



# Downtown Decatur Needs a Master Plan

New developments are popping up all around us, with more on the way. The City has old strategic plans and zoning codes and transportation plans, but the 1982 Town Center Plan needs a broad update to create a comprehensive up to date Downtown plan. A top planner at the Atlanta Regional Commission noted how important a downtown plan would be – and that it should be reviewed every year. What could the plan do?

## LAND USE

- Define how we maintain our small town character and accommodate more density.
- Identify more specifically where that density will be located and what it will look like.
- Determine zoning transitions and other guidelines for Downtown and neighboring residents.

## PUBLIC AND GREEN SPACES

- Set goals for the parks and plazas needed to serve existing residents, visitors and the thousands of Downtown Decatur residents expected to join us in the next few years.
- Identify specific opportunities for new public spaces that will define Downtown for decades to come.
- Ensure that our tree ordinance preserves the downtown tree canopy.

## TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Update the Downtown portion of the transportation plan; improve pedestrian & bicycle safety.
- Define where improvements to sidewalks & crosswalks are needed and how to pay for them.
- Identify where any new roads are needed and determine how we assure they are built.
- Improve parking accessibility, including signage, and set safety standards for parking decks.

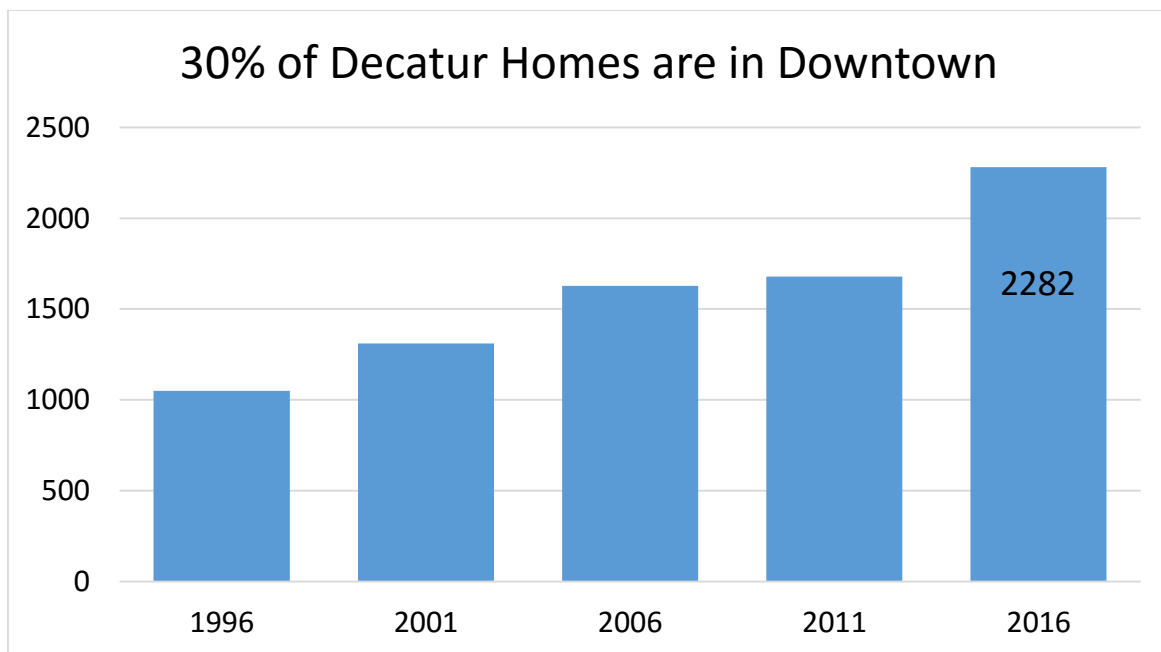
If we want Downtown Decatur to continue to aim high, we need a comprehensive master plan – like the one Decatur recently created for the Avondale MARTA Station and East Decatur Station. Suwanee has a downtown master plan. So does Marietta – and Doraville – and Sandy Springs – and Alpharetta – and Avondale Estates.. It's how they compete for residents, customers and new businesses.

Downtown Decatur has a lot going for it. A master plan will build on all that we have accomplished and make our community even stronger.

*The Downtown Decatur Neighbors advocates for the residents of the Downtown community, consisting largely of condominiums and apartments. By the end of 2016, 30% of all Decatur homes will be Downtown.*

## Multi-Family Communities, Retail and Offices Generate Significant Tax Revenue & Demand Few Services

- Downtown development requires fewer roads & utilities – requiring less maintenance (*every 100 detached homes require ½-mile of roads, sidewalks, water & sewer lines*)
- No recycling or municipal waste pickup; Stormwater often detained on site
- Internal security systems and restricted access limit demands on public safety; No streets for police to patrol (*grateful that they do patrol our parking decks*)
- Internal sprinkler and alarm systems hooked up to Fire Department
- The City documented a \$1.2 million annual subsidy to schools from six residential buildings because most downtown residents don't have children in public schools
- “the downtown neighborhood...provides much of the market support for Decatur’s restaurant and retail businesses” (*September 2015 Decatur Focus*)



### These Multi-Family Housing Residents Have Unique Needs

- A transportation system that prioritizes non-vehicular forms of travel
- Restaurants (well provided for in Decatur) and retail within walking distance
- Public spaces that build community and provide a place for children, seniors, pets and adults to play (in lieu of yards)
- Accessible natural spaces that enhance residents’ health, improve quality of life and meet our inherent need for nature