

SUSTAINABLE DECATUR

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What is Sustainability?

What is sustainability and what does it mean in Decatur? These are two of the important questions the City, residents, and business leaders will answer through the course of this planning process. While the traditional accepted definition of “sustainability” defines it as *meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs*, the actual implementation and practice of sustainability differs from community to community. The planning process is an important first step in being proactive to address energy conservation, land use resources, increased recycling, and water quality, all while enhancing local economic development efforts through the promotion of sustainability, including “green jobs.”

sus · tain · a · bil · i · ty

1: Meet the present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

-World Commission on Environment and Development (1987)

Why Plan for Sustainability?

There are many benefits to the City, residents, and business to promote the implementation of sustainability. Some of the most significant are:

- An increased value, marketability, and economic growth possibilities;
- Reduction in both public and private energy consumption and utility costs;
- Increase in worker productivity and student performance;
- Mitigation of environmentally associated health risks;
- A commitment and opportunity to become a model sustainable community; and
- Public and private models for sustainable building and development practices.

What is a Sustainability Team?

The Sustainability Team is a group of Decatur officials, residents, business and community leaders who represent a variety of interests including public, private, institutional, and non-profit. This team will assist in guiding the planning process through provision of direction and vision, as well as ensuring successful implementation. The Sustainability Team would be the project “champion” and their roles will include:

- Coordinate activities of working groups;
- Lead community engagement and marketing; and
- Implement strategies.

The Sustainability Team will be supported by three Working Groups who will focus on the more specific issues within the disciplines of energy, land, and water.



“The reconciliation of growth and the environment...is the vast and grand work of the 21st century.”

--Dan Walters

What is a Working Group?

The Working Groups will play the role of technical advisors to the Sustainability Team and will be divided into the four specific disciplines of energy, land, recycling, and water.

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<http://www.teskaassociates.com/sustainabledecatur/>

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What are the Outcomes of the Project?

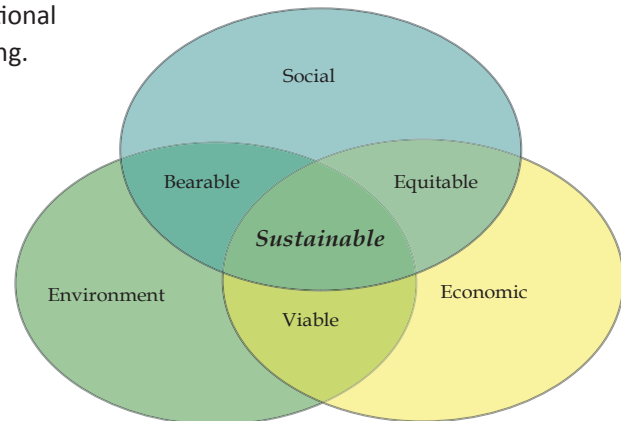
The final outcome of the planning process is to present clear and implementable strategies in order to create a truly sustainable Decatur community. Sample outcomes include:

- **Energy:** Reduce energy consumption for households, energy saving strategies for Decatur business and institutions, and reduce growth of Vehicle Miles Traveled.
- **Water:** Increase in the use of natural stormwater management practices, and improve efficiency of water consumption.
- **Land:** Increase the total amount and quality of open space, and create a market to utilize biomass energy crops.
- **Recycling:** Increase participation in City recycling program, expand additional materials for recycling, and increase household and community composting.



Key Facts

- 20% of Decatur is Agriculture or Open Space.
- 76% of Decatur is considered "Urban".
- 60% of residential lots are less than 8,712 sq/ft (1/5 an acre).
- 10% of residential lots are greater than 21,780 sq/ft (1/2 an acre).
- More than 60% of all electricity and more than 30% of all energy consumed in the United States are used in buildings.
- 25% of all treated water is used in buildings.



SCHEDULE

	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	Responsibility
<i>Project Initiation / Data Collection / Baseline Analysis</i>								City / Consultant
<i>Initiation Meeting with Local Sustainability Team and Working Groups</i>		April 14						City / Consultant / Sustainability Team / Working Groups
<i>First All Day Charrette: staff meeting, Sustainability Team, working groups, public meeting</i>			May 19					City / Consultant / Sustainability Team / Working Groups / Public
<i>Strategy Drafting</i>								Consultant
<i>Second All Day Charrette</i>				June 30				City / Consultant / Sustainability Team / Working Groups / Public
<i>Plan Drafting</i>								Consultant
<i>Present Plan to Sustainability Team</i>								Consultant
<i>Present Plan to City Council</i>								Consultant / Sustainability Team

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