

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE August 17, 2026

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

SUBJECT **Upcoming Agenda Item: August 25, 2026, Dallas City Council Item #26-2182A: Authorize Acceptance of the National League of Cities Institute - Building Economic Resilience in Communities Grant (Contract No. HCE-2026-00030765)**

The purpose of this memorandum is to brief the Quality of Life, Arts, and Culture Committee on City Council agenda item #26-2182A scheduled for August 25, 2026. This item authorizes the acceptance of a \$25,000.00 Building Economic Resilience (BERC) grant from the National League of Cities Institute (NLCI). A local match is not required, and acceptance of the grant will have no impact on the General Fund.

Background

On August 22, 2025, the City Manager [issued a memorandum](#) outlining the vision for the newly formed Office of Housing and Community Empowerment (OHCE). The memorandum identified objectives for the reorganization, including centralizing navigation for residents, streamlining operations across programs, incorporating national best practices, leveraging the West Dallas Multi-purpose and MLK Community Centers as neighborhood-based hubs, and strengthening partnerships with anchor institutions, philanthropy, and community leaders.

On December 10, 2025, the City Council adopted the Drivers of Opportunity (DO!) framework approved by [Resolution No. 25-1836](#). The DO! framework is organized around three system outcomes: Economic Mobility, Public Safety and Community Empowerment and supports alignment across OHCE's housing, homelessness, and community empowerment functions.

In January 2026, the National League of Cities (NLC) contacted OHCE to learn about Dallas' community resilience and economic mobility efforts as it explored promising municipal models nationwide. NLC subsequently invited the City to apply for the Building Economic Resilience in Communities (BERC) grant on May 1, 2026. Guided by the City Manager's vision and the DO! framework, OHCE submitted a proposal focused on strengthening coordination across departments.

On June 11, 2026, the NLCI selected the City of Dallas to participate in the BERC program as one of four cities nationwide. The NLCI is the research and education affiliate of the NLC, an organization comprised of municipal leaders that are focused on improving the quality of life for their constituents.

Grant Program Objective

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The BERC grant program provides funding and technical assistance to help cities with services that support resident economic stability and wellbeing. The program emphasizes coordinated service systems, shared planning tools, and the use of Community Resilience Centers (CRCs) as accessible, neighborhood-based service hubs.

City leaders, members of advisory boards and commissions, and community partners have emphasized the importance of consistent coordination, and improved awareness of services across OHCE programs. The BERC program aligns closely with these priorities by supporting efforts that improve internal integration and strengthen community-centered service delivery.

Planned Use of BERC Grant

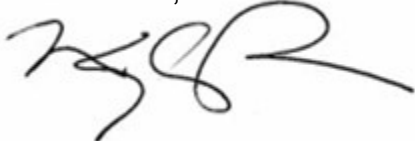
The BERC grant will support two primary objectives: improving internal service alignment across OHCE programs and enhancing community engagement through the Community Centers. Funding will help refine coordination practices, strengthen referral pathways, and support streamlined planning across divisions. In addition, the grant will assist OHCE in expanding engagement at Community Centers to increase awareness and usage of available services, support navigation tools, and strengthen engagement with neighborhood partners.

Council Action

Agenda Item 26-2182A will authorize the City Manager to accept \$25,000.00 from the National League of Cities Institute, execute the associated grant agreement, and appropriate the funds for eligible BERC program activities.

Should you have any questions or need any additional information, please contact myself or Thor Erickson, Director, Office of Housing and Community Empowerment at thor.erickson@dallas.gov

Service First, Now!



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Ahmad Goree, Chief of Staff to the City Manager
John Johnson, Chief of Real Estate
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