

DE SOTO

KANSAS



City of De Soto, Kansas

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

UPDATED - DECEMBER 2022





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**A special thanks to all the citizens of De Soto who participated in the development of this Plan. Without your dedicated support and ideas this Plan would not have been made possible.**



**City of De Soto, Kansas**  
**2019 Comprehensive Plan Update**

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## Chapter 1: Existing Conditions

### Section 1.1 PURPOSE & INTENT

A Comprehensive Plan is the official document adopted by the Planning Commission and the City Council to serve as the legal and conceptual foundation of the City's zoning code and all other land use policies and regulations within the City and its exterritorial planning area. The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the community by preserving and protecting the social, economic, physical and environmental characteristics that comprise a community's quality of life. A comprehensive plan is intended to be a rational land use guide to help direct future land use, zoning, subdivisions, and the quality, timing, and intensity of future growth. The Plan has four main characteristics:

- **It is comprehensive**; it addresses all aspects of physical development and their social and economic implications;
- **It is general**; it establishes general guidelines for future land development and public infrastructure and service provision;
- **It is long-term**; it normally focuses on long-term land use and infrastructure needs well into the future with no specific time frame given due to the unpredictability of development trends;
- **It is aspirational**; Some of the goals and ideas are difficult to attain in the near term due to staffing needs, funding and other priority items, however they have been included as to items the city aspires to reach.
- **It is fluid**; it is a dynamic and ever changing plan.

A Comprehensive Plan is not a not a static blueprint for future development that the City must follow. According to Statue Statues, the Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed annually to ensure it accurately reflects the City's land use regulations and is updated to ensure consistency with any changes to the City's land use policies, zoning map or expectations regarding future development. Kansas Statutes (KSA 12-746 (a)) give cities the authority to prepare a Comprehensive Plan, it states:

*A city planning commission is hereby authorized to make or cause to be made a comprehensive plan for the development of such city and any unincorporated territory lying outside of the city but within the same county in which such city is located, which in the opinion of the planning commission, forms the total community of which the city is a part.*

According to case law and the Kansas Supreme Court, conformance to the city's Comprehensive Plan is one of several factors that should be considered when evaluating the appropriateness of future land use decisions. For example, factors such as compliance with the City's Zoning Code; impact on existing development; capacity of adjacent streets; latest development trends; and the impact on the natural environment should be considered before allowing new development or

## Chapter 1: Existing Conditions

uses to be located within the City. The recommendations of this plan should be considered with a sense of flexibility. Development proposals that do not exactly match the Future Land Use Map

and Comprehensive Plan recommendations, but reflect market place demands, should be given reasonable consideration as long as they do not present significant public service burdens or negatively impact the health, safety, or welfare of the community. While cities may choose to approve a development proposal even though it may not conform to the current Comprehensive Plan, the Plan shall serve as the basis for enforcing zoning regulations and determining and justifying specific zoning districts. State statutes (KSA 12-756) states that if a rezoning is in accordance with the Plan, it is presumed to be reasonable.

*Any such (proposal for zoning) amendment, if in accordance with the land use plan or the land use element of a comprehensive plan, shall be presumed to be reasonable.*

In summary, a Comprehensive Plan is not a rigid set of rules or standards like a zoning code. The Plan is a guide the City's decision makers should follow when making decisions regarding the community's vision, goals and objectives regarding future land use, development and preservation.

### **Section 1.2 2018 DE SOTO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

The 2018 De Soto Comprehensive Plan Update builds upon the City's 2017 Strategic Plan and 2007 Comprehensive Plan. The 2007 Comprehensive Plan has served De Soto well. For example, significant water and sewer infrastructure investments have occurred under the 2007 Plan ensuring De Soto maintains its status as a full-service community. However, future infrastructure investments are still needed to facilitate development within the City's current boundaries, (such as along the 95th Street Corridor and within the eastern portion of the City), as well as areas outside the City, such as the Sunflower property. These investments are needed to create residential, commercial, and industrial growth opportunities and other amenities that increase the livability of the community. These opportunities as well as positive changes in our national and regional economy all pointed to the need to reconnect with the residents of De Soto and update the 2007 Plan.

### **Section 1.3 COMPREHENSIVE UPDATE PLANNING PROCESS**

The planning team utilized a "values-driven" planning approach to update the City's 2007 Comprehensive Plan. This approach integrated both the traditional "data-driven" and "vision-planning" approaches to updating comprehensive plans. A key component of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan update was the use of a customized public participation program designed to build consensus and identify community values. The public participation program provided first-hand knowledge from the citizens' perspective and helped identify and better understand the

## Chapter 1: Existing Conditions

strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the City of De Soto. The public engagement program included ongoing meetings with the City's Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and City Staff, a series of focus sessions, several one-on-one stakeholder interviews, and a citizen survey. An overview of the public engagement process is provided in Chapter 2 Critical Issues. The resulting Comprehensive Plan includes chapters summarizing the City's Existing Conditions, Critical Issues, Goals and Objectives, and Future Land Use. The following is an abstract of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan:

- 1) The **Existing Conditions Analysis** (Chapter 1) includes an executive summary of the comprehensive planning process and resulting plan, a demographic analysis of De Soto's socio-economic conditions, and a description of the planning area. It also includes a baseline report on the existing services available to residents of De Soto, the condition of these services, recommendations for improving these services, and implementation strategies to provide ongoing services.
- 2) The **Critical Issues Report** (Chapter 2) provides an overview of the Public Engagement Program utilized in the development of this Plan Update, the findings of the Citizen Survey, and a summary of the comments and recommendations from participants. Feedback gathered from the public engagement process provided the basis for the development of the critical issues contained in this Chapter. The intent of the public engagement process was to build consensus, identify the key planning elements facing the City of De Soto, and better understand the expectations for the Plan.
- 3) The **Vision, Goals, and Objectives** (Chapter 3) serve as the framework for the Comprehensive Plan. It includes the vision, goals, objectives, and recommended implementation strategies. The land use and community development decisions made by the City's officials should reflect the community's values and sense of what constitutes a reasonable quality of life. To help guide these decisions, the Comprehensive Plan provides specific, measurable, and attainable goals and recommendations that reflect the citizen-defined values held by the residents and business owners of De Soto. Some recommendations are clear actions the City should take; others may require additional planning, more study, or further public input.
- 4) The **Future Land Use Plan** (Chapter 4) provides a description of the future land use designations and recommendations for future land use, growth, transportation improvements, neighborhood stability, and open space preservation. The Future Land Use Map is included in this section. The Future Land Use Map depicts the recommended locations for future land use, including residential, commercial-mixed use, industrial, recreation, and the preservation of open space. The Future Land Use Plan is accompanied by a Future Land Use Matrix. The matrix provides a description of each future land use category and recommendations for implementation. Prior to approving future development, the City must review each proposal/petition for compliance with the conditions, policies, and standards applicable to the future land use category in which the proposed development is located. The intent of the

## Chapter 1: Existing Conditions

Future Land Use Plan and Map is to provide the focus and direction needed to make well informed land use and zoning decisions. The Future Land Use Map does not replace the zoning map; rather it provides the information needed to guide future land use, development, and rezoning decisions.

- 5) The **Transportation and Public Facilities Plan** (Chapter 5) documents the public facilities and services available to the residents include electric, gas, broadband fiber, water, sewer, stormwater management, parks and the transportation system. The quality and availability of these services influence the type, timing, and density of development in the future.
- 6) The **Implementation Program** (Chapter 6) is an outline of the steps needed for adoption and annual revisions. It is a comprehensive overview of the entire plan with an implementation matrix for quick reference.

### **Section 1.4 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUMMARY**

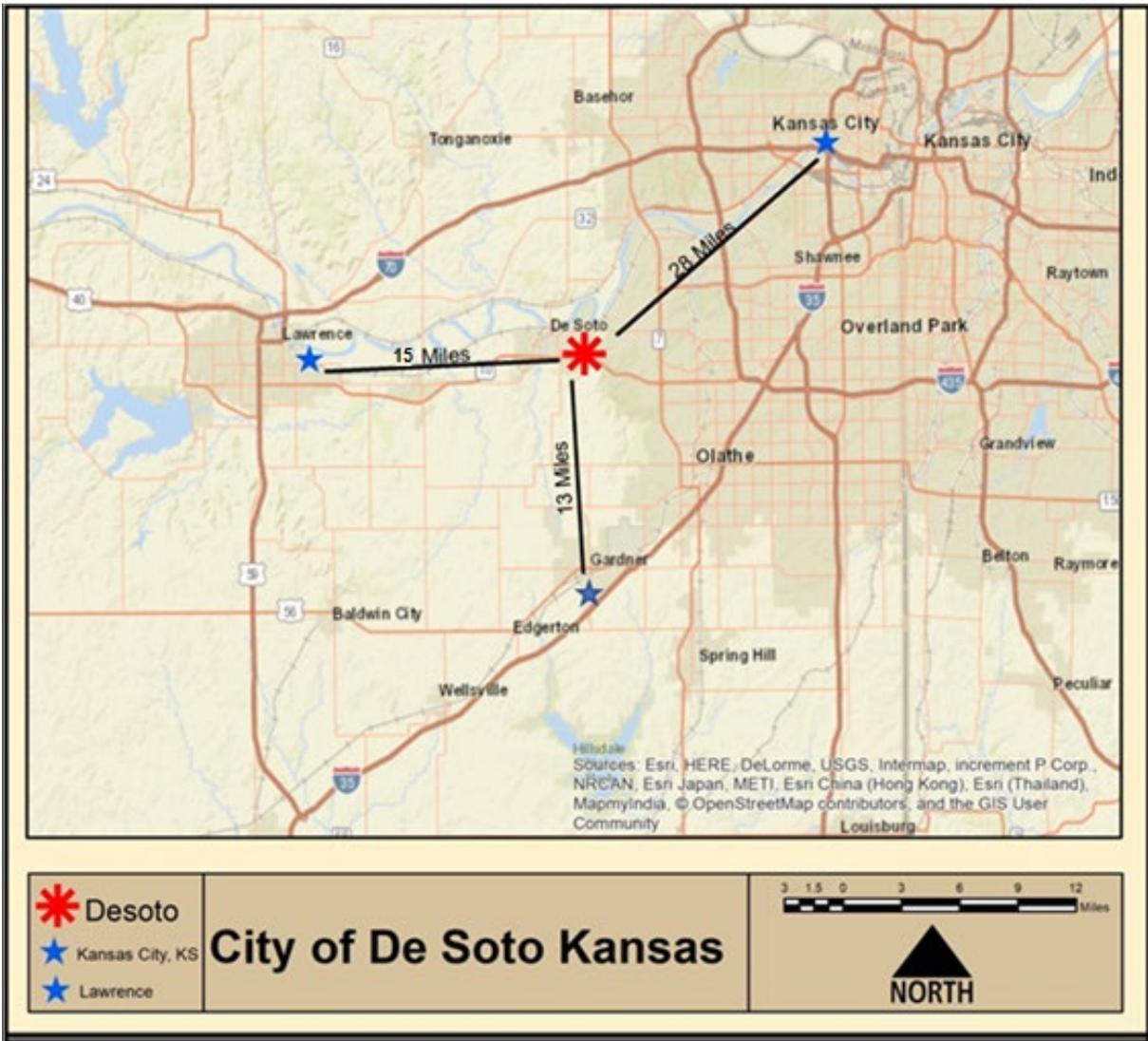
The local government is the primary body with jurisdiction to coordinate the overall pattern of physical development of the community. The Comprehensive Plan should be used to help guide land use decisions as growth and development occurs. Therefore, the local government should review the Comprehensive Plan periodically and implement its objectives to meet the growing demands of the community and ever evolving development cycles. Over time, the 2018 Comprehensive Plan may need to be supplemented with additional, more focused planning studies that address the ever-changing climate of a growing, prospering community. By taking careful steps to create a long-range plan and listening to community feedback, De Soto is taking positive steps to plan for the future, protect investments, and preserve De Soto's rich heritage and natural resources.

### **Section 1.5 VICINITY AND PLANNING AREA**

The City of De Soto is located within western Johnson County, in the northeastern region of the State of Kansas, just south of the Kansas River. Kansas City is located just 28 miles northeast of De Soto, the BNSF Intermodal is 13 miles south and the City of Lawrence is just 15 miles to the west. **Figure 1.1** shows the City's geographic location relative to other cities, highways and major physical features in the surrounding region.

Chapter 1: Existing Conditions

Figure 1.1: Regional Location Map



**Chapter 1: Existing Conditions**

**Figure 1.2** shows the City and surrounding study area, generally defined by the Kansas River to the north, 135<sup>th</sup> Street to the south, Camp Creek to the east, and the Johnson County line to the west.

**Figure 1.2: Study Area**



## Chapter 1: Existing Conditions

### Section 1.6 DE SOTO HISTORY & STAGES OF OCCUPANCY

The first occupants of the study area along with people who followed in their footsteps and the people who call De Soto home today play an important role in the history of the City of De Soto. Therefore, the various stages of human occupancy associated with the City of De Soto are summarized in the following paragraphs. The intent is to trace the people, places and significant events that shaped the City and provide a better understanding of De Soto's rich heritage.

#### **Native American & Colonial Stage (650AD – 1850s):**

The study area possesses a rich Native American heritage that dates back 14,000 years, spanning four (4) principal periods of prehistory: Paleo-Indian, Archaic, Woodland, and Mississippian. The Osage Nation, a Midwestern Native American tribe of the Great Plains who occupied the Ohio and Mississippi river valley dating back to 700BC were the first people to live on and travel through De Soto and the surrounding area. Native Americans migrated west of the Mississippi River after the 17<sup>th</sup> century in search of new hunting grounds and ongoing invasions from Iroquois.

De Soto and Johnson County was part of a large territory extending to present-day St. Louis, Missouri and occupied by the Osage people, who were relocated from east of the Mississippi River in the upper Midwest. After the Treaty of St. Louis in 1825, the Shawnee were forcibly relocated from Cape Girardeau to southeastern Kansas near the Neosho River. Only the Black Bob band of Shawnee resisted removal, however by 1833 they too migrated west and settled in northeastern Kansas in and around De Soto along the Kansas (Kaw) River. Later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many cultures of Native Americans arrived in the area after being pushed west by European-American pressure following colonial expansion and later the discovery of Gold in 1849. While some white settlers lost their lives to Native Americans, this was not the norm. Native American Tribes often helped the first white Americans and assisted them while crossing the Plains. They sold wild game and other supplies while also acting as guides and messengers between wagon trains and traveling settlers during the great Westward Expansion.

Between 1829-1854 almost thirty (30) tribes were assigned reservations in what would become Kansas Territory. The name "Kansas" was derived from the Native American Tribal term "Kansa" meaning "Wind People". The Shawnee Methodist Mission was built in the De Soto area to minister to the tribe. About 200 of the Ohio Shawnee followed the prophet Tenskwatawa and joined their Shawnee brothers and sisters along the Kaw River. A Reserve was established in Kansas and soon other Shawnee from as far east as Ohio would join the reservation. The Agency of the Shawnee Indians, also known as Lexington, was located on the Northern edge of the Sunflower Ordinance Works (S.O.W.).

During the Civil War, many of the Shawnee fled the De Soto area and joined the "Absentee Shawnee" in Oklahoma to escape the war. After the Civil War, the remaining Shawnee in Kansas were expelled and forced to move to northeastern Oklahoma. By the end of the 1850's, many of the native residents in the area were relocated to Indian Territory in Oklahoma.

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The former Kansas Shawnee became known as the “Loyal Shawnee”. Some believe the name was derived from their allegiance to the Union during the Civil War, others believe it is because they were the last group to leave their Ohio homelands. In 2000, the “Loyal Shawnee” finally received federal recognition independent of the Cherokee Nation and now known as the “Shawnee Tribe”. Today, most members of the Shawnee nation reside in Oklahoma.

### **First European Settlement/Pioneering Stage (1860-1900s):**

The first Europeans arrived in area in the 1850s and settled on the banks of the Kansas River. They built a permanent steam saw mill on the Kansas River and soon other buildings and shelters were constructed around the mill. Eventually a town was established along a main road, today known as Shawnee Street, leading to the River and Mill. Various business ventures, including a grocery store, blacksmith’s shop, boarding house and a ferry would be established. Abbott’s Hall, built by its namesake in 1865, was host to the small town’s dances and other social activities until the turn of the century. The stone building, still situated at the Southwest corner of Peoria and 83rd Streets, is now home to a local museum and is listed on the Kansas Register of Historic Places (see **Figure 1.3**).

**Figure 1.3: Historic Abbott’s Hall in Downtown De Soto**



Johnson County was the first county in the Kansas Territory, established in 1855 and named after Reverend Thomas Johnson, a missionary to the Shawnee People. The boundaries are the same

## Chapter 1: Existing Conditions

today, with the exception of the northern line, which followed the Kansas River to the Missouri until 1859 when the preset boundaries were fixed. De Soto is located in the northernmost portion of Johnson County and includes a small area in Leavenworth County. The City of De Soto was founded in 1857 and named for the Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto,

In the late 1800's, A. T. Andrews of Chicago, Illinois published William G. Cutler's *History of the State of Kansas*. The following excerpt, taken from the book first published in 1883, describes De Soto from inception through 1879.

According to Cutler's record, the Lexington Township population, including the City of De Soto, increased by over 60% between 1870 and 1880, growing from 1,256 people in 1870 to 2,042 people in 1880.

*This town is situated in the northwestern part of the county, on the south bank of the Kansas River. The surrounding country is rolling, partially timbered and fertile prairie. The town was laid out in the spring of 1857 by a town company composed of B. W. Woodward, James F. Legate, James Findley, and G. W. Hutchinson, and named De Soto, after the great Spanish adventurer of that name.*

*The first frame building upon the town site was occupied for a short time as a store by Zera Nichols. During this same year, 1857, Stratton & Williams built a saw-mill on the river bank, employing D. Rolfe to construct the mill and run the engine one year. Mr. Rolfe arrived July 12, 1857, and was so well pleased with the country that he sent for his wife and family, who arrived April 3, 1858. During the year, two or three buildings were erected in De Soto. In 1858, Perry Teters, erected a double dwelling in which his family and that of Jacob Van Rankin lived for some time. In August of this year the De Soto hotel was completed and Mr. Rolfe moved into it, thus being the first hotel keeper in the town. John Van Rankin started the first regular store, in 1859. The post office was established in 1860, with James Smith first Postmaster.*

*The Methodist Church was organized in 1858. Elder Beach being the first minister. Services were conducted for some years in private houses, and in the hotel, until in 1870, a stone church was built at a cost of about \$2,500.*

*The Presbyterian Church was also organized in 1858. They built a stone church in 1879, costing \$2,000. Rev. William H. Smith became Pastor in 1860, and still*

## Chapter 1: Existing Conditions

**Figure 1.4: Shawnee Street, circa 1907**



Although De Soto continued to make modest progress, including becoming a third class city and establishing a mail route in 1902, the City saw only modest increases in population during the early 1900's. Even with the availability of public utilities and other community advancements, the lives of De Soto's founding families continued on much the same as those of other small, riverside communities of the time, until World War II.

### **The Automobile & Town of Homes Stage (1942- 1960s):**

In the spring of 1942, plans to hurriedly construct a munitions plant on a 9,080 acre site to the southwest of De Soto were announced. The \$100 million project soon brought an overwhelming influx of workers to the area. A May, 1943 article from the Kansas City Star reported on a town rapidly growing with a population increase from 400 to 1,000 persons in under one year. This sudden overflow in population put a great strain on housing and other resources in the City. Many original residents prospered during this time, buying property and starting new businesses. Production flowed steadily at the Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant until the plant went on standby in March 1948, with small scale production following shortly after. Many of the plant's previous employees stayed on in De Soto, commuting to work in nearby cities, helping to establish De Soto as a "town of homes." Dot Ashlock-Longstreth, author of the book *De Soto, Kansas is 100 Years Old 1857-1957*, penned the following observation almost 50 years ago:

*Hundreds of fine people have been added to our community, and with Kansas City and Lawrence edging closer and closer, someday, in the not too distant future, we'll be caught in between, one of the little communities, in a connecting link between the two towns.*

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As with most communities, the mass production and availability of the automobile also had a great influence on the development of De Soto. Historically, most development in De Soto had occurred in the area north of Lexington Avenue, bounded on the north by the Kansas River. During the 1950's and 1960's development began to spread out, largely due to the influence of old Kansas Highway 10 (83rd Street and Lexington Avenue). Several businesses located along the highway in scattered locations. During this same period several residential developments were built in the unincorporated areas just east of De Soto. **Figure 1.5**, taken during the flood of 1951, records the expansion of commercial and convenience services along old K-10 Highway east of De Soto near what is now Miller Park on 83<sup>rd</sup> Street.

**Figure 1.5: Old K-10 During the Flood of 1951**



City development was again greatly influenced by transportation improvements in 1985 when K-10 Highway was relocated to a new corridor about a mile south of the former highway. Like its predecessor, K-10 Highway has spurred new development in and around De Soto. Most of this new commercial and industrial development has occurred near K-10's Lexington Street interchange. With a shift in major transportation routes, the make-up of the older portions of the community, including downtown, have changed. As with many historic community hubs, Downtown De Soto, once the commercial center of the community, has lost much of its vitality. With the relocation of the highway and improved regional access, citizens which once relied heavily on local goods and services, were now spending their money outside the City. As with Downtown, the businesses along Lexington Avenue have also suffered as the City's most desirable commercial locations have shifted outside the core of the community to the K-10 Highway corridor which offer the most highly visible and accessible sites within region. Despite this land use trend, recently the Historic "Old Town" district has seen some revitalization with the installation of new sidewalks, infrastructure and the opening of two (2) new businesses; Causes Coffee House and KJ's Pizzeria.

### **Planning & Suburbanization Stage (1960s- Present)**

Unlike many other communities of comparable size, De Soto has continued to grow and prosper despite these major shifts to the City transportation system and central business district. This trend is directly related to the City's excellent schools, affordable public services, quality housing,

## Chapter 1: Existing Conditions

and strategic location on K-10 Highway in Johnson County between the Kansas City Metropolitan Area and Lawrence, Kansas. This continued growth and prosperity over the last two decades has evolved De Soto from a small town surrounded by a predominantly rural community to that of a quaint bedroom community for the Kansas City and Lawrence Metro Areas known for its expansive parks and family-friendly neighborhoods.

Much of this growth has been realized in the form of residential development consistent with the historic development patterns in the Historic “Old Town” district north of Lexington Avenue. This growth has taken place as a continued expansion of the core of the City, spurring substantial growth to the south and west of Lexington Avenue north of K-10. In addition to this moderate density development and expanded City utilities, many estate style homes have been constructed on large wooded lots east of Kill Creek Road and south of K-10 Highway.

Throughout its history, the City has supported and coordinated planned and orderly growth. Beginning with the original plan for the community established in 1857, the City and its residents have continued to plan for growth and change. Although major events throughout the City’s history have required reactionary planning, many of the development decisions have been intentional and the result of rational community planning. This is most apparent during the last four (4) decades as the City has formalized land use and development planning, and the planning and implementation process through major updates to City codes, regulations and ordinances. In 1996, the City adopted major updates to prior plans and regulations adopting an updated Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Regulations and Procedures Manual. Another major update to the Zoning Regulations and new Subdivision Regulations were adopted in 2000. In 2007 the City updated the 1996 Plan and in 2017 prepared a Strategic Plan. This Plan seeks to build upon the 2007 Plan and policies of the 2017 Strategic Plan with a focus on future land use development and resource preservation of the City and its strategic growth areas, including portions of the Sunflower Site. Today the City continues its investment in the future of De Soto and the surrounding growth areas through the development and implementation of this Plan.

## Chapter 2: Critical Issues

### Section 2.1 Public Engagement Summary



De Soto is pretty good just the way it is.

There are a few residential areas that are not pretty, but provide a form of housing that is necessary. Folks are able to live in their own home for the price of most apartments.

The public engagement process kicked-off with a series of Stakeholder Interviews with De Soto's elected and appointed officials, business leaders, developers and residents. The interviews lasted at least 1 hour and provided first-hand information from De Soto's well informed residents and leaders about the past, present and future of De Soto.

The Stakeholder Interviews were followed by the Town Planning Workshops which were held on May 8, 2018. The Workshops included participants ranging from elected and appointed officials, business owners and concerned citizens. During the workshop, participants spent approximately two (2) hours discussing the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities facing De Soto. The consultant recorded all findings and recommendations and include them in the summary contained herein. There were many issues, concerns and recommendations repeated by all teams, implying there was a consensus among many of topics discussed at the Workshops.

Another important component of the Public Engagement process was the Citizen Survey which was posted on the City's Website. The survey included over 70 questions covering a wide variety of land use and planning issues. Most questions asked survey respondents to rate items from 1 to 5. This provided a means to quantitatively and qualitatively rate and rank issues based on the unique feedback from each survey respondents. In all, there were over 200 surveys collected and over 48 pages of written notes compiled.

The discussion topics and questions used in the aforementioned public engagement activities were developed with the intent of identifying citizen-defined values and critical issues as they relate to the future of De Soto. The responses to these questions, more specifically, helped identify De Soto's **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats**. The following is a summary of the findings of the City of De Soto's Comprehensive Plan public engagement program as described above. Please note that the statements are comments from citizens and are meant to provide insight to the overall perception of the community at large.

**Chapter 2: Critical Issues**

**Section 2.2 Strengths**

Participants of the public participation process were asked to identify positive community elements. The strengths identified fall within the following general planning elements; quality of life, public services, housing & neighborhood stability, transportation and top assets. De Soto’s strengths, as defined by the community, include:

- A. Quality of Life Strengths:** There is a consensus that De Soto’s small town feel, excellent schools, and convenient location make De Soto a great place to live. The following quality of life related strengths were ranked highest during the public engagement process:
- 1) *De Soto is a great place to raise children:* The statement “*De Soto is a great place to raise children*” was the highest ranked quality of life characteristics with a rating of 4.26 out of 5. Almost 90% (185 out of 213) of survey respondents scored the aforementioned statement with a 4 or higher.
  - 2) *De Soto is a great place to live:* The statement “*De Soto is a great place to live*” was the second highest ranked quality of life statement with a rating of 4.21 out of 5 according to the Citizen Survey.
  - 3) *I am happy with the City’s parks & recreation:* The statement “*I am happy with the City’s parks & recreation*” rounded out the top three (3) quality of life characteristics of De Soto with a ranking of 3.59 out of 5.
  - 4) *De Soto’s small town feel:* De Soto’s small town feel is highly regarded and a major reason many residents live in and are attracted to De Soto. The term “small town” was repeated more than any other term among all the written responses collected throughout the public engagement process.

<b>Table 2.1: Quality of Life Questions</b>					
<i>Agree/Disagree Statements (in order of rating)</i>	Disagree				Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
	Rating				
1. De Soto is a great place to raise children.	<b>4.26</b>				
2. De Soto is a great place to live.	<b>4.21</b>				
3. I am happy with the City’s parks & recreation	<b>3.59</b>				
4. De Soto should grow in size and population.	<b>3.55</b>				
5. De Soto is a great place to retire.	<b>3.46</b>				
6. De Soto is a great place to start a business.	<b>3.00</b>				
7. De Soto is a great place to visit.	<b>2.97</b>				
<i>Source: 2018 De Soto Citizen Survey</i>					

## Chapter 2: Critical Issues

Table 2.1, on the following page, provides a complete listing of the quality of life statements and ratings.

- 5) *School System.* De Soto's school system was the highest rated strength with a ranking of 4.46 out of 5. Over 140 ( 65%) of survey respondents ranked schools 5 out of 5 as being one of De Soto's most valued assets. The school system was also mentioned favorably throughout the public engagement process.
- 6) *Location:* De Soto's location between Lawrence and Kansas City provides convenience for the city's workforce and residents alike. It makes working or traveling to the area's largest metropolitan areas very easy. De Soto residents have the best of both worlds; the amenities of a big City and the feel of a small town.

**B. Public Service Strengths:** The following public service related strengths and community assets were highly regarded by the participants of the public engagement process:

- 1) *Public Services:* Public services are one of De Soto's top strengths. According to the Citizen Survey, 86% of survey respondents indicate that they are pleased with the City's public services. In fact, public services were also ranked in the top ten strengths or assets for De Soto with a ranking of 3.65 out of 5. The highest rated public services were fire (4.15), trash/recycling (3.88), police/sheriff (3.67), winter road maintenance (3.58) and parks and recreation (3.57).
- 2) *Safety:* Many survey respondents and stakeholders agree that De Soto is a safe, quiet town and choose to live in De Soto for its peacefulness. The Sheriff's Department and De Soto's residents are credited for the town's safe, peaceful atmosphere.
- 3) *Seasonal Events:* Almost 90% of all respondents (184 out of 209) agree the City does a good job with seasonal events. Overall, the community enjoys the many seasonal events and many believe the City should have more events and activities for children and teens.
- 4) *Parks:* Over 87% of public engagement participants agree that the area's parks and recreation programs are an important public service, ranking parks and recreation the 5<sup>th</sup> highest most important public services behind fire, trash/recycling, sheriff, and street maintenance. Survey participants rated the City's parks and recreational programs a 3.65 on scale of 1 to 5, 5 being most valuable asset, making parks and recreation the 7<sup>th</sup> highest ranked strength or asset.

When asked if there are sufficient recreation programs for youth, 64% of the survey respondents responded "yes" and 61% believe there are sufficient recreation programs for seniors.

However, survey respondents were split (50/50) when asked if they would support a tax or bond to fund parks/rec improvements and split (48/52) when asked if the city should have more parks and walking areas, slightly leaning towards not needing more parks.

De Soto strength is being a small town with a country feel, close to everything and anything; it's easy to make De Soto your home!

## Chapter 2: Critical Issues

- 5) *Sidewalks and Trails*: There is a consensus among the public engagement participants that the City should improve the City's existing parks and connect them with a comprehensive system of sidewalks, walking path and/or bike trails. According to community engagement participants, the recent sidewalk and trail improvements are a good investment.
- C. Housing & Neighborhood Strengths:** The following specific housing and neighborhood strengths were noted during the public engagement process.
- 1) *Neighborhoods*: De Soto has excellent neighborhoods, which are described as friendly and safe.
  - 2) *Housing Stock*: De Soto's housing stock was ranked De Soto's 10<sup>th</sup> highest strength or asset. However, only 55% of survey respondents believe De Soto has sufficient housing options. Most replied that the City's housing stock needs more homes for first time homebuyers.
- D. Transportation Strengths:** The following specific transportation related strengths and assets were identified during the public engagement process.
- 1) *Traffic Circulation & Congestion*: According to the Citizen Survey, only 16% of survey respondents believe traffic congestion is a problem; 84% do not believe traffic circulation or congestion is a problem. Transportation circulation or congestion was the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest rated threat.
  - 2) *Highway Access & Visibility*: The third highest ranked strength or asset for the City of De Soto is highway access and visibility. Survey respondents rated highway access and visibility 3.76, on a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the most valued asset or strength.
  - 3) *Sidewalks and Trails*: According to community engagement participants, the recent sidewalk and trail improvements are a good investment in De Soto's future and should be located along main roads and connecting all parks.
- E. Top Community Strengths & Assets:** The Citizen Survey asked to rate a wide variety of community assets or strengths. Schools were by far the highest rated community asset with an almost perfect rating of 4.5 out of 5, followed by De Soto's small town atmosphere, highway access and visibility, and location.

Table 2.2 on the following page provides a complete list of the community assets surveyed along with the overall rating for each. The assets are ranked in order from highest to lowest rating:

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<b>Table 2.2: De Soto's Top 10 Strengths &amp; Assets</b>		
<i>Top Community Assets (in order of rating)</i>	<b>Least Valuable</b>	<b>Most Valuable</b>
		
	<b>Rating from 1 to 5</b>	
1. Schools	<b>4.46</b>	
2. Small town atmosphere	<b>3.98</b>	
3. Highway access & visibility	<b>3.76</b>	
4. Location	<b>3.73</b>	
5. Access to quality dining & entertainment	<b>3.68</b>	
6. Kaw River, scenic vistas, and open spaces	<b>3.65</b>	
7. Parks & recreational programs	<b>3.65</b>	
8. Municipal services	<b>3.64</b>	
9. Resident population (the community)	<b>3.60</b>	
10. Housing stock & neighborhoods	<b>3.58</b>	
<i>Source: 2018 De Soto Citizen Survey</i>		

**Section 2.3 Weaknesses**

Throughout the planning process, participants were asked to identify weaknesses or challenges facing De Soto. The identified weaknesses fall within three (3) general planning elements; 1) dilapidated housing / code enforcement, 2) social services, and 3) economic development. A summary of De Soto's weaknesses, as expressed by the public engagement participants, include:

**A. Dilapidated Housing / Code Enforcement:** Building code enforcement was the lowest ranked public service with a rating of only 3.0 out of 5. There is a consensus that some of the City's manufactured homes and older, unkept or poorly maintained single family homes are unsightly. Participants would like to see the City focus on improving the Clearview and Lakeview areas.

While these homes may provide an affordable means of housing for some, they detract from the City's image and compromise the overall health, safety and welfare of the community. Participants of the public engagement program urge the City to address this issue through a variety of means, including code enforcement, incentivizing redevelopment options, beautification efforts, and the provision of quality, affordable housing.

**B. Social Service Weaknesses:** Participants are proud of the City's diverse population but some find it difficult to meet and engage people. Religious institutions, local organizations and committees were the lowest rated strength or community assets according to the survey respondents with a rating of only 2.73 and 3.07, respectively, out of 5.

Participants of the public engagement program believe more needs to be done to provide churches, family services, day cares, recreation programs, and businesses that cater to De Soto's growing, diverse population. They believe De Soto's schools and sports programs do a good job integrating the City's diverse youth population, but more needs to be done to provide for the needs of all ages, income classes and ethnic groups. Another barrier or

## Chapter 2: Critical Issues

weakness related to resident's ability to socialize and have chance encounters is the City's lack of pedestrian connections or public transportation to the City's schools, parks, special events, and destinations for driverless families/individuals.

**C. Economic Development Weaknesses:** The following economic development issues received the lowest ratings therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, are considered weaknesses and summarized below.

- 1) *Commercial Establishments:* According to the survey, commercial establishments were the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest ranked asset or strength of De Soto with a rating of only 3.11 out of 5. Residents and employees travel outside the City to shop, eat and for entertainment resulting in loss of valuable revenues.
- 2) *Historic Downtown:* According to the survey, the historic downtown was De Soto's 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest ranked asset or strength with a rating of only 3.18 out of 5.
- 3) *Tourism:* The statement "De Soto is a great place to visit" was the lowest ranked quality of life statement with a rating of 2.97 out of 5 according to the Citizen Survey.
- 4) *Entrepreneurial Climate:* The statement "De Soto is a great place to start a business" was the second lowest ranked quality of life statement with a rating of 3.0 out of 5 according to the Citizen Survey.
- 5) *Employment:* Almost 68% of survey respondents agreed that there are not sufficient employment opportunities in town.

**D. Housing & Neighborhood Stability Weaknesses:** Many participants opined that there are limited housing choices in De Soto and would like to see more affordable homes (less than \$200,000) to provide a better selection of homes for first-time home buyers and seniors. A concern echoed throughout the public engagement process was the poor condition and aesthetics of some housing- much of which are consolidated within a couple isolated areas within the City. Regardless, according to the information gathered during the public engagement process, there are a few homes that are rundown and do not give off a pleasant first impression of De Soto.

### Section 2.4 Opportunities

During the public participation process, individuals were asked to identify opportunities that De Soto should leverage over the next decade. The housing and neighborhood stability, economic development, quality of life, and public service related opportunities, as described by participants of the public engagement process, are as follows:

**A. Housing & Neighborhood Stability Opportunities:** There is a consensus that De Soto needs to continue to diversify and strengthen the City's housing stock. The following additional future residential development opportunities were noted during the public engagement process:

- 1) *Replace or Redevelop Dilapidated or Outmoded Housing:* Replace housing (including mobile homes) that have fallen into disrepair or no longer meet the latest building codes with market-driven, stick-built single family homes. There is a restorative development or

## Chapter 2: Critical Issues

redevelopment opportunity to replace homes that have outlived their usefulness with new affordable homes. Redeveloping these areas as well as rehabilitating dilapidated homes throughout the City will help add variety and value to the City's housing stock.

- 2) *New Mid-Range Housing*: There is a shortage of newly built or renovated medium priced single-family homes and therefore, moderate growth potential for medium priced housing in the \$150,000 - \$200,000 price range that are at least 1,500 square feet with a garage.
- 3) *Alternative Owner-Occupied Housing Options*: The development of condos and other alternative owner-occupied housing types that offer maintenance free living, such as villas would do well in De Soto.
- 4) *Affordable housing*. According to the community engagement participants, De Soto does not provide enough quality affordable housing options. Much of the City's inventory of affordable housing consists of older houses, duplexes or mobile homes that are unsightly. Many of the duplexes that are scattered throughout De Soto were relocated from the Sunflower Ammunition Plant. The new K-10 apartments and Country Village condominiums are good examples of quality affordable housing options needed to help diversify the City's housing stock. Maintenance provided developments are a good way to keep housing stock from falling into disrepair.
- 5) *Downtown Housing*: Revitalizing the second floors of buildings into lofts and improving the housing and streets leading to the Historic Downtown provides an opportunity to improve the downtown experience and inject vitality downtown.

**B. Economic Development Opportunities:** The following economic development related opportunities were identified during the public engagement process:

- 1) *Neighborhood Revitalization Plan*: An updated Neighborhood Revitalization Plan would be nice, but only worth the effort if there is money available for implementation.
- 2) *Consumer Seepage*: There are voids in the retail and commercial services available in De Soto. As result of these voids, residents travel outside the City limits for certain consumer needs. Consumer seepage hurts De Soto's businesses and the overall financial stability of the City. De Soto officials should strive to attract businesses that fill retail and commercial service voids to reduce seepage. A hotel, medical services, dry cleaners, or a nice destination use (clothing boutique, deli, outdoor outfitter, etc.) would help attract people, retain tax dollars and reduce retail seepage.
- 3) *Retail Niches*: De Soto officials should encourage the fulfillment of new retail niches. According to the public engagement participants, De Soto would be a great fit for a building supply store, businesses that offer entertainment/recreation/social interaction, specialized

We have a huge opportunity to harness the growth that is coming. Let's make it well planned and very walkable. Tie in our natural surroundings and recreation. Connect all the parks and develop the river.

## Chapter 2: Critical Issues

restaurants, a bakery, and small retail boutiques and uses that offer daytime, family friendly entertainment and services.

- 4) *Develop Vacant, Underutilized Sites*: Identify markets and redevelop vacant and underutilized sites, such as the vacant lots near Harps and other locations along the K-10 corridor.
- 5) *Create Synergies*: Expand upon the success of Harps, the new businesses downtown, and other successful businesses by offering new businesses, retailers and seasonal activities. Encourage the revitalization of buildings downtown. This is still our town center and needs to be preserved and redeveloped.
- 6) *Revitalize Downtown*: According to one survey respondent, "Downtown should be revitalized...once it is gone you cannot recover it again." The following recommended opportunities for Downtown De Soto were provided during the public engagement process:
  - Improve parking.
  - Need an anchor shop or destination along with more shops to create opportunities.
  - A good restaurant like the former Blue Tomato along with a couple little destination type shops are needed to draw folks off K-10.
  - Utilize the 2006 KDG Downtown Revitalization Plan. That was a cutting edge plan in its day and is still relevant.
  - Increase walkability within and leading to downtown.
  - *Beautify Downtown*: Plant trees, install planters and benches and do something with all the vacant, cluttered or dirty facades and storefronts. Do whatever else is needed to make downtown beautiful.

**C. Quality of Life Opportunities:** The following quality of life related opportunities were noted during the public engagement process:

- 1) *Make sure De Soto remains De Soto*. According to several participants of the public engagement process, "De Soto is pretty good just the way it is."
- 2) *Unity*: Uniting together, City/organizations/schools/churches. We can individually make small victories, but uniting together we can make a bigger impact for everyone!
- 3) *Preserve De Soto's Small Town Feel*: The community should capitalize on the qualities that give De Soto its small town feel, such as large lot neighborhoods, vast wooded / open areas, parks, intact downtown, low crime, excellent schools, and family-friendly values.
- 4) *Retention of De Soto's Youth*: Retaining De Soto's young adults after they graduate offers opportunities to grow the City's population, bring the community together and pass along the City's small town, family-friendly values.

**D. Public Service Opportunities:** The following public service related opportunities were noted during the public engagement process:

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- 1) *Incremental Improvements*: It's ok to take time, or phase in improvements. Let's grow slow. Don't over commit. Prep for the next economic down turn while growing slowly. Avoid incurring too much debt or granting too many tax incentives. Keep long term in mind.
- 2) *Development Review*: The City does a lot for developers without giving in to quality or other zoning matters.
  - The City should continue collecting the "Excise Tax" that goes towards infrastructure and assessed to new lots/home construction.
  - The Council should continue doing creative arrangements to help development that fits well within the community.
  - While developers always want more, it's important to understand and consider what the City is already offering before additional exactions or relief is provided.
- 3) *Update Zoning Codes*: The codes and zoning rules in De Soto are more restrictive than most areas with a higher population density. They're out of touch with the small town/agricultural mentality of the majority of the population.
- 4) *Better Property Maintenance & Code Enforcement*: Launch a property maintenance campaign to raise awareness of local property maintenance ordinances and make landowners, especially landlords, accountable for their property.
- 5) *Bulk Waste Cleanup*: Citywide cleanup day with free trash haul away once per year would be very helpful. Large items and abandoned cars should be removed from De Soto.
- 6) *Better Communication*: Starting to get some communication (via Discovering De Soto and local media groups) to residences. Need more of this and would welcome a weekly newspaper. The city needs a tangible news outlet in addition to social media.
- 7) *Gateway Improvements*: The City needs to promote itself in many more ways, a sign on K-10 and better looking entrances along 83<sup>rd</sup> Street, Kill Creek and Penner.
- 8) *Improve Water Quality*: Water is extremely expensive and could use fluoride.
- 9) *Annexation*: Annexation was identified throughout the public engagement process as a means to expand and diversify the housing stock, create economic development opportunities, and protect/control the City's boundaries. However, the survey respondents were less supportive than the Stakeholders interviewed during the public engagement process on annexation. While all stakeholders supported some form of annexation, only 45% of the survey respondents believed the City should expand through annexation. However, 55% of survey respondents agreed that De Soto should grow in size and population. This reinforces the fact that annexation is a complicated matter; therefore, the City should educate and raise awareness of any future annexation initiatives early in the planning stages.
- 10) *Sunflower*: The majority of participants of the public engagement process agreed that the City should consider annexing to the south to gain better control over the development in and around Sunflower. De Soto has sewer, water, and roads leading to the area, but we need a land use plan for future development and opportunity. The north 1/4 or 1/3 is ripe

## Chapter 2: Critical Issues

for annexation. The water plant is already located on-site and the sewer plant is there too. Some recommendations included:

- ATV Park
- Clean it up and put something nice there.
- This area needs city codes.

11) *Kaw River*. We could utilize the river and have camping, kayaking, etc.

12) *Transportation Improvement/ Opportunities*:

- Lexington and Penner intersection in front of the Middle School is dangerous, not safe to cross.
- Lexington and 91st finally have cross walk paint but it's not safe. A traffic signal is needed. It's the only way to get to Starside Elementary School. Lexington Avenue at 91st Street is a serious problem during school hours.
- K10 and Lexington needs a light and it needs to be synced just right.

13) *Bike and Pedestrian ways: Pedestrian/Bike Connections*: When asked if the City should have more sidewalks, 73% of the survey respondents replied "yes". Participants recommend connecting parks to neighborhoods, schools, downtown, and business districts via sidewalks, bike trails and walking paths/greenbelts. There is a consensus that sidewalks, walking trails, and bike paths/lanes are needed to support driverless families/individuals and promote healthy, active lifestyles.

According to the survey respondents, walkways and bike paths make a city seem friendlier, but they need to be designed with safety a top concern. Curbs help keep sidewalks safe. There should be sidewalks or paths available so that pedestrians do not have to constantly cross busy streets to get to parks/school/library and the following locations:

- Future sidewalks and trails should be provided to better connect the City's schools (especially Starside) to the City's neighborhoods, parks and the City's downtown. All main roads and neighborhood streets should have sidewalks at least on one side.
- On 83rd/87th Street
- Along Kill Creek to 83rd Street
- Both sides of Lexington.
- Walking bridge across Lexington.
- Sidewalk from new apartments to Harps and sidewalk from residential areas to new Lexington Lake Park so people don't have to walk on the road
- It would be great to have a walking trail/bike path from Timber Trails to Starside. There are currently a lot of parents pushing strollers through the grass by the high school to pick up kids.

## Chapter 2: Critical Issues

- Historic downtown
- The bottoms
- Along the river and creeks
- Down to Riverfest Park
- Around the city perimeter, maybe a river walkway and completion to Kill Creek Park
- Path from De Meadows to Lexington by schools
- More sidewalks on Commerce Drive. Bike paths linking all our beautiful parks
- Everywhere
- New areas.
- Throughout city
- Through the center of town
- Neighborhoods
- Along residential roads.
- Bike lanes should be designed in addition to turn Lanes on 83rd thru to K7
- Bike paths near the river and along major roads
- Along old K10. Bike riders will come through De Soto riding to Lawrence or to Lenexa

### Section 2.5 Threats

During the public participation process, individuals were asked to identify threats facing De Soto. The threats are organized into five (5) general subjects: downtown revitalization, economic development, property maintenance, housing and transportation. The following is a summary of the critical issues from the resident that responded as they relate to the threats facing the City of De Soto:

**A. Downtown Revitalization Threats:** According to the survey, the top concern regarding the future of the City is downtown revitalization. Survey respondents rated downtown revitalization a 3.46 on a scale of 1-5 (5 being a major concern and 1 being no concern). The following summarizes the threats facing the City with regard to downtown revitalization:

- 1) *Tourism:* As mentioned previously, survey respondents ranked the statement “De Soto is a great place to visit” the lowest of all the agree/disagree quality of life questions. On a scale of 1 being disagree and 5 being strongly agree, survey respondents gave the aforementioned statement a 2.97, meaning they did not believe De Soto was a very great place to visit.

## Chapter 2: Critical Issues

- 2) *Undervalued*: When asked to rate De Soto's assets or strengths, the historic downtown was at the bottom of the list (13th out of 16) with a rating of only 3.18 out of 5, (1 being least valuable and 5 being most valuable).
- 3) *Future Investment*: Owners of some of the buildings downtown have resisted investing in their buildings. One participant opinioned; "it's as if they are waiting for their neighbors (and the City) to invest first, thereby increasing the values of their properties without any out-of-pocket investment". Another participant questioned: "Should we spend money revitalizing downtown or should we invest in building a bigger and better downtown somewhere else for the city to grow towards".

**B. Economic Development Threats:** The second highest rated concern facing the future of De Soto is economic development, which scored 3.18 out of 5 according to survey respondents. Please note that the top three (3) threats facing the City of De Soto are all economic development related. The following summarizes the threats facing the City with regard to economic development:

- 1) An important concern facing the City of De Soto (and most area cities) is the provision of sufficient revenue to financially support the needs of the community and provide quality public services at affordable rates.

A high percentage of taxes paid by De Soto residents are going towards schools, but many residents do not have school age children. De Soto needs more businesses and restaurants to generate more tax revenue and ease the strain on residents.

- 2) *Revitalization of existing commercial areas*. Overall, the revitalization and improvement of the downtown and commercial areas throughout the City, is supported. Most participants love De Soto's small town atmosphere, but feel certain areas or individual properties detracts from the gem that we have.
- 3) *Retail Seepage & Competition*: Out-of-town stores and on-line sales capture too much local spending, making it very difficult for De Soto's businesses. Many residents shop outside of De Soto where price and selection are better. To ensure De Soto's revenues remain reliable for the long term, residents need to shop local and the City's commercial districts need to provide the businesses, services and retail selection desired by the De Soto community.
- 4) *The "Let's Keep De Soto the Same" Mentality*: De Soto needs to grow soon or will be left even further behind other Johnson County cities. Bring in some other businesses like Huhtamaki, restore downtown, do something to attract outsiders to want to visit.
- 5) *Access to Quality Shopping & Dining*: The third highest rated threat or major concern according to survey respondents is access to quality shopping and dining. Promoting and recruiting supportable businesses to the City's downtown and commercial districts is recommended. The majority (73.5%) of the individuals surveyed believe the City should invest money in incentives to attract new businesses.

## Chapter 2: Critical Issues

**C. Property Maintenance Threats:** The fourth highest rated concern facing the future of De Soto was a tie between property maintenance of private residences and farmland preservation, which scored 3.0 out of 5 according to survey respondents. The following summarizes the threats facing the City with regard to property maintenance and farmland preservation:

- 1) *Property maintenance and adherence to codes.* One survey respondent opined: “A lot of people don’t take care of their homes and lawns and property”. For most participants of the public engagement process, unkept property especially along main corridors in town-dilapidated residences and businesses are a major concern.
  - *Portions of De Soto look tired and dilapidated.* It makes for a poor transition into De Soto from the adjacent cities. We need to elevate the quality and aesthetics of these areas. These areas would benefit from restorative development and revitalization.
  - I believe the biggest problem is the lack of maintenance of certain roads and buildings. De Soto is an old and historic town but it does occasionally need updates and renovations to better its community.
  - We need to address vacant, dilapidated buildings and homes (especially mobile homes). Too many structures need paint and other maintenance. Yards need to be cleaned up and outdoor storage needs to be regulated.
- 2) I would rather see farmlands and parks than house developments - houses stacked in/on top of each other.
  - The threat of being like the neighboring communities. We are unique, capitalize on that, and enhance it. Protect our farmland and open spaces and grow rightly.
  - Stop allowing De Soto to grow. Maintain the small town feel.

**D. Housing & Neighborhood Stability Threats:**

- 1) Mobile homes and run down houses.
- 2) Over-valued home prices. New housing prices are too high.
- 3) Too many rental properties and a high cost of living.
- 4) There is a hole in the housing market. There are incredibly cheap houses and very expensive houses. Hardly anything available in the mid-range. This creates a huge economic gap in the City’s housing stock.

**E. Transportation Threats:**

- 1) Continued maintenance of public infrastructure (roads and sewers) needed.
- 2) 83<sup>rd</sup> Street is becoming more and more dangerous- it needs to be widened and bike path / pedestrian ways added.
- 3) Sidewalk needed along Kill Creek – it’s too dangerous to walk/ride currently.

**Chapter 2: Critical Issues**

- 4) A stop light is needed at Lexington and street at the intersection near Starside elementary school. There are sidewalks, but no stop light.
- 5) Road maintenance needs improvement.

**F. Other Threats**

- 1) Small town, so lack of funds/interest.
- 2) Old timers not willing to invest in needed improvements.
- 3) Lack of communication citizen involvement. People not being involved with the city - so many people commute and aren't part of things so it's often forgotten.
- 4) Sunflower toxic land. Clear View City is a concern.

<b>Table 2.3: Top 10 Issues Facing the City of De Soto</b>	
<i>Top Community Concerns (in order of rating)</i>	<i>Rating</i>
1. Downtown revitalization	<b>3.46</b>
2. Economic development	<b>3.18</b>
3. Access to quality shopping & dining	<b>3.12</b>
4. Property maintenance-private residences	<b>3.00</b>
5. Farmland preservation	<b>3.00</b>
6. K-10 corridor development	<b>2.99</b>
7. Apartments, duplexes & rental housing	<b>2.82</b>
8. Quality and delivery of city services	<b>2.75</b>
9. Parks & recreation for all age groups	<b>2.74</b>
10. Unemployment/job creation	<b>2.72</b>
<i>Source: 2018 De Soto Citizen Survey</i>	

**Section 2.6: Critical Issues Summary**

The Comprehensive Plan Update public engagement process helped identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing De Soto and the community's vision for the future. The vision for the future calls for balanced and carefully considered growth, neighborhood preservation and commercial revitalization. The intent of the Plan is to preserve the health, safety and welfare of the community and promote economic development initiatives that create jobs, preserve De Soto's small town feel and ensure the City's revenues remain reliable for the long-term. The following chapter provides the Vision for the future of De Soto and the recommended goals, objectives and implementation strategies for the 2019 De Soto Comprehensive Plan Update.

## Chapter 3: Vision, Goals & Objectives

### What the De Soto community wants:

*"It's easy to make De Soto your home! "*

*"We love the small town feel, hope that never goes away."*

*"De Soto is a great place to explore."*

*"We enjoy the small town feel, safety, nice people, and beautiful parks."*

*"There are a few residential areas that don't fit in."*

*"New housing is expensive, no starter homes."*

Source- 2019  
Citizen Survey

### Section 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The critical issues facing the City of De Soto fall within the following general planning categories:

1. Economic Development
2. Housing and Neighborhood Stabilization
3. Quality of Life
4. Transportation
5. Public Services & Facilities
6. Future Growth & Annexation

Goals, objectives and implementation strategies have been developed for each of the aforementioned critical issues. They respond to and build upon the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified by the community and summarized in Chapter 2. The goals prepared for this Plan consist of general statements that address De Soto's long-range plans and desired outcomes. They provide the framework upon which the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan are based. The recommended implementation strategies provide specific actions or steps necessary in turning the Plan's vision and goals into reality.

The stability and future growth of De Soto depends directly on the elected and appointed officials' ability to coordinate and manage the necessary public services, facilities, administrative duties and future land use and development. These and other factors that influence the growth of De Soto, including input from the public engagement process, have been considered in the development of the following vision, goals and objectives.

### Section 3.2 VISION

The purpose of the public engagement process was to gather information from De Soto residents, City Officials and stakeholders to identify the values of the community and create a citizen-defined vision statement reflecting these values. While the vision described in this document is desired by many, it will take time and efforts that are currently beyond existing capabilities due to funding, economic conditions, limited staffing and current work load. Nonetheless city staff, with appointed and elected officials, will strive towards the high level of vision and direction contained in this plan.

The intent of the vision statement is to help direct future growth, development, preservation, and public service decisions. After reviewing hundreds of comments

## Chapter 3: Vision, Goals & Objectives

and survey results, the City's 2017 Strategic Plan and the 2007 Comprehensive Plan, the following "vision statement" was determined to best represent the community's values and expectations for the future of De Soto:

**VISION:**

**2007 Plan:** To be an attractive, accessible, diverse, well-planned and well-respected community with strong schools for our children, first-rate public services and community programs and activities that meet the needs of our citizens, a variety of quality living opportunities, a prosperous local employment base, and a thriving business community that provides local goods and services and a strong economic base.

**2017 Strategic Plan:** De Soto will be a safe, vibrant, and attractive community, where people and families live, learn, work and play, and where one can take advantage of the cultural aspects of a major metropolitan area while enjoying the quality of life advantages of a non-urban lifestyle.

**2019:** Make De Soto the city of choice to raise a family, work, retire, and build relationships by preserving De Soto's small town atmosphere, revitalizing the City's historic downtown and increasing the confidence to invest in the City and its strategic growth areas and developing stronger connections to the City's excellent schools, parks, natural resources and rich cultural diversity.

### Section 3.3 GOALS & OBJECTIVES OVERVIEW

The goals adopted for the De Soto Comprehensive Plan represent measurable conditions that De Soto should strive to achieve in the next decade. Goals that are unattainable or unrealistic have been avoided. Objectives and recommended implementation strategies are included for each goal. They form a work program the City should follow to transform the Plan's vision, goals and objectives into reality. Some strategies are clear actions the City should take; others are recommendations for additional planning, more study or further public input.

City Officials should continue to convey future development plans with the Planning Commission and the community. Part of the decision-making process should include educating the community regarding future land use development and closely monitoring and managing expectations when it comes to major development proposals or capital improvement commitments. The overall strategy for implementing the vision and goals of this Plan is threefold; it includes:

1. Clearly communicate with residents and developers to assist with and successfully implement the vision, goals and objectives of this Plan:
2. Provide transparency with regard to future capital spending and future development by keeping the community informed and encouraging citizen input that results in community-supported, well-informed decision-making.
3. Ensure De Soto's revenues are dependable for the long-term goals and objectives identified in the plan.

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The following sections include the goals, objectives and implementation strategies developed for each of the six (6) aforementioned planning categories.

### **Section 3.4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Economic Development is a top concern according to feedback from the community. The purpose of economic development is job creation, job retention, tax base diversification and preserving the quality of life for all De Soto residents. A leading economic development concern expressed by residents and business leaders is the lack of variety in the local commercial, retail and restaurant offerings. This results in a disproportionate amount of local dollars being spent outside of De Soto. These factors contribute to “seepage” or “leakage” which is the loss of retail spending and/or the generation of sales tax revenues that would otherwise be invested back into the community if money were spent and invested locally. City officials should identify opportunities and support the following economic development goal and recommended implementation strategies.

#### **Economic Development Objectives & Implementation Strategies**

The following objectives and implementation strategies create an actionable program directed at improving De Soto’s business climate. The economic development recommendations advocate

#### **Economic Development Goal:**

##### **2007 Plan:**

- Provide for the location and expansion of shopping and business establishments distributed throughout the community.
- Develop strategies for revitalizing Downtown De Soto and preserving the community core as a unique district within the community.
- Encourage development in the City of De Soto in an orderly and efficient pattern, providing services for growth in a fiscally responsible manner.
- Provide sufficient opportunities for non-residential development at locations with suitable access, adequate community facilities and without serious environmental or land use limitations.

**2019:** Expand, diversify and strengthen De Soto’s economic base by supporting local businesses and recruiting family-friendly businesses that reflect market-based demands while also catering to the current and future needs of the City’s residents.

promotion, collaboration and other place-based strategies such as targeting De Soto’s locational strengths and the following economic development objectives and implementation strategies.

- 1. Promote economic diversification that facilitates long term economic stability and reduces the City’s economic dependence on a few industries and/or revenue sources.** The City should target the following prospective businesses in future economic development efforts:

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- a. Businesses and uses supported by the De Soto community. Participants of the public engagement activities expressed support for the following businesses; an internet café, craft food/beverage restaurants, craft food and beverage suppliers, boutique shops, quality clothing, a bakery, sit-down restaurants and other establishments that provide a place for people to gather, shop, work and linger. This Plan recommends the City encourage future reinvestment efforts that promote economically sustainable and locally supportable businesses and industry.
  - b. Housing, medical, retail and commercial service providers who cater to the needs of De Soto's seniors. As the population ages, the percentage of income spent on housing related costs and medical expenses will increase. The housing, medical (eye doctor, dentists, etc.) and retail industries that provide the aforementioned services will benefit from the increased demand created by the Baby Boom Generation. The City should encourage the development of these markets and service delivery sectors.
  - c. Stay informed on current market demands and the latest retail, commercial and real estate trends to identify businesses that fill a unique niche and/or cater to the future needs and lifestyles of the City's resident population.
2. **Expand Arts, Entertainment, Education and Medical Offerings:** Encourage the creation of more entertainment offerings such as outside theatre, concerts, and community events; providing educational opportunities; promoting retail, farmers markets, and promoting healthcare choices.
  3. **Review and update Codes:** Identify any potential zoning regulations, procedures or other permitting obstacles that may hinder prospective development or other economic opportunities. If regulations are not serving their intended purpose or required by law, consider eliminating them or replacing them with regulations that better align with the vision, goals and objectives of this Plan. This should be done on an as needed basis.
  4. **Incentivize Development:** The use of financial incentives is necessary to continue to grow and broaden De Soto's economic base. Therefore, City officials should continue the strategic use of development incentives to attract new businesses and industry to De Soto. The use of incentives and the level of support provided to each should be based on the amount of new private investment and/or the number of new jobs created in De Soto. This Plan recommends the City consider the following incentives:
    - a. Waiving or discounting permit fees.
    - b. Assisting with infrastructure costs.
    - c. Property exchanges.
    - d. Establishing non-profit development corporations to help companies with the cost of land; and/or property tax abatement.
    - e. Utilizing De Soto's use of Neighborhood Improvement Districts (NIDs), Community Improvement Districts (CIDs), Transportation Improvement Districts (TIDs) and/or other place-based economic development tools, such as economic development sales tax, to help pay for public improvements and infrastructure and spur economic growth.

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- f. Assisting with the planning, funding and permitting of local business expansions and the relocation of businesses to De Soto.
  - g. Promoting and raising awareness of various taxing districts, low interest loans, grants and technical assistance programs.
5. **Programs and Funding.** Work with MARC and Johnson County to keep up on the latest local, state and federal programs. Assistance for new business start-ups, entrepreneurs, and existing businesses applicable programs include, but are not limited to:
- a. **Innovation Growth Program Formerly Kansas Technology Enterprise Corp. (KTEC):** This program assists Kansas entrepreneurs and technology companies by providing intellectual property, technical expertise, research and other services designed to help new and existing technology companies grow and succeed. The program was created on July 1, 2011, as a partnership between the Kansas Department of Commerce and the statewide network of organizations that were part of the network formerly operated by KTEC. While the program exists to help entrepreneurs and companies, its ultimate goal is to bring new technology jobs to Kansas. *Contact: Kansas Department of Commerce.*
  - b. **Economic Development Grants:** This program provides loans to cities like De Soto for gap financing for private businesses that create or retain permanent jobs. Eligible activities include infrastructure, land acquisition, fixed assets and working capital. Grants are made to cities, which then loan funds to developing businesses. Repaid funds are returned to the state revolving loan fund. Funds may also be used for infrastructure on a loan/grant basis. The funding ceiling is \$35,000 per job created or retained with a maximum of \$750,000. Matching funds are required. *Contact: Kansas Department of Commerce.*
  - a. **Kansas Partnership Fund:** The Kansas Partnership Fund is a program to provide low-interest state funds to cities and counties for infrastructure improvements that support Kansas basic enterprises. Partnership Fund loans are designed to assist city and county governments in their efforts to attract new businesses and expand existing businesses. Eligible projects may include the construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, alteration, expansion or improvement of public facilities including, but not limited to roads, streets, highways, storm drains, water supply and treatment facilities, water distribution lines, waste water collection lines and any related improvements. These improvements must directly lead to the creation of new jobs in Kansas basic enterprises. *Contact: Kansas Department of Commerce.*
  - b. **Angel Investment Credit Program:** The Kansas Angel Investors Tax Credit (KAITC) Program helps launch innovative start-ups by bringing together accredited angel investors with qualified Kansas companies seeking seed and early stage investment. *Contact: Kansas Department of Commerce.*
  - c. **Small Business LLC Tax Break:** Kansas law allows self-employed people, family-owned operations, partnerships, and limited liability companies a reduction in the State's income-tax which, according to the State, the tax break gives small business owners an extra boost to grow their business.

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### Section 3.5 HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD STABILITY

Residents believe De Soto has a decent housing stock and excellent schools, public services, and parks. Neighborhood stability and code enforcement efforts that make De Soto's neighborhoods safe, clean and connected are top priorities according to the community stakeholders. There is also a consensus that De Soto needs more housing for first time homebuyers and seniors. The following goal, objectives and implementation strategies are recommended to promote housing and neighborhood stability.

#### Housing & Neighborhood Stability Goal:

**2007 Plan:** Allow a reasonable variety of housing choices while maintaining De Soto's character.

**2019:** Provide safe and quality housing for all residents of De Soto by promoting reinvestment in existing neighborhoods and encouraging well-planned new residential development opportunities to accommodate future growth and create a diverse, self-renewing housing stock.

#### Housing & Neighborhood Stability Objectives & Implementation Strategies

1. **Promote Healthy, Active and Connected Neighborhoods:** Promote and support the installation of street lights, sidewalks, and bike paths connecting De Soto's neighborhoods, parks, schools and other destinations.
2. **Preserve Neighborhood Character:** Prevent blight and preserve the character and stability of existing neighborhoods through appropriate zoning, code enforcement and redevelopment projects.
  - a. Continue code enforcement efforts to prevent property deterioration and to protect property values. Develop and initiate effective code enforcement procedures, as needed, to improve the safety and appearance of properties.
  - b. Continue the issuance of citations and the prosecution of repeat offenders for any properties or structures that present a danger to De Soto residents.
3. **Preserve De Soto's Small Town Qualities:** Promote efforts to preserve the qualities that have made De Soto an attractive small town and encourage future development and preservation that makes the City more attractive to those who desire to live in a family-friendly, attractive and active small town environment. These qualities include tree-lined streets, sidewalks, trails, wooded open space, safe, natural parks, an in-tact historic downtown and clusters of commercial development that provide for the comfort and convenience of De Soto's residents.
4. **Seek Out Programs and Funding for Neighborhood Beautification and Stabilization.** Pursue grants and financing assistance, such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, to preserve and enhance local parks, open space and other public spaces as well as home repairs and maintenance. Target the needs of elderly and lower-income homeowners as they need assistance the most.

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- 5. Identify Housing Solutions for Low Income Households:** Help connect low income households with groups and resources that provide affordable housing assistance, including but not limited to:
- a. The HOME Program assists eligible homeowners of Johnson County, Kansas with rehabilitation needs of their owner-occupied homes. The program will bring a home or dwelling into compliance with local housing codes and address health and safety issues. *Contact: Johnson County Housing Services*
  - b. The Minor Home Rehabilitation program assists eligible Johnson County homeowners with home repairs and provides limited accessibility modifications for eligible persons with a disability. *Contact: Johnson County Housing Services*
  - c. The Johnson County Housing Services Homebuyer Assistance Program is designed to assist low-to-moderate income Johnson County residents or persons who have been employed for at least two consecutive years in Johnson County with down payment/closing cost assistance towards the purchase of a home. *Contact: Johnson County Housing Services*
  - d. *Rebuilding Together:* Rebuilding Together is the nation's leading nonprofit organization working to promote affordable homeownership and revitalize neighborhoods by providing home repair and renovation services free of charge to those in need. The program strives to ensure low income homeowners are safe, comfortable and dry.
  - e. *Habitat for Humanity Kansas:* Habitat for Humanity of Kansas is dedicated to eliminating substandard housing locally and worldwide through its affiliates in constructing, rehabilitating and preserving homes.
  - f. *Individual Development Account Tax Credit Program (IDA):* The Individual Development Account (IDA) program is an asset-building strategy established to promote self-sufficiency through asset-development for low-income Kansans in a matched-savings program. It offers a variety of services to assist individuals and families including rental assistance for income eligible families seeking housing. The tax credits help leverage donations that serve as a match for individual savings in a development account. Savings accrued in IDAs will be used for home ownership, residence repairs, business capitalization and post-secondary education. *Contact: Kansas Department of Commerce.*
  - g. *Housing Rehabilitation Program:* Low-to-moderate income communities can apply for grants to improve housing and rehabilitate and retrofit properties. Before a community considers a housing grants they MUST complete a Housing Assessment Tool (HAT) to determine their needs and are encouraged to attend a Housing Interagency Advisory Committee meeting. A non-entitlement unit of local government can apply for a maximum of \$450,000 in grant funds to improve the homes of its low-to-moderate income residents of owner occupied single family housing units. Grants provide residents with safe and sanitary living conditions and help to stabilize low to moderate income neighborhoods and affordable housing in the community. *Contact: Kansas Department of Commerce.*

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### Section 3.6 QUALITY OF LIFE

There is a consensus among the participants of the public engagement process that maintaining De Soto's single-family neighborhoods, exceptional schools, parks, and public services would

#### **Quality of Life Goal:**

##### **2007 Plan:**

- Maintain and improve the image and appearance of De Soto for the benefit of city residents as well as outsiders to the community.
- Ensure City Staff are qualified and well-trained to proactively address public services, and implement planning strategies.
- Provide high quality public services based on the community's priorities and willingness to support projected programs.

**2017 Strategic Plan (Image Vision):** We envision a future De Soto is a recognized name in the metro area that evokes positive perceptions as a forward thinking, professional, clean, and respected community whose residents and business leaders are prideful about the community and are kept informed and engaged on civic matters.

**2017 Strategic Plan (Amenities Vision):** We envision a time when public investment, community partnering, and careful planning culminate in a community with a diverse array of recreational opportunities, and where retail offerings and civic events are an integral part of a connected and engaged community.

**2019:** Encourage future public and private investment that promotes healthy, active lifestyles, social equity, community beautification and preserves De Soto's quiet, family friendly atmosphere.

have the most positive impact on the quality of life in De Soto. According to the 2017 Strategic Plan, De Soto's status and perception within the region and state plays an important role in our ability to pursue economic development and quality of life goals. The following goals, objectives and implementation strategies are recommended to preserve the quality of life for De Soto residents.

#### **Quality of Life Objectives & Implementation Strategies**

According to the City's 2007 Comprehensive Plan, the desire to maintain and project a small town atmosphere within Johnson County was a top priority. Participants identified a desire to preserve views, resources and geography, reinvest in existing neighborhoods, and improve the impressions of the City on residents and visitors. This is consistent with the wishes and desires of the participants of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan public engagement process. The following objectives and implementation strategies are provided to help maintain and protect De Soto's quality of life.

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- 1. Promote Cultural and Social Equity:** Continue to partner with the school districts, churches, civic organizations, and private businesses to improve the utilization of existing facilities and create more programs and opportunities to integrate families with each other as well as with the entire population of De Soto in general. This can be accomplished by building upon sports programs and other recreational programs events. Additional area could include activities that appeal to De Soto's teens, young adults, seniors and all income levels
- 2. Planning & Partnering:** (2017) Maintain and improve existing infrastructure and programs and broaden the scope and scale of De Soto's recreational and retail offerings through effective planning, cooperation with partners, and community engagement.
- 3. Amenities:** According to the 2017 Strategic Plan, "a community's amenities are crucial to quality of life, and often a deciding factor when a family or business decides to relocate". This Plan recommends the City encourage public and private investment in amenities that make De Soto a better, cleaner, safer and more aesthetically pleasing place.
- 4. Keep the Cost of Living Affordable:** Continue providing a wide range of quality, affordable public services and governance that is inclusive, responsive, accountable, and in the best interest of the people. Police/sheriff, fire, water, sewer, parks and other public services are currently very good, the intent of this Plan is to maintain the current level of service and expand only as needed to accommodate growth. The cost of expanding said public services should be passed onto the newly annexed areas and developers rather than paid for by existing residents.
- 5. Invoke Pride:** As advocated by the 2017 Strategic Plan, this Plan recommends the community promote and expand upon the characteristics that make De Soto a forward thinking, professional, clean, and respected community whose residents and business leaders are prideful about the community, and are kept informed and engaged on civic matters.
- 6. Maintain & Enhance Parks & Recreation:** Continue to maintain and enhance the City's parks and recreation system to promote healthy, active lifestyles. This includes making improvements, as needed, to keep pace with the latest trends in parks and recreational services and facilitates, acquiring additional parkland, preserving open space and the establishment of trails and recreational areas as needed to serve the City's growing resident population- with the costs passed onto the residents and/or developers of the newly developed areas.
- 7. Create a Comprehensive Trail System:** This Plan recommends working with MARC, Johnson County and other local, state and federal agencies to assist with the creation of a comprehensive trail system. City officials should start by meeting with local land owners to determine the best locations for future trail sections and initiate the acquisition of land, right of way, or easements needed to support the trail system. The proposed trail system should be carefully planned to generally follow the routes designated on the Future Land Use Map. All trail improvements should meet ADA guidelines, promote the objectives of Complete Streets and address other requirements necessary to make the comprehensive trail system eligible for public funding.

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8. **Branding:** According to the 2017 Strategic Plan, public communications, branding, and marketing all play an important role in advancing a positive image for De Soto. This Plan recommends the City encourage the promotion and restoration of De Soto’s economic health, community pride and quality of life by “branding” the City. In 2004 and 2005 the De Soto Economic Development Council and Chamber performed an in-depth Community Marketing Plan that was aimed to establish a unified “core message”, or “position” for the community. This core message was used as a basis to develop a marketing and promotion strategy and a slogan. The results and recommendations of the Community Marketing Plan and community feedback collected during the preparation of this Plan influenced the proposed branding slogan. The Core Message recommended by the Community Marketing Plan reads as follows:

***“To our target audiences, De Soto is the unique, centrally located community that nurtures a supportive lifestyle in which to create positive connections.”***

The Slogan from the 2004 marketing effort reads as follows:

***“De Soto, Kansas...Come build your life with us”.***

Although the marketing effort was a success, and did result in a redesign of the City’s logo, the slogan was never formally adopted by the Governing Body or included in any of our marketing material. Upon review and consideration of the 2004 effort, it is clear that many of the underlying conditions are still relevant and applicable today. The slogan was viewed favorably during public input, with a slight modification. The proposed De Soto Slogan was shorted to read as follows:

***“Build your life with us.”***

### **Section 3.7 TRANSPORTATION**

Connecting residential neighborhoods, schools, parks, neighborhoods, and other key destinations is important to the De Soto community and a major focus of this Plan. City officials are urged to work closely with KDOT, MARC and Johnson County to identify deficiencies, provide solutions and obtain funding for future transportation enhancements. This Plan recommends taking a holistic approach to future transportation planning by considering land use, transportation, economic development, environmental quality and community aesthetics in all transportation decisions to ensure planned improvements meet today’s needs without compromising the ability to address the needs of future generations. The following goal, objectives and implementation strategies are recommended to provide for current and future transportation needs.

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### Transportation Goal:

**2007 Plan:** Provide a complete transportation network that serves the vehicular and pedestrian circulations needs of the City.

**2019:** Maintain a safe and efficient transportation system that provides the necessary improvements to accommodate future traffic volumes, generate economic vitality, and provide connections for pedestrians and bikes.

### Transportation Objectives and Implementation Strategies

1. **Ensure the existing transportation network is properly maintained and upgraded to functionally provide safe, fluid traffic flow, improve economic development potential and minimize congestion.**
  - a. *K-10 Highway & Lexington Avenue:* This area needs to be closely monitored to ensure it provides the necessary level of services (LOS) to carry the existing and projected traffic volume safely and efficiently. This intersection carries the highest traffic volumes in De Soto, therefore the safety and functional capacity of this intersection is critical to the future safety and economic stability.
  - b. *Ongoing Maintenance:* Continue to repair potholes, curbs/gutters and provide ongoing resurfacing and road replacement at scheduled intervals.
  - c. *Continue the Installation and Repair of Sidewalks City-wide.* Continue to seek funding, right-of-way and construction assistance to facilitate the installation of new sidewalks and the rehabilitation of old sidewalks. Make it a priority to provide sidewalks and paths to connect De Soto's schools, neighborhoods and parks in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan.
2. **Encourage the beautification of key nodes and entryways into De Soto:**
  - a. *Gateways:* Utilize public/private partnerships to implement gateway features whereby private industries may incorporate corporate logos, etc. within the gateway improvements in exchange for sharing in the costs of the gateway features including installation and maintenance. Gateway features are recommended at key entryways leading into De Soto and at major intersections within the City limits.
  - b. *Lighting:* The use of direct and indirect lighting and other signage/branding elements should be incorporated within the recommended gateway locations.
  - c. *Art and Aesthetics:* A prominent feature, such as a statue of Hernando de Soto the explorer or Shawnee John Possum, that recognizes and commemorates the City's early cultural ties is recommended. Other prominent features or sculptures could be considered along with monumentations, fountains and professional landscaping, are also

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recommended at key focal point(s) within De Soto, including the recommended gateway locations shown on the Gateway map in Chapter 5.

3. **Promote and Coordinate Streetscape Improvements:** Beautify major transportation corridors through the implementation of Complete Street initiatives funded in part by related grants and technical assistance. The following improvements will help make De Soto's commercial areas safer and more accessible, attractive, desirable and profitable:
  - a. Make Downtown De Soto a walkable, vibrant, outdoor shopping, eating, and entertainment district.
  - b. Install outdoor furniture, landscaping, planters, banners and improve lighting and sidewalks to improve the safety, comfort and aesthetics of De Soto's commercial areas.
  - c. Extend the recommended streetscape improvements into the adjacent residential neighborhoods to improve safety, access and increase pedestrian activity along the Lexington Avenue and Kill Creek corridors.
  - d. Support future investment in the safety, appearance and upgrades to De Soto's existing pathway along Lexington Avenue and new pedestrian connections recommended along Kill Creek and other areas as recommended in this Plan.
4. **Sidewalks:** All new streets should have sidewalks, trees and street lights as approved by the City's codes.
5. **Comprehensive Bike-Ped Trail System:** Facilitate the implementation of a comprehensive bike and pedestrian trail system to better connect the City's schools, neighborhoods, parks, commercial districts, and employment centers.
6. **Improve Signage / Way-finding:** Improve signage and way-finding by developing a consistent signage theme using the City logo to help "brand" De Soto and inform people of the City's attractions and guide them to these places. Develop sign regulations to minimize visual clutter and require professional signage.

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### Section 3.8 PUBLIC SERVICES, UTILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

Public utilities and infrastructure such as roads, water, sewer, electric, code enforcement, fire protection, police, parks and other community services are provided to De Soto residents directly by the City of De Soto, through the private sector, or through other governmental agencies. According to feedback from the public engagement process, the community is satisfied with existing utilities and public services. When survey respondents were asked if they; “*were pleased with De Soto’s public services*”, 86% of respondents replied “YES”, however, most community members also stated a desire for more sidewalks and bike paths along the main roads and interconnecting De Soto’s neighborhoods, parks and schools. Additionally, De Soto’s public infrastructure is aging and will require incremental updates and ongoing maintenance to avoid costly emergency replacements and associated repairs. The following goal, objectives and implementation strategies should be considered when preparing De Soto’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and making decisions regarding future public service, utility and infrastructure improvements.

#### Public Services, Utilities & Infrastructure Goal:

##### 2007:

- Provide utilities and infrastructure in a fiscally responsible manner to encourage efficient development and cost-effective development patterns.
- Nurture a cooperative environment with other jurisdictions in Johnson County.
- Ensure City Staff are qualified and well-trained to proactively address public services, and implement planning strategies.
- Provide high quality public services based on the community’s priorities and willingness to support projected programs.
- Promote public participation in the planning process and increase public awareness of development issues and regulation.

**2017: Infrastructure Vision:** Planning for the long-term viability of the City’s utility infrastructure, particularly water, sewer, communications, and energy is critical for economic vitality and quality of life. We visualize De Soto with efficient infrastructure systems including streets, water, sewer, internet, power, and utilities that are capable of serving existing population and businesses and supporting future growth which is needed to keep utility rates low. For this reason, the City desires to expand our service territories and to serve as many residents, businesses, and industries as possible.

**2019:** Preserve and improve upon the quality, affordability and capacity of the City’s public utilities, services and infrastructure to ensure current and future needs of De Soto’s growing, prospering population are met.

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### Public Services, Utilities & Infrastructure Objectives and Implementation Strategies

1. **Provide Sanitary Services within the City's Current Limits:** Provide sewer service to areas already in the City to facilitate infill developments, specifically along the 95th Street corridor where commercial opportunities exist.
2. **Provide Services to the City's Growth Areas:** Provide services to the Sunflower Property and investigate the feasibility to install sewer extensions to targeted growth areas in the eastern portions of the City. (SP)
3. **Street Maintenance:** Provide adequate resources towards street maintenance and the enhancement of existing deteriorating streets, curbs, and sidewalks. (SP)
4. **Future Investments in Pedestrian & Bike Accessibility:** Facilitate the implementation of new sidewalks, trails, and pedestrian access amenities.
5. **Growth Requires Partnerships:** Collaborate with service providers to plan adequately for growth. For example, broadband internet access has been identified as an area where De Soto falls behind our neighboring Johnson County communities, and is viewed as a disadvantage to economic development. Therefore, working with broadband suppliers, developers and landowners to support future development is recommended. (SP)
6. **Business Stability & Affordable Public Services Requires Growth:** There is a recognition that residential growth, in particular, is needed in order to support the types of commercial opportunities that will increase the livability of the community. Additionally, lowering the cost of services like road maintenance, water and sewer utilities, and administrative governmental services relies on increasing the taxing base and the number of patrons served by City utilities. Therefore, this Plan recommends well-planned residential growth and reinvestment in the City's existing residential area. (SP)
7. **Code Enforcement:** Continue supporting fair, consistent and ongoing code enforcement and zoning administration duties to enforce De Soto's Ordinances and implement the goals and objectives of this Plan.
  - a. Become more proactive in enforcing the City's existing property maintenance and nuisance ordinances, to enhance aesthetics, particularly along major corridors throughout town, in and around the historic downtown and any areas that are unsightly or include conditions associated with blight.
8. **Communication:** Restructure communication efforts to include a multifaceted approach involving print, social media, and other forms of electronic communication that helps connect the community to the workings of local government and offers opportunities for public feedback and input.
9. **Recreation Programming:** Improve and expand upon De Soto's existing recreation programming and provide options for citizens of all ages including pre-school, youth, adult, and seniors, all nationalities and all income levels.

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- a. *Improve Existing Parks:* Seek funding and resources to provide upgrades to existing parks, such as the construction of new soccer fields, the construction of new, permanent comfort stations, bike-ped pathways, and other recommended park and recreation improvements provided in the attached parks and recreation plan.
  - b. *Park Decision Makers:* Restart the role of the Park Board to take a more active role in the process and provide the leadership and resources needed by the Parks Department necessary to incrementally provide the improvements recommended herein.
- 10. Incremental Improvements:** This Plan recommends the City provide continued investment in the City's infrastructure and services (water, sewer, electric, internet, gas and telecommunications) to ensure quality, affordable utilities to serve De Soto's present and future needs. Incremental upgrades to the City's aging infrastructure are recommended to avoid costly one-time expenditures and allow the City to spread the costs out over several years.
- a. Plan for and perform incremental replacement of old sanitary lines and routine maintenance to the City's water treatment and storage facilities to meet current and future regulations.
  - b. Provide annual evaluations of the City's park and recreation services, public safety, public transportation, code enforcement and sewer services to ensure they meet the needs of the community.
- 11. Administration:** Provide all departments with adequate staff and the latest computers, printers, communication devices and software needed to continue providing excellent public services.
- 12. Emergency Preparedness:** Develop, adopt and annually review and update an emergency preparedness manual, co-authored by each department head including top police and fire officials.
- 13. Future Capital Improvements:** Concentrate capital investments into areas that are contiguous to currently developed land and within De Soto's service delivery limits.
- 14. Financing New Infrastructure:** Initiate development agreements that help pay for the direct and indirect costs of new infrastructure development and continue to plan and budget for near-term capital improvements.

### Section 3.9 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND ANNEXATION

In order to retain De Soto's family-friendly, small town atmosphere the City must grow its economic base by attracting more businesses and residents. Since the community is not willing to pay more taxes, De Soto needs to focus on future development and growth that expands and diversifies its economic base and sources of revenue. This requires expanding De Soto's housing stock (to support retail and commercial services) and annexing properties that provide new economic opportunities. Officials must carefully consider future growth. Future annexations or growth that compromises De Soto's ability to provide quality, affordable services should be avoided. The following future land use goal and objectives are recommended to help create an

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environment ripe for economic growth while protecting the quality of life and family-friendly, small town atmosphere De Soto residents enjoy.

### Future Development & Annexation Goal:

#### 2007:

- Minimize flood damage to existing development.
- Minimize Flood Damage to future development.
- Create a balanced business environment in De Soto with a strong industrial base and a variety of retail establishments.
- Work to ensure a well-planned redevelopment of the Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant property which is compatible with the future land use projections and utility and service projections for the City of De Soto.
- Support new business development and redevelopment based on consideration of site limitations, good planning practices, and infrastructure and services in addition to Zoning and Future Land Use projections and regulatory criteria.

**2017 Expansion Vision:** De Soto desires to increase in size of the City in terms of its population, geographical footprint, utility service coverage, retail opportunities, and industrial base. We recognize that economic development and growth are catalysts to attracting and funding quality of life initiatives, and maintaining the vibrancy of the community. We visualize a future where the City has expanded its corporate boundaries, utilities, road network, and other public services into areas that are conducive and appropriate for growth, to include portions of the former Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant.

**2019:** Promote future growth that expands and diversifies the City's tax base, provides development to support a growing prospering population, increases property values and is consistent with the Future Land Use Map and the goals, objectives and implementation strategies developed for this Plan.

### Future Growth & Annexation Objective and Implementation Strategies

The following objectives and implementation strategies are designed to help guide the development/redevelopment of land uses in a market-supportive and fiscally responsible manner.

1. **Sunflower:** There is a need to identify areas of land to support future growth, and to plan infrastructure accordingly. The former Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant property is a major influencing factor in these deliberations, and could be the genesis of accelerated industrial or commercial growth in the region. The City intends to work closely with the current owners of the Sunflower property to identify pathways to facilitate the economic development of the property including economic incentives, annexation into the City, land use planning, and utility service extensions. (SP)

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The future development of the Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant is a significant issue for the City, surrounding planning area and the region. Participants identified the need to continue to promote cooperative planning and redevelopment of the site in conjunction with the State and County agencies responsible for oversight of the redevelopment process. Participants also felt that annexation of the site was crucial to the long-term viability of De Soto. This Plan recommends the following future land use strategies for Sunflower:

- a. **Outdoor Recreation Greenbelt:** Building from the natural resources such as the Kansas River and its tributaries, the wealth of local parks and open spaces create a linear greenway connecting these amenities and create basecamps or trailheads along the recommended greenway to create gathering areas, parking, comfort stations, concessions, information kiosks, and limited overnight accommodations. The intent is to create a greenbelt that ties the area's natural resources, including Sunflower, together in a linear park-like setting resembling a string of pearls, where the greenways and trails serve as the string and the peals are the City and County Parks, cultural sites, trailheads, etc.
  - b. **Mixed Use Development:** Mixed use developments are places where people can live, work and shop all within walking distance. The key to successful mixed land use development is compatible design and the creation of positive, synergistic land uses. Through good design and thoughtful tenant selection, mixed use developments can successfully integrate seemingly incompatible land uses. The synergies created between complimentary tenants, well-planned site amenities and pedestrian activity can create a sense of place that visitors want to experience again and again- similar to a traditional downtown. Future commercial and mixed use development are recommended at existing and planned transportation nodes within and leading to the Sunflower site. Nodes are intersections of two key roadways where vehicular activity is concentrated. These locations provide excellent access and visibility to both regional travelers and local commuters.
  - c. **High-Tech Office Warehouse:** This Plan envisions a technology-focused commercial area to accommodate emerging technologies such as medical science and bio-medical engineering; pharmaceutical, life science and biological engineering technology; energy science and energy conservation technology; ecology and environmental science and related research and academic uses. The purpose is to provide a controlled and protected environment for the orderly growth and development of high technology businesses and industries within a park-like setting with common amenities, infrastructure, and property management and where uses such as light manufacturing, distribution, and office warehouse uses are desired.
2. **Development Nodes & Opportunity Clusters:** Promote the development of key development nodes and properties to leverage innovative development proposals. Specific sites that offer development opportunities are identified on the Future Land Use Map. Among the top priorities are the K-10/Kill Creek intersection, the K-10/Lexington intersection, the Lexington Avenue corridor, and downtown. See Chapter 4 "Future Land Use" for more information regarding the recommended opportunity clusters and development nodes.
  3. **Mixed use:** Promote higher density, mixed-use development in order to create vibrant live-work-play activity centers in targeted areas as depicted on the Future Land Use Plan.

## Chapter 3: Vision, Goals & Objectives

4. **Accommodate Smart Growth:** Promote and initiate annexation efforts that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map and where the costs to provide utilities, roads and all other associated infrastructure is either already provided or paid for in whole, or at least in part, by the developer. The City should closely review all proposed annexation plans to control the timing, type and density of future development to ensure they are consistent with the Future Land Use Map and the future growth and annexation goals, objectives and implementation strategies provided in this Plan, including:
  - a. Continue the City's policy of controlled annexation to incorporate adjacent territories contiguous to the City to as shown on the Future Land Use Map:
  - b. Ensure that economic development objectives are included in the evaluation of all future development, transportation and infrastructure projects.
5. **Future Commercial & Mixed Use Development:** Encourage commercial reinvestment along the Lexington Avenue corridor and intersections with K-10. Future uses should include a mix of retail, commercial services, medical, technology, hospitality and limited residential uses that enhance the appearance and convenience of the area. The architectural character and site design should functionally and aesthetically complement the built and natural environment. Annex additional commercial growth areas northeast and northwest of the current City limits as shown on the Future Land Use Map.
6. **Future Residential Development:** Encourage the development of quality, well-built homes that are market-driven. The intent is to provide housing for all stages of the life-cycle, so that moving up in life does not require moving out of De Soto. Preserving and stabilizing the City's existing neighborhoods should be a priority. New residential development should not compromise the safety, privacy, or enjoyment of existing residential areas. This plan also recommends the following neighborhood stabilization and future residential growth strategies.
  - a. Annex residential growth areas as shown on the Future Land Use Map.
  - b. Encourage the development of single family, estate-style custom homes adjacent to areas already developed as such as well as within the future growth areas.
  - c. Encourage the development of condos, garden apartments and senior housing in areas identified as "Multi-Family" on the Future Land Use Map.
7. **Preserve Downtown De Soto:** Re-establish the original downtown by restoratively developing vacant buildings and encouraging the development of underutilized lots. Small-scale commercial services, retail boutiques, delicatessens, bakeries and entertainment uses are envisioned in this area.
8. **Reinvest in Existing Residential Areas:** Encourage the removal and replacement of outmoded housing units and mobile homes that have outlived their usefulness with new, quality built single family homes to help restore neighborhood vitality and create a self-renewing housing stock.
  - a. Promote reinvestment in the existing building stock that is repairable. The preservation and revitalization of existing buildings of architectural significance should be a priority.

## Chapter 3: Vision, Goals & Objectives

- b. Promote the goals, objectives and implementation strategies presented in the Economic Development Section of this Chapter and recommendations contained herein.
- 9. **Open Space Preservation:** Preserve the area's open spaces and other natural resources that promote the quality of life, create wildlife corridors and make De Soto a healthy place to live.
- 10. **Zoning:** Update the City's zoning ordinances to promote well-planned growth and encourage commercial, residential and mixed-use development as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

### **Section 3.10 MONITORING, EVALUATING, AND UPDATING THE PLAN**

The City of De Soto should review, evaluate and update the Comprehensive Plan on an annual basis in conjunction with the City's annual Flood Mitigation Plan review. In addition, the Plan should be updated as necessary to address any significant changes in City policy, development patterns, major annexations, and other major events.

#### **Annual Review and Update**

In order to accomplish this task, City Staff will review the plan and report to the Planning Commission. The evaluation will assess, among other things, whether:

1. the goals and objectives address current and expected conditions;
2. the growth projections are still valid;
3. the current resources are appropriate for implementing the plan;
4. there are implementation problems, such as technical, political, legal, or coordination issues with other agencies;
5. the outcomes have occurred as expected; and
6. the agencies and other partners participated as proposed.

Staff will also report on the status of the various implementation projects and will identify which strategies have been completed, need to be updated, or should otherwise be revised.

Following consideration of the report submitted by staff, the Planning Commission will determine if additional consideration is necessary and may at that time appoint a task force or advisory committee to further analyze specific elements prior to update or revision of the Plan. Once potential revisions and updates have been formed, a Public Hearing will be held before the Planning Commission. Following consideration of the proposed amendments and public comment, the Planning Commission will adopt necessary revisions and updates. Once the Planning Commission has acted to approve revisions or updates, if any, the Plan will be submitted to the Governing Body for adoption and final approval. Any reports prepared justifying any revisions or lack thereof will be submitted along with the record of the Planning Commission's action and further recommendation if any.

**Chapter 3: Vision, Goals & Objectives**

**Section 3.11 VISION, GOALS & OBJECTIVES SUMMARY**

Expectations for the implementation of this Plan need to be placed in a realistic context. The goals and objectives will not be obtained overnight. The objectives and implementation strategies should be viewed as a plan of action that requires daily, incremental efforts executed over the next several years. Economic and financial conditions have created some positive momentum locally, but major development will take time, coordination, intentional planning and unique partnerships. The foundation of this Plan rests on the belief that De Soto’s elected and appointed officials will do what is necessary to seize the opportunity to improve the existing commercial and residential areas, create new housing options and attract businesses that cater to the needs of De Soto residents.

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

### **FUTURE LAND USE**

#### **Section 4.1 EXISTING LAND USE**

De Soto, like so many cities across the Country, was originally laid out in a traditional Jeffersonian Grid pattern with the Downtown being the central business district surrounded by churches, residential neighborhoods, dispersed homesteads and farms further out. However, the automobile significantly changed the Jeffersonian Grid layout of cities across America. Businesses moved from Main Street to the highway to get closer to their customers. As a result, land uses and transportation networks began following a linear or curvilinear pattern resulting in development that is much more spread out than a traditional town layout following the Jeffersonian Grid.

De Soto benefits from having both an intact Historic Downtown (following the Jeffersonian Grid) as well as excellent access and visibility from a modern highway with opportunities for future commercial, mixed use and residential development along K-10. De Soto serves as a bedroom community for Johnson County, Lawrence, and the larger Kansas City metro area offering a wide range of urban, suburban, and rural living environments. What makes De Soto unique is its small-town charm, early heritage, access to the Kansas River and excellent park system. These unique features combined with the recent new growth and development and the potential of the Sunflower Site, make De Soto a highly desirable community with a bright future.

#### **Section 4.2 INTENT**

The intent of the Future Land Use Plan is to build from De Soto's rich heritage, small town charm, and diversity by guiding future land use decisions that promote the planned orderly growth and preservation of De Soto and its strategic growth areas. This Chapter includes the Future Land Use Map, Future Land Use Matrix, and supporting text, all of which must be considered when making decisions regarding subdivisions of land, new development, or zoning changes. The future land use recommendations were developed based on the community's feedback provided during the public engagement program. Careful consideration was also given to the various physical, social, economic, and political factors that influence future land use and development. The intent of the Comprehensive Plan Update is to implement the goals and objectives presented in Chapter 3 and make the following vision for the future of De Soto a reality.

***“Make De Soto the city of choice to raise a family, work, and retire by preserving De Soto's small town atmosphere and increasing the confidence to invest in the City and developing stronger connections to the City's excellent schools, parks, natural resources and rich cultural diversity.”***

The recommendations of this Plan should be used with a sense of flexibility. Development proposals that do not exactly match this Plan's recommendations, but reflect market place demands, should be given reasonable consideration as long as they do not negatively impact the health, safety or welfare of the community.

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### Section 4.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRENDS

The socio-economic and development trends summarized in the following Sections were included in the *Urban Land Institute's 2017 Emerging Trends Report* and will greatly influence future development, redevelopment, and lifestyle choices.

The Millennial Generation is considered to be people ages 18-35 or generally born in the early 80s to early 2000s. This age group just passed the Baby Boom Generation in sheer numbers according to the US Census. While the Baby Boom Generation is shrinking, Millennials are growing; however, both groups are substantial with their impacts on real estate. Millennials are the most diverse of all generations with regard to religion and race and stand out as the most multi-cultural and transient generation in America. The most economically stable cities in the US have high concentration of Millennials. Millennials are changing the marketplace due to their large size and will continue to influence future land use and development as they age. When asked about the importance of specific community features, Millennials ranked the following characteristics highly: *a short distance to work and school, proximity to shopping and entertainment, and walkability*. Although it is impossible to predict if these preferences will endure, for now Millennials are setting the standard for land use development for all generations and throughout the Nation. Therefore, it is important that the City of De Soto continue to provide a variety of housing options, pedestrian/bike infrastructure, Wi-Fi speeds, and access to shopping and entertainment that Millennials desire.

The growth of Millennials and their impact on all sectors of commercial real estate could be the most dominate trend in years. This group lives, works and plays in different ways than previous generations. Millennials tend to want to repopulate aging downtowns and urban areas as they seek convenience and connectivity. Access to arts, entertainment, recreation, culture and connections to cyber space will be priorities. "Location, location, location" will take a back seat to "broadband, broadband, broadband". From in-town rental housing to collaborative (flex) office space to close-in warehouse (to ensure same-day delivery), Millennials will be a noticeable force in shaping commercial real estate. On the other side of the demographic shift, the Baby Boomers will also drive change as they age and retire at a rate of approximately 10,000 per day. Many Boomers will sell their oversized homes and move to in-town locations with similar amenities as those desired by Millennials, but with a stronger emphasis on health care.

These demographic influences have created opportunities in housing for both groups. Multi-family, senior living and medical-related development are strong and evolving with resort-like amenities. In the retail sector, more "experiential" shopping/dining/entertainment destinations are emerging. There will be opportunities in services including medical, assisted living and memory care facilities and an increase in renting over home ownership.

### Section 4.4 LATEST DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

De Soto has made some major accomplishments in the area of economic development in the last few years. Over the next ten (10) years, reinvestment activity is anticipated to slowly continue in Downtown De Soto with significant new construction along and near K-10 Highway. Higher prices

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

and strict credit requirements prevent many young families from entering the home ownership market, increasing demand for rental property. As a result, there is strong demand for rental housing and continued growth in multifamily development; unfortunately these rents are consuming more and more of household incomes. This places increasing demand on affordable housing, making housing more costly and requiring families to relocate further from the workplace to where they can qualify for loans, often on the fringe or outside metropolitan areas.

Office users are demanding less space per worker as they reconfigure for more flexibility (flex-space), shared-space, and telecommuting. Retailers are looking at smaller brick and mortar concepts and virtual formats that serve multiple locations (in lieu of one mega-store serving entire regions) and making adjustments to accommodate the on-line shopping phenomenon.

On-line retailing is impacting the whole distribution program. Distribution centers must be built near major metropolitan areas to enable same-day delivery in areas that have never been contemplated for such uses. In response to the increase of on-line shoppers, retailers are transitioning from using brick and mortar stores as showrooms to using them as quasi-distribution centers. Brick and mortar retail will continue to converge with on-line shopping as retailers become progressively drawn into competition with Amazon to deliver goods to customers on the same day they are ordered. Stores will increasingly fill online orders from their own shelves, effectively blurring the line between retail and warehouse space.

“Destination” retail development is emerging as developers are successfully experimenting with a variety of new concepts. “Mixed-use experiences” such as a hotel/restaurant/sports combination in addition to traditional stores are growing. New retail ideas are emerging to attract consumers, including offering more local shops, craft food & beverages, entertainment/recreational themed spaces and fewer large chains, in an effort to create more unique shopping experiences. Successful developments are expanding and enhancing the retail experience by blending virtual online and physical in-store shopping experiences (“clicks and bricks”).

In summary, industrial space is being designed and located where it can meet the needs of online retailers with faster delivery times. Housing is adapting to provide open concept floor plans with accommodations for home offices and guest/in-law suites while requiring less square footage of living space and an increased emphasis on outdoor living spaces and amenities. After a long, slow recovery, housing prices are rising fast, returning to “normal” levels prior to the bursting of the housing bubble. The demand for new home construction is on the increase as evidenced by the many housing starts in De Soto as buyers demand the latest housing concepts in more affordable second and third tier sub-urban locations where reasonable financing is available.

### **Section 4.5 FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

The Future Land Use Plan includes the current limits of De Soto and strategic growth areas located in unincorporated Johnson County with an intentional emphasis on the long vacated and underutilized Sunflower Site. This Plan considers the compatibility of various land use categories and shows generally how land should be utilized or preserved to best meet vision, goals, and implementation strategies of this Plan. The Future Land Uses identified on the Map are as follows.

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

- Public/Semi Public
- Parkland
- Agriculture
- Residential (Low Density)
- Residential (Medium Density)
- Multifamily
- Downtown
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial

The Future Land Use Map is included as part of the Comprehensive Plan and displays the recommended land use designations for the City of De Soto and the City's recommended strategic growth boundaries and opportunity areas. The future land use designations/categories are described in the Future Land Use Matrix in this Section.

### **Section 4.6 SUNFLOWER ARMY AMMUNITION PLANT**

The Sunflower Army Ammunition site, originally known as the Sunflower Ordnance Works, was established in 1941 on 10,747 acres making it the largest smokeless powder plant. The Plant would go on to produce over 411million pounds of propellants (ammunition) used during WWII, the Korean War and Vietnam War and employ over 12,000 people in its peak production during WWII. Today, the Sunflower site is comprised of approximately 9,000 acres and includes the Kansas City Metro area's largest single tracks of land. It is said to be the largest urban redevelopment site in the nation and a lengthy environmental clean up is on going, which could take an additional 5-10 years.

Previous plans for the site included "a community in a park" proposed by the Johnson County Commission. A Wizard of Oz entertainment and amusement park was also proposed, but never implemented. At the time of this writing, an estimated \$175 million has been spent on cleaning up the property. While remediation is nearing completion on almost 1,200 acres in the northeast sector, the remaining acreage, mostly in the center of the property, will require an estimated \$40 million in remediation, according to the Army. Sunflower Redevelopment LLC, a Kansas City based firm and owner of the Sunflower site, is monitoring the Army's progress and hopes to someday privately develop the site.

As the remediation comes closer to completion, this Plan recommends conceptually planning for the future development of the site. The 2019 Comprehensive Plan Update is the first to include the Sunflower property. The 2007 Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map and recommendations did not include properties south of West 103rd Street. This Plan recognizes that K-10 is an important lifeline for all communities it crosses. De Soto's workforce and economy are literally driven by K-10. Therefore, the properties along K-10 are crucial for economic stability and future growth of De Soto's expanding and prospering population. However, if the properties within the Sunflower site adjacent to K-10 are not suitable for development, development will go elsewhere. The community and the City's elected and appointed officials generally agree the Sunflower site is a potential source of growth for the Johnson County economy and in particular the City of De Soto. The City already owns the water treatment plant at Sunflower and, through the adoption of the Plan, supports the conceptual development and preservation of Sunflower as

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

shown on the Future Land Use Map provided the site is cleaned up and approved by the appropriate federal, state, and local entities.

The proposed Future Land Use Map includes the latest land use and real estate trends which resulted in substantially more land designated Mixed Use and Commercial. Mixed Use provides the most flexibility and variety in future land use configurations, therefore, the majority of prime redevelopment areas within the Sunflower site are designated Mixed Use on the proposed Future Land Use Map to incentivize redevelopment. The limits of the Sunflower site are shown on the Future Land Use Map with a bold red line with the hash lines crossing the entire site.

### **Section 4.7 FUTURE LAND USE & ZONING**

While the Future Land Use Map is a conceptual representation of the recommended future land uses, the Zoning Map is a graphic representation of locally enacted laws that regulate the use of property. According to the State Statutes, future zoning decisions should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map. Therefore, amendments to the Official Zoning Map should be reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map. If a zoning change is made that is not consistent with this Plan, the Plan should be “forwarded” or updated and the Future Land Use Map amended to align with the zoning change.

Unless or until hereafter rezoned, all land within the City may continue to be used for the same purposes as it was being used prior to the adoption of this Plan subject to the requirements of the City’s Zoning Code. If the future land use designation is different than the official zoning, the parcel may continue to be used in accordance with the permitted zoning. If the zoning of property is different than the designation on the Future Land Use Map and the property owner wishes to use the property in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan, the owner must petition the City to rezone the property subject to the rezoning requirements and procedures.

**Chapter 4 Future Land Use**

<b>Section 4.1 Future Land Use Matrix</b>		
<b>Description (corresponding zoning)</b>	<b>Intensity</b>	<b>Recommended Uses</b>
<b>Agriculture (R-A)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> No less than (10) acres per dwelling unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agricultural</li> <li>- Nurseries &amp; Greenhouses</li> <li>- Single Family Detached</li> <li>- Private Clubs or Lodges</li> <li>- Golf Courses</li> <li>- Public &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated “Agriculture” are primarily undeveloped areas not connected to public utilities and consist of woodlands, prairies, farmland, and open spaces. Future development should preserve these natural areas and be limited to low density development that leaves large areas left undisturbed and protected. Uses should be limited to existing agricultural and low density residential. New single-family homes should be located on lots greater than ten (10) acres.</p>		
<b>Low Density Residential (R-O &amp; R-1)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> 10,350 SF in “R1”, 12,000 SF in “RO”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Single Family Detached</li> <li>- Golf courses</li> <li>- Public &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated “Single-Family Residential” are intended for single-family homes in well planned subdivisions where the average lot size is over 10,350 in R1 and 12,000 in RO (Both minimums require public sanitary sewer) square feet or larger with areas preserved as open space. Infill development should maintain lot sizes that are consistent with the surrounding residential development and dwellings that are consistent in scale, size, and character with adjacent homes. Curbs, gutters, and sidewalks are recommended in all future residential development or redevelopment. The installation of trail connections to existing and planned trails is recommended.</p>		
<b>Medium Density Residential (R-1A, R-2 &amp; R-2A)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> 7,500 SF for single family and 4,000 SF for single family attached.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Single Family Detached</li> <li>- Single Family Attached</li> <li>- Townhomes &amp; Condos</li> <li>- Apartments</li> <li>- Public &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated as “Medium Density Residential” are intended for a mix of residential uses and densities including villas, duplexes and single family dwellings that encourage strong residential neighborhoods dominated by owner-occupied dwellings. The average density should be no less than 7,000 square feet per unit, unless part of a planned development. Planned developments should be reviewed by the Planning Commission for the appropriate zoning and approved by the City Council.</p>		

**Chapter 4 Future Land Use**

<b>Future Land Use Matrix (continued)</b>		
<b>Description (corresponding zoning)</b>	<b>Intensity</b>	<b>Recommended Uses</b>
<b>Multifamily (R3 - R6)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> 7,500 SF for single family and 4,000 SF per unit for multifamily.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Single Family Detached</li> <li>- Single Family Attached</li> <li>- Townhomes &amp; Condos</li> <li>- Apartments</li> <li>- Public &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated as “Multifamily” are intended for a mix of residential uses and densities including apartments, senior housing, assisted living facilities, villas, condos, and duplexes. The maximum density should be no more than 18 units per acre. Planned developments should be reviewed by the Planning Commission for appropriate zoning and approved by the Council. Two (2) parking stalls should be provided per apartment unit, however, a parking reduction to no less than 1.5 stalls per unit is recommended when justified by an alternative parking plan.</p>		
<b>Downtown Overlay (R-H &amp; UDO)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> 7,500 SF for single family, 4,000 SF for 2-family attached and 7,500 SF for nonresidential uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Single Family, Villas, Townhomes, Apartments, &amp; Lofts</li> <li>- Commercial Services, Office, Hospitality, Entertainment, &amp; Retail</li> <li>- Public &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>The area designated “Downtown” includes the traditional central business district of De Soto. Smaller compact uses such as restaurants, boutique retail sales, commercial services, and limited residential uses (i.e. residential lofts) are envisioned. The downtown should serve as a focal point for revitalization efforts. Parking requirements should be waived and the use of shared parking and on-street parking encouraged. Buildings should be designed to the human scale, with visible street oriented entrances, historically accurate facades, and unifying architectural and streetscape designs. Drive-thru businesses, alternative lending establishments, and businesses that generate high volumes of traffic should be prohibited.</p>		
<b>Mixed Use (P-D &amp; UDO)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> As determined by City Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commercial Services, Office, Hospitality, Entertainment, &amp; Retail</li> <li>- Limited Medical</li> <li>- Financial Services</li> <li>- Parks &amp; Institutional Uses</li> <li>- Mixed Use</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated “Mixed Use” are opportunity areas intended to become high quality planned environments with a variety of land use types. Active entertainment, dining, office, and retail destinations with planned residential components are envisioned. Lots that abut existing development should be designed to buffer and blend with existing uses. Building designs should adhere to uniform architectural guidelines that respect the human scale. The intent of the Mixed Use areas is to allow flexibility and encourage creative designs and improvements to the public realm through the use and implementation of the City’s planned or overlay zoning procedures and requirements.</p>		

**Chapter 4 Future Land Use**

<b>Future Land Use Matrix (continued)</b>		
<b>Description (corresponding zoning)</b>	<b>Intensity</b>	<b>Recommended Uses</b>
<b>Commercial (C1, C2, O-1, &amp; UDO)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> 6,000 SF or as determined by City Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commercial Services, Retail, Office,</li> <li>- Medical, Hospitals, &amp; Care Facilities.</li> <li>- Financial services (banks)</li> <li>- Mixed Use</li> <li>- Public &amp; Institutional Uses</li> </ul>
<p>Areas designated “Commercial” are recommended for retail sales, commercial services, medical, research, lab, technology, office, financial, restaurants, entertainment, convenience stores, and automobile-oriented sales and services. All development should have direct access to a major road and provide buffers or screening between less intense uses. All buildings should include visible street oriented entrances, landscaped features, monument signage and a unified design theme.</p>		
<b>Industrial-Light (M-1)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> As determined by City Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Office, Research, Laboratory</li> <li>- Manufacturing, Warehouse &amp; Distribution</li> <li>- Public &amp; institutional uses</li> </ul>
<p>The Industrial-Light future land use category is designed to allow for emerging technologies as well as warehouse, distribution, and manufacturing or any combination thereto. Uses should be located along major roadways and buffered from all other uses. The design and overall site layout and orientation shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission and approved by the Council. Outdoor storage or operations should be buffered and screened. Large-scale warehouse distribution/fulfillment centers that generate high volumes of truck traffic are recommended in the Light Industrial and Heavy Industrial areas designated on the Future Land Use Map within the Sunflower redevelopment area or sites not connected to residential areas.</p>		
<b>Industrial- Heavy (M-2)</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> As determined by City Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Manufacturing, Warehouse &amp; Distribution</li> <li>- Public &amp; institutional uses</li> </ul>
<p>The Industrial-Heavy future land use category is designed to allow for higher intensity warehouse, distribution, and manufacturing than permitted within the City’s M-1 Light-Industrial District. This classification is for areas located along major roadways and buffered from all other uses. The design and overall site layout and orientation shall be reviewed by the Planning Commission and approved by the Council on a case by case basis. Outdoor storage of material or outdoor operations should be buffered and screened.</p>		
<b>Public/Semi-Public/Institutional</b>	<b>Min. lot size:</b> As approved by Council	-Public & Institutional Uses
<p>Public/Semi-Public uses are allowed in all of the designated future land use categories subject to City approval. Public and Semi-Public uses include, but are not limited to, parks owned and operated by the City or Johnson County, golf courses, sports fields, schools, community facilities, churches, and other institutional/governmental uses. All public and quasi-public uses and facilities should provide access to public roadways and public utilities and comply with the applicable zoning and design criteria. Public and Semi-Public uses are shown in blue on the Future Land Use Map. Existing parks are shown as green.</p>		

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

### **Section 4.8 FUTURE LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The City should consider annexing areas that might be developed in the near future to ensure greater control over the timing, density, use, and type of development provided the annexation does not financially burden the City. The Growth Management Section provides specific growth recommendations at the end of this Chapter. When an area is brought into the City, the official zoning district should be that which corresponds to the Future Land Use designation as shown on the Future Land Use Map. For example, areas designated “Agriculture” should be zoned “R-A” or “R-O”, unless the petitioner specifically requests and obtains approval of a different zoning request pursuant to the City’s rezoning rules and regulations. If a property is rezoned to a zoning district that is different than the corresponding zoning district as shown on the Future Land Use Table, the Comprehensive Plan should be updated accordingly.

The following strategies and recommendations are intended to create opportunities for a wide range of uses and development scenarios while ensuring continuity through design and the use of physical and natural buffers between dissimilar uses. The future land use recommendations are based on feedback from the public engagement process, the existing conditions analysis, the latest development and real estate trends, and the need to create harmony between the built and natural environments. The intent of the future land use recommendations is to provide the focus and direction necessary to turn community goals into productive community action and replace or significantly revitalize existing deteriorating buildings, homes, and underutilized sites with market-driven uses and sustainable site designs.

### **Section 4.9 AGRICULTURE**

The Agriculture future land use category includes agricultural land, open space, and undeveloped areas. Future development should be limited to agriculture uses or agriculturally related uses, single-family dwellings, private clubs, recreational uses, and open space. Residential areas not served by city sewer or water should provide at least ten (10) acres per house lot. The intent of the Agriculture land use designation is to minimize the impact of urban development on agricultural land and the natural environment. Consumptive land use practices such as strip commercial development and sprawl-inducing conventional residential subdivisions are discouraged in areas designated Agriculture. Urban development should be located in an area designated Industrial, Commercial, or Residential on the Future Land Use Map. These areas are generally adjacent to existing development and already served by roads and publicly provided infrastructure. The rationale for designating large areas Agriculture is to preserve irreplaceable open space & income generating farmland and to maintain De Soto’s small town, rural atmosphere.

### **Section 4.10 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL**

There is demand for new single-family housing ranging from first time home buyers to high-end custom homes in De Soto. The majority of new housing could be accommodated within the current City limits where public improvements are already in place or substantially complete. Areas designated for residential use are shown as light yellow for low density and bright yellow for medium density residential on the Future Land Use Map. The majority of the area designated

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

single family is already developed or subdivided. With the majority of the City’s residential areas already built-out and many homes 50 years old or older, this Plan recommends encouraging the rehabilitation and preservation of existing housing. Reinvesting in the City’s existing building stock is necessary to retrofit existing homes (to address the latest trends in the housing market) and create a self-renewing housing stock.

Most future single family development is anticipated in the east and southern portions of the current City limits and will continue south along K-10 as land is annexed into De Soto. The majority of this area is flat, undeveloped agricultural land that provides excellent access and therefore, well suited for future residential development. Much of this land is currently zoned “R-O” Residential Suburban and “R-1” Residential Low Density and/or outside the City’s current limits and will need to be annexed and rezoned prior to any future development. This Plan recommends rezoning the land when the development is ready to proceed rather than preemptively zoning the land. This allows the land to be used agriculturally and/or preserved as open space until such time the property is approved for development.

New single-family homes and subdivisions are recommended adjacent to existing single-family neighborhoods. This pattern of development will minimize the costs associated with providing services to new residential areas and avoid incompatible mixes of land use. Future single-family development is also recommended in the form of infill development of empty lots or as replacement of a substandard or outmoded home. The densities and land uses of infill should be consistent with the existing homes adjacent to the infill site and comply with the City’s zoning regulations. Infill development will help renew the City’s housing stock by adding vitality and value to the City’s existing neighborhoods. Infill development should take advantage of locations that provide connections to public utilities and excellent access to the City’s transportation network, schools, and parks. All infill and residential redevelopment should blend with the surrounding land uses with regard to character, density, height and massing. The following restorative development options are recommended to help stabilize, diversify, and expand the City’s housing stock. They include:

1. The development of vacant parcels within existing neighborhoods with new residential homes.
2. The replacement of substandard homes or out-dated homes with market-rate housing.

Investing in existing homes and the construction of residential infill are the preferred development options. These options keep existing neighborhoods intact and reduce the demand for new residential development. New residential development is more expensive, requires expanded utility runs, new or improved roads and sidewalks, expands public service boundaries (i.e. police and fire), and is less environmentally sustainable than fixing up an old home or building on an infill location. However, infill and restorative residential development alone does not meet the needs of all future homebuyers nor provide the supply of homes needed to accommodate the City’s anticipated growth. Therefore, several areas are designated for single family development on the Future Land Use Map. Generally these areas are located adjacent to existing residential development and offer the topographic advantage of flat, well drained soils served by public utilities, roads, and excellent municipal services

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

Areas designated for medium density residential are intended to include single family attached dwellings as a planned use. Owner-occupied attached single-family dwellings, known as villas, are extremely popular in the current housing market, especially for seniors and other homeowners looking to downsize yet still maintain ownership of their homes. Villas consist of commonwall or shared wall construction resulting in energy and construction savings, individual garages, private yards, professionally landscaped common areas, and homeownership is generally required. Maintenance of the public and private outdoor areas is typically provided by professional property management organizations. The City should continue to allow villas as a viable redevelopment solution in areas designated as Medium Density Residential on the Future Land Use Map or in areas zoned for attached single family dwellings.

### **Section 4.11 MULTIFAMILY**

Currently senior housing represents approximately eight percent (8%) of all new housing construction nationally. This rate is anticipated to double over the next ten (10) years due to the aging of the Baby Boom Generation and the functional obsolescence of older independent living facilities. As a result, the demand for senior housing is strong and growing. The City should also anticipate multi-family independent and assisted care facilities and restrict them to areas designated Multifamily. The latest senior facilities are resort-like and provide a wide range of amenities, health care, and medical services required of an aging population. These uses are recommended where multifamily uses are permitted or designated on the Future Land Use Map.

In addition to a steady flow of Baby Boomers looking to downsize, there is an influx of young adults (Millennials), one-person households, and couples with no children entering the housing market. These individuals often choose rental options and apartments (over homeownership) because they provide the flexibility needed to respond to career choices and lifestyles on the go. Today's modern apartments are better suited to the needs of these groups by combining convenience and amenities. They are also increasing the average rent prices as a result of an influx of high-end developments. These new luxury apartment complexes are equipped with outdoor pools, exercise rooms, dog parks, guest suites, and other amenities commonly associated with condominium developments and resorts. They are bridging the gap between homebuyer and the renter who can afford a home, but does not want to be tied down by homeownership. This new market segment is known as "renter-by-choice". While senior housing is the preferred type of multifamily housing desired by the De Soto community, market-rate apartments designed for the "renter-by-choice" tenant should also be considered in areas designated as "Multi-Family" on the Future Land Use Map.

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

This plan recommends keeping De Soto’s housing stock predominately single family homes with the addition of well-planned and quality constructed villas and multi-family development in areas appropriately designated for such on the Future Land Use Map or where zoning permits.

New multifamily development should serve as a complimentary expansion to the existing senior services and other multifamily development already constructed. All future multifamily development located adjacent to single family homes or land zoned single family should provide on-site buffering or screening. Any development that creates traffic congestion, noise, or other conditions that would interfere with the enjoyment of adjacent properties should be prohibited or at least regulated to the extent permitted by law. Multifamily development should include the latest indoor and outdoor amenities desired by prospective tenants. Prospective tenants should include “singles” (young adults), “mingles” (newlyweds) and “jingles” (empty nesters). These individuals are most likely to rent and add value to the community. For example, they tend to frequent local restaurants, bars, retailers, and entertainment venues more than any other demographic group. These prospective tenants will help generate revenue for the City by supporting local merchants while minimizing growth to the local school district student body.

### **Section 4.12 DOWNTOWN**

The reduction of vacant space downtown is necessary to help increase property values, generate vitality, and stabilize the local economy. Underutilized sites and buildings in Downtown De Soto could struggle indefinitely in their current condition, but with a new look or purpose, could be attractive to a new business. Downtown De Soto is an important asset. This Plan recommends the City encourage and/or incentivize property owners to position the current vacant building stock for immediate occupancy. Improving Downtown De Soto and making the corridors that serve it more attractive to prospective users/tenants/residents should be a top priority. The City should develop partnerships with local and regional entities and direct financial resources towards future restorative development that sustains Downtown De Soto as a vibrant, attractive gathering center for generations to come.

Working to identify and facilitate opportunistic investments Downtown will result in value-added improvements that serve as catalysts igniting more reinvestment in Downtown. The intent of these recommendations is to build upon the momentum already generated by the recent public and private investments in Downtown and encourage improvements throughout the City to create an urban environment where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The following future land use recommendations are provided for Downtown De Soto:

1. **4-Prong Revitalization Approach:** This Plan recommends following the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s National Main Street Center (NMSC)’s four-part approach to downtown revitalization:
  - a) *Organization-* Encourage the development of a merchant’s organization or similar group who meets regularly to provide a forum where downtown business leaders and property owners can collaborate and mingle.
  - b) *Design-* Preserving the historic architecture and quality of the built environment is critical to preserving De Soto’s heritage and charm.

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

- c) *Promotion*- Business owners, local organizations, and City officials should develop an intentional, unified approach towards marketing De Soto, not just the Downtown.
- d) *Economic restructuring*- The utilization of second story dwelling units, expanding retail selection, and continued growth and success in the food and beverage establishments will help keep downtown alive and active.

2. **Business Improvement District (BID) or Downtown Improvement District (DID):** Discuss creating a Downtown Improvement District (DID) to generate funds for beautification efforts and renew aging infrastructure. Business Improvement Districts can be set up via ordinance by the taxing authority (i.e. City of De Soto) where the district is located at the request of property owners in the proposed District. Participating property owners and/or businesses agree to pay a tax assessment to generate revenues for improvements to the District. The assessment is typically added on to the retail sale tax or property tax. The purpose is to generate funds, specifically earmarked for improvements to the designated business district(s) and the businesses that benefit the most from said improvements. BID/DID funds can be used in a variety of ways including ADA compliance, building/fire code compliance, maintenance, security, economic development, lighting, signage, streetscape enhancements, façade improvements, preservation, etc.
3. **Cleanliness & Safety:** Cleanliness and safety are essential elements of any successful place. This Plan recommends the City work with downtown merchants to maintain the safety and cleanliness of Downtown as well as working towards the implementation of the staging strategies and all other downtown revitalization recommendations provided in this Section. Code enforcement should be heightened in the downtown area to ensure all businesses are well kept and property maintained in a workman-like manner
4. **Animation:** Continue the use of seasonal banners, plantings, and other decorations to provide connections to De Soto’s heritage and the holidays De Soto’s residents celebrate. Coordinate seasonal events and festivals downtown to coincide with the placement of the decorations and staging efforts. These efforts bring life to downtown, by prolonging the duration people stay downtown, drawing people from outside De Soto, and by creating a festival atmosphere that is exciting and memorable.
5. **Preservation:** All new or major renovations to existing building should be reviewed to ensure they maintain the historic character of the Downtown and comply with the following design guidelines:
  - a) *Materials:* Exterior building material should primarily consist of brick, masonry, and other natural, earth tone materials.
  - b) *Style:* While no particular style is required, all new or substantially renovated structures should provide continuity with regard to scale, massing, detailing, and orientation of the existing structures on the block.

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

**6. Use Limitations:** The following uses should be avoided downtown:

- a) Uses that rely on outdoor storage of material, with the exception of nurseries.
- b) Uses with a drive through and/or intercom that can be heard beyond the property line.
- c) Drive-in uses.
- d) Motor vehicle sales where vehicles are displayed outside. (indoor sales may be considered as a conditional use.)
- e) Pawnshops, payday loans, title loan establishments or other alternative lending uses. These uses signal a decline (perceived and/or real) to the community and deter other desired uses.)
- f) Self-storage.
- g) Car wash operation, including self-serve car washes.
- h) Industrial uses.
- i) First floor dwellings; first floors should be reserved for active retail, entertainment, service commercial and recreational uses.

### **Section 4.13 COMMERCIAL LAND USE**

Outside Downtown De Soto, commercial uses are concentrated along 83rd Street, Lexington, and K-10. The City is fortunate to have multiple large retail anchors or corporate headquarters such as Harps, Mr. Goodcents, and Huhtamaki. The recent improvements to K-10 and Lexington, City-owned utilities, low taxes, and access to a consumer-base with among the highest wage earners in the region give De Soto's commercial districts a strategic edge over other cities in area region.

A key economic development challenge facing the City of De Soto is reducing retail leakage. Leakage occurs when local residents leave De Soto to shop, dine, and be entertained. Identifying retail voids and businesses that provide the specific goods or services that residents currently leave the City for should be a priority. Once identified, these businesses should be the focus of future business recruitment efforts. Commercial recruitment efforts should generally focus on businesses that provide goods and services that are currently not available in De Soto. New emphasis should be placed on uses such as restaurants (casual, fast casual, craft food, and sports themed bar/restaurants), entertainment, business incubators, commercial services, internet cafes, and specialty retail boutiques (i.e. running/cycling store, fishing shop/outdoor outfitter, bakery, confectionery, Hispanic grocer, etc.). These are examples of "destination uses" that attract customers who are willing to seek them out, even if they are hard to find or more expensive. These businesses provide access to knowledgeable sales and service personnel, well-appointed showrooms, and gathering space for like-minded end users to learn and linger. Customers are willing to seek out such uses because they offer unique products, services, and expertise not found in big box stores or on the internet. De Soto offers undeveloped commercially zoned property to serve the needs of the aforementioned uses with excellent highway access and visibility. In addition to the above recommendations, this Plan recommends the following commercial future land use strategies:

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

1. **Renewal:** The development of vacant sites strategically located downtown, along Lexington or near intersections with K10 can transform De Soto's retail leakage problem into an opportunity by introducing new retail, commercial, and mixed use formats. These new retail and commercial offerings will expand the City's share of retail sales by providing a wider selection and by cross-selling to the City's existing retail and commercial businesses.
2. **Design Guidelines:** The quality of design in new or substantially redeveloped sites is an important factor in creating continuity between new and existing development. The objective is to provide predictable guidance to developers in the design phase to clearly define the City's expectations with regard to design and development and expedite the plan review process, not slow it down.
3. **Zoning Regulations:** Changes in the retail and commercial services sectors are occurring rapidly as brick and mortar stores are being left behind and the on-line sales phenomenon continues to gain momentum. Local codes need to be updated to create the flexibility necessary to facilitate retail sales and services. The intent of the recommended code update is not to prohibit the latest commercial and retail trends but to accommodate them in a well-planned manner so they can succeed and create synergies with the City's existing businesses.
4. **Continued use of Zoning Overlays:** Overlay districts are special zones placed "on top" of existing zoning and planning regulations. An overlay district is similar to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) in that it provides specific regulations and or relief from the City's zoning requirements for a specific area. This approach allows the City to maintain the current zoning ordinance while addressing the special needs of a targeted area. De Soto currently has an Uptown Overlay district. Overlay districts are a common zoning tool used to help revitalize particular areas without making extensive amendments to the zoning ordinance. The intent of the Overlay is to help integrate new or revitalized uses with the established neighborhoods and existing fabric of De Soto.

### **Section 4.14 MIXED USE**

The key to successful mixed land use development is compatible design and the creation of a variety of positive, synergistic land uses. Through good design and thoughtful tenant selection, mixed use developments can successfully integrate a wide range of land uses. The synergies created between complimentary tenants, well-planned site amenities and pedestrian activity can create a sense of place that visitors want to experience.

Future commercial and mixed use development are recommended at existing and planned transportation nodes and strategic areas around and within Sunflower. These locations provide excellent access and visibility to both regional travelers passing through De Soto and local residential traffic and daily commuters. Nodes are intersections of two key roadways where vehicular activity is concentrated. Businesses prefer to locate at intersections due to their ease of access and high visibility. Commercial uses clustered together at key intersections or **nodes** often do better than scattered commercial uses because each store benefits from the customers drawn by other stores. Additionally, concentrated shopping districts typically attract customers from a wider market area than a single store.

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

Residential land uses, offices and certain public buildings and facilities often reinforce shopping districts even further and benefit themselves from increased public accessibility. De Soto should encourage compact commercial and mixed use development or redevelopment at key nodes. All future development should provide improvements to ensure safe, convenient vehicular and pedestrian accessibility. This Plan recommends the City concentrate efforts and resources into existing businesses, assisting local entrepreneurs and minimizing retail leakage by implementing the following land use and economic development objectives and implementation strategies:

### **Section 4:15 INDUSTRIAL**

The future Industrial land use category includes a range of industrial uses including warehousing, distribution, heavy manufacturing, office warehouse, contractor yards, motor vehicle repair, wholesale uses, and business parks. Future Industrial uses should be directed to areas designated “Industrial (Light and Heavy)” on the Future Land Use Map. According to *Urban Land Institute’s (ULI) 2017 Emerging Trends in Real Estate*; “the last mile” distribution center is the trendiest concept to come out of the e-commerce world. As more and more e-commerce vendors, and now Whole-Foods, Wal-Mart, and Target offer next day delivery, the demand for satellite distribution centers on the fringe of all densely populated areas will become a reality. They will come in all sizes and, due to immediate demand, will often occupy existing, obsolete commercial and industrial spaces. These “last mile” fulfillment centers are the latest tenants of struggling strip commercial centers. These are very flexible uses that do not require 40’ ceilings or rely on 18 wheelers. They use alternative delivery methods ranging from bicycles to cargo vans. These micro-distribution centers are recommended within the City’s existing vacant or underutilized commercial and industrial buildings.

According to the ULI report; “*Industrial has become the darling investment type over multifamily and has been the top development and investor prospect for the second consecutive year*”. The strengthening of the economy over the last few years has increased the demand for industrial space, decreasing vacancy rates, and increasing rents. Therefore, the City should encourage future industrial development within the Light and Heavy Industrial areas shown on the Future Land Use Map. These areas provide good highway access and separation from residential development. According to same ULI report, only the newest and best-in-class industrial buildings are in high demand. Over the last couple years, 70% of all leasing was done in buildings that were two years old or newer. This puts De Soto at the forefront as the industrially designated areas concentrated along K-10 on the northernmost fringes of the Sunflower redevelopment area are mostly undeveloped and ripe for the latest industrial formats. Retail fulfillment centers and customized office/showroom/warehouses are recommended in the City’s industrially designated areas along K-10 and within the Sunflower site.

While there may not be an immediate need for these emerging industrial uses in De Soto today, the City should prepare to address these uses by taking the necessary steps to systematically annex strategic portions of the Sunflower site and other recommended growth areas. This Plan recommends clustering and consolidating industrial uses in areas where access is provided to major roads (K-10) and buffered from residential land uses. The following future industrial land use recommendations are provided to make the City more attractive to prospective industrial users:

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

1. **Pad ready-** Designate an industrially zoned site, 20 acres or larger, that is served by roads and properly sized utilities for future development.
2. **Cost competitive-** Utilize available resources and programs to bring down the costs of development industrial property and the amount of time necessary to prepare land for industrial development.
3. **Diversified Tax Base:** Encourage the development of new manufacturing and industrial uses to help diversify the City's base and lesson the tax burden on homeowners and retailers.

### Section 4.16 FUTURE PARKS & RECREATION

De Soto should continue supporting uses that promote healthy, active lifestyles such as local parks, recreational facilities, the County parks and supporting seasonal events and festivals. The City should also pursue the acquisition of additional rights-of-way or easements needed to create trails and sidewalks connecting neighborhoods to the City's parks, schools, businesses districts, along existing roadways such at Ottawa Street (to Riverfest Park) and Kill Creek to provide right-of-way for the installation of future pedestrian / bikeways. Reference the Parks and Recreation plan update in the appendix.

### Section 4.17 GROWTH MANAGEMENT

As the City of De Soto continues to grow and expand, there are several factors that could hinder efficient, well-planned development, threaten the area's prized open spaces and/or reduce property values. Therefore, this Plan recommends following the general principals of growth management to make intelligent future land use decisions to preserve the City's small town character, stable neighborhoods, and high quality of life. Growth management can be described as a conscious public decision to restrain, accommodate or encourage development. The City should follow the future infrastructure plan in this document to extend utilities in the City's anticipated development areas and agreements that require developers to share in the cost of related roads, utilities and other infrastructure costs.

The City should consider the impact of growth and development when making land use decisions and carefully review all future development to ensure they are served by utilities or areas where pre-development agreements exist regarding the provision of services. The intent of all development proposals should be to minimize the inefficient use of the land, resources, and municipal services and to consider conditions that may affect development potential. These may include the following:

#### Factors Supporting De Soto's Development Potential:

- De Soto is strategically located in a growth area of the County.
- Good external highway system, including the four-lane K-10.
- The availability of City services.

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

### Factors *Limiting* De Soto's Development Potential:

- The cost to increase and or extend the capacity of municipal utilities and services.
- Unknown when Sunflower property will be available for development
- Steep topography / Kansas River Floodplain

The aforementioned Factors should be considered both in terms of their present status and in terms of how they are likely to change over the projection period. These should be considered together with other matters that may influence development quality such as:

- The community's general attitude towards growth,
- Development standards (including density) which the City will exact through its development regulations.

### **Section 4.18 FUTURE GROWTH & ANNEXATION**

Future annexation and growth should not occur until the City has identified substantial support from De Soto residents. Any potential areas considered for future growth should be a win-win for all parties. Expansion to the south should target the key nodes that would accommodate commercial and mixed use development along K-10, Lexington Avenue, Kill Creek and areas designated Mixed Use and Commercial within Sunflower. These areas support a wide range of land uses that complement the City's existing development plans and provide substantial potential for public/private partnerships to enhance the entire K-10 corridor and the quality of life for all who live in the area.

Future growth and development that is not consistent with this Plan, the City's Zoning Regulations, or not supported by local residents and property owners should be avoided. The City must also have a plan in place for the programmed extension of infrastructure and services before proposing any future development. Any growth which strains De Soto's utility, infrastructure, or service delivery capacities should be avoided. In certain specific cases, however, the City must be ready to expand services and offer incentives to take strategic advantage of recommended development, preservation, and future recreation opportunities.

The recommended residential, multi-family, commercial, mixed-use, and industrial growth is necessary to attract and support new commercial, industrial, and residential development, which in turn will increase the City's revenues, create jobs, and grow the City's population. These revenues are necessary to provide the level of services needed to support a growing, prospering community. Retail and service-sector expansion also addresses the community's top critical issue of providing better retail selection and better positions the area as a retail destination.

Partnerships between the City, adjacent property owners, and developers should be established early to help avoid unanticipated repercussions. The City should initiate pre-annexation agreements with adjoining land owners. Before any annexation decisions are made, the following general questions should be considered.

- 1) Will the annexation place any unacceptable political, financial, physical or operational demands or expectations upon the City for the provision of services or infrastructure?

## Chapter 4 Future Land Use

- 2) Will the annexation allow for more appropriate guidance of future development within the growth area?
- 3) Will annexation bring existing land uses into the City that are desirable and have some benefit to De Soto in terms of revenue, quality of life, or additional housing?
- 4) Is the annexation in the best interest of the City as a whole?
- 5) Does the annexation make economic sense from both long and short range perspectives?

### **Section 4.19 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADOPTION & UPDATE**

Before adopting or amending the Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Commission must hold a public hearing. A notice of the public hearing must be published at least 15 days prior to the public hearing (but no more than 30 days) in the official city newspaper or as required by law. Adoption shall require a majority vote of the full Planning Commission. Upon adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, or any amendment thereto, a certified copy of the Plan along with a written copy of the minutes of the public hearing, must be forwarded to the City Council and City Clerk as required by State Statutes.

City Staff, under the direction of the Planning Commission, should conduct annual reviews of the Comprehensive Plan, or any part thereof, to consider any amendments, extensions, or additions to the Plan. All amendments to the Comprehensive Plan must be made in accordance with the process for the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan outlined above.

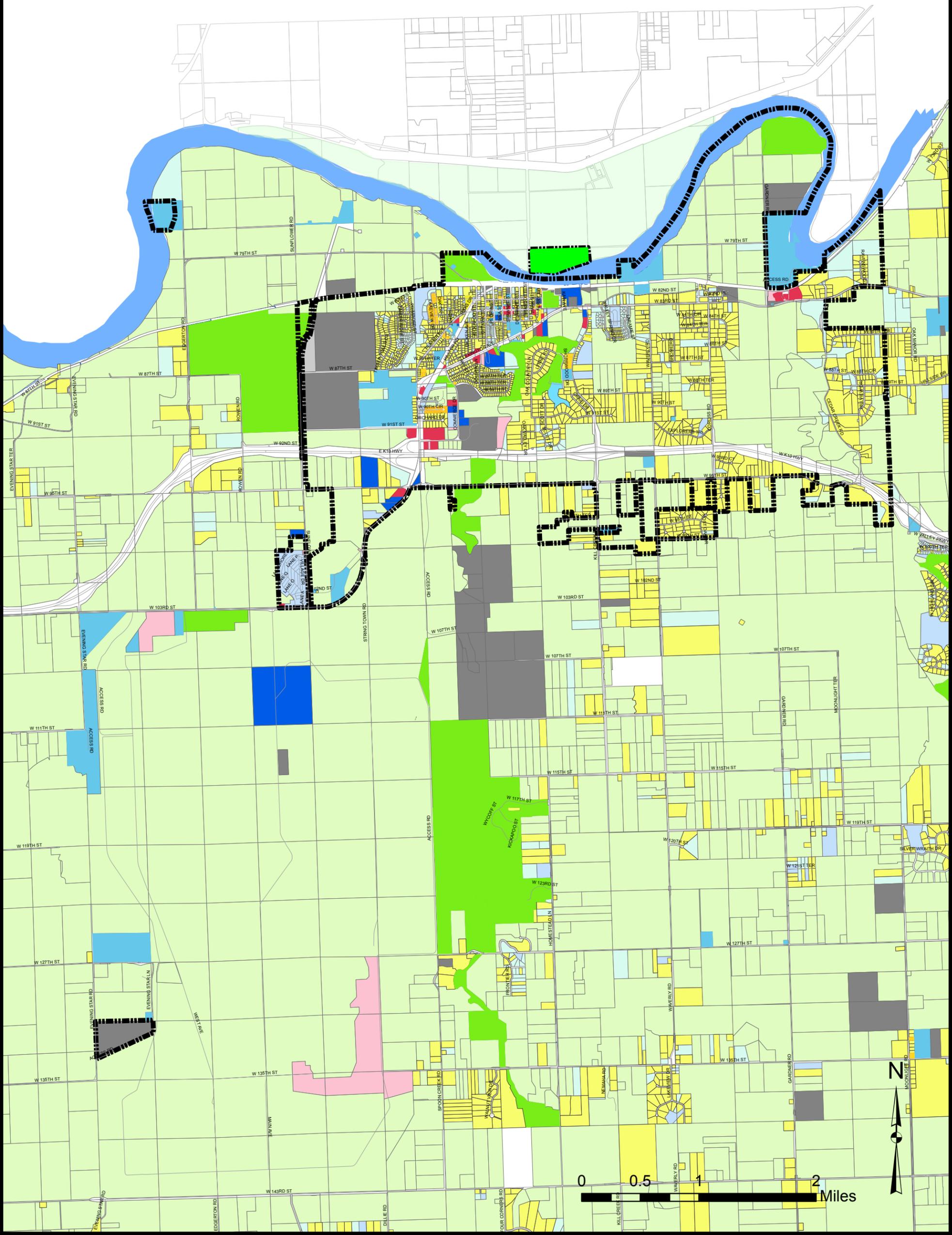
### **Section 4.20 IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM SUMMARY**

Through the adoption of this Plan, the recommendations and implementation strategies contained herein become policy and should be considered in all future land use decisions and utilized to help implement the vision, goals, and objectives of this Plan. The goals and objectives provided in Chapter 3 are intended to work with the Future Land Use recommendations provided in this Chapter. Together they form a work program the City should follow in daily decision-making and empower residents, business owners and other organizations to assist in implementation efforts.

The Comprehensive Plan should not be used as a standalone document. The implementation recommendations of this plan will require the direction and leadership of City staff and the support of the City's elected and appointed officials, residents, and business owners. The City should make sure all land use decisions comply with the City's Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Ordinance. Future development and improvements should be allowed a reasonable level of flexibility to ensure they serve a long life and accommodate future generations and market changes. This will help ensure De Soto's present needs are met, without compromising the needs of future generations.

**Chapter 4 Future Land Use**

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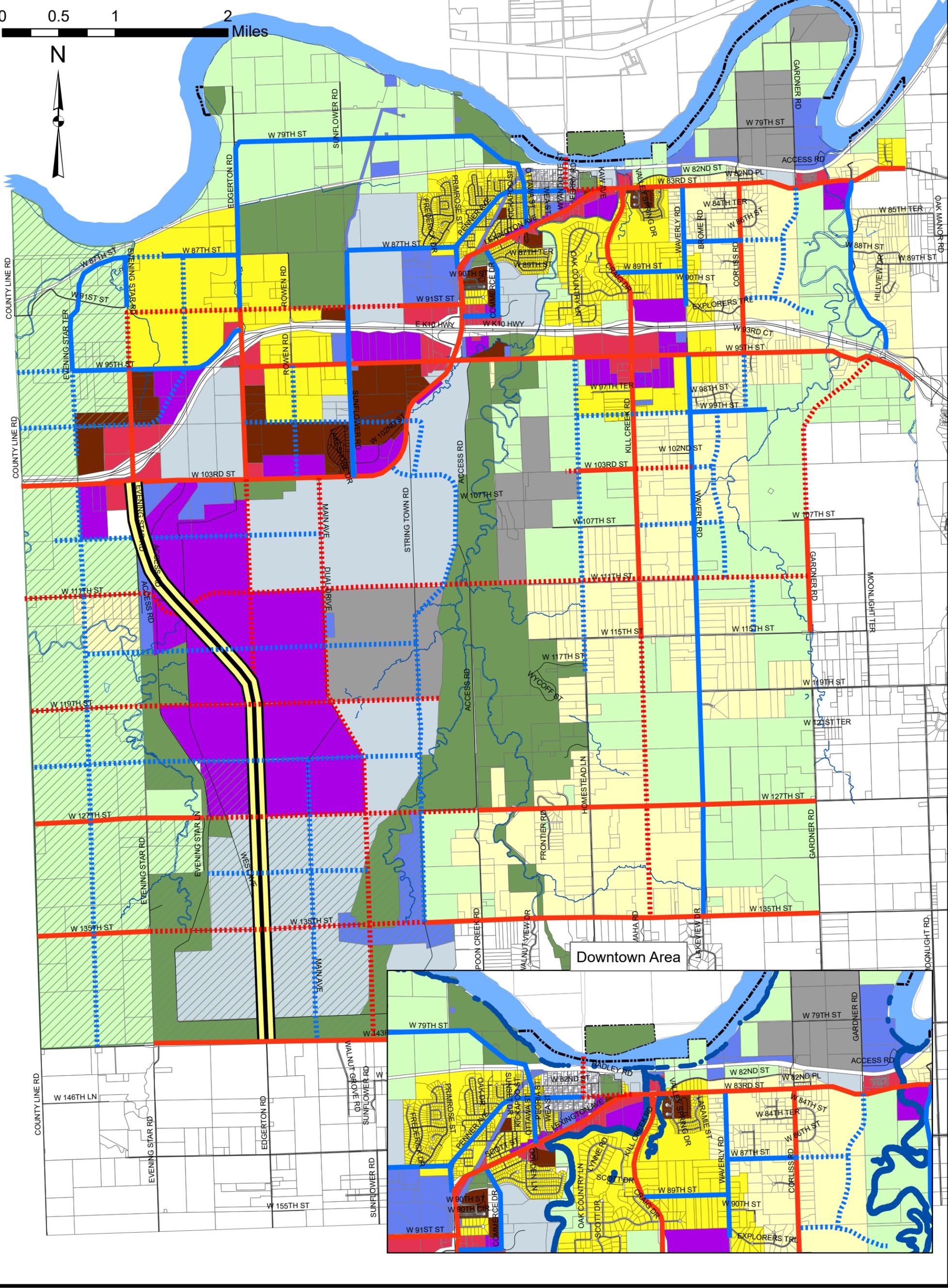
# Map 4.1 Existing Land Use

# City of De Soto, Kansas *Comprehensive Plan*

- |               |              |            |            |           |            |
|---------------|--------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| City Boundary | Kansas River | Ag         | HeavyIndst | Office    | SnglFamRes |
| Commercial    | Lake         | DuTriplex  | LightIndst | OtherRes  | VacCommInd |
| GovPub        | MobileHome   | RightOfWay | Recreation | VacantRes |            |



0 0.5 1 2 Miles



# Map 4.2 Future Land Use Adopted 12.15.2022

*Comprehensive Plan*



City Boundary



Kansas River

**Future Streets**

- - - - - Arterial on New Alignment
- - - - - Collector on New Alignment
- — — — — Collector on Existing Alignment
- — — — — Arterial on Existing Alignment
- Future Expressway
- Centerline

**Future Land Use**

- Long Term Development Overlay
- Public/Semi-Public
- Multifamily
- Rights of Way
- Agricultural
- Downtown
- Heavy Industrial
- Park & Open Space
- Residential Low Density
- Mixed Use
- Residential Med. Density
- Commercial

## **CHAPTER 5: TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES**

### **Section 5.1 PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW**

Public facilities and services available to residents of the City of De Soto include electric, gas, telephone, water, sewer, stormwater management, data, parks and the transportation network. Some of these services/facilities are provided by the City while others are provided by separate public or semi-public jurisdictions or agencies. The quality and availability of these services influence the type, timing, and density of development in the future. Generally, the more compact the community the more efficient the services can be provided. Compactness can be achieved by encouraging development adjacent to the existing built-up areas (where services and infrastructure are already available) rather than allowing “leap-frog” development, which skips over large tracts of undeveloped land. A second means of increasing service delivery efficiency is to cluster those land uses which have the greatest need for new roads and general City services. Concentrating land uses that require the highest level of service and locating them near services delivery centers will minimize services delivery costs as well as costly utility runs and infrastructure expenses.

The most cost-efficient solution to accommodate future growth is to concentrate development in areas which can be served by existing facilities rather than in areas which require new facilities. However, future public utility expansions will be needed to sustain and encourage growth. The City must consider the timing, size and direction of these expansions as well as the availability of alternative sites which could be more easily served prior to investing in costly infrastructure projects. The following sections provide an analysis of the existing transportation system and public infrastructure and recommendations for preserving, enhancing and expanding the local road network and infrastructure to meet the future needs of the community.

### **Section 5.2 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ANALYSIS**

The ability to transport people and goods from one place to another is one of the basic components of the economic and social system upon which a community depends. Consequently, the adequacy of a city’s transportation system will have a substantial impact on the rate and pattern of its future growth. Fortunately, the vast majority (84%) of the public engagement program participants do not believe traffic circulation or congestion is a problem. While traffic congestion may not be a perceived problem in De Soto, the ability to allocate adequate resources towards ongoing maintenance and enhancements to the City’s existing transportation network, including sidewalks, trails and pedestrian amenities is a priority of this Plan.

Significant emphasis is placed on the local roads. The City has the greatest ability to implement future improvements to the local street system and this Plan has the greatest ability to influence these decisions and expenditures. This Plan recommends the City continue requiring road improvements as needed to mitigate the impacts of new development as a condition of approval of said development. When development requires the construction of major transportation improvements, such as substantial upgrades or the construction of new collectors and arterials, the City should continue utilizing revenues from the various revenue streams available including excise tax, transportation improvement districts, property taxes, regional, state, and federal programs, or grants to help offset the cost of major road construction on a case by case basis.

## TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES

Another area of emphasis among survey respondents and during community feedback discussions was non-motorized modes of transportation. This broad topic can be divided into two main Categories – one relating to transportation, and the other relating to recreation. Regionally and nationally, multi-modal transportation has become a focus. The Mid-America Regional Council, the regional planning organization responsible for the distribution of federal transportation funding in the Kansas City area, has prioritized “Complete Streets” in their long-range transportation planning and in their funding selection criteria. Sometimes referred to as livable streets — Complete Streets are roadways designed for safe and convenient travel by users of all ages and abilities. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders must be able to safely move along and across a complete street. It is therefore important that De Soto identify certain elements of the complete streets concepts and attempt to incorporate them into future capital improvements projects, where appropriate.

In addition to non-motorized transportation elements, recreational transportation should be considered. One of the most significant findings of the recently completed parks & recreation masterplan was the strong desire in the community for trails that connect neighborhoods to commercial and civic centers, parks, and our natural resources.

### **Section 5.3 STREET CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM**

Roads are categorized according to the Functional Classification System to differentiate between the various types of streets and their intended purpose. Regulations, standards for design and construction, and funding are based on the functional classification of the roadway. According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) here are a few of the functional classifications applicable to De Soto’s transportation network:

- Expressways/Freeways: Expressways and freeways are primary arterial roadways which are fully or partially access controlled facilities. These routes are typically the highest traveled corridors which serve as a primary means of access to the community and carry the major portion of trips entering or leaving the city. As such, they are divided, multi-lane facilities with a primary function of moving large volumes of through traffic at high speed and are primarily intended to serve long trips.
- Arterial: A street that provides the highest level of service at the greatest speed for the longest uninterrupted distance, with some degree of access control. This classification is generally subdivided into minor arterial and primary or major arterial, with the latter encompassing all freeway and highway designated routes. Minor arterial roadways are appropriate for carrying traffic through primarily residential land uses without directly accessing any of the properties. Major arterial roadways serve major activity centers and carry a high proportion of traffic on a limited number of roadway miles.

The arterial street is given preferential treatment over collector and local streets in signing and signalization of intersections. Ideally, local streets should not have direct access to arterials, but are provided access to the arterial through the collector street system. Arterials in De Soto intersect with many local streets in the older parts of the City because of a grid pattern of development. Access to private property along an arterial should be controlled to avoid hazards and the interference of traffic flow due to ingress and egress traffic movements. Access control can be achieved at differing levels through subdivision design, street design,

## TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES

and curb cut regulations. Two such methods include restricting curb cuts and utilization of shared parking among businesses both of which are promoted by this plan.

- **Collector:** Collector streets carry a lower volume of vehicles at lower speed for shorter distances by collecting traffic from local roads and connecting them to arterials. Collector streets provide slightly better access to developed land and are more pedestrian and bike friendly than arterial roadways. Since collectors provide a dual function of distributing traffic to local streets while at the same time moving increasing volumes of traffic to an arterial, provisions must be made to move traffic forward at a reasonable rate of speed while maintaining access at intersections and driveways.
- **Local:** Local streets consist of all roads not defined as arterials or collectors. They primarily provide access to land with little or no through movement. Local streets carry the lowest volume of traffic, have fewer lanes, and slower posted speed limits. This allows more safe and efficient points of access to land development and the use of narrower lane widths.

Traffic volumes and speeds are typically higher on roadways of increasing functional classification while pedestrian and bicycle counts are lower. Major Arterial roads have the highest traffic counts. Since they carry more traffic, arterial streets typically include multiple lanes and have grade-separated intersections. Street classification is very important for project funding. Federal and local funding in the Kansas City Metropolitan Area is managed by the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). In order for a roadway project to be eligible for federal funds, the facility must be classified in the region's Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) as a Collector or higher. There are a number of roadways in and around De Soto classified at this level or higher. Also critical to the MARC funding process is the incorporation of "complete streets" elements. These include bike lanes, multi-use paths, bus stops, pedestrian features like landscaping, benches and bike racks.

### **Section 5.4 FUTURE TRANSPORTATION**

Based on the analysis of the existing street system and the projected growth of De Soto, a **Future Transportation Map (Map 5.1)** has been prepared. The functional street hierarchy described herein provides the foundation for the designation of the Major Thoroughfare Plan. These streets fit together to form a network of streets to service the needs of each land use throughout the City. How well the transportation needs are met depends upon how closely the street network can be matched to the existing land use pattern. As the City of De Soto grows, however, the demands made upon the street network could change. Therefore, it is important the future land use pattern be considered along with the existing pattern when decisions regarding street classifications are made.

The map depicts recommended expansions of the existing street network and creation of new streets needed to accommodate the safe and efficient movement of traffic in conjunction with continued growth and development. As a general rule, arterials are located at one-mile intervals and collectors located midway between arterials. This general rule, however, must often be modified to accommodate land uses with high traffic demand, the existing road network, or natural and man-made features such as Kill Creek which disrupt the normal street pattern. The map and supporting plan contained herein are intended to guide transportation decisions in conjunction with planning improvements and development proposals.

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### **Section 5.5 FUTURE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommended improvements to the existing transportation network and design guidelines are described below. The guidelines follow the American Public Works Association (APWA) standards for design and the American Society of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The recommendations are intended to provide basic guidelines for future street construction and enhancements to the existing street network. Detailed engineering studies and design will be required prior to the implementation of future transportation improvements.

Road improvements are an evolving process, often beginning with construction to one standard, followed by a series of improvements necessary to accommodate additional traffic and eventually reaching an ultimate design standard. For example, 91<sup>st</sup> Street west of Lexington Avenue is projected as an arterial street. Although the road is projected to ultimately function as an arterial, the road currently functions as a collector road. While the Initial road was designed to collector standards, the right-of-way width was designed to accept a roadway designed to arterial standards thereby allowing for future expansion as necessary to accommodate additional traffic volumes. This Plan recommends the City continue requiring right-of-way widths of the planned roadway classification as opposed to the current classification. This is necessary to allow the roadway to evolve over time to accommodate the level of service required of future development and growth.

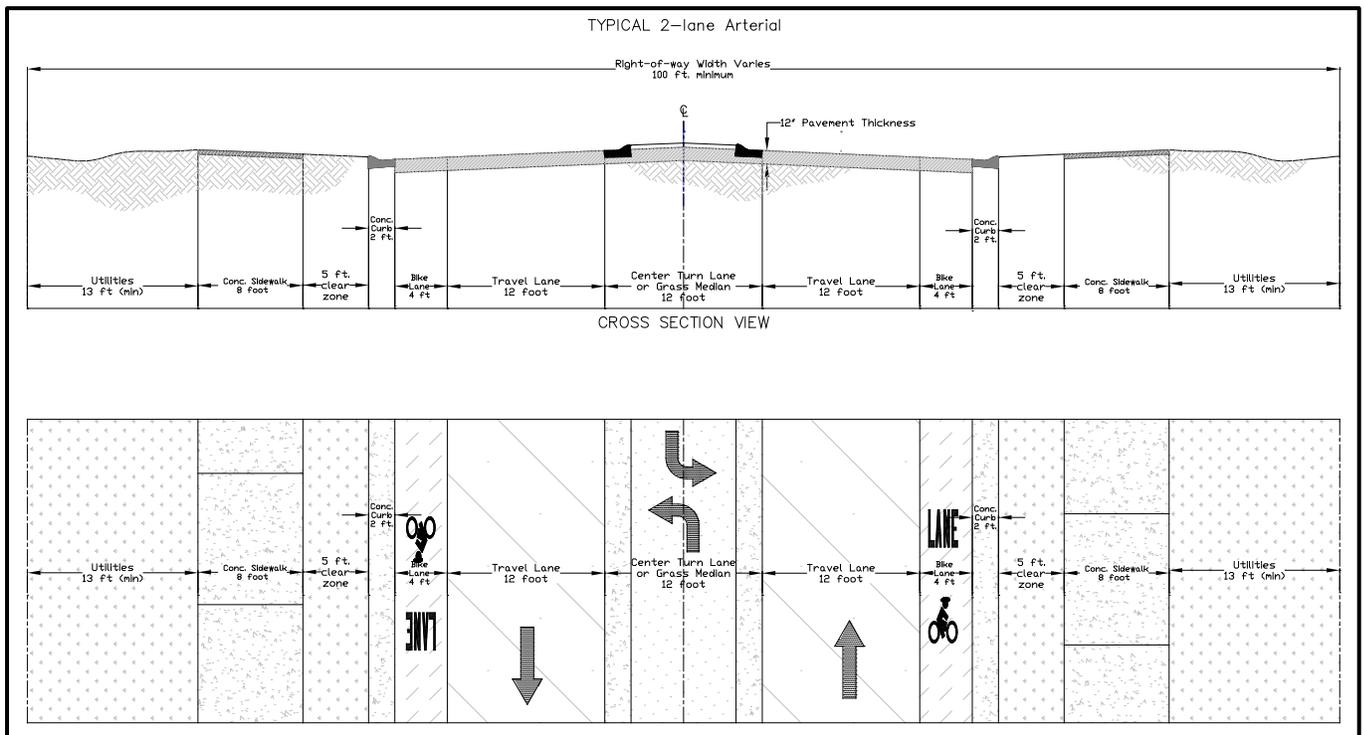
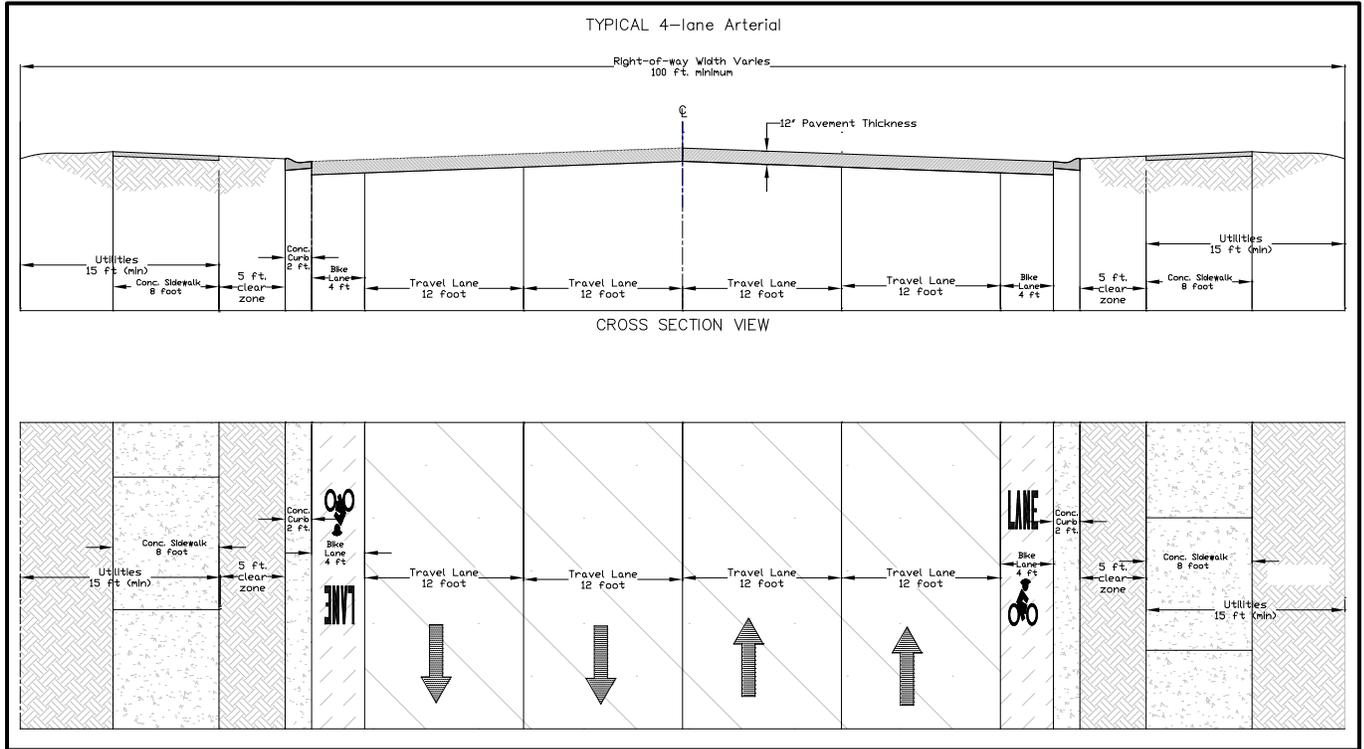
#### **Arterial Roadway Recommendations**

Lexington Avenue, Kill Creek Road and 83<sup>rd</sup> Street function as arterial roadways and serve as critical links between the City, K-10 Highway and the planning area to the south and east. To supplement these roadways and improve traffic circulation in the future, additional east-west and north-south arterial roads are recommended as shown on the Future Transportation Map. For example, an extended 91<sup>st</sup> Street, improved 95<sup>th</sup> Street, and improved Edgerton and Evening Star Roads are projected as future arterials. In addition, Johnson County has projected Kill Creek Road south of K-10 and 119<sup>th</sup> Street as part of the County's arterial street network through the Comprehensive Arterial Road Network Plan (CARNP). Figure 5.1 provides a typical section of an arterial street.

Generally, the minimum right-of-way requirement for arterials is 100-120 feet depending on whether the arterial is divided or undivided. Divided arterials may include a raised median, bike lanes, center turn lanes or right turn lanes, depending on vehicular and pedestrian traffic conditions. Bike lanes should be an integral part of the planning of arterial corridors, and should be seriously considered when implementing significant public improvements on arterial roadways. Undivided or minor arterials, which are anticipated to serve the majority of the community's arterial needs, may have rights-of-way ranging from 80-100 feet. The minimum pavement width is 40 feet from back to back of curbs which allows three lanes – one lane in each direction plus a center turn lane. Four lane arterials generally require 52 feet of pavement width from back to back of curbs. Turning lanes should be constructed at major intersections.

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Figure 5.1: Typical Cross Sections for Arterial Streets



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Only public streets should be allowed to access an arterial and intersection spacing should be restricted based on the projected design speed. The ideal traffic volume for a minor arterial should range between 12,000 to 25,000 vehicles per day. Minor arterials are appropriate for carrying traffic through primarily residential land use without directly accessing any of the properties. As De Soto continues to grow, major or divided arterials may be necessary to accommodate substantially larger traffic volumes such as those anticipated from the development within the Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant. Traffic volumes on major arterials can range between 25,000 to 35,000 vehicles per day. Often a center turn lane is warranted when there are frequent entrances into higher traffic generation land uses such as business parks or retail centers. Excessive curb cuts generate mid-block turning movements that reduce the roadways capacity. Where such conditions exist, left turn movements should be restricted or a median installed in locations where left-turns should be prohibited. For design speeds greater than 35 mph or for peak hour right turn-in traffic volumes exceeding 100 vehicles, it is recommended that a right turn lane be constructed along the arterial approaching the curb cut.

In order to move larger volumes of traffic, parking should not be allowed on either side of an arterial roadway and curb cuts and direct access should be minimized through the use of access control standards, such as a median or right in, right out restricted entrances. Arterial roadways should also be designed to accommodate pedestrian access and circulation via sidewalks at least eight feet wide on both sides of the roadway.

### **Collector Roadway Recommendations**

This Plan recommends two types of collector streets to serve the future growth and development of the City: they include major and minor. Designs for each vary slightly depending on the future use and characteristics of the traffic they carry. Major collectors are typically appropriate for serving industrial and commercial land use areas, such as adjacent to business parks or commercial development where traffic demand is expected to range between 1,500 and 12,000 vehicles per day. The right-of-way requirement for a major collector street is 60-80 feet with a pavement width of 28 - 52 feet back to back of curbs. As with arterials, bike lanes are encouraged on collector streets. The minimum width requirements include one through lane of 12 feet in each direction, a center turn lane, and 4 foot bike lanes in each direction. Accounting for the 20foot curbs, this gives a total street width of 48 feet.

Minor collector streets make up the majority of the recommended collector street improvements which predominantly serve residential portions of the City. Minor collector roads are intended to provide the primary connection between individual neighborhoods and the arterial street network. The right-of-way width for minor collectors is 60 feet with a pavement width of 36 feet measured from back to back of curbs. The pavement provides for a two-lane cross section with bike lanes. Center or right turn lanes should be included at intersections or entrances to major traffic generators, as appropriate. Traffic volumes should range between 1,500 and 5,000 vehicles per day. Since traffic volumes are significantly higher on minor collectors than local streets, additional development setbacks are recommended to minimize impacts on abutting property. Figures 5.2 and 5.3 provide a typical section of the recommended major and minor collector street.

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Figure 5.2: Typical Cross Section for Major Collector Streets

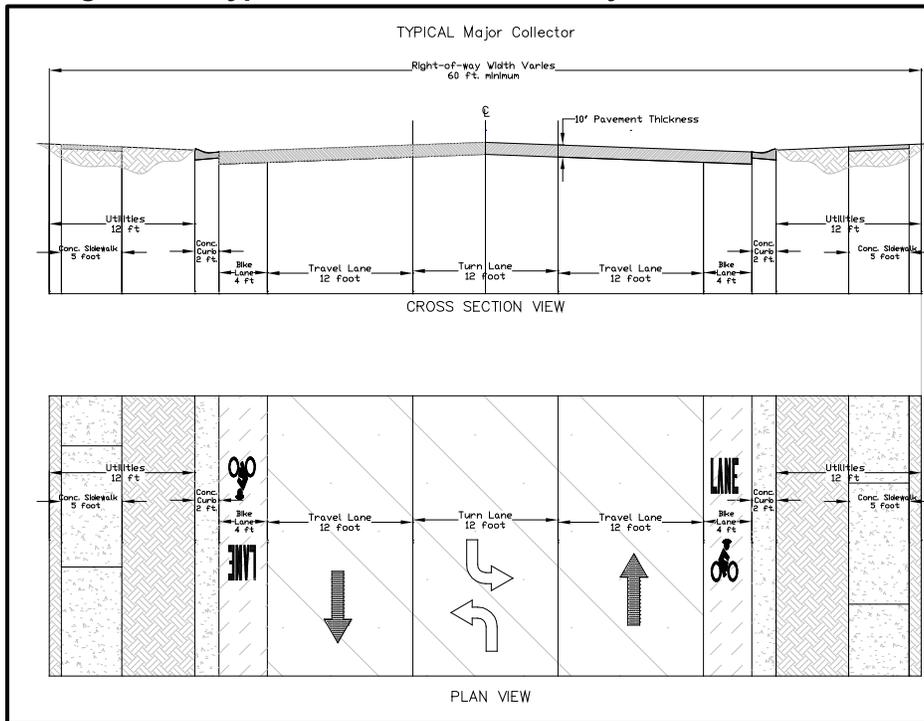
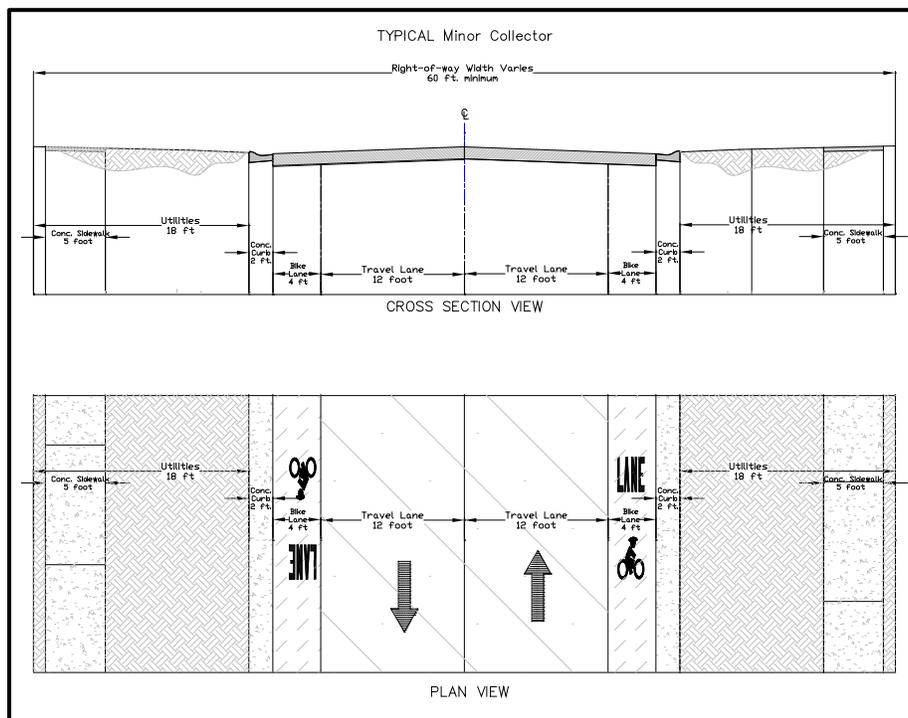


Figure 5.3: Typical Cross Section for Minor Collector Streets



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On-street parking should be prohibited on both major and minor collectors and private ingress and egress should be limited to preserve the functional capacity of the street, reduce vehicular conflicts and increase safety. All collector streets should accommodate pedestrian access via a five (5) foot sidewalk located on both sides of both major and minor collector streets.

Due to the predominantly residential nature of De Soto, major collectors are anticipated to be needed on a limited basis, primarily connecting non-residential development to area arterials. The Commerce Drive connection between K-10 Commerce Park and Lexington Avenue is a good example of how a major collector is intended to work.

### **Local Residential Street Recommendations**

All streets in De Soto and its growth areas not designated as arterials or collectors are considered local residential streets. Most of these streets are generally adequate to serve access needs and are not discussed in detail in this section. The construction of new local streets is recommended on an as-needed basis in conjunction with approved development, the cost of which should be paid by the developer.

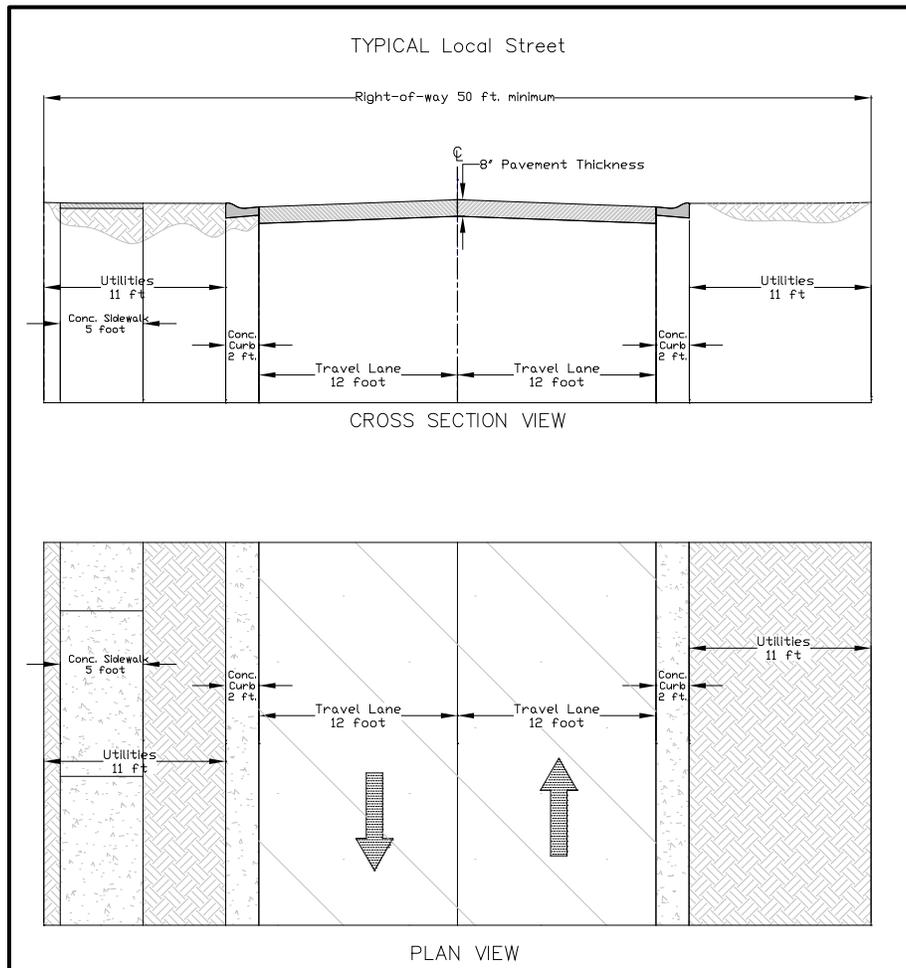
The right-of-way width recommended for local streets is 50 feet and the minimum pavement width recommended is 28 feet (back to back of curbs) which provides 12 foot lane widths leaving two feet for curb and gutter on each side of the road. The ideal traffic volume for local streets is less than 1,500 vehicles per day. On-street parking should be restricted on one side only in accordance with the local fire codes, which require a 20-foot path for equipment. If parking is desired on both sides of a local roadway, additional pavement width should be required. To accommodate local pedestrian circulation, a sidewalk pavement of five feet should be provided on at least one side of the local street. Figure 5.4 provides a typical section for local streets.

### **Section 5.6 ACCESS CONTROL**

Controlling points of access along a roadway is necessary to ensure unimpeded traffic flow and preserve the functional capacity of the roadway. Traffic hazards and traffic congestion reduce the ability of the roadway to safely accommodate the traffic volumes or capacity for which it is designed. Roadway capacity can be increased or decreased in a number of ways. The method utilized most frequently to increase capacity is to widen a road to provide additional travel lanes. In some instances, however, it is not feasible to add additional travel lanes due to land uses on either side of existing roadways. In these instances, other methods of increasing roadway capacity may be more appropriate. Other methods include constructing intersection improvements, turn bays, medians, restricting road and driveway access or providing traffic signal timing improvements. Conversely, road capacity can be decreased by adding cross roads, driveways, traffic signals, or other traffic control devices.

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Figure 5.4: Typical Cross Section for Local Streets



By implementing the principles of access management in both new and redevelopment projects, De Soto can maintain, and in some cases improve, street capacity while accommodating a wide range of existing and future development scenarios. Specific access management solutions vary depending on the functional classification and other factors such as projected traffic volumes, design speeds, sight distance, adjacent land uses, etc. For example, higher traffic volumes (30,000 vehicles per day) would warrant construction of a divided four or five lane arterial with 1,000 to 2,000 feet separation between driveways/points of access. By way of comparison, a two-lane arterial street which includes various private driveway and other points of access could only accommodate half the traffic volume (15,000 vehicles per day). However, in many cases, a two-lane arterial street designed following the principles of access management can function as well as a four-lane street at just over half the cost. Specific access control guidelines are listed below for public street intersection spacing, driveway spacing and corner clearance, and signal spacing.

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**Intersection Spacing**

In order to provide safe and efficient travel on the City’s major roads and in doing so protecting intended capacity, adequate distance should be maintained between intersections. Intersection spacing standards are intended to achieve three principle objectives.

1. Provide adequate distance between intersections for the safe and efficient flow of traffic.
2. Space intersections to give through-motorists an opportunity to respond to traffic entering the street from a side street.
3. Base spacing requirements on through traffic speed, related spacing and reaction times.

**Table 5.1** shows the minimum standards for spacing intersections, determined by through-traffic speed.

**Table 5.1: Minimum Intersection Spacing Standards**

Through-Traffic Speed	Minimum Intersection Spacing
30 mph	210 feet
35 mph	300 feet
40 mph	420 feet
45+ mph	550 feet

*Source: Institute of Transportation Engineers*

**Driveway Spacing**

Like a street, private driveways create an intersection with a public street. Conflicts and potential congestion occur at all intersections - public and private. Methods to reduce conflict include:

- Separating the conflicts by reducing the number of driveways and intersections;
- Limiting certain maneuvers such as left turns; and
- Separating conflicts by providing turn lanes.

Proper spacing of driveways allows adequate storage and stacking of automobiles on the public street. As such, driver conflicts need to be spaced in order to eliminate overlaps between through traffic and right turns. This distance may have to be increased in cases with high volumes to ensure that driveways do not interfere with the operation of turning lanes at intersections. In no case should access drives be located within the operations area of an intersection. Driveway spacing standards are intended to achieve the following objectives:

- Separate access conflicts by reducing the number of driveways and intersections.
- Limit certain traffic maneuvers such as left turns.
- Separate conflicts by providing turn lanes.

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- Prohibit access drives from locating within the operations area of an intersection.
- Space driver conflicts in order to eliminate overlaps between through traffic and right turns.
- Properly space driveways to permit adequate storage and stacking of automobiles on the public street

The following driveway spacing standards in **Table 5.2** are based on AASHTO standards and the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Manual. These standards are intended to serve as guidelines to achieve the above objectives.

**Table 5.2: Maximum Driveway Guidelines**

Maximum Number of Driveways	Driveway Spacing	
	Undivided Arterial Streets Length of Lot Frontage	Divided Arterial Streets Length of Lot Frontage
1	0-399 feet	0-529 feet
2	400 - 899 feet	530 - 1199 feet
3	900-1,399 feet	1200 - 1859 feet
4	1,400-1,899 feet <sup>1</sup>	1860 - 2525 feet <sup>2</sup>

Source: *Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Manual*

Notes: <sup>1</sup> For each 500 feet above 1899 feet, one additional driveway is permitted.

<sup>2</sup> For each 665 feet above 2525 feet, one additional driveway is permitted.

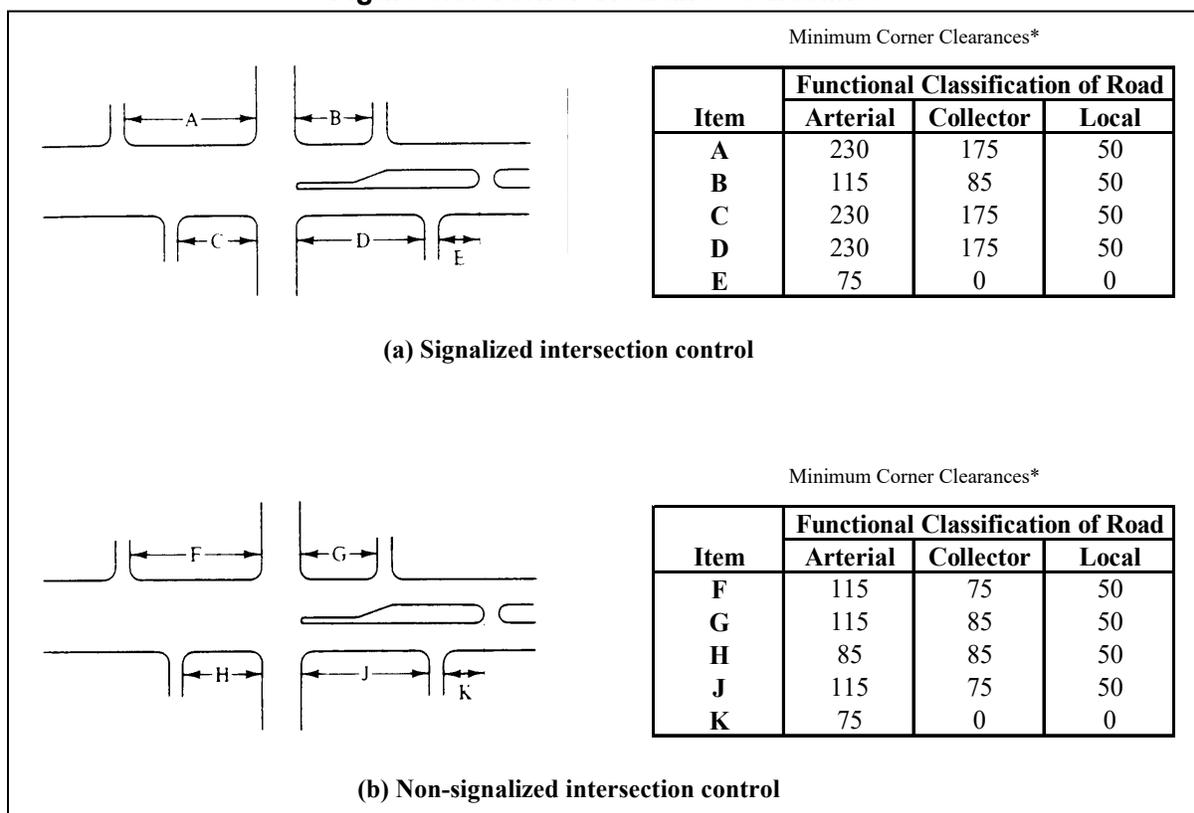
**Corner Clearance**

Corner clearance guidelines, when used in conjunction with intersection spacing, provide for reduced conflicts at intersections. More specific minimum corner clearance guidelines are listed in **Figure 5.5**. These guidelines can be used to regulate new development, particularly multi-family and non-residential developments which often locate along arterial and collector streets.

Additionally as the City continues to grow and traffic volumes increase, the need to signalize intersections such as 91<sup>st</sup> Street and Lexington Avenue may be necessary. As such, the standards shown on Table 5.5 are broken into requirements for signalized and non-signalized intersections.

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**Figure 5.5: Corner Clearance Guidelines**



*Source: Adapted from The Traffic Institute, Northwest University.*

**Section 5.7 PEDESTRIAN & BIKE INFRASTRUCTURE OVERVIEW**

Pedestrian walk and bike trails have become very popular in communities in recent years as sources of recreation, exercise, and an alternative means of transportation for citizens of all ages and wages. There was a consensus among the participants of the public engagement program that sidewalks and paths connecting the City’s neighborhoods, schools, downtown, and parks/recreational areas should be constructed. The most effective and efficient strategy to achieve the desired pedestrian and bike connectivity is to implement the policies of “Complete Streets”. According to the American Planning Association (APA), “complete streets” accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, and cars, creating multi-modal transportation networks. MARC adopted the updated Transportation Outlook 2040 in June 2015 which encourages the principles of complete streets be incorporated into all new projects receiving state or federal monies and/or projects on state or federal roads and highways. Therefore, this Plan recommends the City follow the Complete Street strategies and recommendations of MARC’s Transportation Outlook 2040 plan in all major roadways projects.

**Section 5.8 BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN-WAY RECOMMENDATIONS**

There is consensus among the participants of the public engagement program that sidewalks, walking trails, and bike paths/lanes are needed to support driverless families/individuals and

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promote healthy, active lifestyles. According to survey respondents, walkways and bike paths make a city seem friendlier, safer and more livable. However, De Soto's sidewalk network is incomplete, although the City has made substantial investments in infrastructure to better serve pedestrians over the years. The City should continue requiring sidewalks on at least one side of local streets and both sides of collector and arterial roadways as a condition of approval of all future developments. The City should also continue requiring pedestrian connections in infill projects, especially when connections can be made to area schools, parks and public facilities. Continued cooperation with the Johnson County Parks and Recreation Department in the provision of recreational pedestrian improvements, such as the creation of local and regional trails, should also be a priority. Bike and pedestrian-ways are recommended along all streets and more specifically in the following locations.

- Install a sidewalk from the K-10 apartments to Harps.
- Install a sidewalk from residential areas to new Lexington Lake Park.
- Install a walking trail/bike path from Timber Trails to Starside.
- Install recreational trails along the river leading to and within Riverfest Park.
- Install trails along the river and creeks,
- Install a multipurpose trail leading from Downtown to Riverfest Park along Ottawa Street.

The above-listed segments, as well as all existing trail segments and other proposed sidewalks and trails that are recommended in the recently adopted Park & Recreation Master Plan (See Appendix) are shown on **Map 5.2 – Bike and Pedestrian Map**.

### **Section 5.9 PROPOSED GATEWAY RECOMMENDATIONS**

K-10 is the primary means of access to and through the City of De Soto, therefore the image it projects is very important. Points of interest on this route are a visitor's first impression of the City, therefore the Kill Creek / K-10 intersection and Lexington Avenue / K-10 function as primary "gateways" and should be improved to positively influence a visitors' perception of the City and promote the quality of life and vitality of the community. As such, special attention and planning consideration should be given to these gateway locations.

The planning and design considerations given to gateways should be based upon a hierarchy of importance, purpose, location, traffic volumes, street function and visibility. Gateways are identified as primary, secondary and transition gateways. The creation of gateway features including professional landscaping, monument signage and other aesthetic features should be planned at the City's primary, secondary and transitional gateways.

All gateways designated in De Soto are shown on **Map 5.3 Gateways**.

**Primary Gateways:** Primary gateways should be located at the main entrances to the City and identify De Soto as a whole. The major features these gateways should include are:

- ✓ A prominent feature such as large-scale public art, statuary, fountains, gardens in a park-like setting.

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- ✓ A building or structure of special architectural significance. If a building or structure is proposed within one of the primary gateway locations, special consideration should be given to the building orientation, design and material selection.
- ✓ Signage to clearly identify entrance into De Soto. Brick, stone or other high-quality materials and the City crest/logo should be incorporated into the signage to further establish the gateway.
- ✓ Landscaping to accent the proposed gateway features. A combination of trees, indigenous plants, prairie grasses, shrubbery and other ground covers should be used to accent and coordinate the design.

Gateway features may consist of prominent architecture or local landmarks within the City, welcoming visitors, reminding residents of the City's past, present and future.

**Secondary Gateways:** Secondary gateways should identify De Soto as a whole, but on a smaller scale than the primary gateways. These gateways are identified as the intersections between major roadways. Secondary gateways include intersections such as Kill Creek and W. 83<sup>rd</sup> Street. As opposed to primary gateway features, secondary gateways are intended to be at a pedestrian scale. The major features of the secondary gateways are:

- ✓ A prominent feature such as public art, statuary, fountains, gardens or park-like settings;
- ✓ Signage is of brick, stone or other high-quality material;
- ✓ Landscaping is done to accent the surrounding corridor and prominent features. A combination of street trees, ornamental trees, shrubbery, ground covers and ornamental plantings should be used to accent and coordinate the design; and

### **Section 5.10 IMPLEMENTING FUTURE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

This plan recommends a holistic approach to future transportation planning by considering land use, transportation, economic development, environmental quality, and community aesthetics in all transportation decisions to ensure planned improvements meet today's needs without compromising the ability to address the needs of future generations. Maintaining a safe and efficient road system that provides pedestrian and multi-modal access while maintaining the small town character and the integrity of the original street pattern should be a priority in all transportation projects. In order to achieve this, this Plan recommends the following future implementation strategies:

1. Continue the City's asset management approach to road maintenance with yearly street inspections and multi-year maintenance planning. Ensure that annual funding for street maintenance is enough to maintain or increase the acceptable levels of service for pavement preservation.
2. Partner with Federal, State, and County agencies, including MARC, to obtain maximum funding for identified projects.
3. Invest in the gateway recommendations contained herein and better signage and wayfinding to create new visual cues, promote access to Downtown, and reinforce the branding of De Soto.

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4. Promote public and private investment in the streetscape to implement Complete Street principles and a more vibrant, aesthetically pleasing environment and promote the use of outdoor spaces such as sidewalk cafés and seasonal sidewalk sales, downtown.
5. Carefully maintain the functionality of the original roadway grid and do not restrict streets to one-way only.

Overall all, most of De Soto's collector and arterial streets are in good shape or already slated for upgrade. The City's greatest need is to upgrade local roads in older sections of town to include or improve existing sidewalks, curbs, and gutters.

### **Section 5.11 SEWER & WATER**

The City has made significant investments in its water and sewer infrastructure over the past 15 years to make De Soto a full-service community and to accommodate future growth and annexation. In 2006, \$7.4 million was spent for a new sewer treatment facility and an additional \$1.6 Million was spent to replace the Main Lift Station. Over the past five years, a total of \$7.8 million has been invested renovating the water treatment facility. This Plan recommends continued reinvestment in the City's water and sewer systems and increasing the service boundaries of both. Increasing the service boundaries is necessary to spread the operational, service delivery and maintenance costs out to more and more users and continue to partner with service providers to plan adequately for the future growth, annexation and development of De Soto.

The availability and capacity of water and sanitary sewer facilities have a direct impact on the intensity and timing of development. Both systems should be able to accept additional capacity in order to accommodate future growth. Coordination with neighboring water and sewer providers is needed to facilitate the long-range expansions of these systems. Projects for capital improvements are budgeted within the framework of the Capital Improvements Program, which is reviewed on a yearly basis. This Plan recommends funding major system expansions through user fees, benefit districts, rate increases, or other alternative funding mechanisms. This includes funding for utility infrastructure and services to the Sunflower Property and other opportunity growth areas as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

### **Section 5.12 WATER SYSTEM**

Within the existing corporate limits of De Soto, water service is provided by the City of De Soto, Johnson County Water District Number 1 (Water One), and Johnson County Rural Water District Number 7 (RWD#7). The portion of the City east of Cedar Creek is served by Water One, while the portions south of 95th Street and west of Sunflower are served by RWD#7. There are an estimated 230 water service connections within the City that are served by either Water One or RWD#7. The possibility of future expansion of the City's service area to the east is limited. To the south and west there is a potential for expansions to the City's service area, however any expansion into the RWD#7 service area will have to be negotiated with RWD#7. **Map 5.4 (Water System Map)** shows the layout of the City's existing water system, surrounding water utilities and water accessible areas.

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The City has begun the process of negotiating a water service territory agreement with RWD #7. Although in draft form at the time of this writing, a preliminary service area map is provided as **Map 5.5 (Future Water Service Territory)**.

All of the City's raw water is obtained from wells located within sandstone and shale encapsulated aquifers along the Kansas River. De Soto's water treatment facility was originally constructed by the US Army in 1942 as part of the Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant located southwest of town. The treatment plant is located approximately 1.4 miles south of the intersection of 103<sup>rd</sup> and Sunflower Road, within the former Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant, which is now owned by the Sunflower Redevelopment Group (SRL), a private development company. In 2005, De Soto obtained an irrevocable lease for the treatment plant and associated components from SRL and will receive permanent title to the facilities once the environmental remediation of the former ammunition plant is complete. In addition to the treatment facility, De Soto obtained six of the original twelve vertical wells constructed by the Army and a portion of water rights from the Kansas River that had initially been obtained from the US Army in the 1940's. The general operating characteristics and abilities of the water plant, along with the distribution system is outlined in the following sections.

### **Sunflower Water Treatment Facility**

The treatment facility on the Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant was constructed in 1942, with a major renovation in the mid 1970's. In 1995, the U.S Army declared the entire Sunflower Ammunition facility as excess property and began the process of disposal of the site. In 1998, the City began operating the water treatment facility under a facility use agreement with the U.S. Army. Also in 1998, the City gained approval from the Kansas Department of Health and Human Services for the public benefit transfer of the water plant, storage facilities, and diversion wells. In 2005 the city obtained an irrevocable lease for the treatment facility, wells, and all associated mains and easements necessary to operate the plant.

Throughout the remainder of the 2000's the City worked to establish partnerships for a regional water consortium that would make use of a renovated facility and its associated senior water rights to provide wholesale water to several surrounding cities and water districts. Although these efforts did not result in the formation of any partnerships, the detailed feasibility studies that were conducted in pursuit of these efforts showed clearly that the facility could economically be renovated to serve as the City's long-term water source, with ample excess capacity to consider wholesale water sales to surrounding suppliers in the future.

Since 2010, the City has invested approximately \$7.8 Million in the full renovation of the Sunflower Water Treatment facility. This work includes the following:

- 2010: Electrical Service, Generator, Interior Electrical & Lighting - \$0.5 Million
- 2011: Treated Water Main from Plant to Town: \$1.2 Million
- 2012: 2013: Line Silo - \$0.425 Million
- 2013: Water Rights Acquisitions – \$0.1 Million
- 2014: Lime Sludge Lagoon Rehabilitation - \$0.465 Million
- 2014: 2015: Clarifier Rehabilitations - \$0.56 Million
- 2014: 2017: Well Rehabilitations - \$0.5 Million

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- 2015: Filter Building Roof, Site Work, Filter Upgrades, \$1.1 Million
- 2016: Water Tower, Electrical & Mechanical \$1.2 Million
- 2017: 2018: Filter Building Exterior, Pumping Upgrades - \$0.2 Million
- 2018: Raw Water Line Rehab - \$1.2 Million
- 2019: Lab & Offices, Distribution Building - \$0.35 Million

The Sunflower water facility gets its raw water from a well field along the Kansas River. Originally, there were a total of 12 wells, six on the north side of the river, and six on the south. As part of the 2005 lease agreement, De Soto obtained six of these wells, three on each side of the river. In 2010, De Soto obtained portions of very senior water rights that were originally obtained by the US Army in the 1940's. The original water rights total 8.0 MGD. De Soto obtained 2.0 MGD of the original water right, with the ability to apply for an additional 3.0 MGD, if the need arises. In addition, De Soto's lease agreement allows for the acquisition of two additional wells.

Recent improvements to De Soto's wells and the raw water mains have increased the pumping capacity of the well field to approximately 2.5 MGD. Adding more wells, or additional renovations to the existing wells could double this capacity. The raw water is pumped via two 16-inch mains from the well field approximately 4 miles south to the head works of the treatment facility.

The treatment process includes lime softening, gravity filtration, and chlorination. The original hydraulic capacity of the treatment plant was 10 MGD. Only one of the two circular clarifiers has been fully renovated. The other, while functional, is only used as back-up during maintenance of the renovated clarifier. The capacity of the treatment plant is therefore approximately 5 MGD. The limiting factor for the treatment of raw water is currently the well field, with approximately 2.50 MGD of pumping capacity.

### **Water Distribution System**

At the Sunflower water plant, finished water is stored in a 1.2 million-gallon clearwell located below the filter building. From there, it is pumped by two high service pumps to the 500,000-gallon water tower at the intersection of 95<sup>th</sup> Street and Sunflower Road.

The City's water distribution system consists of approximately 21 miles of water pipe and other water distribution appurtenances (pressure control valves, sectionalizing valves, fire hydrants, blow off valves, etc.). In addition, there are currently 1,717 service meters connected to the system, which are maintained, and read monthly by the City. De Soto also sells water on a wholesale basis to Johnson County Rural Water District #7 at two locations.

The original distribution system in the older portions of De Soto was constructed in the early 1950's. The first major extension of the system came with the development of Oak Country Subdivision in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Extensions serving De Meadows, the High School and K10 Industrial Park occurred in the mid 1980's and early 1990's. Most recent extensions have been made in the newer residential developments along 87th Street, 83<sup>rd</sup> Street, and connecting the City's distribution system with the Sunflower water treatment facility. Approximately 22 miles of distribution system piping and appurtenances are 40 years old or older; approximately 4 miles of the systems 10-15 years old; approximately 7 miles is 7-10 years old, and approximately 10 miles is newer than 7 years.

## TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES

As indicated on Map 5.3, the City's water distribution system currently operates with three separate pressure zones. The largest zone is fed directly by the 500,000 gallon water tower at 95<sup>th</sup> Street and Sunflower Road, and operates at a hydraulic grade range of 1046 to 1086 feet above sea level. The other two pressure zones operate at lower pressures, which are achieved via pressure reducing valves. The existing 50,000 gallon Downtown Tower and the 150,000 gallon Waverly Tower are currently decommissioned since they are not needed to maintain system pressures or service reliability.

### **Water Accessibility**

As with any utility, proximity to the water distribution system is a good indicator of growth potential. Areas within 1/4 mile of the City existing water mains are assumed to have the highest near-term development potential and lower additional development costs for expansion water system. Areas within 1/2 mile of the existing water mains are considered to have a moderate to high development potential with increased development costs for expansion of the existing system. This information helps indicate areas where near-term development pressures are anticipated to be higher. **Map 5.6 (Water Accessibility)** shows areas within the City's existing or anticipated future service territories that are within proximity to larger diameter existing water mains. It also shows potential future water main alignments in the southwest portions of the planning area which are discussed in more detail in Section 5.15 below.

### **Section 5.13 WASTE WATER UTILITIES**

Wastewater is treated by the City of De Soto at a treatment facility northwest of the City near 79<sup>th</sup> Street and Sunflower Road. The plant was constructed in 2007 at a cost of approximately \$7.6 Million. It has a biological treatment capacity of approximately 1.3 MGD, and a hydraulic capacity of 5.0 MGD. The plant was designed to be expanded up to a biological capacity of 3.9 MGD and a peak hydraulic capacity of 12 MGD with the construction of additional aeration basins and headworks at a relatively economical cost. The facility is an Aeromod SEQUOX dual-train activated sludge facility. Each unit consists of rectangular tanks for anaerobic selector chamber, primary aeration, secondary aeration, final clarification and sludge digesters. All the tanks are built together in a single common-wall structure.

The average operating flows to the plant are approximately 420,000 gpd with peak flows reaching twice that. These peaks occur during periods of wet weather when inflow and infiltration increase flows to the plant. Overall, the City's sanitary sewer treatment plant has ample remaining capacity for the City's growth.

The sanitary sewer collection system is comprised primarily of 8" gravity flow mains, pumping stations, and force mains. All wastewater flow in De Soto flows eventually to the Main Lift Station near the confluence of Kill Creek and the Kansas River, where it is pumped approximately 2.5 miles to the treatment plant for treatment and discharge to the Kansas River. **Map 5.7 (Existing Sewer System)** shows the current wastewater collection system, with the drainage basins identified.

The corporate limits of the City of De Soto encompass approximately twelve (12) square miles of land area, or nearly 8,140 acres. Approximately one half of land area is currently undeveloped

## TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES

or underdeveloped, and only about 2,340 acres of the land area in the community has ready access to the City's sanitary sewer system, and most of that land is already developed. Thus, if the excess plant capacity is to be put to use, the sewer collection system must be expanded to currently unserved territories.

### **Wastewater Collection System**

The City owns, operates, and maintains approximately 23 miles of sanitary sewer lines. The system includes forced mains, manholes and cleanouts, and ten separate lift stations necessary to provide adequate service. A large portion of the system that serves old town De Soto was constructed in the early to mid 1940's. The brick construction of manholes in this area date this portion of the collection system. Since that time, the system has been expanded but there have been few major improvements made to the existing system. In 1990, approximately 90% of the brick manholes in the old area of De Soto were lined to cure problems of ground water infiltration into the sewer system. Over the past ten years, various sections of the system have been televised and inspected. Much of the system is vitrified clay pipe (VCP) with a "bell" at one end. In connection with the new sewer treatment plant construction in 2006, the Main Lift Station, located on the west bank of Kill Creek at its confluence with the Kansas River, was rebuilt.

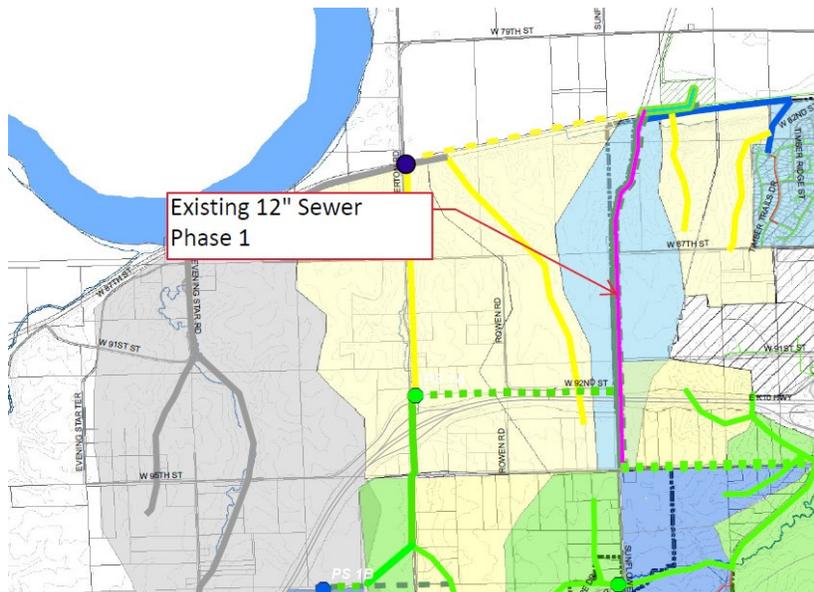
### **Wastewater Accessibility**

As with the water system, proximity to the wastewater distribution system is a good indicator of growth potential and development demand. However, wastewater service accessibility is impacted by more than proximity to the existing system. The relationship to area sub-basins must also be considered. To this extent, areas of the City where development pressures are anticipated based on the near-term feasibility of sewer extensions have been identified. **Map 5.8 (Future Sewer Service)** shows these potential sewer extension areas, along with the sewer main extensions necessary to serve them. These areas have been identified due to their proximity to existing collection systems and their position within the drainage basins currently served by sewer. In most cases, the potential sewer extension areas could be served by a simple extension of gravity flow sewer mains. In others, regional pumping facilities will be required.

Of note on Map 5.8 are the Phase I sewer lines shown along Sunflower Road between 79<sup>th</sup> Street and 95<sup>th</sup> Street. This improvement will rely on the City obtaining ownership and use of an existing 12" sewer line currently owned by SRL that runs within the utility corridor along Sunflower Road between 79<sup>th</sup> Street and 103<sup>rd</sup> Street. The City is currently in negotiations with SRL regarding the transfer of ownership of this line, the two 16" raw water mains that are also located within the utility corridor, the remainder of the water right associated with the well field, and the associated easements that define the corridor.

## TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES

Figure 5.6: Excerpt from Map 5.8



The proposed future improvements shown on Map 5.8 information helps indicate areas where near-term development pressures are anticipated to be higher, but is not intended to indicate plans or support for expansion of the wastewater system. Rather wastewater system expansions will be planned as a result of comprehensive wastewater systems studies and as part of City's ongoing Capital Improvement Plan process.

### Section 5.14 STORMWATER & FLOODING

Located alongside the Kansas River and at the bottom of three major drainage basins which encompass over half the land mass of Johnson County, there are significant areas of De Soto that are within the regulatory floodplain. Despite this fact, there are relatively few structures, public facilities, or roads that experience significant damage resulting from flooding on a regular basis. To ensure that future developments are adequately protected from flooding, De Soto is a member of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), and is therefore required to adopt, observe, and administer strict regulations relating to developments, building, or public works within the floodplain.

Although property loss from specific reoccurring flooding events have been a minimal issue in De Soto, the City's stormwater collection system is aging and there has been no asset management program established for its long-term preservation. The system is not mapped, and there is a need to inventory and inspect the system to establish a baseline for improvement and upgrade recommendations. Toward that end, De Soto should take advantage of the restructuring of a County program that is currently being carried out.

The Johnson County Stormwater Management Program is continuing their years-long process of restructuring how their funds are allocated. Until now, funds can only be used for flood reduction, and the only projects that get funded are those where existing structures are in danger. Under the new structure, there will be funds available for system maintenance, which we will be able to utilize. The next step in the process is to perform watershed studies that will identify flooding problem areas, and also establish comprehensive database and mapping of all existing storm water infrastructure. This will be extremely useful because De Soto has never had a city-wide GIS mapping of the storm sewer system.

## TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES

### **Section 5.15 SOUTHWEST GROWTH AREA FUTURE TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE**

Since 1998 De Soto's Comprehensive Plan has identified areas southwest of the Lexington Avenue and K-10 interchange as having potential for non-residential development. Future Land Use designations in this area have envisioned a transition from mostly rural or residential uses to light industrial, commercial, and higher density residential uses. In addition, the City's economic incentives policy has targeted specific parts of the area for enticement of non-residential projects. Generally, the southwest growth area is bounded on the north by K-10, on the west by K-10 and Evening Star Road, on the east by Lexington Avenue, and on the south by the northern portions of the Sunflower property.

Acknowledging that the former Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant property represents the single largest potential impact on the growth of De Soto, City officials have been actively engaged with the current owner (SRL) in discussions about future annexation, land use, and utility infrastructure planning that might be needed to support the economic development of the property. This includes conversations with Johnson County, since they currently have zoning and land use control over the property and have agreements with SRL relating to the cleanup and timing of development. It is recognized that SRL is still in the process of environmental remediation, and current timelines provided by federal representatives still have the cleanup lasting another ten years or more. However, there are large tracts of the property, primarily toward the northern end of the 9,000-acre site, that are already clean and could be developed, if the owner can obtain the necessary environmental clearances and clear the deed restrictions on the land. In 2017 the City prepared a planning-level land use and utility master plan for the northern portions of the site that identifies potential future land use designations, possible annexation boundaries, and shows how some of the clean tracts might be served by water, sewer, and transportation infrastructure.

In addition, over the past several years there has been interest from the development community in a 318-acre parcel of land at the northwest corner of 103<sup>rd</sup> Street and Edgerton Road. This property is currently under single ownership, has two direct interchanges onto K-10, relatively flat terrain, and no environmental barriers to development. These characteristics make it ideal for large scale light industrial uses.

The remainder of the Southwest growth area consists of approximately 1,300 acres of land under mostly private ownership bounded by K-10 on the north, Lexington Avenue on the east, 103<sup>rd</sup> Street on the south, and Edgerton Road on the west. Although there exist numerous single-family residential properties in the area, much of it consists of larger vacant tracts that could be developed if proper infrastructure were in place. This area also includes Clearview City, a multi-family residential property consisting of about 250 units and about 600 individuals. Because of the area's good access to K-10 and proximity to other infrastructure this area has long been identified within the City's Comprehensive Plan as transitioning residential to non-residential land use patterns including commercial and light industrial uses.

With these opportunities in mind, the City commissioned studies and performed internal analysis of the infrastructure that will be needed to support the growth in this area. This effort resulted in a summary document analysis dated August 8, 2021, is also included herein by reference and attached to this plan. Maps of the proposed public improvements for the southwest growth areas are **Provided as Maps 5.9a - d**

## TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES

The following implementation strategies, which were partly the impetus for the above-referenced studies, are included in this Plan as future growth and implementation recommendations:

- Negotiate a service area agreement with RWD #7 that establishes the northern portions of the Sunflower property as De Soto's water service territory.
- Prepare updated utility plans to address the service of sewer, water, and arterial roads to the portion of the Sunflower property that is targeted for immediate annexation and development which includes but is not limited to the northernmost properties adjacent the City's current limits and water tower.
- Work with the Johnson County Board of County Commissioners to address the pre-development agreement requirement that environmental remediation certifications are obtained for the entire Sunflower Property before any of the site can be developed.
- Work with SRL to transfer ownership or purchase all the infrastructure within the easement corridor that runs along Sunflower Road from 103<sup>rd</sup> Street to 79<sup>th</sup> Street. This infrastructure includes the two 16" raw water mains and a 12" sewer main. In addition, include the remainder of the senior water right associated with the well field.

### **Section 5.16 BROADBAND**

Another critical service that is lacking in at least portions of De Soto is broadband internet. For the past two years De Soto has been working to increase the availability of broadband internet services in the city, particularly in the areas south of K-10 where service is not currently available. Increasingly, the City is concerned that the state of existing data infrastructure lags significantly behind the rest of the Kansas City region and has become a significant impediment to economic growth. There are significant portions of De Soto with no broadband internet options at all, and City leaders were concerned that the overall lack of private investment in data infrastructure has not prepared De Soto for the growing demands of current and future citizens and businesses. In 2016 the Council formed a "Broadband Committee" to advance an effort to increase access to high speed data services throughout De Soto and the surrounding areas. Since its inception, the Broadband Committee has been actively engaged on several fronts to encourage broadband investment in our community. The committee's efforts include reaching out to our existing internet service providers to encourage them to expand and improve their networks; working with our elected representatives at the state level to address the negative impacts of franchise legislation; encouraging internet service providers to consider building a network in De Soto; and investigating public-private partnerships to facilitate a fiber buildout.

In April of 2018, the Council authorized staff to distribute a request for proposals from service providers to build out a city-wide gigabit broadband network. The City received three responses from that RFP, and the committee spent the summer evaluating them and meeting with the respondents. In September of 2018, the Council selected a private service partner, RG Fiber of Baldwin City, as the City's service partner, and negotiated a design-build contract to provide service to the underserved areas of the community.

**TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES**

**Section 5.17 FUTURE PARK RECOMMENDATIONS**

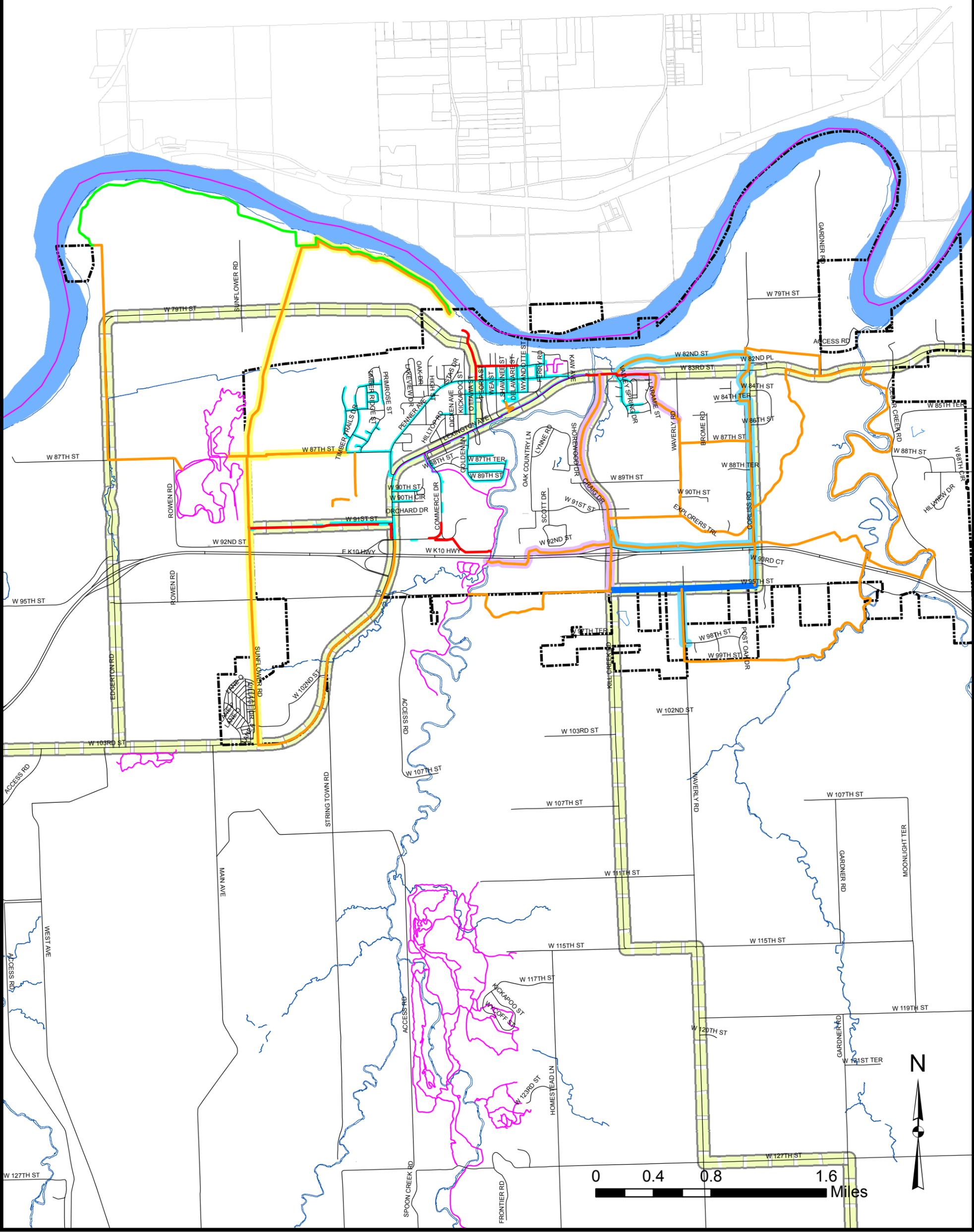
Please refer to the Park Master Plan made a part of this Plan through adoption and included in the Appendix.

**Section 5.18 INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING**

According to the Citizen Survey, 86% of survey respondents indicated they are pleased with the City's public services. In fact, public services were also ranked in the top ten strengths or assets for De Soto with a ranking of 3.65 out of 5. However, the City needs to continue providing the ongoing maintenance, upgrades, and expansion necessary to maintain the current integrity of the City's transportation system, water, and sewer infrastructure. As previously stated, this Plan recommends programming future transportation and infrastructure improvements in accordance with the City's Capital Improvements Plan and sharing the cost of future improvements with developers or other outside funding. The City should continue seeking to increase the number of patrons served by the City's publicly provided services and facilities through well planned growth and annexation to spread the costs of providing said services out and eventually bring the cost per customer down while maintaining the current level of services.

Please refer to Chapter 6 Implementation Program and Matrix for a summary of the transportation and public services implementation strategies and funding sources.





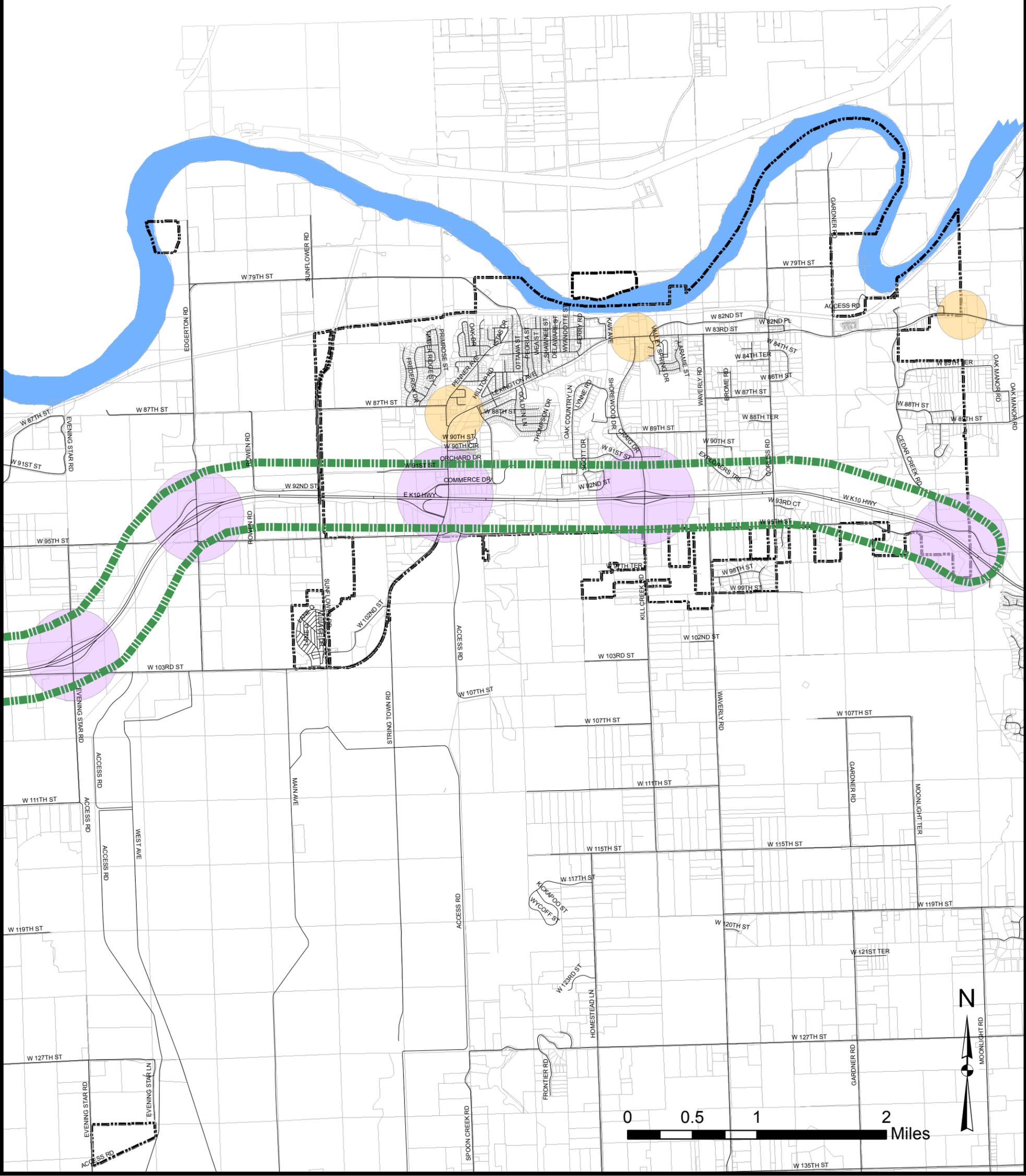
# Map 5.2 Bike & Pedestrian Map

# City of De Soto, Kansas

## *Comprehensive Plan*

- City Boundary
- Kansas River
- Possible Future Trails**
- Asphalt
- Concrete
- Mulch
- Existing Bike Lane
- Existing Trails
- Existing Sidewalks
- Possible Projects**
- East Loop 1
- East Loop 2
- West Loop
- Bike Routes





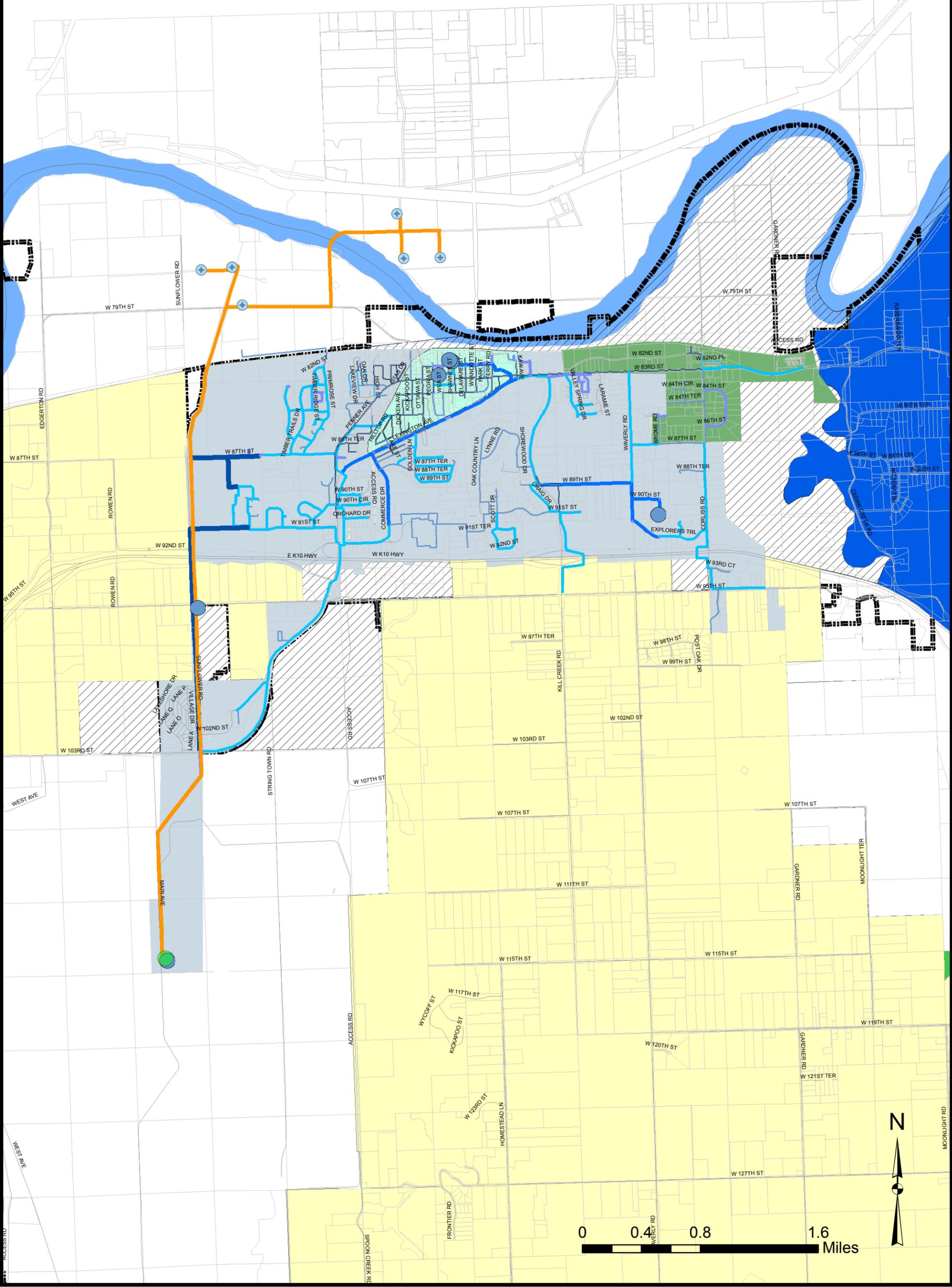
# Map 5.3 Gateways

# City of De Soto, Kansas Comprehensive Plan

City Boundary
  Kansas River
  Property Lines

K-10 Viewshed Overlay
  Primary Gateway
  Secondary Gateway



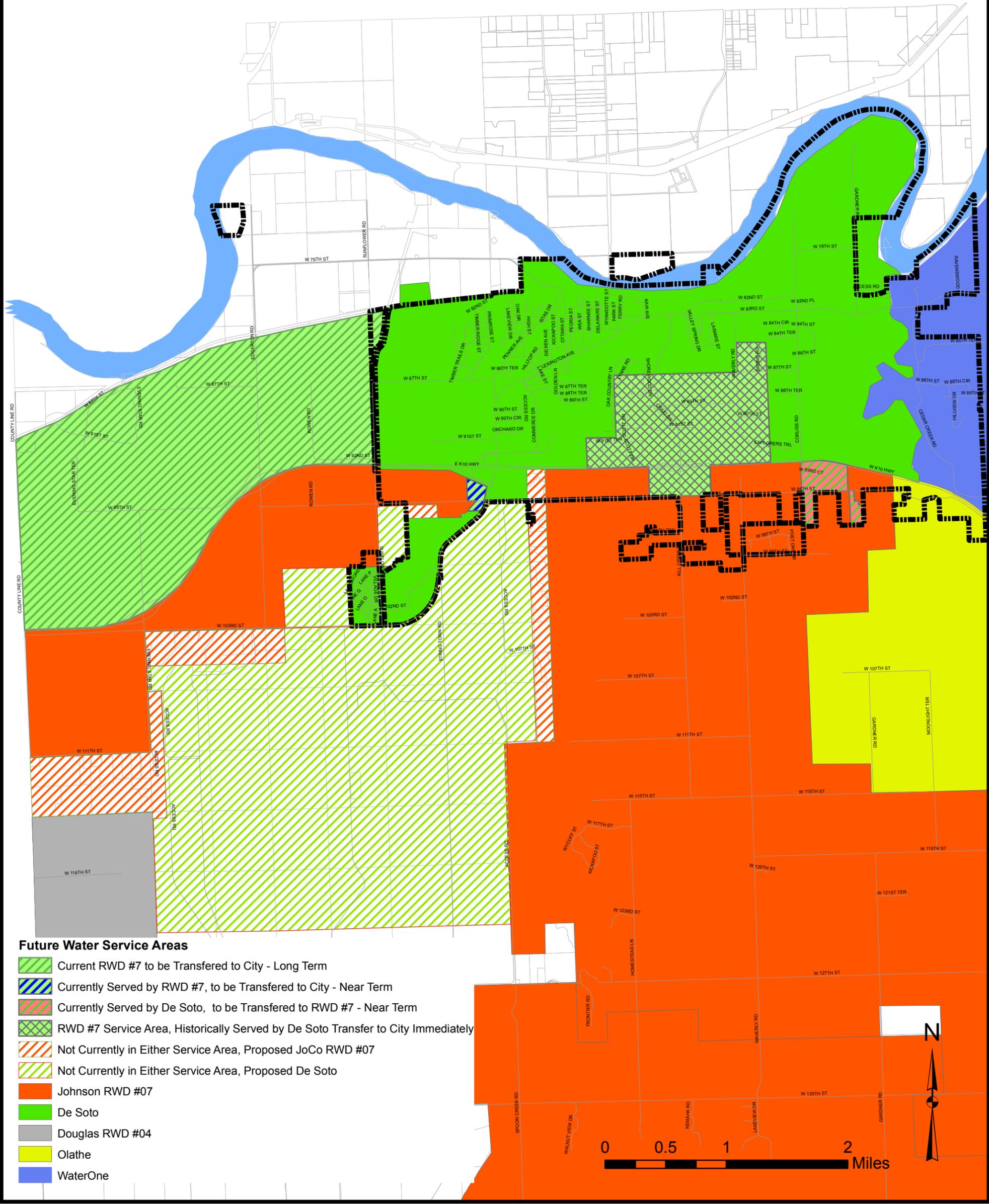


# Map 5.4 Water System

# City of De Soto, Kansas Comprehensive Plan

- |                           |                        |                            |
|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| City Boundary             | Kansas River           |                            |
| <b>Water Lines (size)</b> | Wells                  | <b>Pressure Zones</b>      |
| 2"                        | Raw Water Lines        | High Pressure              |
| 4"                        | Water Treatment Plants | Med. Pressure              |
| 6"                        | Water Storage          | Low Pressure               |
| 8"                        |                        | Low Pressure               |
| 10"                       |                        |                            |
| 12"                       |                        |                            |
|                           |                        | <b>Water Service Areas</b> |
|                           |                        | Johnson RWD #01            |
|                           |                        | De Soto                    |
|                           |                        | Johnson RWD #06 Cons.      |
|                           |                        | WaterOne                   |



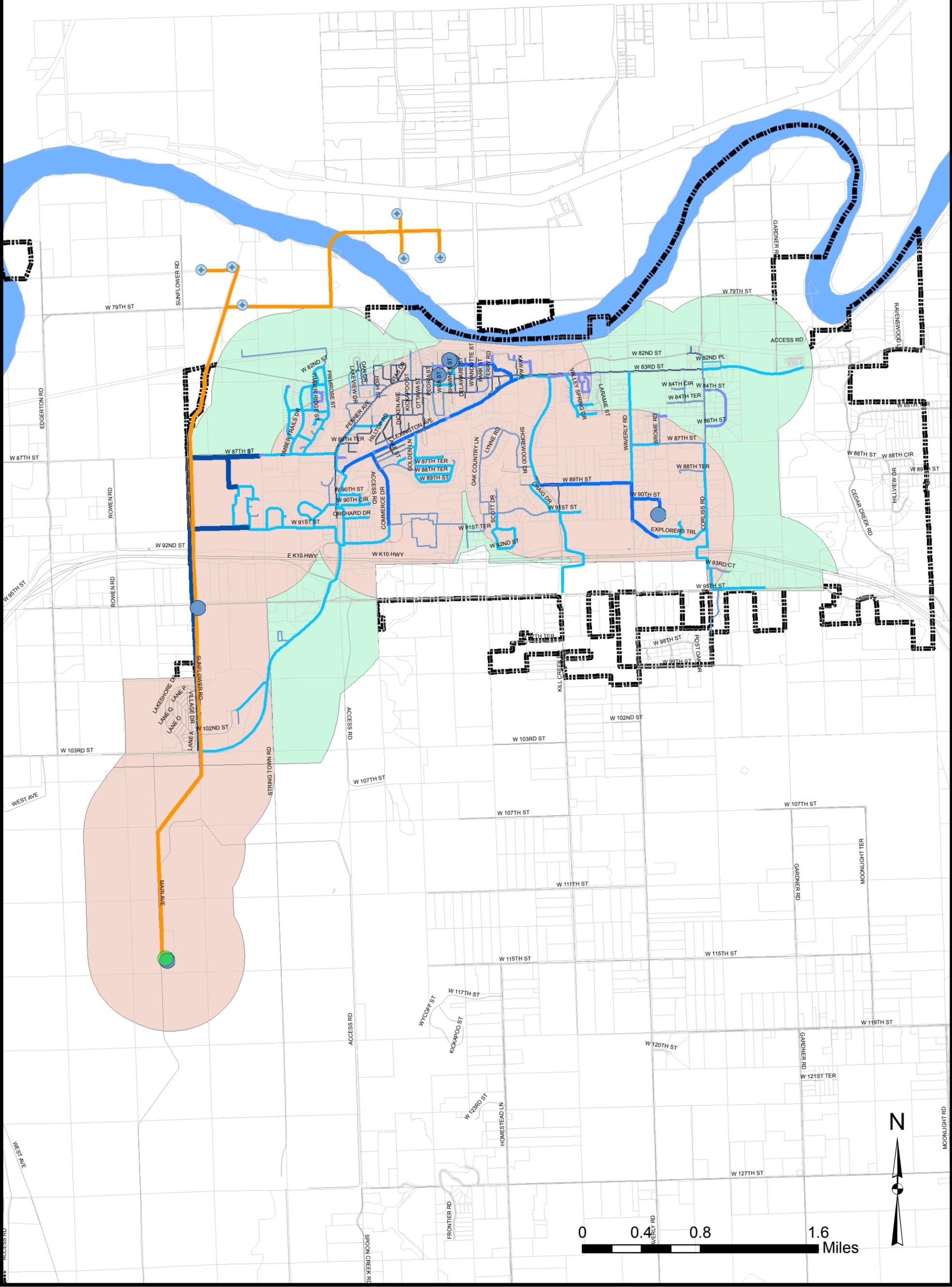


# Map 5.5 Future Water Serv. Territory City of De Soto, Kansas

*Comprehensive Plan*

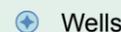
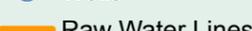
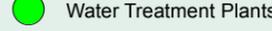
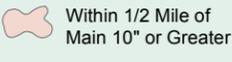
- City Boundary
- Kansas River
- Property Lines



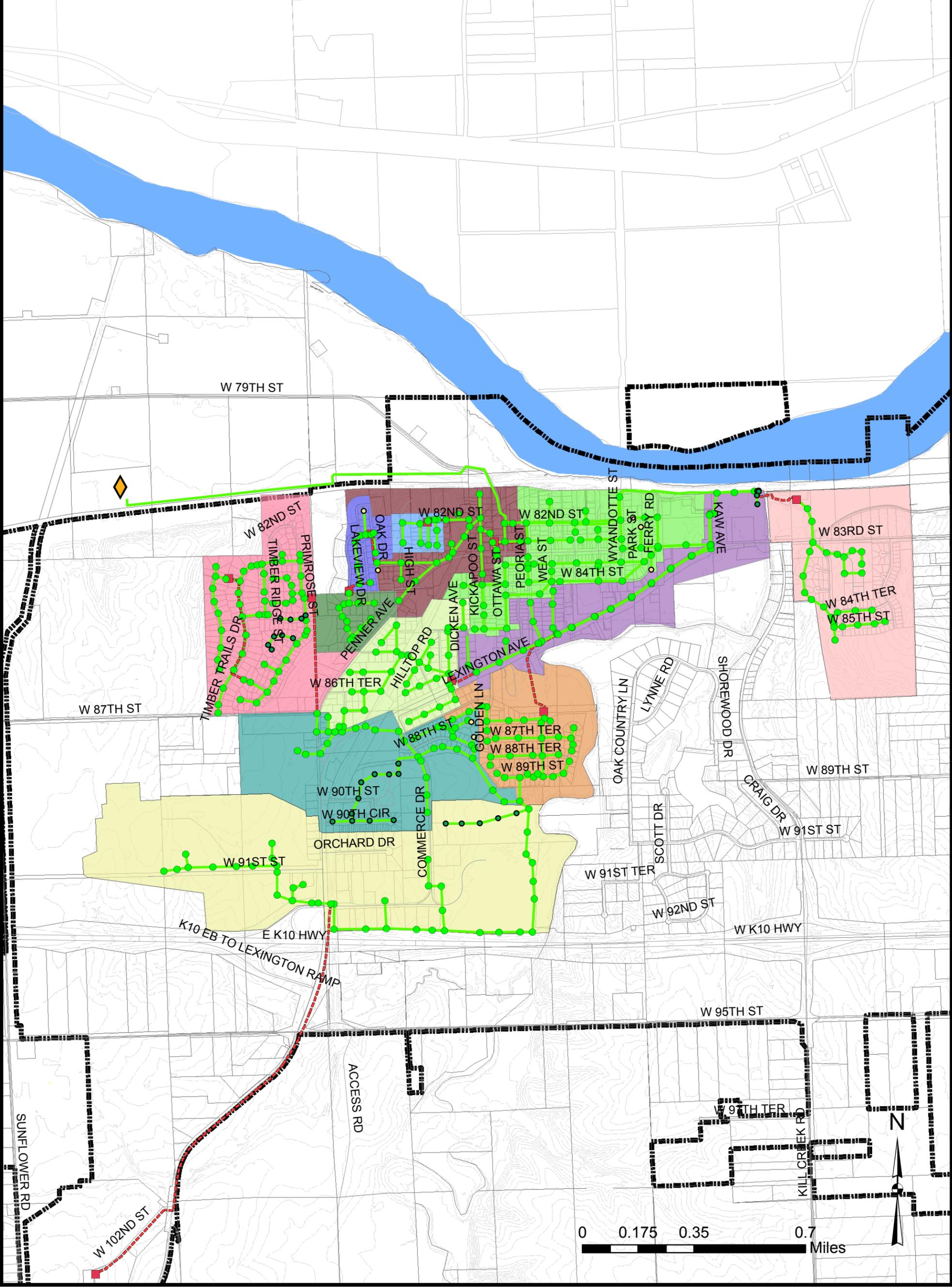


# Map 5.6 Water Accessibility

# City of De Soto, Kansas Comprehensive Plan

-  City Boundary
-  Kansas River
- Water Lines (size)**
-  2"
-  4"
-  6"
-  8"
-  10"
-  12"
-  Wells
-  Raw Water Lines
-  Water Treatment Plants
-  Water Storage
- Proximity to Existing Mains**
-  Within 1/2 Mile of Main 10" or Greater
-  Within 1/2 Mile of 8" Main

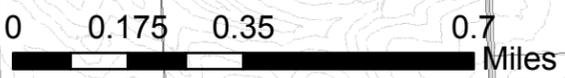




# Map 5.7 Sewer System

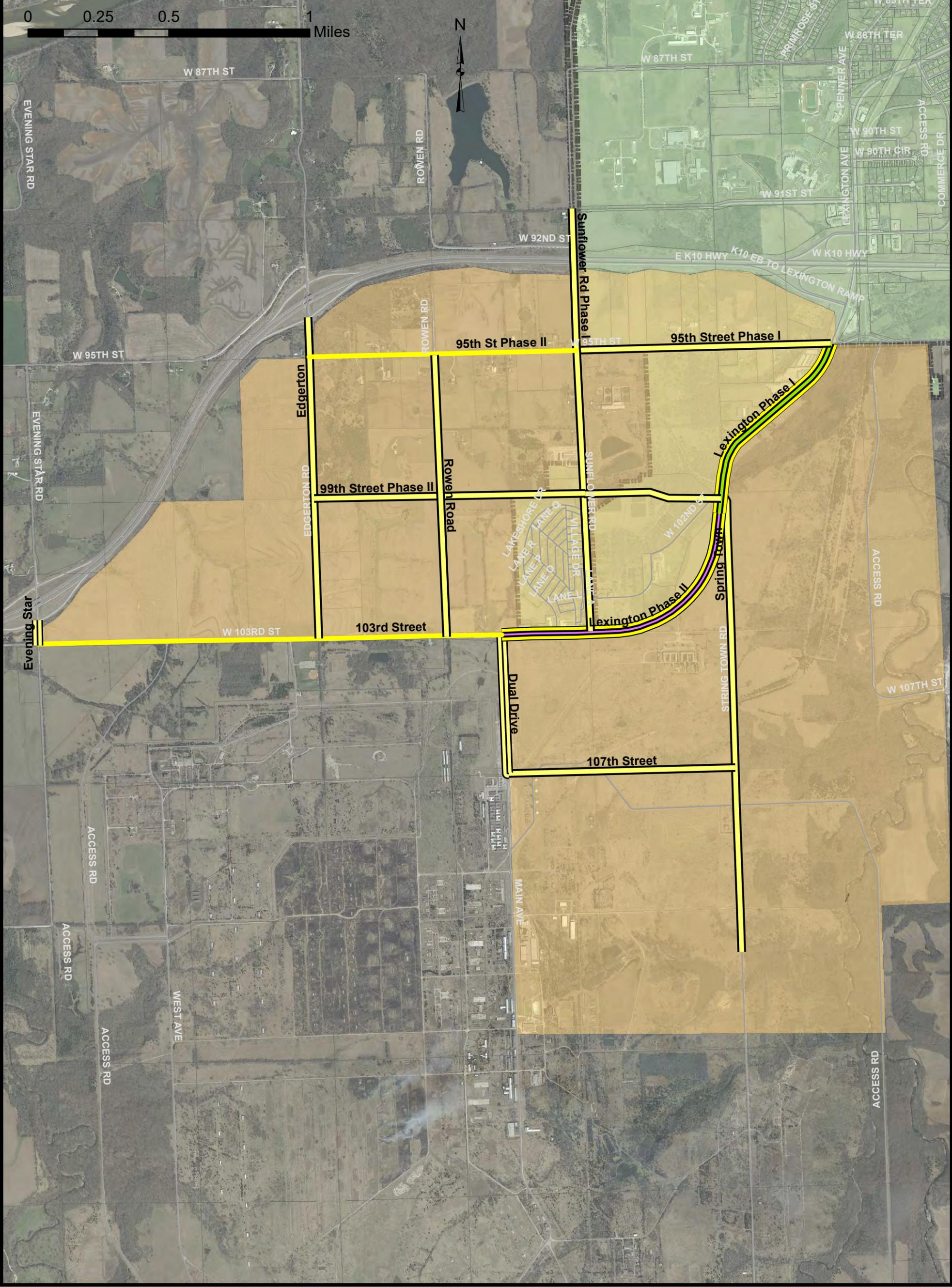
# City of De Soto, Kansas Comprehensive Plan

- City Boundary
- Kansas River
- Treatment Plant Location
- 10' Contours
- Force Mains
- Sanitary Sewers
- Basin A
- Basin B
- Basin C
- Basin D
- Basin E
- Basin F
- Basin F1
- Basin F2
- Basin F3
- Basin G
- Basin H
- Basin I
- Cleanouts
- Lift Stations
- Manholes









# Map 5.9b - Southwest Growth Area - Transportation

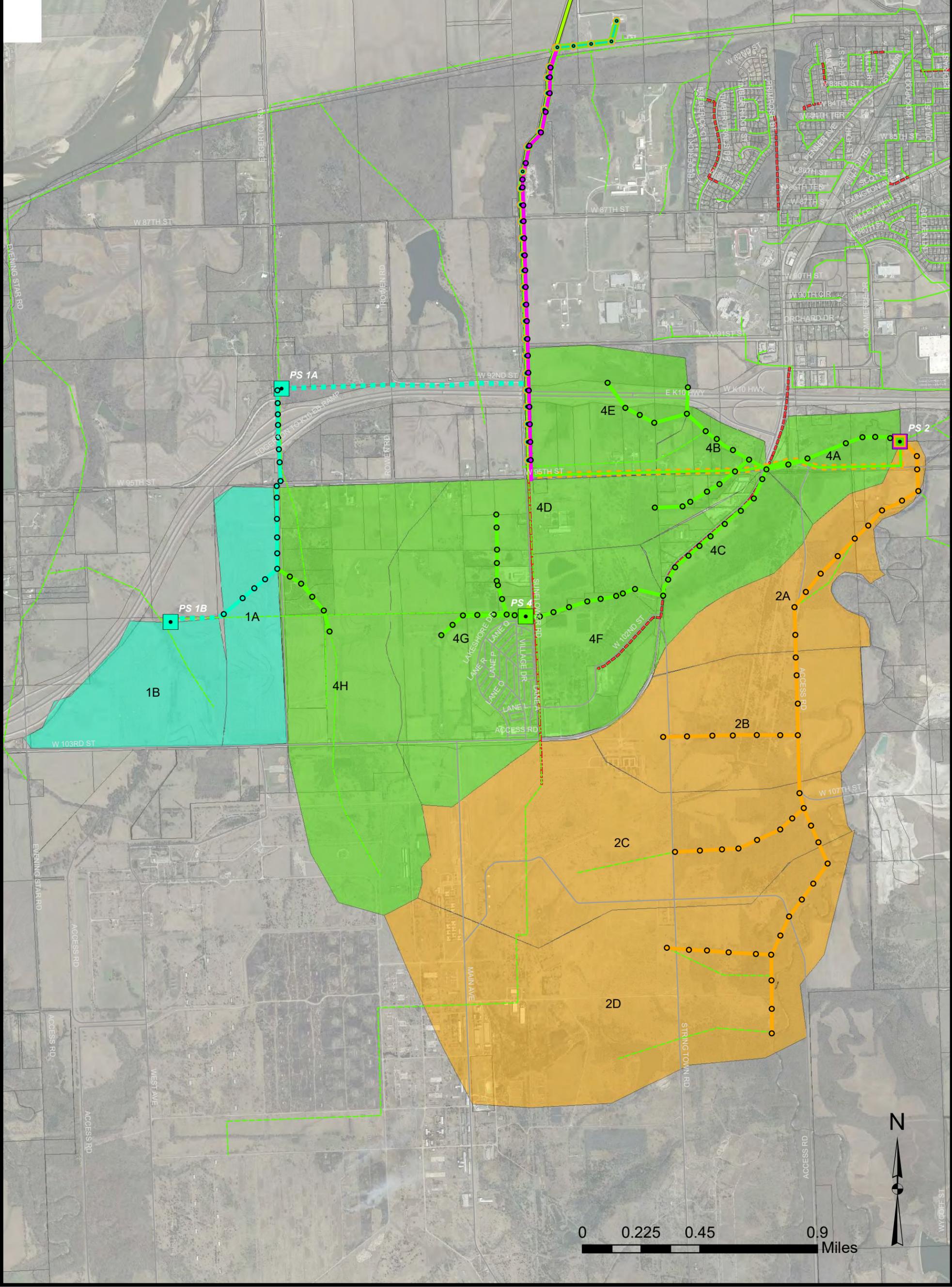
City of De Soto, Kansas  
*Comprehensive Plan*

 City Boundary  Kansas River

## Legend

**Road Improvements**

	3-Lane with Curb		4/5-Lane, Divided, Curb Phase I		Southwest Growth Area
	3-Lane, No Curb		4-Lane with Curb		4/5-Lane, Divided, Curb Phase II

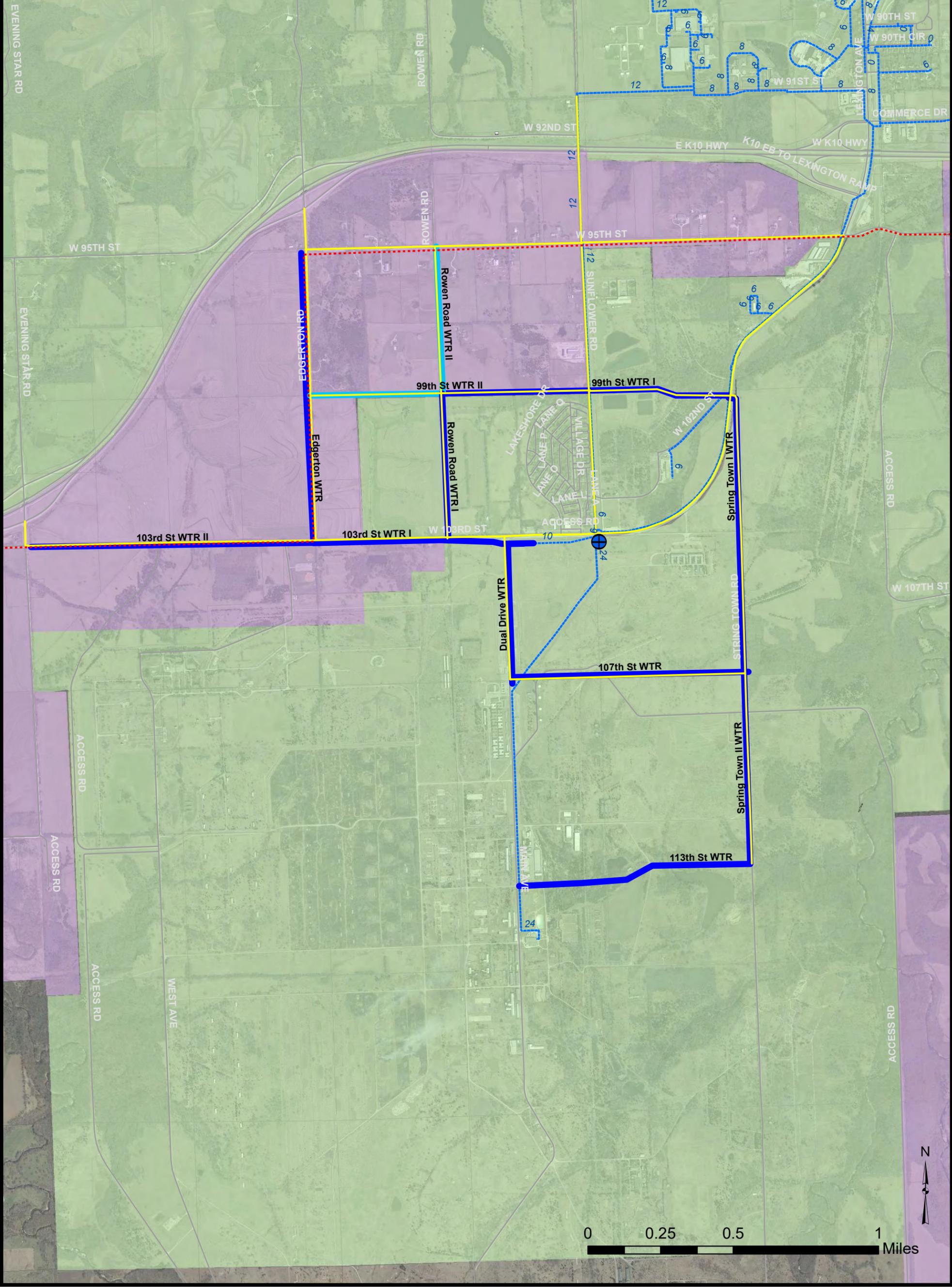


# Map 5.9c - Southwest Growth Area - Sewers

*Comprehensive Plan*

**Legend**

<b>Prop Manholes</b>	<b>Prop. Pump Stations</b>	<b>Prop. Gravity Sewers</b>	<b>Prop. Sewer Force Mains</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Sewer Basins</b>
● Gabriel	■ Gabriel	— Gabriel	— Gabriel	--- Exist. 10" Sewer Force Main	■ Gaabriel
● SRL	■ SRL & SWA	— SRL	— SRL & SWA	— Exist. 12" Sewer Gravity Main	■ SRL
● On Exist. 12" Sewer	■ Clearview (Interium)	— Combined	— SWA		■ SWA
● Combined Future		— Combined	--- Potential Future De Soto Sewers		
● SWA		— SWA			



# Map 5.9d - Southwest Growth Area - Water

**Legend**

	City Boundary		Kansas River
	Prop. WatTower		Proposed Roads
	Exist RWD 7 Lines		Existing De Soto Water Lines
	<b>Proposed Water Lines</b> RWD #7 Water Lines		<b>Water Service Territories</b> Current or Proposed RWD #7
	De Soto Water Lines		Current or Proposed De Soto

City of De Soto, Kansas  
***Comprehensive Plan***

## Chapter 6: Implementation Program

### **Section 6.1 Comprehensive Plan Adoption & Update**

Before adopting or amending the Comprehensive Plan, the Planning Commission must hold a public hearing. A notice of the public hearing must be published at least 15 days prior to the public hearing (but no more than 30 days) in the official city newspaper or as required by law. Adoption shall require a majority vote of the full Planning Commission. Upon adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, or any amendment thereto, a certified copy of the Plan along with a written copy of the minutes of the public hearing, must be forwarded to the City Council and City Clerk as required by State Statutes. City Staff, under the direction of the Planning Commission, should conduct annual reviews of the Comprehensive Plan, or any part thereof, to consider any amendments, extensions, or additions to the Plan. All amendments to the Comprehensive Plan must be made in accordance with the process for the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan outlined above.

### **Section 6.2 Implementation Program Summary**

Through the adoption of this Plan, the recommendations and implementation strategies contained herein become policy and should be considered in all future land use decisions and utilized to help implement the vision, goals, and objectives of this Plan. The goals and objectives provided in Chapter 3 are intended to work with the Future Land Use recommendations provided in this Chapter. Together they form a work program the City should follow in daily decision-making and empower residents, business owners and other organizations to assist in implementation efforts.

The Comprehensive Plan should not be used as a standalone document. The implementation recommendations of this Plan will require the direction and leadership of City staff and the support of the City's elected and appointed officials, residents, and business owners. The City should make sure all land use decisions comply with the City's Zoning Code and Subdivision Ordinance. Future development and improvements should be allowed a reasonable level of flexibility to ensure they serve a long life and accommodate future generations and market changes. This will help ensure De Soto's present needs are met, without compromising the needs of future generations.

### **Section 6.3 Implementation Matrix**

The following matrix depicts the top implementation strategies recommended for each of the major planning elements identified in the Comprehensive Plan. Although, each implementation strategy represents an important component of the Comprehensive Plan, they are not meant to be standalone criteria for evaluating future development decisions. In addition to implementing these prioritized strategies, the City must also consider land use recommendations and other implementation strategies and recommendations included in the Comprehensive Plan to help guide future development decisions.

## Implementation Matrix

### Economic Development (See also Chapter 3, Section 3.4):

**GOAL:** Expand, diversify and strengthen De Soto’s economic base by supporting local businesses and recruiting family-friendly businesses that reflect market-based demands while also catering to the current and future needs of the City’s residents.

### Implementation Strategies

**Objective 1:** Promote economic diversification that facilitates long term economic stability and reduces the City’s economic dependence on a few industries and/or revenue sources.

Target the following prospective businesses in future economic development efforts:

- a. Businesses and commercial services supported by the De Soto community.
- b. Housing, medical, retail and commercial service providers who cater to the needs of De Soto’s residents.
- c. Stay informed on current market demands and the latest retail, commercial and real estate trends to identify businesses that fill a unique niche and/or cater to the future needs and lifestyles of the City’s resident population.

**Objective 2:** Expand arts, entertainment, education and medical offerings.

Encourage the creation of more entertainment offerings such as outside theatre, concerts, and community events; providing educational opportunities; promoting retail, farmers markets, and promoting healthcare choices.

**Objective 3:** Review and update codes.

Identify any potential zoning regulations, procedures or other permitting obstacles that may hinder prospective development or other economic opportunities. If regulations are not serving their intended purpose or required by law, consider eliminating them or replacing them with regulations that better align with the vision, goals and objectives of this Plan.

**Objective 4:** Incentivize development as necessary to continue to grow and broaden De Soto’s economic base.

Continue the use of incentives to attract new businesses and industry to De Soto. This Plan recommends the City consider the incentives listed in Section 3.4 (4.a-g)

## Economic Development (See also Chapter 3, Section 3.4):

### Implementation Strategies

**Objective 5:** Work with MARC and Johnson County to keep up on the latest local, state and federal programs, low interest loans, grants, technical assistance, cost-sharing opportunities, assistance for new business start-ups, entrepreneurs, and existing businesses. Applicable programs include, but are not limited to:

- a. **Innovation Growth Program Formerly Kansas Technology Enterprise Corp. (KTEC):** This program assists Kansas entrepreneurs and technology companies by providing intellectual property, technical expertise, research and other services designed to help new and existing technology companies grow and succeed. The program was created on July 1, 2011, as a partnership between the Kansas Department of Commerce and the statewide network of organizations that were part of the network formerly operated by KTEC. While the program exists to help entrepreneurs and companies, its ultimate goal is to bring new technology jobs to Kansas. *Contact: Kansas Department of Commerce.*
- b. **Economic Development Grants:** This program provides loans to cities like De Soto for gap financing for private businesses that create or retain permanent jobs. Eligible activities include infrastructure, land acquisition, fixed assets and working capital. Grants are made to cities, which then loan funds to developing businesses. Repaid funds are returned to the state revolving loan fund. Funds may also be used for infrastructure on a loan/grant basis. The funding ceiling is \$35,000 per job created or retained with a maximum of \$750,000. Matching funds are required. *Contact: Kansas Department of Commerce.*
- c. **Kansas Partnership Fund:** The Kansas Partnership Fund is a program to provide low-interest state funds to cities and counties for infrastructure improvements that support Kansas basic enterprises. Partnership Fund loans are designed to assist city and county governments in their efforts to attract new businesses and expand existing businesses. Eligible projects may include the construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, alteration, expansion or improvement of public facilities including, but not limited to roads, streets, highways, storm drains, water supply and treatment facilities, water distribution lines, waste water collection lines and any related improvements. These improvements must directly lead to the creation of new jobs in Kansas basic enterprises. *Contact: Kansas Department of Commerce.*
- d. **Angel Investment Credit Program:** The Kansas Angel Investors Tax Credit (KAITC) Program helps launch innovative start-ups by bringing together accredited angel investors with qualified Kansas companies seeking seed and early stage investment. *Contact: Kansas Department of Commerce.*
- e. **Small Business LLC Tax Break:** Kansas law allows self-employed people, family-owned operations, partnerships, and limited liability companies a reduction in the State's income-tax which, according to the State, the tax break gives small business owners an extra boost to grow their business.

## Implementation Matrix

### Housing & Neighborhood Stability (See also Chapter 3, Section 3.5)

**GOAL: Provide safe and quality housing for all residents of De Soto by promoting reinvestment in existing neighborhoods and encouraging well-planned new residential development opportunities to accommodate future growth and create a diverse, self-renewing housing stock.**

#### Implementation Strategies

##### Objective 1: Promote healthy, active and connected neighborhoods

Promote and support the installation of street lights, sidewalks, and bike paths connecting De Soto's neighborhoods, parks, schools and other destinations.

##### Objective 2: Preserve neighborhood character

Prevent blight and preserve the character and stability of existing neighborhoods through appropriate zoning, code enforcement and the following recommendations:

- a. Continue code enforcement efforts to prevent property deterioration and to protect property values. Develop and initiate effective code enforcement procedures, as needed, to improve the safety and appearance of properties.
- b. Continue the issuance of citations and the prosecution of repeat offenders for any properties or structures that present a danger to De Soto residents.

##### Objective 3: Address absentee landlord issues.

Address absentee landlord issues by deploying immediate and on-going code enforcement efforts and updating the Municipal Code, as needed, to regulate problem rental properties to the extent permitted by law.

##### Objective 4: Preserve De Soto's small town qualities

Promote efforts to preserve the qualities that have made De Soto an attractive small town and encourage future development and preservation that makes the City more attractive to those who desire to live in a family-friendly, attractive and active small town environment. These qualities include tree-lined streets, sidewalks, trails, wooded open space, safe, natural parks, an in-tact historic downtown and clusters of commercial development that provide for the comfort and convenience of De Soto's residents.

## Housing & Neighborhood Stability (See also Chapter 3, Section 3.5)

### Implementation Strategies

**Objective 5:** Seek out programs and funding for neighborhood beautification and stabilization.

Pursue grants and financing assistance, such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, to preserve and enhance local parks, open space and other public spaces as well as home repairs and maintenance. Target the needs of elderly and lower-income homeowners as they need assistance the most.

**Objective 6:** Identify housing solutions for low income households by helping to connect low income households with groups and resources that provide affordable housing assistance, including but not limited to:

- a. The **HOME Program** assists eligible homeowners of Johnson County, Kansas with rehabilitation needs of their owner-occupied homes. The program will bring a home or dwelling into compliance with local housing codes and address health and safety issues. *Contact: Johnson County Housing Services*
- b. The **Minor Home Rehabilitation program** assists eligible Johnson County homeowners with home repairs and provides limited accessibility modifications for eligible persons with a disability. *Contact: Johnson County Housing Services*
- c. The **Johnson County Housing Services Homebuyer Assistance Program** is designed to assist low-to-moderate income Johnson County residents or persons who have been employed for at least two consecutive years in Johnson County with down payment/closing cost assistance towards the purchase of a home. *Contact: Johnson County Housing Services*
- d. **Rebuilding Together:** Rebuilding Together is the nation's leading nonprofit organization working to promote affordable homeownership and revitalize neighborhoods by providing home repair and renovation services free of charge to those in need. The program strives to ensure low income homeowners are safe, comfortable and dry.
- e. **Habitat for Humanity Kansas:** Habitat for Humanity of Kansas is dedicated to eliminating substandard housing locally and worldwide through its affiliates in constructing, rehabilitating and preserving homes.
- f. **Individual Development Account Tax Credit Program (IDA):** The Individual Development Account (IDA) program is an asset-building strategy established to promote self-sufficiency through asset-development for low-income Kansans in a matched-savings program. It offers a variety of services to assist individuals and families including rental assistance for income eligible families seeking housing. *Contact: Kansas Department of Commerce.*
- g. **Housing Rehabilitation Program:** Low-to-moderate income communities can apply for grants to improve housing and rehabilitate and retrofit properties. Before a community considers housing grants they **MUST** complete a Housing Assessment Tool (HAT) to determine their needs and are encouraged to attend a Housing Interagency Advisory Committee meeting. Grants provide residents with safe and sanitary living conditions and help to stabilize low to moderate income neighborhoods and affordable housing in the community. *Contact: Kansas Department of Commerce.*

## Implementation Matrix

### Quality of Life (See also Chapter 3, Section 3.6)

**GOAL: Encourage future public and private investment that promotes healthy, active lifestyles, social equity, community beautification and preservation of De Soto's quiet, family friendly atmosphere.**

#### Implementation Strategies

##### Objective 1: Promote cultural and social equity.

- a. Continue to partner with the school districts, churches, civic organizations, and private businesses to improve the utilization of existing facilities and create programs and opportunities to integrate the City's families with each other. Build upon sports program and other recreational programs events that appeal to all.
- b. Create new activities that appeal to De Soto's teens, young adults, seniors and all income levels.

##### Objective 2: Promote continued planning & partnering.

Maintain and improve existing infrastructure and programs and broaden the scope and scale of De Soto's recreational and retail offerings through effective planning, cooperation with partners, and community engagement.

##### Objective 3: Promote continued investment in community amenities.

Encourage public and private investment in amenities that make De Soto a better, cleaner, safer and more aesthetically pleasing place.

##### Objective 4: Keep the cost of living affordable.

- a. Continue providing a wide range of quality, affordable public services and governance that is inclusive, responsive, accountable, and in the best interest of the people.
- b. Maintain the current level of service and expand police/sheriff, fire, water, sewer, parks and other public services only as needed to accommodate growth.
- c. Pass the cost of expanding public services onto the newly annexed areas and developers rather than paid for by existing residents.

##### Objective 5: Invoke pride in De Soto.

As advocated by the 2017 Strategic Plan, this Plan recommends the community promote and expand upon the characteristics that make De Soto a forward thinking, professional, clean, and respected community whose residents and business leaders are prideful about the community, and are kept informed and engaged on civic matters.

## Quality of Life (See also Chapter 3, Section 3.6)

### Implementation Strategies

**Objective 6:** Maintain and enhance the City's parks and recreation system to promote healthy, active lifestyles.

- a. Make improvements, as needed, to keep pace with the latest trends in parks and recreational services and facilities.
- b. Acquire additional parkland, preserve open space and establish trails and recreational areas as needed to serve the City's growing resident population- with the costs passed onto the residents and/or developers of the newly developed areas.

**Objective 7:** Create a comprehensive trail system.

- a. Work with MARC, Johnson County and other local, state and federal agencies to assist with the creation of a comprehensive trail system.
- b. Meet with local land owners to determine the best locations for future trail sections and initiate the acquisition of land, right of way, or easements needed to support the trail system.
- c. Ensure the proposed trail system is carefully planned to generally follow the routes designated on the Future Land Use Map.
- d. All trail improvements should meet ADA guidelines, promote the objectives of Complete Streets and address other requirements necessary to make the comprehensive trail system eligible for public funding.

**Objective 8:** Promote a positive image for De Soto through public communications, branding, and marketing.

- a. Encourage the promotion and restoration of De Soto's economic health, community pride and quality of life by "branding" the City.
- b. Promote the Core Message recommended by the Community Marketing Plan which states: ***"To our target audiences, De Soto is the unique, centrally located community that nurtures a supportive lifestyle in which to create positive connections"***.
- c. Formally adopt the following slogan as the official slogan for De Soto: ***"Build your life with us"***.
- d. Use the slogan in marketing material and official City correspondence.

## Implementation Matrix

### Transportation (See also Chapter 3, Section 3.7)

**GOAL: Maintain a safe and efficient transportation system that provides the necessary improvements to accommodate future traffic volumes, generate economic vitality, and provide connections for pedestrians and bikes.**

#### Implementation Strategies

**Objective 1:** Ensure the existing transportation network is properly maintained and upgraded to functionally provide safe, fluid traffic flow, improve economic development potential and minimize congestion.

- a. *K-10 Highway & Lexington Avenue:* This area needs to be closely monitored to ensure it provides the necessary level of services (LOS) to carry the existing and projected traffic volume safely and efficiently. This intersection carries the highest traffic volumes in De Soto, therefore the safety and functional capacity of this intersection is critical to the future safety and economic stability of the community.
- b. *Ongoing Maintenance:* Continue to repair potholes, curbs and gutters and provide ongoing resurfacing and road replacement at scheduled intervals.
- c. *Continue the Installation and Repair of Sidewalks City-wide.* Continue to seek funding, right-of-way and construction assistance to facilitate the installation of new sidewalks and the rehabilitation of old sidewalks. Make it a priority to provide sidewalks and paths to connect De Soto's schools, neighborhoods and parks in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan.

**Objective 2:** Encourage the beautification of key nodes and entryways into De Soto.

- a. *Gateways:* Utilize public/private partnerships to implement gateway features whereby private industries may incorporate corporate logos, etc. within the gateway improvements in exchange for sharing in the costs of the gateway features including installation and maintenance. Gateway features are recommended at key entryways leading into De Soto and at major intersections within the City limits.
- b. *Lighting:* The use of direct and indirect lighting and other signage/branding elements should be incorporated within the recommended gateway locations.
- c. *Art and Aesthetics:* A prominent feature, such as a statue of Hernando de Soto or Shawnee John Possum that recognizes and commemorates the City's early cultural ties is recommended. Other prominent features or sculptures should be considered along with monumentations, fountains and professional landscaping, are also recommended at key focal point(s) within De Soto, including the recommended gateway locations shown on the Future Land Use Plan and discussed in Chapter 4.

## Transportation (See also Chapter 3, Section 3.7)

### Implementation Strategies

**Objective 3:** Promote and coordinate streetscape improvements to help make De Soto safer, more accessible, attractive, desirable and profitable.

- a. Make Downtown De Soto a walkable, vibrant, outdoor shopping, eating, and entertainment district.
- b. Install outdoor furniture, landscaping, planters, banners and improve lighting and sidewalks to improve the safety, comfort and aesthetics of De Soto's commercial areas.
- c. Extend the recommended streetscape improvements into the adjacent residential neighborhoods to improve safety, access and increase pedestrian activity along the Lexington Avenue and Kill Creek corridors.
- d. Support future investment in the safety, appearance and upgrades to De Soto's existing pathway along Lexington Avenue and new pedestrian connections recommended along Kill Creek and other areas as recommended in this Plan.

**Objective 4:** Promote and coordinate the replacement and installation of new sidewalks.

All new streets should have sidewalks, trees and street lights as approved by the City's codes.

**Objective 5:** Promote and coordinate the implementation of a comprehensive bike-ped trail system.

Facilitate the implementation of a comprehensive bike and pedestrian trail system to better connect the City's schools, neighborhoods, parks, commercial districts, and employment centers.

**Objective 6:** Improve signage and way-finding.

Improve signage and way-finding by developing a consistent signage theme using the City logo to help "brand" De Soto and inform people of the City's attractions and guide them to these places. Develop sign regulations to minimize visual clutter and require professional signage.

## Implementation Matrix

### Section 6.4 Public Services, Utilities & Infrastructure (See also Chapter 3, Section 3.8)

**GOAL:** Preserve and improve upon the quality, affordability and capacity of the City's public utilities, services and infrastructure to ensure current and future needs of De Soto's growing, prospering population are met.

#### Implementation Strategies

**Objective 1:** Provide sanitary services within the City's current limits.

Provide sewer service to areas already in the City to facilitate infill developments, specifically along the 95th Street corridor where commercial opportunities exist.

**Objective 2:** Provide services to the City's growth areas.

Provide services to the Sunflower Property and investigate the feasibility to install sewer extensions to targeted growth areas in the eastern portions of the City.

**Objective 3:** Provide ongoing street maintenance.

Provide adequate resources towards street maintenance and the enhancement of existing deteriorating streets, curbs, and sidewalks.

**Objective 4:** Encourage future investments in pedestrian & bike accessibility.

Facilitate the implementation of new sidewalks, trails, and pedestrian access amenities.

**Objective 5:** Growth Requires Partnerships.

Collaborate with service providers to plan adequately for growth. For example, broadband internet access has been identified as an area where De Soto falls behind our neighboring Johnson County communities, and is viewed as a disadvantage to economic development. Therefore, working with broadband suppliers, developers and landowners to support future development is recommended.

**Public Services, Utilities & Infrastructure: (See also Chapter 3, Section 3.8)**

**Implementation Strategies**

**Objective 6:** Business stability & affordable public services requires growth.

There is recognition that residential growth, in particular, is needed in order to support the types of commercial opportunities that will increase the livability of the community. Additionally, lowering the cost of services like road maintenance, water and sewer utilities, and administrative governmental services relies on increasing the taxing base and the number of patrons served by City utilities. Therefore, this Plan recommends well-planned residential growth and reinvestment in the City's existing residential area.

**Objective 7:** Continue supporting fair, consistent and ongoing code enforcement and zoning administration duties to enforce De Soto's Ordinances and implement the goals and objectives of this Plan.

Become more proactive in enforcing the City's existing property maintenance and nuisance ordinances, to enhance aesthetics, particularly along major corridors throughout town, in and around the historic downtown and any areas that are unsightly or include conditions associated with blight.

**Objective 8:** Improve communication.

Restructure communication efforts to include a multifaceted approach involving print, social media, and other forms of electronic communication that helps connect the community to the workings of local government and offers opportunities for public feedback and input.

**Objective 9:** Improve and expand upon De Soto's existing recreation programming and provide options for citizens of all ages including pre-school, youth, adult, and seniors, all nationalities and all income levels.

- a. *Improve Existing Parks:* Seek funding and resources to provide upgrades to existing parks, such as the construction of new soccer fields, the construction of new, permanent comfort stations, bike-ped pathways, and other recommended park and recreation improvements provided in the attached parks and recreation plan.
- b. *Park Decision Makers:* Restart the role of the Park Board to take a more active role in the process and provide the leadership and resources needed by the Parks Department necessary to incrementally provide the improvements recommended herein. .

**Public Services, Utilities & Infrastructure:** (See also Chapter 3, Section 3.8)

**Implementation Strategies**

**Objective 10:** Incremental Improvements: Provide continued investment in the City's infrastructure and services (water, sewer, electric, internet, gas and telecommunications) to ensure quality, affordable utilities to serve De Soto's present and future needs.

- a. Plan for and perform incremental replacement of old sanitary lines and routine maintenance to the City's water treatment and storage facilities to meet current and future regulations.
- b. Provide annual evaluations of the City's park and recreation services, public safety, public transportation, code enforcement and sewer services to ensure they meet the needs of the community.

**Objective 11:** Provide administrative support necessary in providing excellent public services.

Provide all departments with adequate staff and the latest computers, printers, communication devices and software needed to continue providing excellent public services.

**Objective 12:** Take a leadership role in emergency preparedness.

Develop, adopt and annually review and update an emergency preparedness manual, co-authored by each department head including top police and fire officials.

**Objective 13:** Carefully plan for and implement future capital improvements.

Concentrate capital investments into areas that are contiguous to currently developed land and within De Soto's service delivery limits.

**Objective 14:** Provide equitable, fair and transparent financing for new infrastructure:

Initiate development agreements that help pay for the direct and indirect costs of new infrastructure development and continue to plan and budget for near-term capital improvements.

## Implementation Matrix

### Future Development & Annexation (See also Chapter 3, Section 3.9)

**GOAL: Promote future growth that expands and diversifies the City's tax base, provides development to support a growing prospering population, increases property values and is consistent with the Future Land Use Map and the goals, objectives and implementation strategies developed for this Plan.**

### Implementation Strategies

**Objective 1:** Continue to work closely with the current owners of the Sunflower property to identify pathways to facilitate the development of the property including economic incentives, annexation into the City, land use planning, and utility service extensions.

- a. Continue to promote cooperative planning and redevelopment of Sunflower in conjunction with the State and County agencies responsible for oversight of the redevelopment process.
- b. Annex strategic portions of the Sunflower Site.
- c. *Outdoor Recreation Greenbelt:* Create a linear greenway connecting De Soto's natural resources such as the Kansas River and its tributaries, the wealth of local parks and open spaces, and create basecamps or trailheads along the recommended greenway to create gathering areas, parking, comfort stations, concessions, information kiosks, and limited overnight accommodations.
- d. *Mixed Use Development:* Future commercial and mixed use development is recommended at existing and planned transportation nodes within and leading to the Sunflower site.
- e. *High-Tech Office Warehouse:* Provide a controlled and protected environment for the orderly growth and development of high technology businesses and industries within a park-like setting with common amenities for uses such as light manufacturing, distribution, and office warehouse.

**Objective 2:** Encourage utilization of development nodes & opportunity clusters.

Promote the development of key development nodes and innovative development in accordance with the Future Land Use Map. Among the top priorities are the K-10/Kill Creek intersection, the K-10/Lexington intersection, the Lexington Avenue corridor, and downtown. See Chapter 4 "Future Land Use" for more information regarding the recommended opportunity clusters and development nodes.

**Objective 3:** Accommodate mixed use development in targeted areas as depicted on the Future Land Use Plan.

Promote higher density, mixed-use development in order to create vibrant live-work-play activity centers.

**Objective 4:** Accommodate smart growth.

- a. Promote and initiate annexation efforts that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map and where the costs to provide utilities, roads and all other associated infrastructure is either already provided or paid for in whole, or at least in part, by the developer.
- b. Closely review all proposed annexation plans to control the timing, type and density of future development to ensure they are consistent with the Future Land Use Map and the future growth and annexation goals, objectives and implementation strategies provided in this Plan.
- c. Continue the City's policy of controlled annexation to incorporate adjacent territories contiguous to the City as shown on the Future Land Use Map:
- d. Ensure that economic development objectives are included in the evaluation of all future development, transportation and infrastructure projects.

**Objective 5:** Coordinate well planned future commercial and mixed use development.

- a. Encourage commercial reinvestment along the Lexington Avenue corridor and intersections with K-10 with future uses that include a mix of retail, commercial services, medical, technology, hospitality and limited residential uses that enhance the appearance and convenience of the area.
- b. The architectural character and site design should functionally and aesthetically complement the built and natural environment.
- c. Annex additional commercial growth areas northeast and northwest of the current City limits as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

**Objective 6:** Encourage the development of quality, well-built homes that are market driven.

- a. Annex residential growth areas as shown on the Future Land Use Map.
- b. Encourage the development of single family, estate-style custom homes adjacent to areas already development as such within the future growth areas.
- c. Encourage the development of condos, garden apartments and senior housing in areas identified as "Multi-Family" on the Future Land Use Map.

**Objective 7:** Preserve Downtown De Soto.

Re-establish the original downtown by restoratively developing vacant buildings and encouraging the development of underutilized lots. Small-scale commercial services, retail boutiques, delicatessens, bakeries and entertainment uses are envisioned in this area.

**Objective 8:** Reinvest in existing residential areas.

- a. Encourage the removal and replacement of outmoded housing units and mobile homes that have outlived their usefulness with new, quality built single family homes to help restore neighborhood vitality and create a self-renewing housing stock.
- b. Promote reinvestment in the existing building stock that is repairable. The preservation and revitalization of existing buildings of architectural significance should be a priority.
- c. Promote the goals, objectives and implementation strategies presented in the Economic Development Section of this Chapter and recommendations contained herein.

**Objective 9:** Encourage open space preservation.

Preserve the area's open spaces and other natural resources that promote the quality of life.

**Objective 10:** Promote the review and update of the City's Zoning Code.

Update the City's zoning ordinances to promote well-planned growth and encourage commercial, residential and mixed-use development as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

**Monitoring, Evaluating and Updating the Plan (See also Chapter 3, Section 3.10)**

- a. The City of De Soto should review, evaluate and update the Compressive Plan on an annual basis as necessary to address any significant changes in City policy, development patterns, major annexations, and other major events.
- b. Staff should report on the status of the various implementation projects and identify which strategies have been completed, need to be updated, or should otherwise be revised.

- c. Following consideration of the Staff report, the Planning Commission shall determine if additional consideration is necessary and may at that time appoint a task force or advisory committee to further analyze specific elements prior to update or revision of the Plan.
- d. Once potential revisions and updates have been formed, a Public Hearing shall be held before the Planning Commission and following consideration of the proposed amendments and public comment, the Planning Commission shall adopt the necessary revisions and updates.
- e. Once the Planning Commission has acted to approve revisions or updates, if any, the Plan will be submitted to the Governing Body for adoption and final approval.

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# Appendix



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**City of De Soto, Kansas**  
**Infrastructure Master Planning Narrative**  
**for the**  
**Southwest Growth Area**

This narrative summarizes master planning and cost estimates for City owned infrastructure that will be necessary to support the development of areas southwest of the city that have been targeted by the City's Comprehensive Plan and economic incentive policies for annexation and non-residential development. This area includes parts the former Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant, and the 319-Acre Gabriel property at 103<sup>rd</sup> Street and Edgerton Road. This analysis is needed at this time as the City and the Economic Development Council (EDC) move forward with meaningful discussions with developers, investors, and other interested parties relating to large-scale light industrial developments in the area.

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**I. Area Descriptions**

**Exhibit A** contains a map of the Southwest Growth Area. Three regions are separately identified:

A. Sunflower

This region consists of approximately 1800 acres of the former Sunflower Army Ammunition Plant, which has been under the ownership of the Sunflower Redevelopment Group (SRL) since 2005. Environmental cleanup of the site has progressed to the point where the northern portions are ready for redevelopment in the near term. The 1800-acre Sunflower Site is divided into two phases based on topography, environmental cleanup considerations, and proximity to existing infrastructure.

B. Gabriel

The 319-acre Gabriel site is on the western edge of the Southwest Growth Area and is bounded by K-10 on the north and west, Edgerton Road on the east, and 103<sup>rd</sup> Street on the South. The Gabriel site has been divided into two phases based on sewer accessibility and proximity to the Edgerton Road interchange on K-10.

C. Southwest Area

This area consists of approximately 1,300 acres of land under mostly private ownership bounded by K-10 on the north, Lexington Avenue on the east, 103<sup>rd</sup> Street on the south, and Edgerton Road on the west. Although there exist numerous single-family residential properties in the area, much of it consists of larger vacant tracts that could be developed of proper

infrastructure were in place. This area also includes Clearview City, a multi-family residential property consisting of about 250 units and about 600 individuals. Because of its good access to K-10 and proximity to other infrastructure this area has long been identified within the City's Comprehensive Plan as transitioning residential to non-residential land use patterns including commercial and light industrial uses.

## II. Infrastructure Layouts and Costs

### A. Roads

**Exhibit B** is a map of the conceptual arterial and collector road network for the area. Cost estimates for each road segment are also provided. It is understood and expected that local access streets will be needed interior to individual development areas, but these streets are not shown because they are assumed to be the developer's responsibility to design, construct, and fund.

Mainly, the proposed arterial and collector roads follow existing alignments, section, or half section lines. It is important to note that, depending on traffic volumes, there may be a need for improvements at the K-10 interchanges. This analysis does not address those potential improvements, since they will be largely decided by KDOT based on traffic studies associated with future developments. The main arterial corridor will be Lexington Avenue and 103<sup>rd</sup> Streets, with Edgerton Road also serving as an important connection to K-10.

- All proposed streets will include significant pedestrian elements, with separate bike/pedestrian facilities along all corridors.
- Phase II of 95<sup>th</sup> Street is proposed without curb & gutter largely because of the diminished redevelopment potential for the corridor because of existing residential land use patterns and hilly topography.
- Rowen Road, 99<sup>th</sup> Street, 107<sup>th</sup> Street, and Spring Town Road are proposed along new alignments. All other proposed roads are along existing alignments.
- Construction standards for all segments are consistent with the City's requirements for new construction, which are derived from the American Public Works Association specifications.

### B. Sewer Infrastructure

**Exhibit C** is a map of the sanitary sewer infrastructure that will be needed to serve all three identified growth areas. The concept makes use of two regional pumping facilities, and existing infrastructure within the utility corridor that parallels Sunflower Road between 103<sup>rd</sup> Street and 79<sup>th</sup> Street. Individual drainage basins are labeled, and color coded to reflect each of the three development areas. Like the road network analysis, the sewer lines shown in Exhibit C

represent a backbone system needed to provide service to each drainage basin. Additional lines will be needed within each development area to connect individual properties or buildings.

- 1) PS 2: This pump station is a regional pump station located adjacent to 95<sup>th</sup> Street near Kill Creek. This location is chosen because it is positioned to be able to receive gravity flows from the south along Kill Creek and from the west along 95<sup>th</sup> Street. The force main will flow eastward along 95<sup>th</sup> Street to the utility corridor along Sunflower Road where it will discharge into an existing 12" gravity sewer that flows north to the City's wastewater treatment plant near 79<sup>th</sup> Street. PS 2 can eventually serve most of the Sunflower property and the majority of the Southwest Area. Initially the capacity of this pump station will be 600,00 gallons per day, with expansion up to 1.2 million gallons per day.
- 2) PS 1A: This pump station is a regional pump station located along Edgerton Road just north of K-10. This location was chosen because of the likelihood of obtaining the property and easements needed for the force main, which will flow eastward along the north side of K-10 to the utility corridor along Sunflower Road where it will discharge into an existing 12" gravity sewer that flows north to the City's wastewater treatment plant near 79<sup>th</sup> Street. PS 1A will serve the Gabriel property and sewer basin 4H.
- 3) Sunflower Road Utility Corridor: The sewer service plan for the entire southwest growth area relies on the utilization of the utility corridor that runs along Sunflower Road between 79<sup>th</sup> Street and 103<sup>rd</sup> Street. This utility corridor is owned by SRL and contains raw water mains and a 12" sewer line. The City is currently utilizing the raw water mains under an operating lease with SRL, and we are in negotiations with SRL for a similar operating lease for the sewer line. The capacity of the sewer line is limited to about 600,000 GPD average flows, so it will likely not be large enough to accommodate the full build-out of the entire growth area. It is therefore contemplated that a parallel 24" gravity sewer line will eventually have to be constructed within the utility corridor. The existing 12" sewer line has no access manholes, so those would have to be installed before it can be used. In addition, a 36" main will have to be constructed to connect the existing 12" line to the City's wastewater treatment plant.
- 4) PS 4: Pump Station 4 is located along Sunflower Road just north of Clearview City. It is intended as an interim improvement intended to connect Clearview City to the De Soto sewer system, at the request of the owner. PS 4 will also provide an opportunity to provide sewer service to the area just west of Clearview City and along the west side of Sunflower Road, identified as sewer basin 4H. PS 4 will discharge into an existing 10' force main within the Sunflower Road Utility Corridor that flows northward to 95<sup>th</sup> Street where it discharges into the existing 12" gravity sewer line.

C. Water Infrastructure

Proposed water infrastructure is shown in **Exhibit D**. Portions of the study area are currently within the service territory of Johnson County Rural Water District #7 (RWD #7), portions are currently served by De Soto, and portions are not within either service territory. The City and RWD #7 have been in meaningful dialogue about a service territory agreement that will establish the ultimate boundaries for each utility. The latest iteration of the future service territory boundaries is shown on Exhibit D. Hydraulic interconnections between the two providers and accompanying water sales agreements are possible if needed to accommodate the service demands of any specific development.

- 1) Water Tower: Proposed near the intersection of 103<sup>rd</sup> and Sunflower Road. A 1.0 MG water tower is included in the infrastructure planning in the event a future industrial user or combination of users have fire flow demands that exceed the storage volume requirements of the City's existing tower at 95<sup>th</sup> and Sunflower. The timing of this improvement will be dictated by particular use demands.
- 2) Gabriel Service: Although the Gabriel property is within the service territory of RWD #7, the infrastructure analysis includes De Soto water main extensions to the property in the event that RWD #7 is unable to serve the development in a timely and cost efficient manner.

III. **Cost Estimate Summary and Phasing**

Cost summaries for each infrastructure element are shown on Exhibits B, C, and D. **Exhibit E** gives a summary of all the cost elements and divides them into the three separate development areas. Infrastructure that will be needed to support multiple development areas is listed as "Shared". Exhibit F contains the detailed cost estimates for each element.

A. Cost Summary (Exhibit E): Infrastructure cost estimates for each development area and phase are shown in Exhibit F.

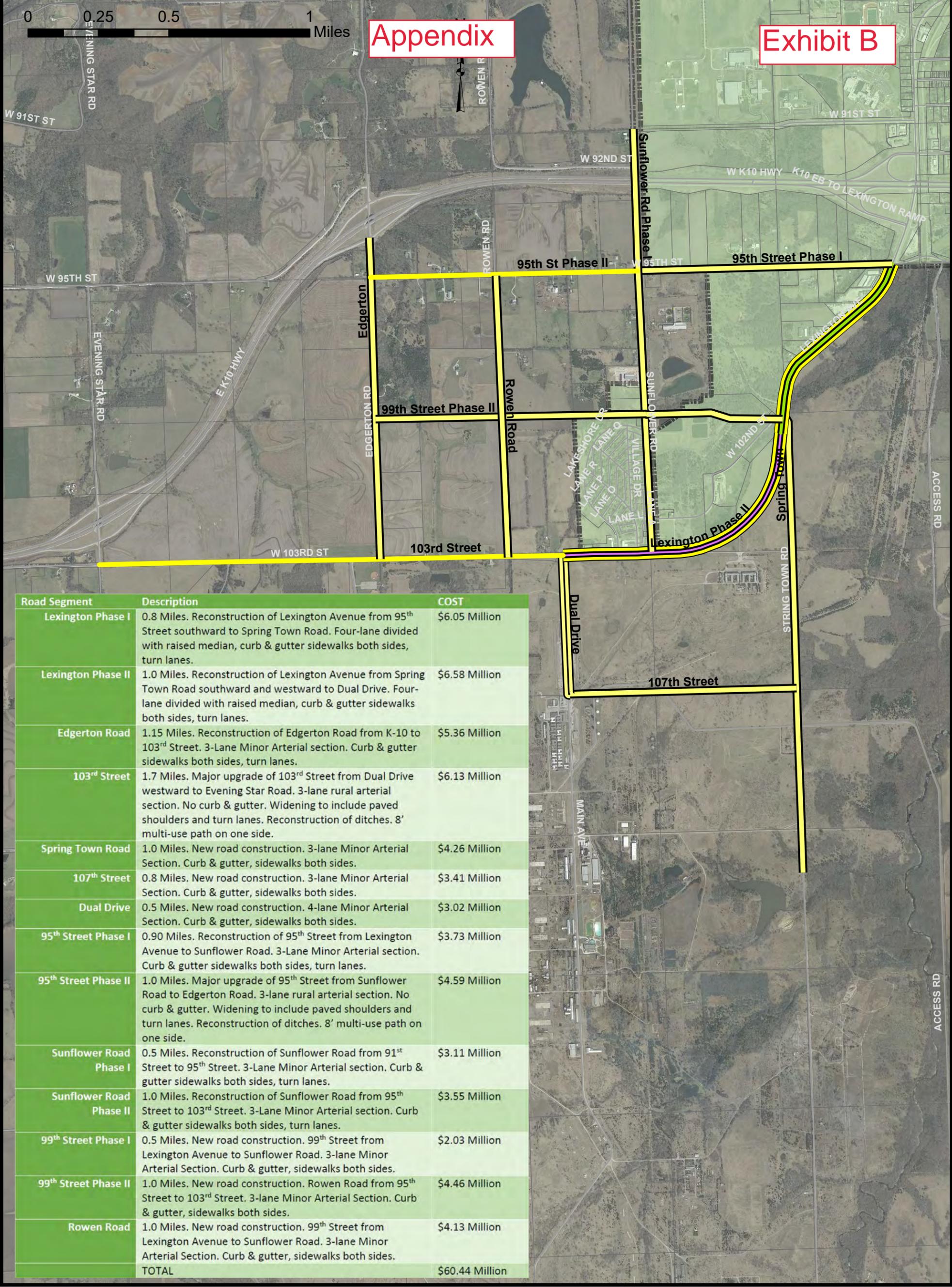
- 1) Total costs attributed for Sunflower are estimated at \$33.6 Million, with Phase I totaling \$14.4 Million and Phase II totaling \$19.1 Million.
- 2) Total costs attributed for Gabriel are estimated at \$23.3 Million, with Phase I totaling \$8.8 Million and Phase II totaling \$4.5 Million.
- 3) Total costs attributed for the Southwest Area are estimated at \$30.2 Million, with Phase I totaling \$11.4 Million, Phase II totaling \$8.7 Million, and Phase III totaling \$10.1 Million.

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4) Total costs for shared infrastructure totals \$9.1 Million.

B. Assignment of Costs: It is acknowledged that certain infrastructure elements assigned to specific development areas will serve to benefit areas outside the development area and the City as a whole. However, since the improvements identified are those necessary to support the increased demands imposed by development, the entire cost is assigned solely to the development area.





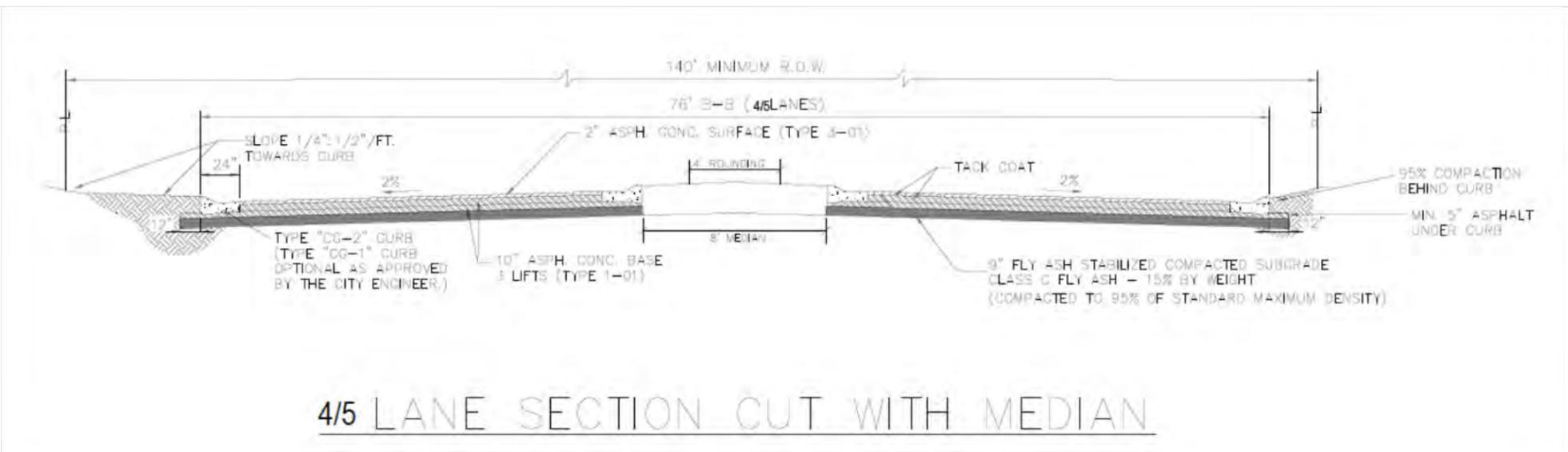
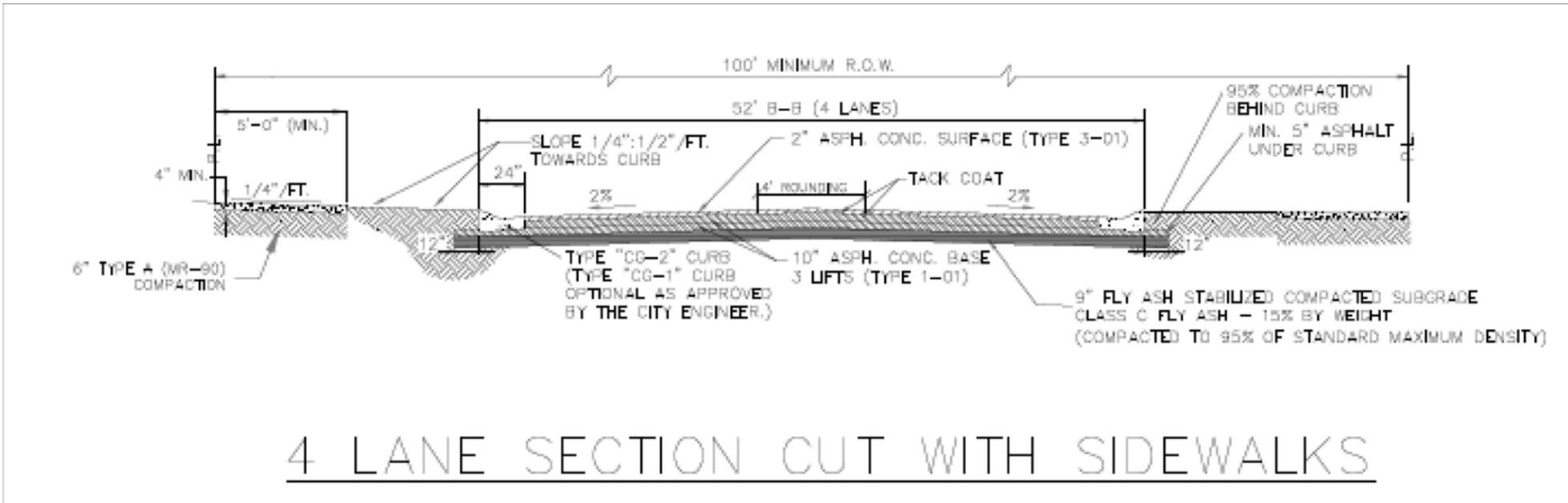
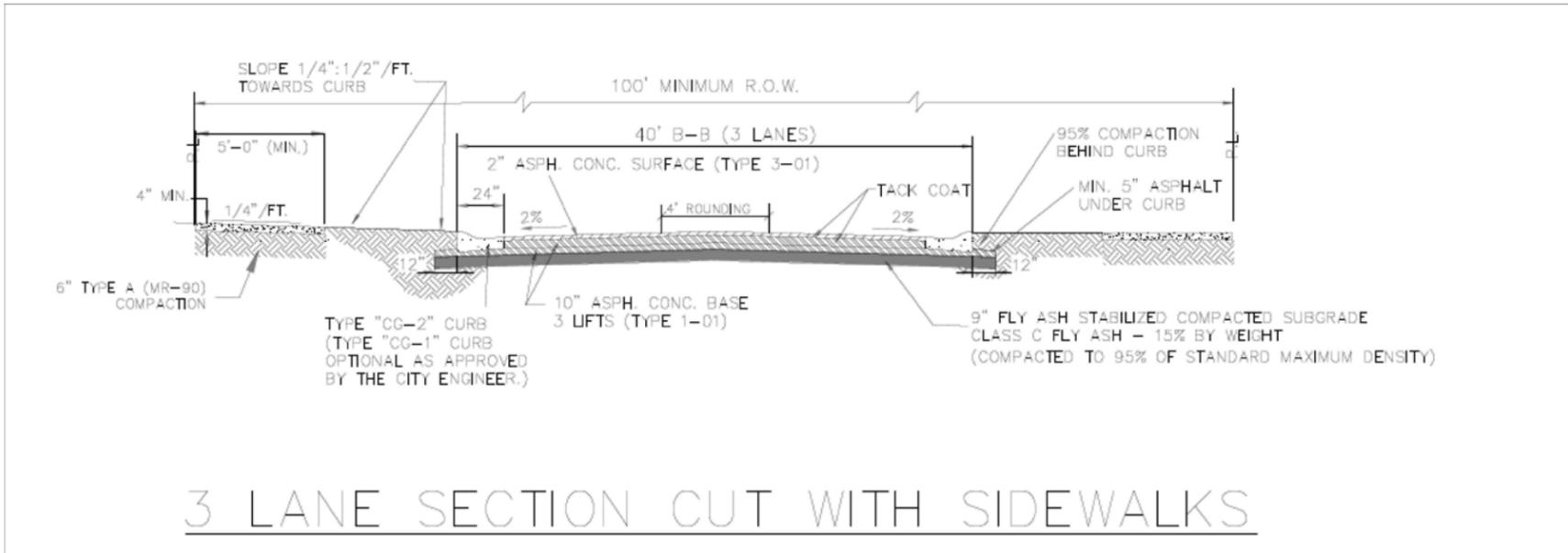
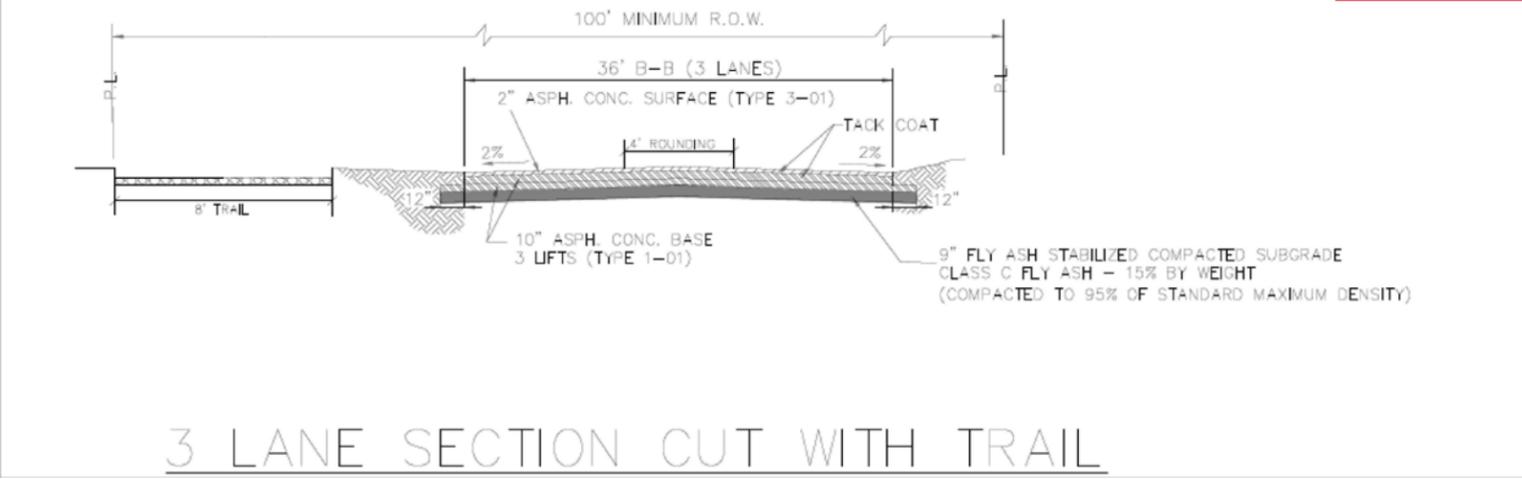
Road Segment	Description	COST
Lexington Phase I	0.8 Miles. Reconstruction of Lexington Avenue from 95 <sup>th</sup> Street southward to Spring Town Road. Four-lane divided with raised median, curb & gutter sidewalks both sides, turn lanes.	\$6.05 Million
Lexington Phase II	1.0 Miles. Reconstruction of Lexington Avenue from Spring Town Road southward and westward to Dual Drive. Four-lane divided with raised median, curb & gutter sidewalks both sides, turn lanes.	\$6.58 Million
Edgerton Road	1.15 Miles. Reconstruction of Edgerton Road from K-10 to 103 <sup>rd</sup> Street. 3-Lane Minor Arterial section. Curb & gutter sidewalks both sides, turn lanes.	\$5.36 Million
103 <sup>rd</sup> Street	1.7 Miles. Major upgrade of 103 <sup>rd</sup> Street from Dual Drive westward to Evening Star Road. 3-lane rural arterial section. No curb & gutter. Widening to include paved shoulders and turn lanes. Reconstruction of ditches. 8' multi-use path on one side.	\$6.13 Million
Spring Town Road	1.0 Miles. New road construction. 3-lane Minor Arterial Section. Curb & gutter, sidewalks both sides.	\$4.26 Million
107 <sup>th</sup> Street	0.8 Miles. New road construction. 3-lane Minor Arterial Section. Curb & gutter, sidewalks both sides.	\$3.41 Million
Dual Drive	0.5 Miles. New road construction. 4-lane Minor Arterial Section. Curb & gutter, sidewalks both sides.	\$3.02 Million
95 <sup>th</sup> Street Phase I	0.90 Miles. Reconstruction of 95 <sup>th</sup> Street from Lexington Avenue to Sunflower Road. 3-Lane Minor Arterial section. Curb & gutter sidewalks both sides, turn lanes.	\$3.73 Million
95 <sup>th</sup> Street Phase II	1.0 Miles. Major upgrade of 95 <sup>th</sup> Street from Sunflower Road to Edgerton Road. 3-lane rural arterial section. No curb & gutter. Widening to include paved shoulders and turn lanes. Reconstruction of ditches. 8' multi-use path on one side.	\$4.59 Million
Sunflower Road Phase I	0.5 Miles. Reconstruction of Sunflower Road from 91 <sup>st</sup> Street to 95 <sup>th</sup> Street. 3-Lane Minor Arterial section. Curb & gutter sidewalks both sides, turn lanes.	\$3.11 Million
Sunflower Road Phase II	1.0 Miles. Reconstruction of Sunflower Road from 95 <sup>th</sup> Street to 103 <sup>rd</sup> Street. 3-Lane Minor Arterial section. Curb & gutter sidewalks both sides, turn lanes.	\$3.55 Million
99 <sup>th</sup> Street Phase I	0.5 Miles. New road construction. 99 <sup>th</sup> Street from Lexington Avenue to Sunflower Road. 3-lane Minor Arterial Section. Curb & gutter, sidewalks both sides.	\$2.03 Million
99 <sup>th</sup> Street Phase II	1.0 Miles. New road construction. Rowen Road from 95 <sup>th</sup> Street to 103 <sup>rd</sup> Street. 3-lane Minor Arterial Section. Curb & gutter, sidewalks both sides.	\$4.46 Million
Rowen Road	1.0 Miles. New road construction. 99 <sup>th</sup> Street from Lexington Avenue to Sunflower Road. 3-lane Minor Arterial Section. Curb & gutter, sidewalks both sides.	\$4.13 Million
	TOTAL	\$60.44 Million

Road Improvements - Gabriel, SRL, & SWA

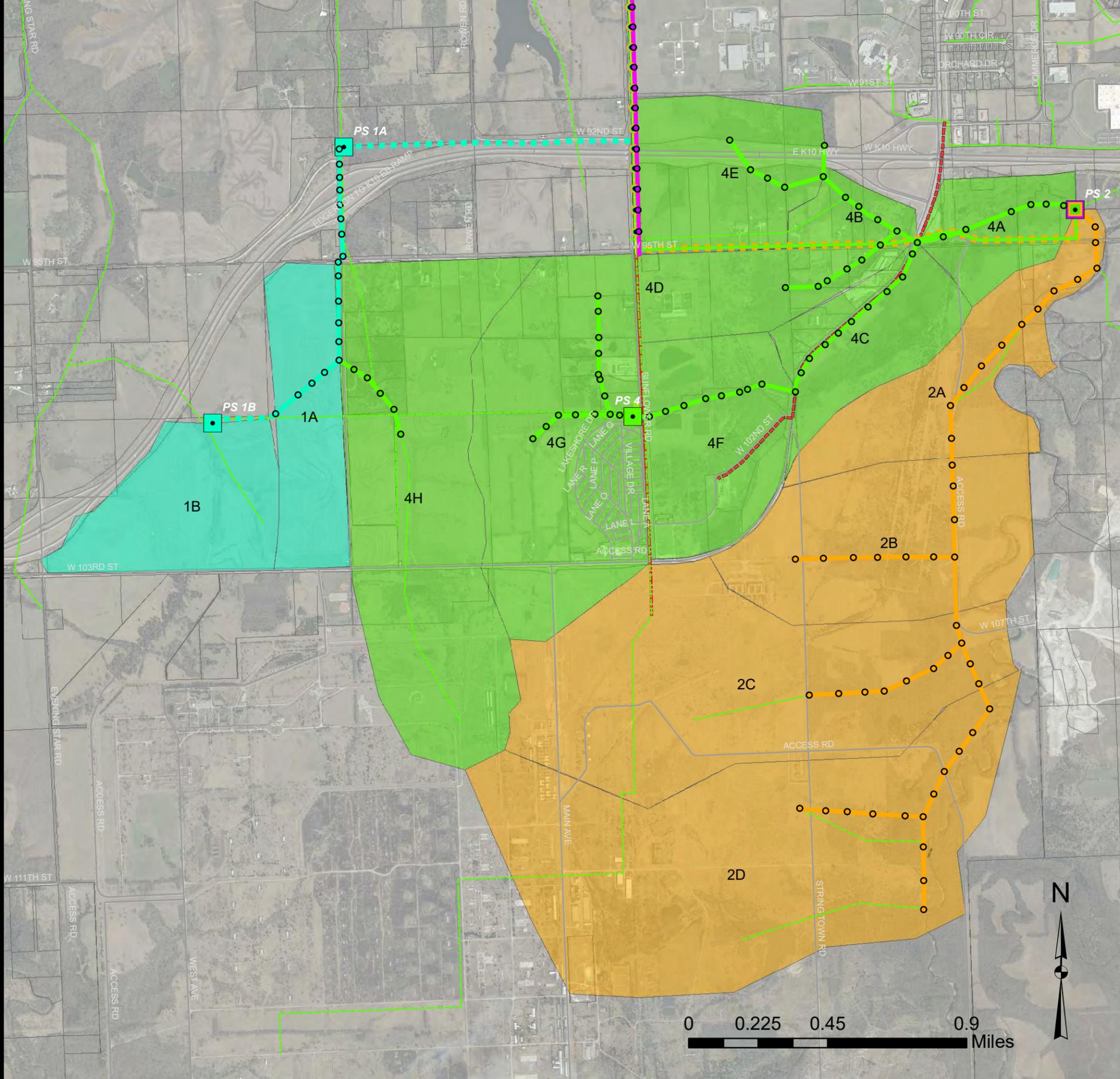
De Soto, Kansas

Legend

- Road Improvements
- 3-Lane with Curb
- 4/5-Lane, Divided, Curb Phase I
- 3-Lane, No Curb
- 4-Lane with Curb
- 4/5-Lane, Divided, Curb Phase II



Phase	Description	COST
<b>Combined Phase I</b>	Rehab and construct manholes on existing 12" gravity main that runs within the Sunflower Road utility corridor from 95th Street northward to the WWTP. Construct 36" gravity line connecting existing 12" gravity line to the WWTP.	\$556,000
<b>Combined Phase II</b> <b>**Timing dependent on flow and capacities.</b>	Construct parallel 24" gravity line within the Sunflower Road utility corridor from 95th Street north to the WWTP. Upgrade PS 2 from 0.6 MGD to 1.2 MGD	\$2,519,000
<b>SRL Phase I</b>	Construct PS 2 and 12" force main along 95th Street from PS 2 to Sunflower Road. Construct 24" gravity sewers to Basins 2A and 2B.	\$4,666,000
<b>SRL Phase II</b>	Construct 24" and 10" gravity sewers to Basins 2C and 2D.	\$2,307,000
<b>Gabriel Phase I</b>	Construct PS 1A and 12" force main along the north side of K-10 from Edgerton Road to the Sunflower Road utility corridor. Construct gravity sewers for Basin 1A.	\$1,968,000
<b>Gabriel Phase II</b>	Construct PS 1B, 10" force main, and gravity sewers for Basin 1B.	\$546,000
<b>SWA Phase I</b>	Construct PS 4 and gravity lines for Basin 4G. PS 4 will discharge into existing 10" force main within the Sunflower Road utility corridor. This is an interim improvement to serve Clearview City.	\$859,000
<b>SWA Phase II</b>	Construct gravity sewers for Basins 4A, 4B, 4C, and 4D.	\$1,905,000
<b>SWA Phase III</b>	Construct gravity sewers for Basins 4E, 4F and 4H.	\$1,343,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$16,669,000</b>



# Sewer Infrastructure - Gabriel, SRL, & SWA

De Soto, Kansas

**Legend**

- |  |   |   |  |  |  |
|--|---|---|--|--|--|
| <p><b>Prop Manholes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="color: blue;">●</span> Gabriel</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">●</span> SRL</li> <li><span style="color: orange;">●</span> On Exist. 12" Sewer</li> <li><span style="color: purple;">●</span> Combined Future</li> <li><span style="color: green;">●</span> SWA</li> </ul> | <p><b>Prop. Pump Stations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border: 1px solid blue; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Gabriel</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid orange; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> SRL &amp; SWA</li> <li><span style="border: 1px solid green; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> Clearview (Interium)</li> </ul> | <p><b>Prop. Gravity Sewers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid blue; display: inline-block; width: 20px;"></span> Gabriel</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid orange; display: inline-block; width: 20px;"></span> SRL</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid purple; display: inline-block; width: 20px;"></span> Combined</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid green; display: inline-block; width: 20px;"></span> Combined</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid green; display: inline-block; width: 20px;"></span> SWA</li> </ul> | <p><b>Prop. Sewer Force Mains</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px dashed blue; display: inline-block; width: 20px;"></span> Gabriel</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px dashed orange; display: inline-block; width: 20px;"></span> SRL &amp; SWA</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px dashed green; display: inline-block; width: 20px;"></span> SWA</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px dashed green; display: inline-block; width: 20px;"></span> Potential Future De Soto Sewers</li> </ul> | <p><b>Existing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px dashed red; display: inline-block; width: 20px;"></span> Exist. 10" Sewer Force Main</li> <li><span style="border-bottom: 1px solid green; display: inline-block; width: 20px;"></span> Exist. 12" Sewer Gravity Main</li> </ul> | <p><b>Sewer Basins</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="background-color: lightblue; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px;"></span> Gabriel</li> <li><span style="background-color: orange; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px;"></span> SRL</li> <li><span style="background-color: green; display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px;"></span> SWA</li> </ul> |
|--|---|---|--|--|--|





# DE SOTO

KANSAS



## PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN DECEMBER 2018





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## Acknowledgements

### ***Mayor and City Council***

Mayor Rick Walker  
Lori Murdock, City Council President  
Rob Daniels, City Council Member  
Kevin Honomichl, City Council Member  
Danny Lane, City Council Member  
Kevin Ritter, City Council Member

### ***Park Board***

Aaron Brownell  
Josh Champlain  
Mary Jo Cline  
Pricilla Franks  
Bill Miller  
Consuelo Montoya  
Todd Tucker

### ***Administration***

City Administrator, Mike Brungardt  
City Planner, Brad Weisenburger

### ***Parks and Recreation Staff***

Jay Garvin, Parks and Recreation Director  
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

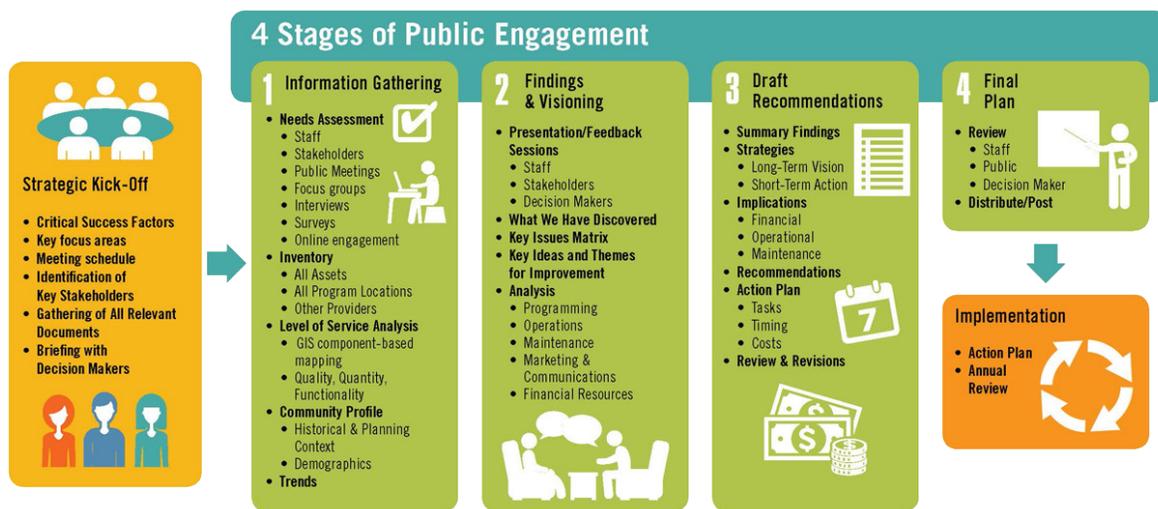
## PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

Over a decade ago, in 2006, the first Parks and Recreation Master Plan in De Soto was developed to help guide staff in planning and providing quality parks and recreation services. In fall of 2018, just months after the City finalized its first ever Strategic Plan, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan was updated to reflect the changing

needs and desires of the area, in addition to accounting for the changing resources, programs, and facilities of De Soto. This plan will serve as an evolving resource to help guide the Parks and Recreation Department in reaching the desired vision of the community.

## Planning Process Summary

### Key Elements of a Community Parks and Recreation Strategic/Master Plan



Typically our Strategic/Master Plans include a 5-year focus on operations, 10-year focus on capital, and 20 year strategic vision. Other elements and tools are added as needed for a community-specific plan.

# Key Issues Summary

Data Parks and Recreation Master Plan	Qualitative Data				Quantitative Data		
	Consultant Team	Staff Input	Public Input	Leadership Interviews	Community Survey	Other City Documents	Facility Assessment/LOS
 <p><b>Key Issue - Rating Scale</b></p> <p>a - priority b - opportunity to improve c - minor or future issue</p> <p>blank means the issue didn't come up or wasn't addressed</p>							
<b>Organizational</b>							
Improve ADA accessibility for all facilities & activities	a	a	a	a		a	a
Improve WiFi Connectivity	a	a	a		a		
Greater access to information about what parks & recreation department does	a	a				a	a
Staff/Coach/Volunteer/Referee Training, Incentives & Organization	b		a		a		
Increase awareness of programs, services, amenities, & hours	b				a		a
Perceived lack of partnerships/communication with local agencies & businesses		b	a			a	
Great inequity in lease and rental rates	a	a					
Improve communication around youth sports	c				a		
Need longer/late hours of operation (pool)					a		
Better use of technology (ex. Mobile app) & social media (Twitter)	a						
<b>Programs &amp; Service Delivery</b>							
Teenagers, Young Adults, & Seniors identified as underserved populations	a	a		a	a	a	
More offerings of unique community events (5ks, Movie in the Park, etc.)	a	a	b	a		a	
Wider diversity of unique program offerings such as cultural & artistic classes	a	a			a	a	
Need better marketing of programs & events	a	a	a				
Timely & consistent communication about programs	a	a	a				
Need additional (&/or backup) fitness instructors	a	a					
Need evening fitness & program hours		c			a		
Need better youth sports organization & structure			b				
Swimming lessons often full			c				
<b>Facilities &amp; Amenities</b>							
Need for connectivity of trails	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
Need additional sports fields (especially for soccer)	a	a	a			a	a
Aging infrastructure & amenities inhibits services (*included)	a	a	b	a		a	a
Restrooms - Need Improvements & Additional Facilities in Parks *	a	a	a	a	a		
Increase availability for indoor space for athletics	a	a	a			a	a
Need for more fitness rooms/dance or gymnastics studio	a	a	a			a	a
Practice fields in need of repair *	a	b			a	a	a
<b>Additional Issues</b>							
Additional lighting (athletic fields &/or courts) *	b	a	c		a	a	
More Parking (esp. at Miller Park)	a	a	a		a		
Develop Riverfest Park	a	a		a		a	
Need to develop Wilderness Park, Widow Big Knife Park, Lexington & Commerce property	a	a				a	a
Playground equipment outdated		a	b		a	a	
Improve entrance & wayfinding signage/monuments at entrance of parks	a	a	b	b			
Need adventure/unique elements at parks	b		a		a		
<b>Finance</b>							
Need additional funding sources	a	a	a			a	
Create value & equity in User Fees	a	a				a	
Need donations for park projects	a	a	a				

# Inventory Assessment Summary

## City Owned & Operated Parks

- Miller Park
- Widow Big Knife Park
- Riverfest Park
- Wilderness Park
- Commerce and Lexington (Future Park)

## County Owned & Operated- used by De Soto Residents:

- Kill Creek Park
- 95th Street Trail Head & Kill Creek Streamway Dog Park
- Lexington Lake Park

## County Owned & City Operated Parks:

- Sunflower Park Ball Fields

## Park Matrix

Park Amenities																							
Park Name	Address	Acreege	Trail Length (Miles)	Diamond Playgrounds	Rectangular Ballfields	Sand Volleyball Fields	Outdoor Basketball Courts	Tennis Courts	Horseshoe Pits	Stage/Amphitheater	Picnic Shelters/Pavilions/Pagoda	Water Fountains	Batting Cage	Restrooms	Archery/Shooting Range	Boat Ramps/ Marina	Fishing Docks	Swimming Beach	Tent Camping	Dog Park	Rain Garden		
Miller Park	83rd and Ferry	10	0.35	2	3	0	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	4	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Widow Big Knife Park	7560 Edgerton Rd	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Riverfest Park	33440 W. 79th	50	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Wilderness Park	13205 Evening Star Rd	67	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Commerce & Lexington - Future	Commerce & Lexington	7	0.18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sunflower Park - Owned by Johnson County	37515 W. 103rd St	6	1.23	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kill Creek Park - Owned by Johnson County	11670 S Homestead Ln	884	13.5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	1	8	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
Kill Creek Streamway Dog Park & 95th St. Trail Head Owned by Johnson County	33460 W 95th St	16	0.88	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Lexington Lake Park - Owned by Johnson County	9000 Sunflower Rd	456	3.1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Cedar Creek Boat Ramp- Owned by Johnson County	Access Rd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>1534</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

\* Acreege & Trail length data taken from GIS or from DeSoto/Johnson County Online Parks Descriptions

Residents in eastern De Soto have limited level of service to parks and facilities and have one or two regional facilities within 3-mile radius and are more than a walkable distance from any neighborhood or community park or facility.

Between downtown and the east side, there is a buffer of agricultural land. It would be beneficial to add a community park east of the agricultural buffer.

If a park is not added in eastern De Soto, trails should be added for non-vehicular access to other parks & amenities.



# Recommendations and Action Plan



## De Soto Parks & Recreation Recommendations & Action Plan



### Goal 1:

#### Improve Facilities and Amenities

- Improve connectivity of trails
- Maintain/improve existing facilities
- Update aging infrastructure
- Improve ADA accessibility
- Implement Riverfest Master Plan
- Repurpose/refinish indoor fitness space
- Install/improve restrooms
- Install new entrance & wayfinding signage
- Fix drainage problems
- Install additional amenities at existing facilities
- Acquire new park land for sports fields
- Master Plan Widow Big Knife Park, Wilderness Park, Lexington & Commerce property



### Goal 2:

#### Continue to Improve Organizational Efficiencies

- Prepare ADA Transitional Plan
- Improve WiFi connectivity in parks/facilities
- Clarify Mission, Vision, Values
- Redefine Park Board bylaws, roles, duties
- Clarify youth sports policies & procedures
- Utilize relevant marketing tools
- Improve/develop partnerships
- Develop equitable rental rates
- Improve communication with youth sports
- Extend pool hours
- Better use of technology & social media



### Goal 3:

#### Continue to Improve Programs/Service Delivery

- Offer more programs for all ages
- Add more special events at Riverfest Park
- Hire one new full-time recreation programmer
- Increase social media presence
- Target user groups via email marketing
- Advertise for instructors & increase incentives/pay
- Offer more evening programs
- Improve transparency & communication with youth sports parents
- Offer additional swim programs



### Goal 4:

#### Increase Financial Opportunities

- Recalculate Park Impact/In Lieu Of Fees
- Potential Bond Referendum for large capital projects
- Implement Cost Recovery & Pricing Philosophy/Policy
- Develop gift catalog for donors
- Resurrect use of Parks Foundation Fund

# I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

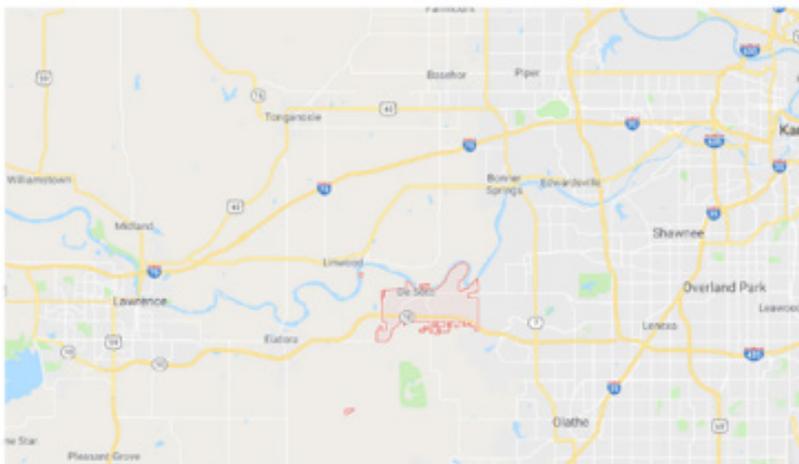
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## B. HISTORY OF PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The City of De Soto is a growing municipality located in Johnson County, just a short drive from Lawrence, Kansas, and Kansas City. A number of corporations, including international enterprises, call De Soto home, in addition to over 5,700 residents. Located just south of the Kansas River, the City of De Soto offers residents quality of life through its parks, recreation programs, and community facilities.

In 2001, the City of De Soto Parks and Recreation Department was formed. Prior to the department being developed, a Park Board performed physical labor, fundraising and made recommendations to the City Council.



Since that time, the De Soto Parks and Recreation Department has grown from two to six full-time staff members. Additions during this time frame include Riverfest Park, the Aquatic Center, and numerous programs.

The Johnson County Park and Recreation District owns four parks in De Soto City limits which are used and enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

## De Soto Parks Foundation

In 2013, former Mayor Maniez wanted to collect donations to purchase property for the expansion of Miller Park. He believed more people would donate if the recipient of the donation had 501 (c) (3) status – only donations to an entity recognized by IRS as being tax exempt can be listed as deduction on one’s taxes.

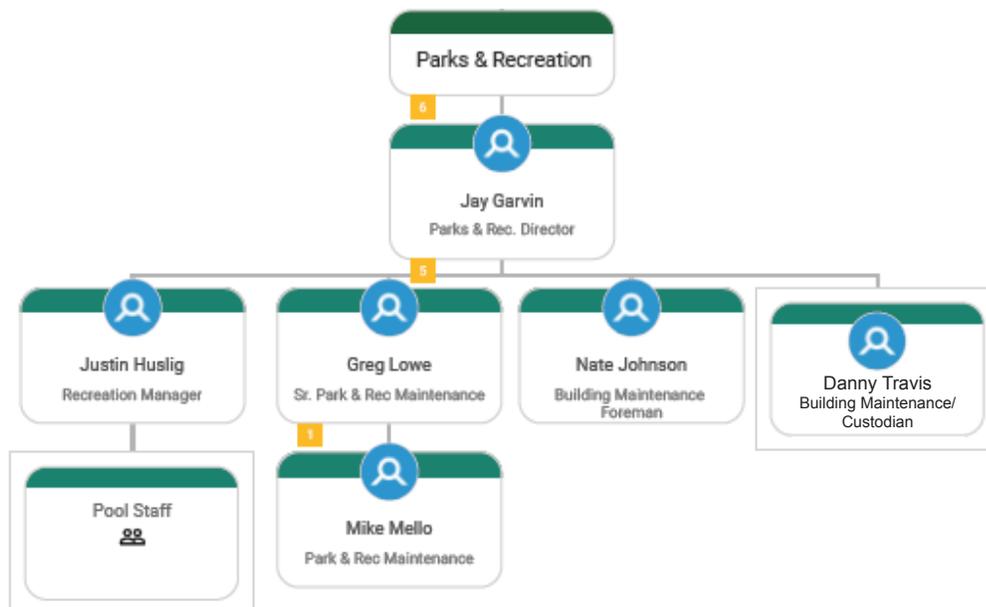
At the time, getting 501 (c)(3) status for the Parks Foundation through the IRS would have been a huge paperwork undertaking. To avoid this, the Department connected with the Kansas Rural Communities Association (KRCA), which has 501 (c)(3) status. Any donations to the De Soto Parks Foundation are funneled through the KRCA, which allows donations to qualify as being given to a 501 (c)(3) entity.

The Park Foundation is a Kansas Not-for-Profit entity (but does not have any status with the IRS), and the board members are the members of the City Council. Thus, to disperse funds, the City Council would need to take a vote, in the capacity of the board of the Foundation, to disperse funds.

## C. DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Kansas officially declared De Soto a “City of the Second Class” based on its population reaching 5,700 residents. De Soto operates under a common form of municipal government in Kansas, the Mayor-Council form, with Council members elected at large. The Parks and Recreation Department is divided into four main divisions, managed by a Parks and Recreation Director, with one staff for each of the departments: Recreation, Parks and Recreation Maintenance, Building Maintenance, and Community Center Operations. The Department’s organization is show in **Figure 1**.

**Figure 1: De Soto Parks and Recreation Organizational Chart**



The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for four main primary areas:

- Maintenance and upkeep of the City’s four park properties (Miller Park, Riverfest Park, Widow Big Knife, and Wilderness)
- Maintenance and Operations of the Community Center, City Hall, Aquatic Center, and Dog Kennel
- Scheduling, oversight, and program implementation of all the recreation programs offered by the City
- Scheduling and management of rental space operations at the Community Center

There is also a Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, which was recently re-established to provide planning recommendations and advisement. The main responsibility of the Park Board, according to Section 12-301 of the City Code, is to “review and study the operation, maintenance, improvement and expansion of all park land and facilities in the city.” The Park Board assists the city staff in recommending long-range planning for future city parks and other recreation facilities. The Park Board operates with seven members, each appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council.

## D. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The purpose of the Master Plan Update is to determine the direction for parks and recreation facility and programming improvements based on the evolving needs and priorities identified by the community. This plan will serve as a guide to help the City make decisions regarding current and future parks, recreation, and trails provision. This process included the engagement of the community while identifying opportunities for improvement in an easy to read format that is implementable.

1. **Develop a Master Plan Update with useful qualitative information that depicts the true needs of the community.** Gain broad public input from the public meetings, on-line survey, newly restructured Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and the Project Team, and utilize existing data from the City to ensure consistency with existing City planning efforts
2. **Develop the plan in a usable format that the City can build upon over time, and engage community stakeholders throughout the process.** Improved and increased collaboration among community stakeholders and agencies, utilization of a digital format for all mapping for future use, and a plan that can be built upon over time.
3. **Identify strengths, opportunities, and gaps for parks, recreation programs, and trails in De Soto.** Identify opportunities for prioritizing parks and recreational assets and focus on programs from the community input gathered and survey analysis.
4. **Assist with smooth transition of the new Park and Recreation Advisory Board.** Include newly appointed Park and Recreation Board members into the Master Plan Update process as well as review and make suggestions to the bylaws.
5. **Provide and present findings, recommendations, and implementation strategies that are usable and reader-friendly.** Synthesize all data and information gathered during the public input process and surveys, and clearly articulates the needs for parks, recreation, programming, open space, and trails in a simple yet precise format.

# E. RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS

## City Comprehensive Plan

[The Comprehensive Plan](#), adopted in 2004, and updated in 2011, acts as a roadmap and guide for how the community of De Soto wants to improve in the next 10 to 20 years. Primarily, the plan

provides recommendations for future actions involving land development and land preservation. In 2004, Parks and Recreation Department staff was only made up of a Director and a full-time maintenance person. It was noted at that time that City resources would have to be leveraged by developing partnerships, outsourcing, grants, and other earned income opportunities. Below is a list of recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan specifically related to the Parks and Recreation Department.

<b>Comprehensive Plan (2004) Key Issues Directly Related and Relevant To De Soto Parks and Recreation Department</b>
The City should identify and acquire park land to the west for a future community park.
The City and School District should meet annually to confer about their dual role of providing facilities for use by citizens.
The City should plan for the development of individual park master plans for Miller Memorial Park and the undeveloped park sites. These plans will guide the City as it moves toward the upgrading of its current system and plans for future improvements by working in collaboration with its partners.
The City should initiate the process of documenting its costs for the facilities and services it currently provides in its Parks and Recreation Department. Those costs can be used as the City considers a cost recovery policy, annual budgets, and partnerships with others.
The City should schedule a formal recognition ceremony for its volunteers who have worked over several decades to ensure that services are provided.
Neighborhoods should be served with playgrounds. Given limited resources, park sites which are larger than playgrounds should be devoted to community level parks.
The City should develop a trail system that links neighborhoods to parks and points of interest, including the school campus.
The City should proceed with its plans to seek voter approval for a new outdoor swimming pool.
The City should refine its Impact Fee Ordinance, develop a Cost Recovery Policy and identify and implement a funding source for parks and recreation improvements.
The City Council and City Manager should continue to work with the Parks and Recreation Board to change its focus to long range planning issues and policy development.
Land adjacent to Miller Memorial Park on its northeast corner and east side along Kaw Street should be acquired for future expansion of the park. Land on the north side of the park should be acquired to provide passive park purposes as a viewshed to the river and bluff area

# Strategic Plan

In October of 2016, the City Council and City Leadership developed the City’s first [Strategic Plan](#), which lists refined goals and objectives, in addition new mission and values statement. This plan was put in place to provide clarity for future decisions regarding city-wide policy. The Strategic Plan focused on areas such as economic development, incentives, planning efforts, and growth.

Many of the key themes identified in the Strategic Plan related to parks and recreation are referenced throughout the report, as detailed in the following table. It is important to remain consistent with previously defined goals and planning efforts and to further refine the community’s vision for the parks and recreation services. This chart can be a quick reference document for city staff to compare the plans and understand how they work together.

A graphic titled "VALUES" with a background of a park path. It lists seven core values:

- **Innovation** – Strive to find a better way.
- **Stewardship** – Take seriously the trust that has been placed in you.
- **Excellence** – Don't let "good" be the enemy of "great".
- **Accountability** – Honest, open, and transparent.
- **Integrity and Trust** – Do what is right, and expect others to do the same.
- **Safety** – Never compromise.
- **Community Engagement** – Encourage and embrace feedback.
- **Employee Enrichment** – Value our personnel assets.

A graphic titled "VISION" with a background of a park path. It contains the following text:

De Soto will be a safe, vibrant, and attractive community, where people and families live, learn, work and play, and where one can take advantage of the cultural aspects of a major metropolitan area while enjoying the quality of life advantages of a non-urban lifestyle.

A graphic titled "MISSION" with a background of a park path. It contains the following text:

"The City of De Soto delivers big adventure and lifelong opportunities to its residents. Civic pride, inclusiveness, and collaboration are hallmarks of our welcoming city where responsible growth is a goal, and Government is responsive, accountable, and works in the best interest of the people."

<b>Strategic Plan Action Plan (2016) Items Directly Related and Relevant To De Soto Parks and Recreation Department</b>	
<b>Goal IF2: Provide integrated pedestrian and trails network throughout the city.</b>	
<b>Initiative IF2.1: Promote the construction of Complete Streets</b>	
Objective IF 2.1B	Sign bike paths and identify bike lanes with striping on roads where it is appropriate
Objective IF 2.1C	Develop partners to advocate for bike trails and support bike programs
<b>Initiative IF2.2: Connect existing and future parks with paved recreation paths.</b>	
Objective IF2.2A:	Include a Initiate trail and sidewalk master plan within the Comprehensive Plan update in 2018
Objective IF2.2.B:	Connect trail links identified in master plan
Objective IF2.2C:	Focus on connection to new Lexington Lake Park. Enlist the help of the Johnson County Park & Recreation District
Objective IF2.2D:	Include a recreation path in the plans for the 91st Street Extension
Objective IF2.2E:	Seek funding and other opportunities to install a pedestrian trail or sidewalk along Ottawa Street from 83rd north to Riverfest Park.
<b>Goal AM1: Expand recreational programming and upgrade amenities at parks facilities.</b>	
Objective AM1.1.A:	Hire a consultant to update the 2006 Parks & Recreation plan
Objective AM1.1.B:	Garner community input in planning process
Objective AM1.1.C:	Plan should address the form and function of an expanded role for the Park Board
<b>Initiative AM3.11.3: Build recreation paths and trails connecting existing and future parks facilities sidewalks are walkable and safe.</b>	
Objective AM3.1.A:	Objective AM3.1.A: Develop comprehensive trail system master plan
Objective AM3.1.B:	Objective AM3.1.B: Research and pursue grants and funding opportunities for trails
Objective AM3.1.C:	Objective AM3.1.C: Obtain necessary easements and rights-of-way.
Objective AM3.1.D:	Work closely with the Johnson County Park & Recreation district to identify areas where we can cooperate
<b>Initiative AM1.4: Work to identify and implement programming expansions to serve people of all ages and abilities.</b>	
Objective AM1.4A:	Conduct outreach to get public input on desired programming expansion
Objective AM1.4B:	Budget additional staff in the Parks & Recreation department as necessary
Objective AM1.4C:	Identify local interest groups that would be willing and able to assist with operational and staffing needs of additional programming
<b>Initiative AM1. 5: Increase the amount and diversity of physical amenities at City parks facilities.</b>	
Objective AM1.5A:	Inventory existing parks amenities and prioritize upgrades or expansions
Objective AM1.5B:	Address ADA issues, wherever feasible
Objective AM1.5C:	Research and pursue grants and funding opportunities
Objective AM1.5D:	Consider ATV or Motor Cross park at Wilderness Park
Objective AM1.5E:	Pursue grant for historic marker of Quantrell's Crossing at Wilderness Park
Objective AM1.5F:	Construct RV park at Riverfest

### Links to Planning Documents

- [City of De Soto Parks Master Plan](#) (2006)
- [City of De Soto Strategic Plan](#) (2018)
- [City of De Soto Comprehensive Plan](#) (2011)
- [Johnson County Parks and Recreation Legacy Plan](#)
- [City of De Soto Land Use Map](#)
- City Code

## F. METHODOLOGY OF THIS PLANNING PROCESS

The process utilized in developing this Master Plan included the formation of an integrated Project Team that included staff and appointed officials. This project team provided detailed input to the GreenPlay team consistent with the planning process. This allowed for a collaborative approach in creating a master plan that incorporates staff and consultant expertise, as well as local knowledge, institutional history, and engagement that only community members can provide. The development of this plan included the following tasks:

- Document Collection and Review
- Community Engagement
- Facility Inventory
- Needs Assessment
- Financial Analysis
- Program Analysis
- Alternative Service Provider Analysis
- Recommendations: Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan

## Community Engagement

The following methods were used:

- Focus Groups
- Stakeholder meetings
- Community-wide public meetings
- Open link survey

## Facility Inventory

- Inventory of parks and facilities using existing mapping, staff interviews, and on-site visits to verify amenities and assess the condition of the facilities and surrounding areas.
- Interviews with staff to provide information about parks and recreation facilities and services, along with insight regarding the current practices and experiences in serving residents and visitors.
- Identification of alternative providers of recreation services to provide insight regarding the market opportunities in the area for potential new facilities and services.
- Analysis and measurement of the current delivery of service for parks and recreation facilities using a Level of Service Analysis.
- Targeting a level of service that is both feasible and aligned with the desires of citizens as expressed through the statistically-valid survey and other public outreach methods.

**Figure 2: Community Engagement Strategies Utilized**



## Assessment and Analysis

- Financial
- Program

## Needs Assessment

- Consideration of the profile of the community and demographics, including population growth, and projections of demographic changes.
- Further analysis of the statistically-valid community interest and opinion survey as well as open link survey.

## Operational and Marketing Analysis

- SWOT Analysis
- Staffing assessment

## Recommendations: Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan

- Identification and categorization of recommendations into themes with goals, objectives, and an action plan for implementation.
- Development of an action plan for capital improvements including operational impacts, and timeframe to support the implementation of the plan.



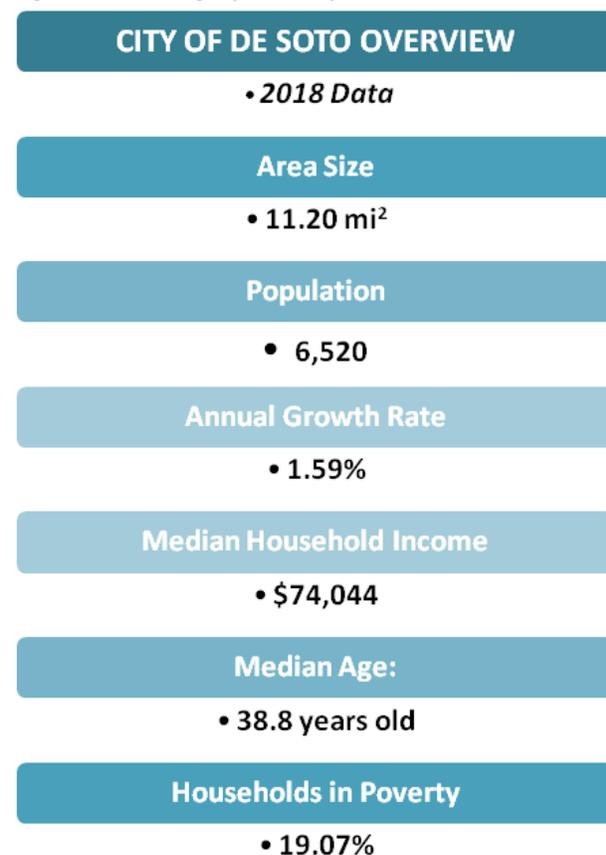
# II. THE DESOTO COMMUNITY: PROFILE AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

## A. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

By analyzing population data, trends emerge that can inform decision making and resource allocation strategies for the provision of parks, recreation, and open space management. Key community characteristics were analyzed to identify current demographic statistics and trends that can impact the planning and provision of services.



Figure 3: Demographic Map and Overview of Study Area



Source: Esri Business Analyst; Image: Google Maps, June 2018

This demographic profile was compiled in June 2018 from a combination of sources including the ESRI Business Analyst, American Community Survey, and U.S. Census. The following topics will be covered in detail in this report:



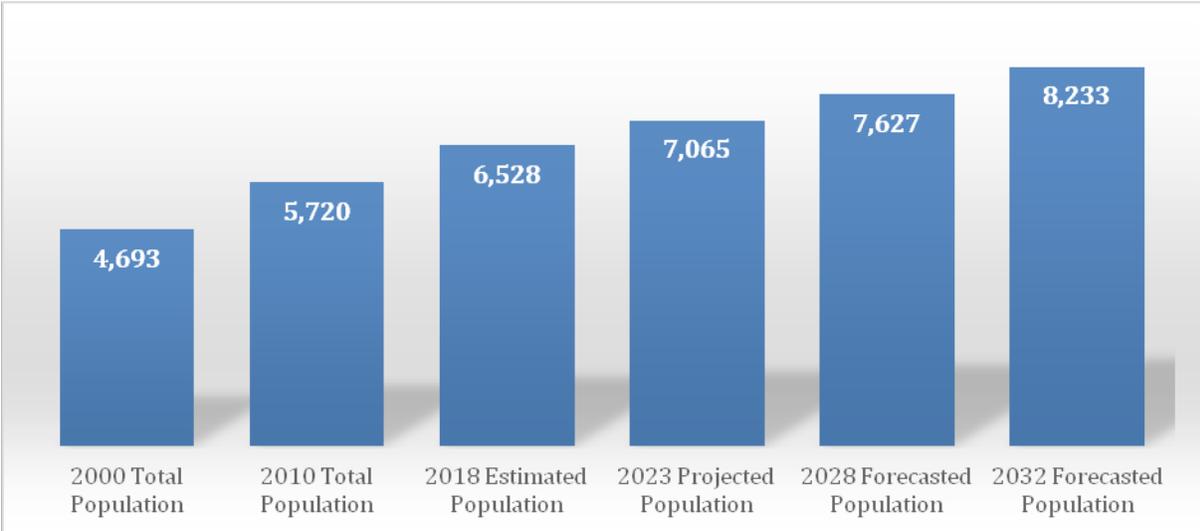
## Population Projections

Figure 4 contains actual population figures based on the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census, in addition to estimates of 2018 and 2022 population by ESRI Business Analyst. Using the average annual growth rates between 2018 and 2023, projections were calculated for 5 and 10 year increments until 2032.



The City of De Soto is expected to grow at over 1.59% average annual growth from 2018 to 2023; projections estimate that the population will reach over 8,000 people in 2032. De Soto has a higher population growth than Johnson County, the State of Kansas, and the United States.

Figure 4: City Population Growth Trend



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Esri Business Analyst Population Projections  
 \*2018 – 2028 growth rate of 1.59% used to forecast 2028 – 2032 population





The median age is expected to increase from 35.4 years of age in 2010 to 39.1 years in 2023. This can also be seen when looking at the shift of age groups in **Figure 5**. The age group of 15 to 24 year olds is expected to decline three percent by 2023. Similarly, the age group of 55 to 64 year olds is also expected to decrease by the same amount. The age group expected to see the most growth is the 65 to 74-year-olds.

*Median Age*

**2010**  
35.4

**2018**  
38.8

**2023**  
39.1

### Population Age & Gender Distribution

The City of De Soto has less than one percent more males than females. The existing and projected population of different age groups, or cohorts, is illustrated in the following series of figures. As demonstrated in **Figure 5**, the city has very different age distributions. Knowing this can help inform in planning recreational activities for specific age groups.

**Figure 5: Estimated Population by Age Cohort between 2018 and 2023**



Source: Esri Business Analyst

### Race/Ethnicity

Prior to reviewing demographic data pertaining to a population’s racial and ethnic character, it is important to note how the U.S. Census classifies and counts individuals who identify as Hispanic. The Census notes that Hispanic origin can be viewed as the heritage, nationality, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person’s parents or ancestors before arrival in the United States. In the U.S. Census, people who identify as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish may be any race and are included in all of the race categories.

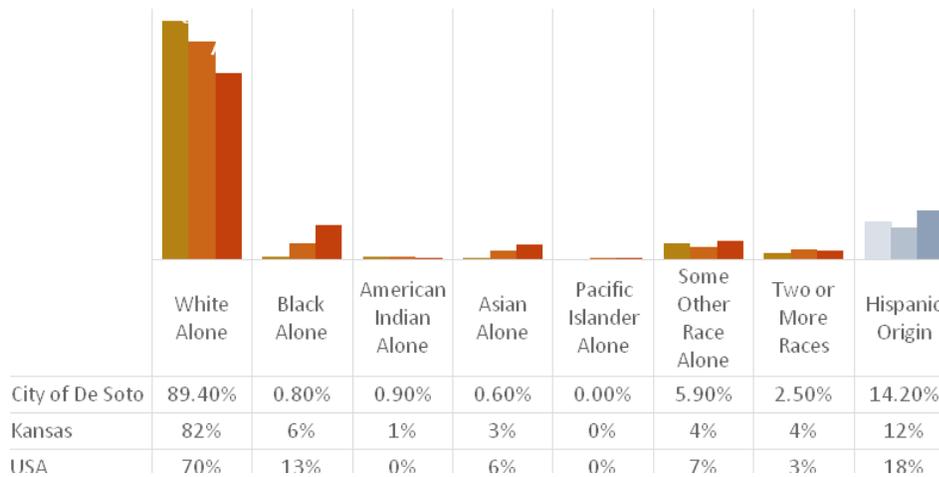


Overall, the state of Kansas is more diverse than the City of De Soto; however, the Hispanic population in De Soto is about two percent higher than the state. Over 89 percent of the population in De Soto is white. When analyzing those who identify as Hispanic, that number is expected to increase from 14.19% in 2018 to 15.95% in 2023.

All race categories add up to 100 percent of the population; the indication of Hispanic origin is a different view of the population and is not considered a race. **Figure 6** reflects the approximate racial/ethnic population distribution for the City, State of Kansas, and the United States, based on the 2018 estimates from the U.S. Census. Understanding the populations in the area can inform marketing and communication strategies, in addition to programming strategies.



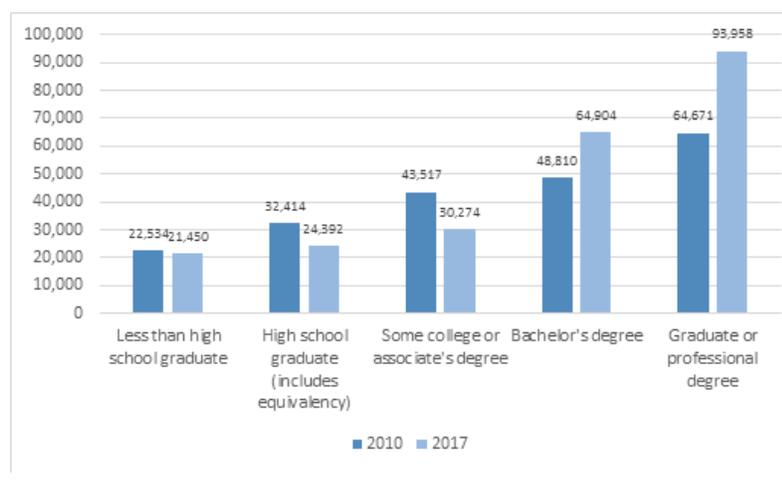
**Figure 6: City, State, and National Comparison of Racial and Ethnic Character**



### Educational Attainment

According to a Census study, education levels had more effect on earnings over a 40-year span in the workforce than any other demographic factor, such as gender, race, and ethnic origin.<sup>1</sup> This can be seen in **Figure 7**, where the educational attainment for De Soto was measured against median earnings. Those with a Graduate or Professional degree earned nearly four times the amount of a high school graduate.

**Figure 7: Median Earnings in 2010 and 2017 By Educational Attainment**

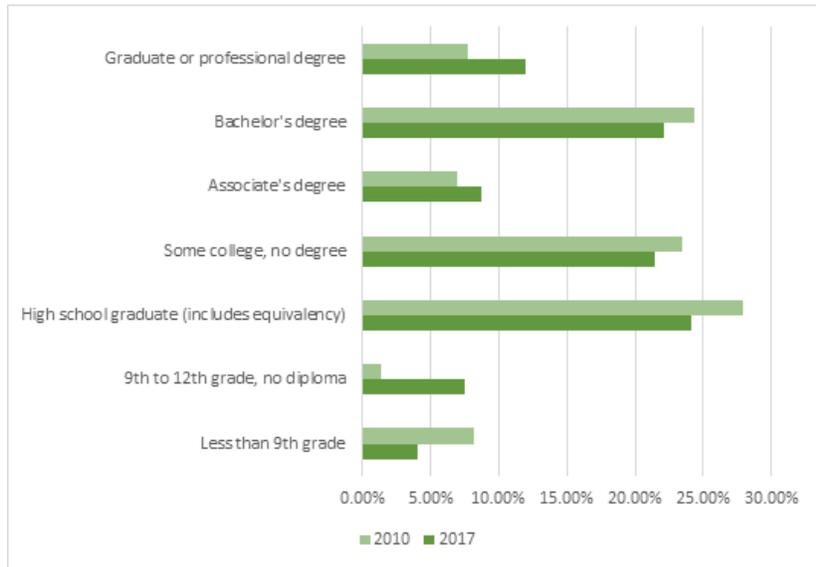


<sup>1</sup> Tiffany Julian and Robert Kominski, "Education and Synthetic Work-Life Earnings Estimates" American Community Survey Reports, US Census Bureau, <http://www.Census.gov/prosd/2011pubs/acs-14.pdf>, September 2011.



A breakdown of the educational attainment by City residents over the age of 25 was measured, as illustrated in **Figure 8**. Over a quarter of residents had completed some college, but had not received a degree. About a fifth of the population received a Bachelor's Degree.

**Figure 8: Educational Attainment of Adults, 2010 to 2017 (ages 25+)**

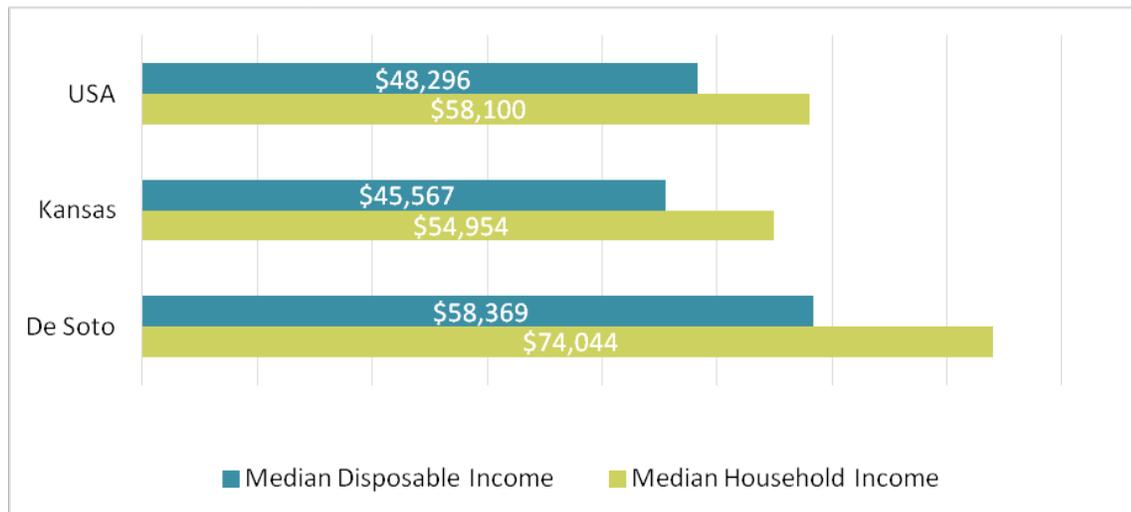


Source: Esri Business Analyst

### Employment

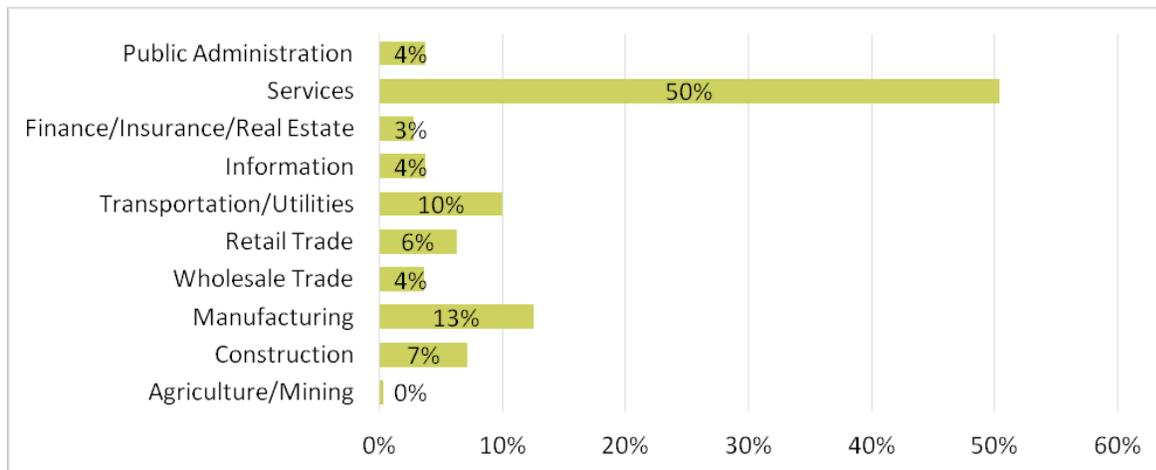
The most current data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the American Community Survey, illustrated in **Figure 9**, indicates that the median and disposable household income in the City is higher than that of the Kansas and the United States. In 2010, the median income for the City of De Soto was \$61,915 according to the American Community Survey. That number has increased to \$74,044 as of 2018.

**Figure 9: Median and Disposable Household Income**



Source: Esri Business Analyst

**Figure 10: 2018 Employment by Industry in De Soto**



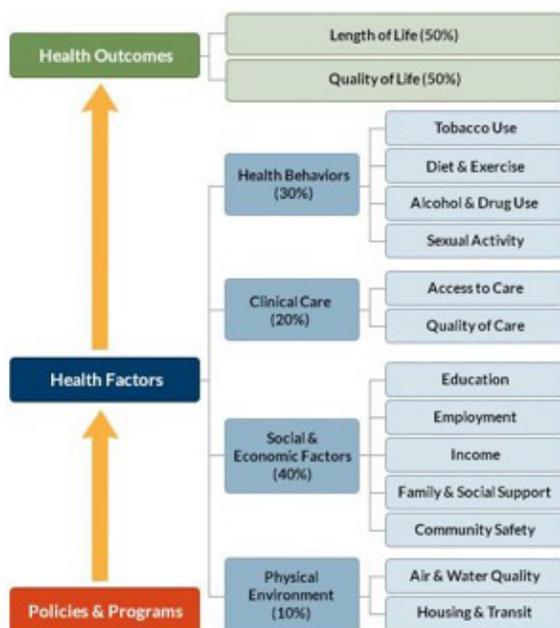
Source: Esri Business Analyst

### Health Ranking

Understanding the status of the community’s health can help inform policies related to recreation and fitness. For instance, learning that the 9.4 percent of the City of De Soto lives with a disability may help justify the need for adaptive programming in recreation, or additional accessibility in facilities and playgrounds. The American Community Survey attempts to capture six elements of a disability: hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, and independent living.

9.4% of residents within the City of De Soto live with a disability.

Johnson County ranked 1<sup>st</sup> out of 103 Counties for Health Outcomes and Health Factors.



### County Health Ranking

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s *County Health Rankings and Roadmaps* provide annual insight on the general health of national, state, and county populations.<sup>2</sup> The 2018 *Rankings* model shown here highlights the topic areas reviewed by the Foundation. The health ranking for gauged the public health of the population based on “how long people live and how healthy people feel while alive,” coupled with ranking factors including healthy behaviors, clinical care, social and economic, and physical environment factors.

<sup>2</sup> University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute & Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, City Health Rankings 2018, <http://www.Cityhealthrankings.org>

## B. PARK AND RECREATION INFLUENCING TRENDS

According to the Outdoor Industry Economy Report, in Kansas alone, annual consumer spending in outdoor recreation is \$7.3 billion, supporting 71,000 direct jobs. This led to \$481 Million in state and local tax revenue. Nearly 61 percent of Kansas residents participate in outdoor recreation annually. According to the Outdoor Industry Association, outdoor recreation (71,000) sustains more jobs in Kansas than the beef industry (48,000).

**Figure 11: State of Kansas Outdoor Recreation Economy**



Source: Outdoor Industry, 2016 Outdoor Recreation Economy Report

**Table 1: Generational Age Categories**

### Generational Changes

Generational Group	Age Category
Generation Alpha	~ Born 2017 - ?
Generation Z	~ Born 1999 - 2016
Millennials	Born 1981 - 1998
Generation X	Born 1965 - 1980
Baby Boomers	Born 1946 - 1964
Silent Generation	Born 1945 and earlier

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Activity Participation varies based on age, but it also varies based on generational preferences. In regard to generational activity, according to the 2018 “Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report,” Millennials had the highest percentage of those who were “active to a healthy level,” but a quarter also remained sedentary. Nearly 28 percent of Generation X were inactive, with Baby Boomers at 33 percent inactive. Baby Boomers prefer low impact fitness activities such as swimming, cycling aquatic exercise, and walking for fitness.

The figure below demonstrates the breakdown of generations in the city. Generation Alpha and the Millennial Generation are age groups that are both expected to increase in size, while all other generations are anticipated to decline. The Baby Boomers, which made up 23 percent of the population, will decrease by three percentage points in just five years.

## Recreational Preferences

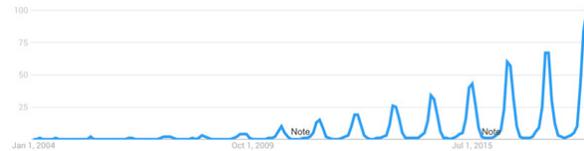
According to the 2018 “Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Topline Participation (SFIA) Report,” outdoor recreation is an activity group that is continuing to capture the interest and attention of new audiences; besides those older than 55, all other age groups listed camping as the number one activity among non-participants.

Nationally, overnight backpacking has seen an average annual growth of seven percent for the last five years. RV Camping is also growing in popularity, with an average annual growth of nine percent in the last three years. Stand-up paddle boarding has seen, on average, 20 percent annual growth in the last five years. According to the 2018 SFIA, Millennials are more likely than other generations to engage in water sports.

### Spray grounds/Splash pads

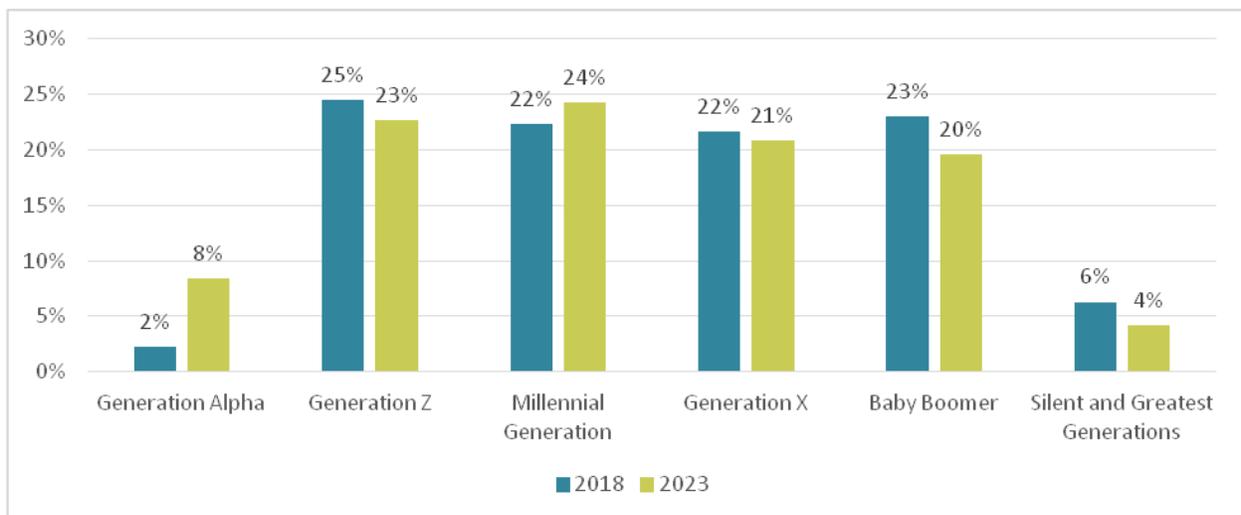
Splash pads, or spray grounds, have seen enormous growth in popularity over the past decade. Simply looking at search terms over time (from 2004 to present), Google Trends show that more people are searching for this amenity. The following graph is specific to Pennsylvania.

Figure 13: “Splash Pad” (Google trends)



Source: Google Trends, “Splash Pad,” United States January 2004 – June 2018

Figure 12: City of De Soto Generational Comparisons from 2018 - 2023



Source: ESRI Business Analyst, U.S. Census

The popularity of splash pads is geographical, and is more common in the West. According to a Feature Article from June 2016 “A Look at Trends in Aquatic Facilities,” splash play areas were least common in the Northeast; only 31.9 percent of responding agencies had this amenity, compared to 55.8 percent of those in the West.<sup>3</sup> Urban areas are more likely to have splash play areas than rural areas. This shift is most likely due to the benefits of splash play areas. Compared to a traditional aquatic facility, splash pads typically incur lower maintenance costs, less programming, and lower staffing costs. Over a third of survey respondents said that they plan to add splash pads to their list of features.



### Therapeutic Recreation

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) established that persons with disabilities have the right to the same access to parks and recreation facilities and programming as those without disabilities. In 2004, The National Council on Disability (NCD) issued a comprehensive report, *Livable Communities for Adults with Disabilities*.<sup>4</sup> This report identified six elements for improving the quality of life for all citizens, including children, youth, and adults with disabilities.

The six elements are:

1. Provide affordable, appropriate, accessible housing
2. Ensure accessible, affordable, reliable, safe transportation
3. Adjust the physical environment for inclusiveness and accessibility
4. Provide work, volunteer, and education opportunities
5. Ensure access to key health and support services
6. Encourage participation in civic, cultural, social, and recreational activities

### Active Transportation – Bicycling and Walking

In many surveys and studies on participation in recreation activities, walking, running, jogging, and cycling are nearly universally rated as the most popular activities among youth and adults. Bicycling and walking are attractive as they require little equipment, or financial investment, to get started, and are open to participation to nearly all segments of the population. For these reasons, participation in these activities is often promoted as a means of spurring physical activity, and increasing public health.



<sup>3</sup> “Aquatics: A Look at Trends in Aquatic Facilities,” *Recreation Management*, June 2016 <http://recmanagement.com/feature/201606fe03/1>

<sup>4</sup> National Council on Disability, *Livable Communities for Adults with Disabilities*, December 2004, <http://www.ncd.gov/publications/2004/12022004>.

The design of a community's infrastructure is directly linked to physical activity – where environments are built with bicyclists and pedestrians in mind, more people bike and walk. Higher levels of bicycling and walking also coincide with increased bicycle and pedestrian safety and higher levels of physical activity. Increasing bicycling and walking in a community can have a major impact on improving public health and life expectancy.

Economic benefits of bicycling and walking include:

- Bicycling and walking projects create 8 to 12 jobs per \$1 million spent, compared to just 7 jobs created per \$1 million spent on highway projects.
- Cost benefit analyses show that up to \$11.80 in benefits can be gained for every \$1 invested in bicycling and walking.

National bicycling trends:

- There has been a gradual trend of increasing bicycling and walking to work since 2005.
- Infrastructure to support biking communities is becoming more commonly funded in communities.
- Bike share systems, making bicycles available to the public for low-cost, short-term use, have been sweeping the nation since 2010. Twenty of the most populous U.S. cities have a functional bike share system.

**Festivals and Special Events**

Public parks and recreation agencies play a major role in planning, managing, and hosting festivals and other community programs that often serve to draw new users into their facilities. Attendants to events hosted in parks, or recreation centers, who enjoy their experience may want to return for another event or program, or simply to enjoy the park or recreation facility. Participants in these special programs can become interested in visiting other parks, recreation facilities or participating in programs.



In 2014, festivals grew in popularity as economic drivers and urban brand builders. Chad Kaydo describes the phenomenon in the January 2014 issue of *Governing* magazine. “Municipal officials and entrepreneurs see the power of cultural festivals, innovation-focused business conferences and the like as a way to spur short-term tourism while shaping an image of the host City as a cool, dynamic location where companies and citizens in modern, creative industries can thrive.”



The success rate for festivals should not be evaluated solely on the basis of profit (sales), prestige (media profile), and size (numbers of events or overall attendance). Research by the European Festival Research Project (EFRP) indicates there is evidence of local and county government supporting and even instigating and managing particular festivals themselves to achieve local or regional economic objectives, often defined very narrowly (sales, jobs, and tourism). There are also a growing number of smaller, more local, community-based festivals and events in communities, most often supported

by local councils that have been spawned partly as a reaction to larger festivals that have become prime economic-drivers. These community-based festivals often will re-claim cultural ground based on their social, educational, and participative value. For more information on the values of festivals and events, see the CRC Sustainable Tourism research guide on this topic.

## C. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Public input was gathered during the week of June 28, 2018. Methods used to engage with the community included focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and public meetings. Additional information was collected via phone interviews and emails sent by citizens wanting to participate. The goal of these sessions was to gather information that would guide the development of survey tools. Participants included: City staff, local business owners, lifeguards, regional leaders, stakeholders; and members of the public.

### Q1: What are the Strengths of the parks and rec department?

#### Facilities

One major strength of the De Soto Parks and Recreation Department by focus group participants is the accessibility and affordability to the community center, fitness classes, and local parks. Services and amenities offered by the City are perceived as assets to the entire community, especially the Community Center and the Aquatic Facility. The outdoor pool is highly valued because of its “top-notch” aquatic lessons and instructors. The successes of the Aquatic Center made residents believe that the pool should be a “destination” where are additional features such as a Lazy River or Splashpad can entertain kids and adults.



*De Soto Aquatic Center June 2018*

#### Staff

Citizens of De Soto, Kansas consistently mentioned that a strength of the Parks and Recreation Department is the approachability of all of the department staff. Residents felt that the department was very open to suggestions and new ideas. Residents expressed that the staff was able to accomplish a lot with little staff and resources.

#### Programs

Overall, programs were also noted as a strength of De Soto Parks and Recreation. Participants enjoy the fitness classes and the instructors. The mix of active and passive recreation is something that residents appreciate. New programs such as Pickleball were able to succeed due to the willingness of the Department to listen and take action. This sport is gaining traction locally, and residents enjoy playing the game, especially when there is involvement with all age groups. In addition, there are recreational sport leagues that are very welcoming to beginners. Their level of competitiveness was noted as a strength. They also do a good job at partnering with surrounding municipalities to offer more resources and sports teams.

#### Parks

Residents were pleased by the quality of the parks in regard to cleanliness and maintenance. Riverfest Park was seen as an underutilized strength because of its potential for community events.

Parks in De Soto Kansas are diverse and offer a variety of programs and amenities for residents.

## Q2: What are the weaknesses of the parks and rec department?

### Connectivity & Biking

Connectivity was a recurring topic with regard to trails and parks in De Soto. Trails offer an opportunity for transportation to areas such as Miller Park, Riverfest Park, Schools, Downtown Area, and JCPRD Facilities. Johnson County also has potential for trail improvement projects which could be a mutually beneficial partnership. Specifically, there was interest in connecting trails from De Soto to Johnson County, and from Lexington Lake to other trails. Certain sidewalks end abruptly, and limit walkability in the area.



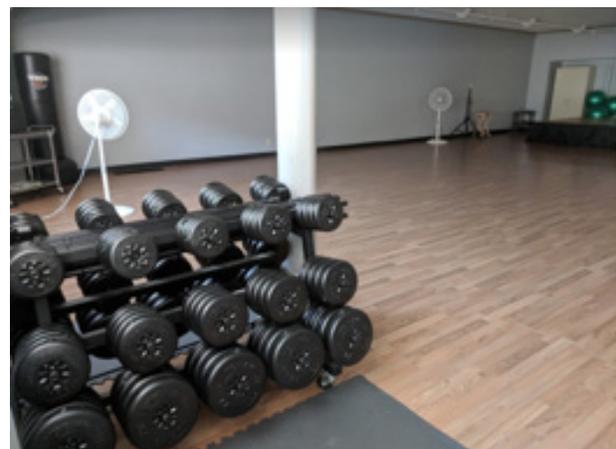
*Sunflower Park, June 2018*

With connectivity, participants expressed that there would need to be more education about cars and bikes travelling safely together. Participants in the focus group have seen the number of cyclists in the area increase. With the lack of bike lanes available, safety is a concern. Educating the public on how to drive with bikes, and likewise, educating bikers on safe routes (avoiding 83rd and Kill Creek) is imperative. Participants expressed that De Soto could become a destination for cyclists, and is slowly becoming one. Trail standards and policies should be a consideration. A number of related

issues were brought up, such as how people will want to use the trails in the future. Will they be used for commuting? Electric bikes? Unicycles? Width of trails? Multiuse?

### Programs

Regarding fitness classes and programs, additional space is desired for classes. The current city administrative building has space but needs work. Could a relationship with the school district help alleviate this problem? Should renovations be done to current administrative building? These were the questions focus groups asked.



*Community Fitness Room, June 2018*

Soccer is a popular sport in De Soto, and many residents felt that it needs to be prioritized moving forward by having dedicated fields for soccer. Some participants expressed frustration because the location of their practice/games had been moved to new locations. In addition, game rules seem to change with the season and the referee who is officiating. Focus groups mentioned that the training to be a coach or official was unorganized and lacked essential information. Finally, with soccer being a coed sport, parents expressed that the competition level was uneven – especially as kids turn into teens and gender differences become more prevalent. The older the kids get, the fewer play in town, making it less fun as a league. Soccer is currently co-ed, which girls don't like, so they leave town for girls leagues.

Playing against other cities doesn't always work since they have different views of what "recreation" is, and different rules in regard to age groups. Some do it by grade level, some by birthdays. The lack of consistency and communication are two areas that needed improvement.

### Fields

Soccer fields are needed – users noted that they need a home for practice and games since games often get moved. Miller Park often floods and causes additional issues. A soccer facility at Lexington Lake Park may answer that need, but funding still needs to be established before that is secured. Residents voiced that additional fields for other sports beyond soccer were also needed, such as baseball and softball. Having permanent irrigation would be desired, as Miller Park often gets flooded which can cause game cancellations.

### Parks

Further dedication to the Riverfest Park development is desired. Key components in the Master Plan should be carried out to provide a number of amenities. Basic needs such as restrooms, paved roads, and shelters are a priority to residents. Although large events may require portable restrooms at scale, more people would like to use Riverfest park on a daily basis – so permanent restrooms are wanted. Residents also noted that they would like to see greater (and safer) connectivity to the Riverfest Park. Residents addressed that Miller Park needs improvement in regard to updated lighting, additional parks, additional restrooms, another park shelter, and updated playground equipment (for all ages).



Riverfest Park, June 2018

### Events

In addition, more community wide events were desired by residents. Ideas included block parties, movie nights, free concerts, or other annual events. These gatherings could help De Soto build stronger relationships with its residents and tourists alike. Events like De Soto Days could be moved to Riverfest Park because of its capacity and purpose to hold festivals.

### Marketing

One major weakness of De Soto is the lack of communication and awareness of programs. The services, parks, amenities, and programs are not reaching all of those in the community who want to learn about them. Residents want to know more about the offerings and opportunities through De Soto Parks and Recreation and need to know where to find this information.



Parks and Recreation Webpage, June 2018

Awareness and communication are essential components to help educate the public on offerings. Some residents were not aware of other parks besides Miller Park. Greater awareness and communication about the other parks such as Widow Big Knife, Lexington Property, and others would be helpful. Having clear and consistent signage at all parks will help unify and brand the parks department. This is especially true at event parks such as Riverfest.

Using modern advertising channels such as social media and the website can help to inform residents. A key question remained after these focus group conversations: “how do we get program information to the public so that they can better utilize our services?” In addition, online registration and payments need to be seamless. This will be improved with the website redesign that is already planned for the city. Considering a longer registration window would be helpful as registrants noticed that they often miss a deadline. Additionally, De Soto Happenings (the quarterly catalog) features some of the Parks and Recreation offerings but does not list all of them. This would be a great opportunity since the magazine reaches all households in De Soto.

### Partnerships

There are currently missed opportunities to partner with small businesses and school districts. To offer more programs – which is desired at Riverfest Park – De Soto Parks and Rec should partner with other agencies that can help.

### Administrative

Residents recognized that staff is limited in De Soto for managing and operating programs. Ideas for new staff include a marketing/advertising person for programs, website, and social media, a sponsorship/funding person, and a special events programmer.

Q3: What programs would you like to see?

- Aquatic Programs (Water Aerobics, Open Swim, Lap Swim)*
- Archery*
- Art Program*
- Bocce Ball*
- Coed Softball*
- Cycling Classes*
- Dance Classes*
- Educational Classes (Cooking, Conservation, Recycling, Bike Safety)*
- Gymnastics Program for Youth*
- Indoor and Outdoor Pickleball*

- Offer Outdoor Fitness Classes in the Parks*
- Open Gym Classes*
- Roller Hockey*
- Running Clubs/Track Clubs for Kids*
- Special Events (Food Trucks, Festivals, Music)*
- Street Soccer*
- Walking Group/Aerobics*

## Q4: What improvements should be made to existing facilities?

### RIVERFEST PARK

- Trail Connectivity to Park
- Main Entry Signage
- Disc Golf
- Shelters for Parties
- Destination Playground
- Need Restrooms and Lighting
- Camping Opportunities (RV and Tent)
- More Events with Food Trucks

### COMMUNITY CENTER

- More Multi-purpose/Fitness Rooms
- Floor Stability
- Space for Youth Classes
- Increase Community Center Hours

### OTHER PARKS AND AMENITIES

- Miller Park needs age-appropriate playground equipment for the 5 and under age group
- Improve drainage issues for soccer at Miller Park
- Year-round Indoor Pool
- Skate Park apparatus or fitness equipment along paths, trails



## Q5: What additional facilities would you like to see?

The following facilities were mentioned when asked focus groups about what they would like to see offered by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Shaded Bocce Ball Court	More Restrooms at Parks	More Multi-Use Trails for Longboarding
Connectivity to Parks	Space for Fitness Classes	Gymnastics Facility
Indoor Pool	RV Park and Tent Camping	Racquetball Courts
Disc Golf Course		

## Q6: What Partners/ stakeholders could assist with implementation?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Johnson County Community College</li> <li>Lawrence Parks and Recreation</li> <li>School District</li> <li>Disc Golf Course Company</li> <li>De Soto Arts Council Fund</li> <li>De Soto Days Festival Fund</li> <li>De Soto Kansas Parks Foundation Fund</li> <li>Urban Trail Co. (Kansas City)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Johnson County Park and Recreation</li> <li>De Soto Kansas Parks Foundation Fund</li> <li>De Soto Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>
<b>Potential Partners</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jazzercise</li> <li>Tae Kwon Do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AB Creative (Play and Playground Equipment)</li> <li>Merk</li> <li>Harps Grocery</li> <li>Huhtamaki</li> <li>Engineered Air</li> <li>Kansas City Power and Light Company</li> </ul>

## Q7: what are the Key issues & Values of De Soto?

Clean

Safe

Excellent Schools

“Build Your Life With Us”

Great place to raise kids

Strong Community

Want Growth but Not Change

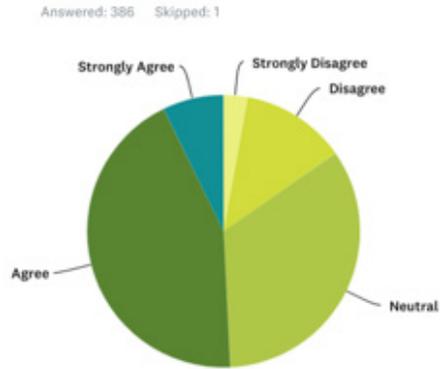
Growing Hispanic Population

Family Oriented

Funding

## Q8: What should be the top priorities in 5-10 years?

- Establish marketing channels to successfully communicate with residents
- Implement the Master Plan and follow through with future plans for Riverfest Park
- Meet expectations of youth sports program with consistent rules and well-trained coaches
- Maintain and improve current programs, facilities, and resources before investing in new
- Build recreational paths and trails to existing and future parks facilities.
- Expand programming opportunities to serve people of all ages and abilities.
- Diversify the physical amenities at City parks facilities.
- Host events that bring the community together

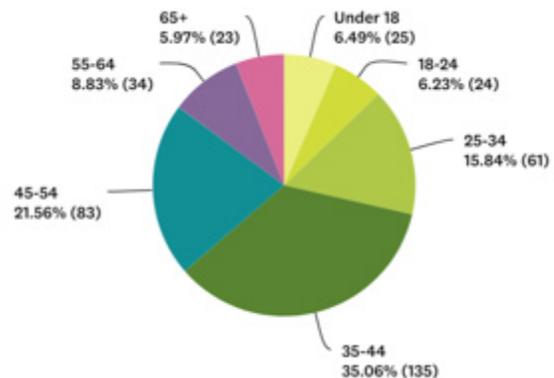


## Survey Response

Over thirty-five percent of survey respondents were between the ages of 35 and 44 years old. Those under the ages of 25 and those over the age of 55 has less than ten percent participation in their age cohorts. When asked if the participants lived in City limits, 70 percent responded that they did, 28 percent lived outside of the City limits, and only five people were not aware if they lived in the City limits.

### Overall Satisfaction

When asked if the Parks and Recreation Department meets the needs of the community, 43 percent of respondents agreed. It is important to note that one third of participants were neutral on the subject, and that 12 percent disagreed with the statement.



## D. COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY

### SURVEY

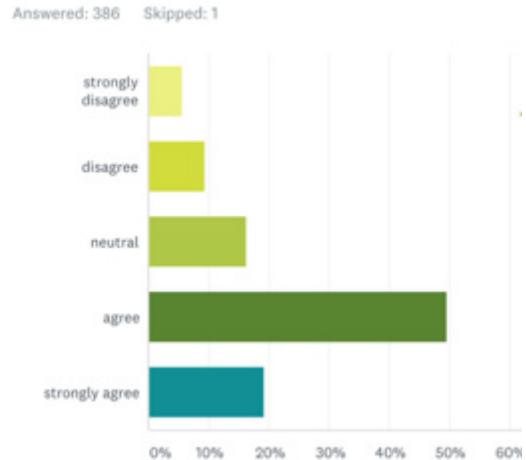
- 387 Survey Responses
- 1.3 Views of Facebook Video Ad
- Emailed to Recreation Database of 2,226 Users

As part of the information gathering process, a community survey was developed to better understand the community's perception of the parks and recreation services. The survey was posted on the City's homepage, on the City's Facebook Page, and was also emailed to 2,226 people subscribed to the City e-newsletter. Overall 387 responses were collected and analyzed using Survey Monkey.

## Communication & Marketing

When asked if participants were aware of the location and amenities of City parks, more than 55 percent either agreed or strongly agreed. However, several comments indicated that participants only thought they knew of all the parks until all of them were listed in the survey. Widow Bike Knife and Wilderness Park were both parks that many participants were not aware of.

Increased awareness of programs was the number one response when asked what would increase participation in offerings by the Parks and Recreation Department. Just 50 percent of respondents agree that they know where to find information about the programs and parks offered by the department. Survey respondents indicated that the notices for events and programs are often communicated via word of mouth, and that information is relayed too short of notice. The survey then asked respondents to indicate how they would most like to receive information.



**Table 2: Communication Preferences**

How would you like to receive information from De Soto Parks and Recreation?	
Answer Choices	Responses
City Website	75.68%
Social Media (Facebook/Instagram/NextDoor)	70.27%
Discovering De Soto Quarterly Magazine	38.92%
Local media (TV/Radio/Newspaper)	10.81%
Radio/TV	5.95%
At the community center/other city buildings	28.92%
Email Newsletter	55.68%
Rack cards/poster	11.35%
Word of Mouth	18.65%

Some of the other ideas that were listed in the comments of this question include:

- Flyers
- Large Banners
- Talk Radio
- Through the schools
- Electronic/LED sign
- City Bulletin Board
- Direct Mail
- Twitter

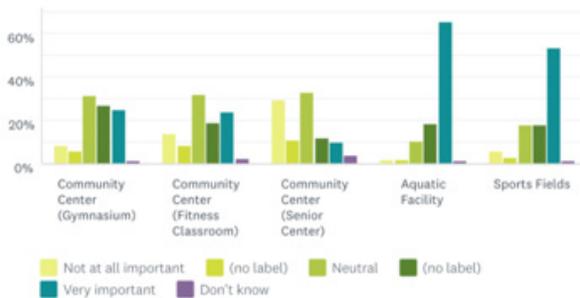
## Facilities

The survey then asked how important the parks and recreation facilities were to the respondents. The aquatic facility and the sports fields were rated as “very important.”

When asked what would increase participation in parks and recreations services (related to facilities), the top responses were:

- Additional facilities and amenities (42%)
- Upgraded existing facilities and amenities (42%)
- Improved condition/maintenance of parks or facilities (26%)
- Increased/different hours of operation (21%)
- Additional Lighting (athletic fields/courts) (19%)
- Improved WiFi Connectivity (18%)
- More Parking (15%)
- Increased safety and security (15%)

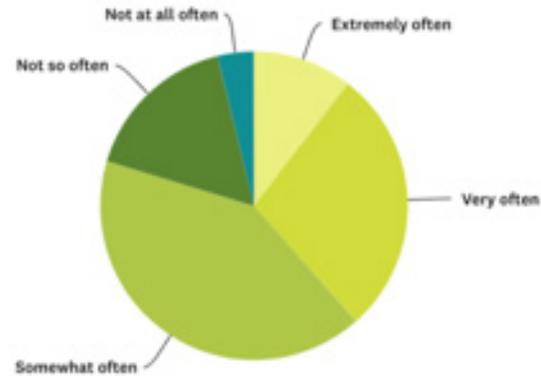
How important are the following facilities to your household?



The next question asked how often residents visited the parks in De Soto. Knowing that visitation differs by season, one’s schedule, and other factors, this question gaged the overall perception from residents as to how often they think they use the parks. The majority of respondents said that visited “somewhat often,” while 10 percent noted they visited “extremely often.”

How often do you visit the public parks in De Soto?

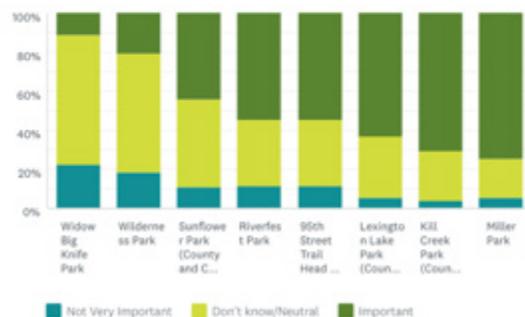
Answered: 315 Skipped: 72



The survey then asked how important the parks were to the participants’ households. Miller Park was the most important, at a weighted average of 4.22/5. Two county-owned parks, Kill Creek Park (4.16) and Lexington Lake Park (4.08) were also ranked highly in this question. The two parks with the lowest weighed average were Widow Big Knife and Wilderness Park. Participants noted that they were unaware of these parks and their locations. Finally, the survey asked what the level of interest might be in regards to non-traditional park amenities and/or play structures. The survey listed a number of unique options as referenced below, including some of the items (such as ATV trails) that were identified in the Strategic Plan. The responses primarily favored zip lines and rock climbing structures, followed by Tree Canopy Trails

How important are the following parks to your household?

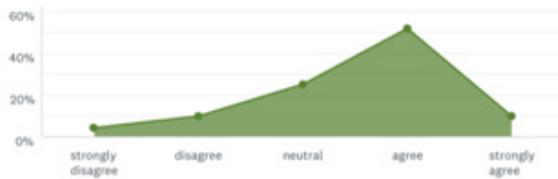
Answered: 316 Skipped: 71



and Ropes Course. BMX Bike Parks and Bike Pump Tracks were rated the lowest on this question, with ATV Trails just ahead of these two options with 38 percent of respondents “not at all interested” in this feature. Many comments revealed that priority should rather be on the existing facilities, such as updating the playground equipment at Miller Park, and completing projects at Riverfest Park, before focusing on new park amenities. Many participants also were unaware as to what these non-traditional amenities were which may have impacted the results.

I am aware of the recreation programs offered by De Soto City Parks and Recreation Department.

Answered: 209 Skipped: 118



### Programs

With regard to programs, participants were first asked if they were aware of the recreation programs offered by the department. Of those, 52

percent noted that they agreed. They were then asked how important the current programs were to the community. The top five programs are listed below. The lowest scoring program was Blastball by those who participated in the survey.

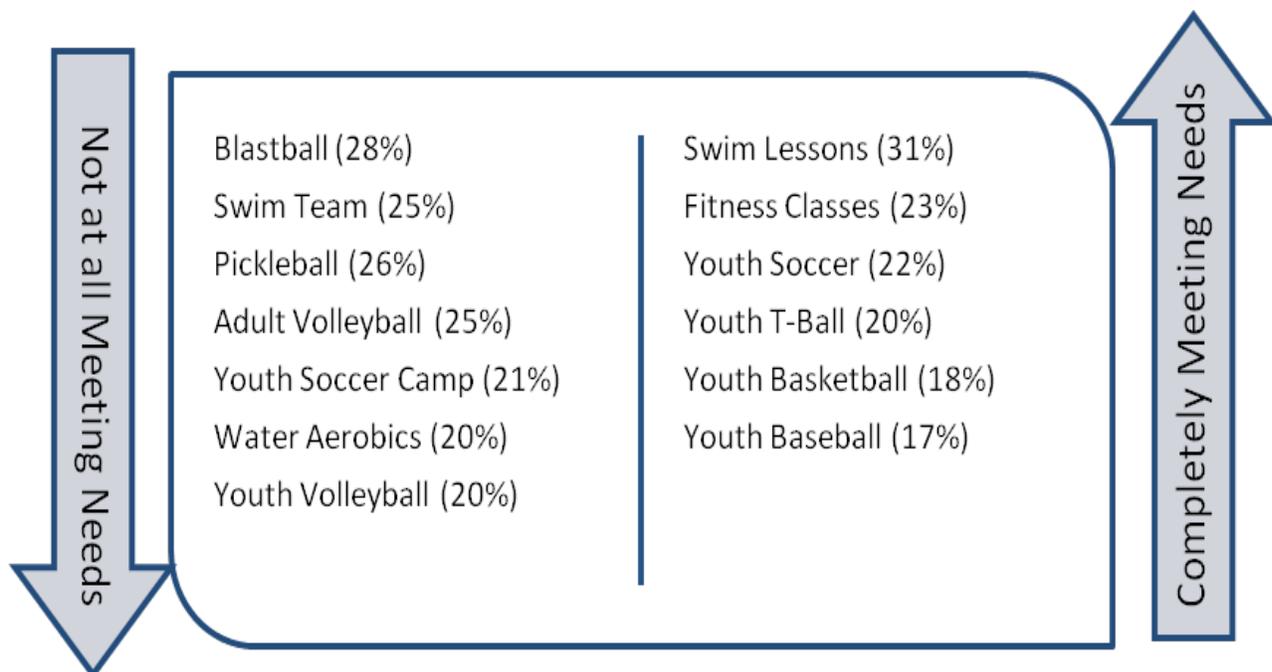
How important are the following programs?

Answered: 270 Skipped: 117

### Top 5 Programs

- Swim Lessons (4.26 weighted average)
- Special Events
- Youth Basketball
- Youth Soccer
- Youth Tball (3.90 weighted average)

To identify which programs needed the most attention, participants were asked to identify how well the current programs were meeting the needs of the community. Below is an illustration to demonstrate how well the following programs are meeting the needs of the community.



Participants were asked who was sufficiently served in regard to programs, and young children were the number one response. According to the survey, teenagers and adults lacked sufficient programs for their age group.

Finally, participants were asked what types of activities they would participate in if they were offered by De Soto Parks and Recreation. A variety of ideas were presented, many of which were echoed in the focus groups. Unique cultural/artistic activities, mom-and-tot programs, adult sports, and additional fitness classes were some of the highlights. Other comments noted that working adults could not attend classes unless they were early morning or after 6 p.m. A number of seniors noted that they wanted fitness programming for their age group.

## E. ORGANIZATIONAL AND MARKETING ANALYSIS

It is important to understand the organizational components that help to define the department. This often starts with becoming clear with the mission, vision, values, and purpose of the department. In this case, De Soto does not have these statements for the Parks and Recreation Department but rather relies on the City for overall guidance. Without knowing the defined purpose of parks and recreation, which varies greatly for departments around the country, it is difficult to make decisions.

The mission, vision, and values of the department can and should be related to the City's overall statements, but in the end should reflect the ultimate purpose and role that parks and recreation serves. Some of the related items to note are:

- As a department, there is no Vision and Mission Statement.

- As a department, there are not Agency and Department goals and objectives and/or Department Workplan on paper.
- There is not a formal marketing plan.
- They do not produce annual reports.
- The department has not performed any formal surveys or analysis in the last 5 years.

The department maintains an agreement with Johnson County Parks and Recreation to lease Sunflower Ball Fields. De Soto Parks and Recreation maintains the facility and makes major improvements, with approval from the County. The De Soto Parks and Recreation Department has a working relationship with the school district (USD 232) to use their gyms at no cost for the youth basketball program. In return, USD 232 uses the Sunflower Ball Fields in the spring and the Aquatic Center for P.E. classes at no cost. The department currently holds a contract with a landscape company which mows all parks and recreation property except for Wilderness Park.

From further analysis, there is a clear need for the following items:

- **Clarify the Department's Purpose:** Communication of purpose and offerings of Parks and Recreation Department should be crystal clear. Define mission, vision, and values.
- **Partner for Success:** Perceived lack of partnerships/communication with local agencies and businesses is a downfall. Look to outside service providers for ways to better serve the community. Create partnership agreements in writing that serve the Parks and Recreation Department and the other party. "Competitors" in the area can serve as allies in order to expand offerings, particularly for programs and special events that cannot be managed with the current staffing conditions.
- **Expand Access:** ADA accessibility for all facilities and activities is critical. According to the U.S. Census, 9.4 percent of De Soto residents live with some sort of disability. Ensure that there is an ADA Transition

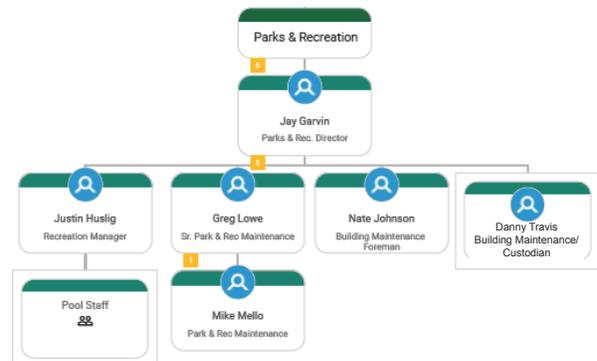
Plan per Federal Law, and that programs can be adapted to serve those to want to participate.

- Train and Organize Youth Sports:** Look to successful youth sports programs to assess the current structure and what is/is not working. Limited parks and recreation staff need to find ways to clarify rules and expectations for coaches and referees. Conduct a formal and repeatable training system with incentives for volunteer coaches. Ask for feedback from coaches regularly. Find ways to communicate last minute changes. Clarify and communicate the purpose of De Soto Youth Sports program – whether it is competitive or designed so all players can play – the expectation should be consistent and clear.
- Seek Greater Awareness:** Programs, services, amenities, and hours all need more awareness. It is critical that the Parks and Recreation Department find a few effective methods that reach a majority of residents. Residents should know exactly where to look to find the information they need. Survey results showed that the City website is the most preferred way to find parks and recreation information. The new update to the website in Fall of 2018 should also help with that marketing piece. Creative marketing strategies can also go a long way in extending awareness: posting in De Soto specific Facebook groups (with permission) may prove effective. Perhaps creating a Twitter feed could help push out last minute updates.
- Ensure Rental Equity:** Rental rates vary greatly depending on the organization. Many agencies establish policies that allow 501 (c)(3) non-profits (with documentation) have a discounted rate on rentals. Having policies written down will help alleviate issues in the future.

- Over-Communicate:** Improved communication around youth sports and program registration. Utilize as many avenues as possible with the goal of over-communicating the message.
- Consider Extended Hours:** Staff permitting, it may be worth experimenting with extended hours (and possibly a longer season) in the pool.
- Ensure Connectivity:** Wi-Fi connectivity in city facilities and Riverfest Park is important to the community. By keeping with current initiatives to expand Wi-Fi in those areas, De Soto residents should be able to enjoy greater internet access in those public areas. This will also help for vendors who need Wi-Fi during festivals/ events for online access to their Point of Sale systems.

## Staffing Analysis and Considerations

The current staffing structure allows the department to maintain a level of service for the current facilities to an acceptable standard. However the future capacity for maintenance will be limited if the parks are expanded. Most of the information gathering revealed that there should be an emphasis on maintaining and upgrading the current equipment in the parks. The current park maintenance contract should be continued to have the landscape company continue the mowing and basic maintenance.



Staffing for programs and events may become a challenge as demand for community events and additional programming continues. Currently, the Recreation Manager is in charge of hiring and training 40+ lifeguards every summer, in addition to year-round responsibilities of programming the Community Center Fitness Room. The capacity of this position will be limited primarily with regard to planning special events and coordinating with partners for programs. A recommendation is to hire an additional full-time Programmer for to help expand recreation program offerings (and/or work with partners who can offer services), oversee special events organization (to bring tourism into the area), and to oversee the marketing, communications, and outreach of the Parks and Recreation Department.

## F. RECREATION PROGRAMMING ANALYSIS

Measuring the success of programs is most commonly analyzed by looking at participation. Understanding the current participation numbers often is an indication of the long term viability of the program. Low participation may not necessarily mean that the program should be eliminated; factors such as awareness, marketing, registration process, operations, and management of the program will all influence the success of the program. Understanding the strengths of the most popular programs will help gain clarity as to how less-attended programs can improve. It is also worth considering the opportunity to partner with clubs/nonprofits/small businesses that offer similar services. Before analyzing the current participation of recreation programs, it is important to talk about the potential of partnerships now.

### Partnerships

The Department offers programming opportunities through partnerships and contracted services. This is a very typical method of service delivery

in park and recreation departments throughout the country. Staff usually manage the contractual programming and seek new opportunities to increase program areas. This is a very efficient method of providing services; eventually, by continuing to partner, the Department will increase the volume of programs the public would like to see offered. The current contractual program areas are listed in detail below.

**Table 3: Alternative Providers**

Alternative Provider			
Organization	Activity	Location	
Great Life Golf and Fitness	Golf and Weight/Cardio Room	De Soto, KS	No
Oak Country Golf Course	Golf Course	De Soto, KS	No
Jazzercise	Jazzercise	De Soto, KS	Yes
White Tiger Tae Kwon Do	Tae Kwon Do	De Soto, KS	No
Wildcat Youth Football & Cheerleading	Football & Cheer	De Soto, KS	No
De Soto Youth Wrestling	Wrestling	De Soto, KS	No
De Soto Arts Council	Meetings and Art Shows	De Soto, KS	No
Johnson County Parks and Recreation	Parks, Day Care, Programs, Youth and Adult Sports	Shawnee Mission, KS	Yes
Johnson County 3&2	Baseball	Lenexa, KS	Yes

Great Life Golf and Fitness currently manages the Golf Course and the Weight/Cardio Room. They are located within De Soto proper, and use the old stage in the community center as their weight room/gym. De Soto Parks and Recreation does not offer this service, and have entered into an agreement with GreatLife to provide this to the community.

If the De Soto Parks and Recreation Department tries to be all things to all people it can result in mediocre or low-quality service. Instead, they should focus on delivering higher-quality service in a more focused (and perhaps limited)

way. It will be important for De Soto to ask the following questions to determine which programs are appropriate to handle for themselves versus creating a partnership with another agency.

- Q: Is the agency the best or most appropriate organization to provide the service?**
- Q: Is market competition good for the citizenry?**
- Q: Is the agency spreading its resources too thin without the capacity to sustain core services and the system in general?**
- Q: Are there opportunities to work with another organization to provide services in a more efficient and responsible manner?**

The term “partnership” should be defined as those that have a key strategic aligned mission and are mutually beneficial collaborations to fulfill an important or essential service. Partnerships should be negotiated in writing, reviewed annually and be valued based on true cost of service provision.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Johnson County Community College</li> <li>• Lawrence Parks and Recreation</li> <li>• School District</li> <li>• Disc Golf Course Company</li> <li>• De Soto Arts Council Fund</li> <li>• De Soto Days Festival Fund</li> <li>• De Soto Kansas Parks Foundation Fund</li> <li>• Urban Trail Co. (Kansas City)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Johnson County Park and Recreation</li> <li>• De Soto Kansas Parks Foundation Fund</li> <li>• De Soto Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>
<h2>Potential Partners</h2>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jazzercise</li> <li>• Tae Kwon Do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AB Creative (Play and Playground Equipment)</li> <li>• Merk</li> <li>• Harps Grocery</li> <li>• Huhtamaki</li> <li>• Engineered Air</li> <li>• Kansas City Power and Light Company</li> </ul>

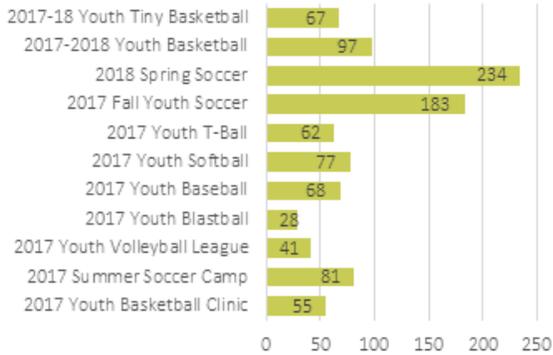
## Participation in Current Offerings

### Youth Sports

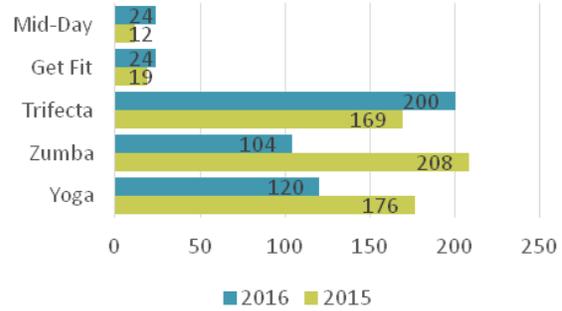
The most popular program according to 2016 participation data is Spring Soccer, and then Fall Soccer. Soccer serves the ages of 4 through 14, while Baseball serves a slightly older age group. Blastball, Youth T-Ball, and Youth Tiny Basketball serve a small portion of children, and therefore, do not have high rates of overall participation.

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	ADULT	SENIOR
<b>Youth Sports</b>																					
2017 Youth Blastball	4 to 5																				
2017 Youth T-Ball	5 to 6																				
2017-18 Youth Tiny Basketball	1st-2nd																				
2017 Youth Basketball Clinic	K-6th																				
2017 Summer Soccer Camp	K-8th																				
2017 Youth Volleyball League	3rd-6th																				
2017 Youth Baseball	6 to 15																				
2017 Youth Softball	6 to 15																				
2017 Fall Youth Soccer	4 to 14																				
2018 Spring Soccer	4 to 14																				
2017-2018 Youth Basketball	3rd - 6th																				

### Youth Sport Participation



### Indoor Fitness Class Participation by Activity



### Programmed Classes

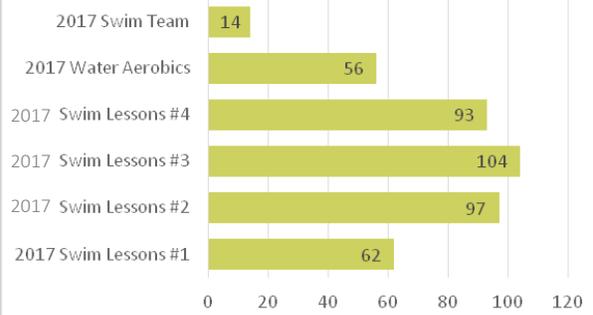
With regard to fitness classes, a range of cardio and aerobic sessions are combined into “Fitness Sessions” based on season. Overall, the most popular class was Zumba, followed by the Trifecta, and then Yoga.

### Fitness Classes (\$12 - \$15/Month) Include:

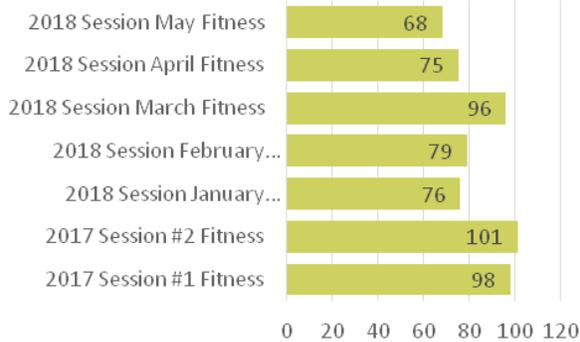
Strength Camp	Kick Start 45	Stretch and Strength	Tabata GX	Mix it Up
Pi-Yo	Blast and Burn	Barre Fusion	20/20/20	

### Aquatics

#### Aquatic Participation



### Indoor Fitness Class Participation by Season



### Programs and Activities

The City of De Soto currently offers 4 different special events throughout the year:

- Splash N Play
- 4<sup>th</sup> of July
- Doggie Plunge
- Appreciation Day

With further analysis, and after cross analyzing the survey results to the focus group meetings, the following items have appeared as themes to consider for future programming:

- **Find Ways to Serve Underserved Populations:** While youth have many options to participate in sports, it was identified that teenagers, young adults, and seniors are limited in recreational programming. De Soto may not need to create and oversee programs for each population, but rather define a target market that the City will serve. Then, look to outside businesses/organizations/nonprofits that could help that could (or are already) creating programs for the other groups.
- **Community Gatherings:** Residents of De Soto want additional events that bring together the community. Community events such as 5ks, Movies in the Park, etc. would provide social gathering places, boost relationships, and remind De Soto residents why they love their city.
- **Diversity of Programs:** Beyond sports, there is a desire to expand offering of programs offerings to be centered on the arts, culture, history, or dance. Specialized programs may be offered through the City, or perhaps groups or individuals near De Soto could have the skills and resources to offer it through a beneficial partnership.
- **Bring Additional Special Events:** There is a need for better marketing of programs and events. Special events, such as Winesong, bring in hundreds of visitors into the area. More awareness around these kinds of events could bring in tourism dollars and promote small businesses and hotels in the area.
- **Improve Communication and Marketing:** Timely and consistent communication about programs. Again, over communicate. Utilize as many avenues as possible with the goal of over-communicating the message. Use online methods of marketing, including the traditional flyers, direct mail, the City's website, Facebook, and email blasts. Consider the

implementation of Instagram and Twitter.

- **Ensure Program Success:** Need additional (and/or backup) fitness instructors. Find a list of back-up or substitute instructors via online databases/personal connections/references from other nearby cities.
- **Expand Program Hours:** Need evening fitness and program hours for working parents.
- **Youth Sports Organization:** Look to successful youth sports programs to assess the current structure and what is/is not working. Limited parks and recreation staff need to find ways to clarify rules and expectations for coaches and referees. Conduct a formal and repeatable training system with incentives for volunteer coaches. Ask for feedback from coaches regularly. Find ways to communicate last minute changes. Clarify and communicate the purpose of De Soto Youth Sports program – whether it is competitive or designed so all players can play – the expectation should be consistent and clear.
- **Capitalize on Successful Programs:** Knowing the successful programs such as swim lessons are often full, it may make sense to invest additional resources to make sure that there is adequate staffing for them.



# G. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

## Current Financial Circumstances

Parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services are essential to maintaining De Soto’s diverse and desirable community. However, not all facilities, programs, and services are equal. In general, the more a facility, program, or service provides a community benefit to its citizens as a whole, the more that element should be paid for by all citizens as part of the City’s general fund. The more a facility, program, or service provides individual benefits, the more that element should be paid for by user fees. This funding and cost recovery philosophy acknowledges the tremendous public benefits of parks and recreation to the community. Parks and recreation services also promote and support a community’s economic development, crime prevention, and community health.

The De Soto Parks and Recreation Department is primarily funded through the City’s General Fund in approximately the levels listed below. These figures are recommendations rather than actual approved budget numbers.

General Fund Parks:	\$359,142
General Fund Pool:	\$310,200
General Fund Community Center:	\$169,852

General Fund Parks and Recreation Total Revenue: \$192,200

The Capital Improvement Fund (CIP) has a long and ever-changing list of capital improvement projects for the City to consider each year. During the past several budget cycles, decisions on specific individual projects were not made until late fall or early in the budget year. The City is not obligated to follow the CIP project list exactly. The CIP list is based on estimated project costs. The Parks and Recreation Department requested the CIP figures listed below, although in a recent year, the

Department received \$51,139 of the requested \$64,100.

- CIP Fund Parks: \$0
- CIP Fund Pool: \$7,500
- CIP Fund Community Center: \$0

There is a Special Parks Fund that is comprised of fees from the state liquor tax and park fees transferred to the CIP Fund. The amount budgeted annually in this fund is approximately \$25,000 and has been very consistent for several years.

A Sponsorship Fund was created in 2007 to capture private donations made to the City for the purpose of recreation programming. The fund guarantees donors that their funds will be used for specific recreation program enhancements. The fund prevents any unused donations at the end of the year from being lost to the City’s overall unspent cash balance. The recent revenue projection was \$3,700 with an expenditure expectation of \$3,100.

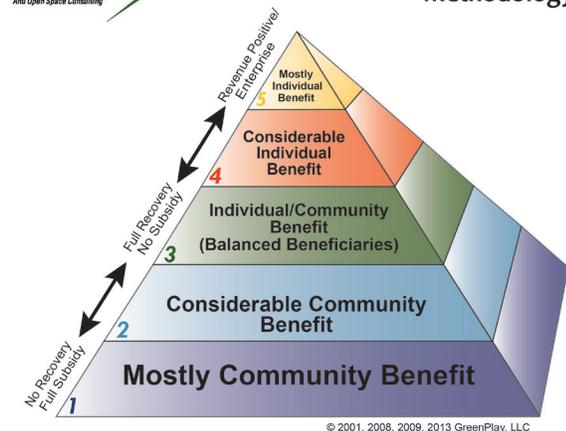
Focus group and survey respondents expressed concern over the access and affordability of programs and services. The Parks and Recreation Department staff needs to continue to work diligently to implement and monitor equitable user fees to improve revenues while maintaining the level of affordability that residents of De Soto find acceptable. All user fees should be based on a decided percentage of covering the same direct costs of each program. Currently, the Department uses the School District’s model for free or reduced lunches to determine eligibility for scholarships. Everybody gets to participate.

## Financial Sustainability for Program Delivery

It is important for the City to develop a resource allocation and pricing philosophy that reflects the values of the community and the responsibility it has to the community. This philosophy will be especially important if the City moves forward in the development of new programs and additional and/or renovated facilities, and as it strives for sustainability and determines how much it is willing to subsidize operations with tax dollars.

One means of accomplishing this goal is applying a process using an industry tool called the “Pyramid Methodology.” This methodology develops and implements a refined cost recovery philosophy and pricing policy based on current “best practices” as determined by the mission of the agency and the program’s benefit to the community and/or individual. A cost recovery philosophy and policy would support the current De Soto financial policy to “review and update fees and charges at least annually to ensure they keep pace with actual program costs, cost-of-living changes, and methods or levels of service delivery.”

Critical to this philosophical undertaking is the **GREENPLAY LLC** **The Pyramid Methodology**



support and understanding of elected officials, and ultimately, residents. Whether or not significant changes are called for, the agency wants to be certain that it is philosophically-aligned with its residents. The development of the core services and cost recovery philosophy and policy is built on a very logical foundation, using the understanding of who is benefitting from recreation services to determine how the costs for that service should be offset.

Recreation programs and services are sorted along a continuum of what delivers the greatest individual benefit to what delivers the greatest community benefit. The amount of subsidy for each level (not necessarily each individual program) is then determined to create an overall cost recovery philosophy.

Developing effective ongoing systems that help measure success in reaching cost recovery goals and anticipate potential pitfalls are dependent on the following:

- Understanding of current revenue streams and their sustainability.
- Tracking all expenses and revenues for programs, facilities, and services to understand their contributions to overall department cost recovery.
- Analyzing who is benefiting from programs, facilities, and services and to what degree they should be subsidized.
- Acknowledging the full cost of each program (those direct and indirect costs associated with program delivery) and where the program fits on the continuum of who benefits from the program or service to determine appropriate cost recovery targets.
- Defining direct costs as those that typically exist purely because of the program and the change with the program.
- Defining indirect costs as those that would typically exist anyway (like full-time staff, utilities, administration, debt service, etc.).
- Program fees should not be based on ability to pay, but an objective program should be in place that allows for easy access for lower income participants through availability of scholarships and/or discounts.

## Potential Funding Support

Lack of funding was one key theme from focus group participants and survey respondents. The Department should continue to pursue funding strategies from the Master Plan action steps including:

- Explore alternative funding sources for the Parks and Recreation Department that strategically align with targeted services such as a potential bond referendum, resurrecting the Parks Foundation and develop a gift catalog for donors.

- Update the Park Impact Fees/In Lieu of Fees that were established in 2005 to give the Parks and Recreation Department enough resources to buy, build, and/or maintain new park land in the growth areas or those existing areas with no current level of service.
- The City should make it a priority to leverage partnerships wherever possible to help fund the facilities, programs, and services that it provides to the community.
- Implementation of a cost recovery and equitable pricing philosophy and policy where revenue go back into the Parks and Recreation Department where they are created sustainability.
- Explore the opportunities for (and use of) sponsorships, in accordance with an approved Sponsorship Policy. A sample Sponsorship Policy has been submitted as a staff resource document.

Based on the capital and O&M budget estimates identified in this master plan as well as the unfunded capital improvement projects, it is imperative that the City maximize the funding and revenue opportunities listed below while balancing the affordability issue within the community.

## Potential Funding Sources

The De Soto Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for providing recreational facilities and activities to the residents of the City of De Soto Kansas. De Soto Parks and Recreation Department is complemented by a few Johnson City parks and some private service providers aimed to encourage recreational and leisure time activities.

Generally, there are a variety of mechanisms that local governments can employ to provide services and to make public improvements. Parks and Recreation operating and capital development funding typically comes from conventional sources such as sales, use, and property tax referendum voted upon by the community, along with developer exactions.

Operating funds are typically capped by legislation; may fluctuate based on the economy, public spending, or assessed valuation; and may not always keep up with inflationary factors. In the case of capital development, “borrowed funds” sunset with the completion of loan repayment and are not available to carry-over or re-invest without voter approval.

Identifying as many potential funding sources or options for De Soto Parks and Recreation Department will enhance the future success of operations.

Utilizing a list of over 100 potential funding sources compiled over 35 years of consulting with agencies across the United States, along with brief explanations, GreenPlay assisted the Board of Directors and staff in the exercise of categorizing this list of traditional and alternative potential funding as follows;

Funding sources **currently being utilized**

Funding sources the board **definitely would consider**

Funding opportunities that could be **considered in the future**

The results of this exercise are as follows:

**These funding sources are currently being used or could easily be used by the De Soto Parks and Recreation Department to create the existing budgets for capital and operational expenditures.**

### General or Operating Fund

Parks and recreation services are typically funded by an agency’s General or Operating Fund, which can be comprised of property tax, sales tax, and other compulsory charges levied by a government for the purpose of financing services performed for the common benefit of a community. These funds may also come from resources such as inter-governmental agreements, reimbursements, and interest and may include such revenue sources as franchise taxes, licenses and permits, fees, transfers in, reserves, interest income, and miscellaneous other incomes.

### **Property Tax**

Property tax revenue often funds park and recreation special districts and may be used as a dedicated source for capital development. When used for operation funding, it often makes the argument for charging resident and non-resident fee differentials.

### **Sales Tax**

This revenue source often funds public park and recreation agencies either partially or fully. Sales tax revenue is very popular in high traffic tourism agencies and with cities, counties, and state parks. Special Districts cannot exact sales taxes, which often calls into question the issue of charging resident and non-resident fee differentials.

### **Development Impact Fees**

Development impact fees are one-time charges imposed on development projects at the time of permit issue to recover capital costs for public facilities needed to serve new developments and the additional residents, employees, and visitors they bring to the community. State laws, with a few minor exceptions, prohibit the use of impact fees for ongoing maintenance or operations costs. Not all states allow the collection of impact fees.

### **Park Land Dedication Ordinance**

Park land dedication requirements typically state that all residential subdivisions of land (and often commercial), with some exemptions, are to provide for parks by either dedicating land, paying an in-lieu fee (the amounts may be adjusted annually), or a combination of the two.

### **Daily Admission and Annual Pass Sales or Vehicle Permits**

Daily and annual pass fees can apply to regional parks and aquatics centers. The consultant team recommends consideration of bulk discount buying of daily admission fees marketed as “monthly, seasonal, 3-month, 6-month, and/or annual passes.”

### **Registration Fees**

This revenue source is for participating in programs, classes, activities, and events which

typically require pre-registration to ensure a place. These services may or may not have limited space. These participant fees attempt to recover most if not all of the direct expenses and are often revenue positive due to market demand.

### **Ticket Sales/Admissions**

This revenue source is for accessing facilities for self-directed or spectator activities such as splash parks, ballparks, and entertainment activities. Fees may also be assessed for tours, entrance or gate admission, and other activities, which may or may not be self-directed. These user fees help offset operational costs or apply to new projects.

### **General Obligation Bonds**

Bonded indebtedness issued with the approval of the electorate for capital improvements and general public improvements.

### **Inter-local Agreements**

Contractual relationships could be established between two or more local units of government and/or between a local unit of government and a non-profit organization for the joint usage/development of sports fields, regional parks, or other facilities.

### **Partnerships**

Partnerships are joint development funding sources or operational funding sources between two separate agencies, such as two government entities, a non-profit and a government agency, or a private business and a government agency. Two partners jointly develop revenue producing park and recreation facilities and share risk, operational costs, responsibilities, and asset management based on the strengths and weaknesses of each partner.

Creating synergy based on expanded program offerings and collaborative efforts can be beneficial to all providers as interest grows and people gravitate to the type of facility and programs that best suit their recreational needs and schedules. Potential strategic alliance partnerships where missions run parallel and mutually beneficial relationships can be fostered and may include the following.

**Currently partnering with:**

- Chamber of Commerce
- School Districts
- Neighboring counties/communities
- Private alternative providers
- Senior Citizen Groups (AARP, Silver Sneakers)

**Can easily partner with:**

- Churches

**Could partner with:**

- Hospital
- Civic Groups (Kiwanis, Optimists, VFW, Elks, Rotary, etc.)
- Convention and Visitor's Bureau
- Homeowner or Neighborhood Associations
- Youth Sports Associations
- Adult Sports Associations

***A Sample Partnership Policy has been provided as a staff resource document.***

**Privatization – Outsourcing the Management**

Typically used for food and beverage management, golf course operations, ball field, or sports complex operations by negotiated or bid contract.

**Grants**

Grants often supplement or match funds that have already been received. For example, grants can be used for program purposes, information technology infrastructure, planning, design, seed money, and construction. Due to their infrequent nature, grants are often used to fund a specific venture and should not be viewed as a continuous source of funding.

**Facilities and Equipment Grants**

These grants help buy long-lasting physical assets, such as a building. The applicant organization must make the case that the new acquisition will help better serve its clients. Fund providers considering these requests will not only be interested in the applicant's current activities and financial health, but they will also inquire as to the financial and program plans for the next several years. Fund providers do not want allocate resources to an organization or program only to see it shut down in a few years because of poor management.

**Land and Water Conservation Fund**

This fund was reauthorized by Congress in December 2015 for three years. Generally during this short period, the level of funding allocated to states (through the State and Local Assistance Program) for outdoor recreation land acquisition and facility development is anticipated to rise. Every state runs their state and local assistance program in a slightly unique manner, so we encourage any municipal or City parks personnel interested in LWCF to contact their LWCF State Liaison Officer (typically someone at a state's department of fish and game, environmental protection, or conservation and recreation) for more information.

**Agricultural Leases**

In some agency parks, low land property along rivers, or excess land may be leased to farmers for crops.

**Surplus Sale of Equipment by Auction**

Agencies often have annual surplus auctions to get rid of old and used equipment, generating additional income on a yearly basis.

**Enterprise Funds**

These funds establish business units that are self-sustaining through fees and charges. Debt service and all indirect costs should be allocated or attributed to enterprise funds. Any excess revenue generated is maintained by the fund for future needs and cannot be used by another fund or department. Examples include premier sports tournament complexes.

**Cost Savings Measures**

In addition to aligning cost recovery with goals, charging appropriate fees, and using traditional and alternative funding mechanisms, several cost saving measures can improve the overall cost recovery picture for an agency.

**Change Maintenance Standards/Practices**

Add one extra day onto the mowing interval; thus reducing the amount of mowing in a season. Evaluate and determine actual maintenance needs and schedules for upkeep of different facilities and landscape features/types. Based on needs,

evaluate resource needs (equipment, staff, etc.) and production rates of staff/equipment for the system’s regularly occurring maintenance work and prioritize maintenance program needs, schedules and relevant resource allocations.

Consider turf management strategies by turf use/wear – high intensity use and maintenance needs (such as sports fields) versus low intensity use areas such as lawns along the edge of a woodlot or roadway – there are usually areas of turf that are regularly maintained because “they have always been mowed”; by changing the maintenance strategy to not mowing or not regularly mowing such areas, less time/resources need to be dedicated to mowing overall. Naturalizing areas of lawn where you don’t need lawn is a “going green” type of practice that also reduces maintenance needs/costs.

#### **Buildings/Facilities**

- Evaluate needs and consider in-house versus contracted maintenance workers for different needed services/trades.
- Standardize equipment, fixtures, and relevant materials.
- Are some facilities in such disrepair that continuing to throw limited funding on “band-aids” no longer practical?
- In designing new facilities, are simple sustainability factors being vetted (such as orienting the building to maximize solar gain to reduce lighting and heating costs)?
- Add energy efficient fixtures, low flow water fixtures, eliminate throw away products like paper towels and replace with energy efficient hand dryers.
- Strategically locate trash and recyclable containers to reduce cost of having staff empty these and spend time picking up trash/recyclables that are not properly placed by patrons.
- Reduce cleaning frequency of office spaces and centralize trash and recyclables into one location in employee work areas to save on costs of related to housekeeping.

- Consider having staff complete multiple tasks at the same time – emptying recyclables and trash at the same time as doing rounds or inspections.
- Educate users to better utilize existing facilities and resources to cut down costs – clean up after themselves.

#### **Equipment and Supplies**

- Purchase better equipment that last longer and requires less maintenance – saving money on the front end does not always result in cost savings overall.
- Standardize equipment (such as vehicles, grounds equipment and tools, etc.) as a way to increase efficiency in training staff to use it, and as a means to simplify and reduce costs associated with parts inventory and maintenance/repair programs (ex. Mechanic places one order for 10 air filters for 1 type of lawnmower and gets bulk price from one vendor, versus ordering 10 different filters for 10 different mowers, from multiple vendors and keeping track of it all).
- Consider leasing vehicles or other heavily used equipment – it can be more cost effective for an organization to lease vehicles or equipment and rotate their fleet regularly versus allocating resources to maintain and repair aging fleets of old, well used vehicles/equipment that have higher likelihood of breakdowns and associated loss of production time.
- Use volunteers to assist with housekeeping and maintenance.
- Solicit in-kind donation of time and services in exchange for maintenance assistance

#### **Contract Re-negotiate or Re-bid**

At every opportunity, review contracts to ensure you are not paying more than you have to, or are receiving the maximum amount of revenue possible.

### Cost Avoidance

An agency must maintain a position of not being everything for everyone. It must be driven by the market and stay with its core businesses. By shifting roles away from being a direct provider of facilities, programs, or services, an agency may experience additional savings. This process is referred to as *cost avoidance*. The estimated savings could be realized through partnering, outsourcing, or deferring to another provider in the provision of a service and/or facility. One example is purchasing in bulk.

### Green Practices

Use light, water, and motion sensors  
 Update to energy efficient ballasts, motors, appliances

Many agencies miss the easiest green practices in their everyday operating procedures and policies. These include administrative procedures, best operating standards, and sustainable stewardship performance measures. Many of the industry best practices outlined below (**Table 4**) may be currently and successfully employed by De Soto Parks and Recreation.

**These funding sources are potential funding opportunities the De Soto Parks and Recreation Department *definitely would consider* for additional funding of capital and operational expenditures.**

### Grants

Grants often supplement or match funds that have already been received. For example, grants can be used for program purposes, information technology infrastructure, planning, design, seed money, and construction. Due to their infrequent nature, grants are often used to fund a specific venture and should not be viewed as a continuous source of funding.

### General Purpose or Operating Grants

When a grant maker gives an operating grant, it can be used to support the general expenses of operating. An operating grant means the fund provider supports the overall mission and trusts that the money will be put to good use. Operating grants are generally much harder to procure than program or support grants.

**Table 4: Green Practices Focus Area and Action Step**

Focus Area	Action Step
Administrative	Recycle Office Trash (consolidate trash and recyclables to one common location – reduce cost to empty containers in each office) Clean offices weekly instead of daily Conserve Resources Flex Scheduling
Sustainable Stewardship	Preventative Maintenance Lead by Example Public Education - agencies should lead by example teaching the public a little bit about what green practices actually are and how they might be able to incorporate some of the same features (maybe raingardens or LED lighting) in their own home to help conserve our shared natural resources. Incorporate Stewardship Principles in all Park and Recreation Services Seek Available Grant Funding and Initiative Awards

### **Management or Technical Assistance Grants**

Unlike most project grants, a technical assistance grant does not directly support the mission-related activities of an agency. Instead, they support management or administration and the associated fundraising, marketing, and financial management needs.

### **Program-Related Investments (PRIs)**

In addition to grants, the Internal Revenue Service allows foundations to make loans—called Program-Related Investments (PRIs)—to nonprofits. PRIs must be for projects that would be eligible for grant support. They are usually made at low or zero interest. PRIs must be paid back to the grant maker. PRIs are often made to organizations involved in building projects.

### **Matching Grants**

Many grant makers will provide funding only on the condition that an amount equal to the size of the grant can be raised from other sources. This type of grant is another means by which foundations can determine the viability of an organization or program.

### **Planning Grants**

When planning a major new program, an agency may need to spend a good deal of time and money conducting research. A planning grant supports this initial project development work, which may include investigating the needs of constituents, consulting with experts in the field, or conducting research and planning activities.

### **Private Grant and Philanthropic Agencies**

Many resources are available which provide information on private grant and philanthropic agency opportunities. A thorough investigation and research on available grants is necessary to ensure mutually compatible interests and to confirm the current status of available funding. Examples of publicly accessible resources are summarized below.

Information on current and archived Federal Register Grant Announcements can be accessed from The Grantsmanship Center (TGCI) on the Internet at: <http://www.tgci.com>.

Another resource is the Foundation Center's RFP Bulletin Grants Page on Health at: <http://foundationcenter.org>. Research [www.ecivis.com](http://www.ecivis.com) for a contract provider of a web-based Grants Locator system for government and foundation grants specifically designed for local government.

### **Program or Support Grants**

A program or support grant is given to support a specific or connected set of activities that typically have a beginning and an end, specific objectives, and predetermined costs. Listed below are some of the most common types of program or support grants:

#### **Seed Money or Start-up Grants**

These grants help a new organization or program in its first few years. The idea is to give the new effort a strong push forward, so it can devote its energy early on to setting up programs without worrying constantly about raising money. Such grants are often for more than one year, and frequently decrease in amount each year.

#### **Naming Rights**

Many agencies throughout the country have successfully sold the naming rights for newly constructed facilities or when renovating existing buildings. Additionally, newly developed and renovated parks have been successfully funded through the sale of naming rights. Generally, the cost for naming rights offsets the development costs associated with the improvement. People incorrectly assume that selling the naming rights for facilities is reserved for professional stadiums and other high profile team sport venues. This trend has expanded in recent years to include public recreation centers and facilities as viable naming rights sales opportunities.

Naming rights can be a one-time payment or amortized with a fixed payment schedule over a defined period of time. During this time, the sponsor retains the "rights" to have the park, facility, or amenity named for them. Also during this time, all publications, advertisements, events, and activities could have the sponsoring group's name as the venue.

Naming rights negotiations need to be developed by legal professionals to ensure that the contractual obligation is equitable to all agents and provides remedies to change or cancel the arrangements at any time during the agreement period.

**Philanthropic**

Philanthropy can be defined as the concept of voluntary giving by an individual or group to promote the common good and to improve the quality of life. Philanthropy generally takes the form of donor programs, capital campaigns, and volunteers/in-kind services.

The time commitment to initiate a philanthropic campaign can be significant. If an agency decides to implement a capital fundraising campaign and current resources that could be dedicated to such a venture are limited, it may be recommended that the agency outsource some or most of this task to a non-profit or private agency experienced in managing community-based capital fundraising campaigns. Capital campaigns should be limited to large-scale capital projects that are desired by the community but for which dedicated funding is not readily available.

**Foundation/Gifts**

These dollars are received from tax-exempt, non-profit organization. The funds are private donations in promotion of specific causes, activities, or issues. They offer a variety of means to fund capital projects, including capital campaigns, gifts catalogs, fundraisers, endowments, etc.

**Gift Catalogs**

Gift catalogs provide organizations the opportunity to let the community know what their needs are on a yearly basis. The community purchases items from the gift catalog and donates them to an agency.

**Volunteer Programs/In-Kind Services**

This revenue source is an indirect source in that persons donate time to assist an agency in providing a product or service on an hourly basis. This reduces cost in providing the service, plus it builds advocacy for the system. To manage a volunteer program, an agency typically dedicates a staff member to oversee the program for the entire agency.

**Adopt-a-Park/Adopt-a-Trail**

Programs such as adopt-a-park may be created with and supported by the residents, businesses, and/or organizations located in the park’s vicinity. These programs allow volunteers to actively assist in improving and maintaining parks, related facilities, and the community in which they live.

**Neighborhood Park Watch**

As a way to reduce costs associated with vandalism and other crimes against property, an agency may consider a neighborhood park watch program. This program develops community ownership of an agency’s facilities.

**Recycling Centers**

Some agencies and counties operate recycling centers for wood, mulch, and glass as revenue generators for their systems.

**Table 5: Green Practices Focus Area and Action Step**

Focus Area	Action Step
Administrative	Virtual Meetings
	Eliminate Environmentally Negative Chemicals and Materials
	Purchase better equipment and supplies that require less maintenance and are more durable

### **Green Practices**

- Conduct energy audits
- Use solar and wind energy
- Implement green operating practices

Many agencies miss the easiest green practices in their everyday operating procedures and policies. These include administrative procedures, best operating standards, and sustainable stewardship performance measures. Many of the industry best practices outlined in **Table 5** may be considered to successfully employ by the City of De Soto.

These funding sources are potential funding opportunities the De Soto Parks and Recreation Department *could consider in the future* for additional funding of capital and operational expenditures. These funding sources may not be available currently in De Soto or an agreement may be necessary for implementation. These funding sources may meet with some resistance and be more difficult to implement.

### **Sin Tax**

This revenue source often partially funds public park and recreation agencies and is derived from casinos, tobacco tax and/or marijuana tax (where legalized). Sin tax revenue is somewhat popular in many states (where it is legal) with high traffic tourism agencies and with cities, counties, and state parks. Special Districts many times cannot exact sin taxes, which often calls into question the issue of charging resident and non-resident fee differentials.

### **Local Improvement Districts**

Different from cities that are direct beneficiaries of these funds, Special Districts (or local improvement districts) are the beneficiaries of pass-through funding from cities or counties, which have responsibility for their interests. Special Districts cannot exact or collect the land dedication or the fee-in-lieu on their own.

### **Full Faith and Credit Bonds**

Bonds that are payable from the general resources of the agency. They are not tied to a specific revenue source, but the payment of principle and interest uses available operating funds.

### **Fundraising**

Many park and recreation agencies have special fundraisers on an annual basis to help cover specific programs and capital projects. This can include selling bricks, benches, pavers, tiles, and commemorative tree plantings, etc.

### **Crowdfunding**

Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project or venture by raising many small amounts of money from a large number of people, typically via the Internet. Park and Recreation agencies are beginning to incorporate crowdfunding efforts alongside traditional fundraising strategies. NRPA has implemented a Fund Your Park crowdfunding platform. It's free to members, donations are tax deductible and you have all the support you need from NRPA staff. *Source: Kara Kish, MPA, CPRE, CPSI, article in Parks and Recreation Magazine, December 2015. www.NRPA.org*

### **Gifts in Perpetuity**

#### **Irrevocable Remainder Trusts**

These trusts are set up with individuals who typically have more than a million dollars in wealth. They will leave a portion of their wealth to an agency in a trust fund that allows the fund to grow over a period of time and then is available to use a portion of the interest to support specific park and recreation facilities or programs that are designated by the trustee.

#### **Life Estates**

This revenue source is available when someone wants to leave their property to an agency in exchange for their continued residence on the property until their death. An agency can usually use a portion of the property for park and recreational purposes, and then use all of it after the person's death. This revenue source is very popular for individuals who have a lot of wealth and their estate will be highly taxed at their death. Their benefactors will have to sell their property because of probate costs. Life Estates allow individuals to receive a good yearly tax deduction on their property while leaving property for the community. Agencies benefit because they do not have to pay for the land.

### **Maintenance Endowments**

Maintenance Endowments are set up for organizations and individuals to invest in ongoing maintenance improvements, and infrastructure needs of specific/targeted facilities. Endowments retain money from user fees, individual gifts, impact fees, development rights, partnerships, conservation easements, and for wetland mitigations.

### **Raffling**

Some agencies offer annual community raffles, such as purchasing an antique car that can be raffled off in contests.

### **Capital Improvement Fees**

These fees are on top of the set user rate for accessing facilities such as sport and tournament venues and are used to support capital improvements that benefit the user of the facility.

### **Development Surcharge/Fee**

Some agencies have added a surcharge on every transaction, admission, or registration to generate an improvement or development fund.

### **Dog Park Fees**

These fees are attached to kennel clubs who pay for the rights to have dog park facilities for their own exclusive use. Fees are on the dogs themselves and/or on the people who take care of other people's dogs.

### **Flexible Fee Strategies**

This pricing strategy would allow an agency to maximize revenues during peak times and premium sites/areas with higher fees and to fill in excess capacity during low use times with lower fees to maximize play.

### **Lighting Fees**

Some agencies charge additional fees for lighting as it applies to leagues, special use sites, and special facilities that allow play after daylight hours. This fee may include utility demand charges.

### **Parking Fee**

This fee applies to parking at selected destination facilities such as sports complexes, stadiums,

and other attractions to help offset capital and operational cost. Fees may be charged for after-hours overnight usage of parking facilities or for storage at parking facilities with excess space.

### **Processing/Convenience Fees**

This is a surcharge or premium placed on electronic transfers of funds, automatic payments, or other conveniences.

### **Recreation Service Fee**

The Recreation Service Fee is a dedicated user fee that can be established by a local ordinance or other government procedure for the purpose of constructing and maintaining recreation facilities. The fee can apply to all organized activities that require a reservation of some type, or other purposes as defined by an agency. Examples of such generally accepted activities that are assigned a service fee include adult basketball, volleyball, and softball leagues; youth baseball, soccer, and softball leagues; and special interest classes. The fee, above and beyond the user fee, allows participants to contribute toward the construction and/or maintenance of the facilities being used.

### **Recreation Surcharge Fees on Sports and Entertainment Tickets, Classes, MasterCard, Visa**

This fee is a surcharge on top of the regular sports revenue fee or convenience fee for use of MasterCard and Visa. The fee usually is no more than \$5.00 and is usually \$3.00 on all exchanges. The money earned would be used to help pay off the costs of improvements or for operational purposes.

### **Residency Cards**

Non-residents may purchase "residency" on an annual basis for the privilege of receiving the resident discounts on fees, charges, tours, shows, reservations, and other benefits typically afforded to residents only. The resident cards can range in price, but are often at least equivalent to what a resident pays in taxes annually to support operations, maintenance, and debt service.

### **Real Estate Transfer – Tax/Assessment/Fee**

As agencies expand, the need for infrastructure improvements continues to grow. Since parks and recreation facilities add value to neighborhoods and communities, some agencies have turned to real estate transfer tax/assessment/fee to help pay for acquisition and needed renovations. Usually transfer tax/assessment/fee amount is a percentage on the total sale of the property and is assessed each time the property transfers to a new owner. Some states have laws prohibiting or restricting the institution, increase, or application of this tax/assessment/fee.

### **Room Overrides on Hotels for Sports Tournaments and Special Events**

Agencies have begun to keep a percentage of hotel rooms reservation fees that are booked when the agency hosts a major sports tournament or special event. The overrides are usually \$5.00 to \$10.00 depending on the type of room. Monies collected would help offset operational costs for hosting the events.

### **Security and Clean-Up Fees**

An agency may charge groups and individuals security and clean-up fees for special events other type of events held at facilities.

### **Self-Insurance Surcharge**

Some agencies have added a surcharge on every transaction, admission, or registration to generate a self-insured liability fund.

### **Signage Fees**

This revenue source charges people and businesses with signage fees at key locations with high visibility for short-term events. Signage fees may range in price from \$25-\$100 per sign based on the size of the sign and location.

### **Trail Fee**

These fees are used for access to closed bike trails to support operational costs. Fees for bike trails are typically \$35 to \$50 a year. This arrangement works for bike trails if the conditions of dedicated use, fencing for control, and continuous patrolling/monitoring are in place. Multi-purpose trails that are totally open for public use without these

conditions in place make it difficult to charge fees and are nearly impossible to monitor.

### **Utility Roundup Programs**

Some park and recreation agencies have worked with local utilities on a round up program whereby a consumer can pay the difference between their bill and the next highest even dollar amount as a donation to the agency. Ideally, these monies would be used to support utility improvements such as sports lighting, irrigation cost, and HVAC costs.

### **Concession Management**

Concession management is the retail sale or rental of soft goods, hard goods, or consumable items. Through contracting, the agency either receives a percentage of the gross sales or the net revenue dollars from the revenue above direct expenses. Net proceeds are generally more difficult to monitor.

### **Merchandising Sales or Services**

This revenue source comes from the public or private sector on resale items from gift shops, pro-shops, restaurants, concessions, and coffee shops for either all of the sales or a defined percentage of the gross sales. Typically, agencies engage in this type of service as a convenience to their patrons and as a means of enhancing overall operational cost recovery.

### **Private Concessionaires**

Contracts with private sector concessionaires provide resources to operate desirable recreational activities. These services are typically financed, constructed, and operated by a private business or a non-profit organization with additional compensation paid to an agency.

### **Booth Lease Space**

Some agencies sell booth space to sidewalk vendors in parks or at special events for a flat rate or based on volume of product sold. The booth space can also be used for sporting events and tournaments.

### **Catering Permits and Services**

This is a license to allow caterers to work in the system on a permit basis with a set fee or percentage of food sales returning to the agency. Also, many agencies have their own catering service or an authorized provider list and receive a percentage of dollars from the sale of food.

### **Land Swaps**

An agency may trade property to improve access or protection of resources. This could include a property gain by the agency for non-payment of taxes or a situation where a developer needs a larger or smaller space to improve its profitability. The agency would typically gain more property for more recreation opportunities in exchange for the land swap.

### **Leasebacks on Recreational Facilities**

Many agencies do not have adequate capital dollars to build desired revenue-producing facilities. One option is to hire a private investor to build the facility according to the specifications requested with the investment company financing the project. An agency would then lease the property back from the investor over 20+ years. This can be reversed whereby an agency builds the facility and leases to a private management company who then operates the property for a percentage of gross dollars to pay off the construction loans through a subordinate lease.

### **Licensing Rights**

This revenue source allows an agency to license its name on all resale items that private or public vendors use when they sell clothing or other items with its agency's name on it. The normal licensing fee is 6 to 10 percent of the cost of the resale item.

### **Manufacturing Product Testing and Display or Research**

An agency may work with specific manufacturers to test their products in a park, recreation facility, or in a program or service. The agency may test the product under normal conditions and report the results back to the manufacturer. Examples include lighting, playground equipment, tires on vehicles, mowers, irrigation systems, seed & fertilizers, etc. The agency may receive the product for free

but must pay for the costs of installation and for tracking results. Research Fees may be charged to allow research to occur on park lands or related to equipment used at Parks. Companies may pay to have their equipment installed and tested to prove durability and user satisfaction. Product Placement fees may also be an option – having a company not only donate their equipment but also pay a fee to have their equipment used at a public facility.

### **Private Developers**

Developers may lease land through a subordinate lease that pays out a set dollar amount plus a percentage of gross dollars for recreation enhancements. These could include sports complexes and recreation centers.

### **Sale of Development Rights**

Some agencies sell their development rights below park ground or along trails to utility companies. The agency would receive a yearly fee on a linear foot basis. This type of activity would be dependent on grant restrictions on property purchased with grant funding.

### **Sale of Mineral Rights**

Many agencies sell mineral rights under parks, including water, oil, natural gas, and other by products, for revenue purposes.

### **Special Use Permits**

Special permits allow individuals to use specific park property for financial gain. The agency receives either a set amount of money or a percentage of the gross service provided.

### **Subordinate Easements – Recreation/Natural Area Easements**

This revenue source is available when an agency allows utility companies, businesses, or individuals to develop some type of an improvement above ground or below ground on its property. Subordinate easements are typically arranged over a set period of time, with a set dollar amount that is allocated to the agency on an annual basis.

### Land Trusts

Many agencies have developed land trusts to help secure and fund the cost of acquiring land that needs to be preserved and protected for greenway purposes. This may also be a good source for the acquisition of future lands.

### Positive Cash Flow

Depending on how aggressively an agency incorporates marketing and management strategies, there may be a positive fund balance at the end of each year. While current facilities, projections, and fee policies do not anticipate a positive cash flow, the climate can change. The ending positive balance could be used, for example, to establish a maintenance endowment for agency recreation facilities, to set aside funds

for capital replacement and/or repair, or to generate a fund balance for contingency or new programming opportunities.

### Green Practices

Use electric and hybrid vehicles  
Use greywater

Many agencies miss the easiest green practices in their everyday operating procedures and policies. These include administrative procedures, best operating standards, and sustainable stewardship performance measures. Many of the industry best practices outlined below (**Table 6**) may eventually be successfully employed by your agency.

**Table 6: Green Practices Focus Area and Action Step**

Focus Area	Action Step
Operating Standards	Reduce Driving LEED® Design Principles
Sustainable Stewardship	Re-analyze and Revised Practices and Standards Monitor and Report Results

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# III. THE PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM IN DE SOTO: INVENTORY AND LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS

## A. INVENTORY

### Park System Summary

City Owned & Operated Parks:	County Owned & City Operated Parks:	County Owned & Operated (used by De Soto Residents):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Miller Park</li> <li>Widow Big Knife Park</li> <li>Riverfest Park</li> <li>Wilderness Park</li> <li>Commerce and Lexington (Future Park)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sunflower Park Ball Fields</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kill Creek Park</li> <li>95th Street Trail Head &amp; Kill Creek Streamway Dog Park</li> <li>Lexington Lake Park</li> </ul>

Scale used to evaluate the physical condition of each amenity:

- Poor: needs repaired or replaced
- Good: serves the intended purpose
- Excellent: like-new condition

Refer to **Appendix B** for larger version of the Park matrix as well as Park Resource and Trails maps.

		Park Amenities																		
Park Name	Address	Trail Length (Miles)	Acreage	Diamond Ballfields	Rectangular Ballfields	Sand Volleyball Courts	Outdoor Basketball Courts	Tennis Courts	Horseshoe Pits	Stage/Amphitheater	Bathing Cage	Water Fountains	Restrooms	Archery/Shooting Range	Boat Ramps/ Marina	Fishing Docks	Swimming Beach	Tent Camping Campsites	Rain Garden	
Miller Park	83rd and Ferry	10	0.35	2	3	0	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	4	1	5	0	0	0	0
Widow Big Knife Park	7560 Edgerton Rd	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Riverfest Park	33440 W. 79th	50	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	0
Wilderness Park	13205 Evening Star Rd	67	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Commerce & Lexington - Future	Commerce & Lexington	7	0.18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sunflower Park - Owned by Johnson County	37515 W. 103rd St	6	1.23	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
Kill Creek Park - Owned by Johnson County	11670 S Homestead Ln	884	13.5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	1	8	0	1	1	1
Kill Creek Streamway Dog Park & 95th St. Trail Head - Owned by Johnson County	33460 W 95th St	16	0.88	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Lexington Lake Park - Owned by Johnson County	9000 Sunflower Rd	456	3.1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	2	0	1	1	0
Cedar Creek Boat Ramp- Owned by Johnson County	Access Rd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>1534</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>

\* Acreage & Trail length data taken from GIS or from DeSoto/Johnson County Online Parks Descriptions

# Miller Park

10 Acres  
83<sup>rd</sup> and Ferry

## Assessment of Amenities and Physical Condition

Miller Park			
Quantity	Amenity	Condition	Notes
1	Sand Volleyball Court	Good	Sand court- tension boundary lines would be a good addition
1	Memorial Monument sign and Waterfall	Excellent	
1	Restroom Building and Concession Stand	Good	ADA Accessible, 1 Men & 1 Women stall- additional stalls would be beneficial during ball games
1	Outdoor Basketball Court	Good	
1	Fenced in Tennis Courts	Good	
2	Playground Areas	North: Good condition South: Poor condition	South Play Area is not ADA Accessible
3	Baseball Diamonds	A, B, and C Diamonds: Good	
2	Horseshoe Pits	Good	Well-shaded area, out of the way way of others
1	Concrete Amphitheater Space	Good	
1	Picnic Shelter	Good	
1	Shaded Picnic Area	Excellent	New, ADA Accessible with ADA Seating at table
1	Pergola	Good	Nice landscaping but no seating
5	Charcoal Grills	Good	Plenty of Grills
4	ADA Accessible Water Fountains	Poor	
1	Batting Cage	Good	
2	Parking Lots	Good	82 offsite parking spaces
	Large Lawn Area	Good/Poor	Condition dependent on weather: floods during rain events
	Ball Field Lighting	Good	"A" Field updated to Musco "B" Field needs updated to Musco "C" Field No Lighting
	Security Lighting	Excellent	Plenty of light fixtures throughout park
	Benches and Trash Cans	Good	Plenty of seating and trash cans throughout park
	Sidewalks and Pathways	Good	ADA Accessible throughout park
	Trees	Good	Large/mature shade trees

### Future Considerations & Recommendations

- The sand volleyball court could benefit from boundary lines/ropes.
- Additional sand volleyball courts would be highly used based on usage of current court.
- Add additional stalls in the restroom facility- during peak game times 1 stall for each gender is insufficient.
- Fixing the drainage problems within the lawn area of the park would be very beneficial. This space could be highly utilized if it did not flood often.

## Wilderness Park

13205 Evening Star Rd  
67 Acres

### Assessment of Amenities and Physical Condition

Wilderness Park			
Quantity	Amenity	Condition	Notes
1	Shooting Range & Shelter	Poor	Functional but dilapidated
1	Gravel Parking Area	Good	Seems to be untouched

- Permitted activities:
  - Fishing
  - Camping
  - Horseback Riding
  - Shooting range with written permit

### Future Considerations & Recommendations

- Needs an entry sign, or something to identify that you have arrived at a De Soto owned park.

Better access or pathways through the park ground would be beneficial. As of now everything is gated off, with access only along one edge. The addition of ATV and dirt bike trails on the park property would be an added amenity for the community.

## Widow Big Knife Park

7560 Edgerton Rd  
38 Acres

### Assessment of Amenities and Physical Condition

Undeveloped park land with river frontage: **Good condition**, contains both forested area and pasture land

- Currently rented to an archery club

### Future Considerations & Recommendations

- Needs an entry sign, or something to identify that you have arrived at a De Soto owned park.
- Could be an excellent location for an adventure park with zip lines/ ropes courses/ etc.

## Commerce & Lexington Future Park Site

7 Acres

### Assessment of Amenities and Physical Condition

Commerce and Lexington Future Park Site			
Quantity	Amenity	Condition	Notes
1	Paved Trail	Good	
	Wooded Area	Good	Seems to be untouched

### Future Considerations & Recommendations

- Needs an entry sign, or something to identify that you have arrived at a De Soto owned park.
- Adding exercise equipment or skateboard rails/jumps along the trail could increase usage.

## Sunflower Ball Fields

37515 W. 103rd St.

6 Acres

### Assessment of Amenities and Physical Condition

Sunflower Ball Fields			
Quantity	Amenity	Condition	Notes
2	Baseball Diamonds	Good	<b>North Diamond:</b> Pitching mound, scoreboard No ADA path or seating to field <b>South Diamond:</b> Pitching mound No ADA seating or scoreboard
2	Water Fountains	Excellent	New and ADA accessible
	Parking Lot	Poor	Needs new curb stops and restriped. No ADA accessible path from parking to seating at ball fields. Plenty of parking spaces
	Lighting	Good	Security Lighting Poor (Only 1 and not working) Ball field Lights outdated but working
1	Access Point to Paved Trail	Good	
1	Restroom Facility	Excellent	Like New, Very Clean 2 Toilets for Each Gender
1	Concession Stand	Poor	Very rundown, needs replaced
	Trash Cans	Good	Plenty of them
	Bleachers	Poor	Rusty, no handrails, no ADA Spots
	Batting Cage	Good	

### Future Considerations & Recommendations

- Needs an entry sign, or something to identify that you have arrived at a De Soto leased park.

## Riverfest Park

33440 W. 79th  
50 Acres

### Assessment of Amenities and Physical Condition

Riverfest Park			
Quantity	Amenity	Condition	Notes
1	Open lawn used for sports field	Good	Also used as parking for events
2	Portable restrooms year round	Good	Poor Lighting
1	Solar lighting panel	Good	
	Boat ramp	Good	
	Playground	Good	Not ADA accessible since there is no pathway to it
2	Picnic Area	Good	Not ADA accessible since the concrete pads are elevated
	Information Signage	Excellent	
	Water Fountain	Good	Functions as needed, more fountains could benefit the park
	Above ground electrical equipment	Good	but not visually pleasing
1	Gravel Trail	Good	
1	Paved Sidewalk loop	Good	
1	Performance Stage	Good	
1	Lawn for Performance Seating	Good	Partly Shaded
1	Abandoned park entrance building	Poor	Boarded up and not in use
1	Rain Garden	Good	With good informational signage
	Parking	Poor Condition	Only 4 defined parking spaces (all of which are ADA)
7	Security Light Fixtures	Good Condition	Not enough throughout the park- currently only have lights on festival frontage area, and west concrete loop.

### Future Considerations & Recommendations

- Needs an entry sign, or something to identify that you have arrived at a De Soto owned park.
- Needs better access from town to the park. It is currently dangerous to walk or ride along the 2 lane road that curves and crosses rail tracks.

# Lexington Lake Park

9000 Sunflower Rd  
456 Acres

## Assessment of Amenities and Physical Condition

Lexington Lake Park			
Quantity	Amenity	Condition	Notes
1	Entry Sign	Excellent	
1	Fishing Lake	Excellent	
1.6 Miles	Paved Trail	Excellent	
1.5 Miles	Soft Trail	Good	
2	Parking Lots	Excellent	Provides Proper ADA Accessibility
1	Boat Ramp	Excellent	
1	Fishing Dock	Excellent	Provides Proper ADA Accessibility
1	Water Fountain with Dog Bowl	Excellent	
1	ADA Accessible Water Fountain	Excellent	
1	Playground	Excellent	New equipment with ADA compliant rubber surfacing
1	Shade Canopy with Bench	Excellent	Provides shaded seating for playground
1	Picnic Shelter	Excellent	ADA accessible pathway and seating
2	Charcoal Grills	Excellent	Like New

### Future Considerations & Recommendations

This park contains land that would be useable as soccer practice fields that could benefit the De Soto Parks and Recreational league.



# Kill Creek Park

11670 S Homestead Ln  
884 Acres

## Assessment of Amenities and Physical Condition

Kill Creek Park			
Quantity	Amenity	Condition	Notes
1	Entry Sign	Excellent	Wayfinding signage and entry monument are noticeable
1	Swimming Beach	Good	Has Lifeguard Stands
1	Fishing Dock	Good	ADA Accessible
	Trail Access Points	Good	Well-Marked/Visible
1	Boat Ramp & Marina	Good	Rental Equipment: Canoes, Peddle Boats, Fishing Boats
1	Playground	Excellent	ADA Accessible
4	Picnic Shelters	Excellent	ADA Accessible with ADA Seating
4	Drinking Fountains	Good	ADA Accessible
8	Charcoal Grills	Good	
5	Parking Lots	Excellent	Provides ADA Accessibility
1	Restroom Facility	Good	Clean and Well-Functioning but dark
1.5 Miles	Paved Trails	Excellent	
12 Miles	Soft Multi-Use Trails	Good	
1	Off-Leash Dog Park	Good	
	95 <sup>th</sup> Street Trail Head	Good	Plenty of parking, portable restroom facility available

### Future Considerations & Recommendations

More consistent hours of operation for rentals & swim beach, as well as better communication of these hours would greatly benefit the usage of this park.



# Aquatics Center

32905 West 84th St.

## Assessment of Amenities and Physical Condition

Aquatics Center	
Quantity	Amenity
6	Lap Lanes
1	Vortex Pool
1	Large Slide
2	Kiddie Slide
2	Water Play Equipment
1	Climbing Wall
2	Beach Entry Pools
6	Shade Structures/Umbrellas
1	Locker Room Facility
1	Party Room
1	Concession Stand
1	Storage Building
Aquatics Center Events	
	Swim Free Days
	Doggy Swim Day
	Evening Swim Nights
	4 <sup>th</sup> of July Party

### Future Considerations & Recommendations

A “Dive-In” event could be a popular event, which consists of projecting a movie on a large screen, allowing people to float in the pool while watching.



# Community Center

32905 West 84th St.

## Assessment of Amenities and Physical Condition

Community Center		
Amenity	Condition	Notes
Senior Center	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Catering Kitchen</li> <li>- Tables and Chairs</li> <li>- Room Divider Walls</li> <li>- Room Rented Out</li> <li>- No alcohol allowed</li> <li>- Not ideal flooring for fitness classes</li> <li>- Used for Tae-Kwon-Do</li> </ul>
Fitness Room	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mirrors and Free Weights</li> <li>- Kids Play Room with Foam Floor and Toys</li> </ul>
Arts Room	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rented by the Arts Council (Non-profit group)</li> <li>- Sink and Counter</li> </ul>
Basement/Storage Room	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asbestos filled storage room</li> </ul>
Upstairs	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asbestos filled rooms</li> <li>- Ceilings are falling in</li> <li>- Tiles and walls crumbling</li> <li>- Water damage from roof</li> </ul>
Shop	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parks Shop Facility – Limited Space</li> <li>- Street Department’s Sign shop/storage- Limited Space</li> <li>- Water Department Offices: Asbestos tile and chalk-boards</li> </ul>
Gymnasium:	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Full court floor &amp; basketball hoops</li> <li>- Water damage causing warping on court</li> <li>- Floor is nearing the end of its life and will need replaced within a few years</li> </ul>
Locker Rooms:	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Used for sports equipment storage</li> <li>- Not suitable for use as functional locker/shower rooms</li> </ul>

## Future Considerations & Recommendations

Renovate more space in the Community Center for use as fitness rooms, dance or gymnastics studios.

## B. LEVEL OF SERVICE ASSESSMENT

### Level of Service Gaps

The east border of De Soto City Limits has no level of service to parks and facilities. This means that these residents are outside of the 3-mile radius from any neighborhood, community or regional park. Between downtown De Soto and the east side residential area, there is a buffer of agricultural land. It would be beneficial to all residents of east De Soto if a park was added east of the agricultural buffer, to better serve them. If land acquisition prevents a park being added in this area, focus should be directed towards adding trails so that these residents have better non-vehicular access to other parks & amenities near downtown De Soto. Refer to **Appendix C** for Level of Service map demonstrating the level of service of parks.

## C. FACILITY ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

### **Signage and/or entry monuments are not present at many of the parks.**

The parks missing entry sign include: Wilderness Park, Widow Big Knife Park, Commerce & Lexington (future park), Sunflower Park – Ball Field entrance, and Riverfest Park

**There is a need for soccer fields.** None of the parks in the study area contain formal soccer fields. Many of the areas that are set up for soccer seasonally are prone to frequent flooding, have no lighting, and have no seating.

**Drainage problems exist in Miller Park.** The flooding of the lawn space in Miller Park seems to be a key item that residents would like fixed.

**There is no safe access from town to Riverfront Park.** A sidewalk or path could greatly benefit the day-to-day use of Riverfront park by creating a safe way for residents to access it. Currently, users must walk along the 2-lane road that curves and crosses rail tracks twice.

**Communication of Facility & Park hours, amenities provided there etc.** Many residents indicate that they can't keep track of what is offered, since hours don't seem consistent or well publicized.

**Need for more fitness rooms/dance or gymnastic studios.** The current community center has a lot of unused space but would need major renovations to make these spaces suitable for additional classes.

**Need for connectivity of trails.** There are many trails in the area, however none of them directly connect to each other. Residents would love to see trail connectivity further east, to tie into existing Johnson County/Lenexa trails.

**Implementation of Riverfest Master Plan.** Residents are hesitant to support other parks being added/renovated until they see the master plan for Riverfest Park implemented.

# IV. KEY ISSUES

## A. KEY ISSUES TRIANGULATION MATRIX

Key issues and themes for focus were identified using a number of tools, including review of existing plans and documents, focus groups, stakeholder meetings, a community survey, Leadership interviews, inventory and level of service analysis, and staff/project team input. The information gathered from these sources was evaluated, and the recommendations and action plans were developed and are listed in the following section.

The findings are summarized on the **Key Issues Matrix**, which captures all of the key issues that surfaced during the Master Plan process and prioritizes them on one matrix. The key issues were placed into four categories on the matrix:

- a) Priority
- b) Opportunity to Improve
- Left Blank means the issue did not come up or wasn't addressed in that venue

The qualitative data planning tools used to determine the priority of key issues include:

1. Consultant team's expertise
2. Staff input
3. Public forum input
4. Leadership Interviews

The quantitative data planning tools used to determine the priority of the key issues include:

1. Community Survey
2. Existing planning documents
3. Facility Assessment / LOS

The Key Issues Matrix summarizes the areas that need immediate attention and determine the direction of the implementation of recommendations in the Master Plan. The planning process vetted out key issues in four key areas as summarized in the following matrix.



Data Parks and Recreation Master Plan  <b>Key Issue - Rating Scale</b> a - priority b - opportunity to improve c - minor or future issue blank means the issue didn't come up or wasn't addressed	Qualitative Data				Quantitative Data		
	Consultant Team	Staff Input	Public Input	Leadership Interviews	Community Survey	Other City Documents	Facility Assessment/LOS
<b>Organizational</b>							
Improve ADA accessibility for all facilities & activities	a	a	a	a		a	a
Improve WiFi Connectivity	a	a	a			a	
Greater access to information about what parks & recreation department does	a	a				a	a
Staff/Coach/Volunteer/Referee Training, Incentives & Organization	b		a			a	
Increase awareness of programs, services, amenities, & hours	b					a	a
Perceived lack of partnerships/communication with local agencies & businesses		b	a				a
Great inequity in rental rates	a	a					
Improve communication around youth sports	c					a	
Need longer/late hours of operation (pool)						a	
Better use of technology (ex. Mobile app) & social media (Twitter)	a						
<b>Programs &amp; Service Delivery</b>							
Teenagers, Young Adults, & Seniors identified as underserved populations	a	a		a		a	a
More offerings of unique community events (5ks, Movie in the Park, etc.)	a	a	b	a		a	a
Wider diversity of unique program offerings such as cultural & artistic classes	a	a				a	a
Need better marketing of programs & events	a	a	a				
Timely & consistent communication about programs	a	a	a				
Need additional (&/or backup) fitness instructors	a	a					
Need evening fitness & program hours		c				a	
Need better youth sports organization & structure			b				
Swimming lessons often full			c				
<b>Facilities &amp; Amenities</b>							
Need for connectivity of trails	a	a	a	a		a	a
Need additional sports fields (especially for soccer)	a	a	a			a	a
Aging infrastructure & amenities inhibits services (*included)	a	a	b	a		a	a
Restrooms - Need Improvements & Additional Facilities in Parks *	a	a	a	a		a	
Increase availability for indoor space for athletics	a	a	a			a	a
Need for more fitness rooms/dance or gymnastics studio	a	a	a			a	a
Practice fields in need of repair *	a	b				a	a
Additional lighting (athletic fields &/or courts) *	b	a	c			a	a
More Parking (esp. at Miller Park)	a	a	a			a	
Develop Riverfest Park	a	a		a			a
Need to develop Wilderness Park, Widow Big Knife Park, Lexington & Commerce property	a	a				a	a
Playground equipment outdated		a	b			a	a
Improve entrance & wayfinding signage/monuments at entrance of parks	a	a	b	b			
Need adventure/unique elements at parks	b		a			a	
<b>Finance</b>							
Need additional funding sources	a	a	a			a	
Create value & equity in User Fees	a	a				a	
Need donations for park projects	a	a	a				

# V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLANS

## A. RECOMMENDATIONS

After analyzing the issues that resulted from this process, including the Key Issues Matrix, qualitative and quantitative data, inventory of existing assets, Level of Service analyses, citizen survey, staff and leadership input, stakeholder and public input, a variety of recommended goals and objectives were developed to provide guidance for the improvement of parks, recreation facilities and trails in De Soto. These recommendations focus on enhancing public recreation in the city through improvements to existing park facilities and recreation amenities, increased organizational efficiency, improved programming and service delivery, and expanded financial opportunities.

### GOAL 1: IMPROVE & UPDATE EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES

#### *Objective 1.1: Maintain and upgrade Existing Facilities Standards*

##### **1.1.a. Update Aging Infrastructure**

With the limited number of De Soto Parks, many parks are highly used which leads to the deterioration of infrastructure and equipment. It is recommended that the items listed in the Low Scoring Amenity Matrix (Staff Document) for Miller Park, Wilderness Park, Sunflower Park and the Community Center be updated. These updates will help with functionality and ADA accessibility in existing parks.

##### **1.1.b. Improve ADA accessibility**

An analysis of current accessibility through parks and facilities should be completed to determine where improvements are needed. The list of improvements in the ADA Transition Plan should be broken up into categories for short-term, mid-

term, and long-term phases that the City of De Soto can plan and appropriately allocate budget for improvements each year.

##### **1.1.c. Implement Riverfest Master Plan**

To increase usage of Riverfest Park, it is recommended that the appropriate budget be allocated to implement the remainder of the planned design for Riverfest Park. De Soto residents have requested places to camp, paved drives, permanent restrooms, additional parking, additional sand volleyball courts, and additional trails which Riverfest Park could provide if fully implemented.

##### **1.1.d. Repurpose & Refinish Indoor Fitness Spaces**

Residents of De Soto recognize that there is unused space within the City Hall building, that could be beneficial for additional programs. It is recommended that rooms are refinished, and repurposed for additional fitness studios, dance lessons or other programs. Repurposing rooms in the basement (near the existing fitness studio) should be priority, before refinishing the rooms in the upper levels of the building.

##### **1.1.e. Install & Improve Restroom Facilities in Parks**

Restrooms facilities in existing parks are important to De Soto residents. A priority for the City of De Soto should be to install permanent restrooms in Riverfest Park, that are well-lit for safety and nighttime use during events. Additional improvements to restroom facilities would be to add more stalls within Miller Park, as there is currently only one stall for each gender. As unused and future parks are developed, permanent restrooms should be a consideration.

### **1.1.f. Install New Entrance and Wayfinding Signage at all City Owned Parks**

The De Soto City Parks do not currently have consistent signage and wayfinding in place. It is recommended that an entry monument and wayfinding sign be designed, that can be customized and implemented at the entrance of each City Owned Park. The entry and wayfinding sign at Lexington Lake (Johnson County Owned) could be used as an example.

### **1.1.g. Fix Drainage Problems**

Miller Park is highly used and cherished by De Soto Residents, although it has ongoing drainage issues that affect sports practices and events held in the park. Fixing these drainage issues is a necessary improvement, to ensure the continued use of the lawn space within Miller Park.

### **1.1.h. Install Additional Amenities in Existing Parks & Facilities**

Prior to developing new parks, De Soto Residents would appreciate additional the following additional amenities be added to existing facilities.

- Within Miller Park, there is a need for additional parking, an additional shelter, updated play equipment and irrigation on existing sports fields.
- Parking lots additions are recommended in the NE Corner, doubling the size of the current lot near the tennis courts, as well as installing a new parking lot in the SW corner of Miller Park near the old pool building.
- Residents of De Soto indicate using the shelter in Miller Park frequently and therefore would like an additional shelter to be added for events.
- It is recommended that the oldest play equipment in the northern playground of Miller Park be replaced with more modern play structures.
- Improve outdoor recreation access for fishing
- In addition to the improvements of amenities at Miller Park, there is a desire for an additional water feature/attraction at the Aquatic Center.

### **Objective 1.2: Improve Connectivity of Trails**

Trail Guidelines/Standards include the order of preference of trail types:

1. Multipurpose Recreational Trails
2. Hard surface 8-10 feet wide
3. Soft surface 6-8 feet wide
4. Sidewalks 4-6 feet wide
5. On street bike lanes only considered if options #1 or #2 cannot exist

Refer to the Trails Map in the **Appendix C** for recommended trail connections. Recommendations for future trails are broken into: planned construction, short-term, medium-term, and long-term.

#### **1.2.a. Finish Construction of Western Trail**

A trail from the De Soto school facilities, west to Lexington Lake is planned for construction beginning in 2019.

#### **1.2.b./1.2.c. Short-term connections include:**

Installation of a city-owned trail from downtown De Soto to Riverfest Park, to safely cross railroad tracks, and be separated from vehicular traffic along the narrow road. A connection between the dead-end trail south of the 95<sup>th</sup> Street Trail Head and Kill Creek Park should be a short-term goal for Johnson County.

#### **1.2.d./1.2.e. Medium-term connections include:**

Installation of a sidewalk along Kill Creek Road from 83<sup>rd</sup> St. to K-10, as well as an 8' asphalt trail from the intersection of 83<sup>rd</sup> St. and Kill Creek Road, to Corliss Rd. These connections will provide safe access to downtown from residential neighborhoods in the east area of De Soto.

**1.2.f. Long-term connections include:** Installation of a soft-surface recreational trail along the river, from Riverfest Park, through Widow Big Knife Park, and connecting into the current trails at Lexington Lake.

### **Objective 1.3: Build Additional Sports Fields**

#### **1.3.a. Add 4 Rectangular Sports Fields**

Within the existing De Soto City Parks there is not currently a dedicated location for rectangular practices and games. It is highly recommended that the City begins looking for additional park land to build sports fields on. The priority should be in adding rectangular fields with irrigation, fencing, lighting, concession/restroom, parking, path, etc.

#### **1.3.b. Add 5 Diamond Sports Fields**

After the rectangular needs are addressed, the City should re-evaluate the need for additional diamond fields with 300' fencing for other sports. The priority should be in adding rectangular fields with irrigation, fencing, lighting, concession/restroom, parking, path, etc.

### **Objective 1.4. : Develop Master Plans for Existing Unused Parks & Future Parks**

#### **1.4.a. Widow Big Knife Park**

Widow Big Knife Park currently leases land to the Prairie Traditional Archers Club, but is not used for City of De Soto parks or recreation activities. It is recommended that a Master Plan is completed for this park to explore programming options and site layouts that use the property to its full extent. Since this park is partially forested, it provides opportunity for adventure park amenities such as zip lines, ropes courses, obstacle courses, bike trails, etc.

#### **1.4.b. Wilderness Park**

Wilderness Park is currently underutilized, since it is further out of De Soto city limits than most residents prefer to travel for every-day park amenities. The current programming includes a shooting range that can be used by the public, and gravel parking areas. Camping and horseback riding are also permitted uses in this park, although there are no physical amenities that cater to those uses. It is recommended that the City of De Soto decide if this park is worth keeping in their park system or returning the land to the federal government. If the park remains in the De Soto park system, it is recommended that this

property become the location of many outdoor sport activities such as the following: Clay-pigeon shooting range, archery range, ATV trails/course, horseback riding trails, and camping. A Master Plan should be completed before implementation of new programming takes place.

#### **1.4.c. Lexington & Commerce Parcel**

The City of De Soto already owns the parcel at the intersection of Lexington & Commerce, to be used as a future park. A Master Plan should be completed to explore programming options and site layouts to best utilize the space. It could be beneficial to use an online survey during this process, to solicit feedback from residents on amenities that they would like to see located in that park.

## **GOAL 2: CONTINUE TO IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCIES**

### **Objective 2.1: Upgrade Organizational Standards**

#### **2.1.a. Prepare ADA Transition Plan for all Parks and Facilities**

To meet federal ADA regulations, preparing an ADA Transition Plan is recommended. An analysis of current accessibility through parks and facilities should be completed to determine where improvements are needed. The list of improvements should be broken up into categories for short-term, mid-term, and long-term phases that the City of De Soto can plan and appropriately allocate budget for each year.

#### **2.1.b. Improve WiFi connectivity in parks/facilities**

Consider cost/benefit of Wi-Fi connectivity in parks and facilities as an added value to patrons. Parents can stay during their kids activities and check their emails and get work done rather than drop them off.

#### **2.1.c. Clarify Mission, Vision, Values**

Clarify mission statement, values, and vision of the City and display publicly at all facilities to tell the story of department's dedication to quality. This can also include online exposure with social media.

### 2.1.d. Redefine Park Advisory Board bylaws, roles, duties

The main responsibility of the Park Board, according to Section 12-301 of the City Code, is to “review and study the operation, maintenance, improvement and expansion of all park land and facilities in the city.” Previous planning documents and informational interviews reveal the importance of keeping the Park Board focused on long-range planning rather than day to day operations. The Park Board can assist city staff by providing recommendations for planning efforts of future city parks and facilities.

According to the Section 12-301 of the City Code, the Park Board:

- Consists of seven members, appointed by the mayor with the approval of the city council. No Terms are specified.
- A member of the governing body should be selected to serve as a non-voting ex-officio member of the park board for a term of one year.
- Duties include review and study the operation, maintenance, improvements and expansion of all park land and recreation facilities in the city
- The park board shall develop and recommend to the governing body a long-range plan for the future development of city parks and other recreation facilities and participate in all discussions on modification of the park and recreation element of the city’s comprehensive plan.

As indicated in the Strategic Plan, Objective AM 1.1C, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan should address the form and function of an expanded role for the Park Board. As a new Park Board has been appointed, the Park Board Code Chapter XII, Article 3 needs to be edited to define the new Park Board members roles, duties, and by-laws.

### ARTICLE 3. PARK BOARD

- 12-301. Park advisory board created.
- 12-302. Members; terms; appointments.
- 12-303. Ex officio member.
- 12-304. Organization; officers.
- 12-305. By-laws; meetings; quorum.
- 12-306. Duties.

Park Boards around the country vary in their structure, terms, by-laws, and duties. By looking at best practices of Advisory Boards across the country, the following information should help to clarify the function, roles, and responsibilities. The language below is adapted from the NRPA Advisory Board Member Resource Guide, first developed from the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association. Examples of By-Laws from two exceptionally run Advisory Boards have been provided to Department staff as a separate resource document.

Redefine Park Advisory Board bylaws, roles, duties	
NRPA Advisory Board Guide Recommendation	
Structure	The advisory board is typically associated with a park(s) and/or recreation department administered by a division of government: state, county, parish or municipality
Oversight	In most cases, the governmental entity is administered by an elected body, which has management and policymaking responsibility for a broad range of governmental services including park(s) and/or recreation. This elected body has the final authority for making all decisions but often looks to an advisory board for recommendations and input regarding decisions that affect the park(s) and recreation department.
Size	The optimum size for an advisory board is generally five to nine members but larger advisory boards do exist. Boards composed of at-large members, representatives of the entire community, regardless of where they live, their particular interests or memberships, normally fall within this range.
Appointments	In the case of at-large advisory boards, members are appointed by the elected body either as a whole, or by the elected chairperson, mayor, governor, etc. In some cases, existing advisory board members will provide the first screening of new members, making recommendations to the elected official(s), who may or may not appoint the recommendations.
Terms	Appointments are generally for a specific term. In the case of an advisory board representing specific groups or geographic areas, the representative can be a political appointment, chosen by the organization they represent or they may serve because of becoming the president or chair of their respective group. In this case, it is possible to have some representatives change annually while others serve for various lengths of time, depending on the election criteria of the individual organizations.
Role of Advisory Board	<p>The advisory board may provide community input to the department director and staff regarding facility operations and programming.</p> <p>In all cases, the role of this type of park(s) and/or recreation board is just what the name implies: advisory. The group serves as a resource to the decision makers, be that staff, director or elected officials. The advisory board can convey how the citizens as a whole, or the segment/organization/program they represent, feel about policies, programs, proposals, or decisions.</p>

As the new Advisory Board is on boarded into their new roles, it is essential that they know their roles and responsibilities. It is recommended that each member reads the full version of the NRPA Advisory Board Resource Guide. It is essential that each new advisory board members be oriented to their roles, duties, and responsibilities as well as those policies, decisions, and approvals for which they are not responsible.

Additional information related to the following questions can be answered in detail in that guide:

- What is the advisory board’s role?
- What should be covered in a board meeting?
- How should the Citizen Board Operate (Sample Agenda)?
- What role should citizen board members play with the media?
- What are the main tasks of the advisory board?
- What can a citizen board member do to remain effective during their tenure?
- What are the important qualities and motivations for being a citizen board member?
- How should board members be oriented and trained for their role?

An excerpt from the Advisory Board Resource Guide lists the following expectations below:

### **2.1.e. Clarify youth sports policies & procedures**

Clarify policies and procedures with youth sports programs and make all information and participation criteria accessible. Be consistent with officials and any coaches trainings.

#### **2.1.e.1. Improve communication with youth sports**

Use email newsletter to specifically target youth sports parents and share updates, rain outs, sports information via email blasts.

#### **2.1.f. Utilize relevant marketing tools**

The Department currently does a good job of promoting its programs and activities through its website, flyers and social media. When asked how they prefer to receive their information from the Department, survey respondents noted that the website, social media, email and De Soto Happenings were the best means.

### **Citizen board members are expected to:**

- Attend meetings regularly - commitment is paramount.
- Do your homework and contribute to the discussions - review the information provided, be prepared with questions and relevant discussion points. Clarification of agenda items or need for additional information should be discussed with the director/chief executive prior to the meeting.
- Vote based on what you believe is best for the community, recognizing that you may need to occasionally compromise. A board member must be willing to abide by and support the decisions, policies and programs agreed upon by the board.
- Be aware of the importance and value of parks and recreation in your community– gain knowledge, ask questions, and work closely and in cooperation with the director/chief executive.
- Resist political, personal and special interest pressures – have courage, maintain integrity, set high personal standards for yourself and fellow board members, and avoid potential or perceived conflicts of interest.
- Be familiar with and adhere to Robert’s Rules of Order or whatever source your agency has identified for meeting protocol.
- Serve as your agency’s ambassador – promote and support agency events, programs, services, etc.
- Encourage citizen participation – recruit your fellow residents to participate in agency events, programs and services, and encourage them to volunteer in the park system.

Using modern advertising channels such as social media (Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor), email blasts and the website redesign that is already planned can help to inform residents. Considering a longer registration window would be helpful as registrants noticed that they often miss a deadline. Additionally, Discovering De Soto (the quarterly catalog) features some of the Parks and Recreation offerings but does not include all of them. Listing all the program opportunities and registration periods would be a great opportunity since the magazine reaches all households in De Soto.

### **2.1.g. Develop a Marketing Plan**

To continue to be successful, the Department should develop a marketing plan that will guide communication and promotion of its activities and facilities. Such a marketing effort will create greater awareness of city recreation offerings, and should include branding for the Department, use of social media, and development of the Department website and partnership opportunities. If developed, the Marketing Plan should be updated every five years or as needed and include marketing strategies that incorporate the efforts of partner departments, other local Parks and Recreation Departments, and projects.

As part of the Marketing Plan, the Department should evaluate wayfinding signage to facilities on roadway, pathways, and within parks. The Department should develop signage standards for parks, trails, and providing measured distances and loops. Improved wayfinding signage will contribute to a greater sense of connectivity to parks, facilities, and pathways. This is a recommendation under the facilities and amenities section as well.

Using modern advertising channels such as social media and the website can help to inform residents. A key question remained after these focus group conversations: “how do we get program information to the public so that they can better utilize our services?” In addition, online registration and payments need to be seamless; this will be improved with the website redesign that is already planned for the city. Considering a longer registration window would be helpful as registrants noticed that they often miss a deadline.

Additionally, Discovering De Soto (the quarterly catalog) features some of the Parks and Rec offerings but does not tell all of them. This would be a great opportunity since the magazine reaches all households in De Soto.

Utilize relevant tools (website, social media, (Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor) email blasts to advertise.

### **2.1.h. Improve/develop partnerships**

Many programs and services are provided by youth organizations or other service providers. The Department should continue to evaluate programs and services, and continue to improve the development of partnerships including cities, schools, county, businesses, & youth organizations to provide recreational opportunities and services for city residents. Current Joint Use Agreements should be reviewed annually for relevance and equity for all parties.

As popularity in program offerings and activities increases, continue to look for opportunities to expand programs while working with the other service providers and formalize these agreements in writing. Continue to expand with partners that form a collaboration relevant to department goals providing both open space and amenities for the community but also facility space for additional programming opportunities.

### **2.1.i. Develop equitable rental rates**

Develop equitable rental rates for all organizations renting public space from the City based on hourly or SF rates. Discounted rates can be applied for 501 (c)(3) non-profit organizations equally.

### **2.1.j. Extend pool hours**

Extend pool hours during the summer to include more evenings and potentially after Labor Day when weather permits.

### **2.1.k. Better use of technology & social media**

Find 1-3 social media platforms that are utilized in De Soto to communicate updates with the community.

## GOAL 3: CONTINUE TO IMPROVE PROGRAMS AND SERVICE DELIVERY

### *Objective 3.1: Enhance Programs and Services Standards*

#### **3.1.a. Offer more programs for all ages**

The Department should continue to look for opportunities to expand recreational programs and activities based on community demand and current trends. The community would like to see nature/environmental and fitness and wellness programs expanded, as well as additional programs for special needs, teens, and seniors.

The Department should continue to monitor recreational trends and community needs to stay current with programming and demand. As new programs and services are developed and implemented, continue to create a balance between passive and active recreation.

#### **3.1.b. Add more special events at Riverfest Park**

Increased community events were a priority for focus group participants and survey respondents. The Department should continue to look for opportunities to expand community special events. Working with local partners, the Department can help facilitate the growth of community events at Riverfest Park with a regional draw. In order to ensure that the events reflect the diversity of the community, the Department should continue to engage the community in event development.

#### **3.1.c. Hire one new full-time recreation programmer**

To be able to add the additional recreational programs and special events the public would like, one additional recreation programmer needs to be hired as the department is currently understaffed and programming at capacity year round.

#### **3.1.d. Increase social media presence**

The department needs to maintain active presence on the social media channels that the community of De Soto embraces for information gathering.

#### **3.1.e. Target user groups via email marketing**

Establish direct communication with target user groups and all active contacts via email marketing while allowing recipients to unsubscribe. Target groups can be formed based on past program registration of activities.

#### **3.1.f. Advertise for instructors & increase incentives/pay**

Continuous advertising in all possible media avenues in surrounding communities need to occur to successfully recruit instructors for the recreational program areas desired. Current pay levels as well as incentive pay percentages need to be increased to make these positions attractive enough for people to drive to De Soto. These costs should be included in the user fees and passed on to the consumers.

#### **3.1.g. Increase evening programs**

The public input supported the need for more evening adult program opportunities for the working and commuting portion of the De Soto community.

#### **3.1.h. Improve transparency and communication with youth sports parents**

Improve communication and transparency with youth sports organizations and parents. Use of social media prior to and throughout the season would help solve the perception many patrons have with the lack of communication and transparency in these program areas.

#### **3.1.i. Offer additional swim programs**

Public comments included the need for additional swim programs including during evening hours. Most aquatic programs fill up fast and are at capacity where not all swim program needs are taken care of currently.

## GOAL 4: INCREASE FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

### Objective 4.1: Identify Improved Funding Mechanisms

#### 4.1.a. Recalculate Park Impact/In Lieu Of Fees

We do want to differentiate between Land Dedication, Fees in Lieu of Land Dedication and Impact Fees, which all make up development fee, and are often blended together to come up with the “mix” desired by the agency. So speaking of the Impact Fees, some focus on park development, some add trails, some add recreation. This speaks to Impact Fees in general.

State laws vary but all require a rational nexus between the need for additional capital facilities and the growth in population generated by the subdivision. It is a growth should pay its own way concept, and is intended to *maintain* the current level of service.

- According to the level of service of the park entity, the impact fee must be in line with the cost to deliver the service both in terms of proximity and in the nature of the provision.
- Impact fees cannot be used to remedy replacement or repairs of existing facilities.
- Many are builder fees rather than developer fees.
- All apply to residential, but some also apply to commercial or non-residential development.
- Most require that impact fees be based on a capital improvement plan
- Most account for at least a portion of “neighborhood level” service (neighborhood park system and trails with in parks), many do not cover this complete cost.
- Some account for “community level” service (pro-rata share of community park system, recreation facilities, trails).
- Many have a fee **per dwelling unit** for the neighborhood park system and a fee per dwelling unit for the community park system. Currently these range from \$800 to \$4,800 per household unit depending

on property values in each different community. Typically the range is from \$1,200 - \$2,000 per housing unit.

- Some, with development of significant size allow the developer to provide the park, to city standards, in lieu of paying the impact fees.
- Some differentiate between single family and multi-family dwelling units and use per dwelling unit population number from their local planning agency as the multiplier to determine a more equitable cost per person. Other lean toward thinking that multi-family dwelling units have less yard space and so the need is greater....may depend on other local development ordinances/
- Most have, or should, have an annual inflation factor.
- State enabling legislation typically has explicit language regarding construction credits.
- Each municipality determines the formula and procedure by which the impact fee is levied, by ordinance.

Some communities use square footage for commercial and/or industrial units as the multiplier but unaware of any that have used # of bedrooms as the multiplier.

#### 4.1.b. Potential Bond Referendum for large capital projects

Floating a bond referendum to be approved by vote of the town is the single most popular method of funding the large costly capital projects in Master Plans. If the timing is right within the community, successful bond referendums can be passed as long as a well-publicized plan that includes exact facilities, location, total project capital cost estimates, annual O&M cost projections, cost benefit, economic impact for De Soto, and conceptual plan is presented to educate the voting public.

#### **4.1.c. Implement Cost Recovery & Pricing Philosophy/Policy**

The Department should pursue a formal resource allocation and cost recovery philosophy, model, and policy that is grounded in the values, vision, and mission of the De Soto Parks and Recreation Department. The GreenPlay team conducted a workshop for staff on the Pyramid Methodology and provided resource materials for the Department. The Department should consider developing a pricing methodology that reflects the community's values, while generating revenues to help sustain De Soto facilities, parks, programs, and services. As part of the policy, the current scholarship program should be expanded and publicized to allow for inclusion and equity for all participants and families.

#### **4.1.d. Develop gift catalog for donors**

A gift catalog should be created that contains all opportunities within Parks and Recreation for donations and sponsorships at all levels of giving from the small events, memorial trees/benches, event sponsors, etc. up to and including naming rights of facilities. Those businesses and individuals capable of donating can shop the catalog for their giving comfort zone annual amount that is tax deductible. The concept of the gift catalog is for the potential donors to know that the department will only be asking for their financial assistance one time each year and will not be back several times to seek additional donations for several programs and/or events.

#### **4.1.e. Resurrect use of Parks Foundation Fund**

The resurrection of the Park Foundation Fund should be considered as a 501c3 non-profit where people can donate specifically for park and recreation activities and/or facilities while being tax deductible. This entity can be a proactive fundraising body along with the Parks Advisory Board while using the gift catalog to demonstrate the need to supplement the operating public funds available through the City General Fund each year.

## **B. ACTION PLAN, COST ESTIMATES AND PRIORITIZATION**

The following Goals, Objectives, and Action Items for the recommendations are drawn from the public input, inventory, level of service analysis, findings feedback, and all the information gathered during the master planning process with a primary focus on maintaining, sustaining, and improving City of De Soto parks, recreation, open space, and trails. All cost estimates are in 2018 figures where applicable. Most costs are dependent on the extent of the enhancements and improvements determined or known at this time. The Operational Budget Impact is a dollar range calculated as the annual number of hours estimated multiplied by an average hourly rate of \$20 per hour to cover all levels of staff including benefits.

Timeframe designations recommended to complete tasks are noted as:

- Short-term (up to 3 years)
- Mid-term (4-6 years)
- Long-term (7-10 years)
- Ongoing (occurs on a continuous basis)

## GOAL 1: IMPROVE & UPDATE EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES

<i>Objective 1.1: Maintain and upgrade Existing Facilities Standards</i>			
Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
1.1.a Update Aging Infrastructure Upgrade the items listed in the Low Scoring Amenity Matrix (Staff Document)	See Low Scoring Amenity Matrix (Staff Document)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Ongoing
1.1.b Improve ADA accessibility	See Low Scoring Amenity Matrix (Staff Document)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Ongoing
1.1.c Implement Riverfest Master Plan	See 1.1c.1-c.4		
1.1.c.1 Add and Install Parking Lots	Paving: \$52.00 per square yard (6" asphalt on 6" crushed rock)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
1.1.c.2 Add and Install Security Lighting	Lighting: \$5,000 (per 18-24' LED Pole, installed)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
1.1.c.3 Construct Permanent Restroom Facility	\$142,000 for new restroom structure with 2 stalls per side.	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
1.1.c.4 Implement phases 2-4 of the Riverfest Master Plan to reach full build out.	\$3,364,243 (2007 cost estimate + approx. 3% per year inflation)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Long-Term
1.1.d. Repurpose & Refinish Indoor Fitness Spaces in City Hall building	\$150 per sf renovation area (NOT including asbestos removal )	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Mid-Term
1.1.e. Install & Improve Restroom Facilities in Riverfest Park and Miller Park	\$100 per sf of renovation area & \$110,000 for new restroom structure with 2 stalls per side.	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term

1.1.f. Install New Entrance and Wayfinding Signage at all City Owned Parks	\$20,000 per park (Entry monument & wayfinding signs)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Ongoing
1.1.g. Fix Drainage Problems in Miller Park	\$100,000	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
1.1.h. Install Additional Amenities in Existing Parks & Facilities	See 1.1 h.1- h.6	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Ongoing
1.1.h.1. Add irrigation on existing sports fields at Miller Park	\$12,000 per field	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Mid-Term
1.1.h.2. Add parking lots in Miller Park at NE corner tennis courts & the SW corner near the old pool building	\$52.00 per square yard (6" asphalt on 6" crushed rock)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Long-Term
1.1.h.3. Add shelter in Miller Park for events	\$100,000 (Large Pavilion)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Mid-Term
1.1.h.4. Replace northern playground structure at Miller Park	\$60,000 (1 large structure, 2 smaller pieces)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Mid-Term
1.1.h.5. Improve outdoor recreation access for fishing at Riverfest Park	\$15,000	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
1.1.h.6. Add water feature/attraction at the Aquatic Center or Park	\$225,000 (per feature)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Mid-Term

**Objective 1.2: Improve Connectivity of Trails**

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
1.2.a. Trail from the De Soto school facilities, west to Lexington Lake (included with 91st Street extension project)	Included with 91st St. Project	Minimal additional O&M	Short-Term
1.2.b. Trail from downtown De Soto to Riverfest Park	\$38.00 per linear foot (8 ft. wide asphalt trail)	Minimal additional O&M	Short-Term
1.2.c. Trail connection between the dead-end trail south of the 95 <sup>th</sup> Street Trail Head & Kill Creek Park	\$38.00 per linear foot (8 ft. wide asphalt trail)	Minimal additional O&M	Short-Term

1.2.d. Sidewalk along Kill Creek Road from 83 <sup>rd</sup> St. to K-10	\$58.00 per linear foot (5 ft. wide concrete sidewalk)	Minimal additional O&M	Mid-Term
1.2.e. Trail from the intersection of 83 <sup>rd</sup> St. and Kill Creek Road, to Corliss Road	\$38.00 per linear foot (8 ft. wide asphalt trail)	Minimal additional O&M	Mid-Term
1.2.f. Soft-surface recreational trail along the river, from Riverfest Park, through Widow Big Knife Park, and connecting into the current trails at Lexington Lake	\$20.00 per Linear Foot (8 ft. wide mulch trail)	Minimal additional O&M	Long-Term

**Objective 1.3: Build Additional Sports Fields**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
1.3.a Add (4) Rectangular Sports Fields (earthwork, pad, grass surface, irrigation)	\$265,000 per field (Not including land acquisition)	TBD	Short-Term
1.3.a.1 Sports Field Lighting	\$32,000 per field (4 poles, custom fixtures)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	TBD
1.3.b. Add 5 Diamond Sports Fields with 300' fences	\$420,000 per field (Not including land acquisition)	TBD	Long-Term
1.3.b.1 Sports Field Lighting	\$53,000 per field (6 poles, 44 fixtures)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	TBD
1.3.c. Add Concession Stand	\$100,000	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	TBD
1.3.d. Add Restroom Facilities	\$142,000 for new restroom structure with 2 stalls per side.	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	TBD
1.3.e. Add Parking Lot for Sports Complex	\$52.00 per square yard (6" asphalt on 6" crushed rock)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	TBD

1.3.f. Add Aluminum Bleachers	\$6,000 per set (15' long, 5 rows, with handrails)	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	TBD
<b>Objective 1.4: Master Plan Existing Unused Parks &amp; Future Parks</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
1.4.a. Develop Widow Big Knife Park Master Plan	\$30,000	TBD	Short-Term
1.4.b. Develop Wilderness Park Master Plan	\$30,000	TBD	Mid-Term
1.4.c. Develop Master Plan for Lexington and Commerce Parcel	\$20,000	TBD	Short-Term

## GOAL 2: CONTINUE TO IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCIES

<b>Objective 2.1: Upgrade Organizational Standards</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
2.1.a Prepare ADA Transition Plan for all Parks and Facilities	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
2.1.b. Improve WiFi connectivity in parks/facilities	TBD	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
2.1.c. Clarify Mission, Vision, Values	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
2.1.d. Redefine Park Advisory Board bylaws, roles, duties	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
2.1.e. Clarify youth sports policies & procedures	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
2.1.e.1. Improve communication with youth sports	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Ongoing

2.1.f. Utilize relevant marketing tools	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Ongoing
2.1.g. Develop a Marketing Plan	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Mid-Term
2.1.h. Improve/develop partnerships	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Ongoing
2.1.i. Develop equitable rental and lease rates	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
2.1.j. Extend pool hours	None	Minimal additional O&M	Short-Term
2.1.k. Better use of technology & social media	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Ongoing

### GOAL 3: CONTINUE TO IMPROVE PROGRAMS AND SERVICE DELIVERY

<i>Objective 3.1: Enhance Programs and Services Standards</i>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
3.1.a. Offer more programs for all ages	None	Minimal additional O&M	Ongoing
3.1.b. Add more special events at Riverfest Park	TBD	TBD	Ongoing
3.1.c. Hire one new full-time recreation programmer	None	\$50,000	Short-Term
3.1.d. Increase social media presence	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Ongoing
3.1.e. Target user groups via email marketing	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Ongoing

**Objective 3.1: Enhance Programs and Services Standards**

3.1.f. Advertise for instructors & increase incentives/pay	None	Additional pay for instructors	Ongoing
3.1.g. Increase evening programs	None	Additional Staff Hours	Short-Term
3.1.h. Improve transparency & communication with youth sports parents	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
3.1.i. Offer additional swim programs	None	Additional pay for instructors	Short-Term

**GOAL 4: INCREASE FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES**

**Objective 4.1: Identify Improved Funding Mechanisms**

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
4.1.a. Recalculate Park Impact/In Lieu Of Fees	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
4.1.b. Potential Bond Referendum for large capital project	None	Cost to list Bond Referendum on ballot	Mid-Term
4.1.c. Implement Cost Recovery & Pricing Philosophy/Policy	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Short-Term
4.1.d. Develop gift catalog for donors	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Mid-Term
4.1.e. Resurrect use of Parks Foundation Fund	None	No additional O&M but existing Staff Time	Mid-Term

# APPENDIX A: PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY



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# Public Input Summary

Public input was gathered during the week of May 28, 2018. Methods used to engage with the community included focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and public meetings. Additional information was collected via phone interviews and emails sent by citizens wanting to participate. The goal of these sessions was to gather information that would guide the development of survey tools. Participants included: City staff, local business owners, lifeguards, regional leaders, stakeholders, and members of the public.

## Q1: WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS OF THE PARKS AND REC DEPARTMENT?

### **Facilities**

A major strength of the De Soto Parks and Recreation Department identified by focus group participants is the accessibility and affordability to the community center, fitness classes, and local parks. Services and amenities offered by the City are perceived as assets to the entire community, especially the Community Center and the Aquatic Facility. The outdoor pool is highly valued because of its “top-notch” aquatic lessons and instructors. The successes of the Aquatic Center made residents believe that the pool should be a “destination” where additional features such as a Lazy River or Splashpad can entertain kids and adults.



De Soto Aquatic Center June 2018

### **Staff**

Citizens of De Soto, Kansas consistently mentioned that a strength of the Parks and Recreation Department is the approachability of all of the department staff. Residents felt that the department was very open to suggestions and new ideas. Residents expressed that the staff was able to accomplish a lot with little staff and resources.

### **Programs**

Overall, programs were also noted as a strength of De Soto Parks and Recreation. Participants enjoy the fitness classes and the instructors. The mix of active and passive recreation is something that residents appreciate. New programs such as Pickleball were able to succeed due to the willingness of the department to listen and take action. This sport is gaining traction locally and residents enjoy playing the game, especially when there is involvement with all age groups. In addition, there are recreational sport leagues that are very welcoming to beginners. Their level of competitiveness was noted as a strength. They also do a good job at partnering with surrounding municipalities to offer more resources and sports teams.

### **Parks**

Residents were pleased by the quality of the parks in regard to cleanliness and maintenance. RiverFest Park was seen as an underutilized strength because of its potential for community events. Parks in De Soto Kansas are diverse and offer a variety of programs and amenities for residents.

## Q2: WHAT ARE THE WEAKNESSES OF THE PARKS AND REC DEPARTMENT?

### **Connectivity & Biking**

Connectivity was a recurring topic in regard to trails and parks in De Soto. Trails offer an opportunity for transportation to areas such as Miller Park, RiverFest Park, Schools, Downtown Area, and Johnson County Parks and Recreation Department (JCPRD) Facilities. JCPRD also has potential for trail improvement projects which could be a mutually beneficial partnership. Specifically, there was interest in connecting trails from De Soto to Johnson County, and from Lexington Lake to other trails. Certain sidewalks end abruptly, and limit walkability in the area.

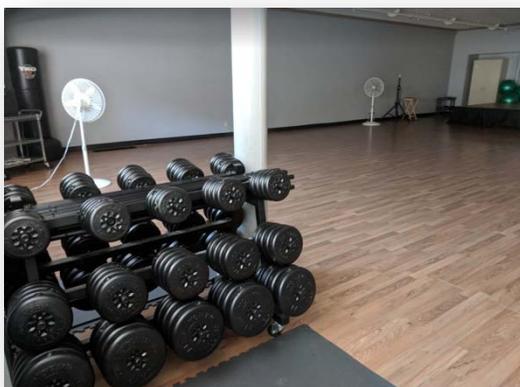
With connectivity, participants expressed that there would need to be more education about cars and bikes travelling safety together. Participants in the focus group have seen the number of cyclists in the area increase. With the lack of bike lanes available, safety is a concern. Educating the public on how to drive with bikes, and likewise, educating bikers on safe routes (avoiding 83<sup>rd</sup> and Kill Creek) is imperative. Participants expressed that De Soto could become a destination for cyclists, and is slowly becoming one. Trail standards and policies should be a consideration. A number of related issues were brought up, such as how people will want to use the trails in the future. Will they be used for commuting? Electric bikes? Unicycles? Width of trails? Multiuse?



Sunflower Park, June 2018

### **Programs**

In regards to fitness classes and programs, additional space is desired for classes. The current city administrative building has space but needs work. Could a relationship with the school district help alleviate this problem? Should renovations be done to current admin building? These were the questions focus groups asked.



Community Fitness Room, June 2018

Soccer is a popular sport in De Soto, and many residents felt that it needs to be prioritized moving forward by having dedicated fields for soccer.

Some participants expressed frustration because the location of their practice/games had been moved to new locations. In addition, game rules seem to change with the season and the referee who is officiating. Focus groups mentioned that the training to be a coach or official was unorganized and lacked essential information. Finally, with soccer being a coed sport, parents expressed that the competition level was uneven – especially as

kids turn into teens and gender differences become more prevalent. The older the kids get, the fewer play in town, making it less fun as a league. Soccer is currently co-ed, which girls don't like, so they leave town for girls leagues.

Playing against other cities doesn't always work since they have different views of what "recreation" is, and different rules in regard to age groups. Some do it by grade level, some by birthdays. The lack of consistency and communication are two areas that needed improvement.

### **Fields**

Soccer fields are needed – users noted that they need a home for practice and games since games often get moved. Miller Park often floods and causes additional issues. A soccer facility at Lexington Lake Park may answer that need, but funding still needs to be established before that is secured. Residents voiced that additional fields for other sports beyond soccer were also needed, such as baseball and softball. Having permanent irrigation would be desired, as Miller Park often gets flooded which can cause game cancellations.

### **Parks**

Further dedication to the RiverFest Park development is desired. Key components in the Master Plan should be carried out to provide a number of amenities. Basic needs such as restrooms, paved roads, and shelters are a priority to residents. Although large events may require portable restrooms at scale, more people would like to use RiverFest park on a daily basis – so permanent restrooms are wanted. Residents also noted that they would like to see greater (and safer) connectivity to the RiverFest Park. Residents addressed that Miller Park needs improvement in regard to updated lighting, additional parks, additional restrooms, another park shelter, and updated playground equipment (for all ages).



Riverfest Park, June 2018

### **Events**

In addition, more community wide events were desired by residents. Ideas included block parties, movie nights, free concerts, or other annual events. These gatherings could help De Soto build stronger relationships with its residents and tourists alike. Events like De Soto Days could be moved to RiverFest Park because of its capacity and purpose to hold festivals.

### **Marketing**

One major weakness of De Soto is the lack of communication and awareness of programs. The services, parks, amenities, and programs are not reaching all of those in the community who want to learn about them. Residents want to know more about the offerings and opportunities through De Soto Parks and Recreation and need to know where to find this information.

Awareness and communication are essential components to help educate the public on offerings. Some residents were not aware of other parks besides Miller Park. Greater awareness and communication about the other parks such as Widow Big Knife, Lexington Property, and others would be helpful.

Having clear and consistent signage at all parks will help unify and brand the parks department. This is especially true at event parks such as RiverFest.



Parks and Recreation Webpage, June 2018

Using modern advertising channels such as social media and the website can help to inform residents. A key question remained after these focus group conversations: “how do we get program information to the public so that they can better utilize our services?” In addition, online registration and payments need to be seamless; this will be improved with the website redesign that is already planned for the city.

Considering a longer registration window would be helpful as registrants noticed that they often miss a deadline. Additionally, Discovering De Soto (The quarterly catalog) features some of the Parks and Rec offerings but does not list them all. This would be a great opportunity since the magazine reaches all households in De Soto.

### Partnerships

There are currently missed opportunities to partner with small businesses and school districts. To offer more programs – which is desired at RiverFest Park – De Soto Parks and Recreation should partner with other agencies that can help.

### Administrative

Residents recognized that staff is limited in De Soto for managing and operating programs. Ideas for new staff include a marketing/advertising person for programs, website, and social media, a sponsorship/funding person, and a special events programmer.

### Q3: WHAT PROGRAMS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE?

- Aquatic Programs (Water Aerobics, Open Swim, Lap Swim)
- Archery
- Art program—people could paint murals to give the town character
- Bocci Ball
- Coed Softball
- Cycling classes
- Dance Classes
- Educational Classes (Cooking, Conservation, Recycling, Bike Safety)
- Family Friendly Events (Movies in the Park/Pool)
- Gymnastic Program for Youth
- Indoor and Outdoor Pickleball
- Offer outdoor fitness classes in the parks
- Open Gym Classes
- Roller Hockey
- Running clubs/track clubs for kids
- Special Events: Food Trucks, Festivals, Music
- Street soccer
- Walking Group/Aerobics

### Q4: WHAT IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD BE MADE TO EXISTING FACILITIES?

#### Riverfest Park

- Trail Connectivity to Park
- Main Entry Signage
- Disc Golf
- Shelters for Parties
- Destination Playground
- Need Restrooms and Lighting
- Camping Opportunities (RV and tent)
- More events with foodtrucks

#### Community Center

- More multi-purpose/Fitness Rooms
- Floor stability
- Space for youth classes
- Increase Community Center Hours

#### Other Parks & Amenities

- Miller park needs age appropriate playground equipment for the 5 and under age group.
- Improve drainage issues for soccer at Miller Park
- Year Round, Indoor Pool
- Miller park needs age appropriate playground equipment for the 5 and under age group.
- Skate park apparatus or fitness equipment along paths/trails

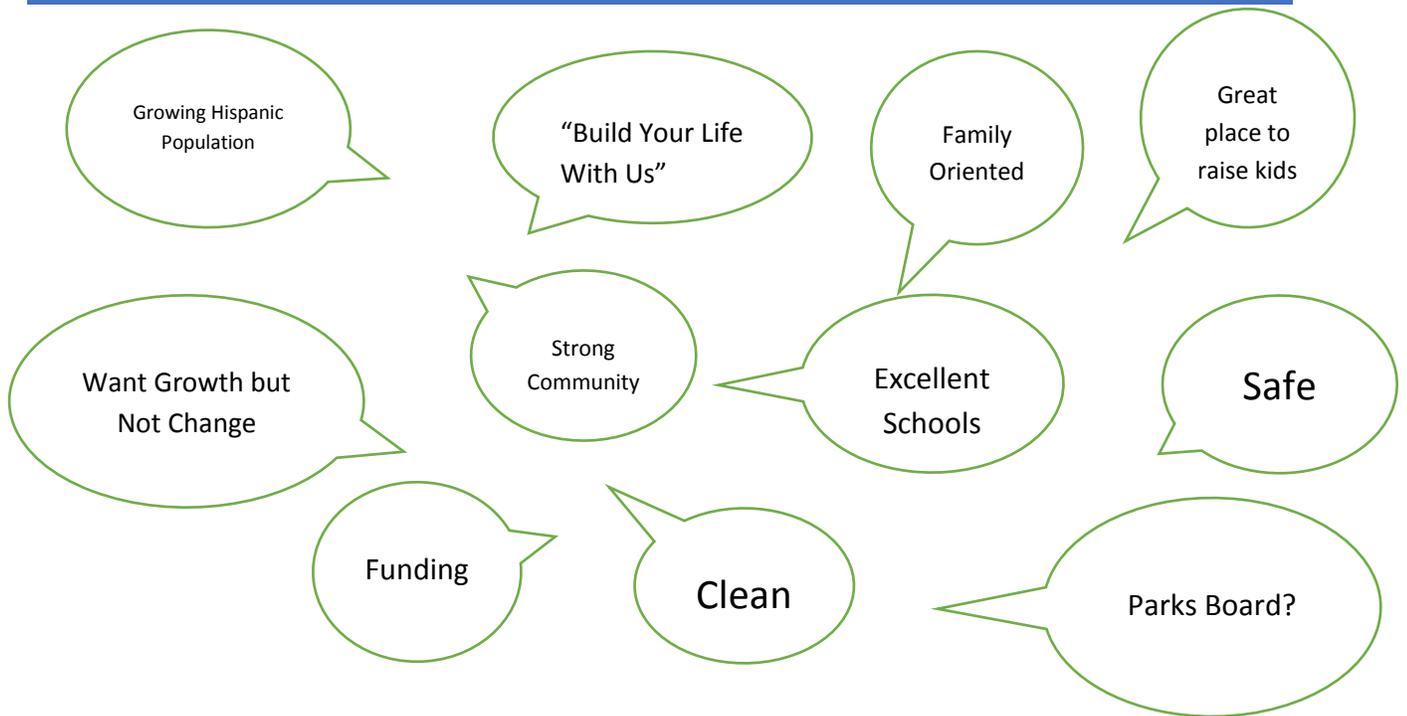
**Q5: WHAT ADDITIONAL FACILITIES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE?**

- |                          |                          |   |                        |                            |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|------------------------|----------------------------|
| -Shaded Bocce Ball Court | -Indoor Pool             | -More multi-use trails for longboarding | -Racquetball Courts    | -Space for Fitness Classes |
| -Gymnastics Facility     | -More Restrooms at Parks | -RV Park & Tent Camping                 | -Connectivity to Parks | -Disc golf course          |

**Q6: WHAT PARTNERS/STAKEHOLDERS COULD ASSIST WITH IMPLEMENTATION?**



## Q7: WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES & VALUES OF DE SOTO?



## Q8: WHAT SHOULD BE THE TOP PRIORITIES IN 5-10 YEARS?

- Establish marketing channels to successfully communicate with residents
- Implement the Master Plan and follow through with future plans for Riverfest Park
- Meet expectations of youth sports program with consistent rules and well-trained coaches
- Maintain and improve current programs, facilities, and resources before investing in new
- Build recreational paths and trails to existing and future parks facilities.
- Expand programming opportunities to serve people of all ages and abilities.
- Diversify the physical amenities at City parks facilities.
- Host events that bring the community together

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# APPENDIX B: PARK MATRIX



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# Park Amenities

Park Name	Address	Acreage	Trail Length (Miles)	Diamond Playgrounds	Rectangular Ballfields	Outdoor Basketball Courts	Sand Volleyball Courts	Tennis Courts	Horseshoe Courts	Stage/Ampitheater	Batting Pits	Batting Cage	Water Fountains	Restrooms	Archery/Shooting Range	Grills	Fishing Range	Boat Ramps/ Docks	Swimming Beach	Tent Camping Campsites	Dog Park	Rain Garden	
Miller Park	83rd and Ferry	10	0.35	2	3	0	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	4	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Widow Big Knife Park	7560 Edgerton Rd	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	
Riverfest Park	33440 W. 79th	50	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Wilderness Park	13205 Evening Star Rd	67	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Commerce & Lexington - Future	Commerce & Lexington	7	0.18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sunflower Park - Owned by Johnson County	37515 W. 103rd St	6	1.23	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kill Creek Park - Owned by Johnson County	11670 S Homestead Ln	884	13.5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	1	8	0	1	1	1	0	0
Kill Creek Streamway Dog Park & 95th St. Trail Head - Owned by Johnson County	33460 W 95th St	16	0.88	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Lexington Lake Park - Owned by Johnson County	9000 Sunflower Rd	456	3.1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	0
Cedar Creek Boat Ramp- Owned by Johnson County	Access Rd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>1534</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

\* Acreage & Trail length data taken from GIS or from DeSoto/Johnson County Online Parks Descriptions



# APPENDIX C: MAPS



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# 1

# PARKS & RECREATION RESOURCE MAP

## Park and Facility Locations

- 1: Miller Park
- 2: Widow Big Knife Park
- 3: Riverfest Park
- 4: Wilderness Park
- 5: Commerce & Lexington Land (Future)
- 6: Sunflower Park (Owned by Johnson County)
- 7: Kill Creek Park (Owned by Johnson County)
- 8: Kill Creek Streamway Dog Park & 95th St. Trail Head (Owned by Johnson County)
- 9: Lexington Lake Park (Owned by Johnson County)
- 10: DeSoto Community Center & Aquatic Center
- 11: Oak Country Golf Course (Privately Owned)
- 12: Great Life Golf Course (Privately Owned)
- 13: Cedar Creek Boat Ramp (Owned by Johnson County)

### Schools

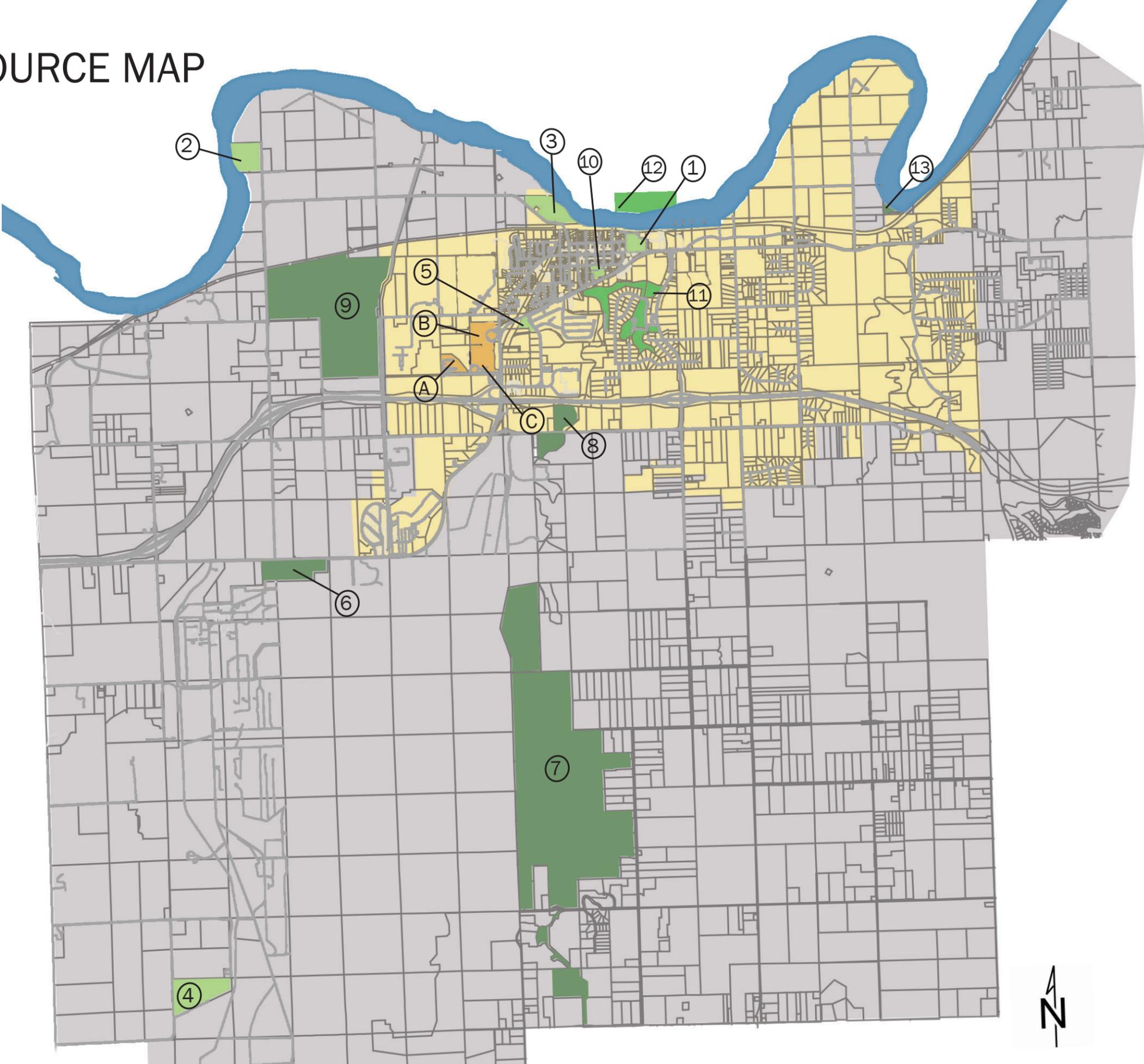
- A: Starside Elementary School
- B: Lexington Trails Middle School
- C: DeSoto High School

### Alternative Providers \*Located in City Facilities\*

- \*Great Life Golf and Fitness
- \*Jazzercise
- \*White Tiger Tae Kwon Do
- \*Wildcat Youth Football & Cheerleading
- \*De Soto Youth Wrestling
- \*De Soto Arts Council

### Legend

- DESOTO CITY PARKS
- JOHNSON COUNTY PARKS
- GOLF COURSES
- SCHOOL FACILITY
- DESOTO CITY LIMIT
- URBAN GROWTH AREA



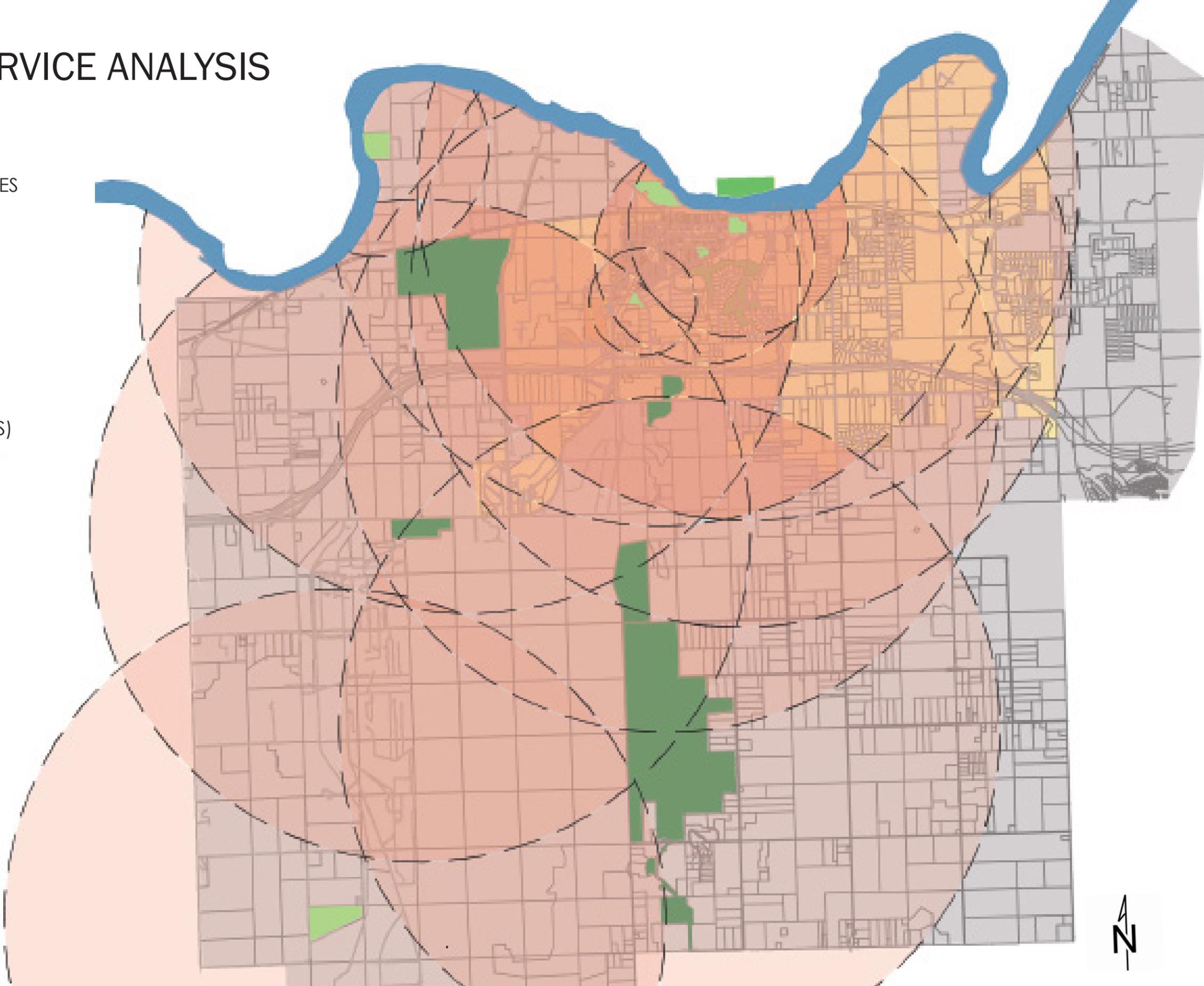


# 2

## PARK LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS

### Legend

- DESOTO CITY PARKS & FACILITIES
- JOHNSON COUNTY PARKS
- SCHOOL FACILITY
- DESOTO CITY LIMIT
- URBAN GROWTH AREA
- LEVEL OF SERVICE RADIUS (LOS)
  - 1/2 mile LOS radius for neighborhood parks
  - 1 mile LOS radius community parks & facilities
  - 3 mile LOS radius for regional parks & facilities



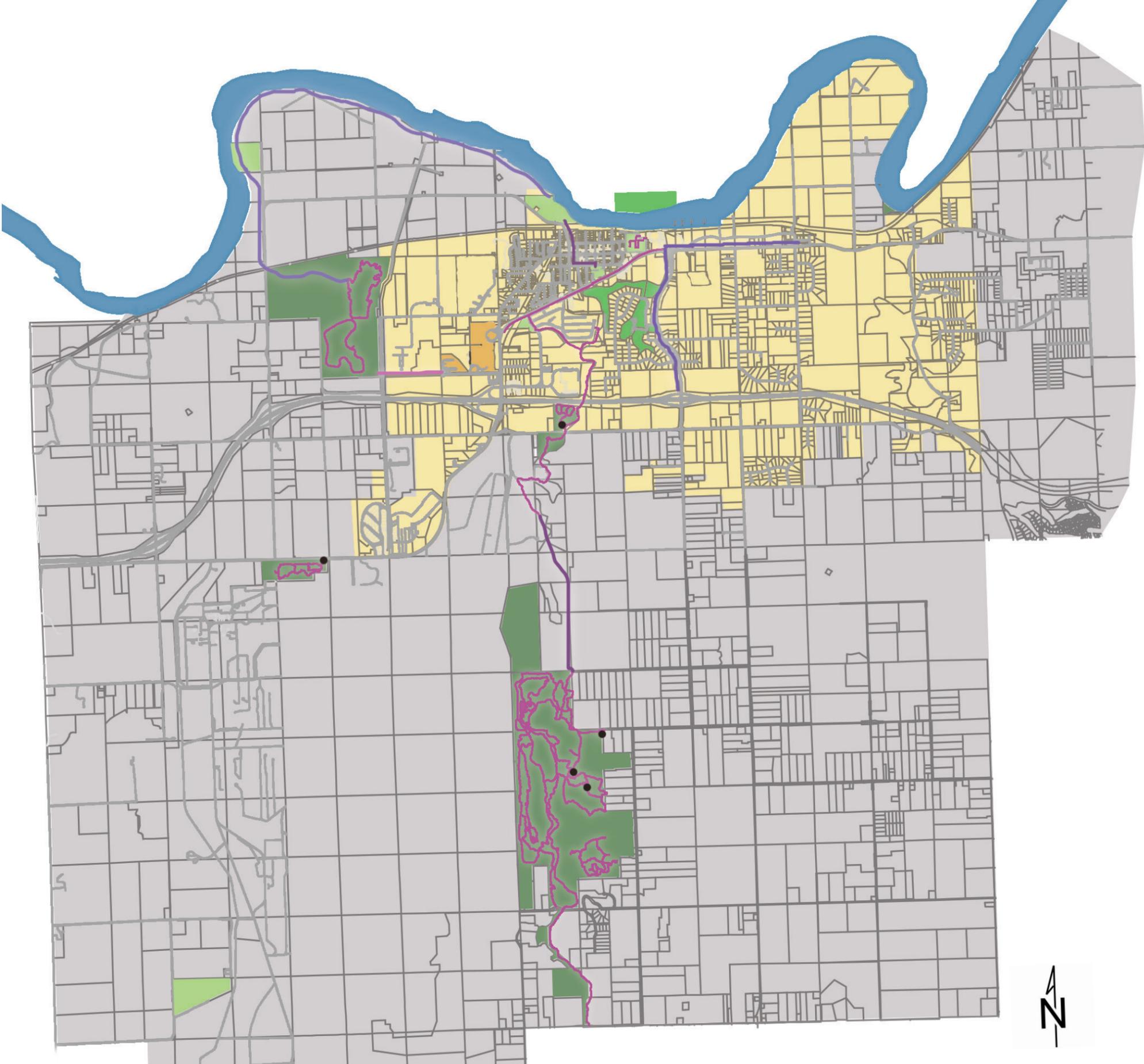


# 3

## TRAILS MAP

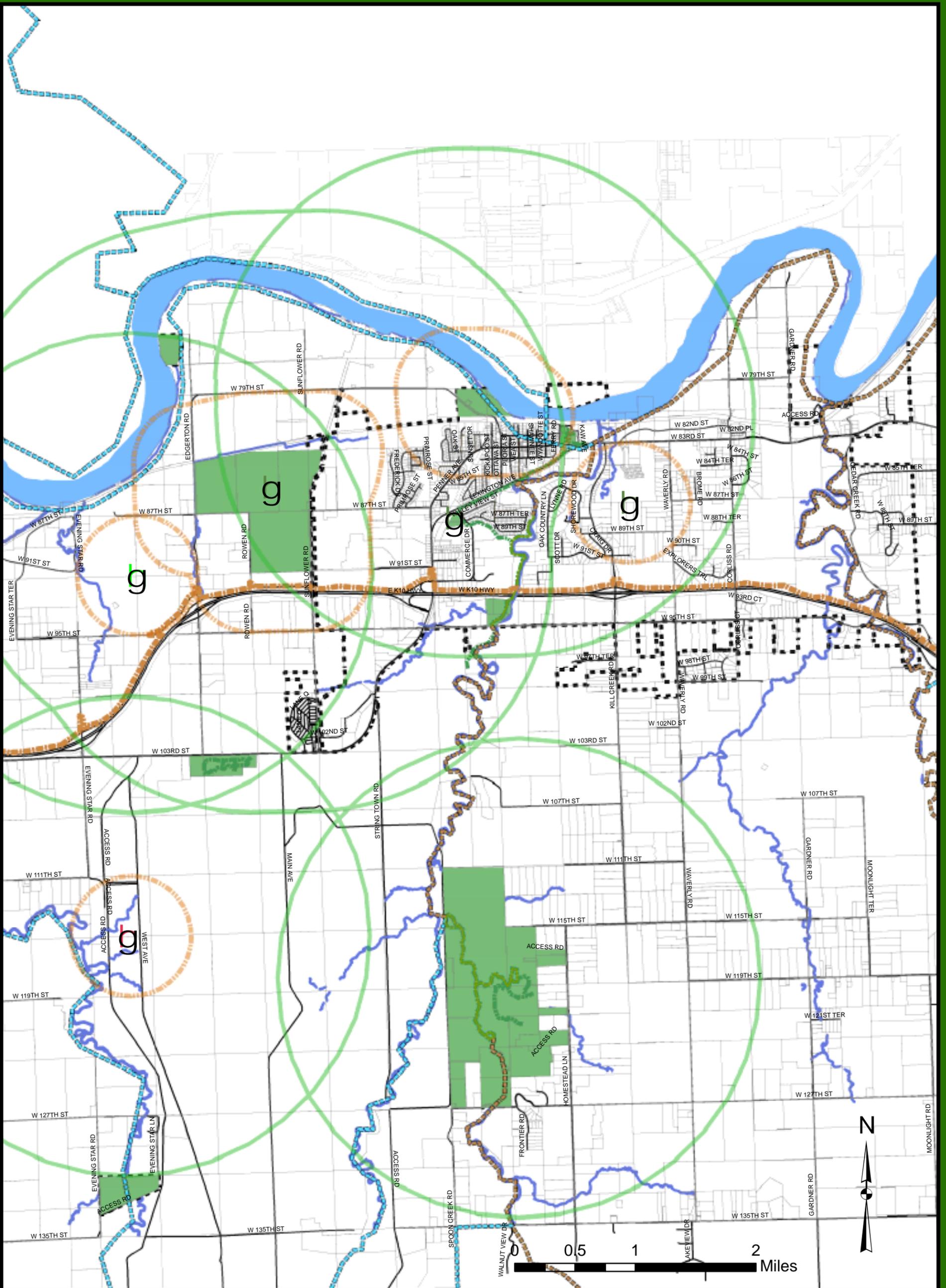
### Legend

- DESOTO CITY PARKS
- JOHNSON COUNTY PARKS
- SCHOOL FACILITY
- DESOTO CITY LIMIT
- URBAN GROWTH AREA
- TRAIL HEAD
- EXISTING TRAIL
- 2019 PLANNED CONSTRUCTION
- SHORT TERM: PROPOSED TRAIL CONNECTIONS
- MEDIUM TERM: PROPOSED TRAIL CONNECTIONS
- LONG TERM: PROPOSED TRAIL CONNECTIONS



2018: DESOTO PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN





# Map 13 City of De Soto, Kansas Future Parks and Service Areas



--- 2007 City Boundary    Kansas River

Existing Trail System  
Existing Parks

Future Community Park\*  
Future Neighborhood Park\*  
Future Regional Park\*\*

Future Walking Service Area  
Future Driving Service Area  
MetroGreen Phase 2\*\*\*  
MetroGreen Phase 3\*\*\*

K-10 Smart Trail\*\*\*\*

## Comprehensive Plan Updated 2007

**Notes**  
\* Projected general location only. Not intended to indicate specific sites  
\*\* Projected by Johnson County Parks Master Plan - MAP 2020  
\*\*\* Projected by Mid American Regional Council (MARC) MetroGreen Plan and Johnson County MAP 2020.  
\*\*\*\* Projected by MARC Smart Trail Feasibility Study.