Old Decatur

Nicholas Cavaliere
Laura Corazzol
Gitisha Goel
Carrie Hutcherson
Rebekah McElreath

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
Cavaliere, Nicholas; Corazzol, Laura; Goel, Gitisha; Hutcherson, Carrie; McElreath, Rebekah; Serafine, Bethany; Spencer, Don; Sullivan, Patrick; and Tankersley, Matt, "Old Decatur" (2006). Heritage Preservation Projects. 34.
https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/history_heritagepreservation/34
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This design guideline manual and accompanying survey document was prepared by graduate students in the Preservation Planning class of the Georgia State University’s Heritage Preservation Program for the proposed Old Decatur Historic District. Over the course of four months, the students worked with their faculty advisors, employees of the City of Decatur and residents of the neighborhood, researching and documenting the built environment of the proposed district and developing a set of recommendations that we hope will work to preserve the unique architectural and historic character of Old Decatur.

The students would like to thank a number of people for their time and assistance on this project: Professors Richard Laub and Mary Ann Eaddy, Planning Services Officer Amanda Thompson of the City of Decatur Development Department, Assistant City Manager Lyn Menne and members of the Decatur Historic Preservation Commission. We would also like to thank the residents of Old Decatur, especially Mary Karwoski, Jay Beard, Lee Beth Burge and Sue Leonard, all of whom provided us with helpful and creative input and a wealth of information about the neighborhood.

Preservation Planning Class - Spring 2006
Georgia State University

Mims Bledsoe
Nicholas Cavaliere
Laura Corazzol
Gitisha Goel
Carrie Hutcherson

Rebekah McElreath
Bethany Serafine
Don Spencer
Patrick Sullivan
Matt Tankersley
# Table of Contents

**Introduction**
- Purpose of Guidelines .................................................. p. 1
- Proposed Old Decatur District Map ..................................... p. 2
- Legal Basis for Historic Preservation in Georgia .................. p. 3
- Decatur Historic Preservation Commission Purpose ............... p. 4
- Obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness ......................... p. 5
- Defining the Proposed District Boundaries ......................... p. 8
- Goals & Objectives of the Design Guidelines ....................... p. 9

**Old Decatur Historic Overview** ...................................... p. 11

**Principles of Preservation and Rehabilitation** .................. p. 16

**Residential Preservation and Rehabilitation** .................... p. 18
- Residential Architectural Building Types ........................ p. 18
- Residential Architectural Building Styles ......................... p. 25
- Residential Character of the Old Decatur Historic District ...... p. 31
- Design Guidelines for Historic Residential Buildings .......... p. 33
  - Residential New Construction ...................................... p. 44
  - Residential Streetscapes and Landscapes ......................... p. 54

**Commercial Preservation and Rehabilitation** .................... p. 64
- Commercial Architectural Types and Styles ........................ p. 64
- Commercial Character of the Old Decatur Historic District ...... p. 67
- Design Guidelines for Historic Commercial Buildings .......... p. 69
  - Commercial New Construction ...................................... p. 79
  - Commercial Streetscapes and Lighting ............................ p. 87

**Community Landmark Buildings** .................................... p. 93
- Community Landmark Buildings Types and Styles ................ p. 93

**Appendices**
- Appendix A - Certificate of Appropriateness Guideline Chart
- Appendix B - Basic Maintenance Advice
- Appendix C - Glossary of Terms
- Appendix D - Secretary of the Interior’s Standards
- Appendix E - Decatur Preservation Ordinance
- Appendix F - Decatur Sign Ordinance
- Appendix G - Web-based Preservation Resources

**Bibliography**

**Contacts**
Purpose of Design Guidelines

As one of the oldest neighborhoods within the city Decatur, Georgia, the district from here on referred to as "Old Decatur" represents many cross-sections of the city's evolution. As far back as 1982, when Decatur issued its "Development Plan, Proposal, and Policies for the Decatur Town Center", citizens were enthusiastic about the potential growth of downtown, but concerned about the future of the city center's one surviving residential neighborhood. The plan notes, "The citizens were sensitive to the one remaining residential area (North Candler and Sycamore Streets) in the downtown and sought its conservation. They looked for opportunities and guidelines for new residential development within the ring road, particularly in the area of Sycamore Street east of the Avondale MARTA Station."¹

In the 20+ years since the city's development plan, Old Decatur has continued to exist without design guidelines, maintaining its eclectic character with a minimum of unsympathetic structures. However, in recent years incompatible residential construction, coupled with increasing commercial pressure on the edges of the district, has prompted concerned residents to nominate Old Decatur as the city's fourth local historic district. The following proposed design guidelines will serve as a uniform set of criteria to evaluate any proposed changes within the Old Decatur district. Ultimately, these guidelines serve to protect the visual qualities of the district's historic and cultural resources.

Graduate students of Georgia State University's Heritage Preservation program developed these design guidelines to assist the city of Decatur and neighborhood residents in the creation and continued preservation of an Old Decatur Historic District. When a local historic district is established, the guidelines should be available to aid neighborhood property owners who may be considering alterations, additions or new construction projects within the district. Additionally, they should be used by the Decatur Historic Preservation Commission in evaluating proposed alterations, additions, or demolitions to historic properties and new construction within the Old Decatur district.

These guidelines will also assist property owners in understanding the unique historic character of the buildings and environment of the Old Decatur district. The guidelines should act as a guide to owners who are faced with decisions about repair, maintenance, rehabilitation and new construction. The following design guidelines should not be viewed as rigid restrictions created to halt all change or to return the district to a prior historical period or style. Instead these guidelines should serve as standards that can guide neighborhood residents in sound design, repair, rehabilitation and preservation practices to reinforce and enhance the existing historic character of the Old Decatur Historic District.

Proposed Old Decatur Historic District Map
Legal Basis for Historic Preservation in Georgia

The Georgia Historic Preservation Act of 1980 authorized cities and counties throughout the state to create historic preservation commissions and enact ordinances "providing for the protection, enhancement, perpetuation, and use of places, districts, sites, buildings, structures, and works of art having a special historical, cultural, or aesthetic interest or value." (Ga. L. 1980, p. 1723, section 2.)
The Decatur Historic Preservation Commission

The Decatur Historic Preservation Commission was established in 1990 by a city of Decatur local ordinance to protect, enhance, and perpetuate structures, districts and elements deemed historic by the city. The commission consists of seven Decatur residents who have experience, education or demonstrated interest in history, architecture or preservation.

Decatur currently has three Local Historic Districts: McDonough-Adams-King's Highway District (1998), the Clairemont Historic District (2001), and Ponce de Leon Court (2006). With varying degrees of regulation in each historic district, homeowners within these districts must apply to and be granted a Certificate of Appropriateness by the commission in order to alter, restore, demolish or move any historic structure or erect any new construction.

In accordance with Ordinance Number A-90-2882-A adopted by the City of Decatur on February 5, 1990, the Decatur Historic Preservation Commission requires obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness before the following take place within a historic district:

1. The exterior architectural features of any existing building or structure are in any way reconstructed, restored, renovated or altered as to material, design or structural appearance;
2. An exterior addition to an existing building or structure is constructed;
3. A new building, exterior structure or appurtenance (including walls, fences, terraces, drives, patios, pools, antennas, solar collectors or similar items) is constructed;
4. The removal or demolition of any building, exterior structure or appurtenance;
5. The painting of any previously unpainted exterior surface, i.e. brick or stone;
6. Preparation of lots to be spaced for parking areas;
7. A change being made in or upon any public street, way or park within or touching upon the boundaries of any Historic District.

Ordinary maintenance generally does not require a COA unless it would alter the exterior of a building. Note that a COA is not needed to change the exterior paint color of a structure.
Old Decatur Design Guidelines

Obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness

All contributing and noncontributing structures within the proposed Old Decatur Historic District would fall under the authority of these design guidelines. While a structure may not necessarily be deemed "contributing", it is important that any ordinance apply to all property in the district so that similar standards apply to all residents. This ensures that if modifications or reconstruction was to occur on any of those properties that any new construction would be sympathetic to the neighborhood's area of influence in mass, scale, size and style.

Design review is undertaken by the Decatur Historic Preservation Commission when a property owner within a historic district wishes to make a material change in appearance visible from the public right of way to any property within the district. With the approval of these major changes to a property, the Commission will issue the property owner with a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). The property owner may then proceed with the approved project.

Section 58-3 of the Decatur City Code defines a Certificate of Appropriate 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."

There is a four-step process to obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness:

Step 1: Determine whether there is a need for a COA
Step 2: Submit an application for a COA to the Decatur Historic Preservation Commission
Step 3: Commission review of the application/Consultation with the property owner/Public hearing upon request
Step 4: Application approved and a Certificate of Appropriateness is issued

OR

Application denied and the owner can revise proposed design and resubmit the application or appeal to the Decatur City Council.

Step 1: Determine the need for a Certificate of Appropriateness

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 Preservation Commission.

By the ordinance, a material change is defined as:

any change that will affect either the exterior architectural or environmental features of a historic
Obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness

property or any building, structure, site, object, landscape feature or work of art within a historic district, such as:

1. A reconstruction or alteration of the size, shape or facade of a historic property, including any doors or windows or removal or alteration of any architectural features, details or elements;
2. Demolition or relocation of a historic structure;
3. Commencement of excavation for construction purposes;
4. A change in the location of advertising visible from a public right-of-way; or
5. 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.

Ordinary maintenance or repair of any exterior architectural feature that does not involve an actual material change in design, material, or outer appearance is excluded from review. This includes painting and all interior changes that do not affect the external appearance of the structure.

Step 2: Submit an application for a COA to the Decatur Historic Preservation Commission

Applications can be obtained at Decatur City Hall. All completed applications should be submitted to the Decatur Historic Preservation Commission. They should be accompanied by drawings, photographs, plans and any other documentation detailing the proposed project.

Step 3: Commission review of the application/Consultation with the property owner/Public hearing upon request.

When reviewing applications the Commission refers to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (see Appendix E) and any of the following factors:

- Historical and architectural significance and value
- Architectural style
- Scale, Setback, and Height
- Landscaping
- Area of Influence

Area of Influence is defined as pertinent features of contributing buildings of like use along a block face.

Applicants should use the expertise of Commission staff as a resource when planning a project.
Obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness

Step 4: Application approved and a Certificate of Appropriateness is issued.

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 modifications.

Construction on the property in question must commence within 12 months of the COA's date of issuance.

OR

Application denied and the owner can make changes to the proposed project and resubmit the application. The property owner also has the option to appeal the decision to the Decatur City Council.

If an application for a COA is denied, the Commission will notify the applicant in writing, giving the reasons why the application was denied.

Applicants are encouraged to make modifications to their plans and resubmit their application at any time.
The proposed Old Decatur Historic District encompasses both residential and commercial areas to the southwest of Decatur's city center. The district 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.
Goals & Objectives of the Design Guidelines

These proposed design guidelines, if adopted should help achieve the following goals:

1. Preserve and retain the historic and visual character of the Old Decatur Historic District.

2. Provide usable and enforceable guidelines for the rehabilitation of historic structures within the district.

3. Protect the existing architecture and historic character of the district while allowing for thoughtful growth and development.

4. Promote appropriate new construction sympathetic to its "area of influence" within the district.
"Old Decatur" developed along the stagecoach route between Atlanta and Augusta, now Sycamore Street, during the first half of the 19th century. The area, which lies along Sycamore Street, Hillyer Place, Sycamore Place, Barry Street, Pate Street, and North Candler Street, boasts an eclectic mix of historic structures that echo the neighborhood's long history. As the oldest residential neighborhood in the city, Old Decatur's past and present infrastructure are intricately tied to the history of the entire city.

As the second oldest municipality within the metropolitan Atlanta region, Decatur was incorporated as a town on December 10, 1823, before even neighboring Atlanta, which was not founded as "Marthasville" until 1843. In fact, Marthaville's namesake, Martha Compton, once lived on Line Street (now Hillyer Place) within the district. James Diamond, a surveyor, platted Decatur on an orthogonal grid (two sets of lines perpendicular to each other). This is a traditional town pattern frequently found in the South.
Originally a Native American trade route, the Sycamore Street stagecoach line passed along the northern border of the district. At the present site of the Sycamore Square Townhomes stood the "Midway" or "Halfway" Inn, which serviced travelers halfway on their journey from Chattanooga, Tennessee to Augusta, Georgia.

With the introduction of the railroad through Decatur in 1833, a depot was built along the track at East Howard Avenue, moving the city's main transportation line from Old Decatur's northern border to the south. With the coming of the railroad, all older, slower modes of transportation were eventually abandoned and Sycamore Street lost most of its importance, though remained the city's main local east/west thoroughfare.

A few structures from this early era in the neighborhood's history still stand. The house at 218 Barry Street dates to 1855, and is considered "one of the oldest structures in DeKalb County." Known as the "Stewart-Roland House", this structure was owned from 1855-1893 by county ordinary and state legislator Mr. John B. Stewart. According to research done in preparation for the nomination as a local historic district, the house was apparently moved 100 yards south on Barry Street in the late 19th century to its current location. The nomination quotes Sanders Roland recalling "a huge crew of workmen descended on our house. They loosened it from its foundation and brought in several big, long logs for rollers. With a strong mule pulling, several men guiding, and several others moving the rollers, they rolled the house down the way and put it on a new foundation on the lower lot."
Old Decatur Historic Overview

With the installation of a new train depot in 1891 and Decatur's post-war economic recovery, commercial development began to spring up along East Howard Avenue with complements of residential construction along Barry Street, North Candler Street and Hillyer Place. Many of Old Decatur's existing residential historic structures were erected during this period of growth, as Decatur took on the status as a commuter suburb to Atlanta. Residents that could afford the fare could take the railroad to and from work in Atlanta.

The namesake of Hillyer Place, originally called "Line Street" because it acted as the town line from 1823 to 1871, was Judge George Hillyer. As a veteran of both Fredericksburg and Gettysburg and a trustee of the University of Georgia, this well-known Atlanta judge had the

3. Ibid.
honor of admitting future President Woodrow Wilson to the Georgia Bar. His home once stood at the corner of Hillyer Place and East Howard Avenue.

Over the course of the 20th century, Old Decatur remained remarkably stable for an area so close to a city center. From examination of plat maps and a 1911 Sanborn map, few property lines have been redrawn and a comparably small number of structures have been torn down. However, the history of the district goes beyond just the neighborhood's structures. Some current residents can trace their family ancestry back nearly 100 years within the neighborhood. As noted in the neighborhood's nomination form, many structures have been passed down through the generations and remain in the same family. The form mentions 220 North Candler Street, which is still owned by the Candler family. This house was located on Sycamore Street before both the Recreation Center and the Murphy Scott Cooper House that preceded it. The small home was moved to its current location on North Candler Street and stands out due to its large setback and orientation. Additionally, the two-story home at 214 Barry Street has been in the Enloe family since 1912 and 136 Barry Street has been in the Garrison family since 1915.

The residential areas of Sycamore, Hillyer, Barry, and North Candler have remained residential, primarily single family homes with the exception of the Spanish Colonial Revival apartment building at 221 Barry Street, erected in the mid-1930s. Many homes on Sycamore were converted to multi-unit rentals in the 1950s and 1960s but have since reverted back to single family dwellings. A small African-American community resided on Pate and on Barry north of Sycamore through the 1930s and 1940s as noted in the City Directories of the period.
Old Decatur Historic Overview

Reflecting the stability of the neighborhood, the small commercial strip located along East Howard Avenue between North Candler Street and Hillyer Place has contained some of Decatur's oldest businesses, such as the Decatur Veterinarian Hospital (308 East Howard Avenue) which dates to at least 1934 and the Dixie Marble and Granite Company which was in business at 318 East Howard from 1930 through the early 1950's. Of particular interest, is the former Palace Hotel (302 East Howard Avenue), built in 1918. By 1930, Lewis Seed Store occupied the building and remained there until the early 1960s when it became a print shop, a craft store, a doll hospital (1984) and a beauty parlor.

Though many homes in the district have long local lineage, the district has seen intrusions that jeopardize its character over the second half of the 20th century. During the 1970s, Sycamore Street homes, from the Square to Sam's Crossing, were threatened and disrupted by the construction of the MARTA underground rail line. The neighborhood rallied through a grassroots organization called "Save Old Sycamore" and was able to prevent a total loss of the neighborhood. Additionally, the completion of Commerce Drive from East Ponce De Leon Avenue to East Howard Avenue altered the character of the neighborhood with the construction of a four-lane road through its eastern border.

Though these intrusions show that Old Decatur has not survived totally unscathed by unsympathetic development, the neighborhood today remains remarkably intact, full of colorful examples of both residential and commercial architecture that span from the city's founding to the present.

Site of the Old Palace Hotel and Lewis Seed Store at 302 East Howard Avenue
Before an owner of a property within the proposed Old Decatur Historic District can make exterior changes to the building facades that are visible from the public view, a CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS (COA) must be obtained from the City of Decatur Historic Preservation Commission prior to granting the building permit for changes or commencing construction (see Obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness, page 5). These design guidelines should serve as a helpful, interpretive and explanatory set of recommendations for Old Decatur neighborhood property owners who are seeking to make repairs and additions to their historic buildings that are in compliance with COA requirements.

In general, most of the recommendation outlines in this manual and required for a COA by the City of Decatur Historic Preservation Commission are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (See Appendix E). According to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, the four classifications used for the management of historic properties are:

**Preservation:** Focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of a property’s form as it evolved over time.

**Restoration:** Depicts property at a particular time in its history, while removing evidence of all other periods.

**Rehabilitation:** Acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property’s historic character.

**Reconstruction:** The act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features, and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure, or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.

Rehabilitation and repair of historic properties are the two most common issues for a property owner in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District. Retaining as much of the historic material and building elements of a structure as possible and adhering to some of the simple following recommendations are two keys to ensuring successful rehabilitation projects.
Residential Architectural Building Types

Determining the architectural type of a residential structure can be easier in many respects than determining its style. However, additions and alterations over time can mask a structure's original form.

As stated in the Georgia Historic Preservation Division's publication "House Types in Georgia," the simplest definition of a house type is "height + floor plan = type." In regards to height, if a residential building is one story it is referred to as a cottage, whereas if it has two stories it is a house. This formula seems straightforward, but oftentimes the core of a building has been altered and the original type can be hidden.

The proposed district is characterized by a variety of house types that span a one hundred year period. However, a few types are more prevalent than others. This reflects the developmental periods of the neighborhood and the economic means of historic residents. The mixture of residential, commercial, and community landmark styles make the proposed Old Decatur district both an invaluable historic resource to the city and an eclectic and picturesque neighborhood. Included in this section are brief descriptions of prevailing house types located within the proposed district.
Queen Anne Cottage and House Type

The Queen Anne Type is the most prevalent house type in the proposed district. The name for this type comes from the Queen Anne Victorian Style usually associated with it. However, as is the case in the proposed district, many Queen Anne houses and cottages do not have Queen Anne stylistic details. This type is characterized by an irregular floor plan and numerous gabled projections to the front and side. Roofs are usually hipped or pyramidal, and chimneys are generally placed within the roofline. Most of these houses were built in the 1880s and 1890s.
The Georgian Cottage and House Type is the second most prevalent type in the proposed district, appearing most frequently along Sycamore Street. The floor plan is symmetrical and massing is square consisting of two rooms separated by a central hallway. Roofs can be hipped or gabled, and chimneys can be interior or exterior. This type is closely associated with Colonial Revival or Neoclassical Revival stylistic elements, but these elements are not always present. Many examples in Georgia were built between 1850 and 1890, but this type was constructed well into the 20th century.
Bungalow House Type

The bungalow is the third most common house type in the proposed district. Similar to the Queen Anne Type, the bungalow is often incorrectly referred to as a style. The bungalow offers irregular floor plans and a general rectangular footprint. Roofs are low and feature wide overhangs, and subtypes of the Bungalow Type are defined by the roof's orientation. Porches are an essential element to the type, usually placed in the front. It was commonly built between 1900 and 1930 in Georgia.
The American Four-Square House was a two-story house type that was popular across the nation in the early 20th century. In Georgia this house type is most often found in urban areas with a few occurring in rural settings. In the proposed district, there are many American Four-Square Houses, on Sycamore, East Howard, North Candler, and Church Streets. The room arrangement consists of four rooms, square in plan, stacked into two stories. Generally, one of the front rooms holds a staircase to the second floor. Roofs are typically pyramidal. The American Four-square House Type was popular within a narrow time period in Georgia, between 1915 and 1930. It appears half as often as the most popular type in the district.
Gabled Ell Cottage House Type

This type goes by several names, including "The Gabled Ell," "The Gable-Front-and-Wing," and "The Gabled Wing." Though this type was one of the most prevalent house types built in Georgia in the late-19th century, there are only a few in the proposed district. The floor plan is either an "L" shape or a "T" shape. Characteristically, the facade has both a front gable and a side-gabled wing, with the wing being set back from the front gabled portion. The front door of a Gabled Ell cottage is usually located on this recessed wing.

203 North Candler Street

Gabled Ell House Type Plan
New South Cottage House Type

The only New South cottages in the proposed district exist along North Candler Street and Barry Street. Resembling Queen Anne cottages by virtue of gabled projections and a hipped roof, the New South cottage is differentiated for its generally symmetrical floor plan. The projecting bays of the New South type usually extend toward the front and rear, with pairs of rooms arranged around a central hallway. This house type was constructed between the 1890s and 1920s and named for the turn-of-the-century period of prosperity experienced in the southeastern United States.

New South Cottage House Type Plan
Residential architectural style is something easily recognized but not easily defined. There are obvious arranged elements such as exterior ornamentation and decoration that can exemplify a historic period. The more subtle elements of style are proportion, scale, mass, and symmetry. Additionally, the interplay of solids, voids, height, depth, width, and construction materials contribute to the architectural style of a house.

Residential architectural style is closely tied to the era in which a house is built. Style can entail a broad spectrum of elements. A house can represent a high style or simply incorporate elements of a style. Architectural styles go through periods of revival, which sometimes makes determining a house's age difficult.

Complexity defines the architectural styles of the residences located within the proposed Old Decatur Historic District. Because the proposed district developed over a long period of time, numerous architectural styles have been incorporated into the neighborhood. The most prevalent styles are Craftsman, Neoclassical Revival, Colonial Revival, Folk Victorian, and Queen Anne Victorian. These styles are summarized in this section.
The Craftsman Style was built in Georgia from the 1910s through the 1930s. Although entire neighborhoods of Craftsman Style are common, the proposed district has this style intermingled with other styles. This style is the most prevalent style in the proposed district.

The Craftsman Style house uses a wide variety of materials both for its structure and decorative detailing. It has a low-pitched roof that is usually gabled but may also be hipped, giving a generally horizontal effect. The wide overhanging eaves feature exposed rafters. Large gables have decorative brackets at the eaves and may be covered with half-timbering. Roof dormers are sometimes found. Walls are most often wood but may also be covered with shingles or a masonry veneer of stone or brick. Porches have short square columns set on heavy masonry piers. Windows may have a multi-paned sash over a large one-pane sash. Craftsman houses are most often asymmetrical with a generally open and functional plan. The Craftsman Style is closely associated with the Bungalow House Type; however, it was popular as ornamentation for many different house forms.

Drawing courtesy of McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses
Neoclassical Revival architecture was popular in Georgia between the 1890s and 1930s. Most of the examples within the proposed district are located on Sycamore Street.

The most prominent feature of the Neoclassical Revival Style is the presence of broad, full-height columns supporting a classically styled pediment. Symmetry is often stressed in the Neoclassical Revival Style, focusing on a central entrance decorated with columns or pilasters and sidelights. Porches are full-height and often feature a prominent cornice with dentils. Roofs can be gabled or hipped and are generally low-pitched. A porte-cochere to the side of the house is common. Windows are double-hung sash with six or nine panes in each sash.

Drawing courtesy of McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*
Colonial Revival Style is also called Georgian Revival Style in Georgia, where it was a popular style from the 1890s through the 1940s. Though generally associated with the Georgian House Type, many Colonial Revival stylistic elements are used in other buildings or added after construction.

This architectural style stressed symmetry and simple detailing as those used in the first houses constructed in America. A central entrance-way is elaborated with a pediment supported by pilasters or columns. The use of broken pediments, fan lights, and sidelights is common. Classical cornices with dentils or modillions are usually present. The roof may be hipped or side-gabled with dormers. Windows have double-hung sashes, usually with six-over-six or nine-over-nine panes, and may be paired. Wall surfaces can feature masonry, masonry-veneer, or wood siding.

Within the proposed district, many houses are in the Colonial Revival Style or have elements of this style. It is especially prevalent on Sycamore Street.
Folk Victorian Style

This style was prevalent in Georgia in the late 19th century and extended into the first decade of the 20th century. Detailing on Folk Victorian houses is very subtle. Elements are often taken from other styles like Queen Anne. Many times these elements were added to the roofs of porches and gables. Details included jigsaw wood work, spindle work, porch posts, and other gingerbread wood detailing. Folk Victorian elements are often incorporated into new construction as noted at 122 Barry Street.
Queen Anne Style

Though commonly found on Queen Anne Houses or Cottages, many Queen Anne stylistic details were used with other house types as well. The Queen Anne Style is characterized by a variety of textures, details, and materials. Most houses in this style have a one story front porch that enhances the building’s asymmetry, and is supported by thin posts decorated with "gingerbread" or carved wooden details. The roof line is also asymmetrical with multiple gables, and portions which are hipped. It is common for a Queen Anne House to feature a corner tower. Chimneys are often elaborate, and windows are usually one pane over one pane double hung sash. Queen Anne Victorian is present in the proposed district on Sycamore Street and Barry Street.

Drawing courtesy of McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*
Residential Character of Old Decatur

The proposed Old Decatur Historic District is the city's oldest surviving neighborhood and with the exception of a few changes still maintains much of its historic character. Old Decatur's long and unique history is reflected in its residential character through the variety of styles and types of dwellings found throughout the district. Each individual street has its own distinct styles and types. Queen Anne houses can be found adjacent to Colonial Revival homes on Sycamore while Craftsman bungalows are across the street from Folk Victorian Gabled Ells on Barry Street. Every street within the district reveals a wealth of information about the working class and affluent residents of one of the oldest residential areas in Decatur, both past and present. Despite the variety of types and styles, the neighborhood maintains a sense of cohesiveness through the presence of tree-lined sidewalks and similar massing, scale, and setback on each street. Together the residences give an eclectic and picturesque character to Old Decatur.

The north-south running streets (Barry, North Candler, and Hillyer Place) contain cottage house types and bungalows from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The historic homes located on these streets range in style from Folk Victorian, Queen Anne, Craftsman, to Colonial Revival with house types including gabled ells, Queen Anne cottages, New South Cottages, and bungalows. These types and styles are often found intermixed along the street. As one travels down the streets, front yards create a sense of visual continuity due to their similar depth and spacing. Setbacks range between approximately 15 and 30 feet. Adding to the visual continuity, the one-story houses are similar in mass and scale.

The 1943 Spanish Colonial Revival historic apartment building located on North Candler is a novel addition to the street. The building's style of brick parapets and Spanish tile roof add to the neighborhood's diverse character. While the apartment building's style of architecture and scale may be thought of as out of place in the district, it contributes through a similar setback as the street's single-family dwellings. Additionally, the apartments are distanced from the single-family homes by a side garden so not to overshadow their presence in the neighborhood. The apartment building continues the pedestrian-friendly nature of the neighborhood with its sidewalks and landscaping similar to single-family dwellings.
Residential Character of Old Decatur

The homes along Sycamore Street are larger, mostly two-story structures dating from the early 20th century. These homes range in styles from Queen Anne, Craftsman, Colonial Revival, and Italianate with house types including Queen Anne House, Georgian House, American Four Square and Bungalow. Like the north-south streets of the neighborhood, the styles and types are intermixed along Sycamore. Due to the larger scale and massing of homes on Sycamore, the setbacks are much larger than those on the north-south streets, ranging between approximately 30 and 50 feet. Like the north-south streets, the similar depth of front yards creates a sense of visual cohesion.

Historic residences on both the north-south streets and Sycamore Street have common characteristics that add to the residential character of the district including building materials, entranceways, and porches. Building materials on historic homes include wood, brick, and stone, while foundation materials are comprised of brick and stone. Most residential entranceways are oriented to the street, which adds to the pedestrian-friendly quality of the district. The entranceways are similarly spaced along each street contributing to the sense of visual continuity. These entranceways are defined on almost all historic homes by porches, porticos, and stoops. These features add a one-story element to the fronts of buildings.

Landscape features such as driveways, sidewalks, and fences are present throughout the proposed district. The majority of the homes have driveways on the side of homes leading to a rear parking area. Driveway materials used in the neighborhood are poured concrete, gravel, and dirt. Fences, while not consistent in the neighborhood, do exist on a couple properties. Fence materials consist of wood and metal. Fences in the front yards of properties make sure not to obstruct the view of the house and yard from the street. Sidewalks lined with mature trees located on both sides of all district streets combined with rear parking areas and unobtrusive fences help maintain the pedestrian-friendly nature of Old Decatur.

Old Decatur's variety of historic architectural styles and types of residences blend together to create an eclectic character that is both visually interesting and inviting. The presence of the landscape features in combination with the consistent setbacks and massing of homes throughout the district creates a neighborhood that calls for long walks down its streets. Old Decatur's many unique residential characteristics mingle together leading to a community feel with an eclectic character.
Residential Preservation and Rehabilitation

Exterior materials and features are important components that help to define the architectural style and period of a house and enhance the historic character of the neighborhood. For this reason, there are a few basic but essential preservation principles that should be kept in mind when conducting any repair or rehabilitation project involving historic building materials of residential properties in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District.

Recommendations

- When cleaning or repairing historic exterior materials, it is important to always use the gentlest methods and means possible.
- Preserve, maintain and repair rather than replace historic building materials. Architectural features and details of a historic building should not be removed or altered.
- If replacement of historic materials is necessary, they should be replaced with like materials and design or with visually similar materials.
- Missing contributing features should be reconstructed based on physical, pictorial or historical evidence.
- New ornamentation, details and other materials not compatible with the period and style of historic buildings in the Old Decatur neighborhood are not appropriate.
- Historic materials and features should not be covered with vinyl, aluminum, stucco or other synthetic materials.
There are a number of brick veneer buildings in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District and brick and stone foundations, porch piers and chimneys are common on almost all of the historic houses in the neighborhood. These masonry features should be retained and preserved. If repair or replacement of historic masonry is necessary, the color, shape, size and visual appearance of the material should match the original as closely as possible.

Recommendations

- Maintain all masonry veneer, piers, chimneys and architectural features. Repair damaged masonry to match existing historic materials in shape, size and color.
- Repointing of mortar should match the historic mortar in width, depth, color, composition and texture. The use of Portland cement or other hard mortars for repointing of older masonry is damaging to the historic material and not appropriate.
- Do not paint or waterproof unpainted brick.
- Do not apply stucco, cement or other synthetic material over existing masonry.
- Do not use artificial materials imitating stone or brick.
- Never clean brick or stone using sandblasting.
Wood Material

Clapboard wood siding is the most common exterior surface material found on houses in Old Decatur and therefore, a primary element contributing to the visual character of the neighborhood. Wood shingles are also used, primarily as decorative features in the gable wall-surface patterns of the many Queen Anne, Folk Victorian and Craftsman Style houses located throughout the neighborhood.

Recommendations

- Historic wood siding and shingles should be maintained.
- If necessary, repair or replace damaged siding with material that matches the reveal width, thickness, texture, placement and design of the historic material.
- Introduction of new wood features incompatible in size, scale, material is not recommended.
- Historically painted surfaces should not be stripped to bare wood or have clear finishes or stains applied to them.
- The removal of synthetic siding such as aluminum, asbestos and vinyl and restoration of historic wood siding is highly encouraged but not required.
Porches and Decks

Porches are important architectural design elements and are often the focal point on historic homes in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District. In addition to providing visual interest to a house, they also influence its perceived scale, protect entrances and provide shade and shelter. Many of the porches on houses located along the Sycamore Street corridor and on some of the Craftsman style bungalows dispersed throughout the neighborhood are full width and extend across the entire front of the building. Other examples of wraparound, side and rear service porch types can be found on many of the historic houses fronting Barry, Church and North Candler Streets.

Recommendations

- Front and side facade porches should be maintained in the historic configuration and with their historic material and detailing.
- Where necessary, replace missing posts, railings and other decorative features in kind.
- If the historic porch is missing, a new porch should be accurately reconstructed based on photographic or physical evidence.
- Avoid using materials not typical to the neighborhood. Porch columns of aluminum or wrought iron are not appropriate for front porches.
- Decks should be located to the rear of the house and not visible from the public right of way.
Porch Enclosure

- Do not enclose an historic front porch with opaque materials.
- Screen material may be acceptable as long as it maintains transparency. Framing of the screening material should be set behind the porch columns and balustrades.
- Rear decks and porches may be enclosed with screening material when not readily visible from the street.
Foundations

Most Old Decatur houses along Barry Street, North Candler Street and Hillyer Place have foundations of continuous brick or brick piers with brick infill, stone or concrete. A few of the houses along Sycamore Street have granite foundations. Repointing and repair of residential foundations should follow the masonry guidelines.

Recommendations

- Foundations between existing piers should be filled in as traditional for the type and style of the house. Infill with concrete block and stucco may be considered.

- The infill should be recessed behind the existing piers and should allow for significant ventilation under the structure.

- Foundations of brick may be painted if the brick and/or mortar is mismatched or inappropriately repaired.

Appropriate foundation infill at 216 North Candler Street

Pierced brick infill at 130 Hillyer Place

Do not cover foundation masonry with concrete or stucco
Old Decatur Design Guidelines

Windows

Traditional window styles and their architectural configuration on historic houses greatly contribute to the building's appearance. Many windows in Old Decatur are double or single-hung sash, casement and fixed single pane. 2/1, 4/4 and 6/6 are three of the most common light configurations.

Recommendations

- Windows should be preserved in their historic location, size and design and with their historic materials, number of lights and panes and shutters.
- Damaged windows should be repaired rather than replaced.
- Avoid using shutters of vinyl construction in the Old Decatur Historic District.
- If necessary, replacement windows should keep with the architectural style and period of the house.
- Oddly shaped windows, such as fanlights, octagons, circles, and diamonds are not compatible to the residential architectural styles found in Old Decatur and should not be used.
There is a wide variety of historic door types and designs found in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District. In general, the predominant doors and entranceways of most houses are defined by the structure’s architectural style.

**Recommendations**

- Historic front and side entry doors and/or their surrounds, sidelights, transoms and hardware should be retained and not be altered.
- If a deteriorated door must be replaced, the new door and surround should be similar to the original in design and materials.
- New doorways should not be added to the front or side facades.
- Screen doors and storm doors should be compatible with existing doors in shape, size, color and appearance.
Roofs

Hipped, gabled and pyramidal are just a few of the many different roof types found on the residential buildings in Old Decatur. Preservation and maintenance of these various roof types of the Queen Anne, Craftsman and Folk Victorian style houses are important and contribute to the unique historic character of the proposed Old Decatur district.

**Recommendations**

- Historic roofs should be preserved in size, shape and pitch with historic features (such as brackets, cresting, and chimneys) and roof material.

- Unique historic roof materials such as tile, metal slates should be repaired and preserved. If repair is not practical, replacement in kind or with asphalt shingles may be acceptable.

- Structures should not have new dormers introduced on front roof facades. Dormers added at the rear of the facade, or where they are not visible from the public right of way are appropriate.

- The addition of decks, balconies, skylights and solar collectors that are visible from the public right of way are not recommended.

- Historic gutters and downspouts should be maintained or replaced with visually similar materials appropriate to the style and period of the house.
Chimneys

Many of the chimneys on historic homes in the Old Decatur neighborhood feature decorative brickwork and designs that greatly contribute to the building’s character. For many of the late 19th and early 20th century architectural styles, the location of the chimney is an important contributing element and should not be altered or removed.

Recommendations

- Chimneys should be maintained and preserved in accordance with the recommendations outlined in the Masonry Material section, page 34).
- If a chimney must be rebuilt due to instability or deterioration, the shape, size, design and material should match in historic design, location and material composition.
- The application of stucco veneer or other siding material over existing historic chimney masonry materials is not appropriate.
Mechanical Systems and Service Areas

Mechanical Systems that serve a property may include air conditioning and heating units, telephone and electrical lines, ventilation systems, fire protection, telecommunication and alarm systems. Service areas include loading areas and storage areas for trash, recycling containers, firewood, and site maintenance equipment.

Recommendations

- Minimize the visual impact of mechanical systems and service areas. If possible, locate these units at the rear of the building where they are not visible from the street.
- Systems may be located at areas on the side facades of a structure provided they are adequately screened from view.
- Mounted window air conditioning units are not appropriate for residences in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District and are discouraged. If necessary, installation should not result in the removal or replacement of the historic window materials or be visible from the street.
- Rooftop mechanical equipment, satellite dishes and solar collectors should not be immediately visible from the public right of way.
New residential construction within Old Decatur should reference historic styles and types, yet still be a product of the time when the new structure was built. New construction should also match existing buildings in scale and mass in order not to overwhelm smaller historic structures.

Design goals:
- Compliment historic structures by matching scale and form
- Keep historic features of the block face consistent
- Match height, orientation and setback of historic houses on block face
- Use traditional building materials such as brick and wood siding
Additions to Residential Buildings

Additions to residential buildings may be necessary to expand a historic home with a small floor plan. Many buildings within Old Decatur have expanded their buildings. As a rule, additions should be placed to the rear of the property and should complement the existing structure.

Recommendations:

- New additions should be placed away from the front facade of the building.
- New additions should be compatible with the design and scale of the historic building and should also use similar materials.
- New additions should have a design that clearly differentiates it from the historic building in order to avoid the creation of a false sense of history.
- New additions should be created so that a minimal amount of historic material will be damaged, destroyed, or obscured.
- Historic additions and/or alterations should be preserved if they have gained significance in their own right.
- Rooftop additions are discouraged.
Outbuildings

Many outbuildings located within Old Decatur are detached garages or carports located behind the main house. Outbuildings may be utilized for storage or workspace. If outbuildings are visible from the right of way, they should be compatible with the home in scale and design. Most outbuildings within the proposed district are made of wood construction with wood or vinyl siding.

Recommendations

• Garages, sheds, or other outbuildings that are original to the property, or have gained historic significance in their own right should be preserved.

• Rehabilitation of outbuildings should follow the residential design guidelines outlined previously in this section.

• The location of a new outbuilding should be placed towards the rear of the property and should be compatible in scale (the outbuilding should not be larger than the home) and design with the historic building.
Building Setback

An essential element to the character of the proposed Old Decatur Historic District is the established distance that residential homes stand from the street. This feature is often referred to as the building’s “setback”. A consistent building setback along a street provides an uninterrupted view of the house and yards and provides a sense of visual permanence. Setback within the Old Decatur neighborhood varies from block to block. Most streets like Barry Street and North Candler have smaller setback distances, 20 to 30 feet, as well as smaller lot sizes. Sycamore Street, on the other hand, has a larger setback from the street, 40 to 50 feet, and larger lot sizes.

Recommendations

- The setback of a new building should be compatible with the historic buildings in its area of influence.
- Setback should be ± 10% of the setback distance of each house within its area of influence, which is defined as the historic structures located within the block face of the new construction.
Building Mass and Scale

It is important that new construction maintain continuity within the Old Decatur district by respecting the size of historic buildings around it. New houses should be constructed in a manner that respects the smaller sized houses on streets like Barry Street and North Candler. New construction on Sycamore Street should match the size of existing houses as well, yet new construction could be larger in scale.

Recommendations

- New buildings should match the scale, massing, setback, height and street orientation of existing buildings in their area.
- Most buildings within the Old Decatur Historic District are single-family residential. New buildings should continue to add to the pedestrian-friendly environment of many streets within the district.
- Massing and scale of new buildings should be compatible with the existing residential buildings and should be no taller than the tallest and no shorter than the shortest structures within the area of influence.
- The scale of a building should relate to and respect its lot size and placement.

The mass and scale of the new construction at 122 Barry Street matches the other buildings within its area of influence.

Inappropriate scale of infill development
The flow and rhythm of historic houses within Old Decatur should be preserved, and new construction should be compatible with the height of existing buildings. An example of this would be the Sycamore Street corridor, where most houses are two stories in height; therefore, it would be inappropriate to build a small, one-story house on this street.

**Recommendations**

- Foundation height for new construction should be compatible with adjacent structures.
- New construction in residential areas must have foundation heights of at least 1 foot above grade on the primary facade.
- Slab on grade house construction is inappropriate for the Old Decatur neighborhood and are discouraged.
- Brick construction must have the foundation level delineated through some type of belt course.
- New construction should be compatible with adjacent structures in floor to ceiling heights.
Old Decatur Design Guidelines

Building Types and Styles

Old Decatur has an eclectic mix of house types and styles. Many house styles are Craftsman or Queen Anne, and predominant types include Bungalow and Queen Anne Cottage. New construction should reference the architectural types and styles historically found within the district.

Recommendations

- New buildings should follow historic architectural styles and details; however, they also should be a product of their time and distinguishable as contemporary construction.

- The form of a new building should be similar to those traditionally found in the Old Decatur Historic District (see Residential Architectural Types and Styles, page 18).

- One simple form should be the dominant element in a building design.

- Building forms that step down in scale to the rear of the lot are encouraged.

- Traditional roof forms should be utilized. Gabled and hipped roofs are appropriate; exotic roof forms that detract from the visual continuity from the street are not appropriate.

- The number and size of dormers should be limited on a roof in order for the primary roof to remain prominent.

These three examples of new residential construction adhere to the style and scale of the Old Decatur Historic District.
Building materials most commonly found within Old Decatur include brick and clapboard (wood) siding. It is important for new construction to include historic building materials that complement the historic character of the district. New materials such as metal or vinyl siding will detract from the integrity of the district.

Recommendations

- The use of materials that are similar to those traditionally used on historic houses in the Old Decatur neighborhood is encouraged for all new construction. Traditional materials include clapboard wood siding, wood shingles, brick and cut stone and granite.

- New buildings may utilize contemporary materials, such as smooth faced cementitious siding, as long as they are visually compatible with surrounding historic buildings within the district. Vinyl and aluminum siding are discouraged.

- Metal siding, mirrored windows, polished metals, stacked stone and river rock are inappropriate materials for the proposed Old Decatur Historic District.

- The size, shape and texture of masonry should appear similar to that used on historic houses along the block face.

New residential structures should utilize traditional building materials that are found in the district, such as wood clapboard, shingle and brick.
Fenestration

The historic patterns of solids to voids should be replicated in new construction in order to keep the historic integrity of the block face in tact. Inappropriate window sizes and types detract from the architectural value of the block face. Most windows within the district are double hung sash windows, and the majority of homes within the district have one front door.

Recommendations

- Window size and arrangement should match existing historic houses within the district.
- The solids (walls) to voids (windows and doors) ratio should be similar to historic configurations.
- New residential construction should have single pane, double-hung or casement windows with true divided lights. Windows with snap-in grid systems are not appropriate in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District.

The fenestration pattern on this new construction would be inappropriate for the Old Decatur neighborhood.

Snap-in grid system vinyl windows are inappropriate for new residential construction.
Demolition and Relocation of Historic Structures

The demolition of historic houses within Old Decatur is discouraged because historic houses that are unique to the district can never be recreated with the same integrity.

Recommendations

• Historic buildings should not be demolished.

• A building or structure should not be relocated out of the proposed historic district if the building retains its architectural and historic integrity.

• Historic buildings should not be relocated from one location to another within the district unless the building would otherwise be demolished and relocation could save the structure.

• If a building is relocated from one location to another within the district, the site and setting of the relocated building should be similar to the historic site and setting of the building.

• The relocation of historic buildings into the historic district may be appropriate and will be subjected to the same guidelines as new construction.
Numerous environmental features contribute to the historic character of an urban residential landscape. Elements such as retaining walls, the presence or absence of fences, sidewalks, vegetation within yards, and the location of parking areas all add to the personality of the proposed Old Decatur Historic District. An additional aspect to the preservation of a historic landscape is the maintenance and promotion of a pedestrian-friendly streetscape. Mature trees, shrubs, and architectural features provide a variety of interest for foot-traffic rather than automobile-based traffic.
In areas where the street grade is considerably lower than the grade of house lots retaining walls provide decorative transitions from the public expanse of the sidewalk to the more private zones of the front yard and porch. Approximately sixteen percent of the properties within the Old Decatur neighborhood have some form of retaining wall. These walls are composed of brick, rough granite stone, and concrete slab. A majority of the properties possessing retaining walls contribute directly to the historic character of Old Decatur.

Recommendations

- Preserve historic retaining walls. If historic retaining walls need repair, they should be replaced with like materials.
- Pointing, height, and width should remain consistent with the historic appearance and form.
- If deterioration occurs, replace only the portions that are deteriorating with like materials.
- The use of paint or stucco to cover a wall surface is not appropriate.
- Reduce pressure on retaining walls by improving drainage behind them. Drains in the wall should allow moisture to pass freely.
- The construction of new retaining walls should incorporate historic materials. Brick and rough granite stone are the most prevalently used in the proposed district and are considered appropriate for new construction.
Fences can define house lots, create private space, add to security, and play a decorative role on a property. Fences, however, are not a prevalent site feature in the front yards of properties contributing to the historic character of Old Decatur. Approximately five percent of the contributing properties within the Old Decatur neighborhood employ fencing in the front yard. In many instances, fencing is found in the front of noncontributing properties. Historic fencing, when used in front of contributing properties, consists of white wood pickets. These fences need to be maintained using existing materials, while new fencing should be erected in the backyards of houses and should not impact front facades and sight lines.

Recommendations

- If present, historic fences should be preserved with historic materials.
- Surfaces should remain painted to protect against the elements.
- If deterioration occurs, replace only the portions that are deteriorating with like materials.
- Fencing may be used to define a rear yard. New fencing should be constructed at a setback of 10 feet from the front facade. New fencing should not stand flush with the front facade.
- Rear fencing should not exceed 6 feet in height.
Vegetation, especially mature trees, is one of the most significant features of the neighborhood. Residential flora provides screening material that creates borders between public/private areas and between properties and is character-defining feature of the district. The present broad pattern of vegetation within the proposed Old Decatur Historic District consists of mature trees with a sparse understory, coupled with expansive grass lawns on lots with a width greater than 86 feet. On lots with a width less than 86 feet, the homes are surrounded with numerous mature trees of varying height punctuated with planting beds and lawn plots. This pattern enhances the pedestrian nature of the neighborhood. Retaining a planting pattern consistent with the existing one is essential to maintain historic character. This process involves the preservation of mature trees whenever possible or, when trees are to be impacted, replacing specimens with the same or similar variety.
Trees and Lawns

The historic pattern of vegetation in yards should be maintained along streets. Front yards should complement one another, creating continuity between yards. The maintenance of the mature tree stock of the neighborhood is one of the most important means of preserving the historic landscape.

Recommendations

Trees
- Mature trees should not be removed unless they pose a safety risk or are in risk of spreading disease.
- If trees are removed, they should be replaced with like specimens with similar maturity sizes.
- If a tree cannot be replaced in its original location any remaining stump will need to be removed to ground surface.

Lawns
- Grass lawns in the front yards are of importance, especially down the Sycamore Street corridor.
- The use of hard surface paving for patios, terraces or drives in a front yard is not appropriate and out of character with the historic landscape.
Gardening and Landscaping

In planning new landscaping projects, use materials that are compatible with the historic context and are suited for the Decatur’s climate.

Recommendations

- Avoid planting too close to a structure. This could damage architectural features or building foundations and cause moisture retention near the foundation.

- Avoid garden ornaments and sculpture which are incompatible with the style, scale, and materials of the building. The use of landscaping lumber or railroad ties is inappropriate.

- Use and incorporate native trees, shrubs and wildflowers in design plans. Exotic invasive plant species such as Privet, English Ivy and Japanese Honeysuckle should be avoided.

- Screening plants should be a sufficient size and number to accomplish the desired coverage year-round. Ground covers and flowering perennials are not appropriate screening plants.

- Clear-cutting existing stands of vegetation with the intent to replant after construction is inappropriate.
Sidewalks

Sidewalks are essential areas of public, pedestrian interaction. Entry walkways, in turn, should provide a well-designed transition from public to private spaces. Concrete slab is the primary historic material used in sidewalks in this portion of Decatur and should be used when repairing and constructing sidewalks. The historic orientation of sidewalks should be maintained when constructing and repairing, as well.

Recommendations
- Preserve significant sidewalk features and maintain historic sidewalk alignment.
- If deterioration occurs, replace only the portions that are deteriorating with like materials.
- Historic granite curbs should be preserved and reused after street work projects are completed.
- New sidewalks should be compatible in scale, material and alignment with historic sidewalks.

Sidewalk along North Candler Street

Concrete slab and granite curbing are appropriate materials for sidewalks on all streets in Old Decatur
Walkways have historically been ornamented entrance ways leading visitors from the public spaces of the streets edge to the private space of the front porch or doorway. Walkways within the proposed Old Decatur Historic District feature a greater variety of building materials. The most frequently used materials are concrete hex-pavers, brick, and concrete slab. The general pattern of orientation for walkways is perpendicular to the street, running from the sidewalk to the front door. Sycamore Street features more walkways parallel to the street leading from the front door to the driveway. Historic materials and orientation should be maintained if walkways are to be constructed or repaired.

**Recommendations**

- Walkways should be maintained in their historic scale and with historic materials.
- If deterioration occurs, replace only the portions that are deteriorating with like materials.
- Brick, concrete hex-paver, or concrete slab are recommended materials when constructing a new walkway.
- The orientation of the walkway should be congruent with the houses within its area of influence.

*Appropriate walkway materials for the Old Decatur neighborhood*
Parking

Cars were not a factor in the founding of Old Decatur. However, over time they have become an integral part of the urban landscape. Inappropriate placement and design of parking could have a negative impact on the historic character of the neighborhood. To promote the established pedestrian-nature of Old Decatur, the visual impact of automobile parking should be minimized. This is accomplished by maintaining the historic pattern parking placement in the rear of house lots in detached structures. Driveways should be maintained in the pattern of orientation and size established by the contributing structures within the area of influence. Most driveways are typically composed of concrete slab and are situated to one side of the house. These driveways lead straight to rear parking areas.

Recommendations

- Parking areas and structures are to be located to the rear or side of buildings. Incorporation of a garage or carport into the front facade of a house is inappropriate.

- Garages, parking pads, and carports should be situated to the rear of the house.

- Historic driveway alignment, at one side of the house, should be maintained.

- The driveway should lead straight from the street to the parking area. The construction of circular driveways and parking pads in the front yard is inappropriate.
Commercial Architectural Types and Styles

The presence of commercial building types in the proposed Old Decatur district adds to the small community character of the neighborhood. The commercial buildings have provided valuable resources and services to Decatur residents since the early 20th century. Two distinct types of buildings exist throughout the proposed district: retail and office and single retail. The following are brief descriptions of these types.

![Commercial and mixed-use areas of Old Decatur](image_url)
The single retail type is a single unit that was built to stand alone or in a series of units. This type of commercial building was built in all size towns from the 1880s to the 1950s. These units usually had a sloping or flat roof and three-bay facades, often large display windows and central door. Single unit retail types could be used for a variety of commercial purposes. In Old Decatur these units range from restaurants, veterinary offices, and automobile services.
The combination retail and office type was built in the 1880s through the 1930s. This commercial type was built as a single unit or in a series of units. This type was typically 2-4 stories high with a flat or sloped roof. Like the single unit the lower level facade often had three-bays. The lower level of these units often functioned as retail space while the upper floors served as rental office spaces. In Old Decatur the only existing retail and office space unit, 302 E Howard Avenue, once served as a hotel on the second floor and today as retail on the lower and office on the upper.

302 East Howard Avenue
Commercial Character of Old Decatur

Old Decatur is a unique neighborhood within the city, as it includes both businesses and restaurants within its district. The presence of these businesses creates a sense of community through their use by local residents who can walk to commercial resources. Like the residential character of Old Decatur, the commercial character is created through an eclectic mix of commercial styles and periods. The Old Decatur Historic District developed mostly in response to the presence of the railroad which still runs along East Howard Avenue. The depot building on East Howard, built in 1891, was constructed with Stick Style elements. A few of the remaining buildings on East Howard reflect late 19th and early 20th century commercial styles associated with a railroad development. An example of one of these buildings is 302 E Howard Avenue, which originally served as a hotel for rail travelers. Many of the commercial buildings along East Howard are aligned immediately at the sidewalk edge giving the area a pedestrian-friendly quality. In most cases similar entry ways are evenly spaced along the block. These entrances are also typically recessed from the sidewalk edge further contributing to the sense of visual continuity.

Moving east along East Howard, the styles of commercial buildings begin to change to mid-20th century styles (i.e. International). These later period commercial buildings have larger setbacks from the street of approximately 10 feet. An example of one of these later commercial buildings is Spencer’s Tire Company at 402 E Howard Avenue. Commercial buildings occur throughout the district in less linear patterns than on East Howard. One of the most significant commercial buildings interspersed within the neighborhood is 333 Commerce Drive, a modern style bus station from 1965 that has been converted into a restaurant.

Building materials used in the historic commercial buildings include brick, wood, stucco and concrete block. Many windows on commercial buildings are fixed, single-pane windows in keeping with the commercial styles of the buildings. Parking is located on the street or on the side of most commercial buildings. In some cases, parking is found directly in front of the building.

Community landmark buildings, like commercial buildings, exist throughout the district in a variety of styles. The landmark buildings' presence in the district contributes to the sense of community that exists in the neighborhood, by giving residents important public resources within
Commercial Character of Old Decatur

walking distance. Two historic churches found in the district are executed in Gothic Revival (First Presbyterian Church) and Romanesque (Decatur First United Methodist Church) Styles. Government building designs also vary, including the International (Decatur Recreation Center) and Neoclassical Revival (Decatur Library) Styles.

Similar to residential properties in the proposed district, landscape features including sidewalks and fences are common elements of commercial and institutional buildings. Fences are often made of wood or metal and do not block the view of the building from the street. While setbacks are much larger in the institutional and later commercial buildings (approximately 40 to 70 feet), sidewalks and the presence of street trees help the district maintain pedestrian-friendly environment.
Commercial Preservation and Rehabilitation

Exterior materials and features are important components that help to define the architectural style and period of a commercial building and enhance the historic character of the neighborhood. For this reason, there are a few basic but essential preservation principles that should be kept in mind when conducting any repair or rehabilitation project involving historic building materials of commercial properties in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District.

**Recommendations**

- When cleaning or repairing historic exterior materials, it is important to always use the gentlest methods and means possible.
- Preserve, maintain, and repair rather than replace historic building materials. Architectural features and details of a historic building should not be removed or altered.
- If replacement of historic materials is necessary, they should be replaced with like materials and design or with visually similar materials.
- Synthetic materials such as vinyl, aluminum and imitation brick are not appropriate as replacement materials for commercial buildings in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District.
- Do not cover or obscure historic facade materials. If historic materials are presently covered, consider exposing them.
Brick and mortar veneer is the most common exterior material found on commercial buildings within the proposed Old Decatur Historic District. While masonry is among the most durable of historic building materials, it is also susceptible to damage by improper maintenance or repair techniques. Harsh or abrasive cleaning methods, such as sandblasting, are also detrimental and should never be used on historic buildings.

**Recommendations**

- Masonry construction that defines the overall historic character of the building should be preserved in its original condition.
- Applying stucco, cement or other synthetic material over existing masonry is not allowed. Repairs should be done carefully to match the original brickwork and mortar.
- The use of hard, contemporary mortars such as Portland cement for repointing and mortar repair is damaging to older masonry material. Try to determine the original mortar chemical composition or use an appropriate historic compound.
- *Never sandblast exterior masonry surfaces.* Washing brick with a low-pressure water application is the best-recommended cleaning method.
- Do not paint or waterproof unpainted brick.
Wood Material

Although the majority of commercial buildings within the proposed Old Decatur Historic District have brick masonry exterior surfaces, there are a number of older, late 19th and early 20th century wood frame structures in the neighborhood that have been adapted for business-related use. The functional and decorative wood features of these buildings are important in defining their historic character and should be retained, protected and repaired in all rehabilitation projects.

Recommendations
- Wood siding original to the building should be repaired rather than replaced. Replacement should be done only if siding is deteriorated beyond repair and it should match the historic material.
- Introduction of new wood features incompatible in size, scale, material and color is not recommended.
- Historically painted surfaces should not be stripped to bare wood or have clear finishes or stains applied to them.
- The application of substitute materials such as vinyl or aluminum over historic wood siding is inappropriate and their use is prohibited in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District.
- The removal of synthetic siding such as aluminum, asbestos and vinyl and restoration of historic wood siding is highly encouraged but not required.
Storefront Entrances and Doors

There are currently few, un-altered traditional storefront designs in the Old Decatur commercial area. Many of the existing, early 20\textsuperscript{th} century buildings with pedestrian focused storefronts are found at the western end of East Howard Avenue across from the train depot. Elements of a historic retail storefront generally included large display windows with sidelights or transoms, solid bulkheads and recessed or flush doorways. Most commercial structures of the late 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries had either single or double wooden doors with large lights as a means of utilizing natural lighting. By the mid-20\textsuperscript{th} century, commercial buildings generally used plate glass doors with raw aluminum framing that were more in keeping with minimal modern design.

Recommendations

- Non-historic storefronts of inappropriate design should be replaced with a traditional configuration.
- Entrances should not be relocated or filled in. The addition of windows and/or doors on the front facade of a building is also inappropriate and is strongly discouraged.
- Transoms should be preserved and remain visible. Air conditioners and signs located in this space are inappropriate.
- Replacement doors should be appropriate to the architectural style and age of the building. Do not use solid doors or residential doors with decorative designs on a commercial storefront.
- Retain historic entrances on the rear and side facades of a building.

Rehabilitation of covered or altered historic storefronts should be considered.
In addition to their functional purpose, a historic building’s windows also play an important role in defining a structure’s decorative character and style. Windows on historic buildings in Old Decatur should be repaired and maintained rather than replaced.

**Recommendations**

- Historic windows should be maintained, preserved, and repaired rather than replaced.
- If replacement windows are needed, they should match the existing style. Only windows with true divided lights are to be used (no snap-in muntins).
- Windows should not be filled-in, reduced or tinted.
- Decorative windows and fanlights are inappropriate for buildings within the proposed Old Decatur Historic District.
- Decorative shutters should not be added to buildings.
- Storm windows and security windows should not obscure historic windows.
Roofs

Roof design and form are important functional and architectural features on historic commercial buildings in Old Decatur and should be preserved. Proper maintenance and repair of the roof is essential to a building's long-term structural integrity.

Recommendations

- Maintain a building's existing roof form. Certain forms such as gabled and hipped roofs are not appropriate for most commercial structures in Old Decatur.

- During roof repair and replacement, new materials should match existing materials in scale and texture.

- Chimneys on commercial structures should be maintained and preserved, never removed.

- Where applicable, historic gutters and downspouts should be retained. Replacement gutters and downspouts should be similar to the original in material and appearance and should not obstruct window or door openings or architectural details.
Awnings

Old Decatur Design Guidelines

Awnings were a common feature found on commercial and residential architecture during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Awnings provide a simple and inexpensive means of protection from the elements and are effective devices for focusing attention on a building’s storefront. They also can serve an aesthetically pleasing function by adding color and variety to the streetscape.

Recommendations

• The application of the awning should not damage the existing historic material of the building.

• Both retractable and fixed type awnings are appropriate with canvas, vinyl coated or acrylic fabric material. Metal or rigid plastic are inappropriate materials for awnings on commercial buildings in the Old Decatur Historic District.

• Flat canopies should only be used on existing mid-20th century modern architecture along East Howard Avenue.

• The awnings should be individually located within the storefront’s major bays or openings. A continuous awning across two buildings is considered inappropriate.

• Awning shapes should match the shape of the openings-shed awning for rectangular opening, arched awning for arched opening.

• Do not use bubble, concave, convex or internally lit awnings.

• Awnings should have an 8 foot height clearance from the sidewalk and cover no more than a third of the opening.
Signs on the exterior of a commercial building are a vital component of a business’s promotion. It is important that signs be both informative to passersby as well as complementary to the business within. All commercial signs in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District must conform to the regulations outlined in the City of Decatur Sign Ordinance (See Appendix F).

**Recommendations**
- Historic painted signs should be preserved and maintained.
- New signs should be placed in traditional sign locations on commercial buildings. Hanging signs, painted window signs and wall signs above display windows and awnings signs are appropriate areas.
- Freestanding signs less than 8 feet in height and constructed of wood are appropriate for residential structures that have been converted to commercial use.
- Sign installation should not destroy or alter historic materials and ornamentation.
- New signs should be of compatible building design and materials.
- Flashing, blinking, rotating and internally lit signs are inappropriate for the proposed Old Decatur Historic District and are not allowed.
Mechanical Systems

Modern mechanical systems for heating and air conditioning can easily detract from the historic character of the commercial area when conspicuously placed. The visual impact of mechanical systems and service areas should be minimized.

Recommendations

- Satellite dishes and other rooftop mechanical systems should not be visible from the immediate public view.
- Utility meters should be located inconspicuously.
- The front facade of a building should not be disrupted by the addition of mechanical systems such as air conditioner units.
- Air conditioner units should be placed on the roof or rear or side facades of a building in such a way as to avoid damage to historic material.
- When placed at ground level, the system should be landscaped or fenced in such a way as to shield it from being visible from the public right-of-way.
In order to be in compliance with current accessibility codes and health and safety requirements, it may be necessary to make modifications to a historic commercial building.

Recommendations

- Ramps/lifts should meet the Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design*. They should be built of materials that are compatible with the historic material of the building.
- Ramps/lifts on front and rear facades should be compatible with the symmetry, scale, and architectural style of the building.
- Enlargement of door openings on a front facade is discouraged.
- Use of appropriate, accessible door hardware is encouraged. Historic hardware should be preserved in storage.
- Installation of access facilities should be done in a manner that, when removed, will not damage or destroy historic fabric.
- Where possible, locate new fire exits, stairs, landings, and decks on the rear or inconspicuous side facades.
- New fire doors should be as similar as possible to existing, historic doors.
- Necessary additional fire exits should be placed on the rear or side facades of the building and match historic door openings in scale and detail.

* For more information regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act Standards for Accessible Design, please visit www.ada.gov/standardspdf.htm
Old Decatur Design Guidelines

Commercial Additions and New Construction

There are a number of areas within the proposed Old Decatur Historic District that present opportunities for new construction and development. These guidelines should be used as a reference tool for promoting appropriate commercial design in keeping with the historic character of the neighborhood.

**Design Goals:**

- Minimize the negative impact of new development on the historic residential neighborhood of Old Decatur.
- Preserve and rehabilitate existing historic and pedestrian scale buildings in the neighborhood commercial district.
- Create new commercial development and building forms that are compatible with the scale and character of existing historic structures and the adjacent neighborhood.
- Promote a mix of retail, service, office, dining and residential uses that serve and enhance the adjacent neighborhoods.
- Reference and reinforce the historic architectural character of Old Decatur’s late 19th and early 20th century railroad past in all new building design.
- Provide a safe and attractive pedestrian environment through the use of sidewalk furnishings and street trees.
- Improve pedestrian access within the commercial areas and to and from the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Allow for adequate parking facilities for the neighborhood commercial area.
Additions to Commercial Buildings

An addition may sometimes be needed to extend the viability of an historic commercial building and allow for its continued use. In such cases, the new attached addition should be constructed in a manner that minimizes damage to significant materials and features and preserves the historic character of the existing structure. The design of the addition should be compatible with the materials and features of the historic building but should be differentiated as a newer structure.

**Recommendations**

- New additions should be placed at the rear of the existing historic building.
- Rear additions should be compatible in form, size, scale and proportion to the original building.
- New additions should not change the orientation of the existing building.
- Roof additions must be set back from the front facade and not visible from the immediate public right of way.
- Brick veneer or wood siding material should be used for new additions on existing structures. Metal, concrete or glass wall additions are not appropriate for the commercial buildings in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District.
Site Regulations - Transitional Buffers

These guidelines on site regulations for new construction are to be used in a manner that allows for mixed-use residential and commercial growth that is compatible with the historic residential areas. Transitional height limits on new buildings and landscape buffers between commercial and single-family residential houses can help to mitigate the impact of new development and work to retain the small town character of the Old Decatur neighborhood.

Recommendations

- Transitional yards between commercial lots and residential areas will have landscape buffers no less than 20 feet wide.
- Transitional buffers will have permanent opaque walls or evergreen screening with a minimum height of 6 feet.
Building heights will increase from the proximity of residential areas to the maximum allowable building height of 80 feet, as found at the Ice House Lofts on Sycamore Place. Height limits on new construction should vary according to distance from residential areas as follows:

a) New development that is 20 to 100 feet from a single-family residential property may have a maximum height of 40 feet.

b) Development that is 100 to 200 feet from a single-family residential property may have a maximum height of 60 feet.

c) Buildings more than 200 feet from a single-family residential property may have a maximum height of 80 feet.

Allowable building heights on new development are based on proximity to single-family residential structures.
Building Setback

Because of the different phases of development along East Howard Avenue, Sycamore Place and Commerce Drive, the commercial corridors of the proposed Old Decatur Historic District do not exhibit a consistent pattern in regard to building setback from the street. The historic, early 20th century commercial buildings in the district are built up to the sidewalk and have little or no space between them. These traditional building practices of older commercial areas create a recognizable streetscape and welcoming pedestrian environment. It is appropriate for new construction and infill development to observe and follow this established historic placement pattern.

Recommendations

- Infill development building facade lines should match average existing building facade lines ±10%, on commercial block faces with historic buildings contributing to the area of influence.

- For all other commercial blocks, building facade lines of new development should not be less than 15 feet or more than 30 feet from the street curb on all streets, in order to accommodate recommended sidewalk widths (See Sidewalks section, page 88)

- New development may have zero side lot-lines. Small setbacks from interior side lot-lines are also encouraged to allow for alleyways - a common feature of historic commercial block faces.
New multi-use commercial construction should reference the early 20th century building forms found in the Old Decatur neighborhood. Older commercial structures used architectural form and elements to promote a feeling of stability and permanence. The solid, block-like quality was emphasized using a flat roof, a parapet, or both. In addition, the width and height of infill development next to buildings contributing to the area of influence should also be consistent with the adjacent historic designs.

**Recommendations**

- Buildings will relate proportionally to the major street widths that they front.
- New construction may incorporate projecting and recessing wall planes and angled corners.
- New construction should have similar width and scale proportions as adjacent historic buildings.
- Stepped parapets with low or flat roofs are the appropriate roof form.

An example of inappropriate form and scale for commercial infill construction.
Building Facades

Commercial facades from the late 19th and early 20th centuries generally employed architectural detailing such as belt courses, cornice lines and caps. The delineation between floors (also known as base, middle and cap composition) helped to define the different uses of the building, generally with prominent storefronts and display windows for street level retail and upper stories for office or residential use. This method of facade design reflects the character of some of the existing historic commercial buildings in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District and is encouraged for all new development.

Recommendations

- Primary building facades must face the major street. Corner buildings will have entrances on each side.
- Storefronts must relate to the pedestrian scale.
- Width and height of multiple storefronts must be consistent on a single facade so as to create a rhythmic pattern.
- Established proportion, distribution and ratio of solid-to-void (wall-to-opening) patterns on historic buildings in the district should be followed.
- Fenestration must cover a minimum of 75% of the frontage length on the 1st floor and be raised to a minimum of 3 feet above the sidewalk with a maximum height of 10 feet above the sidewalk.
- Upper facade windows should be placed symmetrically and relate to those on the lower facade.
Building Materials

facade materials on all new construction or additions to historic buildings should be in keeping with those used on existing early 20th century commercial buildings near the Decatur train depot.

Recommendations

- facade materials on all new construction should be red or tan brick or cut stone. Variegated brick, tile, stacked stone or river rock, concrete block, stucco, metal, glass wall and other contemporary facade materials are not allowed.

- Display windows must be recessed from the facade and will have single panes with wood or dark anodized metal frames.

- Upper facade windows should have true divided lights (no snap-ins).

- Glass must be clear to allow for views of store interiors. Tinted glass is inappropriate.

- Doors may be recessed or flush with the facade.

- Doors may be single or double and must be of wood or dark anodized metal with clear glass lights. Raw aluminum frame doors are inappropriate.

Appropriate window, glass and door materials for new commercial construction

Appropriate and inappropriate facade materials for commercial buildings
Parking

The accommodation of adequate parking facilities should be an important consideration for all new and existing businesses located in and around the commercial corridor of the proposed Old Decatur Historic District. In addition to lot capacity requirements, an emphasis on organization, management and design of parking areas is also important as a method of providing a safe and convenient pedestrian environment.

Recommendations

- Historic buildings contributing to the area of influence should not be demolished to create parking.
- On-street parking should be maximized wherever possible. Establishment of a maximum off-street parking allowance should be considered.
- Parking lots will be located to the rear or side of buildings.
- Shared parking and consolidated driveways and curb cuts are strongly encouraged as a method of preserving continuity of street edges. Connect public sidewalks to surface parking areas.
- Create a continuous landscape buffer area between parking areas and the street, excluding driveways. The buffer should have a minimum width of 5 feet.

Parking decks

- Above ground parking structures will provide continuous, street-fronting ground level commercial or office and have the appearance of a horizontal storied building consistent with other facades of multi-use buildings in the Old Decatur neighborhood.
- Any parking deck should conceal automobiles from visibility.
A comprehensive sidewalk network for commercial corridors allows for increased pedestrian mobility, promotes non-motorized methods of transportation and allows for attractive areas for public gathering and outdoor dining. These recommendations are based on the sidewalk design and streetscape environment found along East Court Square, which is a preferred model for all new development along commercial corridors in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District.

**Recommendations**

- Sidewalks should be located along all public streets.
- Poured concrete sidewalks with granite curbing should be used on all streets. Concrete curbing is an inappropriate material for the Old Decatur neighborhood.
- Commercial area sidewalks should be tapered into adjacent residential areas.
- Sidewalks accompanying new construction should have a minimum width of 15 feet where possible, along Commerce Drive, East Howard Avenue and Sycamore Place (see Setback recommendations, page 83).
- A Building Frontage Zone width that accommodates areas for window shopping and outdoor cafes is encouraged.
- Sidewalks should have a Pedestrian Travel Zone with a minimum width of 10 feet.
- A Features/Planting Zone for street furniture should be located adjacent to the curb with a minimum width of 5 feet. This zone is intended for placement of trees, light poles, street furniture, bicycle racks, and other similar elements approved by the City of Decatur.
Storefront lighting should fulfill a number of functional purposes such as accentuating commercial signs and goods, providing a welcoming environment for customers and enhancing existing sidewalk lighting of the streetscape.

**Recommendations**

- Lighting attached to a commercial building should be aimed down, illuminating the immediate sign and front facade area.
- Lighting should not overwhelm adjacent storefront areas or shine into upper floor windows.
- If necessary, lighting may be appropriate for free standing signs if placed conspicuously behind landscaping or in the ground below the sign.
- Use white or soft white natural lighting only. Colored lighting is not allowed.
- Only use simple, contemporary fixtures for commercial lighting. Lamp styles of historical periods not compatible with the Old Decatur neighborhood are not allowed.
Sidewalks and parking areas should be provided with evenly lit and consistently placed lighting that creates a safe and inviting setting for pedestrians.

Recommendations
- The acorn-style pedestrian streetlights like those used on sidewalks surrounding the courthouse square are appropriate for the Old Decatur neighborhood.
- Contemporary fixtures should be used in areas such as parking lots, where lighting was not historically present.
Street Trees

The use of street trees presents a number of functional, spatial and aesthetic benefits for the improvement of commercial areas. Implementation of the City of Decatur street tree program in conjunction with sidewalk construction and repair along all commercial corridors in the proposed Old Decatur Historic District is encouraged.

Recommendations

- Trees should be planted in front or along side of parking areas for screening purposes.
- Care should be taken that rows of trees are not planted in front of commercial facades in such a manner that will obscure architectural features and signs.
The Decatur Train Depot

The Decatur Train Depot, built in 1891, was constructed as a long and narrow building and has a common depot form. The north and south facades historically paralleled the train tracks and the wide, over-hanging eaves provided shelter for waiting passengers. The depot has elements of the Stick Style which was generally popular between 1860 and 1890, but rare in the South. Distinguishing features of this style are decorative trusses, overhanging eaves, often with exposed rafters, and diagonal or curving porch support braces. Other features include board-and-batten or shingle wall cladding as well as horizontal and vertical bands over the exterior wall, which represent the structure's framing.
The Decatur Presbyterian Church, built in 1951, is a front gable church type. This type is characterized by a large front gable and basic rectangular plan with one or two front doors and three to five windows in the sides. Rooftop steeples or belfries are common additions to this church type.

The church's style is Gothic Revival. Although this style was somewhat common in residences between 1840 and 1880 it prevailed as a common style for church buildings for a much longer period. This style is distinguished by steeply pitched roof, triangular or pointed arch windows, entrances, and porch supports. In church buildings, Gothic Revival often includes a steeply pitched spire and polychromatic masonry work.
Decatur United Methodist Church

The Decatur United Methodist Church, built in 1899, is a corner tower type church with a basic rectangular plan and large front gable like that of the front gable church type. The distinctive feature of this type is the projecting corner entrance tower with usually a pyramidal shaped roof. The church's style is Richardsonian Romanesque, a common building style between 1880 and 1900 and created by architect H.H. Richardson. This style is distinguished by round-topped arches above windows, porch supports, and entrance ways, as well as rough-faced masonry walls. Structures often have towers and an asymmetrical facade.
Decatur Public Library

The Decatur Public Library was built in the Neoclassical Revival Style, which was popular throughout Georgia between 1890 and 1930, but can often be found throughout the mid-twentieth century. This style is distinguished by a symmetrical facade with a central entrance way surrounded with pilasters and columns. Decorative details often include fanlights, sidelights, and transoms. A classical cornice is usually present with dentils or modillions. The roof line is usually low-pitched and hipped.

Decatur Public Library on Sycamore Street, circa 1940s (photo courtesy of GSU Pullen Library)
Built in 1958, the Decatur Recreation Center is an example of the International Style. Originally developed in Europe during the 1920s, the International Style was rare for residential architecture, but was the most common design used for institutional and commercial buildings in the United States during the period following World War II, generally between 1950 and 1970. The style is characterized by modern construction materials such as concrete, glass, and steel. Design elements common to the International style were flat roofs, minimal decoration, exposed structure, and glass "curtain walls" or corner windows.
Certificate Of Appropriateness Requirements

The Decatur Historic Preservation Commission issues Certificates of Appropriateness to make sure that any material, replacement or repair, for a building located within a historic district is consistent with the historical character of the property.

This following chart summarizes when a COA, COE or a building permit is required or when no approval is necessary.
## Appendix A - Guideline Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF WORK</th>
<th>NO APPROVAL REQUIRED</th>
<th>COA or COE APPROVAL REQUIRED</th>
<th>BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additions</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awnings</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brickwork</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decks</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demolition</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doors</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fences</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Escapes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass (replacement to match the original)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass (replacement not matching the original)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass (removal of historic glass)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gutter and Downspouts</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handicapped Ramps</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscaping (except historic fences and retaining walls)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix A - Guideline Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF WORK</th>
<th>NO APPROVAL REQUIRED</th>
<th>COA or COE APPROVAL REQUIRED</th>
<th>BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Light Fixtures (exterior)</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masonry (cleaning &amp; repair)</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Systems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Building Structures</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paint Colors</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Lots</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porches</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retaining Walls</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roofs</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screens</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shutters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalks</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siding</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skylights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solar Collectors</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staircases (exterior)</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storm Doors / Windows</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B - Basic Maintenance Advice

This section summarizes basic and fundamental advice for the proper maintenance of some of the most important elements in a building.

**MATERIALS**

1. Keep gutters and downspouts in good condition to prevent water infiltration.
2. Exposed wood should be kept painted or treated with preservatives.
3. Where exterior siding has to be replaced, the use of pressure treated wood is recommended to prevent deterioration.
4. For exterior siding, oil based paints are recommended.
5. Keep exterior brick clean from mildew, dirt, efflorescence and plant materials. Washing with detergents and water are best for exterior masonry and mortar. Sandblasting, pressure washing and other abrasive cleaning methods should be avoided.
6. Historic mortar should be replaced with a mortar that matches the original in appearance and composition.

**ROOFS, CORNICES, CHIMNEYS**

1. Check regularly for leaks, deterioration of flashing, and worn roof surfaces.
2. During replacement or repair, use only similar metals. Different metals should not touch each other or a galvanic reaction may occur, leading to corrosion.
3. Metal roofs and cornices should be kept painted to prevent rust and deterioration.
4. Chimneys should be checked for cracking, leaning and infestation by birds and insects. The use of chimney caps over chimneys or flue openings is recommended to keep moisture out.

**FOUNDATIONS**

1. All water should drain away from a building and its foundation.
2. Trees, shrubs, and other plants should be kept well away from the foundation to prevent damage from moisture and root movement.
Appendix B - Basic Maintenance Advice

ENTRANCES

1. Doors, transoms, and sidelights should be kept clean and the glass should be regularly washed.

2. Original locks and hardware should be kept oiled and in good repair. If original hardware is missing or is deteriorated, the use of reproduction locks and hardware suitable for the building is recommended.

WINDOWS

1. Windows should be kept clean and wood sash surfaces should be painted regularly.

2. Windows should be kept caulked and sealed to aid in energy conservation.

3. Shutters and blinds should be kept painted and in good repair.
Appendix C - Glossary

This glossary is divided into a pictorial glossary and a traditional glossary. The pictorial glossary is arranged into categories for ease of use.

This information was gathered principally from two sources, The Heritage Education Network, a project of Middle Tennessee State University (histpres.mtsu.edu/then/architecture), and Eastern Michigan University (www.emich.edu).

Pictorial Glossary

Door Treatments

- Entablature with Pilaster
- Fanlight (semi-circular or elliptical) with sidelights
- Plain pediment with pilaster
- Broken pediment with pilaster
### Appendix C - Glossary

#### Window Styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Image</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CASEMENT</td>
<td><img src="casement.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOUBLE-HUNG SASH</td>
<td><img src="double-hung-sash.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIPLE-HUNG SASH</td>
<td><img src="triple-hung-sash.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEEN ANNE</td>
<td><img src="queen-anne.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COTTAGE</td>
<td><img src="cottage.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRAFTSMAN</td>
<td><img src="craftsmans.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONE-OVER-ONE</td>
<td><img src="one-over-one.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWO-OVER-TWO</td>
<td><img src="two-over-two.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROMAN OR ROUNDED ARCH</td>
<td><img src="roman.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PALLADIAN</td>
<td><img src="palladian.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRI-PART</td>
<td><img src="tri-part.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIBBON</td>
<td><img src="ribbon.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PICTURE</td>
<td><img src="picture.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOTHIC</td>
<td><img src="gothic.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANCET</td>
<td><img src="lancet.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lintel or square flat arch in stone or plaster</td>
<td><img src="lintel.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Roof Shapes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Image</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLAIN GABLE</td>
<td><img src="plain-gable.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabled ELL</td>
<td><img src="gabled-ell.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASSYMETRICAL</td>
<td><img src="assymetrical.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIP</td>
<td><img src="hip.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALTBOX</td>
<td><img src="saltbox.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHED</td>
<td><img src="shed.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DORMER</td>
<td><img src="dormer.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JERKIN-HEAD OR CLIPPED GABLE</td>
<td><img src="jerkin-head.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PYRAMIDICAL</td>
<td><img src="pyramidal.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FLAT</td>
<td><img src="flat.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANSEARS</td>
<td><img src="mansears.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PITCHED OR GABLE S. SHED</td>
<td><img src="pitched-gable.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODIFIED PITCHED ROOF</td>
<td><img src="modified-pitched.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAMBREL</td>
<td><img src="gambrel.png" alt="Image" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Flat is usually found in commercial structures.*
Appendix C - Glossary

Roof Trims

- Pedimented Gable
- Parapet Gable
- Stepped Gable
- Gable with Boxed Cornice and Returns
- Bargeboard
- Decorated Gable
- Gable with Brackets

Porch Styles

- Central Pedimented
- Inset
- Two-Tier
- Side
- Wrap-Around
- Shed
- Craftsman
- Stoop
- Central One-Story Portico
- Double Veranda with Gingerbread Trim
- Full-Width Two-Story Portico
Appendix C - Glossary

Components

Exterior Materials
Siding

Brick Patterns and Orientation
Appendix C - Glossary

Masonry and Other Materials

- Fieldstone
- Random Coursed Stone
- Shingle
- Stucco

Architectural Details

Column Styles

- Craftsman
- Doric
- Ionic
- Corinthian
Appendix C - Glossary

Cornices

Area of Influence: Has elements of contributing historic structures along a block face. The area of influence is used as a point of reference for changes to the property.

Bay window: A series of windows which project outward from an exterior wall. If curved, this is called a Bow Window; if on an upper floor, called an Oriel Window.

Bond: The pattern of laying bricks which binds them together to form a wall (e.g., common bond, Flemish bond, English bond).

Bracket: A decorative element supporting a wall projection, cornice or other exterior feature.

Casement window: Window with hinges for opening.

Clapboard siding: Tapered wood boards affixed to an exterior wall over one another to form horizontal siding.

Contributing Structure: A building which is fifty years or older and maintaining architectural integrity.
Appendix C - Glossary

Cornice: the projecting horizontal decorative feature usually found above columns at the top of an exterior wall.

Dentil: Decorative, spaced, rectangular elements usually found on the underside of a cornice.

Dormer window: A projecting, usually gabled window, that projects from the roof of the building.

Double hung window: Two sash windows in one frame, each of which can slide vertically.

Eave: Lower edge of a roof extending beyond the exterior wall. This is different than a cornice, which projects upward.

Facade: The front, or face, of a building.

Fanlight: Fan-shaped window usually located over an entrance door.

Gable: The triangular section of exterior wall sheltered by roof eaves. "Gabled" can also be used to describe the triangular shape of other exterior features, such as a dormer.

Half-Timbering: Exposed heavy timbers with spaces between them. Voids are sometimes filled with masonry.

Header: The short end of a brick, exposed in English and Flemish bonds, or as a decorative feature elsewhere.

Hip roof: A roof with slopes oriented to all exterior walls, usually four different directions.

Keystone: Center stone in a masonry arch, always wider on top than bottom.

Mansard roof: A roof with a steep slope which covers the exterior of the top floor. It is common to the Second Empire Victorian style.

Mullion and Muntin: Wood pieces separating panes of glass in a window sash.

Noncontributing Structure: A building which is not historically significant for the character of the neighborhood, lacks architectural integrity and is not identified for preservation.

Pediment: The triangular feature commonly found above doors and sometimes windows. It is dif-
ferentiated from a gable because it projects from the facade rather than being set back under eaves.

**Pilaster:** A decorative feature designed to resemble a column, it is a flat, rectangular partial column attached to a wall surface.

**Pitch:** The angle of a roof.

**Porte-cochere:** A covered entrance for "coaches" or vehicles, usually attached to the side of a building. It is common to the Italian Renaissance and Neoclassical Revival Styles.

**Ridge:** The uppermost portion of the roof; the point at which both sides come together.

**Sash:** A window frame that opens by sliding up or down.

**Shed roof:** A single-pitched roof, often over a room attached to the main structure. This is sometimes called a "Lean-To."

**Sidelight:** Narrow windows located on either side of an entrance door.

**Single hung window:** Two sash windows in one frame, only the lower of which can slide vertically.
Appendix D - Secretary of Interior Standards

The Secretary Of The Interior's Standards For The Rehabilitation Of Historic Buildings

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards promote appropriate preservation practices to protect and rehabilitate historic buildings.

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.
Chapter 58

Historical Preservation

ARTICLE I. IN GENERAL

Sec. 58-1. Findings of fact and determinations of city commission.

The historical, cultural and aesthetic heritage of the city is among the city's most valued and important assets, and the preservation of this heritage is essential to the promotion of the health, prosperity and general welfare of the people.
(Ord. No. O-90-07, § 11 1/2-1, 6-4-90)

Sec. 58-2. Purpose and intent of chapter.

The city commission hereby declares it to be the purpose and intent of this chapter to establish a uniform procedure for use in providing for the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of places, districts, sites, buildings, structures, objects, landscape features and works of art having a special historical, cultural or aesthetic interest or value in order to:

(1) Stimulate revitalization of the business districts and historic neighborhoods and to protect and enhance local historical and aesthetic attractions to residents, tourists, and others and thereby promote and stimulate business;
(2) Enhance the opportunities for federal or state tax benefits under relevant provisions of federal or state law; and
(3) Provide for the designation, protection, preservation and rehabilitation of historic properties and historic districts and to participate in federal or state programs to do the same.
(Ord. No. O-90-07, § 11 1/2-1, 6-4-90)

Sec. 58-3. Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Certificate of appropriateness means 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.

Certificate of exemption means a document evidencing approval by the historic preservation commission or its authorized designee of an application to make a change other than a material change as defined by the design guidelines adopted as part of the ordinance designating the specific local historic property or local historic district.
Appendix E - Decatur Preservation Ordinance

Exterior architectural features means the architectural style, general design and general arrangement of the exterior of a building or other structure including, but not limited to, the kind or texture of the building material and the type and style of all windows, doors, signs and other appurtenant architectural fixtures, features, details or elements relative to the foregoing.

Exterior environmental features means all those aspects of the landscape or the development of a site which affect the historical character of the property.

Historic district means a geographically definable area designated by city commission as a historic district pursuant to the criteria established in section 58-62.

Historic property means an individual building, structure, site, object or work of art, including the adjacent area necessary for the proper appreciation thereof, designated by city commission as a historic property pursuant to the criteria established in section 58-63.

Material change in appearance means a change that will affect either 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:

1. A reconstruction or alteration of the size, shape or facade of a historic property, including any doors or windows or removal or alteration of any architectural features, details or elements;
2. Demolition or relocation of a historic structure;
3. Commencement of excavation for construction purposes;
4. A change in the location of advertising visible from a public right-of-way; or
5. 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.

(Ord. No. O-90-07, § 11 1/2-2, 6-4-90)

Cross references: Definitions generally, § 1-2.

Sec. 58-4. Penalty for violation of chapter.

Any person guilty of a violation of this chapter shall, upon conviction, be punished as provided in section 1-12.

(Ord. No. O-90-07, § 11 1/2-8, 6-4-90)

Sec. 58-5. Affirmation of existing building code and zoning ordinance requirements.

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as to exempt property owners or occupants from complying with existing building, sign, zoning and similar zoning codes and ordinances, nor to prevent any property owner or occupant from making any use of his property not prohibited by other statutes, ordi-
Appendix E - Decatur Preservation Ordinance

Sec. 58-6. Old DeKalb County Courthouse.

(a) The property known as the Old DeKalb County Courthouse, 101 Courthouse Square, Decatur, Georgia, Tax Map Number 15 246D 07 007, including the courthouse building, all appurtenances, auxiliary structures, and exterior environmental features is designated as an historic property under the provisions of this chapter.

(b) The name of the owner of the property is DeKalb County, Georgia.

(c) A certificate of appropriateness shall be obtained from the preservation commission prior to any material change in appearance of the designated property. However, so long as the county is the owner of the designated property it shall be exempt from the requirement of obtaining certificates of appropriateness, provided that the county commission shall notify the preservation commission 45 days prior to beginning an undertaking that would otherwise require a certificate of appropriateness and allow the preservation commission an opportunity to comment.

(d) The designated property shall be shown on the official zoning map of the city.

(Ord. No. O-94-12, § 11 1/2-10, 9-7-94)

Sec. 58-7. Scottish Rite Hospital for Crippled Children.

(a) The property known as the Scottish Rite Hospital for Crippled Children, 321 West Hill Street, Decatur, Georgia, Tax Map Number 15-213A07-001, including the principle buildings, all appurtenances, auxiliary structures, and exterior environmental features is designated as an historic property under the provisions of this chapter.

(b) The name of the owner of the designated property is the city.

(c) A certificate of appropriateness shall be obtained from the preservation commission prior to any material change in appearance of the designated property. However, so long as the city is the owner of the designated property it shall be exempt from the requirement of obtaining certificates of appropriateness, provided that the city, any lessee or occupant shall notify the preservation commission 45 days prior to beginning an undertaking that would otherwise require a certificate of appropriateness and allow the preservation commission an opportunity to comment.

(d) The designated property shall be shown on the official zoning map of the city.

(Ord. of 12-19-94, § 11 1/2-11)


(a) The district known as the McDonough-Adams-Kings Highway District is designated as a historic district under the provisions of this chapter.
Appendix E - Decatur Preservation Ordinance

(b) The McDonough-Adams-Kings Highway District includes the properties at the following addresses and owned by the following persons:
M.A.K. Historic District Property Owners List

EDIT: PROPERTY LIST REMOVED

The following properties as indicated by the tax parcel numbers below are also included within the boundaries of the McDonough-Adams-Kings Highway Local Historic District:
15214D06007, 15214D06009, 15214D06010, 15214D06011, 15214D06016, 15214D01019, 15214D01028.

(c) A certificate of appropriateness shall be obtained from the preservation commission prior to any material change in appearance of a property located in the designated district. Consideration of applications for certificates of appropriateness shall be based on design criteria for the McDonough-Adams-Kings Highway District.

(d) Design criteria for the McDonough-Adams-Kings Highway District. The following guidelines shall be used to determine whether a certificate of appropriateness shall be approved:

1. New Construction. Any project that calls for the construction of a new structure(s) on vacant property located within the district boundaries.
   a. New structures should respect the existing setback, massing and building materials of historic properties in adjacent blocks and be compatible in design with surrounding historic properties. On new principal structures, no slab on grade construction will be allowed.
   b. Outbuildings. Any new building over 100 square feet, including garages, visible from the public right of way must be reviewed and receive a Certificate of Appropriateness.

2. Additions. Any additions that change the footprint or roof line of existing structures within the historic district will require full review and a certificate of appropriateness. No slab on grade construction will be allowed.

3. Demolition or Relocation. Any plans for the demolition or relocation of a structure over 100 square feet of gross floor area within the historic district requires the full review of the preservation Commission and a certificate of appropriateness. A request for demolition or relocation must include a post-project plan for the property.

4. Alterations to Existing Properties within the District.
   a. Doorways. Change in opening size or location only. Replacing an exterior door will not require review. However, property owners are strongly encouraged to repair and retain original doors. If replacement is necessary, the new door should be as close in design to the original door as possible.
   b. Windows. Any change in window openings to include the addition of window openings, the removal of window openings or a change in the size of existing openings will require full review.
Appendix E - Decatur Preservation Ordinance

Windows visible from the street should be consistent in design with original windows.

c. Roofs. Any change in the roof shape visible from the street requires full review. Replacement or repair of roof materials would require an administrative review.

d. Exterior Cladding. Any proposed change in existing exterior cladding requires the full review of the Commission. The application of vinyl or aluminum siding is strongly discouraged.

e. Porches. The addition of any new porch structure visible from the street requires full review. Any proposed changes to historic design elements on existing porches (e.g., replacement of columns or glassing in) visible from the street will require a full review. Changing an open porch to a screened porch would be excluded from review as long as existing design elements are not damaged, removed or covered.

(5) Certificate of Exemption. A certificate of exemption shall be obtained from the preservation commission or its designee for the following projects:

a. Replacement of Windows in kind.

b. Hardscape/Landscape. Changes in landscape and landscape features can have an impact on the character of a property. The following projects apply to all properties within a district including historic, no historic and intrusions:

1. Vegetation. Removal of overstory canopy trees such as Hickory, Maple, Pecan, Sycamore, Oaks or Sweet Gum, that are 12" in diameter or greater unless the tree is dead or a certified arborist has stated in writing that the tree is diseased or hazardous and recommends removal.

2. Fences and Walls. Planned changes or additions of fences and walls in the front yard area are generally discouraged. However, any proposed changes or additions must meet existing city codes governing this category.

3. Driveways. It is recommended that the width of driveways be restricted to ten feet to the face of the house. The use of asphalt is strongly discouraged.

c. City-owned properties and city rights-of-way. Projects involving city-owned property and city rights-of-way including sidewalk replacement and tree removal shall not be required to obtain a certificate of appropriateness provided that the city shall notify the preservation commission 45 days prior to beginning an undertaking that would otherwise require a certificate of appropriateness and allow the preservation commission an opportunity to comment.

e. The designated district shall be shown on the official zoning map of the city.

(Ord. No. O-98-10, § 2, 6-1-98; Ord. No. O-99-18, 12-20-99)

Sec. 58-9. Clairemont Avenue Historic District.

(a) The district known as the Clairemont Avenue Historic District is designated as a historic district under the provisions of this chapter.

(b) The Clairemont Avenue Historic District includes the properties at the following addresses:
EDIT: PROPERTY LIST REMOVED

c) The recommendations contained in the Design Supplement to the Decatur Historic Preservation Resource Manual will be the primary basis for evaluating and reviewing all proposed work in the Clairemont Avenue Historic District. Property owners planning to make changes to their properties are encouraged to obtain a copy of this publication or consult copies available at the city hall.

The preservation commission and its staff are available to provide consultation, clarification and design assistance to property owners at any time. Property owners, and/or their designers are encouraged to contact the preservation commission at the preliminary planning stages of proposed projects for comments and guidance.

In addition to the recommendations contained in the Design Supplement to the Decatur Historic Preservation Resource Manual, the following guidelines shall be applied in the administration of the Clairemont Avenue Historic District.

(1) Review jurisdiction — "Review jurisdiction" defines what aspects of the physical appearance of the district are subject to the review of the commission and the limits of that review power. All projects are subject to the full review of the preservation commission unless they fall outside of the "review jurisdiction" as defined in this article or they qualify for administrative review and certificate of exemption as defined in Article II of these guidelines.

a. As described in its district designation, the primary value of the Clairemont Avenue District is in the public experience of the district as a historic residential corridor into the heart of downtown Decatur. The preservation of the historic character, as visible from Clairemont Avenue, is the primary goal of this district. Therefore:

1. The review jurisdiction of the preservation commission shall extend only to material changes that would be visible from the Clairemont Avenue public right-of-way.

2. Due to their temporary and non-historic nature, privacy fences and/or vegetation, that might obscure otherwise visible changes, do not remove projects from the review jurisdiction.

3. The preservation commission or its designated staff member may only make the determination of what is visible from the Clairemont Avenue public right-of-way.

b. Only proposed material changes to the exterior of properties within the historic district, that would be legally required to obtain a building permit with the exception of tree removals, must be submitted to the preservation commission or its designated staff person to determine if the project is subject to review, and if so, the level of review required.

c. An application for a building permit for a property within the historic district will commence the review process of the project by the preservation commissions' designated staff person for a determination of the project's status under these guidelines.

d. Project types that must be submitted include, but not be limited to the following:
   1. New construction of principal and accessory structures.
Appendix E - Decatur Preservation Ordinance

2. Additions to principal and accessory structures.
3. Demolition of existing structures.
4. Relocations of existing structures.
5. Alterations to the exterior appearance of existing structures to include changes to the exteriors of existing buildings. For example:
   (a.) Changes to sizes and locations of exterior doors and windows.
   (b.) Replacement of existing windows.
   (c.) Changes to rooflines and configurations.
   (d.) Replacement of roofing materials.
   (e.) Installation of dormers or skylights.
   (f.) Changes in exterior cladding materials.
   (g.) Changes to exterior trim materials, profiles or configurations.
   (h.) Signage where allowed within the district.
6. Alterations to the existing landscape to include:
   (a.) Changes to existing driveway materials.
   (b.) Construction of retaining walls.
   (c.) Removal of existing trees over 12 inches in diameter.
   (d.) Signage where allowed within the district.
   (e.) Existing structures identified as non-contributing or as intrusions into the district will be required to obtain certificates of appropriateness only for work involving additions to, demolitions of, or relocations of qualified structures.
   (f.) The construction, demolition and relocation of accessory structures less than 100 square feet of gross floor area is not subject to review.
   (g.) Replacement of an exterior door within an existing opening is not subject to review.
   (h.) Exterior paint colors are not subject to review. (Note: the use of transparent stains as an exterior finish on siding or trim is not recommended.)
   (i.) Fences and walls, other than retaining walls, less than four feet high are not subject to review.
   (j.) The hardwood tree canopy along Clairemont Avenue is considered to be a contributing element to the appearance of the historic district. All over story trees in front yard setbacks on both private property and the public right of way in the historic district are to be protected as part of the historic district. The removal of any existing tree measuring 12 inches in diameter or larger located in the front yard setback or within the public right-of-way must be approved either with a certificate of appropriateness from the preservation commission or a certificate of exemption as outlined in Article II.
   (k.) Landscape planting materials and configurations are not subject to review.

(2) Certificates of exemption -- In an effort to expedite the review process for the Clairemont Avenue Historic District it has been determined that certain changes to properties will be eligible for a certificate of exemption. The certificate of exemption certifies the approval of the
Appendix E - Decatur Preservation Ordinance

preservation commission for a change to be made other than a material change as defined in these guidelines. The preservation commission or its designated city staff member shall be authorized to provide for this administrative level of review and the issuance of the certificate of exemption for projects requiring a building permit. The following types of projects will qualify for administrative review and certificates of exemption subject to the stated qualifications and limitations.

a. Alterations and additions to the rear of existing structures may be administratively reviewed and determined to be not visible from the Clairemont Avenue public right-of-way and therefore not within the review jurisdiction of the district.

b. As defined in the Historic Preservation Ordinance Section 58-156, routine maintenance and repair involving the identical replacement of, and/or typical maintenance of, existing exterior cladding materials or architectural elements that do not change the exterior appearance of a structure.

c. Changing an open porch to a screened porch or vice-versa, so long as existing architectural elements are not damaged, removed or covered. (Note: the "glassing-in" of open or screened porches is subject to the typical review process.)

d. Replacement of an existing driveway if:
   1. The width of the new driveway does not exceed ten feet or the width of the existing driveway, whichever is greater.
   e. Replacement of existing windows with identical replacement windows.
   f. Backyard decks and associate railings attached to a principal structure whose surface is at or below the first floor level of the principal structure.
   g. Replacement of in-kind roofing material or with asphalt shingles.
   h. Removal of deciduous over story canopy trees over 12 inches in diameter if the tree is visibly dead or a certified arborist has certified that the tree is diseased or hazardous and recommends its removal.

(3) Additional district design guidelines -- These guidelines are intended to address situations or concerns unique to the Clairemont Avenue Historic District. These guidelines are meant to supplement or supercede the general recommendations made in the Design Supplement to the Decatur Historic Preservation Resource Manual.

a. Should properties be demolished in the district, replacement structures should be designed to reinforce the single family, residential character of the neighborhood, respect existing setbacks and retain the structural rhythm of the street.

b. No slab on grade construction will be permitted for new principal structures. Slab on grade additions to existing principal structures may be permitted only if grade conditions are such that traditional crawlspace construction is determined not to be reasonable in the opinion of the preservation commission.

c. Front yard walls and/or fences shall not exceed four feet in height.

d. Every two years after the adoption of the ordinance creating the Clairemont Avenue district, the Historic Preservation Commission shall hold a public hearing at a regularly scheduled monthly meeting for the purpose of reviewing these guidelines and to consider any modifications or refinements that might be desired by either the property owners within the historic district or by the preservation commission.
Appendix E - Decatur Preservation Ordinance

(Ord. No. O-01-02, 2-2-01; Ord. No. O-01-07, 3-19-01)
Secs. 58-10--58-30. Reserved.

ARTICLE II. HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Sec. 58-31. Creation; title.

There is hereby created a commission whose title shall be "Decatur Historic Preservation Commission," known in this chapter as the preservation commission.
(Ord. No. O-90-07, § 11 1/2-3(a), 6-4-90)

Sec. 58-32. Position within the city.

The preservation commission shall be part of the planning functions of the city.
(Ord. No. O-90-07, § 11 1/2-3(b), 6-4-90)

Sec. 58-33. Membership; number; terms; compensation.

(a) The preservation commission shall consist of seven members appointed by the city commission. All members shall be residents of the city and shall be persons who have demonstrated special interest, experience or education in history, architecture or the preservation of historic resources.

(b) To the extent available in the city, at least three members shall be appointed from among professionals in the disciplines of architecture, history, architectural history, planning, archaeology or related disciplines.

(c) Members shall serve three-year terms. Members may not serve more than two consecutive three-year terms. In order to achieve staggered terms, initial appointments shall be: two members for one year; two members for two years; and three members for three years. Members shall not receive a salary, although they may be reimbursed for expenses.
(Ord. No. O-90-07, § 11 1/2-3(c), 6-4-90)

Sec. 58-34. Powers.

The preservation commission shall be authorized to:

1. Prepare and maintain an inventory of all property within the city having the potential for designation as historic property.

2. 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.

3. Review applications for certificates of appropriateness, and grant or deny such certificates in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

4. 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.

(5) Advise the city on the restoration or preservation of any historic properties acquired by the city.

(6) Promote the acquisition by the city of facade easements and conservation easements in accordance with the provisions of the "Facade and Conservation Easements Act of 1976," O.C.G.A. § 44-10-1 et seq.

(7) Conduct educational programs on historic properties located within the city and on general historic preservation activities.

(8) Make such investigations and studies of matters relating to historic preservation including consultation with historic preservation experts, as the city commission or the preservation commission itself may, from time to time, deem necessary or appropriate for the purposes of preserving historic resources.

(9) 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.

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

(11) Perform historic preservation activities as the official agency of the city historic preservation program.

(12) 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 by gift, purchase, exchange, or otherwise of the property or any interest therein.

(13) 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.

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

(Ord. No. O-90-07, § 11 1/2-3(d), 6-4-90)

Sec. 58-35. Limitation on powers.

The preservation commission shall not have the power to obligate the city in any way without prior consent of the city commission.

(Ord. No. O-90-07, § 11 1/2-3(e), 6-4-90)

Sec. 58-36. Adoption of rules and standards; meetings; officers; quorum.

The preservation commission shall adopt rules and standards for the transaction of its business and for consideration of applications for designations and certificates of appropriateness, such as bylaws and design guidelines and criteria. The preservation commission shall have the flexibility to adopt rules and standards without amendment to this chapter. The preservation commission shall
provide for the time and place of regular meetings and a method for the calling of special meetings. The preservation commission shall select such officers as it deems appropriate from among its members. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the members.
(Ord. No. O-90-07, § 11 1/2-3(f), 6-4-90)

Sec. 58-37. Conflicts of interest.

At any time the preservation commission reviews a project in which a member of the preservation commission has ownership or other vested interest, that member will be forbidden from presenting, voting or discussing the project, other than answering a direct question.
(Ord. No. O-90-07, § 11 1/2-3(g), 6-4-90)

Sec. 58-38. Authority to receive funding from various sources.

The preservation commission shall have the authority to accept donations and shall ensure that these funds do not displace appropriated governmental funds.
(Ord. No. O-90-07, § 11 1/2-3(h), 6-4-90)


A public record shall be kept of the preservation commission's resolutions, proceedings and actions.
(Ord. No. O-90-07, § 11 1/2-3(i), 6-4-90)

Secs. 58-40–58-60. Reserved.
Appendix F - Decatur Sign Ordinance

Chapter 78 SIGNS

Sec. 78-1. Preamble and purpose of chapter.

(a) In order to protect the public safety, to protect the tranquil environment, to protect community aesthetics, to protect the public investment in streets and highways, to promote commerce and to provide for the orderly and reasonable display of advertising for the benefit of the citizens of the city, it is hereby determined that the public health, safety and welfare require the adoption of this chapter.

(b) The purpose of this chapter is to recognize that although signs and advertising are necessary, they should be reasonably regulated in the interest of protecting the public health, safety, welfare, environment and community aesthetics by the establishment of standards for location, size, illumination, number, construction and maintenance of all signs and advertising structures and for the prohibition of certain signs and advertising structures in the city.

(Code 1967, § 3-1)

Sec. 78-2. Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Accessory sign means a separate unit displaying information related to the principal business conducted on the premises, which is attached to or supported from any other sign and not made a part thereof.

Advertising structure means any structure or device erected for the purpose of supporting any sign or other advertising or informational media and the framework of the sign.

A-frame sign means any double-faced sign having a metal or wooden frame adequately braced so as to be freestanding on but not permanently attached to the ground.

Animated sign means any sign with action or motion with moving characters or changing colors which requires electrical energy, but not including wind actuated elements, such as flags or banners. This definition includes electronic signs with lights and other elements which change copy and other characters but does not include public service signs, such as time and temperature signs.

Area of sign means the area within a continuous perimeter enclosing the limits of writing, representation, emblem, or any figure of similar character, together with any frame or other material or color forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate such sign from the background against which it is placed, excluding the necessary supports or uprights on which such sign is placed; provided, however, that any open space contained within the outer limits of the display face of a sign or between any component, panel, strip, or figure of any kind composing the display face shall be included in the computation of the area of the sign, whether such open space be enclosed or not by a frame or border. For projecting or double-faced signs, only one display face shall be measured in computing sign area.
Appendix F - Decatur Sign Ordinance

where the sign faces are parallel or where the interior angle formed by the faces is 60 degrees or less. If the two faces of a double-faced sign are of unequal area, the area of the sign shall be taken as the area of the larger face.

Awning means any structure made of cloth or metal with a metal frame attached to a building and projecting over a thoroughfare, when the same is so erected as to permit its being raised to a position flat against the building when not in use, as opposed to a canopy.

Awning sign means any sign attached to, affixed to, or hung from an awning.

Banner means a temporary sign made of cloth, paper, plastic or similar material, but not cut into ribbons, streamers, strips or pennants.

Billboard means any off-site or off-premises board, fence, sign or structure not located on the premises of the business or entity indicated or advertised by such sign which is erected for advertising purposes or upon which any advertisement is shown, or whereupon any poster, bill, printing, painting, device or other advertising matter of any kind may be placed, stuck, tacked, posted, printed, painted, pasted or fastened. This definition shall not be held to include any board sign or surface used to display official notices issued by any court or public officer, or posted by any public officer in the performance of a public duty.

Building codes means any of the building, electrical, and similar construction codes adopted for use within the city.

Bulletin board means any sign which primarily displays the name of an organization and the upcoming events of that organization.

Business identification sign means any sign which directs attention to a business, profession, product, service, activity or entertainment conducted, sold or offered on the premises upon which the sign is located.

Canopy means any structure made of cloth or metal with a metal frame attached to a building and erected so as to permanently project over a thoroughfare, as opposed to an awning.

Canopy sign means any sign attached to, affixed to, or hung from a canopy.

Changeable copy panel means a sign or sign device consisting of or incorporating a panel designed specifically to allow the frequent changing of the copy thereon.

Clock sign means any timepiece erected outside of any building for the purpose of advertising the business on the premises on which it is located.

Combination sign means any sign incorporating any combination of the features of pole, projecting or roof signs.
Appendix F- Decatur Sign Ordinance

Construction sign means any non-illuminated sign located on the property where construction or development is taking place and which identifies contractors, architects, engineers, financial institutions and other parties associated with the construction or development project.

Directional sign means any sign utilized for the purpose of indicating the location or direction of any object, place or area. For example, such signs include, but are not limited to, entrance and exit signs, no parking signs, drive through signs, restroom signs, etc.

Directly illuminated sign means any sign designed to give forth artificial light directly (or through transparent or translucent material) from a source of light within such sign including, but not limited to, neon and exposed lamp signs.

Double-faced sign means any sign which has two display surfaces backed against each other or against the same background, one face of which is designed to be seen from one direction and the other from the opposite direction, the overall total height of which does not exceed 25 feet above ground level.

Flashing sign means any sign, the illumination of which is not kept constant in intensity at all times when in use, and which exhibits sudden or marked changes in lighting effects. Illuminated signs which indicate the time, temperature, date or other public service information shall not be considered flashing signs.

Freestanding sign means a sign securely affixed to a substantial support structure of columns, uprights or braces which is permanently attached to the ground and wholly independent of any building for support, the total height of which is less than eight feet.

Ground sign means a sign which is supported on one or more uprights or braces on the ground, the overall total height of which does not exceed six feet above the grade.

Indirectly illuminated sign means any sign illuminated by an external light directed primarily toward such sign and so shielded that no direct rays from the light are visible elsewhere than on the lot where such illumination occurs. If not effectively so shielded, such sign shall be deemed to be a directly illuminated sign.

Marquee means any roofed structure attached to and supported by a building and projecting over public or private sidewalks or right-of-way.

Marquee sign means any sign painted on, attached to, or hung from a marquee.

Nonconforming sign means any lawfully erected sign which, on the effective date of the ordinance from which this section derives, fails to comply with the requirements of this chapter.
Nonstructural trim means the molding, battens, cappings, nailing strips, latticing, cutout or letters and walkways which are attached to the sign structure.

Office-type business means a business or professional office which does not have frontage on a public street. For example, a business located in an office building or similar facility and which is entered from a hallway or corridor connected to a common building entrance.

Off-premises sign means any sign not located on the same premises as the person, business, commodity, service, entertainment or any other thing which it advertises or to which it relates, including any structure designed primarily for the display of off-site signs or advertising structures.

Outdoor advertising means advertising on any board, fence or structure or the placing thereon of any poster, bill, printing, painting, device or any advertising matter of any kind, and the pasting, posting, painting, printing, nailing or tacking or otherwise fastening of any handbill, card, banner, sign, poster, advertising or notice of any kind upon any property or place.

Pole sign means any sign erected on one or more uprights supported from the ground, the height of which is greater than eight feet, and which is not a part of any building or structure, other than a structure erected solely for the purpose of supporting the sign. The overall total height of a pole sign shall not exceed 25 feet above ground level. A pole sign may include an accessory sign or changeable copy panel, the areas of which shall be included in the total area of the pole sign.

Political sign means a sign identifying and urging voter support for a particular election issue, political party or candidate for public office.

Portable sign means any sign which is designed to be transported by any means, including by trailer or on its own wheels, even though the wheels of such sign may be removed and the remaining chassis or support constructed without wheels is attached temporarily or permanently to the ground, or any movable sign structure designed for transport, which is placed, parked or maintained at a particular location for the express purpose of promotion or conveying an advertising message. It is typical of such signs that the space provided for advertising matter consists of a changeable copy panel.

Price panel means any sign or panel incorporated into a sign or sign device and having changeable numerals used for the purpose of displaying variable price information.

Professional office means an office or office building which is located in a PO-professional office zoning district, as designated by the city zoning ordinance.

Projecting sign means any sign mounted on the face or vertical surface of a building or structure, the display surfaces of which are not parallel to the supporting surfaces.
Appendix F - Decatur Sign Ordinance

Real estate sign means any temporary sign advertising the sale, rental or lease of the property on which the sign is located.

Residential real estate sign means any temporary sign advertising the sale, rental or lease of the residential property on which the sign is located.

Roof sign means any sign which is fastened to and supported by or on the roof of a building or which extends above the roof of a building.

Rotating sign means any sign which is designed to revolve or rotate.

Service station means any building or land used for the dispensing, sale or offering for sale at retail any automobile fuels, oils or accessories and in connection with may be performed general automotive servicing as distinguished from automotive repairs.

Shopping center means a commercial development of two or more retail stores, restaurants, offices, service businesses, similar establishments or combination thereof, with private off-street parking facilities for the common use of patrons and employees of the development.

Sign means any writing, pictorial presentation, illustration, decoration, flag, banner, display, spectacle, statuary or other device or visual medium, including its structure and component parts, which:
(1) Is used or intended to be used to announce, attract attention to, identify, advertise, or otherwise make anything known; and
(2) Is visible from any public street, public road, public right-of-way or adjoining property.

The term "sign" shall not be deemed to include the terms "building" or "landscaping," or any architectural embellishment of a building not designed to communicate information.

Sign official means any person charged with the administration and enforcement of appropriate provisions of this chapter.

Sign structure means the supports, uprights, braces and framework of the sign.

Storefront or street-facing business means a business which has an entrance and its principal frontage located on and/or facing a public street. In a shopping center, such business may face a mall or other private vehicular or pedestrian thoroughfare or private parking area.

Temporary sign means any non-illuminated sign, banner, or advertising display constructed of cloth, canvas, light materials, with or without frames and intended to be displayed for a brief and limited period of time, not to exceed 30 days. Construction signs, real estate and residential real estate signs are not considered temporary signs within this definition.

Vehicular business means a business that, due to the nature of the product or service offered
Appendix F - Decatur Sign Ordinance

is oriented toward persons using vehicular transportation. Such businesses may include automotive service stations and repair shops, motor or drive-in banks, drive-in eating establishments, automobile dealers, drive-in laundries and dry cleaning establishments, motels, grocery and convenience stores, and similar establishments, but do not include general business offices, professional offices, contractor's offices, printer's shops, real estate or insurance offices, retail and other business without drive-in, drive-through or dedicated customer parking facilities, or similar establishments.

Wall sign means a sign applied to or mounted on the wall or surface of a building or structure, the display surface of which is parallel to the supporting surface or perpendicular to the supporting surface.

Weekend directional sign means a temporary directional sign used to direct motorists and others to a property for sale or lease, community event, yard or garage sale, or similar place or event. Such signs are allowed on weekends only between the hours of 5:00 p.m. on Friday to 11:59 p.m. on Sunday.

Window sign means a sign painted on, applied to or hung on the inside of a window. Zoning district means the use classification of parcels or tracts of land as described and defined by the city zoning ordinance.

Zoning ordinance means the zoning ordinance and land use and development regulations adopted for use within the city.

(CODE 1967, § 3-11; Ord. No. O-90-09, art. II, § 1, 6-18-90)
Cross references: Definitions generally, § 1-2.

Sec. 78-3. Penalty for violation of chapter.
Any person violating any provision of this chapter shall, after trial and conviction in the municipal court, be punished as provided in section 1-12.

(Code 1967, § 3-22)

Sec. 78-4. Defacing of official signs and notices.
No person shall injure, deface, obliterate, remove, take down, disturb or in any other manner interfere with any signboard containing the name of any street or public place, or any bulletin board, or sign or notice erected, posted or placed, bearing the name of the city commission or any officer thereof.

(Code 1967, § 3-5)

Sec. 78-5. Business license required.
No person shall engage in or carry on the business or occupation of billposting, advertising, sign painting, outdoor advertising, installing and/or maintaining signs without first obtaining the license and paying the license fee provided for in the schedule of fees and charges.
Appendix F - Decatur Sign Ordinance

(Code 1967, § 3-6)

Sec. 78-6. Fastening signs, notices and posters to property--On public property generally.

It shall be unlawful for any person, except a public officer or employee in the performance of a public duty, to paste, print, nail, stake, tack or otherwise fasten any card, banner, handbill, sign, poster, advertisement or notice of any kind, or cause the same to be done, on any curbstone, lamp-post, pole, hydrant, bridge, tree or area upon any public or publicly maintained street, sidewalk, right-of-way or property within the city, except as may be required by the provisions of this Code, other ordinances of the city or the laws of the state or the United States or as may be otherwise authorized by this chapter.

(Code 1967, § 3-7; Ord. No. O-90-09, art. I, § 1, 6-18-90)

Sec. 78-7. Same--Consent of city manager required for city property; removal of signs in violation.

It shall be unlawful for any person, except a public officer or employee in the performance of a public duty, to paste, post, paint, print, nail, tack or otherwise fasten any card, banner, handbill, sign, poster, advertisement or notice of any kind, or cause the same to be done, on any city property. Any advertisement prohibited by this section or section 78-6 may be taken down, moved or destroyed by the city authorities.

(Code 1967, § 3-8; Ord. No. O-90-09, art. I, § 2, 6-18-90)

Sec. 78-8. Same--Consent of owner, holder, lessee or agent required for private property; removal of signs in violation.

It shall be unlawful for any person, except a public officer or employee in the performance of a public duty or a private person giving legal notice, to paste, post, paint, print, nail, tack or otherwise fasten any card, banner, handbill, sign, poster, advertisement or notice of any kind, or cause the same to be done, upon any property without the written consent of the owner, holder, lessee, agent or trustee thereof. Any advertisement prohibited by this section may be taken down, moved or destroyed by the city authorities.

(Code 1967, § 3-9)

Sec. 78-9. Scattering paste, glue, waste matter, paint or other materials on public or private property.

No person shall scatter, daub or leave any paint, paste, glue or other substance used for painting or affixing advertising matter upon any public street or sidewalk, or scatter or throw or permit to be scattered or thrown any waste matter, paper, cloth or materials of whatsoever kind removed from signs or other advertising matter on any public street or private property.

(Code 1967, § 3-10)

Sec. 78-10. General regulations.
Appendix F - Decatur Sign Ordinance

(a) The following general regulations shall apply to the types of signs specified in this section:

(1) Awning, marquee, canopy and projecting signs. Awning, marquee, canopy and projecting signs shall be securely fastened to the building surface, shall be no less than eight feet above the ground when erected over pedestrian walkways and no less than 14 feet above areas of vehicle access at the lowest extremity of the sign.

(2) Freestanding, ground and pole signs. Freestanding, ground and pole signs shall be securely affixed to a substantial support structure which is permanently and securely attached to the ground and wholly independent of any building for support.

(b) The following general regulations shall apply to all types of signs:

(1) Lighting requirements. No sign shall give off light which glares, blinds, or has any other such adverse effect on vehicular traffic. The light from an illuminated sign shall be established in such a way that adjacent properties and roadways are not adversely affected and that no direct light is cast upon adjacent properties and roadways. No illuminated signs shall be constructed or maintained within 75 feet of any single-family dwelling. Except for public service signs such as clock, time and temperature signs, signs with flashing, intermittent or animated illumination or effect are prohibited. Signs which simulate official traffic control, warning or public service signs are prohibited. Signs which include series, lines or rows of electric, neon or other lights are prohibited.

(2) Construction and maintenance; compliance with building codes. All signs for which a permit is required shall be constructed and maintained in conformance with city building and electrical codes. Such signs, together with their supports, braces, guys, anchors and similar parts, shall be maintained and protected as necessary to maintain a clean and safe appearance and condition. The sign official may cause to be removed after due notice any sign which shows gross neglect, becomes dilapidated or is not well maintained.

(3) Fire safety. No sign shall obstruct any fire escape, any means of egress or ventilation or shall prevent free passage from one part of a roof to another part thereof, nor shall any sign be attached in any manner to a fire escape.

(4) Vehicular traffic. No sign shall interfere with any roadway visibility or obstruct or otherwise interfere with the safe and orderly movement of vehicular traffic.

(5) Natural features. No sign shall be erected, painted or drawn on any tree, rock or similar natural feature.

(6) Ownership. No sign shall be located on any building, fence, or other property belonging to another person without the consent of the owner.

(7) Prohibited activities. No sign shall advertise an activity, service, product or other item prohibited by the laws and regulations of the United States or the state or by the ordinances and regulations of the city.

(8) Sound. No sign shall emit or utilize in any manner any sound capable of being detected on any public roadway, public right-of-way or public sidewalk by a person of normal hearing.

(9) Public roads, rights-of-way and utility poles. No sign, sign structure or advertising shall be located on or within any public roadway or public right-of-way, nor shall any sign, sign structure or advertising device be located on any utility pole.
Appendix F - Decatur Sign Ordinance

(10) Street intersections. No sign or sign structure above a height of three feet shall be located within 15 feet of the intersection of the right-of-way lines extended of two streets, or of street intersection with a railroad right-of-way. However, a sign support structure of not more than ten inches in diameter may be located within such intersection visibility area if all other requirements of this chapter are met, and the lowest elevation of the sign surface is at least 12 feet above ground level. (Code 1967, § 3-12)

Sec. 78-11. Permit--Required.
A permit shall be required for all permanent and temporary signs other than those specifically exempted by this chapter. (Code 1967, § 3-13)

Sec. 78-12. Same--Application.
(a) Application for sign permit shall be made through the office of the sign official. The applicant must submit sign plans indicating size, type of lettering, configurations, coloring, lighting and any electrical and structural specifications as per the requirements of this chapter and the building codes. Standardized sign plans may be submitted in fulfillment of this requirement. Site plans showing specific location of signs shall be submitted with each application.
(b) Each application shall contain an agreement to indemnify and hold the city harmless of all damages, demands, or expenses of every character which may in any manner be caused by the sign, sign structure or advertising matter. (Code 1967, § 3-14)

Sec. 78-13. Same--Fees; double fee penalty.
(a) Schedule. Permit fees shall be payable with the application for the sign permit. Sign permit fees shall be paid according to the schedule as set forth in the schedule of fees and charges.
(b) Double fee penalty. If a sign is erected or painted before the issuance of permits, a penalty equal to the sign permit fee for the sign shall be charged. (Code 1967, § 3-15)

Sec. 78-14. Inspection.
The sign official may inspect, or cause to be inspected by his authorized representative, every sign installed under the provisions of this chapter to determine that each sign meets the requirements set forth in this chapter. (Code 1967, § 3-16)

Sec. 78-15. Signs exempt from permits.
The following signs are exempt from the permit requirements of this chapter:
(1) Official traffic or warning signs;
(2) Changing of copy of bulletin board, poster board, display casement, marquee or changeable copy sign and the moving or relocating of embellishments that does not increase the area of
Appendix F - Decatur Sign Ordinance

embellishments;
(3) Decorative flags or buntings;
(4) Symbolic flag and award flag of institution or business, one for each business or one for
each 50 feet of street frontage;
(5) Construction signs not exceeding 32 square feet in area;
(6) Residential real estate signs not exceeding 24 square feet in area;
(7) Political signs;
(8) Directional signs not exceeding six square feet in area;
(9) Temporary window signs and banners; and
(10) Weekend directional signs.
(Code 1967, § 3-17; Ord. No. O-90-09, art. II, § 2, 6-18-90)

Sec. 78-16. Prohibited signs and sign devices.
The following signs and sign devices are prohibited under the provisions of this chapter:
(1) Signs that display intermittent lights resembling flashing lights associated with danger.
(2) Signs using the word "stop" or "danger," or imitation of an official traffic control, warn­
ing or public service sign.
(3) Signs which provide background of colored lights blending with traffic signals which
might confuse a motorist when viewed from normal approach distance of 25 feet to 300 feet.
(4) Any sign attached or applied to benches, trash receptacles or any other unapproved sup­
porting structure.
(5) Pennants, streamers, ribbons, whirligigs, spinning devices and similar-type devices.
(6) Signs, other than temporary signs, which are not securely affixed to the ground or
securely anchored so as to be immobile or otherwise affixed in a permanent manner to an approved
supporting structure.
(7) Signs attached to or placed on a vehicle that is parked on private property, except serv­
ice vehicles temporarily parked there.
(8) Roof signs.
(9) Animated signs.
(10) Billboards.
(11) Clock signs, except when used as a principal business identification sign.
(12) Flashing signs.
(13) Marquee signs except for bona fide theaters.
(14) Rotating signs.
(15) Portable signs.
(16) Commercial product signs on residentially zoned property.
(17) Off-premises signs.
(18) Signs advertising alcoholic beverages.
(19) Temporary signs unless permitted by this chapter.
(Code 1967, § 3-18)
Sec. 78-17. Nonconforming signs.

(a) Signs which on the effective date of the ordinance from which this section derives were legally erected and maintained under previous ordinances and regulations, or which become nonconforming with respect to the requirements of this chapter, may be continued so long as the size of the sign is not increased beyond that existing as of the effective date of the ordinance from which this section derives or any change thereto is made in conformance with this chapter. However, the display face of a nonconforming roof sign located on an owner-occupied building may be replaced or repainted with a new display face so long as the total area of the sign is not increased.

(b) A nonconforming sign shall not be replaced by another sign except one which complies with the requirements of this chapter.

(c) Minor repair and maintenance of nonconforming signs such as repainting, electrical repairs and neon tubing shall be permitted. However, no structural repairs or changes in the size or shape of a nonconforming sign shall be permitted except to make the sign comply with the requirements of this chapter.

(d) Illegally installed or nonpermitted nonconforming signs, nonconforming signs for which no permit was issued, and all nonconforming temporary signs shall be removed or made to conform with the requirements of this chapter within 90 days of the effective date of the ordinance from which this section derives.

(Code 1967, § 3-19; Ord. No. O-91-05)
Appendix G - Web-Based Preservation Resources

ADA STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBLE DESIGN
www.ada.gov/stdspdf.htm

CITY OF DECATUR
www.decaturga.com

CITY OF DECATUR ORDINANCES
http://www.municode.com/resources/gateway.asp?pid=12110&sid=10

DECATUR PRESERVATION ALLIANCE
http://www.decaturpreservationalliance.org

THE DEKALB HISTORY CENTER
http://www.dekalbhistory.org

HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION
(GEORGIA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE)
http://www.gashpo.org

THE GEORGIA TRUST
http://www.georgiatrust.org/index.htm

NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION
http://www.nationaltrust.org/index.html

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE'S PRESERVATION BRIEFS
http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/briefs/presbhom.htm

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
http://www.cr.nps.gov/places.htm

SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR'S STANDARDS FOR REHABILITATION
http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/index.htm
Bibliography

Books:


Design Guidelines:


Other Resources:


*Old Decatur Historic District Nomination Form*, Old Decatur Neighborhood Association, 2006.
Contacts

City Hall
509 N. McDonough St
Decatur, GA 30031
404-370-4102

Decatur Development Department
City Hall
509 N. McDonough St
Decatur, GA 30031
404-370-410

Georgia Department of Natural Resources
(Georgia State Historic Preservation Office)
34 Peachtree Street, NW;
Suite 1600;
Atlanta, GA 30303-2316
404-656-2840