

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE April 13, 2026

TO Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee on Government Efficiency

SUBJECT **Drivers of Opportunity Update**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Drivers of Opportunity 2026 workplan and an update on the development of the Community Opportunity Index.

Background

On December 10th, 2025, the Dallas City Council adopted the Drivers of Opportunity Policy Framework (DO!) by resolution 25-1836, establishing a citywide policy framework to guide how the City aligns programs, investments, and partnerships to improve quality-of-life outcomes for residents. DO! emphasizes shared outcomes, cross-sector collaboration, and data-informed decision-making to expand access to opportunity across Dallas.

Drivers of Opportunity Symposium

Building on the success of previous Equity Symposium events, the Office of Housing and Community Empowerment (OHCE) hosted the Drivers of Opportunity Symposium on Friday, January 16, 2026, as part of the City of Dallas' Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Week at the Briscoe Carpenter at Fair Park. The convening included 150 community partners, 20 volunteers, and multiple City departments.

Councilmember District 3 and Chair of Quality of Life, Arts, and Culture, Zarin Gracey provided welcoming remarks. The Symposium had two primary objectives: 1) to provide updates on the Drivers of Opportunity policy framework, and 2) to identify community partners to support and collaborate with the City as the Community Opportunity Index (COI) is developed. The COI will be a data-informed tool that establishes a baseline of opportunity conditions across Dallas neighborhoods and helps track progress under each Driver over time.

Internal Alignment and Systems Change

Through the centralization of housing and community service functions the City is redesigning how impact and progress toward housing pathways in measured for Dallas residents. As part of the integration, OHCE has unified leadership across Homelessness Services, Community Care Services, Affordable Housing Development, WIC, Human Rights, Fair Housing, and other specialty areas under one coordinated approach. Guided by DO!, OHCE is reviewing contracts, internal standard operating procedures and performance data to demonstrate the impact of this work. This process helps pinpoint where OHCE can improve service delivery, partnerships and progress tracking for residents.

OHCE is piloting this process internally to refine a scalable approach to integrate DO! into operations. Then, OHCE will expand this process with departments positioned to lead under one or more Drivers. This work is intended to support development of the COI, create shared goals, language, and visual assets to help Council and departments communicate and implement DO! consistently.

2026 Workplan Overview

OHCE is moving forward with phased implementation activities focused on implementation of the DO! in partnership with City departments. Work is organized across four core workstreams, each with defined 2026 milestones that build toward consistent implementation and shared accountability:

1) Communications

OHCE will create consistent messaging materials that explain DO! and how residents, departments, and partners can engage with the work.

- **April 2026:** Publish a public DO! overview and visual assets in coordination with Communication and Client Experience (CCX).
- **Ongoing:** The City Manager will continue to lead conversations with anchor institutions to strengthen collaboration and align shared efforts in support of DO!.

2) City Department Alignment

OHCE will work with City departments to align budgets, plans, programs, and operating practices to DO!, including shared crosswalk tools and implementation guidance that support decision-making and coordinated delivery.

- **June 2026:** Finalize a City Role Matrix summary that documents where the City will lead, collaborate, or support under each Driver, informed by input from departments, anchor institutions and partner convenings.
- **August 2026:** Integrate DO! Framework into OHCE's program-based budgeting process. Begin piloting process with relevant departments for FY 27 budget.
- **October 2026:** Integrate cross-department input into the internal Community Opportunity Index draft framework, including alignment notes on roles, indicators, and known limitations.
- **December 2026:** Collaborate with Budget Management Services (BMS) to integrate DO! Framework as part of the program-based budgeting process for appropriate City departments in FY28 with City Department alignment.

3) External Partnerships

OHCE will convene community partners by Driver, including community-level anchor institutions, to identify opportunities for improved coordination and delineate clear role expectations to expand opportunities for Dallas residents.

- **June 2026:** Issue a partner convenings summary report covering all five Drivers that captures shared priorities, gaps, and key coordination needs and informs where the City will lead, collaborate, or support.

4) Data and Measurement

OHCE will build the foundation for the COI by confirming available data, establishing governance, and drafting the initial framework for review and refinement.

- **April 2026:** Form an external data advisory group of local experts to inform output and outcome measures and shape a data governance approach.
- **August 2026:** Stand up the COI working structure, confirm department points of contact and a partner input group, and compile an initial list of candidate indicators and data sources for review.
- **October 2026:** Deliver an internal COI draft framework for cross-department validation that includes the proposed indicator set, geography level, data governance notes, and limitations.
- **December 2026:** Brief City Council and departments on what the index will measure, what data is ready now, and recommended next steps for refinement in 2027.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact myself or Thor Erickson, Director, Office of Housing and Community Empowerment at 214-670-3632. or thor.erickson@dallas.gov.

2026 DO! Workplan: *Timeline of Milestones*



February - April 2026

- Present 2026 Workplan to QLAC Committee via memo
- Publish DO! Public Overview + Visual Assets (Communications)
- Host External Data Advisory Group and Partner Convenings (Data & Measurement/External Partnerships)



June - August 2026

- Draft City Role Matrix Summary (City Department Alignment)
- Draft Partner Convenings Summary Report (External Partnerships)
- OHCE Program-Based Budgeting Integration with DO! (City Department Alignment)
- COI Working Structure + Candidate Indicators (Data & Measurement)



October - December 2026

- Internal COI Draft Framework (Data & Measurement / City Department Alignment)
- FY28 DO! Program-Based Budgeting Integration (City Department Alignment)
- COI Briefing to City Council (Data & Measurement)



On-going – December 2026

Anchor Institution Collaboration (Communications)



**SERVICE
FIRST,
NOW!**

DATE April 13, 2026
SUBJECT **Drivers of Opportunity – Program Update**
PAGE **4 of 4**

Service First, Now!



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Attachment: DO! Policy Paper

Exhibit A



Drivers of Opportunity (DO!) Policy

City of Dallas

Effective Date: TBD

Administered by: Office of Housing & Community Empowerment

Approved by: City Council Resolution No. TBD

The City of Dallas is committed to expanding opportunity for all residents, regardless of background, by aligning policies, programs, and investments with data and resident priorities and applying an evidence-based lens. The Drivers of Opportunity (DO!) Policy Framework establishes a City-wide framework to guide planning, budgeting, and partnerships that support economic mobility, public safety, and community empowerment.

Table of Contents

- 1. Policy Overview** 3
 - 1.1 Policy Statement..... 3
 - 1.2 Scope..... 3
 - 1.3 Purpose..... 3
 - 1.4 Objectives 4
 - 1.5 Guiding Principles..... 4
- 2. Definitions**..... 4
 - 2.1 Policy Framework..... 5
 - 2.2 Opportunity 5
 - 2.3 Drivers..... 5
 - 2.4 Domains..... 5
 - 2.5 City Role Matrix..... 5
 - 2.6 Community Opportunity Index (COI) 6
 - 2.7 Indicator..... 6
 - 2.8 Priority Area 6
 - 2.9 Anchor Institution 6
 - 2.10 Department Progress Measures..... 6
- 3. Program Administration**..... 6
 - 3.1 City Manager 6

3.2 Office of Housing and Community Empowerment 6

3.3 All City Department Responsibilities 7

3.4 Anchor Institution and Partner Roles 8

4. Drivers of Opportunity Framework 8

5. Community Opportunity Index 9

5.1 Purpose 9

5.2 Data Sources 9

5.3 Methodology 9

5.4 Baselines, Targets, and Feasibility 10

5.5 Public Reporting 10

6. Department Progress Measures 10

6.1 Definition and Scope 10

6.2 Alignment with Citywide Plans 10

6.3 Measure Design Standards 10

6.4 Reporting and Review 11

7. Capacity Building and Collaboration 11

7.1 Annual Event 11

7.2 Trainings and Technical Assistance 11

7.3 Driver and Domain Coalitions 11

8. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Continuous Improvement 12

8.1 Indicators 12

8.2 Annual Drivers of Opportunity Performance Report 12

8.3 Framework Review and Updates 12

9. Policy Compliance and Exceptions 12

9.1 Applicability 12

9.2 Federal and State Requirements 12

9.3 Exceptions 12

1. Policy Overview

1.1 Policy Statement

It is the policy of the City of Dallas to advance opportunities for residents to thrive in every neighborhood by:

1.1.1 Using data to understand needs and track progress for improving the lives of Dallas residents.

1.1.2 Aligning City portfolios, plans, programs, and investments with resident identified priorities such as housing, upward Economic Mobility, infrastructure, safety, and social services.

1.1.3 Clarifying the City's role and how the City partners with Anchor Institutions and community organizations to address Drivers of Opportunity that extend beyond the City's direct authority.

Under this Policy, the City organizes its work around three system outcomes, Economic Mobility, Public Safety, and Community Empowerment, and five Drivers across multiple Domains.

1.2 Scope

This Policy applies to:

1.2.1 Council adopted or council amended, citywide plans and Policy Frameworks, including but not limited to the strategic plans, transportation plans, and infrastructure plans.

1.2.2 Federally funded and locally funded investments, including grants, contracts, and capital projects, where the Drivers of Opportunity Framework is used to identify Priority Areas or guide funding decisions.

1.2.3 City programs and actions, including Department Progress Measures, that are to be developed as part of the Drivers of Opportunity implementation.

The Drivers of Opportunity Policy does not replace federal or state requirements. Where conflicts arise, applicable federal and state law will prevail.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of the Drivers of Opportunity Policy is to:

1.3.1 Establish a common Framework, the Drivers of Opportunity, for organizing City actions that influence residents' fair access to Opportunity and improved system outcomes.

1.3.2 Translate resident feedback and community data into clear priorities and measurable outcomes.

1.3.3 Provide a consistent structure for departments and partners to align programs, investments, and performance measures with the Drivers of Opportunity.

1.3.4 Support federally compliant decision making that avoids identity-based criteria while still targeting areas of greatest need through data informed indicators.

1.4 Objectives

The objectives of the Drivers of Opportunity Policy are to:

1.4.1 Clarify priorities by defining system outcomes, Drivers, and Domains that reflect what residents and data have identified as most important for improving quality of life.

1.4.2 Guide how the City sets priorities, aligns partnerships, and uses data to measure impact across the three system outcomes: Economic Mobility, Public Safety, and Community Empowerment.

1.4.3 Connect data to decisions, particularly around capital projects, housing initiatives, and neighborhood services, through the Community Opportunity Index and related assessment tools.

1.4.4 Ensure that plans, policies, and investments are results focused and aligned with resident priorities and federal requirements.

1.5 Guiding Principles

1.5.1 Resident informed. The Framework is shaped by community survey results, engagement sessions, and ongoing resident feedback.

1.5.2 Research based. The Framework is also shaped by research from academic and national groups that focus on continuous improvement for local governments.

1.5.3 Federally compliant. All criteria used to identify Priority Areas, allocate benefits, or track outcomes are consistent with current federal directives.

1.5.4 Opportunity focused. The emphasis is on expanding Opportunity, such as jobs, housing stability, education, safety, health, and access, rather than labeling deficits.

1.5.5 Place conscious. Data is reported at the most local level feasible, for example neighborhood, census tract, or ZIP code, to illuminate geographic disparities in Opportunity.

1.5.6 Partnership oriented. The City recognizes that many Drivers of Opportunity require collaboration with schools, health systems, employers, and community organizations, and clarifies where the City leads, collaborates, or supports partner efforts.

2. Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy the following terms are defined as follows.

2.1 Policy Framework

A strategic guide voted and adopted by the City Council that defines shared priorities, goals, and implementation standards to inform City plans, programs, and investments.

2.2 Opportunity

Opportunity is defined as the system outcomes the City aims to advance through the Drivers of Opportunity Framework. In the Drivers of Opportunity Policy, system outcomes are Economic Mobility, Public Safety, and Community Empowerment.

2.3 Drivers

The five cross-cutting conditions that shape residents' long-term outcomes:

2.3.1 Gainful Employment. Pathways for Dallas residents to secure good jobs, grow income, and build lasting economic stability.

2.3.2 High Quality Education. Opportunities for lifelong learning so all residents can grow and thrive.

2.3.3 Opportunity-Rich Neighborhoods. Strong neighborhoods with affordable homes, reliable transportation, and community resources.

2.3.4 Healthy Environment and Access to Quality Health Care. Creating conditions that support physical and mental well-being for all residents.

2.3.5 Public Safety and Well Being. Promoting communities where residents feel safe, supported, and engaged.

2.4 Domains

Research-based, resident-informed thematic areas nested under each Driver. Domains can be updated as Dallas needs and innovations evolve. Updates to Domains can be made by staff recommendation and notification to appropriate council committee.

2.5 City Role Matrix

A tool that clarifies the City's level of responsibility within each Domain:

2.5.1 Lead. The City sets policy, invests funds, and has primary implementation responsibility.

2.5.2 Collaborate. The City convenes partners, aligns investments, and supports shared decision making.

2.5.3 Support. The City amplifies, coordinates, or leverages external efforts led by other institutions.

2.6 Community Opportunity Index (COI)

A data platform that uses federally compliant indicators to measure Drivers of Opportunity across Dallas and identify geographic-based Priority Areas for planning and investment. The Community Opportunity Index will map key assets and gaps by Driver, track Baseline to Target progress on Department Measures, and connect data to key decisions.

2.7 Indicator

A data point that uses publicly accessible data to describe the condition or state of a Driver or Domain.

2.8 Priority Area

A geographic area, such as a census tract, neighborhood, or ZIP code that meets one or more of the following criteria, signaling the need for targeted, coordinated action:

- 1) Composite scores across one or more Drivers fall below defined thresholds;
- 2) Existing external composite score(s) or evidence-based scores or rankings demonstrate risk or need;
- 3) Is an identified target areas, such as Opportunity Zones;
- 4) One or more socioeconomic indicators demonstrate need, such as concentration of poverty

2.9 Anchor Institution

A local governmental entity, such as the City of Dallas, and/or an external partner, such as a school district, hospital system, university, major employer, quasi-governmental entity or philanthropic or cultural institution, with long-term presence and influence in a particular Driver.

2.10 Department Progress Measures

Federally compliant actions and targets adopted by City departments that align with one or more Drivers and demonstrate progress toward expanding opportunity.

3. Program Administration

3.1 City Manager

The City Manager is responsible for implementing the Drivers of Opportunity Policy and designates the Office of Housing and Community Empowerment or successor department/office as the central coordinating office.

3.2 Office of Housing and Community Empowerment

OHCE shall:

3.2.1 Develop and author a Standard Operating Procedure to manage the Drivers of Opportunity Framework that includes:

3.2.1.1 A list of system outcomes, Drivers, Domains, and the City Role Matrix.

3.2.1.2 Updates to ensure alignment with federal directives and Council adopted plans.

3.2.2 Community Opportunity Index, data sources, methodology, and public dashboards.

3.2.2.2 Methodologies to establish Priority Areas.

3.2.2.3 A methodology for departments and offices to identify progress measures that align with DO!

3.2.2.4 A process and timeline for reviewing and for updating the Framework.

3.2.3 Support Department Progress Measures reporting.

3.2.3.1 Work with departments to identify and refine Drivers of Opportunity aligned measures, including existing measures and goals that are federally compliant.

3.2.3.2 Provide guidance to City departments and offices on Baselines, Targets, and reporting.

3.2.4 Coordinate partnerships and Anchor Institutions.

3.2.4.1 Maintain a directory of Drivers of Opportunity partnerships and Anchor Institutions.

3.2.4.2 Develop memoranda of understanding or other written agreements where appropriate for formal collaboration efforts such as data sharing or co location of services.

3.2.5 Lead community engagement and capacity building.

3.2.5.1 Host the Drivers of Opportunity Symposium and Driver or Domain focused coalitions and events.

3.2.5.2 Provide training and technical assistance to departments and partners on applying the Drivers of Opportunity Framework.

3.2.6 Lead monitoring and reporting.

3.2.6.1 Provide regular presentations to Council on updates to Department Progress Measures and Priority Areas.

3.2.6.2 Produce an annual Drivers of Opportunity Performance Report summarizing key Indicators, Department Progress Measures, and updates to Priority Areas.

3.2.6.3 Identify risks, recommend corrective actions, and coordinate cross departmental responses.

3.3 All City Department Responsibilities

All City departments and offices shall:

3.3.1 Incorporate the Drivers of Opportunity Framework into relevant solicitations, plans, and program designs where the Framework is used to guide priorities.

3.3.2 Identify Department Progress Measures linked to one or more Drivers and report on these measures at least annually.

3.3.3 Submit data needed to maintain the Community Opportunity Index and Drivers of Opportunity dashboards, in coordination with OHCE and the data governance team.

3.3.4 Collaborate with OHCE and other departments on cross cutting initiatives in Priority Areas.

3.4 Anchor Institution and Partner Roles

Where appropriate, the City will:

3.4.1 Apply the City Role Matrix to clarify when the City will Lead, Collaborate, or Support external efforts to advance Opportunity for residents.

3.4.2 Establish formal partnerships with Anchor Institutions and other key partners that are aligned to specific Drivers and Domains.

3.4.3 Share Community Opportunity Index insights, system outcome data, and community engagement findings with partners to inform coordinated strategies and joint action.

4. Drivers of Opportunity Framework

4.1 Drivers and Domains

HCE shall maintain documentation listing:

4.1.1 Each system outcome and Driver.

4.1.2 The Domains associated with each Driver.

4.1.3 The City's role, Lead, Collaborate, or Support, in each Domain..

4.2 City Role Matrix

The City Role Matrix answers the basic question of where the City leads and where the City partners. It guides how Dallas designs programs, investments, and partnerships, but does not create new legal obligations.

For each Domain, the City Manager will determine whether the City primarily Leads, Collaborates, or Supports based on:

4.2.1 Statutory authority and regulatory responsibilities.

4.2.2 Control over funding, assets, and service delivery.

4.2.3 The presence and capacity of external partners.

4.3 Relationship to other Council-Adopted Plans

The Drivers of Opportunity Framework is intended to:

4.3.1 Inform updates to the Consolidated Plan and other Council adopted strategies.

4.3.2 Provide a consistent Framework for plan priorities, performance measures, and targeted investments.

5. Community Opportunity Index

5.1 Purpose

The Community Opportunity Index provides visible and publicly accessible, federally compliant way to:

5.1.1 Measure how Dallas residents experience key Drivers of Opportunity across neighborhoods.

5.1.2 Identify Priority Areas where coordinated action and investment of resources can have the greatest impact.

5.1.3 Track changes over time in response to City and partner actions.

5.2 Data Sources

The Community Opportunity Index and related assessment tools may draw from places including but not limited to:

5.2.1 National datasets such as the United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Opportunity Atlas, PolicyMap and other publicly available sources.

5.2.2 Local data such as departmental performance measures, program utilization, capital improvement programming, and neighborhood infrastructure conditions.

5.2.3 Community wide surveys and engagement results that describe resident priorities and perceptions of quality of life, access, and service performance.

5.2.4 Established data-sharing and evaluation partnerships with local governmental partners, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, and other partners.

5.3 Methodology

OHCE, in coordination with the City's data governance structures, shall:

5.3.1 Define Indicators for each Driver and/or Domain.

5.3.2 Normalize and weight Indicators to create composite scores at the smallest feasible geography.

5.3.3 Establish thresholds for defining Priority Areas, including publicly available information and methodology

5.3.4 Document methodology, data sources, and update cycles in a publicly available Community Opportunity Index.

5.4 Baselines, Targets, and Feasibility

For Community Opportunity Index Indicators and Department Progress Measures:

5.4.1 Baseline is established using the first full year of validated data after Drivers of Opportunity Policy adoption.

5.4.2 Targets are set at realistic, time bound levels based on historical trends, resource constraints, and importance and satisfaction analysis from the Dallas city wide Community Survey.

When a Target is completed, no longer feasible, or has been surpassed, departments shall work with HCE to revise Targets and document rationale. Data will be displayed in the most local way possible, preferably allowing residents and community partners to see impact at a neighborhood level.

5.5 Public Reporting

Community Opportunity Index results and Priority Areas will be shared through:

5.5.1 A public interactive dashboard that includes methodology notes and context, organized by system outcome, Driver, and Domain.

5.5.2 The annual Drivers of Opportunity Performance Report and related Council briefings.

6. Department Progress Measures

6.1 Definition and Scope

Department Progress Measures are Drivers of Opportunity aligned actions with clear Baselines, Indicators, and Targets that departments will implement to advance one or more Drivers.

6.2 Alignment with Citywide Plans

Department Progress Measures should draw from Council adopted plans and reportable metrics as long as the measures are federally compliant and aligned with the Drivers of Opportunity Framework.

6.3 Measure Design Standards

Each measure should include:

6.3.1 At least one Driver or Domain addressed and connected to the measure.

6.3.2 Geographic focus, such as citywide, specific district, or Priority Area.

6.3.3 Baseline year and value.

6.3.4 Annual or multi-year-old Targets.

6.3.5 Data source, collection frequency, and reporting process.

6.3.6 Responsible department and partners, with roles and responsibilities identified using the City Role Matrix.

6.4 Reporting and Review

Departments shall:

6.4.1 Submit updated data on Department Progress Measures at least annually to OHCE.

6.4.2 Participate in Drivers of Opportunity reviews to discuss progress, barriers, and needed adjustments on Department Progress Measures.

6.4.3 Use Community Opportunity Index results and survey results to refine measures over time.

7. Capacity Building and Collaboration

The City of Dallas shall support departments and community stakeholders through a coordinated set of capacity building initiatives designed to expand understanding and application of the Drivers of Opportunity Framework.

7.1 Annual Event

An annual event that:

7.1.1 Shares Community Opportunity Index findings, community feedback, and Department Progress Measures.

7.1.2 Highlights examples of Drivers of Opportunity aligned programs and projects.

7.1.3 Creates space for cross-sector collaboration.

7.2 Trainings and Technical Assistance

OHCE will coordinate training on topics such as:

7.2.1 Using the Drivers of Opportunity Framework in planning, budgeting, procurement criteria, and program design.

7.2.2 Interpreting Community Opportunity Index data.

7.3 Driver and Domain Coalitions

OHCE or other City departments may convene ongoing coalitions, for example a Financial Empowerment Coalition, to:

7.3.1 Coordinate strategies among departments and external partners.

7.3.2 Elevate community insights from engagement sessions and surveys.

7.3.3 Track progress and impact for specific Domains and Priority Areas.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Continuous Improvement

8.1 Indicators

The City will establish Indicators that reflect the Drivers and Domains.

8.2 Annual Drivers of Opportunity Performance Report

OHCE will publish an annual report that:

8.2.1 Summarizes Community Opportunity Index results and changes in Priority Areas.

8.2.2 Highlights progress on Department Progress Measures and domains

8.2.3 Identifies policy, program, and partnership adjustments for the next year.

8.3 Framework Review and Updates

Every year, OHCE will:

8.3.1 Review system outcomes, Drivers, Domains, and the City Role Matrix.

8.3.2 Assess whether Indicators and thresholds remain appropriate and federally compliant.

8.3.3 Recommend amendments to City Manager for approval as needed.

9. Policy Compliance and Exceptions

9.1 Applicability

This Policy guides City planning, program design, and investment decisions where the Drivers of Opportunity Framework is used to define priorities or alignment criteria. It does not create a private right of action for residents, partners, or vendors.

9.2 Federal and State Requirements

Where federal or state requirements, including grant conditions, procurement rules, or civil rights statutes, conflict with this Policy, the stricter or controlling requirement shall apply.

9.3 Exceptions

The City Manager may approve exceptions to specific implementation requirements of this Policy, such as data reporting cycles or measure formats, when:

9.3.1 Necessary to comply with federal or state law.

9.3.2 Pragmatic constraints require a phased approach.

Any exception should be documented and reported to the City Council as part of the Drivers of Opportunity Performance Report or a separate briefing.