

# DeSoto City Lights

## *The Proposed FY2017 City of DeSoto Municipal Budget Calls for a Decrease in the Property Tax Rate*

“Since my appointment to the position of City Manager in 2011, my Administration has been working tirelessly and with due diligence to improve the monetary situation of our community,” said Tarron Richardson, PhD. “I am pleased to propose a tax rate reduction for FY2017 to .7449 per \$100 of valuation.”

For the last five (5) years, City Administration has meticulously toiled to reduce property tax rates for both residents and business owners. After four (4) years of maintaining a stabilized property tax rate of .7574, the City was able to reduce it by .0075 in FY2016. The proposed FY2017 budget will continue in this direction by reducing property taxes for a second year in a row. In FY2017, the proposed property tax rate will be reduced by .0050 and set at .7449.

The property tax rate of .7449 will provide funding for debt service, personnel, benefits, public services, supplies, equipment and capital projects. These previously mentioned line items were either drastically reduced or completely removed from budgets prior to FY2012. In FY2012, the City’s Executive Leadership Team began working in collaboration with each other to annually increase funding for these defined essentials and collectively agreed that it would take a few fiscal years to accomplish.

On April 7, 2016, the DeSoto City Council and Administration began preparing a preliminary budget plan that included the following defined goals and objectives for FY2017:

- Salary increases in the amount of 1%
- Stabilization Fund
- Positions (workforce-to-population ratio)
- Same public service levels as FY2016
- Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Grant
- Vinyl Fencing along Southside of Pleasant Run Road
- Dr. Emmett J. Conrad Leadership Program (Internships)
- Christmas Celebration Parade
- Annual Holiday Fireworks
- Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT) Grant

“As we move forward into FY2017 and beyond, the City of DeSoto will continue to implement a wealth of innovative practices in public finance to better manage its human and monetary resources” said Dr. Richardson. “The success achieved over the years is attributed to our conservative approach toward budgeting and management of all public affairs.”



## City Calendar

### August

1 Arts Commission Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6 pm  
 1 Park Board Mtg. - Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm  
 2 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm  
 4 Library Summer Reading Kick-off - 1 pm  
 4 KDB Mtg. Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm  
 4 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm  
 5 Zootopia Movie – Amphitheater 8:30 pm  
 9 Planning & Zoning Mtg. -City Hall -7 pm  
 13 Backyard Bash & Concert - Amphitheater  
 16 City Council Mtg.– City Hall - 7 pm  
 23 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall - 7pm  
 26 POLIITIC Concert - Amphitheater - 7pm  
 29 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - 9 am

### September

1 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm  
 1 KDB Mtg. Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm  
 1 Historical Foundation Mtg. - 6 pm  
 3 DeSoto Arts Live - Amphitheater 11a - 9p  
 5 Labor Day Holiday - City Facilities Closed  
 5 Park Board Mtg. - canceled  
 6 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm  
 8 Library Board Mtg. Library - 7 pm  
 8 KDB Mtg. Civic Ctr. - 6:30 pm  
 8 Historical Foundation Mtg. - 6 pm  
 10 Latino Heritage Fest Amphitheater 6:30pm  
 13 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall 7 pm  
 15 Adopt-a-Street Banquet - Civic Ctr.  
 20 City Council Mtg. - City Hall - 7 pm  
 26 DEDC Board Mtg. - City Hall - 9 am  
 26 Submit Photos for Contest City Hall 12-5p  
 27 Planning & Zoning Mtg. City Hall - 7 pm  
 27 Submit Photos for Contest City Hall 12-5p



### Photo Contest

*The DeSoto Art League and the DeSoto Arts Commission, will host a juried photo contest and show that will be on display in City Hall during October, 2016. Cash prizes will be awarded to Best In Show, and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners. All photos must be 8 x 10" or larger and framed. To request an application or for more information, please call 972.230.9648 or email [kathy.jones@desototexas.gov](mailto:kathy.jones@desototexas.gov).*

## Clean-up Continues at Meadow Creek

Work continued at Meadow Creek Park during July to remove the debris dropped by the December 26, 2015 tornado. The process began with mowing the grass to half an inch, vacuuming the debris, and using magnets to remove any remaining metal debris on the surface. This process produced a significant amount of roofing and concrete nails, screws and other small pieces of metal. Once the vacuuming process was complete,



**Magnet**

the fields were verticut to further expose the embedded debris in the grass. Then the process of mowing, vacuuming and using the magnet was repeated.

The third phase of the process, which called for soil removal and sifting, is now complete.



**Soil Sifting**



**Fraze Mowing**

that were fraze mowed will be re-sodded. In the coming weeks the pasture area around the park will also undergo the debris removal process which entails; mowing, verticutting, vacuuming, and magnetic removal of metal.

“Overall, the clean-up is progressing well and we are on track to have the park back in service by fall 2017,” said Lozano.

“The good news is, no debris was found in the sifted soil,” said Phil Lozano, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation for City of DeSoto.

Fraze mowing, the process of removing the top 3/4 inch of grass from the fields, is currently underway. This is intended to remove the small glass shards that were not picked up by the vacuum. The areas



**The Lone Star Treasure Hunt Club, pictured here, scanned fields 1 and 2 for embedded metal on July 30th.**





11 year old Hector Montoya recently donated 125 smoke detectors to DeSoto Fire Rescue. Hector has donated more than 6,000 smoke detectors to cities across north Texas after learning of a mother and daughter who died in a home without a working smoke detector in 2014. He used \$300 he had saved for a

PlayStation4 to purchase the first smoke detectors. DeSoto Fire Rescue will work through the DeSoto Senior Activity Center to identify needy seniors and will install the donated smoke detectors in their homes. Hector is pictured here on the right during the presentation ceremony at City Hall as Mayor Curtistene McCowan (left) and DeSoto Firefighters look on.

### ***A Message from DeSoto's Public Utilities Department***

The City of DeSoto Public Utilities Department will launch a new water conservation and budgeting tool for customers by year end. AquaHawk Alerting is a free online Web portal that enables DeSoto water customers to see their water usage and an estimate of their bill anytime during the billing cycle. After registering and providing up-to-date contact information, customers may opt to receive a text message, e-mail, or phone call alert if their consumption indicates a potential leak or abnormal usage. This tool will be available to customers whose water meters have been replaced over the past four years. As the department continues to replace meters annually, more customers will have access to detailed consumption data.



To help save money and more efficiently manage water usage, customers will be encouraged to set thresholds for usage (e.g., 5,000 gals.) or dollar amounts (\$150.00). If the consumption or bill is trending to exceed, or surpasses the threshold, AquaHawk will send an automatic alert.

“Our goal is to offer a better customer

experience and the peace of mind that comes from knowing that the Public Utilities Department is working towards early identification and notification of

potential water usage problems,” commented Isom Cameron, Public Utilities Director. Expensive and unexpected water bills should be a thing of the past since consumers can login anytime, see an estimate of what they have already spent, and view a projected end-of-period bill amount.

HOA’s and other customers with multiple water accounts will have the ability to access all of their water accounts with a single user name and password. Customers can also provide access to other parties – property managers, caretakers, landscaping companies, etc. – who might benefit from the information or want to receive alerts as well. When water customers are traveling, AquaHawk enables users to monitor unauthorized water use in their homes. Consumption, rainfall, and temperature data are displayed in easy-to-understand graphs that help pinpoint when an account may be using water inefficiently, such as watering landscape during or shortly after a rain event.

### ***Capital Improvement Projects Are Underway in DeSoto***

Every year, a citizen survey is conducted online and through the mail, asking DeSoto citizens to prioritize suggested major projects in the Capital Improvement Program. The list is then ordered and presented to the City Council for approval. Through this process, the City schedules these improvements over time and, in so doing, is able to afford them. These projects were recently completed in DeSoto:



Repainting of retaining walls on Pleasant Run Rd.



Installation of privacy wall on Pleasant Run Rd.



Street reconstruction on Holt Ave.

# Latino Heritage Festival

CON LA BANDA PRINCIPAL TIERRA

¡DeSoto, Texas!  
 Sábado, el 10 de Septiembre  
 6-10 p.m. 972-230-9651



Candle Meadow residents try to teach Capt. Dustin Munn of the DeSoto Police Department a line dance at their DeSoto Night Out Event.

DE SOTO Arts Live!  
 DESOTOARTSLIVE.COM

THE ORIGINAL  
**Lakeside**  
 DESOTO TOWN CENTER AMPHITHEATER

09  
03  
16

DE SOTO Arts Live!

# Art & Music Festival

Join with friends and family at this FREE festival packed with fun for everyone!

Saturday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.

DeSoto's Outdoor Amphitheater  
 at DeSoto Town Center  
 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

Event Sponsors:

Come enjoy great music with:  
 Me & My Monkey at 4 p.m.  
 The Original Lakeside at 8 p.m.

\$15 Reserved Pavilion Seating for the Original Lakeside show available at 7 p.m. Purchase at [www.artsdesoto.com](http://www.artsdesoto.com).  
 Free lawn seating available. Bring your own chair.

Join friends at The Brick House in DeSoto for an after party and autograph signing with the Original Lakeside band members.

The day also features:

- A stroll along the Roy Orr Trail to see plein air artists painting the landscape live from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Art sale
- Enjoy strolling minstrels
- Dancers
- A craft bazaar
- Kid's Zone with: gaming trucks (\$) laser tag (\$) bubble soccer (\$) - Lots of great food (\$)

Brought to you by: DESOTO ARTS COMMISSION

Vendor and artist opportunities are still available. Find more information at [www.artsdesoto.com](http://www.artsdesoto.com) or call 972-230-9648