

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE September 11, 2026

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Update: Opportunity Zones 2.0**

I am proud to report that Dallas has achieved an exceptional result in the next round of the federal Opportunity Zone program, positioning 44 areas across the city to potentially attract new private investment, support economic growth, and create new opportunities in communities where additional investment can make a meaningful difference.

Background and Strategy

Opportunity Zones are federally designated areas where qualifying investments can receive federal tax benefits intended to encourage long-term private investment.

The City of Dallas took a deliberate, strategic, and collaborative approach to developing nominations of census tracts for potential designation.

Following detailed briefings and discussions at the [April 6, 2026](#) and [May 4, 2026](#) Economic Development Committee meetings, at the [June 1, 2026 Economic Development Committee meeting](#) the Committee approved 42 census tracts for nomination to the Economic Development & Tourism Office within the Governor's Office for possible designation as Opportunity Zones pursuant to the Opportunity Zone Program (Opportunity Zone 2.0) as administered by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

The Office of Economic Development then prepared and submitted a detailed nomination package for all 42 tracts to the Governor's Office by the June 26 deadline. The City's process went beyond simply identifying eligible areas. The City's recommendations were based on a combination of eligibility, alignment with Dallas' economic development priorities and plans, community and stakeholder support, and the potential for near-term investment and development.

That strategic approach produced an outstanding result.

On September 4, 2026, Governor Greg Abbott's Office submitted 605 Texas census tracts to the U.S. Department of the Treasury to be considered for formal designation as Opportunity Zones. **All 42 tracts nominated by the City of Dallas were included, and the Governor's Office also added two additional Dallas tracts, bringing the citywide total to 44.**

A map of the 44 nominated census tracts located in Dallas is attached as **Exhibit A**. The map and official list of submitted census tracts in Texas can be found [here](#).

That is a particularly strong result given the level of competition. Statewide, more than 1,200 tracts were proposed by more than 175 economic development organizations and county judges representing 114 counties.

Dallas' performance is even more notable when compared with the original Opportunity Zone program in 2018. In that first round, the City submitted 62 census tracts, but only 15 were ultimately included in the Governor's submission that year. The 2018 nomination program did not have formal scoring criteria, and Texas' nominations focused on coastal areas impacted by Hurricane Harvey.

In other words, while Dallas submitted fewer tracts than it did in 2018, its statewide Opportunity Zone nominations tripled.

A Collaborative Effort

This success is the result of a coordinated effort involving City Council members, community and business stakeholders, and the Office of Economic Development.

Each played an important role in a thorough and collaborative evaluation of the nominated areas based on eligibility, local support (alignment with City priorities, plans, and incentive programs), and project viability (shovel-readiness).

Dallas' successful outcome reflects the strength of the City's targeted approach and the quality of the opportunities identified through the local nomination process. Governor Greg Abbott's nominations also validate the work of the Office of Economic Development and the Economic Development Committee to ensure that each nominated census tract had a strong data-driven argument tied to the new state scoring matrix.

I would like to specifically recognize and thank Deputy Director Heather Lepeska, Manager Gabriela Castillo, Coordinator Jai-W Hayes-Jackson, and Coordinator Ridvan Kirimli in the Office of Economic Development for their hard work and leadership throughout the nomination process.

What Happens Next

The Governor's submission is now with the U.S. Department of the Treasury for final review and official certification. The U.S. Department of the Treasury is expected to complete the certification process by November 28, 2026, with the new Opportunity Zone designations taking effect January 1, 2027 and remaining in effect through the end of 2036.

Should you have any questions, please contact Kevin Spath, Director, Office of Economic Development, at (214) 670-1691 or Kevin.Spath@dallas.gov.

DATE September 11, 2026
SUBJECT **Update: Opportunity Zones 2.0**
PAGE **Page 3 of 3**

Service First, Now!



Robin Bentley
Assistant City Manager

C:

Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, City Manager
Bertram Vandenberg, City Attorney (I)
Rory Galter, City Auditor (I)
Biliera Johnson, City Secretary
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge
Baron Eliason, Inspector General (I)
Dominique Artis, Chief of Public Safety
Dev Rastogi, Assistant City Manager

M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira, Assistant City Manager
Alina Ciocan, Assistant City Manager
Robin Bentley, Assistant City Manager
Jack Ireland, Chief Financial Officer
Ahmad Goree, Chief of Staff to the City Manager
John Johnson, Chief of Real Estate
Directors and Assistant Directors

Dallas Census Tracts Nominated by Governor's Office for OZ 2.0

Exhibit A

Disclaimer: This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

