



**City of Dallas**

Citizen Homelessness Commission  
2021 Annual Report

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission and Purpose of the Commission.....	3
Structure and Composition of the Commission.....	4
Overview of 2021 Activities.....	5
Subcommittee Overview.....	8
Ongoing Education.....	8
Voting/ Action Items .....	9
OHS Program Briefings.....	9
2021 Citizen Homelessness Commission Membership.....	11

## **Mission and Purpose**

The Citizen Homelessness Commission is an advisory body established by the Dallas City Council for the purpose of assuring participation from, and inclusion of, all stakeholders, including those with past or present experience with homelessness, in order to develop policy recommendations to ensure alignment of city services with regional services to enhance the efficiency, quality and effectiveness of the community-wide response to homelessness. (Dallas City Code §2-147)

## **Duties and Functions**

- Advise the City Manager and the City Council on issues affecting homelessness.
- Assist the City in evaluating new and existing programs.
- Coordinate with other local and regional bodies addressing homelessness.
- Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the City Manager or City Council. (City Code §2-149)

## **Guiding Principles**

*All Citizens Must Have a Voice.* The Commission provides an avenue through which all citizens affected by homelessness have an opportunity to have input into the development of the City's homelessness policies and programs. This includes programs and policies that directly benefit persons experiencing homelessness, while having due regard for the legitimate concerns of other Dallas citizens, including businesses and homeowners, and have a positive impact on the City of Dallas as a whole, in terms of quality of life, health and safety, and costs incurred.

*Best Practices.* The Commission seeks to inform itself regarding available data and best practices that have been developed in other communities in making its recommendations and evaluating new and existing programs.

*Diverse Populations.* The Commission recognizes that the City's policies and programs must take into account the varying needs of specific homeless subpopulations, including families with children, single mothers, couples, veterans, older adults (62+), unaccompanied youth and children, formerly incarcerated persons, LGBTQ persons, and persons with disabilities, significant medical needs, mental health issues and substance use disorders.

*Community-Wide Cooperation.* The Commission is guided by the principle that homelessness is a multi-faceted and complex issue that must be addressed with open and ongoing communication, within a coordinated, community-wide effort, into plans of action that assign mutually reinforcing activities with consistent metrics for assessing outcomes and ensuring accountability.

## **Structure and Composition of the Commission**

Pursuant to Section 2-148 of the Dallas City Code, as amended, the Commission consists of 15 members including the Chair, appointed by the Mayor, and one member appointed by each of the other 14 members of the City Council. The City Council appoints a Vice Chair from among those members. Two members of the Commission must have past or present experience as homeless persons, and at least one member must present a faith-based organization. Several members resigned from the commission during 2021 for various reasons, and there were new appointments as a result of a new City Council term that began in June 2021. As a result, the Commission currently has 13 members and does not satisfy the composition requirements mentioned above. The terms of the current Commissioners end on September 30, 2023.

David King, who was initially Vice Chair during 2019-21 term, was appointed by Councilmember Tennell Atkins, and serves as Chair of the Commission, after Mayor Eric Johnson's Chair appointment resigned in the Summer of 2020. Letitia Owens, who was appointed to the Commission by Councilmember Casey Thomas II, was approved by the City Council on December 2, 2019 to serve as Vice Chair. Vice Chair Owens replaced David King as Vice Chair.

The Commission receives staff support from the City's Office of Homeless Solutions (OHS) and works closely with OHS on the development and evaluation of proposals for consideration by City Council. Christine Crossley assumed the position of Director of OHS in February 2021, replacing Interim Director Kevin Oden, who has since transferred to the Integrated Public Safety Solutions Office. The Commission would like to genuinely thank Mr. Oden for his work as OHS Interim Director, as his background in emergency management was instrumental in managing the ongoing challenges of the Coronavirus pandemic, as it relates to persons experiencing homelessness. The OHS staff most actively involved with the Commission are Renita Griggs, Agenda Specialist; Gloria Sandoval, Program Administrator; Latrice Johnson, Executive Assistant to the Director. The Commission would like to extend our gratitude to OHS Staff who continue to offer support.

## Overview of 2021 Activities

Calendar year 2021 was once again challenged by the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. Highlights of Commission activities are listed below, including an update on the OHS Four-Track Homeless Strategy Plan, Subcommittees, Educational Presentations, OHS Briefings, and Voting/ Action Items. Due to the Pandemic, limited work was performed in the Subcommittees, which has previously been the avenue wherein the Commission accomplishes the bulk of its work.

### Overview

- **OHS Four-Track Homeless Strategy Plan:** The Commission continued to work with the Office of Homeless Solutions (OHS) on the Four-Track Homeless Strategy Plan, which began in August 2018, under OHS Director Monica Hardman.
  - **Track 1:** Expand capacity of existing shelter beds through contractual pay-to-stay program
    - “Pay-to-Stay” Program operated by The Bridge Steps, in conjunction with the City of Dallas. Ongoing, implemented October 2018.
    - Hotel sheltering at Love Field Inn and Wyndham Hotel
  - **Track 2:** Establishment of inclement weather shelter facilities on scattered-site basis.
    - Inclement Weather Sheltering ordinances codified in November 2020 in the Dallas Development Code: creation of a new Chapter 45, and amendment of Chapter 51A.
      - Congregant IWS continues to only be available within the greater downtown area and is underutilized across the city in a manner that serves homeless where needs are unmet.
    - KBHCCD IWS implemented during February 2021 Winter Storm
  - **Track 3:** Landlord-subsidized leasing programs
    - Ongoing: “A Way Home” Landlord Subsidy program, operated by CitySquare and Family Gateway.
    - Rapid Rehousing Initiative Oct 2020 – Nov 2022
    - **Track 4:** New developments for permanent housing with wrap-around services.
    - Property management, operations, and supportive services by CitySquare for supporting individuals at Hotel Miramar; and by FamilyGateway supporting families at Candlewood.
    - Dallas R.E.A.L. Time Rapid Rehousing program
- The Commission assisted with budget development for the FY21/22 HUD Consolidated Plan, in continuance of recommendations that the Commission established in June 2019, by the Coordination and Strategic Planning Subcommittee. The grants under advisement include Community Development Block Grant

(CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA). In addition to funds made available through the Coronavirus Relief and CARES Act in 2020, this fiscal year included supplementary federal funding provided through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). (February, August)

- The Commission voted in support of renewing CitySquare’s contract for operation of the *Dallas Connector*, a transportation system for individuals experiencing homelessness. Plans for the *Dallas Connector* were initially developed by the Commission in 2019, through work done by the Short-Term Solutions Subcommittee. A new Request For Proposal (RFP) for transportation for individuals experiencing homelessness was presented in October. (March Special-Called Meeting, October)
- The Commission conducted a vote for the Record in support of grant renewal for the Continuum of Care (CoC) Shelter-Plus Care Program. (March Special-Called Meeting)
- The Commission provided feedback on the core components included within the Request For Competitive Sealed Proposals (RFCSP) for Candlewood and Hotel Miramar supportive housing projects, established in 2020 through Coronavirus Relief, CARES Act, and City of Dallas Proposition J Bond money. These core components include property management, operations, and supportive services serving families and individuals at Candlewood and Hotel Miramar, respectively. The Commission recommended contract authorization to the responsive Proposers of the RFCSP accordingly: to CitySquare in the amount of \$3,291,666, for supporting individuals at Hotel Miramar, and to Family Gateway in the amount of \$2,911,856, for supporting families at Candlewood. (April, June Special-Called Meeting No. 2)
- The Commission evaluated and provided feedback on public education and outreach related to street feeding and panhandling initiatives. The Panhandling Deflection Pilot Program utilizes a 311-based Street Outreach Team to initiate a multiple-department response that holistically addresses an integrated, data-driven approach, avoiding a resort to traditional law enforcement. (May, December)
- The Commission resumed discussions related to Inclement Weather Shelter operations, which continues to challenge the City during the uncertainty of the Coronavirus pandemic. Currently, OHS has authorized IWS operations in a manner different than outlined within Dallas Development Code ordinances codified in November 2020 (Chapters 45 and 51A). Due to this action, there are no inclement weather sheltering options for persons experiencing homelessness outside the greater downtown area. The Commission supports actions that provide solutions for persons experiencing homelessness within areas of unmet needs, especially during times of inclement weather. (May)
- The Commission voted to recommend City Council contract authorization for Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds to Family Gateway, Inc. in the amount of \$135,000; The Salvation Army in the amount of \$175,000; and Shelter Ministries of Dallas dba Austin Street Center in the amount of \$155,000. These ESG federal funds allow providers to increase and sustain their services to help a homeless person find temporary and permanent housing, and also be provided case management support. (June Special-Called Meeting No. 2)

- The Commission voted to recommend City Council contract authorization for FY21 Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) funds to CitySquare in the amount of \$270,554, for Youth Homelessness. TDHCA state funds allows CitySquare to provide street outreach, case management and supportive services targeting young adults twenty-four years old and younger. This vote for approval passed by a narrow majority. Commissioners who opposed contract authorization did so based upon little information offered about some of the applicants. (June Special-Called Meeting No. 2)
- The Commission voted to recommend City Council contracts authorization targeting homelessness diversion to the following: Presbyterian Church DbA The Stewpot in the amount of \$372,696; The Bridge Steps DbA The Bridge in the amount of \$355,500; After 8 to Educate in the amount of \$811,662; and DFW Economic Solutions in the amount of \$225,000. This vote for approval passed by a narrow majority. Commissioners who opposed contract authorization did so based upon little information offered about some of the applicants. (June Special-Called Meeting No. 2)
- The Commission unanimously supported the Dallas R.E.A.L. Time Rapid Rehousing Initiative, presented in August 2021. Dallas' RTRRH initiative unites multiple governmental entities and CoC service providers in granting access to housing via rental subsidies, housing vouchers, landlord incentives, case management, and wrap-around services. The RTRRH makes use of \$72MM in federal, county, municipal and private funds, and is expected to serve over 2700 individuals and families over a two-year time period. Data for the initiative is represented on the Dallas R.E.A.L. Time Rapid Rehousing MDHA Dashboard. (August, November)
- The Commission received a briefing and provided input about expansion of the Rapid Integrated Group Healthcare Team (RIGHT Care) program. RIGHT Care uses an amalgamated behavioral healthcare team to respond to individuals experiencing acute mental health crises, via 911. The RIGHT Care team serves to reduce the need for Dallas police response to non-criminal 911 calls.
- The Commission received information from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Listening Sessions with Homeless Providers, established by OHS. The purpose of these listening sessions were to identify gaps in the homeless services system in order to project spending goals offered by ARPA. (May, June Special-Called Meeting No. 1)
- The Commission established subcommittees in a special-called meeting in March. The subcommittees are: Homeless Support Services, Housing, Street Outreach, and Racial Equity. In addition, Chair King appointed Commissioner John Cogan as the CHC Liaison for Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance (MDHA) and Dallas Area Partnership (DAP). (March Special-Called Meeting)

## Subcommittees

***Street Outreach.*** LeTitia Owens (Chair). A Subcommittee to focus on processes related to the subpopulation of persons experiencing homelessness who live within encampments.

The Street Outreach Subcommittee evaluated and addressed OHS' encampment resolution activities and its effectiveness, in context of the growing number of encampments across the city. Members were particularly interested in OHS' policy regarding the disposal of residents' belongings once an encampment resolution begins.

Street Outreach Subcommittee also evaluated OHS' processes on how to expand the City's network of various organizations that serve the homeless community. The Subcommittee feels that OHS efforts to reach all of the organizations could be improved upon. It is suggested that OHS evaluate the current method of circulating information about funding resources and OHS partnerships, and to specifically identify opportunities on how to engage smaller service providers, social workers, landlords, and businesses.

Of particular note, members of the Street Outreach Subcommittee piloted an event on September 11, 2021, at Holy Cross Catholic Church in District 8 that united numerous smaller outreach organizations with the City of Dallas, and homeless individuals, in an effort to expand and connect the network of resources available to persons experiencing homelessness. The event received over 400 individuals, all of whom had a substantial need for various resources. The plan is to have similar events in the near future, within all council districts.

***Homeless Support Services.*** Lisa Marshall (Chair). A Subcommittee to review organizations, identify solutions, provide recommendations, and integrate solutions into unified processes in order to better serve individuals experiencing homelessness.

The Homeless Support Services Subcommittee undertook addressing the network of homeless providers within Dallas, and evaluating their strengths and weakness of that system as a whole. Included within this holistic evaluation is identifying nodes of funding and support. Subcommittee Chair Lisa Marshall carried out this effort with an extensive schedule of campus tours and meetings, virtual and in-person:

- **Tours:** Association of Persons Affected by Addiction, Promise House, Homeward Bound, ROD Ministries, Our Calling Ministry, Austin Street Center, and Human Impact.
- **Meetings:** CEO of The Bridge Dr. David Woody; CEO of Austin Street Center Daniel Roby; Senior Director of Client Solutions & Strategy Dustin Perkins; CEO of ROD Ministries Dr. Jeffery Parker; CEO of Association of Persons Affected by Addiction (APAA) Joe Powell; Founder and Executive Director of Homeward Bound Doug Denton; Clinical Director of Dallas Deflection Center Dave Hogan; CEO of North Texas Behavioral Health Authority (NTBHA) Carol Lucky, and Chief Strategy Officer of NTBHA Walter Taylor.
- **Symposium:** 2021 Texas Reentry Symposium hosted by Unlocking DOORS, a Dallas nonprofit that serves individuals with criminal backgrounds.



Chair Marshall traveled to Houston to tour The Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD, along with Dallas County Commissioner District 1 Dr. Theresa Daniel, Dallas County Assistant DA Julie Turnbull, Doug Denton, Dave Hogan, Chad Anderson, and staff from Homeward Bound and NTBHA. Their focus was on the Harris County Mental Health Jail Diversion Program, and its successful model within the county-city homeless response.

Additionally, Chair Marshall assisted in the planning and execution of the Street Outreach Subcommittee's Outreach Event held on September 11, 2021, at Holy Cross Catholic Church in District 8.

***Housing.*** Allan Tallis (Chair). A Subcommittee to address ~~people~~ experiencing homelessness integration into housing, with emphasis on investments and developments.

***Racial Equity.*** David King (Chair). A Subcommittee to address the disproportionate number of Black citizens experiencing homelessness in Dallas.

***Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance (MDHA) and Dallas Area Partnership (DAP).***  
Liaison: Josh Cogan

### **Educational Presentations**

At its meetings held by videoconferencing during the year, the Commission received briefings from the following persons, in addition to regular reports from the Office of Homeless Solutions. Time is also allotted for public comment at each meeting.

- Blake Fetterman, Salvation Army CEO. Rapid Rehousing Program (January)
- Verna Jones, CEO and Kimisha Peterson, Senior Director, Under 1 Roof. Rapid Rehousing Program (January)
- Mary Kate Bevel, Grant Strategic Program Analyst for City of Dallas. FY21/22 HUD Consolidated Plan Budget Development (February)
- Chief David Pughes, Director of Integrated Public Safety Solutions for City of Dallas. Multidisciplinary Team Approach to Behavioral Health Crisis Calls: RIGHT Care (September)
- David King, Chair of Dallas' Citizens Homelessness Commission. Community Connection (October)
- Joli Robinson, CEO of Metro Dallas Homeless Alliance. Dallas R.E.A.L. Time Rapid Rehousing MDHA Dashboard (November)

### **Voting and Action Items**

At its meetings held during the year, the Commission made official actions on the following items:

- Review and Approve 2020 CHC Annual Report (March and April)
- Approval of New CHC Subcommittees (March – Special-Called Meeting)
- A vote for the Record on Continuum of Care Shelter-Plus Care Grant Renewal (March – Special-Called Meeting)

- Renewal of *Dallas Connector* Project, operated by CitySquare (March Special-Called Meeting)
- Emergency Solutions Grant contracts (ESG) (June - Special-Called Meeting)
- Youth Homelessness contract (June - Special-Called Meeting)
- Short-Term Assistance Homelessness Diversion contracts (June - Special-Called Meeting)
- Property Management authorization contracts for Candlewood and Hotel Miramar (June - Special-Called Meeting)

## OHS Briefings

- **January**
  - Inter-Agency Report – Kevin Oden, Interim OHS Director
  - Veteran’s Homelessness Project – K. Oden
  - Coronavirus Relief Funds Final Update – K. Oden
- **February**
  - CHC Annual Report – David King, CHC Chair
- **March (Regular meeting cancelled)**
- **March (Special-Called Meeting)**
  - Renewal of contract with CitySquare for the operation of the *Dallas Connector*, a transportation system for individuals experiencing homelessness – Christine Crossley, OHS Director
  - Continuum of Care Grant Renewal – C. Crossley
- **April**
  - Shelter Plus Care Program, Continuum of Care – C. Crossley
  - Update for Property Management RFP for Newly Acquired Hotels – C. Crossley
- **May**
  - Public Education Campaign: Street Charity – C. Crossley
  - Inclement Weather Shelter Operational Strategy Guide – C. Crossley
  - American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Listening Sessions with Homeless Service Providers – C. Crossley
- **June (Regular meeting cancelled)**
- **June (Special-Called Meeting No. 1)**
  - Results of the OHS Listening Sessions Conducted with Homeless Services Providers on May 21 and 25, 2021 – C. Crossley
- **June (Special-Called Meeting No. 2)**
  - Emergency Solutions Grant contracts (ESG) to Family Gateway, Salvation Army, and Shelter Ministries of Dallas dba Austin Street Center – C. Crossley
  - Youth Homelessness contract to CitySquare – C. Crossley
  - Short-Term Assistance Homelessness Diversion contracts to After8toEducate, First Presbyterian Church of Dallas dba The Stewpot, The Bridge Steps Db a The Bridge, and DFW Economic Solutions – C. Crossley
  - Property Management and Supportive Services authorization contracts for Candlewood and Hotel Miramar, to CitySquare and Family Gateway – C. Crossley

- **July (Cancelled)**
- **August**
  - City Manager’s FY22 Proposed Budget for Office of Homeless Solutions – C. Crossley
  - Dallas R.E.A.L. Time Rapid Rehousing Program – C. Crossley and Peter Brodsky, CEO of MDHA
- **September**
  - Supportive Housing for Seniors Contract – C. Crossley
- **October**
  - Transportation Services for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness RFCSP for FY 21/22 – C. Crossley
- **November (Cancelled – Federal Holiday)**
- **November (Special-Called Meeting)**
  - Audit of the Office of Homeless Solutions – C. Crossley
  - Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) to The Bridge, Family Place, and Shared Housing Center, Inc. – C. Crossley
- **December**
  - Porta-Potty Pilot Initiative – C. Crossley
  - Panhandling Deflection Program – C. Crossley
  - Update on Substantial Amendment No. 2 to the FY 2021-22 Action Plan to accept HOME Investment Partnership (“HOME”) ARPA Grant Funds – C. Crossley

**Citizen Homelessness Commission Membership**  
As of December 31, 2021

Membership on this board must include two members with past or present experience with homelessness, one representative from a faith-based organization, and twelve members from the general public.

**District 01** Jennifer Gadd Snow  
General Public  
Reappointed 05 OCT 2021

**District 02** Linda A. Garner  
Experienced Homelessness  
Reappointed 22 SEPT 2021

**District 03** LeTitia C. Owens - VICE CHAIR  
Experienced Homelessness  
Reappointed 19 NOV 2019, Holdover

**District 04** VACANT

**District 05** Soraya Santos  
General Public  
Appointed 13 OCT 2021

**District 06** Britton Banowsky  
General Public  
Reappointed 01 SEPT 2021

**District 07** Josh Cogan  
General Public  
Appointed 25 SEP 2019, Holdover

**District 08** David King -CHAIR  
General Public  
Reappointed 05 OCT 2021

**District 09** Tami Beck Fowler  
General Public  
Reappointed 05 OCT 2021

**District 10** John Shellene  
General Public  
Reappointed 27 OCT 2021

**District 11** Betsy Kleinman  
General Public  
Appointed 20 OCT 2021

**District 12** Matthew Jacob  
General Public  
Appointed 10 NOV 2021

**District 13** Lisa Kay Marshall  
General Public  
Appointed 26 FEB 2020, Holdover

**District 14** VACANT

**District 15** Karen Boudreaux  
General Public  
Appointed 5 FEB 2021, Holdover

**STAFF SUPPORT**

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