



News Release

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The City of DeSoto Information Technology Department Has Just Been Recognized by the 2016 Digital Cities Survey

DeSoto, TX., - November 10, 2016 The Center for Digital Government (CDG) today announced that the City of DeSoto is one of 10 cities nationwide in the under 75,000 population category being recognized for using technology to improve citizen services, enhance transparency and encourage citizen engagement.

“This year’s top digital cities are using technology to ensure citizens can meaningfully interact with city government more easily than in any other time in history,” said Todd Sander, executive director of the Center for Digital Government. “From open data portals to enhanced connectivity and mobile platforms, this year’s top-ranked cities are actively promoting transparency, encouraging citizen participation and making it easier for people to do business with government. Congratulations to the winners!”

This year the survey honors cities in five population classifications: 500,000 or more; 250,000 to 499,999; 125,000 to 249,999; 75,000 to 124, 999 and fewer than 75,000. DeSoto placed sixth out the ten cities in the fewer than 75,000 population category.

The City of DeSoto has made great strides to improve the way our residents interact with their city’s government. “DeSoto’s Digital Cities award is made possible by an organization-wide culture of innovation and creativity,” said Tom Figert, Director of Information

Technology for City of DeSoto. “We are the first city in our population category in the state since 2011 to receive this award. I’m very proud of the IT staff, the technical acumen of colleagues in other departments, and the expert guidance of our vendor partners. Together, we’re cultivating an environment of efficiency and productivity, expert support, and transparency that we think will serve our citizens well in the years to come.”

DeSoto was recognized for making strides in its transparency and Web presence that any large city would be envious of. Beginning with fiscal transparency, city officials have released a spending portal, making it simple for residents to identify exactly where their taxes go. DeSoto has been awarded for its commitment to transparency by the state comptroller, who designated the city a Platinum Member in 2014.

“Over the past six years, our ultimate goal has been to create an unprecedented level of financial transparency and technology that will significantly improve processes in an effort to enhance our public services,” said DeSoto City Manager Tarron Richardson, Ph.D. “I am extremely proud of the hard work, due diligence and dedication of our IT Department for continuously pursuing the latest and greatest innovations in technology which enabled our City to achieve this prestigious award.”

In addition to its commitment to transparency, DeSoto has taken the time and exerted the effort to provide many digital services online. One of the most innovative ways this has been realized is through its municipal e-court system. Starting in July, all citations issued to residents were accompanied by a QR code, which led the users to a virtual courtroom for arraignments through a municipal app. Throughout the year, the City’s tech administration has focused on mobile adoption and optimization. DeSoto offers three other apps: one for City services, another run by the police department, and a third that allows for easy submission of requests for service.

“I am ecstatic, but not surprised, that our IT Team has been named among the country’s Top Digital Cities in our population category by The Center for Digital Government,” said DeSoto Mayor Curtistene McCowan. “I commend our IT Team on its exemplary efforts to utilize metrics to analyze and evaluate DeSoto’s initiatives designed to improve the quality of life for our citizens. Congratulations on behalf of the City Council and the residents of our All America City!”

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DeSoto, Texas is a progressive community of more than 50,000 with a small-town feeling, rich in diversity and the cultural arts. Located just fifteen miles south of downtown Dallas in the southwest corner of Dallas County - DeSoto offers quality, affordable housing, friendly neighborhoods, high-performing schools, updated parks, restaurants and shopping. DeSoto is located fifteen miles south of downtown Dallas.