



## Decatur Round Tables

### Session Two Report

From May 11 to May 15, the City of Decatur held the second session of its Decatur Round Table discussions, an important step in its 2010 Strategic Plan Update. There were 11 separate meetings in this session. 741 citizens attended Session One and the vast majority (78 percent) attended both Sessions Two and Three. In Session Two, participants offered 2,981 ideas and images (in addition to the 2,815 in Session One). A third session has been held, and a report on Session Three is forthcoming.

Session Two was more focused than Session One, in that it asked about specific issues rather than for general ideas about making Decatur a better place to live and work. Not surprisingly, a number of the themes that emerged from the Session One discussions were repeated in Session Two, including concerns that Decatur might become less diverse in the future and the hope that its citizens could be even more engaged and involved than they are now. Two other themes from Session One (that Decatur should find alternative ways of transportation and should become a more environmentally “green” community) were part of the questions asked in this session, so there was considerable discussion of these subjects as well.

One theme that surfaced in several ways in Session Two was citizens would like more information about the community, delivered in different ways. The suggestions ranged from online events calendars to better signage on streets to mile markers on jogging trails. The sentiment appeared to be that citizens didn’t necessarily need city government to do more for them, but they would appreciate the government’s help in doing more for themselves. Providing more information, they suggested, was one way.

There were six major questions asked in Session Two. Summaries of the citizens’ comments for each question are presented on pages 3-7. The complete list of the 2,981 ideas from Session Two begins on page 8.

## **Meeting Process**

As mentioned above, the Round Tables are a first step in the drafting of the 2010 Strategic Plan Update. A similar citizen-engagement process was used to draft the 2000 strategic plan that has guided the city's development for the past 10 years. Of the goals drafted in 2000, 80 percent have been reached.

The Round Tables are face-to-face meetings involving citizens who agree to attend three sessions. The sessions deal with different topics. Session One, from April 27 to May 1, dealt broadly with what citizens appreciate about Decatur, what they see as problems, and what they'd like Decatur to be in the future. Session Two dealt with six issue areas (see below). Session Three will deal with communications and community decision-making.

As in Session One, the meetings of Session Two were held at different times and places around Decatur. In each meeting, participants were seated in small groups of 10 or so, to ensure that all would have a chance to speak. Each small group had a trained facilitator and a recorder, who captured citizen comments.

In Session Two, citizens were asked (after introductions) to offer ideas and images in six areas. Here were the questions:

1. Think about Session One and about how the city has developed and grown. How do we sustain this city? How do we preserve the things we appreciate?
2. How do we preserve and improve our natural environment? How do we protect our air, water and green space?
3. How do you get from place to place in Decatur, now? What might change in how we travel about in the next 10 years?
4. When you think about the overall environment of our city (our public gatherings, our festivals and cultural life) what is most important to you?
5. Who are the people who will need housing in Decatur in 20 years? What kind of housing do you think they will need?
6. In terms of "healthy living," what would make the most positive difference for the residents of our city? What activities, programs, or changes in the things we build could make a difference?

## Major Themes

Here were the major themes that came from discussions on the six questions.

### Sustaining and preserving Decatur

*Think about Session One and about how the city has developed and grown. How do we sustain this city? How do we preserve the things we appreciate?*

In Session One, citizens were encouraged to think about what kind of city they wanted Decatur to become. In this part of Session Two, they were asked to think about how to make that vision a reality, while preserving the things they value about Decatur today.

What most worried citizens most was a **potential loss of diversity**, which refers to the mix of ethnic, income and age groups that distinguishes Decatur. Underlying this concern were two fears: that housing prices would escalate, pushing less affluent people from the city; and that taxes would become onerous, particularly for the elderly, forcing seniors to move elsewhere. (In a later discussion about housing, another concern emerged: that the elderly would not find appropriate housing as they moved from large single-family houses to smaller, more physically accessible housing.)

In their discussions about sustaining and preserving Decatur, citizens tended to focus on two possible solutions. One was to **keep citizen involvement levels high**. The thought appears to be that by keeping residents involved in decision making, the city will find good answers to these long-term issues. The other solution was more specific: to **build Decatur's commercial tax base**, thereby holding down tax increases for homeowners and other residents.

As one group asked, "How do we support the city financially? More commercial revenue; it's currently too lopsided with residential (land uses)." Another group agreed: "Sustaining the city requires a balanced tax base with increased revenue from businesses as well as residents." Yet another group held what looked like a brief dialogue on city finance, saying:

- "Keep an eye on taxes – let's keep the city affordable.
- "How do we do this, though, when 20 percent of the citizens are over 60 years old?"
- "Look carefully at increasing (the) commercial tax base."

Does this mean annexing commercial areas into the city? Some thought so. One group said flatly, "We need annexation to sustain the city." Others believed the emphasis should be on more aggressive economic development. One group said what was needed was a Decatur Chamber of Commerce "to recruit new business."

### **Tending to the natural environment**

*How do we preserve and improve our natural environment? How do we protect our air, water and green space?*

Four themes emerged from the discussion on the environment:

- The city should do its best to **protect and extend Decatur’s tree canopy**, which some saw as in decline. One group suggested that, for every tree that is removed, it be replaced “with four or five new ones.” Another group thought that requiring such replanting of homeowners was too burdensome. While this group wanted to “preserve our trees, the wonderful green canopy,” it cautioned that the city shouldn’t “force tree planting on homeowners.”
- Perhaps the answer lies in arming citizens with **information on being better environmental stewards**, as several groups thought. One group suggested the city “provide education to residents. (The) city can offer classes (like “This Old House” seminar) or post information on how to be environmentally conscious on the city website.” Others wanted more specific information, such as “about what you can and cannot recycle.”
- An suggested area of improvement was in **storm water infrastructure**. Ideas ranged from providing rain barrels and employing porous paving technologies for sidewalks to encouraging rain gardens and green roofs (roofs that are covered with soil and plants, absorbing rainwater and keeping buildings cooler). One group suggested using building codes to require that “every lot should be ... storm water neutral.”
- The city should **use zoning and building codes to require more green developments**. One group suggested using “Smart Growth guidelines from the National Resource Defense Council,” then explained that “Smart Growth means higher density, multiple uses, transportation choices and (a) town that looks unique.” Another suggested something similar for renovations. “Decatur,” it said, “should be proactive (in) greening the building stock.”

### **Present and future mobility**

*How do you get from place to place in Decatur, now? What might change in how we travel about in the next ten years?*

In Session One, citizens made it clear that they wanted alternative ways of transportation. And in Session Two, they spelled out some of those ways – new forms of transit and easier ways of walking and biking through the city.

There was almost uniform **support for new forms of transit**, including the idea of starting a Decatur trolley system. Group after group suggested trolleys, connecting downtown and Oakhurst, Emory

University and Agnes Scott College, or the DeKalb Farmers Market. Not everyone thought in terms of a trolley, though. Other groups suggested electric buses, an expansion of Emory’s Cliff bus system, or a “small, alternative-fuel circulator system” similar to those in Chattanooga, Tenn.

The groups applauded the city’s efforts to **make Decatur more walkable** but had many suggestions for doing even better, from building sidewalks on every street to turning downtown streets into pedestrian plazas. And that was just the start: There were ideas about educating drivers about stopping for pedestrians, traffic calming measures, expanding construction of brick crosswalks, extending pedestrian crossing times and so on.

Similarly, there were numerous ideas about how Decatur could **become more bike-friendly**, from bike lanes and paths to more bike racks downtown.

Finally, there were ideas about **making transportation work better through information**. Some of the information should be directed at drivers, the groups said. Said one group: “We need signage that designates Decatur as a pedestrian friendly community and asks motorists to slow down as they enter the city.” Others wanted clearer signage pointing to parking decks and city attractions and facilities. Finally, some groups wanted more information about alternative transportation, aimed at convincing residents and workers to try walking, biking and transit.

### **Life in Decatur**

*When you think about the overall environment of our city (our public gatherings, our festivals and cultural life) what is most important to you?*

The discussions about community gatherings and cultural life focused on three topics:

- Pride in **Decatur’s abundance of festivals and community events**, which were seen as critical to the city’s identity and sense of community. “We have a small-town feel,” one group said. “You know almost everybody by connecting at events.” Said another, “Events define (the) creative feel of Decatur and introduce people to Decatur businesses.” There were some concerns, though, that Decatur’s festivals could become too popular. “As festivals get more popular/crowded, (the city should) maintain (a) feeling of community versus mob feel,” one group cautioned.
- The suggestion that the city try **smaller, neighborhood-focused events** in the future. “Create more localized, neighborhood-specific gatherings,” one group offered. “It seems like there is either a big event or nothing,” another group said. “We need smaller, simpler, regular public activities.”
- Support for making Decatur **a center for the arts**. “We would like to see more public art,” one group said. “Make our city a mecca for the arts,” another said. “Maybe a film festival,” suggested

a third group. Yet another group suggested encouraging “Agnes Scott, Emory and other universities to use Decatur as their art exhibit space.”

### **Future of housing**

*Who are the people who will need housing in Decatur in twenty years? What kind of housing do you think they will they need?*

More than any other topic in Session Two, the discussions on housing touched on the concern that, as Decatur becomes more affluent, it will lose its ethnic, income and age group diversity. Not surprisingly, groups called for greater provision of **affordable housing** and **housing that is appropriate for an aging population**.

But when the discussions turned from the general to the particular, there was a recognition that the most likely ways of ensuring a diversity of housing options – through **greater density** and **more mixed-income and rental housing** – would be politically challenging. As one group said, “Decatur is a city, not a suburb, therefore density will be greater and is not a bad thing.” Another group said it wanted “more mixed housing: mixed ages/life stages, mixed income – integrated living.” Yet another group said the city needed “more rental property to increase diversity – nice apartments.” But it added, “Neighborhoods often oppose such development.” One recommendation offered by several groups: Allowing single-family houses to add **garage apartments and accessory dwellings** so Decatur could be known “as a place where we let you bring your family to live with you.” The same group added, though, “people are worried about too many cars.”

### **Healthy living**

*In terms of “healthy living,” what would make the most positive difference for the residents of our city? What activities, programs, or changes in the things we build could make a difference?*

In thinking about what Decatur could do to promote healthy living, citizens lined up behind three things:

- The city could do a better job of **promoting exercise and other forms of active living**.
- It could **help citizens find healthier food**.
- It could **offer information that connects citizens with healthy living resources**.

Some of the exercise ideas had been touched on in earlier discussions about alternative transportation – that is, the city could be made easier for walking and bike-riding. But there were also ideas offered for making parks, the Decatur Recreation Center and other public facilities more enjoyable as exercise centers. One group, talking about parks, suggested “a variety of activities. More casual space for just ‘hanging out,’ dancing, bocce ball.” Other groups wanted basketball courts and shuffleboard. Yet another

said it would like to see “tai-chi at the MARTA plaza.” One group suggested simply fixing the restrooms near sports and fitness centers. “They are always closed or nonexistent.”

There were a number of suggestions for encouraging or facilitating community gardens, so people could get healthier food (and the exercise of gardening). Others said they would like “more open-air markets for fresh food and other goods.”

Finally, there were suggestions that the city could do more to offer information to citizens about healthy living. One group suggested that the city “partner with medical centers (i.e., DeKalb Wellness Center, Emory, Kaiser) for health seminars, screenings, etc.” and promote this information. “There are a lot of healthy activities already,” one group pointed out. “Perhaps,” it added, the city should devote “more attention to marketing what is available.”

## **Sustaining and preserving Decatur**

*Think about Session One and about how the city has developed and grown. How do we sustain this city? How do we preserve the things we appreciate?*

- Mixed use development (Resident/Business)
- Keep taxes in check to promote economic diversity of the population of Decatur (so a variety of people can afford to live here)
- Maintain safety/security (e.g., crime) - both public perception (i.e., "feels" safe) and the actual crime rate
- Stress the environment in planning (i.e., consider green space)
- Promote a walking environment - keeps people healthy, gets them out there (so there is presence and increased perceived safety), sidewalks
- Bikes
- Need bike lanes
- More courtesy for bikes from motorists (share the road)
- Have areas where it's safe for kids to bike as well (especially residential), not just bike lanes, but raise awareness
- Cyclists need to be courteous too
- zip bikes to share - public bike program
- Crossing railroad tracks is difficult for bikers and pedestrians, need more options, will help connect Decatur Square area to Oakhurst
- Pedi-cabs
- Festivals - perhaps add music festival, food festival and soap box derby
- Preserve green space
- Update/upgrade school/recreation facilities (e.g., basketball hoops at local school in disrepair)
- Need variety in new businesses (not just new restaurants). For example, a bookstore.
- Maintain recycling and other programs
- More than 2 electronic recycling days per year
- Trash amnesty days where residents can dispose of anything
- Keep initiatives manageable so they get accomplished
- City ordinances to keep property attractive (lawns, broken cars) - Keep Decatur Beautiful
- How do we support the city financially? - More commercial revenue, it's currently too lop-sided with residential
- Explore incorporating more commercial land into Decatur (annexation)
- Face up to organized resistance to annexation

- Increase downtown business, too much unused commercial land.
- Increase diversity/variety of business type and population
- Short term & long term planning, reassessing as we go in the strategic and tactical (doing good now, keep this up)
- Offer incentives to businesses that don't require retail space
- Better partnership with the county on traffic control
- Challenge - Neighbors that are adjacent to commercial areas are opposed to change
- Challenge - Waste of commercial space (i.e. SunTrust bank across from Ted's should have been 2 stories with office space above - 'fake' 2-story facade should not be allowed)
- Assess and improve current building codes and zoning requirements (historic neighborhoods cannot make their homes more energy efficient because of historic building regulations)
- Stricter zoning requirements to preserve neighborhood and commercial feel and continuity (limit infill design and size)
- Tree canopy maintenance and required tree replacement for sick and dead trees
- More frequent strategic planning sessions (5 year updates)
- Strategic growth of residential units based on targeted population levels and demographic mixes
- Bring a Fortune 500 company into Decatur
- Planned school growth in coordination with population growth/annexation
- Decatur WPA program (use citizens to build infrastructure, create jobs)
- Preserving the small town feel of the city:
- Limiting size (population and geographic area)
- Maintaining a caring government that is easily accessible
- Maintaining green space
- Maintain police and fire department quality
- Renovate/expand the Decatur recreation center
- Develop the College Avenue streetscape (trees, sidewalks, lighting)
- Research best practices for using railroad green space (incorporate it into the city rather than ignoring it as a separate space and barrier between the north and south of the city)
- Move power lines, phone lines underground
- Commercial signage ordinances to limit size and height of signs
- Indirect lighting in commercial areas to limit light pollution
- Create a cohesive community communication plan, including improving website, moving towards e-governance
- We need to sustain our aging population given high taxes and this economy. We need to make sure the needs of our elderly population are being met and that the cost of living is kept affordable
- Tax Base: There is a lot of non-profit tax exempt property. Examples of this are the football field, Saint Thomas Moore and Agnes Scott. Sometimes these properties actually do generate income and that income should be captured with some type of tax.

- Giving back to the community: The Brick Store gives back to the community with the Beer Festival. We need to encourage businesses to give back.
- Who owns the land above the Marta station in Downtown?
- Tax Exemptions: How long should a resident's taxes go towards the school system? It's ok to send your own kids through school and possibly a few other generations but there should be a limit to how many years or generations you have to support through the school system. There is differing opinion as to if tax exemptions or breaks would actually help sustain the City or not.
- Who decides tax exemptions?
- Taxes should be called taxes. Don't call things a fee, call them a tax.
- There needs to be service prioritization. The current citizen participation in the budget process is great. Decatur 101 is great. The county is considering storm water fees and we already have them which is good. One of the things we like about the City is the services. We need to have the funds to continue those services.
- Annexation: We need annexation to sustain the city. This would help increase the tax base and reduce the tax burden especially since the population projection shows the population going down. That being said there is the same number of properties and value so the population should not affect the tax base.
- Density: More density would help to share the burden but density should be done in a thoughtful way. The community doesn't want 20 story buildings. We want density without going over 7 stories. There are opportunities for more dense development such as the Trinity Triangle project.
- Local Businesses: Could they get a tax break if the owner lives in the City? We need to do more "shop local" campaigning to support local business. Ex. Austin/Ashville
- Home Businesses: Some of the business categories are prehistoric. Are we capturing all home businesses that exist? How do we know so that they have to get a business license? DBA can help to keep track of home based business. Maybe an older person running a home business shouldn't be taxed the same way as younger professionals. There needs to be variations in the fees. Right now, by paying for a home business license and your property taxes you are getting double taxed.
- Maintain African American population
- Maintain and increase socio economic diversity of city
- Require affordable housing as part of development process
- Support public housing
- Develop incentives to promote affordable housing
- business development - keep viability of being a "destination" - brings \$ in to sustain community
- round out "destination" offerings : need men's clothing, ice cream, book store, turn Blue Moon into B and B, public library is essential/don't lose it
- we've had good leadership - good governance - Peggy is best in state
- we're in positive financial state

- capital improvements only when there are grants
- need to plan well for succession of leadership to maintain the quality we have had
- structured ways for citizen involvement - continuous pulse (without being overwhelmed)
- We need to protect our emergency services in the budget- we have excellent fire, police, etc.
- Maintaining our own services (as opposed to DeKalb) is very important- Keep them in our budget
- Maintaining our own services - Includes waste management
- Maintaining our own services - Quality education
- Maintaining citizen involvement is key
- Maintaining and care for the character of the architecture in our city and neighborhoods, which call up the importance of zoning
- Taking care of our trees- Having a plan to replace old trees and maintaining a healthy tree canopy which can include having an active and functioning tree ordinance
- Sustaining the city requires a balanced tax base with increased revenue from businesses as well as residents
- Maintain appropriate density and the appropriate scale of commercial and residential development
- Preservation of neighborhood character through ordinances, set backs, etc.
- Discourage "McMansions"- Encourage development appropriate to neighborhood
- Develop guidelines to create scalability within neighborhoods
- Enact ordinances to prevent "McMansions" and make it more difficult for tear downs
- Preserving diversity (racial, socioeconomic, etc) can be enhanced through appropriate neighborhood builds and affordable housing.
- Keep engaging the community through processes such as the Strategic Planning processes- may want to re-visit every 3 years and then have 'major' effort every 10 years. Ensure we keep engaging the community
- Use community groups to connect with each other through shared events and city-wide events
- Keep shopping locally; encourage local small businesses
- Spread the word about our City
- Volunteer !
- Promote life cycle housing
- Educate the citizens about the challenges we face and the solutions
- Promote and encourage affordable - Housing
- Promote and encourage affordable - Taxes
- Maintain a variety of retail - Types of Merchandise
- Maintain a variety of retail - Price points
- Obtain access to sales tax revenues
- Intelligent annexation
- Meet your government Day

- Residents remain vocal and continue to participate in civic life
- City develops creative ways outside of property taxes to find funding
- Maintain and strengthen Decatur's brand (i.e. Oakhurst flags, Decatur logo)
- Create Decatur Chamber of Commerce to recruit new businesses
- Provide small business advisory (i.e. SCORE Atlanta)
- Market Decatur to Metro Atlanta
- Reach out to and convince larger retailers to find ways to serve smaller, walking cities such as Decatur
- Comprehensive review of zoning codes and variance policy
- Follow best practice for development, look to Boulder, CO and Naperville, IL as best practice leaders
- Create buffer zone between residential and commercial properties
- Ensure new development meets needs of diverse community and encourages diversity and sustained growth (diversity described as racial, age, socioeconomic)
- Develop affordable housing
- Keep small neighborhoods
- Need better interaction between neighborhoods
- Need ways to help people maintain their houses to keep them up.
- Need a city directory of residents
- Stamp out elitism - How? Foster attitudes
- Balance gentrification - How?
- Each citizen needs to be personally proactive to help keep diversity in city
- Ensure continued community participation. There is strong commitment and enthusiasm to community involvement. It is not lip service.
- More business development to help shift taxes more to commercial vs. residential.
- I am ok with taxes b/c of strong community infrastructure
- Attract more entrepreneurial business whose workers would want to live here or use public transport
- Continue focus on mixed use development
- Need more day time business workers to help sustain local shops and restaurants vs. just residents shopping locally
- Consider better partnerships with the county - Decatur is county seat
- Sustainability is linked to population so we need to leverage existing space vs. building new. Increasing population does have an impact
- Fiscal responsibility of government
- Budget is developed around goals
- informed by strategic plan
- not a lot of infighting among departments

- trying to get mix of retail / other downtown
- stimulate community involvement
- partnership w/ DBA
- need good retail mix
- balance between increased density and close knit community
- movie / music crossover venue needed (like Variety playhouse)
- limited recreational opportunities, more in the evenings and more for adults, example: city sponsored pub crawl
- The city works hard to develop a plan (zoning, land-use, arts, recreation, strategy) and sticks to it
- we might want to revisit planning more often but not to re-invent a strategic session but perhaps to tweak it
- Be trend setters for others communities. Be more Green
- Keep an eye on Taxes – let's keep the city affordable
- how do we do this though when 20% of the citizens are over 60 years old?
- Look carefully at increasing commercial tax base
- continue to engage community via activities - an increase in festivals
- city leadership must continue to be great., i.e. Decatur 101, volunteerism, informed citizenry
- Foster business growth - don't rely entirely on DBA (while it is good it often becomes a lazy way to pitch services to the business community)
- Encourage local shopping
- see economic development continue
- are there holes in our community infrastructure in terms of the types of businesses - why no liquor stores?
- better grocery options
- gas stations
- boutique hotel
- independent art-house movie theater
- performance space
- civic center
- we question the population statistics....
- explore New Urbanism ideals for development
- city leadership needs to prepare for leadership transitions for those in non-political roles
- resolve city/county issues
- Maintain communication avenues open between city government and citizens, developers and planners.
- Support small businesses as citizens and through government support programs
- Continue to balance population density and business growth
- Address transition between light industrial/commercial and residential zoning.

- Preserve pre-War housing stock, are well built and provide sense of place
- Limit tear downs, encourage renovation of houses instead, use incentives- e.g., limit size of new house if tear down vs. renovation
- Need survey of housing stock
- City and school system need to work together to manage growth (annexation and otherwise)
- Maintain image and sense of identity among City residents
- Educate residents and others on what City is doing and promote same
- Decatur is a free-standing community with economic diversity. There is the danger of losing this diversity and becoming an enclave of only one economic strata.
- We need to maintain public housing.
- We need to maintain the "in-between" housing for working class (teachers, firefighters, etc.)
- We need more apartment complexes
- Encourage more Emory students to live in Decatur, High disposable income
- Create a college town environment
- Re-develop brownfield properties or abandoned properties.
- There has been an increase in the number of small families moving to the area and the current housing stock does not fit the need. (the value of the land higher than the value of the existing house - encouraging tear downs and complete rebuilding)
- Avoid the example of the VA - Highlands, Overpriced homes, Overpriced businesses (due to overpriced rents), All leads to a loss of economic diversity
- How do we sustain the entire city?
- How do we incorporate the views / needs of all city residents (across all economic levels)
- The process (government / bureaucracy) should not be / become a barrier to participation
- Can city support landlords who create affordable housing / apartments?
- Need more adult only swimming pools, services, and amenities for the elderly
- Jitney Services - licensed by the city
- Survival / wilderness training (for when things fall apart)
- Keep doing round tables - even after this process is over
- Themes that are discovered in these round tables need to be followed/communicated throughout the community so that when we go to solve these issues, people remain involved.
- Increase use of "Open Government" tool.
- Provide early notice of agenda topics for city council, planning board, zoning board, etc. People can't just drop whatever they're doing and attend meetings within the next 24 hours!
- We love the Decatur Focus. It should include early notice of agenda topics and also provide a forum for suggestions, feedback and how to support a positions.
- We need to bridge the gap between round table meetings and official city meetings (school board, city council, etc) and make them forums for civil discussion rather than them becoming so volatile and emotionally charged. A continuous channel of communication might help carry over

the civil discussions/disagreement into the other meetings. We are able to disagree in harmony in the round table meetings, why not in these other ones? These could even be symbolic gestures.

- There is value in "wild" spaces (similar to Waddell Park). Not every bit of land needs to have a use. Sometimes it is enough just to let it be a wild home to nature.
- Enact mini-roundtables for the kickoff for topics and issues coming up in the next year. For example, get people together to kick off 2011 themes perhaps around walkability and environment. Theme each year and get people together to discuss in roundtables at the beginning how to put plans in action. Use this round table as a start!
- Get younger people involved
- Too many rules makes Decatur seem "fuddy duddy"
- More activities for tweens and parents
- We need a skateboard park or a way to make skateboarding accessible in downtown Decatur
- More outside basketball courts
- Take care of what we have
- Support Trees Atlanta ((Oakhurst)
- Glenwood Park-looks well cared for
- Allow unique character to stay
- More little shops/ charm
- Continue and expand involvement
- Encourage people to spend locally
- Make it a "destination location" and bring money into Decatur
- Monthly or bi-monthly street party (close traffic off)
- Maximize use of web site and internet
- Better links
- Create one central website for city and neighborhood and business organizations
- Fuller city calendar of events
- Preserve historical sites
- More alternative transportation
- Reduce impervious surface
- Age & capacity of storm water system
- Challenge to keep development from encroaching what we consider our greenspace
- Identification of important resources
- Street sweeping, trash pickup more often
- Compost pick up, encourage and promote
- Reduction of trash
- Encourage more recycling by providing containers
- Centralized center for recycling
- Conservation of water

- Encourage rain water recycling
- Best use of flood plains
- Helping residents with storm water issues on their property
- Naturalized greenspace protected
- More pedestrian only areas
- Encouragement of car pooling, business incentives, partnership with City
- patronize local businesses; keep small (independent) businesses thriving; is there a way to prevent big box/chain stores from locating in Decatur? Our unique stores and restaurants keep people coming here
- enhance walkability
- educate people about the history of Decatur; "Decatur 101" is good way to learn history, could offer more often and with more focus on history, e.g., Decatur's role in civil rights, school desegregation; someone could develop a specific session or course, Encyclopedia Decatur
- more winter/fall activities, festivals
- Why is there no diversity in these round table groups? [Because of] how it is advertised and communicated?
- Diversity is about more than race, also income and age
- Community preservation should also include preservation of the people who make up the community. MLK work weekend 1x/year a good gesture, but need more effort to preserve Decatur's cultural heritage through preserving economic diversity, helping people stay in their homes..
- Importance of economic diversity: our police officers, firefighters can't afford to live here.
- Need more affordable homes, trusts to keep homes affordable.
- Attract more businesses to support the tax base.
- Need for Callaway Building to be bought and redeveloped. [Facilitator's note: group included a former City employee who mentioned this - most or all of other participants did not know which building it is, or what occupies it or who owns it. All agreed redevelopment would be good.]
- Establish more historic neighborhoods preservation- local historic districts
- Aesthetic harmony in neighborhoods
- Keep harmony in neighborhoods
- Keep involving public in decisions
- Sustain sensitive populations (long term residents, elderly, low and mid-income) with tax breaks
- Benefits/savings for long time residents so they don't leave
- Increase environmental sustainability.
- Composting (can be money maker)
- Alternative energy (methane gas)
- Yard and food waste composting
- City compost area should be better used and advertised

- Compost should stay within the city- not go to county compost
- Better local composting in general
- How are we preserving water (no one is group knows) Needs encouragement and funding
- Green roofs downtown on flat roofs
- Subsidize energy and water preservation, incentives
- Government buildings should be green leaders. DeKalb/Decatur City should work together.
- Is there available info for smart sustainability? What is best?
- We want to learn, plan. Lead green development, Decatur should be positive example.
- Create green cooperative so can learn about sustainability such as bike co-op and a place to learn how to make rain barrels. Trustworthy, reliable information.
- Don't get bigger, get better. Regulations necessary to control amount of building, size. Housing should be built for seniors from beginning, should have laws / regulations to fit the vision of changing demographics. Review existing code
- Concerns over 14% commercial tax base - unusually low. Plan smart to grow commercial tax base. Should encourage high density / mixed use / mixed income development. Encourage commercial property / annex commercial areas.
- Preserve historic districts / char of city, cure "McMansion" problem. Manage transitions between commercial / high density and lower density residential areas. Review regulations on how we designate historic areas, get guidelines now before expansion / development so that everyone knows standards before hand - lead to less controversy.
- Renovate existing structures
- Increase diversity of shops, need for general store, not just boutique shops
- Affordable rent for businesses
- Large stores (i.e. Trader Joe's etc) would be good to drive residences and people to Decatur area
- Creative ways of charging non-profits for services (trash / recycling collection, etc)
- City is repaving Willow Lane. DeKalb County plans to repave as well. DeKalb contacted City of Decatur, but Decatur is going ahead with paving b/c of needing to spend state money. Road crosses flood plain
- Patillo Way and Greenwood Circle has had flood problems for years. Had to pay 1000. To add lip to driveway. City came by and repaved, destroyed lip and covered manhole covers. City claimed it was use of state money and could not do anything about it. Later came back and milled pavement a foot deep.
- Poplar and Inman has dangerous storm water drainage issues. Child could be hurt
- DeKalb County most paved County in GA. DeKalb goes by old paradigm. . "pave it over"
- Decatur should adopt same ordinances as the City of Atlanta regarding landscaping parking lots. Could use ordinances to remedy Callaway parking lot
- Decatur must appreciate and preserve historic buildings
- Stick to current city limits. Plans to annex not valid.

- The variety of housing types - historic to brand new - is a real asset.
- The diversity of Decatur is wonderful but some kinds of diversity are diminishing (e.g., racial).
- More lo-tech communication - bulletin boards, local radio
- Better directional signs - to library, parks, parking
- Economics: the tax burden needs to spread away from home owners, But we do get good return for our tax dollars, Lots of non-profit entities that don't pay taxes
- More business development
- Brick & mortar business might not be the only answer
- Cultural activities--theaters, etc.
- Technology can facilitate this (cultural activities)
- Current office space should be better used
- How to attract?
- Real estate expensive
- How do we achieve and keep our neighborhood feel?
- Don't approve every permit for larger homes. Declare certain areas affordable? Subsidies? Hard to sustain.
- Neighborhoods give Decatur character--keep what we have, but allow for change.
- Look at revenue alternatives
- We could charge for driving in to the city, as they do in London. "Pay as you drive."
- Nice to have activity on the streets at all times of the day and night
- Our city personnel are passionate, caring and visionary. Pay them well and keep them--don't let other cities lure them away.
- Attract independent businesses that are self-sustaining
- Decatur Job board- where all businesses post job openings
- Protect our natural environment
- Taking care of the older population
- Help in transitioning elderly to assisted living in the neighborhood
- Help elderly with transportation
- Attract volunteer groups that work with the elderly
- Filling in the ugly spaces, make walking routes safer and more scenic
- Make ground level areas pedestrian [friendly] (it's already happening but just keeping improving it)
- Need nicer office space/repurpose buildings to attract more & upscale businesses
- Make Decatur more attractive to creative businesses with features like open floor plans, loft space, cool/modern spaces, shared incubation space/networking
- Attract developers who specialize in creative/loft style space
- Bring in more affordable restaurants/delis/casual eateries (NOT fast food though) and a child-friendly pub (good beer and play space)

- Need a toy store
- Consider closing Ponce de Leon to make a pedestrian mall (traffic study needed)
- Lower taxes
- Offer tax incentives for storm water reduction, corrections
- Credits for volunteering against taxes or traffic fines/penalties
- Issuance of more parking tickets, rigorous enforcement of parking ordinances - which would lead to increased revenues, encourage walkability and sustainability
- Sustain City by becoming, continuing to be a model (i.e., leader in education, parking, transportation)
- Citywide coordination of parking
- Rationalized parking, cooperation between and among businesses, locations
- Tax breaks for work force
- Public safety remain a budget priority
- Incentives for businesses - bulk up commercial tax base, fill-in "Dead Zone," revitalization of business areas would create jobs, relieve traffic congestion, distribute tax base
- Greater economic development by City, partnering with private
- RETAIL MIX. Include in development plan, limit national chains, meet downtown development plan requirements, grocery store. Our group expressed pleasure with the current retail mix in the City and want to make sure that similar efforts are made going forward. An exception to the displeasure for national chains was expressed with respect to Starbucks, since they fit into an existing historic space well.
- CODIFY OR CREATE ECONOMIC INCENTIVES. Explore options like required local ownership, rent controls or such things that would assist with maintaining and expanding the type of retail mix we presently have.
- Balancing grow[th] and livability
- Zoning, smart growth and forward thinking
- Small town feel and affordable home
- Recycle the land
- Maintain people's small houses
- Expansion of partnership with seniors and anyone that needs help
- How to provide housing stock for diverse income levels
- Sustain what we've been doing with controlled growth
- These Round Table discussions periodically would be a good tool for sustainability
- Help proven businesses to stay in the city during tough economic times --taxes too high, rent too high
- Encourage businesses with zoning benefits, incentives
- More cooperation between the City and School Board
- Fear that the big chain restaurants could replace the local businesses

- Continue to actively pursue the businesses to come to Decatur that we want here
- Incentives for people to come into Decatur to buy/spend money
- Review land use / zoning – especially commercial/residential transitions
- Tree preservation
- More sidewalk trees
- Planting and replanting
- Education and support for tree owners
- Encourage green building/development
- Green building ordinance?
- Encourage trees in parking lots
- Preserve commitment to height ordinance—80 foot max
- City fiscal responsibility
- Too many employees?
- Pensions?
- Careful consideration of all annexation issues
- Review/strengthen infill rules
- Implement overlay zone on all C-2 / R-60 abutments
- Achieve uniformity
- Planning Dept and Economic Development are important in the process
- Encourage younger talent to get involved
- Safety
- Maintain stable tax rates
- Spend wisely
- Have credible leadership
- Maintain transparency of government
- B: How do we preserve the things we appreciate:
- More strict guidelines for redevelopment
- Maintain diversity thru more affordable housing
- Affordable housing does not equal low income
- Maybe we stop paying taxes at a certain age
- Age 65 and no children and stop paying school taxes
- Keep the city as walkable as possible
- Specifically, Clairemont is built for cars and could benefit from looking at a “complete streets” program to overhaul it.
- Scott Boulevard is terrible for cyclists
- Fixing some of these problems might cause congestion, but would be better for pedestrians
- Crossing the tracks from Oakhurst to downtown also needs to be improved
- A major challenge in doing this would be getting cooperation with the city’s regional partners

- The group felt that the city could work better with Emory University, which is currently doing lots of campus transportation planning
- Heal the railroad issues...creative ways to make railroad work with us like landscape, underpass, overpass
- Balance economic health- real city, real place, not resort, real places to shop for needs
- Downtown sustainable by more diverse businesses- practice everyday affordable needs ex-target...can be built to look like city (example D.C shops have look of city not big giant retail
- City that works for all income levels-shops not outgrowing the income of its citizens
- Encourage more everyday use -be able to walk to your errands on foot...be healthier
- Corner stores/grocery stores that are attractive and local
- Better version of little Kroger or Trader Joes
- Maintain high quality service- can't be sustained without maintaining tax structure, so broader taxing on "other" non residential
- Fees for county and churches...
- Prepare for economic uncertainty

## **Tending to the natural environment**

*How do we preserve and improve our natural environment? How do we protect our air, water and green space?*

- Biking
- Sidewalks
- Look at underutilized public land for green space
- Community gardens
- Water
- Water quality in streams is bad, recent test showed sewage (bacteria) and alkaline (means dumping of cleaning products)
- Beautify creek areas
- Creek next to Winnona Park Elementary has warning signs (don't let children/pets play in water)
- Continue to test water in creeks and streams
- Need dedicated environmental city official
- Does "pay as you throw" encourage poor sanitation, people to get around policy, or hoard trash?
- Develop incentives for residents/businesses to be environmentally forward (e.g., tax breaks, cash).
- Provide education to residents - city can offer class (like "this old house" seminar) or post information on how to be environmentally conscious on the city website
- Home audit from GA Power
- Develop program to cut down on plastic (e.g., bottles, bags) - incentive to live green
- Upgrade city tree policy - while you need a permit to cut a tree of a certain size, perhaps we also need a "replace" policy (need to plant a tree to replace cut one).
- City buildings should pursue environmental certification
- Promote planting of trees, not just bushes, etc.
- Maintain recycling programs
- Continue to be resourceful
- Promote rain barrel usage and A/C drainage collection
- Partner with ASC to use their vacant lots as green space for now
- Encourage walking, but increase "rest areas" (i.e. benches)
- Promote water use contest (i.e. Gallons per person per day) as a fun way to educate about conservation & recycling
- Educate about air pollution, what contributes to it? How can we reduce our impact?
- Promote green space donation
- Increase amount of green space required per population density (i.e. in multi-housing developments)

- Challenge - Aging trees
- Challenge - Cost of land
- Create a carbon neutral city
- Make the city a zero-waste zone
- Mandate composting, provide a pick-up service
- Make sure city practices green procurement (local, recyclable, sustainable purchases)
- Require commercial recycling or provide a commercial recycling program
- Electric car recharge stations around the city (government parking lots)
- Pay as you throw enforcement for condos and businesses (based on weight of trash in dumpster, charged to HOA/business dumpster rental because individual charges are impossible)
- Rain barrels/cisterns for capturing and reusing rainwater
- Community recycling/waste management education programs
- Liaison to bring city and school planning together
- Gathering places need recycling bins
- There are concerns that the recycling doesn't really get sorted
- We need more public awareness and education about what you can and cannot recycle
- The City needs to publish what happens to recycled items so we can patronize those new products
- We need centralized recycling and less hassle for condos, multifamily, businesses, and single family residential
- We need compost pickup and facilities for condos
- Compost should be tied into the city farm idea
- We need an "Orca" which is a high capacity composting machine that makes a "tea"
- Cooking oil should be used for alternative energy
- We need education and incentives for alternative energy solutions in homes
- We need a co-op that provides energy efficient upgrades to be done at below market costs
- We need local tax break by the City for energy efficient upgrades
- We need a commercial recycling program
- We need a recycling program for building materials during renovations and new construction
- We need to educate the community about how to recycle building materials
- We need Electric Car facilities, like plug ins
- We need service stations that sell alternative fuels
- We need a comprehensive sustainability policy
- The Sustainability Board is a good thing, but the public needs to keep track of what is going on and get updates
- Preserve the existing tree canopy
- Improve air quality
- Use Smart Growth guidelines from the National Resource Defense Council to guide development

- Smart Growth means higher density, multiple uses, transportation choices and that the town looks unique
- more pervious space - get rid of paved parking lots
- each business should be required to plant green
- minimize footprint of parking by building parking decks
- more public / private partnership for alternative energy i.e. solar, geothermal
- codes to promote energy efficiency (which costs less when new build)
- reduce air pollution through less car use
- green space - preserve it, get more of it
- Water: While not having our own services - since DeKalb County provides- we can still be aggressive through actions such as the city providing a Toilet Replacement Program;
- city providing a program to encourage rain barrels at residences;
- Water treatment is energy and chemically intensive- Develop methods to reduce the need for treated water such as a city-wide grey water system
- Be aware of impervious surfaces and their impact on the natural environment
- Looking for alternatives to asphalt
- Porous paving for sidewalks, e.g., {use of rain gardens}
- Education of the public to the issues and the need for pervious surfaces
- Promote additional green space (while being aware of the cost)
- Require tree replacement when trees are cut
- More carrots less stick: e.g. Have a resident STAFF expert on grant matches for environmental matters
- Use tree planters to reduce urban heat island effects in parking lots, etc.
- Encourage green and white roofs
- Provide Incentives through Grants- the Grant Coordinator
- Decatur should be proactive with greening the building stock- city could offer incentives for improvements similar to toilet replacement program where green development is encouraged
- City could aggregate energy efficiency technology (so that certain technology may be cheaper through a bulk contract)- Does DeKalb County have program already in place?, Perhaps through a tax credit or a financing mechanism to incentivize insulation, e.g. such as the PACE concepts
- Green roofs
- LEED/energy efficiency incentives
- Environmental education in the schools
- Community gardens
- Flood plain reuse for gardens and/or recreation
- Stronger tree ordinance
- Incentives for automobile-less lifestyle
- Parking incentives for alternate transportation/scooters/small cars

- Encourage energy audits
- Month Focus article about environmental topics
- Decrease airplane noise pollution
- Establish habitat certification with organization like Audubon Society
- Minimize storm water runoff and encourage capture and re-use
- City sponsored rail barrels ala recycling bins
- Expand recycling program
- Canopy replacement
- monitor water quality, air quality so we can look for appropriate solutions
- Storm water is a threat to water quality
- Consider permeable pavement - is this an option?
- Incorporate eco-based storm water quality treatments on public right of ways
- Support composting program for the city
- More urban farms
- Divert restaurant waste to composting for farms
- Improved bike and pedestrian mobility
- Ensure we have a healthy tree canopy
- Have a tree ordinance "with teeth"
- Explore no net loss of canopy. E.g. Emory - they may take a tree down in one area but they put one up somewhere else.
- Stop proliferation of power lines. Bury them!
- Harvest, recycle and reclaim water
- traffic -- minimize idling by timing traffic lights
- trees - set canopy goals
- ordinance only applies to new construction
- need more trees in parking lots.
- community gardens...maybe even in parking lots
- more composting options -- city coordinated
- Recognize interdependence with Atlanta
- Be engaged with the larger Metro Area
- Include biking, walking in a transportation plan
- actively seek greenspace opportunities
- encourage tree planting
- add green space around DeKalb County courthouse (pretty it up!) and same with the prisoner holding area across the street from the courthouse
- explore constraints to improving our natural environment by being the county seat
- Resolve relationship with the county

- investigate need for all that parking space (lots) on Church and Commerce and DeKalb Medical Center
- Improve flood areas
- Reduce erosion
- Laws around 40% greenspace
- Increase education around how increasing parks and greenspace will increase property value
- Figure out where we are in energy consumption and waste in Decatur and share numbers with community.
- Educate on true time to walk places
- Add 1 cent sales tax to buy old houses and take them down and create green space.
- Improve Dearborn Park
- Get people out of cars
- Manage air space with airplanes==help to reduce air pollution
- Make streets safer
- More organized trash pickup-create community involvement- volunteer and get a t-shirt
- Take more pride in city-increase trash cans around town and have kids from schools paint them.
- Lower speed limits
- Studies to better flow of traffic, traffic lights and commuting with bikes
- Balance design of roads to include bikes and walking
- Bike sharing
- Education on environmental policies in place
- Impact of idling in car
- Tax benefits for hybrid/alternative fuel vehicles and special parking benefits
- Increase number of bike racks
- Bike valet at all festivals
- Stronger tree ordinance should be approved and implemented
- Continue with dog parks
- Continue city "flood plain" purchase
- Consider educational arm to encourage personal conservation efforts
- Broaden existing programs and knowledge base to make citizens aware of environmental issues
- Provide incentives to developers for creatively balancing density and greenspace
- Approach institutions with ample land to "double-duty their property for resident use (as city green space). -i.e. Agnes Scott / Columbia Seminary
- No idling zones
- Charging stations for electric cars
- Promote light-duty transportation vehicles
- All gov't cars should be natural gas/electric powered, including garbage and recycling trucks
- Schools should compost

- Recycling program for businesses
- Need better control of storm water runoff from both public and private property, recreate natural environment in doing this, not with curb and gutter, reduce runoff to more natural state, code changes are needed, Toco Hill library branch is good example
- Drainage systems can be turned into streams (more natural body of water), Westchester Park is good example, use to connect green spaces
- Create incentives for individuals to collect and conserve water, educate public on how and why need to do this using Focus, festivals, etc., do outreach activities, make sure zoning codes don't discourage this
- Central City does well with trees, place more emphasis on tree protection and education of public about trees
- Need to replace and revitalize tree canopy throughout the City to offset coming loss of large canopy trees, encourage replanting of such trees city and county wide, partner with Trees Atlanta and other such entities
- Look at partnership with DeKalb County to encourage use of rain barrels, composting, etc.
- Transportation improvements would improve air quality (one group member was surprised at Atlanta's poor air quality)
- Use alternative fuels in public transportation (e.g., biofuels)
- Create green space walk way connecting cemetery to other parts of City, in particular with intersection at East Ponce de Leon Avenue and Commerce Drive, ideas for this area were walking path or community garden in blighted property along Commerce Drive
- Ban sale of English Ivy in City, remove all invasive plants from public spaces and educate homeowners on need to do same
- Keep parking spaces along Church Street near Glenlake Park, need traffic calming along Church Street
- preserve lots such as the lot on the corner of Church & Commerce
- Utilize city owned lots as - Community gardens
- Utilize city owned lots as - Usable pocket parks
- Utilize waste from restaurants, Grease as biodiesel
- Connect parks and other areas of greenspace
- Create a green beltline
- Dedicated funding to buy more greenspace
- Utilize flood plain space
- Air quality, Charging stations for electric cars
- Encourage/require alternative energy sources in new developments, Provide city-backed loans to aid this
- Improve standards for newly built city buildings (LEED)
- LED street lights

- Retention ponds and re-use of H2O
- Decatur could be more self-sustaining
- Multi-use pocket parks
- With increases in the number of city gardens we need to use pesticides carefully - limited types, only certain times of day, etc.
- Protect green spaces by ticketing those who walk across them
- More focus on storm-water run-off and the use of landscaping chemicals that can pollute run-off
- Conduct a study of water run-off and encourage better run-off management by property owners
- Protect green space for walking, for farming
- Focus on noise pollution (emphasize the value of silence), leaf blowers, unmuffled cars, radios / car stereos
- Composting or other use for food waste generated by city schools (biomass energy)
- No Styrofoam
- We need to figure out how to balance the return on investment on land while preserving greenspace. Knob Hill did it wrong.
- The city has to step up and own the environment - the city controls the zoning, thereby affecting price. So, a lot worth 3 million right now zoned for 90 homes maybe should only be zoned for 45 in the future. But the bank won't loan 3 million on a lot for 45 homes, but that would naturally drive down the value of that lot to about 1.5 million. The homes would end up actually having a higher value because the trees planted/preserved add value to the land. The city creates the economic environment through zoning and can zone to require more greenspace. - This would be visionary zoning.
- Natural environments should be required in development.
- The tree ordinance on the table should be supported.
- There should be a zoning requirement around the tree canopy and number of contiguous trees.
- We should have a quiet zone/time - for example on Sunday mornings from 8-12 and it should be part of the noise ordinance. No mowing/leaf blowers, etc.
- The zoning codes should include requirements around green practices with dealing with storm water. Every lot should be required to be storm water neutral. However, we need to think beyond retention ponds. That isn't the way to deal with storm water.
- We should give credits/incentives for green practices like Pervious cement, Green roofs, Rain barrels, Rain gardens
- NOW is the time do all of this. Real estate/land prices are down and so if we enact zoning changes now, it won't be in the midst of a fever-pitch real estate market and we can actually take time and be thoughtful about what we want to achieve and work to avoid any unintended consequences.
- More parks and community gardens
- More education (i.e. composting, rain barrels)

- Clean up and control storm water
- More trees and 'smarter trees'
- Eliminate or reduce car transportation
- Encourage car pools
- Use web to find buddies (carpool)
- Live/work units
- Local tax credit for alternative use of energy
- Tax credit for sustainable energy
- Decatur version of Cliff Bus
- eliminate some [vehicular] traffic
- reduce energy use: create subsidy for people to invest in less expensive solar energy systems so they can generate own power and sell excess back to the grid
- rainwater harvesting
- City provide information to residents about how to reduce energy use
- secure grant funding to support senior residents investing in rainwater harvesting, solar energy systems
- tax incentives for green solutions
- increase landscape plantings wherever possible, even small increments, to relieve all the pavement; find neighborhood groups to maintain (instead of City)
- encourage people to reduce turf and use more native plants
- establish a green award to encourage people to value biodiversity in their yards, reduce use of chemicals
- City acquire green space when it becomes available to preserve
- invest in consultants to get needed expertise
- No /reduce Styrofoam / plastic in restaurants. Encourage recycling in business and apts / condos. Demand is there, just need operational ability
- Increase fines for tree removal
- More bike / pedestrian lanes for travel
- Highlighting natural resources through education, signs over waterways, etc
- Stick and carrot approach, ordinances + tax incentives, combine with fed, local, and state (i.e. solar power water heaters, etc)
- Water / sewer - poor pipes and infrastructure. Review current and assess county vs. city conflicts
- Label drainage / education. Use online resources reports for air quality other statistics, working into public events. Spread information about how Decatur is doing with regards to sustainability
- Better light timings - improve air quality, left turn arrows at specific intersections are not timed correctly. May be a county issue, should see if Decatur community can influence county action
- Would like more green spaces, but concerned on impact on taxes

- Electric Shuttle between neighborhoods, help relieve traffic. Could charge nominal fee and could sustain itself. Make it unique, like a trolley.
- Smaller parks / greenspace. Areas with benches with grass, along tracks, etc
- Signage for parking lots, parks, etc. larger and more noticeable.
- Street trees need to be a part of Decatur's future
- Use pervious pavement (Cornell Structural soil) for future parking lots
- Intersections that need landscaping and safety attention: Church and Commerce, McDonough and College and McDonough from DHS to the square
- City needs its own arborist: could educate public on appropriate trees to plants regarding sidewalk issues, root structure, life of trees, canopy, utility wires, etc.
- City should dictate all utilities Companies when dealing with City's trees. GA Power comes through and chops trees tops
- We want all utilities in conduits like Peachtree City
- Trees were torn down with Housing Authority buildings
- Need to be actively planning and planting trees for future tree canopy. Current canopy in decline
- City needs tree ordinances for private property owners.
- City needs to educate private property owners regarding types of trees to plant
- Developers should replace trees taken down with 4-5 new ones
- City has to be more responsible with builders regarding trees
- Canopy dictates our storm drainage, AC and power bills
- Do not sell public property, maintain and add to public land, create green space
- Take long-term view with public property
- When making policy, be empathetic to how it would affect you and others as citizens
- Create a citizens' advisory board
- Create a green space commission
- Create a green or emerald necklace through the city
- City should buy property on Scott and Clairemont next to woodland gardens. If developed, has to be mixed use space of green space and building
- Urban development should have the same ordinance or codes and builders.
- Pedestrian traffic must be addressed at corner of Candler and College
- Trees: intentional canopy replacement
- Storm water drainage needs attention
- How do we preserve and improve our natural environment? How do we protect our air, water and green space?
- More flowering plants to complement all the green
- Wildflower fields
- Preserve our trees - the wonderful green canopy. But don't force tree planting on home owners

- Have public composting sites as part of waste management (San Francisco has a pilot program along these lines)
- More attention to flood-risk areas
- Attention to water run-off erosion
- A bird sanctuary
- How about a squirrel-powered source of electricity?
- Provide communal green space near where people live. Make sure each neighborhood has green space, and connect them to one another.
- Lots of green space not used right now. Buy "at risk" properties.
- Along with the job board mentioned above, have natural preservation board
- A message board for volunteer opportunities, Have it not only on website- but make sure the website is publicized through email, Make website more like a blog- have more news and e-mail blasts
- Replace dying trees
- Ordinance encouraging [environmental]preservation
- Bike lanes on the actual street
- Decatur Transportation system
- Closing Ponce on the square and McDonough- make it a pedestrian mall
- More communication in neighborhoods
- Have neighborhood areas on website
- Annual "clean-up Decatur day" With a festival after it
- Figure out a way to keep Atlanta pollution out!
- Encourage green businesses that provide solutions to environmental issues
- Develop alternative transportation infrastructure (see notes #3)
- List the properties that could be greenspaces (that exist but are undeveloped) on the website so communities could use, turn into gardens, use by schools, etc. and who at the city should be contacted for this
- Clarify roles in maintaining and developing parks/greenspaces - what is the role of neighborhood vs. city
- Figure out ways to collaborate and share greenspaces that exist already
- Develop pocket parks
- Communicate if there is a plan to acquire or develop greenspace
- Keep the dogparks
- Tree replacement program
- Expansion of recycling program to multi-family residential and commercial and to include food waste
- Curbside composting
- Fully utilize MARTA, CLIFF

- City involvement in MARTA
- Expand sidewalk program to both sides of all streets
- Expand bike lanes
- Storm water policy, improvement
- Rooftop gardens
- Inventory and designated greenspace
- Tax incentives for LEED certification
- Environmental construction costs more, but that will diminish over time
- Study of water shortages - drought tolerate plants, landscaping; limitation on number of car washes
- How do we preserve and improve our natural environment? How do we protect our air, water and green space?
- STOP OR LIMIT DEVELOPMENT. Our group would rather have a moratorium on any development rather than allow any development that isn't carefully considered with respect to meeting the standards that have been established.
- GARDEN TOPS. Can these be incorporated in development requirements? Hooray for rooftop and ledge type gardens and greenery.
- RESIDENTIAL REQUIREMENTS TO COMMERCIAL. Comments about the restrictions on re-development that have been adopted with respect to residential rebuilding efforts led to thoughts of having similar restrictions commercially.
- LEED AND ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIREMENTS. Greater effort should be made towards encouraging or requiring LEED Certification or other types of environmental certification for all new construction and rebuilding projects in the City.
- BEYOND DECATUR. It was noted that environmental issues often extend to or apply to issues beyond our borders, and the group encourages our City officials to work with DeKalb County, Atlanta Regional Commission, and state officials on efforts in these areas.
- STREAMS. Upon noting that several streams originate within our City, the group felt that greater cleanup efforts are needed. Also increased policing of pollution problems, as it was noted that any problems with the water leaving our City had far ranging impact on both sides of the Subcontinental Divide to the Atlantic and Gulf. Concern was also expressed over the parking lot runoff from our City to the streams.
- WATER RECLAMATION INCENTIVES. The City should explore options with respect to educating citizens and encouraging water reclamation efforts.
- Maintain what greenspace we have
- Balance greenspace throughout north and south Decatur
- Upgrade storm water infrastructure, improve/prevent erosion, reduce storm water runoff
- More pervious surfaces
- More parks and playgrounds for everyone throughout north and south Decatur

- Conserve 'open' space without trees as open play areas, turf area
- Enforcement of regulations by local authorities
- Encourage the school system to protect / expand their green spaces
- More unpaved trails
- Add extra greenspaces so current greenspaces aren't overused --set aside funds for this
- Athletic facilities are overused --not enough of them
- Parks are being impacted by overuse
- Buy land for additional park space and athletic fields
- Create lots on edges of town to park cars so interior is more walkable and bikeable --create car-free zones
- Provide more places bicycles
- Encourage water collection and containment --use to improve the growth of plants
- Buildings to collect water for plant material, parks (incentives) --residences too
- Runoff problems - improve the storm water system to handle runoff --encourage permeable surfaces instead of hard surfaces
- Reduce traffic to improve air quality
- Use a "fur bus"-like system to go around to businesses
- Encourage and support restaurants in using green take-out containers
- Encourage/require institutional and commercial recycling
- Enhance walkability
- Improvements to Commerce Drive for pedestrians / Ponce to Clairemont traffic calming
- More sidewalks and bike lanes
- Pedestrian islands on large streets
- Bike lanes and other improvements for biking on Clairemont
- Review execution of new parking on Church Street at Glenlake Pool – traffic safety? (road narrowing and reducing lanes is a good idea)
- Enhance/support bike parking/racks
- Educational programs (rec center?) for nutrition, personal finance, and gardening
- Encourage more personal and community gardens
- Pedestrian/bikeways connecting neighborhoods and other areas
- Public garbage cans—add more
- Add more dog waste stations
- Collaboration with Trees Atlanta
- Public transportation
- Add multi-use trails
- Condemn/re-appropriate more greenspace
- Have co-operative agreements between neighbors (foottrails and greenspace)
- Performance/protection bonds on construction sites for trees, etc

- Ways to conserve water and capture with rain barrel capture systems
- Save gray water
- Revise/develop regulations for erosion control
- Incentives for impervious surfaces
- Take traffic off roads by adding more free bike exchange
- Plant more trees
- Regulate idling car engines
- Have infiltration systems to capture more water
- Rigorous enforcement of industrial parking lots
- Shuttle services i.e. cliff valley
- Joint development with other municipalities and institutions
- Recommendation from appropriate professionals for use of fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides
- Acquire greenspace thru storm water utility fund
- Tree Ordinance
- The city needs to create a better balance between residential and commercial needs around the issue of tree removal
- It was suggested that Emory University has an interesting policy on trees and open space on the campus, and would be worth looking at by the city's staff
- L.E.E.D Standards
- There was disagreement in the group about whether mandating LEED standards for downtown buildings were a good idea.
- Recognition of importance of being energy efficient, but skeptical over the effectiveness of the LEED program
- It was suggested that the city use trade-offs to incentive developers to use certain building standards downtown, but not specifically what those trade-offs should be
- Group members wanted to make sure that any brownfields in the city were identified and cleaned up
- Lead paint is an issue in Decatur because there are many older homes
- Water
- Public education is a good way to help people conserve water
- Run-off is a problem in the city. Chamblee, Sandy Springs and other cities require run-off septic tanks
- Parks
- McKoy Park's pool is built way too small for the population, but the park is important for the community's cohesion
- Glenlake park has a storm-water run-off problem
- Pools
- The city should look into developing a private pool in Decatur

- The city could form a task force or conduct research on what other cities are implementing around sustainable practices
- underground utilities
- Trees-subsidize the fear of the falling trees and preserve and protect good ones, plant new ones
- City arborist/program to plant new trees, inspect property upon request
- Create a policy on maintenance of healthy canopy
- Policy of waterways/ storm run offs to be enforced by city, make decisions more uniform so many individuals problem solving and not in a uniform way. Example- peavine creek
- Don't see DeKalb water maintaining and checking waterways and storm draining.
- The system now is dependent on homeowners and can be costly if over 50 feet so it can go not fixed
- Energy efficient incentives
- Wildlife management/arborist to help with all the great new green space

## Present and future mobility

*How do you get from place to place in Decatur, now? What might change in how we travel about in the next 10 years?*

- More pedestrian space around Square. Shut down street, eliminate competition for parking spaces
- Eddie's Attic side of courthouse loop backs up with court-goers trying to get a close spot. Eliminate those parking spaces (and ones in front of Brick Store?)
- Make entry into courthouse parking deck easier to alleviate traffic on McDonough and cut down on idling cars
- Add a deck or two and eliminate small parking spot clusters
- Better advertise free parking at courthouse after hours
- Promote walking, less driving - \*show\* people where to park (signage)
- More trees/benches on MARTA plaza
- Some worry about push back from the city that current green space is not used enough in order to justify developing even more - need to prove demand
- Pedi-cabs
- Make it easier to get to all areas of Decatur (e.g., a fare-based trolley, link to other neighborhoods and Emory)
- More people work at home
- Promote safe alternatives to motorized travel.
- Wider sidewalks - Create double-wide sidewalks on one side of the street and bump the road over.
- Make one-way streets around the courthouse/city center (Ponce, W. Trinity, Church & Commerce)
- Implement traffic calming measures (i.e. brick crosswalks, Bulb-out like in Candler Park, "All Red" Crosswalk phases for pedestrians if someone presses the button)
- Ticker more often for people who don't brake at crosswalks when people are present.
- Continue to encourage kids to walk to school (Safe Route to School)
- Educate and follow-up on the rules for pedestrians and drivers
- Relay the message/get attention with folk art signs posted at crosswalks
- City should get control of traffic lights in Decatur - get a traffic engineer
- Clustered businesses on each side of town so people don't have to cross town as often.
- Add a shuttle/street car / tram like we have with the Fur Bus during Terrific Thursdays, Tour of Homes, etc.
- Explore further shuttle opportunities, shuttles for concerts, or a reliable paid-shuttle.
- We currently travel by: walking, car, bike, the Emory "Cliff Bus", Pedi-Cab, Scooter

- Paths connected to the beltline to incorporate Decatur into the greater Atlanta area, connect historic neighborhoods
- Improve train track crossings for pedestrians/cyclists
- Bike paths on College Ave, sidewalk improvements
- Expand brick crosswalks, install more in neighborhoods
- Publicize benefits of stopping for pedestrians to encourage compliance
- Install more bike racks downtown
- Trolley line to connect Emory and Decatur
- Encourage parking at Avondale, East Lake and train rides into Decatur station by having a special subsidized card (especially for festivals)
- Shuttle between three MARTA stops that runs frequently; free on nights and weekends
- Need more bike parking.
- Need more shuttles: Shuttles needed between grocery store and housing authority, In the past there have been shuttles between the housing authority-Allen Wilson and Clairemont Elementary School
- Need more bike facilities like bike paths and bike lanes
- Bike paths should provide safety to non bicycle traffic such as walkers
- Need carts that allow people to carry groceries home
- Emory and Owl Shuttles are good
- We need to map who is traveling where.
- Need more traffic calming. The crosswalks are a good start
- Need better designed roads: West Howard Avenue has a limit of 35 but the road is designed to invite faster speeds
- The intersection at Commerce and Clairemont is very difficult to cross
- Need to close Ponce de Leon Avenue to traffic between Church Street and Commerce Drive
- People need to be taught to stop at crosswalks
- Pedestrian crossing timers need to be lengthened to allow more time to cross for kids and elderly
- When streets are very wide they need a half way point to facilitate ease in crossing
- We need to target streets that need to be calmed
- Church Streets temporary parking due to park renovations has help to calm traffic
- We want Decatur to be known as the City where you "slow down"
- We need signage that designates Decatur as a pedestrian friendly community and asks motorist to slow down as they enter the City
- We need a true vehicular bypass around or through Decatur
- The railroad tracks are a very dangerous situation and the school crossing guards encourage students to cross the tracks. The police don't enforce track crossing issues. A tunnel under the tracks like Agnes Scott but by the high/middle schools would be good but very expensive

- We need to remove parking on East Court Square and North McDonough Street in front of the Courthouse and expand the square
- We have enough parking ramps but need more bike racks
- We need alternative transportation in the Clifton Corridor on Clairemont Avenue
- Decatur's commitment to complete streets will help to provide these above facilities
- Remove parking from North McDonough by square and East Court Square
- Redevelop "dead zones" on Commerce and Church between Commerce/Ponce
- Remove or renovate bandstand on the Square. It is not functional as a performance space and blocks view of Old Courthouse
- Current parking decks in the city seem unfriendly
- Wayfinding signs blend in
- Parking decks should connect to the square visually
- Connect city through elevated gondolas
- Provide a suspended bridge from parking decks to square
- should be able to use alternative forms of transportation
- stop traffic on Ponce Commerce St. to Commerce St. (or at least Church) - pedestrian only
- more bike lanes and bike parking
- sidewalks on every street
- open air electric bus (like Tech trolley) not just through business area but through neighborhoods too (Thursday-Sunday?)
- rework dangerous pedestrian crossings
- golf cart friendly
- bike station: park, snacks, bike maintenance
- Train- 3 stations plus multiple bus stops
- Sidewalk improvements are making walking more doable
- Cars (although members mentioned having car-free days)
- Bikes - PATH and bike lanes, Expansion of PATH
- CLIFF bus (free, convenient, good schedule): get into Oakhurst, e.g.
- We want to be able to be at a destination more quickly- visual and other interest more often (i.e., we get to a 'place of interest more quickly- a shop, a store, a park, etc.)
- Promoting alternatives to the car for travel within the city
- More bicycling capabilities
- Promoting more walkability and bikeability and easier intersections!
- Find ways to divert or re-route traffic (non Decatur traffic) around the city so that we don't have all those folks cutting through and looking for shortest, fastest
- Bikeways encourage slower traffic
- Have a revival of the trolley system connecting all of Decatur
- Cars still need to be able to get in/out of Decatur BUT we want to limit through traffic

- Need to be able to be comfortable/ feel safe walking from downtown Decatur to various places outside the core city - perhaps better street lights along College, Columbia, etc.
- Provide a small, alternative fuel circulator system that moves through town (CNG or electric, similar to Chattanooga, TN non-stop, electric trolley)
- The RR crossings are intimidating, Marked crosswalks, Bridges
- Implement a shuttle service
- Encourage bicycle/scoot travel
- Bicycle/scoot - Dedicated lanes
- Bicycle/scoot - Close streets to automobiles
- Bicycle/scoot - Parking racks
- Golf carts
- Promote alternative transportation success stories
- Education citizens about alternative transportation methods
- Establish Ride-a-[bike/scooter/electric car/walk]-Day
- Promote and encourage short and long term parking near public transportation
- Have businesses provide incentives to customers and employees using public/alternative transportation
- Run a trolley along main arteries to connect neighborhoods with downtown and other frequently visited places within or near the city (Emory, Edgewood, DeKalb Farmers Market, E. Decatur Station)
- Improve parking signage
- Implement bike lanes, specifically on Clairemont, Church, College
- Create pedestrian zone by closing Ponce from SunTrust to Leon's
- Eliminate parking on E. Court and N. McDonough and turn into green space
- Intra city shuttle that has a regular route around business district, Need grants to fund it, 10 minute interval schedule, Regular route
- Need more bike lanes
- Volunteer repair workshop to help people build and repair bikes
- Program similar to yellow bikes for loan or rent (need a way to keep from getting stolen)
- Need Improved Crossings at Intersections, Will help improve traffic flow, Will make it safer for walkers
- Trouble spots are Candler/College and Atlantic/Howard
- Need a way to connect the high school with Renfroe, tunnel or bridge across RR
- Walking, Available shopping will result in more walking
- Walking/Shopping - Need essentials, i.e. place to buy underwear, office supplies
- Walking/Shopping - Need a variety store (example - Richard's Variety Store)
- Walking/Shopping - Keep big box stores away
- Walking/Shopping - Need more than boutiques but less than big box

- Walking/Shopping - Idea - use one of the large buildings for a Marketplace that houses many vendors of essentials - not gifts -
- Walking/Shopping - Need a movie theatre or show movies at an available space (in schools?)
- Trolley
- Encourage more electric cars (example Baskett's GEM car), have available charging stations, monetary incentives
- Driving, Discourage use of gasoline cars
- Need better signage for parking areas
- After hours agreements with offices to allow parking
- look for creative ways to expand public transit in and out of Decatur; Cliff/Marta
- children to and from school: safety needs to be a top priority: wide sidewalks; if safe for kids then safe for all; make it cool to ride bike to school
- make the commitment for change vis a vis bike, walk, then drill down to the nitty gritty on how to get it done. Keep all options on the table like park only on one side of street; identify where gaps are (breaks in connection) for bikes
- look for ways to have cars on the road less--reduce idling (waiting) and congestion, engineer it better
- better publicize available parking
- City is bikeable & walkable but we could do more if we had more "every day" life/essential amenities such as grocery store
- Some areas are not hospitable to bikers/walkers
- Need to create a safe infrastructure for kids for biking
- Frustrating when bikers stop up traffic lanes
- Consider "Bus Rapid Transit" like LA. Basically a fast bus that drops people at subway line to maximize use
- Need more "end of trip" facilities to store bikes
- Need to better understand when people use their cars and determine if City can address that thru attracting certain types of businesses
- Encourage small pockets of commercial spaces to make accessible with short walk (e.g. 5 min)
- walk / drive
- city bus
- awkward to bike through town
- Some take Cliff
- idea of tram to connect neighborhoods
- need more bike paths, lanes
- safety is an issue for walkers and bikers
- we have too much drive through traffic
- walking past probation office on Church is a problem

- need traffic lights sped up for walkers
- need pedestrian bridges over the Railroad tracks
- need alternative to get to Emory area
- need more parking
- need more publicity for free parking in city garages on nights and weekends
- progressive, alternative transportation connecting neighborhoods
- Need to connect to coming Beltline
- Join our bike path to Ponce corridor and the parks along Ponce
- Must work with surrounding cities and counties
- Community Bus that transports folks from nearby neighborhoods to downtown for festivals, shopping, dining, etc.
- Better sidewalks - farther from busy roadsides
- Make traffic more manageable
- wider sidewalks
- Encourage smaller cars
- Explore a trolley from East Lake to Avondale and Clairemont to VA to Agnes Scott.
- Better public transportation for people who cannot bike and walk.
- More time to cross street-alternative crossing lights
- Traffic lights on raised crosswalks like in Seattle
- Improve sidewalks
- Ticket people that run crosswalks
- Crosswalk at Marta stops
- Educate on carpooling in schools
- Use technology that is Decatur specific to support carpooling
- Zip car back in Decatur
- Increased awareness about taxi cabs
- More pedi-cabs
- Better mass transit
- Have Decatur people lobby for MARTA
- Decatur beltline
- Gas car (daily)
- Bike/Scooter (medium frequency)
- CCTAM/Marta BUS (only for work and rarely)
- Walk (daily)
- Cad/pedi-cab (rarely/ some not aware of pedi-cab)
- In future, more likely to use electric cars (or other electric vehicles)
- Use (implement) small group (scale) city transportation that has frequent stops at regular schedules

- Implement late-night solution for business-to-home transportation
- Increase bike and scooter lanes
- Consider that destination is not always downtown Decatur, public transport to and from Oakhurst and other perimeter satellite centers will be needed
- DeVry property will be a nodule (satellite center) for activity and residential
- More motorcycles and scooters
- Provide incentives for development that has none or limited (or deeded) parking in order to encourage pedestrian/bike/scooter/public transport
- Walk, bike, and drive to work and other places, teenagers seem to walk everywhere, three people in group ride bicycles regularly, some others in group are afraid to ride bicycles on roads, all in group drive places
- Commerce Street sidewalk is not pedestrian friendly, in 10 years make it more walkable by adding green space between sidewalk and roadway, grassy median, reduce to 2 lanes
- Recent skateboard ban in downtown area went overboard, skateboards are viable form of transportation
- Shuttle to Emory is used by some in group, good model for City in future-
- shuttle to get around City, encourage residents and visitors to park car at beginning of day and then not use car until end of day
- Develop and encourage use of alternative transportation methods to get around City- pedicabs, rickshaws
- Set up remote parking with public transportation into City- Suburban Plaza, old
- Chamber of Commerce building parking lot are possibilities, model would be Emory shuttle
- Bring back trolley line in Oakhurst and connect to downtown area
- Keep all MARTA stops in City
- Improve section of Church Street between East Ponce de Leon Avenue and
- Commerce Drive, now a dead zone, unfriendly to pedestrians
- Free parking is not the solution
- Better ability to park once for multiple activities on the square
- More "bulb outs" in neighborhoods to calm traffic
- Bike lanes - More lanes in general / make them safe and well thought out
- Bike lanes - On Clairemont
- City-wide campaign for biking / walking
- Aging residents not able to bike / walk everywhere.
- Provide a Decatur Bus (electric) / transit system
- Be sure lower income areas are included in transit plan
- Better rail crossings
- We need to feel safer and be safer to get around without a car
- Create a "Yellow Bike" program: free bikes available around city for anyone to use

- Create a bike program to get people out of their cars
- Create a tax or toll for those driving their cars into the downtown area (i.e. London)
- Educate people on how to get around without cars
- Safety! Protection from motorized vehicles and from criminals
- Jitney service for the elderly and disabled
- Turn empty lots into city owned parking garages
- Get more people to use the existing DeKalb Co. parking deck
- We need transportation options in and out of Decatur
- Currently can only run limited number of errands on foot
- It takes from 7 to 15 minutes to get from Oakhurst to here (downtown Decatur)
- I live downtown and walk a lot
- We can ride Marta to the airport, arts etc
- Growth in pop. Density will create parking issues
- City Ordinances need to have "vision"
- We need lots of options downtown: Zip, bus, taxi, Cliff Bus, bikes
- Support the Beltline
- Trolley
- Expand the Cliff Service
- How can we encourage people to walk (or drive less)
- You can now download an app that tells you where Cliff and buses are in real time
- Incentivize walking or using mass transit
- Educate, advertise and promote options
- Offer more options than driving
- Healthier
- Make it physically safe to ride bikes with bike lanes
- Create protected bike paths (designated like in Paris)
- Make it safe to ride all the way to five points
- How about no cars in downtown Decatur (i.e. Quincy Market in Boston)
- Light rail line down Clairemont
- Hydrogen powered buses – congestion
- Traffic lights, timing, not good for pedestrians or cars
- Ability to move around Decatur
- Services within alternative transportation reach
- Trams, buses, light vehicles for local access beyond MARTA
- Continue pedestrian/bike friendliness, increase safety for both
- More mid-block sidewalk crossings
- Emory shuttle – extend services, tie in for above services
- Railroad as an obstacle for pedestrians, cars & bikes

- Additional crossing between Citgo and Renfro that is pedestrian only
- Policies should consider beyond automobile
- Enforcement of speed limits
- Control of greenery to keep sidewalks clear
- Tree lined sidewalks to encourage walkers
- shuttle service, alternative transportation
- keep vehicles out of downtown core and offer free perimeter parking
- free scooter parking, free bike parking (there is some, need more)
- continue sidewalk improvement/repair program, but find a way to preserve the large, old trees that create most of the problems!
- close Ponce from Commerce to Commerce
- Facilitator's note: Many aspects of this session could be summed up in the statement "All roads lead back to traffic management." Finding more and better ways to manage vehicular traffic--and enable equitable, workable sharing of the roads among cars, bikes, and pedestrians--seemed to be a significant factor affecting virtually every issue addressed.
- close East Court Square loop to extend square & make parking for bikes only (GA Power and courthouse decks could be alternative parking)
- must connect decks, improve signage and safety concerns & make more attractive. Better walkways.
- Convenient bypasses (and traffic flow) around Decatur
- Shared bike membership program. Fee, locks- intelligently designed program
- More bike lanes, infrastructure
- Speed control especially Oakhurst
- Safe travel for walkers, bikers. wheelchairs, & strollers
- complete street policy all modes of travel accommodated
- actual and perceived safety
- College Ave & S. Candler- fast traffic near schools and in general, need a tunnel under the tracks by the high school and Renfro (like near ASC). (Note: lots of discussion about train tracks and crossing safety )
- Shuttle for the city using alternative fuel
- Network trail around city for jogging/walking. Tied to green spaces.
- Link green spaces with a trail like a Decatur beltline. Off-street with no car traffic.
- Light rail (at grade, on street)- Decatur, Emory, Oakhurst, Lindberg
- Force cars to bypass downtown Decatur by closing part of downtown Church so pedestrian traffic only and/or close part of Ponce. (Close Ponce between Commerce and Commerce. Close Church between Commerce and Trinity)
- From last week: shuttle buses between different communities
- Shuttle

- Education - Schools
- Decatur Yellow Bike? / Bike Sharing , how to sustain such an effort
- Special fares for MARTA from East lake to Avondale stations, charge by distance, senior citizen rates
- Transportation from Oakhurst - Decatur, Aging population
- Driving Age requirements, push to older
- Restrictions on number of vehicles people can own, tax incentives and penalties
- Car pooling incentives
- Increase flex cars, more in neighborhood areas, right now in downtown which isn't that effective
- Change mindset of people to not drive around city, but use alternative forms of transportation. Do a good job already, how to improve, who is missing and still driving?
- Used to walk child to school--now drive
- Clairemont School encourages individual drivers with new car drop off
- Parents still drive even though they could walk
- Need better pedestrian and bike paths
- Columbia and college intersection very dangerous
- Parents of Winnona Park do walk
- With restructure of schools from K-5 to K-3 Decatur added car congestion and added number of schools parents need to get their children to
- Need to celebrate how our kids have the choice to walk to all schools and our crossing guards are great
- Need better crossing opportunity with railroad tracks and renfroe
- In next ten years--increase parking opportunities outside Decatur and run shuttles into the city. Make downtown district a walking district. Free up space from parking for trees. Ban Gas cars. Add conduits
- DeKalb employees should have to use MARTA and shuttles into the city
- Begin using golf carts
- With school reconfiguration and 5th Ave. school not being centrally located we should provide shuttles for kids to ride
- Safe routes to school should expand to all schools, churches, and employers
- 5th Ave should be a K-5
- Education has improved with reconfiguration but not geographically friendly
- Need multi use trails. City needs to accomplish goal of completing sidewalks on all streets-- should use pervious concrete. Sidewalks would be a good test for pervious concrete
- Use shuttles or designated cars that loop Decatur for major stops. Like in DC
- Decatur should have loop shuttle to YMCA, schools, and athletic fields like a cliff bus
- Empty parking lots and get rid of them
- Transportation. Consider shuttles, bypasses, multi use trails, get rid of parking lots

- Address intersection of Church and N. Decatur. Parking lot wasteland
- How do you get from place to place in Decatur now? What might change in how we travel about in the next ten years?
- Gridlock in downtown 5:00 - 6:30pm
- Parking - private parking ownership limits flexibility of parking options. For example, it is difficult to park in one lot and go to multiple businesses.
- There is no other way to get around downtown other than on foot.
- Bicycling in Decatur is dangerous.
- The heat in the summer months is a huge disincentive to walking, biking, etc (i.e., not use your car)
- City of Decatur does not have total jurisdiction over use/change to its roads, streets
- Cooperative use of parking lots - i.e., businesses contribute spaces in their lots that can be used by people other than their direct customers.
- Churches may be willing to contribute spaces for weekday parking
- A downtown trolley or shuttle
- A larger satellite parking lot on the outskirts of downtown served by shuttle/trolley
- Shuttles that run between neighborhoods and downtown
- More left turn lanes to cut down on back-ups during high volume times
- Crossing guards need more training on traffic management. They are the cause of back up or confusion in some cases.
- Consider limiting where you can drive in the city, i.e. Times Square or downtown Asheville.
- Safe walking = increased commerce
- Ability to walk allows a diverse (aging) population to live here
- Park and walk.
- Now we drive or walk.
- Would like to see a Decatur trolley or transit. Green, Could be small business, Would need reliable ridership, Could be more sustainable if it went outside the city limits, Survey traffic patterns, Trolley should go to Zip Car locations, then people can further out. Stop at major Decatur sites., Connect parts of Decatur.
- Reduce car ownership in Decatur.
- Help physically impaired get around. Ties into transit idea. Also to issues of aging.
- Now, use of Square difficult for physically impaired.
- Need easier way to get from north part of city to south, especially on foot. Railway tracks and Scott Boulevard act as barriers between parts of city.
- Shuttles from companies that have employees in the city, CNN, CDC, Emory, Coke
- Electric taxis or shuttle service for residents (start with the weekends)
- More sidewalks (by the railroads)
- Bike lanes, bike racks

- Continue sidewalk installation and improvements
- Need light rail that respects existing neighborhoods (no demolition)
- Continue to provide scooter support like parking
- Keep up the complete streets program
- Need better railroad crossings!
- iPhone app in development which would provide on demand ridesharing -could we be a pilot city?
- Intelligent transportation systems (ITSA.org)
- Expand the Zipcar program
- Be creative in developing non car solutions
- Need bike parking everywhere - consider bikes as a mode of transportation and provide infrastructure - don't consider it just recreational
- Need bike lanes - this is a safety issue not just a transportation issue
- Love the yellow bikes -figure out a way to secure them or have a card that unlocks them. Don't just let it go because it wasn't secure
- Like the pedicabs
- Have shuttles around town (family friendly built in car seats)
- Have shuttles for special events to move people around
- Have a cliff bus type shuttle that circulates around the city so that one would come w/in 10 minutes rather than having a bus schedule
- Shuttle will promote local business by making it easy to shop w/o dealing with parking
- No sure if City is proactive in developing technologies - electric cars, access to biofuels - add electric plugs to parking meters
- Pedicabs offer a viable alternative form of transportation
- Safer rail crossings
- Designated bike lanes, walk lanes from car lanes
- Aging population will decrease the number of commuters
- Large SUVs will reduce because shortages of resources (i.e., oil)
- How do you get from place to place in Decatur, now? What might change in how we travel about in the next ten years?
- RR FRUSTRATIONS. The group re-visited briefly the difficulties presented by the CSX protections under federal railroad regulations, minimizing options with respect to any City efforts involving the rail right of way.
- REGIONAL EFFORTS. Any efforts made by the City should be done in conjunction with any regional transportation plan efforts.
- ALTERNATE TRANSPORTATION SIGNAGE, INCENTIVES. The get around town signage should be altered to indicate distances to locations, and any other information conducive to walking or biking to the destination.

- COUNTY EMPLOYEE INCENTIVES. Noting the number of county employees that commute in to Decatur, thought should be given to working with DeKalb to offer alternative commute incentives for them.
- POSSIBLE PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS. The group encourages the City to work with PEDS, the Atlanta Bicycle Campaign, the Clean Air Campaign and other possible partner organizations to explore and promote alternate commute options.
- BLOCK CHURCH STREET AT SYCAMORE. Noting the through traffic on Church from Trinity to Ponce, the group thought explorations regarding blocking Church to through traffic on either side of Sycamore (note: such that access to the church parking lot was maintained).
- STATE ROUTE RESTRICTIONS. The group commented on the difficulties faced by the City in making changes to streets that are designated as state routes.
- FOLKS WITH DISABILITIES. The group felt strongly that adequate provision for individuals with disabilities should be included in any transportation change efforts.
- LOCAL TROLLEY. The group was very interested in the establishment of a free trolley to encourage movement in and between the commercial retail districts of the City, particularly during events.
- CHARGING STATIONS. The group felt that exploration of designated parking locations that offered charging stations for electric vehicles would be a method of encouraging the City's commercial districts as destination locations for individuals driving them.
- TRAFFIC CALMING AND ROAD DIET. Further efforts in these areas would be a positive thing to pursue.
- Choose to live here because we can live without a car
- Shuttle buses as feeders to MARTA
- More bike facilities, bike lanes, bike parking, bike racks
- Education of drivers and cyclist
- Electric bikes and vehicles
- Build and develop alternative transportation infrastructure, electric, natural gas, etc.
- Allow for rental units, garage apartments, zoning flexibility
- Transportation - what is the timeline for implementation, execution,
- Get to Daily necessities
- Zip cars, shared cars
- Shared vehicles, utility vehicles, vans, trucks, pick-up trucks
- Shared facilities
- Public rental access to city owned vehicles
- Continue Decatur government al accessibility - ease of access
- School Board ?
- Expansion of city limits
- Maintaining/increase diversity of property

- Increase commercial tax base (Decatur is low, in areas, of on commercial property)
- Annexation of NE commercial area
- Free transportation in the down town core of the city - trolley
- Park on perimeter of city, ride in on trolley --concerned about the cost of doing this ...how to pay for it?
- Zip cars
- Shuttle bus like at Emory
- Need more places to house bikes
- Pedestrian zones become more public space - like linear parks
- Decatur to be known as a bike-friendly city --bike friendly and promoted as such
- Education program for motorists and bicyclists and runners --bike etiquette
- Drive
- Bike
- Walk
- Marta/ public transportation
- Shuttle
- Super impose maps for cliff shuttle/MARTA
- Better and wider bike lanes
- Better pedestrian paths to connect north and south Decatur
- Meet to park/carpool for folks that live in Decatur and work elsewhere
- Rideshare website
- Meet neighbors because of carpooling
- Could spend less time traveling with better traffic signal timing
- Alternative vehicles(electric)
- Golf carts
- Scooters
- Need bike paths on Clairemont
- Would like to see a light rail system from Agnes Scott to Emory with no more than a 10 minute wait for pick-up
- One person mentioned that the Cliff Bus both eco-friendly and free for all residents, and that the city needed to explore more partnership opportunities with Emory around this
- A trolley bus was also discussed How could this work?, Possible for tourist use in the city, Density is a huge issue to make something like this happen
- Someone also said that they would like to see a Emory to Decatur to Oakhurst bus route
- Creating a more accessible downtown Decatur to those with disabilities is important
- More dedicated handicap parking is needed
- Would like to see use a commuter lots

- And would also like to see a new phone app that tells you exactly where an available parking spot is
- walking
- biking
- scooters cars
- cutting across railroad
- Might change safety of traveling
- counters for crossing street and sound beepers (pedestrians)
- more alternative fuel cars, and places to plug in
- positive reinforcement and education of road rules etc...
- increase signage and more sidewalks
- DeKalb relationship with city

## Life in Decatur

*When you think about the overall environment of our city (our public gatherings, our festivals and cultural life) what is most important to you?*

- 4th of July fireworks
- Gatherings, festivals - all the things that make Decatur look good to non-residents
- Wine, beer, book festivals - all develop community feeling
- Like balance of Decatur-resident-g geared festivals vs. events that draw from wider Atlanta/SE crowd.
- Attracting artists/authors from far and wide
- Forefront of technology (e.g., Wi-Fi)
- Great restaurants (don't have to leave Decatur and can walk to them)
- Food festival
- Larger farmer's market and move to a more central location
- Put everything on the Decatur website - "advertise" what is going on, improve communication
- Share each other's neighborhood association information - links/directory to contacts, maybe put links to associations on city website
- Blogs - community volunteers - centralize information
- Walking tours/maps (Mayor's walking tour)
- Put information about the city at the Oakhurst fire station or restaurants so that Oakhurst residents feel connected and don't have to go to Square area to get information about City of Decatur
- Incorporating school facilities into our community for performing arts, etc.
- Expand our downtown areas during festivals (like we do for the Book Festival) or maybe expand down street in front of high school
- Diversity in events is important - mostly family oriented, but fits all kinds
- Maintain integrity of events
- Challenge - Space
- Challenge - Crowds
- Provide support for all kinds of art
- Create more localized, neighborhood specific gatherings
- Decatur Arts Alliance should coordinate rehearsal space and exhibit space for artist community
- Utilize church facilities for art
- Utilize vacant buildings and sites for artist space
- Promote neighborhood theater events
- City should provide a liaison for the private market and artist community
- Utilize "dead space" on the outside of parking garages for art exhibits/stalls
- Expand little Kroger on Commerce

- Taste of Decatur outdoors
- B and B on the square
- free parking during festivals
- farmer's markets
- amphitheatre
- on paved MARTA plaza: raised beds with trees, kiosks selling newspapers-candy bars-ice cream-etc., canvas canopies/umbrellas for shade, food vending truck, chess board /game tables
- cultural arts master plan - include use of performance arts space at DHS
- remodel/redevelop/revitalize police station, Ebster, Beacon Hill area
- more revitalization in Oakhurst - make easier walking across intersection
- move police to where Maud Baker on Church St. used to be
- Vibrancy of core city- need retail and dining diversity
- Engagement through activities such as Decatur 101 and the Strategic Planning Process
- We have a small town feel- you know almost everyone - by connecting at events
- Concerts on the Square help connect us
- Frequency of community events is key to community engagement
- Festival focusing on Books is a very neat idea
- Abundance of Irish-style family pubs is a key
- Having places to go after hours after dinner- shopping, art galleries, other
- Perhaps have 'Terrific Thursdays' (or similar) throughout the year with wine, shops open, destinations after hours
- Develop outdoor art (such as Valentine)-
- Host temporary exhibits such as the Cow or the Sandy Springs Turtle
- Encourage Agnes Scott, Emory and other universities to use Decatur as their art exhibit space
- Tie the art exhibits to the city schools expeditionary learning program
- Plot visual exhibits on a map with walking tours
- Have neighborhoods host similar [art] events
- Develop scavenger hunt (through the cultural arts council) that relates to the outdoor art
- Decatur fireworks has a very small town feel but very accessible, friendly, 'Awesome'
- Revive the Fidelity Bank Building Christmas Tree
- Christmas Tree/Menorah Lighting in Oakhurst
- Other events in Oakhurst: Blues, Wine Crawl, Oakhurst Arts and Music Festival, Jazz nights
- Norway has an affinity for teachers: Honor teachers with festival and parade
- Patio party at Solarium with auction, food, bird houses, rain barrels, multiple beer festivals
- Could we make some of the beer festivals Decatur only residents?
- Festivals/community gatherings
- Schools
- Convenience

- Walkability
- Outdoor cafe seating
- Participation of religious communities
- Feeling of common community
- Safety
- Small town feeling
- Community volunteerism & outreach
- Variety of businesses
- Strong neighborhoods
- Continuation of community/government interactivity
- Approachability, responsiveness, and stability of City leadership
- Display of "Decatur spirit"
- Create/support thriving arts scene
- Keep residents happy (Happy residents = Happy neighbors = Happy community)
- Encourage and fund block initiatives aside from block parties (i.e. block garden; block composting program, tree plantings)
- Maintain festivals
- Strengthen/improve communication coming from the City
- Spotlight businesses, programs, people
- Safe Ways/places for teens to gather
- Safe ways for teens to get home
- Policing of school after hours to make sure kids are [not] abusing the area - i.e. smoking on grounds
- Parent involvement in schools and neighborhoods promote safety and all parents share in keeping watchful eyes on kids
- We have a great downtown area - need to maintain the small town destination aspect.
- Keep zoning in place for building heights - 80'
- Concentrate high density building in the downtown areas
- Growth isn't always good - evaluate growth with services to achieve proper balance
- Hold the line on disallowing high density developments in neighborhoods
- Challenge: as festivals get more popular (crowded) maintain feeling of community versus mob feel
- create smaller "events within the event"
- focus marketing efforts locally
- sell tickets at Decatur businesses
- cap ticket sales where appropriate
- Like Oakhurst jazz, other music events

- events define creative feel of Decatur and introduce people to Decatur businesses; encourage interaction between attendees and businesses (example: during wine fest, encourage businesses to have their own mini wine tastings)
- current calendar is good--not really looking for more
- City does great job of having mix of events. I don't go to all but I can pick and choose what I want
- Have more regular marketplace type events, street fairs, etc.
- The Arts Festivals we have
- Art Galleries, How can we promote the arts? Make our city a mecca for the arts
- Film Festival
- Increase Public Art Space
- Explore how other cities (Santa Fe, Taos, Asheville) have successfully fostered the Arts
- Increase working space for artists
- Find a way to encourage and support our existing Arts/Crafts/Musical/Theater Community
- DBA should coordinate public showings of community arts within local business establishments
- Provide opportunities for artists to perform in public spaces., i.e., have an open-mike on bandstand on Friday evenings
- Beer Festival and Wine Festival are GREAT
- Let's keep an eye toward diverse audiences for public performances
- Want to feel safe
- Want to have fun
- Important to connect with others
- Cultural activities need quality improvement and growth
- Take advantage of existing new facilities for community/cultural events (i.e. DHS auditorium)
- Create event-specific outdoor venues (i.e. amphitheatre)
- Evaluate available facilities at private/public institution for city use
- keener programs
- Athletic programs at REC center, that are very successful
- Community gardens
- More public art
- Tap into/create DeKalb County/City of Decatur foundation for the arts (for grants/scholarships and research)
- Diversity - schools- inclusive gatherings- not just in theory-but not all
- Diversity - population groups attend events- need to encourage ways to broaden
- Diversity - audience- one possibility is to have more variety in the bands for Concerts
- Diversity - on the Square- another is to add more festivals- food events, multicultural
- Diversity - events, want to maintain all current festivals and events

- Artistic creative feel of city- architecturally and with businesses, losing galleries or music venues would be detrimental, need to maintain and encourage this atmosphere
- Public spaces- uniqueness of Square, cherish, maintain, improve, and invest in these spaces
- Expand feel of Square to other end of Ponce de Leon Avenue, Farmburger is perceived as far from Square, disadvantage to businesses that are farther away from Square
- Glenlake Park has been missed- some people may have forgotten about other parks, number and distribution of public gathering places (parks, etc.) is important
- Walkability - work to improve places off Ponce de Leon Avenue to encourage foot traffic to them, make them more vibrant, continue developing and connecting all parts of city
- Connection between neighborhoods and downtown business district needs to be improved for pedestrians, use Oakhurst business district and surrounding neighborhoods as model
- Expand positives of Square outward to encompass whole downtown business district
- district
- Make use of new high school auditorium as indoor cultural center for City
- Make all intersections leading to downtown business district safer for pedestrians and bicycle riders (discussion centered on Commerce Drive intersections, especially one with Church Street)
- The book festival and maintaining Decatur as a literary center
- Utilizing the square more on a day to day basis:
- Need street vendors or other activities
- Close off Ponce de Leon from Clairemont to Church or even Commerce to Church - during warmer months
- Get more people on the plaza and not just inside restaurants / more outdoor seating
- More street vendors
- Festivals
- Some noted the Beach Party is too crowded
- More teen activities
- More structured teen activities
- CREATE A TEEN COMMISSION
- Maintain the small town feel where people know one another
- Gun free zones - schools, festivals, entire city
- Our festivals and events are not engaging all of our residents (not very diverse)
- Diversify our schools equals diversifying our city (start with kindergarten)
- Create a culture of diversity awareness, We are not all alike
- Block parties
- Tea and coffee conferences
- City Schools of Decatur sporting events
- Use city website for a city wide "conference call"

- Fun activities create a community: Book Festival, Arts Festival, Beer Festival, Beach Party, Concerts on the Square
- Combine active living to include all active living- maybe even have an active living festival with yoga and tai chi on the square and a casual bike tour of Decatur. Bikes, Tai chi, Yoga, Table tennis
- The green festival was a great start, keep it going, make it bigger!
- Have the Marta plaza be a welcoming place where people can practice Tai Chi, Yoga, Dancing.
- Create a free tram and continue to support the pedi-cab business. These help people decide to go into downtown Decatur and other retail areas (Oakhurst) and address parking issues.
- Have a free/low-cost shuttle connecting residential areas including condos with the DeKalb Farmer's Market and grocery stores. It should make stops all around the city - Winnona Park, Oakhurst, the square, Westchester area, Great Lakes, Ridgeland Heights
- Expand Pool hours/calendar! The pools should be open through September. At least after school and on the weekends. We had a lot of interest and consensus around this topic and we think that if you create a partnership with a swim team such as Swim Atlanta, this could be done. Parents and kids want to swim after school. Retirees and stay-at-home parents want to swim during August and September. We know there's an old ordinance that says that pools can't be open when schools are, but is that really necessary? What are we really trying to achieve with that?
- Retail is a huge part of cultural life in Decatur. The square is great, but maybe having one chain shop beyond CVS wouldn't be a bad thing. Something like the GAP might be a great addition that might actually draw more people to the square. Also, we're missing a huge opportunity with Suburban Plaza. We realize it's out of the City of Decatur limits, but even if it doesn't become party of Decatur, it is the entrance to our town and we should work with the owners to attract new, businesses there. Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, GAP would be welcome.
- The Book Festival
- Festivals in general
- They bring the community together and attract outsiders (festivals)
- People come back (festivals)
- We need huge parking signs
- We need a Decatur Arts Council with money to spend on activities and approve projects
- More ongoing support of arts
- Ongoing partnerships between businesses and events
- Monthly major event – not just summer
- Sponsored neighborhood associations to improve communication
- Neighborhood gatherings to improve community/educate/input “Parks & Rec” (TV show) style meetings
- Organize bicycle rides, designation rides, incorporate businesses
- Cultural arts integrated and communicate

- Adult education free, low cost. Decatur active learning, involve community and businesses
- Educate/Advocate for programs for citizens both federal and state
- Getting people to attend & volunteer, services & expertise, extract expertise from community, encouraging people that they have something to share
- Continue with Volunteer Decatur
- Good customer service/ make people feel welcome
- Need more cultural venues, e.g., a place to see independent films, maybe a film festival but ongoing. Library offers some; might be good venue.
- Encourage informal performance, e.g., street performers. Need areas for them; making Ponce a pedestrian mall would encourage (from Commerce to Commerce)
- Spoleto [mentioned as example of great cultural event]
- weekly market, more than organic food, include arts, crafts, performers
- more activities in parks (not have everything at the Square)
- more sharing of rec facilities (between City and CSD?)
- progressive block parties a way to help neighborhoods get acquainted; could use parks to host; in winter could be inside
- garden walks
- walking tours
- Safety in parks, out skirts of city, square at night. Issues of loitering and pan-handling. Around MARTA station
- Diversity of events to variety of people, Beer festival for young adults, Beach parties for families, big draw to city
- Library
- Rec center, active living - collaboration between organizations
- School System, know schedule - Master Calendar
- What is going on in the city today - schools, city, businesses
- Maintain look and feel of city. Have plans and requirements already set, regulations and expectations in place so developers know what standard should be
- Square
- Festivals: Arts, Books, Wine, and Beer. Book festival brings in a wide variety of people to city
- Concert on Square
- Beach party
- Commercial aspects of Decatur brings residents out regularly
- Beach party very Decatur, all ages, see a lot of people from Decatur. The events give back
- 4th of July event, parade and fireworks. Can watch them from front yard
- Churches are vital to downtown
- Schools and school events
- Flea market at Baptists Church on Clairemont. Citywide flea market

- Cooperation of churches
- GA Center for the Book
- ASC venues open to the community
- DHS needs to open stadium and auditorium to the community for city even
- Community needs to know about school events are venues for the community.
- Bring Semi pro soccer team to Decatur, Attract sports teams in Decatur or traveling youth teams, Bring in English league teams, bring in world cup
- When you think about the overall environment of our city (our public gatherings, our festivals and cultural life) what is most important to you?
- There is so much going on in Decatur but we would like to see more. Not just festivals
- We would like to see more public art
- We would like to see more smaller gatherings
- We would like to see more ongoing features like the cow sculptures a few years ago
- Events that draw a diversity of ages.
- Involvement of kids is essential
- Use the public space for more informal gatherings
- It seems like there is either a big event or nothing. We need more smaller, simpler, regular public activities.
- There is a sense that you can't use the Square unless there is a large event or you have permission. Few people go to the Square just to hang out, have a picnic, sit and relax. What would attract people to do this?
- A kiosk on the Square that announces current events
- Structures on or near the Square that can be used by groups for informal gatherings
- Shade on the MARTA plaza (topside)
- Food carts
- A play structure near the Square
- Do something to encourage street performers
- Have students performances in public spaces
- Foster farmers markets in the neighborhoods
- More outdoor seating for restaurants, cafes etc
- Move the weekly farmers markets to the Square
- Provide incentives for businesses to host outdoor events/activities - small events, on a weekly basis
- Need entertainment in the city, Movie theater, Venue hard to find, Tough business
- Arts Center renovation could help
- Money follows culture, so encourage/promote the arts
- Foster social networks
- Neighborhood potlucks, small group meetings, social get-togethers

- Mixers across neighborhoods
- Keep the roundtables going, perhaps quarterly around the issues of the day. Have food and drinks to foster community.
- Take the block party concept across neighborhoods--a "progressive block party" with different neighborhoods hosting.
- Develop a "shop hop"--people shopping at local business are entered into a drawing for city items.
- Keeping people connected helps with an aging population.
- We have great festivals, but we probably don't need more.
- Develop small, but good, arts venues--museums, galleries, theaters, etc. Would bring people to city.
- Eddie's Attic a great asset.
- More classes for adults Like yoga
- Gym at the rec center (place to work out), Lower prices for residents, Just pay each time you go
- Open up the gym at the high school to residents during the summer
- Have an Arts director for the entire city
- Improve the quality of the beer and wine festivals- suppliers and number of people attending
- Allow community to use CSD property, Work on scheduling (baseball field example)
- Maintain small town character- no tall buildings
- Continue to offer variety that appeal to all ages
- Continue to be respectful of proximity to residential
- Safety is important
- Responsive public safety
- Increased street lamps
- Improve technology, city website (no comparison between effectiveness and usability of Strategic Planning website and the City's regular website)
- Keep city meetings in the evenings
- Invest in proper land use planning
- City needs to study the impact/benefits/costs of MARTA; pool/tennis courts/rec. center; existing parking to identify best use of resources
- A plan of succession for city employees, especially city manager and volunteer coordinator
- VENDOR SELECTION. There was discussion over the "carnival style" vendors permitted at many of our festivals, and the group encouraged greater effort to have local and perhaps healthier vendors providing food and beverages at our events.
- SECURITY. Appreciation was expressed for the understated police presence that provide a relaxed yet secure environment at our events.
- STREET VENDORS. Why are there no street vendors at the square or at Oakhurst (generally, not at the festivals where they exist temporarily). Discussion noted that if there were legal or public

health issues, or competition with local retail establishment issues, that might be understandable. But if not, why not?

- NO DOGS. Recognizing the balance between dog lovers and others, interest was expressed in making some of our events "dog free".
- CLOSE MORE STREETS. The group was really interested in the concept of closing more streets to vehicle traffic during events. They would like to see the City experiment with expanding the boundaries of non-vehicle traffic at select events to evaluate the effects of doing so. This could expand the boundaries of the event itself.
- FURTHER EVENT EXPANSION. This involved continuing efforts to expand the boundaries of events via use of trolleys or other transportation efforts to incorporate commercial locations beyond the downtown area in events.
- SPANISH SIGNS. Consideration should be given to adding Spanish translations to way finding and other City signage as a recognition of the increasing bilingual population and in keeping with our general attitude of acceptance.
- Decatur does a good job in developing events
- We love the events, book festivals,
- Should consider an international festival
- want to see 'more of them' (people) in downtown Decatur
- foster a community that is welcoming
- mixture and balance
- Decatur: we are interested in Art, so we have an Art festival
- we are interested in Literacy, so we have an Book festival
- if we are interested in diversity, we should have an international festival
- Outreach- Solution - govt and non-govt groups
- How does the CITY govt and people does to promote diversity and festivals
- Communication of what events that is going on in the city
- Create opportunity for local destination
- Get to Daily necessities
- Concerts on the square popular with residents and visitors to the city
- Promote, encourage freedom to express religious views
- Happy with ALL the festivals we have --love the book festival
- More diverse
- A variety of things to do(r/b and gospel concerts)
- Artwalks
- Music/concerts
- Local feel(local food and music)
- Restaurants and amenities are within easy reach
- More neighborhoods getting involvement

- Arts festivals
- Share best practices between neighborhoods (invite public officials)
- Keep accessible financially
- The book festival, Very cool that it's the largest in the country
- A theatre is missing in the downtown area and could be very good for retail and restaurants
- A movie theatre could also draw lots of people in and could be part of a larger art space
- The city should use its existing parks to create more of a destination, such as adding carousels or mini-golf, etc.
- The Decatur beach party is great, and so is the music on the square and in front of the solarium
- It was suggested that the city could set up an outdoor market for both existing and new vendor to sell their wares.
- Boise has a huge successful outdoor market, which includes closing off streets
- Another positive characteristic is that the police and fire departments will work with you on a neighborhood block party, This needs to be better advertised
- The Georgia Center for the Book is another great asset
- book festival and arts festival
- concerts on the square- has gotten really crowded spread out over the year they are so important it would be great to spread more out over time and space
- volunteer program
- such a variety of stuff to do
- holiday festivities- egg hunt, marshmallow roast, 4th of July, bfast with Santa
- DBA continued support growth

## Future of housing

*Who are the people who will need housing in Decatur in 20 years? What kind of housing do you think they will they need?*

- Don't think people live and die in Decatur (some disagreement on this point)
- Will I be able to afford Decatur taxes on a retirement income?
- Attract young folks - to expand tax base and alleviate taxes for older citizens
- House values going up - becoming less affordable - how can young families afford to move in?
- Starter homes are endangered (people build on, less and less 2/1s in City, etc.)
- Smaller and more affordable homes will attract not only young folks (singles, couples, beginning families), but also empty nesters who wish to downsize, widows/widowers, etc. which will contribute age diversity to Decatur.
- Help older folks continue to afford their homes
- Continuing care, independent living, assisted living (nicely done, not a high rise or condo)
- Apartments and rentals
- There is the threat that with many in the same demographic moving in at the same time, we are boxing out new residents (will there be mass exodus/turnover).
- We are a victim of our own success
- Force builders to balance new expensive houses with affordable housing (e.g., for every \$700K home, ensure a \$200K house built)
- Remain attractive to young singles and young families
- Market City of Decatur as different from Greater Decatur. Perception that Greater Decatur is rough, dangerous.
- Annexing underutilized property to build affordable housing
- Live/work areas for artists (e.g., Castleberry Hills, Studioplex)
- Maintain multi-housing units zoned towards downtown areas
- Affordable housing, people who work here should be able to afford to live here. Shouldn't be too expensive for teachers.
- Require certain % of new development to have affordable housing
- Maintain tax exempt level for seniors
- Create a rental market in downtown
- Promote higher density living by demonstrating benefits (i.e. like tour of condo gardens that was done)
- More density in downtown area
- Development concentrated around 3 MARTA stations
- More multi-family units in neighborhoods (especially for the elderly); requires zoning changes
- Variety of housing price points to encourage income diversity

- Assess lowering the age for school tax exemptions
- Mandate mixed use development
- Enforce "smart" building codes (environmentally efficient)
- More town-home communities
- We need a retirement community that has private space, community space, 3 and 4 wheel parking and events. Clairemont Place is good because you buy the condo and the fees go to dining and meals The old Devry might be a good place for this as long as it had shuttle service
- We need a movie theater: We need a multiplex movies theater. We have several make shift theaters: Holiday Inn, High School, Library. Chattanooga put their movie theater in a parking deck which helped safety issues
- We need a community village
- We need zoning that allow 4 or 5 families to live together and support each other, cook together and support each other's health/insurance needs.
- We need to create alternative ways to support families
- Extended Families: Zoning should accommodate accessory dwellings and we should reduce size limits on accessory dwellings, Decatur should be known as a place where we let you bring your family to live with you...but people are worried about too many cars
- Affordable housing can be a magnet for artists and creative people
- In Seattle, secondary structures on properties encourage density
- Small lots don't make it difficult to deal with storm water issues
- City engineering codes are too black and white with regards to storm water, what are FEMA's thoughts? Codes should allow for rainwater harvesting which ties well into community gardens and gardening in general
- We need roof top gardens and regulations that allow them
- We need to allow multifamily living when houses have 4 or 5 bedrooms from a zoning standpoint
- We need more density in creative ways such as garage apartments and multifamily use in single family dwellings
- affordable for: city work force, i.e. police-fire-teachers, military, seniors, people with disabilities, young folks, transitional college faculty, racial diversity
- diversity of housing prices - mixed income
- question about quality of life versus what's realistic
- rental and ownership
- we want to know what's happening with public housing area on Trinity and Commerce?
- % of affordable housing in any new builds
- lots of discussion about "what is affordable" and for whom?
- salary incentives to live in city for city workforce i.e. housing allowance
- more housing like Benson/Oakview lottery for city workforce
- What do the demographics look like?

- We need housing for: Low income; people who work here; seniors; families; college students
- Healthy mixed income housing stocks spread out throughout the city especially with respect to school age children
- How to accommodate seniors in home- from city planning synergy to encourage smaller, non-McMansions
- For the 'Keenagers' - Wide sidewalks, options for alternative means of getting around, having access to neighbors, and access to amenities
- For the 'Keenagers' - Accessibility, visitability (wheel chair accessible, door width, bathroom accessible and ramp accesses) - Copy 'Easy Living' program
- For the 'Keenagers' - Ensure adult children have opportunities to interact positively with adult parents
- Adult living research, make senior living in Decatur a model community, leveraging ARC senior living program
- Provide incentives for 'work force' housing such as those along Oakview Road
- Ensure people can continue to live in their homes through financial accommodations, tax relief, etc.
- Find other ways to fund Decatur rather than through property tax, which will help alleviate the burden on seniors., Consider increasing fees for non-residents for services such as the dog park and festivals
- Smaller families
- Starter/affordable homes
- Young singles
- Impact of annexation ?
- Multi-generational housing - Code issues?
- Continuing care senior communities
- Live/work incentives
- Local jobs
- Life cycle housing
- Disabled accessible housing
- Mixed use housing for aging population (i.e. necessities available in development or within walking distance)
- Incentives for property developers/owners to encourage affordable housing, look to Charleston and Savannah on rehabbing existing buildings with incentives and tax credits
- Cooperate and partner with non-profits on grant applications for affordable housing (affordable housing needed for low income earners, young professionals, young families)
- Balance density with affordable housing
- Convert unused commercial property to residential (affordable) property
- Who, Elderly, Young Professionals, Workforce, Teachers

- We want to maintain diversity of home owners - elderly, racial, work force, lower income. How can owners of houses afford to pay for houses as costs rise and taxes rise?
- Need a task force to figure out creative ideas so people can afford house in order to maintain diversity -
- Elderly need to be able to afford their houses. Perhaps build specific housing for elderly in pockets of areas - i.e. small cottages, or group houses
- Condos in downtown area
- Co-Housing (Eastlake model)
- Infill housing (Balance with greenspace - for example houses could be clustered as long as there was some common greenspace)
- Annexation - this is good and bad - helps with tax burden, but could stress infrastructure, schools
- Apartments in denser areas for lower income, young workers, students
- if affordable housing continues to decline, diversity will decline
- boutique hotel really is a need--had not considered that before
- wheelchair accessibility in homes, buildings and outside (crosswalks)
- Maintain decent, affordable housing for all income levels
- Leverage existing housing - no new development
- Restrict demolition of older homes to build new bigger homes
- need for more rental options that are accessible to those who work here
- increasing the \$ diversity of residences
- apartments downtown are too expensive
- need other locations for condos
- need rental options for younger residents w/o children
- need to keep taxes down for older residents on fixed income
- tax deferral until after death, for examples
- housing inventory is aging
- need incentives for housing renewal
- strengthen tree ordinance
- need stronger lighting / noise ordinance
- stronger enforcement of infill rules
- neighborhood by neighborhood performance standards for size and style of new housing / upgraded housing
- encourage developers to work with neighborhoods
- In order to maintain diversity, there needs to be affordable housing
- Very diverse population (Families, singles, partners, seniors).
- Universal design standards should be encouraged
- encourage LEED
- plan on including places for our city workers to live

- no more senior high-rises
- emphasize aging in home
- seek tax solutions to enable this
- Empty nesters-affordable condos, affordable taxes, look at tax exemptions
- Young families with children
- Increase diversity of population
- Increase high density condos that include 1, 2, and 3 bedroom condos
- Encourage developers to build more responsibility-less parking spaces
- Green building-increase LEEDS certification
- Rooftop gardens
- More families with school-age children
- Consider that the above may be "squeezing" out the young professionals, the aging population and the public servants
- Current families that want to age-in-place
- The young, child-free families that will be drawn to the walkable benefits of Decatur's city center.
- Housing type - Higher density
- Rental (single and multi- family)
- Garage apartments
- Workforce housing (mid-range in cost)
- Public housing with market-rate housing mix
- Special -needs, group-homes (i.e. elderly)
- Single-level residences
- Explore allowing accessory dwellings for caregivers (paid and family members) for senior citizens, police proper use of such dwellings with periodic licensing requirements
- Decatur is a city, not a suburb, therefore density will be greater and is not a bad thing, multifamily housing should be part of the housing mix
- Increase affordable housing for all income levels and age groups, MLK service Project is a model for helping not only seniors, land trust as done in Athens is another model- land owned by charitable trust which pays no property taxes and resident pays taxes only on value of building, such housing can be located in any neighborhood
- Lower income groups, Lower the standard of what is affordable, 250k is not affordable to many
- Need a stronger rental market
- How can the city become more involved in improving affordability?
- Require a % affordable of new developments
- Provide housing options for seniors - one story living
- Be careful with tax breaks, so as not to encourage only the wealthy to move to Decatur. (such as allowing seniors not to pay school taxes)
- Trade greenspace for developed space, Of course this tradeoffs hurts affordability

- Provide jobs to areas of low income housing
- We call Decatur diverse...but is it really?
- The City is still segregated in some ways
- The conversation about being racially and economically diverse needs to be encouraged by the City
- Expand MLK day to address this
- Strengthen capacity of minority groups
- Need for more housing for disabled (like Park Trace) - there is a very long (60 people) wait list for vacancies.
- More available senior / disabled housing (not necessarily assisted living)
- Develop resources for those with Alzheimer's (or other disabilities) and for their caregivers
- Transportation resources for the elderly
- Walkability
- Senior day care (incorporate into recreation center like Fulton Co.)
- Create partnership between schools (after school programs) and senior orientated groups. Cross-generational exposure gets the young thinking about the issues of getting older and being older
- Create a property tax freeze for those meeting certain criteria, Those of age 65 and, Owns a home that is paid in full and, On a fixed income
- Review and overhaul the rules regarding Historic Preservation, Do not stifle growth or personal tastes, Still protect historic components, Current rules paint with too broad a brush
- We need housing for young and growing families - affordable condos and single-family homes.
- We need to figure out how to enable retirees to stay in our community. The tax burden is too great for those on a fixed income.
- We need housing that is affordable for all of our Decatur citizens including our school teachers, police officers and fire fighters.
- We need to plan for growth that maintains diversity throughout our community.
- There needs to be a diversity of housing including varying density with a conservation overlay. Dense housing doesn't mean no trees. It means more shared greenspaces - greenspaces that aren't just grass, but lots of trees.
- Cluster developments - an updated version, would be a good solution for Decatur. This could be done in the defunct car dealerships and the old DeVrey Tech location. Get rid of the huge parking lots and build cluster homes with significant shared greenspace. However, this would mean that instead of 40 homes going into a development, you'd only get 20 or so, but then the land would end up being cheaper if it was zoned that way. It all starts with the zoning.
- We don't want developments like Knob Hill and the new townhouses on Church Street and Scott Blvd. We want ones that have more shared greenspace and less concrete.
- Having more height like 4-5 story in the downtown area would help with density especially if it was created as a live/walk to work plan similar to the space over the Yogurt Tap. So, if we took a

lot of the 1-2 story buildings in downtown Decatur and built them up to 4-5 story, we could significantly increase our density while not getting rid of greenspace.

- I live in downtown Decatur so I can walk and enjoy the parks.
- Local shopping can enable people to only have one car
- Mow (dead) buildings down and create more parking
- Underground parking
- How about a Trader Joe's?
- Redesign Kroger
- Urban grocery: smaller footprint
- Multi level Kroger
- Need affordable housing-apartments
- Make it safer to cross tracks
- More affordable taxes
- Annexation-higher density equals more revenue
- More community gardens
- Put pressure on school board to accept and prepare for growth
- Lots of options to do mid rise developments
- Quality parks and transportation will make people want to live here
- How about a Central Park in Decatur? (Like New York)
- More assisted living options for older people (all 3 levels: independent, assisted, and nursing)
- Single families: Smaller lots, more efficient and better designed homes
- Portland and Seattle: great design
- Provide help with meals, a la carte options
- Be green and environmentally alert
- Enhanced, need based tax, income testing, mixed, ability to pay, not necessarily age, combined with residency length
- Predatory lending
- Other ways to increase tax revenue, income tax, max pay-out
- Assessment issues, more careful, more creative, not tied to neighbor
- Increased commercial for tax base
- Entities that are not taxed
- New construction/renovation causing assessment impact on unrenovated, demand
- Tax on long time residents at time of sale
- Maintaining diversity
- Seniors do not want to be displaced from community, more options
- Increased home health care
- Taxes
- Affordable housing – increase rental properties

- Challenges for young people and young families
- Challenges for elderly – assisted living, cost, taxes
- Attracting jobs to employ residents, so live & work in community
- Aging in place – children live
- Senior rec. center/living center
- Work with developers for % affordable housing
- Neighborhood opposition to affordable housing
- Tax/rent control
- Parking Lot:
- Schools
- Moss Park @ College Heights
- need to be age-friendly, affordable for retirees and for moderate/low income families and individuals
- more mixed housing: mixed ages/life stages, mixed incomes --- INTEGRATED LIVING
- Decatur should strive to be a model for integrated living and healthy living
- need critical amount of affordable housing mixed in throughout the community (not concentrated in one place, like public housing); look for established models elsewhere in the country
- need services closer to where people live, to promote walking for the entire City, e.g., groceries
- shuttle as part of solution, to provide access to services
- older people need lower maintenance housing
- housing swap program (see Oberlin, OH): match older/empty nesters with young, growing families, who swap houses with each other
- can't neglect the young for the old!
- Over 60 population is projected to be huge (housing)
- They (older) won't want lawn, won't want to have to move from Decatur
- Need place to retire that's not a traditional retirement home
- Easy access to medical care
- If annexed Suburban Plaza then DeKalb Medical Center is more integrated and not isolated
- Cooperative for senior services- active seniors help older seniors and earn "credit" for helping them. The credit can then be redeemed when they need help themselves.
- In general, like ride share concept (senior cooperative)
- City workers like police should afford to live here. Work force housing- we need more.
- Service industry workers should be able to live here too
- The group has concern about the lack of housing affordability in general.
- East Lake & Avondale could be more dense because they are near public transportation
- Density increases affordability- condos, etc and can still feel like a neighborhood
- Avondale Columbia Park would have provided density near public transportation

- Density near public transportation that still keeps neighborhood feel. OR live/work design in commercial area. Strategic density.
- A participant asks, "What will be green building in Decatur and how will we incentivize it?"
- The city could give mandates on new construction (ex. LEED silver) How do we balance green with affordability?
- Review laws about garage offices, homes, etc
- Concern for low-income housing being lower-quality, should try and maintain quality
- Racial Shift - does not speak well, good for schools. Need to backup with housing
- Higher density would offer better choices for affordability
- Need more single-people , other demographics than families. Age, marital status, income, etc. cost of homes leading to missed opportunities.
- Affordable houses, not just condos
- NORC - Naturally occurring retirement community. Existing houses, stay in community
- Smart house - universally accessible designed
- Boomers will need housing as they get older
- Will want to sell home and move into downtown condo
- City needs to loosen codes with multihousing
- Need more affordable housing for younger people
- Decatur needs a healthy balance between single and multifamily housing. There is a stigma if don't own a home in Decatur
- Decatur needs to glamorize downsizing
- Build smaller homes
- Bring in more fee simple townhouses
- Create a retirement home like Parksprings in Stone Mt. Build on edge of the city near DeKalb Hospital and use shuttle to move people back and forth. Use Decatur hospital and all the space for currently used for parking lots for retirement community.
- People move outside of Decatur when they retire to avoid taxes like Avondale Estates--
- Cheaper to rent then to own in Decatur because of taxes
- Statistics correct on data sheet?
- Provide variety of housing for elderly
- Middle income professionals (teachers, fire, police)
- Low income families
- Seniors
- Very elderly - those who need assisted care of varying levels
- College/grad students
- Young families
- Decatur does not have much in the way of "active senior living."

- Paying the tax burden is difficult in retirement. What will make it possible for seniors to stay in their homes?
- What kind of solutions?
- Supported living for seniors
- Reduce the tax burden for seniors
- Increase the share of business/commercial property that generates tax revenue for the city. What incentives would attract business/property owners for this purpose?
- How do you resolve the problem of single-family houses being so expensive?
- The group recognizes that there are several plans/developments in the works that may address some of the needs diverse housing needs, mixed use etc.
- Some members of the group mentioned some problems with standards and regulations for in-fill housing or renovation of existing houses. Current standards may not be adequate to address situations that arise. Some suggested that the City may need a greater willingness to engage in more cooperative give and take with builders and developers.
- Mixed income housing important. Place for teachers, city workers, etc.
- Issue: when affordable housing rises in price, people sell and move, then there are fewer affordable homes.
- As baby boomers age and downsize, what are they looking for? Mixture of housing types, Affordable prices, Smaller homes, Single level homes, Low maintenance--small yards, no painting, etc. HOA neighborhoods.
- People are moving here from the NE and Florida to retire
- Accessibility will be key to (aging in place)
- Provide live/work spaces. Have access to a local business center within walking distance. Build into new developments.
- Permits should preserve neighborhood feel.
- Consider co-housing: supportive communities that are walk-able with perimeter parking. Communal kitchens, gardens, office space.
- Services near population centers. Types of businesses important--markets, groceries, etc.
- Include renters in city planning. Need more rental property to increase diversity--nice apartments.
- Hard to build because available plots of land too small.
- Neighborhoods often oppose such development
- Concern that renters not invested in community
- Aging in place Complex issue, Involves every aspect of city, Decatur seen as a model/example of how to do this, 75% of citizens do not have kids in the schools; many citizens over the age of 50. (This probably has not changed much over time.)
- [housing]Who? Older population
- [housing]Empty nesters

- Civil servants- need affordable housing
- [civil servants]They will need affordable housing
- Requirement for notifying the neighborhood citizens of zoning changes, Email list
- Sales tax to offset property taxes
- Tighten zoning restrictions for single family housing, To reduce the cost of houses
- Merge school system with DeKalb
- Abolish school system- make private and charter- both of these are in an effort to lower taxes
- Just make schools more responsive to parents
- need a staff and citizen commission dedicated to housing issues , trends and attraction strategies.
- Increasing numbers of seniors who may want to Age in Place Why can't they?, Taxes - need relief/exemptions, Transportation - need shuttles, Maintenance - keep the MLK project and expand - encourage more people to have their home worked on, may be stigma keeps some from asking for help, Physical layout of home no longer works
- Attract businesses that serve seniors
- Have a seniors 101 program that educates about services and programs for seniors and provides support for family caregivers
- Expand MLK concept to neighborhoods -neighbors helping neighbors - develop a website the connects those who can help with needs in their own neighborhoods
- Lower income households including workforce (teachers, police, etc) young people starting out, DHS grads who want to move back to Decatur but can't afford it as well as families struggling in poverty and working poor
- Need to balance - look at housing market as a whole - we are not sure how but we want a community that includes housing for all of these groups - economic diversity
- If we want to be a place for artists need affordable live/work space for them to be able to afford to live in Decatur
- Live/work space also for entrepreneurs
- Annex DeVry space for new housing?
- Young families [housing market]
- Downsizing from within Decatur[housing market]
- Challenges will be to provide affordable housing, maintain racial/economic diversity
- Increasing housing prices size out and price out diversity and lead to larger infill
- Policy = zoning overly policies that are specialized and individualized
- Reverse white flight and housing market demand will increase demand that will require increased density and supply, which squeezes out low income residents
- Policy = protection of public house
- Decatur is attractive to young families, but not to seniors
- Increase PR to attract retirees and seniors
- Equitable taxation based upon ability, age

- Increase commercial tax base
- Demand increases squeeze out the middle
- Density is only a part of solution as most residents desire single family housing
- Policy = work force incentives, tax incentives to offer affordable housing
- Multi-generational, mixed families
- Preserving community
- College housing (DeVry, Agnes Scot, Columbia)
- Annexation will create greater stock and supply
- Concerns about whether annexation will actually result in lower taxes, changes to neighborhoods and walkability
- Annexation may help lower/stabilize housing costs
- Annexed properties should have their taxes frozen at pre-annexation rates for 10 years
- City should facilitate and advertise available tax freezes, tax rebates, etc. for historic preservation, renovations
- Decatur should have an Annexation Policy - overarching policy of when, trigger points, goals
- AGING POPULATION. Recognition needs to be given to the increasing percentage of elderly residents. A lot of discussion focused on other than high rise style affordable independent living options, perhaps with an economically feasible mid-rise approach.
- CITY EMPLOYEES. Options should be made available to city employees that enable them to live in the City, or send their kids to school here.
- NO ONE-OFF DEALS. Concern was expressed against offering opening onetime tax breaks or price reductions in affordable housing efforts.
- PARTNER INSTITUTION EFFORTS. Explore options with Columbia Seminary, Agnes Scott, etc. for encouragement of housing opportunities for their employees, City and school employees, etc. Collaboration efforts could extend to other non-residential building and facility usage policies.
- DIVERSITY. This was a broad topic revisited several times by the group. An emphasis was placed on the fact that a mixture of age, income, race, gender, etc. creates a unique neighborhood and City, and there is a value to be placed on this uniqueness. Discussions about how we accomplish and encourage efforts in this area suggested that we find incentives for private investment in mixed income housing efforts like the Villages of East Lake.
- Have bike parking at high density housing
- Encourage mixed use in existing neighborhoods to support aging population
- Housing for continual living in Decatur as we age
- Don't want 22-story housing --keep it quaint, 5-stories or fewer, needs to stay cute
- Happy to have condos in the downtown to move to later in age
- Preserve the homes that are already here --we'd be doing well to hold the line
- Want to be able to age in own home

- Look to lower the age for school tax exemption --graduate it, based on income
- Delay property tax until home is sold or owner passes
- Senior independent living—encourage and add more
- Allow and encourage combined facilities (independent/assisted living/nurse care)
- Encourage parking alternatives—shared parking, reduce parking lot requirements near MARTA, etc.
- Support/encourage work force and affordable housing
- Seniors
- Young people
- Workforce
- Next generation of children
- Students
- Teachers
- Active senior developments
- Student housing
- Mother-in-law suites
- Smaller townhomes/brownstones
- Appropriate sized for user group
- Youth hostels
- Garage apartments
- There will be a need for both single-family housing and multi-family housing in the future
- We need a variety of housing for all sizes of families
- There is a good amount of rental units in the city now
- In terms of things done well, the redevelopment on the housing authority property is a positive for the city
- Specifically because it adds density to downtown
- Existing under-developed parking lots could support more density for downtown
- Another positive is the Artisan development, in terms of size, scale and in-fill nature of it
- However, the city needs to establish height transitions between downtown and single-family housing neighborhoods
- The city also has to recognize that while gentrification may not be widespread, it is occurring to older and lower income residents
- Elderly near downtown where you can access needs via walking and activities near by. Does not have to be large, cluster homes/dorms. Does not to be a 1 size fits all, diverse options,
- Allowing seniors to age in place
- Starter homes for young
- College students non-traditional housing for students (example near King Plow arts center) privatized living spaces

- Non traditional families example- single moms, roommates, etc...

## Healthy living

*In terms of “healthy living,” what would make the most positive difference for the residents of our city?  
What activities, programs, or changes in the things we build could make a difference?*

- Walkable
- Programs for kids and elders (in Decatur magazine)
- Let schools allow residents to use grounds (model is Winnona Park; Renfroe is other extreme and is chained up)
- Develop city to encourage residents to get moving/healthy
- Green space and gardens - get people outside and eating local food
- Is a Whole Foods grocery store coming?
- Feed better lunches at schools
- Several new restaurants specializing in local foods
- Improve water
- Make it easy for anyone to walk/bike anywhere
- Feeling safe everywhere (presence begets presence)
- Trolley would cut down the number of cars
- More parking decks and close off parking in city square would encourage walking - have very local, circular trolley to help
- Mark mileage on "paths" through the city so you know the marked circuit (Oakhurst has marked trees)
- Cops walking or on bikes
- Create live/learn retirement community with ASC, Columbia, Art Institute, DeVry - a community that partners with learning institutions. Continuing Education opportunities in retirement.
- Walking maps that indicate location of benches, water fountains and bathrooms, even on private property and in neighborhoods
- Continue to promote Safe Route to School and crossing guard program, need to educate community about it.
- More stores in downtown supplying daily needs would promote more walking
- Partner with medical centers (i.e. DeKalb Wellness center, Emory, Kaiser) for health seminars, screenings, etc.
- Get flu shot clinics available downtown
- Challenge - Lifestyle / culture
- Challenge - Lack of time
- Challenge - Participation (i.e. community involvement, coaches for teams, etc.)
- Install bike lanes on most major roads in the city

- Sidewalk improvement to encourage walking (repairing cracks, adding curbs, cutting back overgrown vegetation to improve safety)
- Improved railroad crossings to get from north side of city to south side and vice versa for pedestrians and cyclists
- Improve building codes to improve building health, air quality, water conservation, and energy conservation
- Incentives for new construction and retrofitting existing buildings to meet/exceed federal standards for environmental conservation measures
- Healthy eating educational programs for children and the elderly
- Easier access to tennis courts (longer hours)
- Marked trails
- Incentives for building owners to create cultural venues downtown in addition to retail and restaurants
- Household waste disposal for toxic chemicals semi-annually
- Water quality improvement for local streams (eliminate pet waste contamination and building codes to move pet parks and buildings away from polluting local streams)
- Storm water control (permeable driveways, sidewalks)
- Park renovation and maintenance (organized volunteer school groups/neighborhood associations to help with maintenance)
- Beautification of walking routes leading to downtown area (lighting improvements, curbs, trees) and landlords forced to maintain store front areas
- Reduce car speeds through downtown area (make roads brick)
- Quality grocery store downtown
- Tax incentive to reduce cars per household
- Reduce intra-city car use through advertising alternate transport, providing safe infrastructure
- Make trails a destination as well as a conduit by adding artwork, nature trail signs, walking botanical garden, fountains
- Central fountains in the city (European model to encourage congregation, beautification)
- Community connections for work at home people: places to congregate and work, regular gatherings to engage this group by creating a "water cooler" gathering place)
- Gathering spots other than the square, more social urban spaces throughout the city
- Terminal vistas (roads ending in a landmark, fountain)
- Provide bicycle racks everywhere
- Create a magnet retail project downtown
- More farmer's markets
- More community gardens
- In the future streets are so safe, no need for crossing guards
- Drivers speed less because speed limit is enforced

- All streets in Decatur are 2 lane streets
- More bicycle lanes
- MARTA plaza - shade awnings with game tables, chess etc.
- more community gardens, CSA
- more available garden space through rooftop or convert paved surfaces
- new YMCA in downtown Decatur, updated
- cross reference our transportation ideas
- use "healthy living" as barometer for any decision city makes
- Rec center and YMCA collaborating more around sports instead of kids being stretched between
- farm to school
- access to locally grown food for all incomes
- revitalize empty buildings with healthy living in mind
- free/cheap education about healthy eating - process vs. fresh, using kitchens in schools, rec center, Cooks Warehouse for this
- Decatur believes in getting all children to be successful through mentoring, 'Tide lifting all ships'
- Celebrate teachers and education through special programs and events
- How to institutionalize- getting City Schools of Decatur together to celebrate Education
- Decatur Education Foundation, DBA and City of Decatur Volunteer Coordinator to collaborate on healthy issues
- Active neighborhood watch programs
- Walking to destinations
- Having something for the children to do once they are through eating at restaurants- have a playground or some other sort of entertainment
- Access to convenience stores
- Zoning: could have pockets within larger residential zones where limited services could be offered such as convenience store
- We share a common value of education of both children and citizens- Tap into and maximize the diversity of education, experience, culture of the residents
- Encourage development of community gardens and local foods, co-op aspects, Community Supported Agriculture support in Decatur (Sugar Creek Garden, Farm to Table programs)
- Have Grant Coordinator find funding for these activities
- Continue to encourage block parties throughout city, including block parties that are thematic such as with musical instruments or 'progressive porch parties'
- Neighborhood associations promote block parties
- Finding Trader Joe's or equivalent that has healthier food choices
- Access to good health care
- Limit automobiles to improve air quality
- Promote walkability

- Access to fresh food (e.g. farmer's markets)
- More opportunity for physical health activities - City sponsored or promoted
- Business incentives to offer healthy living products and services
- Efficient use of existing resource - people planning, etc.
- Carpooling incentives
- City shuttle service
- Create a pedestrian mall - Ponce Clairemont to Church
- More bicycle routes and racks
- Preserve existing trees and encourage more
- Building code options/incentives to encourage efficient building, LEED, Green roof
- Encourage and promote community gardens
- Sidewalks in good repair
- Continued recycling emphasis
- Expansion of greenspace
- Teach children to walk and bike early
- Implement bike lanes and trolley
- Create "bike stations" (i.e. areas of racks) and offer "bike days" (clinics on using, fixing, maintaining bikes)
- Create more and improve existing greenspace
- Create more community gardens
- Leverage existing resources, better use of public buildings and educational institutions as healthy living and multi-purpose spaces open to citizens, non-profits and businesses (i.e. Decatur H.S. and Agnes Scott)
- Secure funding for Decatur Rec Center overhaul
- Implement intergenerational programs such as gardening and arts at Rec Center
- Engage medical community in active/healthy living programs
- Make the Decatur Focus more timely (by the time the Focus arrives events are often passed)
- Have active living department serve as a clearinghouse for all active events in the City (not just the ones offered by the Department of Active Living/Rec Center)
- Create Decatur Active living / Healthy Living Newsletter available in hard copy and online
- Communicate resident benefits to residents
- Engage Decatur businesses with active living efforts (i.e. running stores, restaurants)
- Implement micro environmentalism such as Decatur initiatives to: use alternative transportation; use less power; visit community gardens; eat healthy in Decatur
- Create community bulletin boards and place throughout the City
- Recreation center - A good functioning center
- Recreation center - Needs funding for improvement
- Recreation center - Location is good, walkable

- Recreation center - Satellite locations would be good to have in various neighborhoods
- Parks - Need to be more accessible - perhaps via a shuttle
- Parks - Need to have a variety of activities, More casual space for just "hanging out", Dancing, Bocce ball
- Parks - Each park could have recreation center type facilities
- Parks - Resource sharing - example use the Boys & Girls Club as a senior day care when it is not in use
- Parks - Adair Park needs upgrade -- water, restrooms
- Parks - Use facilities in parks to help keep seniors engaged - senior activities and places for them to meet
- Parks - Have enough parks and green space - keep parks updated and vital
- Trails and Nature Walks - Need more of these within city or within parks
- Pocket Parks, Need more, Trails, Benches
- how lifestyle changes have changed the response to public health: shift from concerns about infectious disease to concerns about chronic disease (heart, diabetes, obesity, etc.); how focus in urban planning should shift to tackle
- focus first on low-hanging fruit: bike lanes and shoulders
- city is carved up in a weird way to get from A to B safely via bike--connect/map out bike routes; city commission should get on a bike and ride through the city. Winona Park -> downtown -> Emory; encourage bike as transportation and walking with children, connectivity
- Bike suitability map (indicating degree of bike friendliness of each street/route; best way to go by bike)
- all intersections made safer for walking and biking
- better routes
- focused outreach to those who need it most--bikes to those who can't afford to buy, access to fresh/healthy produce and food; food stamps accepted at farmers' markets, teaching nutrition, public space for gardens; support and grow existing programs; not one size fits all
- Alternate formats of activities--not just sign up for a class and show up; walks in cemetery, yoga in the park; take it to the people, decentralized--not necessarily city sponsored--meet ups
- better nutrition in the schools--both in what is being served and taught; farm to school; start with making a commitment: plant then inform
- Encourage kids/families to walk more/bike more
- Promote better connectivity of paths, green space
- Have more active recreational activities in parks such as basket ball courts and shuffle board, etc.
- Promote Farm 2 School - more healthy options
- Have more "spontaneous" gatherings & gathering places to encourage community
- more walking and biking
- farm to school programs

- grants for Rec Center
- kids run program
- family activities
- promote push mowers
- have neighborhood competitions for healthy living
- too much car idling leads to poor air quality
- traffic lights should switch to flashing yellows after 11PM
- left turn signals will cut down on traffic going through neighborhoods (Avery Drive cut through, for example)
- Encourage walkability
- Bike/walking trails
- bike/foot patrols (police)
- Greenspace promotes healthy activities
- sponsor races/walks/biking that would touch local businesses too as a draw to Decatur
- Continue Decatur Youth Rec
- Expand Decatur Rec for Adults;
- Focus on renovating or improving the Decatur Recreations Facility
- Revisit free community bike program
- Define green for Decatur
- Balance green requirement with diversity
- Educate on how to save money in Decatur by decreasing energy use.
- More efficient use of space to create more diverse housing without eroding current homeowner property value
- Look at what needs to be done with single family homes.
- More Rec Center offerings for general population
- Dance hall in Decatur
- Health care co-op
- Healthy eating groups for kids and adults
- Decatur Triathlon
- Walk between green spaces/parks in city
- Once a month close streets in Decatur for walking, biking eating connecting and shopping.
- Food Revolution in Decatur
- Bike riding classes for adults
- Encourage eating locally grown
- Allow for urban "farms"
- Maintain the sidewalks
- Sidewalks and curbs should be handicap accessible (also provide for visually/audibly impaired)
- Update existing facilities without editing architectural value

- Close part of Ponce for pedestrian-only activity (certain times only)
- Involve the schools and educate early on the topic of healthy living and food choices
- Increasing walkability of City and other environmental ideas already discussed, would encourage healthy living
- Maintain and increase recreation center programs to create community connections and give residents a place to go
- Create a senior/youth mentoring program possibly using MLK project as vehicle by extending it beyond MLK Day weekend, aim to increase connections between different age groups on regular basis
- Have Oakhurst Community Garden and recreation center work together to achieve above goals
- Create more community gardens
- Consider establishing traffic free time in area of City so residents can walk, bike, etc. without having to worry about motor vehicle traffic, Some group members had questions about what City is doing now about this subject, suggest establishment of committee to oversee
- Need more activity space at schools
- City owned athletic fields should be made more accessible to general public (e.g., McKoy ballfield, Ebster Park field)
- Better cultural arts coordination
- Allow urban farming- small livestock - chickens, goats but no cows
- Make stairs more accessible
- More Corporate support of physical fitness
- Educate workplace to be healthier
- Eliminate student parking at Decatur High
- Farm to school programs
- Require restaurants to have truth in advertising (within reason)
- Promote and expand recreation centers active living
- More place to play (fields for ad hoc games)
- Open more school spaces
- Use grass not mulch
- Better options to dispose dog litter
- Healthier kids-more recess
- More after school activities, more play grounds
- Activities for those between kids & active adults
- Staffed parks/activities manager, keys to “equipment shed”
- Encourage community to volunteer, to conduct activities
- Teen Center at Decatur Rec
- Co-op with schools to expand active programs for community
- Underutilized public facilities

- Frisbee Golf
- Use expanded on public ball fields
- Inter-neighborhood leagues
- More lenient usage of ball field, parks, etc.
- More open air markets for fresh food and other goods
- Fit station course for community, use bike path
- Use asphalt for bike path for running & walking safety
- more walking and bicycling
- improve traffic lights for pedestrian safety, add audio signals
- improve conditions at all RR crossings (Candler, S. McDonough, Atlanta St.)
- make possible to cross Scott Blvd. safely
- improve curb accessibility, significant problem for elderly people
- enhance safety for bikes and for pedestrians; consult experts at Ga Tech who are developing new ways for all transportation modes to share roadways
- need warning siren in more locations [one participant did not think Decatur has a siren at all, sparked substantial discussion; facilitator recommended she find out when the monthly test is conducted and make a point to be at home and see if she can hear it]
- provide bike safety education, esp for children
- provide a shuttle service to reduce traffic, e.g., like the Cliff Bus at Emory
- electric cars and buses; privately owned so not a drain on the City (another biz to pay taxes!)
- more Rec programming in different locations around town, e.g., tai-chi at the MARTA plaza
- more community gardens where people can grow their own food
- better amenities in parks: benches, water fountains
- Growth of Decatur Rec center, active living, connection with schools, seniors. Maybe review people who use facility
- Promote Farmers Market - have dedicated area
- Expanding runs, clubs, biking, better knowledge/info - Calendar
- Walking tours and Volunteers
- Tourism, draw incentives, "foody" city that is green. Being a destination
- Access to events are free, cheap
- Movie Theater, independent, small
- Boutique Hotel
- Holiday Inn conf center improvement, Emory, CDC
- Expand commercial Tax base - tourism
- Strong doctors in DeKalb Medical center, proximity a plus, good for aging population
- Connect neighborhoods with paths, and bike routes
- No generally accessible field, no baseball park
- Keep parks safe

- Make public space safe
- Allow kids to move around Decatur alone
- Police force needs to be visible. Add bike police force, have police walking sidewalks.
- Need active neighborhood watches
- Parks needs visible safety measures
- Put Emergency number in cell phone
- Public Housing needs to be mixed use for young and elderly
- Drug deals are going on within Public housing and on Patillo way
- Do not want people coming into Decatur to buy drugs
- High School needs better surveillance
- In terms of healthy living, what would make the most positive differences for the residents of our city? What activities, programs or changes in the things we build could make a difference?
- There are a lot of healthy activities already. Perhaps more attention to marketing what is available.
- More community gardens
- Continue developing the farm-to-school program
- Connect walking/running/biking groups with each other
- Health programs in partnership with Emory Healthcare and DeKalb Medical
- Nutrition and exercise programs sponsored by the City
- Have public exercise on the square - e.g., yoga or tai chi
- Decatur Business Association sponsor health-focused events featuring business with health-related products
- The list of Park & Rec programs could also list informal groups - e.g., running groups, meet ups, etc
- Decatur is healthier than other metro suburbs, partially through self-selection. We walk more here than in other places.
- for the residents of our city? What activities, programs or changes in the things we build could make a difference?
- Goal: Healthier aging population
- Need to provide facilities to keep population healthy--environment should keep us active.
- Interconnected green spaces would help.
- Plan to connect through signage, count of steps between green spaces
- Develop a zip line or a tree canopy walk as attractions and healthy activities.
- Host a Decatur neighborhood field/sports day at high school field--all kinds of activities for kids and adults.
- Could be a fundraiser for Active Living and/or school system (neighborhood field/sports day)
- More pedestrian friendly
- More classes for adults and a workout center

- Encourage walking and biking clubs
- Centralized message board
- More awareness about what already exists
- Bike lanes- separate from road
- Work with Emory
- Like Peachtree City but without the golf carts
- Kids need centrally located areas for activities
- Repeal skateboard ordinance
- More pet parks
- However, maintain the balance of "live and let live"
- Focus on fresh, healthy food for all, support farm to school
- Farmers market downtown is too expensive , expand it so costs can go down
- See transportation ideas for improving healthy living (bike lanes and racks)
- Fund the expansion of the rec center
- Active living - bike lanes, tennis courts
- Oakhurst tennis courts are lame - bathrooms are gross - unreasonable to have to obtain a key from City Hall
- Rec Center should focus on more than just kids
- Larger swimming pools with real, useable lap lanes
- An arts program that rivals Callanwolde
- Arts partnership lags benefit
- Local farm-to-table food instruction from city
- Encourage schools, restaurants to use local foods
- Gardening courses, teach where food comes from
- Expansion of local, community gardens
- More athletic fields - allow rec to expand to soccer, lacross
- Bike racks, places to lock bikes, bike rentals, self-serve bike rentals
- Study effectiveness and usage of ZIP car
- Wi-Fi is not reliable - unsure if this is a proper city role given competition w/ private providers
- Bury power lines - or at least conduct a cost-benefit analysis between costs and damages caused by trees
- Lower taxes
- Outdoor arts, ampitheater
- A better hotel - different, boutique, unique - a huge need given the size of houses especially around graduations
- Explore gambling
- WALKABILITY. Wider sidewalks are needed. Create ways to make walking more interesting via distances on way-finding signs, tree and plant identification, historic points of interest, etc.

- ACTIVE LIVING. Continue current City department efforts.
- TAI CHI. Picture it: Tai Chi on the square.
- CAMPING OPTIONS. Once upon a time Boy Scouts camped on the square. Are there options available within the City for limited camping opportunities?
- 24 HOUR ESTABLISHMENTS. We need more places that are open all the time.
- KIDS URBAN PLAY OPPS. We should partner with organizations that teach kids how to play safely in an urban environment.
- WORKOUT PATHS. Incorporate workout or exercise paths, the kind with exercise stations usable by seniors, in our parks.
- (Define Healthy, not just bodily health. Health is life, mind spirit)
- Like to know where we ca[me] from, southern history
- Getting more seniors involved
- Proactive approach to our history
- Communication - public communication
- Bring people together and to gather
- Get people out of their cars
- Neighborhood walk and talk
- Breakaway isolation
- Communication is healthy
- Intertwined in our lifes
- Communicate with one another
- Government to go to the people, outreach to people
- Get seniors to be involved in schools, and kids
- Get seniors to teach history of Decatur\
- Storytelling as part of book festival, art festival
- Take festivals to different part of the city
- Neighborhood gatherings
- How can we encourage and empower people in the city to make the difference
- Citizen's group, organizations
- Bring the 600 people (roundtable participants) together every quarter, periodically to share ideas
- Finding a way for the people of Decatur to interact, maintain connection, roundtable participants be a group of people to foster action
- Community gardens!! Puts people in touch with their food, potential hobby/activity -- the more gardens the better
- More greenspace and athletic fields
- Encourage opportunities for walking
- Education effects healthy living --educated people are healthier
- Use school focus for education forum

- Downtown market year round --food market, artisan/craft market
- Pl[aces] designated for gathering for activities --Ex.: drum circle places, fitness course equipment
- Knowing your neighbor and trusting the place you live
- More activities / groups like fitness bootcamps --neighborhood walking groups, neighborhood stretching groups
- A path that weaves together all the neighborhoods in the city
- THEMES from this meeting:
- Overuse of greenspaces
- Adding greenspaces with designated use -active -wild places -passive
- Encouraging the businesses that we want to be located here --small businesses
- Encouraging pedestrian and bike use --decrease vehicle use
- Housing options for elderly and students
- Making the schools an educational community center --social forums
- Farmers markets
- More community gardens
- ]more swimming pools and well maintained
- Awareness with community supported agriculture(CSA)
- More bike paths
- Recreation facilities
- Gyms
- Solar panels on school bldg rooftops
- More LEED certified bldgs
- Indoor performance facilities
- The group was not aware of a senior center in town, outside of the Recreation center and library
- The recreation center has a lot, but it is “rundown” and does not accommodate everyone
- The farms to schools program is good for people’s health
- The Oakhurst Community Garden’s classes are a positive for the city as well
- renovation of rec center
- variety of location of programs (keeners)
- integration of activities-partnering with others
- maintaining park renovation
- bathrooms in location of sports activities- they are always closed or non existent

## High interest ideas

Here are the ideas, from those listed above, that the groups felt generated a high level of interest during their discussions:

### Sustaining and preserving Decatur

*Think about Session 1 and about how the city has developed and grown. How do we sustain this city? How do we preserve the things we appreciate?*

- Maintain and increase socioeconomic diversity of city
- Develop incentives to promote affordable housing
- City develops creative ways outside of property taxes to find funding
- Create Decatur Chamber of Commerce to recruit new businesses
- Provide small business advisory (i.e. SCORE Atlanta)
- Comprehensive review of zoning codes and variance policy
- Follow best practice for development, look to Boulder, CO and Naperville, IL as best practice leaders
- Create buffer zone between residential and commercial properties
- Ensure new development meets needs of diverse community and encourages diversity and sustained growth (diversity described as racial, age, socioeconomic)
- Develop affordable housing
- Keep an eye on taxes – let's keep the city affordable
- Heal the railroad issues...creative ways to make railroad work with us like landscape, underpass, overpass
- Balance economic health- real city, real place, not resort, real places to shop for needs
- Downtown sustainable by more diverse businesses- practice everyday affordable needs ex-target...can be built to look like city (example D.C shops have look of city not big giant retail)
- City that works for all income levels-shops not outgrowing the income of its citizens
- Corner stores/grocery stores that are attractive and local
- Maintain high quality service- can't be sustained without maintaining tax structure, so broader taxing on "other" non residential
- Prepare for economic uncertainty

### **Tending to the natural environment**

*How do we preserve and improve our natural environment? How do we protect our air, water and green space?*

- Smart Growth means higher density, multiple uses, transportation choices and that the town looks unique
- underground utilities
- Trees-subside the fear of the falling trees and preserve and protect good ones, plant new ones
- City arborist/program to plant new trees, inspect property upon request
- Policy of waterways/ storm run offs to be enforced by city, make decisions more uniform so many individuals problem solving and not in a uniform way. Example- Peavine Creek
- Don't see DeKalb water maintaining and checking waterways and storm draining.
- Energy efficient incentives

### **Present and future mobility**

*How do you get from place to place in Decatur, now? What might change in how we travel about in the next ten years?*

- Remove parking from North McDonough by square and East Court Square
- Current parking decks in the city seem unfriendly
- Run a trolley along main arteries to connect neighborhoods with downtown and other frequently visited places within or near the city (Emory, Edgewood, DeKalb Farmers Market, E. Decatur Station)
- Improve parking signage
- Implement bike lanes, specifically on Clairemont, Church, College
- Create pedestrian zone by closing Ponce from SunTrust to Leon's
- Eliminate parking on E. Court and N. McDonough and turn into green space
- walking
- scooters cars
- cutting across railroad
- counters for crossing street and sound beepers (pedestrians)
- increase signage and more sidewalks
- DeKalb relationship with city

### **Life in Decatur**

*When you think about the overall environment of our city (our public gatherings, our festivals and cultural life) what is most important to you?*

- Utilize church facilities for art
- City should provide a liaison for the private market and artist community
- book festival and arts festival
- volunteer program
- DBA continued support growth

### **Future of housing**

*Who are the people who will need housing in Decatur in twenty years? What kind of housing do you think they will they need?*

- Mixed use housing for aging population (i.e. necessities available in development or within walking distance)
- Incentives for property developers/owners to encourage affordable housing, look to Charleston and Savannah on rehabbing existing buildings with incentives and tax credits
- Cooperate and partner with non-profits on grant applications for affordable housing (affordable housing needed for low income earners, young professionals, young families)
- Balance density with affordable housing
- Convert unused commercial property to residential (affordable) property
- Elderly near downtown where you can access needs via walking and activities near by. Does not have to be large, cluster homes/dorms. Does not to be a 1 size fits all, diverse options,
- Starter homes for young
- College students non-traditional housing for students (example near King Plow arts center) privatized living spaces
- Non traditional families example- single moms, roommates, etc.

### **Healthy living**

*In terms of “healthy living,” what would make the most positive difference for the residents of our city? What activities, programs, or changes in the things we build could make a difference?*

- Create a magnet retail project downtown
- In the future streets are so safe, no need for crossing guards
- Implement bike lanes and trolley

- Create more and improve existing greenspace
- Leverage existing resources, better use of public buildings and educational institutions as healthy living and multi-purpose spaces open to citizens, non-profits and businesses (i.e. Decatur H.S. and Agnes Scott)
- Implement intergenerational programs such as gardening and arts at Rec Center
- Engage medical community in active/healthy living programs
- Make the Decatur Focus more timely (by the time the Focus arrives events are often passed)
- Have active living department serve as a clearinghouse for all active events in the City (not just the ones offered by the Department of Active Living/Rec Center)
- Create Decatur Active living / Healthy Living Newsletter available in hard copy and online
- Engage Decatur businesses with active living efforts (i.e. running stores, restaurants)
- Implement micro environmentalism such as Decatur initiatives to: use alternative transportation; use less power; visit community gardens; eat healthy in Decatur
- Create community bulletin boards and place throughout the City
- Parks - Need to have a variety of activities, More casual space for just "hanging out", Dancing, Bocce ball
- Parks - Use facilities in parks to help keep seniors engaged - senior activities and places for them to meet
- renovation of rec center
- bathrooms in location of sports activities- they are always closed or non existent