



Great things are happening in the River City as its downtown has just received a major achievement award! On August 23, [Main Street Alabama](#), representing the downtowns of 47 affiliated cities and towns throughout Alabama presented the City of Decatur and [Decatur Downtown Redevelopment Authority](#) its 2015-16 Award of Excellence for Adaptive Historic Preservation for restoration of the Decatur Union Depot into a satellite police station as well as a public railroad museum.

The award is pictured inside an antique model train display at the Decatur Depot.

This was the top award presented by Main Street Alabama for the restoration of a building into a new and modern use and was the only such award statewide for restoring a transportation, commercial, or governmental building. The Karsner Home in Florence, an adapted former residence, received a similar award.

This is a major event for the city and its downtown and is a professional recognition of the ongoing progress in the city center. Main Street Alabama is a major part of a nationwide downtown revitalization effort. Its focus is based not only on preservation, but also on economic development and job creation. The award presented for the Union Depot restoration recognized this fact as the award presentation stated that this project has not only saved a culturally and historically important building, but has also provided additional downtown parking and has encouraged the announcement of the future creation of two major housing developments in addition to its main purposes of providing crucially needed office space for the [Decatur Police Department](#) and an interesting future railroad museum for the enjoyment of the public.

The museum space will be operated by [Decatur Parks and Recreation Department](#) and is currently in its build out phase. The rear outside train watching area is already open to the public on Monday-Friday from 9 am until 5 pm.