

chapter 1

introduction



introduction

Soaring for Excellence defines the motivation and direction the City of DeSoto has adopted as it continues to grow. The City of DeSoto is a dynamic city that has grown by 22.5% in the last ten years to become the 22nd largest city in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area. With an estimated population for 2010 of almost 49,047, the City has experienced significant growth since the previous Parks, Recreation and Open-space Master Plan was completed in 2002. As DeSoto looks toward the future, they needed to reevaluate the parks, recreation, open-space and trail needs of the City and establish a plan to address those needs.

In 2006, DeSoto was recognized as an ***All-America City***. This prestigious award is the nation's most recognized, coveted and respected civic recognition. Only 10 cities are selected each year across the country. This designation recognizes exemplary grass roots communities whom work together to achieve desired results. This Master Plan will take advantage of that same community pride and energy to establish a realistic set of goals and an action plan to achieve these goals.

This Master Plan will guide park, recreation, open-space and trail development over the next 5, 10 and 20-year periods. As the projected population continues to increase to 59,000 by the year 2030, a well planned approach to meet the needs of this growing community is very important. Currently the City is approximately 70% developed so it is extremely important that future park, recreation, open-space and trail needs be addressed before land for future development is no longer available.

Parks, open-space, trails and facilities that support recreational activities are vitally important for the quality of life we all need to function in these hectic, hustle and bustle times. These quality of life improvements attract people to move to a community, enhance economic development, and create a sense of pride for a community.

The Master Plan mission statement of DeSoto Parks and Leisure Services Department is *to create a living document that recognizes current socioeconomic changes by providing a flexible guide to address the current and future needs for recreation and leisure activities in DeSoto*. The focus of the Master Plan will be to support this mission statement.



background

The following information was gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau; including data from the 2010 US Census and the American Community Survey 5-year estimate, 2005-2009. It provides a snap shot of the citizens who make DeSoto their home:

Population

- Male – 44.9%
- Female – 55.1%
- Median age - 38.8
 - Under the age of 5 – 6.3%
 - Between the ages of 5 and 20 – 22.7%
 - Between the ages of 21 and 45 – 33.9%
 - Between the ages of 46 and 65 – 23.7%
 - Older than 65 – 13.4%
- 1990 – 30,544
- 2000 – 37,646
- 2010 – 49,047 (estimated)
- 2015 - 53,472 (projected)
- 2020 - 53,873 (projected)
- 2030 – 59,000 (projected)

Income

- Median household income - \$58,880
- Per capita income - \$26,864
- Median home price - \$147,500

Ethnicity

- African American – 68.6%
- White – 23.2%
- Hispanic – 12.1%
- Asian – 0.9%
- American Indian – 0.2%
- Other – 4.8%
- Mixed Race – 2.9%

Education

- 90.4% high school graduate or higher
(Compared to U.S. average of 84.6%)
- 29.3% bachelor's degree or higher
(Compared to U.S. average of 27.5%)



In addition to the current community snapshot gathered from the census, it is important to identify what has changed in the last 20 years. DeSoto has experienced significant socioeconomic changes that are identified as follows:

Ethnicity

<u>African American</u>	<u>Caucasian</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>
20.8% in 1990	76% in 1990	5% in 1990
45.1% in 2000	44.7% in 2000	7.3% in 2000
68.6% in 2010	23.2% in 2010	12.1% in 2010

Population

<u>Median Age</u>	<u>Citizens 65 years of age or older</u>
31.4 in 1990	6.6% in 1990
36.1 in 2000	9.3% in 2000
38.8 in 2010	13.4% in 2010

Income

<u>Median Household Income</u>
\$27,016 in 1990
\$57,699 in 2000
\$58,880 in 2010

This community snapshot shows that DeSoto is an educated, rather progressive community with a growing African American and Hispanic population. It also shows a shrinking Caucasian population, an increasing number of citizens over the age of 65 (which exceeds the US average of 12.6%), and a fairly even mix of the population between the ages of 5 and 65. The population had a tremendous growth spurt in the years between 1990 and 2007, but has begun to slow down as the City reaches build out and the economy has slowed.

The intent of this Master Plan is to represent the needs of **all the citizens of DeSoto** from the young families to the upwardly mobile teenager, the urban professionals and the active seniors.



purpose

The purpose of this Master Plan is to guide parks, recreation, open-space and trail development over the next 5, 10 and 20 year periods. As the projected population continues to increase to 59,000 by the year 2030, a well planned approach to meeting the needs of this growing community is very important. Currently the City is approximately 70% developed so it is extremely important that future park recreation, open-space and trail needs be addressed before land for future development is no longer available.

The first park Master Plan for DeSoto was prepared in 1979 with updates or new master plans prepared in 1987, 1995, and 2002. These Master Plans have been prepared on a 7 to 9-year cycle. Since the previous



Master Plan was prepared in 2002, a new Master Plan in 2011 will continue this pattern of updates or preparation of new Master Plans. This Master Plan will also reflect the new and evolving park administration. Mel Rapp was the park director in DeSoto for 9 years until he retired in 2007. The changing leadership has brought M. Renee Johnson to the position of Managing Director of Parks and Leisure Services. This Master Plan will reflect that leadership and collaboration with DeSoto public officials, volunteers, and citizens.

This Master Plan has taken the needs expressed by the citizens of DeSoto for park, recreation space, open-space and trails and established priorities and a framework for City staff to use in their long-range planning.

The City of DeSoto Parks and Leisure Services Department will be responsible for taking the information included in this Master Plan and implementing it over the next 5 years. This Master Plan will also provide direction for the next 15 years with updates, as required by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, every 5 years. For this Master Plan to function as a living document, annual reassessments are scheduled to evaluate accomplishments, and to reassess priorities.



components

As a part of the point scoring criteria for local park grant funding, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department requires that a community have a current park Master Plan in place. The minimum requirements established by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for a Master Plan must include the following components:

- **Introduction** – Discuss unit of government for which the plan is created and include economic data, demographics, population figures, growth patterns, and the government’s role in providing park and recreation opportunities.
- **Goals and Objectives** – Identify parks and recreation service goals and specific objectives on how each of the goals will be reached. State the time period of the Master Plan.
- **Plan Development Process** – Identify and prioritize needs, describe who prepared the Master Plan and when the planning process began, identify the planning committee utilized and how public input was received.
- **Area and Facility Concepts and Standards** – Establish local standards which are influenced by preferences and available economic and natural resources. Source of base data is provided in the *Park, Recreation, Open-space & Greenway Guidelines* published by the National Recreation & Park Association.
- **Inventory of Areas and Facilities** – Assess existing park, recreation, open-space and trails currently provided by the City as well as school and private facilities open to the public.
- **Needs Assessment and Identification** – Assess the parks and recreation needs using demand-based, standard-based and resource-based needs. Needs shall be clearly identified and methodology outlined for determining these needs.
- **Prioritization of Needs & Plan Implementation** – A priority list of needs should be ranked in order of importance and a time frame established for when these needs will be met. Areas of open-space acquisition and preservation must be identified on a map of the community. If renovation or redevelopment of existing facilities is identified as a need, this should be reflected in the prioritized needs. Resources must be identified for meeting the identified needs.
- **Illustrations, Maps and Surveys** – City-wide maps shall be included that support the master-planning process. Surveys, charts, graphics and photographs shall also be included to help explain and support the Master Plan.

