

# Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE November 2, 2018

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the Dallas City Council

SUBJECT Proposed Program for the 86<sup>th</sup> Session of the Texas Legislature

On Tuesday, November 6, 2018, the City Council will be briefed on the Proposed Program of the 86<sup>th</sup> Session of the Texas Legislature. I will be presenting the briefing along with Clifford Sparks, City Attorney's Office - State Legislative Director. The materials are attached for you review.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Christopher J. Caso'.

**Christopher J. Caso**  
Interim City Attorney

C: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager  
Chris Caso, City Attorney (I)  
Carol A. Smith, City Auditor (I)  
Billierae Johnson, City Secretary  
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge  
Kimberly Bizzor Tolbert, Chief of Staff to the City Manager

Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager  
Jon Fortune, Assistant City Manager  
Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager  
Nadia Chandler Hardy, Assistant City Manager and Chief Resilience Officer  
M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer  
Directors and Assistant Directors

# **Proposed Program for the 86<sup>th</sup> Session of the Texas Legislature**

**City Council Briefing**

**November 6, 2018**

**Christopher J. Caso  
Interim City Attorney**

**Clifford Sparks, City  
Attorney's Office - State  
Legislative Director**



# PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR THE 86TH SESSION OF THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE



City of Dallas



## GENERAL PRINCIPLES: PLAYING DEFENSE

As the largest city in North Texas, Dallas is responsible for providing high quality and reliable services to its 1.3 million residents while creating policies that grow the local economy. The City has cultivated a top-tier standard of living for its residents in addition to a robust and diversified economy due to its fiscal stewardship and local policies.

Dallas is proud to share a few of its many accomplishments. The City of Dallas:

- Continues to maintain an unemployment rate lower than the state of Texas and the U.S.
- Ranks in the top ten for U.S. cities with high-paying jobs and low cost of living.
- Leads contributions to the nation's 4th largest MSA in terms of real GDP.
- Experienced the greatest population increase for a metropolitan area in the U.S. in 2017 – attracting large numbers from both international and domestic migration.
- Reduced the violent crime rate significantly over the past 10 years.
- Dedicated 100 percent of its property taxes and almost 30 percent of sales tax to public safety, while increasing pay for public safety officials to recruit and retain talent.

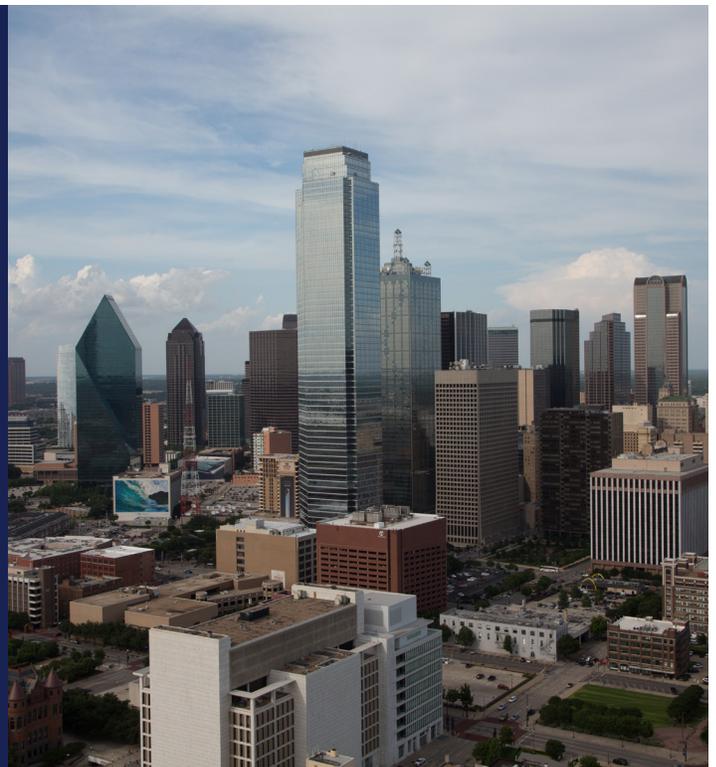
*The City of Dallas will oppose any legislation that will preempt its ability to serve its constituents or limit the City's ability to be a strong fiscal steward.*

### PROTECTING LOCAL DEMOCRACY

The City of Dallas does not support any legislation that will preempt its ability to serve the nuanced needs of its residents. The City of Dallas has proven through its continued economic and population growth that it is well equipped to meet the needs of the community and effectively solve problems.

### FISCAL STEWARDSHIP

The City of Dallas does not support any legislation that will limit the City's ability to be a strong fiscal steward. The City of Dallas works diligently to implement fiscally sound and responsible budgets to provide services for the protection, safety, and welfare of its residents.





## CITY OF DALLAS LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

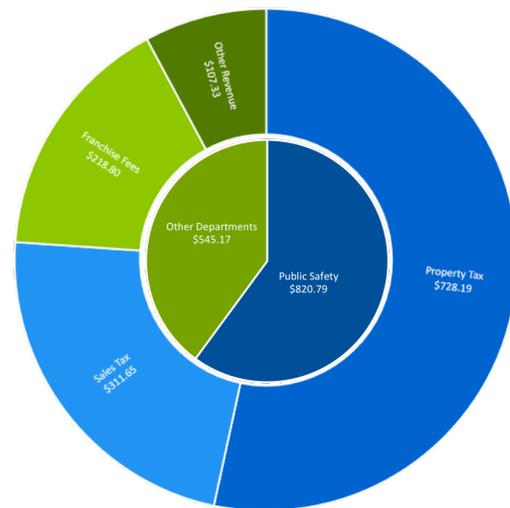
During the 86th Legislative Session, the City of Dallas will pursue and support legislation that reinforces the City's discretion to meet the needs of its residents and will defend against legislation that inhibits or restrains its local autonomy.

### Public Safety

City residents expect and deserve to be safe and secure where they live, work, and play. As one of the largest cities in the State of Texas, the City of Dallas supports a police force of approximately 3,000 uniformed officers. In addition, the FY 2018-19 adopted budget includes 1,942 firefighters. Public safety personnel totals nearly 60 percent of the General Fund budget, including 100 percent of the property tax collected within City limits and almost 30 percent of the sales tax revenue.

Investment in public safety will increase in fiscal year 2018-2019 with increased wages for first responders, recruitment and retention funding to help stabilize police and fire staffing, and increased pension contributions.

**General Fund Expense and Revenue, FY 2018-19 Adopted Budget**



*The City of Dallas will support legislation that enhances its ability to protect and serve its citizenry, such as opportunities to harness state funding for local law enforcement and strategies for safer and more transparent policing.*

### TEXAS TASK FORCE 2

During the 85th Session, the City of Dallas successfully advocated for \$2 million in sustainment funding for Texas Task Force 2. Texas Task Force 2 is a regional urban search and rescue team that deploys to communities that are impacted by catastrophic events. Texas Task Force 2 has recently been deployed in the recovery efforts following Hurricane Harvey and other natural disasters. In the 86th Session, the City of Dallas will continue to advocate for sustainment funding for Texas Task Force 2.



## Economic Vitality

The City of Dallas continues to foster and sustain one of the most diverse and robust economies in Texas and the U.S. The City is home to 16 Fortune 500 companies and over 250 corporate headquarters. In 2018, Dallas was ranked third in the nation for the number of corporate relocations and expansions. Businesses benefit from the business-friendly climate, with the cost of doing business 4 percent lower in Dallas than the national average.

The City of Dallas labor force participation rate continues to be well above the nation's, and for the past 3 years, Dallas has maintained an unemployment rate lower than the state of Texas and the U.S. A diverse economy offers many opportunities for dual profession families and assures a strong pool of talent for area businesses.

*The City of Dallas will support legislation that acknowledges its responsible economic stewardship and encourages autonomy when passing policies that help the local economy thrive. Specifically, the City will support legislation that entrusts discretion over the use of local fees, taxes, and policy tools that will continue to foster a strong economic climate.*





## Transportation and Infrastructure

The City of Dallas is nationally recognized for its commitment to safe and reliable City infrastructure as well as diverse transportation options.

City residents have access to multiple transportation options including travel by car, bus, plane, and light rail. The City's commitment to increase investment in various transit options such as bike lanes and streetcars will improve City air quality and help the city become more sustainable.

Improving local infrastructure remains a top priority for the City of Dallas and in November 2017, Dallas voters approved a \$1.05 billion bond program, which addresses many major infrastructure needs, including 1,030 transportation and street projects.

*The City of Dallas will support legislation that maintains and improves City infrastructure, increases funding, and diversifies resident transportation options across transit modes.*

## Water and Environmental Quality

The City of Dallas prioritizes protecting and improving the local environment. Because of smart and effective conservation efforts beginning in the 1950's, the City has enough water supplies to meet today's demand, providing service to roughly 2.6 million people in Dallas and 27 nearby communities.

The City continues to pursue policies that protect the local environment including a cutting-edge Environmental Management System (EMS), winning national awards for recycling, and creating and maintaining programs for residents and businesses to improve their environmental efforts.

*The City of Dallas will support legislation that preserves the City's water supply, storage options, promotes viable projects in the statewide water plan and ensures that these projects are implemented in a way that provides Dallas customers with reliable and reasonably priced water. The City will continue to ardently protect the air quality of the City and will support legislation that protects and improves the overall environment for City residents.*



## Housing and Mental Health

Effectively meeting the mental health and housing needs of residents is pivotal to the success and prosperity of the community and the City. In 2018, the City of Dallas passed its first-ever comprehensive housing policy. The data-driven and locally informed policy encompasses three main goals: to create and maintain affordable housing throughout Dallas, promote greater fair housing choices, and overcome patterns of segregation and concentrations of poverty through incentives and requirements.

The City continues to lead in innovative and effective solutions to meet the mental health needs of its citizens. The Rapid Integrated Group Healthcare Team (RIGHT) Care program is a specifically trained and equipped response team dispatched for behavioral emergencies. Since its launch in 2018, ambulance calls for mental health services in southern Dallas have decreased by 23 percent.

*The City will support legislation that protects and improves the mental health and housing options of City residents, including continued home ownership for current and future residents, reducing homelessness, increasing mental health resources, and expanding strategies to affordable housing options for its growing population.*





## Parks and Recreation

The City provides residents access to a variety of lakes, trails, and city parks. The Dallas Park System is one of the largest municipal park systems in the nation with 397 parks totaling over 20,118 acres of developed and undeveloped parkland. Access to parks across Dallas provides residents a high quality of life through recreation activities, health and wellness programs, and social equity programs.

*The City of Dallas will support legislation that improves access and funding availability to parks and recreational opportunities.*

## Arts and Culture

Arts and culture are economic drivers of the City and contribute to the high quality of life for Dallas residents. The City of Dallas has the largest urban arts district in the country and is home to citizens from over 60 countries around the world, each serving to enrich the City's cultural landscape.

*The City of Dallas will support legislation that adds to the existing arts and cultural vibrancy of the community.*





## Social Equity

**The City of Dallas complies with all federal and state immigration laws.**

The City of Dallas implements strategies to advance equity and increase economic mobility for vulnerable and marginalized residents. Dallas is a participating city in the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities program, which is dedicated to helping cities become resilient to the economic, social, and environmental challenges that are a part of the 21st century.

The City of Dallas strives to be a welcoming city for all. In 2017, the City established the Office of Welcoming Communities and Immigrant Affairs to bridge the space between newcomers and existing Dallas residents, to find common ground, foster informed understanding, and promote shared leadership.

The City's population continues to grow with almost 25 percent of residents being foreign born. Immigrants make up almost 32 percent of the employed labor force of the Dallas-metro area and they play a critical role in several key industries including accounting for almost 70 percent of construction workers.

Their work contributes directly to the economic strength of the City, earning \$7.9 billion and contributing \$591.1 million to state and local taxes in 2016.

The City of Dallas is proud of its diversity and committed to ensuring that residents are protected regardless of race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. The City is recognized by the Human Rights Campaign for its leadership in non-discrimination protections in employment, housing, and public accommodations.

*The City of Dallas will support legislation that enables it to effectively promote the successful inclusion of immigrants into the social and economic fabric of the Dallas community. Dallas recognizes its cultural diversity as a strength and will support legislation that fosters an inclusive vision of Texas for all residents. The City of Dallas will oppose any legislation that discriminates against community members and inhibits the future growth of the City.*





## Collaborative Efforts

The City of Dallas is home to one of the most diverse, economically robust, and highly-educated populations in Texas. The opportunity for productive collaboration drives the City's prosperity. The City of Dallas will continue to foster and pursue collaboration with organizations such as the Texas Municipal League, North Texas Commission, Dallas Regional Mobility Commission, Regional Transportation Council, North Central Texas Council of Governments, other governmental bodies, chambers of commerce, transportation agencies, higher education institutions, social sector leaders, and City commissions and task forces, to further its legislative agenda. Collaboration with these entities enables the City to leverage its resources in a more inclusive, strategic, and impactful manner. The City of Dallas will utilize these relationships to successfully promote its legislative agenda.



## **List of Councilmember Requested Legislative Items**

1. Rental abatement while landlord repairs unit (CM Atkins)
2. 25 cent claw back of state sales tax to generate public safety dollars (CM Callahan)
3. Homestead preservation of Fair Park (CM Felder)
4. Tent cities under TX DOT bridges (CM Felder)
5. Reporting of Class C domestic violence convictions (CM Gates)
6. Require appraisal districts to share data (CM Gates)
7. Anti-discrimination provisions for survivors of domestic violence or sexual violence (CM Kingston)
8. Anti- donation exception for affordable housing (CM Kingston)
9. Behavioral and mental healthcare funding (CM Kingston)
10. Comprehensive urban air monitoring (CM Kingston)
11. Driving while license invalid/ Driving without a license reform (CM Kingston)
12. Full Day Pre K (CM Kingston)
13. Handgun free local government (CM Kingston)
14. Local alcohol permits (CM Kingston)
15. Marijuana legalization (CM Kingston)
16. Protecting municipalities' ability to implement earned paid sick time ordinance (CM Kingston)
17. SB 4 Repeal (CM Kingston)
18. Statute of Repose (CM Kingston)
19. Transportation transit funding (authorizing the use of TXDOT funds for public transportation and non-automotive transportation) (CM Kingston)
20. Urban drilling regulations (CM Kingston)
21. Dissolving DHA (CM Kleinman)
22. Raise minimum homestead exemption to \$100,000 to encourage home ownership (CM Kleinman)
23. Maximize mental health resources (CM McGough)
24. Maximize transportation tools especially managed toll lanes (CM McGough)
25. School safety funding (CM McGough)
26. Smart City Growth (CM McGough)
27. State study for gas pipes (CM Narvaez)