

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE August 18, 2023

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Update on the Dallas International District**

In 2011, the City of Dallas designated the Valley View-Galleria area as a “new regional downtown” focused on the best practices of New Urbanism, including an iconic 20-acre park surrounded by a high-density, mixed-income, and walkable community. This vision was adopted by the City Council in 2013 and is consistent with an international trend to repurpose former shopping mall sites.

Since 2013, City of Dallas staff and partners have been diligently working to realize this vision, including a \$10 million “Civic Innovation Zone” grant from NCTCOG for a mobility pilot and a \$5.4 million Complete Street project for Montfort Drive, which is currently under construction. In 2020, as the Valley View Mall was closer to being taken down and infrastructure below was prepared for a large-scale development, the City of Dallas stepped up efforts to bring together partners to turn the vision into reality.

Through that collaborative effort, which included extensive primary and secondary community research, the City capitalized on its status as a “global city” to be one of the first cities to start an “International District.” Since that decision, close to 40 (and counting) cities have followed Dallas’ lead, including within the North Texas region (e.g., Fort Worth’s International Hub, Arlington’s International Corridor) – noting the fast-growing foreign-born population coming to the area to build businesses, start families, and support our region’s growth. Now, we are garnering state and national recognition. This past week, Nicholas Lalpui, Region 4 Regional Administrator for the U.S. Department of Labor, praised the new International District Workforce Center at its opening as “the first American Job Center in an international district.”

The *Dallas Business Journal* has identified the Dallas International District as one of the top 6 developments to watch in Dallas. The Dallas International District has also been the source of strong media attention as plans continue to evolve.

Dallas is unique in that its International District is not just focused primarily on tourism or trade but is a place-based initiative in the heart of North Texas and is planned as an innovative, self-contained neighborhood. In the 2 years since its adoption, the Dallas International District has made significant progress, including:

- **Prism Center.** The City of Dallas purchased the Prism Center (which sits within the 20-acre park) to serve as an international business and community center that will include international chambers of commerce to encourage global exchange. **Both the French Trade Office and the European American Chamber of Commerce – Texas have**

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since moved into the building with more to follow. The City is also using the Prism Center as the location of its Night Markets – which continues to build community and celebrate diverse cultures. The [next event](#) is scheduled for Saturday, September 9, to help kick off Welcoming Week.

- **Workforce Center**. This past week, Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas along with the City of Dallas and Dallas County [opened a first-of-its-kind American Job Center](#) in an International District serving Northern Dallas County and its growing international community.
- **Dallas ISD School**. A new Dallas ISD International STEAM Academy is planned to launch within the District in 2025.
- **International Park**. The 20-acre park (now called *Dallas International Commons*) is the linchpin for the continued growth of the vision behind the Dallas International District. Not only is the proposed park located in a park (source: Trust for Public Land) and cultural desert (City of Dallas Cultural Plan), but the Dallas International Commons has an ability to be a catalyst for future economic development growing our city's tax base. A recent HR&A Advisors report calculated a 40:1 return on park investment, which is the highest return for any park project to-date.

To learn more about the [Dallas International District](#), please visit the website, including the new page on the [Dallas International Commons](#) and a [new video series](#) with common questions answered by the team behind the project.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at 214.670.5797 or carrie.rogers@dallas.gov.

Sincerely,



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Director
Office of Government Affairs

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