

# Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE March 31, 2023

Honorable Members of the City Council Economic Development Committee: Tennell  
TO Atkins (Chair), Carolyn King Arnold (Vice Chair), Adam McGough, Omar Narvaez, Jaime Resendez, Chad West, Gay Donnell Willis

SUBJECT **Dallas Development Fund Replacement Board Members**

At the April 12, 2023 City Council meeting, Council Members will be asked to approve two new Dallas Development Fund (DDF) board members: Drexell Owusu and Joel Triska.

In February 2009, the City Council authorized the creation of a non-profit corporation, the Dallas Development Fund to serve as the Community Development Entity (CDE) necessary to apply for a New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) allocation and manage the City's NMTC program. Since DDF's creation, the City Council has approved the DDF's initial and amended certificate of formation and bylaws, confirmed the City Manager's appointment of the initial Board of Directors City Council, and authorized two replacement board members.

Per the amended certificate of formation and the bylaws of DDF, the City Manager shall appoint four Directors to the DDF Board, whose appointments the City Council shall confirm. To be eligible to serve as a Director, a person must be a resident of the city and at least eighteen (18) years of age. Each board member shall serve for a term of two years (with a maximum of an 8-year term) or until his successor is appointed by the City Manager and confirmed by the City Council. Additionally, for NMTC compliance at least four board members must meet the Community Development Financial Institution's (CDFI) guidelines for accountability to low-income communities (LIC).

The City Manager has recommended appointment of Drexell Owusu and Joel Triska to serve on the DDF board to replace members who have been in holdover status. Mr. Owusu is the Chief Impact Officer at the Dallas Foundation and Mr. Triska is the Director of Public Affairs at Metrocare Services. Both Mr. Owusu and Mr. Triska are Dallas residents, and both are LIC accountable. A brief biography of each is available as Exhibit A.

Should you have any questions, please contact Robin Bentley, Director, Office of Economic Development, at (214) 671-9942 or [Robin.Bentley@dallas.gov](mailto:Robin.Bentley@dallas.gov).

  
Majed A. Al-Ghafry, P.E.  
Assistant City Manager

c: T.C. Broadnax, City Manager  
Tammy Palomino, Interim City Attorney  
Mark Swann, City Auditor  
Biliera Johnson, City Secretary  
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge  
Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, Deputy City Manager  
Jon Fortune, Deputy City Manager

M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira, Assistant City Manager  
Dr. Robert Perez, Assistant City Manager  
Carl Simpson, Assistant City Manager  
Jack Ireland, Chief Financial Officer  
Genesis D. Gavino, Chief of Staff to the City Manager  
Directors and Assistant Directors

## Exhibit A—Biographies

### Joel Triska

Joel Triska is a veteran community advocate in the Dallas area. As Executive Director of an innovative non-profit in Deep Ellum for twelve years (2009-2021), he passionately engaged in efforts to improve economic development, advocate for better urban planning, and address systemic issues of social justice.

Joel currently serves as the Director of Public Affairs for Metrocare where he has the privilege of advocating for the most vulnerable residents of Dallas regarding people who are experiencing mental illness, substance use disorders, and developmental disabilities.

Joel has his Master in Divinity and has worked in religious, civic, social, and entrepreneurial spaces for most of his career. His passion is for thoughtful and creative solutions and telling stories in compelling ways. He resides in East Dallas with his partner and two daughters - both proud students of DISD.

He is Low Income Community (LIC) accountable through his employment.

### Drexell Owusu

Drex joined The Dallas Foundation as Chief Impact Officer in April 2021. He leads a team focused on the Foundation's community impact strategy to reduce intergenerational poverty and improve child well-being through investments in programs that ensure a strong and healthy start for children ages birth to three. He will work closely with philanthropic, nonprofit, and civic leaders across Dallas and collaborate with the Foundation's 350+ donor partners to continue the Foundation's proven track record of investing in transformational solutions.

Drex was most recently the Senior Vice President of Education & Workforce at the Dallas Regional Chamber, where he led the organization's efforts to equitably grow and develop the existing regional education and workforce pipeline. Previously, he founded and served as CEO of Brave Capital Partners, an investment company focused on catalyzing minority communities. Drex has also served in a number of leadership and strategy roles including Civitas Capital Group, The Owl Group, Blockbuster, FedEx Office, and Accenture.

Drex earned a Bachelor of Arts in History from Rice University, where he was a two-time Track and Field All-American in the triple jump. He lives in Oak Cliff with his wife and three children. He is LIC accountable through his board service on education boards, including Dallas Education Foundation, Education is Freedom and United to Learn.