

CONVERSATIONS  
ON DECATUR'S  
NEXT DECADE.

# DESTINATION: 2030

2020 STRATEGIC PLAN | DECATUR, GEORGIA

# Equity is Not a Thing, It's Everything

Georgia / Tennessee Planning Associations  
Joint Conference 2021



# A Few Introductions



**Angela Threadgill,  
AICP**

Planning & Economic  
Development Director  
City of Decatur



**Woody Giles, AICP**  
Senior Associate & Planner  
TSW



**Sarah McColley,  
AICP**

Associate & Planner  
TSW



**Fonta High, LPC,  
NCC, MAC, CPCS**  
Professional Counselor  
Co-Chair Beacon Hill  
Black Alliance for Human  
Rights





# Context: the last decade in America



Image source: Gage Skidmore, Flickr Creative Commons

Image source: Wikimedia Commons

Image source: USDA, Flickr

# Mentimeter Question

How did the events of 2020 affect your community?

Join Mentimeter 2 ways:

<https://www.menti.com/t4s1d1hpyd>

OR

[www.menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and use code **1685 9146**



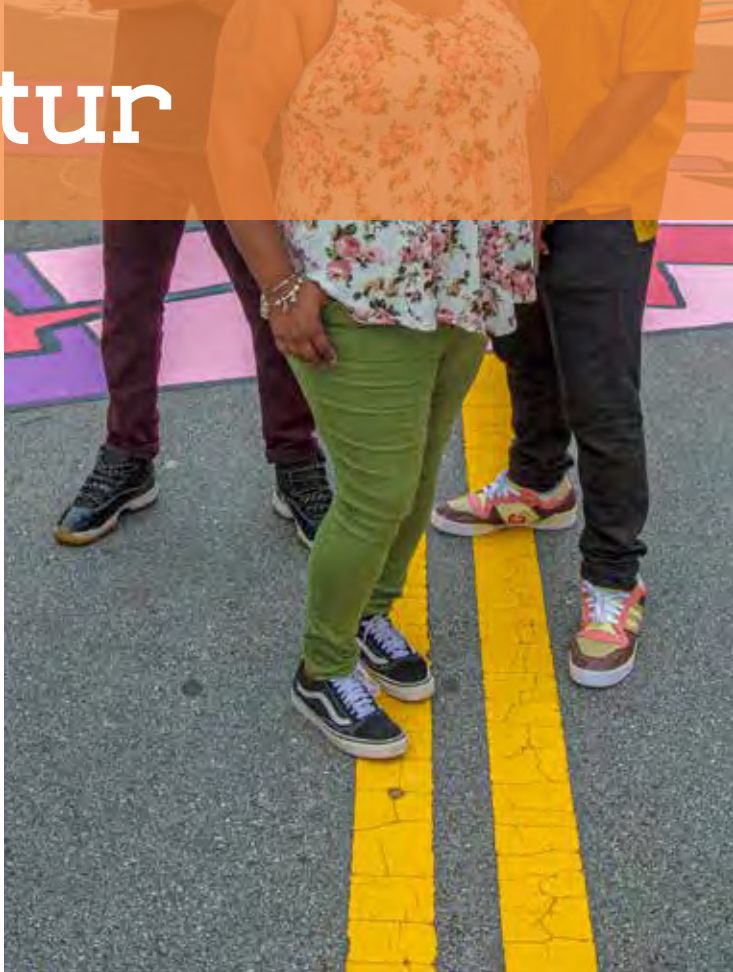




...ther King, Jr. was sentenced here, at the site of the...  
...October 25, 1960, to four months of hard labor for prote...  
...ta Student Movement at a Rich's Department Store...  
...parole conditions set by Judge J. Oscar Mitchell...  
...Georgia license, even though he carried a valid...  
...h sentencing of King's parole violation energized Civil...  
...demands to end racist laws and policies. King's mistr...  
...ion on the Civil Rights Movement when John and...  
...ree King from prison. As a result, many Black voters...  
...ohn F. Kennedy president, setting the stage for majo...  
...y the Georgia Historical Society, Students of Decatur Hi...  
...con Hill Black Alliance for Human Rights, and the City of



# Context: the last decade in Decatur





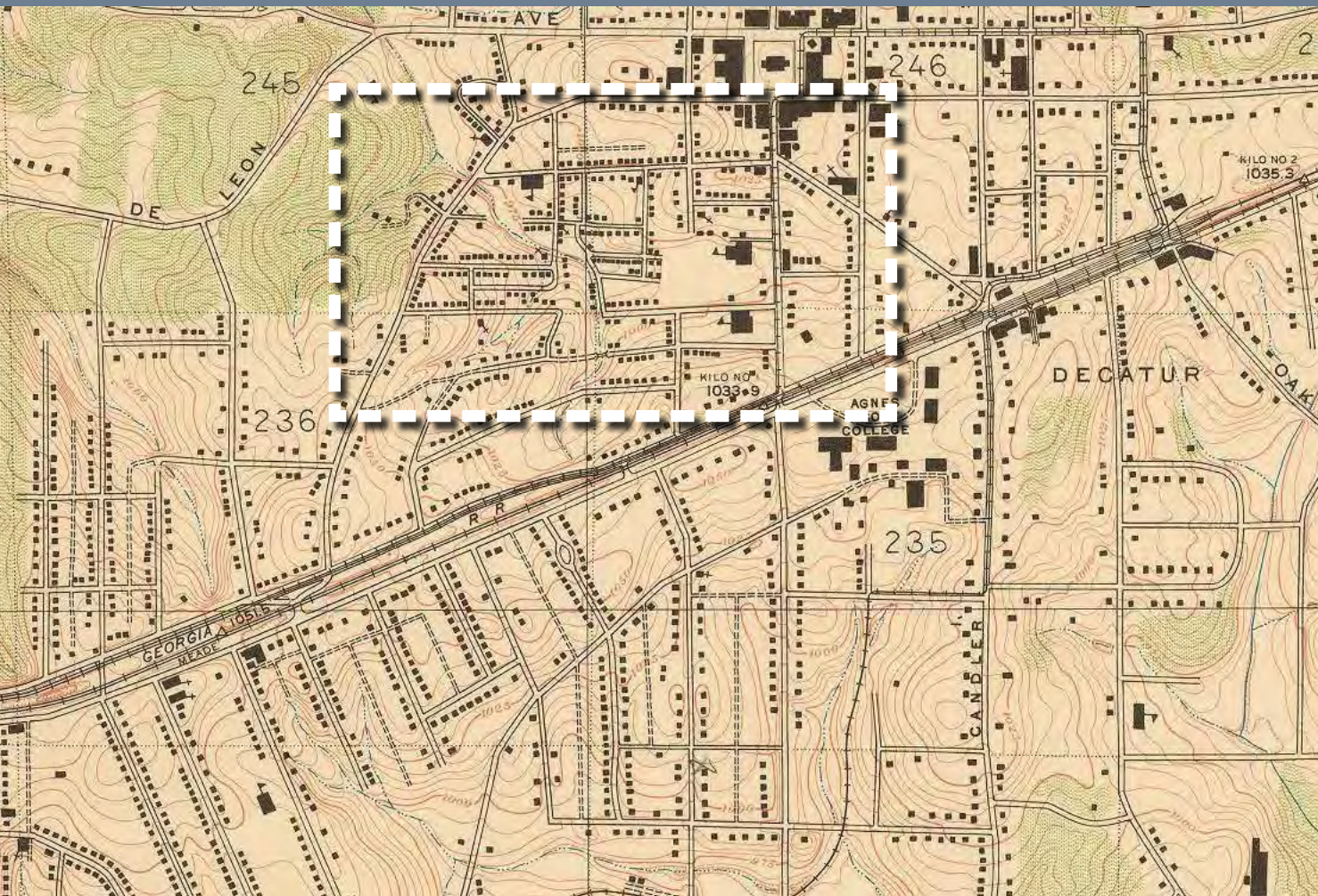
# Mentimeter Question

How has community engagement with your local government changed in the last decade?



# Decatur's History of Planning

Decatur in 1928



Source: Emory University Woodruff Library  
<http://www.digitalgallery.emory.edu/luna/servlet/s/mnp2sw>

Decatur in 1993



Source: Google Earth

Imagery Date: 1/26/1993 33°46'15.64" N 84°17'50"



# Decatur's History of Planning

## Urban Renewal in Beacon Hill

Image source: [www.decaturga.com/beacon](http://www.decaturga.com/beacon)





# Decatur's History of Planning

**Vote Twice  
for  
City Bonds**

## FORWARD

MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT : : AT ONE OF 4 PO

### Decatur Citizens Vote on Vital City Bond Issues on Forward Decatur Day, May 23

In the Space Age ahead, will Decatur move forward as a comfortable, convenient, cherished "City of Homes, Churches, and Schools"?

A positive answer depends upon whether Decatur residents vote for two vital Bond Issues in the special City Election on Wednesday, May 23. The outcome is so important to Decatur's growth and progress that Mayor Arthur W. Bishop has proclaimed this date of May 23 as "Forward Decatur" Day.

Popular questions are answered and details are given on these two Bond Issues in this special tabloid publication. It is published as a pub-

ban Renewal Administration of the national Housing and Home Finance Agency, the Federal Government provides funds and services to help cities save themselves from slums and blight by redeveloping unsightly, unsafe, and costly urban areas.

This all hinges on a city developing and planning a workable Program for Urban Renewal. This the City Commissioners of Decatur have done.

To receive \$900,000 in Federal funds for the first phase of redevelopment of the Beacon Hill section, all that is necessary is for Decatur voters to approve \$300,000 worth of



If you  
in favor

"the scourge of slums and blight"

"Urban Renewal will open up an ill arranged, drying up, stagnated area of Decatur for positive growth... It's an investment in a better, brighter future for all."

"verified by a professional urban planning agency"





Citizen Empowerment



Collaborate



Involve



Consult



Inform



DECISION MAKING POWER





# Equity & Racial Justice

City Government &  
Planning

Community Activism

Starting the Conversation

## Community Healing

The work has just begun &  
how we're moving forward





# The Decatur Strategic Plan





<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Race/Ethnicity/ Cultural Heritage</b>	CULTURAL IDENTITY GROUPS	<b>Household Income</b>		<b>Marital or Family Status</b>	
	<b>Neighborhood/ Community</b>	NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS CONDO BOARDS APARTMENT MANAGEMENT COs	<b>Level of Education</b>		<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	LGBTQ PRIDE
	<b>Age / Cultural Generation</b>	BABY BOOMERS GENERATION X MILLENNIALS iGENERATION	<b>Length of Residency</b>		<b>Homeowner or Renter</b>	
<b>Affinities</b>	<b>Sports</b>	SPORTS BARS DHS SPORTS BOOSTERS YOUTH SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS	<b>Occupation / Profession</b>	TECH WORKERS GROUPS INDUSTRY MEET-UPS	<b>Children's Activities</b>	DECATUR PARENTS NETWORK AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS HOMESCHOOL SUPPORT GROUPS YOUTH SPORTS
	<b>Fitness and Exercise</b>	FITNESS STUDIOS YOGA STUDIOS DECATUR RECREATION ACTIVE SENIOR GROUPS	<b>Music/Arts/ Entertainment</b>	COMMUNITY THEATER DECATUR ARTS ALLIANCE DHS THEATER TROUPE	<b>Pets / Animals</b>	DOG PARKS VETERINARIAN OFFICES DOG BOARDING FACILITIES
	<b>Hobbies</b>	GARDENING CLUBS KNITTING GROUPS DECATUR MAKERS	<b>Food and Culture</b>	FOODIE GROUPS BEER AND WINE GROUPS COOKING CLASSES RESTAURANTS, PUBS, BREWERIES	<b>Love of Decatur / Local Pride</b>	ROTARY DECATUR 101
<b>Causes</b>	<b>Environmental Advocacy</b>	FRIENDS OF SHOAL CREEK WYLDE CENTER OTHER COMMUNITY GARDENS SAVE DECATUR TREES	<b>Wellness</b>	DECATUR ACTIVE LIVING	<b>Housing</b>	DECATUR HOUSING AUTHORITY AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVOCATES AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK FORCE HOMELESSNESS ADVOCATES
	<b>Equity / Social Justice</b>	DECATUR DINNERS BLACK LIVES MATTER BEACON HILL NAACP	<b>Education / Schools</b>	CITY SCHOOLS OF DECATUR DECATUR EDUCATION FOUNDATION	<b>Boosterism</b>	DECATUR BUSINESS ASSN. DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
	<b>Mobility</b>	DECATUR BICYCLE COALITION DECATUR ACTIVE LIVING DISABILITY ADVOCATES	<b>Urbanism / Smart Growth</b>	PRO-URBANISM GROUPS DEVELOPMENT OPPOSITION GROUPS		
<b>Beliefs</b>	<b>Religious</b>	DECATUR WORSHIP COMMUNITIES				
	<b>Political</b>	LOCAL PARTY GROUPS ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATES				
	<b>Social Responsibility Civic Duty</b>	CITY COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS DECATUR 101 BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS				

## Decatur Strategic Plan Audience Outreach Matrix



# Engagement



**Engagement Squad**

**Opening Night**

**Roundtables**

**Decatur 202s**

**Virtual Forums**

**DRAFT PLAN**

**Pop-ups for Final Input**









# A JOINT, ONLINE PUBLIC FORUM FOR EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE

PRESENTED BY THE BETTER TOGETHER ADVISORY BOARD AND  
THE CITY OF DECATUR'S 2020 STRATEGIC PLANNING EFFORT.

Join us, together with local partners, as we wrap up our  
Anti-Racism Speaker series with a review of its highlights,  
then adjourn to breakout discussions that explore real  
world options for change in the coming decade.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 14  
6-8PM ON ZOOM

Register now to attend:  
[decatur2030.com/the-decatur-202s](https://decatur2030.com/the-decatur-202s)



With your host, Ed Lee, EdD  
Senior Director, Alben W. Barkley Forum for Debate,  
Deliberation, and Dialogue, Emory University







# Climate Action

## Cut Emissions for the Long Term. Prepare to Adapt Now

### What do you think?

Write your thoughts on a sticky note and place on the board, or put a green dot next to your favorites.

Energy		
Project Name	Interconnected Topics	What do you think?
Establish greenhouse gas reduction and clean energy targets. Aspirational yet realistic goals with specific timeframes should address 24-hour energy usage as well as Decatur's carbon footprint (for all Decaturites in addition to City government operations). These should address electrification and be consistent with the Clean Energy Plan.		
Expand local renewable energy production. Encourage regionally sourced renewable energy and on-site energy generation, especially in high-visibility locations on publicly-owned land.		
Prepare for emerging technologies. Ensure opportunities for new renewable energy sources, sustainable infrastructure, and low-impact building materials are not hindered or prevented by current policies and development codes.		
Identify creative clean energy funding. Reinvest savings from energy efficiency in further efficiency improvements, clean energy, or community sustainability projects.		
Update regulations to require alternative fuels infrastructure. Zoning and building code requirements should enlist the private sector in expanding options for electric vehicle charging and other fuels.		
Convert all City lighting to LED. Streetlights and all outdoor fixtures, as well as indoor lighting, should be converted to energy saving LED.		

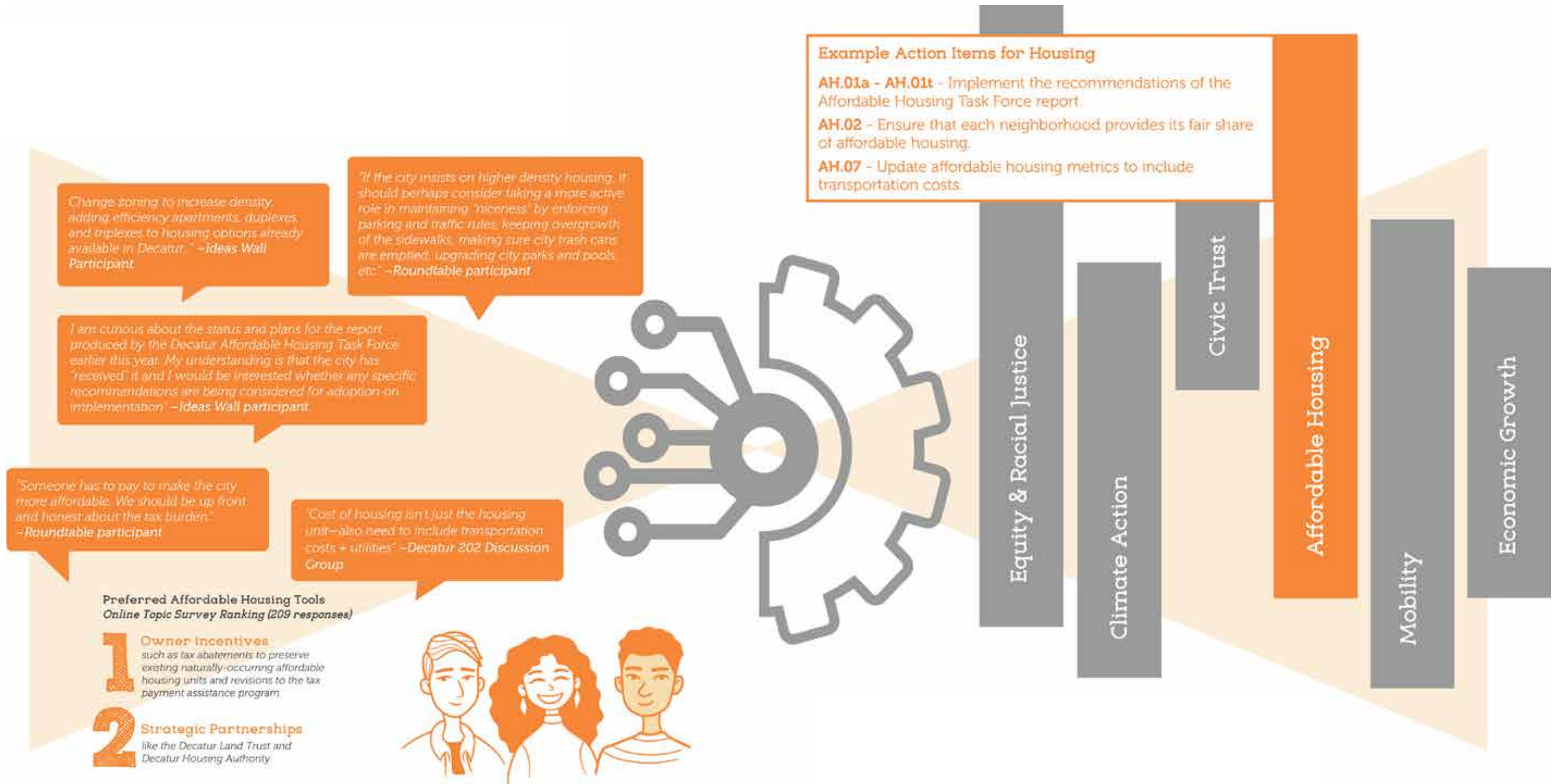
Placemaking		
Project Name	Interconnected Topics	What do you think?
Create a Climate Action Plan. The 2012 Environmental Sustainability Plan should be updated and incorporated into this plan.		
Update the City's internal sustainability policies. Revisit policies related to purchasing, building construction and performance, events, resource usage, and more to include lifecycle impacts and be consistent with other plans. Create a sustainability handbook for employees.		
Evaluate the carbon impact of City decisions. Develop a procedure for understanding and mitigating the environmental consequences of City policies and spending.		
Incorporate green infrastructure into all City projects. Transportation, building, and public space improvements should include elements of stormwater treatment, energy generation, education, recycled materials, habitat creation, and similar elements.		
Join the Climate Disclosure Project. This platform will allow Decatur to manage its emissions data and make them public.		
Commit to the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. This public pledge will provide transparency about Decatur's sustainability goals.		

Education & Culture Change		
Project Name	Interconnected Topics	What do you think?
Increase awareness of the true impacts of everyone's decisions on the climate and the local environment, including the balance of technology compared to lifestyle changes, and which changes have the most impact.		
Encourage homes and businesses to prepare emergency plans.		
Encourage the public understand existing pollution levels, stormwater management, pet waste, landscaping.		
Encourage the Business Association, this program could establish tiered criteria to encourage.		





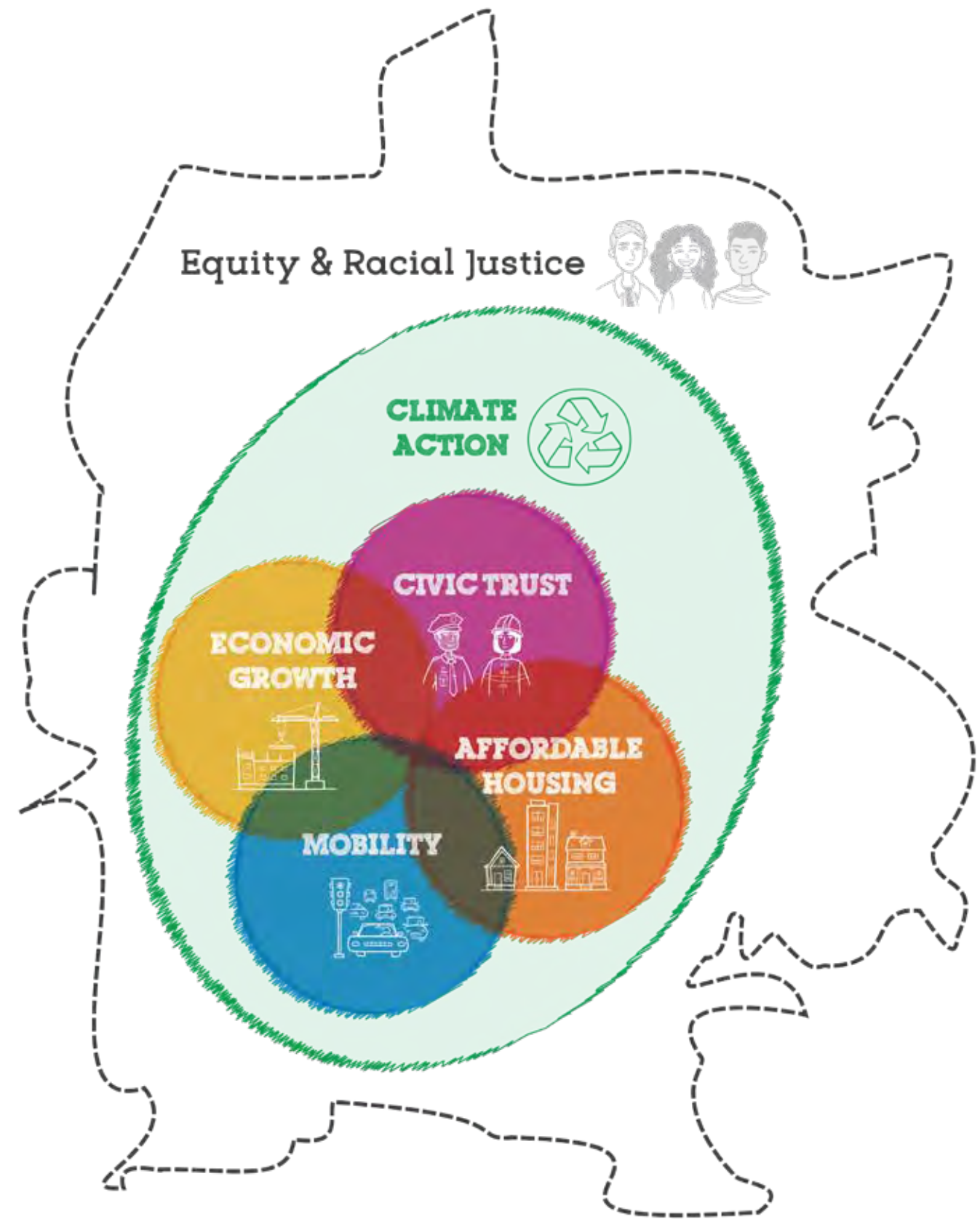
# From Public Comments to Action





# It's All Connected

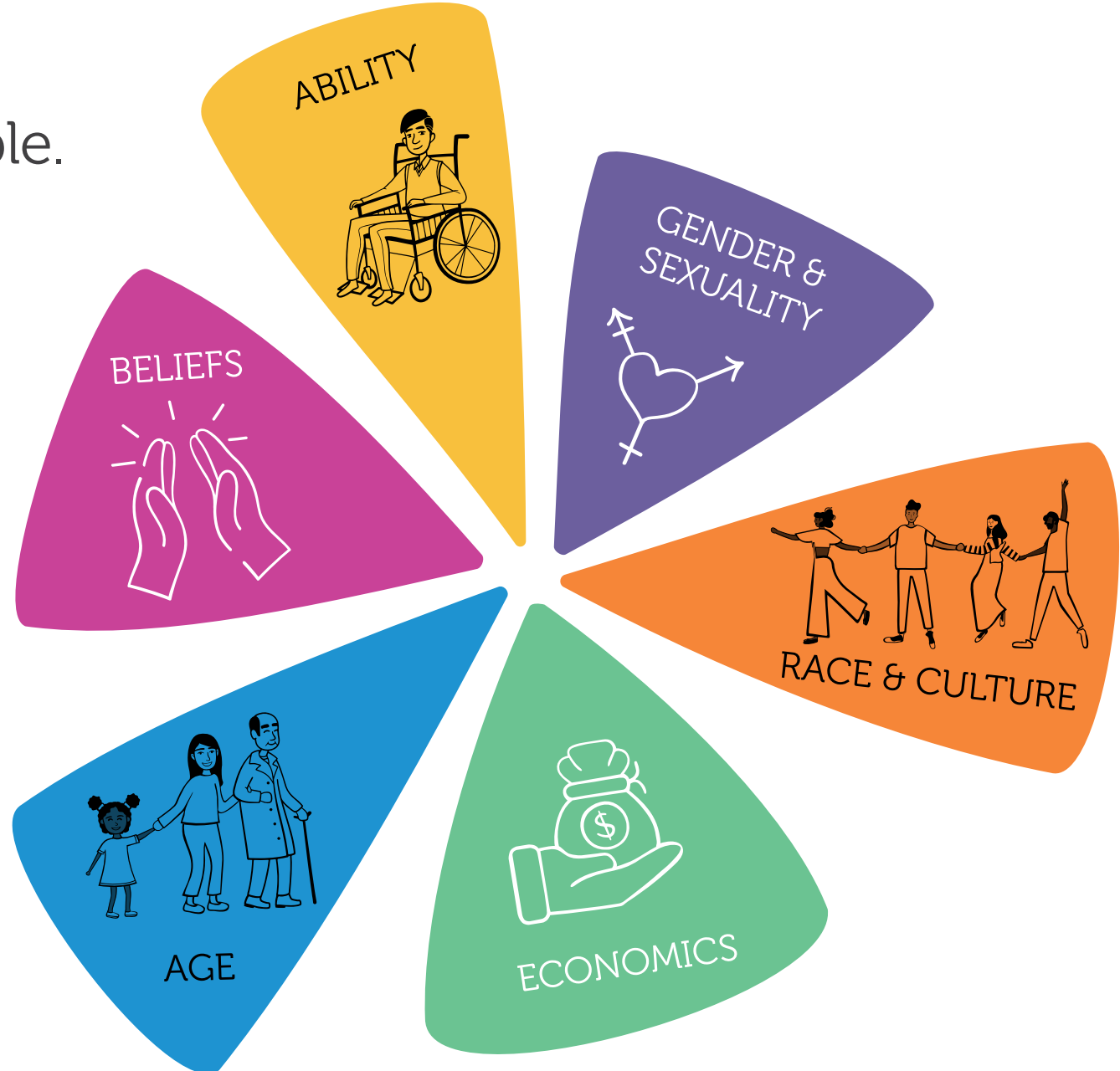
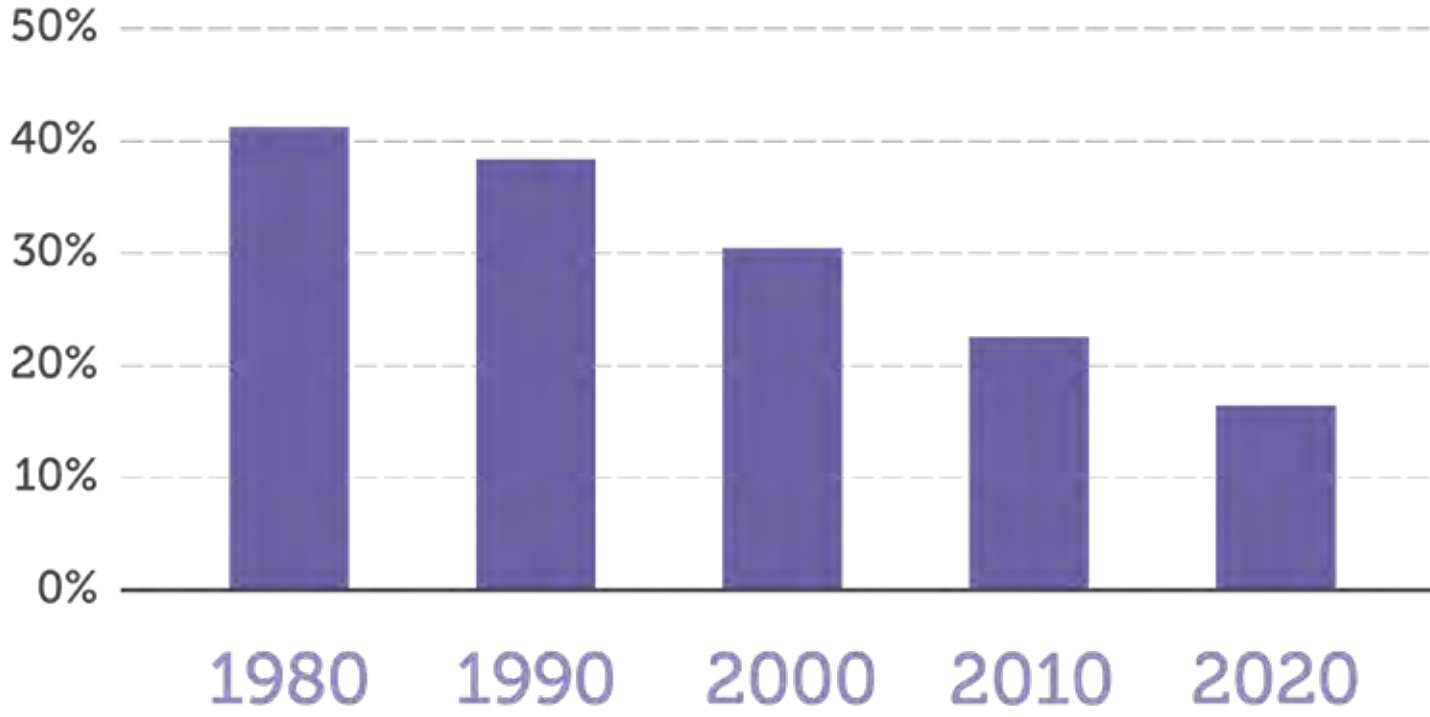
- In most cases, Decatur's issues are interconnected or interrelated
- Equity and Racial Justice issues and Climate Change are the broader and ever-present context in which we operate



# Why Call Out Race?

Sometimes people use “diversity” to avoid addressing the specific concerns of Black people.

### Decline in Decatur’s Black Population since 1980





# Bold recommendations

## Going beyond the previous plans



Equity &  
Racial Justice

Climate Action

Civic Trust

Affordable  
Housing

Mobility

Economic  
Growth





# Moving Forward

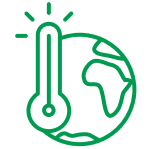


# Equity Action Items

- Community-directed reparations task force
- Equity tool and scorecard
- Recruit and retain diverse businesses
- Affordable retail space
- City Equity Director and Employee Relations Director
- Acknowledge and address history
- Continuing conversations



# Other Action Items



Evaluate carbon impact of City decisions



Continue to empower Decatur's citizens



Draw on the expertise of advisory boards



Create more online resources



Implement and make official most of the Affordable Housing Task Force report



Expand housing options










Include transportation and other costs of living when considering housing cost





# Other Action Items

-  Make walking and biking easier
-  Environmental impact of transportation decisions, goals for non-car trips
-  Work with MARTA to increase transit service and implement TOD plans
-  Encourage affordable retail space
-  Start a business incubator
-  Start a facade improvement program
-  Focus on people- and place-based economics



**Government  
Initiatives**

**Community  
Activism**



**Community  
Healing**







**NEW DATE!**

*What's coming  
to Decatur on  
September 12?*

**ART FOR  
THE PEOPLE**

**BEACON  
HILL** BLACK ALLIANCE  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS



**Lew Lefton**  
FOUNDING DIRECTOR OF DECATUR MAKERS



*Art for the People combines  
three elements about which  
I care deeply: Education,  
Creativity, and Social Justice.  
Ellex Swavoni has created  
Decatur's own member of the  
Dora Milaje to inspire, guide,  
and protect us on our difficult  
journey toward an anti-racist  
future.*



**ART FOR  
THE PEOPLE**

**BEACON  
HILL** BLACK ALLIANCE  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS





**POET**  
**Sonia Sanchez**

*Where is your fire?  
I say where is your fire?*

*Can't you smell it coming  
out of our past?*

*The fire of living...  
not dying*

*The fire of loving...  
not killing*

**ART FOR  
THE PEOPLE**



**Ellex Swavoni**

*A hero is  
nothing more than  
a human being who  
decides to place  
themselves between  
the innocent  
and cruel.*

**ART FOR  
THE PEOPLE**











A group of eight diverse individuals, four men and four women, are posed for a group photo. They are standing in front of a large yellow banner. The banner features a white oval on the left with a megaphone icon and the text "KEEP THE CONVERSATION ROLLING". To the right, there is a blue rectangular area with the text "POP-UP!" in large, bold, white letters, followed by "Conversations Happening" in a smaller font. The group is arranged in two rows, with four people standing in the back and four kneeling or sitting in the front. They are dressed in casual, professional attire. The background shows some greenery and a building in the distance.

# Discussion Groups



# Discussion Question

Consider your community: what issues is it facing around equity and race?



# Discussion Question

How do you chart a different trajectory and amplify voices that have been historically excluded?



KEEP THE  
CONVERSATION  
ROLLING

POP-UP!  
Conversations  
Happening

# Report-out





CONVERSATIONS  
ON DECATUR'S  
NEXT DECADE.

DESTINATION:

2030

2020 STRATEGIC PLAN | DECATUR, GEORGIA

[www.decaturn2030.com](http://www.decaturn2030.com)

