

2026

Downtown Decatur Events



Event Planning Guide

This guide is designed to help event organizers understand what type of event they are planning and exactly which permits, forms, and approvals are required to host an event in Downtown Decatur.

All events held on downtown public property must receive approval through the City of Decatur. Applications are reviewed for safety, logistics, and coordination with City departments.

Important

This document is a planning guide only. It is not a permit application and should not be submitted to the City of Decatur.

All required permits, licenses, and forms must be submitted separately using the official City forms.

Reminder

All required applications and supporting documents must be submitted **at least 30 days prior to the requested event date.**

For questions at any point in the event planning process, please contact Suzanne Langdon, Decatur Parks & Recreation: slangdon@decatur-al.gov.



Event Categories

Use the guide below to identify your event type. Many events fall into more than one category, in which case you will need to meet the requirements for each applicable category.

If your event includes:	Then your event category is:	And your required forms are:
Alcohol sales or service	Alcohol-Included	- Decatur Downtown Public Usage Request - Liability Insurance (\$1,000,000 naming the City of Decatur) - Business License for alcohol vendors - ABC Permits
A run, walk, race, or athletic competition	Athletic/Race	- Decatur Downtown Public Usage Request - Liability Insurance (\$1,000,000 naming the City of Decatur) - Decatur Downtown Parade/Race Request - Detailed GIS/MapGEO map <i>Event-dependent:</i> Decatur Downtown Sound Permit <i>Event-dependent:</i> Decatur Downtown Temporary Street Closure Permit
Closure of a street for gathering	Block Party	- Decatur Downtown Public Usage Request - Liability Insurance (\$1,000,000 naming the City of Decatur) - Detailed GIS/MapGEO map - Decatur Downtown Temporary Street Closure Permit <i>Event-dependent:</i> Decatur Downtown Sound Permit <i>Event-dependent:</i> Business License for all vendors
A moving Procession requiring traffic control	Parade	- Decatur Downtown Public Usage Request - Liability Insurance (\$1,000,000 naming the City of Decatur) - Decatur Downtown Parade/Race Request - Detailed GIS/MapGEO map <i>Event-dependent:</i> Decatur Downtown Sound Permit <i>Event-dependent:</i> Decatur Downtown Temporary Street Closure Permit
Food preparation using grills or cooking equipment	Grilling/Cooking	- Decatur Downtown Public Usage Request - Liability Insurance (\$1,000,000 naming the City of Decatur) - Health Department approval (restaurant or temporary exemption letter) - Commercial-grade grills approved by the City of Decatur
Vendors selling food, merchandise, or services	Vendor/Market	- Decatur Downtown Public Usage Request - Liability Insurance (\$1,000,000 naming the City of Decatur) - Business License for all vendor - Vendor information forms for all vendors - Detailed GIS/MapGEO map



Event Requirements

All Downtown Events

Requirements for all downtown events:

- Decatur Downtown Public Usage Request (submitted 30 days in advance)
- Liability Insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 naming the City of Decatur correctly with the specific language provided
- Event set-up, breakdown, and clean-up plans
- Compliance with pedestrian, vehicle, and emergency access requirements

Additional requirements depend on your event type(s), outlined below.

Important:

- Many event types require detailed map submissions with permit applications
- See GIS/MapGEO definition on page 9, and Event Location Reference Maps on pages 11–17 for examples of downtown event areas and routes

Alcohol-Included Events

Requirements for alcohol-included events:

- City of Decatur Business License for each alcohol vendor
- ABC Permit (City of Decatur and State of Alabama)
- Compliance with Arts and Entertainment District rules (*see “Arts & Entertainment District” definition on page 8*)
- Coordination with Decatur Police Department for off-duty officers

Important:

- Approval to serve alcohol is not guaranteed
- Alcohol permits require a minimum of three months to complete



Athletic/Race Events

Requirements for athletic/race events:

- Signed hold harmless forms for participants
- Detailed event map created using GIS/MapGEO
- Event rules (if applicable)
- Parade/race permit from the Police Department

Important:

- Music or amplified sound must be disclosed for sound ordinance review

Block Party Events

Required Submittals:

- City of Decatur Business License for each vendor
- Description of games, activities, and entertainment
- Detailed event map created using GIS/MapGEO
- Temporary Street Closure Permit (approximately 21 working days to process)

Important:

- Music or amplified sound must be disclosed for sound ordinance review

Parade Events

Requirements for parade events:

- Parade/race permit from the Police Department (*see "Parade" definition on page 9*)
- Parade route and crowd control plan
- City of Decatur business license for all food and merchandise vendors

Important:

- Music or amplified sound must be disclosed for sound ordinance review



Grilling/Cooking Events

Requirements for grilling/cooking events:

- Health Department approval (restaurant or temporary exemption letter)
- Commercial-grade grills approved by the City of Decatur

Operational Requirements:

- Grills must be at least 15 feet from buildings
- Five-foot safety perimeter around grills
- Fire extinguisher within two feet of grill
- Proper removal of hot coals and materials

Important:

- Frying or grease-laden fumes are not permitted

Vendor Market Events

Vendor Market Events include events where multiple vendors sell food, merchandise, or services, regardless of whether the event is a festival, block party, or standalone market (see “Vendors” definition on page 10).

Requirements for vendor market events:

- City of Decatur Business License for each vendor
- Vendor Information Form completed and submitted 14 days prior to the event
- Inclusion of vendor locations on the event map (GIS/MapGEO)

Important:

- Vendors are responsible for their own licensing compliance
- Event organizers are responsible for collecting and submitting vendor information to Downtown Events Coordinator



Universal Event Requirements

- Maintain clear access to businesses, sidewalks, fire lanes, and hydrants
- No motorized vehicles on grass or planted City property
- Emergency vehicle access must be maintained at all times
- Temporary traffic control devices must be included in event plans
- Tents over 199 square feet require a Building Permit and Fire Marshal approval
- Stakes are not allowed in concrete or asphalt
- Line locate required for tent stakes longer than six inches
- Equipment must be installed and secured per manufacturer specifications

Contact Information

Department	Name	Contact
Parks & Recreation	Suzanne Langdon	slangdon@decatur-al.gov
Police Administration	Jennifer Wingo	jwingo@decatur-al.gov



Definitions

- **Second Avenue SE (2nd Street):** The street located in downtown Decatur starting from the intersection of Second Avenue SE and Gordon Drive SE to the intersection of Second Avenue SE and Lee Street NE.
- **Arts & Entertainment District:** Under the authority granted in section 28-3A-17.1 of the Code of Alabama 1975, the council hereby created an Arts and Entertainment District, where outside consumption of alcoholic beverages shall be permitted and regulated; the boundaries as well as definitions of the Art and Entertainment District are found [here in the City's Municode](#).
- **Athletic Event:** An event involving physical activities, such as races, walks, sports competitions, or fitness activities.
- **Block Party:** A community event held on a city block, often involving food, music, and entertainment.
- **Clean-up Plan:** A plan outlining the procedures for cleaning up after the event, including waste disposal and removal of equipment.
- **Daikin Amphitheater (Founders Park):** Located at 905 Canal Street NE in Founders Park, this venue is used for various events, including concerts and performances.
- **Decatur, AL Business License:** A permit required for any business operating within the city limits of Decatur. It ensures that the business complies with local regulations and pays the necessary fees. Located [here on the Decatur City Website](#).
- **Demonstrations:** Public displays or protests, often involving speeches, signs, and other forms of expression.
- **Downtown Public Space Usage Form:** The form is **required 30 days in advance** to request permission to use public spaces in downtown Decatur for events. It includes details about the event, insurance requirements, and any necessary permits. [Online application found here](#).
- **Event Break-down Time:** The time allocated for dismantling and cleaning up after the event.
- **Event End Time:** The scheduled time when the event officially ends.
- **Event Map:** A **detailed map is required** showing the layout of the event, including locations of stages, booths, restrooms, vendors, event paths, and other facilities. **Refer to GIS/MapGEO definition below for the required map format.*



- **Event Organizer:** The Point of Contact responsible for planning, coordinating, and executing the event.
- **Event Set-up Time:** The time allocated for setting up the event, including arranging equipment, decorations, and other necessary preparations.
- **Event Sponsor:** An individual or organization that created and produced the event or, provides financial or other support for the event.
- **Event Start Time:** The scheduled time when the event officially begins.
- **Fees:** Any/All Required Physical or Expected Forms of Payments Required by the Event, to the Guests, to partake in the Event.
- **GIS/MapGEO:** Geographic Information System (GIS) tools used to create detailed maps and analyze spatial data for event planning, zoning, etc., located on the [Decatur City Website](#). **This is the map format that is Required to be turned in with your Public Usage Application. Use the ability "Markup" to edit your map.*
- **Hold Harmless Form:** A legal document that absolves one party from liability for any injuries or damages suffered by another party during an event. It ensures that the event organizer cannot hold the City of Decatur legally responsible for any risks incurred.
- **Liability Insurance:** Insurance coverage that protects the event organizer from legal claims arising from injuries or damages that occur during the event in the amount of a **required \$1,000,000.**
 - **Official Example Text:** The named insured must be ("The City of Decatur, Alabama, its officials, its employees, its servants, and its representatives.")
- **Morgan County Business License:** A permit is required for any business operating within Morgan County. It ensures that the business complies with county regulations and pays the necessary fees. Located on the [Decatur City Website](#).
- **Old State Bank:** Located at 925 Bank Street NE, West of Founders Park. A historic building in Decatur that serves as a venue for events and activities. Located on the [Decatur City Website](#).
- **Parade:** Parade means any parade, march, or procession of any kind, or any similar display, in or upon any street, park, or other public place in the city, where five (5) or more individuals move from one location to another and which the chief of police or his/her designee believes requires closure of any portion of a public street or traffic control at intersections. Ordinance & Definitions found on the [City's Municode](#).
- **Parade Route:** The usual parade route for downtown Decatur lines up on Grant Street SE, starts at 2nd Avenue NE, then east on Lee Street NE, and then down Bank Street NE, and ending at Founders Park.



- **Pedestrian Access:** The ability for pedestrians to move freely within the planned event area.
- **Portable Toilets:** Temporary restroom facilities provided for event attendees. Toilets should be provided for any 1–3-day events with City Property counting if in range. Nongovernmental business locations cannot be offered for any event's toilets. No event is allowed to direct event attendees towards private or residential locations.
- **Princess Theater:** Located at 112 2nd Ave NE, A historic and now a Performing Arts theater in Decatur that hosts various performances and events. Located [here on the Official Website](#).
- **Public Address System:** A horn, megaphone, sound box or amplifier or to play any phonograph, radio or other mechanical or electrical device where the sound is amplified.
- **Sounds Ordinance:** Local regulations governing noise levels during events to ensure they do not disturb residents and businesses.
- **Special Event Retail Liquor License:** A Special Event Retail Liquor License must be obtained from the City of Decatur and the State of Alabama ABC Board for any Event planning to sell Alcohol. This process will take 6-8 weeks to complete.
- **Temporary Street Closure Permit:** A permit for all Downtown Decatur Events required for any public event temporary road closure requests.
- **Temporary Traffic Control Devices:** Signs, signals, markings, and channelizers (like cones, drums, barricades) used to warn, guide, and protect road users (drivers, pedestrians, cyclists) by directing traffic safely through.
- **Vendors:** Individuals or businesses that sell goods or services at the event.
- **Vendor Information Form:** The informational form required by all vendors to complete 14 days prior to the event start date and turn into the Downtown Events Coordinator.
- **Vehicle Access:** The ability for emergency services and vehicles to enter and exit the event area.
- **Waste Disposal:** The process of collecting and disposing of trash and other waste generated during the event.



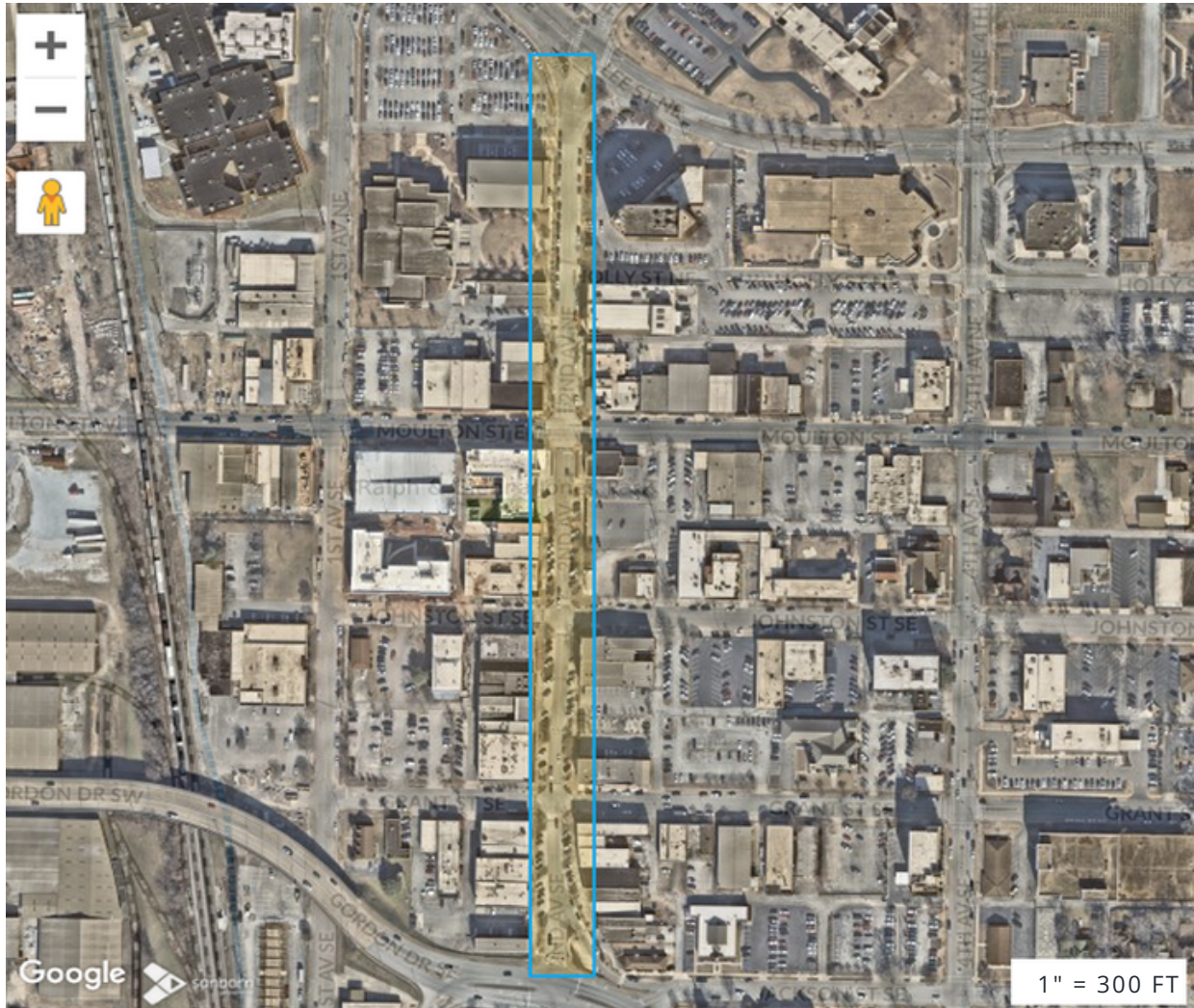
Event Location Reference Maps

Downtown Decatur Event Radius



Disclaimer: Map for reference only. Not a legal document. Accuracy not guaranteed, scale is approximate.

2nd Ave NE (AKA 2nd Street)



Disclaimer: Map for reference only. Not a legal document. Accuracy not guaranteed, scale is approximate.

City Hall



Disclaimer: Map for reference only. Not a legal document. Accuracy not guaranteed, scale is approximate.

Founders Park & Daikin Amphitheater



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Old State Bank



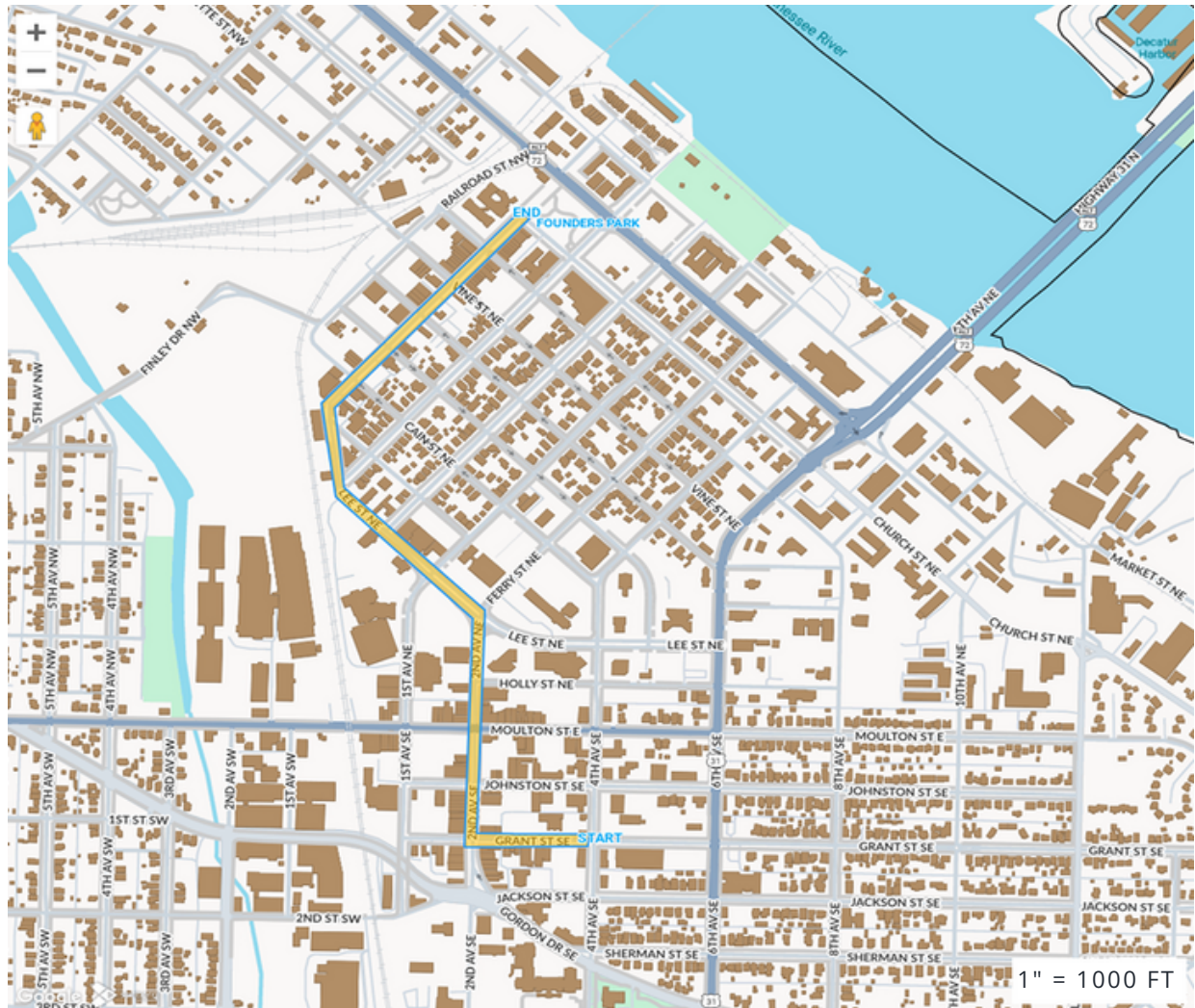
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Princess Theater



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Parade Route



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