

## Water Treatment Plant Progress Report May-June 2021

The water treatment plant project has been divided into 3 separate construction projects.

DeSoto's water treatment plant project as a whole is 45% complete. A construction project of this magnitude is estimated to take 18-24 months. At our current progress rate we will be complete in just 12 months.

Prior to committing the City to a multi-million-dollar project, several years of feasibility studies, pilot studies and preliminary design were conducted by the City's Engineering firm, Financial Advisor as well as the Iowa DNR. Ultimately it was decided by the City Council to move forward with the design and construction of the new water treatment facility. Options that would **not** have been fiscally responsible as a result of these studies included; A permanent rural water connection, though this would have improved the water quality sooner, in the long run the residents of DeSoto would have seen a more substantial increase in their monthly bill for service. There was also a study to build a co-owned water treatment plant with our neighbor Van Meter, again this option was proven to not be in the communities' best interest. The studies took into account everything from water rates to growth in the community twenty to fifty years down the road. The studies were performed by highly credited professionals and State agencies and are a very trusted source for the best interest of the City of DeSoto. Despite what you may read on social media sites or hear on the streets from neighbors, the City Council of DeSoto has done an exemplary job of exhausting all resources and options to provide better quality of water for its residents. It is unfortunate that the timing of the overall project has seen some very unfortunate setbacks from locally spread mis-information to mis-managed leadership to a pandemic; there have been a lot of hurdles to leap over to get this project off the ground.

- A) **New Water Treatment Plant** consisting of pressure vessels to remove iron and manganese and Reverse Osmosis equipment to soften the water.
- B) **Water and Sewer Main infrastructure upgrades** to control the flow from the new water treatment plant to the towers as well as the waste by-product to the wastewater plant. As part of the infrastructure upgrades the City also decided to install an emergency water use connection to a rural water source. This will be used in a catastrophic event that would render the City's water supply unusable and serve as a source of supply during the deconstruction of the existing water plant.
- C) **Construct a new water well** to replace an existing well that is 10 years past its life expectancy and have the ability to produce more gallons per minute to serve the new treatment plant and accommodate the commercial and residential growth in the community.

Where are we today?

- The infrastructure upgrades are in the ground and complete. The Rural Water connection will be complete upon the arrival of the meter that is being provided by the Rural Water source. That part of the project is 99% complete.

- The new well has been installed and the very good news is that it will yield more water than originally expected meaning that future growth will not burden the new system. Project summary 95%, waiting until the treatment plant is ready for the connection of the new well.
- The New Water Treatment Plant is under construction. Due to the pandemic and several permitting delays the project did not officially start until January 2021. The substantial completion date is officially Mid November however we are continuing to have meetings with the contractors to hopefully move that to the first of October 2021.

The end is in site and the residents of DeSoto should be very proud of the work that has been done by the current Mayor and City Council members, the countless hours of meetings, phone calls and emails to ensure that the overall cost of this project remains within the budgeted 5.2 million dollars. If that number seems to be a ridiculous amount please spend your time studying surrounding areas and the expense that treatment facilities cost all tax payers. Look into the rates and what will be happening to rates over the next 10-15 years in other communities as they make changes to their systems that are also long overdue. The City's forethought in planning for this project should not go overlooked. The City has been planning to be financially prepared for this project since the erection of the New Water Tower in 2009, which was a DNR mandated project. Had it not been for some serious misguided interference and social media banter misinforming the general public this project would have been completed several years ago. We are a community. We are a growing community that has nothing but good things in the future to look forward to, from commercial to residential, parks and churches there is always positive change taking place. We do not appreciate negativity. Please understand and trust that everyone who has had the privilege to serve and continues to serve this community in all aspects has done so with nothing but the best interest of the community in mind.

My phone number is public, 515-208-0066 and is on 24-7. Please don't ever hesitate to give me a call and ask your questions, get the facts and real information. Please don't rely on the social media keyboard warriors to "break the story" when there is no real story to report. We know, the water quality is subpar, safe according to all regulatory agencies but subpar nonetheless. We have been and are working very hard to make that better and are almost there. I am happy to take you on a tour of the City and explain how the City's system of infrastructure works from inside out.

The new wastewater facility, a non-funded federally mandated project, is also something that you should know about as it is one of the most discussed facilities in the Midwest and even all the way to Canada due to the effort that was put forth by the same engineers, mayor, council members and staff that have worked so hard on the water treatment plant project. Due to its very low cost, comparable to other options, small footprint and affordability to operate, the magazine WPO (Water Plant Operators, a National magazine) is featuring DeSoto's Plant in an upcoming publication. Feel free to call me and set up a time for a tour if you're interested.

In closing, I certainly hope this answers most of the questions that have been bouncing around the social media sites and please do get involved, get educated and get to the right source when you have questions.

Sincerely,

Dan Van Langen

Public Works Director

*Proudly Serving DeSoto for over 16 years!*

