



# City of De Soto, KS Comprehensive Plan Update



**For Governing Body  
Approval 9-5-2019**



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## **Mayor and City Council**

Honorable Rick Walker, Mayor

Lori Murdock, Council President

Rob Daniels

Kevin Honomichl

Danny Lane

Kevin Ritter

## **City Staff**

Mike Brungardt, P.E. City Administrator

Brad Weisenburger, Planning & Capital Projects Director

Lana McPherson, City Clerk

Patrick Reavey, City Attorney

Bonnie Bennett, Finance Director

## **Planning and Zoning Commission**

Richard Hemphill, Chair

Ian McPherson

Todd Manson

John Shultz

Bob Garrett

Tim Fisher

Linda Lane

**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.**



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**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

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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

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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

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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**

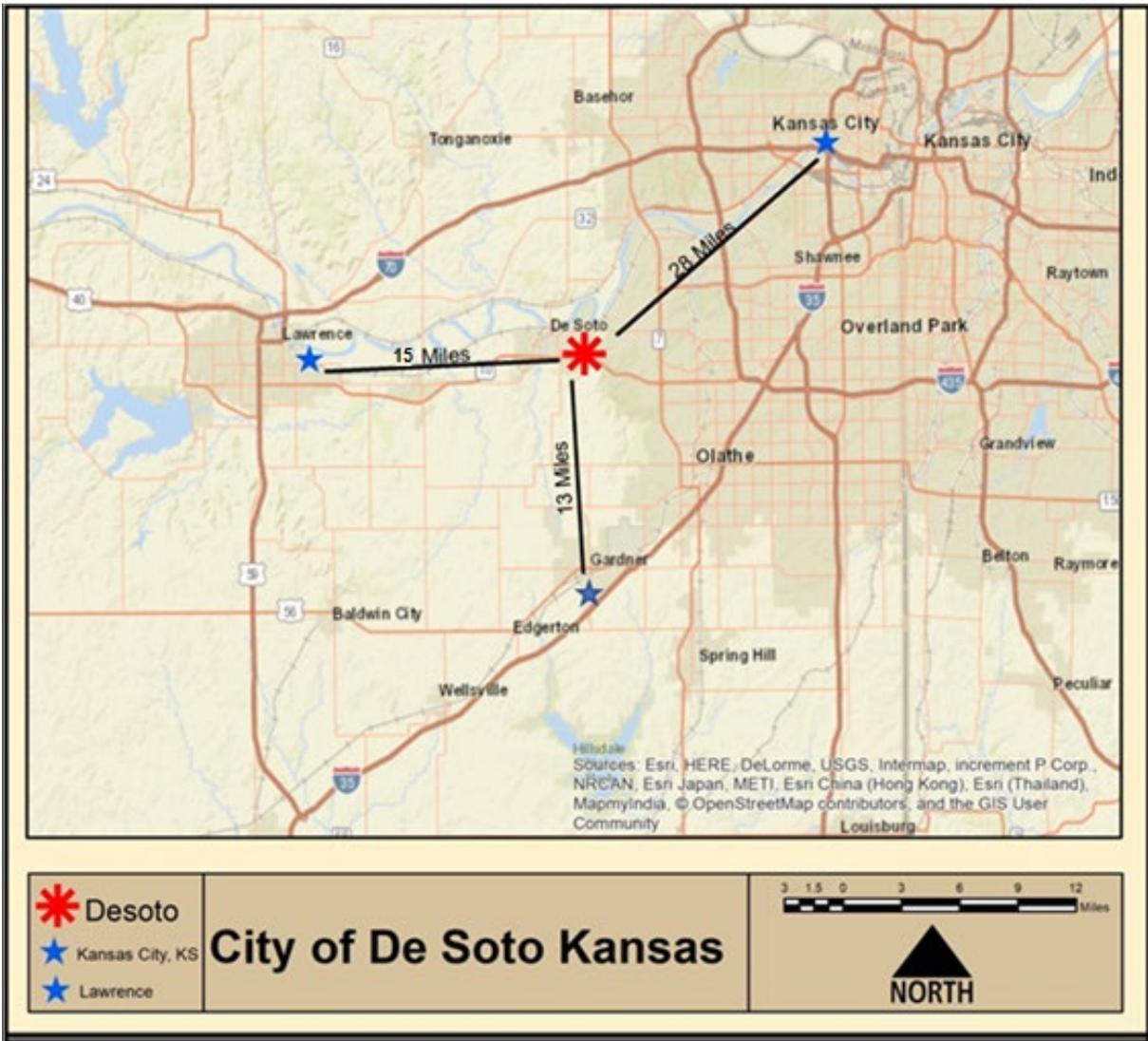
The local government is the primary body with jurisdiction to coordinate the overall pattern of physical development of the community. The Comprehensive Plan should be used to help guide land use decisions as growth and development occurs. Therefore, the local government should review the Comprehensive 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.

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Figure 1.1: Regional Location Map



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**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**



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### 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

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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*

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**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,

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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>					
<b>Agree/Disagree Statements (in order of rating)</b>	<b>Disagree</b> ←————→ <b>Agree</b>				<b>5</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	
	<b>Rating</b>				
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>					

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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.

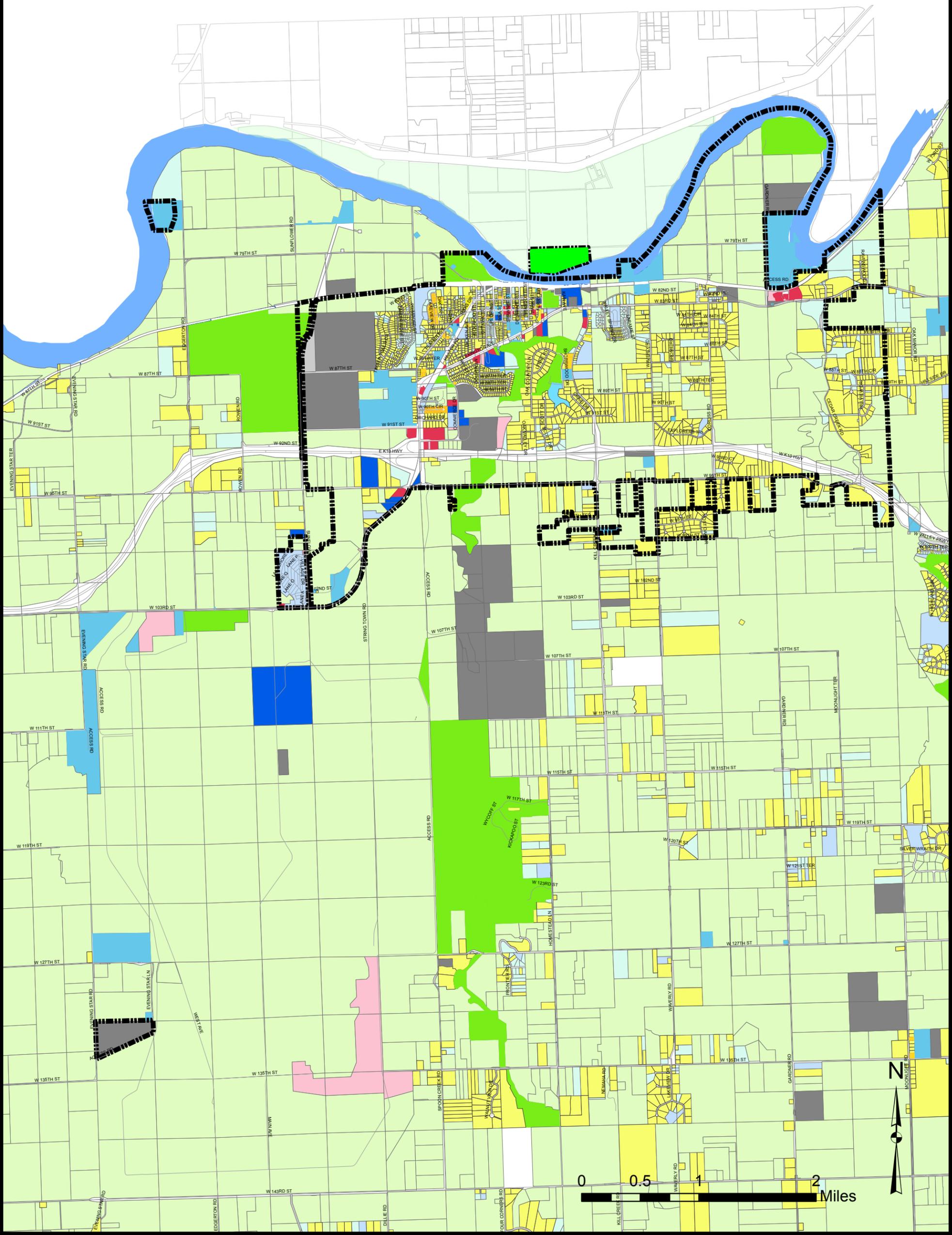
### **Section 4.20 IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM SUMMARY**

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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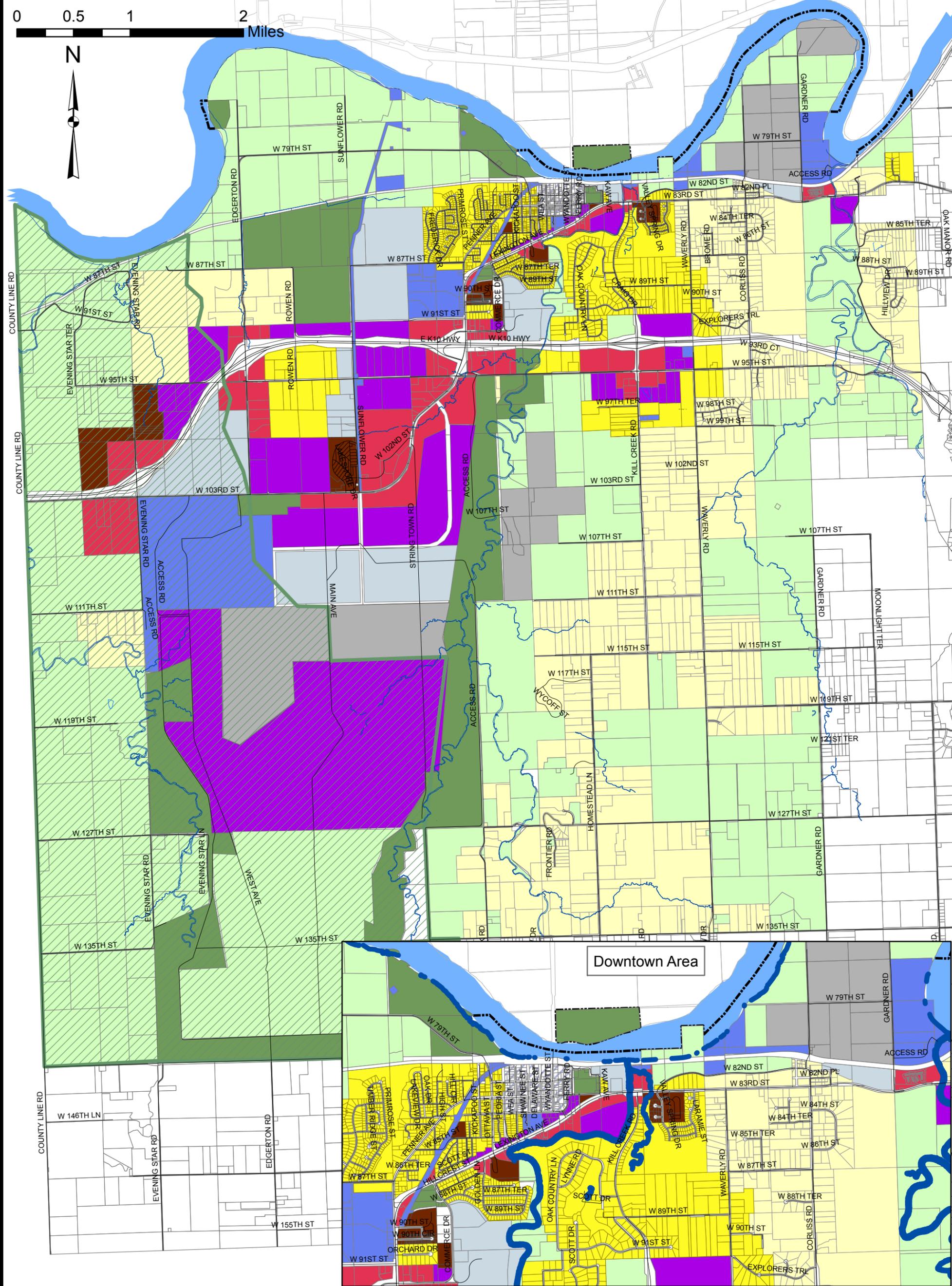
# Map 4.1 Existing Land Use

# City of De Soto, Kansas *Comprehensive Plan*

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







# Map 4.2 Future Land Use

# City of De Soto, Kansas Comprehensive Plan

- |                    |                         |                          |               |                               |
|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| City Boundary      | Kansas River            | Agricultural             | Downtown      | Heavy Industrial              |
| Rights of Way      | Residential Low Density | Residential Med. Density | Commercial    | Long Term Development Overlay |
| Park & Open Space  | Multifamily             | Light Industrial         | City Boundary |                               |
| Public/Semi-Public |                         |                          |               |                               |





## **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.

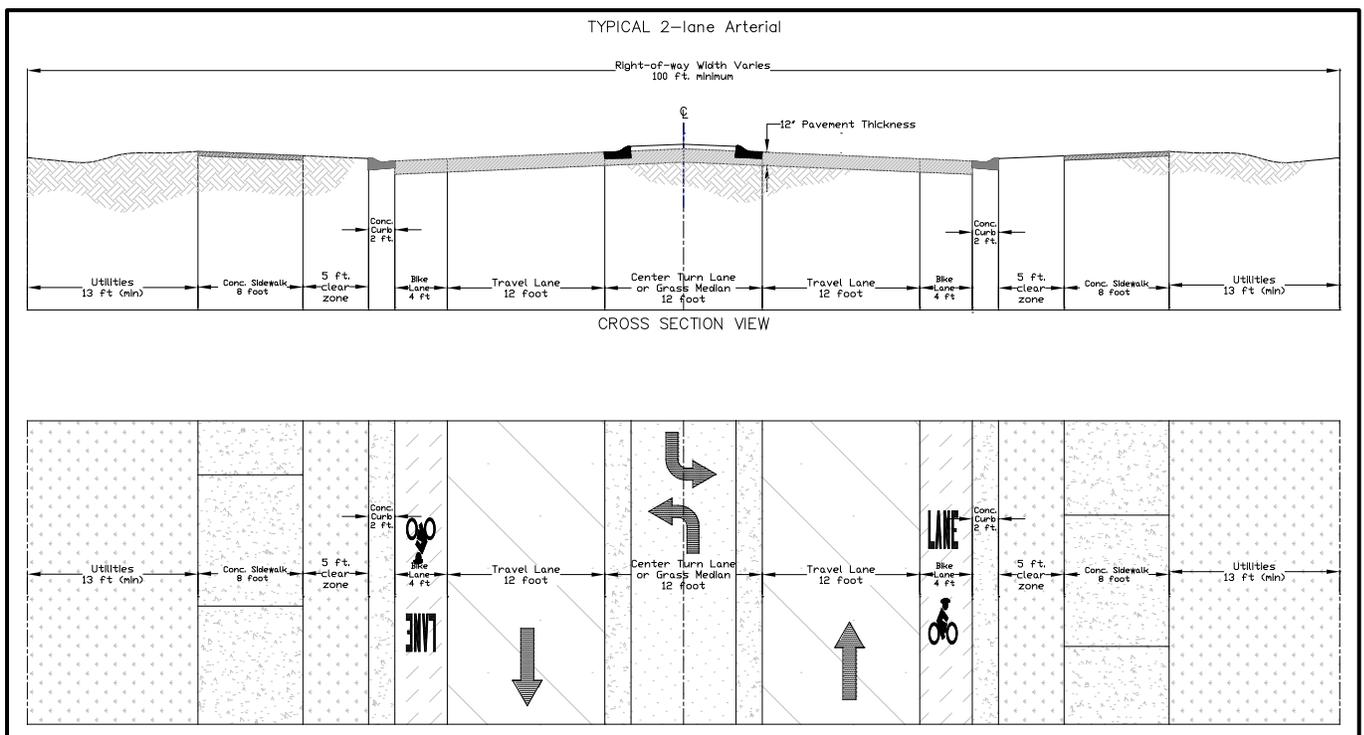
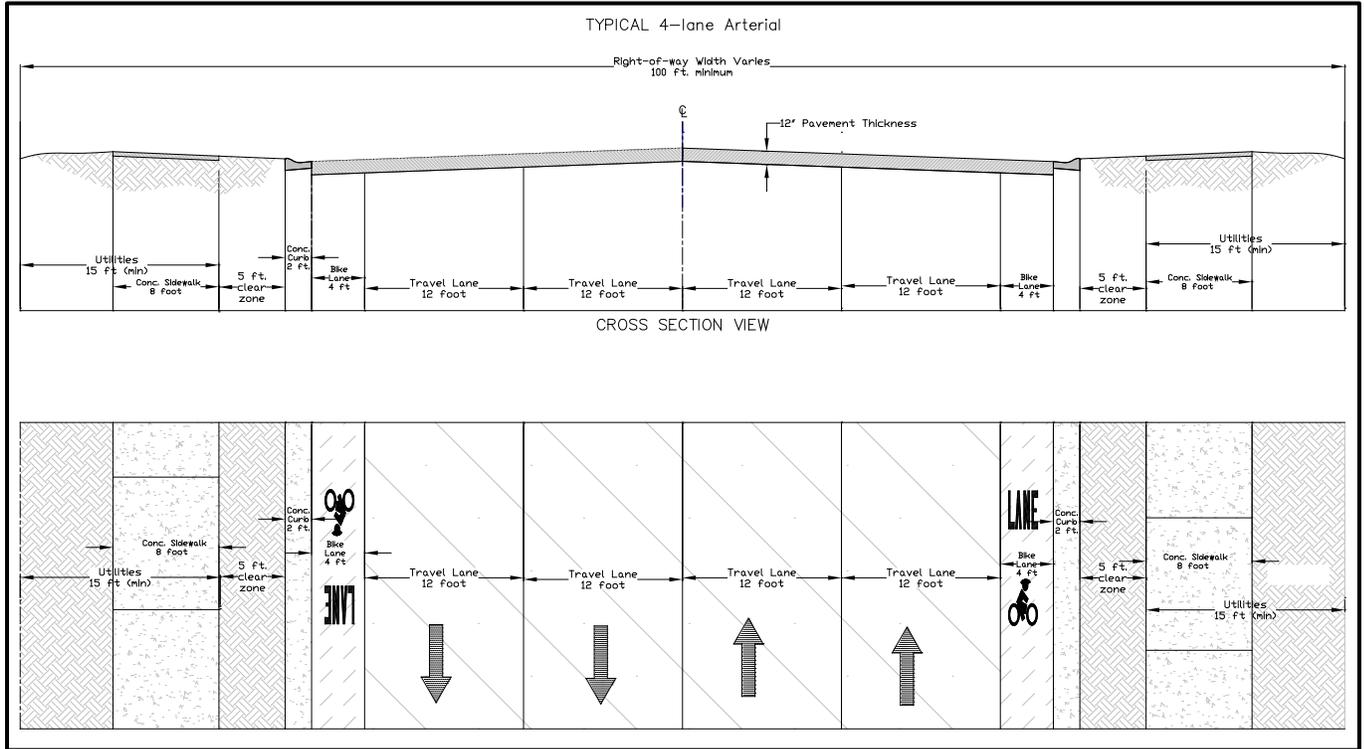
#### **Arterial Roadway Recommendations**

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

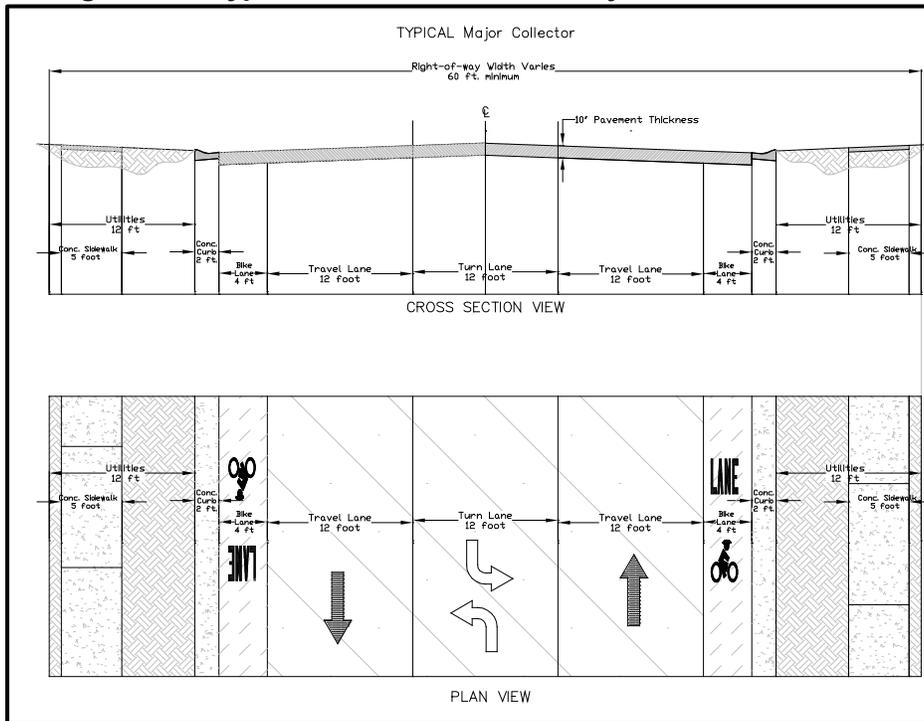
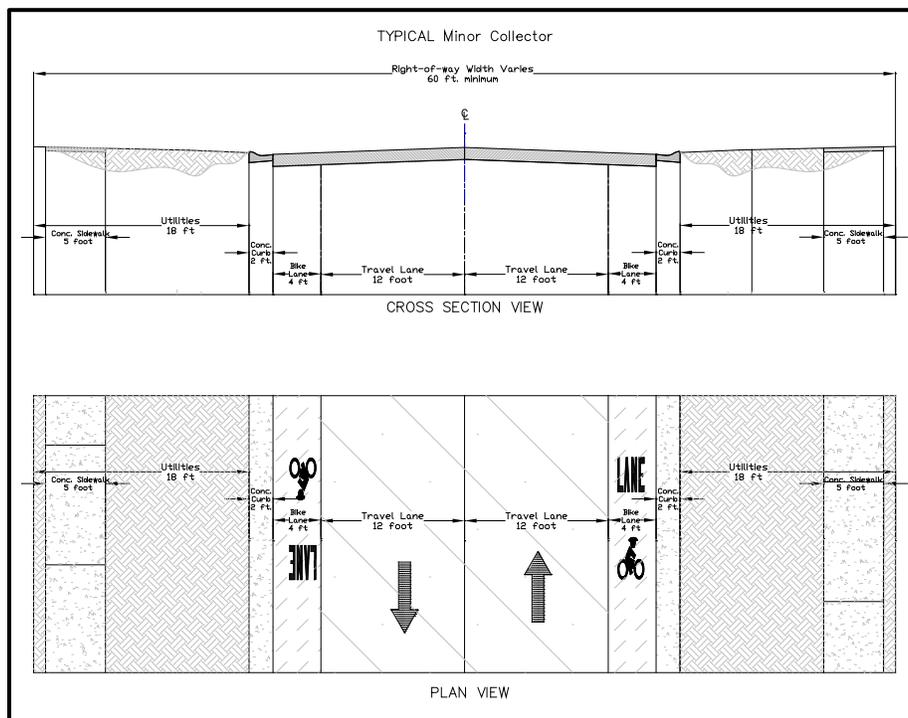


Figure 5.3: Typical Cross Section for Minor Collector Streets



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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.

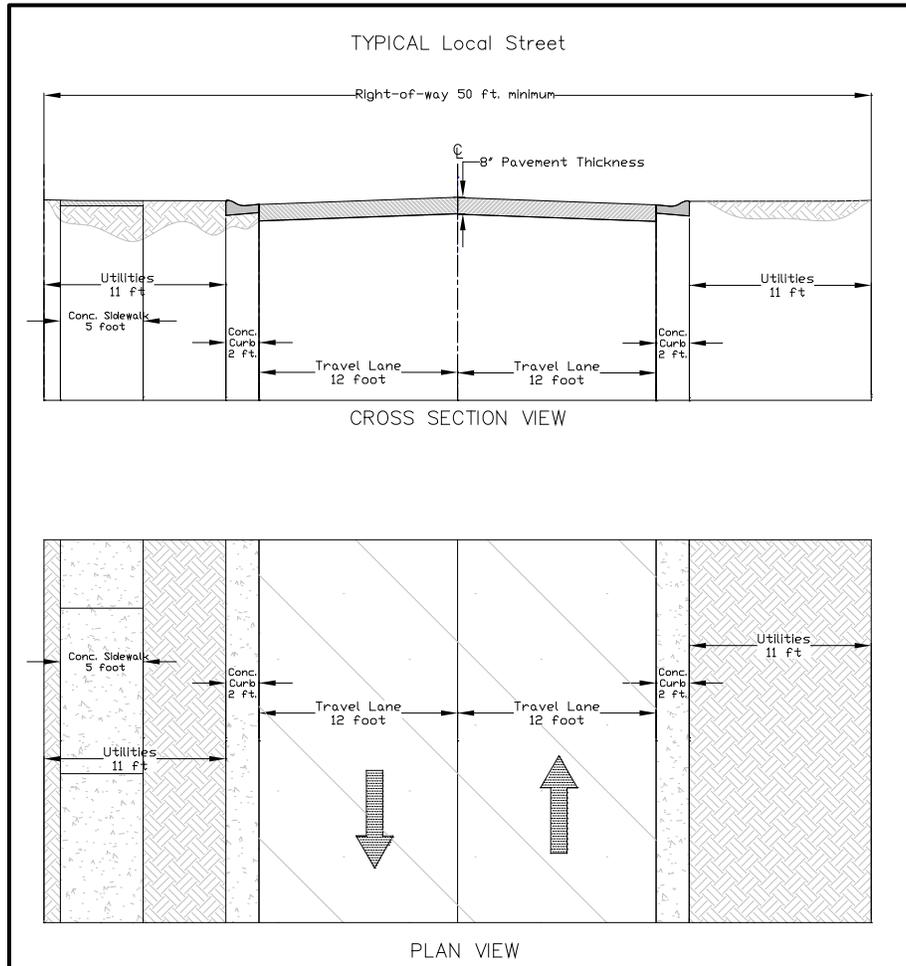
The right-of-way width recommended for local streets is 50 feet and the minimum pavement width recommended is 28 feet (back to back of curbs) which provides 12 foot lane widths leaving two feet for curb and gutter on each side of the road. The ideal traffic volume for local streets is less than 1,500 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**

<b>Through-Traffic Speed</b>	<b>Minimum Intersection Spacing</b>
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.

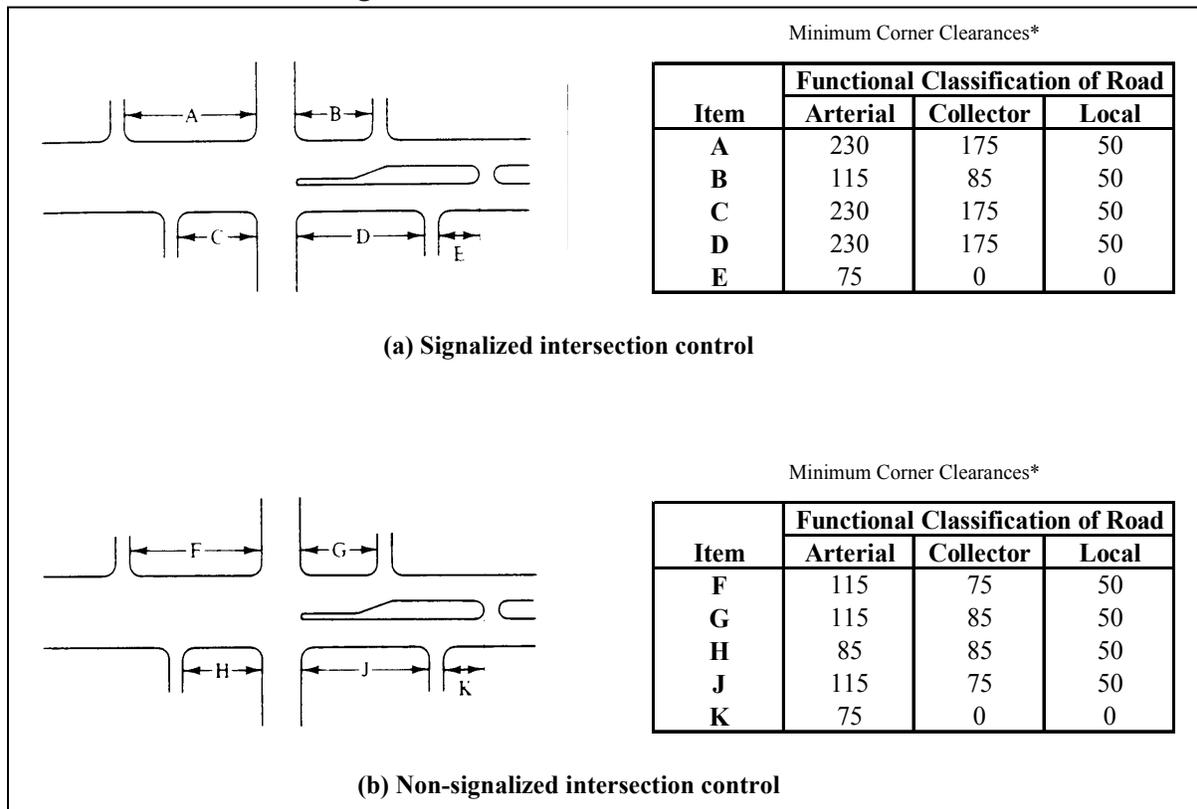
**Corner Clearance**

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. While this information helps indicate areas where near-term development pressures are anticipated to be higher, it is not intended to indicate plans or support for expansion of the water system. **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.

### **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 or underdeveloped, and only about 2,340 acres of the land area in the community has ready

## TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES

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.

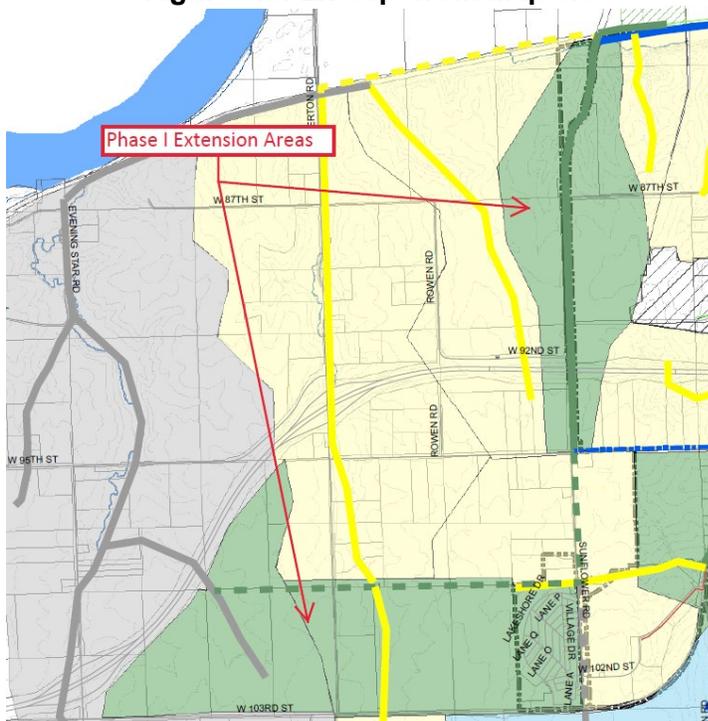
### **Wastewater Accessibility**

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 5.7 are the Phase I extension areas shown along Sunflower Road between 79<sup>th</sup> Street and 95<sup>th</sup> Street, and along the north side of 103<sup>rd</sup> Street between Evening Star Road and Sunflower Road.

TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES

Figure 5.6: Excerpt from Map 5.8



These extensions 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 purchase 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.

Again this 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

## TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES

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.

### **Section 5.15 SUNFLOWER FUTURE TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE**

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.

With that in mind, 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. A map of the proposed public improvements for the northern portions of the **Sunflower Property is Provided as Map 5.9** (Sunflower Infrastructure)

The following implementation strategies, which were partly the impetus for the above-referenced study, 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.

## **TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC FACILITIES**

### **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.

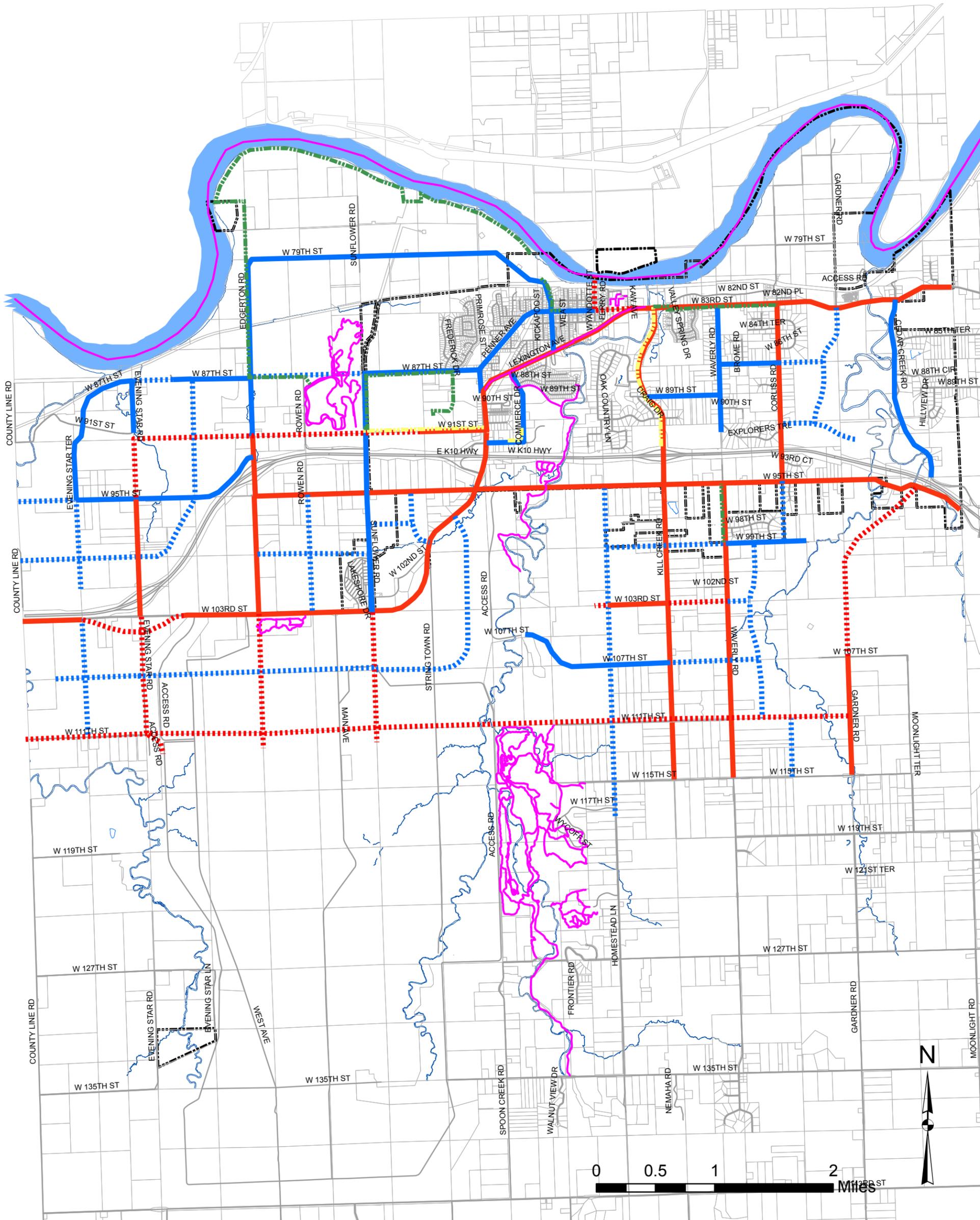
### **Section 5.17 FUTURE PARK RECOMMENDATIONS**

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 5.1 Future Transportation

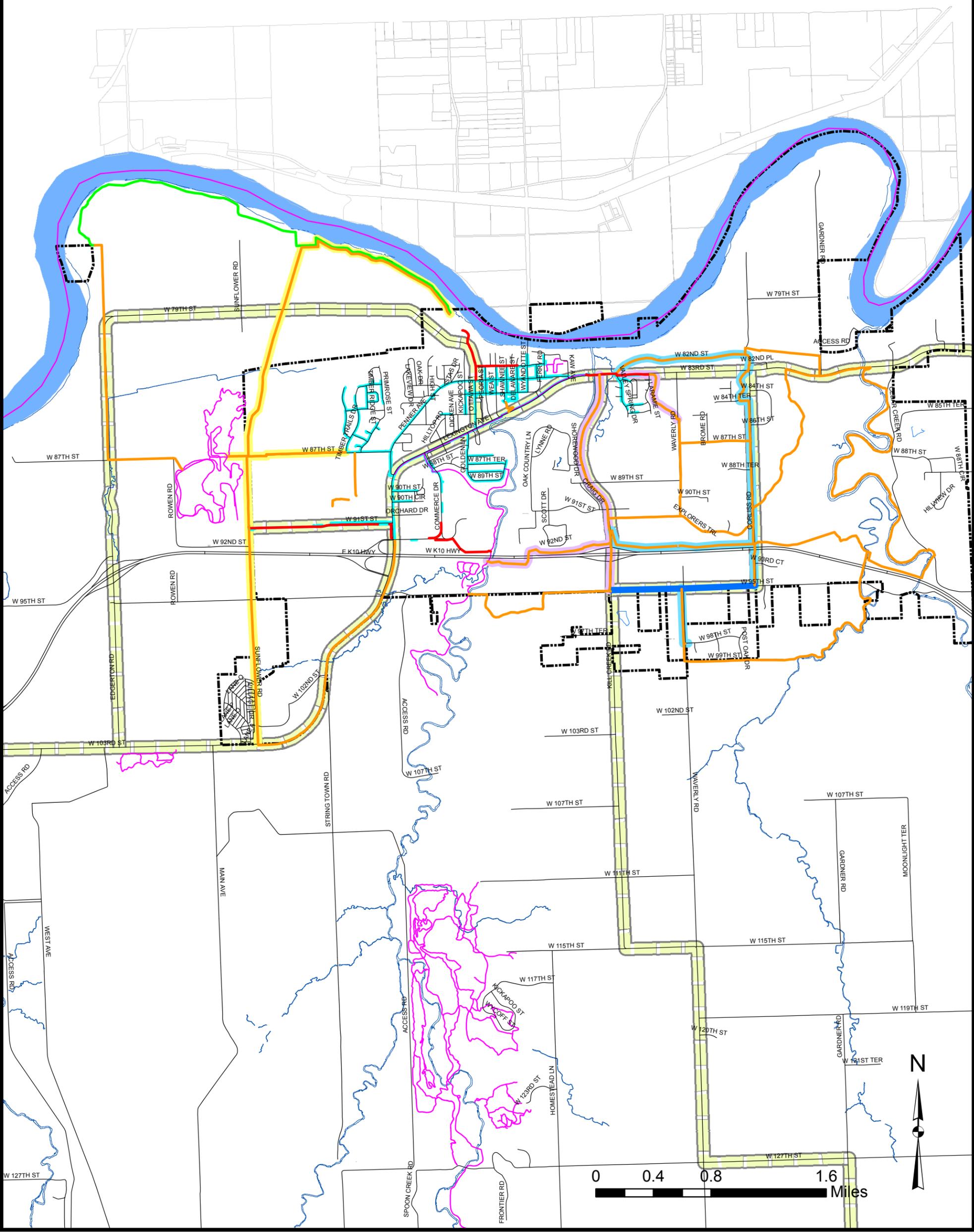
# City of De Soto, Kansas *Comprehensive Plan*

- City Boundary
- Kansas River
- Arterials on Existing Road Alignments
- Collectors on Existing Road Alignments
- Arterials NOT on Existing Road Alignments
- Collectors NOT on Existing Road Alignments
- Existing Trails
- Sidewalks
- Bike & Ped Trail

### Future Bike / Ped







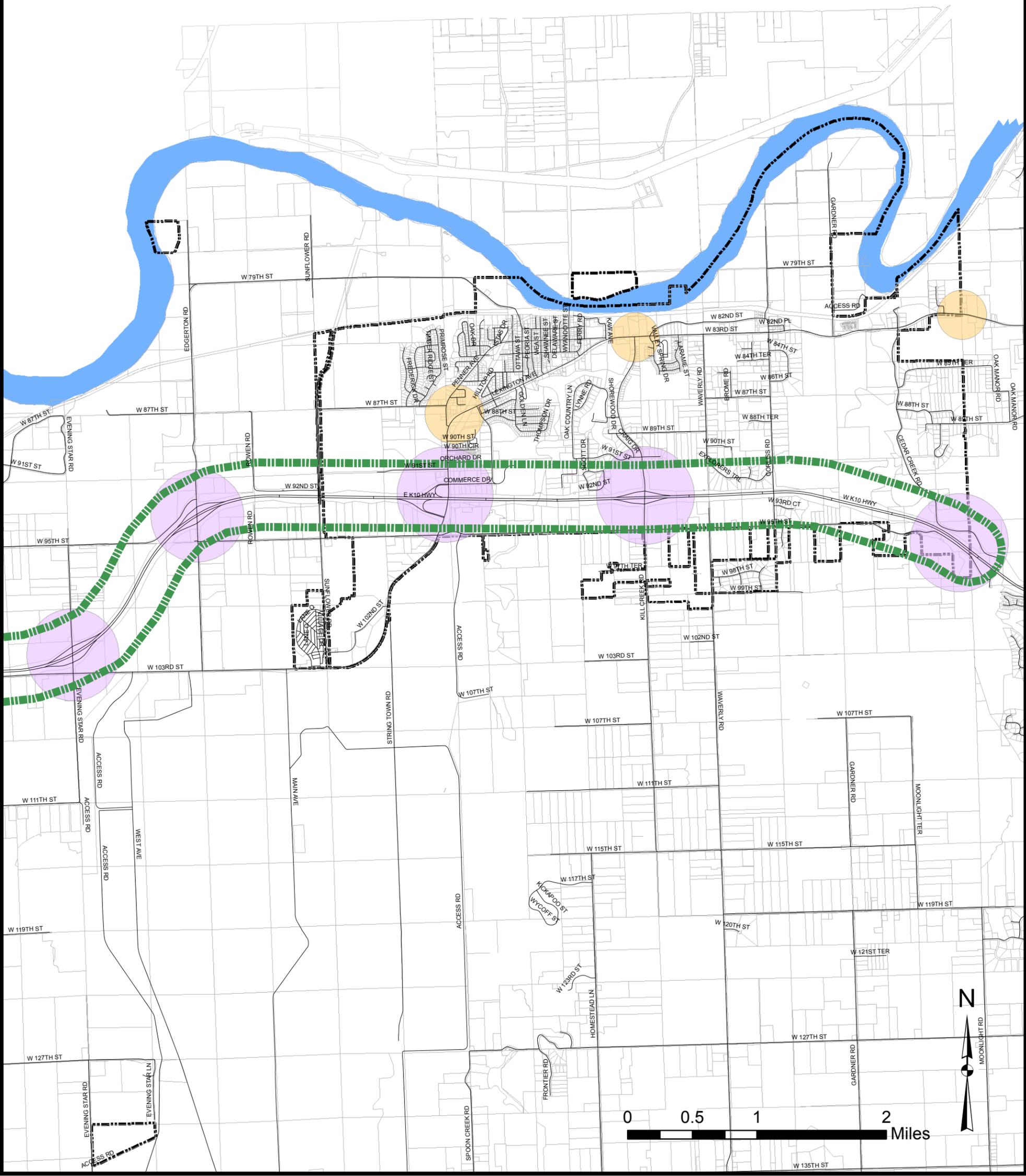
# Map 5.2 Bike & Pedestrian Map

# City of De Soto, Kansas Comprehensive Plan

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







# Map 5.3 Gateways

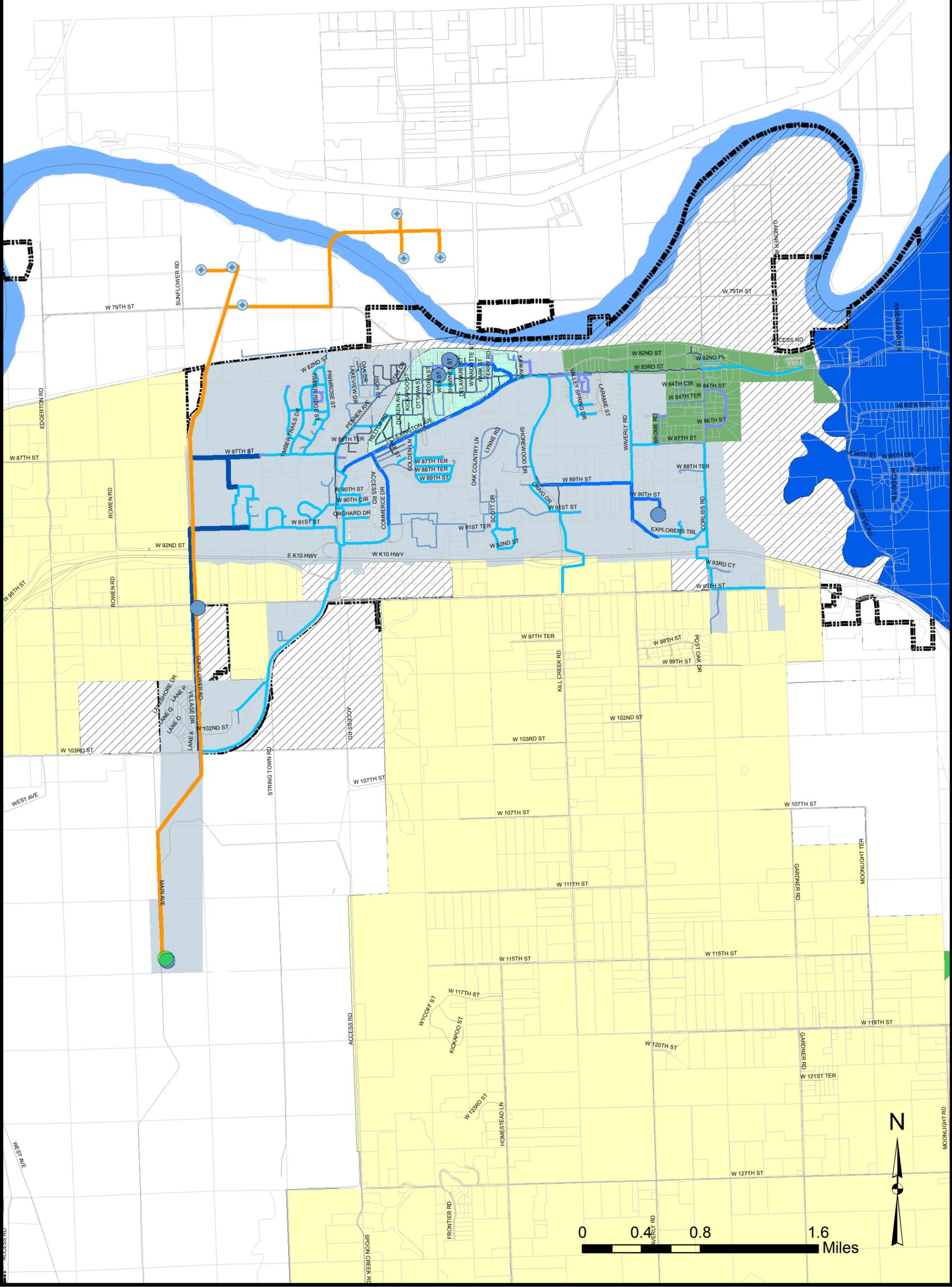
# City of De Soto, Kansas Comprehensive Plan

City Boundary
  Kansas River
  Property Lines

K-10 Viewshed Overlay
  Primary Gateway
  Secondary Gateway







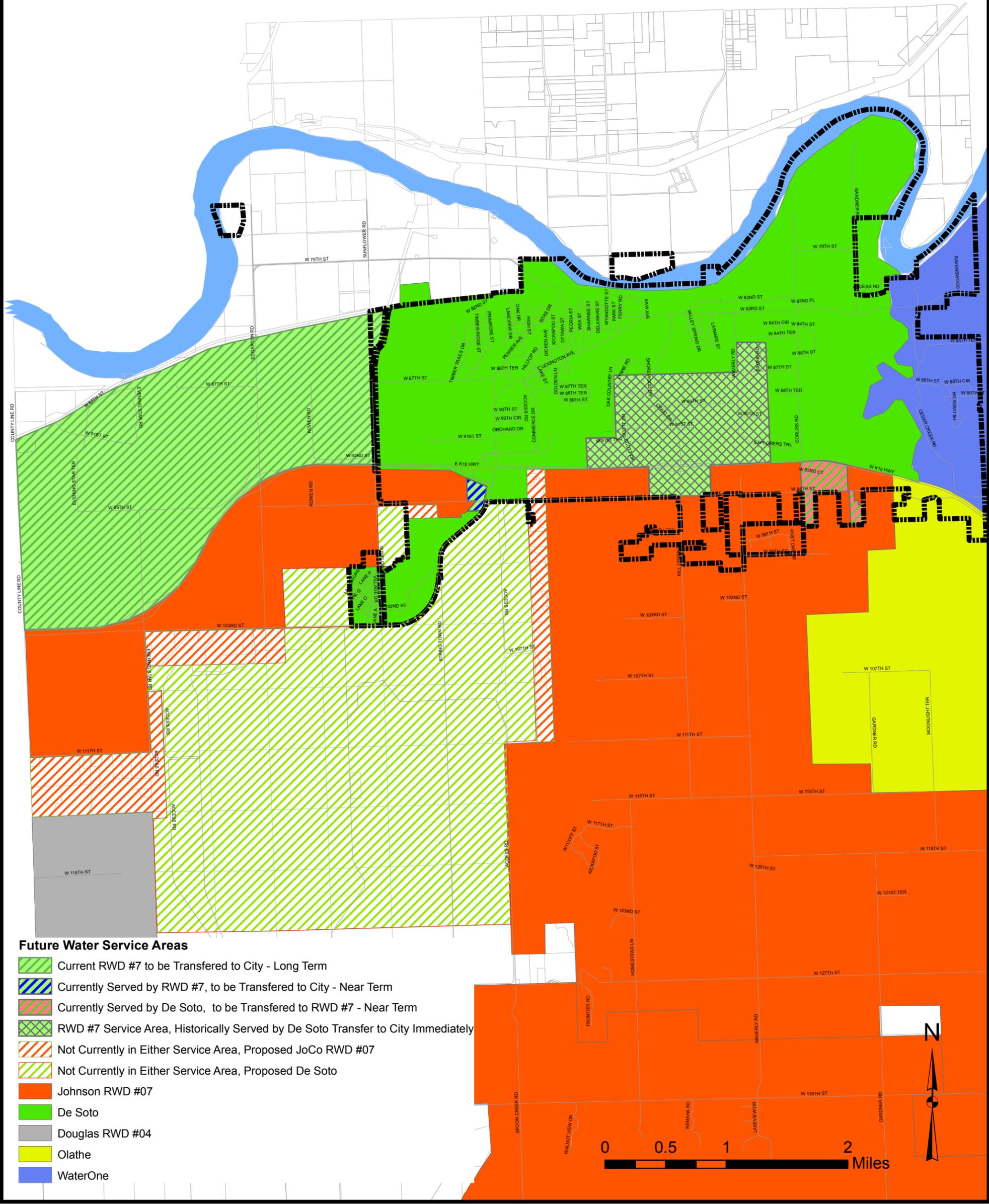
# Map 5.4 Water System

# City of De Soto, Kansas Comprehensive Plan

- |               |                        |               |                       |
|---------------|------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| City Boundary | Kansas River           | High Pressure | Johnson RWD #01       |
| 2"            | Wells                  | Med. Pressure | De Soto               |
| 4"            | Raw Water Lines        | Low Pressure  | Johnson RWD #06 Cons. |
| 6"            | Water Treatment Plants | Low Pressure  | WaterOne              |
| Water Storage |                        |               |                       |







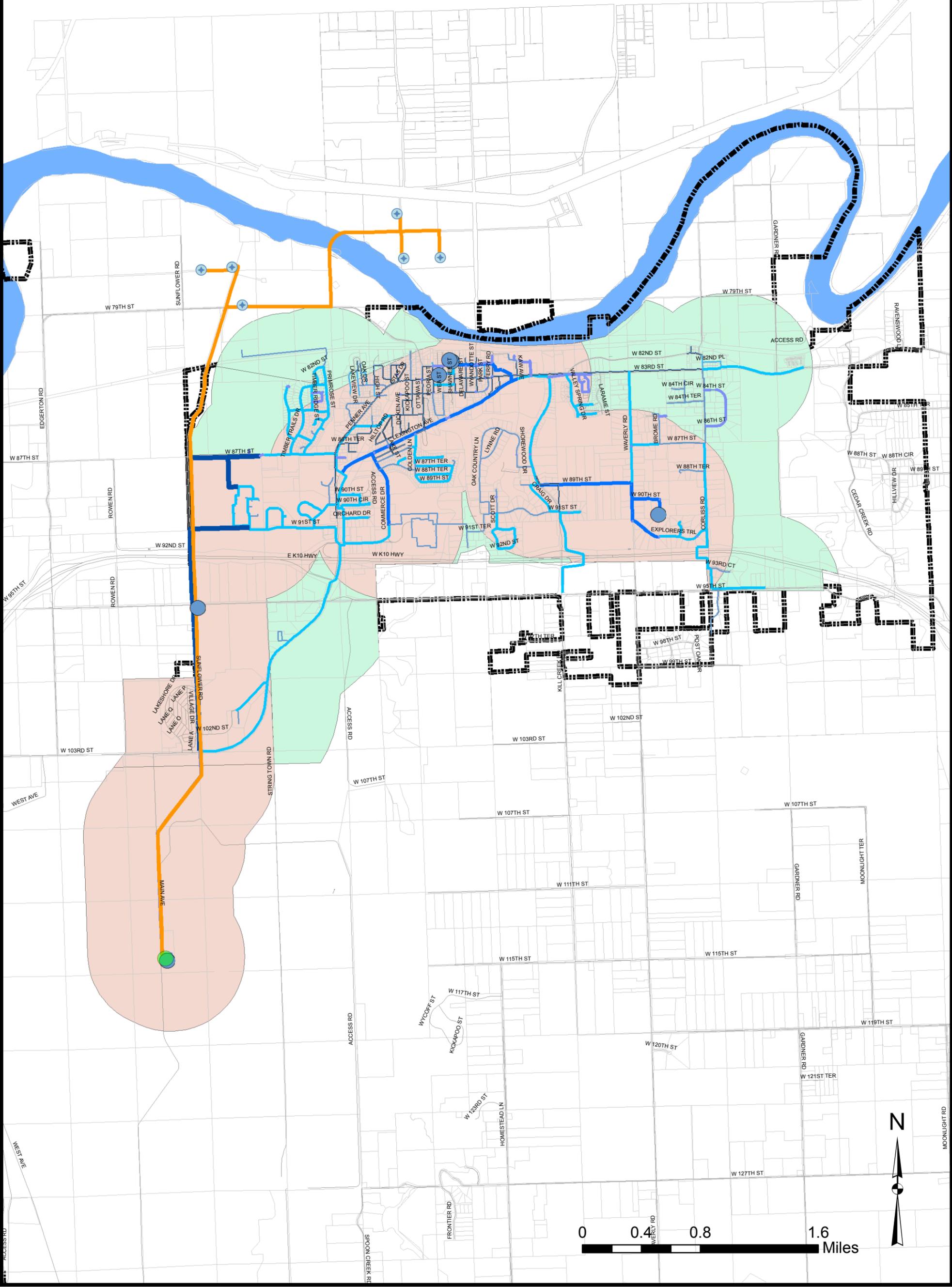
# Map 5.5 Future Water Serv. Territory City of De Soto, Kansas

*Comprehensive Plan*

 City Boundary    
  Kansas River    
  Property Lines



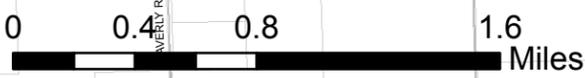




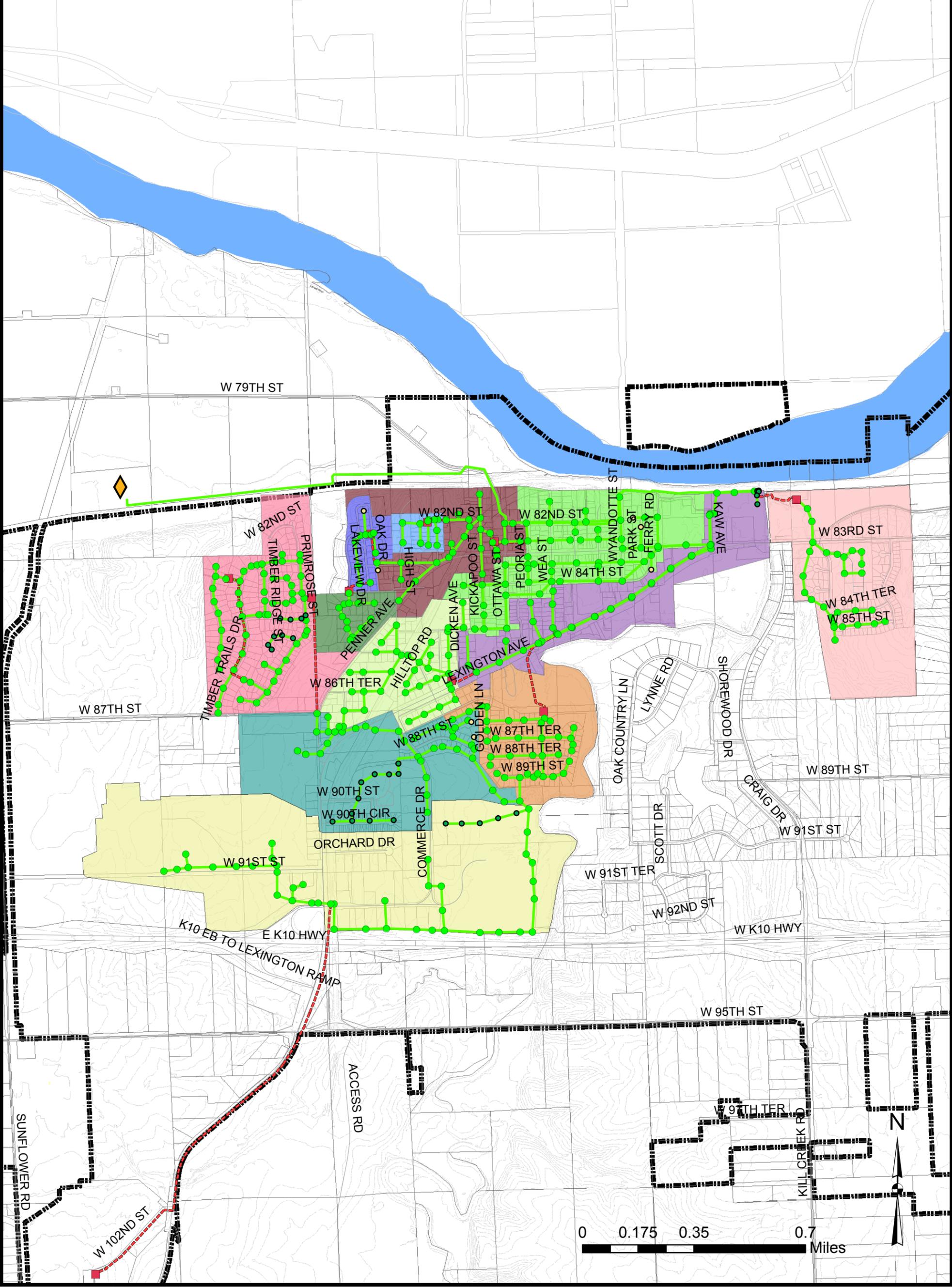
**Map 5.6 Water Accessibility**

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

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







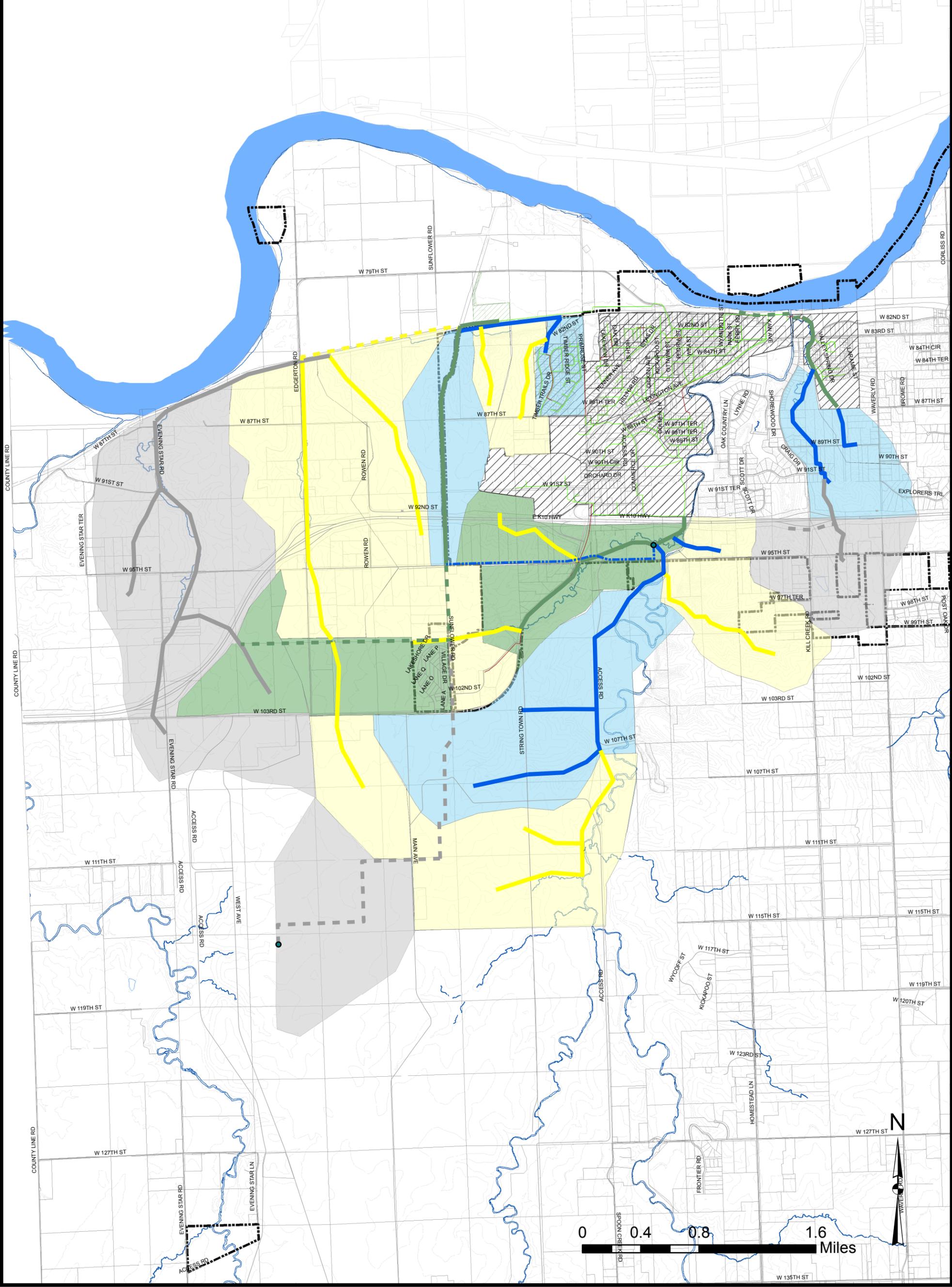
# Map 5.7 Sewer System

# City of De Soto, Kansas Comprehensive Plan

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







# Map 5.8 Future Sewer Service

# City of De Soto, Kansas Comprehensive Plan

City Boundary      Kansas River

Existing Sewer Service Area

Treatment Plant Location

10' Contours

Force Mains

Sanitary Sewers

### Potential Sewer Extension Areas

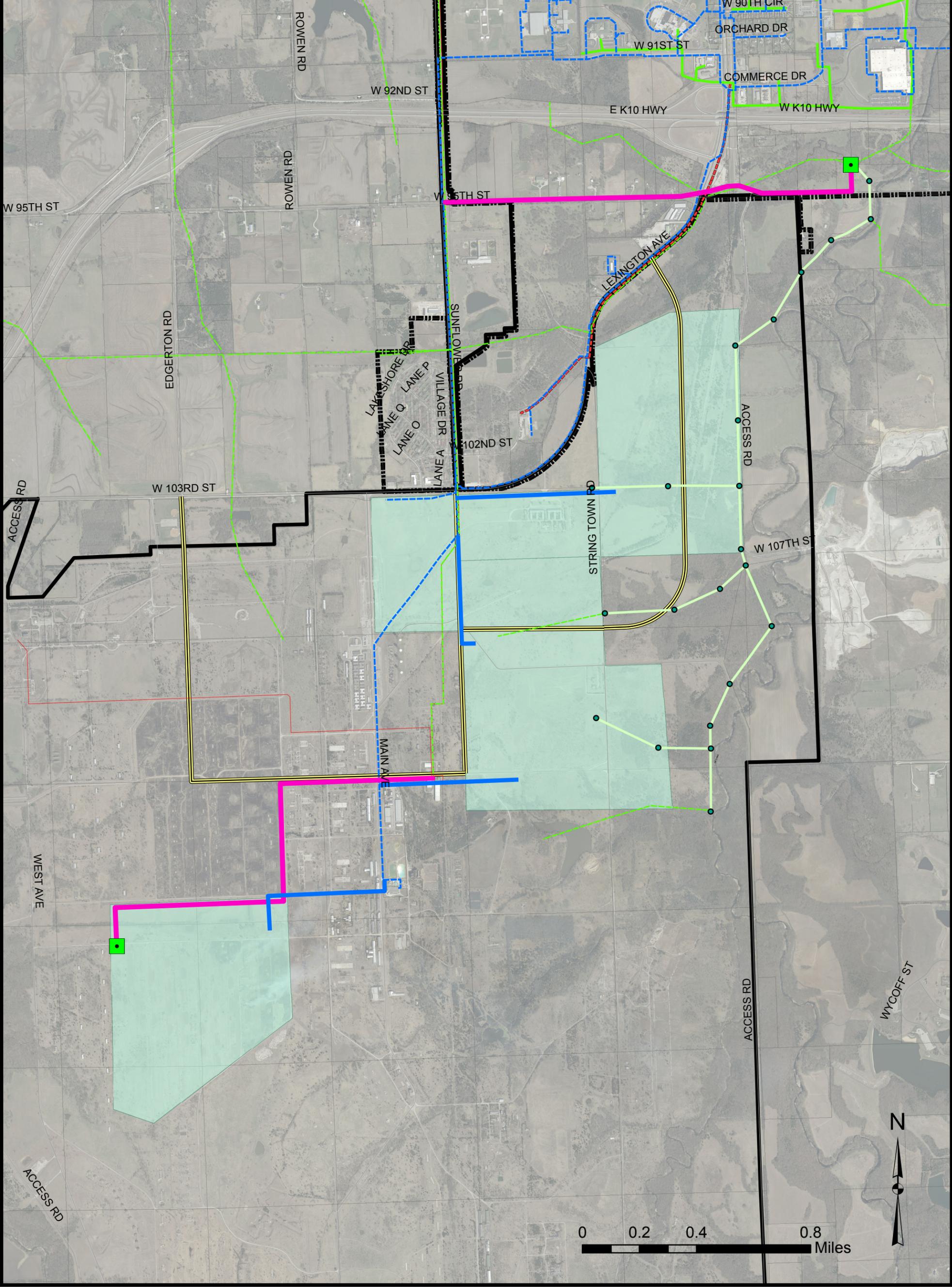
Phase 1      Phase 3  
 Phase 2      Phase 4

### Potential Sewer Extensions

Phase 1  
 Phase 2  
 Phase 3  
 Phase 4







# Map 5.9 Sunflower Infrastructure

# City of De Soto, Kansas *Comprehensive Plan*

City Boundary	Kansas River	Existing De Soto Water Lines	Proposed Arterial Roads
Proposed Manholes	Proposed Sewer Lines	Exist. SRL Sewer FM	SRL Property
Proposed Sewer Pump Station	Proposed Sewer FM	SRL Property	"Clean" Properties
Proposed Water Lines	Potential Future De Soto Sewers		



## 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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