



# PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR THE 85TH SESSION OF THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE

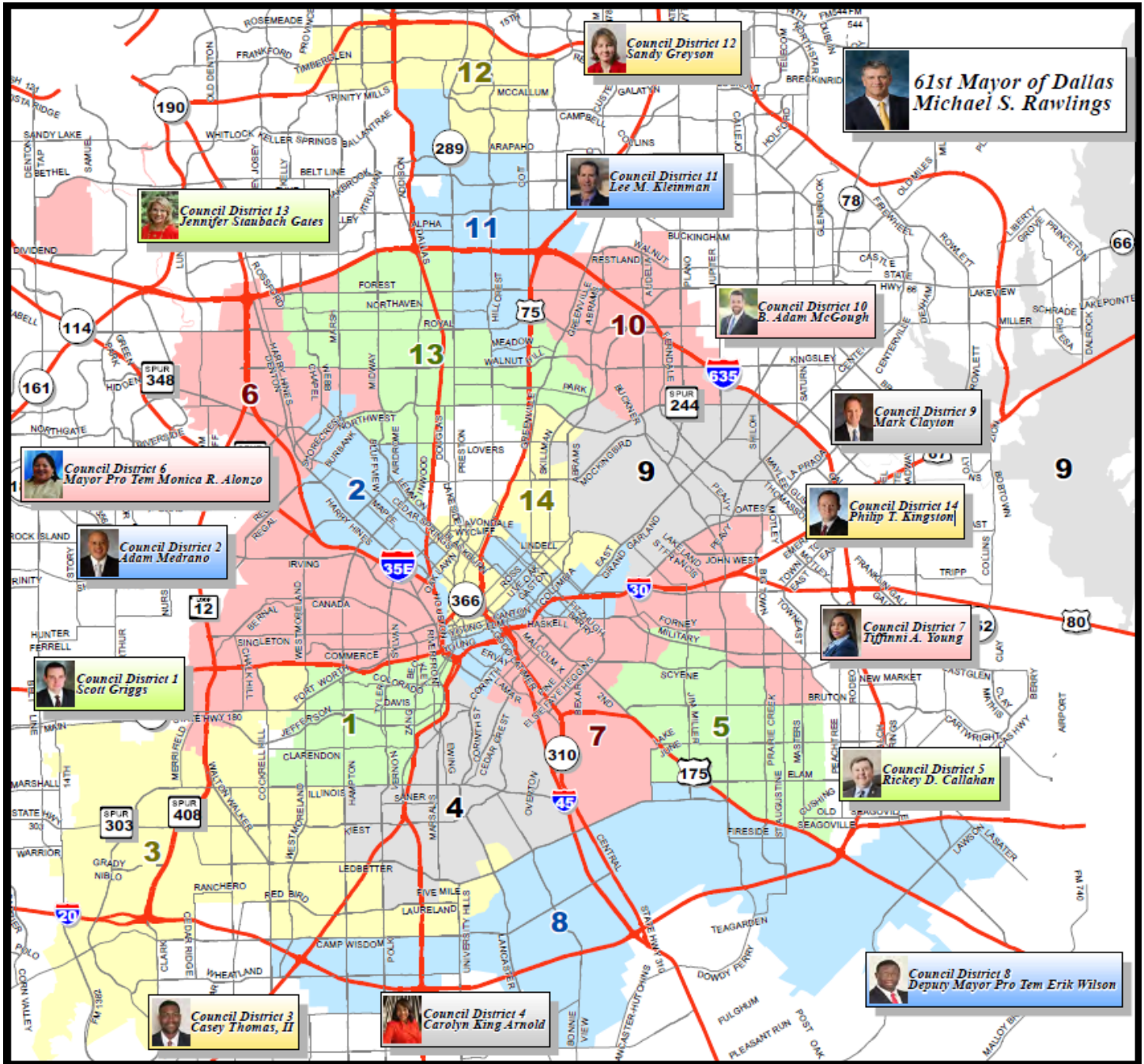
As approved by the Dallas City Council October 26, 2016

Resolution # 161738



City of Dallas

# Mayor and City Council 2015-2017





## Mayor and City Council 2015-2017

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COUNCIL CHAMBER

161738

October 26, 2016

**WHEREAS**, the 85<sup>th</sup> Session of the Texas Legislature will convene in January 2017; and,

**WHEREAS**, many legislative issues affecting local government will be considered; and,

**WHEREAS**, the City of Dallas has historically adopted a legislative program for consideration by the Legislature;

**NOW, THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DALLAS:**

**SECTION 1.** That the City of Dallas Legislative Program for the 85<sup>th</sup> Session of the Texas Legislature is adopted.

**SECTION 2.** That the City Attorney is directed to communicate the items included in the state legislative program to members of the Texas Legislature.

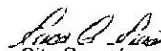
**SECTION 3.** That the City Attorney is directed to support legislation that upholds the City of Dallas' home-rule authority, as well as oppose legislation that diminishes resources or home-rule authority.

**SECTION 4.** That for those issues that arise during or prior to the Session for which there is no official City position and there is insufficient time to convene a meeting of the Legislative Ad Hoc Committee or the City Council, the Chair of the Legislative Ad Hoc Committee is authorized to represent and protect the interests of the City.

**SECTION 5.** That this resolution shall take effect immediately from and after its passage in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the City of Dallas and it is accordingly so resolved.

APPROVED BY  
CITY COUNCIL

OCT 26 2016

  
City Secretary



## GENERAL PRINCIPLES: PLAYING DEFENSE

As the largest city in North Texas, Dallas is responsible for providing high quality services to its residents while creating policies that work to grow the local economy. Over the years, the City's judicious planning and fiscal responsibility have fostered a top-tier standard of living for its residents in addition to consistent regional economic growth.

The City of Dallas provides its residents with high quality services which supports our growing economy. Recently, Dallas has been able to accomplish the following:

- Hold an unemployment rate lower than the state of Texas for the past two years.
- Maintain a lower cost of living than major U.S. cities including Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and New York.

- Lead contributions to the nation's 4th largest MSA in terms of real GDP.
- Reduce the violent crime rate significantly over the past 10 years.
- Lower the City's debt obligations while providing necessary capital for community and economic development.
- Reduce the 2016-17 total budget by 1.53% while bolstering needed residential services such as police, fire, and street maintenance.

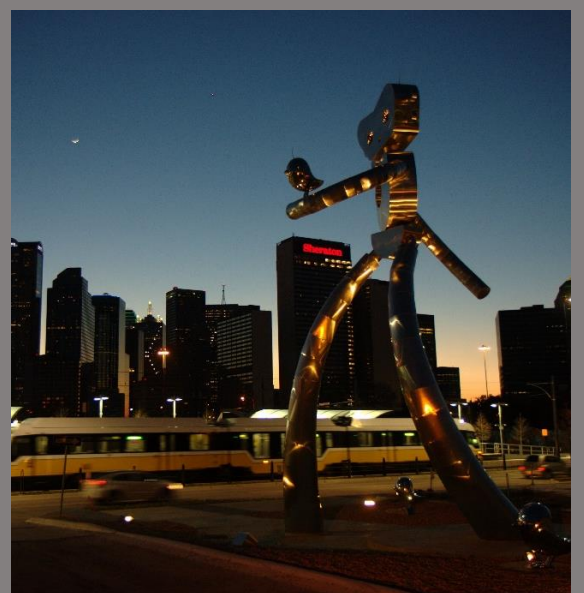
Based on its past successes and desire for continued prosperity, **Dallas does not support any legislation that will preempt its ability to serve its constituents or limit the City's ability to be a strong fiscal steward.**

### PREEMPTION

The City of Dallas opposes any legislation that hinders the City's ability to meet the diverse and nuanced needs of its residents. As north Texas' most populous and economically robust city, Dallas strives to provide the best service for its residents. The City of Dallas has proven that its local officials are well-equipped to serve its constituents.

### DEFEND FISCAL CONTROL

The City of Dallas opposes any legislation that would limit the City's ability to be a strong fiscal steward. Dallas' tax base is continuously subject to external threats such as economic recessions, unfunded state and federal mandates, and natural disasters. The City's funding structure must maintain fiscal control to meet the needs of its residents.





## DALLAS PRIORITY ISSUE: PENSION AND PAY REFERENDUM

The City of Dallas recognizes the challenges related to the Police and Fire Pension and the pay referendum lawsuit. Legislative resources will be utilized to find solutions to these fiscal issues as they can have significant financial consequences.

The Police and Fire Pension has an estimated \$3.5 billion of unfunded liability. This represents an actuarial funding percentage of about 45% at the end of 2015, a drop from 64% at the end of 2014. Solving the Police and Fire Pension's challenges will require commitment and collaboration from all involved parties including the City, the contributing members, the retired members and the Legislature. The City will continue its work with the Police and Fire Pension Fund to develop a solution to present to the State of Texas.



Additionally, the 1979 pay referendum lawsuit poses a potential \$2 billion jury verdict that could have damaging fiscal impacts on the City if it is not resolved. By reconfirming sovereign immunity, the City can avoid the harmful impacts that the pay referendum poses to its financial health. This legislative session, the City of Dallas will work diligently to resolve the pension and pay referendum challenges.

## DALLAS SPECIFIC ITEMS

In addition to the uniform pension and pay referendum items, the City of Dallas has specific legislative requests it will pursue during the 85<sup>th</sup> legislative session.



## PUBLIC SAFETY

### INCLUDE TEXAS TASK FORCE 2 IN STATEWIDE PLAN

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 is comprised of highly trained rescue personnel capable of operating in hazardous environments. In the 85th session, the City of Dallas will work in conjunction with the Texas Engineering Extension Service and the Texas Department of Emergency Management to secure \$2 million to sustain the operational capabilities of Texas Task Force 2 as a part of a statewide network of regional teams.

### PUBLIC SAFETY RESOURCES

Following the tragic events of July 7, it is critically important that the City equips its men and women in uniform with all of the tools they need to safely protect the residents of Dallas. The Dallas Police Department will work with the State of Texas and other organizations in order to increase resources to train, protect and support community policing and de-escalation efforts.

### FACILITATE EFFORTS TO ADDRESS PROSTITUTION AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The City of Dallas strives to eliminate prostitution and human trafficking through innovative administrative actions and ordinances. The City supports legislation that will assist with these local efforts.

### ADDRESS ANIMAL CONTROL ISSUES

The increased occurrence of harmful animal-related incidents necessitates the City to look towards potential state legislative solutions.





## HOMELESSNESS, MENTAL HEALTH, PRISONER REENTRY

The City of Dallas will seek legislation to facilitate a coordinated regional effort to address homelessness.

Through pursuing funding opportunities, utilizing available facilities and supporting programs, the City will work with its partners to help remediate the impacts of homelessness.

In addition, the City will pursue funds and program support to address mental health and prisoner reentry.



## WATER, INFRASTRUCTURE, ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORTATION

### PRESERVE WATER SUPPLY AND STORAGE OPTIONS

Dallas will work to ensure that projects in the statewide water plan continue to be viable and that no further hurdles are created which would make it more difficult to implement the statewide water plan and provide customers with reliable and reasonably priced water. The City of Dallas will support legislation to preserve its water supply and storage options.

### IMPROVE AIR QUALITY COMPLIANCE

The City of Dallas has historically been an ardent supporter of the environment. Exemplifying its support, the Dallas City Council unanimously approved a resolution calling on the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to support stronger ozone pollution standards. The City of Dallas will support legislation that protects its air to advance the wellbeing of its citizenry and create robust economic growth.

### PROTECT TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

In conjunction with other cities and organizations, Dallas will continue to protect multi-modal options for transportation including high speed rail, light rail, streetcars, surface roads, and pedestrian/bicycle trails. Dallas will encourage robust funding options that maintain flexibility for projects.



## EFFICIENT GOVERNMENT

### DAWSON JAIL

The City of Dallas supports legislation that will allow for the purchase or lease of Dawson Jail at below market value for public purpose use as designated by the Dallas City Council.

### MANDATE PROPERTY SALES PRICE DISCLOSURE

The inability for appraisers to view property sales information prevents them from assessing properties at their fair market value. By not having enough tools to assess fair market value, appraisers may not be valuing property fairly creating an imbalanced burden on commercial and residential properties. The City of Dallas will seek legislation for mandatory sales price disclosure of properties.

### SUPPORT HOMEOWNERSHIP

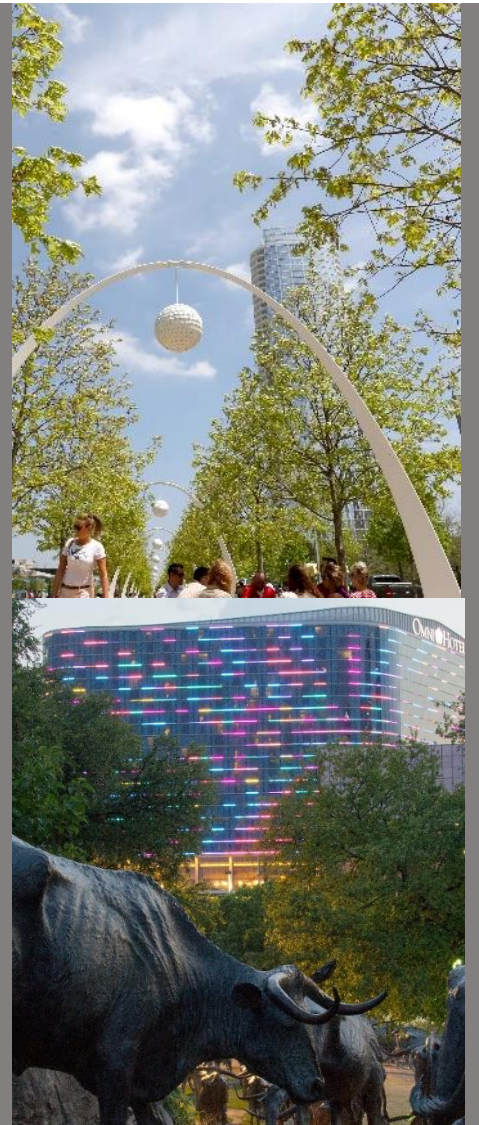
The City of Dallas supports legislation that promotes homeownership opportunities.

### REMOVE LIMITATION ON ALCOHOL SALES IN PUBLIC FACILITIES

Limitations in State statutes inhibit Dallas' utilization of public facilities for the sale of alcohol. The City will seek opportunities to remove limitations on alcohol sales in public facilities – similar to legislation that benefits AT&T stadium and Globe Life Park.

### ADDRESS MOBILE NOISE SOURCES

In many areas throughout the city, cars and motorcycles are disrupting communities due to additional upgrades done to their vehicles, such as custom made mufflers and speakers which significantly increase noise. The City of Dallas seeks to lower the decibel threshold in and on mobile vehicles. This threshold would be tested during state vehicle inspection.





## COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

In the past, the City of Dallas has worked with organizations such as the Texas Municipal League, North Texas Commission, Dallas Regional Mobility Commission, Regional Transportation Council, North Central Texas Council of Governments, Dallas Regional Chamber, and City commissions and task forces, to further its legislative agenda. By collaborating with these entities, the City can leverage its resources in a more inclusive and impactful manner. For the 85<sup>th</sup> legislative session, the City of Dallas intends to utilize these relationships to successfully promote its legislative agenda.







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