

# Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE July 17, 2020

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Updates to the Title Clearing Program Requested During the June 15, 2020  
Quality of Life, Arts, and Culture Committee Meeting**

This memo provides an update on the Title Clearing and Clouded Title Prevention Pilot Program (also known as the Title and Property Assistance Program, or TAPA program) as requested at the June 15, 2020 Quality of Life, Arts, and Culture Committee meeting.

On September 25, 2019, City Council authorized adding the TAPA program to the Comprehensive Housing Policy. TAPA assists in clearing title for low-to-moderate income families in order to establish marketable title, to encourage neighborhood stability, and to enable homeowners to become eligible for funding to invest in their homes. This action also authorized a three-year legal and professional services contract with Cadillac Law, PLLC (Cadillac Law) to implement the program.

## **Outreach and Marketing**

As mentioned in a previous memo, Cadillac Law launched the program and started radio advertising in late May and early June of this year.

In late June, Cadillac Law sent a postcard to approximately 800 properties that are potentially eligible for the program and that have “estate of” as part of the ownership name in the Dallas Central Appraisal District files. This mailing has begun to yield responses.

Also in late June, the City posted a story about the program on [www.DallasCityNews.net](http://www.DallasCityNews.net), on the City’s Twitter account, and on the City’s Facebook page. There were 17,713 total impressions on Twitter and 5,723 people reached on Facebook. The City also created graphics for Council members and others to share to their social media accounts. In addition, 1,173 households were reached through Nextdoor in District 4 and 7. The social media posts sent users directly to the Cadillac Law TAPA website. Planning and Urban Design sent information to their 376 Neighborhood Resource Guide subscribers.

In addition, more information is available at the City’s Housing & Neighborhood Revitalization website, here:

<https://dallascityhall.com/departments/housing-neighborhood-revitalization/Pages/Title-clearing.aspx>

Two Zoom seminars are planned, one in English scheduled for July 18, 2020, and one in Spanish on August 15, 2020. Cadillac Law has received 25 reservations for the English information session and sent information packets to these owners on July 13, 2020.

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Advertisement for the Spanish session on August 15<sup>th</sup> will begin in earnest on July 19, 2020. Interested participants must pre-register and will receive a packet of information in the mail. Reservations are available at this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/programa-de-compensacion-de-titulos-de-la-ciudad-de-dallas-tickets-109985290966>

Cadilac Law has set up a website at <https://www.texastapa.com/>. This website includes an application form, a phone number for more information, and informational videos about probate. In addition, Cadilac Law has a YouTube channel for a variety of property tax-related items, available here:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvNypdU51IG\\_25TyWxy\\_KAw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvNypdU51IG_25TyWxy_KAw)

## **Results**

As of July 13, 2020, the program has had the following results:

- 25 owners have expressed interest in the English-language information session scheduled for July 18, 2020
- Nine consultations have been completed
- Two clients had issues that were resolved with a discussion

## **Recap of Program Purpose and Eligible Households**

The TAPA program serves to address a lack of clarity in ownership and to prevent future heirship issues on properties in Southern Dallas (south of the Trinity River west of downtown and south of Interstate Highway 30 east of downtown) in Market Value Analysis (MVA) Categories D, E, F, G, H, and I. The Program is open to potential clients who have a household income less than or equal to 120 percent of the Dallas Area Median Family Income (\$103,440 for a family of four) and who are unrepresented by counsel.

Within southern Dallas, preference is given to potential clients who have an assumed ownership interest in:

- a home in MVA categories G, H, and I
- real estate in City of Dallas-designated historic districts
- real estate in designated Reinvestment Areas
- a home that has been denied City of Dallas Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization (the “Department”) funding for lack of ownership clarity on the title.

Cadilac Law will conduct marketing efforts, provide legal information sessions, and help qualified clients to prevent and resolve title issues on a sliding fee scale.

Clearing title is a labor- and time-intensive process. Because this is a pilot program, the contract emphasizes data and performance reporting in addition to clearing titles and

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providing preventative services. The precise speed with which the work can be done is thus difficult to predict; gathering this information is part of the purpose of this pilot program.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (214) 670-5988.



Dr. Eric Anthony Johnson  
Chief of Economic Development & Neighborhood Services

c: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager  
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