

December, 2009



www.ci.desoto.tx.us
972.230.9600

City Lights DeSoto, Texas



Council Corner, A Message from Deshaundra Lockhart, City Council, Place 4



Transportation poses many questions for DeSoto. Will vehicular traffic be our primary source of transportation? When will we have another source to transport citizens around the city. How will we carry visitors and business persons to and from our city? What are our future options? What can we do today?

There are several appropriate ways that your ideas can be considered and discussed. Saturday, January 30th at 9:00 am is good time. A Town Hall meeting in City Council Chambers will convene. During this meeting, the council and city staff will ask for your input. I know you have some ideas and information but there is more you should know. More importantly, the Council needs to hear from you. Your face in the place means you care enough about what goes on where you live. What are the challenges we must overcome to get public or private transportation? How long will it take for other forms of transportation to become available? Are we limited to land transport?

Several neighboring cities have plans for heavy rail usage. Some plan to expand participation with Dallas. What will DeSoto do? There are questions and solutions to address our current and future transportation needs. DeSoto has a plan however it is time to evaluate it again. You are invited to join in the discussion by blogging online in January at www.ci.desoto.tx.us and attending the Town Hall meeting.

In my pre-Council days, I questioned the impact of a Town Hall meeting. Much to my surprise, there were break out sessions to facilitate small group discussion.

The Town Hall meeting became quite spirited. I saw how input from citizens, received from a series of Town Hall meetings to update the city's 2003 Comprehensive Plan, was reflected in the final document.

Your input shapes the city's future when you show up and participate in Town Hall meetings. The City Council will review and discuss the input and recommendations that are received during the Town Hall discussion on January 30th at a special Transportation work session in March. City Council will utilize your suggestions as we begin the process that will result in a comprehensive plan to address DeSoto's transportation needs.

Your council listens and considers your ideas. Let us talk transportation because it impacts us all. I am counting on you to participate in blogging, the Town Hall meeting and the transportation work session. Together we can address our transportation concerns.

Deshaundra Lockhart, City Council, Place 4



Students walking to and from West Middle School along Westmoreland Road can now use the new sidewalk recently installed.

City to Launch Pilot Program to Increase Recycling

The City of DeSoto has just been awarded a grant from the North Texas Council of Governments that will fund a pilot program intended to increase residential recycling. Grant funds will be used to purchase 96 gallon polycarts like the one pictured here. These polycarts will be issued to 700 homes in a targeted neighborhood. Use of the polycarts will be closely monitored to determine if recycling increases.



It is hoped that use of these polycarts will encourage residents in the pilot program to recycle more and thus divert recyclable items from the landfill. We are also looking for feedback from residents using these containers.

The information gathered from this pilot program will be used to determine possible changes to the way our solid waste is collected that could result in cost savings on a future solid waste contract. For more information on recycling in DeSoto, call Tracie Hlavinka at 972.230.9689.

DeSoto Police Take the Lead in Forming Special Response Team (SRT)

The DeSoto Police Department has been recognized by the North Texas Council Of Governments for taking the lead in the effort to form the Special Response Team (SRT). The SRT is a tactical partnership among the cities of DeSoto, Lancaster, Midlothian, Seagoville, Highland Park, Glenn Heights, Ovilla, and the Lancaster Fire Dept.

The SRT was initiated in 2008 with \$193,000 in Homeland Security grant funds to support its establishment.

“This collaboration grew out of our mutual aid arrangements with other local cities and a desire to be able to create a greater tactical capacity than any one of us could establish and maintain alone,” according to Wayne Nero, Assistant Police Chief for DeSoto. “It also allows us to spread the costs of maintaining individual tactical teams among the participating cities.”



CITY CALENDAR

December

- 1 City Council Meeting - City Hall - 7 p.m.
- 3 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 3 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 4 *The Gifts of the Magi* - opens in the Corner Theatre 972.572.0998
- 5 DeSoto Holiday Parade of Lights — Hampton Road 6 p.m.
- 7 Arts Commission Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 7 Park Development Corp. Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 8 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 15 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 21 DEDC Board Meeting - noon - City Hall
- 22 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 24 Christmas Eve Holiday - city facilities closed
- 25 Christmas Day - city facilities closed
- 29 CDC Kwanzaa Celebration - 7 p.m. - City Hall

January

- 4 Arts Commission Meeting - 6:30 p.m. - City hall
- 4 Park Development Corp. Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - Recreation Center
- 5 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 7 Keep DeSoto Beautiful Board Mtg. - 6:30 p.m. - City Hall
- 7 Library Advisory Board Mtg. - 7 p.m. - Library Conference Room
- 12 Planning & Zoning Mtg. - City Hall 7 p.m.
- 18 MLK Holiday - City Offices and Facilities closed
- 19 City Council Meeting - 7 p.m. - City Hall
- 25 DEDC Board Meeting - noon - City Hall
- 26 Planning & Zoning Commission Mtg. - 7 p.m. City Hall
- 30 Town Hall Meeting to Discuss Mass Transit - 9 a.m. - City Hall

SRT (cont.)

The Special Response Team went operational in June 2009 after over 350 hours of training. There are a total of 35 personnel assigned to the team including, operators, negotiators, medics, tactical dispatchers, and command staff.

Holiday Trash Collection Schedule

With the holiday season approaching, the City of DeSoto would like to remind you of the following schedule for trash collection:

- There is no trash collection on Christmas Day, Friday, December 25th. All regular Friday collections will move to Saturday, December 26th and the normal schedule will resume on Monday, December 28th.
- There will be no trash collection on New Year's Day, Friday, January 1st. All Friday collections will move to Saturday, January 2nd and the normal schedule will resume on Monday, January 4th.
- Live Christmas Trees will be picked up for recycling on Wednesday, December 30th and Wednesday, January 6th. Place trees on the curb in front of your home for recycling. Trees placed in the alley will go to the landfill. Be sure to remove all decorations and lights for recycling.

Duncan Disposal, the city's solid waste contractor observes the following holidays: New Year's Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. On these holidays, there will be no pick and the schedule shifts by one day. If you have any questions or problems with your trash service, please call the City of DeSoto Action Center at 972 230-9600.



What Can Residents Do To Prevent Storm Water Pollution?

We can all work together to reduce and prevent storm water pollution. Some activities are federal government responsibilities, such as ensuring that federal lands are properly managed to reduce soil erosion. Some are state responsibilities, for example, developing rules to govern certain activities to protect waterbodies. Others are best handled by your community, such as by developing zoning or erosion control ordinances. Individual residents can also play an important role by changing certain everyday habits. For example:

- **Please don't feed the storm drain!** Do not dispose of used cooking oil and grease by dumping it into the storm drain.
- **Select native and adapted plants for your landscape.** These plants require less water, fertilizer, and pesticides to thrive, making your yard a Texas SmartScape.
- **Apply lawn and garden chemicals sparingly and according to directions.** Never apply lawn chemicals before a rain event.
- **Keep litter, pet wastes, leaves, grass clippings and debris out of street gutters and storm drains.** Never blow grass clippings into the storm drain. Outlets blocked by excessive debris, such as leaves and grass clippings, could lead to street flooding. Compost or mulch lawn debris instead.
- **Dispose of used motor oil, antifreeze, paints, and other household chemicals properly, not in storm drains.** The City of DeSoto participates in the Dallas County Household Hazardous Waste Program and DeSoto residents are encouraged to contact the Home Chemical Collection Center at 214.553.1765 for information on proper disposal of household chemicals.
- **Deck the Halls, not the Creeks.** By recycling litter and disposing of trash properly, you can help keep it out of the waterways.
- **Clean up spilled brake fluid, oil, grease and antifreeze.** Do not hose them into the street where they go down storm drains and can eventually reach local streams and lakes.
- **Control soil erosion on your property.** Plant ground cover and stabilize erosion-prone areas. This can be done by using mulch for soil stabilization.
- **Wash your car at a commercial car wash facility.** Washing cars on driveways or streets will result in the cleaning products flowing directly into the storm drain and into a nearby stream, lake, or river. Washing your car on your lawn allows the soil to remove some of the pollutants. Using a commercial car wash facility will ensure that the water and pollutants go to a water treatment facility before entering local water bodies.
- **Learn to recognize what types of discharges to the storm drain system are allowed and not allowed.** Report any signs of illegal discharge to your municipal storm water management service by calling 972.230.9600.



Look for storm drains in your neighborhood marked with this logo which indicates that this storm drain flows to the creek. These drains are meant for rain water only and are not connected to a water treatment facility. It is vital that grass clippings, fertilizers and other pollutants are not washed down these drains to prevent pollution of our creeks and rivers.

DeSoto Recreation Center Is Offering Special Activities for Kids During the Holidays

DeSoto's Parks & Leisure Services Staff is implementing a new Ambassador's Program of supervised activities for kids aged 10 to 18 at the Recreation Center during the holiday school break. Eight citizen volunteers have been recruited as "Ambassadors" and they will be on-hand in the Recreation Center to assist the staff in monitoring the facility, leading recreation activities and mentoring youth.

Planned activities include; a theater workshop, 3 on 3 basketball tournaments, dominos tournaments, a freestyle competition and a Guitar Hero tournament. All activities are free to kids who have a valid DeSoto Recreation Center Membership Card and will be available weekdays from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. from December 21st through the 30th except Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

"Thanks to our Ambassadors, the volunteers who are running this program, we are able to offer this opportunity for the youth in our community," said Keshia Randle, DeSoto Recreation Supervisor. "When school is out, there's not a lot for kids to do, so we want to make sure we are offering every positive opportunity we can for our young citizens."

"This program will continue through spring break in March and the summer break, so we would like to build a pool of volunteers to help with the program," said Randle. For more information on volunteering for the Ambassador Program, call Keshia Randle at 972.230.9649.

YOGA with Marilyn Englund.
Gentle yoga for all sizes, skill levels, ages 16-99.
Wear comfortable clothing and bring a mat.
Classes held in the Pecan Meeting Rooms.

Tuesdays, January 5 - February 16, 2010
7-week session - \$49 • Drop-in class fee - \$10
Beginner/Intermediate classes: 5:30-6:30 and 6:45-7:45
DeSoto Recreation Center 972.230.9655
Or, enroll using PALS Online at <http://www.ci.desoto.tx.us/>

Library Holiday Hours
Main Library closed Dec. 24th & 25th normal schedule resumes on 26th
Extended Hours Computer Lab: 5pm closing on Dec. 24th
Closed on Dec. 25th
Open 9am to 5 pm Dec. 26th

Main Library closed Jan. 1st
Extended Hours Computer Lab: 6pm closing on Dec. 31st
Open 9am to 5pm Jan. 1st
Open 9am to 5pm Jan. 2nd

Recreation Center Holiday Hours
Open 7am to 1pm Dec. 24th
Closed on Dec. 25th
Normal schedule resumes on Dec. 26th

Open 7am to 1pm Dec. 30th
Closed Jan. 1st
Normal schedule resumes on Jan. 2nd

Concerned DeSoto Citizens (CDC) in partnership with the City of DeSoto invite you to

The program begins at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, December 29, 2009 in the atrium of City Hall at DeSoto Town Center
Dinner is served immediately following the program
Admission is FREE but Reservations are required for Dinner
Donations will be accepted for the DeSoto Food Pantry
RSVP by December 24th to CDC at 972-274-9795 or 972-230-1384

**AFRICAN AMERICAN
REPERTORY THEATER
PRESENTS**

*the
GIFTS
OF THE
Magi*
A MUSICAL

Show Dates & Times:
December 4 - 20, 2009
Friday - Saturday Nights @ 7:30pm **\$25**
Saturday & Sunday Matinee @ 2:30pm **\$20**
Preview Performance on
December 3 @ 7:30pm **\$12**

To Purchase Tickets:
Box Office - 972.572.0998
Web - www.aareptheater.com

DeSoto Corner Theatre
211 E. Pleasant Run
DeSoto, TX 75115

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