

Neighbors Fight to Stop High-Voltage Line from Historic Decatur Neighborhood

The City of Decatur was caught off-guard by Georgia Power's plans to run a 115,000-volt transmission line above century-old homes.

DECATUR, GA, UNITED STATES, February 3, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The City of Decatur was caught off guard last November when a resident discovered a plan by Georgia Power to construct a high-voltage transmission line through the Old Decatur Historic District. The neighborhood has mobilized and is asking Decatur residents to join them in their legal effort at [EastDecaturNeighbors.com](https://www.EastDecaturNeighbors.com)

"I received a call from an appraiser who began the call, 'I'm so sorry to be the one to tell you this,'" Decatur resident Patrice Eastham said. "The

appraiser told me that Georgia Power plans to purchase an easement that would include most of my front yard. They want access to my property to run high-voltage lines over my house. They explained this would mean cutting down trees in my front yard and potentially erecting a 100-

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Patrice Eastham, Decatur resident

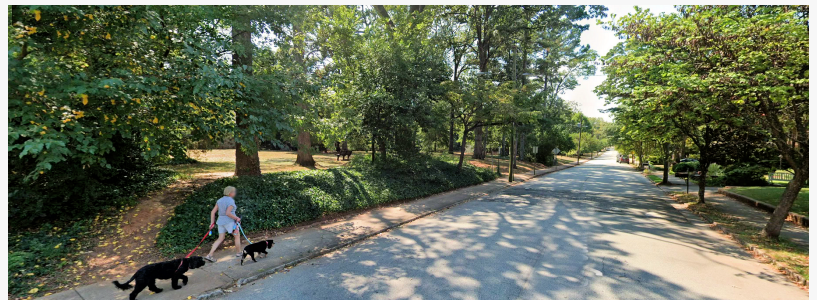
foot steel power pole on my property. I was completely blindsided. My next-door neighbor, who the appraiser also approached, contacted the city for more information. To our surprise, they knew nothing of the plan even though it was seven years in the making."

According to Georgia Power, "a new transmission line is necessary in order to meet a growing demand for electricity." The company has not stated why this route is

its only viable solution, rather than the industrial thoroughfare that already runs near the



This Before/After rendition shows the loss of trees and impact from a 100-foot transmission line in the historic Decatur neighborhood.



Historic Sycamore Street was a stagecoach route where homes from the 1800s remain.

neighborhood.

Once the plan was exposed, the neighborhood quickly mobilized. "It was standing room only in my living room, resident Bruce Miller explained. "In one hour, we formed the East Decatur Neighbors Association, launched an awareness campaign, and funded a legal effort. Our neighborhood includes doctors, lawyers, and communications professionals, so we are prepared to fight."



This 130-year Queen Anne home is threatened by a high-voltage transmission line along its side yard.

The primary goal of the East Decatur Neighbors Association is to preserve the neighborhood's historic character.

Sycamore Street is part of the Old Decatur Historic District, originally developed along a stagecoach route with houses dating back to the 1800s. Georgia Power plans to remove at least one hundred trees for its right of way in the mile-and-a-half route that runs through the neighborhood.

The impacted streets are part of Safe Routes to School, a national program that makes walking and bicycling to school a safe and routine activity. Scores of children use these routes twice a day, so exposure to magnetic fields from high-voltage power lines is a concern.

This is not the first time Sycamore Street neighbors have fought to protect the neighborhood. In the 1970s, many Decatur houses were destroyed during the MARTA rail construction. The neighborhood banded together to "Save Old Sycamore," including saving a [Queen Anne-style house](#) by moving it from its original location, which then became Sycamore Park.

"It's a terrible irony that after all the work to save this grand 130-year-old home, this architectural jewel is in danger again," owner Janie Thompson said. "First, there was the MARTA line, then a highway extension, and now they want to run high-voltage lines along the side yard. I wish they could finally let this home live in peace."

The opportunity to stop Georgia Power's plan is closing. The plans have been drawn, and Georgia Power is actively seeking to procure land and easements. Tree removal is slated for Q2 2025, and poles will be erected soon after.

Because public utilities hold the power of eminent domain for easements, the neighborhood hopes public pressure and a full exploration of alternate routes will save the neighborhood.

Decatur residents and those interested in historic preservation are invited to support the effort. Donate and learn more at EastDecaturNeighbors.com.

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