

Gene Clower May 15, 2010

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

- The elderly will be a growing segment within the community
 - There is a feeling that there will be more adult children returning home to play the role of caretakers for parents that still live in Decatur
 - In addition, there will be an increase in the number of multi-generational homes, not just for caretaking, as a result of either economic conditions or cost of living issues
 - This will have a potential impact on schools depending on overall dynamics of the change
 - For the elderly that want to remain in their current homes, there is a concern about affordability given the current tax burden on each household.
 - Suggestions include reducing the tax rate for certain age levels potentially mirroring social security ages. this will allow those on fixed income to better manage living expenses
- Young people in their 20s and 30s is another area that will need housing and a potential growing segment
 - Decatur is an in-town suburb and the trend is for them to want to live closer to an in-town area
 - Young families moving into Oakhurst is one trend that was noted
 - Concern with ability to move into Decatur and have affordable first or second homes; concern that salaries for younger people may not allow them to move into the city
- When posed with the question, what kind of housing do these segments need?, the team responded with: Single family homes, condominiums and apartments
- Other points with the type of housing that is needed:
 - Affordable from the standpoint of the tax burden (tax burden was an area that came up repeatedly)
 - Manageable for low or fixed income individuals
 - Smaller starter homes are needed for those that want to move into the city
 - Townhomes, apartments and condos all appeared to be viable alternatives for attracting a wider range of demographics
 - With additional housing being developed, make sure the city has a managed density program/tracking
- Create a first-time home buyer program that is subsidized with grants or other means
 - codes on limitations on the size and cost of the homes in this program
 - individual would need to qualify for the program based on income or demographics

- regulations around the amount of time they must live in the home, the contribution for the down payment, the upkeep of the home, etc
- For the elderly, there are several types of housing that will be needed
 - "Age in place" where they stay in existing home
 - Tiered care facilities where the elderly can move from living independently to different levels of managed care within one facility
 - Concern about reducing the tax burden for the elderly without eroding the overall tax base
- From the perspective of demographic, ethnic diversity
 - affordability is an issue
 - concern about reversing the 2000-2007 trend where the African-American population shrunk
 - Appears that the increase in the cost of living had an impact on the diversity of the city
 - Some of the first time home buyer programs could help this
 - In addition, need programs that could attract those that are challenged with the cost issues
 - Quality schools are an attractor to the city but that seems to come with a price/increase in cost of living

How do we sustain this city? How do we preserve the things we appreciate?

- Reduce residential % of tax base by attracting a wider range of businesses
- there is a need for business development initiatives
 - Tax relief for specified periods of time
 - make the tax base competitive with other areas
 - Potential for building on the existing base of medical businesses given the proximity to Emory and the CDC
 - Need to help entrepreneurs understand the business opportunities in Decatur
 - What are areas of unmet demand for businesses?
 - Grocery or farmers markets in all areas of the city
 - Affordable clothing stores
 - Toy or children stores
 - General discussion on more day to day stores; the team understands that the big box retailers have taken a lot of this away but there is the desire to have more affordable shops move back into the city so that you can walk as opposed to driving
 - there is a suggestion for the city to conduct Market surveys and promotions to determine what type of businesses/shops the community is willing/able to support
 - Chamber of Commerce or city needs to lead effort on how to recruit and sustain a broader range of small to medium size businesses

- There is a need for retail shops for residents vs. the retail shops for visitors
 - Daily life needs vs. boutique shops

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

- Ten years from now, we will need more alternatives
- Need more designated bike lanes but "Share the road"
- Need to educate the bikers on the proper use of bike lanes and riding in the road
- Need more parking alternatives
- Do not reduce the current number of lanes, especially on busy streets
- Need mechanisms/plans for better accommodating commuters into and out of the city
 - As congestion has grown, there are more cut thru in neighborhoods
 - Congestion on some streets during peak times is causing residents to alter driving directions or patterns
- Concerning routes and destinations
 - Need traffic plans to manage the commuters just passing thru vs. the people who are traveling in the city and have a certain destination
 - Need more core business areas
 - Strengthen government and business partnerships in traffic planning and solutions
- Alternatives in the future for traveling in the city
 - More pedicabs and 'rickshaws'
 - Trolley or tram or bus alternatives that use electricity or natural gas and have designated regular routes within the city limits
 - Participants expressed they would support using these to go shopping and to entertainment in the city as long as the price point was reasonable
 - concern for how to fund or subsidize this option but maybe there are grants that the city could obtain
- Overall concern that congestion will increase and somehow there needs to be a plan to manage this increase in congestion and parking; need for overall traffic plan that includes alternatives

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

- Add bike lanes where possible/easy but not at the expense of car traffic
- Don't compromise the good lifestyle that already exists in the city; already a very vibrant healthy/walking community
- Develop a large green space downtown; replace some of the older buildings in the city with a large downtown park area; need more green space directly in the city center
- Develop programs to encourage healthy activities
 - Promote/publicize existing opportunities, especially the neighborhood centric ones
 - Grant programs for the city or neighborhood associations

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

- Balance development for revenue enhancement with impact on environment
- Better manage storm water runoff; there were several examples of where new development was causing localized flooding in areas when there are heavy rains
- Do a better job of overseeing/regulating development; in one example a plot of land had been clear cut but no definitive development was ongoing and this was causing erosion/flooding issues
- Encourage alternative transportation plans as we mentioned
- Proactive planning for growth, especially impact to downstream or surrounding areas
- Preserve and maintain the tree canopies
- Need traffic plan to keep traffic moving
 - Look at traffic light timing
 - maintain existing busy lanes

When you think about the overall environment of our city, what is most important to you?

- Quality beer and restaurants
- maintain support for and expand existing festivals
 - city slogan should migrate toward: homes, schools, churches...festivals
- Add a 'big city park'
- Relocate/enhance county seat elements/structures
- Review unoccupied high-rise square footage for possible use by county government
- There is a need for a plan for better use of existing, unoccupied square footage all over the city

Group 57 (plus a few new folks) • May 15 • Saturday, 9 am

M. Lampe

Recap of Session 1

Highlights and recurring themes:

- Vision of Decatur: The "Green Necklace" of parks and greenspaces; "Connecting the Dots" of walkability, sustainability and community and commerce
- Mini shuttle would be a great service to get Decatur folks from their neighborhoods to the parks and commercial districts around town; for short trips to recreational activities, shopping, dining, special events
- Community is key. Concept: "good old-fashioned icecream parlor" to provide all-ages-friendly gathering spot/opportunities for fun and fellowship

1. Sustaining the city

- Restructure taxes
- Create an attraction
- Create a utility for power, gas, wi-max; develop alternate revenue streams;
 - Parks: Fees, concessions, tennis center
 - Be an event destination
 - Be an environmental flagship
- Greenspace – must preserve, must obtain more developer concessions
- Engage in proactive mediation between developers and residents; city must manage facts v. reality v. emotion; move toward communication in new and better ways
- Annex, but focus on commercial districts, esp. Suburban Plaza
- Target the deficiencies that detract from the city: eyesore commercial areas, properties, especially at Decatur's gateways and along main corridors

2. How to preserve and improve our natural environment?

- Change codes to encourage residential development that appeals to the environmentally

conscious

- Move "green" past being a boutique concept to being a way of life; champion "affordable green"
- Encourage neighborhood projects like the Waddell pocket park

Policy:

- Carbon neutrality, but with comprehensive education, encourage the simple acts of weatherstripping, lightbulb exchange
- Encourage biking and walking

3. Transportation: How to get from place to place

- Pursue grants aggressively (FTA Grant, 5307, CMAQ); hire a grant consultant
- We want a mini shuttle "Rover," powered by natural gas for circuit: courthouse, Oakhurst, library, major local destinations; accommodate needs of non-mobile (non-walking) folks
- Change culture, make things fun, orient people away from relying on cars

4. Overall Environment

- Create a major attraction, like a tour of local spots that have been featured in movie scenes; indicate with markers

5. Who will need housing in 20 years?

Issues:

- The challenge of maintaining the diversity of Decatur's population;
- Modifying the tax structure to rely more on business, less on residential real estate
- "Price of dirt" is expensive
- Need for services by elderly increases as income is an increasingly limited resource

Policy:

- Freeze taxes for elderly/long-time residents
- Pursue annexation of commercial districts
- Carefully integrate density into existing neighborhoods
- Become a bike encouraging city

Decatur Roundtables 2010 – Session 1: Envisioning the Future

Facilitator Name: Antonio D. Leung (Tony)

Meeting Date: May 15st 2010

Time: 9:00 – 11:00

Please record the notes from your easel pad below. The subject headings correspond with the discussion guide and facilitator support sheet. Do not use bullet points. If there was an item that you circled or starred because a lot of people were interested in the comment, please **bold** it.

1 – 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?

- Balancing growth 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

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

- Maintain what greenspace we have
- Balance greenspace throughout north and south Decatur
- Upgrade stormwater infrastructure, improve/prevent erosion, reduce stormwater 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

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

- 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

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?

- 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

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

- 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

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?

(Define Healthy, not just bodily health. Health is life, mind spirit)

Like to know where we can 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 lives

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

Below are the input from Ms. Holly Grimes, she is out of town and cannot attend this second session, she sent me the following by email. I believe it is important to include them in our group meeting notes.

Tony,

Since I will miss the review of Session I & am missing the dynamics of interaction, I realize these comments are out of context. However, I will try to understand the questions.

I. What did someone in your small group say or do that moved you or that stimulated new ideas in some way?

- We need to keep property taxes from forcing people from their homes and go beyond just 65+ exemptions. There are long-term residents that may not be 65 who can't pay say \$8000 in taxes if their property is assessed higher and higher. A \$25 k or 40 K exemption for a 400+ K assessed house, is not very effective. Out of this came a suggestion that Decatur should have a way of identifying those that might need outreach to help them benefit from any existing assistance, either through churches or clinics or one on one interaction.
- Someone suggested that Decatur should be sure we have basic shopping. That prompted me to remember that I too can't shop much in Decatur. It is either too expensive for basic items or just caters to clothes, shoes, etc... that I just don't wear. Decatur should study Denver downtown or Memphis or Baltimore where they have created a very small indoor mall type location in small spaces, with parking underneath. The street front looks like a simple building, but inside there are some major basic stores that meet citizen's needs. These shopping areas have pedestrian access and can have the same street effects as Decatur currently encourages, yet provide better shopping so we wouldn't have to leave

Decatur to shop. It can also be quite a draw for those outside Decatur...a mall alternative.

II. Fact sheets [review first---since I don't have I will just try to answer the questions.]

1. Can't really answer this as not sure what they are looking for. I have seen many changes since 1970's when I moved here. But the feel of the Olympics really fueled the desire to be more pedestrian and have a stronger feeling of being neighbors.
2. How do we preserve our natural environment? Trees and plenty of them. Decatur has made it expensive for the homeowner to cut any trees. Decatur needs to temper that with the safety of needing to cut a tree to protect the home or neighbors. Trees are great and needed but we shouldn't overdo either. Protect our air, water and green space? We have improved, perhaps too much so. Air: encouraging walking and biking. We could do a lot more. Streets still don't feel safe for biking. I would like to see more blocked streets with no cars, perhaps with only shuttles. Denver has a street with many neat stores but only the free bus goes up and down the street so if don't feel like walking you can hop the bus. We have been doing more at preserving green space. I would like to see that continue. There is a big forest behind my neighborhood. While privately owned by the homes that front it, I would like long term for that to be a major forested park, with the beautiful creek running through it. Decatur should promote conservation easements with tax reductions for the donation of this beautiful land. I used to love taking my dogs for walks amongst these enormous trees but alas one neighbor put up a fence blocking access back to the street. Stricter rules on water drainage have helped regarding water. We could do more with helping residences with more composting, mulching and rain barrel installation. Some of the water drainage rules have bordered on the absurd however. And very expensive. Good idea but I don't want water Nazis that seem to occur right now.
3. Getting from place to place: as mentioned above, close some streets to encourage shopping and gathering etc... make it a very cool place like in Denver. Maybe a shuttle could be provided if long enough but Decatur is small so probably not needed. Last time it was mentioned that Decatur needs to consider alternatives to MARTA to get people, especially in South Decatur, to the MARTA train. Perhaps Decatur should consider its own type of Emory shuttle to assist residents should bus 18 be dropped by MARTA. I walk now and bike but would bike more if I could feel safer on Ponce, Clairemont, church st. etc...
4. What is most important about overall environment? Feeling safe walking around, being pedestrian, having street side, cafe eating & drinking, but I'd like it be a bit greener. Some interesting stores and the wonderful gatherings like Beach Party, concerts in the square, Book fair, etc... it really gets people out plus promoting volunteerism makes us feel that we contribute to the feel of community.

5. Housing needs: growing baby boomers may want more cluster type homes with smaller lots in the future. Or even active retirement living centers. These latter centers exist outside the city but not in. Many of us aging boomers may want to live in one of those in the future, with activities and ways to meet those of similar age yet still be able to walk to the store or train. It would be nice if we could stay in Decatur. The new restrictions re house size and lot etc... to me is actually a problem. While nice to have large lots some of us would like to have more cluster homes or a smaller lot. I like to garden but my lot is too large to manage yet Decatur discourages people like me from creating two lots out of one, maybe selling one to pay off my mortgage as I retire and then build a small cluster home on the smaller of the divided lots. This also goes to more affordable housing. The new rules encourage larger lots and houses, which does mean that they are also more expensive. I think Decatur should reconsider this larger is better notion. We are in an urban environment.
6. Healthy living or changes: Gathering places for activities, especially for southside. Decatur should subsidize or give price breaks so poorer residents can engage in these activities. Southside residents may need assistance to get to the recreation center or to downtown Decatur. Gatherings for dancing, games, cards, swimming, sort of like a neighborhood club.

I would like to see an organized volunteer base where people could share their expertise, either to help with repairs, tutoring, vocational training. I dream of every family being matched with another in a mentor environment or more flexibly matching needs. For example, if I had a skill for gardening, maybe I could help someone who can't afford a gardener but doesn't have the physical ability to garden. [repairs, tutors or teaches, computer skills, etc...] we have huge human resources in Decatur with a desire to volunteer, so we could take advantage of this Decatur plus. I have long held the dream of Decatur being 100% literate with excellent job training and apprenticeships so that adults and teenagers can take advantage of vocational opportunities. If small Decatur with all our skills can't be literate or improve job skills, how can we do it nationally? Let's do it here and set it as an example for others to follow.

Renfroe 8th grade Humanities classes

Teachers: Robyn Tibbetts and Dominicus Robinson

May 17 – 10 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. & 12 noon – 1:15 p.m. – 80 students

May 19 – 9 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. & 2 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. – 80 students

Total 160 students (individual names listed on separate document)

What I like about Decatur:

Small

Convenient

Great home communities

I like the square.

Little Shop of Stories

The square

Walkability-ness

Yogurt Tap

Decatur Book Festival

Restaurants

Stores

Schools

Square

I like how Decatur is so small and how you can pretty much walk anywhere.

It's easy to walk everywhere. Smalls town.

Decatur Square

Yogurt Tap

(Pretty much everything in the square)

I like public music at the square

I like the fountain

The food

Schools

The gyms

Parks

Churches

Schools

Community

The square

Starbuck's

Little shop of stories

Neighbors

Yogurt Tap

Decatur High

McKoy Park

Glenlake Pool

What I like now is the food places. And the pool's when they open. And I mostly like

everything I guess.

Great shops & restaurants

Schools

Parks

The square

Recycling, Reusing and going Green

Schools

What I like now is the swimming pool

Chickfila

Good schools

Square

I like Chik-fil-A

Square

I like food, stores, parks, pools and schools.

School systems

Downtown Area

Walking around Decatur

The parks

I like that Decatur is full of opportunities academically, and economically

Little shop of stories

Decatur square

Walkability

Decatur Book Festival

Decatur new gym

Decatur new football field

Chic fila

Mcoy park

Taco mac

I like how Decatur's government gets the citizens involved in creating their plans for the future

Have different restaurants around

Have campgrounds

Basketball courts

I like the school system and the teachers and staff that are there.

Lots of parks

Everything is within walking distance

Restaurants & stores

I like how Decatur is easy to get around and has a lot of parks

I like all the food in Decatur.

Great restaurants

Great neighborhoods

Almost everything is in walking distance, is something that's good about Decatur.

Guitar Red in the square

The rec center

Stores on the Square

Music

Everythings walking distance

I like the square

I like Chick-fil-a

McKoy skatepark

The new Stadium

The nes Gym

I will not be here but it should be better than now

Sporting events

Bike trail

I like how there are allot of pools you can go to.

I like the square.

I like being able to walk to all the places I want to go for food and hang out places w/my friends.

I like all the different events in Decatur.

I like how the City of Decatur is quiet.

I like how everything is walking distance.

I like how the City of Decatur is its own school system so we won't have to worry about what other counties are going through.

I really like all of the bike trails that run through Decatur and I am so excited about Glenlake park.

I also like events like the Decatur Beach Party and the concerts on the square & AWESOME festivals!

Nice roads

Good restaurants

Nice gyms

I like the square and being able to walk to a lot of places. I also like playing at the Glenlake tennis courts every week.

Stores

Downtown Decatur

Downtown Decatur – shops, restaurants

I like that you can walk to everything in Decatur.

What I like about Decatur is all the places to go, and the places to hang out with friends all the restaurants and stough!

I also like how clean they keep Decatur, and how safe.

I like being able to walk everywhere. Having access to just about everything is extremely convenient😊

Opportunity

Everyone is close together and this town is like a family and I like the pools and tennis courts.

The square is awesome!

You can walk everywhere

Good food

Sports

Square

Stores next to school

I like the down town area

I like all the places we can walk to eat

Restaurants

City is small

People active in communities

Many parks

Plenty of sport and Recreation activities

The best thing about Decatur is the festivals and the activities like the Beach Festivals

The square very fun

I like how downtown's so close. Kids can hang out, but still walk home.

That there are a lot of places to be and things to do

The square

The kind city workers

The sanitation department

Safety of roaming streets

What I like about Decatur is that it is small. Most of the people in the city involved,

We have a great Decatur High Auditorium, Gym and Stadium.

People

B-Ball coaches

The community is active

Highly rated schools.

I love the Concert on the Squares in the summer time, and other fun summer events like the beach party and the book festival.

I like how you can get every where by walking.

How everyone is friendly and knows each other and you can walk everywhere.

Restaurants

Friendly people

Parks

All the local restaurants.

Lots of fun festivals and stuff.

Walking everywhere

Everything is close so you can walk

All my friends

Good food

I like the square

I like that you can walk everywhere in Decatur, and I like that the schools are so good and we are transitioning to the IB program.

I like the new gyms

The fun places to go

I like Decatur football field

The Square is great

The schools are smart

The square

Ebster Gym

Decatur YMCA

Walking distance

Easy to walk places

Good schools

Community based

Everything is so close so we can walk everywhere

There's yummy places to eat

I like that you can walk almost anywhere in Decatur

Education

What I like about Decatur now is that we have the square where there are a lot of stores.

Tourist attraction

Old

Historic

Multi-cultural

Convenient

Transportation

MARTA

We have a courthouse
The many places you can go.
Everywhere is walking distance.
Chick-fil-lay
Convenient
Nice people
Multi-cultural
Concerts
Everything is within walking distance
It's very easy to get around by walking
I like the conveics of every thing.
Rec
DHS
Lots of play areas for kids, lots of activities for kids, kid friendly restaurants.
The square
Concerts
Citizen involvement
Fun events at the square and around Decatur
Everything is local
How convenient it is to walk places
I like how much freedom kids have here
Good people
The square is nice
LOTS of restaurants
Nice parks
Good sport organizations
There is a big downtown area with a lot of shops and restaurants.
Decatur's small family friendly size
Education
The closeness of the community
Always has activities/things to do
The communication/events that happen when schools combine
There's a lot of fun stuff to do in downtown.
Parks
Rec services
Family places to go
Chik-fil-A
Oakhurst, RMS, DHS
I like all the restaurants.
Diverse and numerous.
Also the shopping stores we do have.
Fun stuffs
Schools
It's small
Lots of places to hang-out
Nice restaurants

Its new-looking
Safe
A cool nice clean place to hang out with friends
Popular fast food restaurants
Clean community
Friendly people/caring people
I like the small community
I like how Decatur is very family friendly and has tons of features and events and place for everyone to enjoy.
They have great schools and restaurants
You can walk to most places in Decatur from your home
Parks
People
All the restaurants
Downtown Decatur's "scene"
I like all the stores and activities that Decatur has.
I like all the restaurants from different places and the different foods.
Easy to get around
Nice parks
Chik-fil-A
A bustling community
The restaurants
Schools and teacher really caring about you and your future
The square
Chik-fil-A
It is a nice sized community.
I know a lot of people.
Parks
Rec Center
MARTA
I enjoy all of the parks such as Winnona and Adair
I also enjoy the square
Library
Good houses
Gardens
Pools
Parks (play parks)
Trees
MARTA
I love chick-fil-a the food and CVS
I like about Dectur is the Marta stations so I can go to Atlanta.

Woes

Littering

I do not like the folks that hang around the Marta and Decatur. They make me scared.
The rec should have a pool.

I dislike the people that hang around Decatur.
The school system
The sanitation and appearance of the inside of the schools (Renfroe & DHS)
Empty deserted parking lots
I wish there was more public transportation available
The clothing stores are too expensive.
I don't like how people don't work together for the community.
NOTHING. Decatur is great
Decatur Wi-fi is really confusing and kind of annoying.
Its so expensive
Streets need repaving
Need a bigger Chik-fil-A

What I would like to see 10 years from now (in the future)

Bigger importance of the community in cheering on students in sports (i.e. lacrosse)
More places for kids to hang out
More landscape
Electric car
Swimming pool
Bowling alley
Book store
Movie theater
Video game store
Restrants
I will be hopefully in college 10 years from now.
When I am 22 I hope Decatur...has a garden by the square that anyone can help grow. (maybe a mall)
Bike road
Movie theater
I'd like for Decatur to have an improved mall, in walking range.
It would also be nice to have more public pools.
We would greatly enjoy a dollar movie theater w/good movies.
I want Decatur School of Ballet to be able to perform in the Decatur Auditorium
Decatur should be cleaned everyday.
More facilities at schools.
More drug enforcement.
More dog parks
Better safety.
I hope Decatur be better than it is now.
I hope to see more restaurants, bigger park to BBQ and have parties at.
More parks/playground
More pools
More restaurants
Be able to cross tracks

I hope Decatur will still have the city functions (arts festival, beach party, etc) and more boutiques

I would like an old school arcade

Less taxes

A Coldstone added

A teen club – 18 – 12 ages

A bigger recreation center with more activities for teen

More places for teens to work

More concerts

A game room place to teen to go during summer and after school

A better way for crossing the street

Designer clothing stores

Redone sidewalks

More open free gyms

8th grade prom

Recurit system

Still has square and Eddie's Attic

More cheaper things like new rodes, more houses, more updated things.

Different cultures of music

Cheaper stores

More shopping

Inground trampoline

Dollar movie

Decatur needs LESS condo's and apartments

Decatur needs a MOVIE THEATER!

More facilities

New track at agnesscot

Clean up the square

Tighter drug enforcement

History of Decatur Meauseam

No school trailers

More environmental friendly

Less taxes

Cheeper houses

I will not be here but it should be better than now.

Need a movie theater and a teen club

We need a cinema

We need a teen club

We need a Skate Shop

Has more shops and small businesses.

Krispy Kreme

Staying envianmentally friendly

There are more festivals

More facilities (track field)

Renovation of old buildings

Famous bands in the concerts on the square

Fix up McKoy Skate Park
I think we should become a really close nit community
I want a water park
I want to see more
Need a movie theatre
More fun places for kids to hang out
I hope that Decatur will expand its school system without the use of trailers
I would like to have more places to shop
Improve mall in walking range
More public pools/inground trampolines
\$1 movie theater
There is a better way to cross the tracks in front of Renfroe
I want a space station in decatur
Trolley/bus system (not MARTA) more like Little 5 Points
Water Park
Roller Coaster
Track Field
Get rid of the drugs
More facilities
I want a water park
More tennis courts around Decatur
A movie theater
NO MORE CONDOS PLEASE!!
I want the City of Decatur to have more places to hang out at.
I want it to have more fun stuff to do.
It should be a mall in Decatur
Movie theater!
More free parking
Internships at local businesses
All of the programs in Decatur are better publicized
Zaxbys
More free stuff
Mall in Decatur
Go-carts
More jobs for teenager
More girls
More clubs
More stores
More restaurants
More parks
A good lacrosse team, and football
I want Decatur to have better recreational activities
More parks
Less sketchy people
More water fountains
Recycling

Riding your bike without it gettin stolen
Public trampoline
Swimming pools everywhere
Free food
Free Wifi (not just two hours)
More tree
It should be a mall in Decatur
I want Decatur High rebuild
I want to see Decatur having more parks, more water fountains, and being a public Olympic size trampoline, swimming pool at the square, cheap food, more trees
More good neighborhoods
Bike trails
Less cars
Fix up projects
More people
Better street lights
More parks
More water fountains (unjunky)
More inground public trampoline
No more school
Extended curfew
There should be a ? park here in Decatur
More eco-friendly options
In the future we should have better schools and more stores
I want there to be a Zaxbys
We need a Zaxbys in Decatur
More places to go/things to do
Another park
I hope Decatur has less cars/is even more eco-friendly than it is now.
Sirens that say "Fresh Dounets"
Signs that say "a rect law, have some icecream on sidewalk.
I hope theres a Zaxbys
More job opportunities for everyone, no matter what ethnicity.
More clubs (night clubs)
More shopping places, mall, boutiques, etc.
Clubs/Teen Parties
Better Taxes
Zaxby's wings
Rollercoasters
Mall
We need Zaxby's
Clubs
Movie theatre
Guitar shop
Extended curfew
I'd like a hooters

Less drug dealers
Better schools/streets – couldn't read this last word, looked like either one
More schools
More homes
Education reform (better schools)
Bike paths
Parks (walking)
Creeks
Fruit trees
More gardens
Bigger downtown
Theme park
Less pot dealers
More bike paths
I want a huge stadium
I hope Decatur has more shopping boutiques around the square
I would like to see more advertising for soccer teams.
I want there to be smoothie shops. Jamba Juice!!
Also, more restaurants like that aren't fast food, but not fancy
Fast food restaurants other than chick fila, johnnys, etc.
A BMX park
Recreation time in school
Target or Publix
Mall
More American restaurants and more fast food places and more gyms
An improved basketball court at Winnona Park
A program to help teenagers find part-time jobs
Mall
A roller coaster and an ice rink
To build more new restaurants, stores etc in the lots that arnt being used
Decatur is great!
More non-pollutant transportation (like bicycle cab)
Still has people walking in the Square
Is clean/not pollyted
A nice mall
Bigger library
School system (more schools)
More gardens
There are more cool shops in downtown Decatur
I hope Decatur stays the same.
More communication between the city government and the citizens
I want Decatur to less expensive
More pools
BMX park!
Soccer fields
Pond

More shops
Dont change it alot because I think it is perfect.
Doughnut shop
Sport store
Casino
Public bathrooms (like San Fran)
Tube hotels (like Japan)
Movie theater
New rec center w/pool
Softball fields
More parking lots
Golf carts
Golf cart parking
Water park
Less boutiques and more known stores like Forever 21.
Mini mall
\$2 movie theater
Artificial turf fields
High diving board
Bridge/underpass for the railroad in front of RMS
More cross walks
I would like it to be more economically friendly
Bigger pool open to public for free and cleaner.
I love the rec cool place to chill.
More businesses.
Carnivals
More places to go shopping
Pools with diving boards that aren't private pools.
Water park
More shops
More clothing shops
A better mall w/shops that all people like
More restaurants
Casino
More events
I would like to have a carnival and a amusement park
Hovercars
Robots
Drive thru sus bar
Doughnut show
Movie theater
Easier walk from RMS to DHS (pedestrian bridge?)
Diving boards
Greener city, stuff like that
CARNIVALS!
More businesses

Bigger downtown
More places to shop and hang out with my friends.
I think they should renovate the rec.
Clubs
Movie theater
Indoor basketball court
Football field
Babershop
More stores w/electronics & a carnival
A mall
Casino
Cracks in sidewalk filled in
A sports store like Dick's Sporting Goods
More sidewalks and bike lanes
More economic work programs for youth
A school that has fish in the floor and we can get out of school to get food. And better teachers.
And I want us to have everything.
Hope Decatur gets bigger, so there can be more friendly people.
Mall
Car dealership
Mall
More schools
Have a chuch-e-cheese
I would like Decatur to stay mostly the same, not have a lot of big corporations and stuff coming
Maybe more eco-friendly stuff
There should be a mini-mall in Decatur.
Decatur should expand.
The rec should get a pool.
I would like to see a mall
I would like more programs and sports leagues for children, young adults, and high schoolers
(outside of school).
I like Decatur the way it is.
Mall
Clubs
Teen clubs
More big buildings
Gun shops
Movie theatre
Sports complex w/more playing fields (maybe turf)
Their should be a footlocker
Their should be a mini mall
Their should be a Zaxbys
Their should be a Checkers

Responses to session 1

Trader Joe's and Whole Foods would be nice variety of organic food and stores, very accessible
Annexation- what is best? Avondale? Urban Plaza?

Want greater control of entrances to Decatur

Spend energy thinking about lower emissions

The community is for everyone not just people with kids. kids/no kids – two aren't mutually exclusive

In-fighting between neighborhood groups is a concern

Themes from 1st session

Diversity

Transportation

Affordability/taxes

Sustainability/development, master plan for city

Communication/connection using social media tools

Active living

How do you get from place to place? What might change in 10 years?

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 Renfroe (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)

Question1- How do we sustain this city? How do we preserve what we appreciate?

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 in 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.

Question 5 Who will need housing in 20 years?

Over 60 population is projected to be huge

They 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

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?

Back to transportation . . .

-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.

Back to sustainability . . .

-how will we protect & replant our canopy? Tree ordinance is too weak

Wrap up

This group is not racially diverse. Are the Decatur Roundtable diversity efforts effective? (maybe other groups are more diverse)

Even if there is diversity is there interaction?

Are there underlying race issues that exclude people from this process and communication and community events?

If communication is online then exclusion happens (sometimes)

Themes from Session 2

Sustainability

Transportation

Annexation

Active living

Green-ing of Decatur (in affordable way)

Appreciation of Decatur's beauty and preserving it