Decatur, GA

Mollie Bogle
Jonathan Brown
Renee Brown-Bryant
Courtney Collins
Megan Covey

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/history_heritagepreservation

Part of the Historic Preservation and Conservation Commons

Recommended Citation
Bogle, Mollie; Brown, Jonathan; Brown-Bryant, Renee; Collins, Courtney; Covey, Megan; Decker, Elizabeth; Dempsey, Wright; Dixon, Jennifer; Federer, Julie; George, Audra; Howard, Edward; Kennedy, Katie; Kurtz, Sarah; Perez, Chrystal; and Taff, Emily, "Decatur, GA" (2011). Heritage Preservation Projects. 14. https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/history_heritagepreservation/14

This Design Guidelines is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of History at ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Heritage Preservation Projects by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gsu.edu.
Design Guidelines for Preservation of Historic Neighborhoods in Decatur, Georgia
Design Guidelines for Preservation of Historic Neighborhoods in Decatur, Georgia

Prepared April 2011 for the City of Decatur, Georgia

by the Preservation Planning class under the direction of Richard Laub and Mary Ann Eaddy
Master of Heritage Preservation
Georgia State University
Acknowledgements

These design guidelines were prepared by graduate students in the Preservation Planning Class of Georgia State University's Heritage Preservation Program under the direction of Richard Laub and Mary Ann Eaddy. The recommendations incorporate and revise the Design Supplement to the Decatur Historic Preservation Resource Manual, developed in 1997, the McDonough-Adams-King the Guidelines for MAK district property owners, developed in 2008, and the Historic Resource Survey: Final Report, City of Decatur, Georgia, September 1, 2009, developed in 2009. Students consulted with the Historic Preservation Commission of Decatur to ensure that these revisions accurately reflect the intent of Decatur's local historic designations and the design review process. We hope that consideration of these recommendations will aid in the preservation of the unique architectural and historic character of the city.

The Historic Preservation Planning Class would like to extend its appreciation to Regina Brewer and the entire Decatur Historic Preservation Commission for their support. We would also like to gratefully acknowledge the express help of Laura Drummond, Ken Kocher, Andrew Kohr, and the staff of the DeKalb History Center and Decatur Branch of DeKalb Public Library. Finally, we would like to thank Richard Laub and Mary Ann Eaddy for their invaluable guidance.

Preservation Planning Class
Georgia State University
Spring 2011

Mollie Bogle
Jonathan Brown
Renee Brown-Bryant
Courtney Collins
Megan Covey
Elizabeth Decker
Wright Dempsey
Jennifer Dixon

Julie Federer
Audra George
Edward Howard
Katie Kennedy
Sarah Kurtz
Crystal Perez
Emily Taff
# Table of Contents

## PART I

### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Why Preserve Historic Properties  
1.2 Purpose and Benefits of Design Guidelines  
1.3 What Design Guidelines Do  
1.4 What Design Guidelines Do Not Do  
1.5 How to Use These Design Guidelines  
1.6 Legal Basis for Preservation  
  - Federal Laws  
  - State Laws  
  - Local Laws  
1.7 Economic Incentives and Benefits  
  - Federal Tax and Financial Incentives  
  - State Tax and Financial Incentives  
  - Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation

### 2.0 Historic Overview of the City of Decatur

- Annexation Map of Decatur  
- Early 1800s: First European Settlers  
- Mid-1800s: Small City  
- Mid-to-Late-1800s: Moderate Growth  
- 1900-1940: Growth of the Suburbs and the Automobile Age  
- 1940-1960: “Modern Decatur” Evolves  
- 1960-1990: Urban Renewal, MARTA, and the Decatur Town Center Plan  
- 1990-Present: A Preservation Ethic and the Historic Preservation Commission

### 3.0 Decatur Historic Preservation Commission

3.1 Commission Members  
3.2 Certificate of Appropriateness and Certificate of Exemption  
3.3 Design Review Process

### 4.0 Architectural Overview

4.1 Types  
4.11 Georgian Cottage  
4.12 Gabled Wing Cottage  
4.13 Queen Anne Cottage  
4.14 Queen Anne House  
4.15 Bungalow  
4.16 American Foursquare  
4.16 American Small House  
4.16 English Cottage  
4.16 Ranch House
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.2 Styles</th>
<th>27</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.21 Folk Victorian</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.22 Queen Anne</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.23 Colonial Revival</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.24 Federal Revival</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.25 Neoclassical or Neoclassical Revival</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.26 Craftsman</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.27 English Vernacular Revival</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Additional Examples of Architectural Types and Styles</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.0 Historic Neighborhood Character Areas</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Map of Decatur Area Neighborhoods</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of District Designations</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of Property Status in Decatur</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Chelsea Heights</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Clairemont Avenue</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 College Heights</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 Decatur Heights</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5 East Ponce de Leon Corridor</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6 Glennwood Estates</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7 Great Lakes</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8 Greenwood-Pattillo-Howard</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9 Lenox Place</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.10 McDonough-Adams-Kings Highway (MAK) District</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11 Oakhurst</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.12 Old Decatur</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.13 Parkwood</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.14 Ponce de Leon Court</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.15 South Candler Street-Agnes Scott</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.16 West Clairemont</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.17 Westchester Hills</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.18 Winnona Park</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART II Residential Design Guidelines</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0 Guidelines for Residential Rehabilitation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Mass and Scale</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Roof</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Façade</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 Windows</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5 Doors</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6 Porches</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7 Foundation</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.8 Outbuildings</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.0 Guidelines for Residential Additions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 Rooms and Wings</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Roof</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3 Porches</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART I
McDonough Street, looking north to the Old Dekalb County Courthouse, postcard early 1900s.
(Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives, DeKalb History Center, Decatur)
1.0 Introduction

1.1 WHY PRESERVE HISTORIC PROPERTIES

The rich character of Decatur's residential areas is embedded in the neighborhoods' varied architectural styles, which reflect the many developmental periods of the city. Preserving these residential and commercial areas will add to the value of the historic downtown district and make Decatur's neighborhoods eligible for consideration for National Register listing and local historic district designation.

Decatur is continually highly rated in indexes for its desirability and livability. The City seeks to maintain this distinction. The benefits sensitive design and historic preservation can have on the city's cultural health and economic and environmental health are made increasingly clear as Decatur continues to grow and mature. Great cities provide beautiful and attractive neighborhoods and public spaces that make them appealing places to live as well as distinctive destinations. Cities that value quality design and the preservation of their historic resources not only improve the quality of life for those who live in, work in, and visit them, but are also more competitive in attracting businesses and institutions.

1.2 PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF DESIGN GUIDELINES

The neighborhoods that have been nominated for designation on the Georgia Register are Old Decatur, Ponce de Leon Court, Clairemont Avenue, McDonough-Adams-Kings Highway (MAK) District, which has been accepted, and Old Scottish Rite Hospital National Register. The city hopes that through diligent preservation solutions fourteen of its other neighborhoods will eventually become National Register districts. The Decatur Historic Resource Survey,
completed in 2009, documented over fifty percent of the houses in these proposed districts have been classified as properties that contribute to the historic character of Decatur. In order to maintain this high level of integrity, Decatur requested that design guidelines be developed to aid residents and the city as they make decisions impacting the maintenance, repair, rehabilitation, and new construction of residential properties within these areas.

Graduate students of Georgia State University’s Heritage Preservation program created these design guidelines at the request of the City of Decatur to assist the City and its residents in deciding the appropriateness of maintenance, repairs, additions, and new construction of residential properties within areas.

Design guidelines aim to provide parameters in the form of written descriptions, photographs, and illustrations which provide examples of appropriate and inappropriate rehabilitation and new construction and design solutions that complement and detract from the historic character of Decatur’s neighborhoods. The guidelines, however, do not dictate the final decision on property work. Rather, they are open to interpretation and community discussion with the Decatur Historic Preservation Commission.

1.3 WHAT DESIGN GUIDELINES DO

Design guidelines:

- Benefit the community by “explaining, expanding, and interpreting general design criteria in the local preservation ordinance”1 and “serving as a tool for designers and their clients to use in making preliminary design decisions” (Ibid).
- Preserve the historic character of an area by suggesting ways for homeowners to update their properties to meet changing needs while respecting the integrity of the district’s earliest structures.
- Protect and stabilize the property values within a neighborhood.
- Make suggestions for design appropriateness that will direct the future development of the neighborhoods.
- Provide a neighborhood with continuity, stability, and predictability as to how the neighborhood will assess future change.
- Reflect the high level of civic pride in historic Decatur.

1 National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior Creating and using design guidelines

1.4 WHAT DESIGN GUIDELINES DO NOT DO

They do NOT:

- Affect the use of the property.
- Regulate the design or alteration of a building’s interior.
- Regulate a building’s paint color.
- Take effect unless a property is within a locally designated historic district or is a locally designated landmark, and proposed changes to the exteriors of the property or new construction require a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) or Certificate of Exemption (COE).
1.5 HOW TO USE THESE DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Guidelines are divided into nine main sections:

- Introduction
- Historic Overview of the City of Decatur
- Decatur Historic Preservation Commission
- Architectural Overview
- Historic District Character
- Residential Design Guidelines
- Commercial Design Guidelines
- Signage
- Appendices

The “Introduction” describes why it is important to preserve historic resources, what design guidelines entail, and how they should be used. The “Historic Overview of the City of Decatur” and the “Historic District Character” sections describe Decatur’s historic resources and its many historic neighborhoods. The “Decatur Historic Preservation Commission” section explains the purpose of Decatur’s preservation commission and describes a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and Certificate of Exemption (COE), when each needed, and the process for obtaining a COA and COE. The “Architectural Overview” defines the types and styles of structures found in Decatur’s residential neighborhoods. Finally, “Design Guidelines” delineate the appropriate way to rehabilitate, add to, or build in a historic residential or commercial area.

The “Appendix” includes useful tools to supplement the guidelines. The “Glossary” defines preservation terms most commonly used throughout the document. The “Decatur Preservation Ordinance” section includes usable application forms for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and for a Certificate of Exemption (COE). “Preservation Briefs,” the “Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation,” “References/Bibliography,” and “Resources and Contacts” are all useful resources that provide additional guidance.

Here are fundamental steps to using these design guidelines:

- Understand what is important to preserve in Decatur. Key historic features are highlighted in the “Historic Overview of the City of Decatur” and the “Historic District Character.” These features should influence design decisions when undertaking a rehabilitation, addition, or new construction.
- Understand the process for preservation that has been established in the city. The “Introduction” and “Decatur Historic Preservation Commission” sections explain the key players and the course of action required. They will guide residents through the process.
- Determine the type and style of structure to be preserved. The “Architectural Overview” can help residents identify their building’s design and provide information related to their specific property which can be used throughout the rehabilitation process.
- Determine if the project is a rehabilitation, addition, or new construction. Rehabilitation is “the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values.” Additions involve physically adding on to a historic structure. An example is a new wing. New construction involves building a completely new structure in a historic area, such as outbuildings, garages, or personal residences.
- Analyze the guidelines for the project. If the project entails a residential structure having a wing added, turn to the “Residential Addition Design Guidelines.” If the project entails construction of a

---

2 National Park Service, The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation
new commercial building, turn to the “Commercial New Construction Design Guidelines.”

- Ask for help. The guides included in the “Appendix” as well as the definitions, photographs, resources, and contacts are there to help property owners through the process—do not be afraid to ask.

- Apply for a COA or COE before beginning a project, and submit the application to the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). Applications can be found on the city’s website at http://www.decaturga.com.

Keep in mind that this document is here to help Decatur property owners recognize the important historic resources of Decatur and to provide a basic means to preserve and maintain those resources. The Design Guidelines only discuss general principles in preservation, and provide basic preservation guidance to both individual property owners and to the HPC. Each structure, street, and neighborhood is special and its singular attributes must be taken into account when undergoing a rehabilitation, constructing an addition, or creating an entirely new structure. The HPC has the responsibility of weighing each case individually and determining the best course of action in order to maintain the preservation objectives of Decatur.

1.6 LEGAL BASIS FOR PRESERVATION

These guidelines are intended to be a resource for homeowners, business owners, developers, architects, builders, and the Decatur Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and its staff in evaluating what types of repair, rehabilitation, or new construction is appropriate for historic properties in Decatur. These guidelines are, however, closely connected to the local ordinances that address historic preservation in the city. It is anticipated that the City Commission may adopt these guidelines in their entirety and incorporate them by reference into the Decatur, Georgia, Code of Ordinances. When the Commission takes such action, these guidelines will then have a binding legal effect.

Therefore, it is useful to have a basic understanding of relevant preservation laws in order to place these guidelines in their appropriate context. This is merely an overview, and any questions about these or any other laws, their interpretation, or their application should be directed to a licensed attorney.

Federal Law

The United States Supreme Court has long recognized the power of governments to regulate historic preservation. As a result, historic preservation laws now exist at all levels of government in the United States—federal, state, and local. These laws are generally complementary to each other, but there are some differences that may make one set of rules applicable when others are not.

At the federal level, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 set in place the framework for the federal preservation program and created the National Register of Historic Places. “The National Register is the official federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. National Register properties have significance to the history of their community, state, or the nation.” The National Register is an honorary designation, but it enables properties to qualify for various federal grants, loans, and tax incentives. In most instances, designation on the National Register will not impact the right to use and control the appearance of private property, except when federal monies are attached to the property.

3 www.nps.gov/nr/faq.htm#nr (April 2011).
State Laws

The Georgia Historic Preservation Act of 1980 was the enabling legislation through which local government bodies could regulate preservation of historic property. In passing this legislation, the Georgia General Assembly found “that the historical, cultural, and esthetic heritage of this state is among its most valued and important assets and that the preservation of this heritage is essential to the promotion of the health, prosperity, and general welfare of the people.” This Act provides the framework under which governmental entities such as the City of Decatur have enacted their own preservation ordinances. The Act also creates the provisions for the Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and Certificate of Exemption (COE) requirements which are discussed in detail in these guidelines.

The other significant portion of the state’s historic preservation laws addresses the creation and maintenance of façade and conservation easements. An easement is a non-possessory interest of a holder in real property imposing limitations or affirmative obligations as to the use of the property. Façade and conservation easements pertain specifically to the façade (or “shell”) of a historic property or other “natural, scenic, or open-space values of property.” It is fairly common for an easement to be granted with respect to historic property in order to adequately preserve and maintain the property’s historic integrity in perpetuity.

Local Laws

Local historic preservation ordinances actually offer the greatest level of protection for historic resources. These laws protect both individual sites and historic districts through a regulatory process that requires an advanced review of proposed projects by an administrative body, most commonly a preservation commission (as in the case of Decatur). Such projects can range from applications to replace a historic window or door to plans for a new addition or tentative new construction. The most extreme projects may be seeking demolition of entire historic properties. Today, more than 2,300 historic preservation ordinances have been enacted across the country. The City of Decatur Historic Preservation Ordinance is included in that list.

Designation of property to the National Register is an honor, but in only a few circumstances (such as receipt of tax incentives or other federal money for rehabilitation) is the owner actually restricted in future activity with respect to the property. A local designation of historic property is controlled by local law and imposes certain requirements with which homeowners must comply.

Decatur’s preservation ordinance controls all historic properties within the city limits that are located in a local historic district or that have been individually designated and which are also the subject of these guidelines. The Historical Preservation Ordinance is the law under which the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is formed and in which it carries out its duties discussed in these guidelines.

4 O.C.G.A. § 44-10-21.
5 Tax incentives and economic benefits of preservation are also outlined in the legislative intent of the act. They are separately discussed in the following section of these guidelines.

6 O.C.G.A. § 44-10-2 (1).
7 www.preservationnation.org

8 See Decatur, Georgia, Code of Ordinances, Ch. 58.
1.7 ECONOMIC INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS

Historic preservation programs offer a variety of financial incentives and economic benefits to property owners. An overview of some of them follows.

Federal Tax and Financial Incentives

Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit (RITC)

The RITC allows owners of certified historic structures who undertake a certified rehabilitation to receive a federal income tax credit equal to 20% of the qualified rehabilitation expenses. Only properties that are used for income-producing purposes can take advantage of this credit.

To be eligible for the 20% tax credit:

- The building must be listed in, or be eligible for listing in, the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as a contributing building within a National Register historic district.

- The project must meet the “substantial rehabilitation test.” The benchmark for this test is that the cost of the rehabilitation must be greater than the adjusted basis of the property and must be at least $5,000. Also, projects must generally be finished within two years.

- After the rehabilitation is complete, the owner must use the building for an income-producing purpose for at least five years.

- The actual rehabilitation work must be done according to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.

All federal rehabilitation tax credit projects must be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Division (HPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and be certified by the National Park Service (NPS). A property owner interested in applying for the RITC must submit the Historic Preservation Certification Application and supporting documentation to HPD for review and comment. After the work is reviewed, the project materials are then forwarded to NPS for final certification. The application has three parts. Part I addresses documentation that the building is a historic structure, listed in, or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Part 2 contains a detailed description of the rehabilitation work to be done, supplemented with photographs of the property before rehabilitation and proposed floor plan. Part 3 certifies the work after completion. Part 2 should be submitted to HPD before work begins to ensure compliance with the Standards for Rehabilitation. Part 3 is submitted after the rehabilitation is complete and should provide photo-documentation of the rehabilitation in compliance with the Standards for Rehabilitation.

1.71B Charitable Contribution Deduction

A charitable contribution deduction can be taken in conjunction with the granting of a conservation easement, and it enables the owner of a “certified historic structure” to receive a one-time tax deduction for the value of the easement. The intrinsic value of the easement was discussed in the previous section in terms of the legislative intent for preservation laws. The deduction is the financial incentive that accompanies the otherwise altruistic conveyance of the easement. Just as with the RITC, to be eligible for the charitable contribution deduction, the property must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as a contributing building within a historic district. Qualified legal and tax professionals should be consulted on the matters of easement valuations and the tax consequences of their donation.

---

9 Easements Atlanta, Inc. is a non-profit entity created to accept the donation of façade easements in the Atlanta area and work to maintain those easements. More information on façade easements can be found at www.easementsatlanta.org.
State Tax and Financial Incentives

Georgia has two incentive programs to encourage preservation of historic properties. Parties interested in either program should contact the Historic Preservation Division (HPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for information and to apply.

State Preferential Property Tax Assessment Program for Rehabilitated Historic Property

This program encourages rehabilitation of both residential and commercial historic buildings by creating an abatement on ("freezing") property tax assessments on the property for 8.5 years. The actual assessment of rehabilitated property is based on the rehabilitated structure, the property on which the structure is located, and not more than two acres of real property surrounding the structure.

In order to participate in this program, several conditions must be met. They include the following:

1. The property must be listed in or eligible for listing in the Georgia Register of Historic Places either individually, or as a contributing building within a Georgia National Register Historic District.

2. The cost of rehabilitation must meet the substantial rehabilitation test. That is accomplished by increasing the fair market value of the building by 50% for owner-occupied residential property; 75% for a mix of owner-occupied residential and partially income-producing property; and 100% for income-producing commercial or professional property.

3. The property owner must obtain preliminary and final certification of the project from the Historic Preservation Division (HPD).

4. Rehabilitation must be in accordance with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Standards for Rehabilitation (which are virtually the same as the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation) and must be completed within two years.

Georgia State Income Tax Credit Program for Rehabilitated Historic Property

This program allows property owners of historic residential and commercial buildings who complete a rehabilitation project approved by the Historic Preservation Division (HPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to receive a state income tax credit equal to 25% of the rehabilitation expenditures. The credit is capped at $300,000 for income-producing properties and $100,000 for historic primary residences. To be eligible for the credit, the property must first be eligible for or listed in the Georgia Register of Historic Places, either individually or as a contributing building in a Georgia Register Historic District. The rehabilitation must also meet DNR's Standards for Rehabilitation, and HPD reviews all projects to certify that they meet these Standards. The project must also satisfy the substantial rehabilitation test, which is met when the qualified rehabilitation expenses exceed the following amounts: for a historic home used as a principal residence, the lesser of $25,000 or 50% of the adjusted basis of the building; for a historic home used as a principal residence in a Department of Housing and Urban Development certified target area, $5,000; and for any other certified historic structure, the greater of $5,000 or the adjusted basis of the building. At least 5% of the qualified rehabilitation expenditures must be attributed to the exterior of the building.

Overall Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation

In addition to the financial and tax incentives available for historic preservation activities, studies have shown that there are measurable benefits in real estate, construction, and commercial activity due to historic preservation. One study published in 1999, entitled Profiting from the Past: the Economic Impact of Historic Preservation in Georgia, used Rome, Tifton, and Athens to demonstrate that historic preservation is good business.
The study concluded that historic preservation has quantifiable, positive, economic impacts on local communities. In the study, property values in National Register Districts increased in value 10% more than comparable properties in non-designated areas, and locally designated properties increased in value almost 80% more than those only nationally designated. This study also found that over a five-year period in the mid-1990s, Georgia realized the creation of 7,550 jobs, $201 million in earnings, and $559 million in total economic impact from participation in state and federal preservation programs.

Following two recessions in 2001 and 2008, Georgia completed a new study in the Fall of 2010 that essentially built upon the 1999 study. Good News in Tough Times: Historic Preservation and the Georgia Economy found that over the last decade, preservation-related activity statewide has created over 10,000 jobs, generated $420 million in household income, and resulted in $560 million being invested in historic buildings in Georgia. Decatur was among four cities used as case studies in the published study.

The National Park Service (NPS) has reported that almost $2.5 million has been spent on park properties in Georgia as a result of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and that Georgia received a small portion of the $58 million spent on multi-state parks. So, even in the current economic climate of 2011, historic preservation is still providing strength to Georgia’s economy.

10 A link to the .pdf and online versions of the report (and a link to the 1999 report also) can be found at www.gasbpo.org (or directly at: gasbpo.org/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=148)

2.0 Historic Overview of the City of Decatur

The information on the following pages is taken almost exclusively from the Historic Resource Survey: Final Report, City of Decatur, Georgia, September 1, 2009 created by Keystone Preservation Associates LLC and Morrison Design LLC (through "1940–1960: 'Modern Decatur' Evolves") and the City of Decatur, Georgia: A Preservation History, created by Georgia State University student Nick Cavaliere (sections "1960–1990: Urban Renewal, MARTA, and the Decatur Town Center Plan" through the Present). All historic images are from the Joe Lee Postcard Collection and the Guy Hayes Photograph Collection archived at the DeKalb History Center. Please see the References in the Appendices for Bibliographic information.

Early 1800s: First European Settlers

The first European settlers began moving into what is now DeKalb County in the early 1820s. The area was rural and sparsely populated. A majority of the early settlers were farmers or skilled tradesmen of English, Scottish, and Irish ancestry. Migrating from other parts of Georgia, the Carolinas and Virginia, they settled mainly on medium to small farms, and the area in what is now DeKalb County. In 1822, the Georgia General Assembly designated a site for a new courthouse in the newly established DeKalb County, which is the site of the current Old Courthouse on the Square. On December 10, 1823, the General Assembly incorporated the City of Decatur.

Mid-1800s: Small City

The arrival of the railroads in the 1830s and 1840s to the Atlanta area had little impact on Decatur, other than offering the convenience of moving goods and passengers. By 1845, the growth and development in the region moved westward to Atlanta which was established as the regional transportation center. Atlanta's growth soon far eclipsed that of the small city of Decatur. While Atlanta experienced explosive growth, development, and sprawl, as early as 1849, the City of Decatur promoted itself as a quiet, prosperous, small town which offered a peaceful, healthful, and beautiful place to live.

Mid- to Late-1800s: Moderate Growth

In January 1861, the state of Georgia seceded from the Union and the City of Decatur shifted its focus to wartime efforts. By the end of war, Decatur and the entire Atlanta area were devastated, as much of the railroad was destroyed and a severe decline in population was suffered. Reconstruction forced the development of Decatur as a suburb of Atlanta. Despite this, Decatur managed to maintain its own unique identity and character. In 1871, the city limits of Decatur were extended to a one-half mile radius from the Old DeKalb County Courthouse. Sycamore Street was one of the few residential areas of this era and now offers a distinct nineteenth century charm with many houses dating to the 1800s.

As with most cities, the commercial and residential development of Decatur grew outward from the city's commercial center. During the mid- to late-1880s, in addition to providing legal and administrative services to the county government, the city also became the commercial center for DeKalb County. Small businesses, commercial, and retail en-

View of Sycamore Street, postcard. (Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives, DeKalb History Center, Decatur)

12 City of Decatur 1992, 1-7-9
teringprises began to be established in buildings mostly clustered around the Square. Unfortunately, none of these original historic structures remain.

Some of Decatur’s earliest residences date to the late 1880s-1890s, and were located on or near Sycamore Street. Before the advent of the railroads in the 1830s and 1840s this street, formerly called Covington Road, was the stagecoach line from Augusta and was the main east-west thoroughfare in the area. Residential development naturally grew along this route close to the city center. Many fine residences were built on Sycamore Street, Hillyer Place, Sycamore Place, Barry Street, Pate Street and North Candler Street, a few of which remain today.

The area just south of the railroad line, known as “Little Decatur,” did not see extensive residential development until the 1880s, though early influential citizens had farms and large homesteads on the land along what is now South McDonough Street before that time.

By the late 1880s, a prosperous residential neighborhood had developed south of the railroad near the intersection of College Avenue and South Candler Street. As was the residential pattern of the time, wealthy families built their homes near the railroads, which offered convenient travel. It was in this established wealthy neighborhood in 1889 that the Decatur Female Academy was founded. This early school grew into what is now Agnes Scott College, and the College had then, and continues to have, an important impact on residential development in this area. Remaining in this area today are the historic neighborhoods of McDonough-Adams-Kings Highway (MAK), Agnes Scott College, and South Candler.

Though the railroad lines had a minimal effect on Decatur’s early development, the trolleys had dramatic impacts on residential growth patterns. In 1841, the first trolley line was established between Decatur and Atlanta, and other local routes were formed. From that time until the early 1900s and the beginning of the Automobile Age, residential development occurred along and near these lines. The trolleys offered a faster, cleaner and less-expensive means of travel, and because there were numerous lines, they were more accessible to more residents. Winnona Park and West Clairemont are among the neighborhoods that were influenced by the trolley lines. The town of Oakhurst, incorporated in 1910, originally developed as a streetcar suburb of Atlanta, following the North Decatur trolley line, which was constructed in 1892.
1900-1940: Growth of the Suburbs and the Automobile Age

The invention of the automobile and its availability to the middle class changed the fabric of American life. Because of the ease and freedom of movement offered by this vehicle, citizens could live wherever they chose, no longer tethered to city centers for jobs, schools, goods and services. The ideal of living in a “garden suburb” became a reality in Decatur, beginning with the purchase of land by local businessmen for residential development.

Decatur’s “garden suburbs” flourished between 1910 and 1940. These neighborhoods offered residents larger lots with the houses set farther back from the street, as well as spaces for a garage and driveway. In these new suburbs, the focus of family activities changed from the front-porch society of the nineteenth-century to residences oriented toward private back yards, large enough for gardening, gathering, and play. No longer needing to follow the grid of a railroad or trolley line, roads in these new suburbs tended to follow the natural topography, with winding, hilly streets.

In the years between 1910 and 1940, evidence of the popularity of the garden suburb in Decatur can be seen in the neighborhoods of Lenox Place, Greenwood-Pattillo-Howard, West Clairemont, Oakhurst, and Adair Park. Other examples of these newer garden suburbs were planned during this time. They include Great Lakes, Glennwood Estates, and College Heights. Growth of the areas is also related to the need for housing after World War I, the national movement for house ownership, and the development of affordable housing during the Depression era.

1940-1960: “Modern Decatur” Evolves

Decatur's neighborhoods and subdivision growth continued throughout these decades. The post-World War II period offered mortgage financing for veterans, many of whom would come to purchase homes built according to GI Bill and Federal Housing Administration (FHA) specifications. This is evident in the American Small House and Ranch types found in outlying areas of the city. The ranch house, once overlooked as a common, indistinct house type, has recently been recognized as a classic American style that represents the age and culture of the 1950s and 1960s. As noted in a study of mid-century DeKalb County development, Decatur would attract families seeking a single-family, suburban home in the growing metropolitan Atlanta area. This period is also a time when Decatur, as a city, expanded the infrastructure that now supports local education, recreation, and other amenities symbolic of modern suburban communities.

In March 1959, the city commission submitted an urban renewal application to the Federal Urban Renewal Administration to receive financial assistance to clear the African American neighborhood of Beacon Hill, demolition of which began in February 1965. Although various areas were severely altered throughout Decatur in the mid-1960s, opposition to many urban renewal proposals aided in the retention of much of the city’s historic character. The Old DeKalb County Courthouse was spared due to a united and active group of proponents for preserving the structure.

Decatur development in the 1970s was defined by the construction of the MARTA rail line and station running through the center of downtown. Neighborhood opposition to the project included the required closing of a portion of Sycamore Street and moving DeKalb’s oldest house, the Swanton House. Regardless of this opposition, the construction of MARTA and redevelopment of downtown continued. Plans from this era included tall office buildings and hotels. Although this idea for dense urban development eventually failed, another, more successful plan was created that allowed Decatur citizens to guide the city’s future development. It was termed the “Decatur Town Center Plan”.

The Decatur Town Center Plan, developed in 1982, was much more sensitive to the existing urban environment. The plan’s success led to the construction of Two Decatur Town Center in 1988 and a new hotel in 1989. Aside from the construction of these two projects, downtown development slowed throughout the 1980s as the city began to focus on improving its existing infrastructure.

The City of Decatur began to act more strategically regarding its growth and placed a new importance on the city’s remaining historic inventory due to the residents desire to “conserve Decatur’s small-town scale.” The city commissioned a survey of South Decatur in 1987. This was followed two years later by a survey of the remainder of the city and the appointment of a preservation task force to develop recommendations that would lead to the creation of a local preservation ordinance.

The Old DeKalb County Courthouse in Decatur was built in 1898. This 1908 postcard shows the cupola still intact, a fire in 1916 destroyed much of the interior and the cupola was never rebuilt. (Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives, DeKalb History Center, Decatur)

1980 Postcard of the current Dekalb County Courthouse (circa 1967) with the MARTA station in the foreground. (Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives, DeKalb History Center, Decatur)
1990–Present: A Preservation Ethic and the Historic Preservation Commission

In June 1990, the Decatur City Commission adopted its Historic Preservation Ordinance creating the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and its authority to designate and protect historic districts in the city. In the same year, the City of Decatur published its first *Historic Resource Survey*.

In September 1992, the HPC created the *Decatur Historic Preservation Resource Manual*. Two years later, the HPC designated the Old DeKalb County Courthouse and Scottish Rite Hospital as the city's first local historic landmark buildings. In 1997, in a further attempt to promote education and advocate for the preservation of historic structures, the city hired John Milner Associates to create a Design Supplement for the *Decatur Historic Preservation Resource Manual*. Between 1998 and 2007, four local historic districts were created, McDonough-Adams-Kings Highway (MAK) District, Clairemont Avenue, Ponce de Leon Court, and the Old Decatur Neighborhood.

The first dedicated preservation planner was hired in 2007. This employee has taken over the duties of staffing the Historic Preservation Commission meetings, organizing the city's Old House Fair, and providing guidance and support to residents interested in preservation. A *Historic Resource Survey* was created for the City of Decatur in 2009 by Keystone Preservation Associates LLC and Morrison Design LLC. Many of Decatur's neighborhoods have been nominated for designation on the Georgia Register, including Old Decatur, Ponce de Leon Court, Clairemont Avenue, McDonough-Adams-Kings Highway (MAK) District, which has been accepted, and Old Scottish Rite Hospital National Register. Downtown Decatur was listed on the Georgia Register in January 2011 making it the most recent listing for the City of Decatur.
3.0 Decatur Historic Preservation Commission

In 1990 the Decatur Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) was created under authority of Section 58 of the Decatur Code of Ordinances. This empowers the Historic Preservation Commission with the authority to do several things, including the power to review plans which involve changing the exterior appearance of locally designated historic structures or structures located within historic districts. A full description of the commission's duties, powers, composition, and other items can be found below, and in Section 58 of the Decatur Code of Ordinances. The mission of the Decatur HPC is to educate and advocate for the preservation of Decatur's historic resources.

3.1 COMMISSION MEMBERS

The Decatur Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is a multi-disciplinary team composed of persons who demonstrate special interest, education, or experience in architecture, landscape architecture, interior design, and history. Members of the Commission must be residents of the City of Decatur. The Commission was established by local ordinance to ensure that rehabilitation and new construction in Decatur's local historic districts are consistent with the character of the neighborhoods. The Decatur HPC is also responsible for the location and identification of historic structures and districts, conducting the design review process, and the development of public support. The Commission must approve exterior projects to homes located within these districts by issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) or Certificate of Exemption (COE) before a building permit can be issued.

Prior to making any exterior alterations to a property in a local historic district, the property owner must first obtain a COA or COE from the Decatur HPC. This is obtained by submitting a COA or COE application and appearing before the commission when scheduled. Decatur HPC Meetings are held monthly in the City Commission Meeting Room, Decatur City Hall, 509 North McDonough Street. The Decatur HPC uses staff review, the ordinance, and the design guidelines to form their decisions. The commission's intent is to ensure that exterior renovations and new construction in Decatur's local historic districts are consistent with the character of the neighborhood. Design review in the meeting will be based on established historic preservation standards—The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (see Appendix 15.2).

The Preservation Commission is authorized to:

- Prepare and maintain an inventory of all properties within the city that have the potential for historic designation.
- Recommend to the city commission specific places, districts, sites, buildings, structures, objects, or works of art to be designated by ordinance as historic properties or historic districts.
- Review applications for certificates of appropriateness, and grant or deny such certificates in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.
- Recommend to the city commission that the designation of any place, district, site,
building, structure, objects, or work of art as a historic property or as a historic district be revoked or removed.

♦ Advise the city on the restoration or preservation of any historic properties acquired by the city.

♦ Promote the acquisition by the city of façade easements and conservation easements in accordance with the provisions of the “Façade and Conservation Easements Act of 1976,” O.C.G.A. § 44-10-1 et seq.

♦ Conduct educational programs on historic properties located within the city and on general historic preservation activities.

♦ Make investigations and studies of matters relating to historic preservation including consultation with historic preservation experts. The city commission or the preservation commission may deem necessary or appropriate for the purposes of preserving historic resources.

♦ Seek out local, state, federal and private funds for historic preservation and make recommendations to the city commission concerning the most appropriate uses of any funds acquired.

♦ Submit to the historic preservation section of the state department of natural resources a list of historic properties or designated historic districts.

♦ Perform historic preservation activities as the official agency of the city historic preservation program.

♦ Where such action is authorized by a specific resolution adopted by the city commission and is reasonably necessary or appropriate for the preservation of a unique historic property, the preservation commission may enter into negotiations with the owner for the acquisition by the city with gifts, purchases, exchanges, or otherwise of the property or any interest therein.

♦ Review and make comments to the historic preservation section of the state department of natural resources concerning the nomination of properties within its jurisdiction to the National Register of Historic Places.

♦ Participate in private, state and federal historic preservation programs and with the consent of the city commission, enter into agreements to do the same.

3.2 CERTIFICATE OF Appropriateness

Local historic districts have preservation ordinances requiring proposed work on properties within the district to be reviewed by the local historic preservation commission. When the commission reviews and approves proposed changes to a building, they issue a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA), a document stating that the proposed work is appropriate for the historic district and meets local code criteria. A COA would be required for all structures located within the district and is important so that the same standards apply to all residents. This ensures that if modifications or new construction were to occur on any properties, they would be sympathetic to the neighborhood’s character in mass, scale, size and style.

3.3 DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

There is a six step process to obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) or Certificate of Exemption (COE):

1. Contact and meet with HPC staff to de-
termine whether there is need for a COA and COE
2. Determine whether there is a need for a COA or COE.
3. Submit an application for a COA or COE to the Decatur HPC.
4. Commission staff review of the proposed project.
5. Commission review of the application can be obtained upon request at a public hearing. Advice can be received by calling or emailing the Commission staff.
6. Application approved and a COA or COE is issued.

Section 58-3 of the Decatur City Code defines a COA as "a document evidencing approval by the historic preservation commission of an application to make a material change in the appearance of a designated historic property or of a property located within a designated historic district." Design review is undertaken by the Decatur HPC when a property owner within a historic district wishes to make a material change visible from the public right of way to any property within the district. Upon approval, the Decatur HPC will issue the property owner a COA or COE and the proper permits can then be obtained. The property owner may now proceed with the approved project.

See Flow Chart ➤
**Decatur Historic Preservation Commission**

**Determine the need for a COA**

A COA is needed for any owner planning projects that constitute a "material change in appearance" to a property located within the district is required to file for a COA with the Decatur HPC. The Historic Preservation Ordinance defines a material change as: any change that will affect the exterior architectural or environmental features of a historic property or any building, structure, site, object, landscape feature or work of art within a historic district, such as:

- A reconstruction or alteration of the size, shape or façade of a historic property, including any doors or windows or removal or alteration of any architectural features, details or elements;
- Demolition or relocation of a historic structure;
- Commencement of excavation for construction purposes;
- A change in the location of advertising visible from a public right-of-way; or
- The erection, alteration, restoration or removal of any building or other structure within a historic property or district, including walls, fences, steps and pavements, or other appurtenant features.

A COA is not needed for ordinary maintenance of any exterior architectural feature that does not involve a material change in design, material, or outer appearance. This includes painting and all interior changes that do not affect the external appearance of the structure.

**Submit an application for a COA to the Decatur Historic Preservation Commission**

Applications can be obtained at Decatur City Hall and online. All completed applications should be submitted to the preservation planner at the Downtown Development Authority. They should be accompanied by drawings, photographs, plans and any other documentation detailing the proposed project. Copies of this documentation should be submitted to the Commission for their records. The Decatur HPC is available for consultation concerning proposed plan.

**Commission review of the application/Consultation with the property owner/Public hearing upon request**

When reviewing applications, the Commission refers to the following:

- Historic Preservation Ordinance
- Design Guidelines for the area if applicable
- *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* (see Appendix 15.2)

**Application approved/denied for a COA**

The Commission must approve or deny an application within 45 days after a complete application is filed. Failure for the commission to act constitutes approval and further evidence is not needed. The Commission may approve an application “as is” or with conditions for approval. Construction on the property must commence within 12 months of the COA’s date of issuance.

**Peeling paint should be addressed in regular maintenance and does NOT require obtaining a COA/COE. Also, the City of Decatur does NOT regulate paint colors though they may be able to offer advice.**
4.0 Architectural Overview

This architectural overview provides Decatur residents with the principles used to define the various historic styles, types and features of residential architecture found in the city. Each element that combines to form the unique character of a house, a neighborhood, and a community is enveloped within a specific period of growth with a telling history of how and why it became what it is and where it is. This overview should clearly define type and style as they pertain to architecture. It provides a basic history of where the terms originated, why these terms populate the neighborhoods of Decatur, and the unique features that create the various types and styles we see. Sources sent to “Resources and Contacts” section.

Refer to the Chart of Types and Styles in Decatur on page 40 at the end of this chapter to see which Architectural Types and Styles are most common in individual neighborhoods.

4.1 Types

House type is determined by the floor plan and height of a house: floor plan + height = type. A single house type can exist in a variety of styles, which refers to the ornamentation on a building, for instance, a Victorian Cottage (style: type) or an English Vernacular Cottage. The different house types found in the neighborhoods of Decatur are delineated below.

below left to right: an American Small, an American Foursquare, a Bungalow, and an English Cottage
4.10 GEORGIAN COTTAGE

- Popular architectural type popular during the 1850s to 1890s but continued well into the 20th century.
- One of the most popular types in the area it was named after the English Georgian architecture it is associated with and not the state.
- Consists of a central hallway with two rooms on either side.
- Plan shape is square.
- Roofs are usually hipped but sometimes gabled.
- Chimneys are sometimes in the exterior walls but usually in the interior of the house in between each pair of rooms.

4.11 GABLED WING COTTAGE

- The Gabled Wing Cottage was popular from 1875 to 1915.
- Sometimes referred to as the gable-front and-wing or the gabled ell house type.
- Floor plans call for a “T” or “L” shape.
- Usually has a gabled roof but variations can have different styles of roof.
- Consists of a gable-front at one end of a recessed wing that is parallel to the façade.
- The front door is located in the recessed wing and may lead into a hallway or directly into the room in the wing.
4.12 QUEEN ANNE COTTAGE

- Built during the 1880s and 1890s.
- One-story in height.
- The roof line of the Queen Anne cottage is usually hipped with projecting gables on the front and side.
- Rooms include at least four with no hallway and are arranged asymmetrically.
- The front door is typically on the front façade with decorative detailing and a single pane of glass in the upper portion.
- Chimneys are typically seen piercing through the roof slope.

4.13 QUEEN ANNE HOUSE

- Identical to the Queen Anne cottage with the exception of its height being two stories instead of one story.
4.14 BUNGALOW

- The bungalow was popular architectural type built between 1900 and 1930.
- The bungalow roof tends to be a front or side gable with some hip or cross gables evident.
- Typically four or more rooms make up the rectangular floor plan, usually deeper than it is wide.
- Front doors are typically centered on the front façade, but can be off to one side or the other of the façade.
- Chimneys are usually centrally located within the plan, either along the gable or along the hip portions of the roofs.

4.15 PYRAMID COTTAGE

- The Pyramid Cottage was a popular type built between 1910 and 1930.
- Consists of a square main mass typically with four rooms and no hallway.
- The roof is steeply pitched and shaped like a pyramid which is where this type got its name.
4.16 AMERICAN FOURSQUARE

- The American Foursquare was a popular style between the years 1915 to 1930.
- The form of the American Foursquare consists of a cubicle mass capped by a pyramidal roof which provided for maximum interior space for the cost.
- There are four principle rooms on each floor. One of the front two rooms typically serves as an entry and stair hall.

4.17 AMERICAN SMALL HOUSE

- The American Small House was built approximately between 1935 and 1950. It is based on traditional precedents but lacks expensive traditional detailing.
- The form of the American Small House varies widely, but it typically has one or one-and-a-half stories. The houses are compact, and often nearly square, and may have projections—rooms that extend from the main mass of the house.
- Typical sizes range roughly from 900 to 1500 square feet. Many were built with a crawlspace or partial basement.

- Exterior cladding materials for the American Small House include wood (board and batten, vertical boards, shingles, or weatherboarding), asbestos shingles, concrete masonry units (often at the crawlspace), and granite.
- Granite construction often features a beaded mortar joint, while brick veneers are often finished with a raked or concave joint. Stone veneers and floor applications often have flush mortar joints.
- The American Small House usually has a moderately-pitched roof, not shallow like the Ranch, nor steep like its traditional predecessors.
- The house type features very narrow eaves and usually has a gabled or multi-gabled roof, which provides space for an attic, accessed by staircase or ladder.
4.18 English Cottage

- The English Cottage, built during the 1930s and 1940s, generally has a cross-gabled massing and a prominent front chimney and is modeled after English vernacular houses.
- In Decatur, these compact, single-story houses were often clad in brick or stone.

4.19 Ranch House

- Ranch houses were constructed during the mid-20th century.
- Roofs for ranch houses tend to be varied with projecting overhanging eaves.
- Five or more rooms make up the long, low, linear floor plan of the ranch house.
- Front doors are typically central on the front façade.
- Chimneys often make an architectural statement.
- There are eight sub-types of Ranch style houses. These sub-types are variations on fundamentally similar concepts of interior plans and exterior massing. These sub-types include Compact, Linear, and Ranch Designed. For further information on ranch house sub-types go to www.gashpo.org/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=434&txtPage=1.

Ranch subtypes below are a Half-Courtyard (left) and a Rambling Ranch (right)
4.2 Styles

Styles help us to identify, analyze, and describe the distinct features and architectural significance associated with the buildings we live in. Tastes and preferences of a particular time as well as necessity influence style. There are two parts to defining architectural style: first, style alludes to the kinds of decoration or ornamentation that have been put on a house; secondly, style is the design of the overall form of the house such as symmetry, proportion, massing, and the existence of solids and voids. Each of these distinct parts of architecture, when combined, provides us with architectural style. Following are descriptions of Decatur's most prevalent house styles and their common characteristics. This information, organized in order from earliest construction to most contemporary, should be used as a guide when planning rehabilitation or additions to historic buildings.

below left to right: a New South Cottage, an English Vernacular, a Federal Revival, and a Queen Anne Cottage.
4.21 FOLK VICTORIAN

This popular style of residence is often associated with simple forms with decorative elements and details. The style is a product of railroads and the industrial revolution which made elaborate decorative details inexpensive to manufacture, thus relatively humble houses could be adorned in a higher style for less cost. The Folk Victorian style was popular in the United States and Georgia from the 1870s through the 1910s. For Decatur houses, this style has the defining characteristics of:

- Ornamentation applied to simple house types including the gabled ell and central hallway as well as Georgian cottage.
- Decorative woodwork (often Queen Anne spindle work) is found on porches, cornice lines, railings, and around windows and doors.
- The style, however, is relatively restrained and
- Exterior walls are most often wood and occasionally brick.

Basic house, usually wood, with simple folk house form

Note how the Folk Victorian elements are applied to various simple house types:

(top to bottom) Hillyer Place in Decatur Heights, Sycamore St. in Old Decatur, and a Bungalow on Drexel Ave. in Lenox Place.
Queen Anne, one of Georgia's most popular styles, was popular in the 19th century and continued through the early 20th century. It references a style found in English Elizabethan and Jacobean styles. In Decatur it is normally used for wood-framed housing. Characteristics of this style include:

- Complex roof shapes, often steeply pitched with multiple gables and hipped.
- Multiple projecting bays with occasional towers.
- Use of ornamentation (spindle work, etc.) that may be confused at times with that of Folk Victorian, as both styles share highly decorated exteriors.
- One-story porches that follow the asymmetrical "bones" of the house form with occasional balconies.
- The use of wood shingles or sawn patterned on the exterior walls of the residence.
- Ornamental cornices, friezes.
- Chimney placement toward the interior.
- One-story variations are found in Decatur, where roof pitch, porches and patterned wood ornamentation represent a vernacular form.
- Windows are double-hung; some with multi-paned borders on the sashes. In some cases, the windows maybe relatively tall.
- Asymmetrical façade.
- The Queen Anne style shares common elements with the Folk Victorian style. Care should be taken in distinguishing the differences between the two styles in the neighborhoods of Decatur.

Steeply pitched, irregularly shaped roofs. often hipped

Textured shingles often fill gables or occur in bands

Turrets may be found on the more elaborate forms

These Queen Anne style homes exhibit many elaborate features common to the style including spindlework, lattice and elaborate decoration in the gables. Top house is on Sycamore St and the bottom example is in the MAK district.
Colonial Revival style was a renewal of interest in American colonial architecture spurred on by the Centennial Exposition of 1876. This revival adapted design elements and/or used exact floor plans from the American colonial style. Colonial Revival was popular in Georgia from the 1890s until the 1940s in suburban neighborhoods. During the 1930s and 1940s it was often referred to as Williamsburg. These symmetrical houses have a central entrance with classical features and double-hung sashes. The defining characteristics include:

- A central primary entranceway with supporting columns or pilasters
- Hipped or side-gabled roof of moderate slope, sometimes with dormers
- Wooden ornamentation including cornices, pediments, and modillions.
- Sidelights and fanlights may be used to surround the entrance door.
- Exterior walls are generally of brick or wooden cladding. Foundations in some houses are of granite.
- Porches are generally placed to the sides of the residence, although occasionally a full-width front porch is found. A few houses of this style feature one-story side porches and porte cocheree that continue the symmetry of the style with classical columns.
- Windows are double-hung, normally with simple multi-plane glass, and may be in pairs.
- Functional and non-functional shutters are used to reflect the Colonial past.

A Georgian Cottage type house with Colonial Revival style on Superior Ave.

This example on Clairmont Ave is a typical Georgian House type with Colonial Revival style.
Federal Revival is a rare style in the state of Georgia, used primarily from about 1900 to the 1920s. Very similar to Colonial Revival, Federal Revival buildings usually have more delicate features. The style is based on variations of the Georgian and Adams styles that were prevalent in the late 18th and early 19th century. Federal Revival traces its roots back to New England origins of house types and styles along with variations that appeared in Charleston and Savannah. For Decatur residences, this style is distinguished from Colonial Revival and other houses by these characteristics:

- Simple “box” design using center hall types and most doors and windows in strict symmetry.
- Side gabled or hipped roof with moderate to low pitch.
- Often a two story residence, may have gables.
- Door surrounds with a fanlight and/or curved lintels.
- Cornices, friezes and other decorative features include dentil or other molding.
- Double-hung windows often part of projecting bays.
- Materials are generally wood and/or brick veneer according to period of construction.

This house on Upland Rd., has curved lintels and decorative exposed brackets on the eaves, features of the Federal Revival style.

The fanlight over the door of this house on Glendale Ave, is representative of the Federal Style.

- Belt courses often distinguish sections/stories.
- Design elements include classical swags, urns, garland, and decorative panels.
4.25 NEOCLASSICAL OR NEOCLASSICAL REVIVAL

This style of residence is often associated with classically inspired architecture. Though sometimes a reaction to styles associated with the Victorian era, it is more ornate than Colonial Revival. In Georgia, this style is associated with the use of Greek and Roman details and is also characterized by symmetry. In Decatur, there is some evidence of the influence of Neoclassical styles with Neoclassical Revival detailing and features. Several subtypes might influence a vernacular Neoclassical or Neoclassical Revival style found in Decatur.

Distinguishing features include:
- Full height entry porticos and large columns usually command the front façade.
- Symmetrical façade may be flanked with wings, porches, or porte-cochères.
- The roof is of a low pitch and possibly hipped.
- Exterior walls are wood or brick.
- Ornamentation would be primarily of wood rather than masonry.
- The residence may have a rather irregular shape if Neoclassical Revival, but not to the extent of a type that is associated with the Bungalow type.
- Windows are double-hung and may be paired.
- Vernacular examples may have simple squared columns with capitals, rather than those following the classic order (e.g., fluted columns, Doric/Corinthian capitals).
This typical Neoclassical house in the Old Decatur Historic District on Sycamore St. dates to ____.

The Neoclassical style is also commonly found on early-mid 20th century apartment buildings such as this one on East Ponce de Leon.

Not all houses in the Neoclassical Revival style are large. The style was also popular in the mid-20th century and can be found on Ranch type homes in Decatur as well. This example is in the Parkwood neighborhood on Pine-tree Dr.

A quick lesson on columns:

- Ionic
- Corinthian
- Doric
- Composite

Note the Ionic columns that supporting this monumental pediment and the classically styled lentils over large doors and windows.
This is an American style with influences from the Arts and Crafts movement and Japan. The detail of the woodwork and the emphasis on materials and craftsmanship define these houses. Craftsman style houses, in the early 20th century, were the most popular residential architectural style in Georgia, and were built in Decatur from the 1910s through the 1930s. Entire neighborhoods were often constructed in this one style. Common characteristics are:

- Use of a variety of materials for structure and ornamentation.
- Gabled roofing or hipped roofing with a low pitch for horizontal effect
- Eaves and porches with exposed rafters.
- Decorative or functional brackets and braces.

The Craftsman style is a very unique and very decorative style. These doors are made in the Craftsman Style and would be appropriate on any house with Craftsman or Prairie styling which draws from the same Arts and Crafts base.
- Dormers, gabled or shed.
- Exterior walls of a variety of materials including brick masonry, stone, wood or a combination of all. Some walls may have stucco.
- Foundations are often masonry, granite or brick. Older houses will have granite with grapevine mortar patterns (See image to the right).
- Porches, full or partial width, on the front, typically with square columns set on masonry/stone bases.

- Windows, double-hung, with multiple panes over a one-paned sash.
- Doors with sidelights
- This house style is most associated with the bungalow house type.

Gravevine stonework is popular on the foundations, pillars and retaining walls in the landscape around homes in the Craftsman and other 1920s-1930s house styles.

Note the Arts and Crafts influence in the Craftsman styles below.

Leila Ross Wilburn signature Craftsman patterns on a home in Decatur, also note the 9-light Craftsman door and windows.

Note the unusual but very Arts and Crafts sidelights in this home on Sycamore Dr.

The short tapered columns sitting on heavy brick pillars are common. Also note the exposed rafter tails on this home on East Ponce de Leon.
4.27 ENGLISH VERNACULAR REVIVAL

This style of residential architecture is found in suburban neighborhoods across Georgia and was generally built in the 1920s and 1930s. True to its name, English Vernacular draws on ideas of the architecture of medieval England as well as later Tudor cottages and manor houses. Therefore, it is sometimes referred to as Tudor style. Defining characteristics, with special regard to Decatur houses, include:

- Steeply pitched roofs with dominant front-facing gables
- Masonry popular for almost all exterior walls
- Patterned brickwork, at times mixed with fieldstone or sandstone trim
- Large masonry or stone chimneys, often on the front of the structure
- Stucco in trim areas
- Wooden half-timbers in gables
- Windows that are tall, narrow and sometimes grouped together using multi-paned glass in casement window frames. Window casing may continue the use of large half-timbers in gable areas.
- Entrances may feature a small portico, sometimes with an arched area, that emphasizes the doorway.
- Front doors and casing may be arched.
- Asymmetrical overall house shape.

 ventana
This apartment building on East Ponce de Leon Ave exhibits a rather simplified use of the English Vernacular style elements.

This English Vernacular style house on Seneca St. is also an English Cottage type house. This is a common.

Steep roof pitch is often exaggerated as it is here on this house on Geneva St. Also note the side screen porch, another common feature.

Another example in the Great Lakes neighborhood, this wooden sided example (also an English Cottage type) exhibits the elegant curve found in many English Vernacular styled houses.
4.30 Additional Examples of Architectural Types and Styles

The Prairie Style is not uncommon in Decatur. Like the Craftsman style it is derived from the Arts and Crafts movement and so shares many of the decorative elements, similar doors and windows, found in Craftsman houses.

American Foursquare type in the Great Lakes neighborhood with some Craftsman styling.

Typical American Foursquare.

Long and low, with a hipped roof, this house in Westchester Hills typifies the Ranch type house.

Another Ranch type house in Glennwood Estates on Mount Vernon Dr. This example with an end-gabled roof, appears less low than the previous example but it is still a Ranch type house.

A compact Ranch type house in Chelsea Heights on Ridley Circle.
A Georgian Cottage type with Folk Victorian style details

A Georgian House type with Colonial details

This house is a Queen Anne Cottage, although the stylistic elements are simple, the complex forms that make up the house itself exemplify both the Queen Anne Cottage and Queen Anne House types.

The Decatur Recreation Department building on Sycamore St is an example of the Modern style which is not popular for residences in Decatur.

The Lustron House

Lustron houses were developed after World War II in response to housing shortages. The post WWII housing shortage opened the doors for many new and innovative techniques in home construction and housing development. The Levittowns and Eichler homes were also being constructed at this time.

Lustron houses were prefabricated enamelled steel to attract modern families who did not have time to deal with the maintenance and repair of a conventional wood and plaster house. The Lustron house includes many space-saving and innovative features in it's design including this downspout which doubles as a very stylized porch column.

The only Lustron house in Decatur (below) is in the Farmer Lustron House in the Lenox Park neighborhood.¹

For more information on Lustron Houses go to www.lustronpreservation.org

¹ photo of downspout from Wikipedia Commons,
### TYPES AND STYLES IN DECATUR

#### Relating Architectural Types and Styles to Your Neighborhood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood Character Area</th>
<th>Chelsea Heights</th>
<th>Clairmont Avenue</th>
<th>Decatur Heights</th>
<th>East Ponce Court</th>
<th>Glenwood</th>
<th>Great Lakes</th>
<th>Greenwood-Parillo-Howard</th>
<th>Lenox Park</th>
<th>&quot;McDonough, Adams and King Highway&quot;</th>
<th>Oakhurst</th>
<th>Parkwood</th>
<th>Ponce de Leon Court</th>
<th>South Candler Street-Agnes Scott</th>
<th>West Clairmont</th>
<th>Winchester Hills</th>
<th>Winnona Park</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TYPES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Foursquare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Small House</td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungalow</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Cottage</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen Anne Cottage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen Anne House</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranch House</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STYLES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Revival</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsman</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Vernacular Revival</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td>★</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Revival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk Victorian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lustron</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediterranean Revival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NeoClassical/Neoclassical Revival</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prairie</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queen Anne</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vernacular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.0 Historic Neighborhood Character Areas

MAP OF DECATUR NEIGHBORHOODS
The Chelsea Heights neighborhood, named for the Chelsea Development Company, is located on the northwest side of Decatur in DeKalb County, immediately south of the Westchester Hills neighborhood. Chelsea Heights is bounded roughly by Kathryn Avenue to the north, Mockingbird Lane to the east, Coventry Road to the south, and the CSX railroad tracks to the west. Chelsea Heights was plat­ted as early as 1912 by the Chelsea Land Company, but the majority of its houses were built in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. The neighborhood is recommended for designation as a local and National Register historic district.

Chelsea Heights has a hilly terrain with streets laid out in curvilinear patterns. Houses are of moderate size, placed on rectangular lots with uniform setbacks of approximately twenty feet and no sidewalks. Old-growth pine, oak, and maple trees and well-manicured lawns give a strong sense of cohesiveness. Driveways of asphalt or concrete are situated to one side of the houses.

This residential neighborhood consists primarily of Ranch and American Small houses. Most are vernacular, constructed in no particular defined architectural style. There are a small number of gabled wing and English cottages, some with elements of the English Vernacular Revival style. Chelsea Heights includes twenty-six American Small houses, built around 1938 through 1948, seventy-eight Ranch houses, built around 1940 through 1959; sixteen English cottages; and forty-six non-contributing buildings.

Ranch houses in Chelsea Heights were built in the 1940s through the 1950s and are mostly compact and a handful are half-courtyard Ranch houses. The design of these houses varies widely. Many of the
red brick Ranches have entries accented by tan stone, while others have Colonial-style details like shutters, broken pediments at entries, and front gables supported by white columns. A number of houses, particularly the compact Ranches, are clad in asbestos or vinyl siding. A few houses have wrought-iron floral columns. Rooflines vary; some are comprised entirely of hip profiles while others have multiple small gables terminating at a primary hipped roof. Some houses have chimneys, although they are generally not major design elements. Very few have carports. A few houses take advantage of topography and have a garage set within a partial basement level or a depressed garage. Some Ranch houses and American Small houses in Chelsea Heights have been altered and expanded to two stories. Chelsea Heights contains excellent examples of the Ranch and American Small house types that were popular in the mid-twentieth century. Buildings are generally of a high quality and exhibit the cohesiveness characteristic of mid-century suburban developments. Chelsea Heights is also a good example of a mid-twentieth century suburban community. A hilly terrain and curvilinear street patterns give the community a unified appearance. Chelsea Heights contains 180 parcels, of which 120 (66.7%) are currently contributing historic properties, 47 (26.1%) are non-contributing, and 13 are vacant lots. The oldest house is a renovated American Small house that was built in 1935 and is located on Chelsea Drive. Only five houses were constructed in the neighborhood between the 1960s and the present. 13

The Clairemont Avenue local historic district runs the length of Clairemont Avenue from Commerce Drive and Hunter Street to the south and to Maediris Drive to the north. Although Clairemont is a high traffic street, it is well-shaded by large trees, mostly oak, and has sidewalks on either side. The district contains primarily single-family residences, with a few contemporary multi-family or apartment dwellings around the intersection with Scott Boulevard. The Clairemont Avenue district consists of 88 lots, of which 65 (73.9%) are contributing, 19 (21.6%) are non-contributing, and four are vacant lots. There are also three historic churches in the district: First Baptist, First Church of Christ Scientist, and the Lutheran Church of the Messiah, all of which sit at the southern end of Clairemont, close to downtown. Clairemont Avenue is the main entrance into Decatur from the north. It provides an attractive transition from the high-density commercial character of Clairemont Road north of the city, and south to Decatur’s central business district and courthouse square. Clairemont was previously known as Shallowford Trail, because it followed a Native American trail that lead to a shallow cross-
ing of the Chattahoochee. Although it is a four-lane thoroughfare with heavy traffic, the district has largely maintained the integrity of an established residential neighborhood. The district contains a variety of early twentieth century architectural styles including English Vernacular, Craftsman, and Colonial Revival with no academic style, primarily built in the 1920s through the 1940s with some exceptions. Building materials include brick and wood siding and some granite in the foundations and chimneys. While most roofs are asphalt, there are some with terracotta tile and slate. Craftsman style houses, located closer to the city center, contain front porches, but hardly any open porches are seen farther north. The single-family houses tend to be mid-size to larger and are all consistently set back thirty to forty feet from the street. This pattern generally holds, regardless of the year of construction. Most have a front walkway from the sidewalk to the front door, although a side driveway to a garage in back can be found at almost every house. There is no on-street parking on Clairmont. Front yards may be open or enclosed by plants or fences.
5.3 COLLEGE HEIGHTS

College Heights is a residential neighborhood, proposed for both local historic district and National Register District designation. The neighborhood extends from Spence Avenue on the west to a deep ravine near Dearborn Drive on the east. The south is bordered by Pharr Road and Chevelle Drive with East Hill Street being the north border. Most houses are one and a half stories and are American Small Houses, Bungalows, and Ranches. The neighborhood is comprised of 381 parcels with approximately 272 (71.4%) contributing, 71 (18.6%) non-contributing, and 38 currently vacant lots. Along with the residential structures, College Heights contains one institutional building, College Heights Elementary School.

Rolling hills, especially in the park at the north side of the district, are a primary characteristic of this area. Curvilinear streets follow the topography, and there is no rigid grid system. The fifty to seventy-foot wide lots face the street and have consistent fifty-foot setbacks from the road. Asphalt streets with historic granite curbs are found throughout the entire neighborhood as evidenced by tool marks; there is also non-historic, concrete curbing. Many streets do not have sidewalks, but those that do exist are concrete. The area has tall, mature deciduous
trees, and the same vegetation is consistent from the front yards to the side and back of the houses. Walkways are concrete and extend from the front door, directly to the driveways. Sporadic signs of new designs for walkways take a curvilinear path to the driveways. Few retaining walls remain, but most are made of brick.

The American Small House is the prevalent type, but the area includes English Vernacular Revival cottages, Craftsman style Bungalows, and Ranches. Façade materials range from wood siding to red brick or a combination of both. Newer construction contains unpainted wood shingles, possibly cedar, and stack stone entryways. Asbestos siding is also present on a few houses built during the 1950s and 1960s. Metal awnings are scattered throughout the neighborhood. An array of windows is used even among houses of similar academic styles. Some are historic, others new, but not replaced in-kind. Others have attempted to replicate the historic arrangement of glass panes. There are also many door types and materials used throughout.

The English Vernacular Revival houses have screened side porches which are roughly 12'x12'. In many cases, these have been enclosed with glass, wood, or vinyl siding. The Craftsman style Bungalows have deep front porches supported by tapered wood columns resting on brick piers. There are a number of differing types of porticos over the front doors. Most of the American Small houses were built with a gabled portico, but many have been modified or replaced. Examples include entrances that are enlarged, arched or transformed into large dormers. The dominant roofing material is asphalt shingles.

College Heights was built as a driving neighborhood, and most houses were constructed with a garage or carport. Driveways lead to the carport or garage and are mostly single slab concrete with a few ribbon strip drives. A common alteration to these properties is the conversion of the garage into an interior room.
The neighborhood of Decatur Heights is located in the northeast region of Decatur. It can be accessed by heading north on Sycamore Drive which runs roughly north; south is located off of East Ponce de Leon Avenue to the south of the neighborhood. Decatur Heights is also accessible by Church Street to the north. Other streets in the neighborhood include Ridgeland Avenue, Fairview, Pinehurst, Hillcrest, Poplar, Oakdale, Grove, Woodland Road, and Covington Road. Residential structures are located in this district as well as The Church at Decatur Heights and Suburban Nursery Pre-School and Pre-K. The Glen Creek Nature Preserve can be accessed by heading west on Fairview Street and provides a buffer between the Decatur Heights and Glendale Estates neighborhoods. The DeKalb Medical Center is situated to the north of the neighborhood. Decatur Heights consists of 452 parcels with approximately 110 (24.3%) contributing, 319 (71.6%) noncontributing, and 23 currently vacant parcels. Because of the low percentage of contributing buildings, the neighborhood has not been proposed as a historic district.

Decatur Heights is named for the oldest part of the neighborhood which traces its history to 1910. Houses were built on Sycamore Road by Homer C. Lord of the Georgia Land and Investment Company with construction beginning in the 1920s. The majority of the houses, however, were built in the 1940s and 1950s. Most are American Small Houses and Bungalows, with contemporary infill comprising the rest of the development. There is no notable academic style. The majority of contributing houses are one-story. The newer, noncontributing houses are exclusively two-stories. Materials on contributing houses include wood, asbestos, and stone. Chimneys are either brick or stone. Aluminum awnings over windows and doorways are prevalent. Porches are usually open or screened in with a few enclosed
There are a variety of house styles and types in the Decatur Heights neighborhood. Left to right these modest homes are on Hillcrest Ave., Ridgeland Ave., and Lockwood Terrace.

examples. Many detached garages reflect the character of the house, and in some instances house roofs were extended over the driveways to provide shelter for vehicles.

Along Sycamore Street there is a fairly unobstructed view of the entire thoroughfare as houses are rarely separated by any type of fence, wall, or hedge. Large trees extend out over the road but are set back far enough so that their roots will not crack and obstruct the fluidity of the sidewalks present on either side of the road. Front yards are open with the exception of some smaller trees and shrubs including small flower boxes in the front yard and in other sections of the lots. Setbacks are consistently around twenty feet from the road, though at one point where the sidewalk breaks, setbacks are further away from the street. Driveways are of several different varieties, including gravel, asphalt, and concrete pavement - solid and tracts.
East Ponce de Leon Corridor includes East Ponce de Leon Avenue on the west and Commerce Drive and North Arcadia Avenue to the east. It is currently a proposed National Register District. The corridor is mainly residential housing, but there is also a school, a church, the Avondale MARTA station, and a few commercial enterprises in formerly residential buildings. There are also several apartment buildings. Single-family houses include Bungalows, English Cottages, American Small Houses, as well as English Vernacular Revival houses.

The majority of construction on the East Ponce de Leon Corridor was completed in the 1920s. The area is an example of a common growth pattern seen in the early 1900s. As cities grew, residential development began to spread out beyond the central city areas along major thoroughfares. This district consists of 95 parcels including approximately 76 (80.0%) contributing historic properties, 17 (17.9%) non-contributing properties, and two vacant lots.

The neighborhood consists of curvilinear streets running through a slightly hilly topography. The main thoroughfare runs east to Stone Mountain and west to Atlanta. English Vernacular Revival houses sitting on narrow and wide lots unify the appearance of the neighborhood. Streets are asphalt with granite curbs. Most of the cement sidewalks are lined with mature trees. The size and type of shrubbery varies throughout the area, as do seasonal beds. Retaining walls are made of a combination of stone set in concrete.

Setbacks vary with some houses set deep on their lots, others set closer to the road. Façade materials are brick, clapboard, siding, and stucco, while the roofs are asphalt shingles. Many porches have been screened in. Double-hung, casement, dormer, and Palladian windows are present. Most historic houses are one-story, but several American Small Houses have been "popped-up" and are now two-stories. A
few houses also show examples of further additions, such as anything from one room to an entire wing added to the side or rear. Some modern infill has been designed to incorporate standard features of the corridor. One newer house was built in the English Vernacular Revival style and another was built using Craftsman influences. There are also several apartment buildings on the street, one townhouse community, and at least one condo community.

All houses in the neighborhood have driveways, many of which have auxiliary buildings serving as a garage or other service building. A few houses appear to have basements; most do not. Fencing along the corridor includes chain-link, iron, picket, brick, and wood.

Several apartment buildings line the western end of the East Ponce de Leon corridor, closer to downtown.

Single-family homes dominate the eastern end of the district.
5.6 GLENNWOOD ESTATES

Glennwood Estates, a residential neighborhood located in the northeast section of Decatur, is currently a proposed local historic district and National Register district. Glennwood Estates is bound by Forkner Drive to the north, the Decatur Heights area to the east, East Ponce de Leon Avenue to the south, and Glendale Avenue to the west. Glendale Avenue, Mount Vernon Drive, Glen Circle, and Pinecrest Avenue make up the neighborhood streets. Most houses are one and a half to two stories tall, 1,500 to 2,900 square feet, and were built during the 1930s and 1940s.14 Predominant historic house types are English Cottage, American Small House, Ranch, and Colonial Revival. Throughout the neighborhood, historic styles range from Federal Revival to English Vernacular Revival. Lots are uniform with deep setbacks set along curvilinear streets with houses following the naturally undulating topography. Currently, Glennwood Estates contains 235 parcels with approximately 185 (78.7%) contributing historic properties, 43 (18.3%) non-contributing properties, and seven vacant lots.15

Roads are asphalt with granite curbs ranging in height. Glendale Avenue and Glenn Circle have four-foot wide concrete sidewalks on only one side of the street with no planting strip in between the road and sidewalks. No street drainage systems are present. Mount Vernon Drive and Pinecrest Avenue do not have sidewalks. Setbacks are not uniform and start at 70 feet, providing large front yard areas. Every house has a side or back parking strip, along with ample room for street parking. The cement parking strips are rectangular pads with some occasional concrete strips with grass in between. Most driveways lead to carports or garages. A canopy of oak trees provides shading. Oaks, magnolias, crape myrtles, and pine trees are present throughout the neighborhood.

The American Small Houses have predominantly brick or stucco façades and the English Cottages are nearly all brick. The Ranch and Colonial Revival houses have predominantly brick façades, but a few have wood plank exteriors. Residential houses primarily consist of gable roofs with asphalt shingles and single chimneys, usually centrally located. Most porches have been enclosed and are being used as interior space. Infill garages are found throughout the neighborhood and are offset from the back of the house or attached to the rear.

The outer east side of Glennwood Estates is the Glenn Creek Nature Preserve. The two-acre watershed is one of the largest undeveloped areas of Decatur. The Glenn Creek Nature Preserve Alliance and the Governor’s Greenspace Program helped Decatur raise $90,000 to purchase the property in December 2004. The property is comprised of a forest, creek, wildlife, and native plants. A water runoff drain, bridge across the stream, and lookout posts were built for the local public to enjoy the area. The deed states the “property will be used in perpetuity as a nature preserve and it will remain in its undeveloped state.”

The Glenn Creek Nature Preserve can be accessed from Fairview Street, off of Sycamore Drive, located in the Decatur Heights neighborhood. A chain link fence surrounds the property on all sides, except for the entrance on the east side. Trails have been laid using the fallen limbs within the area and wood chips. The terrain slopes up toward the west and is slightly hilly.

There are many good examples of brick English Vernacular style houses such as these on Glenn Circle.

Great Lakes is an early twentieth century neighborhood characterized by rolling hills with curvilinear roads, tall trees, and early architectural styles typical of a planned garden-style suburb. The neighborhood is bounded roughly by Lucerne and Champlain Streets on the north, Church Street on the east, Erie Avenue to the south, and Superior Avenue on the west. The majority of houses were developed by Robert H. Paris from 1913 to the 1920s. These styles are predominantly English Vernacular Revival Cottages and Craftsman style bungalows. Some American Small Houses were added to the neighborhood in the 1930s and 1940s, with little other construction until the 21st century. There are 225 parcels of land of which 138 (61.3%) are contributing, 80 (35.6%) are non-contributing, and seven are vacant lots. The neighborhood is currently a proposed National Register District.

Many lots are irregular and narrow, often allowing little more space than a driveway between houses. It is a picturesque neighborhood, and its historic character has remained relatively intact. Additions to
earlier houses have mainly been compatible with the historic fabric of the neighborhood and the property. New construction has tended to be in the Craftsman style, which is popular in Decatur. Typical house materials include wood siding, cedar shingle siding, brick, granite, and sandstone. Most houses have porches, particularly the Craftsman style houses, and most of the English Revival Vernacular houses have side screen porches some of which have been enclosed.

Landscaping varies with some yards enclosed by compatible cottage-style wooden fences and others left open. Many are contained by historic retaining walls, comprised of concrete or brick, while newer retaining walls are often made of granite and stacked stone. The historic driveways are a single band of poured concrete, and several newer driveways are made of brick or ribbon filled in with dark slate chips.
Greenwood-Pattillo-Howard (GPH) residential district is bounded by Greenwood Circle to the north and west, West Howard Avenue to the south, and Pattillo Way to the east and is proposed as a local or National Register district. Primary residential construction in this neighborhood began in the 1910s and ended during the 1940s and reflects the emergence of garden suburbs. Most houses are one-story with some second stories concealed under roofs in the craftsman style and bungalow house-type. Approximately forty of the fifty-four parcels are considered contributing, making it another prime candidate for local and National Register designation.17 Originally part of the Capital View neighborhood of Decatur, primary landowners were Green Butler and William Latimer. The Pattillo name comes from a prominent Decatur family that owned a construction company, which became a real estate company currently based in Florida and Georgia.18 There are 54 properties that comprise this neighborhood, 42 (77.8%) of which are contributing, 11 (20.4%) are non-contributing and one vacant lot.

The topography of the neighborhood is flat to slightly hilly. Lot sizes are uniform with uniform setbacks, and are situated a side-by-side along a grid pattern street system. Hardscape elements include some concrete sidewalks with asphalt streets and granite curbs. Concrete driveways radiate from the streets to the side of residential buildings throughout the neighborhood. Fences are low and are either metal or wooden picket fences. Walkways extend from the concrete sidewalks to the entrance doors

of the houses. Some houses in the hilly area have concrete stairs leading to the entrance with decorative iron railings. Most houses have modern HVAC systems behind the house. Overall, the neighborhood has minimal landscaping.

Contributing residential properties include the Bungalow, Ranch, and American Small House-types. House styles include Craftsman, Colonial Revival, and vernacular or no academic style. Most buildings are one story, with a few single and multi-family houses having two stories. Exterior materials include masonry foundations with brick, wood, and shingle siding. Shutters are seen on many houses. Examples of pyramidal and gabled asphalt shingle roofs can be found with protruding brick chimneys. Windows are double-hung in varying styles. The majority of the Colonial Revival and American Small Houses do not have porches. Some of the vernacular houses have porches, and almost all the Craftsman houses have full-width porches. Some of the American Small structures have awnings on the front windows. Additional structures, such as outbuildings and garages, can be seen in the rear of the buildings, appropriately set back, designed, and clad to blend with the contributing properties.
5.9 LENOX PLACE

Lenox Place is a small historic residential area that is currently a proposed National Register District. It is bounded by Emerson Avenue to the north, Drexel and Lansdowne Avenues to the east, West Howard Avenue to the south, and Melrose Avenue to the west. 210 land parcels of relatively equal size comprise the area and create a grid-like pattern. There are 125 (59.5%) contributing historic properties, 71 (33.8%) non-contributing and 14 vacant lots. A variety of building types and styles make up Lenox Place including, but not limited to, Craftsman Bungalows and American Small Houses. The noteworthy Farmer Lustron House, circa 1949, is the only Lustron house in the City of Decatur and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Lenox Place was primarily developed from 1905 through the 1920s and was originally part of the city of Oakhurst. The main developer of the neighborhood was Charles A. Layman, of Indianapolis, Indiana. Advertisements to sell the original 209 lots in Lenox Place praised the neighborhood as being thoroughly white, well drained, the best deal in real estate Atlanta had ever seen, and located in an area free from industry and railroad crossings with the best Atlanta had to offer in electric car facilities. Scattered construction in the 1940s and 1950s is seen with the addition of the American Small houses. Lenox Place was mostly owner-occupied through the 1920s and 1930s with some blue-collar residents who rented properties in the area. The neighborhood has continuously been publicized for its proximity to public transportation and as an area where families can live in the suburbs while enjoying easy access to jobs downtown and elsewhere.

The redevelopment and rezoning of unused lots have been concerns for homeowners in the Lenox Place neighborhood over the years. The neighborhood wanted to maintain its older houses by discouraging demolition and HDSF-1 (high density single family- condos/townhouses) zoning on lots that could be rehabilitated or preserved. Rezoning the Lenox Place from R-60 (single family residential) to HDSF-1 was considered during the 1960s and 1970s when the area was suffering from “white flight.” At this time, speculators bought the abandoned houses for rental properties and the

19 Lottery Advertisements 1915
20 DeKalb History Subject Files, Communities/Neighborhoods, Lenox Place/Lenox Park
21 Decatur Views 5/5/83, Tom and Lyn Deardorf, Lenox Place: Alive and Well
neighborhood experienced increased crime and a decrease in the desirability of the area. The mid-1970s brought MARTA close by, which brought life back to Lenox Place. A Neighborhood Association was established in September 1980. The group argued for the preservation of the land lots to retain their original 1900 to 1915 designs. The “restoration-minded homeowners” were victorious in convincing the commissioners to rezone the neighborhood down to R-60. Today, nearly 60% of the houses in the area are historically contributing and Lenox Place is considered a significant example of an early twentieth century planned suburban community.

The neighborhood was laid out on a grid and organized to provide easy access to the old Decatur trolley lines. There are a few detached garages and driveways that appear to be later additions perhaps because the neighborhood was organized around public transportation and planned for off-street parking only.

There are several properties with sheds, accessory apartments, and carriage houses with mixed uses, such as garden sheds or chicken coops. These outbuildings are commonly designed to complement the style of the house. The retaining walls are concrete, painted concrete, stacked stone, brick, or granite. Walkways and entranceways are concrete or concrete and stacked stone with occasional brick edging. Lenox Place has concrete sidewalks throughout with a green-space buffer from the road. The lots have mature deciduous trees for shading, and ornamental gardens are found in the front yards. Houses use “cottage style” front and side gardens and foundation plantings including boxwood, nandina, and other evergreens planted along the front of the Ranch and American Small Houses.

The exterior materials in the neighborhood are primarily brick veneer and wood. The roofs are all asphalt. Awnings are found on front and side façades. Doors range from historic wood entrances to modern mid-century with glass inserts along with revival variations of historic doors. Many houses have retained their historic windows, sashes and openings. However, there have been modern changes with aluminum and vinyl casing and, occasionally, glass. The historic houses feature some form of porch, portico or patio, while renovated houses often have enclosed porches or sunrooms for four-season use.

22 The DeKalb News- 8/19/81- Decatur Commission Approves Melrose/Drexel Rezoning
5.10 MCDONOUGH, ADAMS AND KINGS HIGHWAY (MAK)

The residential neighborhood of McDonough-Adams-Kings Highway (MAK) is the first local historic district in Decatur and encompasses ten city blocks. The district is bounded by West College Avenue to the north, Kings Highway to the west, West Davis Street and Oakview Road to the south, and South McDonough Street to the east. Decatur's first residential subdivisions, development initiated along Adams Street in the MAK district in 1907 and continued into 1930s with later construction along Kings Highway. Most of the subdivision was developed by local businessmen, John Mayson and Poleman Weekes, and Leila Ross Wilburn, one of Atlanta's first female architects, is responsible for designing many of the houses.

Houses range from 900 to 2,000 square feet; most are mainly one-story with some two-story interspersed. In the initial development on Adams Street, homes were actually required to be two-story. House types include mainly Bungalows and English Cottage with Craftsman, Queen Anne and English Vernacular Revival styles. The McDonough, Adams and Kings neighborhood consists of 166 parcels including approximately 139 (83.7%) contributing historic properties, 11 (6.6%) non-contributing and 16 vacant lots. The percentage of contributing properties makes this district a prime candidate for National Register designation.

The topography of the MAK neighborhood is flat to moderately hilly. While dimensions vary by street, lot sizes are uniform, and the rectangular shape of the lots predicts the side-by-side situation of buildings with uniform setbacks. Landscape elements include concrete sidewalks with asphalt streets. Concrete driveways radiate from the streets to the side of the houses throughout the neighborhood. There are very few fences, while retaining walls of brick and stone are

more abundant. Walkways or concrete steps extend from the concrete sidewalks to the entrance doors of the houses and lawns are landscaped with trees and shrubs. Overall, the neighborhood is fairly wooded with many mature deciduous trees.

Contributing residential properties include one and two story Craftsman Bungalow, English Vernacular Revival styles and Queen Anne Cottages as well as several multi-family structures in no academic style. Exterior materials include brick and wood siding with masonry foundations. Examples of pyramidal and gabled asphalt shingle roofs can be found throughout with protruding brick chimneys. Windows are double-hung in varying styles including traditional 6/6 and Arts and Crafts influenced designs on Prairie and Craftsman style homes. Porches are more common in some parts of the neighborhood than others. Accessory structures, such as outbuildings and garages, can be seen in the rear of the buildings, appropriately set back, designed, and clad to be compatible with the contributing properties.

The MAK was Decatur's first registered historic district.

Leila Ross Wilburn

Leila Ross Wilburn, one of Atlanta's first female architects, was born in Macon, Georgia, in 1885 and moved with her family to Decatur 10 years later. She attended Agnes Scott Institute, which became Agnes Scott College, taking architectural drafting lessons and eventually joining the Atlanta firm of Benjamin Padgett and Son as an intern. This position made her one of two women to work in the male-dominated field of architecture in Georgia. Her first commission, at the age of twenty-two, was a three story building that became a YMCA, and is now part of Woodward Academy.

Wilburn opened her own firm in 1909 working on the principle that the building of the American house should not be reserved for the rich. In order to reach a wider audience, she produced pattern books from which a design and plan could be purchased by contractors and home builders. Thus, many single-family houses and apartments throughout Atlanta, including Ansley Park and Candler Park, and throughout Decatur, including the MAK District and Oakhurst, carry her designs. She became a member of the Society of American Registered Architects in 1961, which was an important honor considering the field was still predominantly male-centered. Leila Ross Wilburn passed away in 1967 and was buried in the Decatur Cemetery. Each year, the city of Decatur awards the Leila Ross Wilburn honor to those excelling in historic preservation.

5.11 OAKHURST

The residential and commercial neighborhood of Oakhurst is bounded by West College Avenue to the north, Winter Avenue to the west, Northern Street and West Pharr Road to the south, and South McDonough Street to the east and is a proposed local and National Register District. The garden suburb neighborhood was first a streetcar suburb of the city of Atlanta, incorporated in 1910, and later annexed by the city of Decatur in 1916. The majority of the houses were built within this six-year period, although some date back to 1905 and others are as recent as the 1940s. Construction of these earlier houses was overseen by two pioneering women. Georgia Adams, whose father owned the property (Adams Street), oversaw the development and Leila Ross Wilburn, then a local architectural graduate of Agnes Scott College, designed the houses.

Residences within Oakhurst are typically one story, with two-story houses interspersed—ranging from approximately 800 to 2,000 square feet. House types include mainly Bungalows and American Small. Houses with the house style primarily Craftsman or no academic style. Oakhurst consists of 1384 parcels including 854 (61.7%) contributing historic properties, 413 (29.8%) non-contributing and 117 vacant lots. The oldest house in the neighborhood was built circa 1880 and is located at 303 Fifth Avenue. This Victorian house is two-story, wood framed, and has clapboard siding.

The commercial areas of Oakhurst thrived due to Scottish Rite Hospital, which eventually left its Oakhurst location in 1976. Harmony Park in Oakhurst progressed from a primarily white-collar business district in the early years to the retail and restaurant district that it is today. Early businesses included a drug store, a hardware store, a shoe store, four gas stations, and an ice cream parlor. The commercial buildings are mainly one story brick with no academic style and flat roofs. Some contain awnings, and all have façade mounted signage that coordinates with the overall character of the commercial building.

Oakhurst’s topography is moderately hilly. A granite-lined median spans the length

26 Trulia Real Estate Search. www.trulia.com/property-sitemap/GA/Atlanta/30317/5th_Avenue_Ne, 2011. 23 Feb. 2011
of Oakview Road with lots situated in a traditional grid pattern on either side of this main road. Curvilinear sections and multiple road bisections project from Oakview Road. Lots are generally small, with a few medium and large ones interspersed. The rectangular shape of the lots predicts the side-by-side situation of buildings with uniform setbacks. Some areas have houses that are set at an angle to the street.

Landscape elements include granite curbs with asphalt streets. Concrete driveways run from the streets to the side of the residences throughout the neighborhood. Occasional picket fences can be found, along with retaining walls of brick and stone. Walkways extend from the concrete sidewalks to the front porches or entrance doors of the houses. Lots with sloping terrain include terraced or stepped walkways leading to the entrance. Most houses have modern HVAC systems on the side or the back of the building, with some window air conditioning units. These are often masked by landscaped lawns with trees and shrubs. The neighborhood is heavily wooded with mainly mature deciduous trees. A tennis and basketball area with picnic and park space can be found on Third Street across from the Boys and Girls Club.

Contributing residential buildings include Craftsman Bungalows and American Small Houses with a few Victorian and English Vernacular Revival styles and Queen Anne Cottage and English Cottage types interspersed. Exterior materials include masonry foundations with brick, painted brick, wood siding, and wood cedar shingle types of cladding. Examples of pyramidal, gabled and hipped asphalt shingle roofs can be found throughout with brick chimneys and some stone. Metal awnings are occasionally seen over windows. Windows are typical variations of the double-hung style. The majority of buildings have full-width or ¾-width porches on the front façades.

Contributing commercial buildings, which are mainly brick with flat roofs, exist mainly at the intersections of Oakview Road and East Lake Drive, and along College Avenue. Commercial buildings have either painted signs on their façades or manufactured signs mounted on the façade. Other structures, such as outbuildings and garages, can be seen in the rear of both commercial and residential buildings, appropriately set back, designed, and clad to work with the contributing properties.
5.12 OLD DECATUR

The Old Decatur Historic District is a pedestrian friendly, residential and commercial neighborhood and the oldest neighborhood within the city of Decatur. The district is locally designated and is nominated for National Register designation. It is southwest of the city center and is defined on its western boundary by the Decatur Presbyterian Church on the eastern side of Church Street, (from Sycamore, down West Trinity Place to East Howard Avenue - excluding Philips Tower), to the south by the railroad tracks (from North Candler Street to properties on the east side Sycamore Place), and to the east (with the exception of Sycamore Street) by Sycamore Place properties. Properties on the northern boundary of the district stretch further east as properties on both sides of Sycamore Street span from Church St. to Ponce de Leon Avenue. The district consists of 181 properties, of which approximately 79 (43.6%) are contributing, 62 (34.3%) are non-contributing, and 40 are vacant lots.

While the residential area of the neighborhood has a variety of house styles and types, the massing, scale, and setbacks remain consistent on each street. The neighborhood also boasts tree-lined sidewalks throughout. The north-south running streets contain Folk Victorian, Queen Anne, Craftsman, and Colonial Revival style houses dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The houses along Sycamore Street are larger with a larger setback and are built in styles ranging from Queen Anne, Craftsman, Colonial Revival, and Italianate. The historic houses are built of wood, brick, and stone with brick and stone foundations. Most residential entranceways are oriented to the street. Most of the historic houses have either a porch, portico, or stoop. Throughout the district there are consistent landscape features, such as driveways, sidewalks, and fences. Most houses have driveways on the side and a rear parking...
Holy Trinity Parish Episcopal church on Sycamore Place, one of two historic churches in the district.

area. Fences are built of wood and metal and do not obstruct views of the house and yard from the street.

The commercial area of Old Decatur was constructed in the late 19th and early to mid-20th centuries. It consists of two types of buildings, retail and office or single retail in varying styles. The retail and office buildings were built through the 1930s and are two to four stories high with a flat or sloped roof. Most street level façades had three-bays. Traditionally, the lower level was used as retail space while the upper floors were rental office spaces. Only one retail and office building remains in Old Decatur and it is located at 302 E Howard Avenue. The single retail building types were built as stand-alone units, and were often built in a series during the mid-20th century. The units have sloping or flat roofs with three-bay façades and a central door. The historic commercial buildings are constructed of brick, wood, stucco, concrete block, or a combination. Most windows are fixed, single-pane windows in keeping with commercial styles of the neighborhood. Parking is located on the street or on the side of the buildings. Few buildings have parking located in front. The two historic churches in the district are in Gothic Revival (Holy Trinity Parish Episcopal Church) and Romanesque (the chapel of Decatur First United Methodist Church on Sycamore Street) styles. Government building styles include International and Neoclassical Revival. Like the residential area, the commercial also has sidewalks and fences. Fences are made of wood and metal and do not obstruct views of the building from the street.29

Parkwood is a residential neighborhood proposed as a local and National Register Historic District, significant in architecture and community planning and development. Parkwood is bordered by Pinetree Drive to the north, Melrose Avenue to the east, and the Decatur city limits to the west. East Parkwood Road is the southernmost boundary. Residential construction took place along West Ponce de Leon Avenue starting at its widening in 1913 by the Druid Hills Company, and construction expanded with the development of Pinetree Drive in 1950. The Parkwood neighborhood developed primarily during the 1950s. The community is mainly composed of one story brick Ranches and English cottages with a few examples of two story English Revival Vernacular houses. The neighborhood consists of 128 parcels including approximately 102 (79.7%) contributing historic properties, 21 (16.4%) non-contributing properties and five vacant lots.

The lots along West Ponce de Leon Avenue are by far the largest in Parkwood, although all seem to be medium to large. These lots are larger and deeper than most typical for Decatur. The hilly topography of the neighborhood adds character to the area and is reflected in the often steep, side driveways leading up to the houses. Concrete sidewalks flanked by grass or mulch are characteristic features with the exception of Pinetree Drive, which does not have sidewalks. Sidewalks made of flag stone, sometimes with brick edging or concrete paver edging, can be found in other parts of Parkwood. Mature evergreens and deciduous trees shade the neighborhood, and garden plots have been planted in the front of houses. Some cottage style front and side gardens are on West Ponce de Leon Avenue, while foundation plantings are common in front of Ranches and American Small Houses in other parts of the neighborhood.

Upland Road and West Ponce de Leon Avenue have the most variety in house types. Construction ranges from one to two stories and includes building materials such as brick veneer, wood, with occasional stone ornamentation, granite foundations, and painted brick. Details, such as brick quoins, add to exterior texture. Asphalt roofs are dominant in Parkwood, with a few examples of terracotta tile roofs. One house features a copper roof over the portico. Retaining walls made of painted concrete, granite, and brick are also visible from the street. Granite curbing lines asphalt streets. Concrete or asphalt driveways on the side of houses, sometimes with pavers or pea gravel topping, are common, most lead to a carport, garage or outbuilding. Only one exception of a circular driveway could be found. In some
instances, houses include historic basement-level garages for one or two cars.

Outbuildings and fencing are popular additions to most of the lots. Storage units range from small garden sheds made of contemporary materials to special units that appear to be custom-made to complement the house design. Accessory apartments or carriage houses are visible from the street on several lots. Some are connected to historic houses, giving them a historic look while others appear to have been constructed after the house was built. Fencing is rare along the right of way, but side or rear fencing is common for providing privacy and ornament. These fences are constructed primarily of wood, chain link, wrought iron, or modern plastic to mimic painted wood. Ornamental fences are more frequently used to hide HVAC units on the side or rear of the properties.

Exterior features such as porches on front façades employ a number of building materials, most of which match the historic style of the house. Almost all of the older housing stock features some form of porch, patio, or portico. Wrought iron is commonly used for columns on porches, as well as on rails along walkways and entrances. Renovated houses have enclosed porches or sunrooms for four season use. One house includes a walled garden or patio area made of brick. Metal and fabric awnings provide shade. Many houses retain historic windows, sashes, and openings; however, there have been modern window adjustments with aluminum and vinyl casings and glass. Mid-century picture windows remain in some houses. Doors appear to range from historic wood entrances to modern mid-century plywood with glass inserts with some revival variations of historic doors.

The canopy of mature trees on West Ponce de Leon Ave makes a pleasant entrance into the City of Decatur. This stretch of road is part of the Parkwood neighborhood.

These two brick ranch type houses in the Parkwood neighborhood (both on West Ponce de Leon Ave), are characteristic of the neighborhood. Large, mature trees are also found in most yards.
5.14 PONCE DE LEON COURT

This cul-de-sac neighborhood is a locally designated historic district and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The single street is located east of downtown Decatur, off of East Ponce de Leon Avenue which borders the neighborhood to the south. To the north, the neighborhood is bordered by the Decatur City Cemetery, to the west by Commerce Drive, and to the east by Glenndale Avenue. The neighborhood consists of residential dwellings built by John L. Womack in the 1920s. His wife, Margaret, was also listed on the subdivision plat, which includes 24 parcels, approximately 22 (91.7%) of which are contributing and two (8.3%) are non-contributing. This area was built as a planned automobile subdivision. The landscape is unique to the area with its tropical planting, including palm trees which still survive today.

The streetscape slopes downward and to the north from East Ponce de Leon Avenue. The straight street has a unified appearance with an island planted with a mature evergreen in the cul-de-sac. The asphalt road is lined with granite curbs and cement sidewalks. In addition to palm trees, holly and magnolia trees line the sidewalks. House setbacks are not very deep, no more than thirty feet from the street. Lots are narrow plats. Most of the houses are one-story Bungalows and English Cottages made of brick, but covered with siding on the top half story. The Womack House is a two-story Neoclassical.

The porches commonly have Craftsman influence in the columns; all have brick steps leading up to the landing, and some have been enclosed. Craftsman influence can
also be seen in the exposed rafter tails on many of the houses and in many of the front doors. English Vernacular Revival influence is apparent in the half-timbering on many houses. Colonial Revival influence is seen in the six-panel front doors and the stoops which have classical order columns. Brickwork throughout the neighborhood is laid traditionally and in designed patterns. Windows are double-hung. Some houses have a single, gabled dormer facing the street. Some dormers appear to follow the historic layout of the houses. Roofs are comprised of asphalt shingles. A few basements are present as well. All houses have driveways with no garages. A few duplexes and apartments are present on the street. The Womack House was converted in the 1950s into an apartment building. Another apartment building, located at the entry into the neighborhood, dates from the 1920s and has classical features.

The houses in Ponce de Leon Court are primarily one-story and were planted with palm and banana trees at the wish of the developer, John Womack. Some palm trees still remain (far left) which contribute to an airy subtropical feel along parts of the street.

These large crepe myrtles are also impressive and were likely planted in the early years of the development.
South Candler Street-Agnes Scott

is a residential neighborhood, anchored at
the north end by Agnes Scott
College, a large, historic college
campus dating from the 1890s.
Almost every lot faces South
Candler Street, a busy road
of two lanes. The district was
listed on the National Register
of Historic Places in 1994. The
district is bounded by South Mc­
Donough Street to the west, East
Hill Street to the south, and East
College Avenue to the north.

Land was annexed by the city
in 1900 and 1907 and developed
between the 1880s and the 1960s
with buildings closer to the
central core of Decatur developed earliest.
Houses are typically two-stories tall. Their
size and lots become progressively smaller
from the north of the neighborhood to the
south. Colonial Revival, Queen Anne Cot­
tages, Bungalow, American Small House,
English Vernacular Revival, Federal Revival,
and Folk Victorian make up the types and
styles of houses within the neighborhood.
The area is comprised of 93 parcels with
approximately 68 (73.1%) properties con­	ributing; 8 of those are Agnes Scott College
properties, which are not able to be locally
designated. Approximately 17 (18.3%) prop­
erties are non-contributing, and there are
eight vacant parcels.

The entire district is on an incline with
the north end at a higher elevation than the
south. This rise in elevation is fairly con­
sistent and highly noticeable when driving
along South Candler Street. The campus
extends along half of the district. Lots range
from 50 to 70 feet along the street and 150
feet deep in the southern half of the district
to twice that size in the northern half across
the street from the college. Setbacks are
about 50 feet for houses on South Candler,
but on smaller side streets the houses are
setback about 25 feet.

Asphalt streets run throughout the area,
along with concrete curbing. The district is
comprised of large mature hardwood trees.
Most streets do not have sidewalks, but the
ones that exist are concrete. The majority of
walkways appear to be historic and extend from the front entrance of the houses to the driveways. A few newer walkways extend from a house’s front door on a curving path to the road or driveway. With few exceptions driveways are slab concrete, which terminate at the carport or garage present with most houses. The address numbers are located on the houses.

Among the medium-sized houses there are a variety of house styles and types including American Small houses, English Vernacular Revival Cottages, Craftsman style Bungalows, and Ranch houses. Most houses are brick, but some are constructed as wood. Larger historic houses near Agnes Scott College include American Foursquare and Queen Anne type houses.

Some houses retain their historic windows, sashes and openings; however, many have had modern windows installed in the historic window frames and casements. Some have had major window changes that are clearly not of a style consistent with that of the historic building. Although there are examples of houses without alterations to the porches and porticos, those are relatively few. A common change seen in the porches of English Vernacular Revival houses is an enclosed area with glass, wood siding, or vinyl siding. Asphalt roofing material is common for most residences.
West Clairemont is a residential neighborhood proposed as a local historic district and a National Register District because of its significance in architecture, community planning and development. The West Clairemont district is bordered by Clairemont Avenue to the north, Ponce de Leon Place to the east, West Ponce de Leon Avenue and Nelson Ferry Road to the south, and Scott Boulevard to the west. The neighborhood was developed between 1910 and the 1940s with the largest building phase taking place in the 1930s and 1940s. One-story American Small Houses, English Cottages, and Bungalows make up the majority of houses though examples of two story properties can be found on Garden Lane. Although most houses have no academic style, examples of Colonial Revival, Craftsman, and English Vernacular Revival houses exist. The neighborhood consists of 503 parcels including approximately 382 (75.9%) contributing historic properties, 106 (21.1%) non-contributing properties and 15 vacant lots.

The houses in West Clairemont sit on small, inconsistently shaped lots with a uniform setback from the road. Retaining walls, made of stacked stone, brick, or granite, are a necessary feature of the neighborhood as a result of the sloping topography of the area. With the exception of narrow Lamont Road, the West Clairemont district has sidewalks buffered from the street by green space and mature trees shading the landscaped lots. Streets follow a grid pattern in some areas, while landscaped medians add shape and curves to others. Granite curbing and asphalt streets are standard in the neighborhood.

The area of the neighborhood closer to downtown was developed earlier than that to the north. These houses along Wilton Dr. reflect typical 1920s and 1930s architecture including Craftsman Bungalows and English Cottage houses.
Walkways typically extend from the driveway and run parallel to the house. Occasionally, however, walkways can be seen running directly from the sidewalk through the center of the front yard.

A variety of building materials have been used in West Clairemont not only in the houses, but also in outbuildings, retaining walls, and fences. Residential exterior materials include cedar plank wood, brick, asbestos siding, stone ornamentation, and granite while asphalt is the dominant roofing material. Most chimneys have been constructed of brick, although one example of a river stone chimney can be found. Many houses retain their historic windows, sashes, and openings; however, there have been modern alterations with aluminum and vinyl casings and glass. A few examples of fabric awnings hang over doorways and windows. Several houses appear to have enclosed their historic screened porches by adding a large decorative window to what is now a sunroom. Most English Vernacular Revival houses do not have front porches, but Craftsman style porches are seen commonly on bungalows, some of which have been enclosed.

Side concrete and asphalt driveways are common. Outbuildings in the back of many houses have been added for additional storage. Typically, residents who have built separate additions have chosen to keep their outbuildings consistent with the character of their houses which has helped to preserve the integrity of the neighborhood. Storage units range from small garden sheds to larger sheds that either mimic the style and color of the house or are a more modern material. Some houses have a basement-level, one car garage, but more commonly garages have been added to the back or side of the properties. Other exterior features include several chain-link or white picket fences that have been added to lots in the area. With only one exception, most of the fences are smaller than six feet tall. Ornamental fences have also been used to hide HVAC equipment.  

The neighborhood of Westchester Hills is located on the northwest side of Decatur in DeKalb County. The neighborhood is named for the main artery and longest street, Westchester Drive, and also consists of Maediris Drive, Harold Byrd Drive, and Dogwood Way north of this main street.

The slightly hilly terrain suits the uniform setbacks of fifty to sixty feet and moderately sized houses. There are granite curbs throughout and no sidewalks. Deep lawns filled with plantings, and mature pine, oak, and maple trees result in a unified appearance particularly along Westchester Drive.

Westchester Hills includes 19 American Small Houses which were built around 1939 through 1948, 53 Ranch houses built around 1947 through 1953, three English cottages, and 15 non-contributing buildings. The architecture reflects the development of the neighborhood in two distinct stages. Maediris Drive, Harold Byrd Drive, and Dogwood Way were developed first, in the late 1930s and 1940s, and include mainly American Small houses which follow no academic style. Houses along Westchester Drive, built mainly in the 1950s, are nearly all Ranch houses with slightly larger setbacks. The neighborhood is bounded by two busy thoroughfares, Scott Boulevard to the southeast and Clairemont Avenue to the northeast.

Among the Ranch houses are a variety of subtypes including compact, half-court yard, and transverse-linear Ranch houses. Most of these Ranch houses are red brick though a few have been painted. However, in the middle of the street where Westchester Drive curves to the south, several houses are clad in aluminum siding. Many houses have shutters. Rooflines vary; some roofs are comprised entirely of hip profiles, while others have multiple small gables terminating at a primary hipped roof. Real estate listings
The homes along Dogwood Way are part of the earlier, 1940s development of the neighborhood and consist mainly of American Small houses. Indicate that many houses are between 1,200 square feet and 1,500 square feet. Towards the west end of Westchester Drive, approaching the cul-de-sac, some carports appear. Closer to Scott Boulevard, builders took advantage of sloping terrain, and many houses have garages set within a partial basement, or depressed garages.

Westchester Hills is architecturally significant for its excellent examples of early American Small Houses and Ranch Houses. Westchester Hills is also a good example of a mid-twentieth century planned suburban community.

Shared with the Chelsea Heights neighborhood to the south, Westchester Elementary School (currently an administration building) and Hidden Cove Park are important landmarks that are integral to the strong sense of community and identity in the neighborhood. Westchester Elementary was built in 1956 on Scott Boulevard, roughly 300 feet from Westchester Drive. It originally was constructed to be an all-white school. African-American elementary students attended Beacon Elementary School, about one and a half miles south. Westchester Elementary School was altered substantially in the late 1990s, but some of its International style details are in good condition. In 2004, the structure became the administration building for the City Schools of Decatur and is no longer used as a school.

Westchester Hills contains 96 parcels (30.5 acres), of which 75 (78.1%) are currently contributing historic properties, 15 (15.6%) are non-contributing and six are vacant lots. The oldest house in the neighborhood, an American Small House type, was built in 1939 and is located at 124 Harold Byrd Drive.3132

Hidden Cove Park, located at the end of Westchester Dr. provides a cut-through to the Chelsea Heights neighborhood.

5.18 WINNONA PARK

Winonna Park consists mainly of residential structures and a few institutional buildings. The neighborhood is proposed for local historic district designation and has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places since 2002. The area is bounded roughly by East College Avenue on the north, South Columbia Drive on the east, Columbia Theological Seminary and Mimosa Drive on the south, and Avery Street on the west. Four primary areas comprising Winnona Park were established between 1914 and the 1940s: Winnona Park (1914), Missionary Heights (1938), Winnona Heights (1940), and Mimosa Drive (1941). The majority of houses are one to one and a half stories tall. Most of the houses in the neighborhood are American Small Houses, with a number of Bungalows and English Cottages with elements of the English Vernacular Revival style. Winnona Park consists of 443 parcels of which approximately 294 (66.4%) are contributing historic properties, 136 (30.7%) are non-contributing and 13 are vacant lots. Though the neighborhood retains a high degree of its historic character, recent infill houses and incompatible renovations are beginning to impact the historic integrity of the neighborhood.

Among the oldest houses in Decatur, the Avary-Fulton house, built in 1868, is located within the district at 205 South Columbia Drive. An important neighborhood center is the Winnona Park School at 510 Avery Street. The school was completed in 1924, and in 2001 an addition was built, which is compatible with the historic structure. Another neighborhood landmark located at 120 Avery Street is the Agnes Lee Chapter House of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The topography of the neighborhood consists of curvilinear street patterns with...
gently sloping hills throughout. Lots are small and generally rectangular-shaped. Around curves, the lots are often irregularly shaped. Setbacks are uniform, but not very deep. Streets are asphalt and the curbing is granite. Mature hardwoods line the streets, side and back yards. There are concrete sidewalks on both sides of the street and almost always planting strip areas. Retaining walls, comprised of stacked stone, are a necessary part of some yards due to the sloped topography.

Mainly one-story or one and a half story American Small Houses, English Cottages, and Bungalows make up Winnona Park. Most houses have no academic style, but there are examples of Craftsman and English Vernacular Revival houses. Façade materials range from wood, brick, asbestos siding, to stone ornamentation. There are also brick chimneys throughout. Many houses retain their historic windows, sashes, and openings; however, there have been modern changes with aluminum and vinyl casings and glass. Many screened porches have been closed in with the addition of a large decorative window to create a sun or sitting room. Craftsman-styled porches, some of which have been enclosed, are also common. The dominant roofing material is asphalt shingles.

Driveways are concrete and asphalt and are located on the side yard. Many driveways lead to carports, garages or other outbuildings. Some houses have a basement-level entry garage suitable for one car. Some garages have been added to the back or side of the properties. Most residents have used similar materials, colors, and designs for their outbuildings and houses. Predominantly, parking is on-street, parallel with zones reserved for property owners.

Winnona Park is made up of four primary areas of development and the streetscapes reflect that. Here, medium-sized houses along Shadowmoor Dr. (left) and smaller American Small type houses along the southern end of Avery St.
PART II
Residential Design Guidelines
The goal of residential design guidelines is to preserve the historic integrity of Decatur's homes and districts. Guidelines apply to undertakings to rehabilitate or make changes to existing residential buildings. They also apply to new construction in order to preserve the rhythm and character of Decatur's streetscapes and neighborhoods. An applicant for a Certificate of Approval should understand the need for exterior designs that are compatible with the historic character of a district. A design review preserves compatibility of new, altered, and rehabilitated properties for it:

- Maintains the massing, roofing, and scale of residential buildings.
- Maintains residential building setback in compliance with Decatur zoning ordinances.
- Retains the relationship of one house to others as currently viewed on the streetscape.
- Encourages preservation of building types and styles important to Decatur's historic character.

- Retains the use of historic architectural details, including rooflines, entrances, windows, building materials and ornamentation.
- Maintains primary and secondary façades that reflect the historic character of the building and of the neighborhood.
- Avoid the use of protrusions or appendages change the historic character of the building, the streetscape and the district.

Old Decatur: Sycamore Street—Rehabilitation of a historic house significantly improves the overall integrity.
6.0 Guidelines for Residential Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is an important aspect of historic preservation. The framework for exterior rehabilitation of Decatur’s historic residential buildings is based on the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. (This document is reproduced in this document. It is also called “The Secretary’s Standards” in many preservation manuals and materials that may be used by Decatur homeowners.) The Secretary’s Standards are the guiding principles used by local, state and Federal preservation programs, including the City of Decatur’s Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission seeks to uphold the Secretary’s Standards so it may be “applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.”

The key features of the rehabilitation design guidelines for Decatur’s historic residential buildings include:

- Making minimal changes to the historic character of the building, its site and environment.
- Preserving distinctive features, finishes, construction techniques and examples of craftsmanship.
- Replacing lost features of historic buildings after obtaining evidence of its existence as part of the building’s original design or through comparisons with like examples used in contributing historic properties.
- Making decisions regarding removal of architectural or building elements that obscure historic building design and materials. This also applies to decisions to remove non-historic materials that may damage historic building materials.

Rehabilitation is critical to retaining the historic character of a building and preserving important architectural design features. For Decatur homeowners, rehabilitation may apply to the primary building residence and associated outbuildings. Key features preserved through rehabilitation include roof shape and pitch; façades visible from the street; historic windows and doors, porches and foundations; and the overall size and shape of a house.

Rehabilitation decisions should begin with identifying historic and character-defining features of the property. This may require some research that reveals the history of the building and its current status of being a contributing (or non-contributing) property in the local district. Some owners will find their residence is eligible (or potentially eligible) for tax credits under state or Federal historic preservation incentive programs. There are also opportunities for the building and related landscape to be listed on the Georgia Register of Historic Places or the National Register of Historic Places in its current condition or with sensitive rehabilitation. (See Appendix 15.7 for more information on obtaining information, guidance and technical assistance for rehabilitation, tax incentives and preservation programs.)

Finally, rehabilitation undertakings may require exposure to materials that contain lead or asbestos. Rehabilitation should be conducted with care if there is evidence of these products being used in the past. However, it is possible to rehabilitate historic structures with care and sensitivity that minimizes health threats during rehabilitation.
6.1 MASS AND SCALE  6.2 ROOF

The scale and massing of a house refers to the overall size. These aspects are important in preserving the historic character of a building. In general, scale and mass should not be changed through rehabilitation.

- Identify the scale and mass of the historic areas of the building.
- Remove non-historic additions or changes to scale and mass, if feasible.
- Observe the City of Decatur’s building and construction ordinances when undertaking rehabilitation may change the scale or massing.

The roof is a key feature in determining the overall appearance of a building. Severely altering the roof line or pitch can greatly change the historic character of a residential building. Like materials should be used when rehabilitating the roof of a historic residential buildings, unless it is cost-prohibitive.

Historic dormers are important features which define and maintain historic character. Adding or removing dormers can severely alter the roof line, scale and massing of a historic residential structure.

Gutters are an important feature for water management and protection of building materials. They should be used and properly maintained in order to prevent water intrusion and damage to the historic buildings. Gutters can also be a historic element of the roof systems if constructed of metal or wood. These historic gutter systems should be maintained and rehabilitated with care. Eaves, soffits, facia, supporting brackets, vents, and other elements should also be protected and maintained.

Shape
- Retain historic roof shape, including gabled and hipped roofs.
- Retain historic roof forms at principal elevations.

Materials
- Retain historic roof materials, such as asphalt shingles, slate shingles, asbestos shingles, terra-cotta tiles, or metal standing seams to maintain the overall design of the structure.
- Use compatible roofing materials, such as composition shingles, if there is no evidence available to identify the historic roofing material.
- Do not use wood shingles and metal roofing unless there is evidence of their use on the building during its period of significance.
- Repair and maintain metal that has been used for shallow pitched porch coverings. In all cases, every seam must be crimped down flat and soldered.

Dormers
- Retain and maintain historic dormers.
- Repair historic dormers using like materials compatible in size, scale, and design.
- Avoid using dormers as a means to disguise “pop-ups” for they will alter the character of a historical building’s roofline.
Gutters
- Retain and maintain historic gutters, box gutters, leaders, and downspouts.
- Repairs should be made with materials that match those historically used.
- Avoid installing new gutters unless the historic materials are beyond repair. Replace with in-kind materials.

Eaves and Soffits
- Retain and repair historic eaves and soffits to maintain the historic character of the building. Make repairs with in-kind materials.
- Replace eaves and soffits with like materials that will not change the historic character of the residence.

Skylights
- Retain and repair historic skylights.
- Take care in replacing or adding skylights to avoid loss of historic character.
- Use low-profile skylights in secondary roof areas.

Vents
- Retain and maintain historic vents or other roof openings.
- Replace vents and other roof openings with metal rather than wood or other materials.
6.3 FAÇADES

The exterior surfaces of a historic building are referred to as façades. Retaining the historic character of a building’s primary façade is essential to preserving design integrity. Also, each secondary façade may add to the historic integrity of the building. Improper façade rehabilitation may remove historic character and important references to a historic style. Therefore, care should be taken to identify and retain original design and associated historic building materials.

The façade materials commonly found in Decatur’s historic districts and neighborhoods include brick, stone, granite, and wood. Some original façades may use a historic stucco coating. Rehabilitation can return the historic building to its original form by removing non-historic siding and making repairs to the original building materials. This is especially important if there is evidence of materials under aluminum or vinyl siding.

These house façades have been significantly altered in appearance because of inappropriate use and lay of new materials.
Materials

- Maintain wood, stone and brick siding materials for they are the most commonly used on Decatur's historic residential buildings.
- Replace façade siding using like materials which existed on the historic house.
- Maintain the subtle visual characteristics of these historic building materials including texture, mortar color, pointing, clapboard reveal and size when repairing or replacing materials (see photo to right).
- Retain and repair secondary siding materials that complement the primary siding materials, such as historic exterior siding, shingles, banding, and corner boards.
- Take care to use the most sensitive form of maintenance for primary and secondary siding materials as replacing these historic materials may be difficult and expensive.
- Do not replace siding with natural or synthetic wood shingles, slate, or stacked stone.
- Do not use EIFS (exterior insulation finish systems) to replace original stucco coating.
- Use cementitious siding (e.g., fiber cement siding or hardi-plank) for replacement if it can be applied to match historic siding's texture, shadow/reveal and size.
- Use care when removing materials, such as vinyl or aluminum siding, that covers historic siding.

Details and Ornamentation

- Retain and maintain all historic architectural detail and ornamentation, including cornices, friezes, entablatures, and brackets.
- Identify, uncover, repair, and maintain historic architectural details that may be hidden under non-historic building materials or alterations.
- Replace architectural details if they can be shown, by research, to be consistent with the historic character of a house or similar houses in the district.
- Avoid removing historic architectural details except if needed to fabricate replacements or for repairs.

When using secondary siding materials (like this hardi-plank) for replacement or repair be sure to match the reveal and size of the historic clapboard as seen here.

Natural cedar shingles should only be used as siding if it existed as siding historically.

Synthetic shingles may replace natural shingles if the material matches the visual characteristics of the historic material.
6.4 WINDOWS

The windows of a historic residential building contribute both character and architectural design to the overall structure. These contributing features include functional and decorative elements including the frames, window sash, muntins, glazing (glass), sills, jambs and moldings. The placement of windows is an essential element of each historic architectural style found in Decatur. Replacement of historic windows is discouraged unless the existing window is beyond reasonable repair.

Rehabilitation requires matching the scale, design, and materials of the historic window, its surround and sills. Window replacement must be appropriate to the style, age, and character of a building. This may require construction and installation of custom windows and surrounds. Therefore, some may choose to protect historic windows from damage if undertaking a large-scale rehabilitation project.

Construction Materials

* Preserve and maintain historic wood windows.
* Replace historic windows, if necessary, with like materials that are identical in size, shape, function and reflective qualities.
* Do not replace double-hung sash windows with casement or single pane windows.
* Repair damaged window elements including glazing, frames, sills and muntins to avoid loss or further damage.
* Do not use steel or vinyl window units to replace wood window units.

Placement

* Keep window units in the identical location to maintain the configuration of the façade and historic character.
* Identify areas where historic windows have been removed or covered when undertaking a rehabilitation.
* Remove air conditioning units from historic windows for they may damage original materials.
* Use window screening that matches the historic character of the house and has a rail design which is appropriate to the period of construction.

Scale

* Maintain the thickness and profile of historic framing for window units.
* Keep or rehabilitate historic façade windows to retain historic character of the structure.
* Refrain from changing window opening scale and size to accommodate interior changes.

Design

* Do not replace historic windows with modern windows. New window units may have false muntins and other elements that detract from historic character.
* Replace windows with units that have the same operating characteristics as the historic window and surround.
Remove picture windows, kitchen bay windows ("mini-greenhouses") and plexiglass replacement glazing on the primary façade unless they define the character of a 20th century building style if feasible.

**Glass**
- Identify, retain and maintain historic stained, leaded, or other decorative glass.
- Repair and restore damaged stained or leaded glass. This may require the assistance of a skilled artisan with experience in this type of repair/restoration. If unable to do this repair or restoration in a timely manner, remove glass or glass panels for future rehabilitation.
- Replace clear glazing (window glass) with the same unless replacing decorative glass.
- Do not use tinted, smoked, mirrored, or other non-historic glass when rehabilitating a structure.

**Storm Windows and Screens**
- Use storm windows and screens that are compatible with window size and type.
- Use storm/screen units that have rails matching those of the historic window.
- Use clear, nonreflective glass for storm windows.

**Shutters**
- Identify, repair and maintain historic shutters.
- Replace shutters if historic shutters are deteriorated beyond economical repair.
- Replace shutters with wooden shutters matching the scale, design, and craftsmanship of those original to the historic period.
- Use vinyl and aluminum shutters only if there is evidence these match the historic shutter materials and are of the same scale, design and craftsmanship.

**Awnings**
- Use fireproof materials if replacing a historic awning.
- Consider the scale and size of new or replacement awnings. They should not overwhelm the scale and historic character of the façade.
- Take care to install replacement awning units so they can be removed without damaging historic building materials.
- Do not use awnings on historic structures unless there is evidence of use in the past as a design feature.
- Do not use plasticized materials for awnings.
6.5 DOORS AND ENTRANCES

Doors, doorways, and entranceways contribute to the overall historic character and architectural design of the building. The placement of entrances and doors provide an aesthetic balance in the outward appearance of individual structures. The rehabilitation of entrances and doors should be appropriate to the age and character of a structure. This may include porticos found in some residential house styles.

Custom fabrication, carpentry, and installation of doors, surrounds and entranceways may be required for rehabilitation of historic residential buildings. Therefore, protecting existing historic materials and construction through periodic maintenance and repair saves the historic fabric and avoids replacement expense.

Some historic buildings will have multiple entrances and exterior doorways. The primary façade’s entrance and doorways should be preserved in any rehabilitation undertaking. Other entrances should be considered for rehabilitation if visible from public right-of-ways.

Placement
✦ Retain existing openings.

Scale
✦ Maintain the scale of historic door openings. Do not change the scale of historic doors by reducing or enlarging the door opening.

Materials
✦ Repair and maintain materials used for exterior doors and surrounds.
✦ Repair and maintain hardware used for exterior doors, including hinges and knobs.
✦ Replace doors using like design and materials if beyond reasonable repair.
✦ Retain door features and design elements (windows, fanlights, sidelights, transoms, panels) through periodic maintenance.
✦ Keep door, surround and other materials consistent with the style and historic character of the residence.

Design
✦ Identify defining historic characteristics of doors and entrances through research and comparison with similar styles of contributing properties in Decatur’s historic districts.
✦ Maintain door and entrance designs to be consistent with their historic character.
✦ Repair and maintain door and entrances, including historic ornamentation.
✦ Use screen and storm doors appropriate to the style and period of construction.
✦ Do not use screen or storm doors that obscure the historic door. Rails and storm panels should allow a view of the historic door from the street.
✦ Do not use highly-reflective or tinted screening and glass on entrances.
✦ Avoid the use of flush doors except if there is evidence they replace the original historic door design and materials.
✦ Avoid wrought iron and metal doors if not original to the historic character of the building and its style.
✦ Keep existing sidelights, transoms, and fanlights that are original to the structure.

By covering historic doors and windows with barred screens, as seen here, character features are lost. This application is inappropriate.
Porches vary in purpose and use. Porches are often critical architectural elements of historic residential buildings. The placement and construction of porches must match the historic design of a house. If a porch is to be rehabilitated, elements of the façade should not be damaged, hidden, or removed. Rehabilitation may include identification of a porch that has been removed or replacement of porches that have been altered without a historic reference.

Reconstruction

- Identify placement and design of porches that have been removed.
- Reconstruct historic porches that were removed using like design, scale, size, and materials.
- Maintain the historic façade and elevations of the structure with reconstruction design. Be sure to include supporting structures (e.g., pier or other foundation), posts/columns, lines, railing, stoop/steps and entryways.
- Understand current building codes may require modifications of the original design to conform to health and safety standards. Modern building codes may require balustrades and rails that are higher than those being replaced.

Materials

- Maintain existing porches to keep as much of the historic material as possible.
- Use wrought iron columns, railing and other porch features only if there is evidence of use in the original design.
- Maintain and repair brick, stone or masonry steps if they are made of historic building materials.
- Maintain and repair terrazzo or other period flooring.
- Do not use composition and plastic moldings to replace columns, balustrades, posts, railing, or flooring.

Design

- Retain exposed rafters if a historic element of house style.
- Use historic photographs of buildings with similar style and design when making decisions about repairs that could change the historic character of the porch, its entry (steps/stoop) and egress to interior rooms.
- Consider how landscaping, including permanently attached brick or masonry flower boxes, maintains or changes the historic character of a porch. Do not remove these elements if it will result in permanent damage to the historic materials.

Screens and Screening

- Identify historic screens and screening methods for porch openings.
- Consider porch screening materials and designs that maintain, rather than reduce, historic character.
Using inappropriate and/or mismatched materials to rebuild a foundation alters the appearance of the façade, as seen here with the brick infill.

6.7 FOUNDATION

The foundation is more than a platform that supports a historic building. Many Decatur homes have foundations with historic building materials. These foundations, often visible from the street and sidewalks, add to the overall historic character of the building. Repair and maintenance of historic foundation materials help preserve the structural integrity of the building. Rehabilitation undertaken on residences should not alter the appearance of the foundation.

Materials

- Identify the residence's original structural building materials (e.g., wood, stone, brick, granite, concrete) and any materials used to reinforce/repair the structure over its lifespan.
- Repair and maintain foundation materials with like materials that are historic to the house.
- Limit replacement of foundation members to only the damaged area.
- Use pressure-treated lumber in areas exposed to weather and dampness.
- Use termite control measures to reduce potential for infestation in historic wooden materials.
- Maintain the historic granite foundations that are unique to many Decatur's historic houses and repair pointing using similar mortar (not cement).

Design

- Identify the type of foundation used in the historic design. This may be a solid (closed) or open (pier) foundation design.
- Keep and maintain historic foundations, including any vents used for minimizing condensation.
- Use landscaping and other stormwater diversion methods to maintain the structural integrity of foundation materials.
- Do not remove or alter a historic building's foundation without professional advice and necessary building permits.

Pier foundations are best left open, but, should infill occur, it should be recessed and darker than the material on the piers.
Rehabilitating outbuildings is another important aspect of maintaining the historic character of a district, particularly when an outbuilding is visible from the public right-of-way. Detached garages or carports, garden sheds, and greenhouses are examples of outbuildings that may be historic and contribute to the overall character of a property. These structures could be associated with a person, time period, or building style and type important to Decatur's history. These outbuildings are important to retaining the historic integrity of a property that is eligible for the Georgia Register of Historic Places or the National Register of Historic Places.

- Identify what outbuildings are historic or have gained historic significance over time.
- Rehabilitate outbuildings if they contribute to the historic landscape of a property and the overall historic character of the district.
- Repair and maintain outbuildings (garden sheds, greenhouses, etc.) which contribute to the historic character of the landscape surrounding the primary residence.

Apply the guidelines for residential rehabilitation to preserve roof lines, entryways, structural elements, ornamentation, building materials and other character-defining components of a historic outbuilding.

Updates to historic structures may be necessary to make a historic house practical for modern use. In Decatur, they must not impact the historic character of the structures, nor detract from their integrity. Standard #9 of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation requires that new additions not destroy historic materials which characterize the property. They shall be differentiated from the historic house and shall be compatible with the massing, scale, size, and architectural features of the house. Standard #10 requires additions to be added in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic house would be unimpaired.
7.0 Guidelines for Residential Additions

Additions to historic structures may be necessary to make a historic house practical for modern use. In Decatur, additions must not impact the historic character of the structures, nor detract from their integrity. Standard #9 of the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation requires that new additions not destroy historic materials which characterize the property. They shall be differentiated from the historic house and shall be compatible with the massing, scale, size, and architectural features of the house. Standard #10 requires additions to be added in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic house would be unimpaired.

7.1 ROOMS AND WINGS

Rooms and wings added to historic structures should be designed and constructed so as not to alter the view from the street. Added rooms or wings should never be the focal point of a historic structure and should be constructed in such a way which does not add height to a historic structure, as seen from the street. Materials used should be in keeping with the materials used on the accompanying historic structure.

Setback

- Locate additions on the rear of a contributing/historic structure. Never build to interfere with the existing setbacks of the surrounding houses.
- Align within the footprint established by the sides of a historic structure.
Rooms and wings should be built on the rear and should not alter the historic integrity of the house.

Scale

- Proportion additions to be smaller than the historic residence. Massing and scale of an addition should not be the dominant feature of a residence.
- Increasing the height of a residence through “pop-ups” or additions is inappropriate.

Location

- Building on the front façade is not allowed.
- Set back additions further from the street than the historic structure in order to have less visual impact and dominance.
- Locate an addition on the rear of a structure whenever possible.
- Refer to porch section for reference.

Roof Type

- Compatibility in shape and style with that of the historic structure is essential. Flat roofs are not appropriate for any residential type or style house in Decatur.
- Similar roof pitch to the historic structure is essential.

Materials

- Utilize wood, brick and stone, for these are the primary materials used in Decatur.
- Using modern materials, such as cementitious siding, may be acceptable, if the material looks similar to the material it is replacing.
- Using vinyl and aluminum siding is not allowed.
- Utilize masonry, such as brick and stone, similar to that of the historic structure not only in texture, shape, and size, but also mortar type and joint.

Reversibility

- Design and construct additions for future reversibility without damage to the historic structure.
- Undertake additions and adjacent or related new construction in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the history property and its environment would be unimpaired.
7.2 ROOF

Roof design and materials are important elements to the historic character of a house. Roof additions should not damage historic materials nor alter the design of the historic structure. Materials used for roof additions should be in keeping with historic materials used on the house. Any addition should not detract from the house's historic integrity, as seen from the street. New roofs or dormers shall be below the historic roofline.

**Chimneys**

- Design for consistency with the style of the historic house.
- Size to be no larger in scale or mass than the historic chimney and chimney shaft.

**Skylights**

- Do not locate skylights on a front façade or to be visible front the front of the house.
- Minimize the use of skylights if being used in lieu of windows; especially on corner lots.
- Install flat skylights or light tubes preferably.

**Dormers**

- Compatibility with the historic structure of the residence is essential.
- Disguising pop-ups as dormers to gain usable attic space on the front façade is not allowed.
- Locate dormers on the side or rear, not the front of the house.

**Materials**

- Consider historic materials found in Decatur in order to determine which material to use such as asphalt or composition shingles. Terracotta tile or cedar shingles may be allowed when trying to replicate existing materials of a historic structure.
7.3 PORCHES

Many of Decatur’s houses have porches, which vary from neighborhood to neighborhood, and in house style and type. Porches should not be added to the front of houses which never had porches. Otherwise, porches should be constructed on the side and rear of a house and should not exceed the height of the house. Enclosures are often made to existing historic porches.

Setback

♦ Locate new porches on a historic structure to the side and rear façades of the residence.

♦ Additions of new porches include decks and raised patios added to the historic footprint of a house and landscape. If the new porch extends beyond the historic footprint, it is considered an “addition.” (see above)

♦ Situate porches within the sight lines of the house when viewed from the street.

♦ Installation should not change alignment or style of the roof if it is a covered porch.

Scale

♦ Size new porches so they are not the visually dominant features of a house when viewed from the front façade or from the street.

Location

♦ Locate new porches to the side or rear of a house to retain the greatest level of integrity of a front façade. The exception to this would be to recreate a historic front porch which had been removed.

Materials

♦ Construction of new porches and “3-season” decks should be of wood (pressure-treated), brick, concrete, or stone and based on designs which are compatible with a historic structure, as seen throughout Decatur.

♦ Reflect the fabric of the existing structure by using same or similar infill materials, including brick, wood, and possible other materials.

♦ Differentiate the infill of a pier foundation on an existing porch by setting it back from the front edge of the piers.

♦ Do not use sheet metal or Plexiglas for enclosing existing porches.

♦ Utilize infill materials for enclosing existing porches such as clear glass, insect screens and window banks. No wall material shall be added above balustrade height.

Inappropriate: porches should not be added to houses which never had them historically, such as on this ranch type house.
7.3 PORCHES continued...

**Reversibility**

- May require the use of interior materials which could permanently damage existing materials (e.g. terrazzo or tiled flooring, etc.).
- Care should be taken to maintain an optimal amount of materials because the enclosed area might be restored to historical use in the future.
- Save and store all usable materials removed from a historic structure if possible, such as exterior doors and lighting.
- Enclosing porches and vestibules on the front façade of a house is discouraged since it obscures character-defining elements of a house's style and type.

Appropriate porch enclosure:

Enclosure of a porch is permitted on specific types and styles of houses. When enclosing a porch, clear screen or clear glass should be used, so as to not alter the appearance of the façade.

Completely enclosing a porch is not allowed, for this will alter the historic integrity of a house, as seen here.
8.0 Guidelines for New Residential Construction

New residential construction within Decatur should reference historic styles and types in the character area. Any new construction within a historic area must be compatible with the overall current historic character. Historic neighborhoods and their features should be referenced when constructing a new structure on a vacant lot, or when replacing a non-historic building which has been demolished. New construction also includes outbuildings, such as garages and storage sheds. New construction should match existing buildings in scale and mass in order to avoid overwhelming smaller historic structures. Orientation should reference historic structures within a block-face of a new building. Materials should be traditional building materials found among neighboring historic resources.
8.1 SETBACK

An essential element to the character of a historic area is the distance a residence sits from the facing street. A consistent building setback along a street provides an uninterrupted view of neighboring houses and yards, and it provides a sense of visual permanence. Setback distances within Decatur neighborhoods may vary within districts, neighborhoods, or blocks.

Moreover, the setbacks on all sides of a lot are regulated by the zoning ordinance for the City of Decatur, Georgia and are based on the zoning type of the particular lot. Different zoning classifications have different thresholds or caps for setbacks. For instance, a low intensity, single-family residential development (not more than three families per acre) (class R-85) will have a minimum setback of 50 feet, whereas a low-intensity single-family residential development not more than seven families per acre (class R-60) will have a minimum setback of only 30 feet. These guidelines are intended to be and should be compatible with the zoning ordinance; however, if there is a discrepancy, the zoning ordinance will take priority.

- Compatible setback with historic buildings in the district is essential.
- Allowable setback for new construction is ±10% of the average setback of all historic buildings in the relative district.

---

1 That ordinance can be found in Appendix A to the Decatur, Georgia, Code of Ordinances. See Appendix 15.6.
2 Section 58-5 of the Historical Preservation Section in the Decatur, Georgia, Code of Ordinances defers to the zoning ordinance and existing building code requirements.
8.2 ORIENTATION AND RHYTHM

Most buildings in Decatur are oriented to directly face the street. Rare exceptions exist, however, where series of houses may be oriented at an angle to the street. Orientation is an important aspect of a blockface and can greatly alter the historic character of a neighborhood if not in keeping with surrounding buildings. Rhythm, or spacing, refers to the side yard distances between houses and is a key feature in creating a unified blockface.

Just as with the setback discussed in the previous section, the zoning ordinance of the City of Decatur, Georgia controls the actual dimensions of property and how buildings can be situated on a given lot. Likewise, the zoning classification for a given lot dictates the exact parameters of the setback requirements for side yards. These guidelines are intended to be and should be compatible with the zoning ordinance; however, if there is a discrepancy, the zoning ordinance will take priority.

† Orient new buildings to be consistent with surrounding historic houses throughout the district.
† Orientation to side streets or perpendicular to the main street is not allowed.
† Space new buildings with the same rhythm currently existing between historic buildings in the district.

---

3 That ordinance can be found in Appendix A to the Decatur, Georgia, Code of Ordinances. See Appendix 15.6.
4 Section 58-5 of the Historical Preservation Section in the Decatur, Georgia, Code of Ordinances defers to the zoning ordinance and existing building code requirements.
8.3 MASS AND SCALE

The mass and scale of a new building within a historic district are primary determinants if a building will correspond, respect, and mesh with the character of a neighborhood. New construction should maintain continuity within Decatur by respecting the size of historic buildings around it. By greatly altering any of these aspects, an entire streetscape could be altered and the historic character damaged. The overall bulk of a building, and the land it covers, is greatly determined by the size of the lot, but other criteria should also be considered such as height. The overall size of a house can be either respectful or disruptive of a historic area. The flow and rhythm of historic houses within Decatur should be preserved, and new construction should be compatible with the height and width of existing buildings.

Again, as with the building parameters discussed in the previous two sections, the zoning ordinance of the City of Decatur, Georgia will determine the allowable dimensions of the building, and those parameters will vary based on the specific zoning classification. These dimensions include height, number of stories, and floor area ratio is the percent of the entire lot that can be covered by the building. These guidelines are intended to be and should be compatible with the zoning ordinance; however, if there is a discrepancy, the zoning ordinance will take precedence.

- Complement and harmonize with the majority of historic buildings in the district in both footprint and mass.
- Respect the directional expression, or overall relationship of height to width, of the surrounding historic residences, whether it is a horizontal, square, or vertical shape. For example, constructing a shotgun house in a block of ranch houses is not appropriate since the direction of the house would be inconsistent with the existing houses.
- Follow building forms or shapes which relate to the majority of the surrounding historic residences including limiting projections to same-style buildings on the streetscape. For example, a U-shaped house amid square bungalows is not appropriate if there are not any other U-shaped houses in the historic district.
- Compatible foundation height for new construction with adjacent historic structures is essential and must comply with the applicable sections of the City zoning ordinance. Typically, the first floor elevation will be no more than two or three feet above the existing elevation of the mean ground level at the front building setback line as outlined in the zoning ordinance based on a number of factors.
- Compatible floor-to-ceiling height with adjacent historic structures in new construction is essential.
- Respect the average height and width

5 That ordinance can be found in Appendix A to the Decatur, Georgia, Code of Ordinances. See Appendix 15.6.
6 Section 58-5 of the Historical Preservation Section in the Decatur, Georgia, Code of Ordinances defers to the zoning ordinance and existing building code requirements.
of the majority of existing historic structures in the proportions of new construction, and comply with the applicable sections of the City zoning ordinance.

- Respect the required setback on all sides when sizing of new construction in proportion to the size of the lot.
- Complement the overall size of the new building and respect the surrounding historic structures when constructing porches and other decorative features.

Note how the examples of new construction above loom over their neighbors. The scale and massing of the houses pictured here is inappropriate, new construction should fit in with the surroundings and not be obtrusive in the neighborhood.

The above illustration depicts a newly constructed house that is of incompatible mass and scale compared to the surrounding houses. The overall height of the house, as well as the height of each floor, exceeds those around it to a degree that compromises the historical character of that block. The foundation is a noticeably lower height as well.
8.4 ROOF

Roof design, materials, and texture are primary features of the historic character of a building. Forms, such as gable and hipped roofs, or combinations of the two, combined with the pitch, define the character of the district. Materials used historically in the area should be considered, with modern materials used as a last resort.

- Respect the historic character of roof types and pitches in the surrounding area when designing a new roof.
- Using traditional roofing materials found on historic houses in the area, such as asphalt shingles, is allowed.
- Using modern materials, or those not used traditionally in the historic district such as tile or metal, is not allowed.

8.5 WINDOWS AND DOORS

Doors and windows are essential details to complement the historic character of a new building. It is important to reference surrounding streetscapes as well as the style of the building being built when determining the design of doors or windows to be used.

Construction

- Respect the existing rhythm, pattern, and proportion of solids to voids for a particular architectural style and relate to, as well as be compatible with, adjacent historic façades.
- Compatible size and proportion, or ratio of window and door openings in new construction and respect of surrounding historic façades is essential.
- Using materials of doors and windows such as wood or metal is allowed as long as the overall type and style are pertinent to the style of the building.
- Construction of the jambs and frames of doors and windows shall follow the historic construction seen on surrounding historic buildings.
Design

- Reference and respect the particular style of the building in all new door and window styles.
- Respect the particular styles of door and window types found within the district.

Windows

- Emphasize the overall design of the house in all windows types used with careful consideration of the divided light pattern.
- Installing small decorative windows in the attic level of a front gable is allowed, if consistent with the architectural style of the structure.
- Installing false “clip-in” muntins in windows is not allowed.
- Installing shutters is allowed if the use corresponds with the house style and the surrounding historic residences’ shutters and if the shutters installed fit the window frame.

Doors

- Installing transoms, sidelights, or other decorative elements surrounding doors is allowed when evidence of similar features exist on surrounding historic houses.

Infill of doors and windows should not be placed on the sides of a house which face the street. These examples significantly alter the appearance of the front façades and are inappropriate.

Windows should be placed with historic windows and should not detract from the historic character of the house, as seen here.
The variety of porch sizes, locations, and types allow many options in the construction of new porches or porticos with infill or new houses. The architectural style of a house and the surrounding historic structures should be respected to allow for a unified district. Each aspect of a porch or portico should be carefully considered including columns, balustrades, and handrails.

♦ Constructing porches or porticoes is allowed on new houses if in keeping with the neighborhood.
♦ Respect the style of the house when designing the porch.
♦ Respect the surrounding historic houses when determining the size and design of a porch.

- Installing two-story porches is not allowed.
- Installation of the porch floor should be even with the floor of the house, and in any construction, no more than one step below the corresponding story. Exceptions can be made only if historic conditions suggest otherwise.
- Installing a porch taller than the story it is placed upon is not allowed.
- Installing a porch extending beyond the edges of the foundation is not allowed.
- Match the scale of the existing property and exhibit common features seen in the historic structure in the profiles of new porches.
- Install porches at least 8 feet deep.
**8.7 MATERIALS**

Materials give a building texture, color, and character. Materials on new construction should respect these historic aspects. Adding modern materials within a historic area can alter the unique feel of the neighborhood and detract from the historic character. Materials consistent with the historic materials found in the streetscape will only enhance the historical value. The combining of various materials on one façade should be carefully considered in respect to colors, textures, and overall character design.

- Use compatible materials consistent with the majority of historic buildings in the historic district and reference the academic style of the new building.
- Using modern materials which are not consistent with the historic building period of the neighborhood should be avoided.

**8.8 STYLE AND DETAILS**

Details have a large impact on the overall character of a house, streetscape, and fabric of a neighborhood. Details and design vary greatly with the different styles, periods, and types seen throughout Decatur. The style and detailing of a new house should reflect the character-defining features seen in the surrounding area. See the Architectural Styles section in order to determine the styles of the houses within the district. Reference and respect the details of these character-defining resources within a neighborhood. Successful new buildings take their design elements from historic images while reintroducing and reinterpreting decorative elements which relate to the style of new construction, which in turn relates to the styles of the surround historic structures.

- Follow historic building patterns previously found on the lot or one of the dominant historic styles seen in the neighborhood.
- Draw from corresponding elements of same-style historic buildings for general architectural details of infill.
- Copying the complete design of a historic building is not allowed.
- “Pasting on” historic details to a modern, unadorned building is not allowed.
Site characteristics and appurtenances refer to the many aspects of a particular property that are typically not part of the actual building. These features add up to a site's overall design and are important in the character of both a property and the neighborhood in which it is located. Walkways, driveways, and other hardscapes are important aspects in the overall exterior look of a house in the context of a building lot. Installation of these hardscapes and other new appurtenances should be in keeping with the examples currently seen in the neighborhood so as to not radically alter the feel of a historic area. Circulation and parking is another challenging aspect to incorporate, but the use of appropriate materials, patterns, and screening can help to reinforce the historic character. Fences and retaining walls also have strong impacts on the character of a lot and neighborhood. The existing conditions of surrounding lots should be respected in planning new construction with these features. Other appurtenances include mechanical units and antennae or satellite dishes. Modern devices, even those relatively that are small, can detract greatly from the historic character of a house and neighborhood, and should be placed accordingly.

In many instances, the zoning ordinance for the City of Decatur, Georgia dictates the specific parameters for such add-ons to a piece of property. The zoning classification provides different rules for various types of property, such as commercial or residential. These guidelines are intended to be and should be compatible with the zoning ordinance; however, if there is a discrepancy, the zoning ordinance will take precedence.

7 That ordinance can be found in Appendix A to the Decatur, Georgia, Code of Ordinances. See Appendix 15.6. Of particular note in terms of site characteristics are the supplemental regulations (Section 10.1 through 10.17 of the zoning code) since the address a number of exceptions and grounds for modifications to accommodate the appurtenances.

8 Section 58-5 of the Historical Preservation Section in the Decatur, Georgia, Code of Ordinances defers to the zoning ordinance and existing building code requirements.
9.1 WALKWAYS

Walkways leading to houses should provide a well-designed transition from public to private space. Walkways should be compatible with the house and reflect the historic character of the neighborhood in both material and scale. Whenever possible, existing historic materials should be retained, repaired, or replaced in-kind when necessary.

**Scale and Placement**

- Sizing appropriately to avoid overwhelming the front of a house is essential.
- Mimic the alignment of surrounding walkways along the street of a historic district. This may mean a walkway runs perpendicular from the front door to the street, or it may run from the driveway to the front entrance.
- Installing a combination of walkways from the street and from the driveway to a front entrance is allowed if evidence exists in the historic streetscape.
- Installing walkways to side entrances may be acceptable if the surrounding historic district shows evidence of this pattern.

**Materials**

- Reflect the rest of the neighborhood and the house in material selection.
- Retained existing walks, and repair or replace damaged historic materials in kind.

A variety of walkways exist in Decatur. Walkway styles and materials should reflect the rest of the neighborhood and the styles of the house.
9.2 DRIVEWAYS AND PARKING

Although driveways are a modern amenity, many historic neighborhoods were designed and constructed before the rise of automobile ownership. If the overall design of a historic neighborhood is without driveways, the continued absence of this design element is crucial to the unity of the neighborhood. The addition of a driveway within those Decatur neighborhoods is not recommended in order to maintain the historic character of that specific area. In areas where driveways are a common feature, appropriate materials should be used to sustain the character of the district.

Scale and Placement

- Installing driveways is allowed on appropriately sized lots which can accommodate such a feature.
- Size should be of an appropriate scale for the neighborhood and the lot.
- Placement of a driveway should be in keeping with the rest of the neighborhood. For most areas, this means positioning the driveway perpendicular to the street, along the side or rear of a house.
- Installing semi-circular driveways is not recommended.
- Install compatible paving materials with the character of the area and reference those materials already existing along the streetscape.
- Avoid demolishing driveways in order to create new ones out of inappropriate material.
- Installing parking in the front yard is not allowed.
- Extend all driveways at least twenty feet beyond the front building line.

Materials and Styling

- Use materials and styles in keeping with the historic character of the neighborhood.
- Using materials, such as cement, asphalt, or pavers is appropriate and recommended.
- Retain all historic materials and repair or replace in kind all damaged historic materials.
- Installing paved tracks is allowed in neighborhoods where the style exists.

Additional Parking

- Locate parking to the side or rear of existing houses and screen with landscaping if prominently visible from the street.
- Placing large paved areas for parking in the front yard is not allowed.
- Removal of historic structures for driveway or parking placement is not allowed.
9.3 RETAINING WALLS

There are a variety of retaining walls within the neighborhoods of Decatur. When visible from the front of a house, retaining walls should be kept in scale and alignment, and of similar materials with the rest of the neighborhood. If the majority of houses in an area do not have retaining walls, new ones should not be added. Similarly, if most houses have retaining walls, they should be considered for new construction.

Scale and Placement

- Exceeding the average height of existing retaining walls is not allowed.
- Blocking the view of a historic structure with a retaining wall in the front of the building is not allowed.
- Adding a retaining wall is strongly encouraged if the majority of front yards within a historic district have retaining walls.
- Determine the location of a retaining wall by assessing the topography of a lot and the surrounding neighborhood.
- Constructing a retaining wall of a particular height and at a particular location to prevent soil erosion is allowed.
- Adding front retaining walls is not allowed in new construction or additions if it is not in keeping with the historic character of the area.

Materials

- Constructing walls of granite, brick, stack stone, or reinforced concrete is allowed as long as materials chosen reflect those of the area and complement the materials of the house.
- Retain historic materials.
- Repair and replace damaged historic materials in kind.

This wall retains the historic brick construction and is appropriate to the site and the neighborhood.

New retaining walls should reflect scale, placement and materials of historic examples in the neighborhood. These are made of field stone (left) and stack stone (right).
9.4 FENCES

Fencing is present within various neighborhoods in Decatur. The size and materials vary depending on the district. Fencing should not be added to the front of a house if it is not prevalent in the neighborhood, as it will adversely affect the streetscape.

Scale and Placement

- Exceeding four feet in height in the front or eight feet on the sides and rear is not allowed per the City Zoning Ordinance.
- Added fencing to the front of a house is allowed if it is common among historic houses in the area.

Materials

- Utilize materials commonly used in the area including brick, wood, wrought iron and stone.
- Installing chain link fencing is not allowed and solid materials for fencing are strongly discouraged.
- Reflect the ornate design of the neighborhood and the individual house. Simpler and smaller designs are most appropriate on smaller sized lots.
- Retain historic materials when possible and damaged historic materials should be repaired or replaced in kind.

Some common, appropriate, fencing materials include wrought iron and pickets.
Fences should never be damaged, made of inappropriate materials, such as chain-link, solid, or too high as to detract from the street view of a house. These examples are inappropriate uses of fences and materials.

9.5 OTHER APPURTENANCES

Site appurtenances, such as fuel tanks, utility meters, antennae, exterior mechanical units, and trash containers are a necessary part of modern life. Their placement, however, may detract from the historic character of a site and building.

♦ Place modern conveniences to the side and rear of the property.
♦ Screen conveniences from the public view with landscaping or other methods when visible from the public right-of-way.

This rainbarrel, although near the front of the house is not obvious. Matching the column in color and its placement under the side portico behind this column allow it to be well-hidden from the street.

Appurtenances should be placed in inconspicuous locations as shown here.
PART III
Commercial Design Guidelines
As the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards state,

New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

The same document also states that,

New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

These are the guiding principles for the following design guidelines for rehabilitation, additions, or new construction related to historic commercial properties. Historic commercial properties with residential character, rehabilitation of historic structures, additions to historic buildings, new construction within a historic character area, and signage for historic commercial properties are all included within this portion of the design guidelines. Regulations touch on aspects unique to commercial enterprises such as how to address historic commercial ventures housed within a historically residential building, historic storefronts, roof deck and accessibility additions, and signage along with the necessary guidelines for materials, design, and other details important in preserving the historic character of the City of Decatur.
10.0 Guidelines for Historic Resources with Residential Character

Commercial enterprises operating in buildings of historic residential character should follow the requirements and recommendations included in the preceding residential section. Areas not addressed in the residential guidelines that relate to historically commercial ventures within residential buildings should follow the requirements and recommendations listed within the commercial design guidelines sections. Some unique characteristics in designated neighborhoods may require further restrictions to be determined by the Historic Preservation Commission of Decatur.
11.0 Guidelines for Commercial Rehabilitation

To provide an efficient contemporary use of historic commercial properties, it is understood a historic building may require repair or alteration not only to allow the building to continue to be open to the public, but to allow accessibility to all. These alterations must be done in a way that does not damage or destroy historic materials, or include features which will alter the building's historic character. Therefore, certain precautions must be taken in order to ensure the building's historic integrity. The objective is to bring the building to a state of utility and accessibility, while preserving the components of the property which are significant to its cultural value. Historic commercial structures may encompass alterations that have changed the character of the structure. Previous alterations that are now contributing to the historic character of the property should be maintained according to standard preservation and rehabilitation guidelines for historic structures.

Safety is an important aspect of any rehabilitation and construction project. All rehabilitation projects must adhere to accessibility and building codes as well as environmental regulations. Rehabilitation projects should be strictly regulated to ensure the historic integrity and future use of the property. Building materials which are non-historic to the structure and are environmentally harmful should only be replaced if they are non-contributing and can be removed without damage to the historic fabric. However, historic building materials should not be replaced with new material to simply conserve energy, unless approved by the Historic Preservation Commission.
11.1 ROOF

The primary goal of rehabilitating roofs is to maintain the historic form of the building, especially as seen from the public view. Roofs are an integral aspect of the historic structure's form, and should be carefully rehabilitated to maintain historic integrity.

- Maintain existing pitch and shape of roofs as seen from the street-view.
- Repair and replace existing roof materials in-kind.
- Maintain existing cornice and eave details as seen from the street-view.

The roof below displays the structure's true historic intent. If any changes have been made to this roof, it is not obvious, as the shape and form remain the same as it has always been. This is how all modifications should be displayed, as if the changes never had to be made. The historic integrity of the structure should always be preserved in spite of more efficient modern building technique.

The two examples below display roofs that have been modified from the structure's historic intent. These modifications must not be made. In both cases, changes to the historic structure were designed to prevent water build up. However, any ascetic change that creates a false appearance impacts the structure's historic integrity.
11.2 STOREFRONTS

The storefront is a key feature in portraying a structure's historic character, which makes it an important feature to rehabilitate. The primary goal is to maintain the historic materials and configuration of the storefronts, which will preserve the character of Decatur's unique twentieth century commercial districts. The National Park Service's Preservation Brief #11: Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts should be referenced for additional guidance.

- Maintain and repair historic storefront materials, or replace existing materials in-kind.
- Maintain existing transoms, opening historic transoms currently covered is encouraged.
- Maintain historic window components; replace damaged portions with in-kind materials.
- Maintain high window-to-wall ratios in display areas. Restoring previously enclosed display windows based on traditional design is encouraged.
- Maintain historic bulkheads, if replacement is necessary, use in-kind materials or those historically documented.
- Removal of non-historic façades is encouraged and either restoration of historic material found underneath or replacement of the non-historic façade with a historic storefront is required.

Covering a building's materials and ornaments robs it of its historic character as seen here. This is inappropriate.

Inappropriate material greatly detracts from the historic character of an area.
11.3 **WINDOWS**

Windows are an important aspect of commercial buildings, primarily those that historically or currently use large display windows for advertisement and natural lighting. The primary goal is to maintain the historic ratio of window to enclosed space, design, and placement.

- Maintain and preserve historic windows.
- Repair damaged portions of historic windows rather than replacing them in total.
- Replace historic windows damaged beyond repair with windows of matching materials, design, configuration, and muntin profile, if any. Metal or wood windows may be allowed on upper story or rear windows.
- Maintain the historic window configuration and dimensions.
- Relate new windows on side and rear elevations to historic windows through materials, size, and design.
- Match storm windows to the color and configuration of the historic window frame. This must be done in a manner that does not obscure the historic window’s detail and character.

- Appropriately retained decorative mullions or leaded prism glass transoms typical to 20th century storefronts. The transoms shown here are fit into tall, individual display window openings.
- It is inappropriate to replace historic upper windows with modern windows that do not fit the historic framed openings. As seen in this photo, such distortion negatively affects the structure’s historic character.
11.4 DOORS

Doors, along with windows, are primary openings that are integral to the overall look and historic use of commercial properties. The primary goal is to maintain historic doors in their design placement.

○ Maintain and preserve historic doors and surrounding features.
○ Repair damaged portions of historic doors rather than replacing the door in total.
○ Replace historic doors damaged beyond repair with in-kind material and similar design.

- Maintain the historic door placement on the façade including entrances to upper floors.
- Replace non-historic doors with a replication of the historic door (if documentation exists) or a design typical for the age and style of the building.
- Widening of historic doors on primary façades may be allowed for accessibility if a secondary façade door is not available.

Appropriate

(A) (B) (C) (D)

Inappropriate

Typical (yet not limited to) commercial door examples for: (A) high-style Victorian (may have oval glass or beveled glass), (B) most common door that is simple and versatile for any style storefront, is still used today with full glass, wood construction and high kick-plate, (C) Art Deco or Art Moderne styled handrails, (D) aluminum—not recommended unless displays match (1930s–today).
Awnings are important façade features that if properly installed and designed can greatly compliment the structure's historic character. The primary goal is to promote the use of traditional form and design for awnings and canopies. Awnings are appropriate on any small-scale commercial building in Decatur, but they must be relevant to surrounding historic structures in style and material.

- Maintain historic awnings and canopies.
- Traditional shed-style, sloping, fabric or metal awnings are encouraged.
- Refer to historic documentation, or the awnings of surrounding historic buildings when considering color and surface design.
- Match awning shape to the form of window or door openings.
- Fit awnings within the frame of the window or doorway without covering architectural detail.
- Install awnings in a manner that does not damage the historic structure. Removal of the structure's historic materials is not permitted.
- Adding fixed awnings is recommended only when historic documentation exists or the majority of the surrounding structures include fixed awnings.
- Awnings should reflect their historic use, and should not reflect modern trends.

It is inappropriate to install awnings that do not match the shape of the window, as improper installation is blatantly obvious.

Permanent awnings are inappropriate and should not be added to the historic structure as they cause permanent damage and are not historic to the structure.
11.6 MATERIALS

Materials portray a visual concept that can disrupt or contribute to a historic district. The primary goal is to maintain the shadow, texture, and look created by existing historic exterior materials. If the historic material is no longer available, a complimentary modern option may be allowed.

- Maintain historic exterior materials.
- Leave unpainted historic materials unpainted and uncoated.
- Repair damaged exterior materials in-kind and only in the area of damage, rather than total replacement.
- Use historic mortar mixes and tooling when repointing brick, which should match the historic mortar joints. A qualified professional mason is recommended.

Employment of metal and concrete materials should only occur if such materials are historic to the structure, or if historic documentation displays such materials. Metal and concrete materials historic to the structure should always be replaced in-kind.

- Retain secondary features and character-defining materials which contribute to the historic design.
- Using sandblasting cleaning methods is not allowed; the gentlest means possible to clean exterior materials is encouraged.

Older buildings can have softer historic brick and mortar that may become weathered over time. Repairs should be made with a comparable mortar to avoid damage to the brick. Harder based mortar (Portland cement) is not a recommended replacement material for use with softer brick and lime-based mortar.
11.7 DETAILS

Individually altering historic architectural details can negatively change the appearance of a historic structure when applied in mass. The primary goal is to maintain detail elements typical for historic commercial buildings, many of which impart a specific architectural style.

- Maintain and preserve historic details, such as murals or advertisements that contribute to the properties historic value.
- Replace damaged details with details of matching material and matching design.
- Restore missing details when documentation of those elements is available.

![Image of a historic mural being restored.](image1)

Historic murals contribute to the historic structure's integrity, and the preservation of murals should be an objective when restoring or repairing. This image illustrates how improper rehabilitation can easily destroy a historic mural. One must keep in mind that such paintings are sensitive, as chemicals and treatments can easily ruin historic murals.

![Image of a historic building before and after rehabilitation.](image2)

Altering slight, individual, historic details is inappropriate as it can negatively change the character of the structure as a whole, to a large degree.
12.0 Guidelines for Commercial Additions

**Historic structures must** allow for expansion for continued use when deemed necessary and no other compatible use can be found. Accessibility additions may be required due to current building codes and should be addressed so as to allow the historic commercial building to be accessible to all while maintaining historic integrity. Additions to historic commercial structures should be designed and constructed so as to preserve significant materials and features. Additions should not detract from the historic character of a structure or a district.

12.1 **SETBACK**

Setback is important to maintain so that the commercial district of a city remains viable and walkable. Any additions should respect the existing historic commercial setback and stay within the established layout. The Decatur Zoning Ordinance takes precedence over any setback guidelines listed.

- Maintain historic setback or align with the most common existing setback line along the street.

12.2 **ORIENTATION AND RHYTHM**

The orientation, or direction the historic building faces, and rhythm, or pattern of open space to building space, are important in keeping the overall historic integrity of a commercial node. In laying out the addition, the historic building's orientation, and other additions seen throughout the historic commercial node should be respected.

- Place additions away from public view on a rear elevation or on a side elevation to preserve the historic orientation of the building.
- Respect the setback of current historic buildings both within the lot and other historic buildings in the surrounding area.
- Additions to the front of a building are not allowed.
12.3 MASS AND SCALE

Size of an addition is important so as not to detract from the integrity of the historic structure. Form, height, and width are key factors to consider in an addition.

* Maintain form and symmetry of a historic structure while creating a discernible break at the junction with a historic structure.
* Maintain the historic element's intent, and adhere to the size and scale of the historic structure.
* Alterations to the height of the historic structure are not allowed.
* Follow the same design and pitch as the historic roof for roof covering additions.

Additions that are appropriately scaled do not detract from the historic building.

It is important to maintain appropriate mass and scale when creating an addition. Note the similar height and width, similar shape and placement of doors, windows, and awnings. The new addition is entirely compatible, similar but not identical.
12.4 MATERIALS

Materials of an addition can detract or compliment the historic structure it is attached to. The shadow, texture, and look are important when selecting materials for a new addition in a historic area. If the addition is not as visible, the material selected is not as important, but should still respect the historic structure. If the historic materials present on the structure are no longer available, then a complimentary modern option may be allowed.

- Utilize materials in the addition in keeping with the character of the structure such as roofing and siding.
- Use matching or similar elements, such as windows, on visible façades with modern elements reserved for rear elevations.
- Include materials that are present in the historic structure for the visible portions of additions, and do not include materials that were unavailable at the time of construction.
12.5 DESIGN

The overall design of an addition should not detract from the historic character of the structure. The particular style of the main building should be respected in the design of the addition, but the ability to identify the new structure from the historic structure is important. Design reversibility is crucial.

- Respect historic structure design when designing an addition and incorporate similar or complementary design motifs.
- Obscuring historic design details is not allowed.
- Distinguishing additions through color or architectural detail is necessary so that new construction is clearly viewed as such and not part of the historic structure yet must remain compatible with the historic structure.
- Reversibility of any addition is necessary so that it can be removed without causing alteration or destruction to the historic fabric.

An inappropriately designed addition that obscures the historic building is not allowed.

12.6 ROOF DECKS

Roof decks are a popular feature of many commercial enterprises, particularly restaurant and bar locations, in order to take advantage of view sheds throughout the City of Decatur. The addition of a roof deck is allowed as long as all precautions have been taken to retain historic fabric of the building and historic integrity of the structure as a whole.

- Install a roof deck so as not to alter or destroy historic details or materials.
- Install a roof deck with proper placement and size so as not to detract from the historic integrity of the structure.
- Installation of roof deck should be unobtrusive to the overall character of the historic structure. For example a deck on the rear façade is preferred.
- Use materials in keeping with the historic materials already present on the structure.
- Maintain the historic style of the building in all rooftop additions.
12.7 AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY COMPLIANCE

It is essential to ensure equal access to all amenities for all visitors to a historic commercial building. Care should be taken to not allow secondary treatment of accessibility features while maintaining the overall historic character of a structure. The National Park Service’s Preservation Brief #32, Making Historic Properties Accessible should be referenced for additional guidance.

- Install all accessibility features so as not to alter or destroy historic details or materials.
- Install all features so to be easily reversible.
- Use materials in keeping with the historic materials already present on the historic resource.
- Maintain the historic style of the building in all accessibility additions.

> Appropriate application of ADA guidelines includes minimal damage to historic materials while allowing those with disabilities to enter on a primary façade if available.

> This appropriately sized, layout, and clad addition also shows appropriate ADA access on a secondary façade.

Significantly altering the façade of a historic building for ADA access is unacceptable.
13.0 Guidelines for New Commercial Construction

Compatibility for new commercial properties should be determined by looking at other commercial nodes in the City of Decatur and surrounding commercial as well as residential buildings. The goal of regulating construction of new buildings is to preserve the rhythm and character of the historic neighborhood and to ensure that all new elements of a historic district are sensitive to existing historic elements in design, scale, and general character of the district. Particular attention should be paid to the immediate historic environment constituting a particular block.

The Decatur Ordinance, particularly in relation to zoning, will take precedence over any design guidelines listed. The points on the following pages should be taken into consideration when designing your project.

A wide variety of building styles, setbacks, and general appearances have found their way into Decatur's historic commercial districts. This diversity is a challenge for written guidance in terms of setting rules for new buildings that meet every situation as well as provide accessibility to all. Therefore, variances which meet the intent of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards may be judiciously applied by the Historic Preservation Commission of Decatur.

Please note: New commercial construction within a historically residential building, the compatibility rule established for residential new construction should be adhered to.
13.1 SETBACK

Setback is the space between the building footprint and the right of way, which in a commercial application, is typically a sidewalk or street. In most cases, the size of the setback relates to the land use, lot size, and building type. In commercial areas, setback is an important aspect which gives the district a sense of walkability. It is imperative to determine the established setbacks within other historic commercial nodes and attempt to stay within those boundaries while adhering to the Decatur Zoning Ordinance.

Base setback on the type of building and layout of established parking.
Align setback of one-story, multi or single unit commercial buildings with sidewalk or parking already established.

Inappropriate setback. Setback should be aligned with existing historic commercial buildings in the historic node or relative to other historic commercial nodes within Decatur.
13.2 ORIENTATION AND RHYTHM

Orientation, or direction, and rhythm, or spacing, determine the way a commercial building is placed within the property boundaries. These factors should be similar to the surrounding historic commercial or residential construction so as to keep a similar historical feel throughout the district.

Locate new commercial properties on main roads and intersections or in similar patterns to those currently found within the historic district.

Utilize similar orientation such as diagonal or straight alignment as determined by the surrounding commercial district.

Determine spacing by reviewing surrounding commercial or residential buildings.

Locate new parking in the rear of the building.

Orientation should be similar to the surrounding historic commercial buildings.

Spacing should be similar to the surrounding historic commercial buildings.

Main intersections are primary locations for commercial enterprises both for visibility and the creation of commercial cores.

Parking should be behind the main façade of the building.
Appropriate scale gives the commercial node a walkable character and is in keeping with the historic feel. Both horizontal and vertical massing are important elements to coordinate with surrounding historic buildings.

New structures should be designed and constructed of similar scale as surrounding historic commercial or residential structures, so as not to diminish or overpower historic structures in the area.

Keep scale no smaller or larger than other historic structures in commercial nodes.

Keep height no larger or smaller than the historic structures within commercial nodes.

Compliment massing of similar historic buildings of similar style in commercial nodes.

Take into account horizontal massing, such as the effect of length through ribbon windows and banding, and vertical massing, such as columns and piers.

Inappropriate mass and scale changes the overall feel of a historic district.
When new buildings lack the texture and character of surrounding historic buildings, they detract from the character of the area.

The front façade of a structure is vital to its historic character and greatly contributes to the street scene in a historic district. New construction should be recognized as new, but should contribute to the historic character of the area and should not detract from the surrounding historic structures.

Keep style of new structures similar to the styles found within the historic structures in commercial nodes.

Reflect the style of the building in all ornamental detail.

Align fenestration patterns in keeping with the majority of the similarly-styled and historic structures in the commercial nodes of Decatur.

Recessed storefront doors are allowed. The storefront may not be extended in order to account for this recessed entryway.

Installing bulkheads below windows is encouraged.

Oakhurst commercial district displays appropriate storefront design.

Bulkheads are typical of historic commercial buildings and are encouraged in new construction.

Some modern storefronts are allowed and recessed storefronts may be allowable.
13.5 MATERIALS

**Materials play a key role** in the overall look and feel of a structure. To remain in keeping with the historic character of an area, materials should be consistent with existing historic structures, including size, color, and texture.

Utilize materials found in surrounding historic commercial applications for construction.

Vinyl siding is inappropriate on any commercial building in the City of Decatur.

Painting materials is allowed if existing historic resources in the area present the same finish.

Install built-up tar and gravel flat roofs for all one-story commercial buildings.

Installation of awnings constructed of fabric or metal is allowed on one-story commercial units, but should not detract from the historic character.

The use of traditional historic materials is essential.
Signage is an important visual aspect of advertising in all commercial design. It is important that signs be both informative to consumers as well as complementary to the design of the building. In historic districts, signage takes on a special character by not only advertising the enterprise, but also attributing to the historic character of the building and the overall district. Signage should be specially selected to factor in these aspects to preserve the unity of the area and above all, historic signs should be preserved and maintained.

Signs on the exterior of a residential building are inappropriate unless the residential building has been zoned commercial and is in use as a commercial business. It is understood that signage is a vital component of a business's promotion, but great care should be taken when creating signage for commercial enterprises within residential-styled buildings. Therefore, signs should be both informative to passersby as well as complementary to the building a business is within.

All commercial signs in historic districts must conform to the regulations outlined in the City of Decatur Sign Ordinance. These restrictions do not apply to any Department Of Transportation signage complying with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).
14.1 DESIGN

The overall design of a sign can be an important aspect of a storefront. It is necessary to balance the need for eye-catching design with the need for design compatibility in order to preserve historic integrity.

Respect the design and visibility of surrounding historic signs.

Complement the historic materials and design elements of the building when selecting colors, style, materials, and design for signage.

Utilize indirect lighting to illuminate the signage. Internally lit signage is not allowed.

Utilize appropriate styles of signage such as hanging signs, painted window or wall signs, and signs above display windows and awnings.

Utilize freestanding signage, painted window sign on a front façade or a combination of both for residential buildings with commercial purposes.

Disruptive signs, such as flashing, blinking, and rotating signs are not allowed.
14.2 PLACEMENT

The location of a sign can benefit a commercial enterprise by attracting clients and advertising the business. The placement should be both evident yet compatible with the storefront.

Interfering, detracting, altering or destroying the historic character of a building is not allowed.

Install signage similar to surrounding examples of historic commercial signage.

Installation of a hanging sign from a mailbox within a residential area may be allowed as long as the sign is smaller than the height and width of the mailbox.

Installing façade mounted signs in a residential area is not allowed.

Installation of signage that hides, alters or destroys historic materials and character is not allowed. Oversized signage is not allowed.

Appropriate locations for signage on historic commercial buildings as long as historic details are not covered up.
14.3 SIZE

The size of a sign aids in visibility of the advertisement contained within the sign. Over-sized signs can detract from a business while signs sized too small can defeat the purpose of employing signage. Appropriately sized signage can both enhance the overall look of the commercial property as well as constructively portray the advertisement needed.

Detracting from the historic structures or the surround structures with inappropriately sized signage is not allowed.

Inappropriately sized signage is not allowed. This sign is too small.
This glossary is adapted from several sources including *A Visual Dictionary of Architecture* by Francis Ching and *A Field Guide to American Houses* by McAlester and McAlester. The DeKalb Public Library maintains a collection of reference and circulating materials providing more information on architectural design, building types and styles, local history, and preservation of historic buildings.

**Awning:** A projecting shading device, usually of canvas, mounted on the outside of a door or window.

**Baluster:** One of a series of short vertical posts, often ornamental, used to support a rail.

**Balustrade:** A series of row of balusters supporting a rail.

**Basement:** The lowest, subordinate story of a building often either entirely or partially below ground level.

**Bay:** A regularly repeating division of a façade, marked by fenestration.

**Bay Window:** A projecting form containing windows that rises from the ground or from some other support, such as a porch roof. See also oriel.

**Belt Course:** Narrow horizontal band projecting from exterior walls, usually defining interior floor levels.

**Board-and-batten:** A wooden siding treatment in which wide, vertically oriented boards are separated by narrower strips of wood called "battens," which form the joints between the boards. This is NOT commonly used in Decatur's historic communities.

**Bond—Patterns of brickwork:** Types of bond include stretcher, English, header, Flemish, garden wall, herringbone, basket, American, and Chinese.

**Bracket:** Projection from a vertical surface that provides structural and/or visual support for overhanging elements such as cornices, balconies, and eaves.

**Building:** An enclosed structure with walls and a roof, created to serve some residential, industrial, commercial, agricultural, or other human use.

**Casement Window:** Window frame hinged on one vertical side, which swings open to either the inside or the outside of the building. Casement windows often occur in pairs.

**Character-defining Feature:** Prominent or distinctive aspect, quality, or characteristic of a historic property that contributes significantly to its physical character. Structures, objects, vegetation, spatial relationships, views, furnishings, decorative details, landscape, and building materials may be such features.

**Clapboard:** Wood siding composed of horizontal, overlapping boards, the lower edges of which are usually thicker than the upper. Clapboards are a traditional weather-proofing device.

**Column:** Vertical support that may be used on porches, door surround, and porticos to historic Decatur houses.

**Cornice:** Crowning projection at a roof line, often with molding or other detail.

**Cornice Molding:** Decorative strip of wood running just below the eaves of a building. A cornice molding is a cross between
a cornice and a molding. A cornice is a crowning projection at a roof line, while a molding is a decorative strip of wood.

Dentils: Small rectangular blocks that, when placed together in a row abutting a molding, suggest a row of teeth.

Design: The combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a historic property.


Dormer: A structural element of a building that protrudes from the plane of a sloping roof surface. Dormers are used, either in original construction or as later additions, to create usable space in the roof of a building by adding headroom and usually also by enabling addition of windows.

Double-hung Window: A window with two sashes that move independently of each other.

Drip molding: A projecting molding around the head of a door or window frame, often extended horizontally at right angles to the sides of the frame, intended to channel rain away from the opening; also called a drip lintel.

Eave: Overhanging edge of a roof. Often projects to protect exterior walls from rain.

Elevation: Common term used to describe the external face of a building, being a view of (or simply a synonym for) a façade. Also used to describe a type of architectural drawing.

Entablature: Horizontal organization of architectural elements that can include a column, architrave, frieze, and cornice.

Exposed Rafters: Rafters that are exposed to the outside of a building. Rafters are the inclined, sloping framing members of a roof, to which the roof covering is affixed.

Eyebrow dormer: Curved dormer with no sides, covered by a smooth protrusion from the sloping roof.

Facade: An exterior wall, or face, of a building. The front façade of a building contains the building’s main entrance, the rear façade is the building’s rear exterior wall, and the side façades are a building’s side exterior walls. The front façade is also known as the “primary façade.” Secondary façades are those which do not face a public thoroughfare, walkway or court and that do not possess significant architectural features.

Fan Light: A semi-circular or semi-elliptical window, with wedge-shaped panes of glass separated by mullions arranged like the spokes of a wagon wheel. Fan lights are usually found over entrance doors and windows.

Fascia: Horizontal, flat element, often combined with a cornice and architrave. Often used to describe wood cladding that is part of roofing structure.

Feeling: Describes how a property or set of buildings express the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time.

Fenestration: Organization and design of windows in a building.

Flashing: Strips of sheet metal bent to fit the angle between any two roof surfaces or between the roof and any projection, such as a chimney.

Floor Plan: The arrangement of rooms in a building.

Frieze: Band (often decorative) below cornice.

Gable: Triangular portion of a wall between the edges of a sloping roof.

Gable Roof: A roof with two slopes—front and rear—joining at a single ridge line parallel to the entrance façade. When the ridge line of a gable-roofed house is perpendicular to the street, the roof is said to be a “gable-end roof.”
Galvanized Metal: Metal with zinc to inhibit rusting.

Gambrel Roof: Symmetrical two-sided roof with two slopes on each side.

Gingerbreading: Wooden architectural ornament popular with American folk houses in the late-19th and early 20th centuries. The widespread use in the mid-19th century of the jigsaw—a hand tool consisting of a handle attached to a small, thin blade—made gingerbread decorations readily available to home builders.

Grille: Decorative, openwork grating, usually of iron, used to protect a window, door, or other opening. May also be vents or ventilation panels, often highly decorative.

Gutter: Shallow channel of metal or wood set immediately below and along the eaves of a building to catch and carry off rainwater.

Hardware: Metal fittings of a building, such as locks, latches, hinges, handles, and knobs.

Hip roof: Type where sides slope downwards to the walls, normally with four sloped sides all meeting at ridge in center of the roof.

Historic Character: All visual aspects, features, materials, and spaces associated with a property’s history.

Historic District: A local or national geographically definable area, urban or rural, possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, landscapes, structures, or objects, united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical developments. A district may also be composed of individual elements separated geographically, but linked by association or history.

Historical Context: The structure for organizing and creating summary information about historic properties based on common themes, time periods, and geographical areas.

Hood: A projection that shelters an element such as a door or window.

In-kind: Refers to use of materials that are the same or similar to historic precedents. Their use is similar or identical to that which they replace.

Integrity: Describes the authenticity of a property’s historic identity and the extent to which it retains its historic character. Sometimes answered by posing the question—would the original owner or builder be able to identify the structure?

Lattice: Thin strips of wood arranged in a netlike grid pattern, often set diagonally.

Leaded Window: Normally composed of small panes, usually diamond-shaped or rectangular, held in place by narrow strips of lead. Often used to refer to “stained glass” windows.

Lintel: Horizontal structural element over an opening which carries the weight of the wall above it.

Masonry: Building materials that include stone, brick, or concrete.

Molding: Decorative strip of wood. Often used to trim structural members, wall planes, and openings.

Mullion: Vertical primary framing member that separates paired or multiple windows within a single opening.

Muntin: Vertical bar of wood, metal, or stone which divides a sashed window into two or more parts.

National Register of Historic Places: A list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects of national, regional, state, and local significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture kept by the National Park Service under authority of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. (See www.nps.gov/nr) Also related to the Georgia Register of Historic Places.

Oriel: Projecting window of an upper floor, supported from below by a bracket or corbel.

Overhang: Protruding structure which may
provide protection for lower levels.

**Paver:** Block of stone or other masonry used in sidewalk or areaway paving.

**Pediment:** Low-pitched gable or decorative triangular piece on the front of a building above a doorway or portico.

**Pilaster:** Rectangular support projecting slightly from a wall, treated architecturally as a column. May be found as part of the surround for door frames.

**Period of significance:** The span of time in which a property attained attributes that are consistent with the criteria established by the National Register of Historic Places.

**Pier:** A column designed to support concentrated load. In Decatur, can be used as part of the foundation structure.

**Pitch:** Usually refers to the slope of a roof.

**Plinth:** Square block at the base of a column, pedestal or statue. Can also refer to a block at the base of steps/exterior stairways.

**Pointing:** Treatment of joints between bricks, stone, or other masonry components which fills space with mortar. Repointing refers to repairs of missing or damaged joints.

**Porte Cochere:** Porch roof projecting over a driveway.

**Portico:** Porch consisting of a roof supported by columns that is used to protect doorways.

**Preservation:** Actions to the integrity and material of a historic structure (building), landscape, or object. Work generally focuses upon the ongoing preservation maintenance and repair of historic materials and features, rather than extensive replacement and new work.

**Preservation maintenance:** Action to mitigate wear and deterioration of a historic property without altering its historic character by protecting its condition and repairing when its condition warrants with the least degree of intervention. Routine ("ordinary") maintenance usually consists of service activities such as tightening, adjusting, oiling, pruning, etc. Stabilization refers to actions that render an unsafe, damaged, or deteriorated property stable while retaining its present form.

**Protection:** Action to safeguard a historic property by defending or guarding it from further deterioration, loss, or attack or shielding it from danger or injury.

**Quoin:** Units of stone or brick that are used at the corners of a building for the purpose of reinforcement, frequently imitated for decorative purposes. Can also outline windows and doorways.

**Rafters:** Framing members of a roof, and to which the roof covering is affixed.

**Recessed Entryway:** Door that recesses into the side of a building to form two walls on either side.

**Reconstruction:** Act or process of depicting, by means of new work, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving historic structure or landscape, or any part thereof, for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific time and in its historic location.

**Rehabilitation:** Act or process of making a compatible use for a historic building repair and maintenance while preserving those portions or features, which convey its historical, cultural, and architectural values.

**Repair:** Efforts to correct deteriorated, damaged, or faulty materials or features of a structure or landscape.

**Repointing:** See *pointing*.

**Restoration:** Process of accurately depicting the form, features, and character of a historic structure, landscape, or object as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period.
Return: Part of a molding, cornice or wall surface that changes direction, usually at a right angle, toward the building wall.

Reveal: Side of an opening for a door or window between the frame and the outer surface of a wall, showing the wall’s thickness.

Roof Ridge: The horizontal intersection of two roof slopes at the top of a roof.

Roofline: Part of a building that rises above the building’s eaves. Rooflines can be highly decorative, with balustrades, pediments, statuary, dormer windows, cross gables, etc.

Sash: Part of a window which holds the glazing in place; may be operable or fixed; usually constructed of horizontal and vertical members; sash may be subdivided with muntins.

Secretary of the Interior’s Standards: Formally known as The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The Standards present advice on protecting a wide range of historic properties through preservation planning, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction. See page 149.

Shed Dormer: Dormer window covered by a single roof slope without a gable.

Shingles: Small, rectangular-shaped slats of wood that are nailed to an exterior surface, overlapping one another from top to bottom. Shingling is a traditional weather-proofing method for building.

Shutters: Pairs of solid or slatted window coverings, traditionally hinged to the exterior of a building to either side of a window, used to block light or wind from the interior of a building.

Sidelight: Vertically framed area of fixed glass, often subdivided into panes, flanking a door.

Sill: Horizontal member at the bottom of a window or door.

Site Plan: Specific type of architectural view drawn to show the whole context of a building or group of buildings, with boundaries, nearby structures, roads, parking lots, footpaths, hard landscaping, exterior lighting, trees, plantings, and services (such as drainage, water supply lines, and cables).

Slate: A finely-grained, foliated rock, native to Pennsylvania, Vermont, and New York, and found in many colors. Slate has been used to roof buildings in the United States since the colonial era.

Soffit: Underside of an eave, lintel or other horizontal element.

Spalling: Chipping or erosion of masonry caused by abuse or weathering.

Spandrel: A panel between the top of one window and the sill of another window on the story directly above it.

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO): Georgia’s official program that administers the historic preservation program and carries out certain responsibilities relating to Federal preservation programs and activities in the state. The SHPO office maintains an extensive set of online resources at www.gashpo.org.

Stile: Main vertical member of a door or window.

Stoop: The steps which lead to the front entrance of a structure.

Streetscape: The appearance or view of a street or roadway.

Structure: A constructed work. Here it refers to residential and commercial buildings.

Stucco: A plaster used as a coating for walls and ceilings. Historic stucco was made from cement, lime, sand, and water.

Subframe: A secondary frame set within a masonry opening.

Sugaring: Deterioration of stone caused by the breaking up or dissolving of the stone surface. This often occurs when bricks and other masonry are sandblasted to
remove paint and other finishes.

**Surround:** The ornamental frame of a door or window.

**Symmetry:** A characteristic where two sides of a façade or architectural floor plan present mirror images of one another.

**Tax credits:** See *Tax Incentives*.

**Tax Incentives:** Special tax programs designed to encourage the continued use of historic properties through rehabilitation. There are three different types of tax incentives available to owners who plan to rehabilitate their historic buildings. The Federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit is available only to properties that will be used in an income-producing capacity after rehabilitation for commercial, professional, or residential rental purposes. The Georgia Preferential Property Tax Assessment and the State Income Tax Credit for Rehabilitated Historic Property are available to both private residential properties as well as income-producing properties. More information is available from the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office ([www.gashpo.org](http://www.gashpo.org)).

**Terra Cotta:** Hard fired clay, either glazed or unglazed, molded for use in roof tiles. May also be used in some homes as ornamental elements.

**Transom:** Horizontal element in a window or above a door, but within its vertical frame. May also refer to cross-bar separating a door from the window, panel, or fanlight above it.

**Transom bar:** A horizontal element that subdivides an opening, usually between a door and window.

**Transom light:** A narrow window, sometimes hinged at the top, positioned over a doorway or larger window.

**Veranda:** Porch that runs along front or side of a building; supported by pillars or columns.

**Vernacular Architecture:** Styles or types that incorporate local methods of building construction which respond to local climates and conditions or relate to local living needs and traditions.

**Vestibule:** Small entrance hall of a building.

**Viewshed:** Area of land, water, or other environmental element that is visible to the human eye from a fixed vantage point.

**Window Sash:** Movable frames in a window in which window panes are set.

**Wrought iron:** Iron that is worked by being forged or hammered.
15.2 Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation

The Standards Department of Interior regulations, 36 CFR 67 pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior, related landscape features, and the building’s site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction.

The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.

5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.
15.3 ADA Accessibility Guidelines

ACCESSIBILITY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The National Park Service developed Preservation Brief 32: Making Historic Properties Accessible which addresses some of the issues related to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Broadly interpreted, the ADA calls for accommodation of the disabled in the use of public properties and land. There are three instances where ADA accommodations might be required (or found highly desirable) for privately owned properties. Commercial buildings which house offices, shops, or restaurants could make sensitive additions to the structure or the landscape to accommodate the disabled. Other commercial buildings where medical and other services are offered can benefit from improving access for the disabled. Finally, community organizations receiving Federal grants or loans may find adaptive architecture important to fulfilling funding or loan requirements as well as their mission.

Private homeowners may find the need to provide for accessibility and provide accessible exits from the building in case of emergencies. Ramps to accommodate walking and wheelchair access, when permanently placed on a historic structure may damage historic materials. Changing the width and type of doorway openings also affects historic character if not done in a sensitive manner. Here is where it can be important to consider additions, renovations and options that meet an owner's needs and the City's goals for preservation.

Accessibility needs may not be addressed fully by these design guidelines. If there is a long-term or permanent need for accessibility, the property owner should:

- Consult with City preservation officials about options and alternatives that can be designed and meet addition and rehabilitation standards;
- Identify potential designs or strategies to provide accessibility without removing or changing the historic character of a structure;
- Use the services of professionals with experience in designing and executing plans for accessibility; and
- Obtain review of proposed plans by the City's officials prior to undertaking construction or renovations.

These actions can help property owners make the best decisions regarding preservation while accommodating family members and in commercial settings, business tenants and visitors. As time passes, the City's preservation officials and advisors may identify and approve plans that can be used for specific types and styles of structures. If so, these plans will help others who have similar needs for accessible historic properties.
15.4 Decatur Preservation Ordinance

Following are application forms for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) and a Certificate of Exemption (COE) for your use. COA and COE forms may also be found by going to www.decaturga.com/index.aspx?page=118, which is the Historic Preservation Commission page on the City of Decatur website: www.decaturga.com.

Ordinances for the City of Decatur may be found via the city’s website as well, and direct links are listed in this publication in Appendix 15.6. More information may be found in Part I, chapter 3.0 of this publication but brief exaplanations follow.

Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)

Local historic districts have preservation ordinances requiring proposed work on properties within the district to be reviewed by the local historic preservation commission. When the commission reviews and approves proposed changes to a building, they issue a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA), a document stating that the proposed work is appropriate for the historic district and meets local code criteria. A COA would be required for all structures located within the district and is important so that the same standards apply to all residents. This ensures that if modifications or new construction were to occur on any properties, they would be sympathetic to the neighborhood’s character in mass, scale, size and style.

Certificate of Exemption (COE)

A Certificate of Exemption approves changes that do not conflict with the Historic Preservation Ordinance as stated in section 3.31 of the Ordinance.
City of Decatur

Case Number: ____________________________

Historic Preservation Commission
Application for Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)
For
____________________________
Property Address & Historic District

How to obtain a COA:

Application Requirements
Completed applications must be submitted, including required support materials, for any material change to a property within a historic district.

There is a $25 application fee.

Application Deadline
Applications must be received by 5:00 PM no later than 15 calendar days prior to the regular HPC meeting, usually the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

Application Approval/Denial
Applications heard by the HPC must be approved or denied within 45 days of the filing of application. Appeals to HPC decisions may be made to the City Commission.

Design Guidelines
All applications are reviewed and processed according to the Historic Preservation Ordinance Chapter 58 of the city code and the individual district design guidelines.

Building Permit Requirements
Building permits will not be issued without proof of COA.

Submit Application to:
Regina Brewer
Decatur City Hall,
P.O.B 220
509 N. McDonough St.,
Decatur, GA 30030

Questions? Contact
Regina Brewer
regina.brewer@decaturga.com
Phone (404) 371-8386
Fax (404) 371-1593

Applicant: _________________________________________________
Mailing Address: ____________________________________________
Phone: ________________________ Cell: __________________________
Email: ________________________

Architect/Contractor: ________________________________
Contact Information: __________________________________________

Brief Description of Project: __________________________________
(example: addition, siding replacement, fence, screen porch, etc.)

Type of Project (Check all which Apply)

Construction
□ New Building
□ Addition to building
□ Major building restoration
□ Minor Exterior Change

Site Changes
□ Driveway, sidewalk
□ Fence, wall
□ Signage
□ Demolition or relocation of building
□ ________________________
□ ________________________

Applicant Signature __________________________ Date Submitted ________

Page 1 of 2
Application Checklist

For all applications the following materials are required:

☐ List of Proposed Materials

☐ Photographs of Property (including one photograph of each elevation that will be impacted).

For applications for material changes (additions, decks, new construction) MUST ALSO include:

☐ Existing Site Plan & Proposed New Site Plan

☐ Existing Elevation and Proposed Elevation Plans (check all that will be impacted)
  - Front
  - Right Side
  - Left Side
  - Rear

Please note that plans submitted must include one (1) to-scale set of plans and eight (8) sets of 8 1/2 x 11 plans.

Suggested Additional Materials:

☐ Floor plan

☐ Roof plan

☐ Additional photographs showing properties to either side

☐ Samples of materials to be used

☐ Specifications

☐ Plan showing existing landscape

☐ Plan showing changes to the landscape

☐ Letters of support from the adjacent property owners

☐ Other______________________________________________________________

The commission will not consider incomplete applications. Copies of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and Design Guidelines are available at City Hall.
How to obtain a COE:

Application Requirements
Completed applications must be submitted, including required support materials, for any material change to a property within a historic district.

There is a $10 application fee.

Application Approval/Denial
Applications will be administratively approved or denied within five (5) business days after submission. Appeals to staff decisions may be made to the Historic Preservation Commission.

Design Guidelines
All applications are reviewed and processed according to the Historic Preservation Ordinance Chapter 58 of the city code and the individual district design guidelines, which are available at City Hall.

Building Permit Requirements
Building permits will not be issued without proof of COE.

Submit Application to:
Historic Preservation Commission
Decatur City Hall,
509 N. McDonough St.,
Decatur, GA 30030

Questions? Contact
Regina Brewer
regina.brewer@decaturga.com

The following information may be required depending on the type of project:
- List of Proposed Materials
- Photographs of Property (including one photograph of each elevation that will be impacted).
- Letter from a certified arborist for tree removal
- Plan showing existing landscape
- Plan showing changes to the landscape
- Existing Site Plan & Proposed New Site Plan
- Existing Elevation and Proposed Elevation Plans
- Other

Applicant Signature: ____________________________ Date Submitted: ____________________________

Staff Signature: ____________________________ Date Completed: ____________________________
The National Park Service provides free materials on preserving and rehabilitating historic buildings. These materials include Preservation Briefs, a series of guides developed by preservation professionals to help owners of residential and commercial historic buildings. All the listed titles are available for viewing at www.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm. Other NPS guides to historic building preservation are listed at www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps.

The list below contains titles that may be relevant to preserving historic buildings in Decatur.

- **01**: The Cleaning and Waterproof Coating of Masonry Buildings
- **02**: Repointing Mortar Joints in Historic Brick Buildings
- **03**: Conserving Energy in Historic Buildings
- **04**: Roofing for Historic Buildings
- **06**: Dangers of Abrasive Cleaning to Historic Buildings
- **08**: Aluminum and Vinyl Siding on Historic Buildings
- **09**: The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows
- **10**: Exterior Paint Problems on Historic Woodwork
- **11**: Rehabilitating Historic Storefronts
- **14**: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns
- **17**: Architectural Character: Identifying and Preserving
- **22**: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stucco
- **23**: Preserving Historic Ornamental Plaster
- **24**: Heating, Ventilating, and Cooling Historic Buildings
- **25**: The Preservation of Historic Signs
- **27**: The Maintenance and Repair of Architectural Cast Iron
- **30**: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Clay Tile Roofs
- **31**: Mothballing Historic Buildings
- **32**: Making Historic Properties Accessible (to People with Disabilities)
- **33**: The Preservation and Repair of Historic Stained and Leaded Glass
- **34**: Preserving Composition Ornament
- **37**: Reducing Lead-Paint Hazards in Historic Buildings
- **38**: Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry
- **39**: Controlling Unwanted Moisture in Historic Buildings
- **43**: The Preparation and Use of Historic Structure Reports
- **44**: The Use of Awnings on Historic Buildings: Repair, Replacement and New Design
- **45**: Preserving Historic Wooden Porches
- **47**: Maintaining the Exterior of Small and Medium Size Historic Buildings
Photo/Illustration Credits

While the majority of the photos within these guidelines were taken by the authors, a few images deserve better credit.


- Illustrations were taken and modified from several existing community historic design guidelines. The following consultants’ work was particularly heavily borrowed from:
  
  **Piedmont Preservation**, Madison, Georgia  
  contact: Ken Kocher, kkocher@piedmont-preservation.com

  **Frazier Associates**, Stauton, Virginia  
  contact: 540-886-6230  
  www.frazierassociates.com

- Many photos from Part 2 were taken by Jennifer Dixon for the Atlanta Urban Design Commission.

- MAK District, photographs of Leila Ross Wilburn houses page 63, Terry Kearns.

- Several photographs were pulled from Wikipedia.org. These are credited in the caption. Wiki Commons and Wikipedia images are released from copyright.

- The following images are published courtesy of the DeKalb History Center, Decatur:

  - *Adams Street, looking north, Decatur, Georgia, Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives.*
  - *Aeroplane view, Agnes Scott College, Decatur, Georgia, Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives.*
  - *Agnes Scott College for Girls, Decatur, near Atlanta, Georgia, Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives.*
  - *Decatur, Georgia, DeKalb County Courthouse, Postcard, 1908, Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives.*
  - *Downtown Commercial Area and Bailey’s Shoe Shop, Sycamore Street, Decatur, Georgia, Guy Hayes Photograph Collection, Archives.*
  - *Scottish Rite Crippled Children’s Home, Atlanta, Georgia, Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives.*

- South Candler Street, looking north, Decatur, Georgia, Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives.

- View of Decatur, Georgia from water tower, December 1981, Guy Hayes Photograph Collection, Archives.

- View of Sycamore Street, Decatur, Georgia, Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives.

- Ponce de Leon Avenue, Looking East, Decatur, Georgia, Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives.

- Public School, Decatur, Georgia, Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives.

- McDonough Street, Looking North, Decatur, Georgia, Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives.

- The 1967 DeKalb County Court House and MARTA station, 1980, Joe Lee Postcard Collection, Archives.

General References


Decatur, Georgia, *Code of Ordinances,* Appendix A. library.municode.com/HTML/12110/level2/PTIICOOR_APXAZO.html


Historic Buildings—Architecture and Design


*House Types in Georgia,* Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources (no date). Available at www.gashpo.org/assets/documents/housetypes.pdf


*Residential Architectural Styles in Georgia from Georgia’s Living Places; Historic Houses in their Landscaped Settings,* Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, 1991. Available at www.gashpo.org/Assets/Documents/NRISearch_20080521100904_optimized.pdf


The American Small House, Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, 2/12/2008. Available only as an electronic publication at www.gashpo.org/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=415


Tax Incentives:

“How to Apply for Tax Incentives,” Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta. (no date). Available at www.gashpo.org, specifically: www.gashpo.org/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=495
15.7 Resources and Contacts

Decatur's historic preservation programs support many activities to preserve communities and neighborhoods in the city. The Decatur Historic Preservation Commission and the City's Preservation Planner are key resources for Decatur building owners. The Commission's work also contributes to:

1. The annual Decatur Design Awards, which recognizes projects that promote preservation and excellence in design in Decatur.

2. In the recent past, the City’s Historic Preservation Commission also organized and co-sponsored the Decatur Old House Fair. This is a one-day conference focused on preserving and maintaining historic residential buildings. (Information from past Fairs is available at www.decaturoldhousefair.com)

Other key resources for Decatur building owners are below and on the following pages.

DeKalb History Center
101 East Court Square
Decatur, Georgia 30030
404.373.1088
404.373.8287 (fax)
www.dekalbhistory.org

The Center collects, preserves and shares the history of DeKalb County, Georgia. The Center's Archives and Museum are located inside the historic Old Courthouse on the Square in downtown Decatur. Decatur residents will find many resources for historic preservation in the Center's Collections. These include books, photographs, newspapers and official DeKalb County records. Their website includes many online aids to help identify materials in their Collection. Please contact the Center’s Archives staff for appointments to use their collections.

Historic Preservation Division
Department of Natural Resources
State of Georgia
254 Washington Street, SW; Ground Level
Atlanta, GA 30334
404-656-2840
404-657-1040
www.gashpo.org

The Historic Preservation Division (HPD) is the recognized State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). It works in partnership with federal and state agencies, local governments, preservation organizations, community groups and individuals to achieve a greater appreciation and use of historic resources in the context of everyday life. Working at the state level, the Historic Preservation Division helps bring together national, regional and local interests to support community and economic development throughout Georgia. Georgia's state preservation program encourages regional and local planning, neighborhood conservation, downtown revitalization, economic development, heritage tourism and archaeological site protection.

The Division maintains a number of services to help residents and owners of historic buildings. These resources include technical assistance to obtain tax credits; a collection of materials on local and state historic resources; and electronic publications that help Georgia residents preserve communities and historic buildings. Many HPD publications are available online.
Local Resources

Decatur Old House Fair
www.decaturoldhousefair.com
An annual celebration of new ideas, practical advice, innovative materials, and quality services for homeowners.

Atlanta Preservation Center
www.preserveatlanta.com
327 Saint Paul Ave. SE Atlanta, GA 30312-3129
404-688-3353
The agency for coordination, knowledge, research and advocacy for preservation in the city of Atlanta.

City of Decatur
Historic Preservation Commission
www.decaturga.com
Established to ensure that renovations and new construction in Decatur’s four local historic districts are consistent with the character of the neighborhood. See page 17 for more information.

City of Decatur Local Historic District Design Guidelines are also available through the City of Decatur’s website: www.decaturga.com.

Decatur Preservation Alliance
www.decaturpreservationalliance.org
P.O. Box 1764, Decatur, GA 30031 / 404-371-4444
Incorporated in 2000 to preserve Decatur’s historic structures and green spaces.

Easements Atlanta
www.easementsatlanta.org
327 St. Paul Ave. Atlanta, GA 30312
404-688-3353 ext 16
A nonprofit organization that accepts historic façade preservation easements in Atlanta and its environs.

Georgia Alliance of Preservation Commissions
www.uga.edu/gapc
Provides support to local historic preservation commissions. The purpose of the alliance is to provide a forum to promote communication between the commissions and help coordinate their efforts throughout the state; to promote and support educational activities that enable preservation commissions to effectively administer local programs and ordinances; and to serve as a public information and educational resource.

Building Trades Directory
www.buildingtradesdir.com
A resource to architects, contractors, guilds and other professionals in the building industry. The directory lists and provides access to members of the building profession and their home pages.

Georgia Archives
sos.georgia.gov/archives
Identifies, selects, preserves, and makes accessible records that constitute Georgia’s recorded history and improves the quality of records and archives management throughout the state.

Georgia Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources
www.gashpo.org
Georgia’s state preservation program encourages the preservation of historic resources through programs and services, including the National Register of Historic Places, tax incentives, grants, project review and compliance, local planning and archaeological site protection and education. Information on Historic Preservation tax incentives can also be found here.

Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation
www.georgiatrust.org
1516 Peachtree St. NW Atlanta, GA 30309
404-881-9980
Georgia’s only statewide nonprofit preservation organization.

National Resources

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
www.achp.gov
Promotes the preservation, enhancement, and productive use of our Nation’s historic resources, and advise the President and Congress on national historic preservation policy.

American Institute for Conservation and Artistic Works (AIC)
aic.stanford.edu
Supports the conservation professionals who preserve our cultural heritage.
The Association for Preservation Technology International  
www.apti.org  
A cross-disciplinary membership organization dedicated to promoting the best technology for conserving historic structures and their settings.

National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT): National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers  
www.ncshpo.org  
The professional association of state government officials who carry out the national historic preservation program as delegates of the Secretary of the Interior pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 USC 470).

National Park Service and Programs  
www.cr.nps.gov  
National Park Service archaeologists, architects, curators, historians, and other cultural resource professionals work to preserve, protect, and share the history of this land and its people.

National Register of Historic Places  
www.nps.gov/history/nr  
The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation’s historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archaeological resources.

National Trust for Historic Preservation  
www.nthp.org  
Private, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to saving historic places and revitalizing America’s communities.

Society for American Archaeology  
www.saa.org  
Expanding understanding and appreciation of humanity’s past as achieved through systematic investigation of the archaeological record. The society leads the archaeological community by promoting research, stewardship of archaeological resources, public and professional education, and the dissemination of knowledge.

Technical Resources

Old House Journal  
www.oldhousejournal.com  
A guide to renovation, restoration and the stylings of old houses.

Old House Network  
www.oldhousenetwork.org  
A nonprofit group of old house lovers, the network teaches people how to care for houses built before 1950 by hosting workshops and seminars.

Preservation Trades Network  
www.iptw.org  
A 501(c)3 nonprofit membership organization founded to provide education, networking and outreach for the traditional building trades.

Society of Architectural Historians  
www.sah.org  
An international not-for-profit membership organization promotes the study and preservation of the built environment worldwide.

Styles in American Architecture  
www.bc.edu  
An illustrated chronology of styles in American architecture.

Technical Preservation Services for Historic Buildings  
www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/index.htm  
Provides the tools and information necessary to take effective measures to protect and preserve historic buildings, ranging from historic masonry and window repairs to lead paint abatement to accessibility for people with disabilities.

This Old House Online  
www.thisoldhouse.com  
Expert advice on home improvement, remodeling, gardening and decorating.

Traditional Building Magazine  
www.traditional-building.com  
A comprehensive resource for historically inspired public architecture.
Additional Non-Profit Organizations

The Oakhurst Community Garden  
www.oakhurstgarden.org  
435 Oakview Rd. Decatur, GA  
404-371-1920  
Teaches environmental awareness through hands-on gardening and outdoor education programs.

Southface Energy Institute  
www.southface.org  
241 Pine St. NE Atlanta, GA 30308  
404-604-3611  
Promotes sustainable homes, workplaces and communities through education, research, advocacy and technical assistance.

Trees Atlanta  
www.treesatlanta.org  
225 Chester Ave. Atlanta, GA 30316  
404-522-4097  
Protecting and improving Atlanta's urban environment by planting, conserving and educating.

Directories

PreservationDirectory.com  
www.preservationdirectory.com  
Online resource for preservation, building restoration and cultural resource management.

PreserveNet  
www.preservenet.cornell.edu  
PreserveNet is designed to provide preservationists with a comprehensive database of regularly updated Internet resources and current professional opportunities.