

Progress of Recommendations from Citywide Comprehensive Athletic Facility Master Plan (2002)

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS						
Facility	Location	Description	Complete	Progress	Include in Recreator	Notes
Funding/ Management	Citywide	The initiation of a capital replacement program to allocate funding for the regular replacement of park elements such as playgrounds, picnic tables, benches, pavilions and other common park features when they have exceeded their expected life cycle	In progress	Completed in 2018	Yes	Playground replacement fund in place \$25k annually. Looking to rubberize surfaces, specifically areas with drainage issues. New Facilities Manager will assist with oversight and inventory. Current issues are addressed through See, Click, Fix and staff review.
Management	Citywide	The initiation of a park adoption program that allows residents who live adjacent to parks to get involved in the security, beautification and improvements of their neighborhood parks	No progress		Yes	Discussions with Park Pride pre-pandemic. Stalled due to COVID. Good to restart. Volunteer work days previously, stopped with pandemic. Eagle Scout projects (new benches, etc.)

Relevance to Recreator:

While much progress has been made on the recommendations proposed in the Citywide Comprehensive Athletic Facility Master Plan, others remain to be completed, were canceled, or stalled. Recreator will explore the continued need for these recommendations and update them based on findings from the process.

Destination 2030 (2020)

Overview:

Destination 2030 was designed to combine three of Decatur's primary planning documents: the Strategic Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and the Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) into one planning document that meets the objectives of all three plans.

Themes / Analysis:

A primary theme of the plan is the connections—between the three traditional citywide plans, between the goals of the Mission Statements and between the policies that form the basis for the action items.

It presents a Vision statement, 5 Mission Statements, and 6 policy areas.

It also includes a Future Land Use Map, which directly addresses recent greenspace acquisitions.

Recommendations / Vision:

Equity and Racial Justice

- EQ.02 Diversify events and festivals.
- EQ.03 Proactively hire diverse staff.
- EQ.05 Create minority participation requirements for City contracts.
- EQ.17 Make public spaces more welcoming.
- EQ.18 Acknowledge and document Decatur's entire history.

Climate Action

- CA.05 Convert all City lighting to LEDs.
- CA.11 Educate the community on true sustainability.
- CA.12 Continue education about water quality.
- CA.15 Recover discarded resources appropriately.
- CA.18 Reduce single-use materials.
- CA.19 Expand sustainable and edible landscapes.

- CA.22 Increase the tree canopy goal.
- CA.25 Continue to push the envelope on City facilities.
- CA.28 Update the Community Forestry Management Plan
- CA.29 Prepare a Greenspace and Recreation Facilities Master Plan
- CA.31 Remove all creeks from the list of impaired waters.
- CA.32 Promote green stormwater infrastructure first.

Civic Trust

- CT.06 Draw on the expertise of advisory boards.
- CT.07 Continue to involve youth in decision making.
- CT.15 Expand community information kiosks.
- CT.18 Support and innovative and creative City work environment.
- CT.19 Recruit and retain the best employees possible.

Affordable Housing

(None directly related to Parks and Recreation)

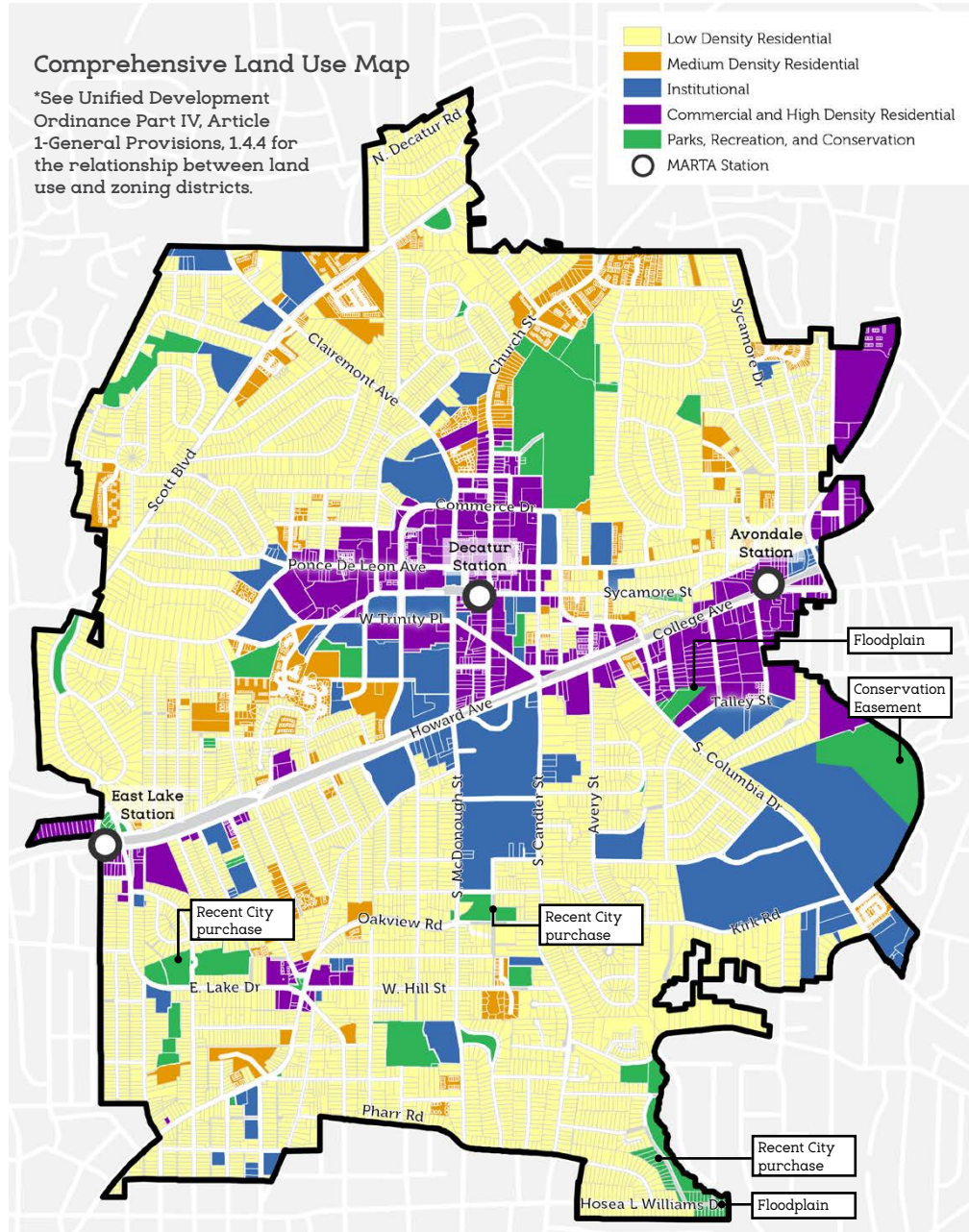
Mobility

- MB.02 Plan for the "10-minute neighborhood."
- MB.05 Promote Connectivity.
- MB.06 Explore the redesign of streets.
- MB.15 Install more wayfinding signs focused on walking and biking.
- MB.17 Expand pedestrian amenities.
- MB.20 Encourage more bike parking.

Economic Growth

- EG.11 Replicate successful public spaces.
- EG.14 Follow human-centered design techniques.
- EG.15 Fill in the gaps.

Figure 1.2b
Destination 2030 Future Land Use Map



Relevance to Recreatur:

The policies noted all have direct implications for parks and recreation operations. Recreatur has the potential to advance these policies or inform similar recommendations that could be incorporated into this master plan. It will be important to consider these during the Long-Range Vision and Implementation phases of the project.

DECATUR PATH – Connectivity and Implementation Plan (Dec. 2016)

Overview:

The Decatur PATH plan identifies 9.2 miles of bicycle and pedestrian trail connectivity opportunities primarily within the city limits of Decatur. A steering committee, organized by the city and community leaders, offered guidance along with the public during the four-month planning process. The plan presented achieves the goals of connecting the downtown business district, city parks, neighborhoods, and major visitor and employment centers identified in the initial planning meetings.

Themes / Analysis:

The plan establishes that the City of Decatur has “already established a fairly friendly environment for those wishing to travel around the city on foot or by bicycle.”

Additionally, the plan involved analysis of current and future planning and development efforts, feedback from the public, and GIS mapping to address the following criteria:

- Is the trail route feasible for construction?
- Is the trail route appealing to all users?
- Is the trail route perceived as safe?
- Is the trail route connecting desirable destinations?

Recommendations / Vision:

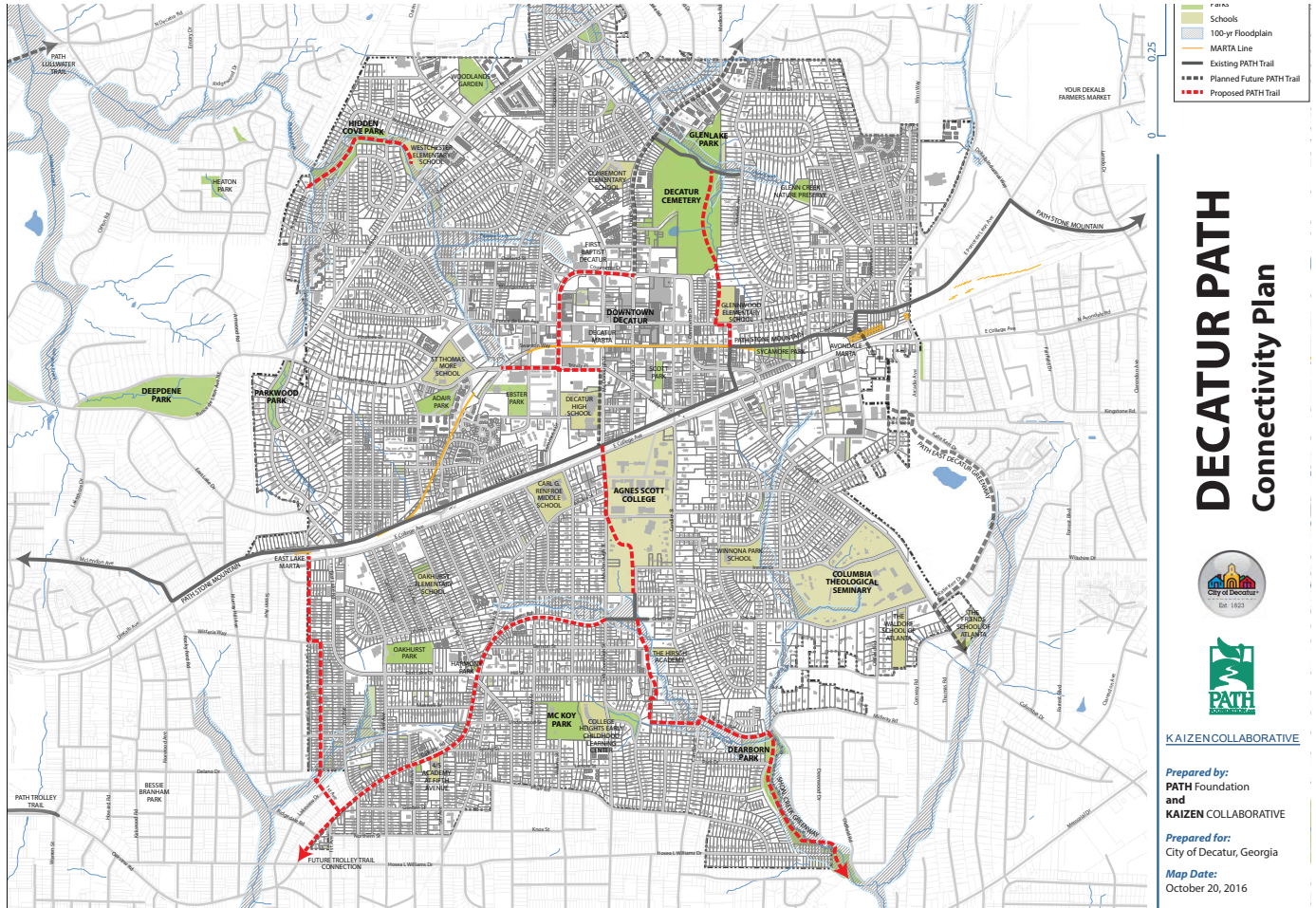
This plan suggests additional improvements to the public rights-of-way that will further enhance the safety and enjoyment of moving about Decatur as a pedestrian or cyclist. Giving cyclists their own facility where possible, will encourage a much larger constituency for biking while creating buffers between sidewalks and traffic. Reconfiguring certain streets to become ‘neighborhood greenways’ will provide the same benefits plus increase property values and promote neighborhood vitality.

The Implementation Strategy proposes 12 specific projects, with an estimated total cost of \$11,693,820.

Figure 1.2c
Glenlake Park Trail Spur Existing and Proposed Images



Figure 1.2d
Decatur PATH Plan Vision



Relevance to Recreatur:

The proposed projects enhance bicycle and pedestrian connectivity throughout the City of Decatur, including to parks and recreation facilities.

Recreatur should explore if there are any additional needs and provide recommendations associated with bicycle and pedestrian connectivity to parks and recreation facilities.

Decatur Legacy Park Master Plan (2019)

Overview:

This plan is a vision for a 77-acre site acquired by the City of Decatur in 2017. It is a historic property, the former site of the United Methodist Children's Home. At the time of the planning process, the site is expected to be annexed into the City of Decatur and zoned Institutional.

Recommendations / Vision:

The proposed concept creates two new housing villages, as well as space for small offices, in addition to a variety of recreation amenities, including a competition track.

Additionally, the concept proposes the realignment of the existing intersection of Katie Kerr Dr. and South Columbia Dr., as well as the creation of 146 total parking spots.

Figure 1.2f
United Methodist Children's Home Site



Relevance to Recreatur:

Recreatur should consider the facilities and amenities proposed in Legacy Park in relation to parks and recreation needs and priorities identified through the Needs and Priorities Assessment phase of the project.

Additionally, based on the findings from the Needs and Priorities Assessment phase, Recreatur should provide recommendations related to the use of the two buildings in Legacy Park currently operated by the Active Living and Children and Youth Services Divisions.

Figure 1.2g
Legacy Park Master Plan



Decatur Grows Greener – Decatur Environmental Sustainability Plan (2012)

Overview:

This plan outlines goals and strategies that Decatur should take to deepen the City's commitment to serving as good stewards of the environment and community resources. It provides guidance for current and future decision makers, City employees, committee members, residents, businesses, and organizations. It is recognized that this plan will evolve with advancements in science and technology as well as community interest and that over time, new methods might become viable alternatives to reaching the same goals.

Themes / Analysis:

The Sustainability Assessment documented the City's accomplishments and ongoing efforts across the following areas:

- *Development*
- *Air*
- *Transportation*
- *Water*
- *Soils/Greenspace*
- *Solid Waste Collection*

Additionally, performance metrics were provided for the seven focus areas.

Recommendations / Vision:

The recommendations are divided into the 7 focus areas and 12 goals. The following items are included for their implications to Parks and Recreation.

Government Management Practices

GOAL 1: Promote sustainable practices within local government operations to reduce the overall environmental impact of facilities, fleet, programs and practices.

- **TASK A** Measure sustainability performance on a regular basis and communicate the

results to the staff and community.

- **TASK B** Educate, empower and engage employees in the City's sustainability commitment.
- **TASK C** Ensure that existing city facilities are operated in a manner which enhances sustainability.
- **TASK D** Ensure that city building projects implement strategies that enhance sustainability.
- **TASK E** Apply environmentally preferable purchasing procedures to all city operations.
- **TASK F** Continue to encourage waste reduction and recycling strategies in all city facilities and operations.
- **TASK G** Reduce energy consumption by city fleet vehicles and employees.
- **TASK H** Ensure compliance with the Sustainable Landscape Procedures.

Food & Agriculture

GOAL 2: Promote healthy food options within a sustainable food system.

- **TASK B** Support the expansion of urban gardening opportunities.
- **TASK E** Encourage regular local farmers markets, and support expansion of existing ones.

Natural Systems

GOAL 3: Maintain healthy ecosystems and outdoor recreational opportunities.

- **TASK A** Remove local streams from the state list of impaired waters.
- **TASK B** Restore in-stream flows (overland and in-stream) to mimic pre-development

flows more closely and to the extent practical.

- **TASK C** Maintain or reduce city dependence on water and wastewater systems, within limits of public health needs.
- **TASK E** Protect and enhance the city's tree canopy.
- **TASK F** Promote native and drought-tolerant landscaping.
- **TASK G** Improve and increase public access to greenspace.

Buildings and Energy

GOAL 4: Increase the energy efficiency of new and existing buildings.

- **TASK D** Use and promote widespread energy efficiency and water conservation retrofits.
- **TASK E** Encourage preservation of historic

buildings as identified in the Decatur historic resources survey.

Transportation

GOAL 6: Increase the opportunity for using alternative transportation.

- **TASK A** Increase the mode share for energy-efficient transportation.

GOAL 7: Reduce the environmental impact of current transportation systems.

- **TASK A** Support the installation of alternative fuel source stations in public or semi-public places.

Relevance to Recreatur:

Recreatur has the potential to provide recommendations that advance many of the Decatur Environmental Sustainability Plan's goals and tasks. It will be important to consider these during the Long-Range Vision and Implementation phases of the project.



Decatur Storm Water Master Plan Volume 1: Report (2020)

Overview:

The Storm Water Master Plan (SWMP) addresses the City's future management of storm water. This plan is focused on improving how the city manages its storm water to address and prevent flooding and improve water quality in the city's streams. This plan evaluates storm water concerns across the city and prioritizes solutions to address these concerns. The major goals of this plan are to improve storm water management in Decatur's neighborhoods, public spaces, and rights-of-way, to mitigate environmental impacts from urban runoff, and to improve the water quality in the city's watersheds.

Themes / Analysis:

The plan includes:

- An analysis of the city's existing storm water infrastructure (including community input on problem areas and needs),
- Recommendations to improve storm water management, and
- A prioritized list of recommended storm water infrastructure improvements.

Progress since 2004 SWMP

The city has successfully constructed four of the six Category 1 (top priority) projects identified in the 2004 SWMP. Twelve other projects recommended in the 2004 SWMP, but not prioritized as Category 1 improvements, have also been completed. Additional storm water improvements have been completed across the city including Lockwood Terrace, Howard Avenue, Kings Highway, North McDonough Street, and the Ebster storm water detention vault.

Storm Water Utility

The city's Storm Water Utility collected \$1.2 million in 2018. The 2004 SWMP recommended \$27

million in storm water project improvements across the city, which equated to \$1.4 million in annual capital expenses over a 20-year implementation period for the master plan (without adjusting for inflation).

Hydrologic Stormwater Modeling

The plan includes an extensive series of computer models to understand storm water conditions during "Critical Storms" and "25-year Storms."

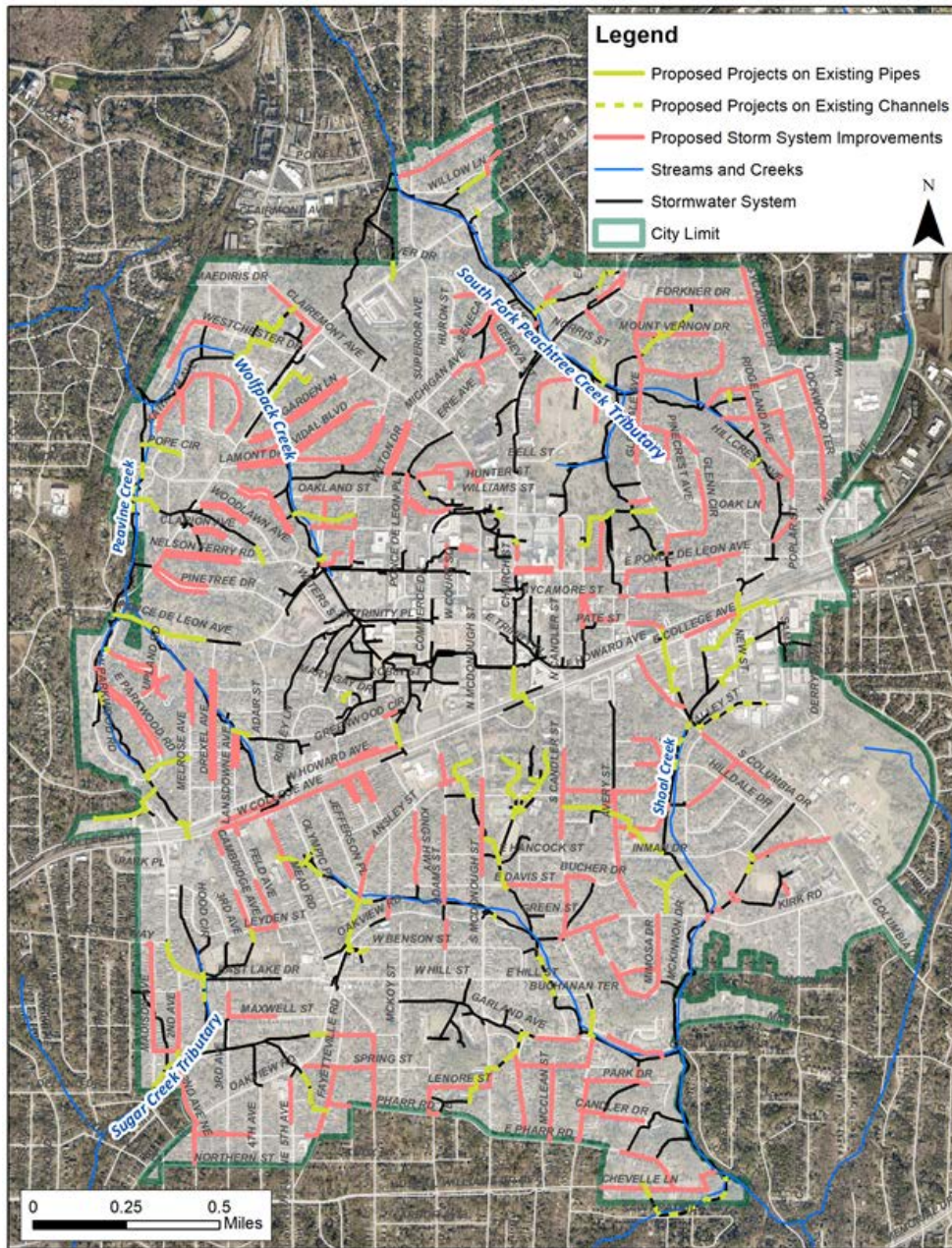
Recommendations / Vision:

The recommendations are divided into Policy and Stormwater Utility. The following items have direct implications for Parks and Recreation.

Policy Recommendations

- The city should consider environmental sensitivity with new development including the use of low impact development and green infrastructure techniques, stream buffer protections, and tree conservation where possible.
- Regional storm water management and improvements should be incorporated into the City's targeted development plans (Avondale MARTA, East Lake MARTA, Legacy Park) as these projects are conceptualized.
- The city should encourage green infrastructure solutions where viable on new development and redevelopment sites.
- The city should continue to pursue flood prone home acquisition projects with FEMA hazard mitigation grants to transform high hazard areas to protected greenspace.
- The city should continue to pursue grants to support green infrastructure installations, water quality improvements, buffer protection and enhancement, open space acquisition, stream restoration and daylighting (where feasible), and other environmental enhancement projects.

Figure 1.2h
Storm Water Master Plan Potential Projects



Relevance to Recreatur:

Parks and greenspaces are integral to addressing stormwater quality and quantity. Recreatur has the potential to help advance many of the Storm Water Management Plan’s recommendations. As much as possible, parks and recreation needs and recommendation identified through Recreatur will seek to leverage stormwater needs and recommendations to achieve multiple benefits and stretch tax payer dollars.

The Better Together Community Action Plan for Equity, Inclusion, and Engagement (2015)

Overview:

Based on recommendations from the 2000 and 2010 Strategic Plans, city leaders created a Better Together Leadership Circle in 2014. This group convened the community to create this collaborative plan which seeks to provide a framework to make the City of Decatur more welcoming to people from all backgrounds and walks of life.

Themes / Analysis:

The Leadership Circle was concerned with several trends and events related to diversity and community engagement:

- Decatur's population has grown and changed dramatically over a short period of time, becoming significantly less racially and economically diverse.
- A surge in housing values is making the city increasingly unaffordable for older residents, young people and low and middle-income families.
- Community policing has moved to the forefront as several Decatur residents have reported being targets of racial profiling in their neighborhoods.
- The city recently completed its annexation plan. If the plan is approved, the City will be welcoming new neighbors — many of them more diverse than the current population.
- In 2014, the City Commission adopted the Compassionate Cities Charter expressing a commitment to being a compassionate community. This was a significant commitment for a community located in one of the most diverse counties in the country.

Recommendations / Vision:

Six focus areas emerged during the planning process:

1. Support community participation and engagement among all members of the city's population.
2. Prioritize racially-just community policing by improving relationships between community members and law enforcement and ensuring all community members are treated in a just way with equity and respect.
3. Ensure the availability of diverse and affordable housing in order to prevent the displacement of existing residents and provide for a variety of housing types and prices.



4. Cultivate a welcoming and inclusive retail environment for serving a diverse clientele.
5. Maximize the use of public spaces for the enrichment and well-being of all Decatur residents, workers, and visitors.
6. Facilitate low-cost transportation options for people of all ages and abilities.

Sixty Action Items were included in the plan, structured in three categories—Individuals, Organizations, and Local Government—and intended to be developed over a three-year time frame.

The following Action Items are noted for their relevance to Parks and Recreation:

Focus Area 5:

1. Provide signage to direct downtown visitors to public restrooms.
2. Consider installing more seating downtown and other neighborhood commercial centers,

possibly in conjunction with public art installations.

3. As the county seat for one of the nation’s most culturally diverse counties, consider utilizing public spaces to honor cultures past, present, and future through art and signage.

Relevance to Recreatur:

Recreatur has the potential to help address most of the focus areas that emerged during the planning process. The three Action Items noted range from specific (1.) to general recommendations (2. and 3.) that Recreatur can help implement. It will be important to consider the focus areas and specific and general recommendations of the Better Together Community Action Plan for Equity, Inclusion, and Engagement during the Long-Range Vision and Implementation phases of the project.



Make East Lake MARTA Yours – 2017 Livable Centers Initiative (2018)

Overview:

The Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) is a grant program funded by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), with the goal of empowering local jurisdictions to “re-envision their communities as vibrant, walkable places that offer increased mobility options, encourage healthy lifestyles, and provide improved access to jobs and services.” The City of Decatur (in partnership with MARTA and the City of Atlanta) was awarded an LCI grant to study the East Lake MARTA station and area within a half-mile radius, which is where six neighborhoods meet: Lake Claire, Druid Hills, Lenox Place, Parkwood, Oakhurst, and Kirkwood.

Themes / Analysis:

The LCI serves as the first step in MARTA’s Transit Oriented Development (TOD) planning process, and provides a framework for future implementation. A major component of the plan is a market study to ensure that proposed development scenarios are based on actual demand for the study area.

Based on the market study, combined with a robust public feedback process, the following themes emerged:

- **Make East Lake MARTA station the area’s “front porch”** by opening the station for community events, new housing options, community open spaces, public art, retail destinations, thoughtful parking solutions, and stormwater infrastructure.
- **Make the nearby streets walkable, bikeable, and fun**—with traffic calming solutions, signage, wider sidewalks and landscaping, intersection treatments, and improved bike facilities.
- **Make room for more neighbors** by adding a mix of housing types that accommodate different age groups, income levels, and preferences.
- **Strengthen the neighborhood’s story** by protecting and enhancing the character of the neighborhoods and commercial nodes; and
- **Make more social and connected places** in the study area by adding needed retail, services, and public space.

Recommendations / Vision:

The plan’s recommendations include the creation of a new 0.9-acre Paden Circle Park (with a stormwater pond), as well as an additional 1.9 acres of green space, including a “Station Green,” plaza areas, forested buffers, a Station Soccer field on top of a parking deck, and other public spaces.

Figure 1.2j
East Lake MARTA Station with Station Soccer



Relevance to Recreatur:

Pending further design and implementation of the LCI’s concepts, the Decatur Parks and Recreation Department should lead or oversee the planning and design of these proposed greenspaces, in coordination with MARTA and the developer. Recreatur can provide insight into the types of amenities, facilities, and programs that may be needed in that area.

1.3

Decatur's Demographic Context

The characteristics of the City of Decatur's residents can provide important insights related to the potential role that Recreatur can play in improving the social, environmental, and economic quality of life of residents.

Following is an overview of the key findings from the analysis of specific demographic attributes:

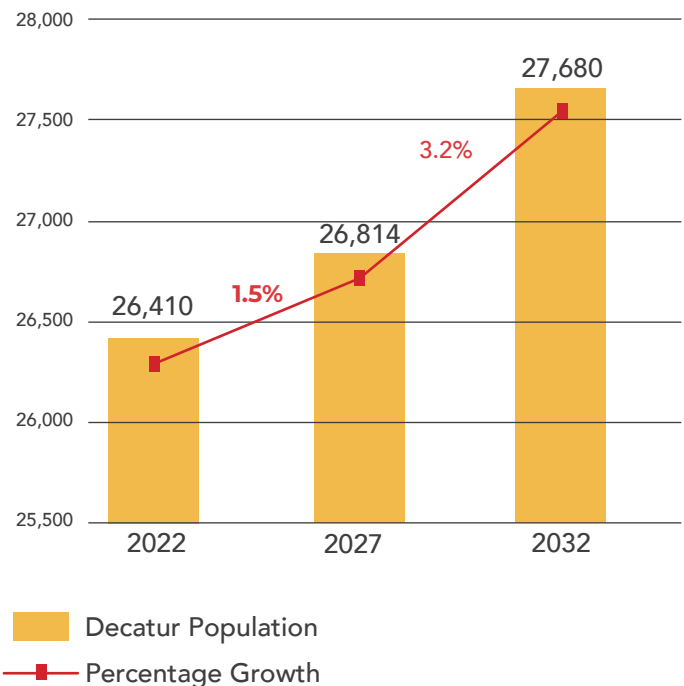
- Population Growth
- Population Density
- Age Distribution
- Race and Ethnicity, and
- Median Income.

Population Growth

Population growth is an important factor to consider in parks and recreation master plans because the larger the population growth, the more need there may be to expand parks and recreation services in the future. Additionally, many of the Level-of-Service (LOS) recommendations revolve around population.

Figure 1.3a demonstrates Decatur's projected population growth over the next 10 years. The city's historical growth suggests that by the year 2027, the city could add approximately 404 residents to reach a population of 26,814 residents. By the year 2032, the City of Decatur could add approximately 1,270 residents to reach a projected population of 27,680.

Figure 1.3a
Population Growth 2022 - 2032



Source: ESRI forecasts for 2022 and 2027. Linear Regression for 2032. U.S.

Relevance to Recreatur:

As the population continues to grow, new parks, recreation facilities, and programming may be needed to maintain and improve the quality of life that residents currently enjoy. These needs will be further explored in Chapter 2: Needs and Priorities Assessment.

Population Density

Population density typically influences how residents enjoy parks and recreation services. For example, areas with higher population densities have more residents living in a defined geographic area. This may create a larger demand on, and for parks, recreation facilities, and programs.

Additionally, increased densities may suggest the presence of multi-family housing (i.e. apartments, condos, etc.). Residents living in multi-family homes typically rely more on public parks to provide basic, close-to-home recreational opportunities such as playgrounds, lawns to play catch, community gardens, or open spaces to allow dogs to run around without a leash. These are some of the basic, everyday recreational activities that a family living in a single-family home may enjoy in their backyard.

Figure 1.3b shows the city’s population density between 2022 and 2032. The city’s population density is projected to increase from 9.0 to 9.6 persons per acre. As a form of comparison, densities of 9 persons per acre are consistent with the densities found in cities such as St. Louis, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh.

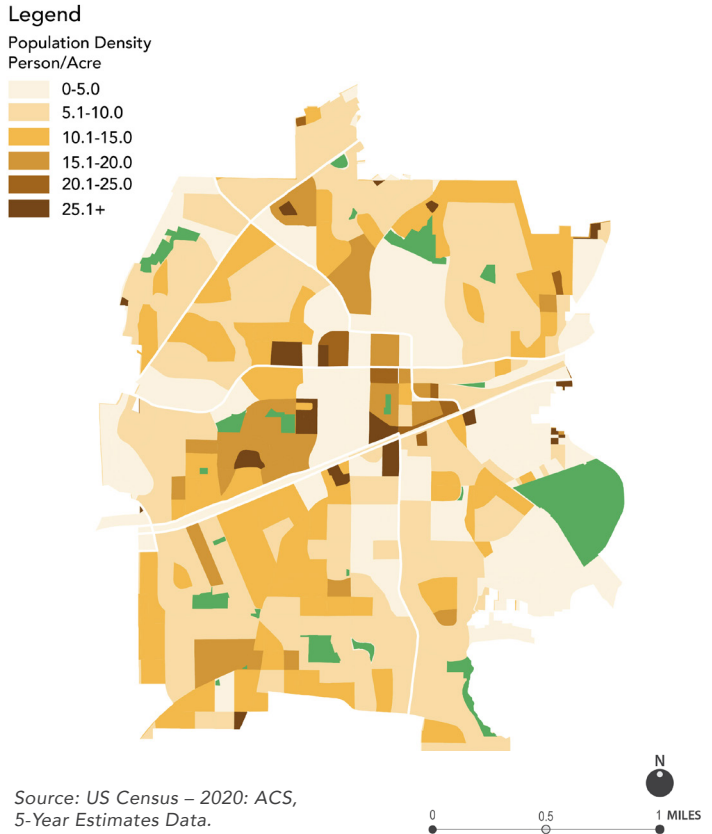
Figure 1.3c maps population density per census block in the city. Most of the city’s census blocks are under 10 persons per acre. A few census blocks downtown have population densities that are over 20 persons per acre and adjacent to census blocks with less than 5 persons per acre. As a form of comparison, densities of 15 persons per acre are found in cities such as Washington, D.C.

Figure 1.3b
Population Density 2022 - 2032

Year	Population	Population Density
2022	26,410	9.0
2027	26,814	9.2
2032	27,680	9.6

Source: ESRI forecasts for 2022 and 2027. Linear Regression for 2032. U.S.

Figure 1.3c
Population Density (Persons per Acre)



and Philadelphia. Densities of 19 persons per acre and above are found in cities such as Boston, San Francisco, and New York. This diversity illustrates the pockets of residential, commercial, and parking areas downtown.

Relevance to Recreatur:
Decatur’s overall density and pockets of high density suggest housing with limited private greenspace. This suggests a need for public greenspace and parks. Additionally, it suggests that land for parks may be at a premium and may require creative and collaborative service delivery strategies to address park land needs. Consistently, the demand for programs and services in these areas may be comparatively higher and more diverse than in less dense areas. These factors will be explored further in Chapter 2: Needs and Priorities Assessment.

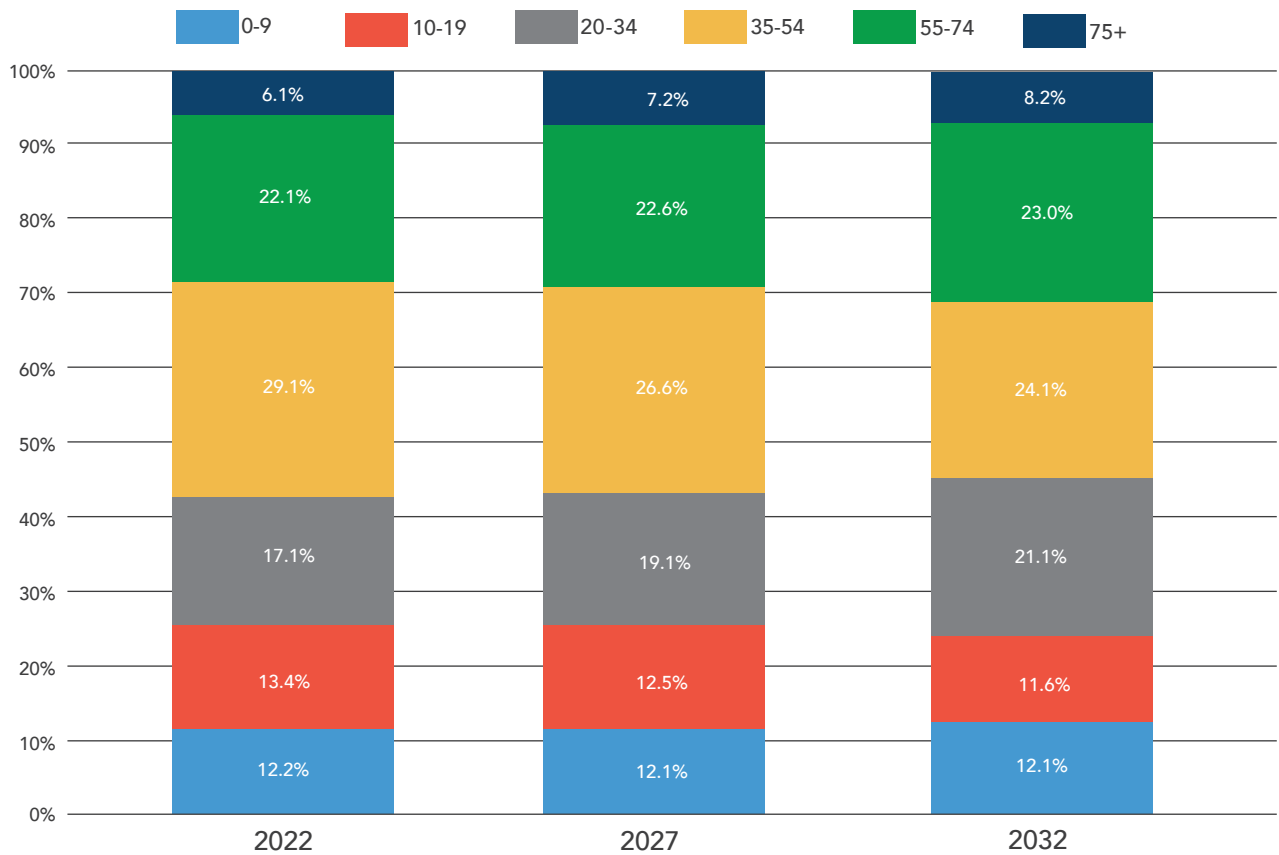
Age Distribution

The type of programs and recreation facilities that a community provides its residents is directly related to the age distribution of the community's population. Communities with a high concentration of residents ages 0-9 and 10-19 for example, may have a higher need for youth activities such as before school or after school care programs and youth athletics. These communities may also require more playgrounds and athletic fields.

Communities with a high concentration of residents ages 65 and older on the other hand, may require more senior related activities, such as senior leisure programs, health related services, senior center space, and transportation services to transport seniors from activity to activity.

Figure 1.3d illustrates the city's age distribution for the years 2022, 2027, and 2032. The data suggest that over the next 10 years, the city's population between the ages of 20-34 may grow the most from 17.1 percent in 2022 to 21.1 percent in 2032 and will remain the dominant population age group. The city's population older than 55 years of age may grow the second most from 28.1 percent in 2022 to 31.2 percent with adults ages 55-74 representing the second largest age group in the city. Children ages 9 and under may remain the same while youth ages 10-19 and adults ages 35-54 will decrease.

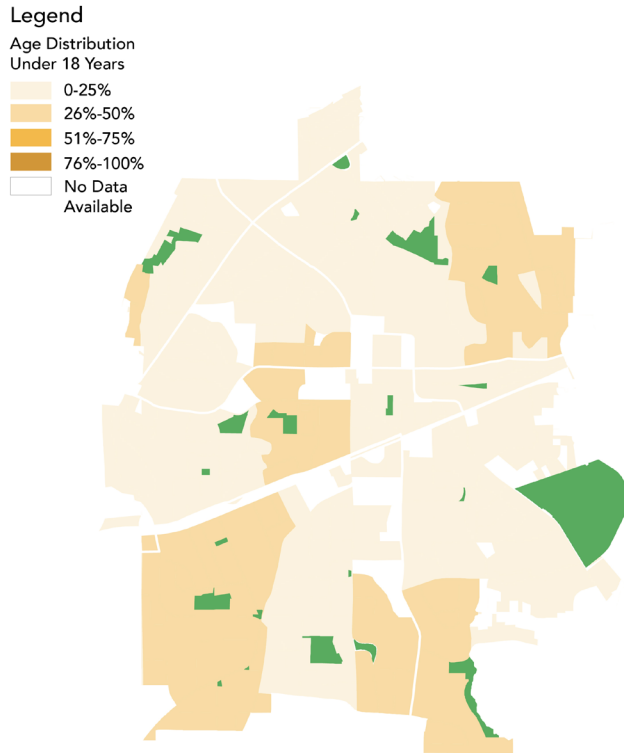
Figure 1.3d
Age Distribution 2022 - 2032



Source: ESRI forecasts for 2022 and 2027. Linear Regression for 2032.

Figures 1.2e-1.2f map age distribution for populations under 18 years of age and over 65 years of age respectively. These maps identify pockets in the city where there appears to be a concentration of residents that are under 18 and over 65 years of age.

Figure 1.3e
Percentage of Population Under 18-Years of Age per Census Block Group



Source: US Census – 2020: ACS, 5-Year Estimates Data.

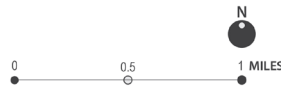
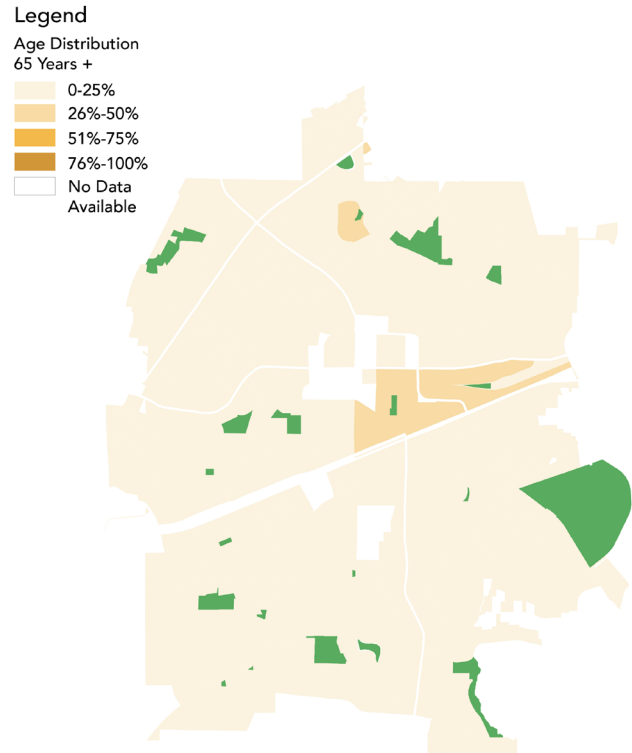


Figure 1.3f
Percentage of Population Over 65-Years of Age per Census Block Group



Source: US Census – 2020: ACS, 5-Year Estimates Data.



Relevance to Recreatur:

Adults ages 35-54 will continue to be the dominant age group in Decatur followed by seniors 55 and over. Parks may need to be flexible and provide a variety of recreation programs and activities for residents of various ages, with an emphasis on adults and seniors. It may also be important to increase specific age-appropriate recreational facilities/programs in targeted parts of the city where certain age groups live. These factors will be explored further in Chapter 2: Needs and Priorities Assessment.

Race and Ethnicity

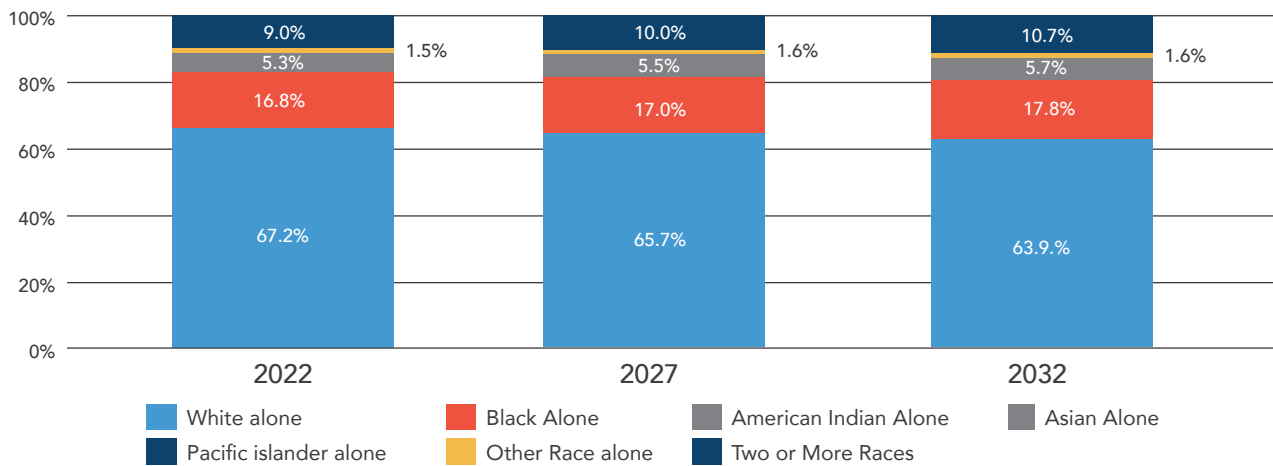
Race and ethnicity can be an interesting indicator of recreation program and facility needs and desires. Various academic studies have shown that individuals' preferences towards specific park settings, activities, or amenities can vary by racial category.

For example, one study used surveys to study the preferences of 900 park users in a major city in the United States. The study reported that Asians showed a strong preference for scenic beauty, Whites expressed a stronger preference for trees and vegetation, and African Americans expressed a preference for cultural facilities and maintenance.¹ Another study found that African Americans and Hispanics participated more in sports, but less in activities that took place in remote areas or undeveloped facilities than Whites.²

1 Gobster, P.H. (2002). Managing urban parks for a racially and ethnically diverse clientele. *Leisure Sciences*, 24, 143 – 159.

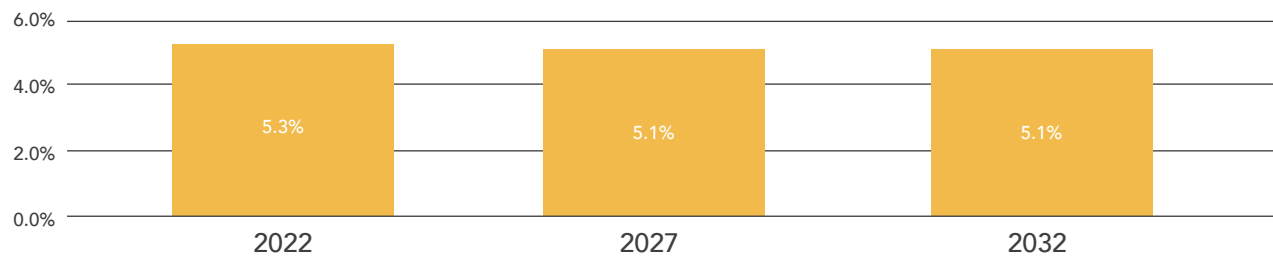
2 Dwyer, J.F. (1993). Outdoor recreation participation: An update on Blacks, Whites, Hispanics, and Asians in Illinois. In P.Gobster (Ed.), *Managing urban and high-use recreation settings* (pp. 199-1211)

Figure 1.3g
Race 2022 - 2032



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022 and 2027. Linear Regression for 2032.

Figure 1.3h
Ethnicity (Hispanic/Latino) 2022 - 2032



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022 and 2027. Linear Regression for 2032.

Figure 1.2g-1.2h illustrates the city’s race and ethnicity respectively for the years 2022, 2027, and 2032. The data suggest that while over the next 10 years White Alone will continue to be the majority race, it will decrease slightly with the remainder of races increasing slightly. Residents identifying as having Hispanic/Latino ethnicity comprise 5.3 percent of the population, and this percentage is expected to decrease slightly over the next 10 years.

Figures 1.3i-1.3j map the majority races in the city - White Alone and Black Alone (“Alone” is the Census signifier that these individuals do not identify with any other racial category.)

Figure 1.3i
Percentage of Population White Alone per Census Block Group

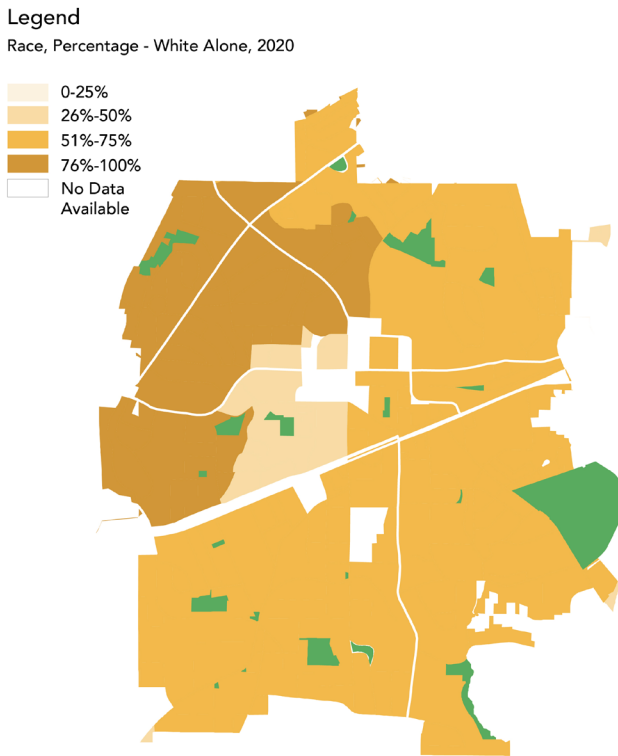
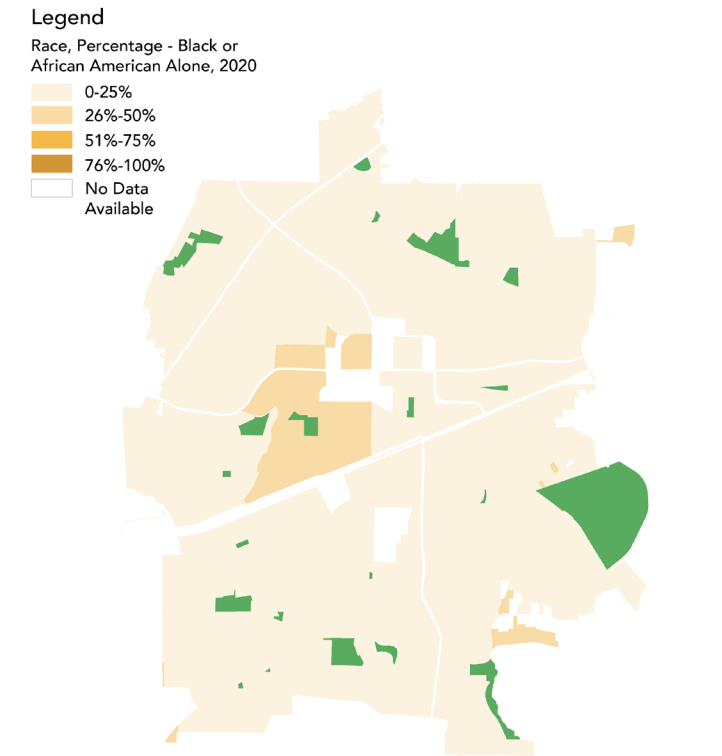
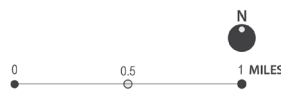


Figure 1.3j
Percentage of Population Black Alone per Census Block Group



Source: US Census – 2020: ACS, 5-Year Estimates Data.



Source: US Census – 2020: ACS, 5-Year Estimates Data.



Relevance to Recreatur:

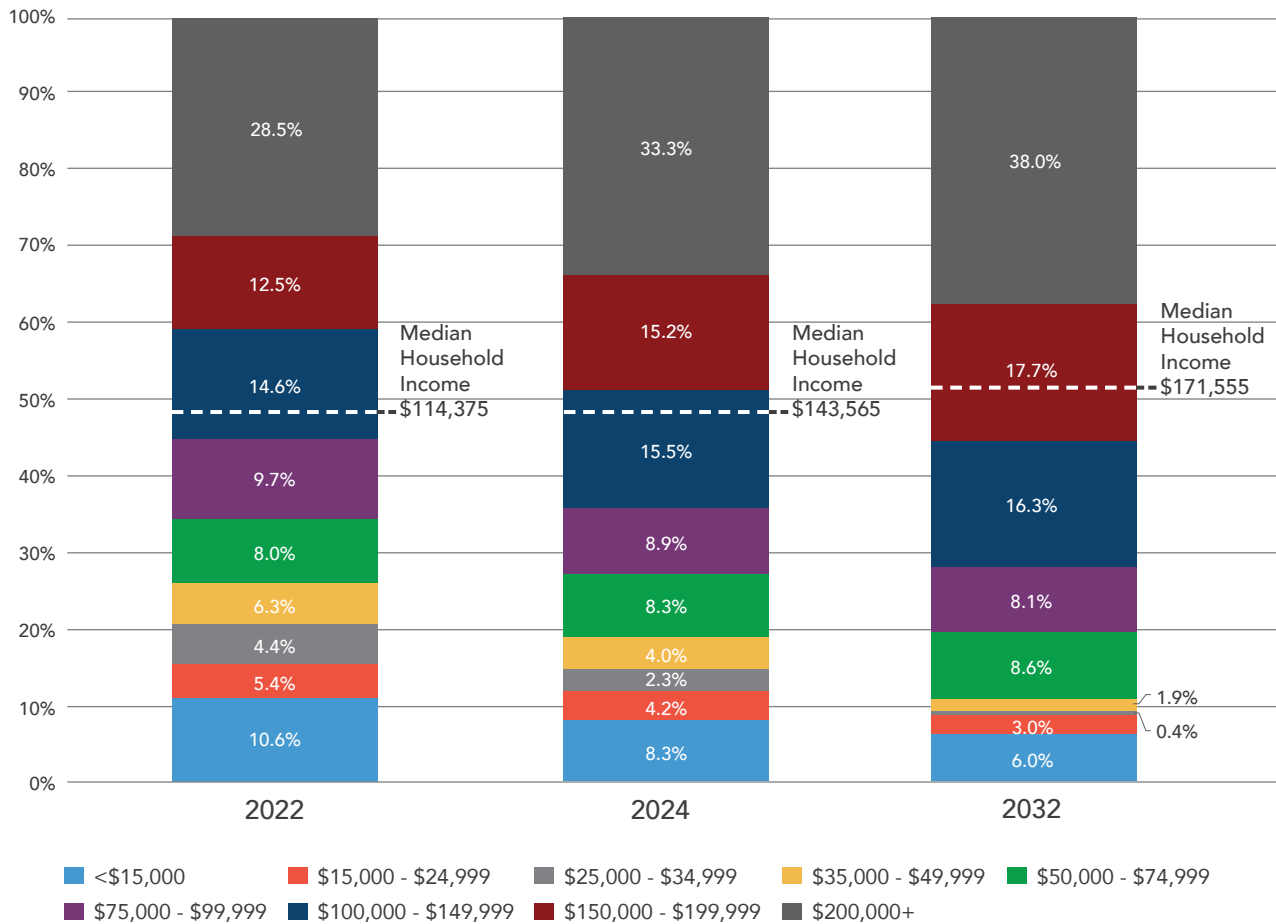
While Decatur will continue to be a majority White Alone population, the city’s historic and actively shifting racial makeup suggests the need for a parks and recreation system that celebrates the diversity in the community. Planning and programming for parks and recreation facilities that are flexible and provide a variety of recreation programs and activities for various races and ethnicities will be important. It will also be important to consider special events and programs throughout the year that continue to educate, foster, and strengthen the diversity of the community. These factors will be explored further in Chapter 2: Needs and Priorities Assessment and Chapter 3: Recreatur Vision.

Household Income

Income levels provide a glimpse of the purchasing power of residents. Simply stated, the higher the household income, the greater the potential for residents to have disposable income to spend on paid leisure programs and activities. The lower the household income, the more residents may rely on affordable and/or free parks, recreation, and social programs and services.

Figure 1.3k illustrates the city’s household and median household income for the years 2022, 2027, and 2032. The data suggest that over the next 10 years, barring any national economic decline, household incomes may continue to rise based on historical growth. This suggests that households making over \$100,000 may increase from 55.7 percent to 72.3 percent. Households making over \$200,000 may increase the most from 28.5 percent in 2022 to 38.5 by 2032. Households making under \$99,000 will decline and may make up about 27 percent of city households.

Figure 1.3k
Median Household Income 2022-2032

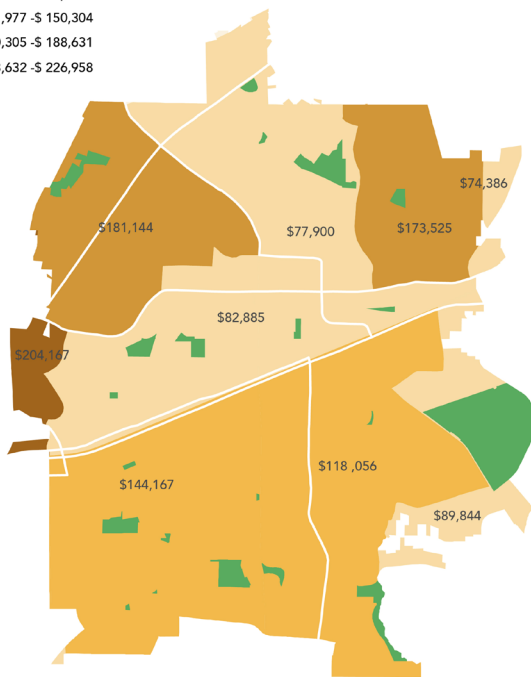


Source: Esri forecasts for 2022 and 2027. Linear Regression for 2032.

Figure 1.3|
Median Household Income - 2020

Legend

- City MHI: \$114,651
- \$35,323 - \$73,650
- \$73,651 - \$111,977
- \$111,977 - \$150,304
- \$150,305 - \$188,631
- \$188,632 - \$226,958



Figures 1.2| maps median household income in the city per Census Tract and reveals where in the city there appears to be areas that are below and above the city’s median household income.

Source: US Census – 2020: ACS, 5-Year Estimates Data.



Relevance to Recreation:

The presence of a range of household incomes in the city may suggest a need to provide programs and services that cater to a spectrum of household incomes. Households with higher incomes may have a need for certain types of sports activities, such as lacrosse, soccer, golf, tennis, swimming; as well as leisure activities, such as cultural and performing arts programs and events and dining out.

Additionally, these residents may be able to support community parks organizations through financial contributions. Many of the parks in areas with higher household incomes may already have conservancies or friends groups.

On the other hand, many of the residents and families with lower household incomes may rely on reduced cost/free services, such as youth development, after school activities, adult continuing education opportunities, and other social, recreational, cultural, or educational needs. These implications will be explored further in Chapter 2: Needs and Priorities Assessment.

Social Vulnerability Index

While demographic attributes on their own have important parks and recreation implications, they can also be combined to identify vulnerable populations. In collaboration with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) and the U.S. Census Bureau, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) developed a Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) for every census tract in the U.S.

The SVI is based on a total of 15 social factors that are combined into 4 related themes: Socioeconomic Status, Household Composition and Disability, Minority Status and Language, and Housing and Transportation. Figures 1.3n below depicts the relationship between the social factors, key themes, and overall SVI.

Figure 1.3n identifies the areas in the city that have a low and medium level of social vulnerability.

Relevance to Recreatur:
It will be important for Recreatur to consider these areas during the planning process and explore how parks, recreation facilities, programs, and services may support populations in higher social vulnerability areas.

Figure 1.3m
Social Vulnerability Index Themes and Factors

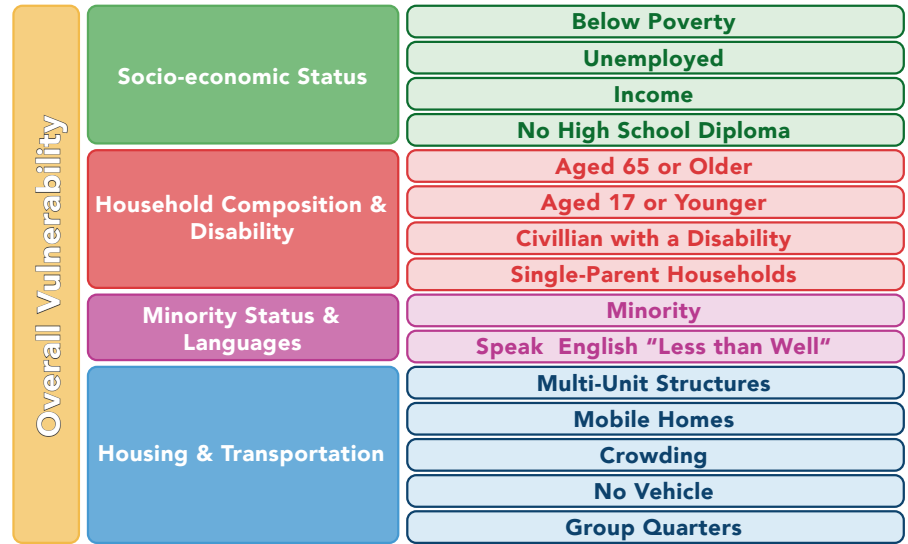
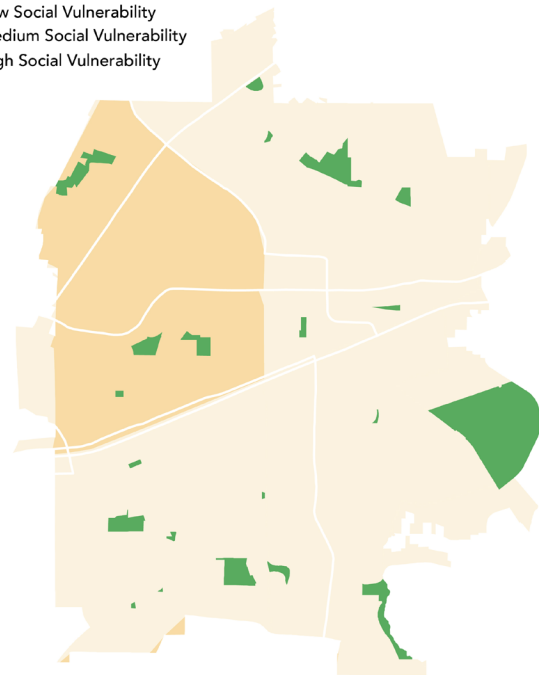


Figure 1.3n
Social Vulnerability Areas

Legend
Social Vulnerability Map

- Low Social Vulnerability
- Medium Social Vulnerability
- High Social Vulnerability



Source: US Census – 2020: ACS, 5-Year Estimates Data.



Summary of Demographic Context

Following is a summary of key findings from the demographic context analysis along with their relevance to Decatur. These implications will be further explored in Chapter 2 - Needs and Priorities Assessment and Chapter 3 - Long-Range Vision.

- **Population Growth** - Decatur has seen a rapid increase in growth in recent years. Over the next ten years, the City is projected to add another 1,600 residents. As the population continues to grow, new parks, recreation facilities, and programs may be needed to maintain and improve the quality of life that residents currently enjoy.
- **Population Density** - As the city's population increases, the city's population density will also increase. Since potential park land is scarce and at a premium, the City may have to be creative and collaborative as it seeks to provide additional park land.
- **Age Distribution** - While Decatur's population is comprised of a range of ages, over the next 10 years, adults ages 35–54 will continue to be the dominant age group in Decatur followed by seniors 55 and over. This suggests that parks may need to be flexible and provide a variety of multi-generational and multi-functional spaces, programs, and activities for residents of various ages, with an emphasis on adults and seniors. It may also be important to increase specific age-appropriate recreational facilities and programs in targeted parts of the city where a larger concentration of specific age groups live.
- **Race** - While Decatur will continue to be a majority White Alone population, the city's historic and actively shifting racial makeup suggests the need for the parks and

recreation system to celebrate the diversity in the community. Planning and programming for parks and recreation facilities that are flexible and provide recreation programs and activities for various races and ethnicities will be important. It will also be important to consider special events and programs throughout the year that continue to educate, foster, and strengthen the diversity of the community. These factors will be explored further in Chapter 2: Needs and Priorities Assessment.

- **Household Income** - Decatur residents comprise a broad range of incomes, from very low to very high. This diversity of incomes may be reflected in the programs and services needed or desired by different groups.

Many of the residents and families with lower household incomes may rely on reduced cost/free services, such as youth development, after school activities, adult continuing education opportunities, and other social, recreational, cultural, or educational needs. Higher income households may desire certain types of sports activities at higher proportions, and additionally, these residents may be able to support community parks organizations through financial contributions.

These implications will be explored further in Chapter 2: Needs and Priorities Assessment.

- **Social Vulnerability** - The city's northwest quadrant is identified as having a medium level of social vulnerability. It will be important for Decatur to consider this area during the planning process and explore how parks, recreation facilities, programs, and services may support populations in higher social vulnerability areas.

1.4

Decatur's Park System Context

The parks system context is comprised of three primary elements:

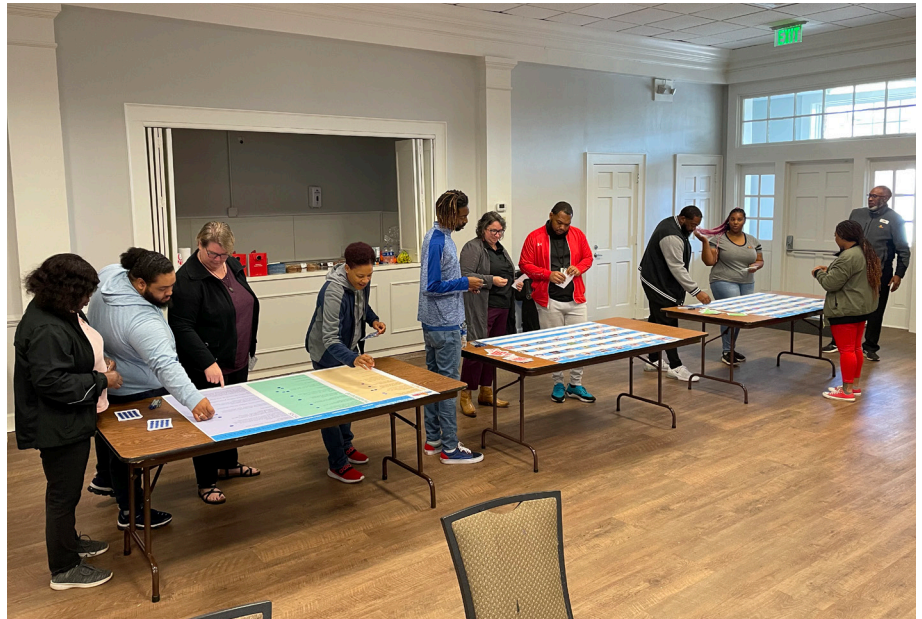
- The Department
- Programs
- Parks and Recreation Facilities.

The following section provides an overview and assessment of each of these elements that will establish a foundation for planning process.

The Department

The following section provides an assessment of the first Park System Context element - the Department. In Decatur's case, this is primarily the Active Living Division, although certain programs are managed by the Children and Youth Services Division. Both divisions are under the Community and Economic Development Department.

The assessment includes a review of operations, staffing, and maintenance. The assessment began with a workshop with administration staff to obtain context and insights from the employees' perspective. Staff members from various divisions and levels participated in focus groups to identify emerging themes in operations.



The objective of the park system context analysis is to analyze and provide guidance on current practices, future organization and staffing needs, improved operational efficiencies, policy development, technology improvements and marketing/communication opportunities.

Department Overview

- **Current Children and Youth Services Vision Statement** - "To be a leader in quality out-of-school time programming for children and youth in Decatur."
- **Current Children and Youth Services Mission Statement** - "We provide quality out-of-school time programming that empowers children to become responsible, healthy, engaged members of the community."
- **Current Active Living Mission Statement:** "To provide leisure and support services that contribute to the quality of life of the citizens of Decatur. We are committed to enhancing the lives of individuals and families, contributing to the City's economic development, preserving and promoting an appreciation for our green spaces and celebrating diversity while bringing us together as a community."



Division Operations

Operations include multiple different management areas where the Division either takes on a support role or a lead role. An example of where the Division has a support role would be HR Management. The City has the Human Resources (HR) Department to manage this aspect of City services and the Division supports the HR Department. Division operations require a proactive approach to managing assets and developing services for residents. Operational areas of management include:

- Administrative management
- Capital project management
- Communications management
- Concession management
- Contract management
- Document management
- Land use management
- Facility management
- Emergency management
- Environmental management
- Equipment management
- Event management
- Financial management
- Human resource management
- Information technology management
- Maintenance management
- Marketing & brand management
- Operations management
- Partnership management
- Planning management
- Project management
- Recreation program management
- Resource management
- Risk management
- Stakeholder management

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of an agency can impact efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Functional organizational structure is the best approach for the service industry. This is true for public parks and recreation agencies, as it builds structure in each major function/service provided. The organizational structure for the Department is separated by the following major functions:

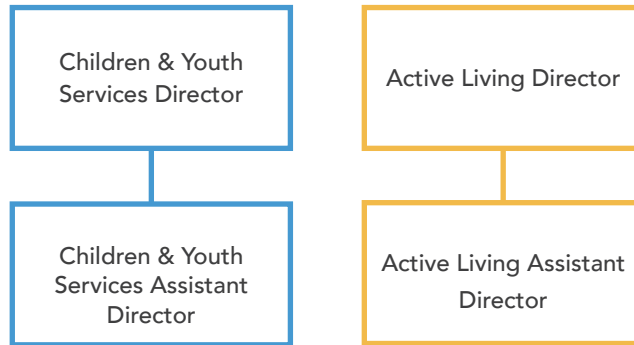
- Administration
- Adults & Seniors
- Athletics & Aquatics
- Communication, Customer Service & Marketing
- Operations
- Child & Youth Services
- Recreation Centers (Facilities)
- Tennis
- Plans, Policies & Standards Documentation
- Marketing & Communication

The following pages provide a visual aid of the Division's current structures.

Administration

Administration leads the Divisions and serves as support for the major functions/services. This Division assists with planning, organizing and coordinating services, functions, and finances for parks and recreation guiding operations to achieve larger outcomes. The current structure for administration is from two City Divisions: Children & Youth Services and Active Living.

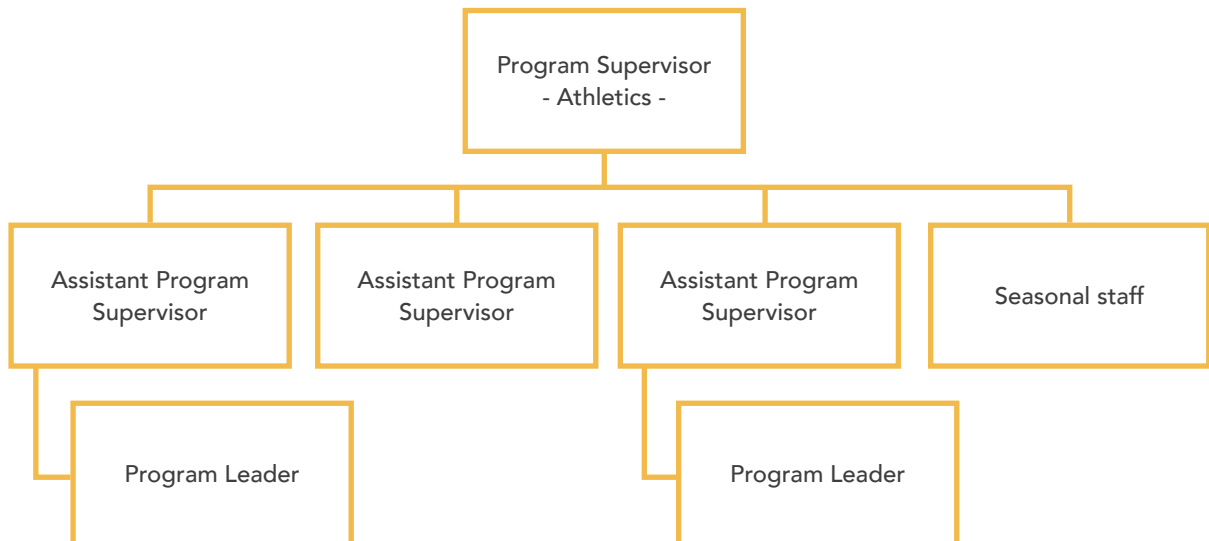
Figure 1.4b
Current Administration Staff Structure



Athletics & Aquatics

The Athletics Division is responsible for the development, training, scheduling and supervision of sports activities and events for adults and youth residents. As of 2022, the Division is only Athletics, while Aquatics is managed by the Tennis Center. However, the creation of a combined Athletics & Aquatics subdivision is in progress.

Figure 1.4c
Current Athletics & Aquatics Staff Structure



Communication, Customer Service, and Marketing

Currently, the responsibilities of communication, customer service and marketing are assigned to existing staff or teams of staff to ensure these management functions are executed. The functions distributed among staff are:

- Budget & Finance Management
- Communications
- Marketing
- Payroll
- Software Maintenance & Support

Operations

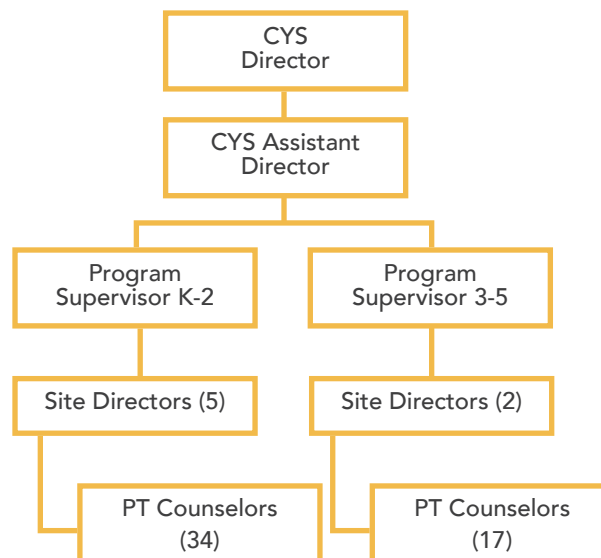
Currently, the responsibilities of operations are assigned to existing staff or teams of staff to ensure these management functions are executed. The functions distributed among staff are:

- Accreditations, certifications, licensing, policies and procedures
- HR Processes
- Parks and facilities maintenance
- Project Management
- Special Events
- Training

Children and Youth Services

Currently, Children and Youth Services Division provides out of school programs and services.

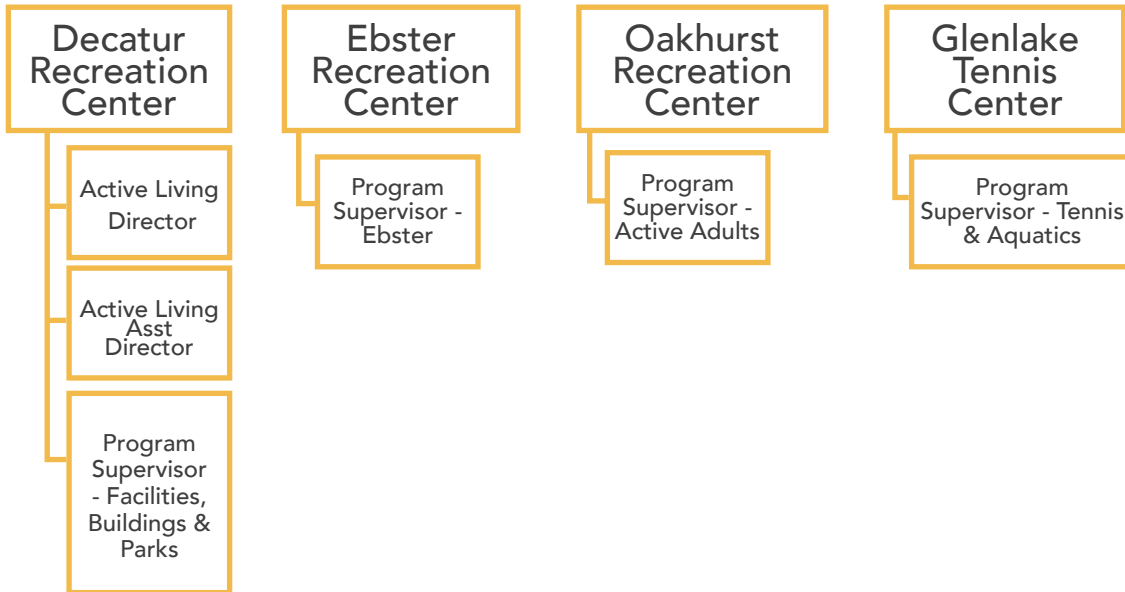
Figure 1.4d
Current Children and Youth Services Staff Structure



Recreation Centers

Recreation centers are hubs for communities. The current structure has executive staff assuming some of the responsibilities of this subdivision. This impacts capacity and progress at a time when residents value parks and recreational opportunities more than a few years ago.

Figure 1.4e
Current Recreation Centers Staff Structure



Plan, Policies, and Standards Documentation

Plans, policies and standards are the directional foundation for staff to achieve desired outcomes. Documentation of these and annual reviews are best practices in parks and recreation agencies. The following definitions explain the importance of having plans, policies and procedures:

- Department Plan defines the Department’s reason for existing, sets direction for staff, defines outcomes, and identifies strategies and tactics to achieve the outcomes.

- Department Policies are approved ideas or plans that establish a basis for decision making.
- Department Standards establish a level of quality by which progress or outcomes can be measured and are known for helping employees meet or exceed expectations.

The following plans, policies and standards have been identified:

Figure 1.4f
Current Plans, Policies, and Procedures

Current Plans, Policies & Procedures			
Plans	Yes	No	Notes
Department Master Plan	X		Department Master Plan in progress
Policies	Yes	No	Notes
Parks Rules & Regulations ordinance and enforcement policy	X		No enforcement policy
Refund Policy	X		May need updating
Communications Policy (social media, lead time, methods, review/approval of materials)	X		City-wide, no departmental policy
Standards/Procedures	Yes	No	Notes
Parks and Recreation Employee Handbook/ Manual (Full time, Pt, Seasonal)	X		Active Living handbook needs updating as part of proposed new structure
Marketing Standards & Brand Style Guide	X		City-wide style guide, marketing standards are not documented
Performance Evaluation Procedure	X		City-wide, no training currently in place on procedure
Onboarding Procedure	X		City HR Department, not parks and recreation specific

Marketing and Communications

The Active Living Division website can be found at <https://www.decaturga.com/activeliving>

The Children and Youth Services Division website can be found at <https://www.decaturga.com/cys>

Overall, the site has several features making it easy to navigate and user friendly. Google Translate is embedded in the site which makes it easy to instantly translate the site into nine different languages including Spanish, Chinese, and Hindi, showing a commitment to making the website more inclusive and accessible.

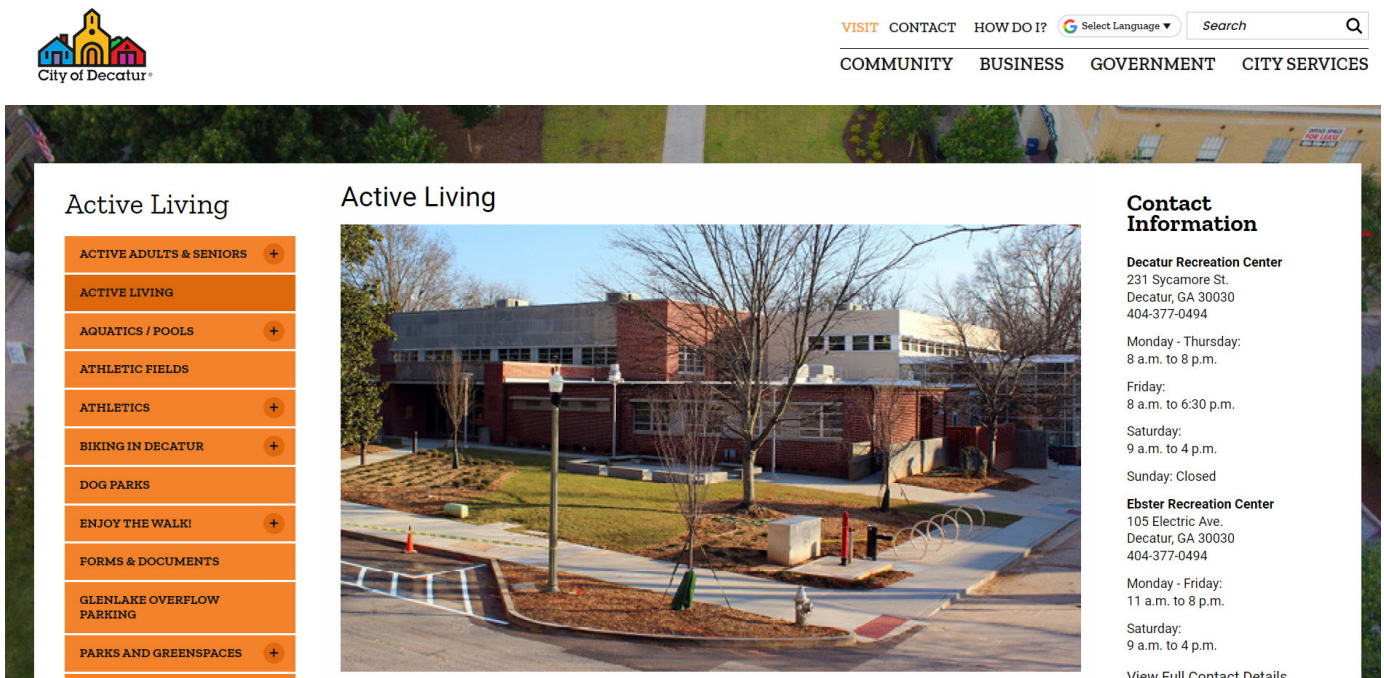
Contact information for the Division is located along the right side of the page and links to information on programs, facilities and amenities are along the left side. The center of the page displays the Division Mission as well as links to the daily blog and Registration Page.

The Registration Page link takes you to a page with additional information regarding the registration process from there, you need to click on the "CommunityPass" link to get to the online registration portal (Community Pass).

Some of the links along the left lead to outdated information, such as the Adult Athletics tab which promotes the "Winter 2019 Adult Basketball League for Men", and the "Biking in Decatur" tab promoting "May is Bike Month!" in August.

The website is branded per Metro Government guidelines which constricts options for branding and visual enhancements. The website does not incorporate story telling on the page that encapsulate the mission, vision, and values of the Division.

Figure 1.4g
City of Decatur Active Living Department Website



Department Assessment Summary

Parks and recreation departments across the country are, in most instances, the only department in a municipality where people choose to spend their disposable income.

Providing quality services backed by standards and accountability ultimately produce more revenue and less subsidy. It takes people to provide services to people and that includes being appropriately staffed for asset preservation, programs, and events. Developing better standards of excellence increases quality, which will increase the elasticity of Department pricing and make the system more sustainable.

From the analysis, there are opportunities to better align services with the community's needs and expectation. An increase in staff to improve maintenance and service delivery directly benefits the resident, whether they utilize the Department for recreation or not. Needs exist across the system and there appears to be an opportunity for the City to

explore areas to invest and divest. Reducing services which consume more resources than the community benefits from could also increase the capacity of the Department to better provide quality maintenance, programs and events.

Additionally, it was observed that the Department does not have an Executive Assistant to help support the Administration in leading the Department and serving the needs of each division, who serve the residents. Also noted is the absence of a Facilities Division to capture recreation centers and special use facilities such as tennis, banquet halls and aquatic centers. These initial findings will be further explored during Chapter 3 – Long-Range Vision, based on the findings from the needs and priorities assessment.



Programs

The following section provides an assessment of the second element of the Park System Context – Programs.

Recreation programs and services in the City of Decatur are offered by the City’s Active Living Division and the Children and Youth Services Division. This assessment offers an in-depth perspective of program and service offerings and helps identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities regarding programming. The assessment also assists in identifying core programs, program gaps within the community, key system-wide issues, areas of improvement, and future programs and services for residents and visitors.

The consulting team based these program findings and comments from a review of information provided by the Division including program descriptions, financial data, website content, and discussions with staff.



Framework

Current Active Living Mission Statement - “Provide accessible experiences by promoting healthy living, creating connections and igniting growth across generations.”

Current Children and Youth Services Mission Statement - “We provide quality out-of-school time programming that empowers children to become responsible, healthy, engaged members of the community.”



In order to help achieve these missions, the Division manages parkland with aquatic features, tennis courts, recreational facilities and numerous athletic fields, while operating recreation programs for area residents of all ages and abilities.

Core Programs Overview

To help achieve the mission, it is important to identify Core Program Areas based on current and future needs to create a sense of focus around specific program areas of greatest importance to the community. Public recreation is challenged by the premise of being all things to all people. The philosophy of the Core Program Area is to assist staff, policy makers, and the public to focus on what is most important to the community. Program areas are considered as Core if they meet a majority of the following criteria:

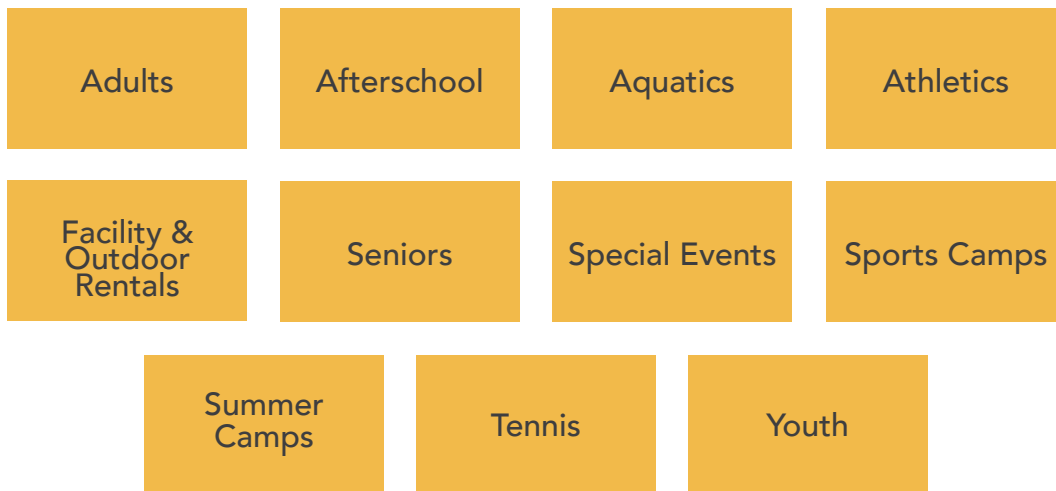
- The program area has been provided for a long period of time (over 4-5 years) and/or is expected by the community.

- The program area consumes a relatively large portion (5% or more) of the agency's overall budget.
- The program area is offered 3-4 seasons per year.
- The program area has wide demographic appeal.
- There is a tiered level of skill development available within the program area's offerings.
- There is full-time staff responsible for the program area.
- There are facilities designed specifically to support the program area.
- The agency controls a significant percentage (20% or more) of the local market.

Existing Core Program Areas

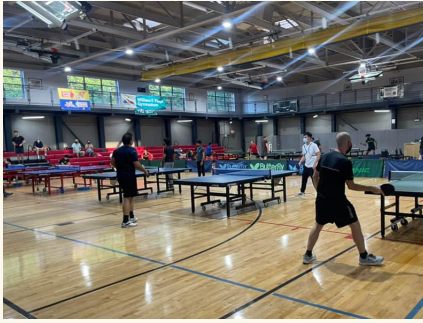
In discussions with the Division staff, the consulting team identified 11 Core Program Areas currently being offered.

Figure 1.4h
Existing Core Programs



Core Program Area Descriptions, Goals, and Example Programs

ADULTS



Description: Exercise, fitness, wellness activities and educational classes that promote healthy lifestyles for active adults.

Goals: Provide programs and facilities for adults 21+ to have a measurable positive impact on physical and emotional health for the community.

- Bikes and Brew
- Community Garden
- Dance
- Dog Obedience
- Fitness
- Hiking
- Table Tennis

AFTERSCHOOL



Description: Afterschool time programming designed to actively engage youth in enriching activities and foster positive social interactions.

Goals: Invest in the lives of children by providing quality afterschool programming that empowers them to become responsible, healthy, engaged members of their community.

- Animal Crackers
- Whiz Kids

AQUATICS



Description: Offering aquatics programming opportunities regardless of their ability to pay.

Goals: To guarantee access to learn to swim programs, swim teams, and aquatic recreation for all residents, regardless of their ability to pay.

- Fall Swim Team
- Gators Swim Team
- Junior Gators

ATHLETICS



Description: Sports, fitness, and wellness classes, tournaments, leagues, field rentals, and facilities.

Goals: Promote healthy lifestyles and recreational sport participation for all ages.

- Badminton
- Basketball
- Flag Football
- Golf
- Soccer
- Softball
- Tot Sports

Core Program Area Descriptions, Goals, and Example Programs (Continued)

FACILITY & OUT-DOOR RENTALS



Description: Clean classrooms, fields, and spaces for programming; as well as clean and affordable rental space for private/non-profit/corporate and City functions.

Goals: Provide excellent customer service and clean, safe, supervised spaces for City and community use.

- Corporate Spaces
- Events
- Picnics

SENIORS



Description: Exercise, fitness, wellness activities, social events, workshops, and educational classes that promote healthy lifestyles for active seniors.

Goals: Provide programs and facilities for seniors that have a measurable positive impact on physical and emotional health for the community.

- Arts & Crafts
- Bingo
- Pickleball
- Senior Trips
- Senior Workshops & Classes
- Silver Spokes
- Special Social Events

SPECIAL EVENTS



Description: Exercise, fitness, and wellness activities that promote healthy lifestyles for all ages.

Goals: Provide programs and facilities for all age segments to have a measurable positive impact on physical and mental health for the community.

- Decatur Streets Alive
- Touch a Truck

SPORTS CAMPS



Description: Learn new techniques and enhance their skills through drills to improve their fundamentals and understanding of a wide range of sports.

Goals: Create positive impact on physical and mental health for the community.

- Decatur Sports Camps
- Fast Break Basketball Camp
- Gymnastics, Parkour, & Stunting
- Small Fry Sports Camp

Core Program Area Descriptions, Goals, and Example Programs (Continued)

SUMMER CAMPS



Description: Camps that offer a wide range of both indoor and outdoor activities for children.

Goals: To learn skills and team building through fun recreational activities.

- E Camps
- iDiscover
- Leaders in Training
- Legacy Park Day Camp

TENNIS



Description: : Offering year-round tennis programming and opportunities for ages 4 and up in addition to providing a full-service tennis pro shop.

Goals: Create new and retain existing Tennis players through affordable tennis court rentals, lessons, and programs.

- Adult Beginners Tennis Clinic
- Junior Tennis Academy
- Munchkin Tennis
- Sunday Morning Round Robin

YOUTH



Description: Preschool aged introductory sports programs, as well as enrichment programming for ages 5 and up.

Goals: Provide programs and facilities for all age segments to have a measurable positive impact on physical and mental health for the community.

- Fencing
- Karate
- "Lil" Series
- Theatre Acting Class

Informed by the Division's core programs, the Consultant Team completed five types of analyses to assess the Department's programs. These were:

- Age Segment Analysis
- Program Lifecycle

- Program Classification
- Cost-of-Service and Cost Recovery
- Pricing

Following is a summary of the analyses and findings.

Age Segment Analysis

An Age Segment Analysis was completed by Core Program Area, to review the age segments served by different program areas and identify any gaps in segments served. It is recommended that staff perform an Age Segment Analysis by individual programs to further understand and tailor future offerings to community needs.

The table below depicts each Core Program Area and the most prominent age segments they serve. Recognizing that many Core Program Areas serve multiple age segments, Primary (noted with a 'P') and Secondary (noted with an 'S') markets are identified.

The Division has Core Program Areas already separated by age (Adults, Seniors, Youth) so all age segments are represented, including a strong selection of all ages programming.

Figure 1.4i
Age Segment Analysis

Age Segment Analysis						
Core Program Area	Preschool (5 & Under)	Elementary (6-12)	Teens (13-17)	Adult (18+)	Senior (55+)	All Ages Programs
Adults				P		
Afterschool		P				
Aquatics	S	P	P	S	S	
Athletics						P
Facility & Outdoor Rentals						P
Seniors					P	
Special Events						P
Sports Camps	S	P	P			
Summer Camps		P	S			
Tennis						P
Youth	P	P	S			

Program Lifecycle

A Program Lifecycle Analysis involves reviewing each program offered by the Division to determine the stage of growth or decline for each. This provides a way of informing strategic decisions about the overall mix of programs managed by the agency to ensure that an appropriate number of programs are “fresh” and that relatively few programs, if any, need to be discontinued. This analysis is not based on strict quantitative data, but rather, is based on staff members’ knowledge of their program areas. The following table shows the percentage distribution of the various lifecycle categories of the Division’s programs. These percentages were obtained by comparing the number of programs in each individual stage with the total number of programs listed by staff members.

The Lifecycle Analysis shows 71% of programming falling within the beginning stages (Introduction, Take-Off, & Growth). While this is above the recommended distribution for these stages of 50-60%, with 38% of programs being in the “Growth Stage”, it can be expected that these programs will begin to

move into the Mature stage, which currently only makes up 13% of all program offerings. The Mature Stage anchors a program portfolio, and it is recommended to have roughly 40% of programs within this category in order to achieve a stable foundation.

Fifteen percent of programs are identified as Saturated or Declining (0-10% Recommended Distribution). It is a natural progression for programs to eventually evolve into saturation and decline stages. However, if programs reach these stages rapidly, it could be an indication that the quality of the programs does not meet expectations, or there is not as much of a demand for the programs. As programs enter the Decline stage, they must be closely reviewed and evaluated for repositioning or elimination. When this occurs, the Divisions should modify these programs to begin a new lifecycle within the Introductory stage or replace the existing programs with new programs based upon community needs and trends.

Figure 1.4j
Lifecycle Analysis

Lifecycle Stage	Description	Adult Program Distribution		Recommended Distribution
Introduction	New program; modest participation	13%	71%	50-60% total
Take - Off	Rapid participation growth	20%		
Growth	Moderate, but consistent population growth	38%		
Mature	Slow participation growth	13%	13%	40% total
Saturation	Minimal to no participation growth; extreme competition	9%	15%	0-10% total
Decline	Decline participation	7%		

Program Classification

Conducting a classification of services analysis informs how each program serves the overall organizational mission, the goals, and objectives of each Core Program Area, and how the program should be funded regarding tax dollars and/or user fees and charges. A program's classification can help determine the most appropriate management, funding, and marketing strategies.

Program classifications are based on the degree to which the program provides a public benefit versus a private benefit. Public benefit can be described as everyone receiving the same level of benefit with equal access, whereas private benefit can be described as the user receiving exclusive benefit above what a general taxpayer receives for their personal benefit.

For this exercise, the Division used a classification method based on three categories:

- Essential Services
- Important Services, and
- Value-Added Services.

Where a program or service is classified depends upon alignment with the organizational mission, how the public perceives a program, legal mandates, financial sustainability, personal benefit, competition in the marketplace, and access by participants. Figure 1.4k describes each of the three program classifications.

With assistance from staff, all recreation programs offered by the Division were classified into three categories. The results presented in Figure 1.4l represent the current classification of recreation program services. Programs should be assigned ranges for cost recovery goals within those overall categories.

Figure 1.4k
Program Classification Diagram

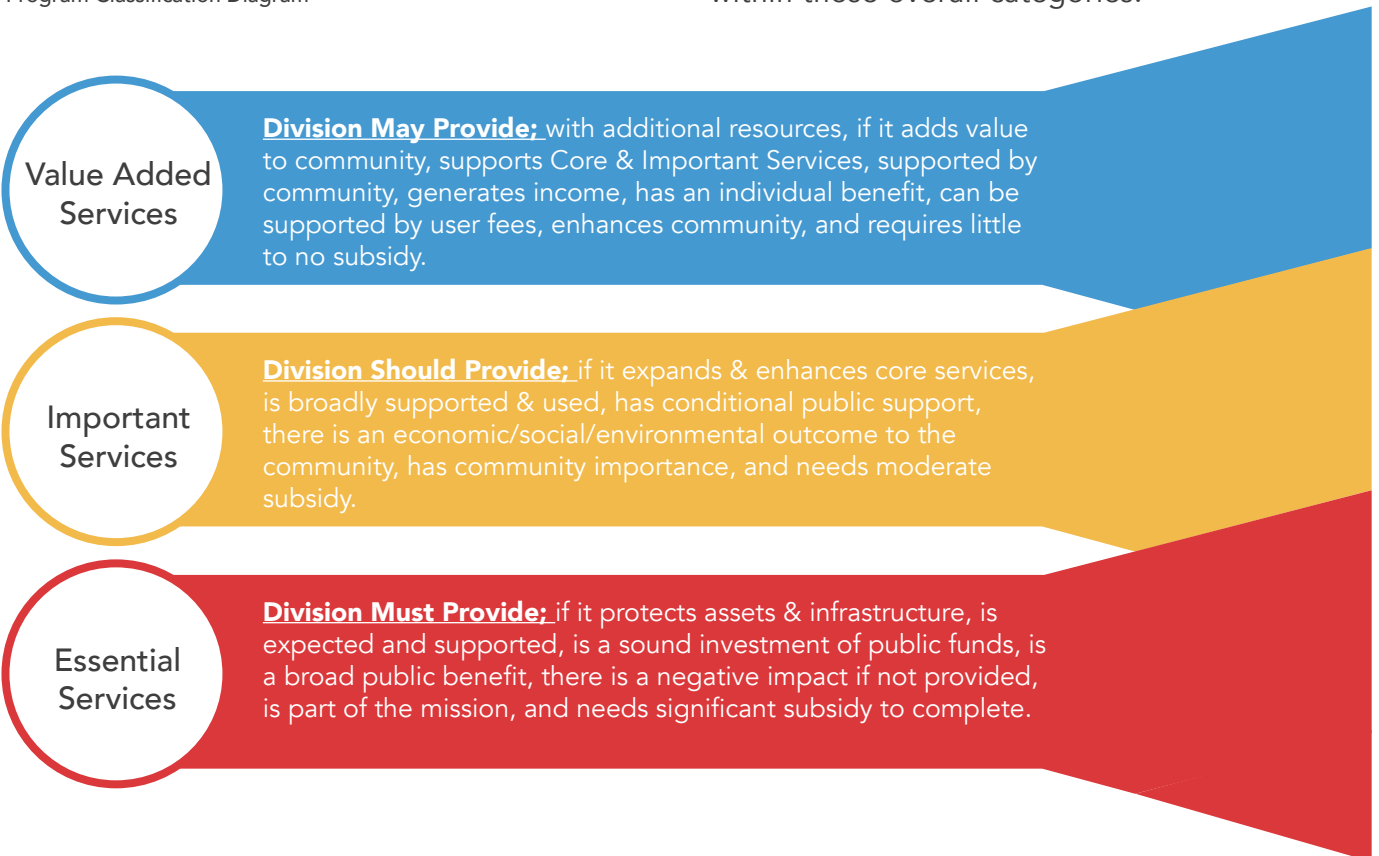


Figure 1.4|
Program Classification

Program Classification			
Factors	Essential	Important	Value - Added
Public interest; Legal Mandate; Mission Alignment	High public expectation	High public expectation	High individual and interest group expectation
Financial Sustainability	Free, nominal or fee tailored to public needs, Requires public funding	Fees cover some direct costs, Requires a balance of public funding and a cost recovery target	Fees cover most direct and indirect costs, some public funding as appropriate
Benefits (health, safety, protection of assets, etc.)	Substantial public benefit (negative consequence if not provided)	Public and individual benefit	Primarily individual benefit
Competition in the Market	Limited or no alternative providers	Alternative providers unable to meet demand or need	Alternative providers readily available
Access	Open access by all	Open access, Limited access to specific, users	Limited access to specific users
Best Practice Cost Recovery Goal*	0-50%	50%-75%	75%-100%+
Program Distribution	5%	64%	30%

Cost-of-Service & Cost Recovery

Cost recovery targets should at least be identified for each Core Program Area, and for specific programs or events when realistic. The previously identified Core Program Areas would serve as an effective breakdown for tracking cost recovery metrics including administrative costs. Theoretically, staff should review how programs are grouped for similar cost recovery and subsidy goals to determine if current practices still meet management outcomes.

Determining cost recovery performance and using it to make informed pricing decisions involves three steps:

1. Classify all programs and services based on the public or private benefit they provide (as completed in the previous section).
2. Conduct a Cost-of-Service Analysis to calculate the full cost of each program.
3. Establish a cost recovery percentage, through Division policy, for each program or program type based on the outcomes of the previous two steps and adjust program prices accordingly.

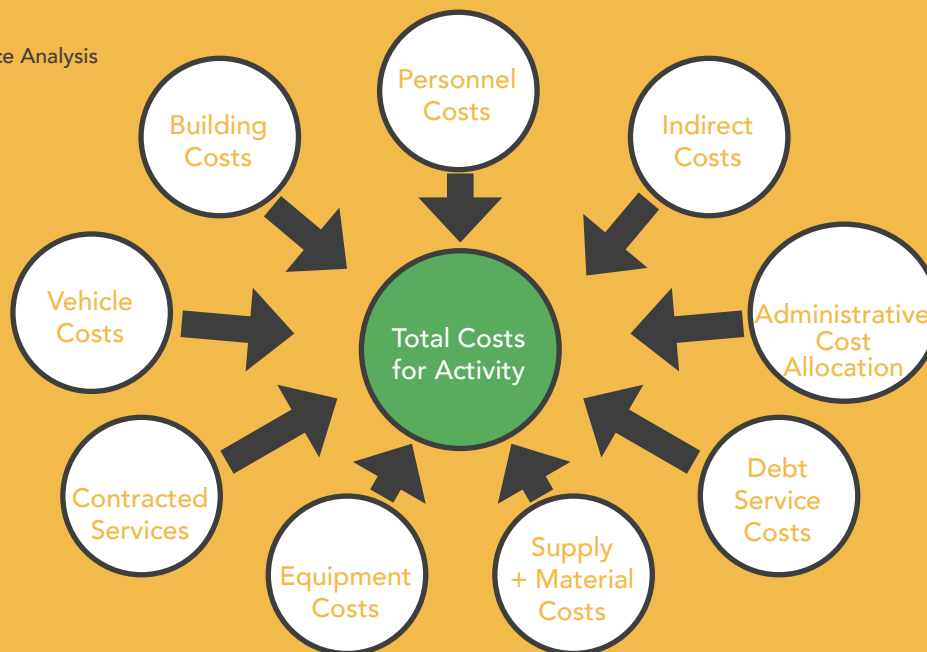
Understanding the Full Cost-of-Service

To develop specific cost recovery targets, full cost of accounting needs to be created on each class or program that accurately calculates direct and indirect costs. Cost recovery goals are established once these numbers are in place, and the Division's program staff should be trained on this process.

A Cost-of-Service Analysis should be conducted on each program, or program type, that accurately calculates direct (i.e., program-specific) and indirect (i.e., comprehensive, including administrative overhead) costs. Completing a Cost-of-Service Analysis not only helps determine the true and full cost of offering a program, but it also provides information that can be used to price programs based upon accurate delivery costs.

Figure 1.4m illustrates the common types of costs that must be accounted for in a Cost-of-Service Analysis.

Figure 1.4m
Cost-of-Service Analysis
Cost Factors

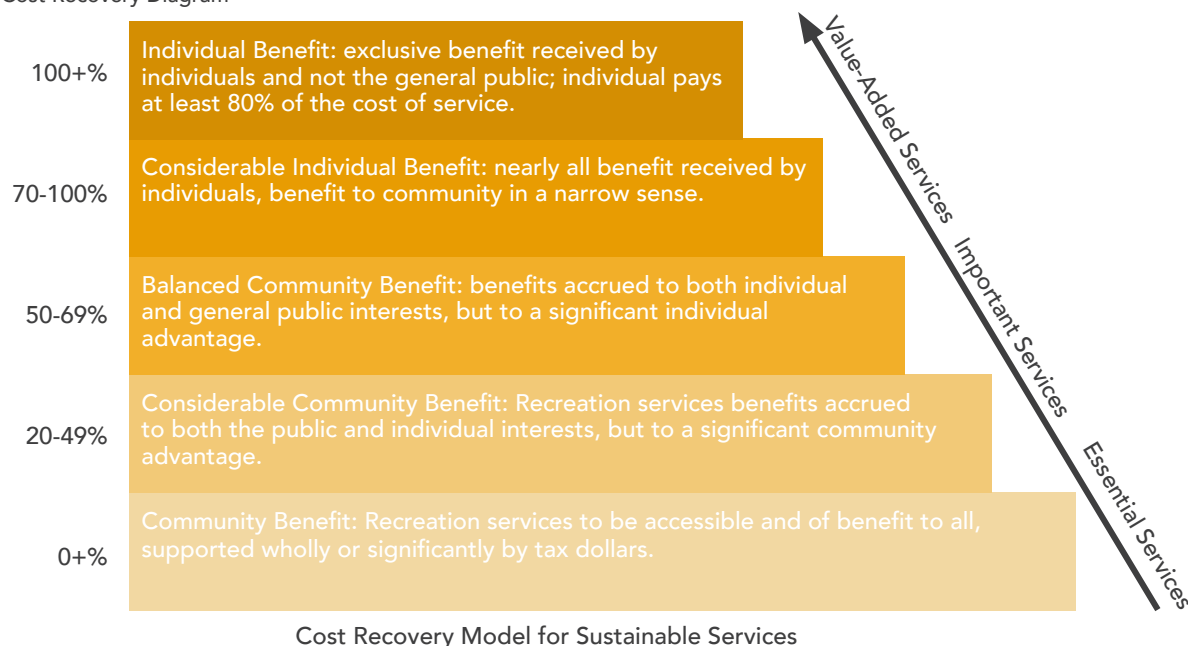


The methodology for determining the total Cost-of-Service involves calculating the total cost for the activity, program, or service, then calculating the total revenue earned for that activity. Costs (and revenue) can also be derived on a per unit basis. Program or activity units may include:

- Number of participants
- Number of tasks performed
- Number of consumable units
- Number of service calls
- Number of events
- Required time for offering program/service

Agencies use Cost-of-Service Analysis to determine what financial resources are required to provide specific programs at specific levels of service. Results are used to determine and track cost recovery as well as to benchmark different programs provided by the Division between one another. Cost recovery goals are established once Cost-of-Service totals have been calculated.

Figure 1.4n
Cost Recovery Diagram



Current Cost Recovery

The Divisions do not currently implement a universal Cost Recovery Philosophy and uses general cost recovery principles sparingly. Most Core Program Areas have vague cost recovery goals, with limited tracking of actual cost recovery achieved.

The Divisions should explore best practices that would assist staff in developing a general cost recovery philosophy that can be implemented Division wide. This will be further explored in Chapter 3: Long-Range Vision.

Figure 1.4o
Cost Recovery Goals by Core Program Area

Cost Recovery Goals by Core Program Area		
Core Program Area	Current Cost Recovery Goal Percentage	Actual Cost Recovery Achieved
Adults	35%	30%
Afterschool	100%	92%
Athletics	100%	80%
Aquatics	100%	Unknown
Facility & Outdoor Rentals	100%	85%
Seniors	30%	25%
Special Events	0-35%	0%
Sports Camps	100%	Unknown
Summer Camps	35-100%	20-200%
Tennis	100%	Unknown
Youth	100%	0-100%

Pricing

Pricing strategies are one mechanism agencies can use to influence cost recovery. Overall, the degree to which the Divisions uses various pricing strategies is dynamic. All pricing tactics are utilized by multiple Core Program Areas, except for Weekday/Weekend which is only used by Summer Camps and by location which is only used by Facility & Outdoor Rentals.

Residency is the most used pricing strategy, with only Special Events not employing this option.

Currently, the Core Program Area that utilizes the largest variety of pricing strategies is Facility & Outdoor Rentals which uses 6 of the 10 mentioned tactics.

Figure 1.4p details pricing methods currently in place by each Core Program Area and additional areas for strategies to implement over time.

Figure 1.4p
Pricing Strategy

Pricing Strategies										
Core Program Area	Age Segment	Family/ Household Status	Residency	Weekday/ Weekend	Prime / Non-Prime Time	Group Discounts	By Location	By Competition (Market Rate)	By Cost Recovery Goals	By Customer's Ability to Pay
Aquatics	●	●	●			●				
Sports Camps			●					●		●
Special Events										
Summer Camps	●	●	●	●	●					●
Adults			●							
Seniors	●		●							●
Afterschool Programs			●						●	●
Facility & Outdoor Rentals	●		●			●	●	●	●	
Athletics			●						●	●
Youth			●					●	●	●
Tennis	●		●		●	●			●	

Marketing, Volunteers, and Partnerships

Current Recreation Marketing and Communications

The Division's current marketing plan utilizes several communication methods to connect with residents including printed and online program guides, the City's website, flyers/brochures, direct mail, email blasts, marquees signs, in-facility signage, and various social media channels.

Effective communication strategies require striking an appropriate balance between the content with the volume of messaging while utilizing the "right" methods of delivery. The Divisions have a broad distribution of delivery methods for promoting programs. It is imperative to continue updating the marketing plan annually to provide information for community needs, demographics, and recreation trends.

An effective marketing plan must build upon and integrate with supporting plans and directly coordinate with organization priorities. The plan should also provide specific guidance as to how the Division's identity and brand is to be consistently portrayed across the multiple methods and deliverables used for communication.

Social Media

The City of Decatur utilizes Web 2.0 technology through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn. Here is a quick analysis of the Division by each platform. All numbers are as of August 9, 2022.

• Facebook

- 2,600 Followers
- About one post per day
- Used to promote programs, activities and employees

• Twitter

- 741 Followers
- Posts sporadically, mostly info shares and updates

• Instagram

- 863 Followers
- Posts sporadically
- Content includes program flyers, info shares, and employee spotlights



• Youtube (City of Decatur)

- 420 Subscribers
- Last video posted four months ago (City of Decatur Homelessness Town Hall)
- Last video promoting the Active Living Division was "Conditioning For Youth, By Youth"
- Most recent post were recruiting videos from June 13th 2022

• LinkedIn (City of Decatur)

- 1,886 Followers,
- 396 employees
- Last post was 2 weeks ago promoting job openings
- Utilize video to promote workplace culture and tell the story of why the City of Decatur is a great place to work

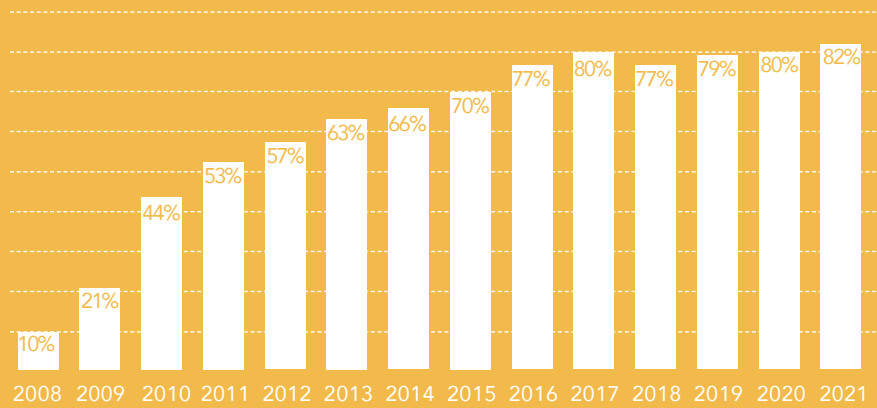
• TikTok

- There is currently no TikTok account

Social Media Users

Over the last decade, social media has become one of the Country's fastest growing trends. With only ten percent of the country using social media in 2008; today, an estimated eighty-two percent of the U.S. population is currently using some form of social media. With such a large percentage of the population using these online media platforms in their daily lives, it becomes essential for the City to take advantage of these marketing opportunities. Social media can be a useful and affordable tool to reach current and potentially new system users. Such platforms as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, Twitter, or LinkedIn are extremely popular with not only today's youth but also young and middle-aged adults.

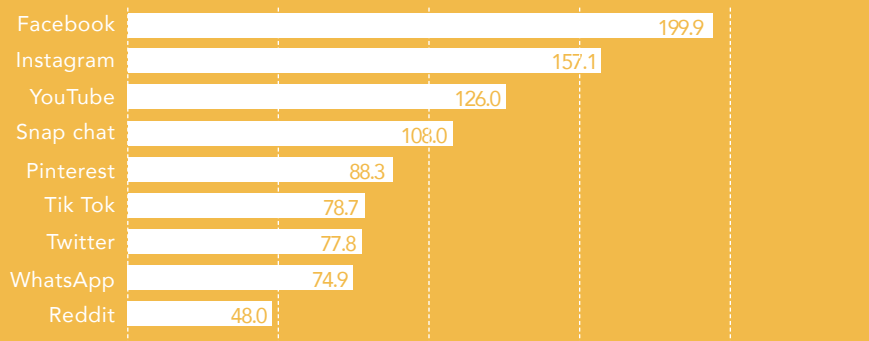
Percentage of U.S. Population Who Currently Use Any Social Media



Social Media Platforms

Below is a chart that depicts the most frequently used social media sites throughout the world. As of October 2021, Facebook stands out as the most heavily trafficked social media platform, with an estimated 2.9 billion visitors per month. YouTube is second with 2.3 billion visitors per month. TikTok has the highest growth rate at 85.3% in 2021

Most Popular Social Networks in U.S. participation in millions



Volunteer and Partnership Management

Today's realities require most public parks and recreation departments to seek productive and meaningful partnerships with both community organizations and individuals to deliver quality and seamless services to their residents. These relationships should be mutually beneficial to each party to better meet overall community needs and expand the positive impact of the agency's mission. Effective partnerships and meaningful volunteerism are key strategy areas for the Divisions to meet the needs of the community in the years to come.

Current Volunteer Management

When managed with respect and used strategically, volunteers can serve as the primary advocates for the City and its offerings. Currently, Decatur has volunteer information posted on the City's website, through the Community Development page, under the "VOLUNTEER! DECATUR" tab. There you can find the mission of Volunteer! Decatur, how to sign up online, who volunteers and a link to Community Volunteer Opportunities.

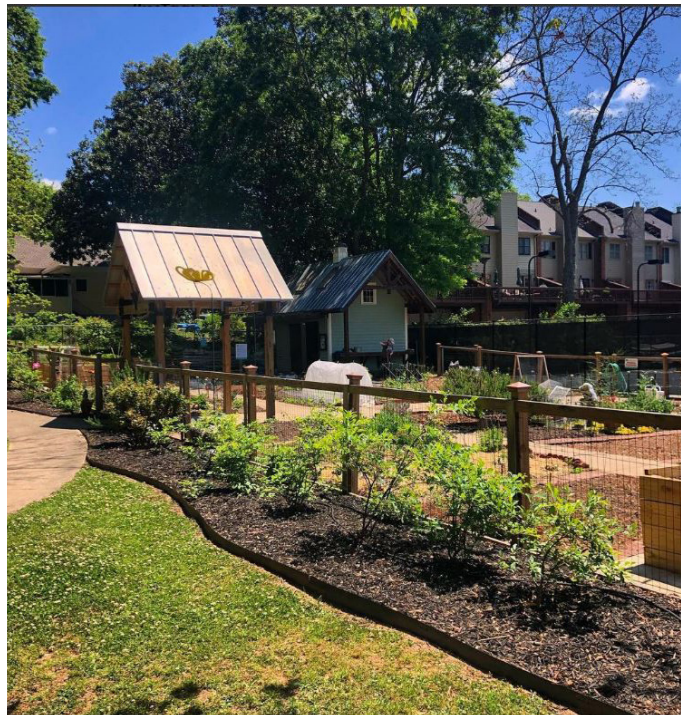
While the City has the system to seek volunteers, the Division does not use it. The system is geared primarily for large events. The Division is tracking the number of individual volunteers used annually, but not the number of hours, nor do they have a formal volunteer policy.

Recreation Program Partnerships

The Division currently works with several different types of partners throughout the community. These partnerships support facilitation of programs and sponsorships of community events. As with tracking of volunteer hours, tracking partnerships helps show leadership how well staff can leverage resources. In many instances, partnerships are inequitable to the public agency and do not

produce reasonable shared benefits between parties. It is not suggested that the Decatur's existing partnerships are inequitable; rather, in general many parks and recreation agencies' partnerships tend to be inequitable.

The Division should explore partnership policies that promote fairness and equity within the existing and future partnerships while helping staff to manage against potential internal and external conflicts. Certain partnership principles must be adopted by the Division for existing and future partnerships to work effectively. These will be explored in Chapter 3: Long-Range Vision.



Program Assessment Overview

Based on the various program assessments completed, following are summary observations:

- **Program Descriptions:** Overall, do not adequately communicate the key benefits and goals of each Core Program Area effectively and efficiently to the public.
- **Age Segments:** Distribution of age segments show a good amount of All ages programming with some gaps in additional Adult and Senior programming.
- **Program Lifecycles:** Over half of all programs currently fall within the “Growth” (moderate, but consistent participation growth) and “Mature” (slow participation growth) stages. This indicates a very stable programming mix, with an opportunity to add more new programs on a regular basis. A complete description of Lifecycle Stages can be found in Section 1.2.5.
- **Volunteer Program:** The City’s volunteer program allows residents and organizations to get involved and give back to the community, however, the Division should centralize their own volunteer program through the adoption of a formal volunteer policy. This will give the Division ownership of their own volunteer base, improving communication, training, and creating system advocates.
- **Marketing and Promotions:** From a marketing and promotions standpoint, the staff utilizes a variety of marketing methods including printed and online program guides, website, flyers/brochures, direct mail, email blasts, marquees signs, radio advertisements, in-facility signage, QR codes, and various social media channels as a part of the marketing mix.
- **Social Media:** Social media is an area of continued growth for any agency currently and the Division currently does not track any spending or return on investment for its marketing initiatives.
- **Customer Feedback:** Currently, customer feedback methods are limited.
- **Pricing Strategies:** Pricing strategies are varied across the board. Currently, the most frequently used approach by far is Residency followed by Age Segment. These are useful strategies in increasing participation as well as helping the Divisions become more self-sufficient.
- **Cost Recovery:** Cost Recovery Goals are in place for most programs; however, methodology and tracking are inconsistent.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Existing Parks and Recreation System

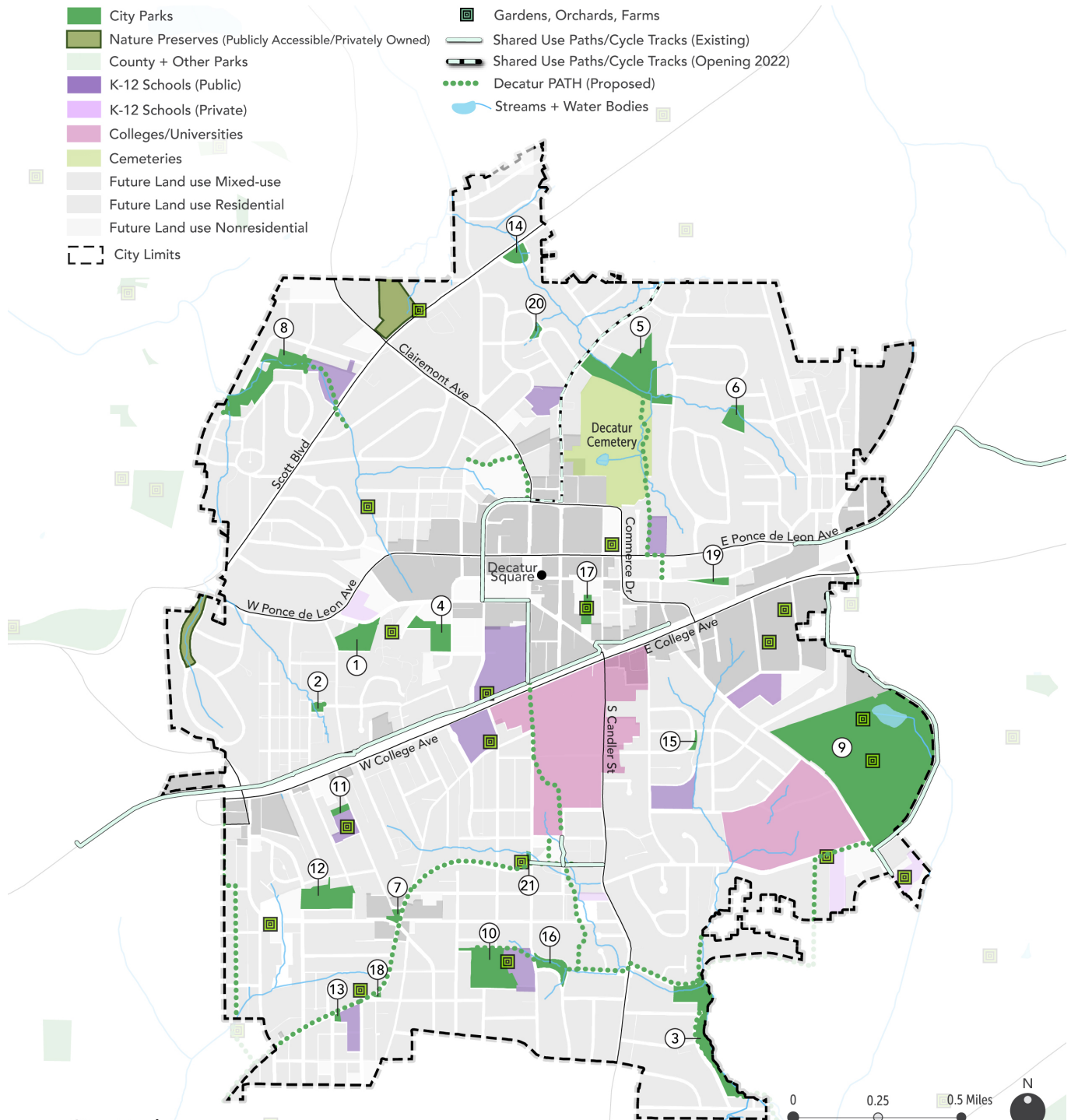
The City of Decatur's parks and recreation system is currently comprised of 22 parks, totaling 196 acres (including the Decatur Cemetery). The system also includes 4 indoor facilities that provide residents with approximately 135,000 square feet of indoor recreation space. These facilities range from the Glenlake Tennis Center that provides residents with a variety of tennis programs to the newly acquired Oakhurst Recreation Center which provides residents with a variety of indoor recreational facilities such as an indoor gym, community rooms, and an indoor pool.

Other public and private recreational resources are also located in and around the City of Decatur. These include facilities provided by the Decatur School District, DeKalb County, colleges and university, places of worship, and an YMCA.

Figure 1.4q maps the City's parks and recreation system while Figure 1.4r includes an inventory of the system.



Figure 1.4q
City of Decatur Parks and Recreation System Map



City Parks

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Adair Park | 6 Glenn Creek Nature Preserve | 11 Mead Road Park | 16 Rev. Roy Moss Sr. Garden |
| 2 Corley Commons | 7 Harmony Park | 12 Oakhurst Park | 17 Scott Park |
| 3 Dearbon Park | 8 Hidden Cove Park | 13 Oakview Road Park | 18 Spring Street Pocket Park |
| 4 Ebster Park | 9 Legacy Park | 14 Parkside Circle Park | 19 Sycamore Park |
| 5 Glenlake Park and Pool | 10 McKoy Park | 15 Poplar Circle Trail Extension | 20 Waddell Park |
| | | | 21 Wylde Woods |

Figure 1.4r
City of Decatur Parks and Recreation System Inventory

				Number of Indoor Facilities															
Park Name	Acres	Indoor Recreation Center Square Footage	Park Type/Classification	Recreation Centers	Community Centers	Senior Centers	Teen Centers	Nature Centers	Fitness Centers	Gyms	Stadiums	Arena	Performance Amphitheater	Indoor Track	Indoor Competitive Swimming Pools: 25 Meter	Indoor Competitive Swimming Pools: 50 Meter	Indoor Separated Dive Well	Indoor pool designated exclusively for leisure (i.e. non-competitive)	Therapeutic Pool
Decatur Recreation Center		34,500	Active	1						1				1					
Ebster Recreation Center	0.78	23,000	Active	1						1			1						
Oakhurst Recreation Center		22,500	Active	1						1								1	
Glenlake Tennis Center		1,650	Active																
Adair Park	5.00		Active																
Corley Commons	0.62		Passive																
Dearborn Park	8.70		Passive/Active																
Ebster Park	4.27		Active																
Glenlake Park (Pool + Tennis Center)	14.32		Active																
Glenn Creek Nature Preserve	2.50		Passive																
Rev. Roy Moss Sr. Garden	2.29		Passive																
Harmony Park	0.65		Passive																
Hidden Cove Park	9.85		Passive																
Legacy Park	71.48 ¹	53,500	Passive/Active							1									
McKoy Park	8.98		Active																
Mead Road Park	0.67		Active																
Oakhurst Park (Oakhurst Rec Center)	12.01		Active																
Oakview Road Park	0.26		Passive																
Parkside Circle Park	1.81		Passive																
Poplar Circle Trail Extension	0.37		Passive																
Scott Park (Decatur Rec Center)	2.92		Active																
Spring Street Pocket Park	0.11																		
Sycamore Park	1.04		Passive																
Waddell Park	0.59		Passive																
Wylde Woods ²	0.22		Passive																
Decatur Cemetery	47.5		Passive																
Totals	196.96	135,150		3	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0

¹Legacy Park total site acreage is 78.48. Seven acres have been committed to the South Housing Village for Affordable Housing, reflected in the park land acreage (71.48).
²This small park site is adjacent to the Wylde Center's Oakhurst Garden. Its management is being transferred back to the City from the Wylde Center.

Number of Outdoor Facilities

Playgrounds	Tot lots	Community Gardens	Basketball Courts	Tennis Courts	Pickleball Courts	Diamond Fields: baseball - adult (+200' FL)	Diamond Fields: baseball - youth (-200' FL)	Diamond Fields: softball fields - adult (+225-250' FL)	Diamond Fields: softball fields - youth (-225-250' FL)	Diamond Fields: softball fields - tee ball	Skate Park	Dog park	Lighted Fields	Rectangular Fields: Multi-purpose	Rectangular fields: football field	Rectangular fields: soccer field - adult	Rectangular fields: soccer field - youth	Rectangular Fields: Multi-purpose Synthetic	Golf Courses (18-Hole)	Aquatic Centers	Splash Pads/Spray Ground	Swimming Pools (Outdoor-Only)	Trails (miles)	
				5																				
1												1												
1			1											1							1	1		
1			1				1					1		1								1		
1			2											2									1	
1			1			1					1		1										1	
1																								
1			1	2				2		1		1	2	1										
1		1		2	2																			
8	0	2	6	9	2	1	1	2	0	1	1	3	3	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0

Figures 1.4.s shows the location and inventory of DeKalb County and City of Atlanta parks around the City of Decatur that contain athletic facilities such as adult and youth baseball, softball, soccer, and multi-purpose fields.

Figure 1.4.s
Other Parks and Recreation Providers within 2 Miles from the City of Decatur

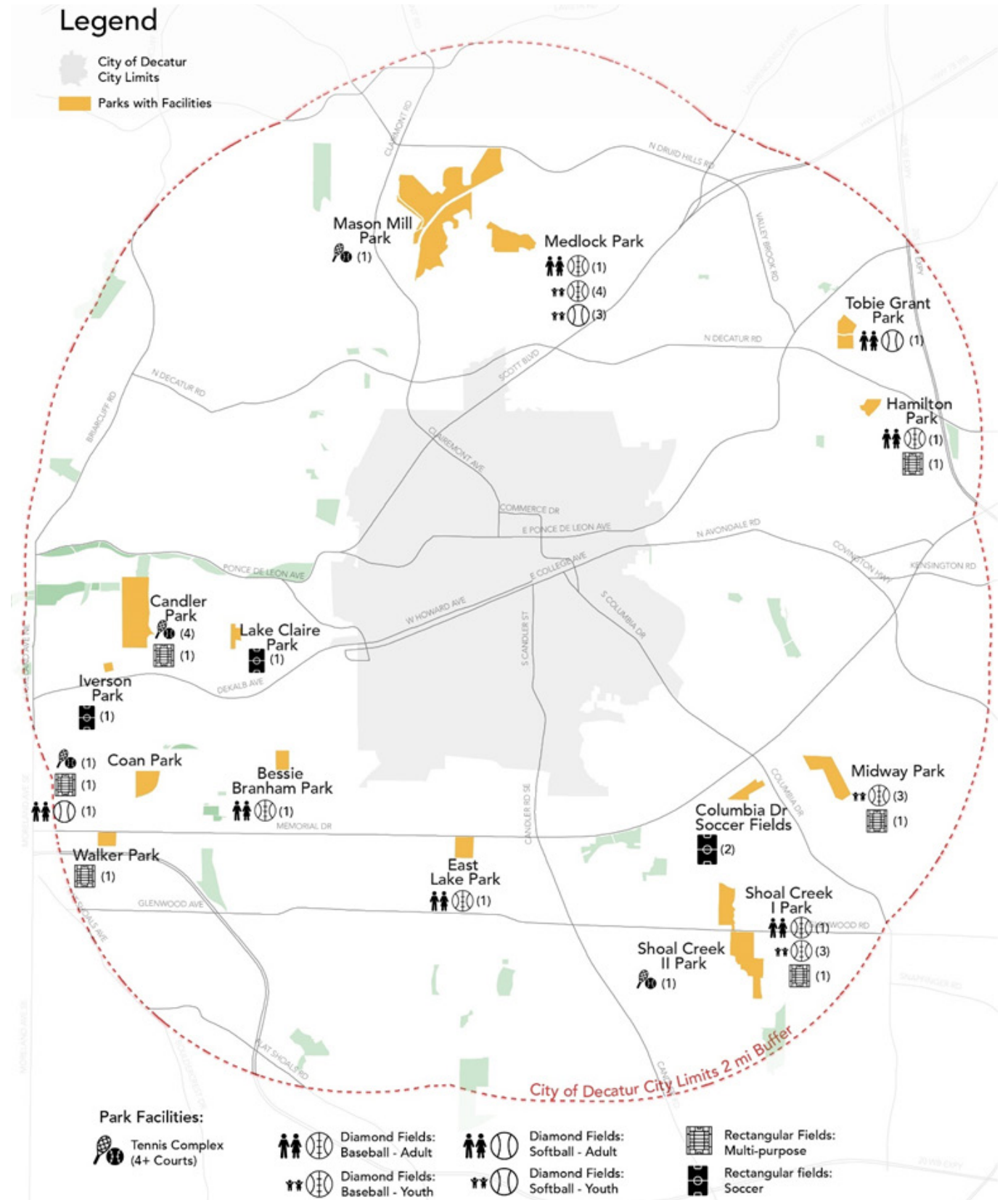


Figure 1.4t
Other Parks and Recreation Providers Inventory

Park Name	Acres	Indoor Recreation Center Square Footage	Park Type/Classification	Number of Indoor Facilities						Number of Outdoor Facilities				
				Recreation Centers	Fitness Centers	Gyms	Indoor Competitive Swimming Pools: 25 Meter	Indoor pool designated exclusively for leisure (i.e. non-competitive)	Therapeutic Pool	Playgrounds	Tot lots	Diamond Fields: softball fields - adult (+225-250' FL)	Swimming Pools (Outdoor Only)	Trails (miles)
Green Streets/Trails														
Green Street	1.20		Passive											
Bike Lanes			Passive/Active											16.32
Walking Trails														6.00
Public Preserves/Natural Areas														
DeKalb Co. - Dearborn Park	7.24		Passive											
Woodlands Garden (privately owned)	8.05													
Wylde Center (privately managed)	1.13													
Parkwood Park (privately owned)	3.16													
Total	19.58													
Other Parks/Facilities														
Decatur Square (MARTA Plaza)	1.83		Passive/Active											
CSD - Westminster ES	3.84		Active											
Toy Park	1.31		Public Access (owned by first Christian Church)							1	1			
First Baptist Church											1			
Decatur Family YMCA		40,000	Public Access-fee based	1	1	1	1	1	1					
Venetian Pools			Private Members Club-Fees and Dues										1	
Intown Stars		75,000	Public Access-fee based											
Total	6.98	115,000		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	

General Park and Facility Evaluations

Research by park experts has shown that all successful parks and public spaces share common qualities:

- They are easily accessible
- They are comfortable and have an attractive image
- They allow users of all ages to engage in a variety of activities and allow people to gather and meet one another
- They are sustainable – meaning that they help meet existing needs while not compromising the needs of future generations

Considering these qualities, the City of Decatur parks were evaluated based on 5 categories and 34 sub-categories using Glenlake Park as a measuring stick for the rest of the park system.

Parks were evaluated collaboratively by City staff and the consultant using a five-point scale:

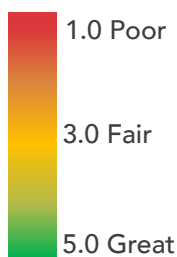


Figure 1.4u illustrates the results of this analysis and Figure 1.4v maps the results.



ACCESS

Proximity, Access, and Linkages

- **Visibility from a distance**
Can one easily see into the park?
- **Ease of walking to the park**
Can someone walk directly into the park safely and easily?
- **Clarity of information/signage**
Is there signage that identifies the park, and/or signage that provides additional information for users?
- **ADA Compliance**
Does the site generally appear to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) laws for accessibility?
- **Lighting**
Is the park lighted appropriately for use at night? (if applicable)



COMFORT

Comfort and Image

- **First impression/overall attractiveness**
Is the park attractive at first glance?
- **Feeling of safety**
Does the park feel safe at the time of the visit?
- **Cleanliness/overall quality of maintenance (Exterior /Interior)**
Is the park clean and free of litter?
- **Comfort of places to sit**
Are there comfortable places to sit?
- **Protection from bad weather**
Is there shelter in case of bad weather?
- **Evidence of management/stewardship (Exterior/ Interior)**
Is there visual evidence of site management?
- **Ability to easily supervise and manage the park or facility (Interior)**
How difficult it is to supervise the park and its facilities?
- **Condition and effectiveness of any equipment or operation systems**
Is the equipment and/or operating system in good condition?
- **Branding**
Does the park exhibit appropriate branding?



USE

Uses, Activities, and Sociability

- **Mix of uses/things to do**
Is there a variety of things to do given the type of park?
- **Level of activity**
How active is the park with visitors?
- **Sense of pride/ownership**
Is there evidence of community pride in the park?
- **Programming flexibility**
How flexible is the park in accommodating multiple uses?
- **Ability of facility to effectively support current organized programming**
Is the site meeting the needs of organized programs?
- **Marketing or promotional efforts for the facility**
Is the site being marketed effectively?



BUILDINGS

Buildings and Architecture

- **Image and aesthetics**
Is the building attractive?
- **Clarity of entry and connection to the park**
Is the building integrated into its surroundings?
- **Interior layout**
Is the layout functional?
- **Interior finishes, furniture, and equipment**
Are the furnishings and equipment inside the building of good condition and quality?
- **Functioning dimensions of spaces**
Does the organization of space support the building's intended function?
- **Structural integrity**
Is there any obvious need for structural repairs?
- **Building enclosure**
Is there any obvious need for repairs to the building shell?
- **Building systems**
Are all the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems in working order?
- **Energy and sustainability**
Is there evidence that the building is energy efficient?



NRPA PILLARS

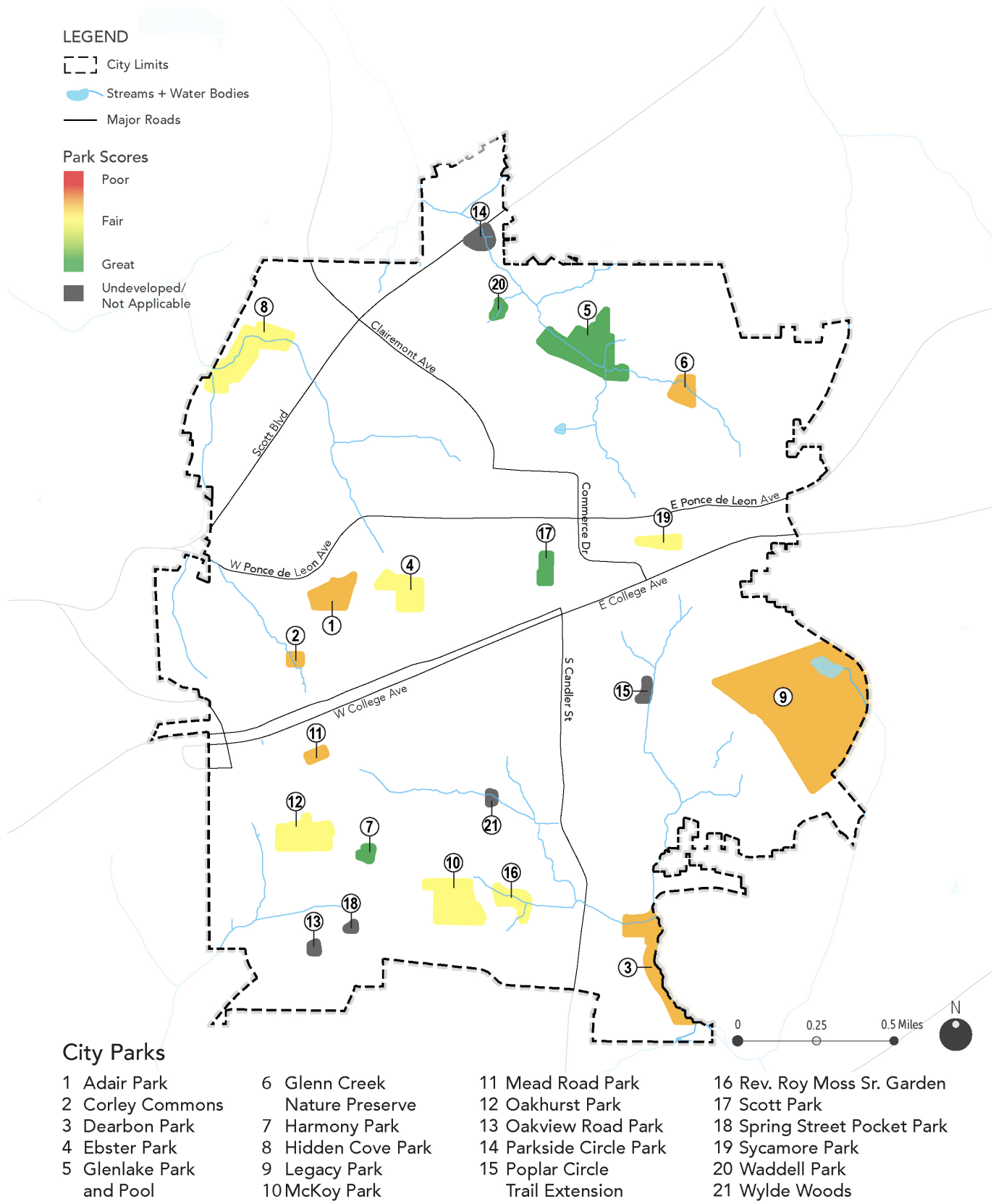
Health and Wellness, Conservation, Social Equity

- **Health and Wellness**
Does the park promote a variety of health and wellness opportunities?
- **Conservation**
Does the park promote conservation practices?
- **Social Equity**
Does the park promote social equity?

Figure 1.4u
Park Site Evaluations Results

	Adair Park	Corley Commons	Dearbon Park	Ebster Park	Glenlake Park and Pool	Glenn Creek Preserve	Harmony Park	Hidden Cove Park	Legacy Park (Buildings)	McKoy Park	Mead Park	Oakhurst Park	Rev. Moss Sr. Garden	Scott Park	Sycamore Park	Waddell Park	Average
TOTAL SYSTEM AVERAGES	2.8	2.1	2.9	3.0	4.0	2.7	4.1	3.4	2.2	3.2	2.4	3.2	3.7	4.4	3.3	4.2	3.1
TOTAL SYSTEM AVERAGES (Without Architecture)	2.8	2.1	2.9	2.8	3.9	2.7	4.1	3.4	-	3.2	2.4	3.4	3.7	4.4	3.3	4.2	3.2
PROXIMITY/ACCESS/LINKAGES	2.4	2.4	2.0	2.8	3.4	1.7	4.4	2.8	-	2.4	2.6	3.0	3.3	3.8	3.5	4.0	2.9
Visibility from a distance	2	1	2	2	1	1	5	1	-	1	2	2	5	2	4	4	2.3
Ease in walking to the park	4	4	4	4	5	2	5	4	-	4	5	5	4	5	5	4	4.3
Clarity of information/signage	2	1	1	4	4	2	4	4	-	2	1	4	3	4	4	4	2.9
ADA Compliance	2	4	1	2	4	-	4	2	-	2	1	2	1	4	1	4	2.3
Lighting	2	2	2	2	3	-	4	-	-	2	2	3	-	4	-	-	2.6
COMFORT & IMAGE:	2.8	2.0	3.1	2.3	3.8	3.0	3.6	3.5	-	3.1	2.1	2.9	4.2	4.5	3.6	4.7	3.2
First Impression / overall attractiveness	3	2	3	2	4	3	2	3	-	3	2	3	4	4	4	5	3.1
Feeling of safety	4	3	3	2	3	4	4	4	-	4	4	3	5	4	4	5	3.6
Cleanliness/overall quality of maintenance (Exterior Site)	3	2	4	2	3	3	4	3	-	3	2	3	4	4	4	5	3.1
Cleanliness/overall quality of maintenance (Facilities Interior)	-	-	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	5	-	-	3.5
Comfort of places to sit	2	1	4	2	4	1	4	3	-	3	2	4	4	4	4	4	3.0
Protection from bad weather	1	1	4	4	3	-	1	-	-	4	1	3	-	5	1	-	2.4
Evidence of management /stewardship (Exterior Site)	3	4	4	2	3	4	4	5	-	3	2	3	5	4	4	5	3.6
Evidence of management /stewardship (Facility(ies) Interior)	-	-	-	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	5	-	-	3.2
Ability to Easily Supervise and Manage the Park or Facility (Interior)	-	-	-	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	2.6
Condition and Effectiveness of any Equipment or Operating Systems	3	-	2	2	5	-	4	-	-	2	2	3	-	5	-	-	3.2
Branding	3	1	1	2	5	3	4	3	-	3	2	2	3	5	4	4	2.9
USES AND ACTIVITIES & SOCIABILITY	3.2	2.1	3.5	3.3	4.5	3.3	4.3	4.0	-	4.0	-	4.3	3.5	5.0	2.8	4.0	3.7
Mix of uses/things to do	3	1	4	5	5	2	4	4	-	5	3	5	3	5	1	4	3.5
Level of activity	4	3	3	3	5	3	5	4	-	5	4	5	3	5	2	4	3.8
Sense of pride/ownership	4	2	5	2	5	5	5	5	-	4	3	5	5	5	5	5	4.2
Programming Flexibility	2	-	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	3	-	4	-	5	-	-	3.1
Ability of Facility to Effectively Support Current Organized Programming	2	-	3	3	4	-	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	5	-	-	3.3
Marketing or Promotional Efforts for the Facility or Activities	4	1	3	4	5	3	3	3	-	4	3	4	3	5	3	3	3.4
BUILDINGS AND ARCHITECTURE:	-	-	-	3.4	4.4	-	-	-	2.4	-	-	2.7	-	4.4	-	-	3.4
Image and Aesthetics	-	-	-	4	5	-	-	-	3	-	-	2	-	5	-	-	3.8
Clarity of Entry and Connections to Park	-	-	-	2	5	-	-	-	3	-	-	2	-	5	-	-	3.4
Interior Layout	-	-	-	3	5	-	-	-	1	-	-	3	-	5	-	-	3.4
Interior Finishes and Furniture and Equipment	-	-	-	3	4	-	-	-	1	-	-	3	-	4	-	-	3.0
Functioning Dimensions of spaces	-	-	-	4	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	3	-	5	-	-	3.2
Structural Integrity	-	-	-	5	5	-	-	-	4	-	-	5	-	5	-	-	4.8
Building Enclosure	-	-	-	3	5	-	-	-	3	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	3.4
Building Systems	-	-	-	3	5	-	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	3	-	-	3.0
Energy and Sustainability	-	-	-	4	4	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	4	-	-	3.0
NRPA PILLARS	3.0	1.7	4.0	3.7	4.0	3.3	2.3	3.3	-	3.0	2.3	3.0	3.0	4.3	1.7	3.0	2.9
Health and Wellness	3	1	4	4	4	3	2	4	-	4	3	4	3	5	1	3	3.1
Conservation	3	2	4	4	4	4	3	3	-	3	2	3	3	4	3	3	3.1
Social Equity	3	2	4	3	4	3	2	3	-	2	2	2	3	4	1	3	2.6

Figure 1.4v
Map of Park Site Evaluations



General Park and Facility Evaluation Summary Findings

Based on the evaluation of the City of Decatur’s parks and recreation system that uses the criteria previously described, and Glenlake Park as the measuring stick, it appears that the City’s parks and recreation system is in fair condition, with an overall score of 3.1. The system displayed a variety of strengths and opportunities that the City should build on and improve wherever possible. These will be further explored during the Long-Range Visioning Phase of the project.

Proximity, Access, and Linkages

(+) STRENGTHS



- Many of the City’s parks provide users the opportunity to walk to the park along sidewalks or low traffic streets. Great examples are the sidewalks and cycle tracks being built along Church Street in front of Glenlake Park and the streets connecting Harmony Park, Mead Park, Oakhurst Park, Scott Park, and Sycamore Park to the surrounding neighborhood. Some of the sidewalks are also separated from the road by a landscape buffer that provides an opportunity to install shade trees, pedestrian lights, and where appropriate, amenities and furnishings to enhance the walking experience.



- Many of the City’s parks provide a fair hierarchy of signage and wayfinding including gateway, identification, regulatory, and educational signage. Glenlake Park provides a good example of this with various types of signs throughout the park that direct and educate park users.

(-) OPPORTUNITIES



- Most of the City’s parks do not provide adequate visibility or clear sight lines into the park. Harmony Park and Rev. Moss Sr. Garden are examples of parks that provide clear visibility into the park from at least two sides of the park. The City should strive to improve visibility to the interior of the City’s parks wherever possible.



- While many of City’s parks provide a fair hierarchy of signage and wayfinding, there is an opportunity to enhance signage in all of the City’s park. Additional signage opportunities that the City should consider include a park system location map, park amenity location map and amenity directional signage (depending on the size and complexity of the park), amenity signs, and educational interpretive signs.



- Most of the City's park lights need to be upgraded to be LED, allow users opportunities to enjoy park amenities after dusk, where appropriate, or provide safety lights in parks where after dusk activities are not appropriate.
- While most of the City's parks are accessible, the City should continue to improve ADA accessibility to park and park amenities to ensure that people with disabilities have equitable access to the City's park amenities.

Comfort and Image

(+) STRENGTHS



- The first impression and overall attractiveness of many of the City's parks is fair. Glenlake Park, Harmony Park, Rev. Roy Moss Sr. Garden, Scott Park, and Waddell Park are examples that stand out. The positive first impression and overall attractiveness that these parks exhibit also translates into a feeling of safety.



- Most of the City's parks exhibit good signs of overall cleanliness, quality of exterior maintenance, management, and stewardship with some parks exhibiting a higher degree than others. Notable examples include Scott Park and Waddell Park.

- Many of the City's parks have adequate places to sit that are located in pleasant areas.

- Some of the interior spaces of City park buildings can be easily supervised and managed due to an interior design that is configured to allow clear site lines to major amenities, entrances, and exists from a central location. Buildings in Glenlake Park and Scott Park are good examples of spaces that facilitate interior supervision. This translates into strong interior management/stewardship and cleanliness, which these parks exhibit.



- Some of the City's parks and facilities contain equipment that is in fair condition, maintained, and effective. Notable examples include Glenlake Park and Scott Park.
- Some of the City's parks contain a consistent use of building materials, facilities, amenities, and furnishings that collectively create a brand for the park. Notable examples include Ebster Park and Scott Park.

(-) OPPORTUNITIES



- While most of the City’s parks have a fair first impression, overall attractiveness, cleanliness, quality of maintenance, management, and stewardship, there is an opportunity to improve the level of care and maintenance in all of the City’s parks to take the system from fair to great. This includes better maintaining and upgrading hardscapes, landscapes, amenities, and furnishings that are approaching the end of their life cycle and are out of date. Additionally, there is an opportunity to improve the overall experience of parks through thoughtful design and organization of spaces, amenities, and circulation that elevates the appearance and experience of parks.



- While many of the City’s parks have adequate places to sit that are located in pleasant areas, some parks do not. The City should strive to incorporate a variety of seating options in parks including movable tables and chairs. Parks that could use improving seating include Adair Park, Corley Commons, Ebster Park, Glenn Creek Preserve, Mead Park, and Sugar Creek.



- Most of the City’s parks do not contain shelters where park users can go to find refuge from Georgia’s inclement weather. The City should strive to incorporate more shelters and shade in parks including pavilions, shade structures for playgrounds, exercise stations, and seating areas, and shade trees to enhance park users’ experience and comfort. Parks that could use shelters include Adair Park, Corley Commons, Harmony Park, Mead Park, Sycamore Park, and Sugar Creek.



- Some of the City’s parks contain equipment and operating systems that are in good condition, however, others do not. Parks that could use improvements to equipment and operating systems include Ebster Park, McKoy Park, and Mead Park. The City should ensure that the equipment and operating systems in all of the City’s parks are in good working condition.

- Many of the City’s parks have the potential to enhance their branding through the consistent use of high-quality materials, colors, textures, furnishings, signage, details, upkeep, and overall aesthetics. The City should develop park standards that define the City’s brand and implement the branding throughout the parks and recreation system.

Uses, Activities, and Sociability

(+) STRENGTHS



- A variety of uses, activities, and things to do for park users of different ages are available in some of the City's parks with some parks having more opportunities than others. These varying uses and activities help increase the level of activity in many of the City's Parks. Notable examples include Ebster Park, Glenlake Park, McKoy Park, Oakhurst Park, and Scott Park.



- Many of the City's parks exhibit a high degree of pride and ownership with no signs of litter, vandalism, misuse, or lack of use of facilities. Many parks appear to be actively used and enjoy a high level of volunteerism, signs of care, and upkeep. Notable examples include Dearbon Park, Glenlake Park, Glenn Creek Preserve, Harmony Park, Hidden Cove Park, Oakhurst Park, Rev. Roy Moss Sr. Garden, Scott Park, Sycamore Park, and Waddell Park.



- Some of the City's parks are adequately planned and spatially organized to facilitate organized programming due to the proper size, location of facilities, and amenities. Additionally, some of the City's parks provide an adequate opportunity for flexible use due to the presence of multi-purpose outdoor and indoor spaces. Examples include Oakhurst and Scott Park.
- Some of the evaluated parks use a variety of marketing and promotional tools to make residents aware of the park, its recreation facilities, activities, and programs. Notable examples include Glenlake Park and Scott Park.

(-) OPPORTUNITIES



- While some of the City's parks provide a range of facilities, amenities, and activities for users of all ages, others do not. This limited range of facilities, amenities, and activities in parks also limits the level of activity that occurs in these parks. Even parks that are well used in the evenings or the weekends, may remain underused in other parts of the day. The City should strive to add more activities and things to do in parks based on the community's needs and priorities. Specific parks that could use additional things to do include Adair Park, Corley Commons, Glenn Creek Preserve, Mead Park, Rev. Roy Moss Sr. Garden, Sycamore Park, and Sugar Creek.



- While some of the City parks are adequately planned, with spatial organization to facilitate organized programming, others are not. Spaces for multi-purpose, multi-generational experiences and parking appear to be limiting factors. Parks that could be improved include Adair Park, Dearbon Park, Ebster Park, and McKoy Park.
- Many of the City parks lack marketing strategies that make use of a variety of promotional tools to make residents aware of the park, its recreation facilities, activities, and programs. To the extent possible, the City should look to enhance marketing efforts through as many avenues as possible including traditional and digital means.

Buildings and Architecture

(+) STRENGTHS



- Most of the City's park buildings have an adequate image and aesthetic through the use of appropriate proportions and materials, and contribute to the context of the park and surrounding neighborhood. Notable examples include buildings in Glenlake Park, Scott Park, and Ebster Park.



- Most of the City's park buildings have adequate entry points and connections to surrounding outdoor spaces as well pleasant entry and lobby spaces with an adequate sense of arrival. Additionally, most of the City's park building interior layouts are well-organized to facilitate intuitive circulation, safety and security, and use. Notable examples include Glenlake Park and Scott Park.



- Most of the City's park buildings have fair interior finishes, furniture, and equipment that is undamaged, well-maintained, and aesthetically pleasing. Examples include Glenlake Park and Scott Park.
- Some of the City's park buildings have adequate and functioning dimensions that are ample in size and volume for their function. A notable example is Scott Park.
- Most of the City's park buildings showed no visible evidence of loss of integrity of any structural members, building enclosure, and building systems. Examples include Ebster Park, Glenlake Park, and Scott Park.

(-) OPPORTUNITIES



- While most of the City's parks buildings exhibit a positive image and aesthetic, one could be improved - Oakhurst Park. This building may benefit from exterior renovations to enhance its aesthetic and curb appeal.
- While most of the City's park buildings have clear entry points and connections to surrounding outdoor spaces, some in particular could be improved - Ebster Park and Oakhurst Park.



- While most of the City's park buildings have adequate interior finishes, furniture, and equipment, buildings in Legacy Park could use improvements. The interior finishes, furniture, and equipment are aging and could be renovated and brought up to date.
- While most of the City's park buildings have adequate and functioning dimensions, the Glenlake Park and Legacy Park gym could be renovated and expanded to provide more room for programming and storage.



- Some of the City parks' buildings contain systems that are aging and in need of repair; particularly buildings in Legacy Park and Oakhurst. Additionally, most of these systems are not energy efficient. Over time, the City should look to replace and upgrade building systems to have energy efficient elements and use sustainable materials.

NRPA Pillars

(+) STRENGTHS



- Most of the City parks show good examples of health and wellness with a variety of sustained activities and programs, fitness equipment, trails, walking tracks, play areas, and hard courts. A notable example is Scott Park. Other examples include Dearbon Park, Ebster Park, Glenlake Park, Hidden Cove Park, McKoy Park, and Oakhurst Park.
- Most of the City's parks exhibit adequate conservation with a high percentage of tree canopy and use of some sustainable materials. Examples include Dearbon Park, Ebster Park, Glenlake Park, Glenn Creek Preserve, and Scott Park.

(-) OPPORTUNITIES



- While most of the City's parks show good examples of health and wellness there is an opportunity to enhance these features in three of the City's parks - Corley Commons, Harmony Park, and Wylde Woods (managed by Wylde Center).
- While most of the City's parks exhibit adequate conservation with a high percentage of tree canopy and some sustainable materials, there is an opportunity to enhance conservation strategies in all of the City's parks. These includes the use of additional sustainable materials, erosion control, stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs), invasive plant control, the use of native landscaping, and other environmental best practices.
- While some of the City's parks exhibit good social equity strategies such as availability and ease of access, ADA compliance, recreation opportunities for many different ages/abilities located in a racially, ethnically, and economically diverse area, others do not. Corley Commons, Harmony Park, McKoy Park, Mead Road Park, Oakhurst Park, Sycamore Park, and Wylde Woods are parks that could be improved to provide additional social equity opportunities.



In addition to these general park site evaluations, the Team completed detailed facility site assessments with short and long-term costs of maintaining the aesthetics and functionality of the system. These are included in the following pages. Both sets of park site evaluations will be used to inform future park capital improvements that will be identified in the Long-Range Vision phase.

Detailed Facility Site Assessments

To maintain the aesthetics and functionality of the City of Decatur’s parks and recreation system, significant investments are required over the next ten years. This section provides a summary of the financial requirements and key issues identified for the parks and recreation systems facilities included within the assessment.

Overall, the parks and recreation facilities are in fair condition. Significant capital investments have been made at several of the parks and recreation facilities over the last 15 years. The primary purpose of the condition assessment was to develop a strategic long range capital plan that the City could utilize to properly budget and plan for addressing the deferred maintenance backlog and future capital renewal requirements. Expenditures identified in the assessment typically do not include programmatic improvements, such as facility or park expansion or reconfiguration.

A reactionary approach of repairing or replacing upon failure is one that comes with inherent risk. To fully comprehend the magnitude of these risks, one must weigh the cost of the system or component renewal versus the costs incurred at the time

of a system failure along with potential collateral costs resulting from the failure. Reactionary spending carries a higher premium of sometimes up to 75 percent or more than typical proactive capital renewal projects.

A strategic proactive approach must be taken to help mitigate the inherent risks associated with aged systems and components. To accomplish this, a structured capital investment plan must be implemented. A strategic capital investment plan focusing on reducing the

deferred maintenance backlog, along with planning for future capital renewal items, will help ensure that the operations and overall mission of the City of Decatur parks and recreation facilities is not impacted.

Financial Summary

The following section provides a summary of the capital investment requirements over the 10 year study period for the parks and recreation facilities included in the assessment. All costs are provided in 2022 dollars.

Figure 1.4w
Capital Investment Requirement Per Park Over the Next 10-Years

Parks	Expenditures
Scott Park	\$183,800
Mead Road Park	\$293,400
Oakview (Harmony) Park	\$38,600
Parkside Circle Park	\$18,200
Glenn Creek Preserve	\$14,000
Glenlake Park	\$528,950
Oakhurst Park	\$792,200
Adair Park	\$352,220
Hidden Cove Park	\$128,500
Waddell Park	\$39,720
Sycamore Park	\$23,100
McKoy Park	\$1,085,050
Rev Moss Sr. Garden	\$31,300
Dearborn Park	\$221,450
Corley Commons	\$16,350
Sugar Creek Garden	\$24,700
Ebster Park	\$1,387,850
Total	\$5,081,670

Figure 1.4x
Capital Investment Requirement Per Facility (Rec. Centers and Pools) Over the Next 10-Years

Facility(Rec. Centers & Pools)	Expenditures
Oakhurst Rec Center & Indoor Pool	\$183,800
Glenlake Pool	\$293,400
Glenlake Tennis Center	\$38,600
Legacy Park Gym	\$18,200
Cochran Building	\$14,000
McKoy Pool	\$528,950
Decatur Rec Center	\$792,200
Ebster Rec Center	\$352,220
Ebster Pool	\$128,500
Total	\$8,708,443

Figure 1. Figure 1.4y
Capital Investment Requirements for Parks Per Year

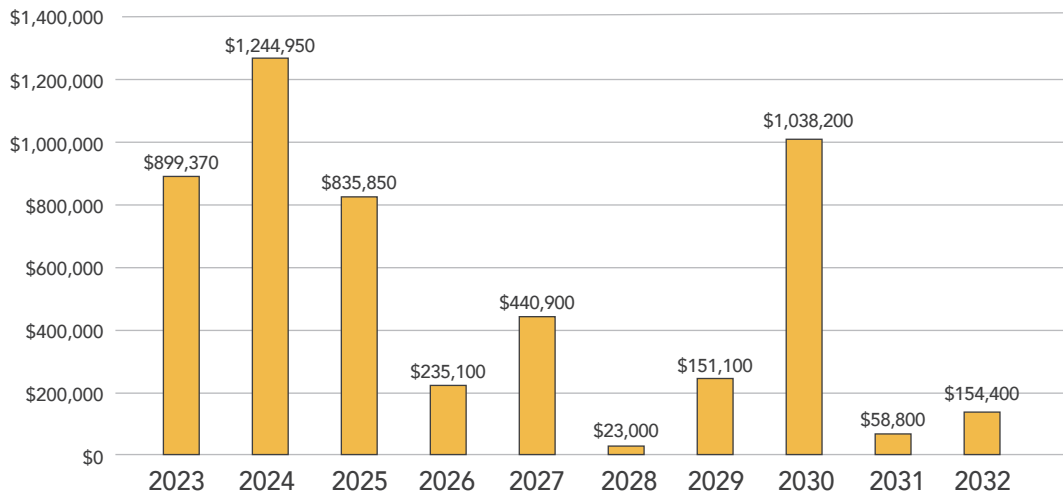
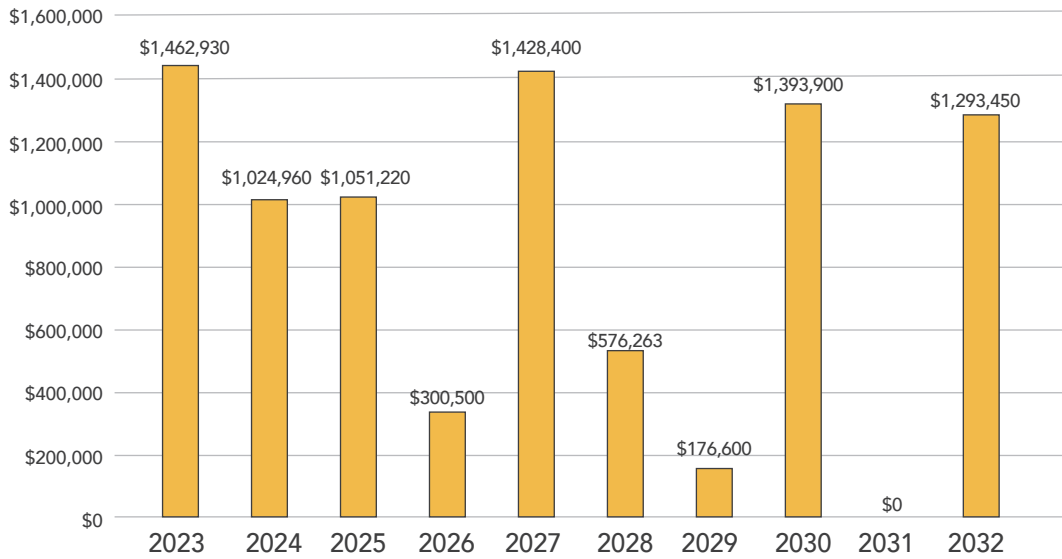


Figure 1.4z
Capital Investment Requirements for Facilities (Rec. Centers and Pools) Per Year



Expenditures by Category

A classification category has been assigned for each recommendation which helps group expenditures based on why it should be completed. The Consultant Team classified each recommendation by one of the five classifications identified in Figure 1.4aa below.

Figure 1.4aa
Expenditure Categories

Category	Definition	Description
SM	Scheduled Maintenance	Scheduled maintenance is major maintenance that is typically required to maintain effective operation of an asset and/or prolong the lifecycle. This does not include items related to preventative maintenance activities and typically have a requirement total of over \$2,500.
CR	Capital Renewal	Capital Renewal projects correct unacceptable conditions caused by aged building components which will exceed their useful life cycle within the next ten years. These items generally function as originally intended. If execution of Capital Renewal projects is deferred for an inordinate amount of time, conditions may deteriorate, and the projects may be re-categorized as Deferred Maintenance.
DM	Deferred Maintenance	Deferred Maintenance is a maintenance or repair that is past due. This work will return a component or system to an acceptable condition, prevent physical depreciation or loss in the value of a building, minimize or correct wear, and maintain the maximum reliability and current useful life of the facility or component.
ES	Energy & Sustainable	When the repair work or replacement of equipment or systems are recommended to improve energy and sustainability performance.
CI	Capital Improvement	When a recommendation to install or upgrade a system component improves or enhances the performance or functionality of the facility.

Figure 1.4ab

Expenditures by Category by Year for Parks

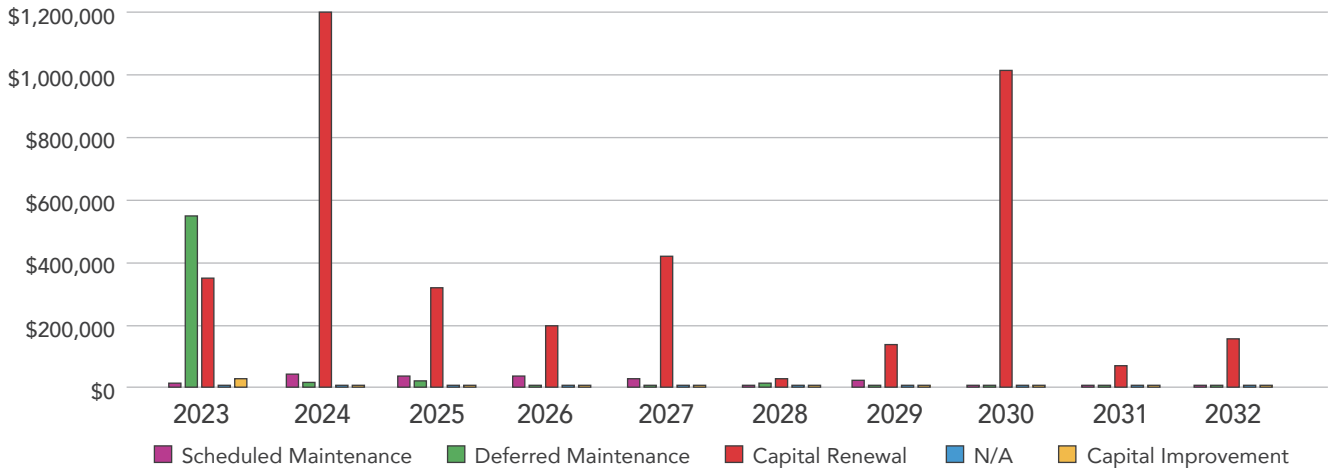
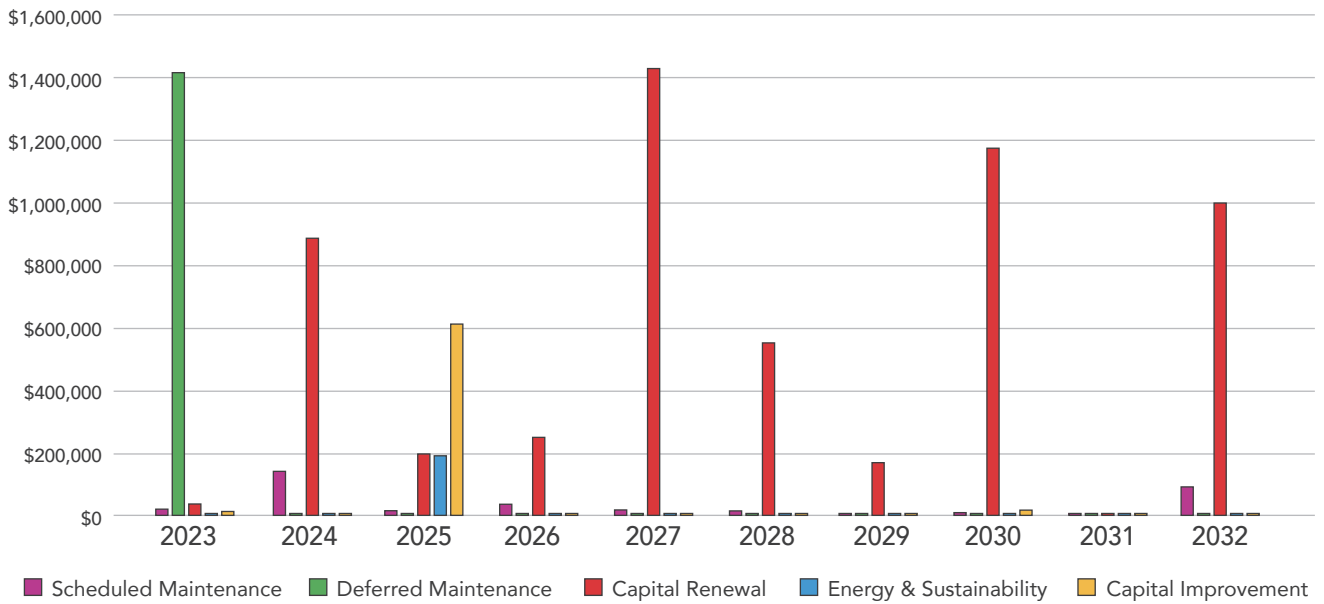


Figure 1.4ac

Expenditures by Category by Year for Rec. Centers and Pools



Expenditures by Priority

To provide ease of project prioritization within the expenditure forecast, the Consultant Team prioritized each expenditure by criticality. These priorities are listed and described in Figure 1.4ad.

Figure 1.4ad
Expenditure Priority Categories

Category	Definition	Description
I	Currently Critical	Conditions in this category require immediate action to either correct a cited safety hazard, stop accelerated deterioration, or return a facility/system to operation
II	Potentially Critical	Conditions in this category, if not corrected expeditiously, will become critical within a year.
III	Necessary/Not yet Critical	Conditions in this category require appropriate attention to preclude predictable deterioration or potential downtime and the associated damage or higher costs if deferred further.
IV	Recommended	Conditions in this category include items that represent a sensible improvement to existing conditions. These are not required for the most basic function of the facility.
V	Appearance	Conditions in this category include finishes that have deteriorated and are required to maintain the required aesthetic standards.
VI	Does Not Meet Codes/Standards	Conditions in this category include items that do not conform to existing codes but are "grandfathered" in their condition. No action is required at this time, but should substantial work be undertaken in contiguous areas, certain existing conditions may require correction to comply with current code standards.

Figure 1.4ae
Expenditure by Named Priority by Year for Parks

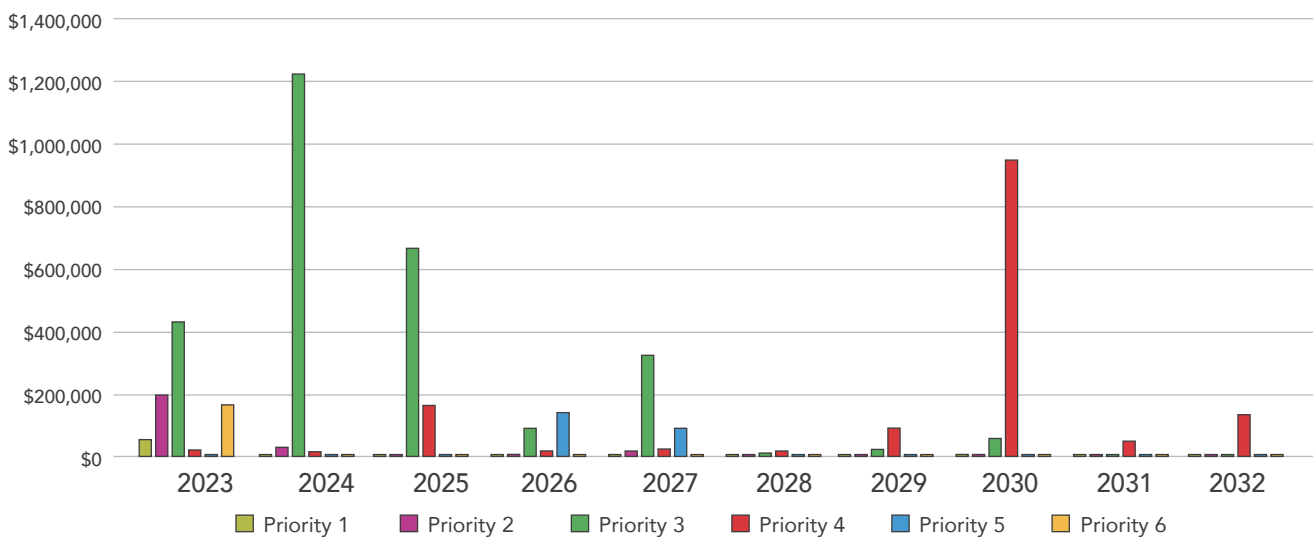
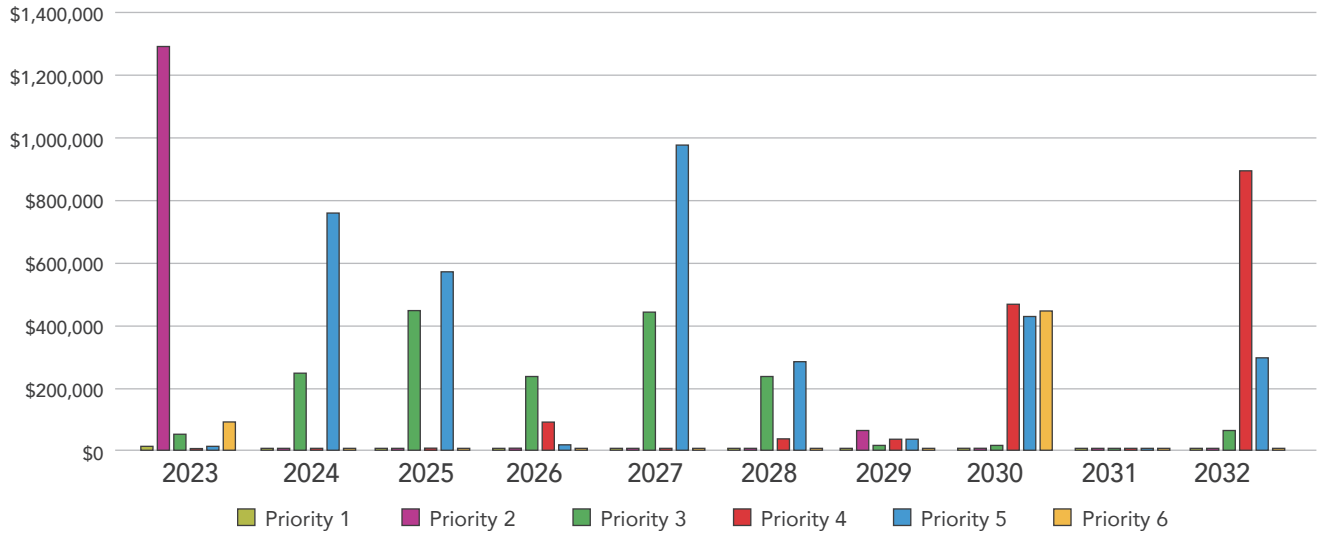


Figure 1.4af
Expenditure by Named Priority by Year for Rec. Centers and Pools



Most of the required expenditures documented have been named as a Priority III which typically relates to timely capital renewal. The second greatest Priority is V which is attributable to renewal of interior finishes. The Priority I expenditures primarily relate to recommended accessibility improvements and increasing the mulch depth at the playgrounds across all the parks and facilities.

Expenditure by System

Each recommendation and expenditure are also grouped by system or facility element. This will allow the City to identify like projects that could potentially be grouped into one project.

Figure 1.4ag
Expenditure by System for Parks

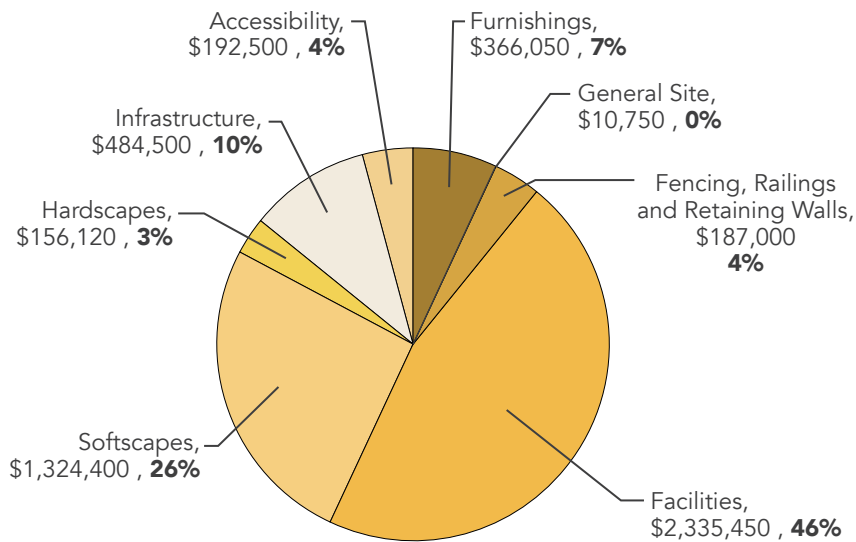
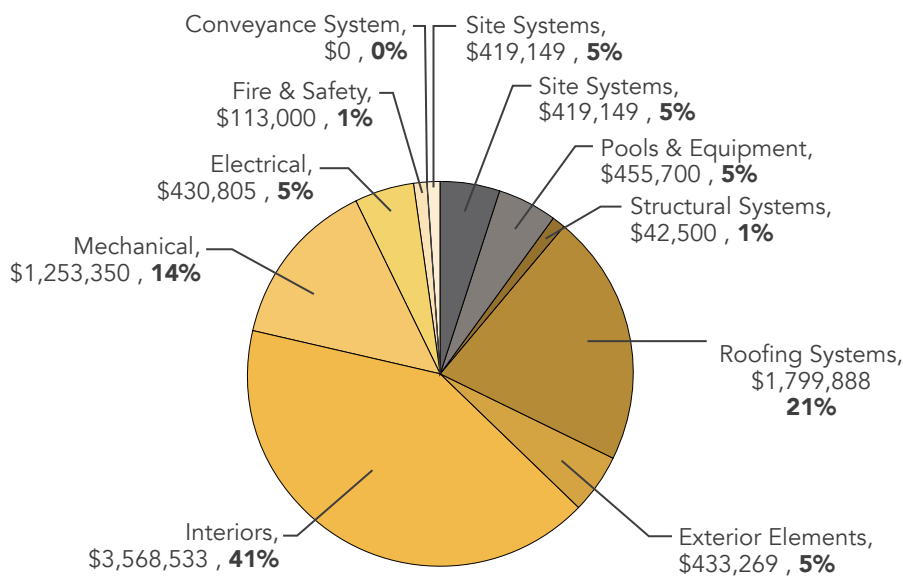


Figure 1.4ah
Expenditure by System for Rec. Centers and Pools



The majority of the expenditures identified are attributable to renewal of the Interiors for the recreation centers and Facilities for the parks. The park Facilities category includes playground equipment, structures, basketball courts, and tennis courts. Softscapes for the parks is the second greatest expenditure category and typically includes general landscaping.

Expenditures by Risk Prioritization

To allow the City to weigh the risks of capital investment versus capital deferment, the Consultant Team assigned each recommendation a risk number. The risk prioritization methodology is detailed in the Facility Condition Assessment Methodology Appendix. Figures 1.4ai - 1.4aj below show the identified expenditures by risk category by year. A complete risk assignment for each recommended expenditure is included in each facility Capital Expenditure Forecast.

Figure 1.4ai

Expenditures by Risk Prioritization by Year for Parks

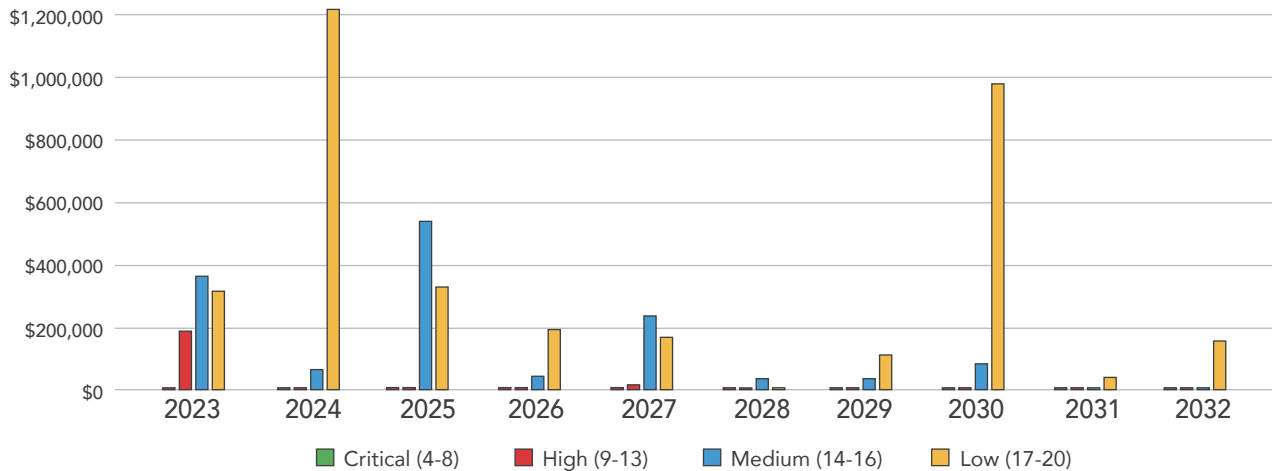
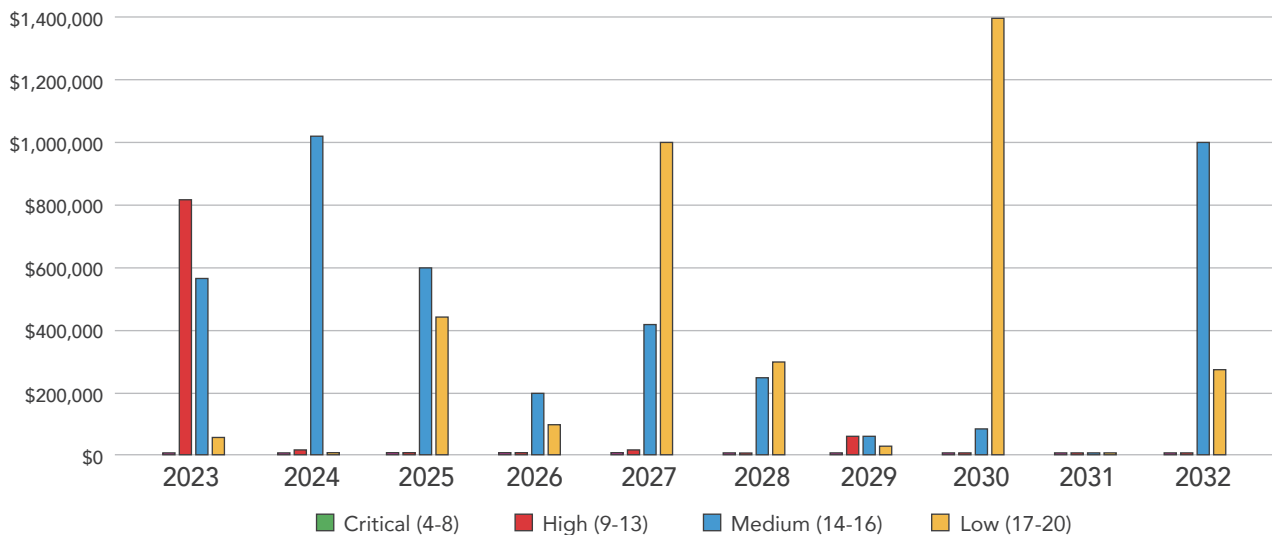


Figure 1.4aj

Expenditures by Risk Prioritization by Year for Rec. Centers and Pools



There were no Critical items noted as part of the assessment; however, significant High-Risk items were identified that could potentially become Critical if left unaddressed. High-risk items identified include installation of guardrails at site walls where wall elevations are 30-inches above grade, repairing the guardrail/handrails at Oakhurst Park, and increasing the mulch bed depths at playgrounds. Addressing the High-Risk items also must be balanced with addressing Medium-Risk items to make sure they do not become High-Risk.

Facility Conditions Index Comparison

The Facility Condition Index (FCI) provides a relative measure for comparing one facility (or group of facilities) to another. This index is a calculation derived by dividing the total project cost for the first year of the study period by the total current replacement value of the building.

In addition, the Facility Condition Needs Index (FCNI) is similar to the FCI but helps assist in comparing the expenditure needs of one facility versus a group of facilities over a period of time. The FCNI also shows the cumulative effects if the deferred maintenance and capital renewal expenditures are not addressed in a timely manner. This index is a calculation, derived by dividing the total recommended expenditures over the entire 10 year study period by the total CRV of the building. The index is intended to show the current and future conditions of the building if no capital investment is made over the next 10 years.

Figure 1.4ak
Rec. Centers and Pools Condition Index and Facility Conditions Need Index

Parks	Current FCI	10-Year FCI	Current FCI	10-Year FCI
Oakhurst Rec Center & Indoor Pool	0.10	0.24	Below Average	Poor
Glenlake Pool	0.08	0.36	Fair	Poor
Glenlake Tennis Center	0.01	0.24	Excellent	Poor
Legacy Park Gym	0.03	0.30	Good	Poor
Cochran Building	0.00	0.32	Excellent	Poor
McKoy Park	0.09	0.35	Fair	Poor
Decatur Rec Center	0.01	0.17	Excellent	Below Average
Ebster Rec Center	0.01	0.04	Excellent	Good
Ebster Pool	0.05	0.35	Good	Poor

Figure 1.4al
FCI/FCINI Conditions Ranges

Parks	Current FCI
0.00 - 0.02	Excellent condition, typically new construction
0.02 - 0.05	Good condition, renovations occur on schedule
0.05 - 0.10	Fair condition, in need of normal renovation
0.10 - 0.20	Below average condition, major renovation required
0.20 - 0.50	Poor Condition, total renovation indicated
0.50 and above	Complete facility replacement indicated

The current FCIs range significantly from Excellent to Below Average, typically reflecting if a building has been subject to a substantial system replacement or refurbishment. The FCI does not consider the capacity or programmatic needs of the facility and typically only is utilized to understand the current condition of the major systems and components. Future programmatic requirements, when identified, should be considered when evaluating a facility FCI to determine if the cost of the programmatic requirements and required expenditures is financially prudent, or does it make more sense to construct a new facility.

Figure 1.4ak further shows that if significant capital investment in the facilities is not made, the range of ratings change from Excellent through to Poor by year 10. Anything considered to be in fair condition or worse will likely require significant investment / renovation.

Maintenance Budgets

As part of the assessment, maintenance budgets were developed for each park and facility. The City currently utilizes a combination of service contracts and City staff to complete preventative maintenance and general upkeep. The preventative maintenance budget was developed by identifying and inventorying all items that require a maintenance task or require regular inspections or upkeep for all parks and facilities. Associated costs were then assigned to each item based on the number of hours to complete a task and the frequency associated with the required task. The costs per park and facility below do not include associated cost related to corrective repairs or replacements. A detailed maintenance budget is provided within each park and facility report included in the Appendix.

Figure 1.4am
Annual Preventive Maintenance Budget by Park

Parks	PM Budget
Scott Park	\$30,183
Mead Road Park	\$6,716
Oakview (Harmony) Park	\$6,046
Parkside Circle Park	\$6,374
Glenn Creek Preserve	\$7,420
Glenlake Park	\$132,994
Oakhurst Park	\$138,121
Adair Park	\$55,122
Hidden Cove Park	\$9,547
Waddell Park	\$1,939
Sycamore Park	\$9,569
McKoy Park	\$101,502
Rev Moss Sr. Garden	\$7,773
Dearborn Park	\$23,883
Corley Commons	\$6,149
Wylde Woods	\$4,741
Ebster Park	\$49,659
Total	\$595,801

Figure 1.4an
Annual Preventive Maintenance Budget by Rec. Center and Pool

Parks	PM Budget
Oakhurst Rec center & Indoor Pool	\$286,353
Glenlake Pool	\$99,096
Glenlake Tennis Center	Included in Glenlake Park
Legacy Park Gym	\$192,045
Cochran Building	\$28,776
McKoy Park	\$98,563
Decatur Rec Center	\$81,736
Ebster Rec Center	\$112,035
Ebster Pool	\$92,958
Total	\$991,562

The total annual maintenance budget developed from the assessment is approximately \$1.5 million. Various factors should be considered when evaluating a maintenance budget and program as various levels of service impact the costs associated with maintaining a park or facility. To get a more defined budget, a detailed maintenance plan should be developed. The plan will help the City define what level of maintenance attention each park and facility should receive based on defined metrics which can be utilized to better develop a detailed budget.

Summary

Overall, the City of Decatur’s parks, recreation centers, and pools are in fair to good condition. The Oakhurst Recreation Center does require the most immediate capital investment due to the amount of deferred maintenance that has accumulated over the years before being acquired by the City. The other recreation centers and pools have all undergone extensive renovations within the last 15 years and remain in good condition. However, these recreation centers and pools will require ongoing capital investment to address capital renewal requirements in the next five to 10 years.

The condition of the parks is generally consistent across the City, with the most common issues noted being general overgrowth and deteriorated lawn areas. The deteriorated lawn areas can lead to erosion and stormwater runoff issues. General accessibility issues were also noted throughout most of the parks.

The total capital investment required by the City equates to \$14,660,957 over the next 10 years. This total typically only includes required capital renewal and replacement and does not account for programmatic improvements. This averages out to approximately \$1.5 million dollars in capital funding required annually to reduce deferred maintenance and address future capital renewal requirements.

The current Capital Improvements Fund budget for FY22-23 to FY26-27 is stated at \$2,743,400. Based on this budget, there is a shortfall of approximately \$4.7 million over the next five years. A strategic plan will need to be developed so that deferred maintenance is addressed, and future capital renewal requirements do not get deferred.

Chapter 2

NEEDS

+ PRIORITIES

ASSESSMENT



2.1

Overview of the Needs Assessment Process

The purpose of a Needs and Priorities Assessment is to determine the gaps between existing and desired conditions. Each community must determine the appropriate needs assessment techniques and Level-of-Service (LOS) standards required to identify and meet the specific needs of its residents.

Communities typically use a “triangulated” approach to identifying needs, including various types of quantitative, qualitative, and anecdotal techniques to determine top priorities from different perspectives.

Quantitative Methods:

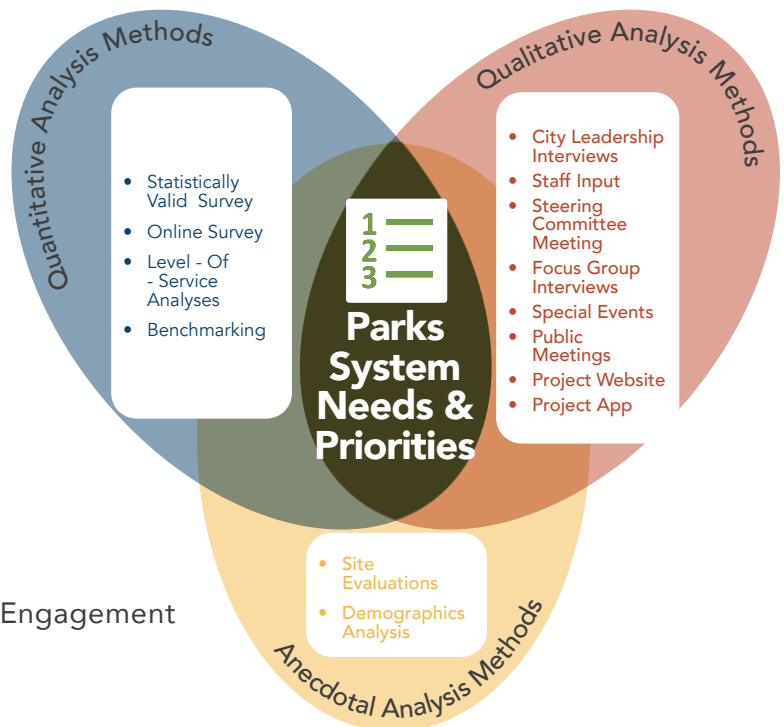
- Statistically Valid Survey
- Online Survey
- Level-of-Service Analysis
- Benchmarking

Qualitative Methods:

- City Leadership Interviews
- Staff Input
- Steering Committee Meeting
- Focus Group and Special Events Public Engagement
- Public Meetings
- Project Website
- Project App Input

Anecdotal:

- Demographics and parks and recreation trends (Discussed in Section 1.3 - Decatur’s Demographic Context)
- Site evaluations (Discussed in Section 1.4 - Decatur’s Park System Context)



The project was promoted via various printed, online, and social media outlets, including a project website that has received over 5,106 visits to date. Collectively, over 800 people participated in the process to date. Findings from each of the needs assessment techniques, as well as a summary of top priority needs are discussed in this chapter.

Findings

Statistically-Valid Survey

Overview

ETC Institute administered the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey for the City of Decatur during the summer months of 2022.

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in the City of Decatur. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it online at DecaturParkSurvey.org.

After the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute followed up by sending text messages and mailing postcards to encourage participation. The text messages and postcards contained a link to the online version of the survey to make it easy for residents to complete the survey. To prevent people who were not residents of the City of Decatur from participating, everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address prior to submitting the survey. ETC Institute then matched the addresses that were entered online with the addresses that were originally selected for the random sample. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the online survey was not included in the final database for this report.

The goal was to complete a minimum of 300 completed surveys from residents. The goal was exceeded with 317 completed surveys collected. The overall results for the sample of 317 households have a precision of at least +/-5.4 at the 95% level of confidence.

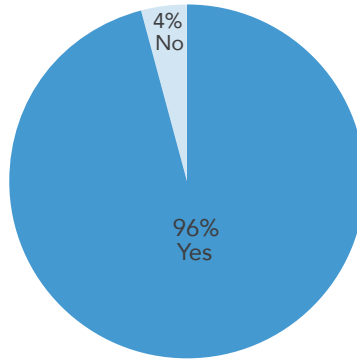
Use of Parks and Recreation Facilities.

Respondents were asked if they had used the City of Decatur parks or recreation facilities within the past four years. Ninety-six percent (96%) of respondents said they had used parks/facilities. Decatur Cemetery (67%), Glenlake Park (63%), Legacy Park (59%), Decatur Recreation Center (56%), McKoy Park (54%), and Oakhurst Park (53%) were the most popular facilities used by respondents.

Those same respondents were asked to rate the physical condition of those facilities: most respondents (62%) rated them good, 28% said excellent, and 9% said fair.

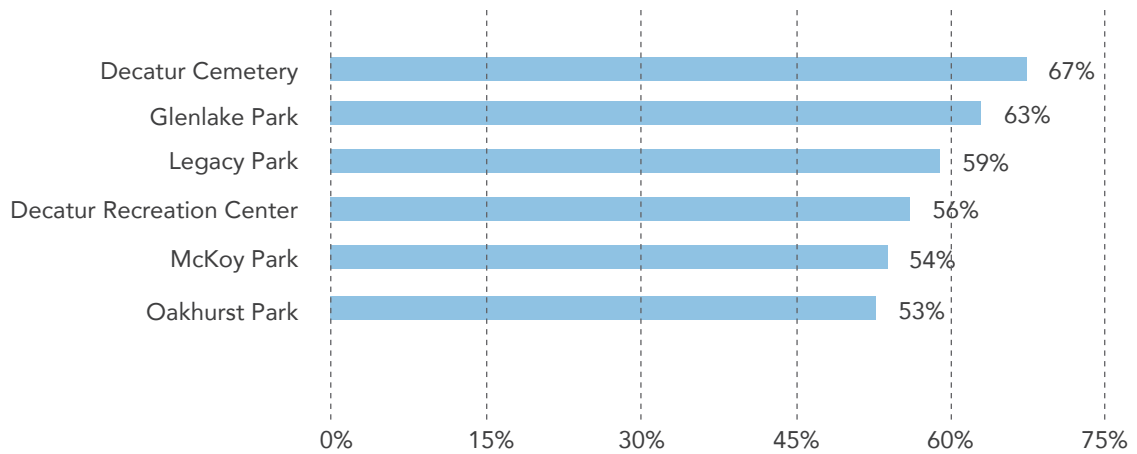
Have You Or Your Household Visited Any Parks Or Recreation Facilities Offered By the City of Decatur During The Last 4 Years?

by percentage of respondents



Parks and Recreation Facilities Households Have Visited During the Past 4 Years

by percentage of respondents who responded "Yes"



Rating Quality of Parks and Recreation Facilities

by percentage of respondents who responded "Yes"

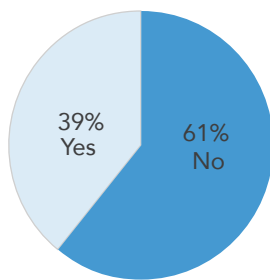


Parks and Recreation Program Participation

Program Participation. Respondents were asked if they had participated in City of Decatur parks or recreation programs within the past four years. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of respondents said someone in their household had participated. Those same respondents were then asked to rate the overall quality of the programs: most respondents (53%) rated them good, 30% said excellent, 16% said fair, and only 1% rated them poor.

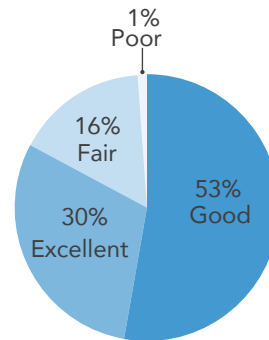
Have You Or Your Household Participated in any City of Decatur Recreation Programs in the Past 4 Years?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



Rating Quality of Parks and Recreation Facilities

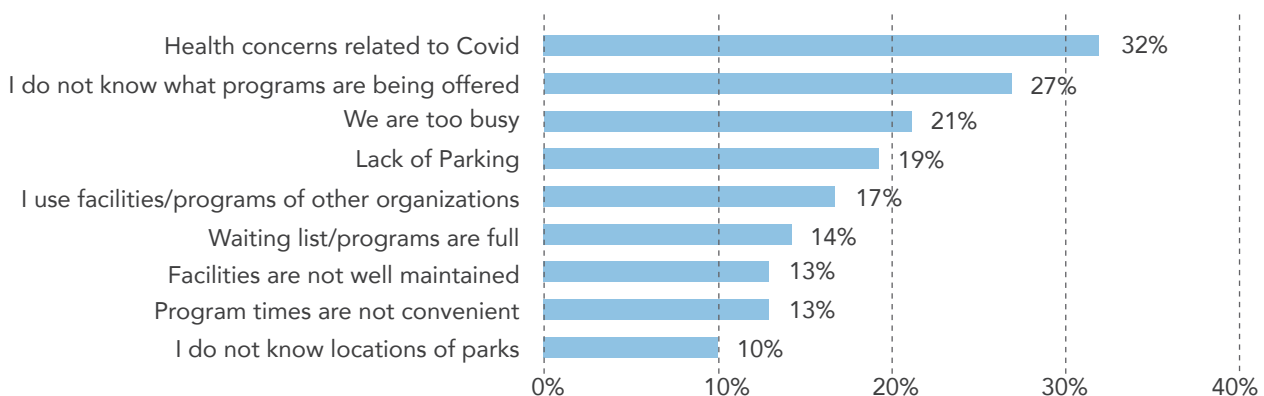
by percentage of respondents who responded "Yes" (excluding "not provided")



Barriers to Use. Respondents were asked to indicate the reasons why they didn't participate in programs or didn't participate more often in the last two years. The highest number of respondents said health concerns related to Covid-19 (32%), not knowing what programs are offered (27%), busy schedules (21%), lack of parking (19%), I use facilities/programs of other organizations (17%), Waiting list/programs are full (14%), Facilities are not well maintained (13%), Program times are not convenient (13%), and I do not know locations of parks (10%).

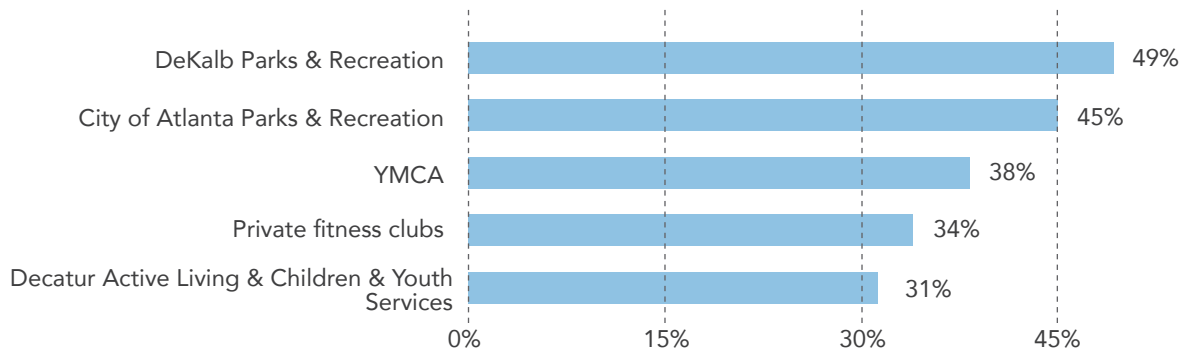
Barriers to Parks or Recreation Facilities Use in the Last Two Years

by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)

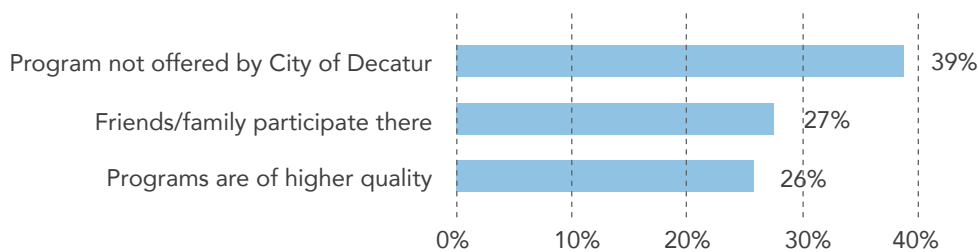


Outside Organizations Used for Recreation. Respondents were asked to select the organizations other than the City of Decatur that their household has used for indoor and outdoor recreation activities in the past four years. Most common were DeKalb parks and recreation (49%), City of Atlanta parks and recreation (45%), and the YMCA (38%). Respondents said they used these outside organizations most often because it offered a program that Decatur did not (39%), friends/family participation (27%), and higher quality programs (26%). Respondents most often used outside organizations for group fitness (26%), camps (25%), and aquatics/youth sports (23%).

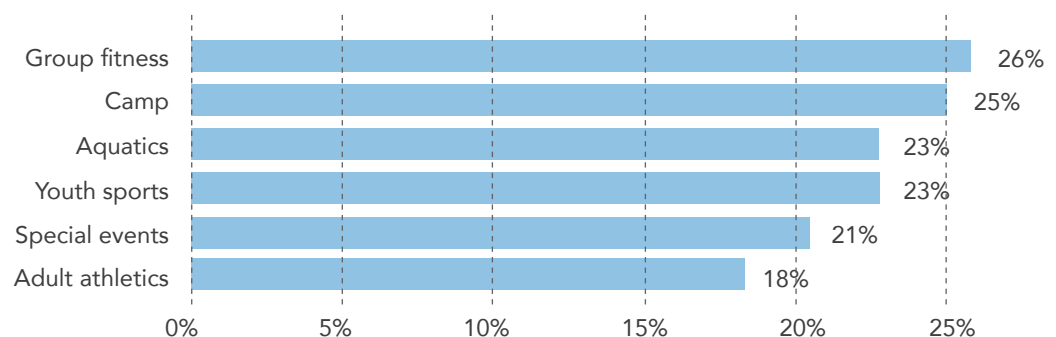
Organizations Used for Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Activities in the Past Four Years
by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



Reasons Households Use Outside Organizations for Recreation Activities
by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



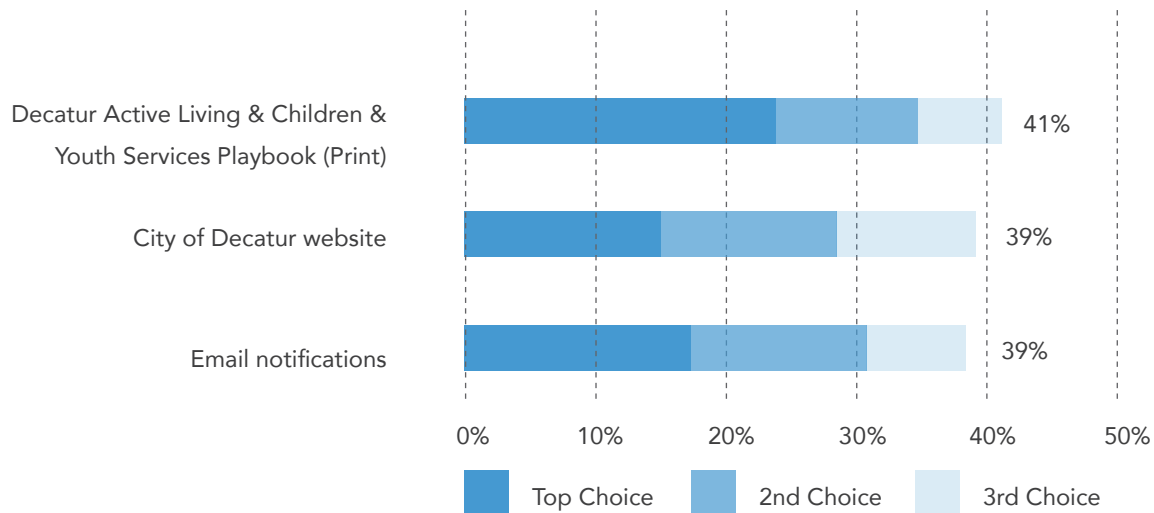
Recreation Programs Households Participate in Via Outside Organizations
percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



Communication Methods. Respondents' most preferred methods are the Decatur Active Living and Children and Youth Services playbook (41%), city website (39%), and email notifications (39%).

Most Preferred Sources for Learning About Recreation Programs and Activities

by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top three choices

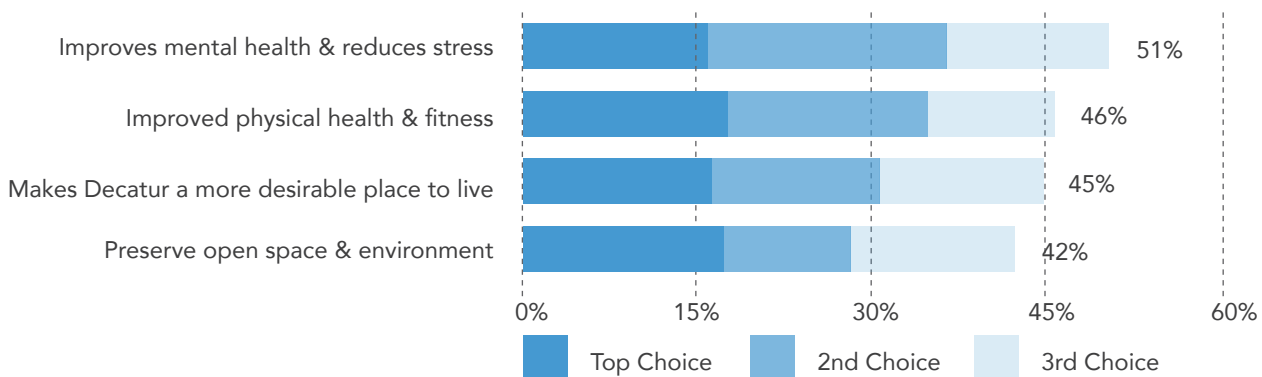


Community Perception

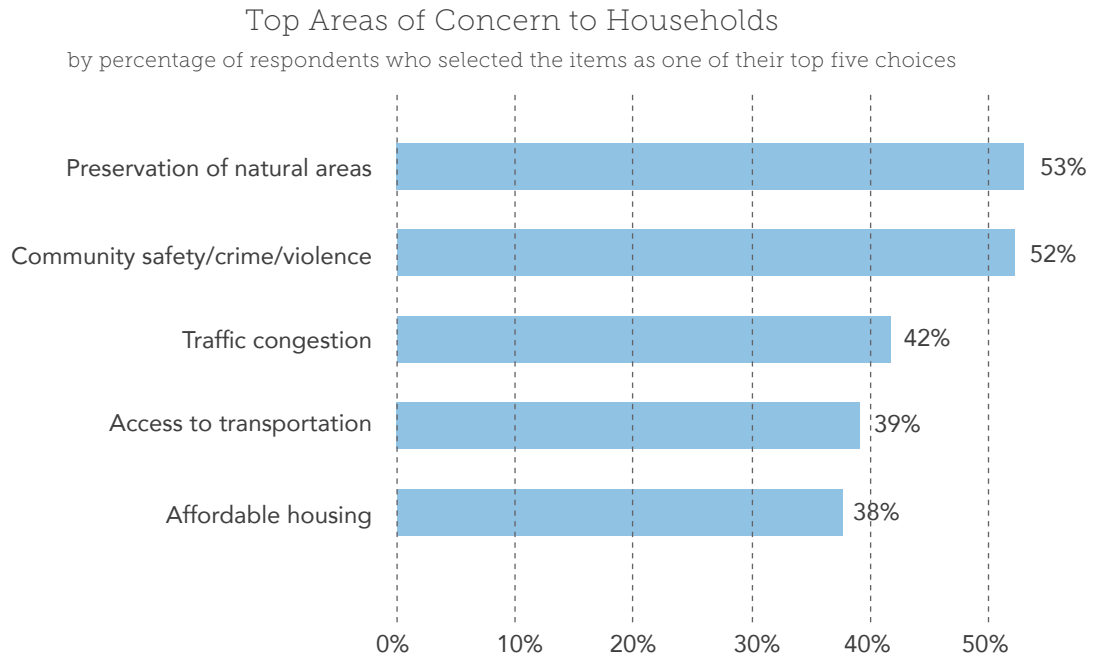
Benefit and Services. Respondents were asked to select the three benefits most important to their household: improves mental health and reduces stress (51%), improves physical health and fitness (46%), and makes Decatur a more desirable place to live (45%) were selected most often.

Three Potential Benefits MOST IMPORTANT to Households

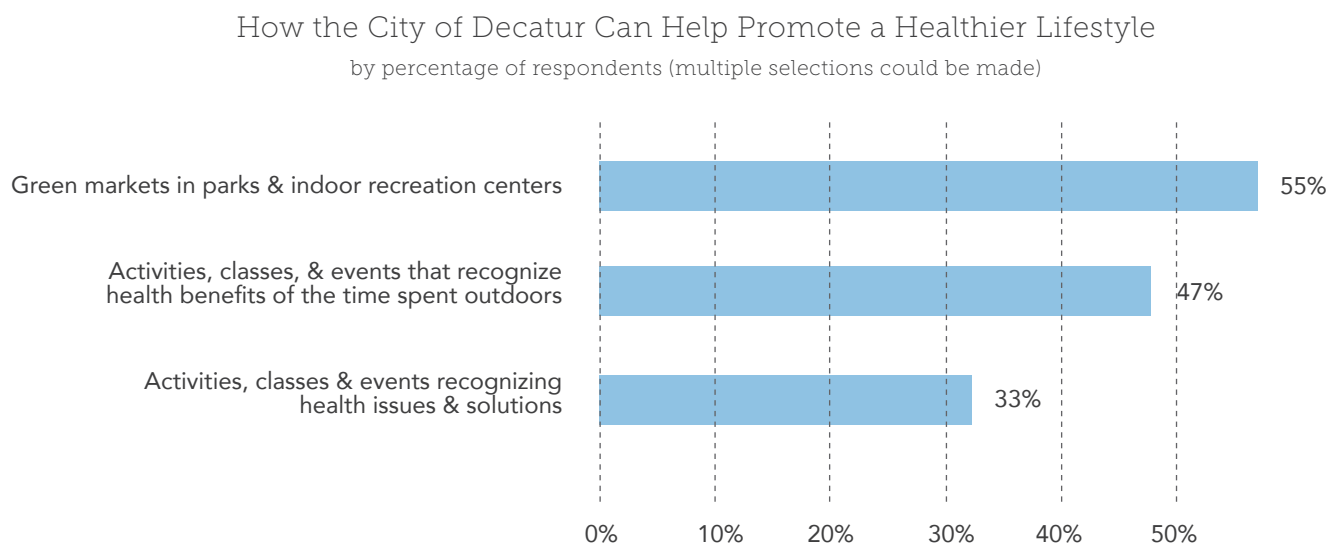
by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top three choices



Areas of Concern. Respondents were asked to select five of their top areas of concern in the community and in their daily life. Preservation of natural areas (53%), community safety (52%), and traffic congestion (42%) were selected most often as issues.

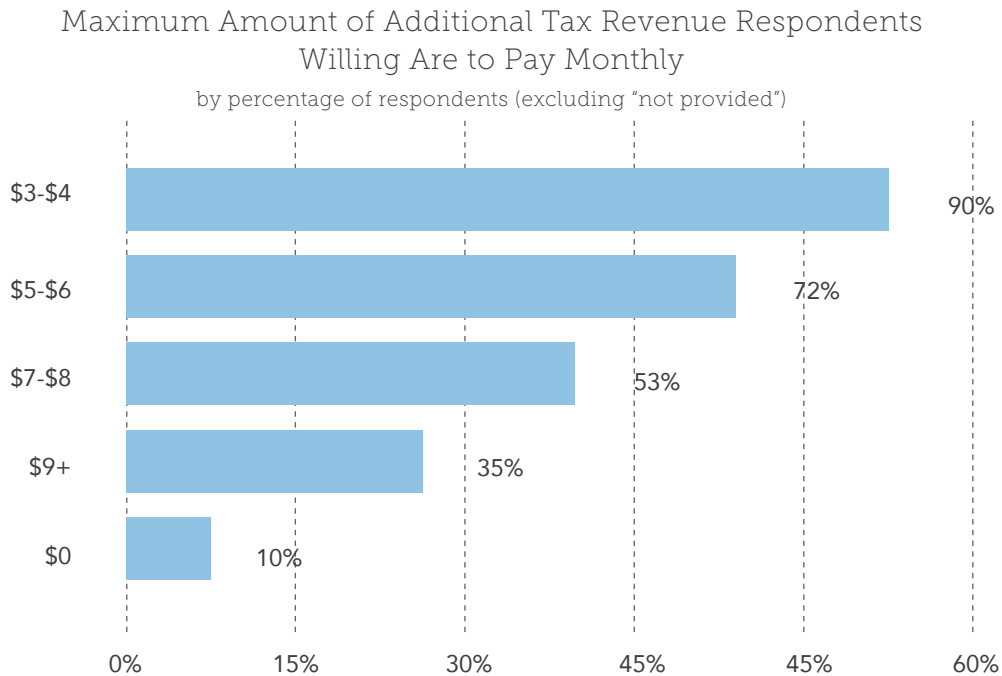


Healthy Lifestyles. Respondents were asked to reflect on the best ways the City of Decatur could help promote healthier lifestyles. Respondents felt green markets in parks and indoor recreation centers (55%), activities that recognize the health benefits of time spent outdoors (47%), and activities that recognize health issues and solutions (33%) were the best ways to promote healthy lifestyles.



Value of Parks and Recreation and Allocation of Funds

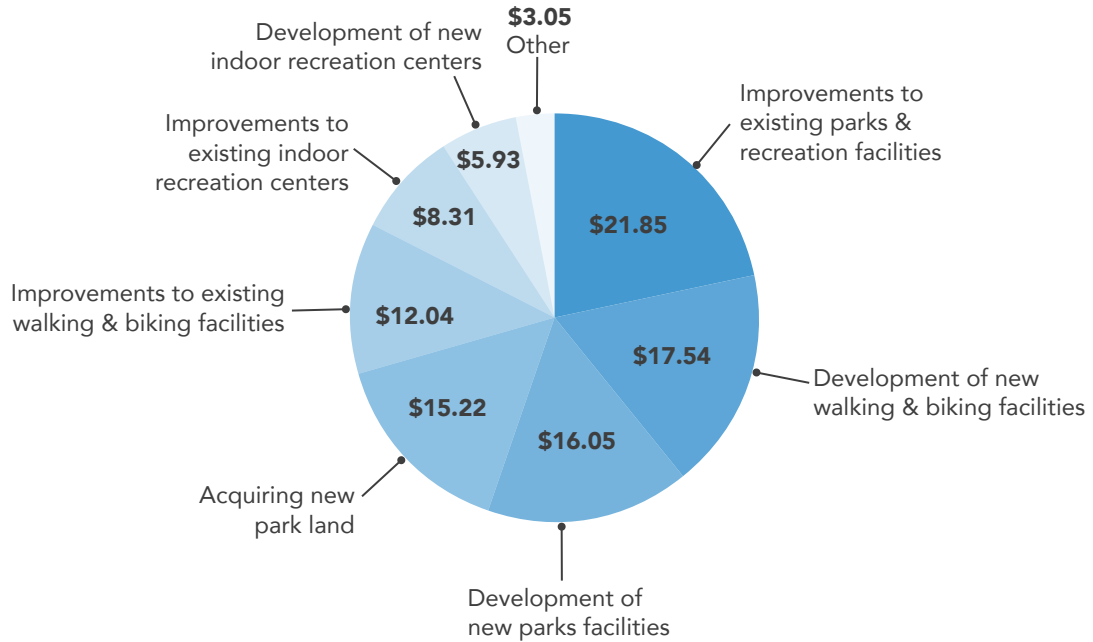
Taxation. Respondents were asked how much they would be willing to pay in additional monthly tax revenue for the parks and recreation services they most value. The highest number of respondents (90%) said \$3-\$4, followed by 72% willing to pay between \$5-\$6, 53% willing to pay \$7-\$8, 35% willing to pay \$9 and more, and 10% willing to pay nothing.



Allocation of Funds. Respondents were asked to allocate a hypothetical \$100 budget for Parks and Recreation facilities/capital improvements. The highest amount of funding (\$21.85) went to improvements/maintenance to existing parks and recreation facilities followed by \$17.52 for development of new walking/biking facilities, and \$16.05 for the development of new parks facilities. Then, respondents were asked to allocate for programs/operations. The highest amount of funding (\$25.44) went to increasing staff to improve maintenance of parks/facilities, additional youth recreation programs/classes (\$14.23), and additional youth athletic programs/leagues (\$12.81).

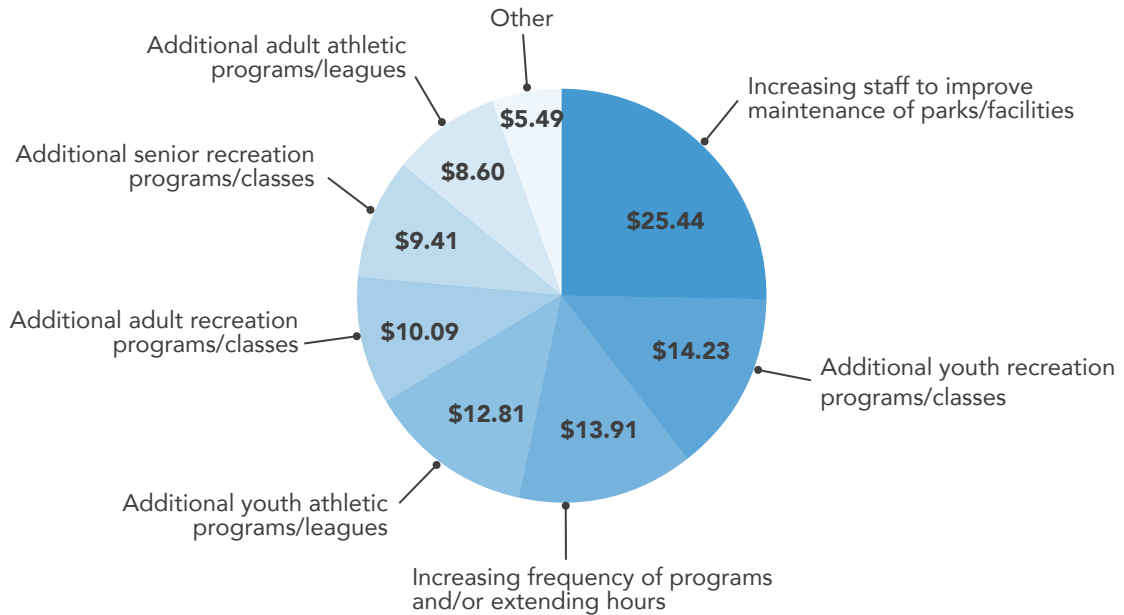
With a Budget of \$100, How Would Respondents Allocate Funds for Facilities/Capital Improvements?

by average allocated per item



With a Budget of \$100, How Would Respondents Allocate Funds for Programs/Operations?

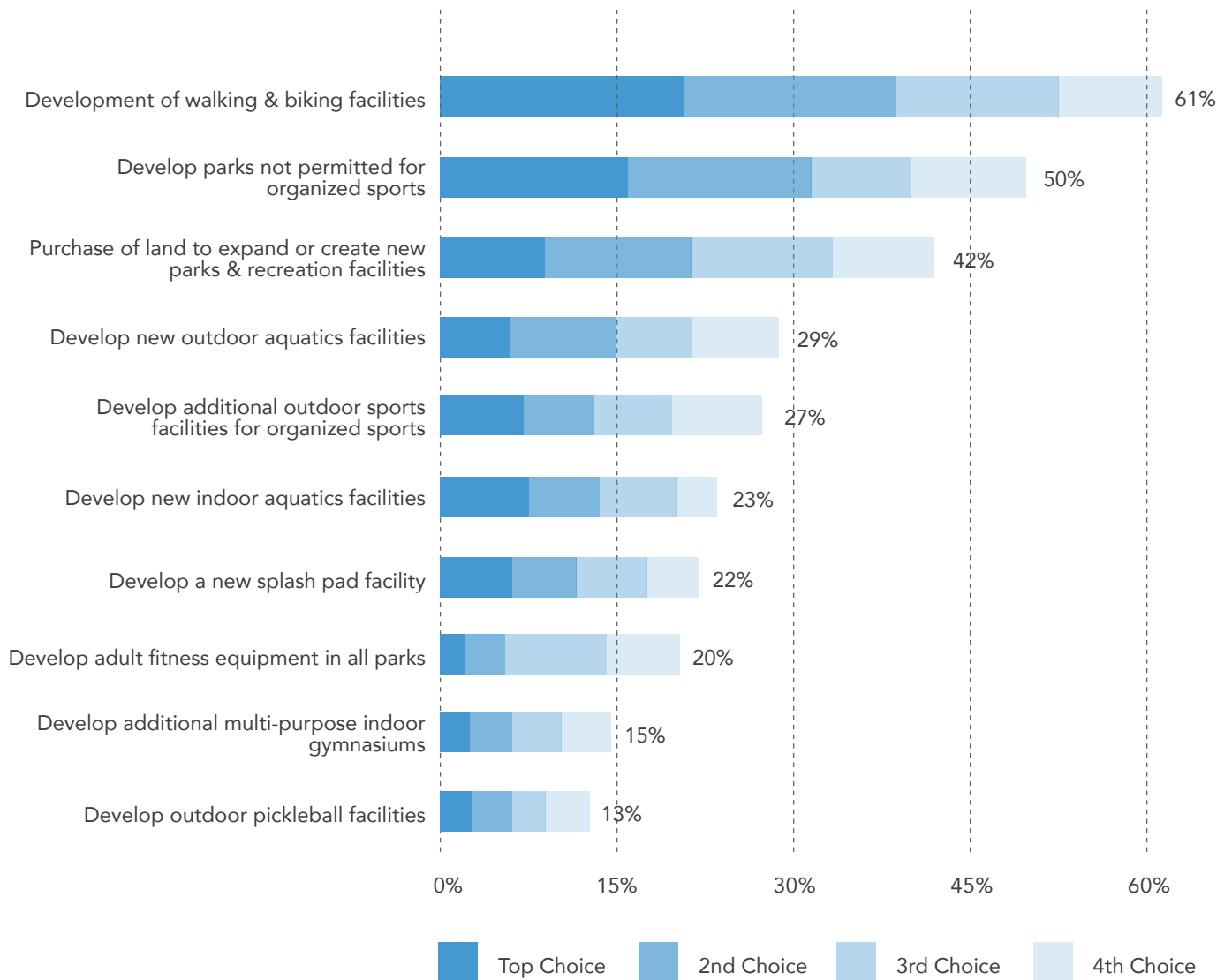
by average allocated per item



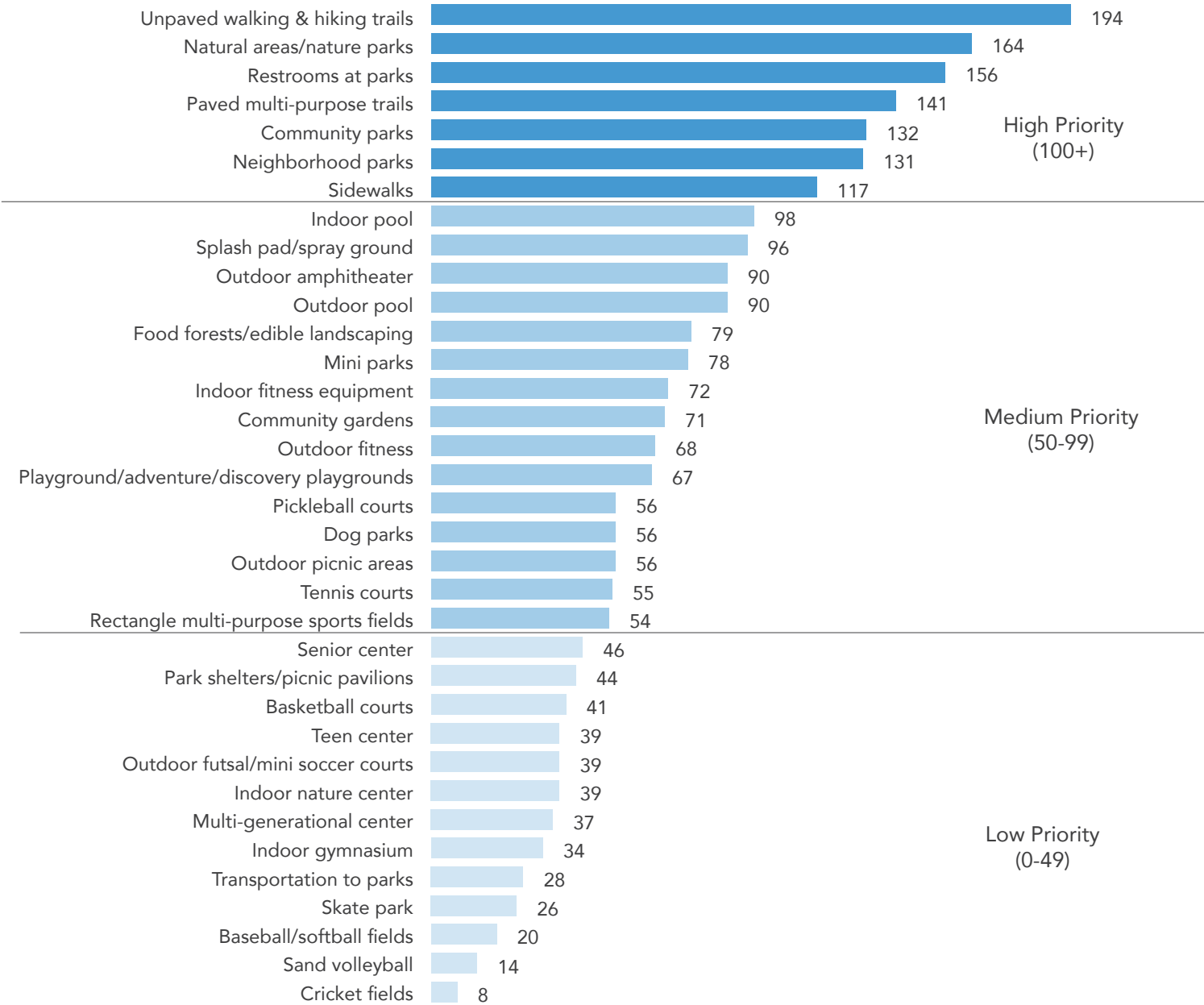
Support for Improvements/ Developments.

Respondents were provided a list of 10 potential actions that the City could take to improve parks and recreation and were asked to select the four items most important to their household. The four items selected most often were development of walking & biking facilities (61%); parks not permitting organized sports (50%), purchase of land to expand or create new parks and recreation facilities (42%), and develop new outdoor aquatics facilities (29%).

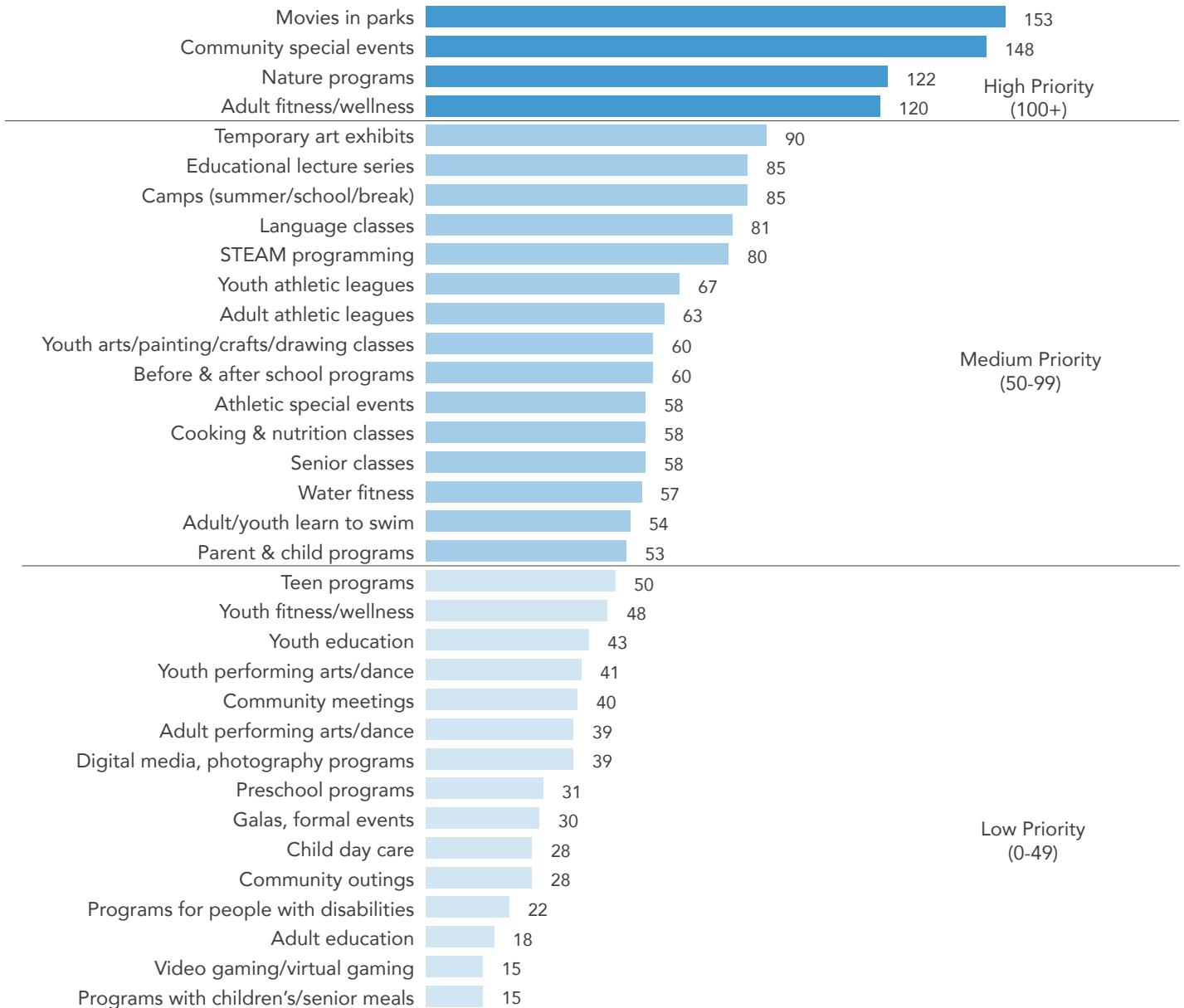
Potential Improvements Most Important to Households
by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top four choices



Priorities for Facility Investments: The **Priority Investment Rating (PIR)** was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on recreation and parks investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weights (1) the importance that residents place on amenities/facilities and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the facility/amenity. Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following parks and recreation facilities/amenities were rated as high priorities for investment:



Priorities for Program Investments: Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following City of Decatur programs were rated as high priorities for investment:



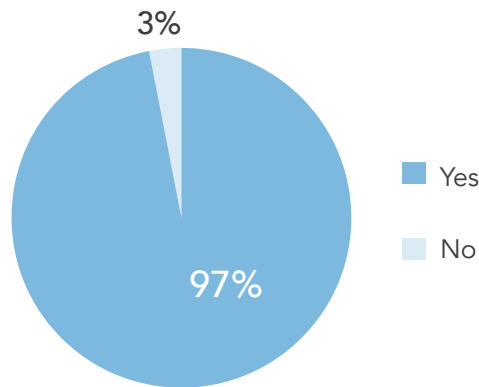
Online Survey

The Consultant Team hosted an online, 31-question survey from July 1, 2022 through August 10, 2022. A total of 350 people participated in the survey. The survey was based on the statistically-valid survey, but had some modifications to accommodate the on-line format. Following is a summary of findings from the online survey.

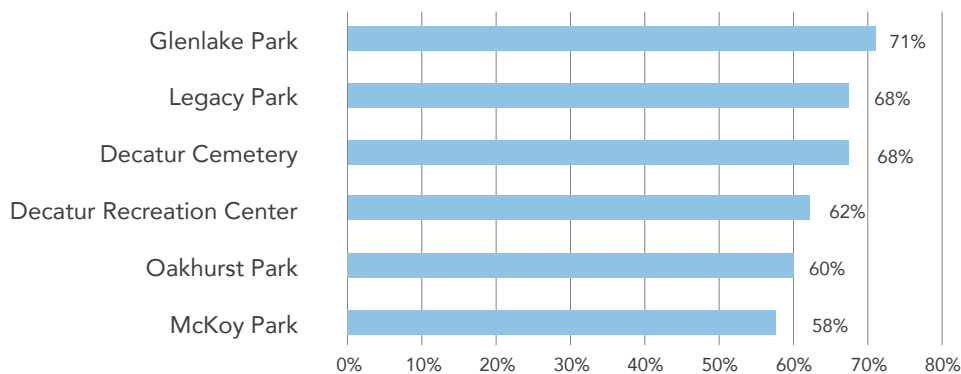
Use of Parks and Recreation Facilities. Respondents were asked if they had used the City of Decatur parks or recreation facilities within the past four years. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of respondents said they had used parks/facilities. Glenlake Park (71%), Legacy Park (68%), Decatur Cemetery (68%), Decatur Recreation Center (62%), Oakhurst Park (60%), and McKoy Park (58%) were the most popular facilities used by respondents.

Those same respondents were asked to rate the physical condition of those facilities: most respondents (61%) rated them good, 25 percent said excellent, and 12 percent said fair.

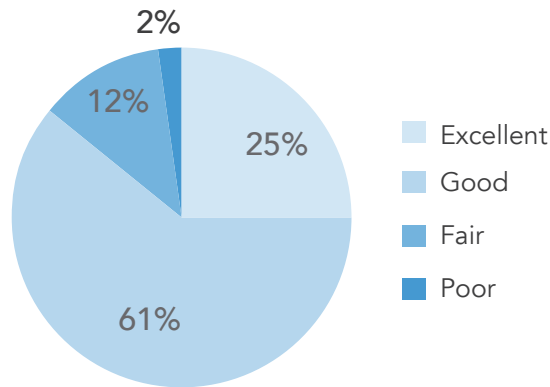
Have You or Your Household Visited Any Parks or Recreation Facilities Offered By the City of Decatur During the Last 4 Years?



Parks and Recreation Facilities Households Have Visited During the Past 4 Years by percentage of respondents who responded "Yes"



Rating Quality of Parks and Recreation Facilities by percentage of respondents who responded "Yes"

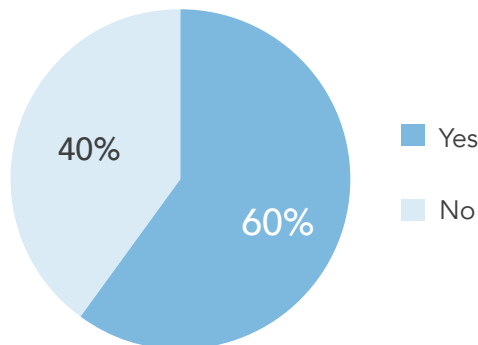


Parks and Recreation Programs Participation

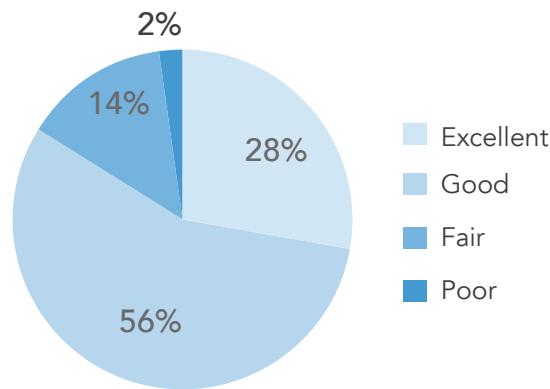
Program Participation. Respondents were asked if they had participated in City of Decatur parks or recreation programs within the past four years. Sixty percent (60%) of respondents, about 20 percent more than the statistically valid survey, said someone in their household had participated. Those same respondents were then asked to rate the overall quality of the programs: similar to the statistically valid survey, most respondents (56%) rated them good, 28 percent said excellent, and 14 percent said either fair or poor (1%).

Have You or Your Household Participated in any City of Decatur Recreation Programs in the Past 4 Years?

By percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")

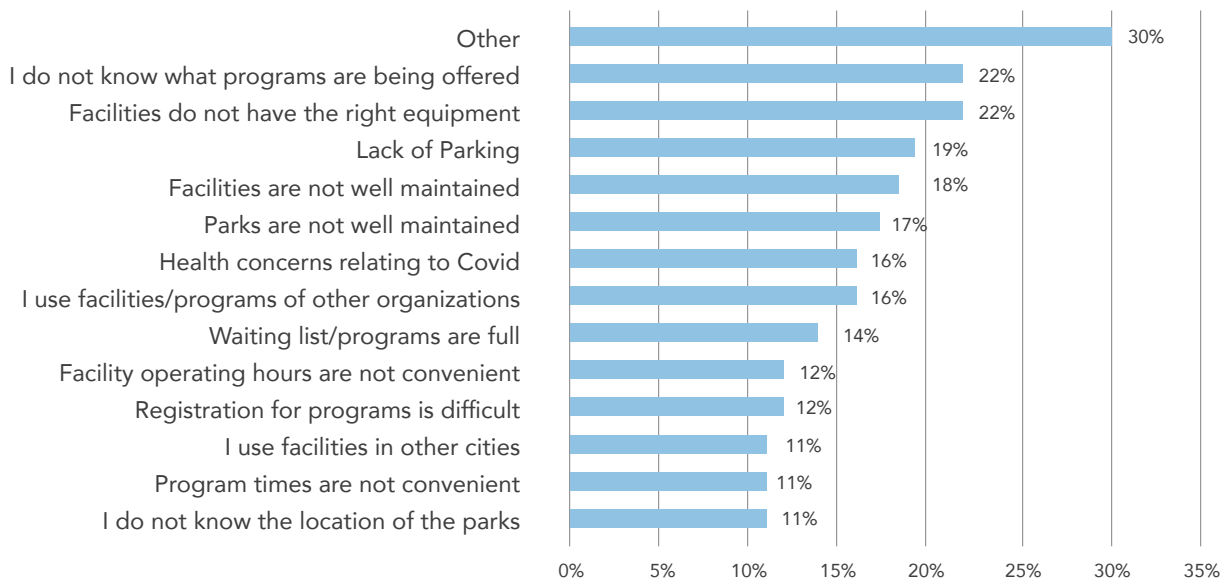


Rating Quality of Parks and Recreation Facilities by percentage of respondents who responded "Yes" (excluding "not provided")



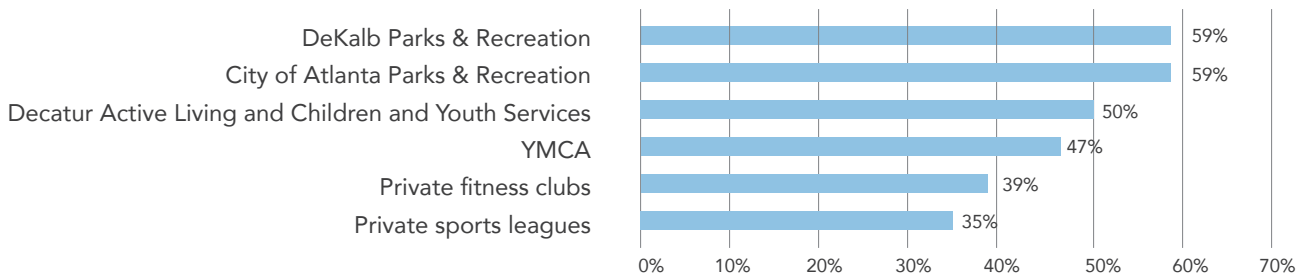
Barriers to Use. Respondents were asked to indicate the reasons why they didn't participate in programs or didn't participate more often in the last two years. The highest number of respondents said health concerns related to other (30%), not knowing what programs are offered (22%), facilities do not have the right equipment (22%), lack of parking (19%), facilities are not well maintained (18%), parks are not well maintained (17%), health concerns related to COVID-19 (16%), I use facilities/programs of other organizations (16%), waiting list/programs are full (14%), facility operating hours are not convenient (12%), registration for programs is difficult (12%), I use facilities in other cities (11%), program times are not convenient (11%), and I do not know locations of parks (10%).

Barriers to Parks or Recreation Facilities Use in the Last Two Years

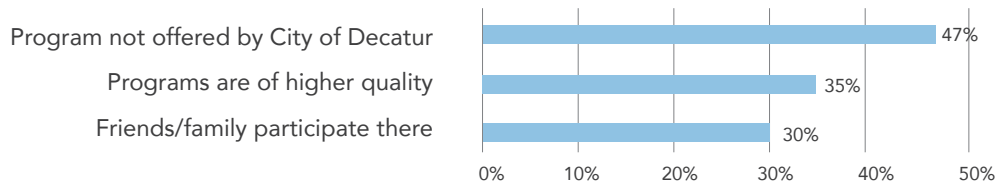


Outside Organizations Used for Recreation. Respondents were asked to select the organizations other than the City of Decatur that their household has used for indoor and outdoor recreation activities in the past four years. Similar to the Statistically Valid Survey, most common were DeKalb parks and recreation (59%), City of Atlanta parks and recreation (59%), Decatur Active Living and Children and Youth Services (50%), the YMCA (47%), private fitness clubs (39%), and private sports leagues (35%). Respondents said they used these outside organizations most often because it offered a program that Decatur did not (47%), higher quality programs (35%), and friends/family participation (30%). Respondents most often used outside organizations for youth sports (45%), camps (39%), aquatics/youth sports (36%), group fitness (29%), adult athletics (24%), special events (23%), tennis (16%), and sports conditioning (15%).

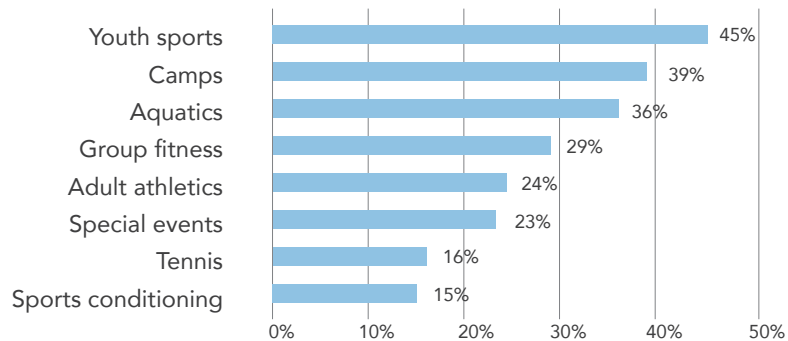
Organizations Used for Indoor and Outdoor Recreation Activities in the Past Four Years by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



Reasons Households Use Outside Organizations for Recreation Activities by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



Recreation Programs Households Participate in Via Outside Organizations by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



Communication Methods

Respondents' most preferred methods are:

- Decatur Active Living and Children and Youth Services Playbook (Print)
- City of Decatur website

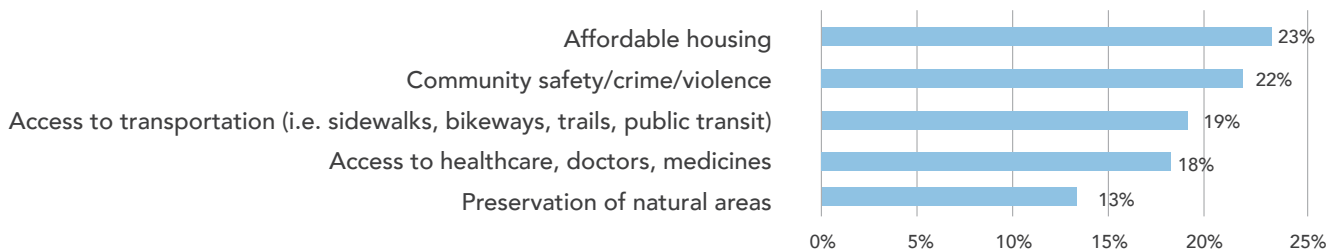
Community Perception

Benefit and Services. Respondents were asked to select the three benefits most important to their household:

- Improves physical health and fitness
- Improves mental health and reduces stress
- Preserves open space and the environment

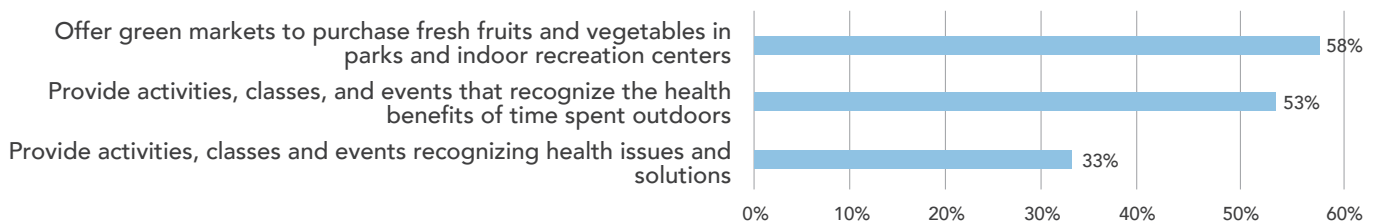
Areas of Concern. Respondents were asked to select five of their top areas of concern in the community and in their daily life. Affordable housing (23%), community safety/ crime/ violence (22%), access to transportation (19%), access to healthcare, doctors, and medicine (18%), and preservation of natural areas (13%).

Top Areas of Concern to Households by percentage of respondents who selected the items as one of their top five choices



Healthy Lifestyles. Respondents were asked to reflect on the best ways the City of Decatur could help promote healthier lifestyles. Respondents identified green markets in parks and indoor recreation centers (58%), activities that recognize the health benefits of time spent outdoors (53%), and activities that recognize health issues and solutions (35%) as the best ways to promote healthy lifestyles.

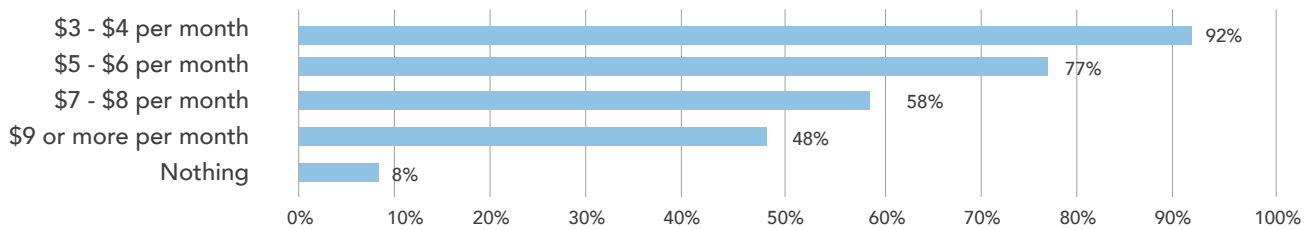
How the City of Decatur Can Help Promote a Healthier Lifestyle by percentage of respondents (multiple selections could be made)



Value of Parks and Recreation and Allocation of Funds

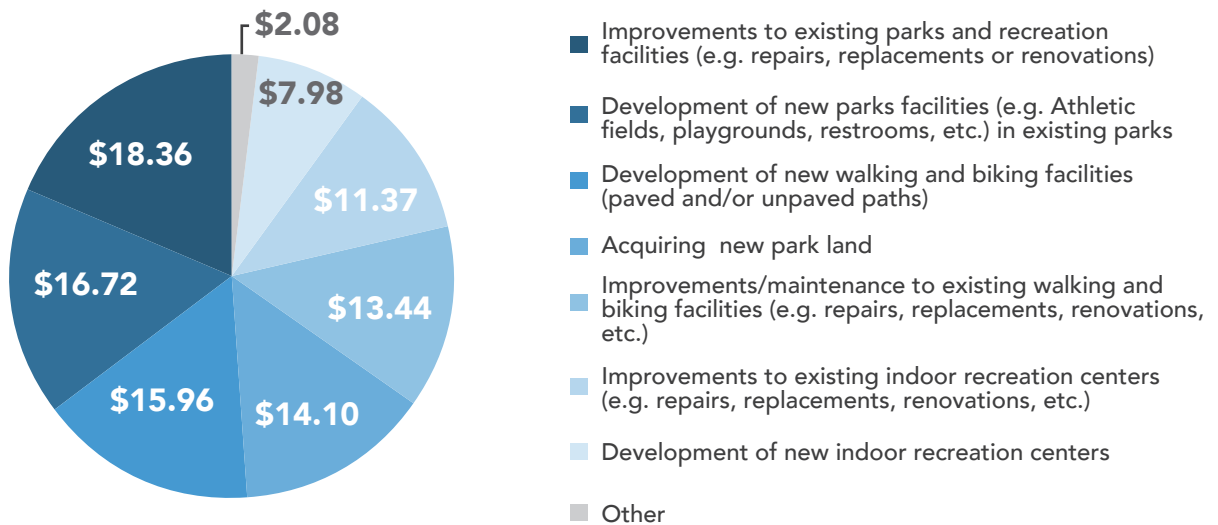
Taxation. Respondents were asked how much they would be willing to pay in additional monthly tax revenue for the parks and recreation services they most value. The highest number of respondents (92%) said \$3-\$4, followed by 77 percent willing to pay between \$5-\$6, 58 percent willing to pay \$7-\$8, 48 percent willing to pay \$9 and more, and 8 percent willing to pay nothing.

Maximum Amount of Additional Tax Revenue Respondents Willing Are to Pay Monthly by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided")



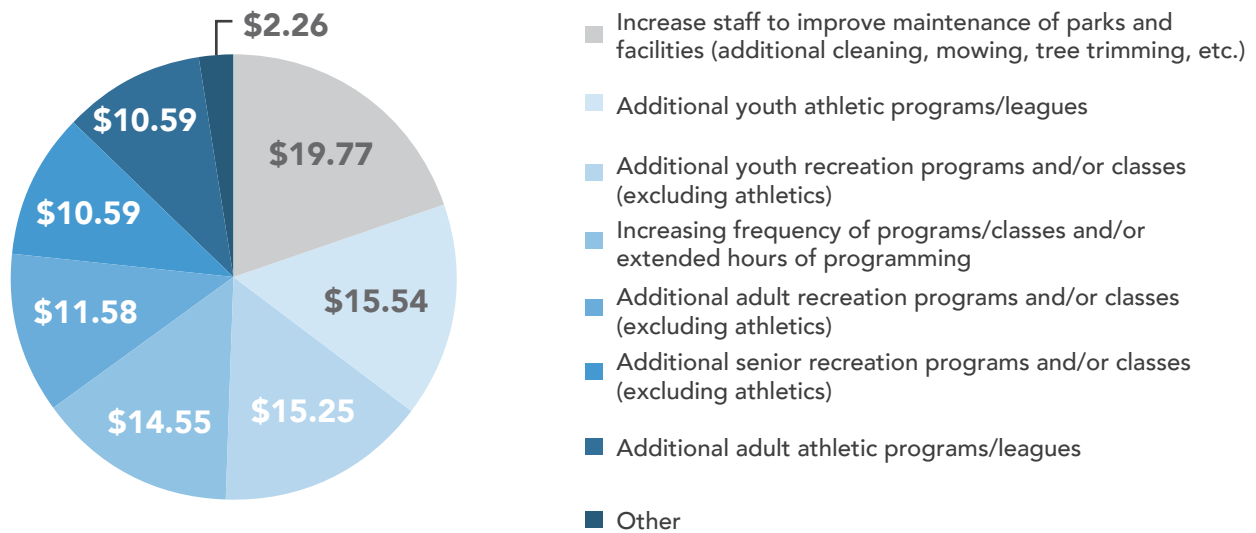
Allocation of Funds. Respondents were asked to allocate a hypothetical \$100 budget for Parks and Recreation facilities/capital improvements. The highest amount of funding (\$18.36) went to improvements/maintenance to existing parks and recreation facilities followed by \$16.72 for development of new parks facilities (e.g., athletic fields, playgrounds, restrooms, etc.), and \$15.96 for development of new walking and biking facilities (paved and/or unpaved paths).

With a Budget of \$100, How Would Respondents Allocate Funds for Facilities/Capital Improvements? by average allocated per item



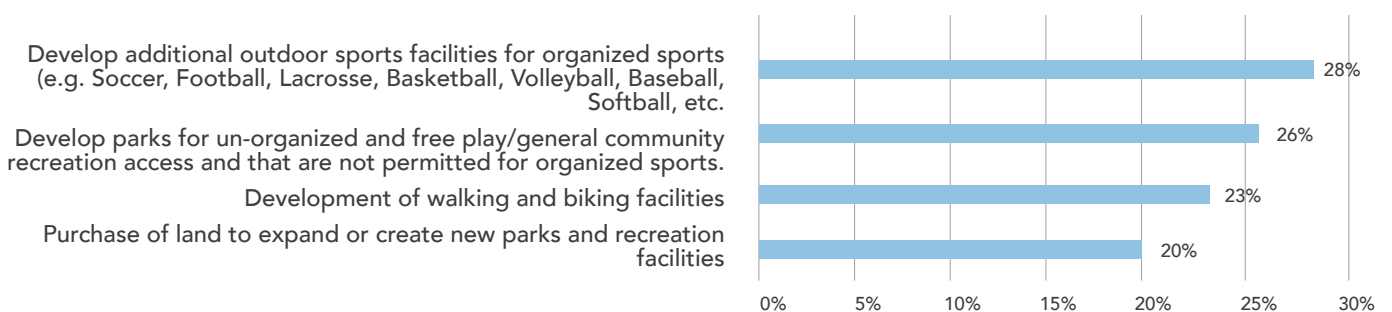
Respondents were also asked to allocate for programs/operations. The highest amount of funding (\$19.77) went to increasing staff to improve maintenance of parks/facilities, additional youth athletic programs/leagues (\$15.54), and additional youth recreation programs/classes (\$15.25).

With a Budget of \$100, How Would Respondents Allocate Funds for Programs/Operations? by average allocated per item

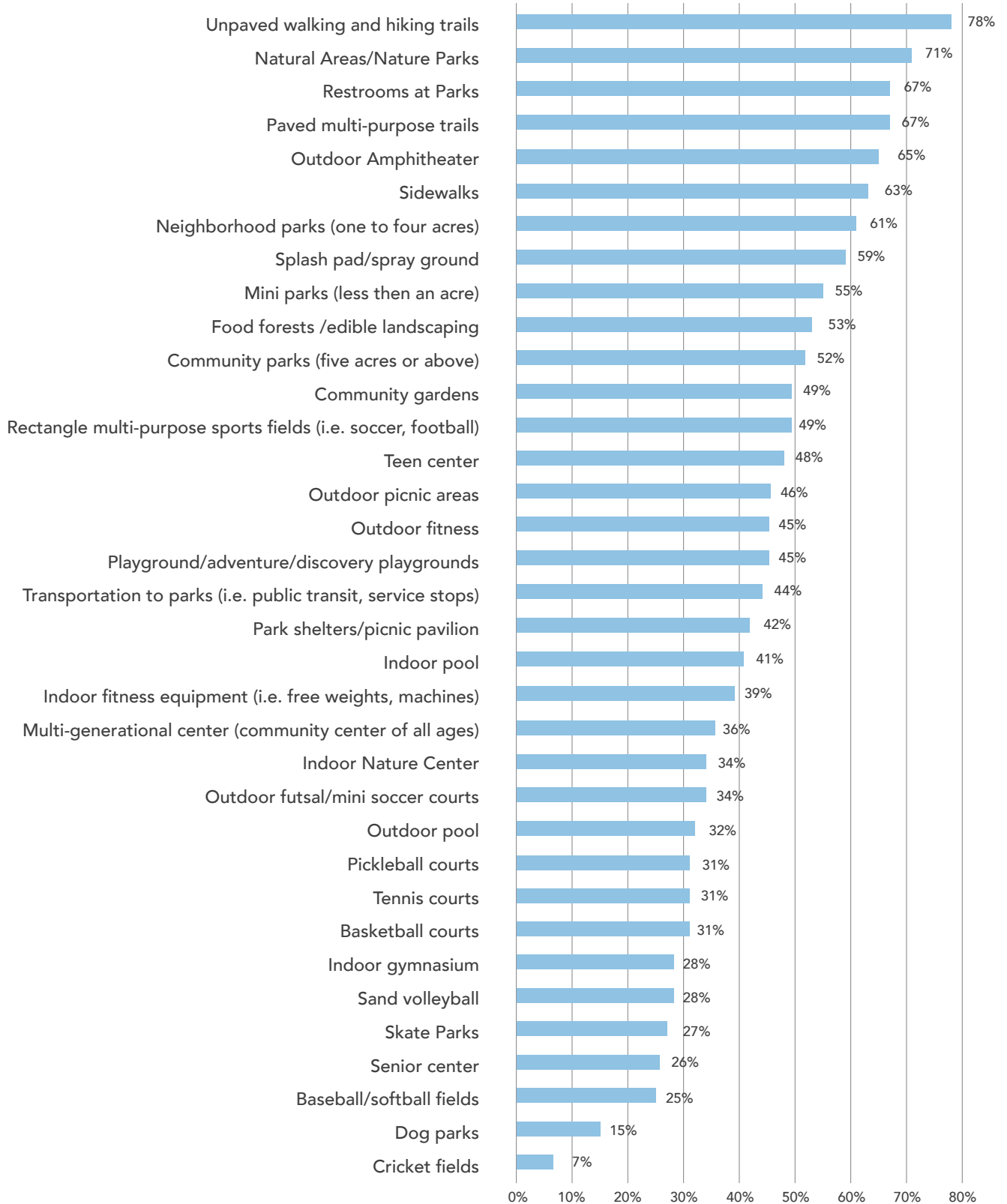


Support for Improvements/ Developments. Respondents were provided a list of 10 potential actions that the City could take to improve parks and recreation and were asked to select the four items most important to their household. The four items selected most often were development of additional outdoor sports facilities for organized sports (ex. Soccer, Football, Lacrosse, Basketball, Volleyball, Baseball, Softball, etc.) (28%); develop parks for unorganized and free play/general community recreation access and that are not permitted for organized sports (26%); development of walking and biking facilities (23%); and purchase of land to expand or create new parks and recreation facilities (20%).

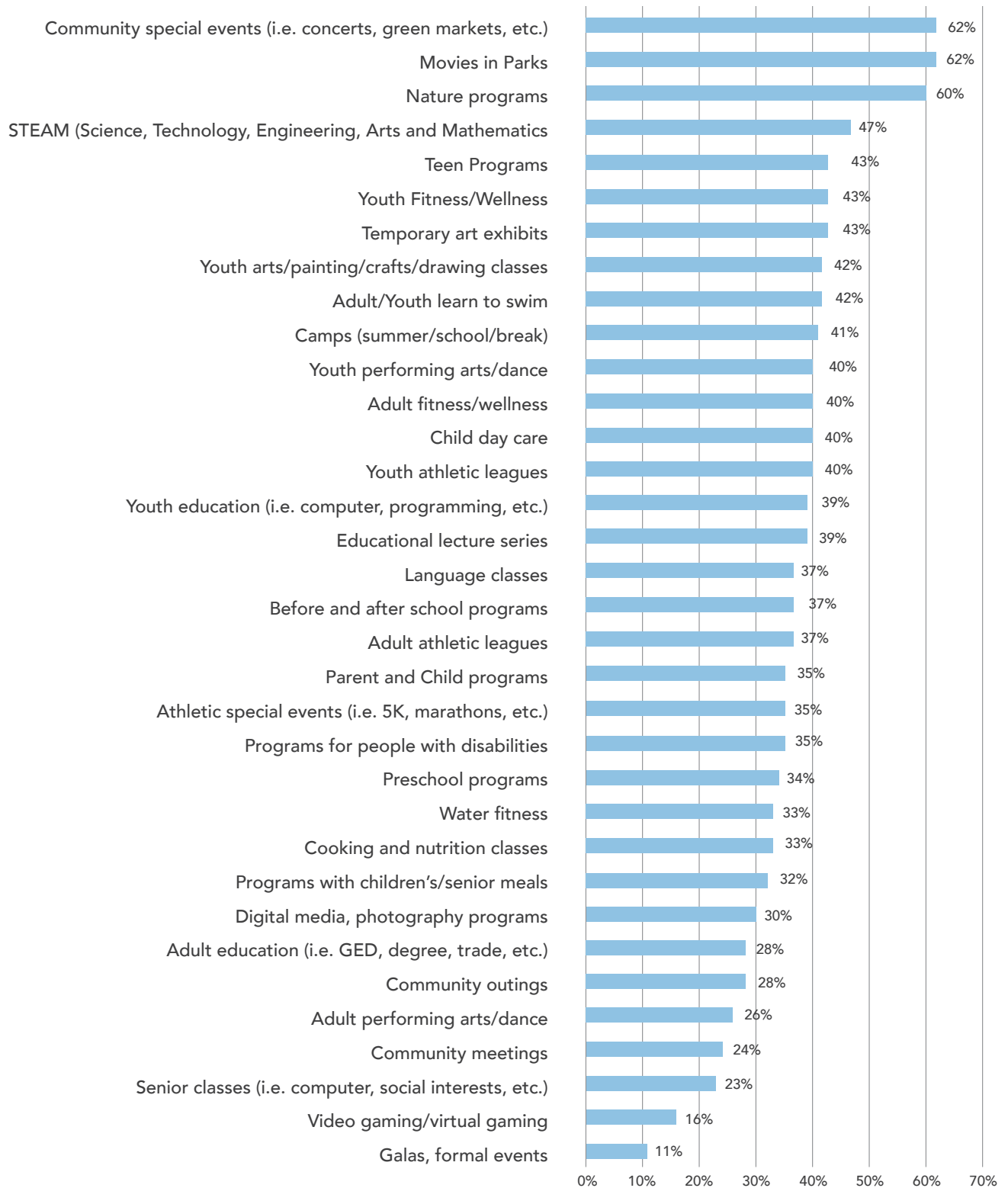
Potential Improvements Most Important to Households



Facility/Amenity Needs. Respondents were provided with a list of 35 parks and recreation facilities/amenities to select and identify which they believed were needed in the community. Following are the findings:



Program/Activity Needs. Respondents were provided with a list of 35 parks and recreation programs/activities to select and identify which they believed were needed in the community. Following are the findings:



City Leadership Interviews

The Mayor, City Commissioners, and City Manager were provided with the opportunity to be interviewed during June and July 2022. Each interviewee was asked four questions associated with parks and recreation needs, broader city needs, priorities, and funding strategies. Following is a summary of findings from the interviews.

Parks and Recreation Needs

City leaders identified the following parks and recreation needs:

- More park land and recreation facilities given the city's recent and projected population growth including:
 - A destination park downtown
 - More pocket parks downtown
 - More field and court space
- There is a need to be creative and intentional about identifying opportunities for more parks and recreation facilities, given the small and urban nature of the city:
 - Optimize existing parks (including cemetery) to focus on addressing parks and recreation needs, while also improving the quality, design, and experience.
 - Collaboratively explore opportunities and costs with partners in the city including schools, colleges, universities, churches, for-profit community, and non-profit community.
 - Be creative and aggressive about identifying potential park land by exploring parking lots, vacant/underutilized lands, land swaps, redevelopment opportunities, etc. for development of park land.
- More recreational facilities, priorities being tennis courts, field space for sports courts (e.g., soccer, football, lacrosse), and a track and field

Other needs mentioned included a baseball field, opportunities for pick-up sports, enhanced indoor

pool/swimming opportunities, splash pad, pickleball courts, age friendly facilities, and athletic events.

Citywide Social, Economic, and Environmental Needs and/or Issues

City leaders identified the following citywide social, economic, and environmental needs and/or issues:

- Equity, racial/social justice and diversity
- Affordable housing
- Climate change
- Building community/making people feel welcomed

Other citywide social, economic, and environmental needs and issues included unsheltered population, litter, environmental sustainability/stormwater management, and mental health

Priorities

When asked about the top three priorities, city leaders identified the following:

- Collaboration/sharing of facilities and spaces
- Understanding community needs
- Developing a reasonable and implementable plan

Other priorities mentioned included more park space, including downtown and more athletic field spaces, a track and field, and the maintenance and optimization of existing parks.

Funding

City leaders were mostly supportive of the following funding strategies:

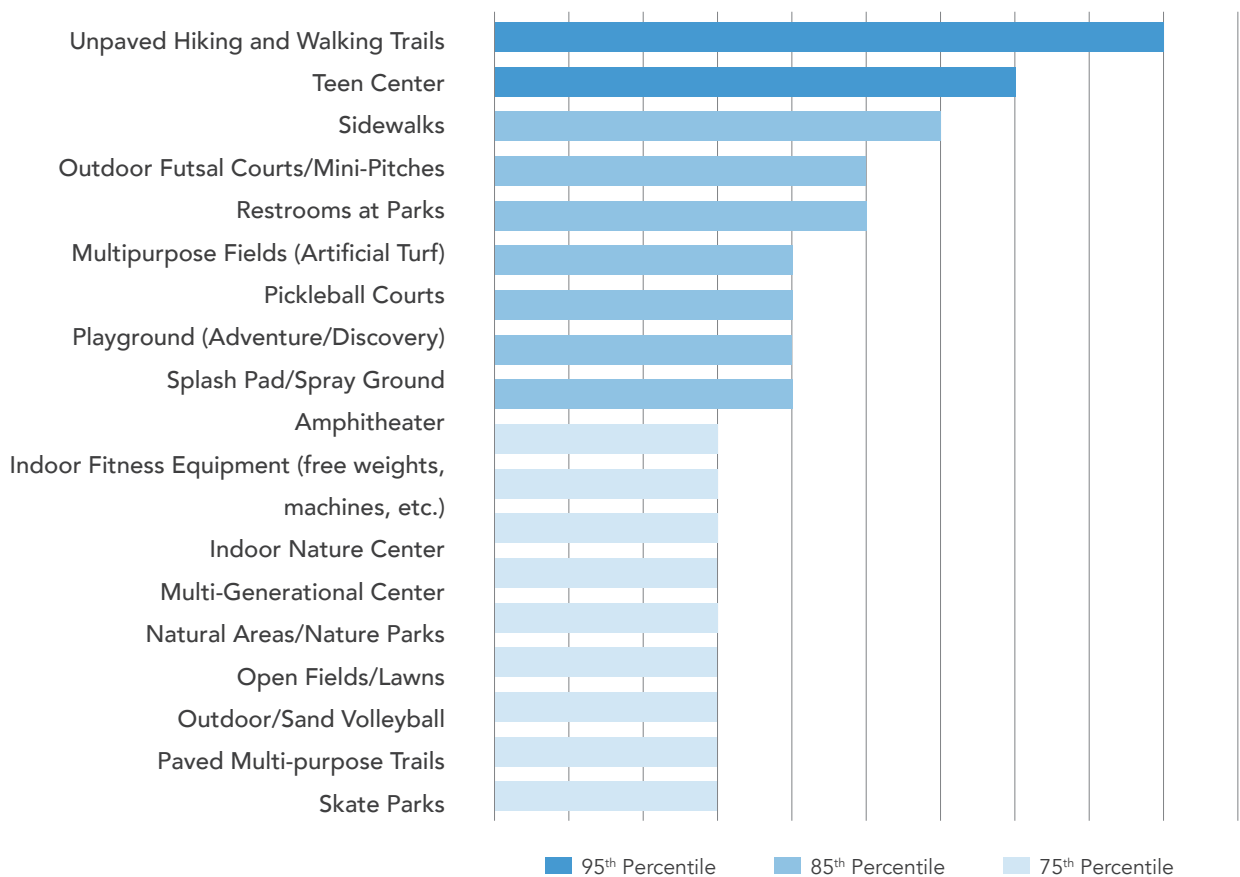
- Grants
- Park impact fees
- SPLOST
- Dedicated millage for parks
- Bonds
- Tax Allocation District (TAD) Funds for parks

Staff Kick-Off Meeting

The project team kick-off meeting occurred with staff on Tuesday, March 29, 2022 and collected input on the desired outcomes and priority needs. Attendees participated in six interactive exercises. Following is a description of the exercises and the selections that were in the 95th, 85th, and 75th percentile.

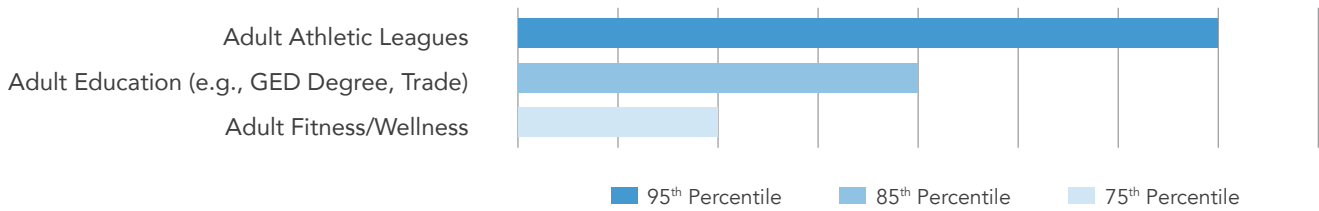
Facilities Priorities

Based on a matrix with images and names of over 40 facilities and amenities, participants were asked to place a dot on the facilities and amenities that they believed were important, but not adequately provided in the city.



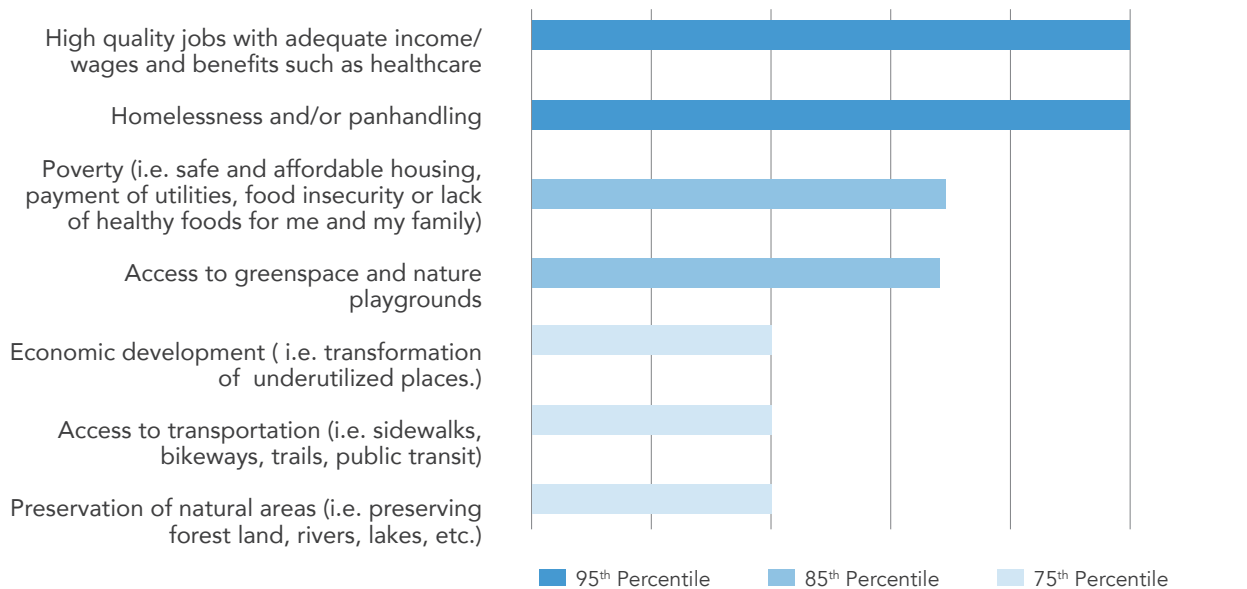
Program Priorities

Based on a matrix with images and names of over 35 programs and activities, participants were asked to place a dot on the programs and activities that they believed were important, but not adequately provided in the city.



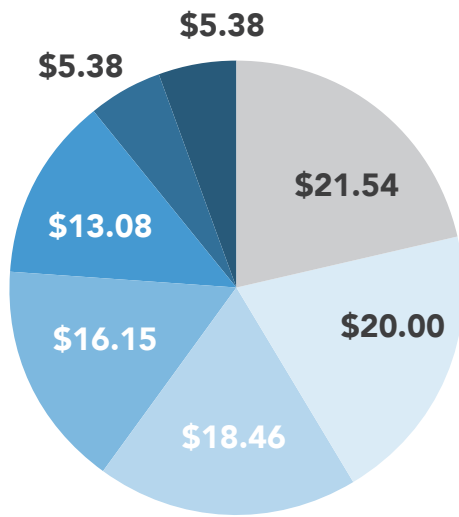
City-wide Challenges

Based on a matrix with over 22 economic, environmental, and social challenges that cities typically face, participants were asked to place a dot on the challenges that the City of Decatur is facing that they believed were most important to them.



Funding Facility Priorities

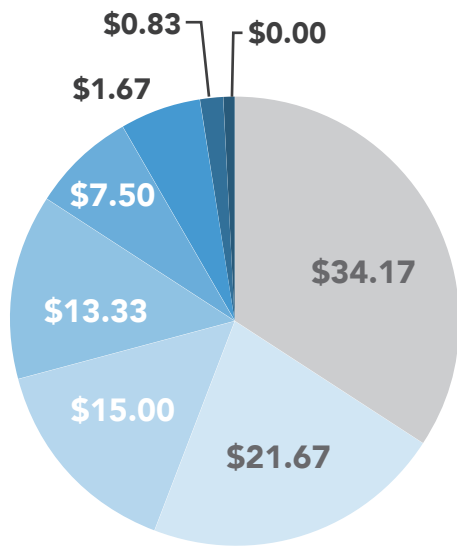
Participants were given \$100 dollars to spend on eight different facilities/capital improvement categories.



- Acquiring New Park Land
- Improvements to Existing Indoor Recreation Centers (e.g. repairs, replacements or renovations)
- Development of New Park Facilities (e.g. athletic fields, playground, restrooms, etc.) in Existing Parks
- Development of New Indoor Recreation Center
- Improvement to Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities (e.g. repairs, replacements or renovations to playgrounds, athletic fields, restrooms, etc.)
- Development of New Walking and Biking Facilities (paved and/or unpaved paths)
- Improvements/maintenance to Existing Walking and Biking Facilities (e.g. repairs, repaving or renovations, etc.)

Funding Program Priorities

Participants were given \$100 dollars to spend on eight different programs/operations categories.



- Additional Youth Recreation Programs and/or Classes (excluding athletics)
- Increase Staff to Improve Maintenance of Parks and Facilities (additional cleaning, mowing, tree trimming, etc.)
- Additional Youth Athletic Programs/Leagues
- Additional Adult Athletic Programs/Leagues
- Additional Senior Recreation Programs and/or Classes (excluding athletics)
- Additional Adult Recreation Programs and/or Classes (excluding athletics)
- Increase Frequency of Programs/Classes and/or Extend Hours of Programming
- Funds for outside instructors, vendors, professionals, to offer specialized classes/workshops
- Other (Write idea and funding amount on Sticky Note)

What Else is on Your Mind?

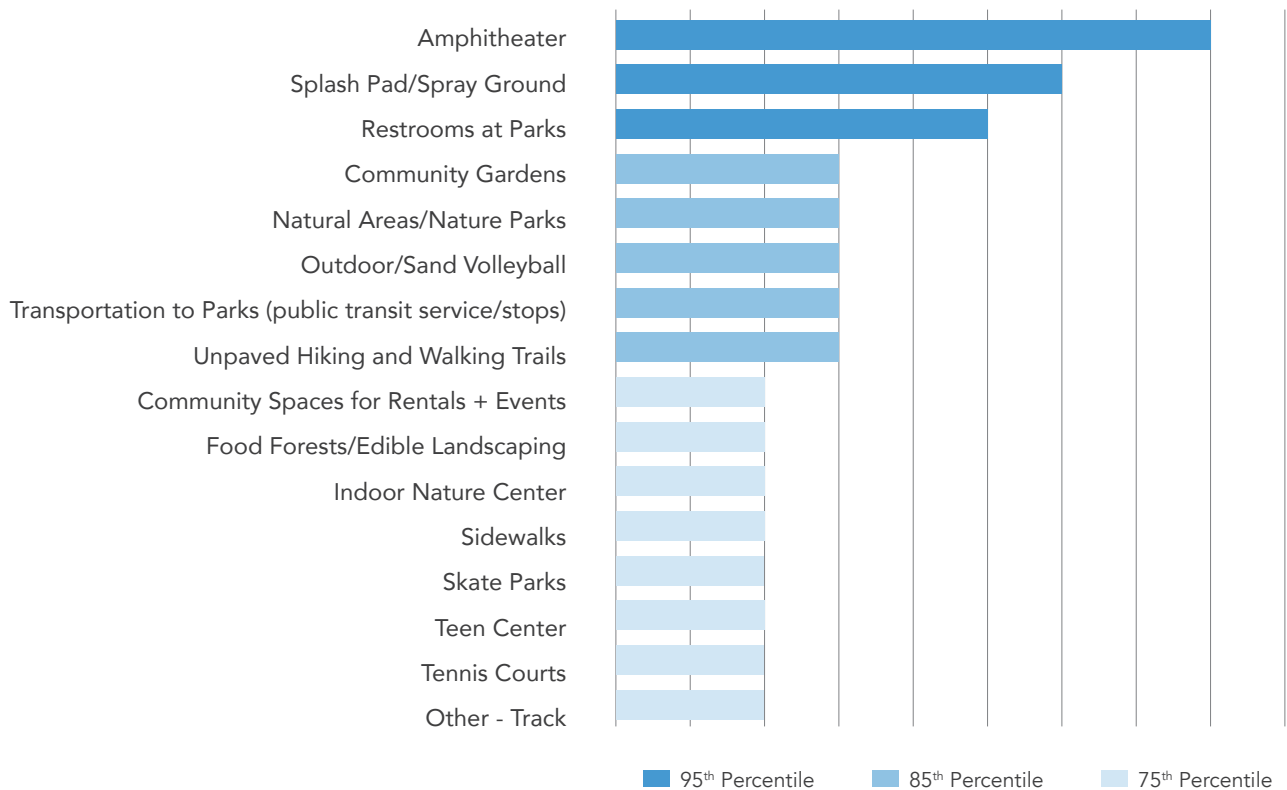
Participants were asked to share anything else that was on their mind regarding the parks and recreation master plan that should be considered. Participants expressed that they would like to see the parks and recreation system better maintained and park maintenance schedules better aligned with the time residents use parks and recreation facilities.

Steering Committee Meeting

A project steering committee was developed for the project to provide strategic direction, advice, and expertise; serve as influential advocates that challenge conventional thinking; and help implement the plan. The first of four meetings was scheduled on Tuesday, March 29, 2022 for the Committee to provide input on the desired outcomes and priority needs. Attendees participated in six interactive exercises. Following is a description of the exercises and the selections that were in the 95th, 85th, and 75th percentile.

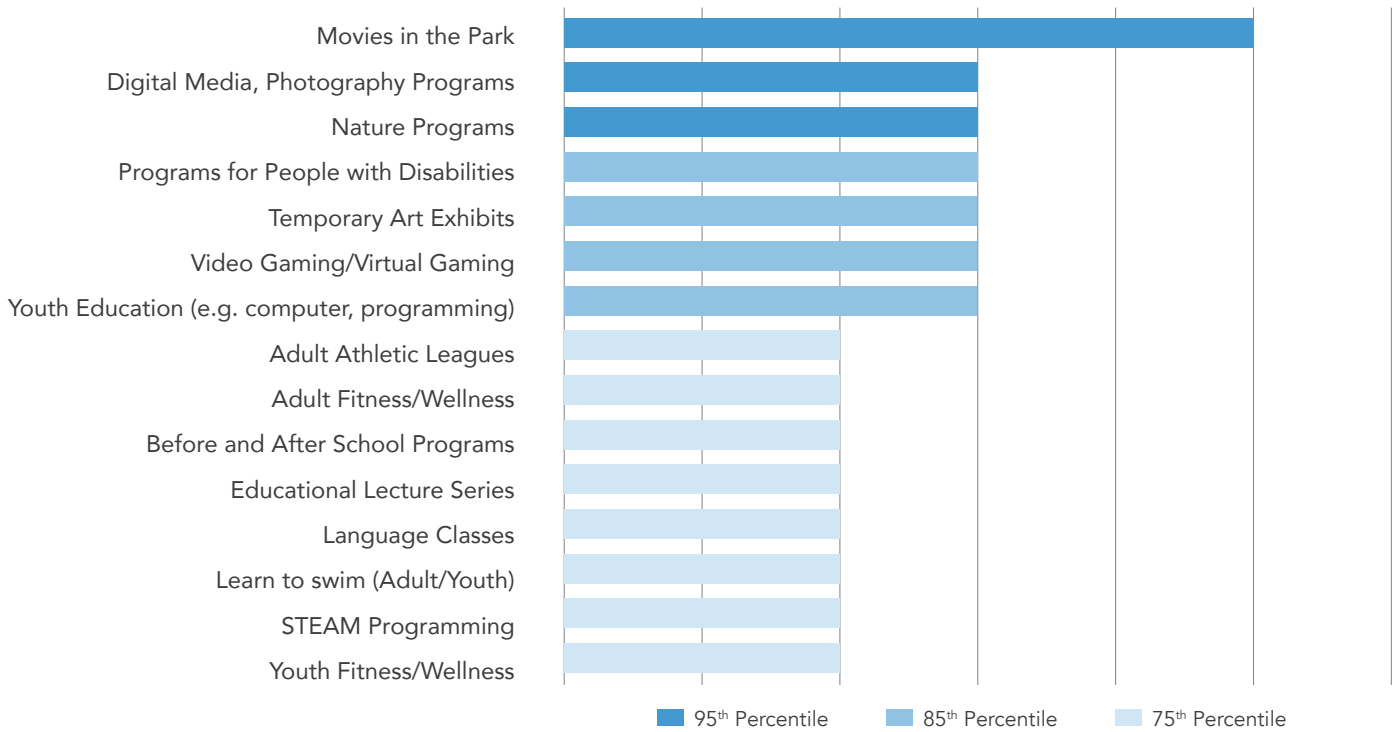
Facilities Priorities

Based on a matrix with images and names of over 40 facilities and amenities, participants were asked to place a dot on the facilities and amenities that they believed were important, but not adequately provided in the city. Following are the findings.



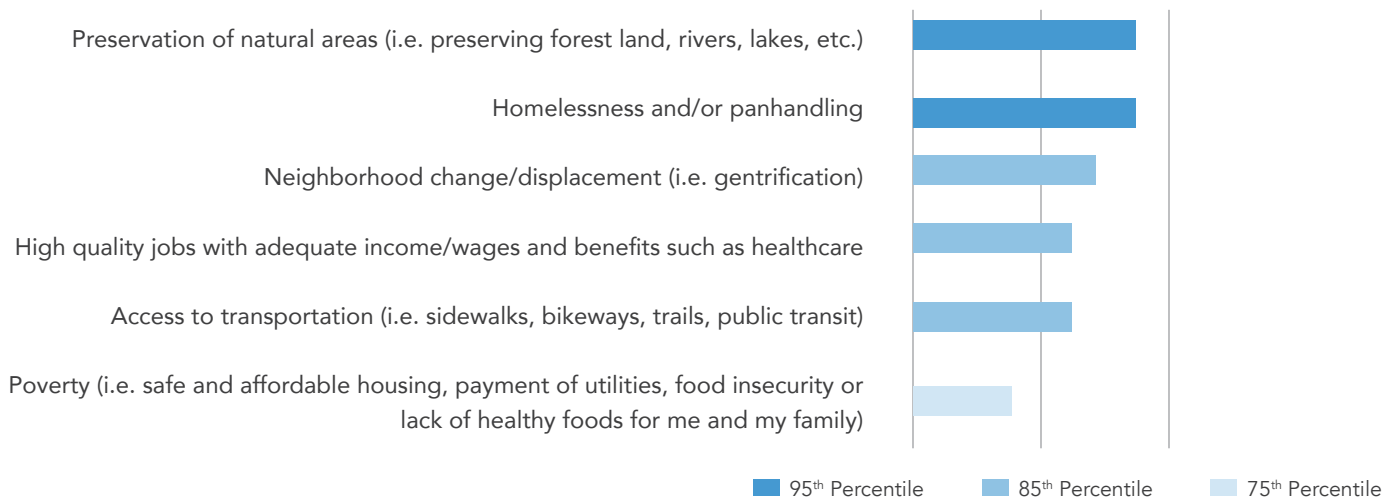
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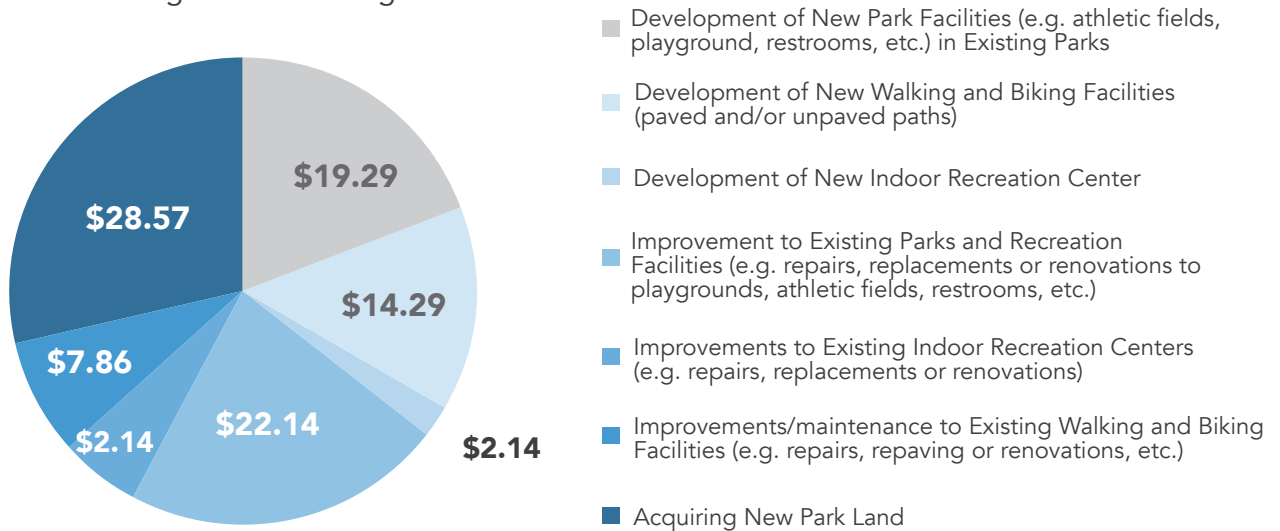
City-wide Challenges

Based on a matrix with over 22 economic, environmental, and social challenges that cities typically face, participants were asked to place a dot on the challenges that the City of Decatur is facing that they believed were most important to them. Following are the findings.



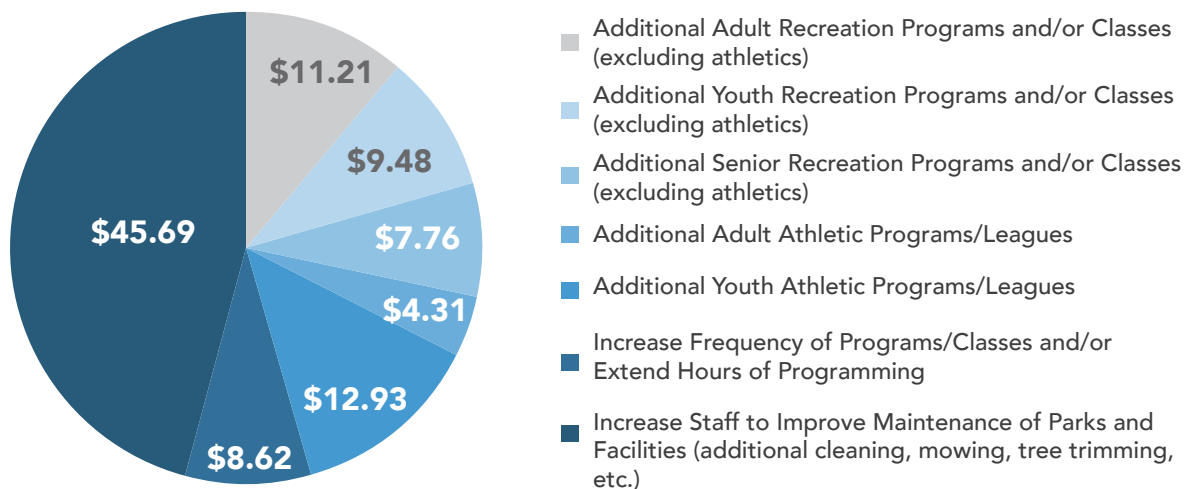
Funding Facility Priorities

Participants were given \$100 dollars to spend on eight different facilities/capital improvement categories. Following are the findings.



Funding Program Priorities

Participants were given \$100 dollars to spend on eight different programs/operations categories. Following are the findings.



What Else is on Your Mind?

Participants were asked to share anything else that was on their mind regarding the parks and recreation master plan that should be considered. Participants expressed that there is a need for:

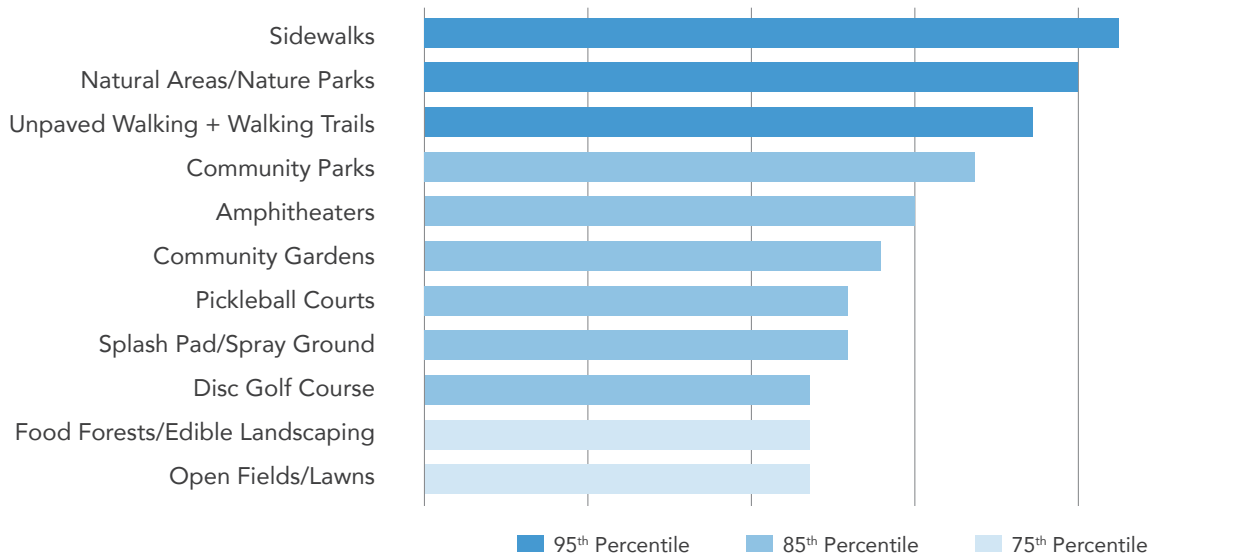
- Additional park land in the city that could be achieved through transformation of underutilized greenspace, surface parking lots, and interlocal agreements.
- More preprogrammed, multi-purpose, and multi-generational park space.
- Invasive exotic plant removal in parks and better management of natural areas.
- Playful streetscapes.
- Youth programs and athletic facilities.
- Expose youth to a variety of programs and activities.
- Facilities for electrical vehicles.
- Impact fees.

Public Meeting

A public meeting was hosted by the City at Ebster Recreation Center on Wednesday, May 11, 2022 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Over 60 participants attended to learn about the project and provide their input. Attendees participated in six interactive exercises. Following is a description of the exercises and the selections that were in the 95th, 85th, and 75th percentile.

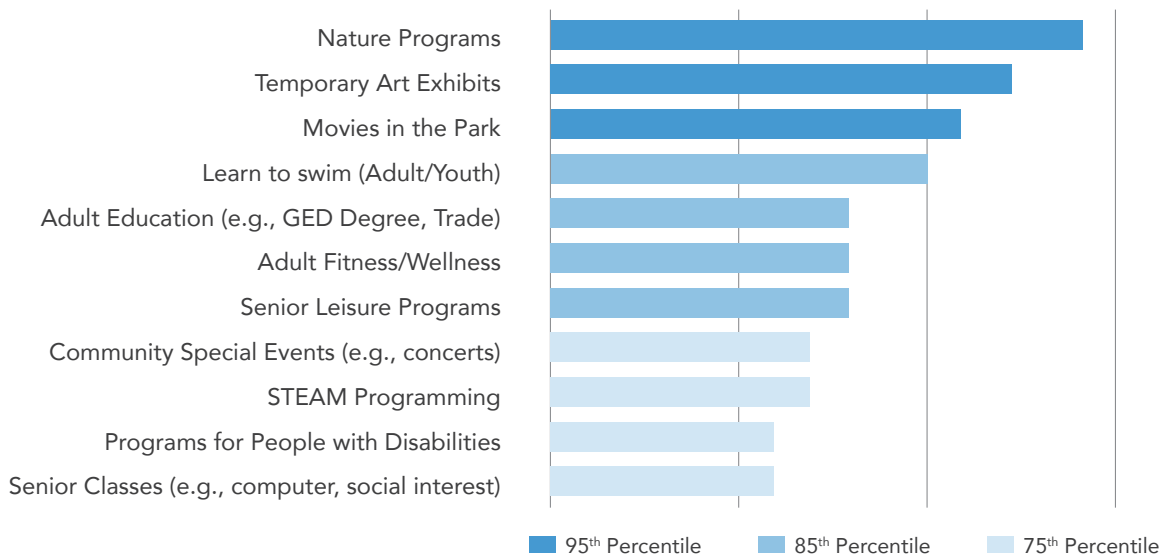
Facilities Priorities

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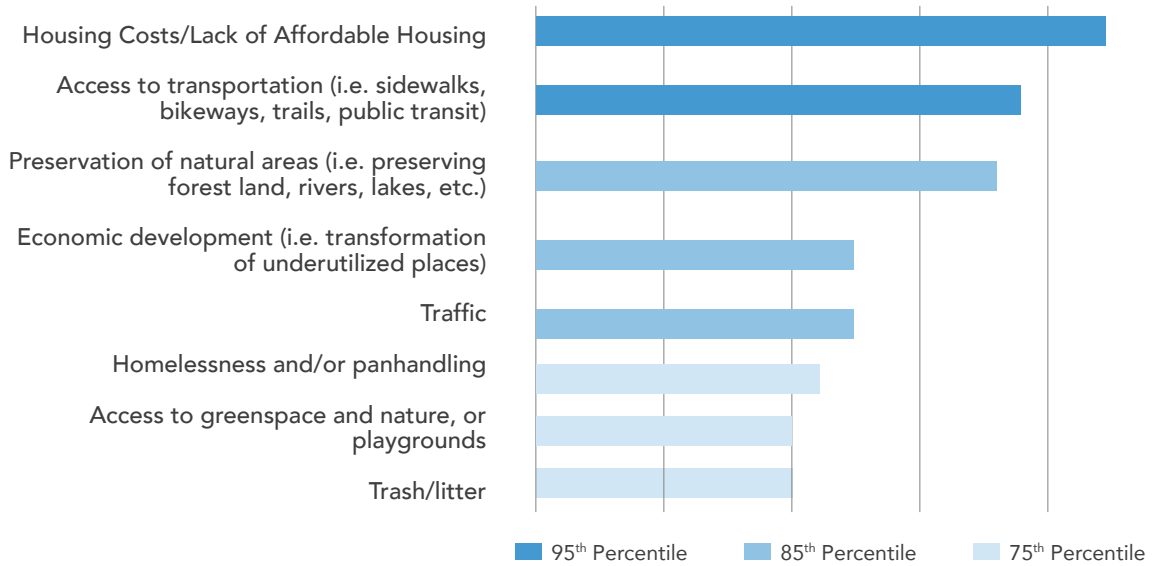
Program Priorities

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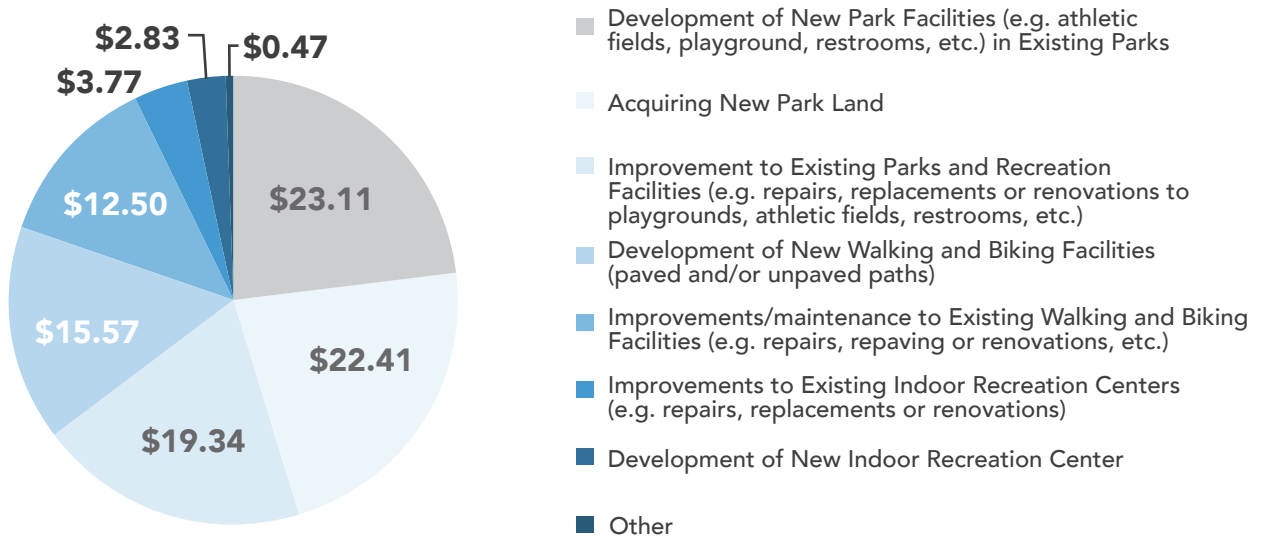
City-wide Challenges

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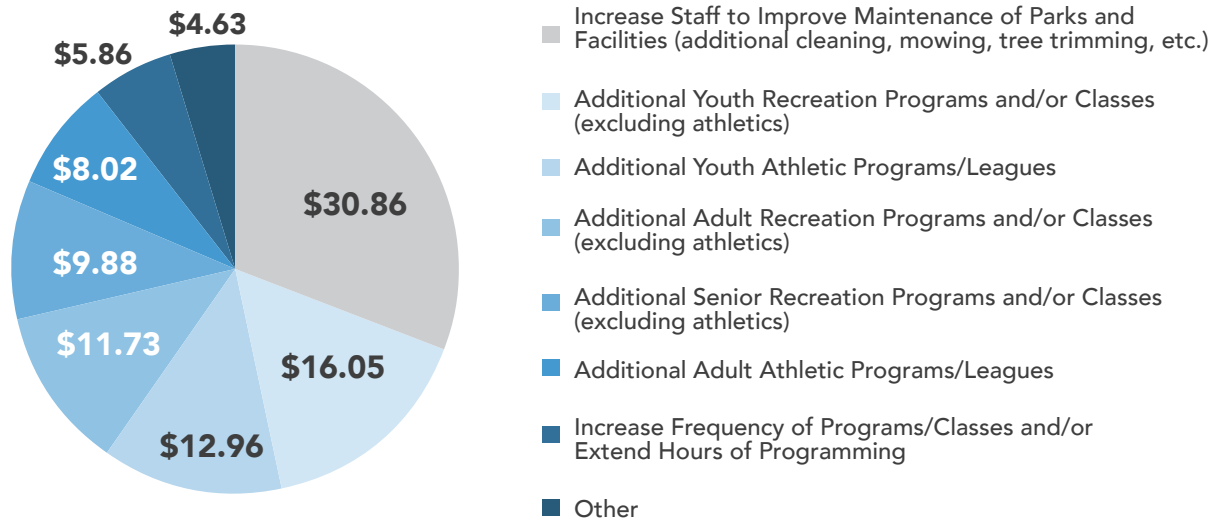
Funding Facility Priorities

Participants were given \$100 dollars to spend on eight different facilities/capital improvement categories. Following are the findings.



Funding Program Priorities

Participants were given \$100 dollars to spend on eight different programs/operations categories. Following are the findings.



What Else is on Your Mind?

Participants were asked to share anything else that was on their mind regarding the parks and recreation master plan that should be considered. Participants expressed that the City should:

- Partner with schools, universities, and places of worship to identify opportunities for shared use of park space and recreation facilities.
- Ensure first-rate, well-maintained parks, recreation facilities, and restrooms by having dedicated park maintenance staff.
- Provide free, unprogrammed recreation time in the gyms and underutilized green spaces.
- Make improvements to Adair Park.
- Provide low-cost programs for seniors.
- Consider the role of private recreation providers including Venetian Pool, Woodland Gardens, the Neighborhood Fun Leader, and others.
- Protect tree canopy.
- Creating a Mountain Bike Course and Pump Track.
- Change brand and identity so parks have a unified look.
- Volunteer groups in parks.

Focus Group + Special Events

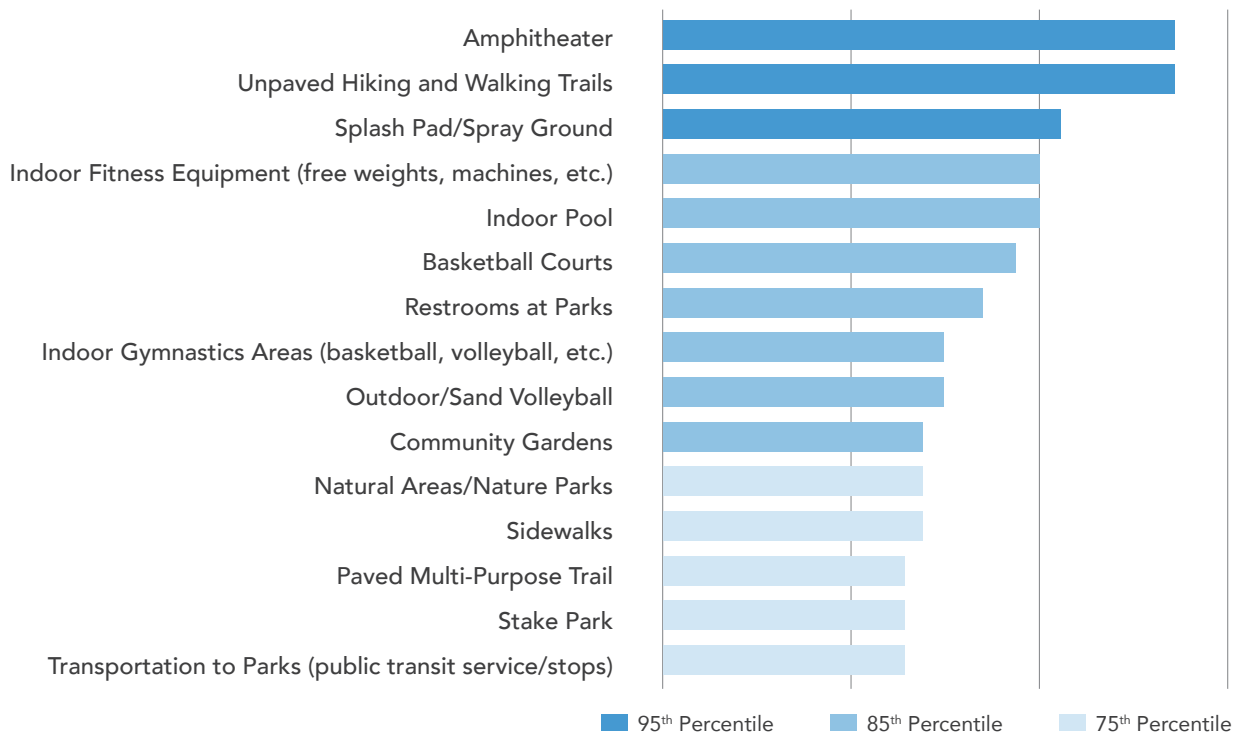
Interviews were conducted with seven different focus groups to ascertain needs and priorities for the parks and recreation system:

- Active Living Board/ Safe Routes to School/Pedestrian Advisory Committee Group | Tuesday, June 7, 2022 at 9:00 am
- Pollinator Fest | Saturday, June 25, 2022
- Retail/Restaurant Focus Group | Tuesday, July 12, 2022 at 9:00 am
- Church Focus Group | Wednesday, July 13, 2022 at 1:00 pm
- Decatur Housing Authority | Thursday, July 14, 2022 at 5:00 pm
- Better Together Advisory Board – Tuesday, July 19, 2022 at 6:30 pm
- Environmental Sustainability Board – Friday, July 22, 2022 at 9:00 am
- Arts Alliance Tuesday, July 26, 2022 at 7:00 pm

In most instances, attendees participated in six interactive exercises. Following is a description of the exercises and combined findings from all of the events and the selections that were in the 95th, 85th, and 75th percentile.

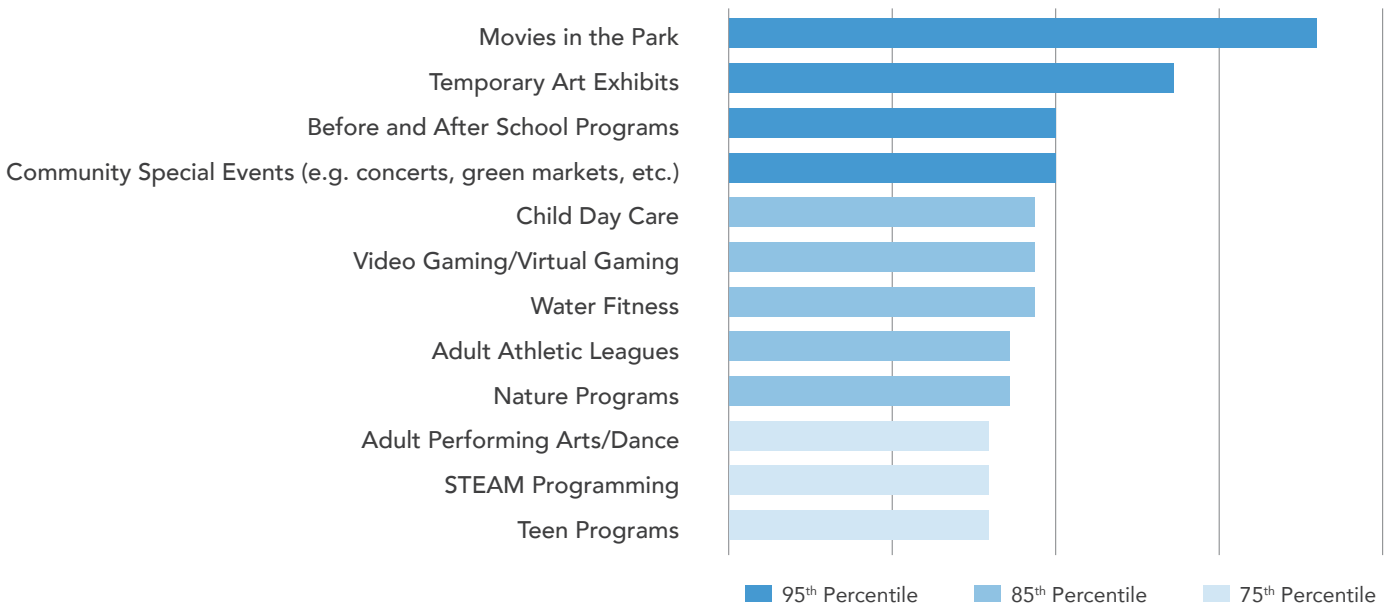
Facilities Priorities

Based on a matrix with images and names of over 40 facilities and amenities, participants were asked to place a dot on the facilities and amenities that they believed were important, but not adequately provided in the city. Following are the findings.



Program Priorities

Based on a matrix with images and names of over 35 programs and activities, participants were asked to place a dot on the programs and activities that they believed were important, but not adequately provided in the city. Following are the findings;



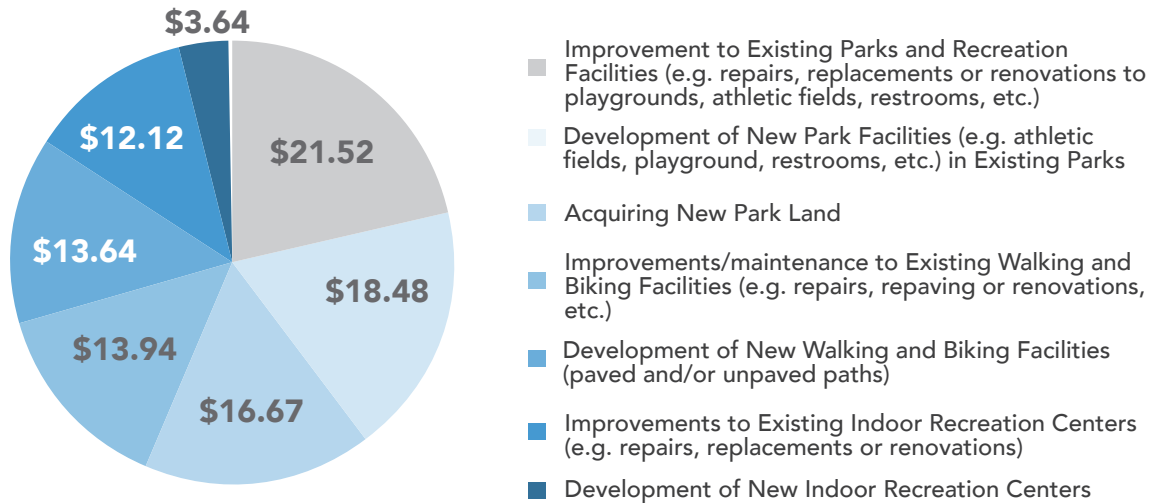
City-wide Challenges

Based on a matrix with over 22 economic, environmental, and social challenges that cities typically face, participants were asked to place a dot on the challenges that the City of Decatur is facing that they believed were most important to them. Following are the findings.



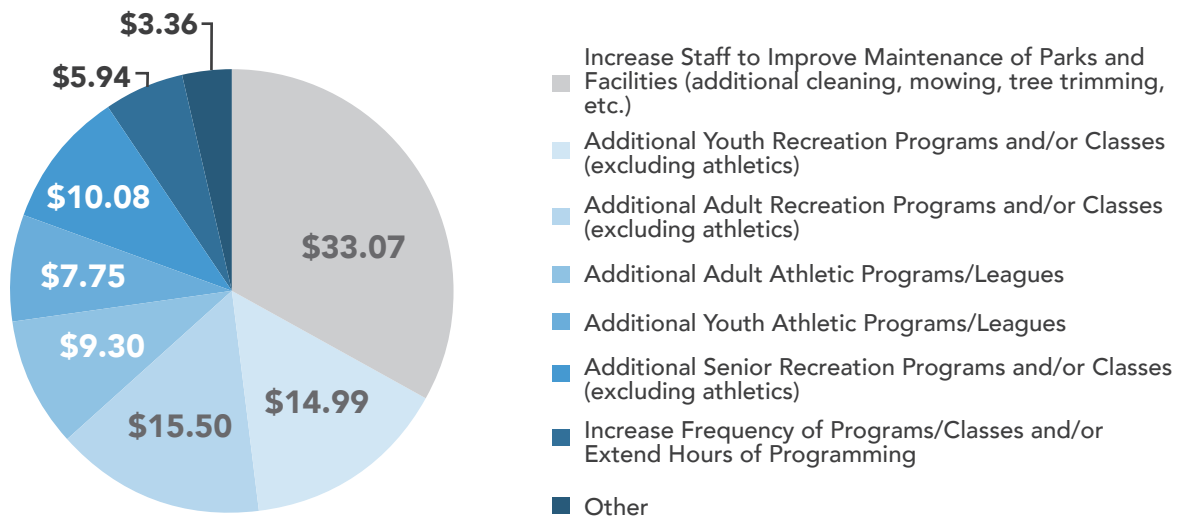
Funding Facility Priorities

Participants were given \$100 dollars to spend on eight different facilities/capital improvement categories. Following are the findings.



Funding Program Priorities

Participants were given \$100 dollars to spend on eight different programs/operations categories. Following are the findings.



What Else is on Your Mind?

Participants were asked to share anything else that was on their mind regarding the parks and recreation master plan that should be considered. Participants expressed the following points:

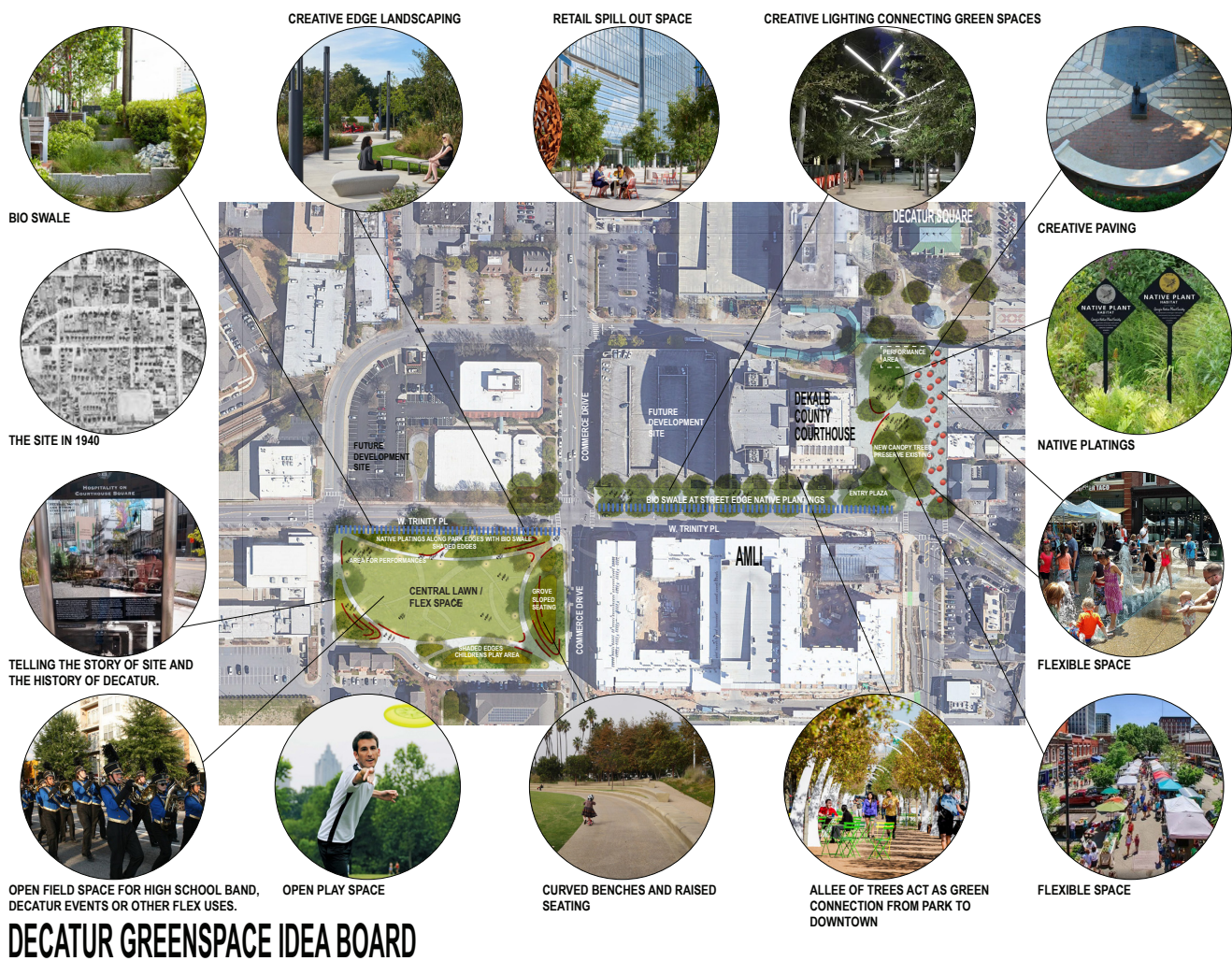
- Enforce dog rules on spaces that are not dog parks
- Develop a park with senior focused activities near housing authority
- Add waiting areas for adults in facilities
- Provide additional program such as:
 - Mental health programs for seniors
 - Literacy programs for seniors
 - Child care
 - Adult day care
 - Teen activities
 - Movies in the park - partner with library; story time before
 - Mobile Farmer's Market
 - Temporary art exhibits in store fronts
 - Theater space; black box
 - Shakespeare in the Park
 - Temporary installation to take pictures
 - Activities that bring the whole community together – multi-cultural events and 1st Friday events
 - Art Alliance partnership – adult education art classes and Plain Air art night
 - Speakeasy programs
- Provide a fee waiver for senior programs
- Provide additional amenities such as:
 - Arcade/ Teen Center/ Lounge
 - Multi-generational centers
 - Natural areas/ Conservation Parks joined with Arts
 - Roller skating
 - Picnic areas
 - Teen exercise fitness center
 - Fresh fruit and vegetables
 - Community gardens for renting
 - Park with animals such as bunny rabbits
 - Water park with slides
 - Indoor pool
 - Splash pad within walking distance for younger kids in a central area
 - Restroom in Decatur Square
- Incorporate sustainability into parks such as solar power, green infrastructure best practices, tree canopy
- Enhance communication to let residents know what is going on - develop a website with a list of all the programs that are happening in Decatur
- Post events on Visit Decatur web page
- Enhance the maintenance of parks, including additional resources for park maintenance
- Enhance trash and litter pick up throughout Downtown
- Rehab existing parks:
 - McKoy Park – dug outs, stands, concession stand, drainage in 3rd base, bathrooms
 - Cemetery
 - Ebster Park - Redesign with seniors in min
- Use See, Click, Fix and code for park comments
- Develop connections to all of the City's parks to create a connected system through better, improve sidewalks, bike lanes leading to parks, trails, and an electric trolley bus
- Partner with schools and faith-based organizations for programming, shared-use of land and facilities, and joint-use of potential new spaces, facilities, and amenities

Email Comments

Residents emailed the Consultant Team and staff to share their input related to desired parks and recreation improvements. The comments received revolved around two primary interests:

- **Tennis Courts:** Residents expressed a desire for more tennis courts, better maintenance of existing courts, better trash pick-up and recycling, and the installation of an online reservation system to allow residents to reserve courts. Residents noted that courts are frequently booked and unavailable, especially during the high school season (January-April).
- **Permanent Greenspace in Downtown Decatur:** Residents expressed a desire to preserve the last piece of undeveloped greenspace in Downtown Decatur - the 2.88 acre parcel across from Ebster Recreation Center. Additionally, they expressed a desire to develop parking lots and underutilized areas, such as the space in front of the DeKalb County Courthouse, into greenspaces. The Downtown Decatur Neighbors also developed an idea board that shows all the potential uses and benefits of preserving and connecting these greenspaces downtown illustrated in Figure 2.2a.

Figure 2.2a
Downtown Greenspace Idea Board developed by Downtown Decatur Neighborhoods



Level of Service Analysis + Benchmarking

There are no industry standards or regulations regarding how communities should establish Levels of Service (LOS) for parks and recreation services. Neither the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) nor the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) publish traditional population-based LOS standards such as park acres and facilities per 1,000 residents.

Instead, cities are encouraged to conduct community-wide needs assessments and benchmark themselves against other similar communities in order to establish their own LOS standards.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has developed its benchmarking website Park Metrics, “the most comprehensive source of data standards and insights for park and recreation agencies” to help cities develop LOS metrics. City of Decatur LOS findings were benchmarked against communities that have a similar population and population density as the City of Decatur.

Five different LOS methods were used to determine how well the City’s parks and recreation system is meeting residents’ needs:

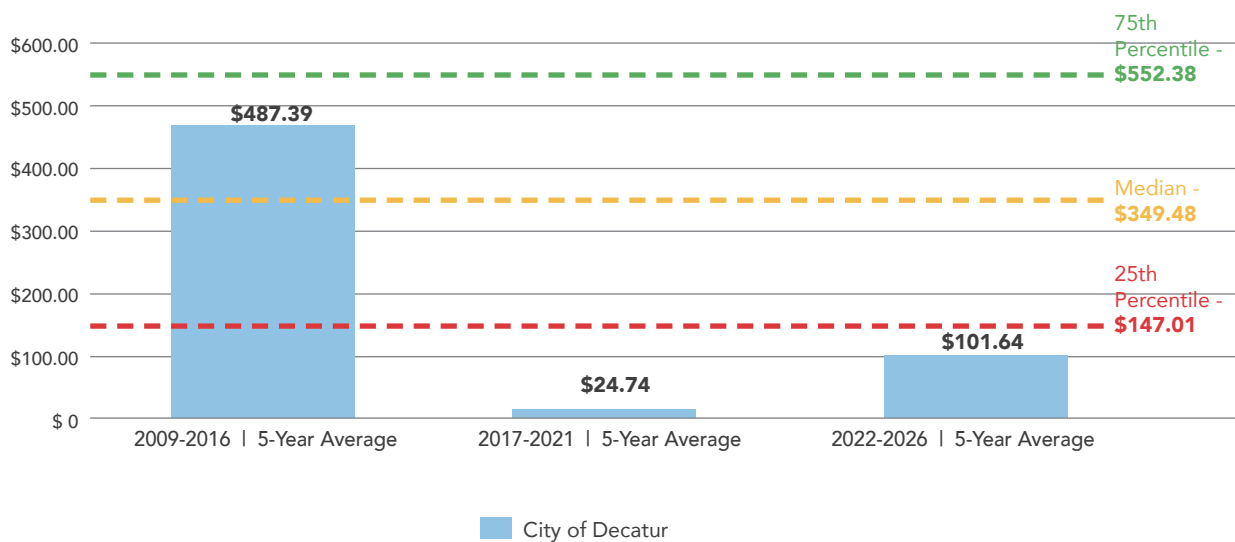
1. **Capital Funding Per Capita:** Measure the amount of capital dollars spent on parks and recreation services per resident.
2. **Acreage LOS:** Measures the quantity of parkland acreage that is available per 1,000 residents.
3. **Indoor Recreation Center Square Footage LOS:** Measures the quantity of indoor recreation space available per resident.
4. **Facilities LOS:** Measures the number of recreation facilities available per capita.
5. **Access LOS:** Measures the geographic areas served by parks or recreation facilities.

It is important to note that these LOS Analyses are just one tool for determining the community’s needs. The findings alone may not be indicative of residents’ needs and priorities. LOS analyses are based on the gross population of a community, not preferences or priorities based on unique community demographics, lifestyles, or values. The findings from the LOS analyses must be compared to the findings from the other needs assessment techniques in order to verify parks and recreation needs and priorities.

Capital Funding Per Capita

Capital funding per capita is used to gauge how well a community funds parks and recreation capital improvements. Five-year average capital funding per capita were calculated for the years 2022-2026, 2017-2021, and 2009-2016 and compared to NRPA benchmarks for cities with a similar population and population density as the City of Decatur. Figure 2.2b illustrates the findings from these analyses.

Figure 2.2b
Capital Funding Per Capita 5-Year Average Level of Service



Based on this analysis, the City of Decatur five-year average capital funding per capita for the years 2022-2026 and 2017-2021 were below the 25th, Median, and 75 percentile benchmarks.

However, the 2009-2016 average of \$487.39 per capita was above the median and approaching the 75th percentile of \$552.38 per capita.

These findings suggest that while the City benefited from an infusion of capital funding at the beginning of the 2010 decade, funding has been low since then. Additionally, based on the currently projected capital projects, this funding will remain low for the next five years.

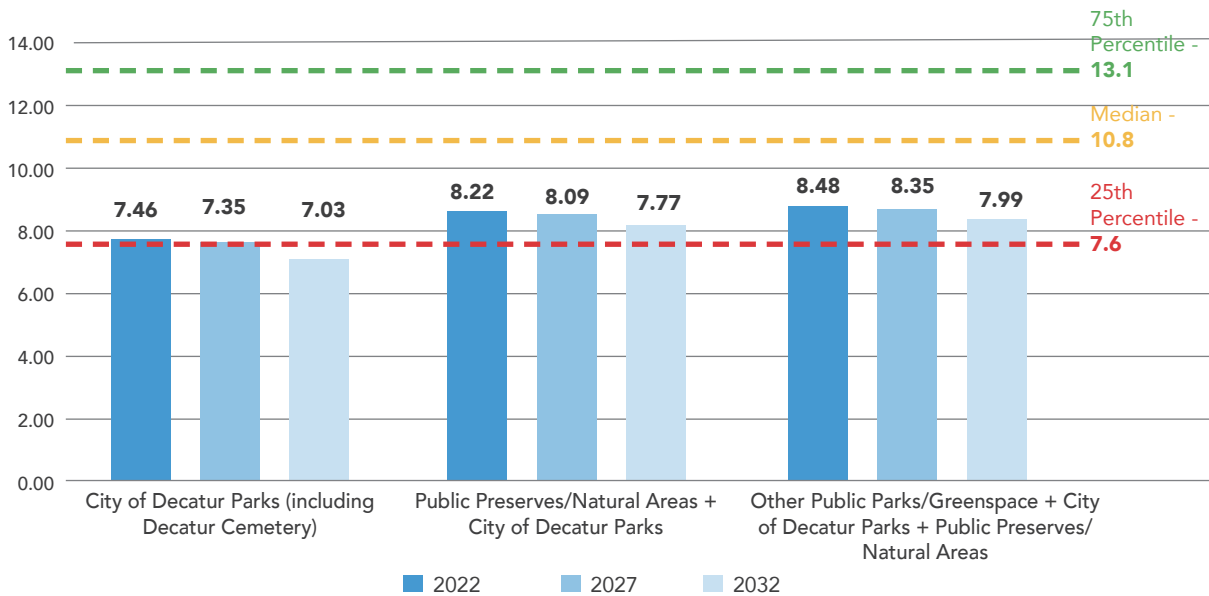
Acreage LOS

Acreage LOS is measured by dividing the number of park acreage by 1,000 population. Park Acreage LOS was analyzed using three different acreage considerations:

- City of Decatur Parks including the Cemetery
- City of Decatur Parks including the Cemetery and Public Preserves/ Natural Areas
- City of Decatur Parks including the Cemetery and Public Preserves/ Natural Areas and Other Public Parks/ Greenspaces

Acreage amounts were divided by the population estimates for the years 2022, 2027, and 2032. Figure 2.2c illustrates the findings from these analyses and compares the City's 2022 Acreage LOS to NRPA benchmarks for cities with a similar population and population density as the City of Decatur.

Figure 2.2c
Acreage Level of Service Analysis



Based on the Acreage LOS analyses, the City of Decatur's Acreage LOS in 2022 ranges from 7.46 to 8.48 acres per 1,000 population. If the City does not acquire any additional park land by the year 2032, park acreage LOS would continue to decline. By 2032 it would go down to a range between 7.03 and 7.99 acres per 1,000 population. This is below the median and 75th percentile benchmarks.

To meet the median Acreage LOS benchmark of 10.8 per 1,000 population by the year 2032, the City of Decatur would have to add between 78 to 105 acres depending on whether public preserves, natural areas, and other public parks and greenspaces are considered.

Facilities LOS

Facilities LOS is measured by dividing the number of residents by the number of parks and recreation facilities. The higher the number, the less facilities there are per resident, and the more of a need there may be for that particular recreation facility. The lower the number, the more facilities there are per resident, and the less of a need there may be for that particular recreation facility.

Figure 2.2d
Facilities Level of Service Analysis

	Facilities	City of Decatur - Level of Service				NRPA Park Metrics			Need/ Surplus	
		Inventory	2022	2027	2032	Aggregated Benchmarks (Pop. 17.5k-49k; Dens. 300-1000/ sq mi.)			Based on Median Benchmark	
						25th Percentile	Median	75th Percentile	2027	2032
Indoor Facilities	Recreation Centers	3	8,309	8,938	9,337	21,995	24,066	38,008	2	2
	Senior Centers	0	-	-	-	28,037	35,000	40,895	-1	-1
	Teen Centers	0	-	-	-	22,050	22,100	22,150	-1	-1
	Stadiums	0	-	-	-	27,152	30,015	32,878	-1	-1
	Performance Amphitheatres	0	-	-	-	32,000	32,000	37,114	-1	-1
	Gyms	4	6,232	6,704	7,003	15,872	22,200	31,650	3	3
Outdoor Facilities	Amphitheatres	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Basketball Courts	6	4,155	4,469	4,469	4,070	7,153	10,909	2	2
	Community gardens	2	12,464	13,407	14,006	12,249	24,317	32,000	1	1
	Diamond fields: baseball - youth	1	24,928	26,814	28,012	3,140	4,571	8,935	-5	-5
	Diamond fields: baseball - adult	1	24,928	26,814	28,012	16,375	18,214	30,150	0	-1
	Diamond fields: softball fields - youth	0	-	-	-	6,782	7,327	21,532	-4	-4
	Diamond fields: softball fields - adult	2	12,464	13,407	14,006	12,499	16,750	26,730	0	0
	Dog park	3	8,309	8,938	9,337	17,125	22,866	36,084	2	2
	Golf Course (18-Holes)	0	-	-	-	33,000	33,000	33,000	-1	-1
	Multipurpose synthetic field	0	-	-	-	15,608	21,980	26,618	-1	-1
	Multiuse courts -basketball, volleyball	0	-	-	-	11,755	19,279	26,230	-1	-1
	Playgrounds	8	3,116	3,352	9,337	2,067	2,890	3,662	-1	-2
	Tot lots	0	-	-	-	5,625	7,327	11,766	-4	-4
	Rectangular fields: football field	0	-	-	-	9,909	15,775	21,602	-2	-2
	Rectangular fields: multi-purpose	5	4,986	5,363	5,602	3,976	8,613	21,273	2	2
	Rectangular fields: soccer field - adult	0	-	-	-	8,202	13,973	24,723	-2	-2
	Rectangular fields: soccer field - youth	0	-	-	-	3,118	3,579	12,739	-7	-8
	Skate park	1	24,928	26,814	28,012	23,531	32,000	35,741	0	0
	Splash Pad / Water Feature	1	24,928	26,814	28,012	-	58,914	-	0	0
	Swimming pools (outdoor only)	4	6,232	6,704	7,003	7,203	9,279	22,850	1	1
Tennis courts (outdoor only)	9	2,770	2,979	3,112	3,713	7,159	9,382	5	5	
Pickleball courts (outdoor only)	2	12,464	13,407	14,006	10,848	14,476	18,918	0	0	
Walking Path/Trail/Track	6.00	-	-	-	7	12	21	-6	-6	

Population estimates for the years 2022, 2027, and 2032 were divided by the number of existing facilities to identify the Facilities LOS. The Median Facility LOS benchmarks were then used to calculate the need or surplus of facilities based on the projected 2027 and 2032 population. Figure 2.2d illustrates the findings to this analysis.

Based on this analysis, it appears that the City may have a need for the following parks and recreation facilities:

- Senior Center
- Teen Center
- Stadium
- Performance Amphitheater
- Diamond fields: baseball – youth
- Diamond fields: baseball – adult
- Diamond fields: softball – youth
- Golf Course (18-holes)
- Multipurpose synthetic field
- Multiuse courts – basketball, volleyball
- Playgrounds
- Tot lots
- Rectangle fields: football field
- Rectangle fields: soccer field – adult
- Rectangle fields: soccer field – youth
- Walking paths/ trails

The City also appears to have a surplus of the following facilities:

- Recreation Centers
- Gyms
- Basketball Courts
- Dog Parks
- Rectangle fields: multi-purpose
- Swimming pools
- Tennis Courts

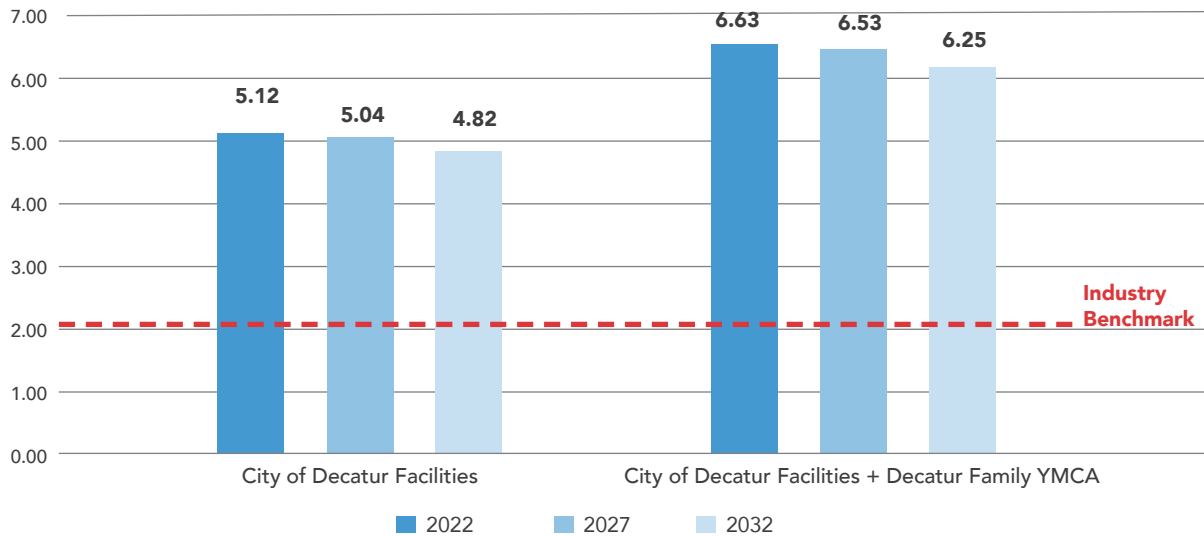
The need and surplus quantity will be revisited in Chapter 3: Long-Range Vision based on the proposed vision for the City and related recommended Facilities LOS.

Indoor Recreation Center Space LOS

Indoor Recreation Center Space LOS is measured by dividing the amount of indoor and community recreation center space available to residents by the number of residents in the City.

Industry guidelines suggest that communities with high quality indoor recreation services should have about 2.0 square foot of interior recreation and community center space per resident. Figure 2.2e illustrates the findings from this analysis considering the City of Decatur's 2022, 2027, and 2032 population estimates.

Figure 2.2e
Indoor Square Footage Level of Service Analysis



The City of Decatur currently has approximately 135,150 square feet of indoor recreation and community center space. This equates to approximately 5.12 square feet of indoor space per resident in 2022, 5.04 in 2027, and 4.82 in 2032.

If the square footage of the Decatur Family YMCA is considered, the City's indoor recreation center square footage increases by about 40,000 to approximately 175,150 square feet. This equates to approximately 6.63 square feet of indoor space per resident in 2022, 6.53 in 2027, and 6.25 in 2032.

Based on this analysis, it appears that the City may have a surplus of indoor recreation center space of about 82,330 square feet based on the 2022 population, 81,522 square feet based on the 2027 population, and 79,126 square feet based on the 2032 population. If the Decatur Family YMCA is considered, the City would have a surplus of about 122,330 square feet based on the 2022 population, 121,522 square feet based on the 2027 population, and 119,126 square feet based on the 2032 population.

Access LOS

Access LOS measures the distance residents have to travel to access parks and recreation facilities. It is used to understand how park access varies between different neighborhoods in a city. Informed by industry best practices, the following distances were used to analyze Access LOS for the City’s park system and key recreation facilities that were identified as potentially needed through the needs assessment process:

- All City Parks – ½ mile
- Community Parks – 1 mile, 2 miles
- Indoor Recreation Centers – 1 mile, 2 miles

Figures 2.2f – 2.2h provide the results from this mapping analysis while Figure 2.2i provides a summary of these findings.

Figure 2.2i suggests that, with an Access LOS of 1/2 mile, the City may have a need for parks in key pockets throughout the City. However, the City may not have a need for Community Parks or Indoor Recreation Centers with an Access LOS of 2 miles. These findings will further be explored during Chapter 3: Recreation Vision.

Figure 2.2i
Access LOS Analysis Summary

Park Type Analyzed	½ Mile	1 Mile	2 Miles
All City Parks	●	-	-
Community Parks	-	●	+
Indoor Recreation Centers	-	●	+








● Partial-Coverage

+ Full-Coverage



Figure 2.2f

All City of Decatur Parks – 1/2 Mile Access LOS

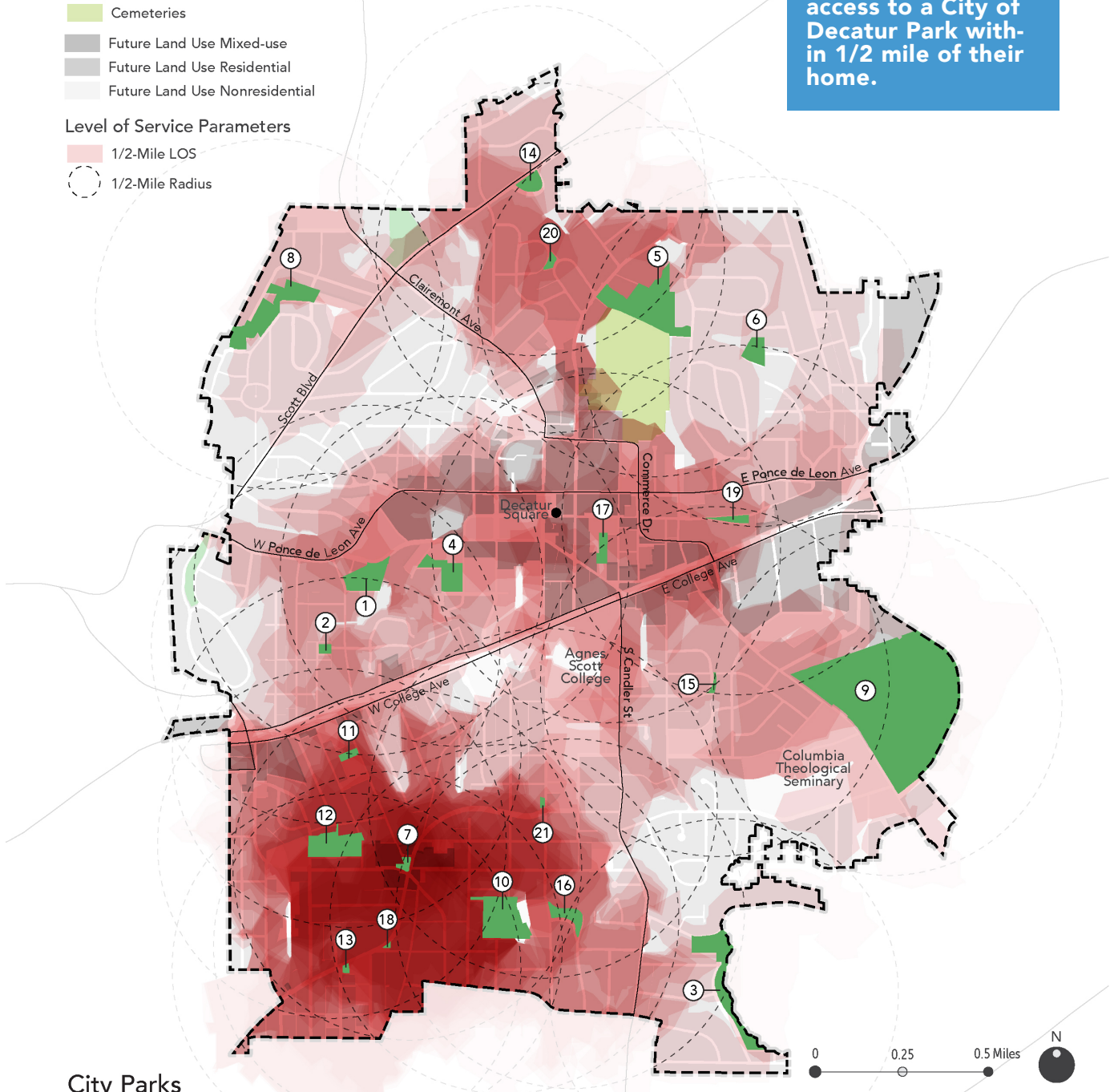
LEGEND

-  City Limits
-  City Parks
-  Nature Preserves (Publicly accessible/privately owned)
-  Cemeteries
-  Future Land Use Mixed-use
-  Future Land Use Residential
-  Future Land Use Nonresidential

Level of Service Parameters

-  1/2-Mile LOS
-  1/2-Mile Radius

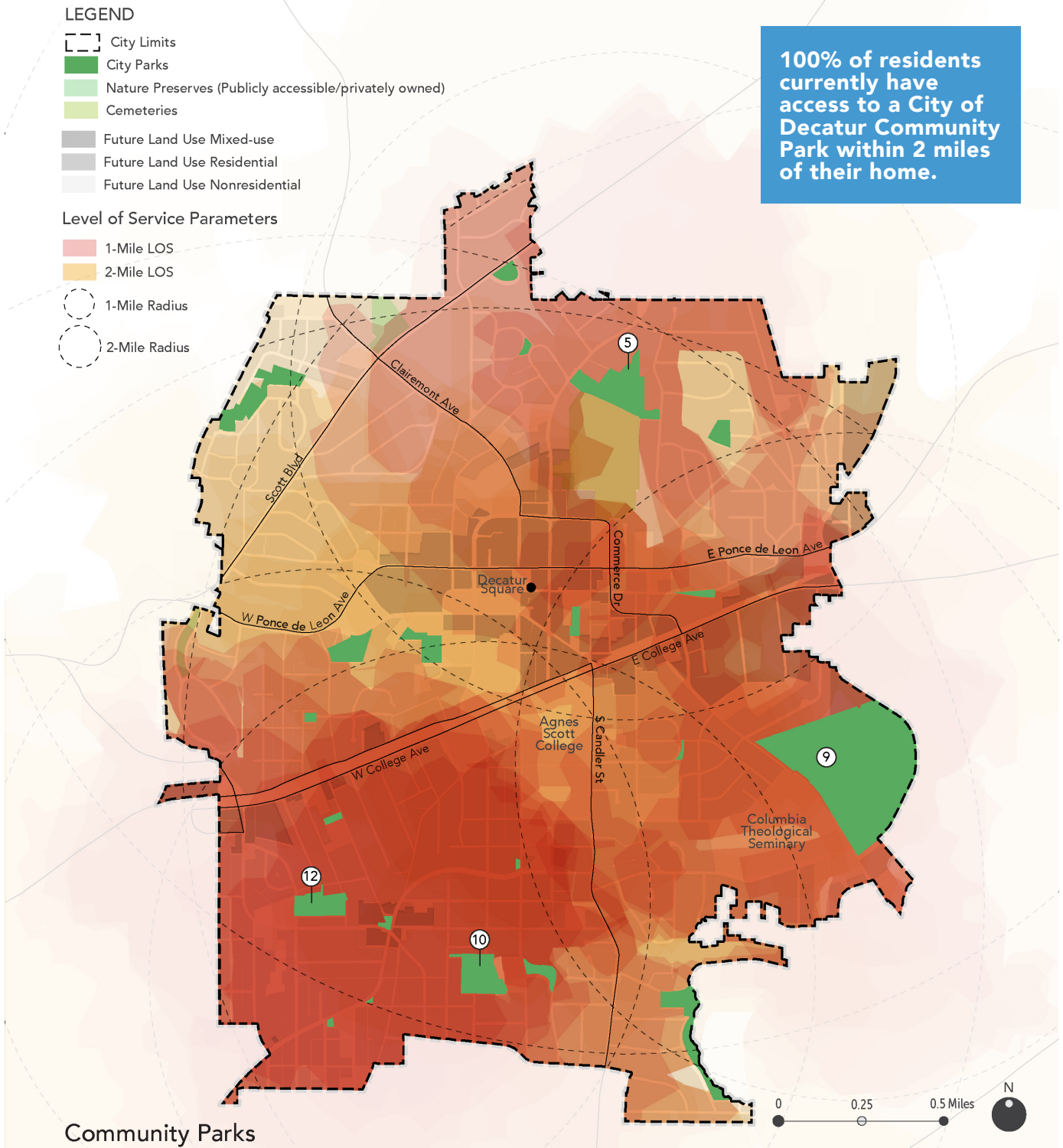
88% of residents currently have access to a City of Decatur Park within 1/2 mile of their home.



City Parks

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Adair Park | 6 Glenn Creek Nature Preserve | 11 Mead Road Park | 16 Rev. Roy Moss Sr. Garden |
| 2 Corley Commons | 7 Harmony Park | 12 Oakhurst Park | 17 Scott Park |
| 3 Dearborn Park | 8 Hidden Cove Park | 13 Oakview Road Park | 18 Spring Street Pocket Park |
| 4 Ebster Park | 9 Legacy Park | 14 Parkside Circle Park | 19 Sycamore Park |
| 5 Glenlake Park and Pool | 10 McKoy Park | 15 Poplar Circle Trail Extension | 20 Waddell Park |
| | | | 21 Wylde Woods |

Figure 2.2g
Community Parks – 1 Mile, 2 Miles Access LOS

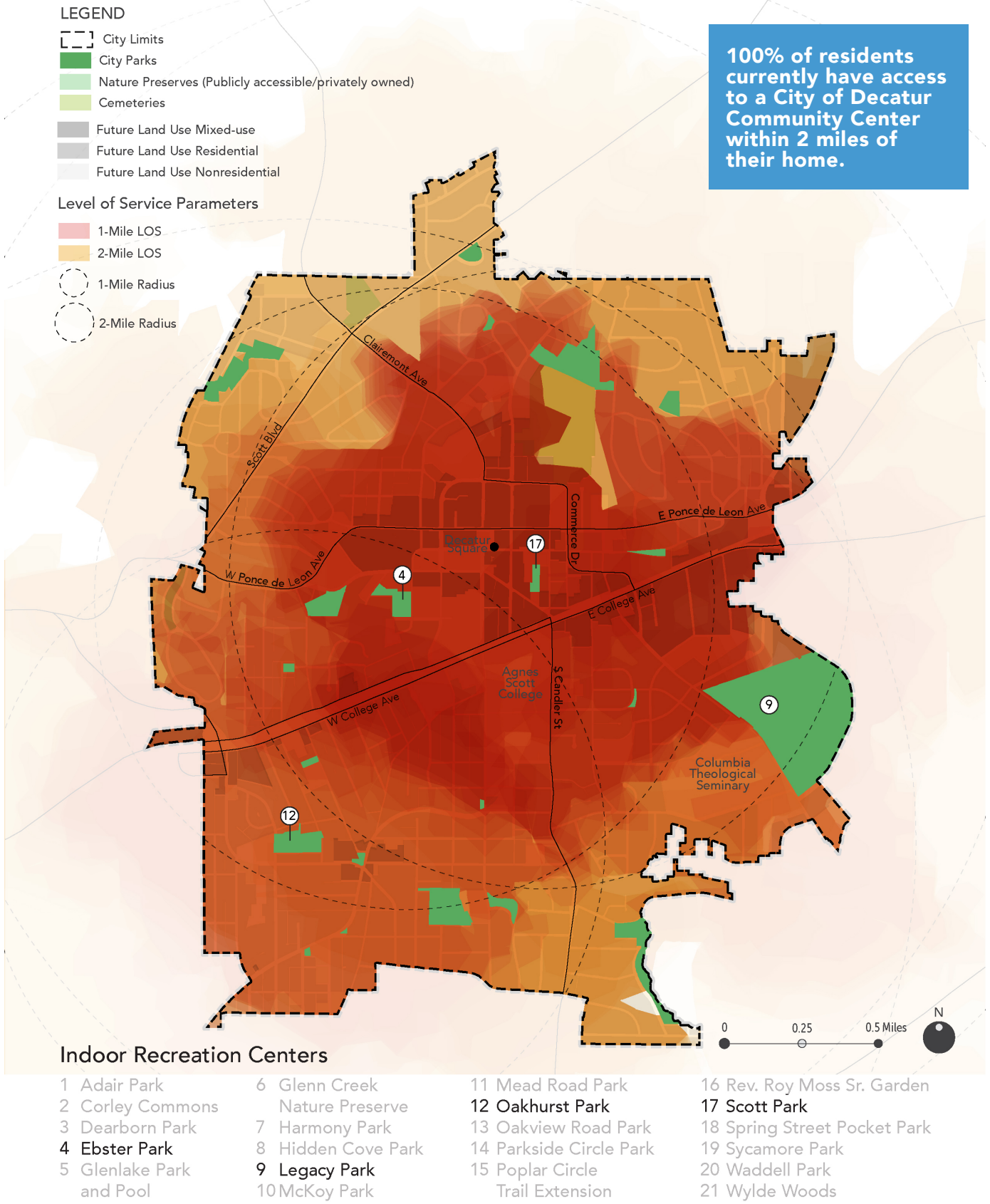


100% of residents currently have access to a City of Decatur Community Park within 2 miles of their home.

Community Parks

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Adair Park | 6 Glenn Creek Nature Preserve | 11 Mead Road Park | 16 Rev. Roy Moss Sr. Garden |
| 2 Corley Commons | 7 Harmony Park | 12 Oakhurst Park | 17 Scott Park |
| 3 Dearborn Park | 8 Hidden Cove Park | 13 Oakview Road Park | 18 Spring Street Pocket Park |
| 4 Ebster Park | 9 Legacy Park | 14 Parkside Circle Park | 19 Sycamore Park |
| 5 Glenlake Park and Pool | 10 McKoy Park | 15 Poplar Circle Trail Extension | 20 Waddell Park |
| | | | 21 Wylde Woods |

Figure 2.2h
Recreation Centers – 1 Mile, 2 Miles Access LOS



Summary Findings

Based on all the information collected, Figures 2.3a and 2.3b indicate how the findings from the statistically-valid survey – the most reliable and credible of the needs assessment techniques, with the largest sample size – are validated by many of the other techniques related to facilities/amenities, programs/activities, areas of community concern, actions, and funding allocation for facilities/capital improvements and programs/operations.

Following is a summary list of the priority rankings followed by comparison matrices.

Top Priority Facilities/Amenities

1. Unpaved walking & hiking trails
2. Natural areas/nature parks
3. Restrooms at parks
4. Paved multi-purpose trails
5. Community parks
6. Neighborhood parks
7. Sidewalks

Top Priority Programs/Activities

1. Movies in parks
2. Community special events
3. Nature programs
4. Adult fitness/wellness

Top Priority Areas of Community Concern

1. Preservation of natural areas
2. Community safe, crime, violence

Other areas of concern that emerged through discussions with the City leaders and key stakeholders were equity, the unhoused population, and affordable housing.

Top Priority Actions

1. Development of walking & biking facilities
2. Purchase of land to expand or create new parks and recreation facilities
3. Develop parks not permitted for organized sports
4. Develop additional outdoor sports facilities for organized sports
5. Develop new outdoor aquatics facilities
6. Develop new indoor aquatics facilities
7. Develop a new splash pad facility
8. Develop additional multi-purpose indoor gymnasiums
9. Develop adult fitness equipment in all parks

Chapter 3: Recreation Vision of this report will discuss recommendations for responding to the top priority parks and recreation needs.

Figure 2.3a

Findings Summary and Comparison - Facilities/Amenities, Programs/Activities, Areas of Community-Wide Concern, and Actions

NEEDS ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE:	1. Statistically Valid Survey	2. Online Survey	3. City Leadership Interviews	4. Staff Input	5. Steering Committee	6. Public Meeting	7. Focus Group+ Special Events	8. Email Comments	9. Level-of-Service Analysis + Benchmarks
HIGH PRIORITY FACILITIES/AMENITIES:									
Unpaved walking and hiking trails	●	●	-	●	●	●	●	-	-
Natural areas/nature parks	●	●	-	●	●	●	●	-	-
Restrooms at parks	●	●	-	●	-	-	-	-	-
Paved multi-purpose trail	●	●	●	●	-	-	●	-	●
Community parks	●	●	●	-	-	●	-	-	●
Neighborhood parks	●	●	●	-	-	-	-	-	●
Sidewalks	●	●	-	●	●	●	●	-	-
HIGH PRIORITY PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES:									
Movies in the park	●	●	-	-	●	●	●	-	-
Community special events	●	●	●	-	-	●	●	-	-
Nature programs	●	●	-	-	●	●	●	-	-
Adult fitness/ wellness	●	-	-	●	●	●	-	-	-
AREAS OF COMMUNITY-WIDE CONCERN:									
Preservation of natural areas	●	●	●	●	●	●	-	-	-
Community safety/ crime/violence	●	●	●	-	-	-	-	-	-

Figure 2.3a

Findings Summary and Comparison - Facilities/Amenities, Programs/Activities, Areas of Community-Wide Concern, and Actions (Continued)

NEEDS ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE:	1. Statistically Valid Survey	2. Online Survey	3. City Leadership Interviews	4. Staff Input	5. Steering Committee	6. Public Meeting	7. Focus Group+ Special Events	8. Email Comments	9. Level-of-Service Analysis + Benchmarks
HIGH PRIORITY ACTIONS:									
Development of walking and biking facilities	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	-	●
Purchase of land to expand or create new parks and recreation facilities	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Develop parks not permitted for organized sports	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	-	●
Develop additional outdoor sports facilities for organized sports	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Develop new outdoor aquatics facilities	●	●	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Develop new indoor aquatics facilities	●	●	-	-	-	-	●	-	-
Develop a new splash pad facility	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	-	-
Develop additional multi-purpose indoor gymnasiums	●	●	-	-	-	-	●	-	-
Develop adult fitness equipment in all parks	●	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Funding Allocation for Facility/ Capital Improvements

1. Improvements to existing parks & recreation facilities
2. Development of new walking & biking facilities
3. Development of new parks facilities
4. Acquiring new park land
5. Improvements to existing walking & biking facilities
6. Improvements to existing indoor recreation centers
7. Development new indoor recreation centers

Funding Allocation for Programs/ Operations

1. Increasing staff to improve maintenance of parks/facilities
2. Additional youth recreation programs/ classes
3. Increasing frequency of programs and/or extending hours
4. Additional youth athletic programs/leagues
5. Additional adult recreation programs/ classes
6. Additional senior recreation programs/ classes
7. Additional adult athletic programs/leagues

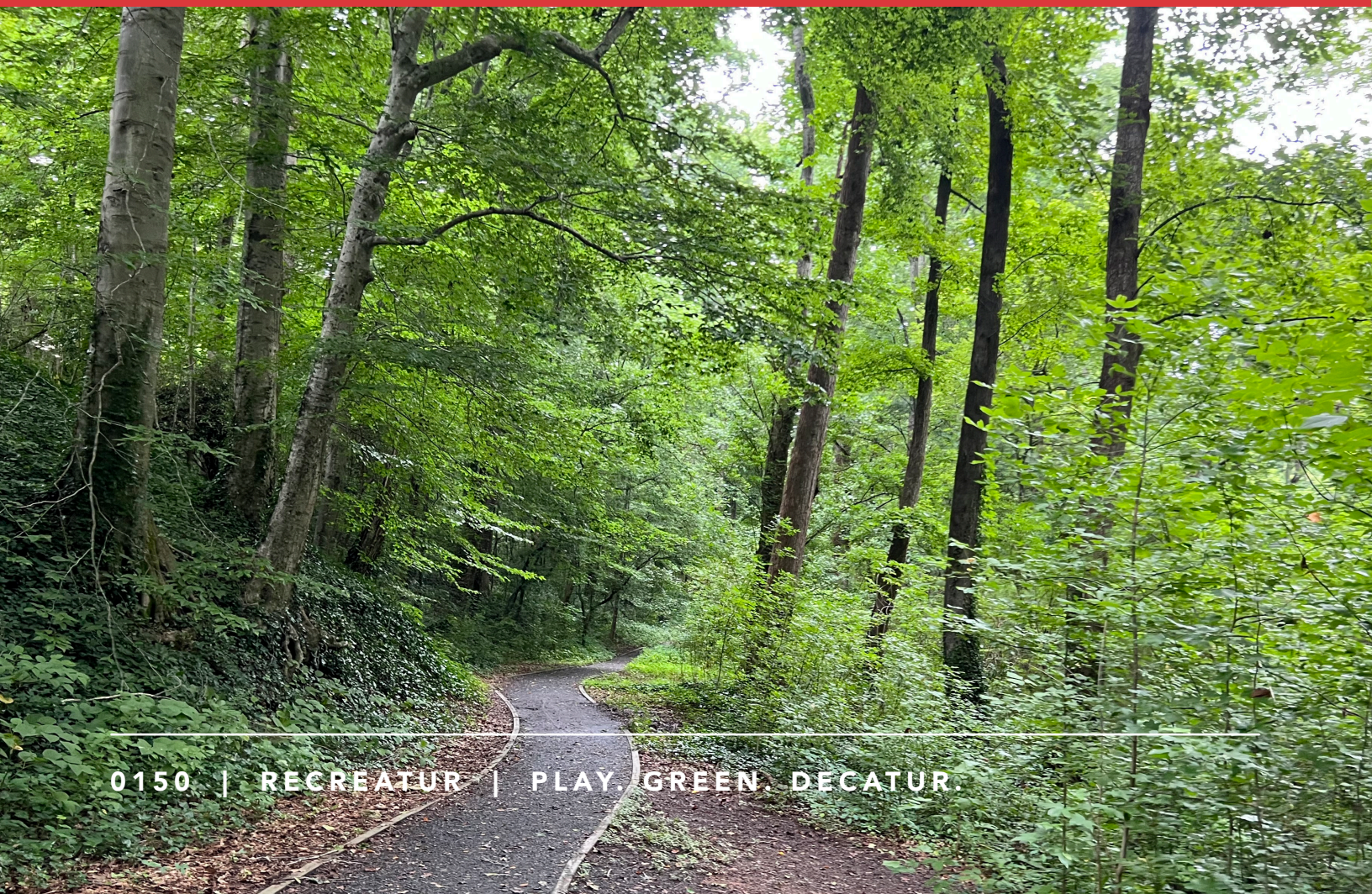
Figure 2.3b
Findings Summary and Comparison - Funding Allocation

NEEDS ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE:	1. Statistically Valid Survey	2. Online Survey	3. City Leadership Interviews	4. Staff Input	5. Steering Committee	6. Public Meeting	7. Focus Group+ Special Events	8. Email Comments	9. Level-of-Service Analysis + Benchmarks
FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR FACILITY/ CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS:									
Improvements to existing parks & recreation facilities	\$21.85	\$18.36	-	\$13.08	\$22.14	\$19.34	\$21.52	-	-
Development of new walking & biking facilities	\$17.54	\$15.96	-	\$5.38	\$14.29	\$15.57	\$13.64	-	-
Development of new parks facilities	\$16.05	\$16.72	-	\$18.46	\$19.29	\$23.11	\$18.48	-	-
Acquiring new park land	\$15.22	\$14.10	-	\$21.54	\$28.57	\$22.41	\$16.67	-	-
Improvements to existing walking & biking facilities	\$12.04	\$13.44	-	\$5.38	\$7.86	\$12.50	\$13.94	-	-
Improvements to existing indoor recreation centers	\$8.31	\$11.37	-	\$20.00	\$5.71	\$3.77	\$12.12	-	-
Development new indoor recreation centers	\$5.93	\$7.98	-	\$16.15	\$2.14	\$2.83	\$3.64	-	-
FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR PROGRAMS/OPERATIONS:									
Increasing staff to improve maintenance of parks/facilities	\$25.44	\$19.77	-	\$21.67	\$45.69	\$30.86	\$33.07	-	-
Additional youth recreation programs/classes	\$14.23	\$15.25	-	\$34.17	\$9.48	\$16.05	\$14.99	-	-
Increasing frequency of programs and/or extending hours	\$13.91	\$14.55	-	\$1.67	\$8.62	\$5.86	\$5.70	-	-
Additional youth athletic programs/leagues	\$12.81	\$15.54	-	\$15.00	\$12.93	\$12.96	\$7.75	-	-
Additional adult recreation programs/classes	\$10.09	\$11.58		\$5.83	\$11.21	\$11.73	\$15.50		
Additional senior recreation programs/classes	\$9.41	\$10.59		\$7.50	\$7.76	\$9.88	\$10.08		
Additional adult athletic programs/leagues	\$8.60	\$10.46		\$13.33	\$4.31	\$8.02	\$9.30		

Chapter 3

RECREATUR

VISION



Recreatur Overarching Themes

The Vision establishes a framework for Decatur’s parks system over the next 10 years. It includes a variety of components, all of which build on the Context Analysis and Needs and Priorities Assessment as their foundation. The findings of those first two phases produced a broad range of ideas, needs, challenges, and opportunities, which generally aligned under **three overarching themes**:



Equity

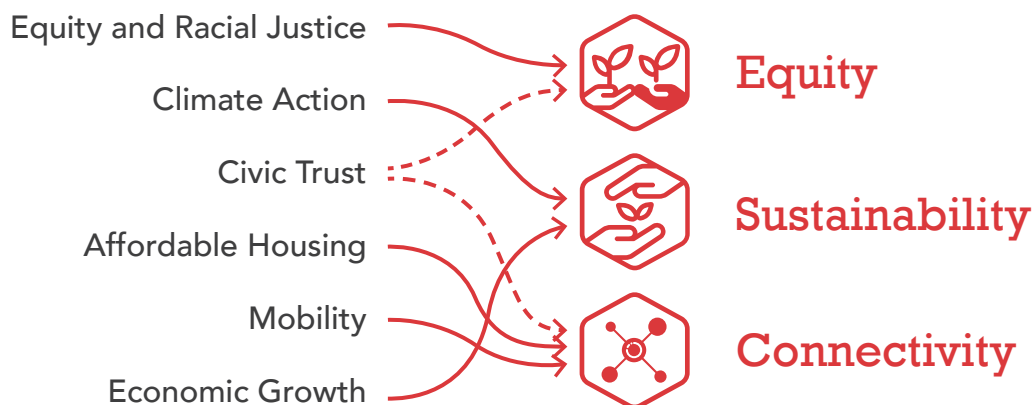


Sustainability



Connectivity

These three themes are both closely tied to—and extensions of—the **six themes** that were identified in **Destination: 2030**, the City’s Strategic Plan (adopted in 2021).



To better understand the connections between the Strategic Plan themes and the Park Plan themes, the following descriptions provide an overview of the principles underlying the Park Plan Themes.



Equity means

Parks for Everyone: An Equitable Park System

A park system that provides a baseline of equal service to all Decatur residents, regardless of home location, age, or ability, while devoting specific resources to address historic and ongoing racial and economic injustice and inequity.

This theme incorporates the equitable ambitions described in the Strategic Plan, and recognizes that as equity is proactively pursued, Civic Trust will grow. Specific **Policies** and **Actions** from the Strategic Plan will be included and noted in following sections.



Sustainability means

Parks with Resilience: A Sustainable Park System

A park system that has the appropriate resources—financial and staff—to grow along with the city, while pursuing initiatives to ensure that Decatur is adapting to climate change through the design and management of parkland and indoor spaces.

This theme incorporates the ambitions and many specific **Policies** from two of the Strategic Plan's themes: Climate Action and Economic Growth. It also will provide recommendations on staffing and budget growth that correspond to the city's ongoing population growth.



Connectivity means

Beyond Parks: A Connected Greenspace System

A parks and recreation system that is seamlessly integrated into the fabric of the city, providing a diverse range of programs, partnerships, and urban design elements to connect every citizen with recreation and maximize the public benefit.

This theme is directly related to the Strategic Plan's Mobility theme, in that it addresses the use of sidewalks and paths in parks and greenspaces as active transit corridors connecting residents to schools, businesses, and other destinations, as well as the role of trails, sidewalks, and the overall streetscape outside of parks, to provide access to recreation and greenspace, along with all other destinations. It also goes beyond mobility to consider creative partnerships, with recreation programmers, schools, and other organizations. In particular, **Affordable Housing** must be prioritized to ensure that greenspace is a component of any future housing development, and that any future improvement to recreation center properties, consider the possibility to include affordable housing, a co-benefitting goal in a city with limited available land.

Based on these themes, and informed by specific results from the Context Analysis and Needs and Priorities Assessment, a visioning workshop was scheduled with Active Living and Children and Youth Services staff and stakeholders in October 2022 to explore the following topics:

1. Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles
2. Programs and Activities
3. Staffing and Marketing
4. Facilities and Amenities
5. Individual Park Improvements

The visioning workshop began the process of developing a Long Range Vision for this plan, and ultimately, the Department. This Vision is comprised of Vision and Mission statements, Values, Guiding Principles, Policies/Actions, and Steps that will guide the department over the next 10 years and beyond. The following sections explore each of these elements in more detail.

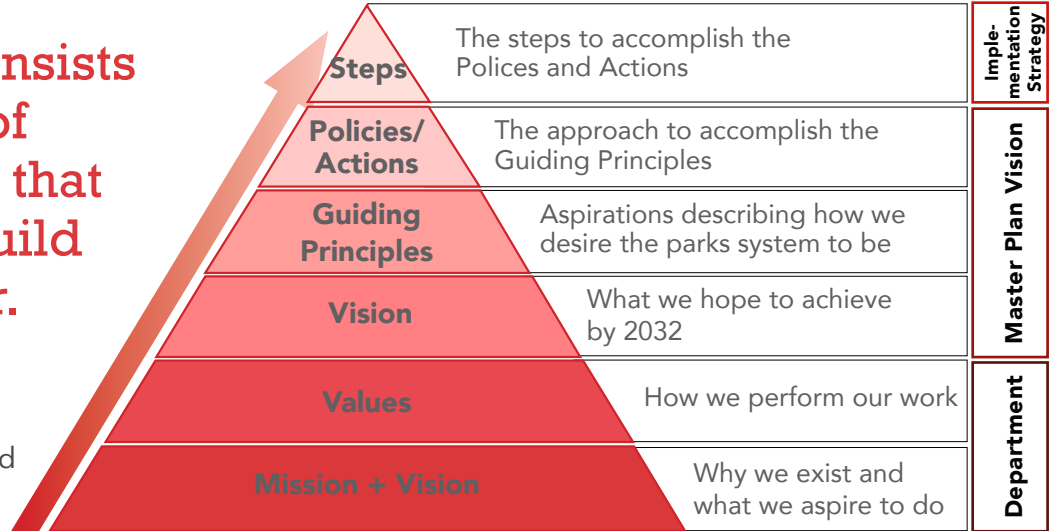


3.2

Recreatur Vision

The Vision consists of a number of key elements that inform and build on each other.

These elements begin with the foundations of the Department and build into the components of this Master Plan Vision.



The final element is the Steps that form the Implementation Strategy.

The pyramid above indicates how these separate statements support each other while the following pages describe these in more detail. The Department’s Mission and Vision articulate why the Department exists and what it aspires to do. Next come the Department’s values, which identify how the Department performs its work. The Recreatur Vision statement refines the vision to what the organization hopes to achieve by 2032. The Guiding Principles represent what the Department plans to accomplish in the next decade. The Policies and Actions provide the Department with guidance on how to accomplish the Guiding Principles.

Vision: Enhance lives across communities.

Mission: Provide quality experiences to promote healthy living and connections.

Values:



Highest Standards in the Field - Achieve national, state, and organizational standards with professional ethics, transparency and integrity in order to deliver exceptional services and improve the quality of life for people in the City of Decatur.



Active Living - Emphasize and encourage healthy lifelong habits through programming and infrastructure to increase well-being for all city residents and visitors.



Inclusion - We all play a role in creating an equitable environment where everyone feels seen, heard and valued and appreciated for their differences as well as their commonalities. Our inclusive culture welcomes everyone and generates a sense of belonging for all team members.



Positive Work Culture - Establish a positive work environment for all through trusting each other, honest conversations, ongoing communication, and developing effective working relationships. Our positive work culture creates the foundation for our efforts and inspires all of us to try new ideas, connect, and develop as professionals.



Innovation - Dream big. Challenge the status quo. Think outside of the box. Take calculated risks. Leverage technology tools. Foster a creative environment that challenges constraints and drives progress. Deliver quality, innovative programming that is responsive to the needs of the community.



Partnership (Internal & External) - Collaborate with other departments within the City of Decatur and community partners in order to provide quality services and achieve goals for the community.



Quality Service - Provide excellent customer service and develop interconnected policies and programs to provide internal and external stakeholders the highest level of service and support.



Accountability - As a team and as individuals, we take the initiative to own our responsibilities, follow through on commitments, and practice integrity.



Stewardship - With a view to the future, we care for the places and spaces in this city today, keeping them as precious resources for the future of this community. We will choose sustainable and responsible practices to leave a legacy for future generations.



Accessibility - Everyone should be able to fully engage with every aspect of Decatur Parks and Recreation. We will prioritize inclusion, accessibility and affordability to reduce or eliminate barriers to participation and promote lifelong community for all.

Guiding Principles, Policies, and Actions

As with Destination: 2030, the policies and action items in this chapter are the most important component of the plan. While each element falls under a specific theme, the icons [E] - Equity, [S] - Sustainability, and [C] - Connectivity indicate when a policy is related to other themes, highlighting how "everything is connected." Items marked with the following symbols are elements directly derived from policies and actions in prior plans:

- * Destination: 2030
- ^ Decatur Grows Greener
- o Better Together Community Action Plan
- ~ Decatur Stormwater Master Plan



Parks for Everyone: An Equitable Park System

- **Park Spaces - Parkland, Indoor Facilities, and Amenities**

- » **Ensure equitable access to parks and facilities.** [C]^ The Department has adopted the 10-minute walk standard, and currently 88 percent of residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park. Acquiring new park land, and partnering to provide public spaces on available land, such as at schools, will be necessary to reach 100 percent as well as reach the target Park Acreage Level of Service of 10 acres per 1,000 population. Additionally, the Vision proposes a shorter standard (i.e. a 5-minute walk) in the Downtown area.

Subsequent pages include visions and recommendations for the following individual park system components to ensure equitable access to parks and facilities:

- **Parkland**
 - Diamond Fields - Baseball
- **Neighborhood Parks**
 - Diamond Fields - Softball
- **Natural Areas**
 - Multi-Use Recreation Fields
- **Indoor Facilities**
 - Racquet Courts
- **Outdoor Facilities**
 - Restrooms
 - Skate Parks
 - Splash Pads
- Amphitheaters

These facilities were mapped based on needs determined either through community input or staff and stakeholder feedback.

PARKLAND VISION

Despite the challenges of limited space and rising land values, Decatur has numerous opportunities to add parkland over the next few years, a critical goal given the city's increasing density. Developing previously proposed park spaces, activating publicly owned land, and pursuing new acquisitions or easements are all ways that the city can add to its total park acreage. Below are descriptions of each of these opportunities.

Previously Proposed Parks

- ① **MARTA East Lake TOD** – The TOD plan for MARTA's East Lake station includes a few different park spaces, including the development of a Station Soccer facility. Implementation is largely contingent on the project's development, however there may be an opportunity to begin developing the proposed Paden Circle Park, as it is currently vacant land.
- ② **Avondale MARTA Station Regulating Plan** – As part of redevelopment around the station, multiple greenspaces were proposed, the largest being on the north side of Talley Street. Development of greenspaces is expected to occur (through public/private partnership) as redevelopment of adjacent sites takes place.
- ③ **Downtown Design Vision**—ongoing efforts to redesign the Decatur Square and surrounding blocks downtown seek to establish a new framework for greenspace in the downtown area.

Figure 3.2a
Parkland Vision Map

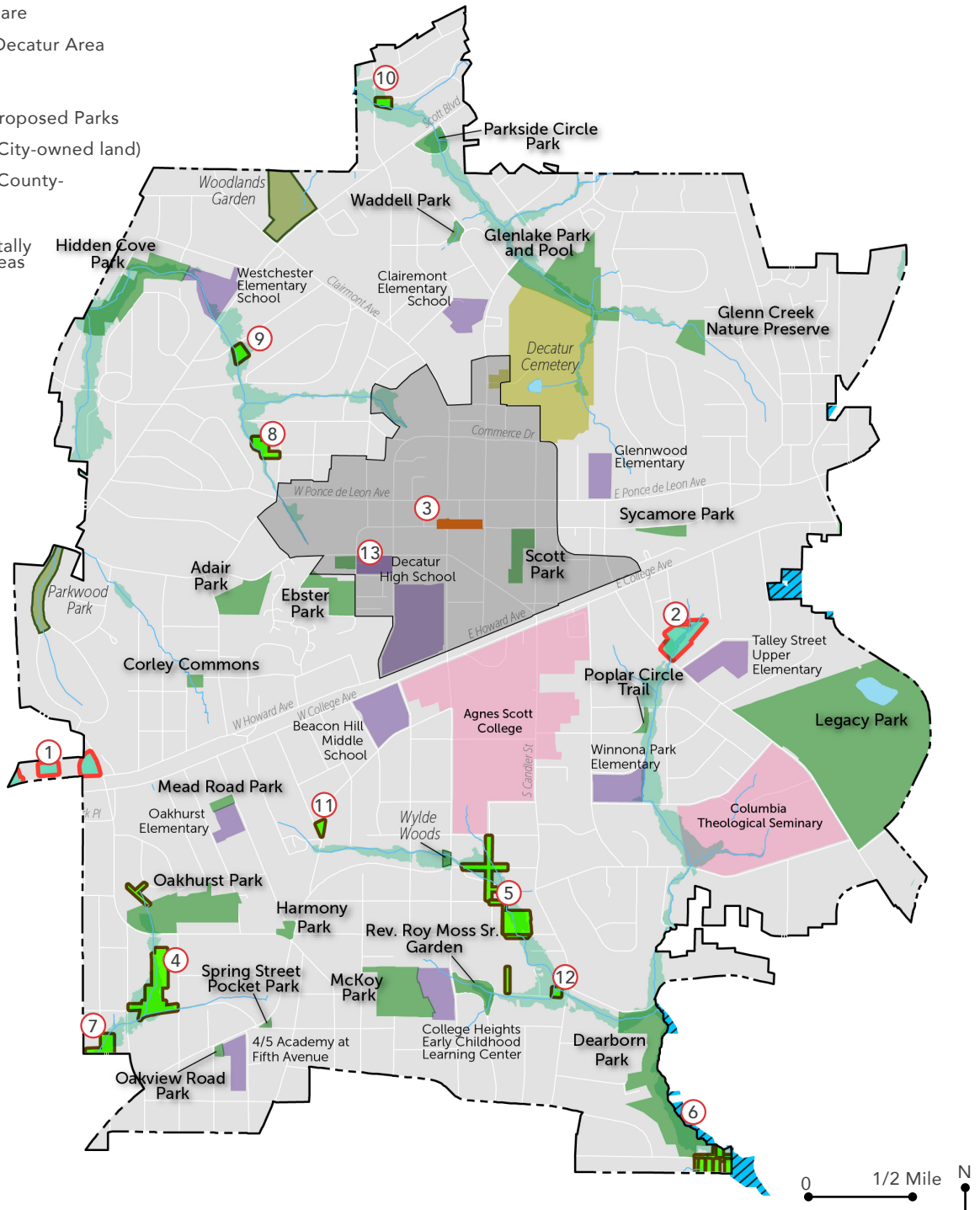
LEGEND

Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Privatey Owned)
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area

Proposed

- Previously Proposed Parks
- New Parks (City-owned land)
- New Parks (County-owned land)
- Floodplain/Environmentally Sensitive Areas



Activating Public Land for Parks

There are multiple properties that the City of Decatur owns that should be named and formalized as parks. Some are already used for recreational purposes, others are vacant. Additionally, continued coordination and discussion with DeKalb County present opportunities for further development on County-owned land, including at Dearborn Park.

④ Sugar Creek Garden (4.6 acres)

- » This large contiguous area has frontage on both Second Ave and Third Ave. The Wylde Center manages the Sugar Creek Garden at the north end of the site, which is currently accessed from East Lake Drive. Two branches of Sugar Creek flow through the property and meet at the southern end. The ~1,400 feet of stream is entirely confined to a concrete channel, and presents the opportunity for re-naturalization and a connection to Oakhurst Park.

⑤ East Decatur Connector (4.62 acres)

- » By combining unused ROW (2.35 acres) and city-owned parcels (2.27 acres), much of the land for the proposed Phase 3 of Decatur PATH's East Decatur Greenway is available. Mostly forested, this park could include hiking trails and other passive uses. Easements/acquisitions of adjacent private property could double acreage. "Friends of Shoal Creek," a neighborhood group, is actively advocating for protection and improvement of this area.



- ⑥ Dearborn Park Expansion (2 acres)
 - » By combining unused ROW (0.69 acres) and city-owned parcels (1.31 acres), Dearborn Park can be expanded.
- ⑦ Hawk Hollow Expansion (1.1 acres)
 - » Unused ROW and city-owned parcels are adjacent to the Wylde Center’s “Hawk Hollow” which is in the City of Atlanta. Stream in a concrete channel and Decatur PATH “East Lake Marta Connector” both intersect the site and present opportunity for related improvements.
- ⑧ 333 Montgomery Street (0.64 acres)
 - » This parcel currently features a small community garden. Further improvement and potential trail connection to nearby Toy Park could create a neighborhood park.
- ⑨ 190 Garden Lane (0.58 acres)
 - » This parcel includes a small, mowed field and is serving as a pocket park for dog walking, casual soccer play, etc.
- ⑩ 115 Willow Lane (0.35 acres)
 - » This parcel currently has a community garden and is functioning as a pocket park.
- ⑪ 455 Ansley Street (0.22 acres)
 - » This forested triangle at the intersection of Ansley Street and Jefferson Place is undeveloped, but has the potential for benches, natural play elements, etc.
- ⑫ 905 South Candler Street (0.23 acres)
 - » This parcel features a segment of Shoal Creek and offers opportunities for public art, environmental education, benches, MARTA bus stop improvements, and for the development of a segment of Decatur PATH’s proposed Shoal Creek Greenway.
- ⑬ 342 West Trinity Place (2.6 acres)
 - » This undeveloped greenspace is currently owned by City Schools of Decatur (CSD) and could potentially be explored to serve as a Downtown park.

New Parkland

The City will continue to pursue the creation of new parkland through acquisition, securing conservation easements, and redevelopment on a parcel-by-parcel basis strategically, and as opportunities become available. Specific opportunities include:

- Vacant parcels
- Underutilized lots
- Floodplain
- Surface parking lots
- Tops of parking decks

These strategies will help create new parks; grow existing park acreage; and improve park edges, visibility, and access.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS VISION

The vision for neighborhood parks explores how to close the remaining gaps for accessing a neighborhood park within a 10-minute walk for every resident in the City of Decatur and a 5-minute walk in the Downtown area. Following are specific opportunities informed by the Parkland Vision.

Previously Proposed Parks

- ① MARTA East Lake TOD – The redevelopment of MARTA’s East Lake station based on the TOD plan would create a small network of greenspaces which together could serve as a neighborhood park.
- ② Avondale MARTA Station Regulating Plan – Redevelopment of this area is still in planning stage and an expansion of the proposed natural area or development of vacant land could create a neighborhood park.

Activating Public Land for Parks

- ③ Further development of the City-owned land on Northern Ave (now home to the Tanyard Creek Community Garden) with a connection to the existing Toy Park could create a neighborhood park.

Partnerships

- ④ The greenspace at Winnona Park Elementary is currently functioning as a neighborhood park, with a large field, playground, and basketball court. Further coordination with CSD should be undertaken to improve lighting and recognize this space as a neighborhood park.
- ⑤ The greenspace at Beacon Hill Middle could function as a neighborhood park. Further coordination with CSD should be undertaken to explore how the space could be redesigned and recognized as a neighborhood park.



New Parkland Acquisitions

- ⑥ Parkland for a new neighborhood park should be explored in the northern area of Downtown Decatur. The minimum size of this park should be between 1/4-acre to 1/2-acre. Alternatively, the City could explore the surgical integration of park amenities in available spaces throughout this area interconnected with high-quality sidewalks.

Figure 3.2b
Neighborhood Parks Vision

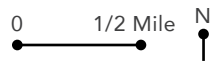
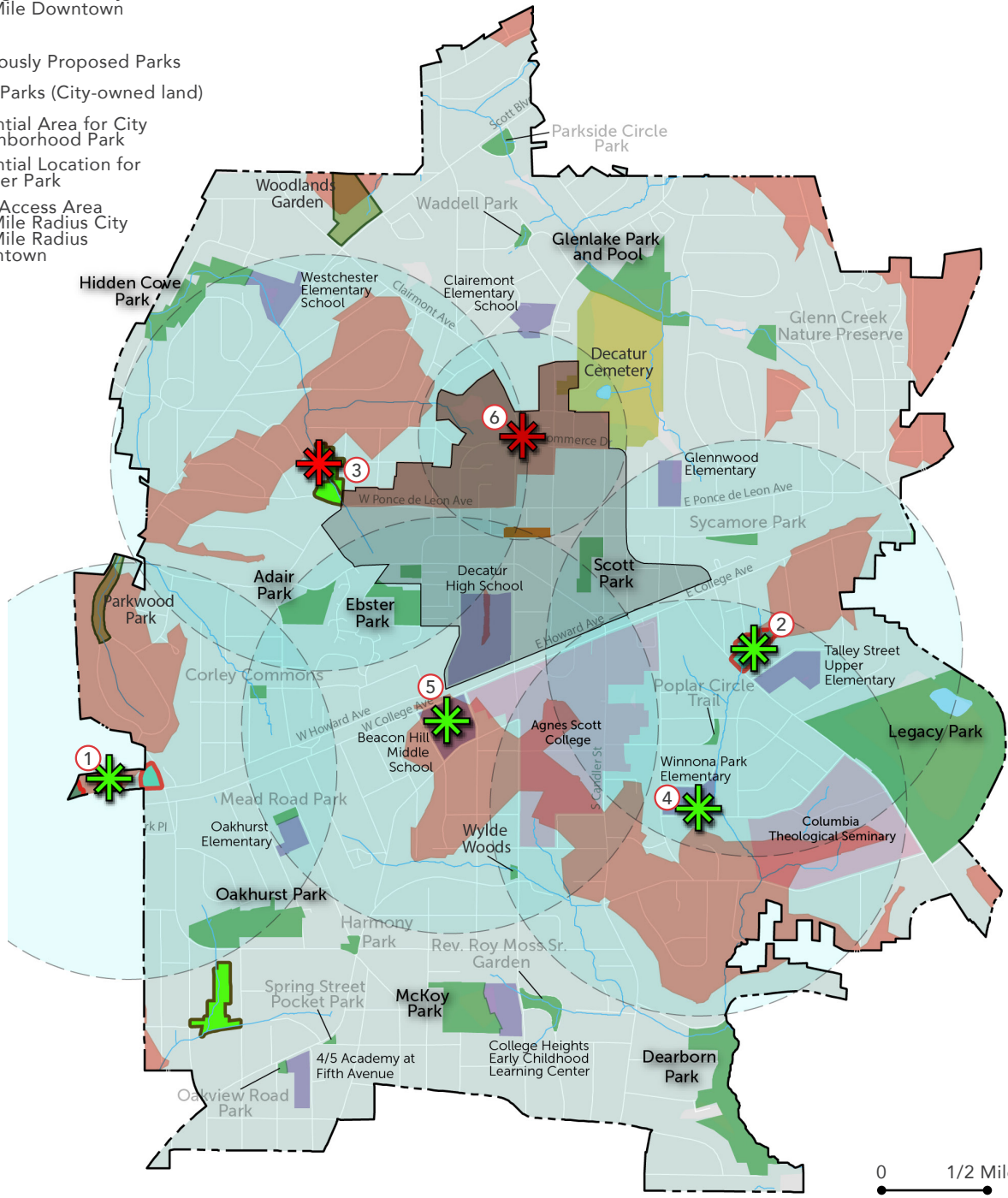
LEGEND

Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Private Owned)
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Areas without Access to a Park within 1/2 Mile throughout the City and 1/4 Mile Downtown

Proposed

- Previously Proposed Parks
- New Parks (City-owned land)
- Potential Area for City Neighborhood Park
- Potential Location for Partner Park
- Park Access Area
1/2 Mile Radius City
1/4 Mile Radius Downtown



NATURAL AREAS VISION

The City of Decatur owns and manages several important natural areas, including Hidden Cove Park, Dearborn Park and Glenn Creek Nature Preserve, as well as significant portions of Legacy Park, Decatur Cemetery, Glenlake Park, Oakhurst Dog Park and other areas. These natural areas include greenspace, woodlands, stream corridors, and other environmentally sensitive properties. Preservation, conservation and improvement of Decatur’s natural areas is critical for the City of Decatur. A key goal for greenspace management is to remove invasive plants and restore with native plants, encourage native biodiversity and sustainability and promote sound environmental stewardship, education and outreach.

The vision for natural areas is rooted in the parkland vision. It identifies entire parks, as well as areas within parks, where forests and floodplains predominate, and which are most suitable to be maintained in a “natural” state—designed and managed to benefit native ecological systems.

Previously Proposed Parks

- Avondale MARTA Station Regulating Plan – The largest greenspace proposed as part of redevelopment around the Avondale Station, on the north side of Talley Street, would function as a natural area with soft-surface trails.

Activating Public Land for Parks

As discussed in the Parkland Vision, the City of Decatur owns various greenspaces that should be named and formalized as natural area parks. Some are already used for recreational purposes, others are vacant.

New Acquisitions/Easements

This vision demonstrates how many of the best opportunities for natural areas seek to connect to or expand existing parks, and are focused in floodplain areas that, while generally unbuildable for active-recreation opportunities provide access to nature through unpaved walking/ hiking trails. Additionally, continued coordination and discussion with DeKalb County present opportunities for improved management of, and access to, Dearborn Park.



Figure 3.2c
Natural Areas Vision

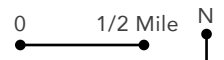
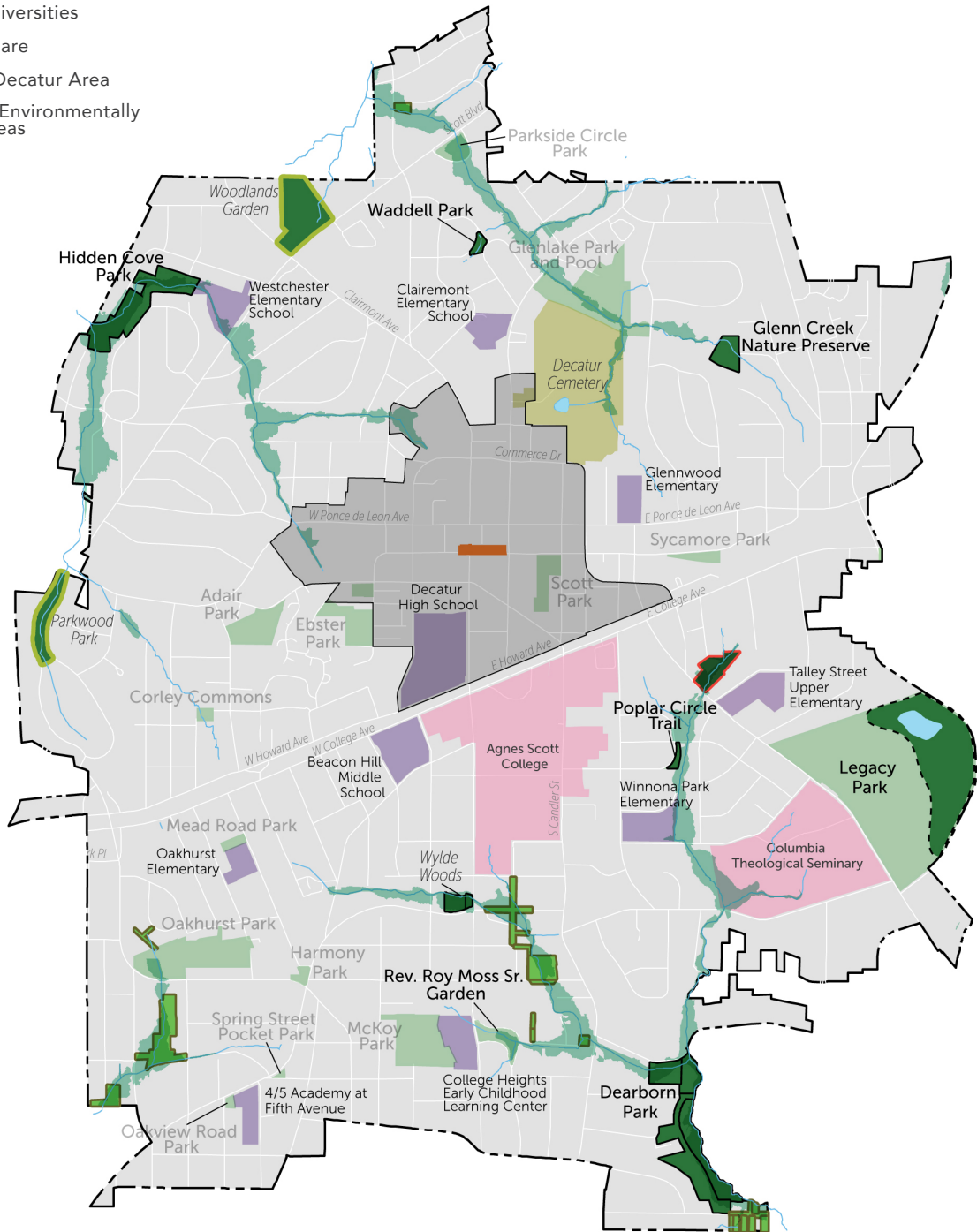
LEGEND

Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Privatey Owned)
- Natural Areas
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area
- Floodplain/ Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Proposed

- Previously Proposed Parks
- New Natural Area Parks (City-owned land)



INDOOR FACILITIES VISION

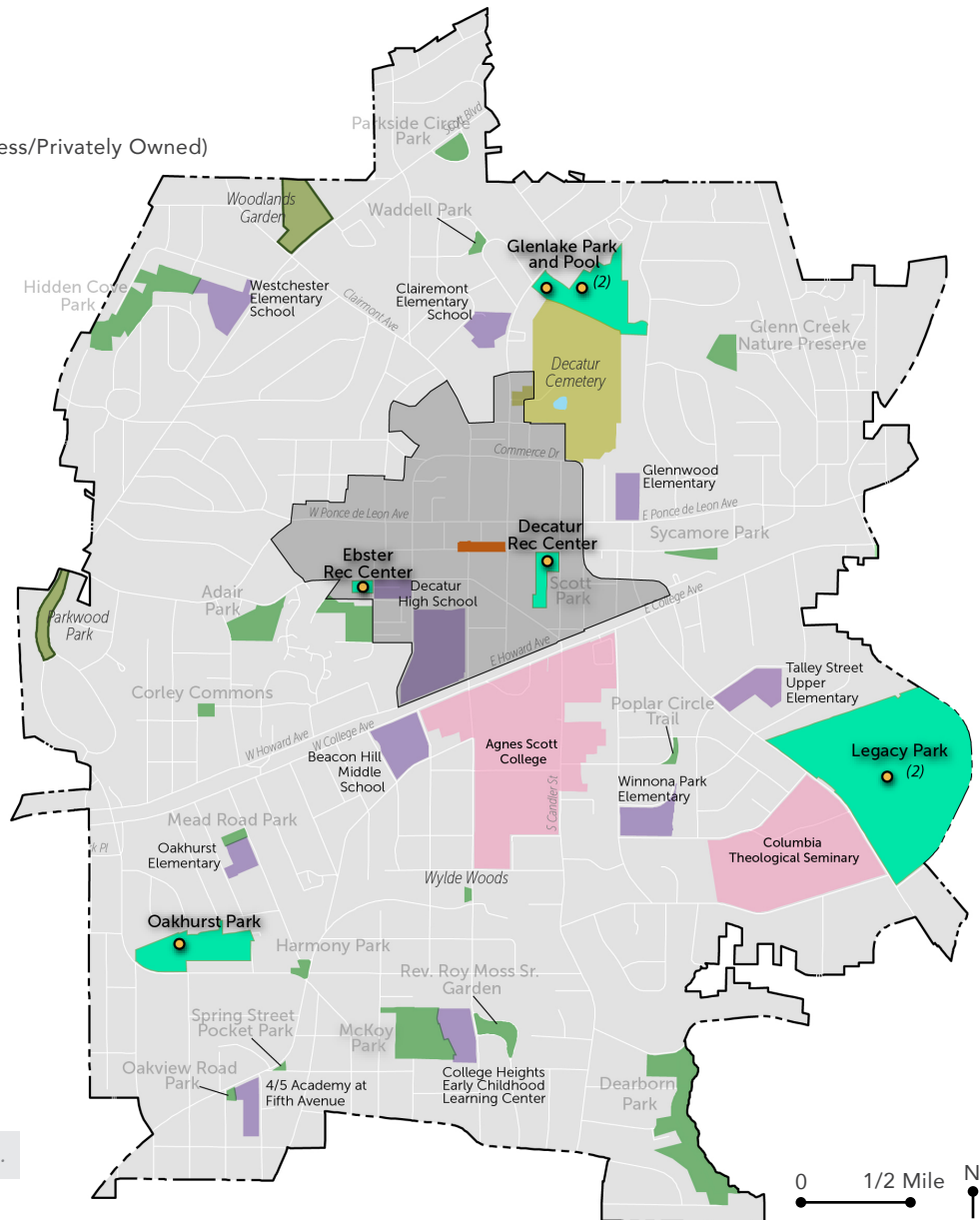
The vision for indoor facilities is informed by the needs, priorities, and input of residents and staff.

Figure 3.2d
INDOOR FACILITIES

LEGEND

Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Private Owned)
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area
- Parks with Facility
- Location of Facility



All facilities serve residents citywide.

Existing

- All indoor facilities should be improved based on the repair/ replacement and asset management recommendations provided in the Facility Assessments.
- The Glenlake Tennis Center should be expanded to enhance customer service, safety, and security.
- The gym in Legacy Park should be remodeled to be ADA accessible to provide enhanced program and service delivery.

OUTDOOR FACILITIES VISION

The following visions for individual outdoor facilities are based on the Facilities Level-of-Service needs, Access Level-of-Service needs, and the priorities and input of residents.

Figure 3.2e
AMPHITHEATERS

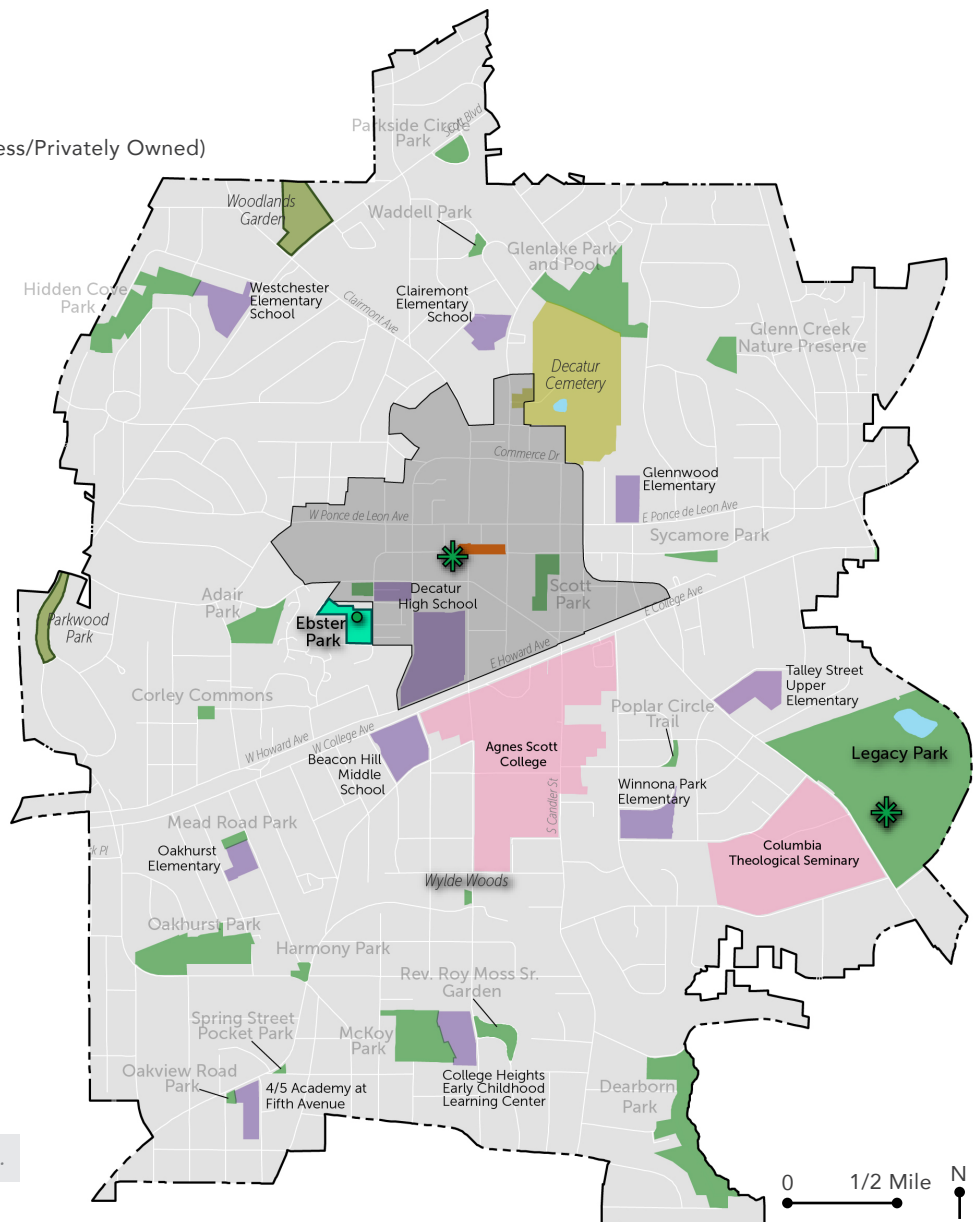
LEGEND

Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Privatey Owned)
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area
- Parks with Facility
- Location of Facility

Proposed

- Location of Park Facility



All facilities serve residents citywide.

Existing

- The existing amphitheater at Ebster Park should remain in its current state and continue to serve small gatherings.

New

- A new amphitheater with an advanced A/V system is proposed to be developed as part of redesigned greenspace at the Decatur Square, or in a new public space downtown, potentially in coordination with CSD for the undeveloped greenspace at 342 West Trinity Place.
- A new multipurpose amphitheater is proposed to be developed at Legacy Park, within the arboretum area, following the Legacy Park Master Plan.

Figure 3.2f
DIAMOND FIELDS - BASEBALL

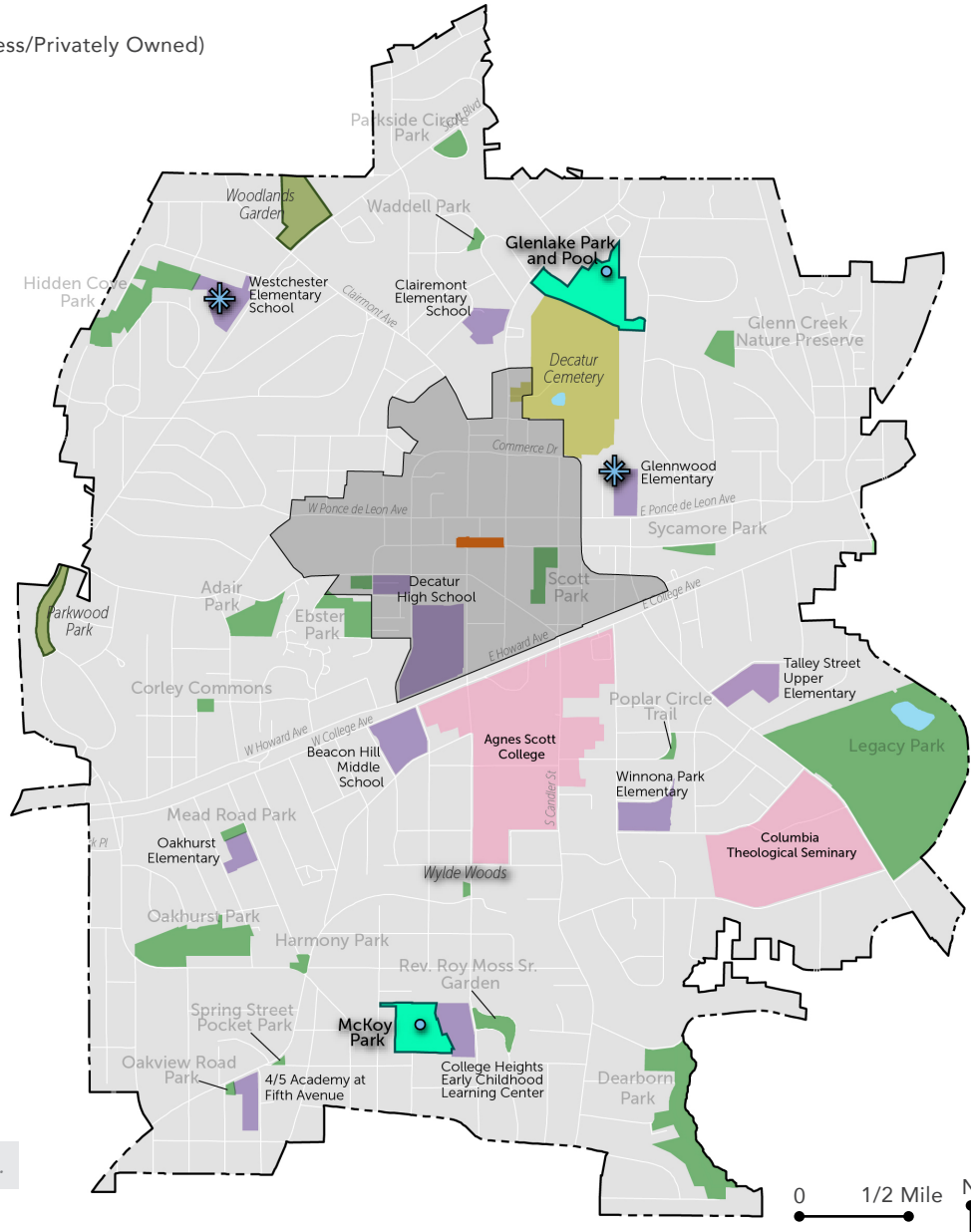
LEGEND

Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Privatey Owned)
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area
- Parks with Facility
- Location of Facility to be Improved

Proposed

- Location of Partner Facility to be Improved



All facilities serve residents citywide.

Existing

- The existing regulation high school/adult field at McKoy park is proposed to be converted to synthetic turf to maximize use, added netting, improved dug out, and batting cages.
- The existing youth field at Glenlake Park should be lighted and improved with turf management.

New

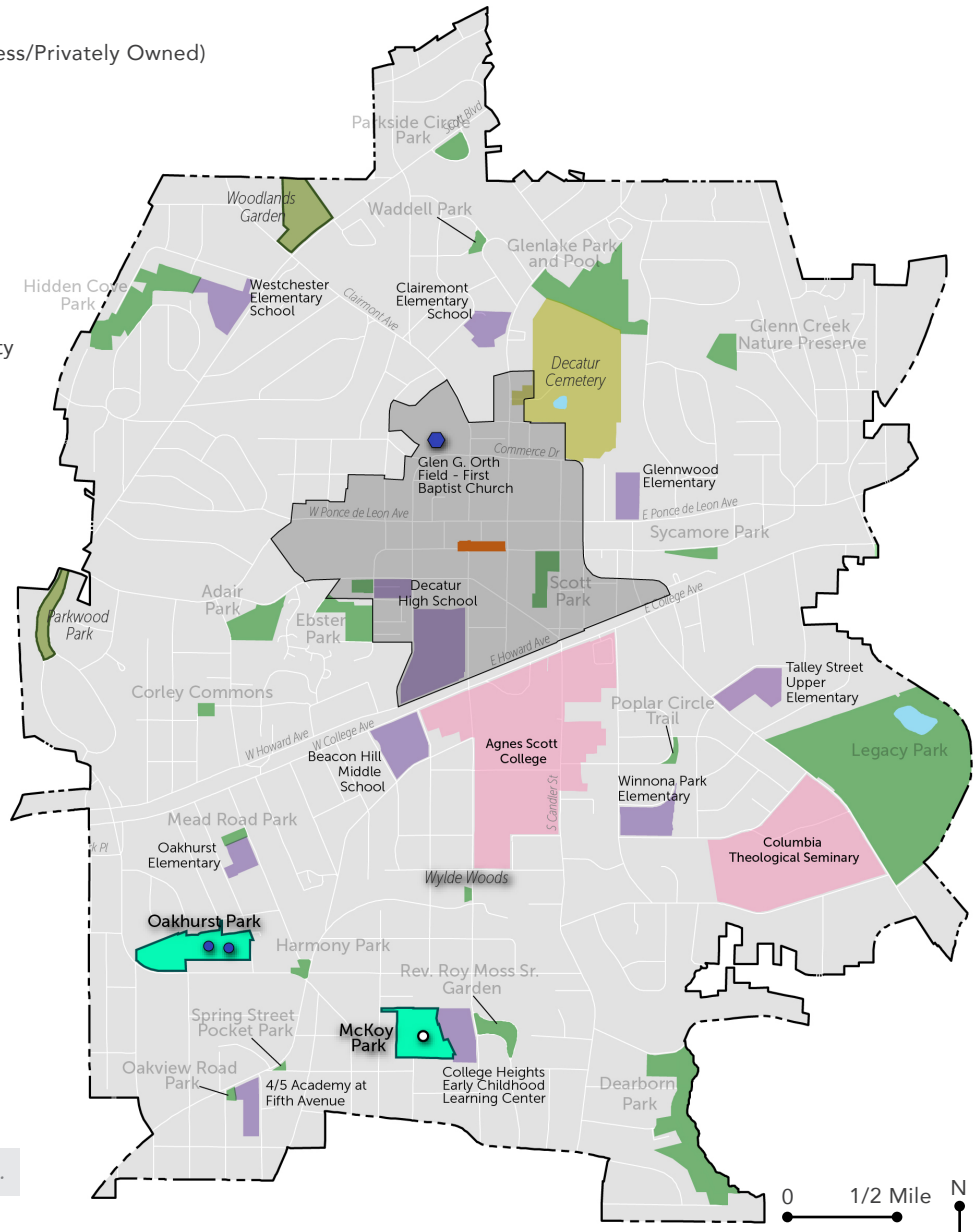
- The youth fields at Glennwood and Westchester Elementary Schools should be improved through turf and infield management, as well as lighting.

Figure 3.2g
DIAMOND FIELDS - SOFTBALL

LEGEND

Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Privatey Owned)
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area
- Parks with Facility
- Location of Regulation Sized Facility to be Improved
- Location of Shared Use Facility to be Improved
- Location of Other Facility to be Improved



All facilities serve residents citywide.

Existing

- The existing regulation youth and adult fields at Oakhurst Park should be converted to synthetic turf to maximize use.
- The adult baseball field at McKoy park is also used for softball and conversion to synthetic turf with a net in the back field will allow for increased use.

New

- The regulation Glen G. Orth Field at the First Baptist Church should be incorporated into the system through a formalized agreement, converted to synthetic turf and lighted.

Figure 3.2g
MULTI-USE RECTANGLE FIELDS

LEGEND

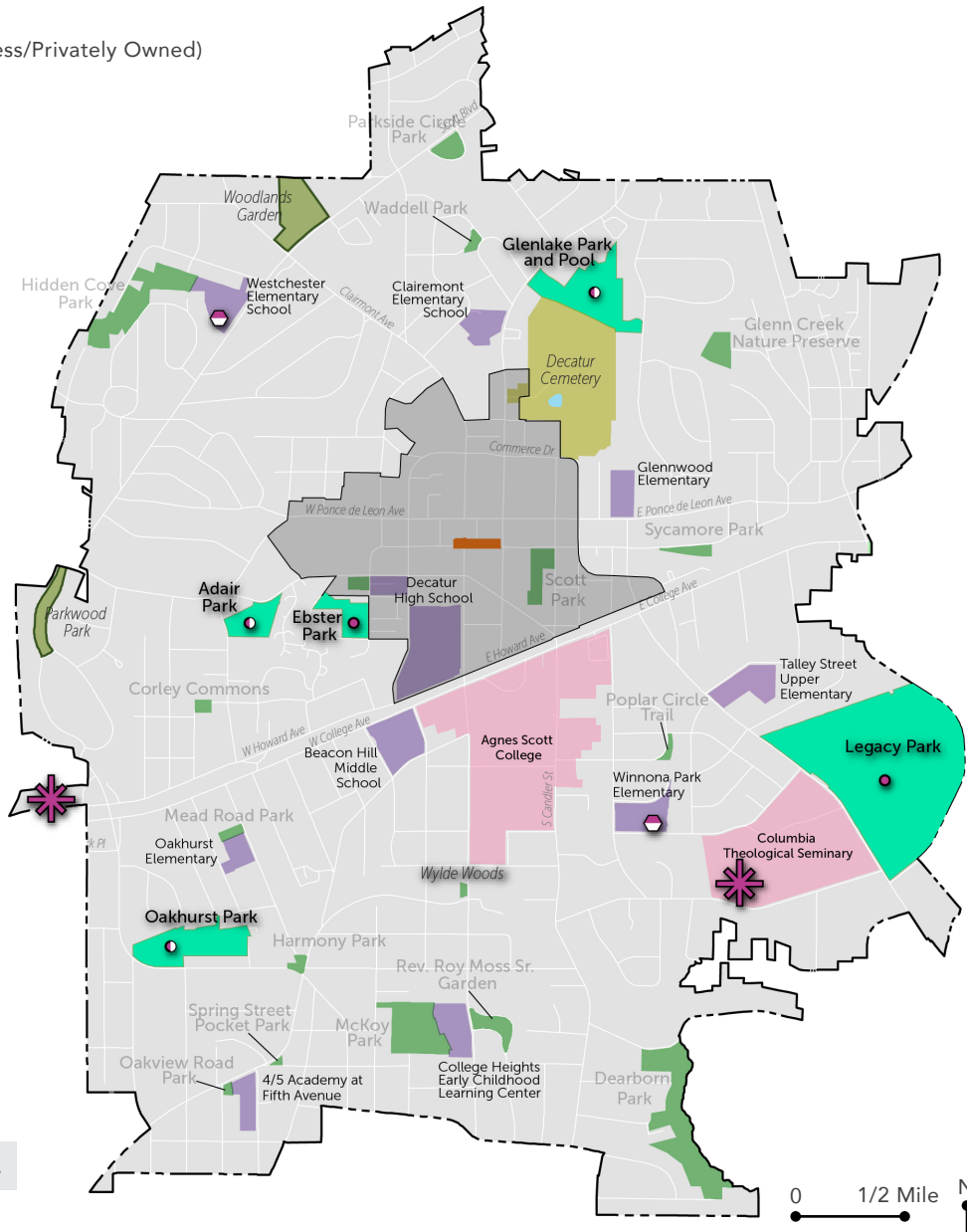
Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Privatey Owned)
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area
- Parks with Facility

- Location of Regulation Sized Facility to be Improved
- Location of Non-Regulation Sized Facility to be Improved
- Location of School Facility to be Improved

Proposed

- Location of Partner Facility to be Improved



All facilities serve residents citywide.

Existing

- The existing regulation-size field at Ebster Park is slated to be converted to synthetic turf and lighted.
- A regulation-size synthetic turf and lighted track and field is proposed at Legacy Park.
- The existing mini-field at Adair Park, used for youth soccer and pick-up games, should be improved with turf management.
- The existing mini-field at Glenlake Park, used for pickup games, should be improved with turf management and considered for lighting.
- The existing non-regulation field at Oakhurst Park should be improved with turf management and the restoration of the lighting system.

Partnerships

- The field at Columbia Theological Seminary (used for youth soccer) should be incorporated into the system through a formalized agreement and improved to be a synthetic field and lighted.
- The mini fields at Westchester and Winnona Park Elementary should be improved with turf management, lighting, and a formalized use agreement.
- The field at Talley Street Upper Elementary should be improved with a synthetic field, lighted, and a formalized use agreement.

New

- The proposed Station Soccer facility at Avondale Station should be considered to be designed as a multi-use synthetic field, as opposed to strictly mini-soccer.



Figure 3.2h
PLAYGROUNDS

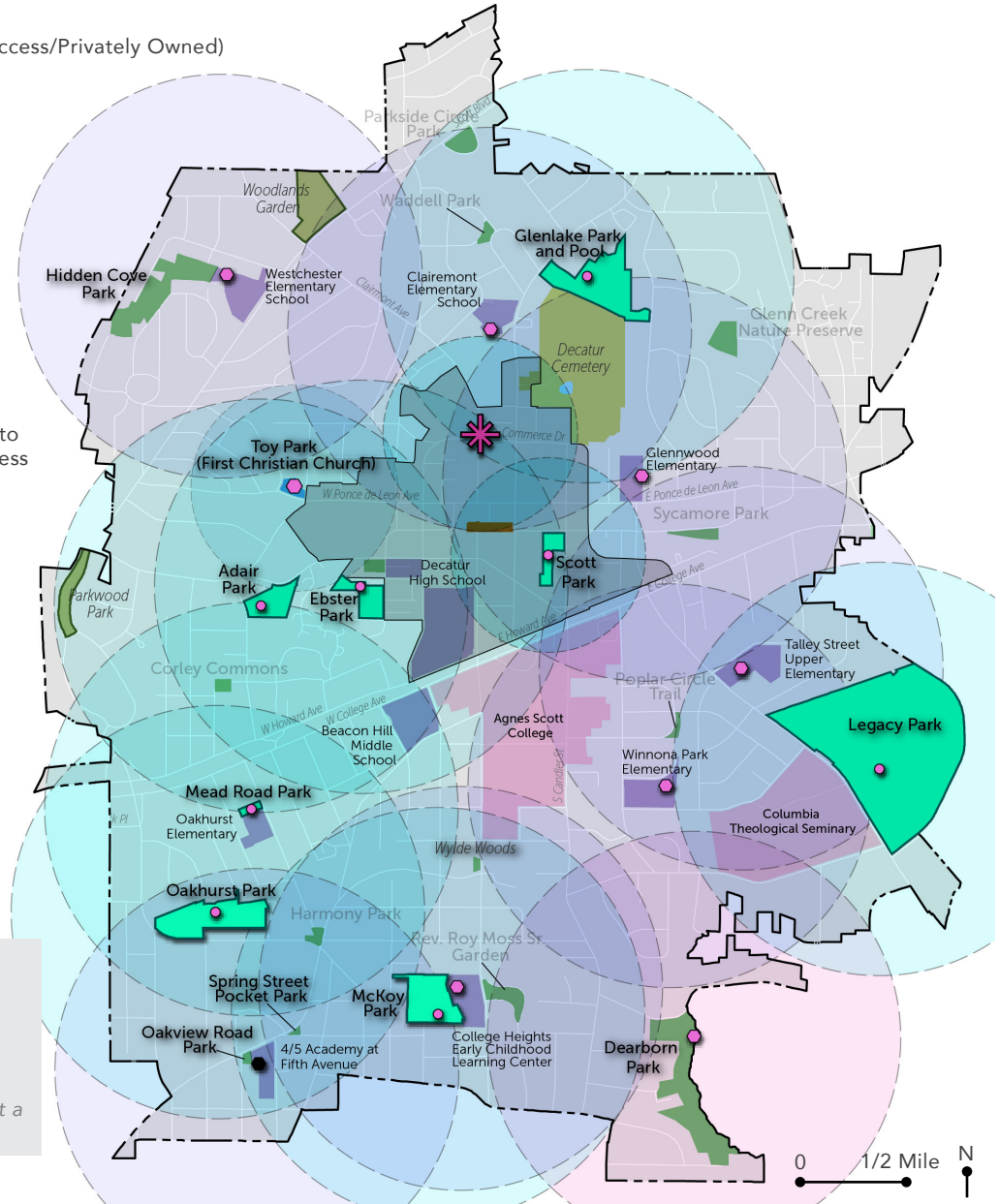
LEGEND

Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Private Owned)
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area
- Parks with Facility
- Location of Existing Facility/ 1/2 Mile Access
- Location of Facility to be Improved / 1/2 Mile Access
- Location of School Facility to be Improved/ 1/2 Mile Access

Proposed

- Location of Park Facility



Access Standard

City facilities serve residents at a half-mile radius, except in the downtown area, where access is a quarter-mile.

Partner facilities serve residents at a quarter-mile radius.

Existing

- Existing playgrounds should be replaced as needed to incorporate inclusive elements and to improve the overall experience.

New

- A new, inclusive playground installed early 2023 at Legacy Park following the Legacy Park Master Plan. Intention should be made to make this a “signature” playspace that will draw residents from across the city.
- Custom play elements that serve as “placemaking” are proposed as part of the redesign of the Decatur Square.



Source: www.becoration.com



Source: www.tinyme.com/blog

Figure 3.2i
RACQUET COURTS

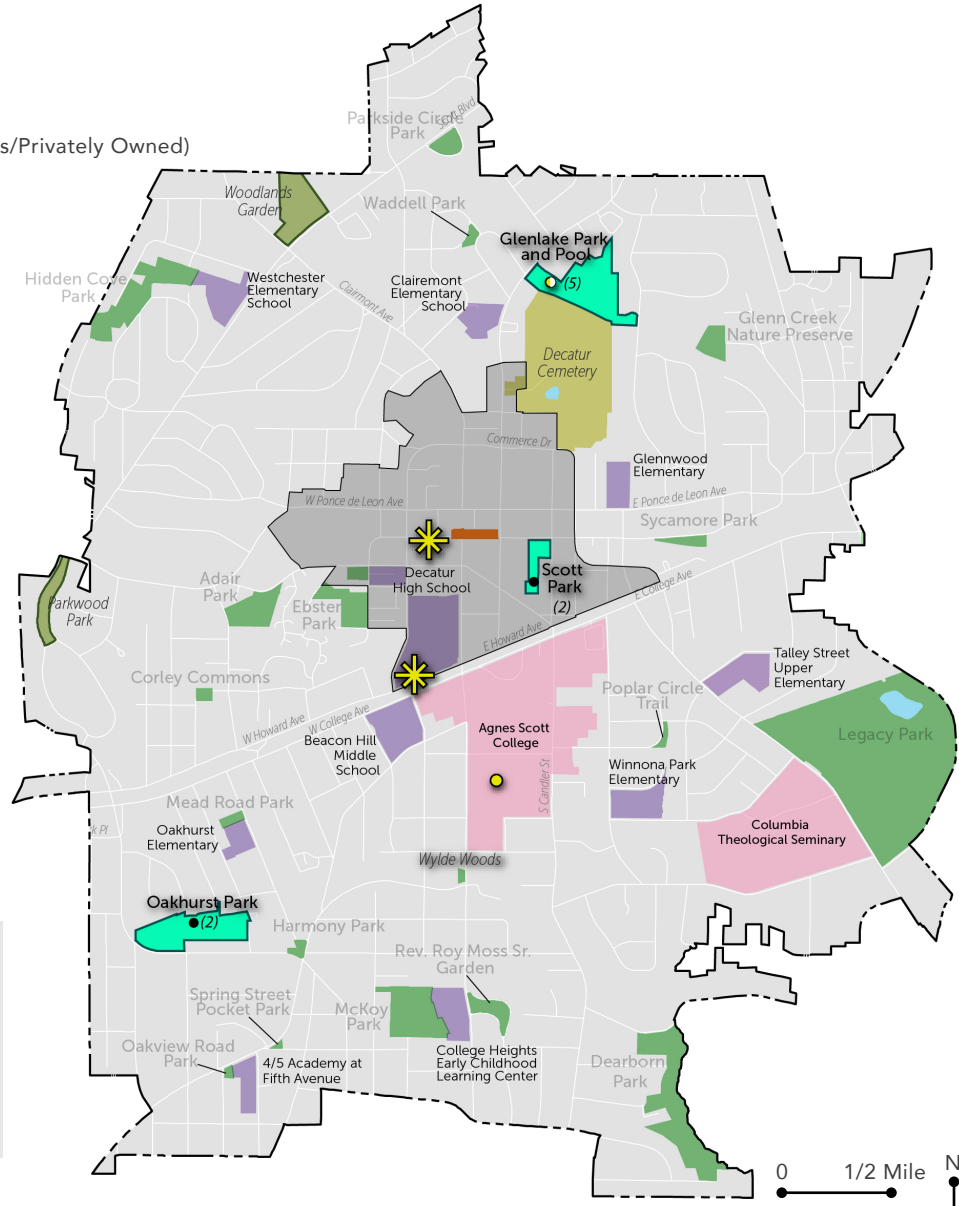
LEGEND

Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Private Owned)
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area
- Parks with Facility
- Location of Facility
- Location of Existing Facility to be Improved
- Location of Partner Facility to be Explored for Shared-Use

Proposed

Proposed Courts



Access Standard

The Glenlake Park Tennis Center serves a 1-mile radius.

Oakhurst Park serves a half-mile radius.

Scott Park serves a quarter-mile radius.

Existing

- Glenlake Park Tennis Center courts could be covered with a bubble covering to facilitate play during inclement weather. The tennis shop building is undersized and should be reconfigured/expanded.
- The Oakhurst and Scott Park courts are due for resurfacing.

Partnerships

- Develop a partnership with Agnes Scott College for athletic facilities. The six courts at Agnes Scott College should be considered for public access through a formal agreement.

New

- Courts, including exclusive pickleball courts and additional tennis courts are proposed to be developed on top of downtown parking decks and at Dearborn Park, in coordination with DeKalb County.
- There is potential space for courts in the Decatur High School parking lots adjacent to W. Howard Avenue.

Figure 3.2j
PARK FACILITIES ON PARKING DECKS

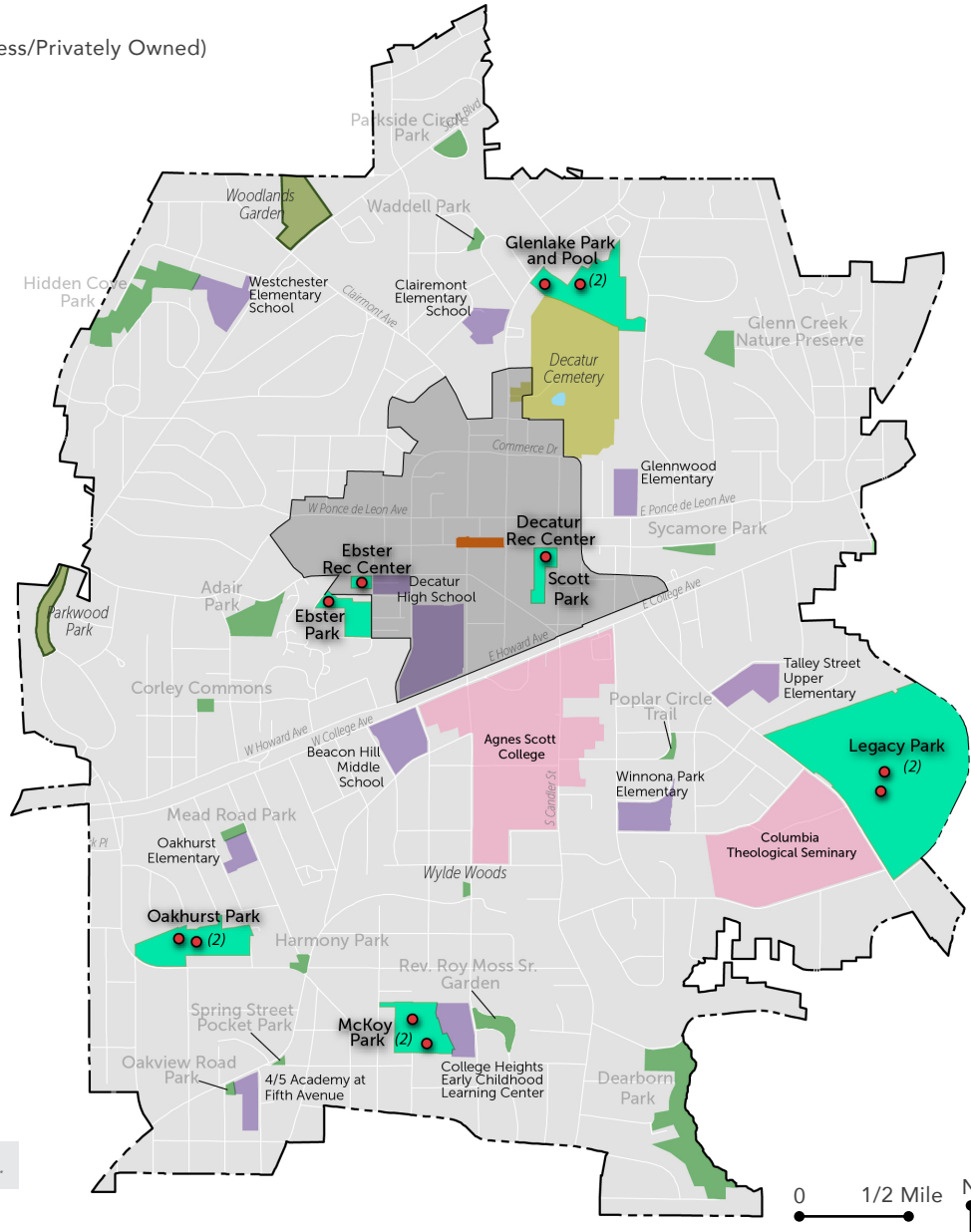


Figure 3.2k
RESTROOMS

LEGEND

Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Privatey Owned)
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area
- Parks with Facility
- Location of Facility to be Improved



All facilities serve residents citywide.

Existing

- Existing restrooms should be improved, considered for increased lighting and cameras, automated access systems installed to ensure safety for all patrons, and increased frequency of maintenance.

Figure 3.21
SPLASHPADS

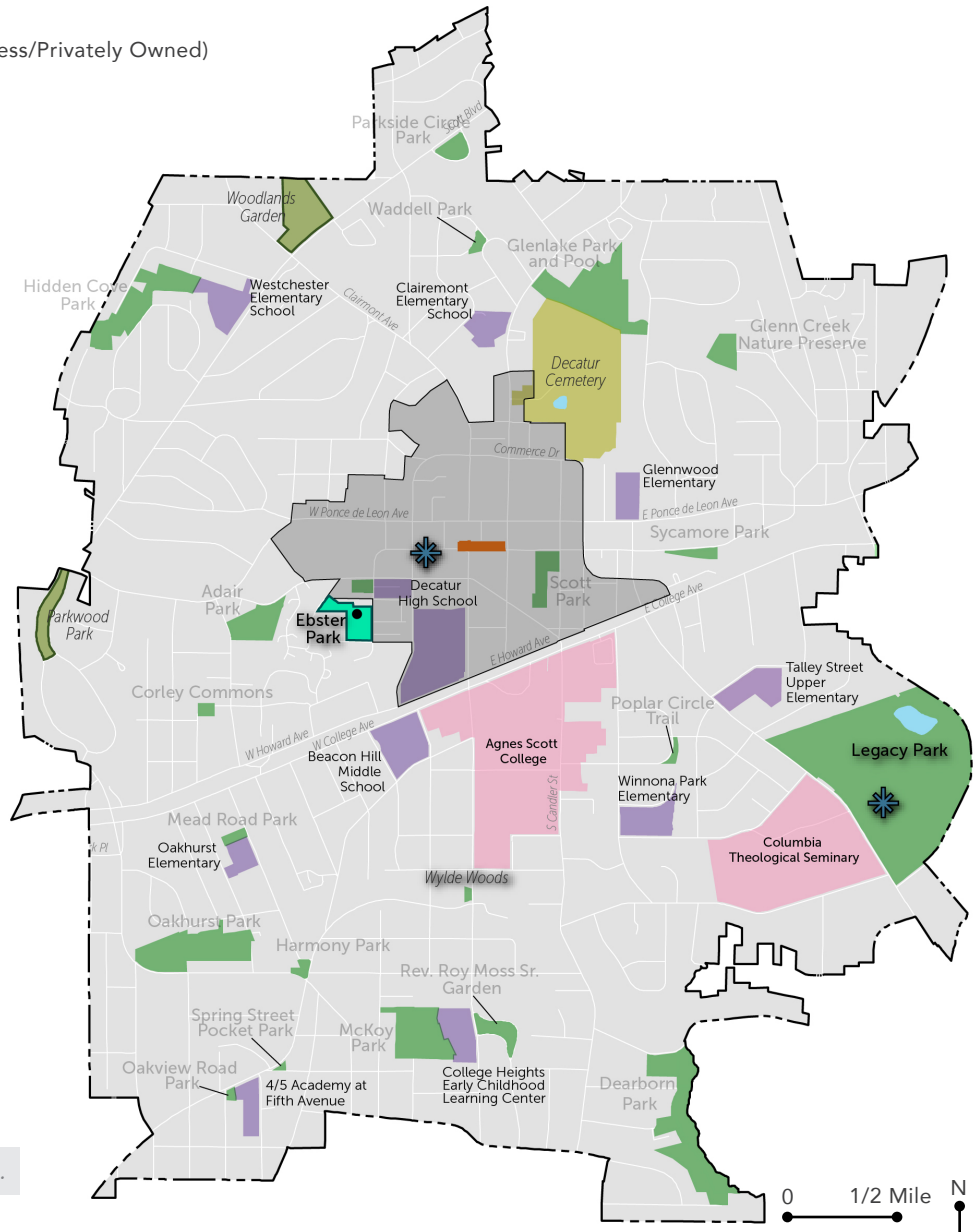
LEGEND

Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Privatey Owned)
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area
- Parks with Facility
- Location of Facility

Proposed

- Location of Partner Facility



All facilities serve residents citywide.

Existing

- There is a small splashpad at Ebster Pool that is limited by its location within the pool facility.

New

- A splashpad or spray elements should be considered for the redesigned downtown park space.
- A splashpad should be considered for the redeveloped playground at Legacy Park, increasing its appeal as a "signature" play space.



Source: City of Atlanta - Adams Park Splashpad



Source: www.static.spokanecity.org/

Figure 3.2m
SKATE PARKS

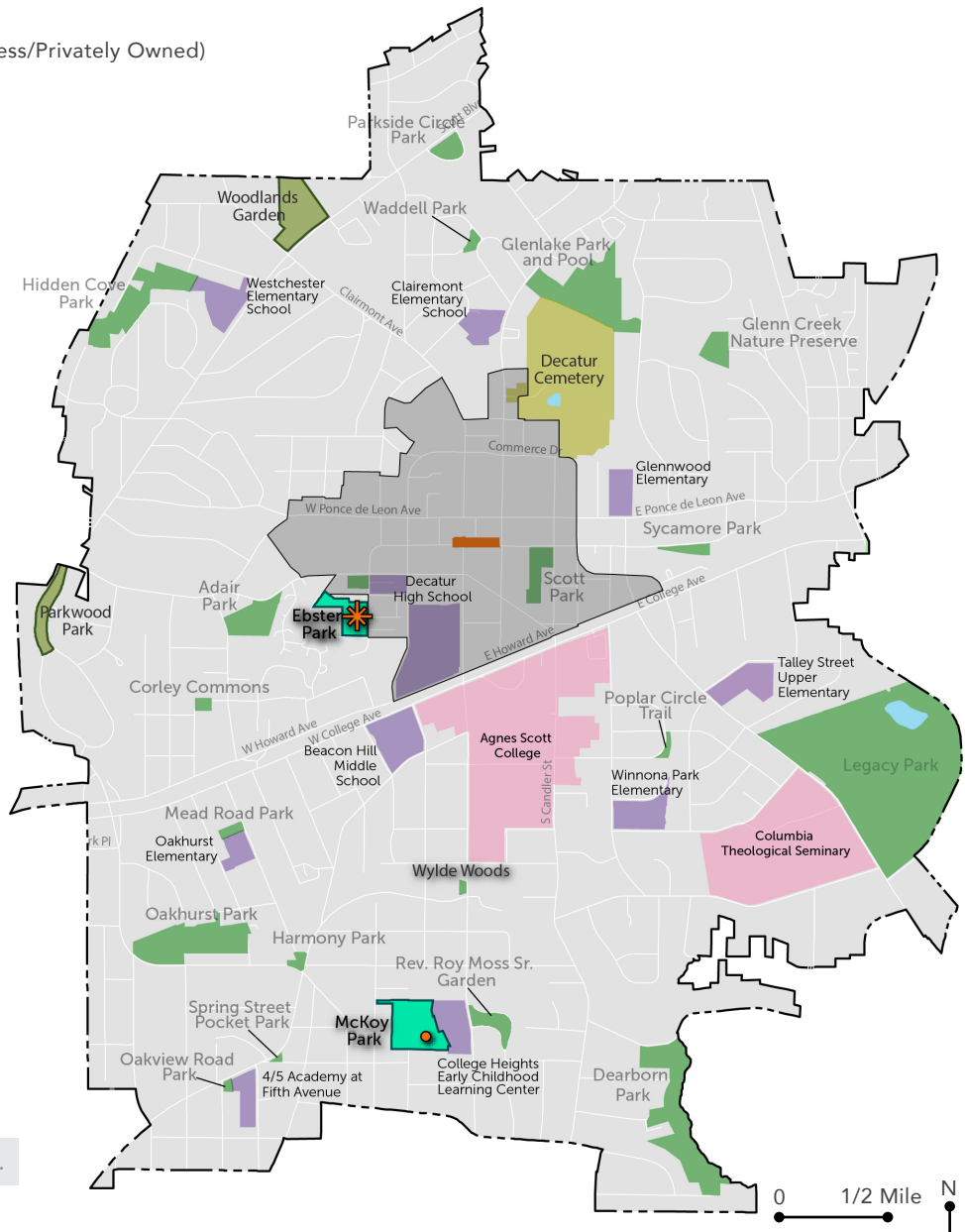
LEGEND

Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Privatey Owned)
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area
- Parks with Facility
- Location of Facility to be Improved

Proposed

- Location of Facility



All facilities serve residents citywide.

Existing

- The skate park in McKoy should be improved to provide new and modern skateboarding, scooter, and skating amenities.

New

- A new skate park is proposed in Downtown Decatur, potentially in Ebster Park.

- **Park Spaces - Parkland, Indoor Facilities, and Amenities (Continued)**

- » **Provide full accessibility at all park sites. [C]** Address facilities and amenities that are not meeting ADA requirements. Ensure that any new or redeveloped amenities are accessible.
- » **Complete improvements in parks in collaboration with the community to provide high-quality park experiences across the board.** Address deferred maintenance and proactively complete capital improvements based on Facility Assessment, identified facility needs discussed previously, and recommendations collected through the planing process and described below. Include a collaborative public engagement process as improvements are completed.
 - **Adair Park** - Enhance dog park area, improve drainage, add a dog agility course, pavilion, seating areas, add a restroom, walking trails, and better sidewalk connections.
 - **Ansley Street Park** - Develop natural play area, add benches, and signage/ wayfinding.
 - **Corley Commons** - Add benches, trash receptacles, water fountains, and shade structure.
 - **Dearborn Park** - Complete landscape improvements, including invasive plant removal, management, interpretive signage, and add nature trails, seating areas, and a pavilion.
 - **Decatur Cemetery** - Enhance cemetery to function as a passive park, add signage/ wayfinding including African American History Interpretive Signage, landscape improvements, and enhance walking/ biking opportunities.
 - **Decatur Cemetery/ Glenwood Elementary School** - Develop a nature trail connection between Decatur Cemetery/ Glenwood Elementary School,



complete landscape improvements including invasive plant removal and management, and add seating areas, pavilions, interpretive signage.

- **Ebster Park** - Develop an outdoor Teen Area with new lighted basketball court, pavilion, restroom buildings, and removal of ADA ramp walls where playground and basketball court are currently located.
- **Garden Lane Park** - Develop nature trails, add a pavilion, seating areas, an signage and wayfinding.
- **Glenlake Park** - Pave Norris Street, enhance bank entrance into the park and connection to Decatur Cemetery, add a restroom in the back portion of the park, complete landscape improvements including invasive plant removal and management.
- **Glenlake Park/ Glenn Creek Nature Preserve** - Develop a nature trail connection between Glenlake Park and Glenn Creek Nature Preserve, complete a stream restoration project, and add seating areas, pavilions, interpretive signage.
- **Hawk Hollow Park** - Develop nature trails, additional community gardens, seating areas, pavilions, and signage/ wayfinding.
- **Mead Park** - Complete a Master Plan of the Park in coordination with the City of Decatur Schools and the surrounding community. Consider adding a cover over the Basketball Court.
- **Montgomery Street Park** - Develop nature trails, additional community gardens, seating areas, pavilion, signage/ wayfinding.
- **Oakhurst Park** - Complete a Master Plan for the Park in coordination with the community that explores previously discussed improvements, including a connection between Oakhurst Park and Sugar Creek.
- **Oakview Road Park** - Complete a Master Plan for the Park in coordination with the City Schools of Decatur and the surrounding community.
- **Reverend Roy Moss Sr. Garden** - Develop nature trails, swing benches, pavilion, and complete landscape improvements including invasive plant removal and management, and add seating areas/ swing benches, pavilions, and interpretive signage.
- **Scott Park** - Install outdoor fitness equipment, benches, and playground shade structure.
- **South Candler Park** - Develop nature trails, improve MARTA bus stop, and add a seating area, signage/ wayfinding.
- **Sycamore Park** - Add walking trail, community garden, and related ancillary facilities.
- **Waddell Park** - Complete landscape improvements, including invasive plant removal, management, and interpretive signage.
- **Willow Lane Park** - Develop nature trails, complete community garden improvements, and add seating areas, pavilion, and signage/wayfinding.

- » **Perform high-quality park maintenance across the board.** Establish a standardized system for park maintenance that is consistent throughout the park system.
- » **Perform ecological restoration throughout the park system.** Remove invasive plantings and restore areas with native planting while considering opportunities to improve sight lines, increase safety and provide opportunities for better use of the restored areas.
- » **Make public spaces more welcoming.* ° [C]** Redesign parks, as appropriate, and install features to improve each space's ability to convey a sense of inclusion for all visitors.
 - Increase safety at restrooms and other locations through improved design, lighting, and tech-based solutions (automatic cleaning/security systems).
 - Provide signage and art to contextualize spaces with history and culture, including foreign language signage and accessible features.
 - Install more seating at parks that serve commercial districts.
 - Ensure all neighborhood parks provide shaded areas and protection from bad weather.
 - Provide drinking fountains in all neighborhood parks and look for opportunities to provide cooling stations, particularly around athletic fields.



Source: www.nytimes.com

- **Programs**

- » Provide programs for all of the community's diverse needs and interests. [C]
Initiate new programs based on feedback from Recreatur public input.
- » Diversify special events and festivals and continue to ensure program mix is aligned with the age segments served. * [C] – Match primary and secondary age segments annually to ensure community demographics are aligned with age served.
- » Annual Review of Program Lifecycles – Ensure program innovation cycle is ongoing.

- **Administration and Management**

- » Establish regular surveys of users and non-users. [C] – Understand changing community desires and support rapid adaptation through communication with users and non-users.
- » Use an equity tool.* [C] Establish a rubric and/or online dashboard to evaluate the equity impact of parks and recreation investments and decisions.
- » Proactively hire diverse staff.* Park and recreation employees (and volunteers) at all levels should reflect the full diversity of the Atlanta region and be educated on the City's commitment to equity.



Source: www.oxford.emory.edu



Parks with Resilience: A Sustainable Park System

• Resource Adaptations for the Future Climate

- » **Maximize tree canopy on parkland.** [C] ^ Identify areas for new tree planting and collaborate with partners to organize community plantings. Ensure that Tree Bank funds and Tree Canopy Replacement trees are maximized on parkland.
 - Advocate for an increase to the tree canopy goal.*
 - Assist with an update to the Community Forestry Management Plan.*
- » **Prioritize water in parks.** [C] ^ Pursue green infrastructure installations, stream buffer protection and enhancement, stream restoration and daylighting (where feasible), and other environmental enhancement projects.*~
 - Remove all creeks from the list of impaired waters. *
- » **Expand sustainable and edible landscapes.** [C] * (Re)design parks, where appropriate, to minimize unnecessary mowing and expand native vegetation, including edible plants whenever possible.
 - Support the expansion of urban gardening opportunities.^
- » **Educate the community on urban ecological resilience.*** Use signage and programming to highlight the ecosystem value of native trees and urban forests and “green” stormwater management.
 - Empower youth activists by enlisting youth to participate in park planning and ecological improvement projects.
- » **Support the creation of a compost program.** [C] * Partner with Public Works and other organizations to establish a fee-based composting program.
- » **Pursue increased efficiency and sustainability of Department buildings.*** Consider how new and renovated facilities can achieve the highest levels of green building certification, including conversion to clean energy, like solar.

• Staffing and Resources

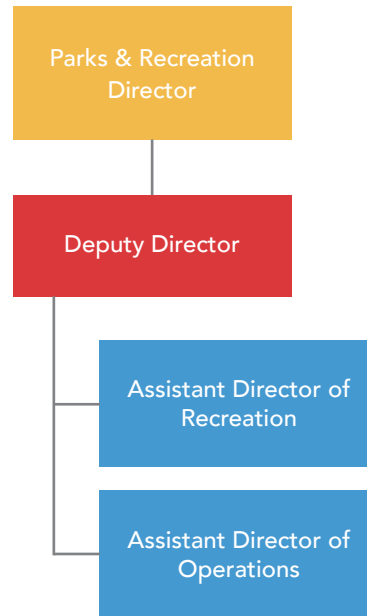
- » **Reorganize staffing and organizational structure to increase efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.** Merge Children & Youth Services and Active Living to create the City of Decatur Parks and Recreation Department to establish communication and reporting channels, streamline task completion, address organizational needs, serve as a foundation to support organizational growth, optimizing spheres of management, and justify staffing requirements.

The following diagrams illustrate the proposed staffing and organizational structure, which organizes the Department around the following six Divisions:

- Administration
- Operations
- Athletics & Aquatics
- Out-of-School Time Programs
- Customer Experience
- Recreation Centers (Facilities)

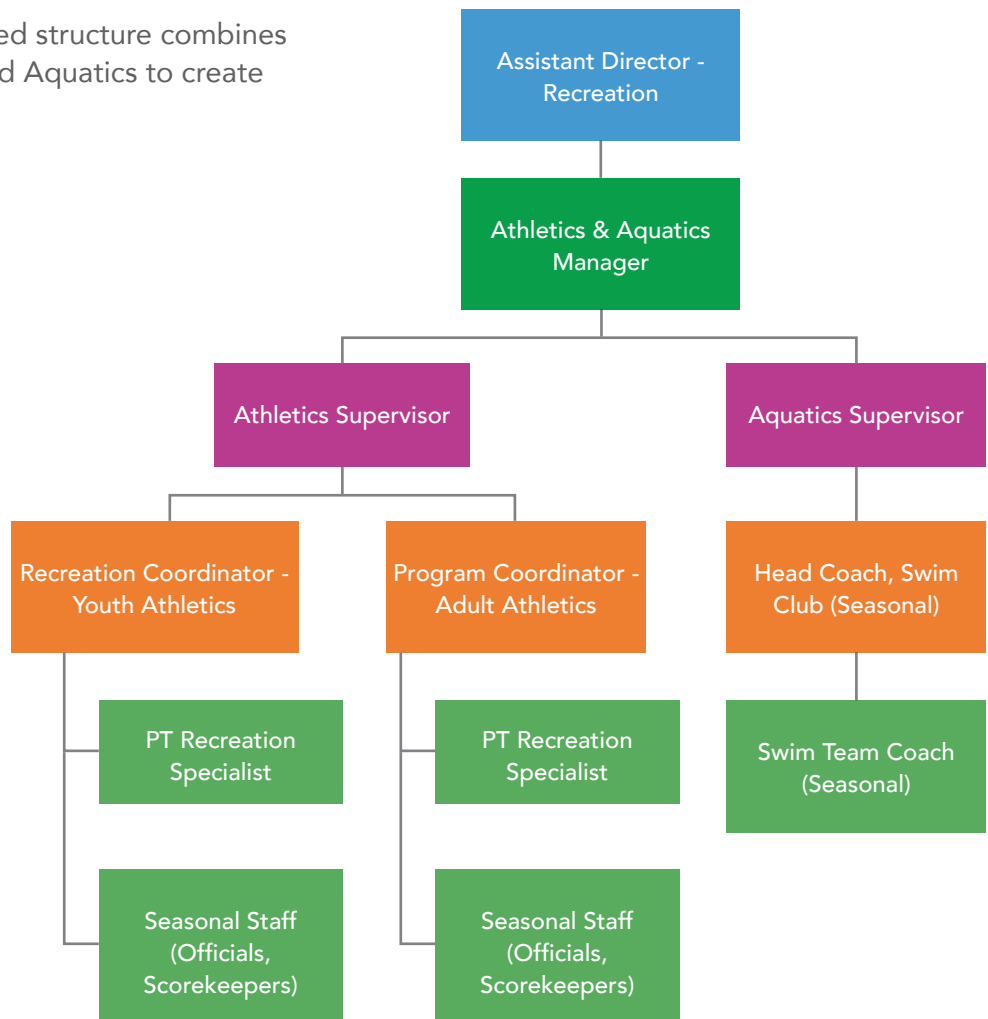
Proposed Administration Division Structure:

The proposed structure merges two administrative structures to create one Department - the City of Decatur Parks and Recreation Department.



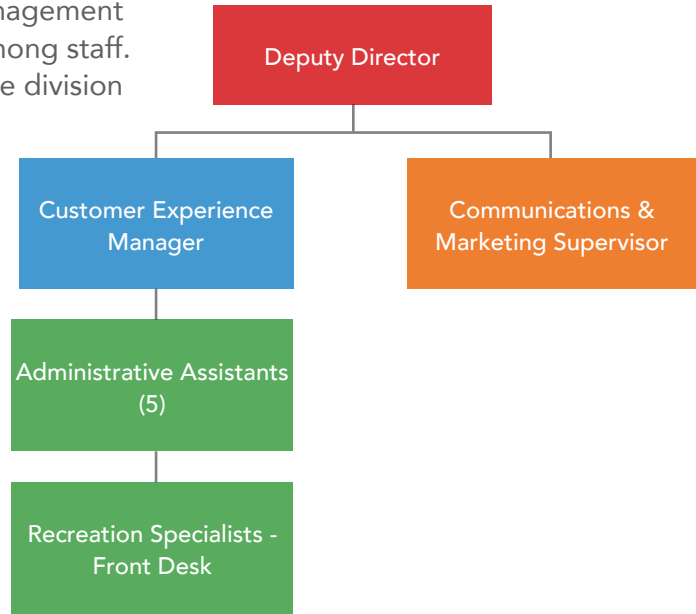
Proposed Athletics & Aquatics Division Structure:

The proposed structure combines Athletics and Aquatics to create efficiencies.



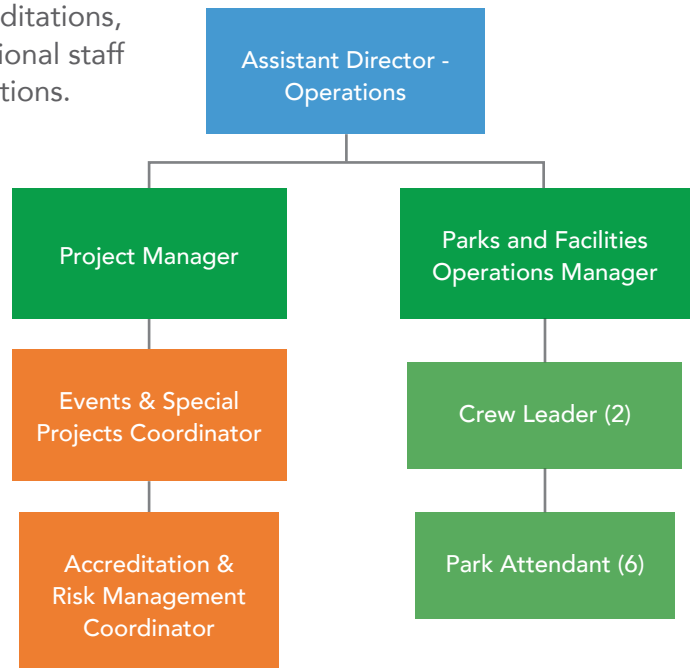
Proposed Customer Experience Division (Communication, Customer Services, and Marketing) Structure:

The proposed structure would have the Deputy Director leading the Division to ensure the integration of the management functions currently distributed among staff. Additional staff would support the division operations.



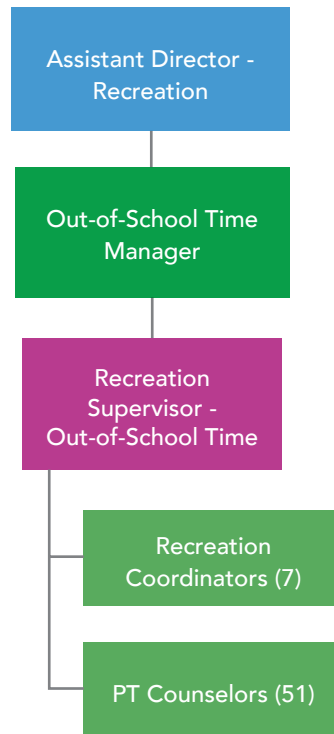
Proposed Operations Division Structure:

The proposed structure would have the Assistant Director of Operations leading the Department to ensure the integration of the compliance to maintain accreditations, certifications, and licenses. Additional staff would support the division operations.



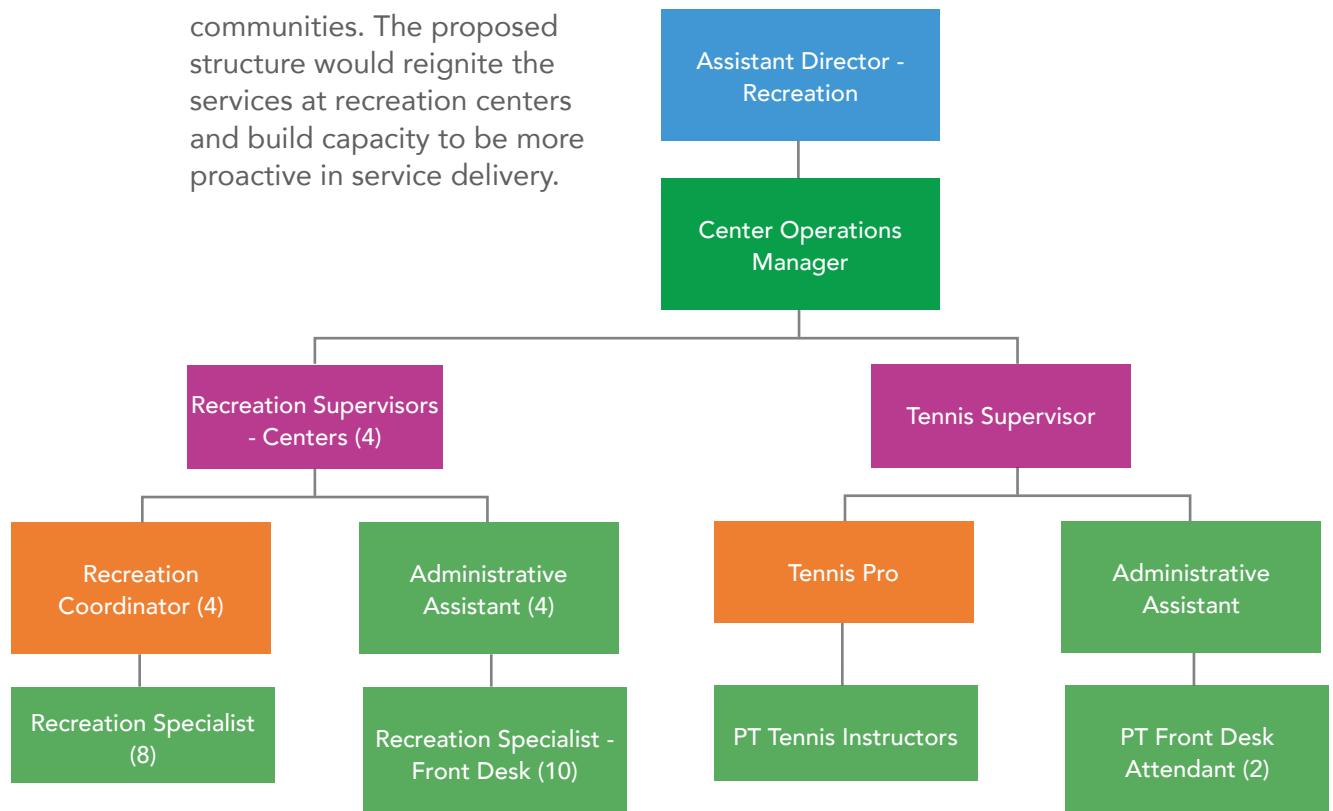
Proposed Out-of-School Time Programs Division (Children & Youth Services) Structure:

The proposed structure identifies the Assistant Director of Recreation to lead the Division with support staff.



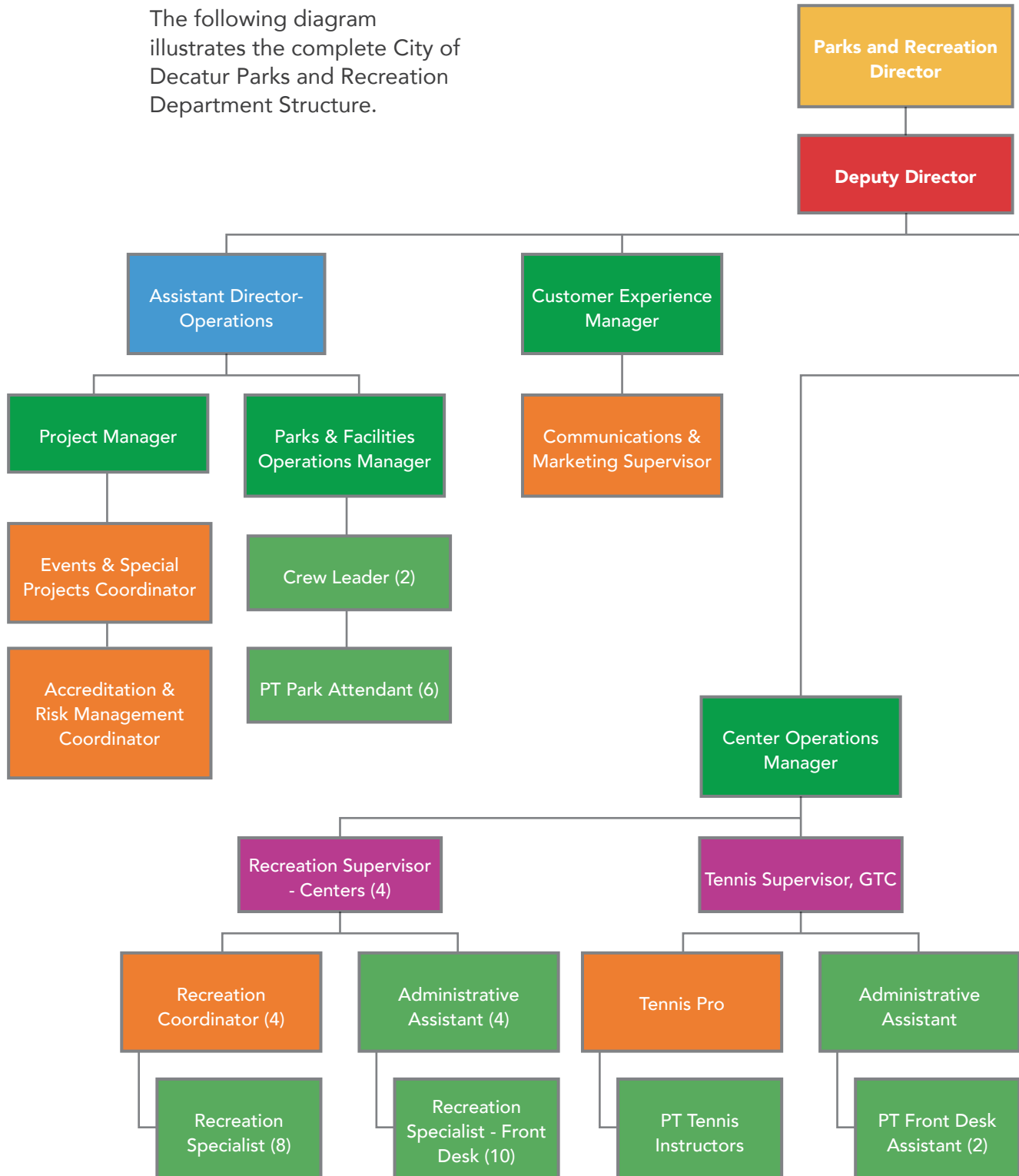
Proposed Recreation Center Division (Facilities) Structure:

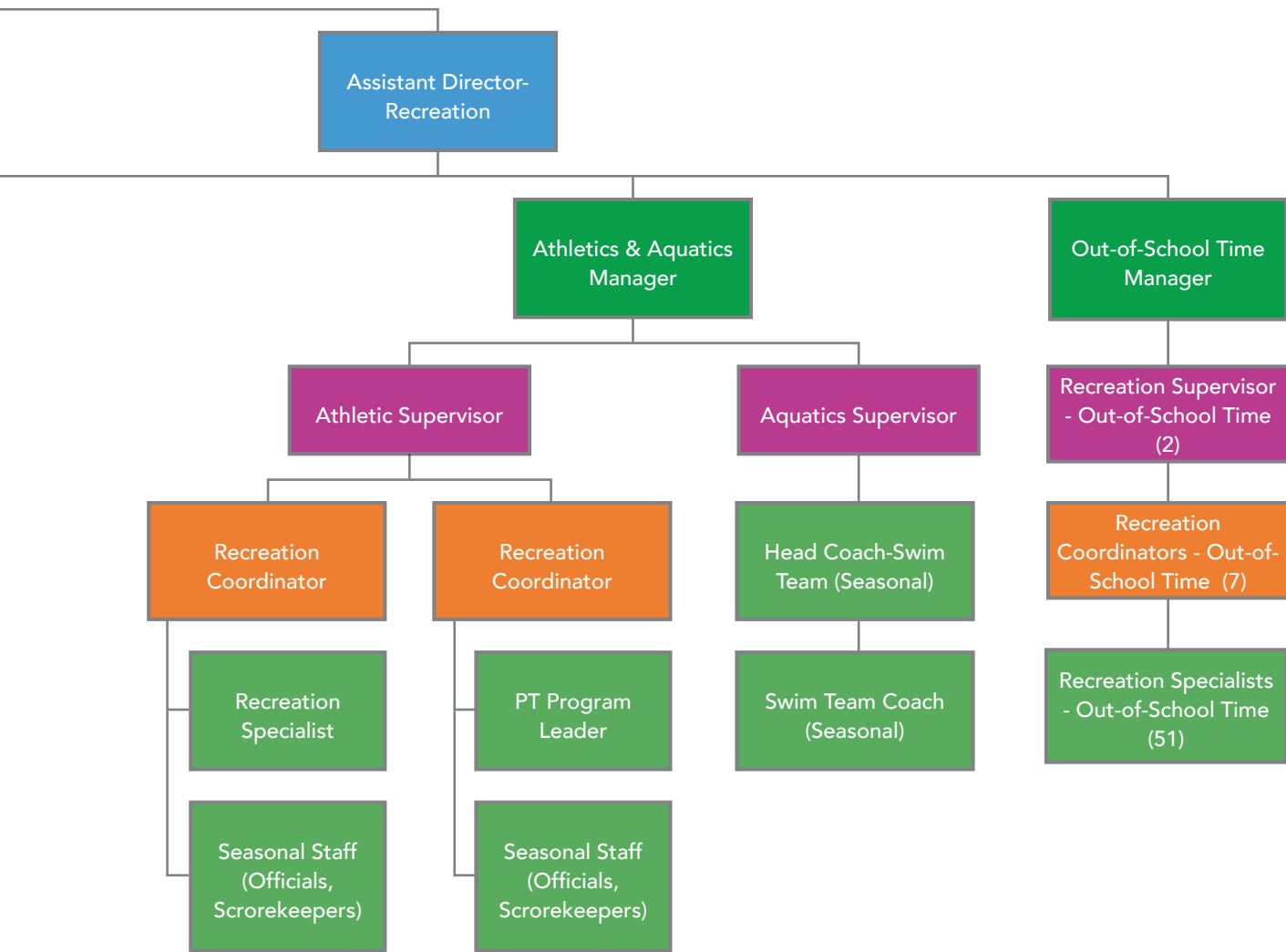
Recreation centers are hubs for communities. The proposed structure would reignite the services at recreation centers and build capacity to be more proactive in service delivery.



Proposed Department Structure:

The following diagram illustrates the complete City of Decatur Parks and Recreation Department Structure.





Proposed Department Structure Summary

The proposed restructuring to combine the Active Living and Children and Youth Services Divisions into the Parks and Recreation Department will streamline service delivery. The functional structure will help the Department adapt services over time to continue meeting residents' needs. The realities of COVID-19 have increased residents' need, use, and expectation of parks and recreation services. In addition, the increased cost of doing business creates a need for increased revenue generation.

» **Hire for needed positions.** The city and its needs have grown over the last 20 years, and new positions are needed to address the system as it grows and adapts. The following positions were identified as in process or needed:

- Center Operations Manager
- Out-of-School Time Manager
- Program Coordinator – Ebster Rec Center, Oakhurst Rec Center, Decatur Rec Center
- Tennis Pro
- Customer Experience Manager
- Project Manager
- Athletics & Aquatics Manager
- Accreditation & Risk Coordinator
- Crew Leaders
- Events & Special Project Coordinator
- Aquatics Supervisor
- Legacy Center Supervisor
- Legacy Program Coordinator
- Legacy Admin
- Digital Marketing Specialist (e.g. dedicated position for social media management)
- Outdoor Recreation Specialist
- Therapeutic Recreation Specialist
- Child Friendly Cities Initiative Position
- Financial Analyst
- Executive Assistant
- Business Manager
- Biking/Walking Coordinator
- Capital Projects Manager
- Community Outreach Coordinator*
- Environmental Sustainability Coordinator*

**These positions may be designed to serve across multiple departments*

» **Restructure the Active Living Advisory Board.** The Active Living Advisory Board was established to provide guidance to the City Commission regarding the programs and goals of the city's Active Living Division, to help citizens safely incorporate physical activity into their daily routines along with guidance and assistance with implementing the recommendations to promote positive health outcomes from the 2007 Community Transportation Plan. It is recommended to restructure the Active Living Advisory Board as the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to provide guidance to the City for the implementation of the parks and recreation master plan, under which a mobility committee is established that focuses on programming and initiatives that advance Decatur as a walk-friendly and bike-friendly community in coordination with the 2016 Community Transportation Plan.

» **Advocate for increased budget.** Make the case for growing the parks and recreation budget based on a local record of success, and examples from national case studies.



Beyond Parks: A Connected Greenspace System

- **Urban Design – Trails and Streetscapes**

- » Ensure safe routes to parks and schools. [E]

- Continue to implement the Decatur PATH Connectivity Plan, prioritizing segments that connect to schools.
- Expand system of paved/ unpaved trails, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities to connect the PATH system to the Decatur park system.

Figure 3.2n
TRAILS AND PATHS

LEGEND

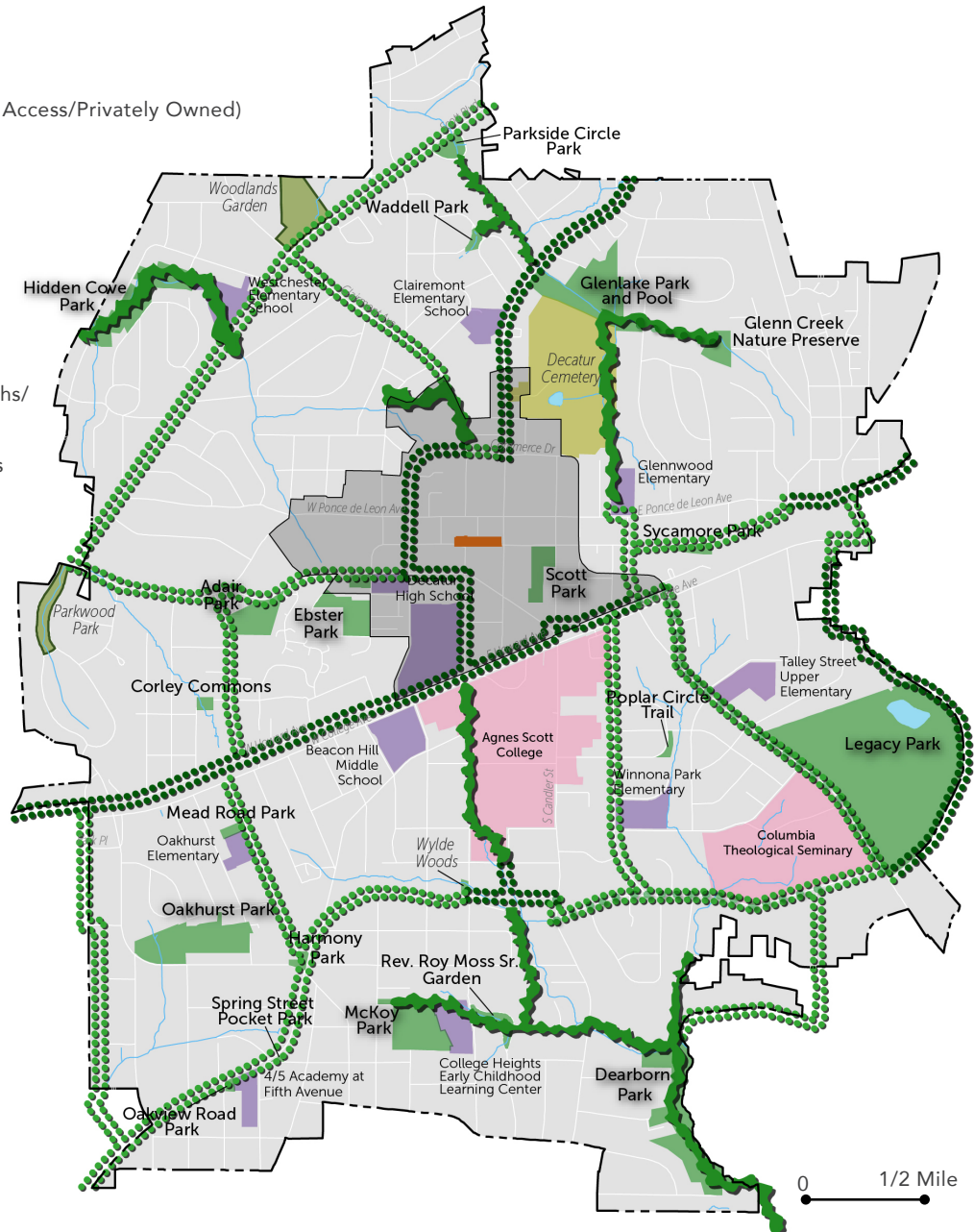
Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Privatey Owned)
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area

Shared Use Paths/Cycle Tracks (Existing)

Proposed

- Proposed Shared-Use Paths/Cycle Tracks
- Proposed Greenway Trails



- » Install more wayfinding signage, particularly around commercial districts.*
- » Provide more bike+ parking. [E] Ensure that major facilities have appropriate bike+ parking areas, and consider creative partnerships (Eagle Scout projects, etc.) to support place-making design.
- » Leverage trail corridors to provide park experiences. Design trails to facilitate the incremental integration of park experiences along the trail based on the parks and recreation needs of surrounding residents.

Figure 3.2n
TRAILS WITH PARK EXPERIENCES



- **Administration, Management, and Marketing**
 - » Bring management of Decatur Cemetery under Parks and Recreation Department. Restructure the Department to include the cemetery maintenance staff and provide further support for its use as a greenspace.
 - » Develop a Marketing and Branding Plan for the Department.
 - » Undertake strategies to expand the Department’s storytelling.
 - » Develop an annual staff training calendar with input from staff for training areas.
 - » Create an organizational culture and customer service training to help establish the Decatur Way.
 - » Invest in technology – Upgrade technology to provide more user friendly program registration and payment experiences (interdepartmental as well).
- **Programming Partnerships**
 - » Increase partnership opportunities. Proactively pursue creative partnerships with local organizations who may need facilities/venues for programs.
- **Addressing community challenges**
 - » Explore the intersectionality of parks and affordable housing.
 - Work closely with Decatur Housing Authority, the Decatur Land Trust, and other housing partners to maximize recreation opportunities (playgrounds, etc.) at existing developments.
 - Consider joint development of new affordable housing and greenspace on publicly-owned land.



- Explore the future redevelopment of underutilized recreation center properties to create integrated affordable housing and indoor recreation complex.
- » **Confront homelessness compassionately.**
 - Provide staff with appropriate training on how to work with unhoused population.
 - Partner with a local service organization/university to provide social workers to perform outreach and service-delivery to unhoused individuals in parks.
 - Continue to manage, operate, and maintain restrooms so they serve as a refuge for the unhoused population after parks hours while ensuring a high-quality experience for park users during park hours.
- » **Improve community safety through the parks system.**
 - Consider Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies in the design and redesign of parks and recreation facilities.
 - Add security cameras in key parks, ensure adequate lighting in parks after dark, and encourage more patrolling in parks.
 - Expand parks so they have as many public edges as possible that encourage “eyes on the park.”
 - In collaboration with partners, develop programs and activities for at-risk youth to help deliver programs, services, employment, and educational opportunities focused on reducing youth/ young adult crime and improved neighborhood safety.

Figure 3.2o
 CONCEPT EXAMPLE OF UNDERUTILIZED INDOOR RECREATION CENTER PROPERTY REDEVELOPMENT INTO AN INTEGRATED AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND INDOOR RECREATION CENTER COMPLEX

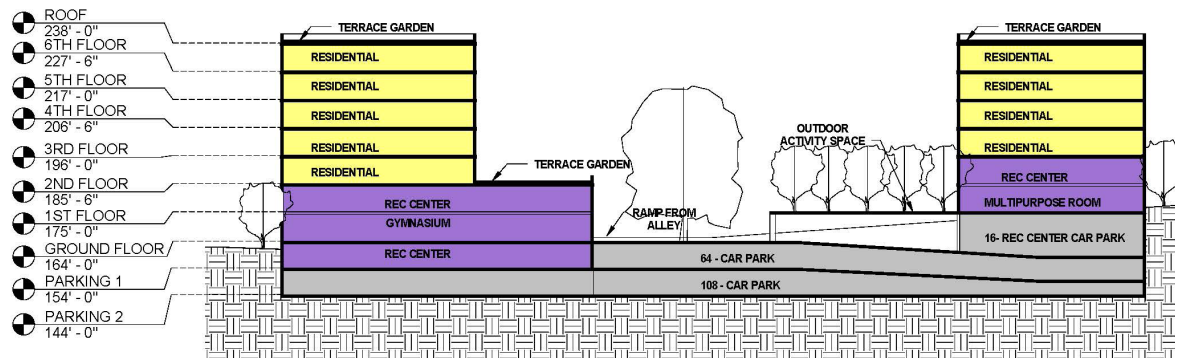


Figure 3.2o
INTEGRATED RECREATUR PARKS SYSTEM VISION

LEGEND

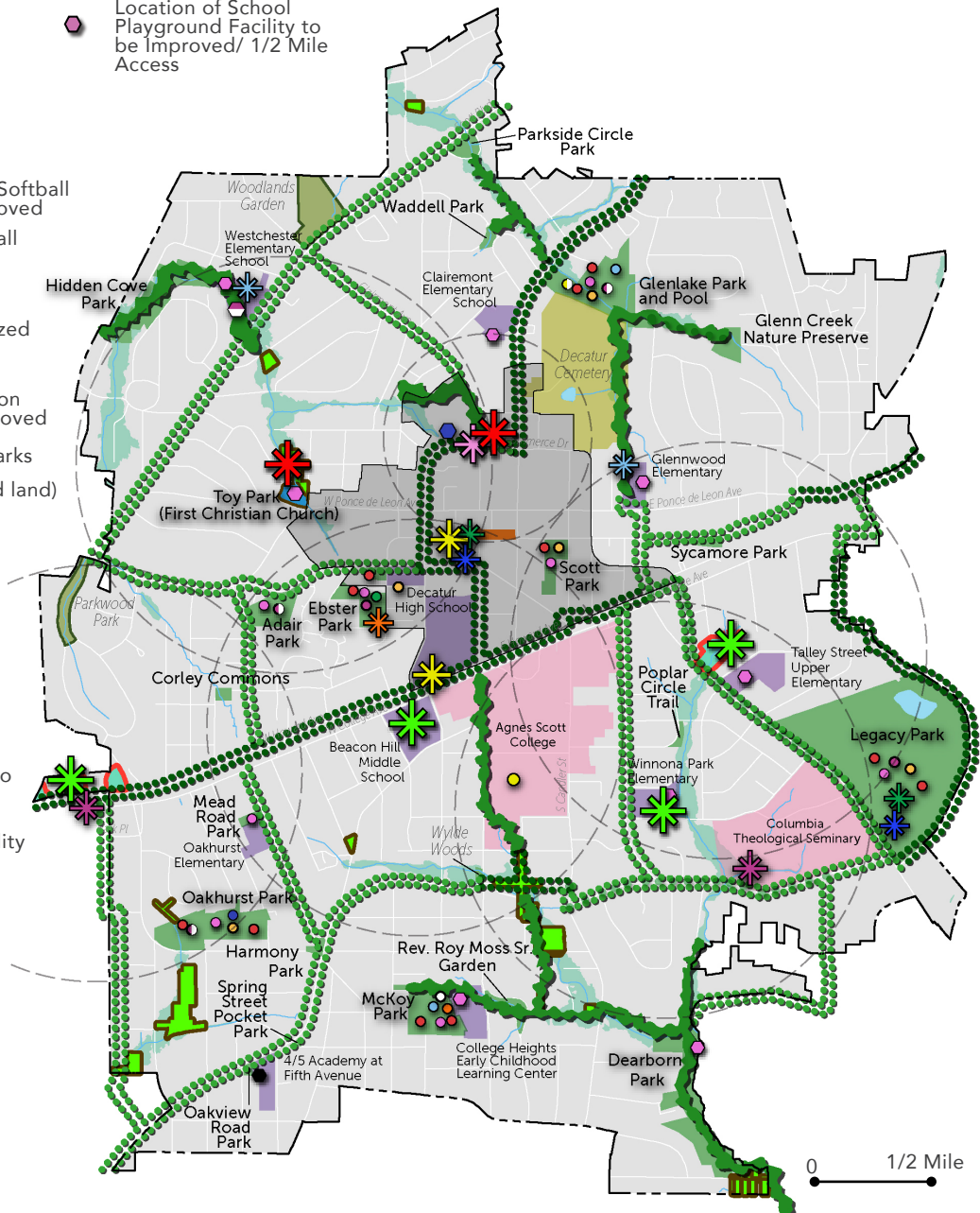
Existing

- City Parks
- Nature Preserves (Public Access/Privatey Owned)
- Cemetery
- K-12 School (Public)
- Colleges/Universities
- Decatur Square
- Downtown Decatur Area
- Shared Use Paths/Cycle Tracks (Existing)

Proposed

- Floodplain/ Environmentally Sensitive Areas/ Natural Area Parks
- Location of Indoor Facility to be Improved
- Location of Amphitheater Facility to be Improved
- Location of Baseball Field Facility to be Improved
- Location of Regulation Sized Softball Field Facility to be Improved
- Location of Shared Use Softball Field Facility to be Improved
- Location of Other Softball Field Facility to be Improved
- Location of Multi-Use Rectangle Regulation Sized Facility to be Improved
- Location of Multi-Use Rectangle Non-Regulation Sized Facility to be Improved
- Previously Proposed Parks
- New Parks (City-owned land)
- Potential Area for City Neighborhood Park
- Potential Location for Partner Park
- Park Access Area 1/2 Mile Radius City 1/4 Mile Radius Downtown
- Location of Amphitheater Park Facility
- Location of Partner Baseball Field Facility to be Improved
- Location of Multi-Use Rectangle Partner Facility to be Improved
- Location of Proposed Playground
- Location of Proposed Racquet Courts
- Location of Partner Splash Pad Facility
- Location of Skate Park Facility
- Proposed Shared-Use Paths/ Cycle Tracks
- Proposed Greenway Trails
- Location of Existing Racquet Court Facility to be Improved
- Location of Partner Racquet Court Facility to be Explored for Shared-Use
- Location of Restroom Facility to be Improved
- Location of Skate Park Facility to be Improved

Figure 3.2p below illustrates the proposed Recreatur Vision, an illustration of the all the proposed improvements that will collectively help enhance lives across communities and provide quality experiences to promote healthy living and connections.



Chapter 4

IMPLEMENTING RECREATUR



Introduction to the Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy for the Recreator parks and recreation system plan is comprised of three interrelated parts:

- Capital Improvement Projects, such as the replacement of playgrounds, or the construction of new parks and recreation facilities;
- Staff Actions, the steps that Department staff need to take in order to facilitate the completion of capital projects, or the provision of programs and services;
- Funding, to pay for capital projects and staff.

The following chapter focuses on these three interrelated parts.

- 1 Funding Recreator
- 2 Phasing the Implementation of Recreator
- 3 Action Steps to Implement Recreator

4.2

Funding Recreatur

The ability to implement the Recreatur Vision is directly linked to the amount of funding that will be available over the next 10 years.

The complete Recreatur Vision would likely cost well over \$150 Million to implement. The Consultant Team met with staff to discuss realistic funding strategies for the implementation of the Vision.

Based on conversations with staff and public funding calculations completed by the City’s financial advisor, Davenport & Company, two funding options were developed for the City’s consideration. These options consider order of magnitude estimates for public funding sources, grants, and potential philanthropic contribution amounts that may be obtained and leveraged.

Funding Options

The two funding options consider the use of an extra-ordinary funding source in the form of a 30-year General Obligation Bond. The use of Special Option Local Sales Tax (SPLOST) revenue was also discussed, however the City currently uses SPLOST revenue for other needs.

The inclusion of this extraordinary funding source is based on the responses from the Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) where 90 percent of respondents expressed a willingness to pay an additional \$3-\$4 per month and 72 percent of respondents expressed willingness to pay \$5-\$6 extra monthly to fund the types of parks and recreation facilities that are most important to their households. Figure 4.2a illustrates the potential bond revenue that could be generated based on a range of household property tax contributions.

Figure 4.2a
GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND REVENUE GENERATION POTENTIAL BASED ON MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD CONTRIBUTIONS

30-Year Obligation Bond (30-Year Pay Back)	\$3 per tax paying household per month = \$4.25 MM
	\$6 per tax paying household per month = \$8.5 MM

Figures 4.2b and 4.2c illustrate the amount of combined revenue that could be generated by leveraging \$3 and \$6 per tax-paying household, per month, respectively, with other funding sources. Three dollars per household leveraged with other funding sources could generate about \$6.75 Million and six dollars could generate about \$11 Million over the next 10 years.

Figure 4.2b
 FUNDING OPTION – G.O. BOND (\$3 PER TAX PAYING HOUSEHOLD PER MONTH)

FUNDING OPTIONS	10-YEAR PROJECTION
G.O. Bond (30-Year Pay Back) (\$3 per tax paying household per month)	\$ 4.25 M
Other Parks and Recreation Grants	\$ 1 M
CDBG Grants	\$ 1 M
TOTAL	\$ 6 M
Philanthropic Contribution Goal	\$ 500 K
TOTAL	\$ 6.75 M

Figure 4.2c
 FUNDING OPTION 3B - G.O. BOND (\$6 PER TAX PAYING HOUSEHOLD PER MONTH)

FUNDING OPTIONS	10-YEAR PROJECTION
G.O. Bond (30-Year Pay Back) (\$6 per tax paying household per month)	\$ 8.5 M
Other Parks and Recreation Grants	\$ 1 M
CDBG Grants	\$ 1 M
TOTAL	\$10.5 M
Philanthropic Contribution Goal	\$ 500 K
TOTAL	\$ 11 M

Phasing the Implementation of Recreatur

Given the limited amount of funding that may be available to implement the Recreatur Vision, prioritizing projects will be important.

City staff and the Consultant Team collaboratively developed a prioritization strategy to inform how parks and recreation capital projects should be implemented over the next 10 years. Two steps were used to prioritize projects:

Step 1 - Funding Allocation Targets: City-wide spending targets for four Project Funding Categories based on the findings from the Needs and Priorities Assessment.

Step 2 - Prioritization Criteria: Indicators used to score and prioritize improvements within the four Project Funding Categories based on the findings from the Context Analysis, Needs and Priorities Assessment, Recreatur Vision, industry best practices, and staff input.

Step 1 - Funding Allocation Targets

Parks and recreation system capital projects can be organized into four primary project categories:

- **Improvements to existing parks and facilities** - Capital projects related to enhancing and replacing aging and deteriorating parks and recreation facilities, amenities, and spaces such as replacing an air conditioning unit, or a playground, or improving the natural turf in a field.
- **Development of new parks and facilities** - Capital projects related to installing and implementing new facilities that were not previously available in parks such as installing synthetic turf in an existing natural turf field, adding a new restroom building, or installing a splash pad in a vacant site.
- **Development of walking and biking facilities** - Capital projects related to implementing walking and biking facilities such as paved trails, cycle tracks, and sidewalks.
- **Acquiring park land** - The acquisition of land that would be used for parks and recreation facilities.

The findings from the question in the Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) where respondents were asked to allocate \$100 into eight capital improvement categories were collapsed into allocations for the four primary project categories discussed above. Figure 4.3a illustrates these allocation results.

Figure 4.3a
FUNDING ALLOCATION TARGETS

PROJECT TYPES	PERCENTAGE FUNDING ALLOCATION TARGETS
Improvements to Existing Parks and Facilities	42%
Development of New Parks and Facilities	25%
Development of Walking and Biking Facilities	18%
Acquiring Park Land	15%
TOTAL	100%

These percentage funding allocation targets are proposed to be applied to the amount of funding that may be available to implement parks and recreation capital projects over the next 10 years. This ensures that each type of project receives some amount of funding over the next 10 years rather than all the funding going to a certain type of project. Figure 4.3b illustrates the costs to implement the full plan as well as how percentage funding allocation targets translate into funding amounts based on the two potential funding tiers discussed in Section 4.2 - Funding Recreation.

Figure 4.3b
FUNDING ALLOCATION TARGETS AND DOLLARS PER POTENTIAL FUNDING TIER AMOUNTS

PROJECT TYPES	COSTS TO IMPLEMENT THE FULL PLAN	PERCENTAGE FUNDING ALLOCATION TARGETS	Recreation Funding Tier 1 (G.O. Bond at \$3 per Household, per Month)	Recreation Funding Tier 2 (G.O. Bond at \$6 per Household, per Month)
Improvements to Existing Parks and Facilities	\$ 32.6 MM	42%	\$ 2.83 MM	\$ 4.62 MM
Development of New Parks and Facilities	\$ 58.3 MM	25%	\$ 1.70 MM	\$ 2.75 MM
Development of Walking and Biking Facilities	\$ 30.0 MM	18%	\$ 1.22 MM	\$ 1.98 MM
Acquiring Park Land	\$ 31.3 MM	15%	\$ 1.00 MM	\$ 1.65 MM
TOTAL	\$ 152.2 MM	100%	\$ 6.75 MM	\$ 11.0 MM

Step 2 - Prioritization Criteria

City staff and the Consultant Team collaboratively developed a prioritization criteria for each project type to identify which capital improvement projects within each project type should be implemented first as funding becomes available. These criteria were based on findings from the Chapter 1 - Context Analysis, Chapter 2 - Needs and Priorities Assessment, Chapter 3 - Recreatur Vision, industry best practices, and staff input. Figures 4.3c - 4.3f identify these prioritization criteria.

Figure 4.3c
 PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES

PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR IMPROVEMENT OF EXISTING FACILITIES					
Guiding Principle	Criteria	Criteria Description	Points	Metric	Weight
Equity	Critical Expenditure	What is the category of the Critical Expenditure of the project?	0-5	Category I-VI	3
	Priority Need	Does the project address an improvement in a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) need?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	3
	Historical Racial and Economic Injustice/ Inequities	Is the project located in an area that has historically experienced racial and economic injustice/ inequities?	0,1-6	No, Low - High	4
	Social Vulnerability	Is the project located in an area that is currently socially vulnerable?	0,1-6	No, Low - High	4
Sustainability	Water	What is the project's potential impact on water quality and managing water quantity?	0,3,5	Positive, No, Negative Impact	3
	Carbon Footprint	What is the project's potential to improve the site's energy efficiency or provide opportunities for onsite renewable energy production?	0,3,5	Positive, No, Negative Impact	3
	Climate Resilience	What is the project's impact to the City's tree canopy and urban heat island?	0,3,5	Positive, No, Negative Impact	3
	Staffing and Financial Resources	What is the project's impact to staffing and funding resources?	0,3,5	High, Medium, Minimal Impact	3
Connectivity	Mobility	Does the project present an opportunity to enhance universal accessibility?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	1
	Plan Alignment	Does the project help implement projects/ initiatives from other adopted plans?	0,3,5	Minimal, Strategic, Specific Alignment	1
	Partnerships	Does the project present an opportunity for partnerships?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	1
	Social Connectivity	Does the project present an opportunity to facilitate multi-generational, multi-cultural, and multi-purpose gathering?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	2

Figure 4.3d
 PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PARKS AND FACILITIES

PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PARK FACILITIES					
Guiding Principle	Criteria	Criteria Description	Points	Metric	Weight
Equity	Priority Need	Does the project address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) need?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	3
	LOS Gap	Does the project address an Access LOS Gap in the Facility Vision?	0,3,5	No, Partial, Full	4
	Historical Racial and Economic Injustice/ Inequities	Is the projected located in an area that has historically experienced racial and economic injustice/ inequities?	0,1-6	No, Low - High	4
	Social Vulnerability	Is the projected located in an area that is currently socially vulnerable?	0,1-6	No, Low - High	4
Sustainability	Water	What is the project's potential impact on water quality and managing water quantity?	0,3,5	Positive, No, Negative Impact	3
	Carbon Footprint	What is the project's potential to improve the site's energy efficiency or provide opportunities for onsite renewable energy production?	0,3,5	Positive, No, Negative Impact	3
	Climate Resilience	What is the project's impact to the City's tree canopy and urban heat island?	0,3,5	Positive, No, Negative Impact	3
	Staffing and Financial Resources	What is the project's impact to staffing and funding resources?	0,3,5	High, Medium, Minimal Impact	3
Connectivity	Trail Connectivity	Does the project provide an opportunity to advance the Recreatur Paths and Trails Vision?	0,5	No, Yes	1
	Mobility	Does the project present an opportunity to enhance universal accessibility?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	1
	Plan Alignment	Does the project help implement projects/ initiatives from other adopted plans?	0,3,5	Minimal, Strategic, Specific Alignment	1
	Partnerships	Does the project present an opportunity for partnerships?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	1
	Social Connectivity	Does the land present an opportunity to facilitate multi-generational, multi-cultural, and multi-purpose gathering?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	2

Figure 4.3e
 PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WALKING AND BIKING FACILITIES

PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR DEVELOPMENT OF WALKING/BIKING FACILITIES					
Guiding Principle	Criteria	Criteria Description	Points	Metric	Weight
Equity	Priority Need	Does the project address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) need?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	3
	LOS Gap	Does the project address an Access LOS Gap in the Trails Vision?	0,3,5	No, Partial, Full	4
	Historical Racial and Economic Injustice/ Inequities	Is the project located in an area that has historically experienced racial and economic injustice/ inequities?	0,1-6	No, Low - High	4
	Social Vulnerability	Is the project located in an area that is currently socially vulnerable?	0,1-6	No, Low - High	4
Sustainability	Water	What is the project's potential impact on water quality and managing water quantity?	0,3,5	Positive, No, Negative Impact	3
	Climate Resilience	What is the project's impact to the City's tree canopy and urban heat island?	0,3,5	Positive, No, Negative Impact	3
	Staffing and Financial Resources	What is the project's impact to staffing and funding resources?	0,3,5	Minimal, Medium, High Impact	3
Connectivity	Mobility	Does the project present an opportunity to enhance universal accessibility?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	1
	Plan Alignment	Does the project help implement projects/ initiatives from other adopted plans?	0,3,5	Minimal, Strategic, Specific Alignment	1
	Partnerships	Does the project present an opportunity for partnerships?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	1
	Social Connectivity	Does the land present an opportunity to facilitate multi-generational, multi-cultural, and multi-purpose gathering?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	2

Figure 4.3f
 PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR ACQUIRING PARK LAND

PRIORITIZATION CRITERIA FOR PARK LAND ACQUISITION					
Guiding Principle	Criteria	Criteria Description	Points	Metric	Weight
Equity	Park Desert	Does the land address a park desert?	0,3,5	No, Partially, Yes	4
	Acreage LOS Need	What is the degree of park acreage need in the area where the land is located?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	4
	Priority Need	Does the land address a Statistically Valid Survey (SVS) Priority Investment Ranking (PIR) need?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	3
	Historical Racial and Economic Injustice/ Inequities	Is the land located in an area that has historically experienced racial and economic injustice/ inequities?	0,1-6	No, Low - High	4
	Social vulnerability	Is the land located in an area that is currently socially vulnerable?	0,1-6	No, Low - High	4
Sustainability	Water	What are the park land uses' potential impact on water quality and managing water quantity?	0,3,5	Positive, No, Negative Impact	3
	Climate Resilience	What are the park land uses' impact to the tree canopy and urban heat island?	0,3,5	Positive, No, Negative Impact	3
	Staffing and Financial Resources	What is the land's impact to staffing and funding resources?	0,3,5	High, Medium, Minimal Impact	3
Connectivity	Trail Connectivity	Does the land provide an opportunity to advance the Recreatur Paths and Trails Vision?	0,5	No, Yes	1
	Mobility	Does the land present an opportunity to enhance universal accessibility?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	1
	Plan Alignment	Does the land help implement projects/ initiatives from other adopted plans?	0,3,5	Minimal, Strategic, Specific Alignment	1
	Partnerships	Does the land present an opportunity for partnerships?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	1
	Social Connectivity	Does the land present an opportunity to facilitate multi-generational, multi-cultural, and multi-purpose gathering?	0,3,5	Low, Medium, High	2

Based on the prioritization criteria, scores, and weights, the Consultant Team scored seventy-one (71) potential capital improvement projects. Figures 4.3g - 4.3j identify the prioritized projects for each of the project types. Each chart contains a Project Identification Number (I.D.), Park Name, Project Name, Project Description, Order of Magnitude Opinion of Probable Capital Cost (Capital Costs), and Order of Magnitude Opinion of Probable Operations Maintenance Costs (Maintenance Costs) for new projects.

Figure 4.3g
PRIORITIZED IMPROVEMENT TO EXISTING PARK AND FACILITIES PROJECTS

PRIORITIZED IMPROVEMENT TO EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES PROJECTS						
Rank	Project I.D.	Park Name	Project Name	Project Description	CAPITAL COSTS	MAINT. COSTS (YR)
1	IEF-06	Decatur Cemetery	Decatur Cemetery Improvements	Develop plan and include Signage/Wayfinding, African American History Interpretive Signage, landscape, and trail improvements.	\$100,000	\$8,000
2	IEF-01	Adair Park	Adair Park Dog Park Area Improvement	Complete Park Master Plan and implement Dog Park enhancements, drainage improvements, inclusion of dog park agility course, pavilion, seating areas, and sidewalk connections.	\$500,000	\$13,000
3	IEF-05	Dearborn Park	Dearborn Park Invasive Management	Implementation of Invasive Plant Management.	\$85,000	\$5,000
4	IEF-15	Waddell Park	Waddell Park Improvements	Landscape improvements, invasive plant removal and management.	\$225,000	\$3,600
5	IEF-09	Glenlake Park	Glenlake Park Invasive Management	Complete Park Master Plan and implement Invasive Plant Management.	\$375,000	\$17,000
6	IEF-04	Corley Commons	Corley Commons Park Improvements	Complete plan and implement additional benches, trash receptacles, water fountains, and shade structure.	\$210,000	\$8,000
7	IEF-10	Glenlake Park	Glenlake Park Restroom Improvement	Restroom improvements, security cameras, controlled remote access and add a Restroom in the back portion of the park.	\$1,200,000	\$10,000
8	IEF-02	Adair Park	Adair Park Field Area Improvements	Improve existing mini-field with turf management, add restroom, walking trails.	\$1,000,000	\$20,000
9	IEF-07	Glenlake Park	Glenlake Park Access and Field Improvements	Improve existing mini-field with turf management and lighting, pave Norris Street, enhance back entrance area, and connection to Decatur Cemetery.	\$2,500,000	\$16,500

Figure 4.3g
 PRIORITIZED IMPROVEMENT TO EXISTING PARK AND FACILITIES PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

PRIORITIZED IMPROVEMENT TO EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES PROJECTS (CONTINUED)						
Rank	Project I.D.	Park Name	Project Name	Project Description	CAPITAL COSTS	MAINT. COSTS (YR)
10	IEF-12	Legacy Park	Legacy Park Restroom Improvement	Restroom improvements, security cameras, controlled remote access.	\$250,000	\$12,000
11	IEF-16	Westchester Elementary School	Westchester Elementary School Baseball and Mini Rectangle Field Improvements	Develop plan and improved field management and lighting of fields.	\$1,500,000	\$16,500
12	IEF-13	McKoy Park	McKoy Park Restroom Improvement	Restroom improvements, security cameras, controlled remote access.	\$250,000	\$12,000
13	IEF-14	Oakhurst Park	Oakhurst Park Restroom Improvement	Restroom improvements, security cameras, controlled remote access.	\$250,000	\$12,000
14	IEF-08	Glenlake Park	Glenlake Park Baseball Field Improvements	Improved field management and lighting of fields.	\$2,600,000	\$16,500
15	IEF-11	Glenwood Elementary School	Glenwood Elementary School Baseball Field Improvements	Improved field management and lighting of fields.	\$1,500,000	\$16,500
16	IEF-03	Agnes Scott College	Agnes Scott College Court Use Agreement	Collaborate with Agnes Scott to explore use of courts with potential improvements to facilitate use. Consider payment for proportional maintenance costs (e.g., *1/3 of yearly maintenance costs).	\$75,000	\$10,000*
TOTAL					\$12,620,000	\$196,600

Figure 4.3h
PRIORITIZED DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PARKS AND FACILITIES PROJECTS

PRIORITIZED DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PARKS AND FACILITIES PROJECTS						
Rank	Project I.D.	Park Name	Project Name	Project Description	CAPITAL COSTS	MAINT. COSTS (YR)
1	DNP-17	New Park - South Downtown	Neighborhood Park in south downtown	Complete Neighborhood Park Master Plan and Park in south downtown area	\$3,500,000	\$46,800
2	DNP-34	Ebster Park	Ebster Park Teen Area	Confirm Plan with the community to develop a lighted basketball court, pavilion, restroom buildings, skate park, and removal of ADA ramp walls where playground and basketball court are currently located.	\$2,000,000	\$15,000
3	DNP-18	333 Montgomery Street	Montgomery Street Park	Development of park area plan nature trail, additional community gardens, seating areas, pavilion, signage/ wayfinding.	\$300,000	\$6,400
4	DNP-26	Sugar Creek Garden/ Oakhurst Park	Sugar Creek Garden Master Plan/ Oakhurst Park Master Plan	Complete Park Master Plan and include natural area, enhanced softball and multi-purpose fields with artificial turf and lighting, playground, restroom building, circulation, etc.	\$11,200,000	\$172,500
5	DNP-02	Beacon Hill Middle School	Beacon Hill Middle School	Complete plan and implement Neighborhood Park amenities.	\$1,500,000	\$28,000
6	DNP-11	Glenlake Park/ Glenn Creek Nature Preserve	Glenlake Park/ Glenn Creek Nature Preserve Expansion	Complete plan and implement nature trails, stream restoration, seating areas, pavilions, interpretative signage. <i>*Requires land easement or acquisition.</i>	\$2,800,000	\$28,000
7	DNP-30	190 Garden Lane	Garden Lane Park Development	Complete plan and implement trail, improved field, pavilion, signage/ wayfinding.	\$260,000	\$3,800
8	DNP-16	New Park - North Downtown	Neighborhood Park North of Downtown	Complete plan and implement Neighborhood Park amenities. <i>*Requires land easement or acquisition.</i>	\$1,000,000	\$18,000
9	DNP-15	Mead Road Park	Mead Road Park Master Plan	Complete Park Master Plan with CSD, consider adding a shelter over the Basketball Court.	\$1,200,000	\$23,500
10	DNP-04	Decatur Cemetery/ Glennwood Elementary School	Decatur Cemetery/ Glennwood Elementary School Nature Park	Complete plan and implement nature trail, seating areas, interpretative signage. <i>*Requires land easement or acquisition.</i>	\$1,200,000	\$3,200
11	DNP-01	Agnes Scott College/ Driftwood Terrace	Agnes Scott College/ Driftwood Terrace Nature Park	Complete plan and implement nature trails, seating areas, pavilions, interpretative signage. <i>*Requires land easement or acquisition.</i>	\$1,500,000	\$20,800

Figure 4.3h
 PRIORITIZED DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PARKS AND FACILITIES PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

PRIORITIZED DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PARKS AND FACILITIES PROJECTS (CONTINUED)						
Rank	Project I.D.	Park Name	Project Name	Project Description	CAPITAL COSTS	MAINT. COSTS (YR)
12	DNP-29	Hawk Hollow	Hawk Hollow Park Development	Complete plan and implement nature trail, additional community gardens, seating areas, pavilion, signage/wayfinding. <i>*Requires land easement or acquisition.</i>	\$500,000	\$7,200
13	DNP-33	905 South Candler Street	South Candler Street Park Development	Formalize public land into a park with development of seating areas, MARTA bus stop improvements, signage/wayfinding, and sidewalk/PATH connections.	\$105,000	\$2,300
14	DNP-06	Downtown	Downtown Courts	Complete plan and implement courts on the top of parking decks downtown. <i>*Requires land easement or acquisition.</i>	\$500,000	\$20,000
15	DNP-20	Oakview Park	Oakview Park Master Plan	Complete Park Master Plan with CSD.	\$175,000	\$6,000
16	DNP-10	Glenlake Tennis Center	Glenlake Park Tennis Center Expansion	Expand Tennis Center Building.	\$1,800,000	\$95,000
17	DNP-28	Winnona Park Elementary School	Winnona Park Elementary School Park	Complete Park Master Plan with CSD and implement Neighborhood Park amenities and lighted playing field.	\$3,200,000	\$63,000
18	DNP-03	Dearborn Park	Dearborn Park Development	Complete plan and implement nature trails, pickleball courts, seating areas, pavilions, interpretative signage.	\$900,000	\$13,000
19	DNP-19	Oakhurst Park	Oakhurst Park Expansion	Complete plan and implement nature trails, seating areas, pavilions, interpretative signage.	\$850,000	\$26,700
20	DNP-32	455 Ansley Street	Ansley Street Park Development	Complete plan and implement natural play area, benches, signage/wayfinding.	\$100,000	\$2,200
21	DNP-08	Downtown	Downtown Splash Pad	Develop an interactive splash pad downtown.	\$750,000	\$50,000
22	DNP-07	Downtown Decatur	Downtown Decatur Amphitheater	New amphitheater with an advanced A/V system.	\$1,000,000	\$10,000
23	DNP-35	Columbia Theological Seminary	Columbia Theological Seminary Field Improvements	Establish formal use agreement to increase recreation and league play and complete plan to improve existing field with synthetic field and lighting.	\$2,900,000	\$42,400
24	DNP-05	Downtown	Downtown "Placemaking"	Custom play elements that serve as "placemaking" are proposed as part of the redesign of the Decatur Square.	\$250,000	\$26,000
25	DNP-27	Sycamore Park	Sycamore Park Development	Complete plan and implement walking trail (ADA accessibility), play elements, garden beds.	\$525,000	\$15,000

Figure 4.3h
 PRIORITIZED DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PARKS AND FACILITIES PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

PRIORITIZED DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PARKS AND FACILITIES PROJECTS (CONTINUED)						
Rank	Project I.D.	Park Name	Project Name	Project Description	CAPITAL COSTS	MAINT. COSTS (YR)
26	DNP-23	Scott Park	Scott Park Development	Install outdoor fitness equipment, benches, shade structure.	\$500,000	\$18,000
27	DNP-13	Legacy Park	Legacy Park Amphitheater	Develop new multi-purpose amphitheater.	\$750,000	\$5,000
28	DNP-31	115 Willow Lane	Willow Lane Park Development	Complete plan and implement nature trails, community gardens improvements, seating areas, pavilion, signage/ wayfinding.	\$160,000	\$3,500
29	DNP-22	Rev. Roy Moss Sr. Garden	Rev. Roy Moss Sr Garden Development	Complete plan and implement natural trail and seating areas.	\$850,000	\$12,000
30	DNP-37	Talley Street Elementary School	Talley Street Elementary School Mini Rectangle Field Improvements	Complete Park Master Plan with CSD and implement Neighborhood Park amenities and lighted athletic field.	\$3,000,000	\$9,000
31	DNP-21	Parkside Circle Park/ Waddell Park	Parkside Circle Park/ Waddell Park Nature Park	Complete plan and implement nature trail, seating areas, pavilions, interpretative signage.	\$2,400,000	\$94,500
32	DNP-14	Legacy Park	Legacy Park Gym Remodel	Remodel building to be ADA accessible and provide enhanced program and service delivery.	\$4,000,000	\$150,000
33	DNP-09	First Baptist Church	Glen G. Orth Softball Field	Establish formal use agreement to increase recreation and league play, develop a plan, and implement synthetic field, lighting, seating areas, and amenities.	\$3,000,000	\$20,200
34	DNP-12	Legacy Park	Legacy Park	Implement new inclusive and signature play space.	\$250,000	\$26,000
35	DNP-25	Legacy Park	Splash Pad in Legacy Park	Develop a splash pad as part of the signature playground at Legacy Park.	\$750,000	\$50,000
36	DNP-36	McKoy Park	McKoy Park Baseball/ Softball Field Improvements	Complete Park Master Plan and convert field to synthetic field and other field expansion projects; develop locker rooms and improve batting cages and dug outs.	\$2,200,000	\$104,500
37	DNP-24	Downtown/ North Decatur	Skate Park	Complete plan and implement a Skate Park in Downtown/ North Decatur.	\$500,000	\$7,500
TOTAL					\$58,375,000	\$1,245,000

Figure 4.3i
 PRIORITIZED DEVELOPMENT OF WALKING AND BIKING FACILITIES PROJECTS

PRIORITIZED DEVELOPMENT OF WALKING AND BIKING FACILITIES PROJECTS						
Rank	Project I.D.	Park Name	Project Name	Project Description	CAPITAL COSTS	MAINT. COSTS
1	WBF-11	Adair Street Trail	Trail from W Ponce de Leon Boulevard to Stone Mountain Trail	Connecting Destinations: W Ponce De Leon/ Trinity Place Trail/ Adair Park/ Corley Commons/ Stone Mountain Trail Begins: W Ponce De Leon Boulevard/ Adair Street Ends: Stone Mountain Trail/ Corley Commons	\$1,600,000	\$5,300
2	WBF-10	W Ponce de Leon/Trinity Place Trail	Trail from Parkwood Park/ Scott Boulevard to Commerce Drive	Connecting Destinations: Parkwood Park/ Adair Park/ Ebster Recreation Center/ Decatur Highschool/ Commerce Drive Cycle Track Begins: Parkwood Park/ Scott Boulevard Ends: Commerce Drive Cycle Track	\$3,000,000	\$10,200
3	WBF-09	Scott Boulevard Trail	Trail from City Limits/ Parkside Circle Park to Parkwood Park	Connecting Destinations: Parkside Circle Park/ Clairmont Avenue Trail/ Westchester Elementary School/ Hidden Cove Park/ Begins: City Limits Ends: Parkwood Park	\$5,400,000	\$18,300
4	WBF-12	Mead Road Trail	Trail from Stone Mountain Trail to Harmony Park	Connecting Destinations: Stone Mountain Trail/ Mead Road Park/ Oakhurst Elementary/ Oakhurst Park/ Harmony Park Begins: Stone Mountain Trail Ends: Harmony Park	\$2,100,000	\$7,100
5	WBF-08	Clairmont Avenue Trail	Trail from Commerce Drive to Scott Boulevard	Connecting Destinations: Commerce Drive Cycle Track/ First Baptist Church Field Begins Commerce Drive Ends: Scott Boulevard Trail	\$3,000,000	\$10,100
6	WBF-01	Downtown to Legacy Park	Trail from Downtown to Legacy Park	Connecting Destinations: Downtown, Legacy Park Begins: Katie Kerr Drive/ S Columbus Drive Ends: Stone Mountain Trail	\$3,900,000	\$13,200
7	WBF-03	Winnona Park Elementary School Connector	Trail from Kirk Road to Stone Mountain Trail	Connecting Destinations: Legacy Park, Winnona Park Elementary School Trolley Trail Begins: Kirk Road/ Avery Street Ends: Stone Mountain Trail via E College Avenue	\$3,200,000	\$10,400
8	WBF-06	Glenn Creek Nature Preserve Connector	Trail from Glenn Creek Nature Preserve to Glenlake Park	Connecting Destinations: Glenn Creek Nature Preserve to Glenlake Park Begins: Glenn Creek Nature Preserve Ends: Glenlake Park	\$1,000,000	\$3,300

Figure 4.3i
 PRIORITIZED DEVELOPMENT OF WALKING AND BIKING FACILITIES PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

PRIORITIZED DEVELOPMENT OF WALKING AND BIKING FACILITIES PROJECTS						
Rank	Project I.D.	Park Name	Project Name	Project Description	CAPITAL COSTS	MAINT. COSTS
9	WBF-04	Sycamore Park Connector	Trail from Commerce Drive to Stone Mountain Trail	Connecting Destinations: Glennwood Elementary School Connector/ Stone Mountain Trail Begins: Commerce Drive/ Sycamore Street Ends: Stone Mountain Trail via E Ponce de Leon Avenue	\$1,500,000	\$5,100
10	WBF-05	East Decatur Greenway Connector	Trail from East Decatur Greenway to Stone Mountain Trail	Connecting Destinations: East Decatur Greenway to Stone Mountain Trail Begins: East Decatur Greenway at Avondale MARTA Station Ends: Stone Mountain Trail via E Ponce de Leon Avenue	\$1,000,000	\$3,400
11	WBF-07	Glenlake Park Connector	Trail from Glenlake Park to Parkside Circle Park/ Waddle Park	Connecting Destinations: Glenlake Park to Parkside Circle Park Begins: Glenlake Park Ends: Parkside Circle Park / Waddle Park	\$1,800,000	\$5,800
12	WBF-02	Trolley Trail to Legacy Park	Trail from Trolley Trail to Legacy Park	Connecting Destinations: Legacy Park, Trolley Trail Begins: Kirk Road/ Oldfield Road Ends: Trolley Trail	\$2,500,000	\$8,600
TOTAL					\$30,000,000	\$100,800

Figure 4.3j
 PRIORITIZED ACQUIRING PARK LAND PROJECTS

PRIORITIZED ACQUIRING PARK LAND PROJECTS				
Rank	Project I.D.	Park Name	Project Name	Project Description
1	PLA-04	North Downtown Area	Neighborhood Park in North Downtown	Acquisition of land for a park in the northern area of Downtown.
2	PLA-01	Agnes Scott College/ Driftwood Terrace	Agnes Scott College/ Driftwood Terrace Land Acquisition	Acquisition of land/ floodplain that connects Agnes Scott College to Driftwood Terrace
3	PLA-05	Hawk Hollow	Hawk Hollow Expansion	Unused ROW and city-owned parcels are adjacent to the Wylde Center's "Hawk Hollow". Stream in a concrete channel and Decatur PATH "East Lake Marta Connector" both intersect the site and present opportunities.
4	PLA-03	Woodland Gardens	Woodland Garden Park Formalization	Formalize Woodland Garden as a City of Decatur public park.
5	PLA-02	Parkwood Park	Parkwood Park Formalization	Formalize Parkwood Park as a City of Decatur public park.
6	PLA-06	East Decatur Connector	East Decatur Connector Park	Unused ROW and city-owned parcels, and much of the land for the proposed Phase 3 of Decatur PATH's East Decatur Greenway, and Easements/ acquisitions of adjacent private property could double acreage.

Action Steps to Implement Recreatur

Executing the implementation of the Recreatur Vision requires a coordinated effort by a variety of individuals, with the goal of completing projects within a certain timeframe. The following section complements the City's phased Capital Improvement Projects and provides detailed processes by which the City will implement the vision.

These steps are organized around the Guiding Principles and Policies and Actions presented in Chapter 3 - Recreatur Vision. It includes thirty-five (35) Policies and Actions and one-hundred and eighty-six (186) Steps with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Responsible Parties, and Time Frames that the City should follow to implement the Recreatur Vision. This section is intended to be a "living section," which will be used by staff on a regular basis and updated based on current information.



Goal 1: Parks for Everyone: An Equitable Park System

Topic: Park Spaces - Parkland, Indoor Facilities, and Amenities

Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
<p>» 1.1 - Ensure equitable access to parks and recreation facilities.</p> <p>Acquire new park land and partner with agencies and others to provide public spaces on available land.</p> <p>Continue to pursue the creation of new park land through acquisition, securing conservation easements, and redevelopment on a parcel-by-parcel basis strategically, and as opportunities become available.</p>	<p>Parks within 1/4 mile for residents in the Downtown Area and 1/2 mile in other areas</p>	<p>Parks and Recreation Department</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing
	<p>Number of park projects implemented</p>	<p>Parks and Recreation Department</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 • 2024-2026 • 2026-2032
	<p>Number of park projects implemented</p>	<p>Parks and Recreation Department</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 • 2024-2026 • 2026-2032 • Ongoing
	<p>Amount of park acres acquired towards target LOS Targets or fees paid in lieu of land.</p>	<p>Parks and Recreation Department</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 <p>Ongoing</p>

Steps

Previously Proposed Parks (MARTA)

- Meet with MARTA quarterly to receive updates on previously proposed parks at East Lake MARTA Station and Avondale Station and advocate for the implementation of the park spaces.
- Collaborate with MARTA on the planning and design of the park spaces to ensure that parks are informed by Decatur Recreatur Plan and that Decatur residents participate in the process.

Activating Public Lands for Parks

- Review list of prioritized projects and confirm feasibility based on proposed vision, planning level capital costs, and management costs/ implications.
- Complete community-based conceptual plans for prioritized projects when applicable using the findings from the Needs Assessment and Visions as a starting point for dialogue with the community. Develop detailed cost estimates and identify phased implementation strategy based on available capital and operations and maintenance funding.
- Develop construction documents for phased implementation and implement.

Partnerships

- Review list of prioritized projects and confirm feasibility based on proposed vision, planning level capital costs, and management costs/ implications.
- Develop a mutually beneficial site management strategy for properties determined to be suitable for addressing parks and recreation needs. Discuss Parks and Recreation Department (PRD) property construction, operations, and management needs in relation to partner(s) needs and expectations.
- Establish appropriate land management strategy agreement that considers construction, operations, maintenance, and asset management.
- Complete community-based conceptual park plans for prioritized projects when applicable using the findings from the Needs Assessment and Vision as a starting point for dialogue with the community. Develop detailed cost estimates and identify phased implementation strategy based on available capital and operations and maintenance funding.
- Develop construction documents for phased implementation and implement.
- Meet yearly to discuss land management strategy agreement and revise as needed.

New Park Land

- Establish a Park Land Acquisition Team comprised of representatives from relevant City Departments including City Manager's Office, Parks and Recreation, Planning and Economic Development, Public Works, and others to meet monthly to review and discuss potential properties to be acquired.
- Survey real estate listings on a weekly basis to identify potential opportunities for acquisition and identify properties that are suitable for acquisition.
- Explore potential of property to address both parks and recreation needs and other city-wide needs such as affordable housing, trail connectivity, stormwater management, public safety, etc.



Goal 1: Parks for Everyone: An Equitable Park System

Topic: Park Spaces - Parkland, Indoor Facilities, and Amenities (Continued)			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
<p>» 1.1 - Ensure equitable access to parks and recreation facilities (Continued).</p> <p>Acquire new park land and partner with agencies and others to provide public spaces on available land.</p> <p>Continue to pursue the creation of new park land through acquisition, securing conservation easements, and redevelopment on a parcel-by-parcel basis strategically, and as opportunities become available.</p>	<p>Amount of park acres acquired towards target LOS Targets or fees paid in lieu of land.</p>	<p>Parks and Recreation Department</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2026-2032
	<p>Amount of park acres acquired towards target LOS Targets or fees paid in lieu of land.</p>	<p>Planning and Economic Development</p>	<p>On-going</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2026-2032
<p>» 1.2 - Provide full accessibility at all park sites.</p> <p>Address facilities and amenities that are not meeting ADA requirements. Ensure that any new or redeveloped amenities are accessible.</p>	<p>Number of facilities improved</p>	<p>Parks and Recreation Department</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 • 2024-2026 • Yearly

Steps

New Park Land (Continued)

- Use Park Land Acquisition Prioritization criteria to score properties.
- Acquire highest scoring properties.
- Complete community-based conceptual park plans using the findings from the Needs Assessment and Vision as a starting point for dialogue with the community. Develop detailed cost estimates and identify phased implementation strategy based on available capital and operations and maintenance funding.
- Develop construction documents for phased implementation.

Park Land Through Redevelopment

- Establish a Park Impact Fee that requires future residential construction to contribute its fair share to the cost of required park and recreation capital improvements and additions.
All new development containing a residential component would dedicate a proportionate share of recreation land or pay the applicable impact fee for park land, to mitigate the increased demand on parks created by new residents based upon the Level of Services Standards proposed for parks and recreation facilities identified in Figure 4.1.
It would be the City's sole decision to require land dedication or accept payment of impact fees in accordance with the adopted Impact Fee Regulations.
 - If a developer is proposing to dedicate a proportionate share of recreation land within the proposed development, the City would collaborate with the developer during the plan review process to locate and design the open space in a manner that fosters public access, facilitates use, and addresses the parks and recreation facilities needs identified in the Recreation Vision. Parks and recreation facilities could be delivered through the Activities-Based Service Delivery Model proposed in Figure 4.2 or depending on the proposed size/ population of the proposed development, through the Neighborhood Park Prototypes illustrated in Figure 4.3 - 4.6. The larger the size and population of the proposed development, the larger the Neighborhood Park required.
- Review list of prioritized projects from Facility Condition Assessments, confirm capital costs, and management costs/ implications.
 - Where applicable, complete community-based conceptual plans using the findings from the Needs Assessment and recommendations from the Vision as a starting point for dialogue with the community. Develop detailed cost estimates and identify phased implementation strategy based on available capital and operations and maintenance funding.
 - Develop construction documents for phased implementation and implement.
 - Review list of projects yearly and re-prioritize projects based on opportunities and needs.



Goal 1: Parks for Everyone: An Equitable Park System

Figure 4.1 - Proposed Level of Service (LOS) Targets

Facilities Category	2022 Decatur Inventory	Proposed Facilities LOS Target (1 Facility per X Population unless otherwise noted)	2032 Need/Surplus
Acreage Level of Service	196 Acres	10 acres per 1,000 population	-83
Recreation Centers	3	9,400	0
Gyms	4	7,000	0
Amphitheaters	1	9,000	-2
Basketball Courts	6	2,300	-6
Community gardens	1	7,000	-3
Diamond fields: baseball	2	7,000	-2
Diamond fields: softball fields	3	7,000	-1
Dog park	3	9,300	0
Multipurpose synthetic field	1	5,600	-4
Playgrounds	8	1,600	-10
Rectangular fields: multi-purpose	5	5,600	0
Skate park	1	14,000	-1
Splash Pad / Water Feature	1	9,300	-2
Swimming pools (outdoor only)	4	7,000	0
Tennis courts (outdoor only)	9	1,800	-7
Pickleball courts (outdoor only)	2	2,300	-10
Track	2	14,000	-2

Figure 4.2 - Activity-Based Service Delivery Model

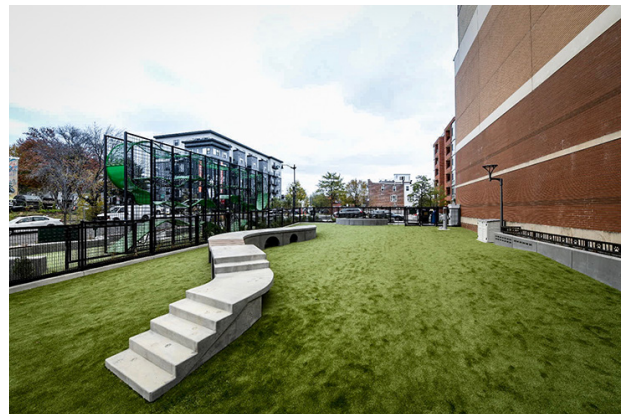
Activity-Based Service Delivery Model

An Activity-Based Service Delivery Model focuses on providing desired recreation opportunities throughout the community without regard for standardized park typologies (neighborhood park with ballfield, playground, see Fig. 4.3)

A dog park or tennis courts, for example, may be located on top of a parking deck; a playground may be provided through a local church; and an athletic field may be provided through partnerships with local schools. Facilities and amenities that are needed are strategically inserted wherever there is space.

This model is most common in large, urbanized areas where land is at a premium. For example, the NoMa Business Improvement District in Washington, D.C. built a playground, dog park, and seating areas in a 8,200 SF site - 5,200 SF in private land and 3,000 SF in public land; the City of Seattle built the I-5 Colonnade urban mountain bike skills park under Interstate 5; and the City of New York tows a seven-lane swimming pool barge down the East River – dubbed the “Floating Pool Lady” – to serve the residents of the Bronx each summer.

The emphasis is not on park or facility types, but on providing access to recreational opportunities wherever and however they can be provided.



8,000 SF Swampoodle Park in the NoMA Business Improvement District with Playground, Seating Areas, and Dog Park

Figure 4.3 - Neighborhood Park Prototype 1 - 6+ Acres



Legend

Park Amenities

- ① Basketball Court
- ② Chess and Checker Tables with Canopy
- ③ Community Garden and Shed
- ④ Exercise Stations with Canopy
- ⑤ Multi-Purpose Open Space
- ⑥ Multi-Purpose Trail
- ⑦ On-Street Parking
- ⑧ Outdoor Ping-Pong Tables with Canopy
- ⑨ Park Oriented Development
- ⑩ Park Zone Markings
- ⑪ Pavilion
- ⑫ Pavilion with Restroom
- ⑬ Pickleball Court
- ⑭ Picnic Tables
- ⑮ Playground with Canopy
- ⑯ Tennis Court

Park Amenities included throughout the Park

- Bicycle Racks
- Composting Bin
- Light Fixtures
- Movable Tables and Chairs
- Outdoor Electrical Outlets
- Park and Community Signage
- Wayfinding
- Trash and Recycling Receptacles
- Tree Lawn with Canopy Trees
- Bio-Retention
- Wi-Fi

Scale: 1"=100'



Figure 4.4 - Neighborhood Park Prototype 2 - 2 Acres



Legend

Park Amenities

- ① Basketball Court
- ② Chess and Checker Tables with Canopy
- ③ Community Garden and Shed
- ④ Exercise Stations with Canopy
- ⑤ Multi-Purpose Open Space
- ⑥ Multi-Purpose Racket Court:
 - Pickleball Court
 - Tennis Court
- ⑦ Multi-Purpose Trail
- ⑧ On-Street Parking
- ⑨ Outdoor Ping-Pong Tables with Canopy
- ⑩ Park Oriented Development
- ⑪ Park Zone Markings
- ⑫ Pavilion
- ⑬ Playground with Canopy

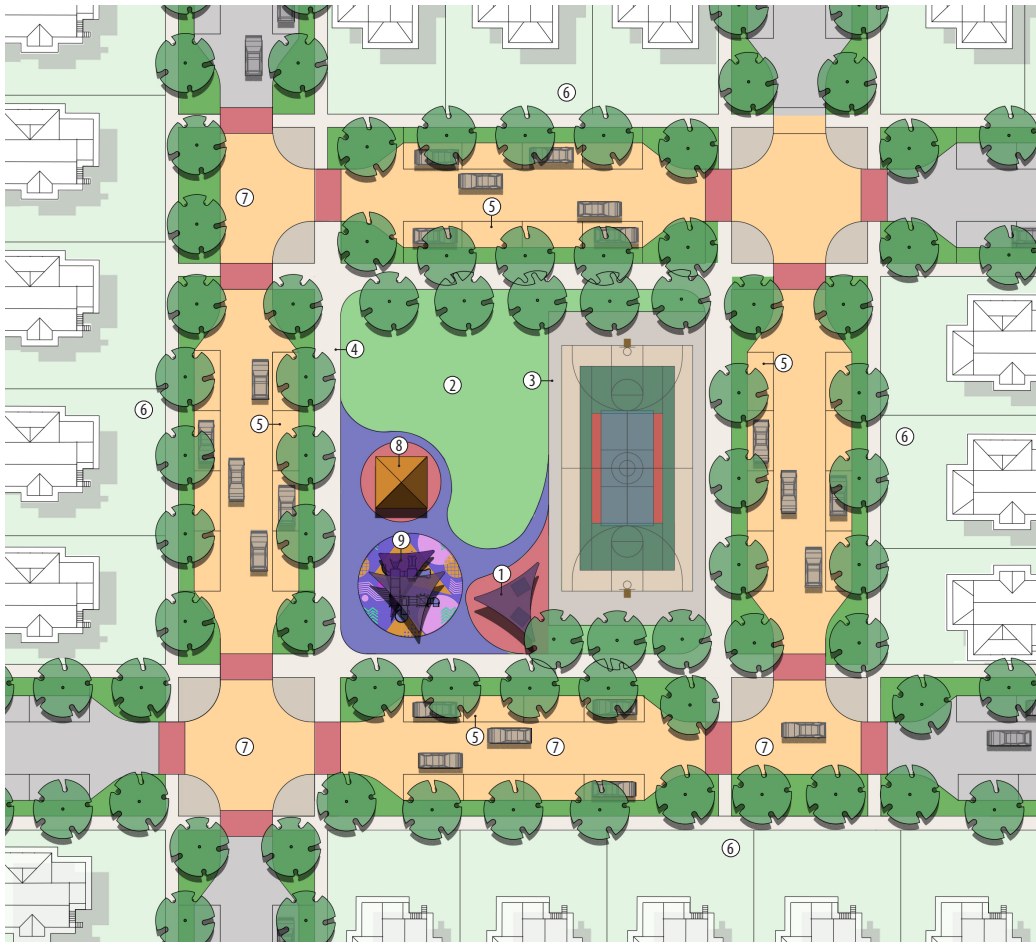
Park Amenities included throughout the Park

- Bicycle Racks
- Light Fixtures
- Movable Tables and Chairs
- Outdoor Electrical Outlets
- Park and Community Signage
- Wayfinding
- Trash and Recycling Receptacles
- Tree Lawn with Canopy Trees
- Bio-Retention
- Wi-Fi

Scale: 1"=80'



Figure 4.5 - Neighborhood Park Prototype 3 - 0.5 Acre



Legend

Park Amenities

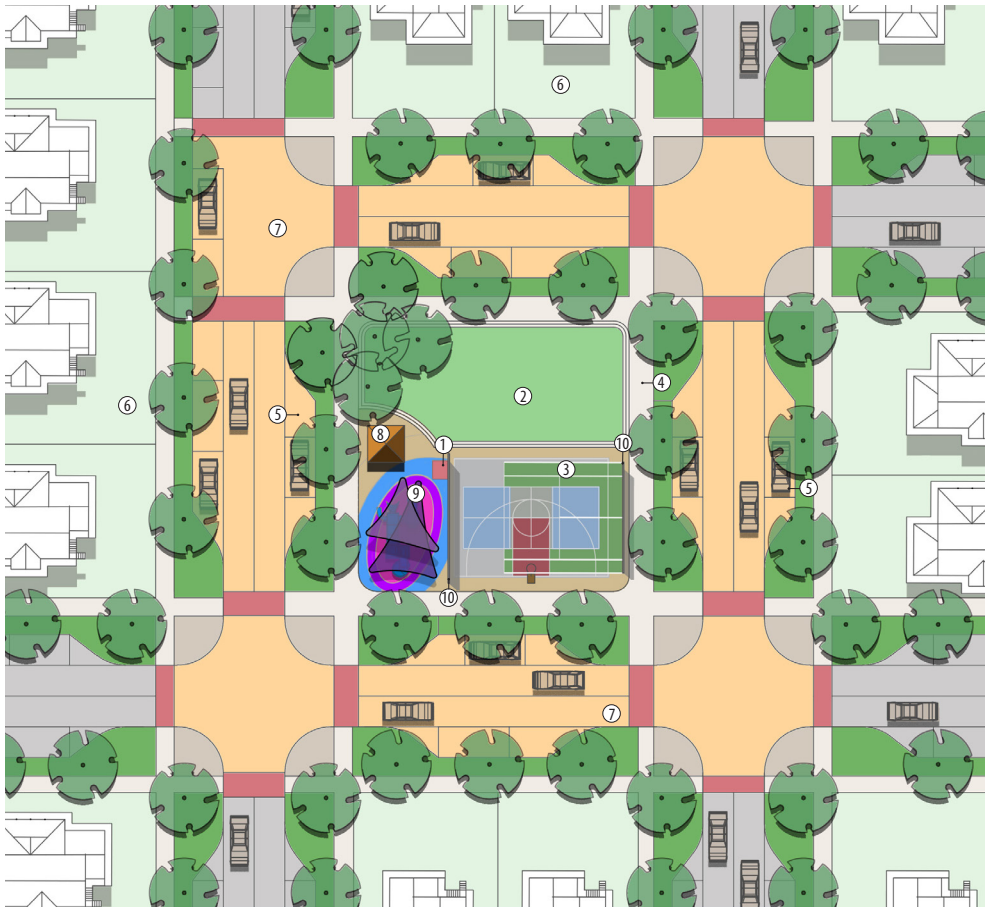
- ① Exercise Stations with Canopy
- ② Multi-Purpose Open Space
- ③ Multi-Purpose Racket Court:
 - Basketball Court
 - Pickleball Court
 - Tennis Court
- ④ Multi-Purpose Trail
- ⑤ On-Street Parking
- ⑥ Park Oriented Development
- ⑦ Park Zone Markings
- ⑧ Pavilion
- ⑨ Playground with Canopy

Park Amenities included throughout the Park

- Bicycle Racks
- Light Fixtures
- Movable Tables and Chairs
- Outdoor Electrical Outlets
- Park and Community Signage
- Wayfinding
- Trash and Recycling Receptacles
- Tree Lawn with Canopy Trees
- Bio-Retention
- Wi-Fi

Scale: 1"=40'
 0 40' N

Figure 4.6 - Neighborhood Park Prototype 4 - 0.25 Acre



Legend

Park Amenities

- ① Exercise Stations
- ② Multi-Purpose Open Space
- ③ Multi-Purpose Court:
 - 1/2 Basketball Court
 - Pickleball Court
 - 1/2 Tennis Court with Practice Wall/Art/Green Wall
- ④ Walking Path
- ⑤ On-Street Parking
- ⑥ Park Oriented Development
- ⑦ Park Zone Markings
- ⑧ Pavilion
- ⑨ Playground with Canopy
- ⑩ Art/Green Wall

Park Amenities included throughout the Park

- Bicycle Racks
- Light Fixtures
- Movable Tables and Chairs
- Outdoor Electrical Outlets
- Park and Community Signage and Wayfinding
- Trash and Recycling Receptacles
- Tree Lawn with Canopy Trees and Bio-Retention
- Wi-Fi

Scale: 1"=20'
 0 20' 40' N



Goal 1: Parks for Everyone: An Equitable Park System

Topic: Park Spaces - Parkland, Indoor Facilities, and Amenities			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
<p>» 1.3 - Complete improvements in parks in collaboration with the community to provide high-quality park experiences across the board.</p> <p>Address deferred maintenance and proactively complete capital improvements based on Facility Assessment, identified facility needs discussed in the Vision, and recommendations collected through the planning process and described in the Vision.</p>	Number of projects completed	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 • 2024-2026 • Yearly
<p>» 1.4 - Perform high-quality park maintenance across the board.</p> <p>Establish standardized procedures for park maintenance that are easily replicable across the park system.</p>	Maintenance standard performance metrics	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2026/ Yearly
<p>» 1.5 - Perform ecological restoration throughout the park system.</p> <p>Remove invasive planting and restore areas with native planting while considering opportunities to improve sight lines, increase safety, and provide opportunities for better use of the restored areas.</p>	<p>Acres of invasive plants removed</p> <p>Number of native plants planted</p>	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2026-2028 • 2028-2032

Steps

- Review list of prioritized projects and confirm feasibility based on proposed vision, planning level capital costs, and management costs/ implications.
 - Complete community-based conceptual plans for prioritized projects when applicable using the findings from the Needs Assessment and recommendations from the Visions as a starting point for dialogue with the community. Develop detailed cost estimates and identify phased implementation strategy based on available capital and operations and maintenance funding.
 - Develop construction documents for phased implementation and implement.
 - Review list of projects yearly and re-prioritize projects based on opportunities and needs.
-
- Develop maintenance standards and procedures based on a cost-of-service model for waste management, facilities maintenance, and landscaping services.
 - Use data collected to determine the optimal resources (funding and employees required) to maintain the system at the desired standard.
 - Work with the City Manager's Office and Commissioners to increase PRD operations and maintenance budget to address needs.
-
- Consult with other Departments such as Public Works and environmental stewardship partners to confirm prioritized list of natural areas that should be improved.
 - Confirm/update planning level capital costs identified for natural areas to be improved, and develop operations and management costs/ implications for improvements to properties.
 - Complete a site inventory of natural areas in prioritized parks and confirm areas to be improved in parks.
 - Develop community-based management plans, conceptual area site improvement plans, and construction documents for properties, based on available/ proposed capital and administrative dollars and implement.
 - Manage and maintain natural areas per management plans.



Goal 1: Parks for Everyone: An Equitable Park System

Topic: Park Spaces - Parkland, Indoor Facilities, and Amenities			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
<p>» 1.6 - Make public spaces more welcoming.</p> <p>Redesign parks, as appropriate, and install features to improve each space’s ability to convey a sense of inclusion for all visitors.</p>	Completed restroom projects	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2026-2028 • 2029/ Yearly
	Number of signage, wayfinding, and public art installations	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2026-2028 • 2029/ Yearly
	Number of seating areas installed	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2026-2028 • 2029/ Yearly
	Number of shade structures and shade trees planted	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2026-2028 • 2029/ Yearly

Steps

Increase safety at restrooms and other locations through improved design, lighting, and tech-based solutions (automatic cleaning/security systems).

- Develop design standards for improved restrooms that consider the needs of all users, resiliency, durability, comfort, safety, security, and capital and maintenance costs.
- Review list of prioritized restrooms to be improved from Facility Condition Assessment, apply restroom design standards, and confirm capital costs, and management costs/ implications.
- Where applicable, collect public engagement on the proposed improvements, develop detailed cost estimates and identify implementation strategy based on available capital and operations and maintenance funding.
- Develop construction documents and implement.
- Review list of projects yearly and re-prioritize projects based on opportunities and needs.

Provide signage and art to contextualize spaces with history and culture, including foreign language signage and accessible features.

- Develop/ update design standards for signage, wayfinding, and public art in parks.
- Prioritize list of parks to install signage, wayfinding, and public art.
- Develop signage, wayfinding, and public art design packages for prioritized parks, and confirm capital costs, and management costs/ implications.
- Install signage, wayfinding, and public art designs based on available dollars.
- Review list of projects yearly and re-prioritize projects based on opportunities and needs.

Install more seating at parks that serve commercial districts.

- Develop/ update design standards for seating areas in parks.
- Prioritize list of parks to receive seating areas.
- Confirm capital costs, and management costs/ implications and implement based on available dollars.
- Review list of projects yearly and re-prioritize projects based on opportunities and needs.

Ensure all neighborhood parks provide shaded areas and protection from bad weather.

- Develop/ update design standards for shade structures in parks.
- Prioritize list of parks to receive shade structures.
- Consider natural shading strategies during the design and redesign of parks such as preserving tree canopy and strategically planting shade trees.
- Confirm capital costs, and management costs/ implications and implement based on available dollars.
- Review list of projects yearly and re-prioritize projects based on opportunities and needs.



Goal 1: Parks for Everyone: An Equitable Park System

Topic: Park Spaces - Parkland, Indoor Facilities, and Amenities			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
<p>» 1.6 - Make public spaces more welcoming (Continued).</p> <p>Redesign parks, as appropriate, and install features to improve each space’s ability to convey a sense of inclusion for all visitors.</p>	Number of drinking fountains and cooling stations implemented	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2026-2028 • 2029/ Yearly

Topic: Programs			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
<p>» 1.7 - Provide programs for all of the community’s diverse needs and interests.</p> <p>Initiate new programs based on feedback from Recreatur public input.</p>	Track annual program mix	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going
<p>» 1.8 - Diversify special events and festivals and continue to ensure program mix is aligned with the age segments served.</p> <p>Match primary and secondary age segments annually to ensure community demographics are aligned with age served.</p>	Demographic profile of community versus special events and festivals	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going
<p>» 1.9 - Annual Review of Program Lifecycles</p> <p>Ensure program innovation cycle is ongoing.</p>	Annual Review of Program Lifecycle	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 onward

Steps

Provide drinking fountains in all neighborhood parks and look for opportunities to provide cooling stations, particularly around athletic fields.

- Develop design standards for drinking fountains and cooling stations in parks.
- Prioritize list of parks to receive drinking fountains and cooling stations.
- Confirm capital costs, and management costs/ implications and implement based on available dollars.
- Review list of projects yearly and re-prioritize projects based on opportunities and needs.

Steps

- Proactively provide park facilities for programming partnerships with diverse local organizations beyond the scope of the Department's staff.
- Some ideas from survey and staff include Movies in the Parks, Monthly Cultural Events, Chili Cook Offs, Senior Olympics, Poetry Slam, Rainbow Events, Forest Bathing, Hip Hop Festival, etc.

- Utilize annual demographic estimates to identify community profile.
- Use program assessment data to measure existing program offerings and audiences served by age.
- Based on gaps in age segments, determine future programs by age segments.

- Track program lifecycle annually to add/ modify/ eliminate programs based on their lifecycle stage from introduction to decline.



Goal 1: Parks for Everyone: An Equitable Park System

Topic: Administration and Management			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
<p>» 1.10 - Establish regular surveys of users and non-users.</p> <p>Understand changing community desires and support rapid adaptation through communication with users and non-users.</p>	User satisfaction	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 onward
<p>» 1.11 - Use an equity tool.</p> <p>Establish a rubric and/or online dashboard to evaluate the equity impact of parks and recreation investments and decisions.</p>	Prioritization of Projects	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 onward
<p>» 1.12 - Proactively hire diverse staff.</p> <p>Park and recreation employees (and volunteers) at all levels should reflect the full diversity of the Atlanta region and be educated on the City's commitment to equity.</p>	Track and share staff diversity metrics	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 onward

Steps

- Distribute surveys of park and recreation needs every 2-3 years to understand changing community desires and support rapid adaptation.
- Continue using the HAPPiFEET – Decatur tool to obtain ongoing feedback from users.

- Continue the use of Prioritization Criteria for parks and recreation investments and decisions.
- Review the Prioritization Criteria yearly and update as needed.

- Ensure staff position descriptions encourage applications from a diversity of staff.
- Determine organizations to reach out to and institutionalize outreach in hiring process.
- Proactively reach out to non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and others to recruit potential staff.



Goal 2: Parks with Resilience: A Sustainable Park System

Topic: Resource Adaptations for the Future Climate			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
<p>» 2.1 - Maximize tree canopy on parkland.</p> <p>Identify areas for new tree planting and collaborate with partners to organize community plantings. Ensure that Tree Bank funds and Tree Canopy Replacement trees are maximized on parkland.</p>	<p>Increase in tree canopy goal and increase in canopy percentage</p>	<p>Public Works in coordination with Parks and Recreation Department</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2026-2027 • 2027-2028
	<p>Number of community of planting events</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going
	<p>Updated Community Forestry Management Plan</p>	<p>Parks and Recreation Department to support Public Works Department</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2028
<p>» 2.2 - Prioritize water in parks.</p> <p>Pursue green infrastructure installations, stream buffer protection and enhancement, stream restoration and daylighting (where feasible), and other environmental enhancement projects.</p>	<p>Green infrastructure projects/ BMP installed in parks</p>	<p>Parks and Recreation Department</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going
<p>» 2.3 - Expand sustainable and edible landscapes.</p> <p>(Re)design parks, where appropriate, to minimize unnecessary mowing and expand native vegetation, including edible plants whenever possible.</p>	<p>Number of community gardens improvement projects accomplished</p>	<p>Parks and Recreation Department</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly
	<p>Number of edible plants installed</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going

Steps

Advocate for an increase to the tree canopy goal.

- Develop a list of suitable trees to plant in the City, including fruit trees, along with tree planting and design standards.
- Develop a tree inventory of trees in parks and public spaces.
- Identify areas in parks and public spaces that are suitable for additional tree plantings based on park master plans and tree standards.
- Develop a recommendation for a tree canopy goal based on the tree inventory and the identification of areas that are suitable for additional tree plantings.
- Ensure the tree canopy goal is considered in every project completed on City land and maximizes the Tree Bank Fund and Tree Canopy Replacement trees.
- Organize community plantings where possible and appropriate.

Assist with an update to the Community Forestry Management Plan.

- Participate in the update and provide available tree data including tree planting and design standards, tree inventory, and identified areas suitable for additional tree plantings.

Remove all creeks from the list of impaired waters.

- Integrate Public Works and City Engineering Staff in park design projects to ensure projects achieve desired water quality and quantity goals, objectives, and strategies identified in the Decatur Storm Water Master Plan.

Support the expansion of urban gardening opportunities.

- During the redesign of parks and in coordination with developed maintenance standards and procedures, identify areas of reduced mowing and expansion of native vegetation.
- During the redesign of parks and informed by the City's suitable list of edible trees and tree planting and design standards, identify opportunities to plant edible plants.
- Meet yearly with community garden stewards in the City to discuss community garden improvement needs and priorities.
- Establish a project list of improvements and explore opportunities to collaboratively implement improvements based on available resources.
- Review list of projects yearly and re-prioritize projects based on opportunities and needs.



Goal 2: Parks with Resilience: A Sustainable Park System

Topic: Resource Adaptations for the Future Climate			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
<p>» 2.4 - Educate the community on urban ecological resilience.</p> <p>Use signage and programming to highlight the ecosystem value of native trees and urban forests and “green” stormwater management.</p>	<p>Number of interpretive ecological signs and public art</p> <p>Number of ecological programs</p>	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2026-2028
<p>» 2.5 - Support the creation of a compost program.</p> <p>Partner with Public Works and other organizations to establish a fee-based composting program.</p>	Completion of Feasibility Study	Public Works and Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2025
<p>» 2.6 - Pursue increased efficiency and sustainability of Department buildings.</p> <p>Consider how new and renovated facilities can achieve the highest levels of green building certification, including conversion to clean energy, like solar.</p>	Number of buildings where Green Building Certification is achieved	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going

Steps

- Target natural areas that have been prioritized for improvement/ installation of green infrastructure projects as opportunities for ecological education.
 - In accordance with the design standards for signage, wayfinding, and public art, identify opportunities to develop signage and public art that educates the public on ecosystem value of native trees and urban forests and “green” stormwater management.
 - Include ecological resiliency educational opportunities in signage, wayfinding, and public art design packages for prioritized parks.
 - Empower youth activists by enlisting youth to participate in park planning and ecological improvement projects.
 - In accordance with the policy and action to provide programs for all of the community’s diverse needs and interests, develop nature programs that educate the community on ecosystem value of native trees and urban forests and “green” stormwater management.
-
- Support Public Works in the on-going development of a feasibility study to explore the creation of a composting program and determine the role of Parks and Recreation Department.
-
- Involve and coordinate with Public Works during the redesign of buildings to explore how new and renovated facilities can achieve the highest levels of green building certification, including conversion to clean energy, like solar.



Goal 2: Parks with Resilience: A Sustainable Park System

Topic: Staffing and Resources			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
<p>» 2.7 - Reorganize staffing and organizational structure to increase efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.</p> <p>Merge Children & Youth Services and Active Living to create a City of Decatur Parks and Recreation Department to strengthen communication and reporting channels, streamline task completion, address organizational needs, and serve as a foundation to support organizational growth, optimizing spheres of management, and justify staffing requirements.</p>	Creation of Decatur Parks and Recreation Department	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 Onward
<p>» 2.8 - Hire for needed positions.</p> <p>The city and its needs have grown over the last 20 years, and new positions are needed to address the system as it grows and adapts.</p>	Positions hired	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2023-2024 • 2023-2024 • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2024-2025 • 2024-2025 • 2024-2025 • 2024-2025 • 2024-2025 • 2024-2025 • 2025-2026 • 2025-2026 • 2025-2026 • 2025-2026 • 2025-2026 • 2025-2026 • 2025-2026
<p>2.9 - Advocate for increased budget.</p> <p>Make the case for growing the parks and recreation budget based on a local record of success, and examples from national case studies.</p>	Increase in Parks and Recreation Department Budget	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2026/ Yearly

Steps

- Continue meetings with City Managers Office and Department Leadership to establish timeline, process, and procedures for the creation and launching of the City of Decatur Parks and Recreation Department.

- Center Operations Manager
- Out-of-School Time Manager
- Recreation Coordinator – Ebster Rec Center, Oakhurst Rec Center, Decatur Rec Center
- Tennis Pro
- Customer Experience Manager
- Administrative Assistant - Ebster Rec Center and Glenlake Tennis Center
- Project Manager
- Athletics & Aquatics Manager
- Accreditation & Risk Coordinator
- Crew Leaders
- Events & Special Project Coordinator
- Aquatics Supervisor
- Legacy Recreation Supervisor
- Legacy Recreation Coordinator
- Legacy Administrative Assistant

- Develop maintenance standards and procedures for the parks and recreation system based on a cost-of-service model for waste management, facilities maintenance, and landscaping services.
- Use data collected to determine the optimal resources to maintain the system to meet the desired standard.
- Identify what services can be delivered to the fullest, those that cannot, and what resources are needed to meet expectations in the delivery of services.
- Work with the City Manager's Office and Commissioners to increase PRD operations and maintenance budget to address needs.



Goal 3: Beyond Parks: A Connected Parks Park System

Topic: Urban Design - Trails and Streetscapes			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
<p>» 3.1 - Ensure safe routes to parks and schools.</p>	Miles of trails and bike+ facilities built	Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • On-going • 2023-2026 • 2028-2030 • 2030-2032 • Yearly
<p>» 3.2 - Install more wayfinding signage, particularly around commercial districts.</p>	Number of signs installed	Public Works and Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2026-2028
<p>» 3.3 - Provide more bike+ (bikes, e-bikes, scooters, etc) parking.</p> <p>Ensure that major facilities have appropriate bike+ parking areas, and consider creative partnerships (Eagle Scout projects, etc.) to support place-making design.</p>	Number of bike+ parking facilities installed	Public Works and Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2026-2028 • Yearly
<p>» 3.4 - Leverage trail corridors to provide park experiences.</p> <p>Design trails to facilitate the incremental integration of park experiences along the trail based on the parks and recreation needs of surrounding residents.</p>		Public Works and Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going

Steps

- Expand system of paved/ unpaved trails, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities to connect the PATH system to the Decatur park system as illustrated in Recreatur Trails Vision.
 - Continue to implement the Decatur PATH Connectivity Plan, prioritizing segments that connect to schools.
 - Integrate prioritized projects from Recreatur Trails Vision into prioritized list of trails from PATH Connectivity Plan, confirm feasibility based on proposed vision, planning level capital costs, and management costs/ implications.
 - Complete community-based conceptual plans for prioritized projects when applicable using the findings from the Needs Assessment and recommendations from the Recreatur Trails Vision as a starting point for dialogue with the community. Develop detailed cost estimates and identify phased implementation strategy based on available capital and operations and maintenance funding.
 - Develop construction documents for phased implementation and implement.
 - Review list of projects yearly and re-prioritize projects based on opportunities and needs.
- Target prioritized projects from PATH Connectivity Plan and Recreatur Trails Vision as opportunities for installing more wayfinding signage.
 - In accordance with the design standards for signage, wayfinding, and public art, identify opportunities to develop signage, wayfinding, and public art in trail projects particularly in commercial districts in collaboration with businesses.
 - Include signage, wayfinding, and public art design packages for prioritized trails.
- Consult with Public Works and active-transportation stewardship partners to determine major facilities with a need for parking areas.
 - Develop design standards for bike+ parking areas, compare against needs, and develop implementation strategy that addresses needs based on design standards and considers creative partnerships, such as volunteer-based opportunities where appropriate to install facilities.
 - Develop detailed cost estimates and identify phased implementation strategy based on available capital and operations and maintenance funding.
 - Review list of projects yearly and re-prioritize projects based on opportunities and needs.
- During the feasibility study or conceptual design phase of a trail project, explore and identify opportunities along the corridor to install needed parks and recreation amenities along the corridor informed by the Needs Assessment and recommendations from the Recreatur Visions.
 - Develop detailed cost estimates and identify phased implementation strategy based on available capital and operations and maintenance funding.
 - Develop construction documents for phased implementation and implement.



Goal 3: Beyond Parks: A Connected Parks Park System

Topic: Administration, Management, and Marketing			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
<p>» 3.5 - Bring management of Decatur Cemetery under Parks and Recreation Department.</p> <p>Restructure the Department to include the cemetery maintenance staff and provide further support for its use as a greenspace.</p>	Staff transferred to Parks and Recreation Department	Parks and Recreation Department and Public Works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2026/ Yearly
<p>» 3.6 - Develop a Marketing and Branding Plan for the Department.</p>	Marketing and Branding campaigns completed	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023
<p>» 3.7 - Undertake strategies to expand the Department's storytelling.</p>	Distribute surveys every 2-3 years	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023
	Updated website		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly
	Frequency of postings		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2025 • On-going • On-going
	Digital Displays installed (at least 1x / year)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2025
	QR Code installed		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2025
	Developed app		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going

Steps

- Meet with Public Works Department to identify which maintenance staff are best served being under the Public Works Department and which may be better served being under Parks and Recreation Department to achieve the best service delivery, quality, and consistency of maintenance.
 - Define clear roles and responsibilities for Public Works Department staff and Parks and Recreation Department staff.
 - Consider Cemetery maintenance staff to be transferred under Parks and Recreation Department within the context of the development of the maintenance standards and procedures for the parks and recreation system based on a cost-of-service model for waste management, facilities maintenance, and landscaping services.
 - Identify what cemetery maintenance services can be delivered to the fullest, those that cannot, and what resources are needed to meet expectations in the delivery of services.
 - Work with the City Manager's Office and Commissioners to increase PRD operations and maintenance budget to address needs.
-
- Develop a comprehensive strategy for marketing the department and telling its story.
-
- Initiate surveys of residents to identify changing community desires and support rapid adaptation.
-
- Update website annually
-
- Improve social media presence, including hiring youth to develop content.
 - Spotlights on individual parks and services (highlight particular programs/parks on weekly basis)
 - Follow-up posts after events
-
- Adding digital displays at all recreation centers
-
- Install signs with QR codes at parking lots advertising upcoming events
-
- Develop app with push notifications



Goal 3: Beyond Parks: A Connected Parks Park System

Topic: Administration, Management, and Marketing			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
» 3.7 - Undertake strategies to expand the Department's storytelling (Continued).	Established frequency of communication with School System	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 - 2024
	Interactive Guide developed		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024
	2 kiosks per year		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023
	Parks renamed, where appropriate		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 -2028
	Increased cross-promotional materials		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 - 2028
	Track Marketing Return on Investment for social media		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
	QR Codes added to marketing mix for all programs, events and feedback mechanisms		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023
	Age segment focused strategies for U18, 19-34, 35-54, 55-74, 75+		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024

Steps

- Increase communication with school system about recreation programs and opportunities.
- Create an interactive parks and facilities guide (in progress).
- Create interactive kiosks in parks with Wifi, info, sign-ups for programs.
- Consider renaming certain parks to provide more local cultural or historical relevance.
- Increase cross-promotion with other departments.
- Continue to invest in digital marketing.
- Grow use of QR codes for all Department offerings.
- Build marketing strategies by age groups by considering targeted marketing approaches by different age segments.



Goal 3: Beyond Parks: A Connected Parks Park System

Topic: Administration, Management, and Marketing			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
» 3.8 - Develop an annual staff training calendar with input from staff for training areas	Annual staff training calendar developed	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024
» 3.9 - Create an organizational culture and customer service training to help establish the Decatur Way	Develop training for organizational culture and customer service training for all staff	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023-2024
» 3.10 - Invest in technology Upgrade technology to provide more user friendly program registration and payment experiences (interdepartmental as well)	Upgraded hardware and software tools	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024

Topic: Programming Partnerships			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
» 3.11 - Grow existing partnerships and identify new partnerships	2-3 new partnerships / annually	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023-2024
	Ongoing and expanded Farmer's Markets		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023-2024 Yearly

Steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain input from staff annually for their training and development needs. • Develop annual calendar with in-person and online training options. • Develop criterion for certification and feedback from trainings to measure effectiveness.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine internal culture, service standards and establish the Decatur Way. • Train all staff, including part-time and seasonal staff. • Obtain ongoing feedback from staff and users to identify effectiveness of the training to keep and update.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement online tennis court reservation system. • Identify key technology needs to enhance user experience and revenue generation. • Benchmark tools to identify the ideal technology for the Department. • Install and train staff on new technologies on an ongoing basis with a focus on simplicity and user friendliness.

Steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively pursue creative partnerships with local organizations who may need facilities/venues for programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with Farmers Market organizer to determine needs and opportunities to enhance and increase farmers markets. • Develop a strategy to address needs and opportunities. • Meeting annually with Farmers Markets organizers to update strategy as needed.



Goal 3: Beyond Parks: A Connected Parks Park System

Topic: Address Community Challenges			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
» 3.12 - Explore the intersectionality of parks and affordable housing.	Number of project implemented in existing developments	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2025-2027 • Yearly
	Number of affordable housing and artist village units delivered	Legacy Decatur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going
	Completion of Feasibility Study	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2033+
» 3.13 - Confront homelessness compassionately.	Completed training	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going
	Number of unhoused individuals that are assisted	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023-2024 • 2024-2025 • 2025-2026 • Yearly
		Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going

Steps

Work closely with Decatur Housing Authority, the Decatur Land Trust, and other housing partners to maximize recreation opportunities (playgrounds, etc.) at existing developments.

- Schedule annual/bi-annual meetings with Decatur Housing Authority, the Decatur Land Trust, and other housing partners to explore the need for recreation opportunities at existing developments.
- Develop list of needed projects, compare to findings from the Needs Assessment and recommendations from the Recreation Vision, and collaboratively develop the role of Parks and Recreation Department in addressing needs.
- Based on agreed upon roles, develop detailed cost estimates and identify phased implementation strategy based on available capital and operations and maintenance funding.
- Develop construction documents for phased implementation and implement.
- Review list of projects yearly and re-prioritize projects based on opportunities and needs.

Consider joint development of new affordable housing and greenspace on publicly-owned land.

- Continue with affordable housing and artist village implementation recommendations from the Legacy Park Master Plan.

Explore the future redevelopment of underutilized recreation center properties to create integrated affordable housing and indoor recreation complex.

- When recreation centers are deemed to be rebuilt, complete a feasibility study that considers rebuilding the recreation center within a multi-story affordable housing development.

Provide staff with appropriate training on how to work with unhoused population.

- Organize yearly training for staff on how to address the unhoused population.

Partner with local service organization/ university to provide social workers to perform outreach and service- delivery to unhoused individuals in parks and around the recreation center.

- Establish an Unhoused Population Task Force comprised of representatives from local service organizations, universities, and City Departments.
- Meet and collaboratively discuss what services are currently provided, what may be needed, and the roles of the various representatives of the task force in addressing the needs, including hiring social worker(s) to assist unhoused in improving their living condition.
- Develop an implementation strategy to address the needs and develop metrics to track progress.
- Meet bi-annually to review progress against established metrics and make adjustments as needed.

Continue to manage, operate, and maintain restrooms so they serve as a refuge for the unhoused population after parks hours while ensuring a high-quality experience for park users during park hours.

- Incorporate strategy into restroom design standards, update staffing and operations based on needs to implement strategy, and implement.



Goal 3: Beyond Parks: A Connected Parks Park System

Topic: Address Community Challenges			
Policies and Actions	KPI	Responsible Party	Time Frame
» 3.14 - Improve community safety through the parks system.	Highlighted CPTDED strategies	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023-2024
	Number of cameras installed Number of parks rated as well lit by users	Parks and Recreation Department and Decatur Police Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023-2024 2024-2025 2025-2026 2027-2028 Yearly
	Land acquired that expand park edges	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023-2024 2024-2025 2025-2026 Yearly
	Number of delivered at-risk programs and services	Parks and Recreation Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023-2024 2024-2025 2025-2026 Yearly

Steps

Consider Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies in the design and redesign of parks and recreation facilities.

- Require park design teams to integrate and highlight CPTED strategies in the design and redesign of parks and recreation facilities.

Add security cameras in key parks, ensure adequate lighting in parks after dark, and encourage more patrolling in parks.

- Conduct an initial evaluation of security and lighting in parks with Decatur Police Department (DPD).
- Identify areas that are in need of security cameras, lighting, and more patrolling.
- Develop detailed cost estimates and identify phased implementation strategy based on available capital and operations funding.
- Implement based on available capital and operations and funding.
- Review list of projects yearly and re-prioritize projects based on opportunities and needs.

Expand parks so they have as many public edges as possible that encourage “eyes on the park.”

- Survey real estate listings on a weekly basis to identify potential opportunities of land that allow parks to expand to have public edges.
- Acquire property.
- Complete community-based conceptual park expansion plan using the findings from the Needs Assessment and Vision as a starting point for dialogue with the community. Develop detailed cost estimates and identify phased implementation strategy based on available capital and operations and maintenance funding.
- Develop construction documents for phased implementation.

In collaboration with partners, develop programs and activities for at-risk youth to help deliver programs, services, employment, and educational opportunities focused on reducing youth/ young adult crime and improved neighborhood safety.

- Establish an At-Risk Youth Task Force comprised of representatives from local service organizations, universities, and City Departments.
- Meet and collaboratively discuss what services are currently provided, what may be needed, and the roles of the various representatives of the task force in addressing the needs.
- Develop an implementation strategy to address the needs and develop metrics to track progress.
- Meet annually to review progress against established metrics and make adjustments as needed.

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