Awareness, Reflection & Dialogue
On the Current Economic Conditions and How They are Affecting Us

With the recent focus on the economic downturn, foreclosures, government bailouts and the slump in the housing market, you can’t help but be concerned about what it all means for you personally as well as how it is affecting your neighborhood and our community. The DeSoto City Council shares your concern and has provided a forum to discuss and reflect on issues facing us all and how DeSoto can emerge a stronger community.

In 2010 and beyond, our future is tied to national and international developments largely beyond our control. Charting the course for the future of our city in these uncertain times will not be easy, but we are up to the challenge. DeSoto was named an All-America City in 2006 in recognition of our ability, as a community, to face problems and work together for solutions. We have always addressed problems by frank discussion of the issues facing us. With that in mind, we invite you to join us as we embark on a communication initiative designed to help us become aware of the situation facing us, reflect on the impact it may have on our community and start the dialogue that will best address our concerns.

On Monday, February 2, 2009, the DeSoto City Council and DeSoto ISD Board of Trustees began a month of Awareness, Reflection and Dialogue. They are taking a cue from President Obama’s campaign and will be “blogging”. This blog is intended to engage the community in a dialogue regarding the current economic conditions. You are invited to go to our blog at http://blog.desototexas.com or just click on the link on the homepage of the city’s website and share your observations, ideas and concerns by offering anecdotal comments and suggestions on how the community should react to the following issues:

1. Are you seeing an increase in crime or code enforcement issues in your neighborhood?

2. Have you experienced a decrease in the value of your home because of foreclosures in your neighborhood?

3. Are you concerned about the local job market? Have you or a family member recently become unemployed?
4. In difficult economic times, what city services are most important to you?

5. In his inauguration speech, President Obama urged us to “summon a new spirit of service” and called on Americans “to make a more enduring and active commitment to their community”. Use of volunteers is one way a city can stretch limited funds. (cont.) How would you like to see the city expand volunteer efforts?

6. What are you doing to help your child(ren) be successful in school? How can DeSoto ISD better support parent involvement in schools?

The community blog can also be accessed from the city’s website at www.ci.desoto.tx.us in the News & Events section on the homepage under Awareness, Reflection and Dialogue through February 28th. Please feel free to comment on any of the posted questions.

If blogging is not your thing, the City and School District will host a Town Hall Meeting at City Hall on February 28, 2009 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. to give you a “face to face” opportunity to dialogue on these issues. This meeting will begin with a general session at 9 a.m. to set the tone of the day and will follow with breakout sessions on the following topics:

**Town Hall Meeting - Public Invited**
Saturday, February 28th 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
City Hall, 211 E. Pleasant Run Rd.

**9:00 am Joint Opening Session** - Mayor Bobby Waddle

**Concurrent Breakout Sessions**

**9:30 - 10:25 am** Home Values & the Current Real Estate Picture, resources; Shane Docherty, Chief Appraiser with Dallas Central Appraisal District & Kenzie Moore, Local Realtor, Council Host – Sandy Respess & Deshaundra Lockhart

**9:30 - 10:25 am** Crime & Code Enforcement, resources; DeSoto Police Chief Mike Brodnax & Code Enforcement Officer Charles Humphrey, Council Host – Denise Valentine

**9:30 - 10: 25 am** Volunteerism & City Provided Recreation & Leisure Time Opportunities resources; Renee’ Johnson, Managing Director of Parks & Leisure Services & Lucile Dade, Managing Director of Library Services - Council Host - Patricia Ledbetter

**Concurrent Breakout Sessions**

**10:30 - 11:25 am** 2010 Operating Budget & City Services, resources; Jim Baugh, City Manager & Camelia Browder, Managing Director of Financial Services, Council Host - Carl Williams

**10:30 - 11:25 am** The National, State & Local Employment Picture; resource Richard Perez of the Texas Workforce Commission, Council Host - Carl Sherman

(cont.)
10:30 - 11:25 am  **Home Values & the Current Real Estate Picture**, resources; Chief Appraiser with Dallas Central Appraisal District & Kenzie Moore, Local Realtor - Council Host – Sandy Respess & Deshaundra Lockhart

10:30 - 11:25 am  **How Parent Involvement Supports Public Education**, resources; Lloyd Treadwell, DeSoto ISD Superintendent, District Host, Don Gant President, DISD Board of Trustees

11:30 pm  **Joint Closing Session**

The DeSoto City Council and DeSoto ISD Board of Trustees are sponsoring this month of Awareness, Reflection and Dialogue to help residents realize that you are not alone and that your concerns are shared by city officials. It is also an opportunity for you to voice ideas on how to address growing needs with shrinking resources and for the city to share information with you that may help you through the difficult times ahead. We hope you will take part in this effort by posting a comment on our blog and/or by attending the Town Hall Meeting on February 28th. For more information on Awareness, Reflection and Dialogue, please call the City Manager’s office at 972.230.9648.

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**AARP is Offering Tax Help for Senior Citizens at the DeSoto Senior Activity Center**

AARP Tax Help has moved to the DeSoto Senior Center, 204 Lion Street. Beginning Wednesday, February 4th, tax help will be from 11 am – 3 pm on Wednesdays. The last day for tax help will be Wednesday, April 15th. Please bring last year’s tax return, your Social Security card, and all documents necessary for completing your 2008 tax return. Seniors are the priority for tax help, but the preparers will help anyone as time permits. For more information, please call the DeSoto Senior Center 972.230.5825.

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**DeSoto Public Library Offers Workshop on Finding Employment**

“**This free workshop is open to everyone. Seating is limited; therefore, please register early by calling 972.230.9618 by Tuesday, February 17. The library is located at 211 E. Pleasant Run Road in DeSoto’s Town Center. Park behind City Hall and enter the library through the Recreation Center and the Civic Center.**
DeSoto Public Library Offers Workshop on Finding Employment

“Job Search Strategies” will be presented at the DeSoto Public Library, on Thursday, February 19, 2009 from 6:30 pm – 7:30 p.m. in the Library’s Quiet Reading Room. Mrs. Linda Lamar, a DeSoto resident will facilitate the workshop. Mrs. Lamar has a decade of experience as career development facilitator. She will provide strategies on resources for searching for a job, 60-second commercial, resume and interview tips as well as follow-up.

This free workshop is open to everyone. Seating is limited; therefore, please register early by calling 972.230.9618 by Tuesday, February 17. The library is located at 211 E. Pleasant Run Road in DeSoto’s Town Center. Park behind City Hall and enter the library through the Recreation Center and the Civic Center.
Week of February 16th, through February 20th, 2009

DeSoto News Flash

AFRICAN AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER
Presents
A RAISIN IN THE SUN
by LORRAINE HANSBERRY
Directed by William (Bill) Earl Ray

Starring
Irma P. Hall
as Lena Younger

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

Show Dates & Times:
March 20 - April 12, 2009
Fridays & Saturdays @ 8pm $20
Saturdays & Sundays @ 3pm $15

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

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