



# Rooted in Community. Focused on the Future.

City of Decatur®  
ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2024-2025











# BY THE NUMBERS

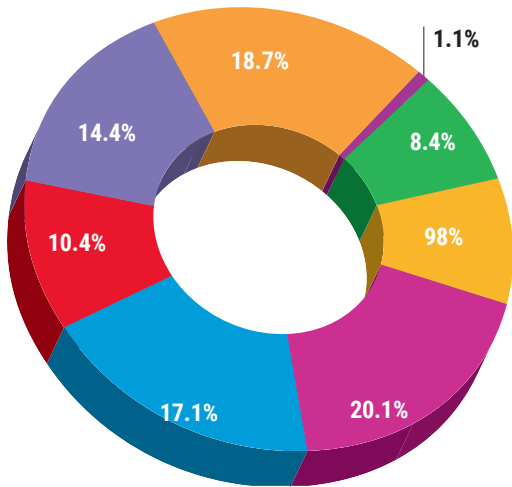
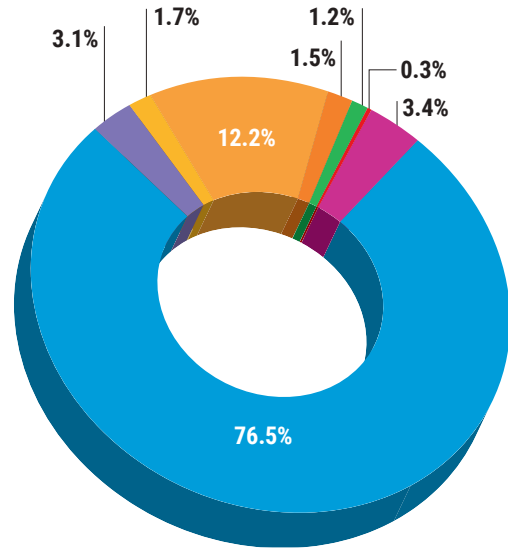
The City Commission adopted the fiscal 2025-2026 budget in June. Behind these numbers is a bold work plan to embrace the goals of the 2020 strategic plan. Learn more at [decaturga.com/budget](http://decaturga.com/budget).

## General Fund Revenues

### FY 2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET

*"Where the Money Comes From"*









SOURCE	AMOUNT		
Taxes	34,600,070	76.5%	
Licenses, Permits & Inspections	1,414,700	3.1%	
Penalties, Fines & Forfeitures	760,000	1.7%	
Charges for Current Services	5,530,650	12.2%	
Intergovernmental Revenues	678,430	1.5%	
Miscellaneous Revenue	550,000	1.2%	
Sale of Fixed Assets	10,000	0.0%	
Operating Transfers	137,220	0.3%	
Appropriation From (To) Fund Balance	1,530,610	3.4%	
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$45,211,680</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	



## General Fund Expenditures

### FY 2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET

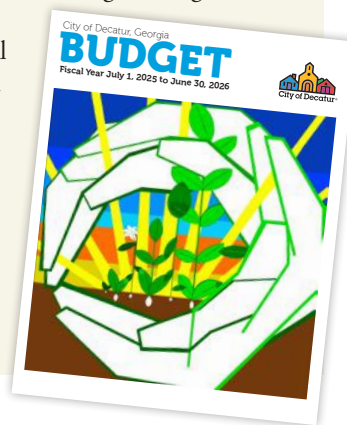
*"Where the Money Goes"*

DEPARTMENT	AMOUNT	%	
Governmental Control	475,570	1.1%	
General Government	3,808,740	8.4%	
Community & Economic Development	4,445,190	9.8%	
Administrative Services	9,068,190	20.1%	
Police	7,719,840	17.1%	
Fire	4,716,230	10.4%	
Public Works	6,523,190	14.4%	
Parks & Recreation	8,454,730	18.7%	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$45,211,680</b>	<b>100%</b>	

## DECATUR **LOVES ART**

The Budget as Art Collection continues with an original work of art by local artist, Patreece Lewis, with "Safeguarding and Serving." The artist uses the gardening of Decatur Daylilies to represent the City's serious approach to financial stewardship and the resulting positive financial growth through the City's care of the budget and financial resources in partnership with community members represented by the sky and sun. The artwork reflects that public funds are distributed and reinvested in the community, carrying out the goals of the community's strategic plan and working to achieve the City's vision:

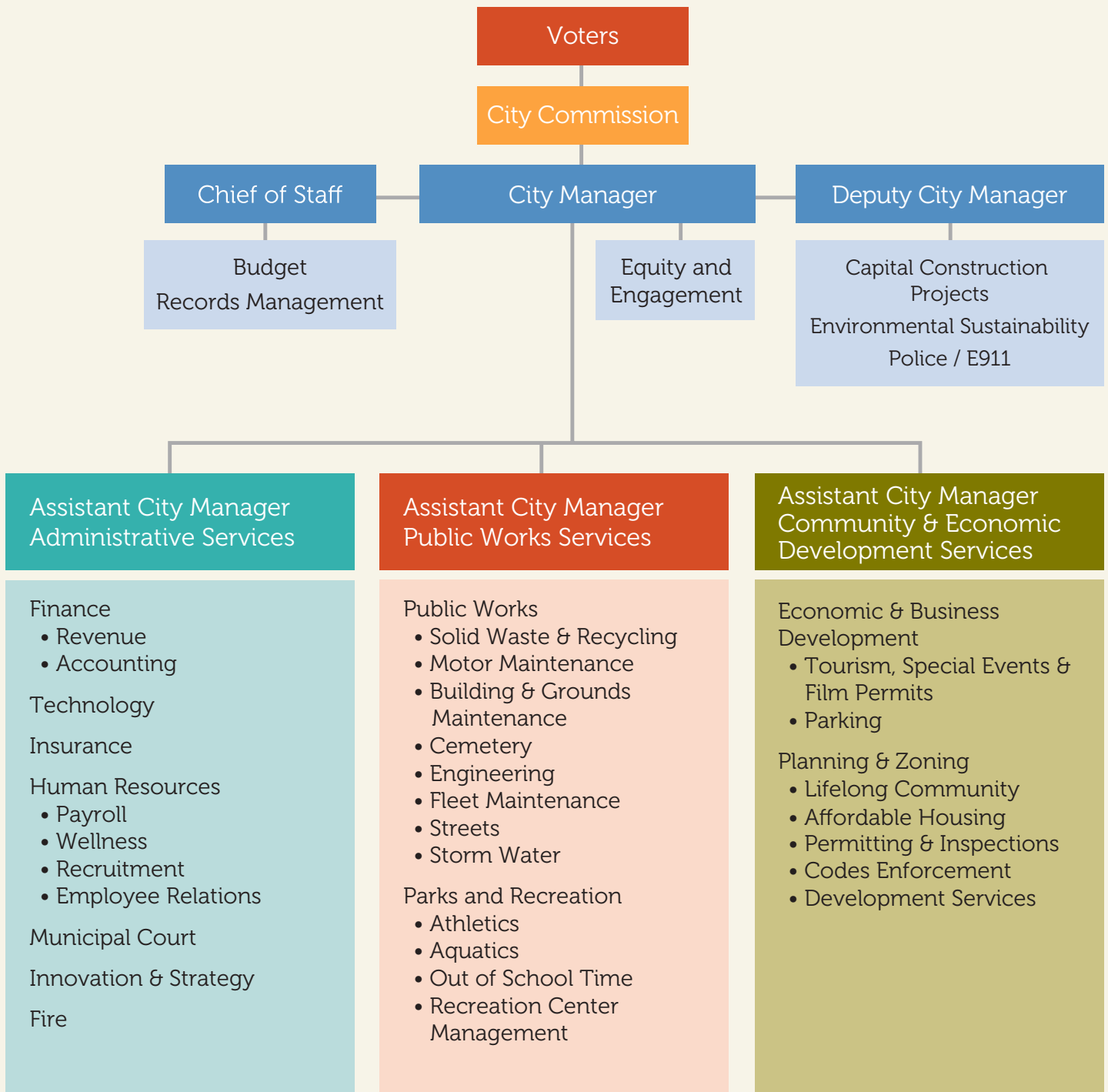
*Decatur will foster an equitable, thriving, and welcoming community for all, today and in the future.*



## DISTINGUISHED **BUDGET**

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada presented a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award to the City of Decatur, Georgia for its annual budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024. In order to receive this award, a governmental unit must publish a budget document that meets program criteria as a policy document, as an operations guide, as a financial plan, and as a communications device.

# CITY ORGANIZATION



# DECATUR **CITY** COMMISSIONION



Commissioner  
**LESA  
MAYER  
FRONK**  
District 2

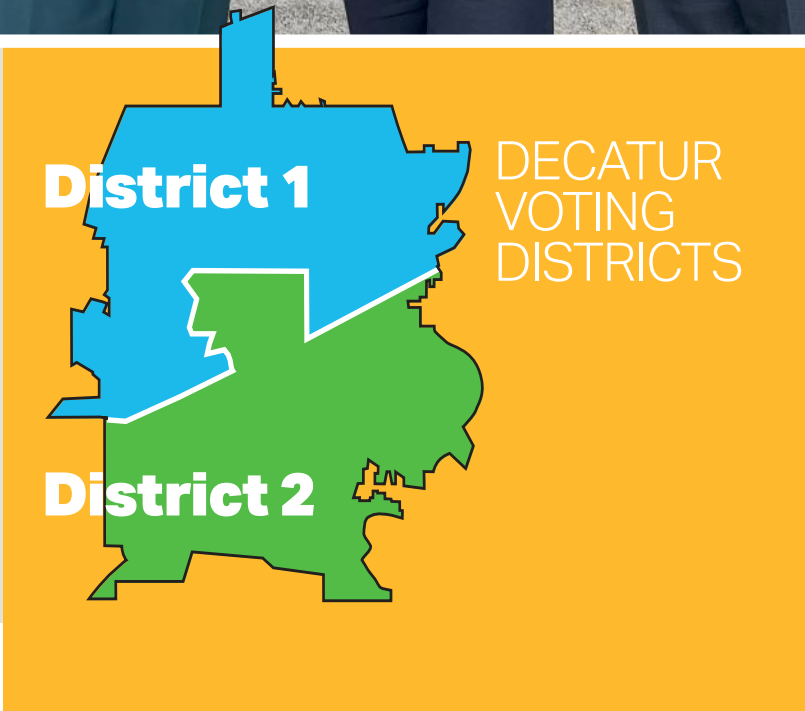
Mayor Pro Tem  
**TONY  
POWERS**  
At-Large

Mayor  
**PATTI  
GARRETT**  
District 2

Commissioner  
**KELLY  
WALSH**  
District 1

Commissioner  
**GEORGE  
DUSENBURY**  
District 1

**Five City Commissioners are elected in nonpartisan elections** for overlapping four-year terms – two from District 1, two from District 2, and one At-Large (citywide). Mayor Patti Garrett first began serving in 2009 and Mayor Pro Tem Tony Powers first began serving in 2015. Kelly Walsh first began serving in 2018. George Dusenbury and Lesa Mayer Fronk first began serving in 2020.



# REFLECTIONS FROM THE **CITY COMMISSION**

Looking back on the previous fiscal year, what are some projects or values that you are most proud of?

Mayor  
**Patti Garrett**

The City Commission remains committed to ensuring that decisions reflect the goals of the Strategic Plan and that the City's Vision of fostering an equitable, thriving, and welcoming community for all is supported today and in the future. I am proud that Decatur is recognized for the way in which we govern; how we live together as a community; how we celebrate with many festivals that are not only fun but that often bring different perspectives into focus; and how each of us respects the opinions and work of others - not always agreeing but working together for our community. Where else can you celebrate A Child Friendly City designation, a Beach Party, A Square Shake Up and a new track and field all in the same breath?

Mayor Pro Tem  
**Tony Powers**

When I reflect on the last fiscal year, I would like to think of the physical and literal legacy that has been created at Legacy Park. The community spoke and expressed a strong desire for the track and affordable housing development. There was no hesitation in my unwavering support to have both projects funded and developed. The 132 affordable housing units being built in partnership with the Decatur Housing Authority will provide a new opportunity to a new generation of future residents and leaders. I am extremely excited to have these projects completed at a time when equity and inclusion are under attack.

Commissioner  
**Kelly Walsh**

Our City's connective tissue is the shared value around being a welcoming and inclusive place to live, work, study, recreate and worship. I aim to protect that value with every important decision I make as a city commissioner.

Commissioner  
**George Dusenbury**

I always hold civic trust as the foundation for my work as a City Commissioner. Regardless of the issue, I try to listen, share my thoughts, ask questions, and transparently explain my actions and decisions.

Commissioner  
**Lesla Mayer Fronk**

While diversity, equity and inclusion are terms that have been villainized over the past year, they are still the core of all of our values as a city. We fearlessly continue to embody those values and they have been the drivers for our priorities, our budget and all of the important work that we have accomplished this year.

# CONNECTING THE DOTS

## OUR STRATEGIC PLAN IN ACTION

Throughout this report, you will see icons that represent the six focus areas of the City's Destination 2030 Strategic Plan. These icons help illustrate how each accomplishment and accolade aligns with community priorities like equity, sustainability, civic trust, and more. Many initiatives can touch multiple goals—because in Decatur, everything is connected.



# WELCOME NEW BUSINESSES

The city of Decatur welcomed a diverse range of new businesses during the 2024-25 fiscal year. These additions offer new experiences for community members and reflect the continued vitality of Decatur's small business ecosystem.

### Bench Warmers Sports Grill

A venue for community sports fans and family dining.

### Cat Eye Creative

A contemporary art gallery.

### Fawn Wine & Amaro Bar

An intimate, high-end wine bar with curated selections.

### Green Office Golf

Indoor golf concept designed for workplace team building.

### Monkey Arm Art Gallery

Showcasing local and regional visual artists.

### Mother's Best Fried Chicken

Comfort food with deep roots in Southern tradition.

### One Oh Four

A flex creative and studio space.

### Smiley's Burger Club (reopened)

A burger eatery reimaged.

### Rreal Tacos

Fast-casual taqueria known for authentic street-style Mexican cuisine.

### StretchLab

Customized assisted stretching to promote wellness and mobility.

### Sugar Posh Nail Bar

Inclusive, eco-friendly nail salon.

### SwemKids

A nonprofit providing swimming education and equity in aquatic access.

### Toco Classic

Retro-themed barber shop with modern flair.

### The Intown Retreat

Tranquil wellness spa offering holistic therapies.

### The Wylde Center (reopened)

Educational gardens and sustainability hub open again with a new porch.



# WELCOME **NEW CITY EMPLOYEES**

The City of Decatur warmly welcomed 66 new full-time staff during the 2024-25 fiscal year.

**Jordn Allen**

Firefighter

**Gary Anderson**

Firefighter

**Teekey Andrews**

HR Generalist

**Richard Avery**

Crew Worker/Grounds  
Maintenance

**Elijah Bender**

Firefighter

**Ian A. Boyce**

Police Officer

**Sydney Bradley**

Recreation Specialist/Center  
Specialists

**LaTasha Brown**

Communications Manager/Public  
Information Officer

**Noah Brown**

Recreation Coordinator

**Rebecca Bryant**

Sustainability Coordinator

**Shekina Bundrage**

Crew Worker/Building

**Shenetta Byars**

HR Generalist

**Miracle Carter**

Recreation Specialist/Center  
Specialists

**Brittany Charles**

Recreation Specialist/Center  
Specialists

**Victoria Cohen**

Business Development Manager

**Beth Costello**

Head Swim Team Coach

**Matthew Damico**

Police Officer

**Steven Davis**

Police Officer

**Remy Epps**

Parks and Rec Director

**Casey Felton**

Police Officer

**Kniasia Fortney**

Recreation Specialist I/OST Lead  
Counselor

**Jeffrey Graham**

Firefighter

**Julie Gyuricza**

Senior Engineer

**Amy Hall**

Special Events Officer

**Kitawana Hammett**

Police Officer

**Julie Harlan**

Active Transportation Director

**Haven Hester**

Firefighter

**Logan House**

Arborist

**Jonathan Jacobs**

Crew Worker/Cemetery

**Shibeh Jerry**

Police Officer

**Anthony Jones**

Firefighter

**Allyson Khiev**

OST Site Coordinator at  
Glenwood

**Rosalyn Lee**

Accounting Specialist

**Angela Marshall**

OST Counselor

**Ashantek McCoy**

Police Officer

**Thomas Mingo**

Police Officer

**FAO Morales**

Fire Apparatus Operator

**Nancy Olivio**

E-911 Communications Officer

**Jonothan Owens**

Police Officer

**Jayon Palmer**

Firefighter

**Dejuan Parks**

Firefighter

**Ashley Powell**

Communications Coordinator

**Jamal Powell**

Police Officer

**Ryan Ramirez**

Front Desk Attendant

**Heidi Rine**

Recreation Specialist/Center  
Specialists

**Orlando Robinson**

Engineering Inspector

**Tyrique Robinson**

OST Site Coordinator at FAVE

**Ray Rollins**

Athletic Supervisor, Active Living

**Travis Scott**

Facility Monitor

**Corey Sheppard**

Equipment Operator I/Sanitation  
Division

**Swanzetta Smith**

OST Counselor

**Keith Strong**

Assistant Parks & Rec Director

**Cliford Surprisse**

Police Officer

**Orielle Thomas**

Fire Apparatus Operator

**Andre Thompson**

Recreation Supervisor, OST

**Brandon Upshaw**

Crew Worker/Cemetery

**Nicole Webb**

OST Counselor

**Jasaca Watson**

Communications Officer

**Kellian Watson**

Police Officer

**Kamayah Williams**

Communications Officer

**Jennifer Worthem**

OST Counselor

**Latavious Wyche**

Equipment Operator II/Sanitation

These new appointments and promotions strengthen the City's ability to deliver quality services, deepen community relationships, and fulfill the goals of operational excellence and equity.



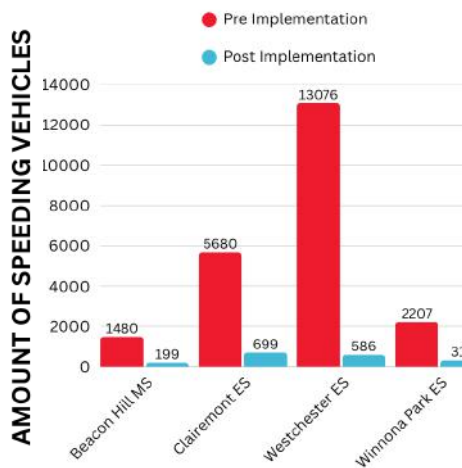
## School Zone Safety Plan and Speed Camera Implementation

To enhance pedestrian safety, especially around schools, the City launched a School Zone Safety Plan in October 2024. Cameras were installed at targeted school zones to enforce speed limits during peak hours. Early results show a 92 percent decrease in speeding violations and improved driver behavior.

The cameras are strategically positioned near the following schools:

- Beacon Hill Middle School
- Clairemont Elementary School
- Westchester Elementary School
- Winnona Park Elementary School

For more details, visit [decaturga.com/schoolzones](https://decaturga.com/schoolzones).



## RAISE Grant Awarded to City of Decatur

The City received the federal Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for \$1.8 million in spring 2025 for the Reconnecting Scott Boulevard Complete Street Plan to support East College Avenue improvements: protected bike lanes, stormwater upgrades, ADA access, and safety infrastructure.



## John Lewis Memorial Unveiled on Decatur Square

In August 2024, a statue honoring the legacy of Congressman John Lewis was unveiled on Decatur Square, in front of the historic courthouse. The new memorial replaced the former Confederate monument and was the result of four years of planning by the John Lewis Commemorative Task Force—a partnership between DeKalb County and the City of Decatur.



Designed by internationally recognized sculptor Basil Watson, the monument commemorates Congressman Lewis' lifelong dedication to civil rights, democracy, and public service. Local, state, and national leaders participated in the unveiling ceremony, including Mayor Patti Garrett, Congresswoman Nikema Williams, Senator Raphael Warnock, and former Ambassador Andrew Young.

The task force raised more than \$700,000 to support the installation. The memorial stands as a symbol of equity, justice, and community progress—values at the heart of the City's mission.



## Decatur Hometown Habitat Award – Donna and Wayne Robertson

In spring 2025, the Environmental Sustainability Board launched the Decatur Hometown Habitat program. This new initiative recognizes residents that are reimagining their outdoor spaces with sustainability and biodiversity in mind.

The inaugural winners, Donna and Wayne Robertson, embraced a holistic plan that prioritized native species, preserved existing plant life, and reduced the traditional lawn to a small, low-maintenance patch still suitable for their grandchildren to play.



A community-made award plaque honors their achievement and highlights collaboration across students, artists, arborists, and environmental advocates.



## Updated City Noise Ordinance

In fiscal year 2024-25, the City Commission adopted an updated noise ordinance to better reflect community expectations and simplify enforcement. The new policy establishes a single, citywide sound standard—65 decibels during the day (7 a.m.-9:59 p.m.) and 60 decibels at night (10 p.m.-6:59 a.m.).

Additional updates included defined operating hours for landscape equipment and generators, as well as exemptions for permitted events, essential government work, and school-related activities. The ordinance promotes a quieter, healthier environment while supporting clarity for residents and businesses alike.



## Decatur Police Department Launches PowerEngage

In December 2024, the Decatur Police Department launched PowerEngage, a communications platform that collects feedback via automated text messages after non-emergency service calls, designed to promote transparency, engagement, and accountability. Residents can rate their experience, provide comments, or opt out at any time.

With a 32.63% response rate and a 93.03% positive feedback rating, the program is improving transparency, morale, and real-time responsiveness. Sign up at [powerdms.com/power-engage](https://powerdms.com/power-engage).



## Field Groundbreaking

In March 2025, representatives from City of Decatur, Decatur Legacy Park and City Schools of Decatur cut the ribbon to the Legacy Park Track and Field at the opening ribbon cutting and Community Day event. The facility features an eight-lane track, multi-sport turf field, restrooms, lighting, and ADA-accessible design features.

If you missed a look at this celebratory day, check out @cityofdecaturga social media pages for a video reel recap.



## Decatur Square Shake Up Breaks Ground



In spring 2025, City officials, project partners, and community stakeholders gathered at the Community Bandstand to break ground for the Decatur Square Shake Up—the redesign of downtown Decatur’s central plaza.

This initiative emerged from the 2023 Decatur Town Center 2.0 master plan, and the project has been guided by extensive community input. The redesign aims to enhance public space, support downtown vitality, and improve pedestrian access.

Features include expanded greenspace, a new performance stage, a children’s play area, and improved connectivity to the MARTA bus terminal. The project reflects the City’s commitment to creating a welcoming, adaptable, and accessible public plaza at the heart of downtown. Learn more at [squareshakeup.com](https://squareshakeup.com).



## Decatur Beach Party Returned

In June 2025, the Decatur Beach Party made a return to downtown Decatur, drawing residents of all ages for a lively evening of music, food, and fun. The event transformed a section of Ponce de Leon Avenue with truckloads of sand for castle-building and barefoot strolls.

Families enjoyed live music, boardwalk-style food trucks, and games. The atmosphere welcomed beachgoers with sunglasses and buckets with this community tradition.



## Climate Resilience & Greening Our Streets

The City partnered with Trees Atlanta to launch a tree planting initiative along W. Benson Street—an area identified as underserved in the City’s canopy study. Volunteers helped plant 50 new trees, advancing the City’s tree canopy goals and strengthening green infrastructure. This project supports the Climate Action priorities outlined in the Destination 2030 Strategic Plan.



## Safe Streets Action Plan Implementation

In May 2025, the City of Decatur officially adopted the Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan, a bold and community-informed roadmap to eliminate traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries on our streets. The plan prioritizes equity and accessibility, placing an emphasis on protecting pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users. Guided by public input and grounded in data, the plan reflects Decatur’s deep commitment to creating a transportation system that is safe, inclusive, and sustainable for all. This milestone positions the City to pursue federal funding opportunities and reinforces our vision for a connected, walkable future.



Visit [decaturga.com/ss4a](https://decaturga.com/ss4a) for more information.



## Parks and Rec Receives Mobility Grant

In January 2025, Decatur Parks and Recreation was awarded a \$47,994 grant from the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety to promote safe mobility practices through teen education, safe routes to parks, and expanded pedestrian lighting. The program was developed in partnership with local schools.



## Decatur Ambassadors Program Launched



The City of Decatur launched a Decatur ambassadors program in partnership with the Decatur Development Authority (DDA) and the City’s Tourism office. The goal of the Decatur ambassadors is to enhance the downtown experience for guests and community members.

Ambassadors work alongside City staff and assist with trash pickup, graffiti removal, sharing resources with the unhoused community, security efforts and answering general questions.



## Decatur Fire Receives Health Grant

In April 2025, Decatur Fire Rescue was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Georgia Health Initiative to fund a part-time community health worker position for one year.

The position is designed to address the social determinants of health that often lead to repeat 911 calls. The community health worker will identify root causes of calls—such as lack of access to preventive care, housing instability, or unmanaged chronic conditions and connect individuals with appropriate support services to reduce emergency responses.

This proactive approach strengthens both public health and emergency response capacity while advancing the City's broader goals of equity and well-being.



## DYC Hosts Fair on the Square

In March 2025, the Decatur Youth Council hosted its second annual "Fair on the Square," welcoming over 2,000 attendees. The event featured student-led performances, vendor booths, mental health resources, and fundraising activities. The Council raised \$3,000, including a donation to the Decatur YMCA's family support fund.



## Lyn Menne Earns Starr Award

Lyn Menne received the 2024 Georgia Cities Foundation Starr Award in honor of her leadership and innovative efforts in urban development and community improvement. The award was presented to Lyn at the annual Georgia Municipal Association Awards ceremony in June 2024 at the Savannah Convention Center.



Lyn was the first executive director that was hired by the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and she oversaw implementing the City's Town Center Plan that was meant to revitalize Decatur's downtown area while preserving the city's historic character. Some of the initiatives that Lyn helped spearhead were:

- The establishment of the DBA (Decatur Business Association).
- The creation of the Decatur Arts Alliance.
- Assisted in helping bring more townhouse/condo developments to Decatur.
- Assisted in making Decatur more walkable and bike-friendly.
- The creation of several festivals and events like the Decatur Beach Party, the Decatur Book Festival, and concerts on the square to help draw people to Decatur and build a sense of community.

From founding cultural festivals to supporting local business growth and equitable economic development, Menne's leadership continues to inspire.



## Decatur Wins 2024 Community Impact Award

The City of Decatur was awarded a 2024 Community Impact Award from Georgia City Solutions for its ongoing work around youth leadership and engagement. Mayor Garrett, Mayor Pro Tem Powers (not pictured), and two student leaders accepted the award on the city's behalf at an awards dinner in October 2024.

The award recognized a partnership between Decatur Parks and Recreation and local nonprofit Growing Together to create weekly pop-up resource fairs for teens and families. This initiative provided access to food assistance, mental health services, and job training—all through a trusted and welcoming space. Held throughout the school year, the events helped bridge gaps in access for youth and families navigating systemic barriers.



From left: Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens, Decatur Mayor Patti Garrett, former Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin, and two student leaders.



## Chief Toni Washington Honored at Women in Fire International Conference

Decatur Fire Chief Toni Washington was honored at the 2024 Women in Fire International Conference for her contributions to mentoring female firefighters and advancing equity in public safety. Chief Washington continues to lead by example, ensuring that the department reflects and serves the entire community.



## 2025 Welcoming Business Awards

The Better Together Advisory Board, in partnership with the Decatur City Commission, presented the fourth annual Welcoming Business Awards to Sole Play ATL, Squash Blossom Boutique, and Charis Books & More at the Decatur Business Association Holiday Party in December 2024.

Established in 2019, the Welcoming Business Award honors Decatur-based businesses



that lead by example in creating inclusive, accessible, and community-centered environments.

**Sole Play ATL** | A Black-owned business that expanded into Decatur in 2022 and has become a hub for culture, style, and youth engagement. With a nonprofit arm (Sole Circle Foundation) and programs like Sole Play HER, the business fosters inclusion and digital access for underserved youth.

**Squash Blossom Boutique** | A longtime Black woman-owned boutique that highlights ethically sourced apparel and goods created by LGBTQ+ and minority artisans, the business engages in local activism and community initiatives.

**Charis Books & More** | As the South's oldest feminist bookstore, Charis is a leader in inclusivity, community programming, and public health advocacy through free contraceptives, Narcan kits, and an accessible front and back ramp design.



## Decatur Recognized as a UNICEF USA Child Friendly City

Decatur was officially recognized as a Child Friendly City by UNICEF USA in March 2025. Decatur is the third city in the United States following Houston, TX (August 2023) and Minneapolis, MN (February 2024).



City leaders were invited to witness the official Recognition Designation with the UNICEF USA President and CEO. The recognition follows years of collaboration with the Decatur Youth Council and the Teen Leadership Team and reflects our commitment to making Decatur a place where all children feel safe, supported, and empowered to thrive.



## Thomas O. Davis Award – Hugh Saxon

During the recent State of the City Address, Hugh Saxon was honored as the 2025 recipient of Decatur's Thomas O. Davis Award, in recognition of his many contributions to the city. His 47 year career with the City of Decatur exemplified his dedication to thoughtful urban planning, sustainable development, and



public infrastructure that serves all residents. Saxon's leadership helped lay the foundation for many of the walkability, stormwater, and open space improvements that are now considered signature features of Decatur's livability. He is recognized not only for his technical expertise but for his unwavering belief in community-centered design.



## Community of the Year – Georgia Safe Routes to School

The City was named Community of the Year by Georgia Safe Routes to School in May 2025. The award recognizes the City's innovative programs to support walkability, biking, and traffic safety around schools. Programs like the School Zone Safety Plan and active travel curriculum have improved safety and increased participation.



# Resident **Boards** and **Commissions**

Many Decatur residents serve on volunteer boards, commissions, and task forces. They are appointed to these volunteer groups by the City Commission and staffed by City of Decatur employees. If you have an interest in serving, or if you'd like more meeting information, visit [decaturga.com/bc](http://decaturga.com/bc).

## MEETING LOCATIONS

Unless noted otherwise, volunteer boards and commissions meet in the City Commission Conference Room at Decatur City Hall, 509 N. McDonough St.

## Planning Commission

Conducts public hearings on land use and zoning changes, special exceptions, proposed subdivisions of property and proposed planned unit developments, and recommends actions for consideration by the City Commissioners. It also reviews and recommends changes to zoning regulations and future land-use plans.

For more information, contact Kc Krizc, 404-371-8386 or email [kc.kzric@decaturga.com](mailto:kc.kzric@decaturga.com).

**Meetings:** Second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m.

### Board Accomplishments:

- Held public hearings, engaged the applicant and community members, and forwarded recommendations to the City Commission for zoning cases.
- Reviewed and recommended approval to the City Commission for text amendments to Article 11 of the Unified Development Code.
- Reviewed and recommended modifications to the Decatur Streetscape Design Guidelines.
- New members completed the Atlanta Regional Commission's Community Planning Academy training for Planning Officials.



## Decatur Youth Council

The Decatur Youth Council (DYC) is a city-sponsored, community-based leadership program for high school students who live within the City of Decatur and attend public, private, and home-based schools.

For further information, contact Meredith Roark, 404-370-4102, [meredith.roark@decaturga.com](mailto:meredith.roark@decaturga.com).

**Meetings:** First Wednesday of every month 4-5:30 p.m. (except June through August).

### Board Accomplishments:

- Hosted another successful Fair on the Square event with assistance from the CFCI Teen Leadership Team.
- Created a public service campaign around walking and biking in the City.
- Participated in master planning processes for the Oakhurst Recreation Center, Ebster Park teen area and the Square Transformation.



## Zoning Board of Appeals

Conducts public hearings on appeals from decisions of the zoning administrator and considers requests for variances from zoning requirements.

For more information, contact Kc Krizc, 404-371-8386 or email [kc.kzric@decaturga.com](mailto:kc.kzric@decaturga.com).

**Meetings:** Second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

### Board Accomplishments:

- Held public hearings, engaged the applicant and community members to render decisions on variances.
- Completed an annual training by UGA's Carl Vinson Institute of Government for Zoning Board Officials.
- Integrated stormwater solutions for development located within stream buffers such as rain gardens and new pervious pavement material.





## Environmental Sustainability Board

Provides recommendations to the City Commission regarding the city's environmental regulations, plans, and initiatives. Assists with implementation of city projects that impact the natural environment to protect and improve the quality of life for citizens and property owners in the City of Decatur. Participation is open to anyone who is interested.

For more information contact David Nifong at david.nifong@decaturga.com or Rebecca Bryant at rebecca.bryant@decaturga.com.

**Meetings:** Fourth Monday of each month, 4-6 p.m. Visit decaturga.com/bc-esb for meeting locations.

### Board Accomplishments:

- Co-hosted a nearly zero-waste Earth Day event with Legacy Park.
- Published a Green Focus insert with 13 articles advising residents how to reduce waste.
- Launched the Hometown Habitat Award program and rewarded the first home for greenspaces with native plants and a layout that supports the local ecosystem.
- The Green Business Board Group has reached out to restaurants to better understand how to support sustainable business practices in the community.
- Visited CHaRM recycling center to explore opportunities to connect residents with resources to decrease waste.
- Advocated and supported an updated noise ordinance to encourage more green lawn care maintenance tactics.
- Began consulting with urban naturalist on ways to reduce waste at city events in general, most prominently with the Decatur FC games.
- Provided feedback to help the City to secure more than \$1 million in state and federal grants for clean energy and sustainability projects.



## FY 2024-2025 BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

### Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

Serve as advocates and advisors on projects and programs that help citizens safely incorporate physical activity into their daily routines. They also support Decatur's ongoing efforts to improve sidewalks and intersections, calm traffic and expand the network of bike paths and walking trails. It seeks to educate residents about obesity and lifestyle issues and implement programs designed to change behavior and encourage healthier habits.

For more information contact Nancy Brune at nancy.brune@decaturga.com.

**Meetings:** First Tuesday of each month, 6-7 p.m., at Legacy Park, 500 S. Columbia Dr.

### Board Accomplishments:

- Partnered with Clarity Fitness to host "Walk & Talk" events promoting wellness and active living.
- Welcomed youth members to both the Parks and Recreation Board and the Active Transportation Committee.
- Active Transportation Committee hosted the Bright at Night Walk to promote walkability and visibility during evening hours, and the Mobility Walk to highlight accessibility challenges and advocate for more inclusive sidewalks.
- City of Decatur was named the 2024- 2025 Georgia Safe Routes to School Community of the Year in recognition of outstanding commitment to student safety and sustainable transportation.
- Committed to becoming an official Keep Decatur Beautiful affiliate city through the Keep America Beautiful program.
- Supported and commented on Safe Streets for All Safety Action Plan and Oakhurst Master Plan.



### Decatur Development Authority and Decatur Downtown Development Authority

These authorities are charged with planning, organizing, and financing projects that will revitalize and redevelop Decatur's commercial business districts. The DDA focuses on the historic commercial downtown central business district and works to market a positive image for the city.

For further information, contact Angela Threadgill, 404-371-8386, angela.threadgill@decaturga.com.

**Meetings:** Joint meetings on the second Friday of each month at 8 a.m.

### Board Accomplishments:

- Small Business Grant Programs. (CFIG, CBIG, MDCG)
- Completion and Sales of Oak Cottage Court.
- Property Tax Incentive to support AMLI Project.
- 303 East Howard/Kimball House lease & sale.
- Town Center Plan 2.0/Square Redevelopment Plans.



## Better Together Advisory Board

Better Together goals are guided by four roadmaps including the Better Together Community Action Plan, City of Decatur 2020 Strategic Plan, Welcoming Standards/Certified Welcoming City, and GMA's Certified City of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Program. They focus on Community Engagement and Education, Advising, and Connecting. Claire Anderson and Syreeta Campbell currently serve as Co-Chairs of Better Together.

For more information, contact Renae Jackson, 678-553-6561, [renae.jackson@decaturga.com](mailto:renae.jackson@decaturga.com)

**Meetings:** First Tuesday of every month, 6:30 to 8 p.m.

### Board Accomplishments:

- Facilitated the first in person Speaker Series event, Empathy and Action: A Decatur Community Conversation Guided by the Life and Wisdom of John Lewis, in November 2024 at the John Lewis "Empathy" Memorial on the Decatur Square.
- In partnership with the Decatur City Commission, presented the fifth annual Welcoming Business Award to Sole Play ATL, Charis Books & More, and Squash Blossom Boutique. Better Together established the award to reward and publicly recognize leadership actions that create a welcoming and inclusive business environment in Decatur and encourage businesses to prioritize inclusivity as a "best practice."
- Welcomed five new board members: Bernadette Davis, Shan Mukhtar, Rebecca Ramage-Tuttle, Marla Tepper, and Rhonda Wildman.
- Continued to focus on three critical areas of need (Community Engagement and Education, Advising, and Connecting) through the work of subcommittees.



## Lifelong Community Advisory Board

Assists with expanding and implementing initiatives for helping residents age in place. The members assist city staff with outreach to senior citizens, people with disabilities, and diverse populations to encourage participation in available programs and to develop new programs.

For more information, contact Julie Smith, 404-371-8386, [julie.smith@decaturga.com](mailto:julie.smith@decaturga.com)

**Meetings:** Fourth Monday each month at 6:30 p.m.

### Board Accomplishments:

- A designated board member actively participated in the City's Safe Streets Initiative, ensuring older adults' needs were considered in pedestrian and traffic safety planning.
- Published monthly articles in The Decatur Focus highlighting aging-related issues and resources.
- Developed plans to host a Connections Café, a supportive program for residents living with dementia and their caregivers. Identified a service provider, partnered with Parks & Recreation, and are prepared to implement a pilot program if budget is approved.
- Began drafting universal design recommendations for new construction and remodeling of single-family homes to support accessibility and aging in place.
- Shared Smart911 information and registration materials at community events for older adults.
- Partnered with the Atlanta Regional Commission to host an evidence-based falls prevention course called, A Matter of Balance. Twelve residents completed the eight-week class offered at no cost to participants.



## Historic Preservation Commission

Ensures that renovations and new construction in Decatur's five Local Historic Districts (McDonough-Adams-King's Highway District, Ponce de Leon Court, Old Decatur, Parkwood, and the Clairemont Historic District) are consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

For more information, contact Aileen de la Torre, 404-371-8386, [aileen.delatorre@decaturga.com](mailto:aileen.delatorre@decaturga.com).

**Meetings:** Third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. (no meeting in July)

### Board Accomplishments:

- The Decatur Design Awards recognized properties throughout the City that promote excellence in preservation, design, sustainability and advocacy.
- In conjunction with Tourism, developed a series of walking tours highlighting Decatur history and the built environment. There have been three walking tours hosted so far centered around women's history, public art, and architectural history.



# The Road Ahead

Building on the progress of this fiscal year, the City of Decatur remains focused on the inclusive, sustainable, and community-driven goals outlined in our Strategic Plan. Here are the priorities we'll be focusing on in the year ahead:

- ▶ Downtown Square Transformation
- ▶ Comprehensive Plan/Clean Energy Plan Update
- ▶ Charter Review Process
- ▶ Heat Mitigation Strategy
- ▶ Safe Streets Action Plan Implementation
- ▶ Beautification Efforts Citywide
- ▶ Utility Management Software
- ▶ Downtown Ambassador Program
- ▶ Storm water Capital Projects
- ▶ Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) Preservation Strategy
- ▶ Re-establish School Resource Officer (SRO) Program
- ▶ Digital Suggestion Box
- ▶ Staffing and Planning for Unhoused Support Efforts
- ▶ Missing Middle Model at 600 Commerce Drive
- ▶ World Cup 2026 WatchFest Event
- ▶ W. Howard Avenue Cycle Track & Traffic Calming
- ▶ Expanded and improved communications services
- ▶ Ebster Teen Activity Area Construction
- ▶ Energy Savings Performance Contract Design
- ▶ Downtown Parking Enhancements
- ▶ Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program
- ▶ Launch of Community Energy Rebate Program
- ▶ Business Recruitment Services

