

COMMUNITY SURVEY '24

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

This report provides a summary of results from De Soto's community survey. The survey was conducted to gather feedback about how the City is meeting community needs as well as help guide future decisions by City leaders. *The survey captured responses from a total of 500 citizens.*

Satisfaction Ratings

A closer look at top items rated "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" for each category:

City Leadership

- Quality of leadership provided by the City Council: 44%
- Effectiveness of City Administrator & Staff: 43%
- Accessibility/responsiveness of City Council: 39%

Code Enforcement

- Enforcing exterior maintenance of business property: 43%
- Enforcing mowing and cutting of weeds on private property: 34%

Communication

- Quality of newsletter (in utility bills): 69%
- Quality of City's email newsletter: 63%
- Availability of information about City programs, services, & events: 62%

Community Development

- City efforts to promote economic development: 54%
- Overall quality of new development: 47%

Customer Service

- Always or usually courteous and polite: 92%
- Easiness of contacting the staff member resident needs to reach: 83%

Parks & Recreation

- Maintenance of City Parks: 86%
- Condition of park equipment: 77%
- Number of City Parks: 72%

Street Maintenance

- Snow removal on City Streets: 80%
- Cleanliness of City streets and other public areas: 74%
- Mowing/trimming City streets: 72%

Water & Wastewater

- How easy bill was to understand: 70%
- Overall Customer Service: 62%
- How well City keeps residents informed about water issues/disruptions: 54%

Community Satisfaction

De Soto rates significantly above the US and Plains region averages in two-thirds (23/34) of service categories:

	Service Category	De Soto Avg.	Region Avg.	National Avg.
Perceptions	Quality of Public Education	79%	47%	48%
	Feeling of Safety	78%	65%	66%
	Quality of Life	70%	NA	NA
	Quality of Services Provided by the City	70%	52%	49%
City Services	Quality of Customer Service	73%	42%	39%
	Street Maintenance	70%	35%	41%
	City Communications	59%	37%	37%
Over all	As a Place to Raise Children	82%	58%	61%
	As a Place to Live	81%	49%	49%

Community Priorities: Progress & What's Next

One of the most important aspects of the survey is identifying which City services the community wants us to prioritize. In 2022, the community pinpointed four key priorities; in 2024, the focus has narrowed to three as communication has moved off the priority list:

1. Planning and Community Development:

- 2022 Progress: Engaged the community in capital projects, though ongoing construction impacted satisfaction as expected. This remains our #1 priority moving forward!
- 2024 What's next?: Focus on job accessibility (25% satisfaction) and child care availability (16% satisfaction), while ensuring continued strategic growth that aligns with resident needs; this includes the Southwest Growth Area Plan and updating the comprehensive plan.

2. Water and Wastewater Utility Services:

- 2022 Progress: Satisfaction with communication on water issues improved, and Water & Wastewater Treatment Plants are underway.
- 2024 What's Next?: The new treatment plants are expected to improve water/wastewater value (43%) and drinking water quality (45%).

3. Street Maintenance:

- 2022 Progress: The Street Department saw satisfaction rise in six out of seven maintenance categories.
- 2024 What's Next?: Prioritize pavement/pothole repair (56%) and sidewalk maintenance (56%) in the Capital Improvement Plan.

4. City Communication (2022 Only):

- 2022 Progress: Investment in new staff and communication platforms has paid off -- residents no longer flag communications as a top priority.
- 2024 What's Next: While not on the top priority list, increased usage across all our platforms shows that residents still value and expect a high level of investment in communications. We will continue to maintain - and expand - efforts to sustain engagement and momentum.

Other Findings

- Top 3 parks and rec programs desired: 1) special events, 2) nature-based education/activities, and 3) adult non-sport programs
- Top 3 parks and rec amenities desired: 1) walking paths/trails, 2) new indoor all-purpose recreation facility, and 3) community parks
- Top 3 reasons why people live in De Soto: 1) safety and security, quality of public schools, small-town feel.
- Fifty-four percent (54%) of residents said they'd like to receive text communications and 33% wanted a mobile app
- Top 2 types of businesses residents want to see: 1) restaurants/bars/pubs (70%) 2) health and personal care stores (58%)