



City of Dallas

Veteran Affairs Commission

WEE Committee June 3, 2025

Hai Tran, Director (I), Office of
Equity and Inclusion

Christina da Silva, Assistant
Director, Office of Equity and
Inclusion

Shpendim Nadzaku, Welcoming
Coordinator,
Office of Equity and Inclusion

Presentation Overview



- Background/History
- Veteran Demographic
- The Commissioners
- Challenges
- Veteran Wellbeing Assessment - Scope Development
- Procurement & Implementation Process
- Triangulated Research
- Veterans Innovation & Insight Forum
- Next Steps



Background/History



- The City of Dallas Veteran Affairs Commission (VAC) ordinance was adopted on January 27, 2021.
- The Veteran Affairs Commission functions as an advisory body that makes recommendations to the City Manager and City Council.



Veteran Demographics



Approximately 40,000 Dallas residents are military veterans.

Educational Attainment

- 39 % — Bachelor's degree or higher
- 62 % — Associate's degree or less

Disability – 34% of military veterans report a disability

Source: American Community Survey, 2023



Period of Military Service – Dallas Veterans



- **Gulf War (Post-9/11, 2001–present)**
 - 10,997 veterans | 31 % of Dallas veterans
- **Gulf War (1990–2001)**
 - 8,201 veterans | 23 %
- **Vietnam Era (1961–1975)**
 - 9,252 veterans | 26 %
- **Korean War (1950–1955)**
 - 1,192 veterans | 3 %
- **World War II (1941–1946)**
 - 421 veterans | 1 %

Source: American Community Survey, 2023

Note: Percentages exceed 100 % because some veterans served in more than one conflict period; ACS tabulates each period separately.

The Veteran Affairs Commissioners



District	Commissioner Name	Military Branch Affiliation
D1	Charles Ayers (Co-Chair)	Army
D2	Juan M. Preciado	Navy
D3	VACANT	
D4	Fred Walker	Army
D5	Gayland Sherman	Navy
D6	Ronnie L. Mestas (Chair)	Navy
D7	Sergio V. Ortega	Navy
D8	Dominique Haskett	Navy
D9	Glenn R. Hunter	N/A
D10	VACANT	
D11	Scott Chase	Army
D12	Steven Cole	Navy
D13	Ray A Smith	Air Force
D14	Matthew Bell	Navy
D15	VACANT	

The Veteran Affairs Commission is made up of Dallas residents whose **combined military service is approximately 114 years**, giving the City decades of firsthand expertise and insight. Most commissioners have worn the uniform themselves—or have close family ties to those who have.



Persistent Challenges Facing Veterans



- Access to Information and Support with Navigation
- Stable and Affordable Housing
- Workforce Opportunities

City of Dallas ★ RESOURCES FOR DALLAS VETERANS ★ VETERAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION		
Carry the Load	Non-profit that provides active ways to honor veterans	214-723-6068
Dallas 311	Helps residents resolve non-emergency issues	214-670-3111
Dallas County VA	Benefits assistance	972-692-4939
Dallas Public Library	Help Desk, support service referral	214-670-1769
Dallas Vet Center	Free counseling and PTSD care	214-361-5896 24-hour hotline: 877-927-8737
Daniel & Salvador Montoya HEROES Foundation	Vet friendly employment assistance and emergency relief	817-590-2008
DART – GoLink	DART's on-demand curb-to-curb service within designated zones	214-515-7272
Homeless Crisis Helpline	Information and referral to community resources that support homelessness	888-411-6802
Legal Aid of Northwest Texas	Provides legal services to eligible veterans and family members in the DFW metroplex with a primary focus on expunctions, non-disclosures and other barrier removal work	214-748-1234

City staff worked with the VAC to create an inventory of local resources for military veterans



Celebrating Military Veterans



21st Annual "Operation Meet a Hero"

*"Come meet the future and share
your experience as a member of the military"*

When: Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Time: 9:30 -11:00 a.m.

Location: Cafeteria, Bryan Adams High School
2101 Millmar Dr. Dallas, Texas 75228

Many of today's young men and women have never had an opportunity to meet a veteran to learn what life in the service was like. Whether you were a careerist or draftee, officer or enlisted, during peacetime or wartime, please come and let students know what you remember the most. What did military service do for you? Feel free to bring photos or mementos from your time in uniform.

RSVP

<https://tinyurl.com/uhp mucvp> or

Scan QR Code

Diane Birdwell
CPT, USAR
(214) 957-3987
dianebirdwell@yahoo.com
MAJ Robert Jeter
(972) 502-4956/57
rojeter@dallasisd.org



"Please pass the word and invite other veterans who might be interested in participating."

**DISTRICT 4
COMMUNITY**

VETERANS DAY PARADE

HOME OF THE FREE BECAUSE OF THE BRAVE

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
**SATURDAY, NOV. 9
2024**

START
Cedar Crest Cathedral
1616 E. Illinois Ave.
Dallas, TX 75216


Carolyn King Arnold
Councilwoman
Dallas City Council District 4

END
Lancaster Crossing
4515 S. Lancaster Rd.
(Across from the Veterans Hospital)

There will be a brief program after the parade honoring our veterans, music and food.

For more information: District4@dallas.gov 214-671-9347  City of Dallas



**VETERANS ORAL
HISTORY PROJECT**

Preserve your history for the future

Dallas Public Library is capturing the memories and experiences of U.S. military veterans, support staff and family members of veterans in the Dallas-Fort Worth area for future generations to understand and learn from the past.



Call or email to schedule an interview

Genealogy & History
J. Erik Jonsson Central Library
8th Floor
214-670-1433
genealogy@dallas.gov





Veteran Wellbeing Assessment





Scope Development: Collaborative Input

- **VAC Subcommittee** provided strategic guidance and veteran insights.
 - **Commissioners Involved:**
 - Steven Cole, D-12 (Chair)
 - Charles Ayers, D-1
 - Juan Preciado, D-2
 - Dominique Haskett, D-8
 - Ray Smith, D-13
- **Councilmember Input:**
 - Gathered feedback from Councilmembers **West and Resendez**, emphasizing support for veteran-owned businesses.
- **Recommendations Approved by VAC August 8, 2024**



Veteran Representation in Procurement and Implementation Timeline



- **Veteran-Focused Procurement:**

- Military veteran assigned as primary buyer, Alina Nair.
- Veteran Employee Resource Group (VERG) President, Kevin Belcher, participated in proposal evaluation.

- **Implementation Timeline:**

- Process initiated: **February 2024**
- Contract executed with SMU: **March 2025**
- Project launch: **April 1, 2025**
- Duration: **1 year**, ensuring timely implementation of recommendations.



Veterans Wellbeing Assessment- Purpose



- **Needs Assessment:** Evaluate current veteran challenges in Dallas.
- **Service Gaps:** Identify gaps in education, workforce, employment, health (physical & mental), and housing services.
- **Municipal Evaluation:** Assess effectiveness of existing city support initiatives.
- **Enhancement Strategies:** Recommend improvements to municipal veteran services.
- **Actionable Insights:** Provide practical recommendations to policymakers for enhanced veteran well-being.



Triangulated Research Approach



1. Veterans Innovation & Insight Forum

- **Method:** Workshops, discussions, skill-building sessions
- **Focus:** Collaborative engagement with veterans & stakeholder

2. Veteran Support Service Impact Analysis

- **Method:** Quantitative analysis of service use across Dallas
- **Focus:** Education, health, housing, employment gaps

3. Dallas Veteran Location & Mobility Project

- **Method:** Geospatial analysis of veteran mobility & service access
- **Focus:** Transportation patterns and logistical barriers





The Veterans Innovation and Insight Forum

When: Saturday, July 12, 2025

Where: Southern Methodist University campus

Time: 8:30am to 5:00pm





Next Veteran Affairs Commission Meeting

- **Date:** Thursday, June 12, 2025
- **Time:** 12:00 p.m. (noon)
- **Location:** Dallas City Hall — L1 Auditorium
1500 Marilla St., Dallas, TX 75201

Councilmembers and members of the public are warmly invited to attend and engage with the VAC's work on behalf of Dallas veterans.





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