

DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION DECATUR, GEORGIA



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THE COMMUNITY

Decatur is a welcoming, historic city that combines a vibrant small-city atmosphere with the sophistication and excitement of a college town--along with all the benefits and amenities of living in a major metropolitan area.

Decatur's city limits include 4.7 square miles and more than 25,000 residents as of the 2020 Census, which makes Decatur one of the most densely populated cities in the state of Georgia. Decatur is just minutes east of downtown Atlanta, minutes west of Stone Mountain, and has three MARTA rail stations, including one right under the downtown square, which provides easy access to downtown Atlanta, Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, and the region's attractions.

The City of Decatur has a thriving downtown business district that is surrounded by beautiful, historic neighborhoods. Downtown Decatur offers a mix of office, retail, restaurant, and residential uses designed to encourage walking and an active lifestyle for persons of all ages. Locally owned restaurants and retail businesses also make the City of Decatur a destination for shopping and dining in metro-Atlanta.

The City Schools of Decatur provide one citywide early childhood education center, five neighborhood K-2 elementary schools, two system-wide 3-5 upper elementary schools, one middle school and one high school. Decatur is home to Agnes Scott College, recently ranked as one of the top 50 national liberal arts colleges, the Southeast's best women's college, and Georgia's best liberal arts college by U.S. News & World Report in its annual "America's Best Colleges" survey. Columbia Theological Seminary, with its 52-acre campus along Columbia Drive, anchors the southeastern quadrant of the city. Emory's Nursing Learning Center is also located in downtown Decatur.

The City of Decatur has friendly neighborhoods, tree-lined streets, great schools, parks and playing fields, libraries, colleges, and businesses that all make Decatur a wonderful place to spend some time.

THE CITY ORGANIZATION

The City of Decatur operates under the commission-manager form of government. The city commission determines the policies of the local government and enacts local laws necessary for the protection of public health, safety, and welfare. The city commissioners provide leadership in identifying community needs and developing programs to meet community objectives. There are five city commissioners, elected in nonpartisan elections, for overlapping four-year terms.

The city commission appoints a city manager to provide professional management and direct the day-to-day operations of the city. The city manager serves as the chief executive and administrative officer and is responsible for conducting the policies and ordinances of the city commission, for overseeing the daily operations of the government, the recruitment of all employees and serves at the pleasure of the commission.

The city's leadership has been dedicated to recruiting a diverse workforce to reflect the community they

serve. While an ongoing effort, the city has been successful in developing a diverse team throughout the city organization. There is a high degree of positive collaboration between the senior staff and the city commission and a mutual respect of one another's roles and responsibilities. The organizational culture is also one of openness, equity, and approachability. The city manager and other senior leaders regularly roll up their sleeves and assist in the administration of the city without regard to hierarchy. The city organization is focused on customer service, both internal and external. Highly responsive, personable customer service is expected.

The city organization includes 250 full-time and 200 part-time seasonal employees who are encouraged to participate in interdepartmental teams and committees as well as professional development opportunities. The City General Fund Budget for FY 24-25 is \$43,021,180.

CORE PURPOSE AND VISION

Our employees uphold and promote the mission, vision and values of the City of Decatur, and work to fulfill the four main principles of the Decatur Strategic Plan through these essential competencies:

Leadership



Effective Management



Teamwork/ Interpersonal



Task



The six themes of the Decatur's Destinations: 2030 Strategic Plan are:

Equity and Racial Justice

Integrating proactive equity ambitions into every plan.

Climate Action

Cut emissions for the long-term; prepare to adapt now.

Civic Trust

Empowering bold ambitions with high trust.

Affordable Housing

Ensuring housing diversity through innovative policy-making.

Mobility

Safer and more affordable ways for getting around – for more people, more of the time.

Economic Growth

What is good for quality of life for everyone is good for business.



THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The Parks and Recreation Department includes 27 full-time staff, including two Assistant Director positions, one for Operations and one for Recreation. The Department is responsible for the following core programs: youth and adult sports programs, senior programs, afterschool programs, aquatics, facility and outdoor rentals, special events, summer camps, tennis, adult programs, teen programs, and youth programs. The Department also adopted a new [Parks and Recreation Master Plan](#) in 2022.

The Department runs Decatur's Out of School Time (OST), providing enriching and engaging programming from grades K-5th, during out of school hours. During the school year OST, operates programs at seven afterschool sites, accredited with the Council of Accreditation (COA). The City's afterschool programs are all nationally accredited since the OST Division achieved agency-wide accreditation from the Council on Accreditation (COA) in 2023. The city also offers "All Day Camp" options during school breaks and during the summer, the OST Summer camp programs take center stage and serve children from K-6th grade.

The Parks and Recreation Department offers seven (7) school sites – 5 are K-2nd grade (Animal Crackers) and 2 serve 3rd-5th graders (Whiz Kids). The number of children served differs by location based on square footage of available space. Number of participants by program: Clairemont Animal Crackers – 60; Glennwood Animal Crackers – 84; Oakhurst Animal Crackers – 96; Westchester Animal Crackers – 84; Winnona Park Animal Crackers – 84; Fifth Avenue Whiz Kids – 84; Talley Street Whiz Kids – 120. Total Animal Crackers (if fully enrolled) – 408. Total Whiz Kids – 204. Total afterschool participant slots across 7 programs: 612.

Decatur is taking significant strides to become a Child Friendly City through a groundbreaking initiative. In partnership with the Decatur Education Foundation, Decatur Housing Authority, and City Schools of Decatur, Decatur Parks and Recreation is working towards earning recognition for the City of Decatur from UNICEF as a city committed to improving the lives of its young citizens by upholding their rights as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.



Recreatur
PLAY. GREEN. DECATUR.



Mission: The Decatur Parks & Recreation Department's mission is to provide exceptional experiences that foster healthy living and meaningful connections within our communities.

The Parks and Recreation Department staff are dedicated to creating opportunities that inspire and empower individuals of all ages and backgrounds to lead active, vibrant lives.



Vision: Enhancing Lives Across Communities

We envision a future where our parks and programs have a profound impact on the lives of individuals and communities. By enhancing physical and mental well-being, nurturing social connections, and encouraging a deep appreciation for nature, we strive to improve the overall quality of life for everyone we serve.

In January 2020, the City Commission approved the city's participation in an MOU with UNICEF to pursue recognition as a Child Friendly City. City of Decatur, GA was one of only six communities signed on as part of the first cohort.

In 2022-23, the first Teen Leadership Team was created, consisting of 28 teens. The team created the city's first Local Action Plan for Youth and in 2023-24 the Teen Leadership Team implemented the projects identified in the plan. Leadership and coordination of this project includes various facets:

1. Serving as focal point/primary contact for the UNICEF USA team in Decatur.
2. Developing the agendas for and facilitating meetings of the Leadership Team (includes partners from Decatur Education Foundation, City Schools of Decatur, Decatur Housing Authority and other community stakeholders plus city staff members).
3. Facilitating all aspects of the Teen Leadership Team from recruitment and selection to planning and facilitating of meetings, communication, etc.
4. Coordinating with city and community partners whose work intersects with the five priorities in the Local Action Plan for Youth. Priorities include Equitable and Inclusive City, Environmentally Conscious City, Improve Public Spaces, Increase Trust with Police, and Improve Access to and Awareness of Mental Health Resources.

Safe Routes to School is a collaborative project across all schools (focus on elementary schools) and includes Decatur Police Department. The purpose of the project is to promote children getting to school safely using methods other than cars/gas-powered vehicles. The Parks and Recreation Director has played a convening role in the past with this project – holding periodic meetings of stakeholders for planning and coordination as well as hosting kickoff and other special events for the project.



The project relates to a new and upcoming project – Safe Streets 4 All – which looks at expanding the scope of safe ways to travel on foot or bicycle (or skateboard, etc.) between all public locations within city limits. This project is currently under the direction of assistant city manager of Public Works due to the many infrastructure-, transportation-, and capital projects-related implications of the "safe routes" concept.

The Parks and Recreation Department was previously organized into two separate divisions: Children and Youth Services and Active Living. As the two departments combined into one, oversight of the department also shifted from Community and Economic Development to Public Works. The Director of Parks and Recreation reports to the assistant city manager for Public Works. Parks and Facilities maintenance is a collaborative effort with Public Works.

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board has a new charter approved by the City Commission in July 2024 to transition from what was the Active Living Board to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Various parks and recreation and other city projects rely upon the existence of this Board and some of its sub-committees to meeting requirements for projects like Safe Routes to School where oversight and engagement by community members is a requirement.

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board recently established a Micro-Mobility Committee to focus on programming and initiatives that advance Decatur as a walk-friendly and bike-friendly community in coordination with the 2016 Community Transportation Plan. The Micro-Mobility Committee is responsible for being the community voice to the Board regarding bicycling and pedestrian-related issues. This can include consideration of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, policies, and trends.



PARKS AND RECREATION FAST FACTS

25,000 Residents



22 Parks
196 Acres

8 Playgrounds

6 Basketball Courts



9 Tennis Courts



2 Pickleball Courts

4 Diamond Fields

5 Rectangle Fields



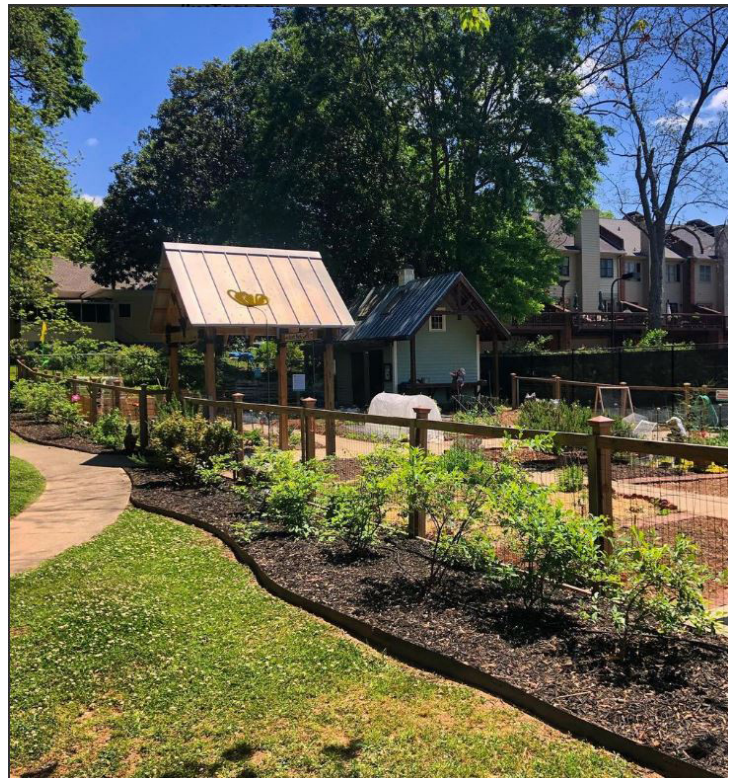
4 Outdoor Pools



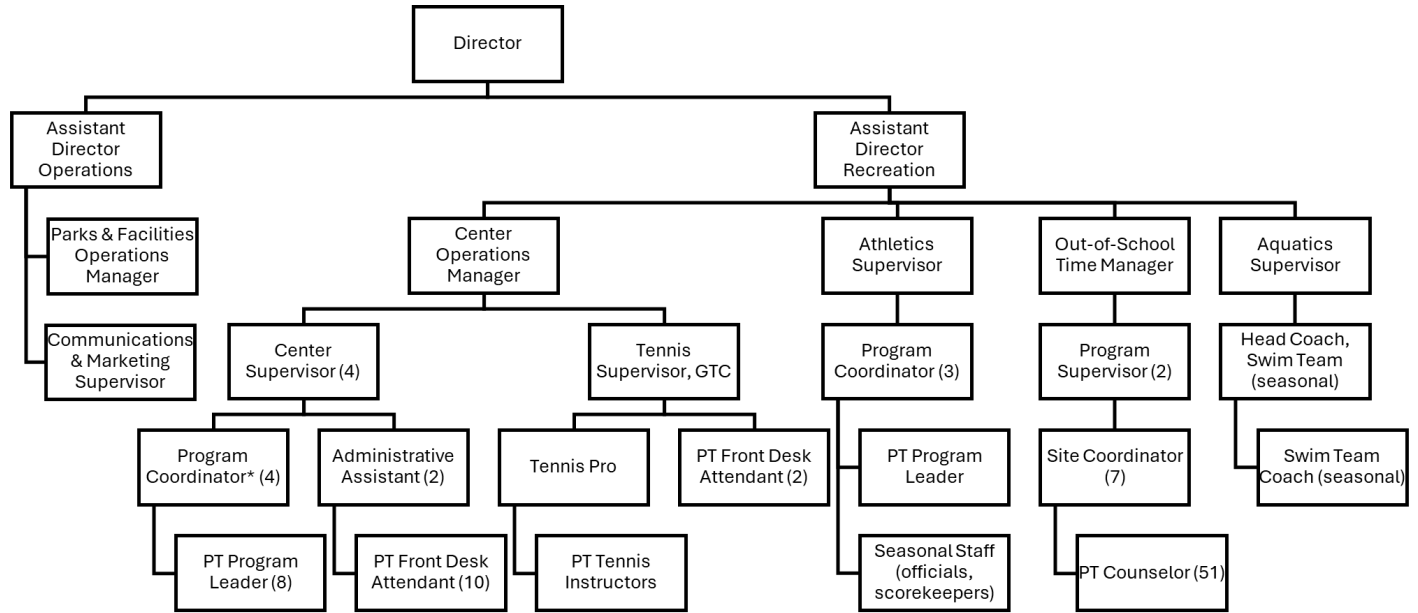
134,510 sf
of indoor recreation
space

1 community garden

1 skate park



PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The next Director of Parks and Recreation can expect to work closely with the Assistant City Manager on the following responsibilities, opportunities, and challenges:

- Developing, administering, and supervising a comprehensive parks and recreation plan; supervising all divisions, including administration, athletics, aquatics, tennis, parks, and recreation programs; ensuring the effective construction and proper maintenance of a wide variety of new and existing parks and recreation facilities.
- Providing interpretation of department policies and procedures; defines mission, goals and objectives, oversees functions and results of the department through participant, financial, and general reports.
- Creating high-performance work culture by demonstrating behavior consistent with the City's vision, mission, and values.
- Setting the vision for the department to promote a high quality of life for all residents through holistic services and programming in the community.
- Ensuring the development, implementation, and maintenance of a current parks and recreation master plan in conjunction with the City Commission, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, city staff, and consultants.
- Providing information and resources to help others do their jobs and remove obstacles to high performance.
- Modeling a working atmosphere of reliance and collaboration by building effective working relationships with supervisors, team members, city employees and the public.
- Seeks out and solidifies community, state, and organizational collaborations that further diversify a year-round recreation program.
- Fostering a cohesive and collaborative team that effectively works across all levels of the organization.
- Developing an organizational structure that maximizes the talent and expertise of the staff.
- Acting as the designated department spokesperson for the media.
- Preparing a variety of studies, reports, and related information for decision-making.
- Developing a team to follow through with the new master plan for the parks and recreation department.
- Guiding the foundation for the new department with a new direction.
- Providing quality recreation programs and services at affordable fees and charges.
- Collaborating with the local school district on sharing facilities.
- Ensuring that new facilities continue to operate and are maintained at a high level.
- Developing an open relationship with community members.

CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS:

The City of Decatur seeks an experienced leader who is committed to collaboration, consensus building, integrity, and transparency. The Director of Parks and Recreation must fully embrace the culture of the Decatur community and City organization, honoring the City's commitment to strategic planning, community engagement, innovative programs and services that reflect best practices, fiscal stewardship, and exceptional customer service.

This position requires a bachelor's degree in parks and recreation administration, public administration, business administration, or a closely related field and ten years of relevant experience. A master's degree is a plus. CPRP (Certified Park and Recreation Professional) or CPRE (Certified Park and Recreation Executive) Certification is preferred.

Additionally, the successful candidate will demonstrate these qualities, skills, and attributes:

- A community-engaged leader with the ability to establish and maintain trusting relationships with staff, community leaders and the community at large.
- A forward thinking leader who can combine vision, strategy, and innovation.
- A collaborative individual who understands how to balance financial excellence and sustainability while looking ahead to changing service needs and models.
- An excellent communicator with strong people skills.
- A builder of strong partnerships and consensus at all levels of the organization.
- An approachable and supportive leader who has a proven record of developing high performing teams.
- A transparent and knowledgeable leader able to build trust with all stakeholders.
- Innovative and experienced in identifying emerging parks and recreation trends and opportunities and able to effectively implement best practice solutions.
- Ability to balance the need for strategic thinking with day-to-day tasks, cultivating positive morale throughout the management of the department.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is \$91,936 to \$150,934 with a starting salary range from \$91,936 to \$121,435. Appointments within the range will be made depending on the qualifications of the selected candidate. The City of Decatur offers a comprehensive [benefits](#) program. Residency in the City of Decatur is NOT required.

HOW TO APPLY

Candidates must apply by Monday, August 15, 2024, with resume, cover letter and contact information for five work-related references to www.GovHRjobs.com to the attention of Charlene Stevens, Executive Vice President Joe DeLuca, Senior Vice President, GovHR USA, 790 Frontage Road, Ste. 213, Northfield, IL 60093. Tel: (847) 309-9403.

The City of Decatur, Georgia is an Equal Opportunity Employer

