



*OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, & FOR THE PEOPLE - ABRAHAM LINCOLN*

**Press Release - Wednesday September 12, 2007**

***Citizens of Decatur Call for Change in Form of  
Decatur, Illinois City Government***

Organizers of ChangeDecatur, a citizen-based effort to change Decatur city government, announce today that they are initiating a petition drive to give the citizens of Decatur the chance to vote for a Strong-Mayor form of government.

The petition drive will seek to gather 650 signatures on two petitions that will i.) abandon the current council-manager form of government, and ii.) adopt a strong-mayor form of government. If successful, the ballot initiatives will be on the February 5, 2008 Illinois presidential primary election. Registered Decatur, Illinois city residents are eligible to sign petitions and vote.

In a strong-mayor form of city government, the elected Mayor would lead and direct city affairs in place of an unelected city manager. Under Decatur's current system, the Mayor has little real authority or responsibility. In addition, the referendum will establish an aldermanic city council elected from ten neighborhoods. Each neighborhood would elect two aldermen. The aldermanic approach would replace the current six council-members elected at-large. All but two major Illinois cities outside of the Chicago area use aldermanic representation.

Brian Burcham, an organizer of ChangeDecatur, stated "The citizens of Decatur want a government that represents all the citizens of Decatur and not just the well-connected. City government should never raise water rates 59 percent or buy \$7 million hotels without the knowledge and support of the community." Steve Daniels, another organizer also said "An strong mayor could provide the leadership and vision to meet the challenges and opportunities facing our community. The mayor should be full time and accountable for the leadership of the city."

Last January, 1,800 voters in Decatur called for a referendum to change the form of city government. That effort was withdrawn when only 85% of the required signatures were obtained in less than a week. The matter was kept off the ballot by a petition challenge that disqualified certain voter signatures.

Petitions can be signed at the following locations or by calling the numbers below:

Charles Daniels Properties  
All Service Contracting

Colonial Place Suite 6, 1355 N. Route 48  
2024 East Damon (just west of 22nd Street)

233-3415  
233-3018

For more information, go to [www.changedecatur.com](http://www.changedecatur.com), call Brian Burcham or Steve Daniels, or send an email to [ChangeDecatur@gmail.com](mailto:ChangeDecatur@gmail.com).

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