

# Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE February 17, 2026

TO Honorable Members of the Quality of Life, Arts & Culture Committee: Zarin D. Gracey (Chair), Laura Cadena (Vice Chair), Adam Bazaldua, Paul Ridley, Bill Roth, Chad West, Gay Donnell Willis

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 10<sup>th</sup>, 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.

## 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!

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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](mailto:thor.erickson@dallas.gov).

Service First, Now!



M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira  
Assistant City Manager

c: Kimberly Bizer Tolbert, City Manager  
Tammy Palomino, City Attorney  
Mark Swann, City Auditor  
Biliera Johnson, City Secretary  
Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge  
Baron Eliason, Inspector General (I)  
Dominique Artis, Chief of Public Safety

Dev Rastogi, Assistant City Manager  
Alina Ciocan, Assistant City Manager  
Donzell Gipson, Assistant City Manager  
Robin Bentley, Assistant City Manager  
Jack Ireland, Chief Financial Officer  
Ahmad Goree, Chief of Staff to the City Manager  
Directors and Assistant Directors

Attachment: DO! Policy Paper