



The City of DeKalb Announces a New Search for the Position of Fire Chief





City Introduction

The City of DeKalb is an urban community with a vital commercial base located in a rural county. It is located approximately 60 miles west of Downtown Chicago. The City's current land area is about 16 square miles, all of which is located within DeKalb County. Neighboring communities include Sycamore, Malta, and Cortland. The City's current official population is 40,290 according to the 2020 Census.

The City of DeKalb was incorporated in 1856 and since that time has continued to expand as new residents move farther west of the Chicagoland area to find quality affordable housing in a congestion-free community with a premium quality of life. The regional road system serving the City includes Annie Glidden Road, Peace Road, State Routes 23 & 38, and two full I-88 interchanges. The DeKalb Taylor Municipal Airport is designed to accommodate private aircraft from small general aviation to large corporate aircraft.

DeKalb's downtown is the heart of the community, playing host to numerous events and providing unique dining, shopping and entertainment alternatives. The community offers excellent social services, a public transit system to provide mobility around the community, and access to a wide variety of cultural, sports, and educational activities.

DeKalb is home to Northern Illinois University (NIU), which hosts 16,234 students. On the 10th day of attendance in September, total freshman enrollment was up 238 students and the arriving freshman class brought an average high school GPA of 3.34, the second highest in 10 years. About 57% of the new freshmen are first-generation college students. NIU is an integral part of the larger metropolitan area. NIU's operations, capital projects and visitor spending generate over \$413 million in local economic impact. The marriage of community and university provides DeKalb with a solid foundation as a regional hub that has abundant retail opportunities.

The DeKalb Community Unit School District #428 serves the City of DeKalb with seven elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. Kishwaukee College, the DeKalb Public Library, and the DeKalb

Park District all serve the DeKalb community and provide educational and recreational opportunities for its residents.

Council-Manager Form of Government

The council-manager form of government is the system of local government that combines the strong political leadership of elected officials in the form of a council or board, with the strong managerial experience of an appointed local government manager. The form establishes a representative system where all policy is concentrated in the elected board and the board hires a professionally trained manager to oversee the delivery of public services. Under the council-manager form, those duties not specifically reserved by the elected body pass to the City Manager and professional staff.

Home Rule Authority

The City of DeKalb is a home rule unit by virtue of the provisions of the Constitution of the State of Illinois of 1970. Home rule shifts much of the responsibility for local government from the state legislature to the local community. The most significant powers granted to a home rule community include the ability to enact its own police power relating to the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community, to issue bonds without referendum, and exemption from property tax caps under the Property Tax Extension Law Limit (PTELL).

Community Characteristics

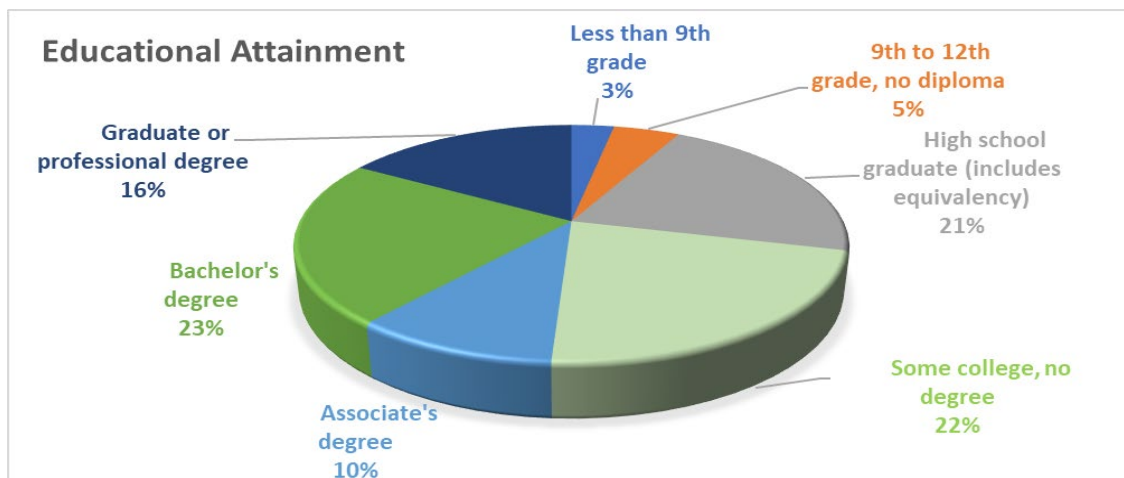
The following statistical data and graphics provide a cursory statistical profile of the community.

1. Total population: 40,290
2. Median resident age: 25.0
3. Per Capita Income: \$24,219*
4. Median household income \$45,020*
5. Median home value: \$166,000
6. Median year homes were built: 1977
7. Total housing units: 16,629

*Includes limited incomes of students matriculating at NIU.

DeKalb is a diverse, welcoming community. While 59% of the population identifies as White, 18.5% identify as African American and 18% identify as Hispanic or Latino (whom may be of any race).

DeKalb has a highly educated workforce. The 2019 American Community Survey reported that 38.9% of all City residents aged 25 and over have a bachelor's degree or higher.



Economic Factors

Although the City's property tax base is primarily residential, the commercial and industrial tax base continue to be an important component in the diversification of the City's tax base. In 2020, the equalized assessed valuation (EAV) for residential properties was \$351,406,926 or 57.6% of the total EAV. Commercial EAV was \$189,583,406 or 31% of the total EAV. Farm, industrial and other EAV was \$69,342,730 or 11.4% of the total EAV. In Illinois, EAV approximates 33 1/3% of the market value of real property within a community's corporate limits. Property taxes imposed on property within the City's corporate limits provide a stable revenue source. Because the City is a home rule municipality, it is not subject to the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law.

The City's principal employers have been stable. In 2020, the top ten employers operated in nine different industries and represented 17% of the total 2020 EAV.

In 2020, two international companies, Ferrara Candy Company and Facebook, announced transformative investments in the DeKalb community which will dramatically change the proportion of industrial EAV within the community. Facebook is investing over \$800 million in the initial phase of a new data center, and Ferrara has already invested more than \$120 million in a new distribution center and packing center totaling about 1.6 million square feet. The combined investment of these initial phase commitments will increase the industrial EAV of DeKalb County by about 12% upon full build-out.

Facebook Data Center Rendering—Initial Phase



Ferrara Rendering—Initial Phase



The City's downtown business district has been a targeted redevelopment area for several years. Since 2017, the City has dedicated a substantial share of its annual TIF property tax increment to incentivize private property rehabilitation and redevelopment in the downtown core. **The following downtown investments characterize the downtown renaissance:**

Cornerstone DeKalb—E. Lincoln Highway and First Street



Plaza DeKalb—E. Lincoln Highway and Second Street



Agora Tower—Fourth and Locust Streets (Occupancy in June, 2022)



Johann DeKalb Suites—200 S. Fourth Street (Occupancy in December, 2022)



City Hall Relocated to Downtown Core, June 2020



Notwithstanding the harsh economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis and its continuing drag on the City's general operating revenues, the City projects an FY2022 General Fund surplus of over \$16 million:

	FY2020 Actual	FY2021 Amended	FY2022 Budget	FY2023 Budget	FY2024 Budget
Starting Fund Balance	\$10,524,704	\$12,286,411	\$14,531,654	\$16,891,911	\$18,932,724
Revenues by Category					
Property Taxes	\$6,178,386	\$6,522,456	\$6,845,318	\$7,184,161	\$7,539,777
Sales & Use Taxes	\$14,504,006	\$16,057,608	\$16,735,272	\$17,195,492	\$17,668,368
Gross Receipts Taxes	\$3,375,859	\$3,507,593	\$3,627,072	\$3,726,816	\$3,829,304
Intergovernmental	\$7,462,155	\$5,123,514	\$5,836,949	\$5,997,465	\$6,162,395
Licenses & Permits	\$997,277	\$872,133	\$973,847	\$1,000,628	\$1,028,145
Service Charges	\$3,119,088	\$3,763,507	\$4,350,924	\$4,470,574	\$4,593,515
Fines	\$422,112	\$506,393	\$471,815	\$484,790	\$498,122
Other Income	\$1,235,589	\$1,054,481	\$899,075	\$923,800	\$949,204
Transfers In	\$1,295,038	\$2,290,996	\$2,722,785	\$2,411,785	\$1,593,523
Total Revenues	\$38,589,510	\$39,698,681	\$42,463,057	\$43,395,511	\$43,862,353
Expenditures by Category					
Personnel	\$30,566,531	\$30,517,945	\$31,554,055	\$32,484,580	\$33,590,566
Commodities	\$774,146	\$675,226	\$728,513	\$757,654	\$787,960
Contractual Services	\$3,635,519	\$3,949,962	\$4,161,559	\$4,359,233	\$4,566,297
Equipment	\$19,922	\$31,000	\$32,240	\$33,530	\$34,871
Transfers Out	\$1,831,685	\$2,279,305	\$3,626,433	\$3,719,701	\$3,819,103
Total Expenditures	\$36,827,803	\$37,453,438	\$40,102,800	\$41,354,697	\$42,798,796
Rev-Exp	\$1,761,707	\$2,245,243	\$2,360,257	\$2,040,814	\$1,063,557
Prior Period Adjustment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ending Fund Balance	\$12,286,411	\$14,531,654	\$16,891,911	\$18,932,724	\$19,996,281
vs. Reserve Policy 25%	33.36%	38.80%	42.12%	45.78%	46.72%
Amended by ORD 2021-023 (July 12,2021)					
55 FF/Paramedics, 63 sworn officers, EMS Coordinator (Lieutenant level), Video Evidence Tech (PD)					
58 FF/Paramedics, 65 Sworn Officers, +2 Additional FT Public Works/Water Maintenance, +1 Code Compliance Officer, Work Comp Fund Deposit Increased by \$200K					
Includes ARP Transfer: \$1,397,996 (FY21); \$1,837,285 (FY22); \$1,837,285 (FY23); \$1,019,023 (FY24);					
Water Fund transfers to General Fund reversed in 2023 (savings to Water Fund of \$311,000 per year).					
Includes G.O. Debt Service of \$1,853,291; Pension Shortfall of \$1,278,142; Library Debt Service \$495,000					
Includes New GEMT Revenue & Ambulance Service Charges					
Municipal Share of State Income Tax Trend as of July 2021					
Utility, Telecomm, Gas Use Tax Trends as of Q1 and May 2021					
Municipal Share of Central Area TIF Sales Tax Surplus Forfeited and Interest Income Very Low					

The Fire Department

Mission Statement

We are committed to providing the highest level of service to the citizens of DeKalb and those who visit. We strive to continuously seek innovative and effective ways to protect the lives and property of those we serve through suppression, emergency medical services, education, prevention, and training.

The DeKalb Fire Department proudly serves over 40,000 residents and is accountable for all fire and emergency medical service requests within the City corporate limits, Northern Illinois University, and the DeKalb Fire Protection District. The Department service area is approximately 55 square miles.



The responsibilities of Fire Department have expanded from responding to fire emergencies to addressing an array of technical responsibilities including fire investigation, aircraft rescue and firefighting, emergency management, mass casualty response, water rescue, post-fire assistance, and fire and life safety inspections. In addition, services have extended to the everyday needs of the public, such as performing home safety checks, assisting with smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and aiding persons with mobility challenges. All these services and resources are available 24 hours a day, year-round.

Department Personnel

The Department consists of two divisions: Operations and Administration. The Operations Division is comprised of the boots-on-the-ground Firefighters who respond to everyday emergencies from three fire stations. Minimum daily staffing is 13 firefighter/paramedics who work 24-hours on/48-hours-off schedule. The Administration Division supports every aspect of the Operational side of the Fire Department and provides public assistance and customer service.



The Department includes 59 sworn and 1 civilian employee. Staff consists of a Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief of Operations, Deputy Fire Chief of Training, 3 Battalion Chiefs, 3 Captains, 11 Lieutenants/Paramedics, 39 Firefighter/Paramedics, and an Administrative Assistant.

In 2020, the department responded to 6,325 fire/emergency medical services (EMS) calls. The annual call volume in 2020 decreased by 343 calls compared to 2019. State Covid-19 mitigation measures greatly reduced normal activities and special events throughout DeKalb including Northern Illinois University.

The FY 2021 operating budget for the Department is \$11.2 million. For more information about the Department or to view the 2020 Annual Report, please visit:

<https://www.cityofdekalb.com/DocumentCenter/View/12633/2020-Annual-Report>



Fire Chief Job Summary, Required Candidate Experience, and Education

JOB SUMMARY:

The Fire Chief plans, coordinates, and directs the activities of the Fire Department. The Chief also manages budgeted resources and establishes departmental goals and objectives while delivering efficient and effective public safety services to the community. The Fire Chief oversees the Fire Department's two divisions: Administration and Operations.

POSITION CONTEXT:

The position of Fire Chief is appointed by the City Manager. The Fire Chief is a sworn, department-head position and key member of the Executive Team, who reports directly to the City Manager. The position is a full-time exempt position which requires frequently working and attending meetings outside of regular business hours including weekends and evenings. The position routinely handles highly sensitive and/or confidential information and requires the ability to make difficult decisions under periods of extreme stress. This position is highly visible and collaborates regularly with City staff, elected officials, committee members, partnering agencies, and the community at large.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

- Manages the overall administration and operations of the Fire Department. Advises and develops staff to ensure continual professional growth in related disciplines. Oversees and evaluates the performance of departmental staff.
- Subject to review and approval of the City Manager, establishes goals, direction, and activities of the department. Develops and implements departmental policies, administrative rules and regulations governing personnel, standards of performance, operational procedures, and other activities. Implements short and long-term plans to achieve City initiatives in response to community, safety, and emergency needs.
- Directs the development, administration, and review of the departmental annual budget. Forecasts needs, allocates funds to divisions based on departmental goals and priorities, monitors, and approves expenditures within the parameters of the approved departmental budget, and recommends adjustments as needed. Ensures applications for grants from federal, state, and other agencies are consistent with authorized departmental appropriations.
- Maintains liaison with the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners in the recruitment, selection, and promotion of fire officers. Participates and makes recommendations in personnel matters relating to the discipline of fire personnel and ensures review with the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners and the City Manager as required.
- Assumes command at multiple alarm fires or other incidents of major magnitude. Directs tactical and all support operations through subordinate officers.
- Directs the work of the Fire Prevention Bureau. The Fire Prevention Lieutenant reports to the Fire Chief.

- Evaluates fire prevention and fire control policies by keeping abreast of new methods and conducting studies of departmental operations. Develops emergency preparedness programs. Oversees compliance with contractual obligations.
- Coordinates mutual fire protection plans with surrounding municipalities. Maintains working liaison with the City Police Department and neighboring community Fire and Police Departments and related public prevention programs.
- Oversees the preparation of the Fire Department annual report and other reports as needed.
- Represents the City and makes public presentations to community and neighborhood groups, social service agencies, etc. upon request. Coordinates communication to news media.
- Proposes and advises the City Manager of the practicality and impact of proposed ordinances and resolutions.
- Provides for mutual aid to other jurisdictions and direct operations of aiding agencies within the local area.
- Ensures department operations are consistent with current laws and regulations, and the collective bargaining agreement between the International Association of Firefighters, Local 1236, and the City of DeKalb.
- Participates in the collective bargaining negotiations process and contract interpretation.
- Works closely with the City Manager, City Council, other City departments and various citizen groups to develop fire protection and fire prevention programming to achieve required results.

OTHER JOB FUNCTIONS:

- Prepares reports and pertinent documentation for the City Manager.
- Attends and participates in professional organizational meetings, seminars, and workshops to stay abreast of new trends and innovations related to the field.
- Serves as a staff liaison to boards, committees, and commissions as assigned.
- Completes special projects and other duties as assigned.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES REQUIRED:

- Extensive knowledge of the principles, standards, and practices of modern firefighting, fire prevention and suppression, paramedic, and fire administration.
- Thorough knowledge of the operation, capabilities, and maintenance of various types of emergency service apparatus and equipment used in modern firefighting and related technologies.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the federal and state laws and regulations regarding fair labor standards as specifically applicable to firefighting personnel employed by a municipal government and the ability to apply same.
- Extensive training and knowledge in incident management in accordance with Federal, State and local guidelines.
- Advanced knowledge of federal, state, county and city ordinances related to public safety.
- Ability to make critical decisions in a confused, chaotic, and potentially life-threatening environment throughout the duration of the operation.

- Ability to direct the work of others while leading and motivating a team.
- Ability to develop and maintain collaborative working relationships with all levels of staff, management, elected officials, outside law enforcement agencies and general public while maintaining a high level of social awareness for professional engagement.
- Strong analytical skills with the ability to analyze complex issues and make sound recommendations.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills. Must have the ability to communicate and facilitate effectively with diverse audiences.
- Ability to research, analyze and evaluate new service delivery methods and techniques.
- Ability to analyze financial, budgetary, administrative, legal, and organizational data to recommend appropriate action.
- Must have the ability to maintain professional composure and take reasonable action when confronted with difficult situations.
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively, constructively, and congenially with all Fire personnel whose professional work is governed by the reciprocal obligations of a collective bargaining agreement.
- Ability to multi-task and work under pressure with interruptions and within short timeframes.
- Ability to maintain highly confidential/sensitive information and work independently while exercising good judgement and initiative.
- Ability to learn the City geography, demographics, and population patterns.
- Ability to drive to various municipal buildings, city locations, etc.
- Must be medically certified under standards National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1582 and certified to wear a self-contained breathing apparatus.
- Ability and willingness to respond to situations twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Education:

- Bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university in fire science, fire administration, public administration or closely related field, or a comparable combination of education, training, and experience, required.
- Completion of Advanced Incident Command training and/or actively pursuing state certification as a Chief Fire Officer (State of Illinois), Chief Fire Officer designation from (Center of Public Safety Excellence), and/or national Executive Fire Officer designation through the National Fire Academy is required.
- Certifications through the State Fire Marshall as Advanced Fire Officer or Fire Fighter II, Incident Safety Officer, Instructor II, Hazardous Materials Incident Command Officer, and Incident Safety Officer required. Training Program Manager and Fire Prevention Inspector certification strongly desired.
- Completion of NIMS 100, 200, 300, 400, 700, and 800 required.
- Valid driver’s license.

Experience:

- A minimum of fifteen (15) years of experience in fire operations including firefighting, fire prevention, public fire education, emergency medical services, special operations, and the administration of a modern urban or suburban fire department.
- Demonstrated progressive promotion and advancement in responsibilities and rank. A minimum of two (2) years of supervisory experience required at the rank of battalion chief or deputy chief or equivalent.
- Strong working knowledge of MS Office (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) required. Ability to gain proficiency departmental systems and enterprise systems required.

WORKING CONDITIONS/PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

- While working in the office, the person in this position will regularly sit, stand, walk, reach with hands and arms, and talk or hear over the phone and in-person. This position will require travel to various municipal buildings and offsite locations to attend meetings
- This position will have frequent contact with others in-person and over the telephone.
- At times, workloads can be extensive with limited time for response and/ or action. Position requires prolonged periods of concentration and the ability to cope with numerous interruptions, changing priorities, and various sound from radio dispatch calls and/or broadcasted alarms throughout the day.
- While working outdoors, the person in this position may be exposed to chemicals, smoke, high voltage, and/or radiation. The person in this position will routinely stand for prolonged periods of time, stoop, kneel, bend, climb, crawl or crouch to reach items and maneuver/navigate all types of terrain and be exposed to all mechanical moving parts and extreme weather conditions, such as heat, humidity, snow, sleet, rain, ice, wind, and fog. Work may be performed in emergency and stressful situations with exposure to hazards associated with emergency driving and work in and around traffic.
- The employee may work near moving mechanical parts and in high, precarious places and is occasionally exposed to wet and/or humid conditions, fumes, or airborne particles, toxic or caustic chemicals, risk of electric shock, and vibration.
- The position requires the ability to see close, at a distance and with a peripheral vision as well as adjust vision focus and distinguish objects and colors. The position also requires the ability to hear ordinary conversation, such as questions from residents, as well as other sounds, including the back-up alarm on trucks and other equipment, radio-dispatched calls and /or signals and calls for help from a co-worker, etc.
- The employee may occasionally lift, move, and wear personal protective equipment weighing up to 50 pounds

EQUIPMENT USED:

- General office equipment including computers, laptops, scanners, copier, and cellular phones.
- Field equipment including radios, pagers, mobile data terminals, emergency medical aid unit, fire apparatus, fire pumps, hoses, other standard firefighting equipment, ladders, first aid equipment, and motor vehicles including cars, trucks, and ambulances.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- This position is currently required to establish residency within the DeKalb city limits within an agreed upon timeframe.
- The Fire Chief may serve as a staff liaison to boards, committees, and commissions as assigned.
- This position requires the willingness to work outside of normal business hours including evenings, weekends, and holidays as required.

To Apply:

Please submit an on-line application, cover letter, resume, and five professional references by 5:00 p.m., October 17, 2021.

Application instructions can be found at: <http://www.cityofdekalb.com/254/Employment>

Compensation and Benefits:

The starting salary for the position is \$145,000 +/- commensurate with knowledge, skills, and experience.

The City provides a comprehensive benefits package that includes medical, dental, vision and prescription benefits, life insurance coverage, health and flexible spending accounts, deferred compensation, and pension.

Questions?

For further information, please do not hesitate to contact Michelle Brening in the City's HR office at 815-748-2398, or by email at michelle.brening@cityofdekalb.com