



## Statement of Interest for the City of Chamblee Design Review Board

Name: Aileen de la Torre Date: 02/10/2025

Street Address: [REDACTED]

City: [REDACTED] State: [REDACTED] Zip code: [REDACTED]

### What is your affiliation with the City of Chamblee (check all that apply)?

Resident ☒ Business Owner ☐ Property Owner ☐

Phone: [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]

Employer: City of Decatur Job Title: Planner

### Please Describe Your Educational Background (School Name, Degree Name, Area of Study, etc.):

Bachelors in French, University of Colorado  
Masters in Historic Preservation, University of Georgia

### Please provide a brief statement about why, in general, you are interested in serving on a city appointed board along with a list of any prior volunteer or related service:

After having staffed preservation commissions in Mobile, AL, and Decatur, GA, as well as the architectural review board for the Mississippi State Historic Preservation Office, I'm very much interested in serving in a similar capacity in my own community of Chamblee.

### On the following page, please provide your response to the following question:

Please provide your general philosophy on development in the city. Also, how do you feel about past and current development? What would you change, if anything? Is the architectural design of buildings important to you? If so, how?



**Response:**

The built environment has a profound effect on the well-being of a community, and I believe good urban design can solve a lot of problems.

Past development in Chamblee (everywhere, really) has been focused on creating car dependency via a lack of infrastructure that provides connectivity and zoning that's unnecessarily restrictive. There's a lot more to do, but it's encouraging to see new projects in Chamblee require things like trails, green space, etc. I'm also glad to see higher density.

One thing I would change is having less parking and more public art incorporated into developments. Also, I have a real concern about gentrification along Buford Highway, so I would push development that doesn't displace current residents.

Architectural design is very important to me because the built environment guides the way we act and how we feel. It's why I studied Historic Preservation.



# Aileen Alexis de la Torre



## SUMMARY

- Experience in all aspects of planning to include plan review and long-range planning initiatives.
- Able to manage multiple projects independently and as part of a team.
- Extensive involvement in all levels of community relationship building.
- Spanish and English bilingual.

## PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### City of Decatur

Decatur, GA

09/18–current

#### Planner

- Serve as primary staff to the Historic Preservation Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals as well as provide assistance to the Planning Commission as needed.
- Provide commercial and residential plan review for zoning and historic compliance, assist with the regulatory process, and resolve zoning code issues to include recommending amendments and improvements to the Unified Development Ordinance.
- Conduct post-construction site inspections for properties located in locally-designated historic districts.
- Draft and issue Zoning Verification Letters, Letters of Determination, and letters of support from the Historic Preservation Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals as needed.
- Assist with long-range planning initiatives, including a housing rehabilitation strategy resulting in the Decatur ReHAB program and the Historic Resources Survey portion of Decatur Town Center Plan 2.0.
- Partner with other departments and outside organizations on City projects and events, including 200 Stories, Agnes Scott's climate resilience plan, the façade improvement grant program, and Placita Latina cultural festival.
- Perform other duties as needed.

### Federal Emergency Management Agency

Washington, DC

01/17–09/18

#### Historic Preservation Specialist, Environmental Historic Preservation Cadre

- Provided technical assistance to FEMA staff through all phases of a project, ensuring that historic preservation and environmental concerns were incorporated into the proposed work.
- Reviewed project worksheets and made determinations based on The Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* as well as all environmental laws and Executive Orders.
- Consulted with the SHPO, THPO and tribal leaders, and the Army Corps of Engineers, and other relevant agencies when concurrence was required.

**Mississippi Department of Archives and History**

Jackson, MS

06/11–12/16

**Grants Administrator, Technical Preservation Services Section, Historic Preservation Division**

- Managed over ten million dollars in grant funds under three separate preservation programs, including supervising projects, ensuring grantee compliance, and processing reimbursements.
- Served as point of contact for the SHPO, THPO, state legislators and other government officials, grantees, project professionals, and the general public.
- Reviewed architectural plans and specifications for the state permitting committee.

**Architectural Historian, Architectural History Section, Historic Preservation Division**

- Reviewed Section 106 reports completed by consultants on properties affected by Hurricane Katrina.
- Edited National Register nominations and conducted presentations on tax incentive programs.

**George Mason Center for Social Science Research**

Fairfax, VA

08/08–05/11

**Southgate Community Engagement and Leadership Project Team Leader**

- Developed community participation initiatives based on residents' diverse cultural perspectives.
- Organized family events and connected residents to services, which were direct outcomes of the project.

**Mobile Historic Development Commission**

Mobile, AL

01/06–06/08

**Architectural Historian**

- Served as primary staff to the Architectural Review Board.
- Researched and interpreted historic buildings and events in Mobile as well as the State of Alabama.
- Taught Preservation Leadership Courses on restoration and general preservation.
- Assisted with compliance for grants and federal historic preservation tax incentive projects.

**Mobile Revolving Fund for Historic Properties Committee Member**

- Identified and applied for financial and in-kind grants available to the Fund.
- Managed grant funding for the maintenance and renovation of historic properties.

**Janus Research**

Tampa, FL

03/02 – 03/03

**Preservation Planner**

- Led large-scale historic resource surveys throughout the State of Florida.
- Photographed historic resources with a large-format camera to HABS/HAER/HALS specifications.
- Wrote local and National Register nominations and developed historic district boundaries.

**EDUCATION**

- Master of Historic Preservation, 12/03                      University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia
- Bachelor of Arts in French, 08/95                      University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado