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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DeKalb County Superior Court Judge Orders Removal of Confederate Monument

On June 10, 2020, the City Attorney for the City of Decatur filed a legal action in DeKalb County Superior Court to request that the Court order DeKalb County to relocate the Confederate Monument from the Decatur Square because it has become a public nuisance as defined by State law. The Monument is owned by DeKalb County, not the City.

City Attorney Bryan Downs noted in the complaint that in recent days the monument has been an increasingly frequent target of graffiti and vandalism; and it is inspiring outrage, leading to demonstrations and protests, which potentially expose the public and police officers to COVID-19 and which could result in violence, injury or death to individuals, including those who may attempt to forcibly remove the monument.

Mayor Patti Garrett stated, "We appreciate DeKalb County's efforts in recent years to attempt to relocate the monument and we share the County's frustration that no one was willing to accept the monument. We are at a point now where we cannot delay. This symbol of hate and oppression has created a real and present danger to our community and it must be moved for the protection of the public." Mayor pro tem Tony Powers added, "This monument is a lightning rod for all of the emotions that have surfaced after the racially-motivated events at the national level and the racist incidents right here in our community. We have a lot of work to do as a community, but we must take this step to protect the safety of the Decatur community."

On June 12, 2020, an emergency hearing was held with Superior Court Judge Clarence Seeliger. Judge Seeliger granted the Emergency Motion to Abate Public Nuisance and ordered that the County immediately relocate the monument to a secure location. A copy of the Order is attached. Judge Seeliger noted that these actions are needed as "an appropriate measure to abate a public nuisance and protect the monument."