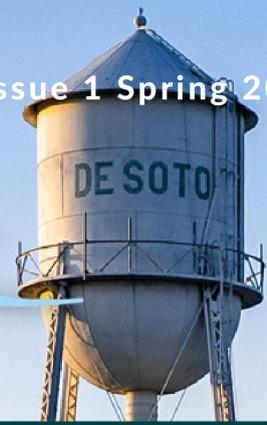


# DE SOTO

Volume 7 Issue 1 Spring 2023

KANSAS



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## CITY MEETINGS

### City Council Meetings

First and Third Thursdays @ 7pm

### City Planning Commission

Fourth Tuesdays @ 6pm

### Municipal Court

Second and Fourth Mondays @ 6pm

City Council and Planning Commission Agendas/  
Minutes can be found on the City website:

[www.desotoks.us/AgendaCenter](http://www.desotoks.us/AgendaCenter)

## CONNECT WITH US



**32905 West 84th Street PO Box C**  
De Soto, Kansas 66018



**913-583-1182**  
**913-583-3123 (fax)**



[www.desotoks.us](http://www.desotoks.us)

## CITY WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEE

*The City of De Soto hired Makenna Jennings to fill the newly-created Recreation Programmer position. Makenna joined City Staff on January 26th, 2023.*

In an effort to expand public recreation opportunities in De Soto, the City developed a Recreation Programmer position who would plan year-round community programs and special events related to education, nature, fine arts, and culture. We are thrilled to welcome Makenna Jennings to our team to fill the role!

Makenna has set high goals for herself as she starts this new position. Her first big project is to brainstorm workshops for the community by compiling recreation feedback from the citizen survey, meeting with other cities, attending parks & recreation conferences, and continuously gathering citizen input.

When asked what drew her to apply for this position, Makenna said that she was drawn to the fact that this job was uncharted territory. "No one had ever been in this role before, so I could make it my own and grow with the role," she explained. "It's not very often you get to help build a program from scratch."

Makenna's Parks and Recreation education at Pittsburg State University, as well as her practical experience with the City of Lenexa, make her well-equipped to tackle the challenges of this position and succeed in this role.

During the hiring process, Assistant City Administrator Brandon Mills said that "it wasn't only her degree and school of choice (Go Pitt State!) that made her stand out; it was her positive attitude, willingness to learn, and fresh ideas that set her apart from the other candidates and convinced us that she was the right fit for the organization."

Outside of work, Makenna enjoys spending time with her family and soaking up the sun at the lake during the summer. She is a self-proclaimed "big water rat" who loves being on the water. Makenna also enjoys crafting and cooking; in less than a month of working for the City, she won the all-employee Souper Bowl Soup Competition with her specialty potato soup.

"After just a few weeks Makenna has jumped feet first into her role, not only learning the De Soto Parks & Rec ropes but also producing a lot of good ideas." Parks and Rec Director Jay Garvin continues, "her thoughtfulness, collaborative nature, and proactivity is tangible and will be crucial as she and the department get new programs, workshops, and ideas off the ground. We're lucky to have her on board!"



**MAKENNA JENNINGS**  
RECREATION PROGRAMMER



## PARKS & RECREATION PROGRAMMING POLL

Want to let Makenna know what types of recreation programs you and your family would like to see in De Soto?



Follow this QR code to complete a quick poll!

# MISSION STATEMENT

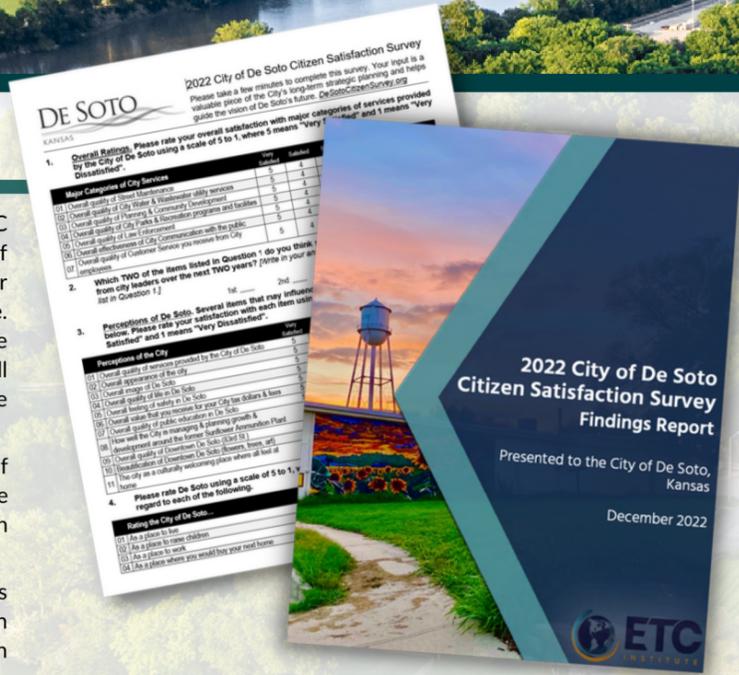
"The City of De Soto delivers big adventure and lifelong opportunities to its residents. Civic pride, inclusiveness, and collaboration are hallmarks of our welcoming city where responsible growth is a goal, and government is responsive, accountable, and works in the best interest of the people."

## COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

During the fall of 2022, the City of De Soto partnered with ETC Institute to conduct the first community survey. The purpose of the survey was to gauge citizen satisfaction with the quality of our services and understand the community's priorities for the future. "The survey results provide a blueprint for how residents want De Soto to evolve," said Mike Brungardt, City Administrator. "We'll use the results as a guide for how we move forward, 'Design De Soto,' and revamp the Strategic Plan."

Some 507 surveys were returned, well over double the goal of 250 needed to ensure statistical validity. The results reflect the geographic and demographic diversity of the City with a precision of at least +/- 4.6% at the 95% level of confidence.

Overall, the results were positive with 85 percent of respondents saying they would recommend De Soto as a place to live. In addition, the City rated significantly above the national average in 23 of the 34 service areas assessed.



### SATISFACTION WITH CITY SERVICES

The categories of City services that had the highest levels of satisfaction, based upon the combined percentage of "very satisfied" and "satisfied" responses among residents who had an opinion, were:

- Quality of Customer Service from City employees (75%)
- Quality of City Parks and Recreation programs and facilities (72%)
- Quality of Law Enforcement (72%)

### SATISFACTION WITH PERCEPTIONS OF CITY

The perceptions of De Soto that had the highest levels of satisfaction, based upon the combined percentage of "very satisfied" and "satisfied" responses among residents who had an opinion, were:

- Feeling of safety in De Soto (86%)
- Quality of public education (82%)
- Quality of life (80%)
- Quality of services provided by the City (74%)

### OTHER FINDINGS

- **Top 3 Parks and Rec programs desired:** 1) special events, 2) nature based education/activities, and 3) senior programs.
- **Top 3 Parks and Rec amenities desired:** 1) walking paths/trails, 2) community parks, and 3) an indoor all-purpose recreation facility.
- Fifty percent (50%) of residents said they'd like to receive email newsletters and 49% wanted mailed newsletters
- **Top 2 types of businesses residents want to see:** 1) restaurants/bars/pubs (77%), 2) health and personal care stores (57%)
- Eighty six (86%) of residents were interested in learning about the development related to Astra Enterprise Park (formerly known as Sunflower Ammunition Plant).
- Only 29% of residents are satisfied with the quality of De Soto's downtown

For the complete survey results report and presentation by ETC Institute, scan the QR code or go here: [desotoks.us/307/Community-Survey](https://desotoks.us/307/Community-Survey)



## DESIGNING DE SOTO

As interest and development grows in De Soto, so does City Staff's commitment to "the right kind of growth" - "smart growth." A huge piece of this smart growth is incorporating citizen input into the City's Strategic Plan, a.k.a. the documented vision for De Soto that Council and Staff use in decision making.

The initiative, led by Mays Communication and community-engagement firm Shockey Consulting, was kicked off with the community survey, but there are other ways community members have already given feedback and even more opportunities on the way!

### OPEN HOUSE

At the end of January, the City hosted a public information open house, offering residents an inside look into the growth and development of Astra Enterprise Park and Flint Commerce Center. Representatives from 25 organizations, including KDOT, Department of Commerce, USD 232, Johnson County Community College, and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, participated in the event held at the City Hall Senior Center.

The event, just one piece of the Designing De Soto initiative, was aimed at gathering resident feedback and shaping the City's Strategic Plan for growth management. Residents were encouraged to build a vision board and share their hopes and aspirations for the city. Top items on residents' wish lists included more dining options, expanded library services, and an ice cream shop!



To learn more about the event and see a brief video, visit the Designing De Soto page on the City's website. The Open House was a powerful reminder of the importance of resident engagement and the role it plays in shaping the future of De Soto.



OTTAWA STREET BRIDGE RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT | NORTH OF RAILROAD TRACKS



DESIGNING DE SOTO | GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT OPEN HOUSE

### COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP

The Designing De Soto Advisory Group was established to provide a platform for a group of community representatives to voice their opinions and insights as the City redevelops its Strategic Plan.



We put out a call for volunteers to join - and the community responded! After receiving many great applications, Shockey Consulting blindly selected thirty people who represent a diverse cross-section of the community and its demographics. This group is composed of people with a deep commitment to De Soto and will represent the community well.

This team of people will join us for multiple meetings this year to help think strategically and holistically about the future of De Soto.

### PULSE PANEL

There are still additional opportunities for involvement! Residents can sign up to be on the Pulse Panel, an informal group of community members who will take quick polls and offer feedback on evolving initiatives. Sign up on the Designing De Soto page of the City's website.

### STAY IN THE KNOW

We want to keep you in the loop! Sign up for once-weekly updates from the City on all things De Soto, from events to lane closings. Sign up at [bit.ly/DeSotoNewsletterSignUp](https://bit.ly/DeSotoNewsletterSignUp).

### OTTAWA STREET BRIDGE RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Contractors are still "on track" to complete the Ottawa Street Bridge Reconstruction Project by Summer. In late January, the walls of a Reinforced Concrete Box (RCB) were poured under Ottawa Street, between the railroad tracks and Riverfest Park.

Prior to construction, this two-lane stretch of road was approximately 24 feet in total width with no shoulder or sidewalk; this reconstruction project is widening the road to 32 feet (two 11-foot travel lanes and two 5-foot bike lanes). There will be an 8-foot-wide concrete sidewalk along the east side with grading for a future 5-foot sidewalk along the west side.

These improvements will provide better multimodal access to the park and the many events hosted there each year.

How Residents describe De Soto!



### KEY FINDINGS

#### Residents Have a Positive Perception of the City

("Very Satisfied" & "Satisfied")

- Overall quality of life in the City: 80% of respondents
- Overall quality of services provided by the City: 74%

#### Satisfaction with City Services is Much Higher in De Soto Than Other Communities

- 85% of residents rated De Soto as an "excellent" or "good" place to live, which is 35% higher than the national average!
- On most scores, De Soto ranked above the national average

#### Top Priorities for Improvement In Next Two Years

- Quality of Planning and Community Development
- Quality of Water and Wastewater utility services
- Quality of Street Maintenance
- Effectiveness of City Communication with the public

#### TOP OVERALL SATISFACTION SCORES

- As a place to live: 85%
- Quality of customer service from City employees: 75%
- As a place to raise children: 86%
- Feeling of safety: 86%
- Snow removal: 78%

# DE SOTO

KANSAS

**MAYOR** Rick Walker 913-375-7729 Cell

**City Hall Hours:**  
Monday-Friday  
8:00am-4:30pm

## CITY ADMINISTRATOR

Mike Brungardt, P.E. 913-586-5253 Direct

## CITY ATTORNEY

Patrick G. Reavey 913-586-5299 Direct 816-474- 6300 Office

## CITY CLERK / ASSISTANT CITY ADMINISTRATOR

Brandon Mills 913-586-5250

## CITY BUILDING OFFICIAL

Cameron Maughmer 913-210-9186 Cell

## CITY BUILDING INSPECTOR

Dale Hamilton 913-274-8259 Cell

## CITY CODES & CIP INSPECTOR

Walter Gardenhire 913-586-5263 Direct 913-940-8552 Cell

## CITY COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Whitney Lange 913-586-5255

## CITY COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Lori Murdock 913-636-2679 Cell

## CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Rob Daniels 913-221-4498 Cell

Kevin Honomichl 913-583-1622 Home

Danny Lane 913-634-9150 Cell

Kevin Ritter 913-208-5352 Cell

## CITY ENGINEER / PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

Chet Belcher 913-586-5257

## CITY FINANCE DIRECTOR

Bonnie Bennett 913-586- 5262

## CITY PLANNER

Brad Weisenburger 913-586-5286 Direct

## MUNICIPAL COURT CLERK

Erika Carrillo 913-586-5290

## PARK & RECREATION DIRECTOR

Jay Garvin 913-586-5280 Direct 913-544-8073 Cell

## AQUATICS & RECREATION MANAGER

Justin Huslig 913-586-5281 Direct

## RECREATION PROGRAMMER

Makenna Jennings 913-586-5282

## PLANNING COMMISSION

Bob Garrett 913-707-6284

Linda Lane 913-634-8299

Todd Manson 913-909-0145

Justin Milburn 913-530-1397

John Shultz 913-585-3511

Roger Templin 913-583-3183

Mark Huggins 913-915-2390

## PUBLIC WORKS OPERATIONS MANAGER

Martin Juarez 913-426-8539

## STREET & FLEET & FOREMAN

Jim Briggs 913-908-6099 Cell

**UTILITIES** 913-583-1182 Mayte Diaz x112, Erika Carrillo x122

## WATER/SEWER SUPERINTENDENT

Doug Smith 913-238- 0434

Wastewater Plant 913-585-9956

**MUNICIPAL COURT** 913-586-5290

## CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Sara Ritter Director 913-583-1585 office 913-238-2206 cell

**ANIMAL CONTROL** Johnson County Sheriff 913-782- 0720

## JOHNSON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPT.

Non-emergency 913-782-0720 emergency 9-1-1

## NORTHWEST CONSOLIDATED FIRE DISTRICT

Non-emergency 913-583-3886

## HONEY CREEK SANITATION

Randy Weldon 785-423-1809 Cell

# DE SOTO PARKS & RECREATION

[www.desotoks.us/151/Parks-Recreation](http://www.desotoks.us/151/Parks-Recreation)

## REGISTRATION OPTIONS:

**In-person:** De Soto City Hall 32905 West 84th St.

**Online:** <https://bit.ly/DeSotoParksActivities>

**Mail In:** PO Box C, De Soto, KS 66018

**After Hours Drop Box:** 32905 West 84th Street

## 2023 SPRING YOUTH ACTIVITIES



### Youth T-Ball

**Ages:** 5 thru 6 | **Fee:** \$50

**Registration Deadline:** March 3, 2023



### Youth Baseball

**Ages:** 6 thru 15 | **Fee:** \$75

**Registration Deadline:** March 3, 2023



### Youth Softball

**Ages:** 6 thru 15 | **Fee:** \$75

**Registration Deadline:** March 3, 2023



### Youth Blastball

**Ages:** 4 thru 5 | **Fee:** \$25

**Registration Deadline:** May 5, 2023

## 2023 SPRING ADULT ACTIVITIES



### Adult Yoga

**Time:** Tuesdays *or* Thursdays @ 6:30pm - 7:30pm

**Sessions:** Next session begins the week of  
March 20, 2023

## 2023 AQUATIC CENTER ACTIVITIES

- Dolphin Swim Team
- Dolphin Swim Academy
- Swim Lessons

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Lifeguard (De Soto Aquatic Center)
- Concessions and Front Desk (De Soto Aquatic Center)
- Managers (De Soto Aquatic Center)
- Officials (Youth Soccer & Youth Basketball)
- Umpires (Youth Baseball and Youth Softball)
- Fitness Instructors

*For more information, please contact  
Justin Huslig at [jhuslig@desotoks.us](mailto:jhuslig@desotoks.us)*