



Appendix G **MUNICIPAL BENCHMARK REPORT**

Budget FY 2018-2019

Municipal Benchmark Report

Decatur's Exceptional Eight

Benchmarking is “the practice of comparing performance with standards or the performance results achieved by others”¹ and it is not a new concept to many local governments. Following the Great Recession many places, including the City of Decatur, began looking for ways to do more with less. This challenge presented a unique opportunity to review internal and external processes and workflows in an effort to make cost-effective and efficient improvements.

In the fall of 2013, the City's Performance Measurement Team embarked on a project to identify communities around the United States that were similar to the City of Decatur in order to make comparisons and learn best practices. As a starting point, comparable places were drawn from a list of jurisdictions that participate in the National Research Center's citizen survey program and were members of the former ICMA Center for Performance Measurement program. Each location was selected based on criteria that included population, proximity to a large city in a metropolitan region and a council-manager form of government.

The data gathered and shared by these eight cities plus the City of Decatur tell a unique story about community engagement, transparency and people. This report includes short profiles, maps as well as interesting facts and figures for fiscal year 2016-2017.

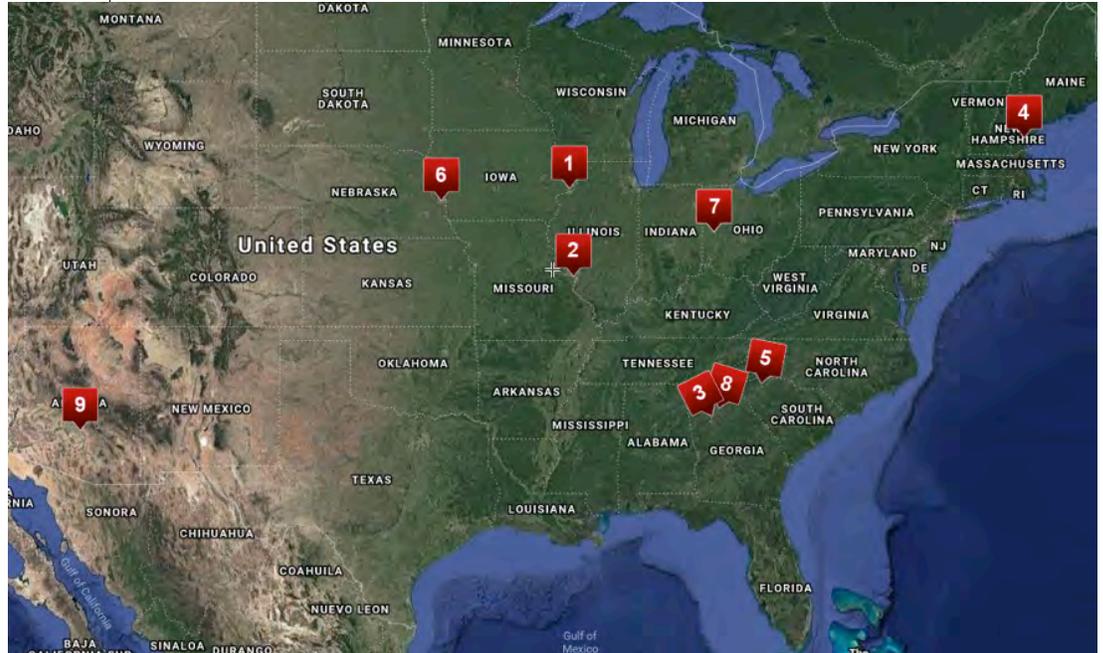
The metrics shared with us by this group, now affectionately known as Decatur's “Exceptional Eight” help tell an interesting story. Even though we range in size from 16,000 to 35,000 people, our residents do not share the same amount of living space or even the same make-up. However, each of the nine cities cares about the public it serves and this is evident by the answers to the questions in the following nine subject areas. A summary chart of all the responses follows.

Citizen Education: All of the cities offer at least one citizen education course. Most of the courses are multi-session and touch a number of municipal departments. The average number of courses offered is 57 and the median is 30. Five out of nine cities broadcast public meetings via live streaming for an average of 37 showings a year. Suwanee more than doubles the number of citizen education classes than that of next closest city with a notable 211 classes.

Communications: All of the cities surveyed believe in utilizing social media to reach out to their residents. Eight out of nine cities have a Facebook page, all are tweeting, and six have an Instagram page. Nextdoor, a social networking service for neighborhoods, has



1. Bettendorf, Iowa
2. Clayton, Missouri
3. Decatur, Georgia
4. Dover, New Hampshire
5. Greer, South Carolina
6. La Vista, Nebraska
7. Piqua, Ohio
8. Suwanee, Georgia
9. Queen Creek, Arizona



exploded in popularity with five cities creating accounts. Four cities have even braved the world of YouTube! Therefore, it is no surprise that the majority of city communications now originate online with an average percentage rate of online based communications at 61%.

Welcome to the digital age! Each city reported that they offer at least four services via the web. The types of services offered are varied and include citizen request reporting portals, bill payment, business license renewals, court fine payment and recreation program registration. The average number of online services offered is 16 and the median is 15.

Planning: Quality cities do not happen on their own, they require strategic planning. This is something every city surveyed understands and each one has adopted a strategic plan. Greenspace is also an important component for cities. The Exceptional Eight have recognized this importance by averaging 366.58 acres of greenspace. Bettendorf really likes to show off its natural beauty by maintaining 730 acres of green space.

Recycling Services: Seven of the 9 cities reported on the collection of recycling materials. The average amount is 2,162 tons of commingled materials. Queen Creek tops the average by collecting 3,545 tons of recycling in 2017. The way each city handles recycling of glass is diverse with some places requiring separation before the reaching a recycling center, putting in landfills or recycling through a private contractor.

Personnel: Each city appears to be staffed by seasoned and well-trained employees. The average years of service is 10 years and the median is 10.67 years, while the average amount spent on employee training is almost \$123,000 with a median of about \$62,250. Eight out of the 9 cities also have an employee wellness program with an average participation rate of 46%. The City of Greer takes the crown again this year with an almost perfect participation rate of 94% of their employees taking advantage of the city-sponsored wellness program!

Public Safety: On average, it doesn't take long for help to arrive in the nine cities. With a blistering fast average response time of 5 minutes and 14 seconds for Police calls and 5 minutes and 20 seconds for Fire calls in FY16-17, the staff in the Police and Fire departments are doing a great job of taking care of business.

Special Events: From the Decatur Arts Festival to Queen Creek’s S’more Sweets Festival to Clayton’s Centennial, our residents are never far from something fun to do. The group averaged a whopping 47 special events in 2017 and Greer had 80!

Taxes: Great services and fun festivals are not free. On average, 62% of the tax base is residential and 34% is commercial tax base. The average value of tax exempt properties is over \$102 million with a median of \$66,629,736.

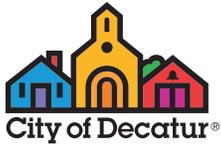
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City	Region	Metro Area	Area (Sq Mi)	Population	Population Under 18	Population 65+
Bettendorf, IA	Midwest	Davenport-Moline	21.22	35,813	25.5%	15.8%
Clayton, MO	Midwest	St. Louis	2.48	16,805	14.9%	13.6%
Decatur, GA	Southeast	Atlanta	4.27	23,832	29.6%	11.5%
Dover, NH	Northeast	Portsmouth-Rochester	26.72	31,398	19.5%	14.3%
Greer, SC	Southeast	Greenville	20.64	30,899	26.3%	11.5%
La Vista, NE	Midwest	Omaha	4.28	17,116	26.6%	9.4%
Queen Creek, AZ	West	Phoenix	25.8	39,184	38.4%	7.0%
Piqua, OH	Midwest	Dayton-Springfield	11.62	20,987	24.4%	17.0%
Suwanee, GA	Southeast	Atlanta	10.88	19,549	27.6%	8.5%

City	2017 Gen'l Fund Expenditures	Central Bus. District	County Seat	College or University	Independent School System	Bachelors Degree or Higher
Bettendorf, IA	\$ 29,788,314	Y	N	Y	Y	49.1%
Clayton, MO	\$24,818,5199	Y	Y	Y	Y	78.7%
Decatur, GA	\$23,011,146,	Y	Y	Y	Y	72.3%
Dover, NH	\$107,805,3655	Y	Y	N	N	42.6%
Greer, SC	\$24,309,531	Y	N	N	N	32.6%
La Vista, NE	\$14,736,299	N	N	N	Y	32.6%
Queen Creek, AZ	\$23,484,408	N	N	Y	Y	39.8%
Piqua, OH	\$10,400,000	Y	Y	N	Y	11.4%
Suwanee, GA	\$11,916,700	N	N	N	N	51.1%

Information in these columns is self-reported. All other data obtained from www.census.gov.

City	Travel time to work (minutes)	White	Black	Other	Hispanic/Asian	Latino	Female
Bettendorf, IA	18	88.5%	3.4%	.3%	5.2%	4.0%	51.2%
Clayton, MO	16.6	76.7%	8.4	.1%	11.8%	3.5%	49.6%
Decatur, GA	25.8	69.1%	21.1%	0.64%	4.5%	3.8%	58.2%
Dover, NH	23.6	90.9%	1.3%	1.8%	4.4%	2.2%	51.5%
Greer, SC	21.8	71.6%	18.2%	0.3%	5.0%	14.9%	52.5%
La Vista, NE	18.5	87.0%	5.2%	0.5%	2.7%	8.0%	50.0%
Piqua, OH	18.0	90.6%	3.2%	0.7%	1.0%	1.4%	51.7%
Queen Creek, AZ	32.0	87.8	2.6%	5.8%	2.5%	16.4%	49.2%
Suwanee, GA	31.6	67.0%	10.5%	2.1%	17.8%	12.5%	51.1%



Subject Area	Benchmarking Metric	Bettendorf	Clayton	Dover	Greer
Citizen Education	How many citizen education classes did your city host in 2017?	39	95	17	4
Communications	How many online services does your city offer?	5	17	38	4
	Do you broadcast your public meetings using live streaming?	No	No	Yes	No
	If yes, how many meetings did you stream in 2017?	—	—	128	—
	Types of social media platforms utilized?*	FB, TW, YT, YG	FB, TW, YT, IG, ND	FB, TW, TU, IG, YT, PT, VM, SC, G+	FB, TW
	What percentage of your communications is paper based?		22%		65%
	What percentage of your communications is online based?		88%		35%
Planning	Do you have a citywide strategic plan?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	If yes, what year was the plan adopted?	2017	2012	2017	2014
	How many acres of greenspace do you maintain in your city?	730	99.82	181	96.69
Recycling Services	How many tons of recyclable materials did you collect in 2017?	2,680	1,463	2,634	757
	Do you collect co-mingled materials?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	If yes, how is glass handled?	Separated and crushed	Recycled through MRF	Separated at facility	No glass allowed
Personnel	How much did you spend on employee training in FY16-17?	\$270,622.00	—	—	\$196,057.00
	Do you have an employee wellness program?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	If yes, what is your participation rate?	38%	N/A	31%	94%
	What is the average years of service for your full-time employees?	15	—	12	7.89
	What percentage of your organization is female?	30%	—	34%	25%
	What percentage of your organization is minority?	—	—	2%	12%

* FB – Facebook; G+ – Google Plus; IG – Instagram; ND – Nextdoor; PT – Pinterest; SC – Snapchat; TU – Tumbler; TW – Twitter; VM – Vimeo; YG- YourGov; YT – YouTube

La Vista	Piqua	Queen Creek	Suwanee	Decatur	Median	Average
10	4	30	211	103	30.00	57.00
4	5	30	22	15	15.00	15.56
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes		
2	0	29	—	27	27.00	37.20
FB, TW, IG, ND	ND, TW	FB, TW, IG, ND, YT, PT	FB, IG, TW	FB, TW, Blog, IG, ND		
20%	60%	25%	40%	50%	40%	40%
80%	40%	75%	60%	50%	60%	61%
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
2018	2017	2008	2012	2010		
221	668.1	564	372	141	296.5	366.58
N/A	1,464	3,545	N/A	2,591	2,591.00	2,162.00
N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes		
N/A	Glass in Co-Mingled	MRF Ground Cover	N/A	Separate Container		
\$62,160.74	—	\$25,000.00	\$62,250.00	\$ 293,139.71	\$129,153.50	\$151,538.24
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
30%		50%	32%	71%	35%	46%
12	9.34	6	8	10	9.34	10.03
	20%	31%	38%	48%	31%	30%
	5%	28%	32%	69%	12%	16%

continued ►



Subject Area	Benchmarking Metric	Bettendorf	Clayton	Dover	Greer
Public Safety	What was your average response time for Police calls in FY16-17?	—	2:32	4:40	6:50
	What was your average response time for Fire calls in FY16-17?	—	4:44	4:20	5:09
	What percentage of your Public Safety staff is female?	4%	15%	10%	11%
	What percentage of your Public Safety staff is minority?	—	7%	1%	12%
Special Events	How many special events did your city host in 2017?	—	—	35	80
	How many of those special events were organized by the city?	5	—	4	48
	How many total hours did volunteers work during special events?	—	—	—	603
Taxes	What percentage of your tax base is residential?	86%	—	74%	36%
	What percentage of your tax base is commercial?	14%	—	24%	49%
	What is the overall value of tax-exempt properties in your city?	—	—	\$346,651,570.00	\$1,325,230.00
Transportation	How many lane miles of street did you maintain in 2017?	443	98.72	268	244
	What is the percentage of streets with a least one side of sidewalk?	—	90%	30%	53.45%
	How many lane miles of bicycle lanes did you maintain in 2017?	25	2.19	2	0
	How many traffic calming projects did you undertake in 2017?	—	1	5	10

La Vista	Piquah	Queen Creek	Suwanee	Decatur	Median	Average
—	—	8:29	7:10	1:42	5:45	5:14
—	—	6:22		6:20	5:09	5:20
14%	6%	5%	11%	19%	10.30%	9.51%
10%	1%	13%	8%	47%	8%	7%
46	54	39	44	36	44	47.71
46	1	9	21	5	7	17.375
368	120	1542	8933	6362	1,072.25	2,987.92
49%	—	77%	51%	84.3%	63%	62%
51%	—	16%	49%	15.7%	36%	34%
\$10,774,468.00	—	\$66,629,736.00	\$86,200,000	\$209,668,445	\$66,629,736.00	\$102,316,200.80
211	6.1	456	126.9	62	211	212.86
97%	70%	85%	—	82%	82%	72%
0	15	63.9	1.9	2.6	2.19	12.51
0	1	14	0	5	3	4.5



Bettendorf, Iowa

Population: 30,000+
Area: 22 sq. miles
Incorporated: 1903

Bettendorf, Iowa is a city on the Mississippi River near Davenport, Iowa. The community is within 175 miles of both Chicago, Illinois and Des Moines, Iowa and a part of the Quad Cities Metropolitan Area. Connected to Moline Illinois in part of the Twin Bridges pictured above at left. Bettendorf is home to the largest hotel in Iowa – The Isle Casino & Hotel (pictured below left). Along with 500 rooms, The Isle boasts 4 dining experiences, shows and entertainment, and a brand new gaming floor which opened Summer 2016. The Isle was voted the area’s best casino by 2017 Quad-City Times Reader’s Choice. The City also includes over 700 acres of park land throughout 24 different park sites.



Metric	Decatur	Bettendorf
Number of acres of green space maintained	141	730
Number of online services offered	15	5
Employee wellness program participation rate	71%	38%
Percentage of female employees	48%	30%

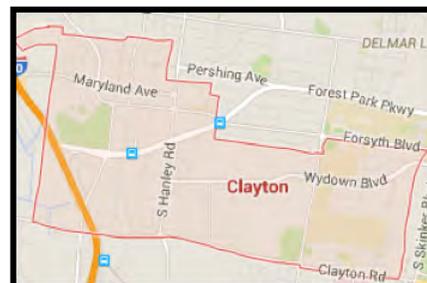
Clayton, Missouri

Population: 16,000+
Area: 2.48 sq. miles
Incorporated: 1913

The county seat of St. Louis County, Clayton, Missouri is just 8.1 miles from St. Louis. While 81% of Clayton’s land is dedicated to residential or park use, the City’s central business district combines 7,000,000 square feet of office space (with a 90% occupancy rate) with 1,000,000 square feet of retail space. The City’s public school district is one of the nation’s best, with 95% of its high school graduates going on to college.

Sixty-nine percent of Clayton residents hold a bachelor’s degree or higher. The City’s per capita income is \$55,033 and the median property value is \$577,300. The City has the following departments: Parks & Recreation; Economic Development; Public Works; Planning & Development; Fire and Police. The Center of Clayton, the City’s 124,000 square-foot community recreation center, offers sports, fitness, swimming, recreational, educational and lifestyle enhancing programs.

Metric	Decatur	Clayton
Lane miles of streets maintained in 2017	62	98.7
Tons of recyclable materials collected in 2017	2,591	1,463
Number of citizen education classes hosted in 2017	103	95
Percentage of online based communications	50%	88%





Decatur, Georgia

Population: 20,000+
Area: 4.4 sq. miles
Incorporated: 1823

Decatur, Georgia, a city of homes, schools, places of worship, is the county seat of DeKalb County, one of the most densely populated counties in the state. The city strives “to assure a high quality of life for its residents, business and visitors both today and in the future.” Decatur’s downtown attracts people from all over the Atlanta metro area due to its diverse selection of restaurants, pubs and shops. Riding on a Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) train or bus, it’s easy to get here. Just step off the train at one of three stations located inside the City.

Decatur is home to Agnes Scott College, a small liberal arts college for women, and Columbia Seminary. Seventy-two percent of residents hold a bachelor’s degree or higher. The City’s per capita income is \$44,572 and the median property value is \$365,900. The City has 220 full-time employees and 260 part-time employees.

Metric	Decatur
Number of hours volunteers worked during special events	6,362
Number of traffic calming projects in 2017	5
Average response time for Police calls in FY16-17	1 Minute 42 seconds
Employee wellness program participation rate	71%

Dover, New Hampshire

Population: 30,000+
Area: 29 sq. miles
Incorporated: 1855

Dover is located in the seacoast area of New Hampshire, and is only a one hour drive to Boston, Massachusetts; Portland, Maine and the New Hampshire Lakes Region and White Mountains. Dover is the oldest permanent settlement in New Hampshire and the 7th oldest in the US. It is a suburban community that strives “to be a city with an emerging urban vibrancy guided by a small town sense of community.” The restored and updated Cochecho Falls Millworks (pictured under the map at right), a focal point since the early 19th century, hums with 900 office workers and their computers rather than rows of whirring machinery.

Forty-two percent of Dover residents hold a bachelor’s degree or higher. The City’s per capita income is \$33,637 and the median property value is \$238,100. The City has the following departments: Schools; Finance; Planning & Economic Development; Police, Fire & Rescue; Community Services; Public Library; Public Welfare and Recreation.

Metric	Decatur	Dover
Number of acres of green space maintained	141	181
Year City strategic plan was adopted	2010	2017
Number of traffic calming projects in 2017	5	5
Average response time for Police calls in FY16-17	1:42	4:40





Greer, South Carolina

Population: 26,000+
Area: 20.64 sq. miles
Incorporated: 1876

One of South Carolina’s fastest-growing cities, Greer is located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The area brings Greer plenty of natural beauty, but Greer City Park is an especially great example of well-maintained greenspace. The Park is located in Historic Downtown Greer. Built in 2008, this 12-acre park has become a favorite destination for residents and visitors. Greer is also highly industrial. Greer is home to the Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport and BMW’s only United States manufacturing facility. Greer’s progressive business philosophy has attracted world-class businesses like Mitsubishi and Michelin.



Over 32% of Greer residents hold a bachelor’s degree or higher. The City’s median household income is \$47,933 and the median property value is \$149,400. Greer’s City Hall includes an entire floor dedicated to public space, with a 4,500-square-foot events hall available for conventions, receptions and galas.



Metric	Decatur	Greer
Employee wellness program participation rate	71%	94%
Tons of recyclable materials did you collect in 2017	2,591	757.1
Percentage of organization is female	48%	25%
Number of traffic calming projects in 2017	5	10

La Vista, Nebraska

Population: 17,000+
Area: 10 sq. miles
Incorporated: 1960



La Vista, incorporated in 1960, is a relatively young and progressive city. Located only minutes from Offutt Air Force Base, Eppley Airfield and the interstate system, La Vista has grown quickly to a community of nearly 17,000. La Vista, Spanish for “The View”, describes the magnificent panorama of the Big Papio Creek Basin. The La Vista Public Library is the result of a gift from a generous resident who wanted nothing more than for his city to have a library. In 1972, the City of La Vista approved his donation of 4,000 books as well as \$75,000 for the construction and the library opened to the public in June 1974. In 1999, the library expanded from the original 4,000 square foot facility to a spacious modern facility of more than 23,000 square feet. Along with its original amenities, the library now has downloadable books, audiobooks, music and magazines, a computer lab with online databases, Microsoft Office, Internet access and wireless access including wireless printing.

Thirty-two percent of La Vista residents hold a bachelor’s degree or higher. The City’s median household income is \$59,401 and the median property value is \$141,600. The City is the youngest city in Nebraska.



Metric	Decatur	La Vista
Citizen education classes in 2017	103	10
Percentage of your Public Safety staff is female	19%	14%
Percentage of your Public Safety staff is minority	47%	10%
Overall value of tax-exempt properties	\$209,668,445	\$10,774,468



Piqua, Ohio

Population: 20,522
Area: 11.62 sq. miles
Incorporated: 1807

The word ‘Piqua’ is derived from a Shawnee language phrase: Othath-He-Waugh-Pe-Qua, translated as “He has risen from the ashes,” related to a legend of the Shawnee people. Piqua’s roots are established in the beauty, elegance, and culture of the Midwestern countryside. In Piqua, you can enjoy the charm of a small town with historic canal-era architecture loaded with amenities and attractions such as the Great Miami River, specialty shops, McCulloch Square, and national award-winning community treasure, Fort Piqua Plaza. Pictured directly above, Fort Piqua Plaza, has a storied past involving hotels, a “very popular” lunch counter, and even a Prohibition era speakeasy. Today, the Plaza is Piqua’s public library and home to a legitimate, and not at all secret, pub.

Eleven percent of Piqua residents hold a bachelor’s degree or higher. The City’s median household income is \$55,322 and the median property value \$85,800. The City has the following departments: Administration; Development; Information Technology; Human Resources; Fire; Law; Health; Police; Utilities; Power and Engineering.

Metric	Decatur	Piqua
Percentage of female staff	48%	20%
Special events hosted by city	36	54
Number of online services offered	15	5
Traffic calming projects in 2017	5	1

Queen Creek, Arizona

Population: 26,361

Area: 25.8 sq. miles

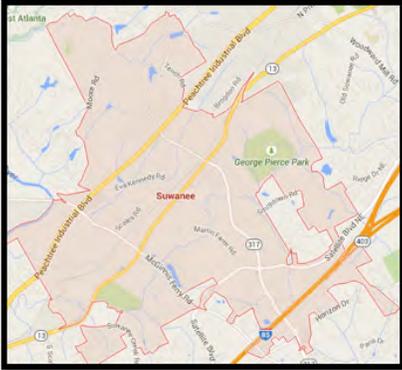
Incorporated: 1989

Queen Creek is one of the larger cities in the Exceptional Eight, but it likes to keep a small town feel. The “QC” describes itself as a “first name” community, where a person serving you isn’t an uncaring stranger, but someone who will know you by name. There are plenty of options for those who are more active. From the Horseshoe Park & Equestrian Centre to the many parks and community centers to the golf courses. The Queen Creek Marketplace is one of Arizona’s newest malls and has a variety of shopping options including retail and dining. Agritainment, farm-based entertainment, is a specialty of this town.

Thirty-four percent of Queen Creek residents hold a bachelor’s degree or higher. The City’s per capita income is \$27,595 and the median property value is \$190,200. The city has about 330 days of sunshine annually.

Metric	Decatur	Queen Creek
Percentage of streets with a least one side of sidewalk	82%	85%
Percentage of residential tax base	84.3%	77%
Average years of service for full-time employees	10	6
Number of acres of green space maintained	141	564





Suwanee, Georgia

Population: 18,000+
Area: 10 sq. miles
Incorporated: 1838

Suwanee, Georgia is a suburban community located about 30 miles north of Atlanta. The City’s vision is to be a “a diverse and forward-looking community actively engaged in shaping its own future.” The City has more than 500 acres of parkland and miles of walking and biking trails. Residents appreciate public art, special events and their town center.



Fifty-one percent of Suwanee residents hold a bachelor’s degree or higher. The City’s per capita income is \$33,713 and the median property value is \$251,300. The local transit system in Suwanee is the Gwinnett County Transit system. The City has the following departments: Administrative Services; Economic Development; Financial Services; Planning and Public Works.



Metric	Decatur	Suwanee
Number of citizen education classes hosted in 2017	103	211
Number of hours volunteers worked during special events	6,329	8,933
Percentage of commercial tax base	15.7%	49%
Average response time for Police calls in FY16-17	1:42	7:10

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