

DR. THERESA DANIEL

DALLAS COUNTY COMMISSIONER

DISTRICT 1 NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2017



2016 has certainly zipped by!! The good news is that we are all here to witness its passing. With that, I would also like to say that I could not have made any progress without all of you. Whether you are there as a resident, a voter, a colleague, an advisor or a contributor, it takes all of us to accomplish anything of merit. As you will see in the following updates, we are deeply involved in issues that impact you. So, thank you for your support of events in Dallas County and for being there. Let us feel good about moving forward toward our goals.

2016 IN BRIEF

Health and Human Services

The year has been quite active for the health of residents in Dallas County. We witnessed the outbreak of several viruses such as Zika and the most recent uptick in the cases of Mumps. We are nearing the end of the first full year of the New Parkland Hospital which is the safety-net for the uninsured. Whether it is leading policy to increase housing for our citizens with behavioral health issues or supporting new ways in 2017 to deliver mental health and substance use services to the Medicaid and uninsured populations, I am committed to doing what it takes to improve the lives of all citizens in Dallas County, particularly those who are most vulnerable.

As co-chair of the Behavior Health Leadership Team and chair of the Behavioral Health Housing Work Group, we are actively seeking permanent supportive housing for individuals with mental health and/or substance use needs away from the emergency rooms and the county jail. This effort will provide these individuals access to services that will treat and stabilize their conditions, as well as case managers to help them better manage their lives. I am also working with other stakeholders to address the housing shortage by establishing an inter-governmental agency that will set policy, funding priorities, and leverage local, state, and federal resources to accelerate our progress.

Criminal Justice

We have been participating on a national level with the White House's Data-Driven Justice Initiative that is focused on developing assessment tools for meaningful data collection and cooperative activities related to our mental health and jail populations. The goal is, like the Caruth Smart Justice Grant and the Stepping Up initiative,

to get the proper care for people currently in jail with mental health issues and to reduce the number of people that are in jail solely for lack of coordinated services.

Trails

I have embraced the multimodal philosophy of travel and believe you should have choices about how you get where you want or need to be. Trails have become an integral part of that plan and we are continuing to build and connect the trail systems in District 1 among the member cities of Dallas, Richardson, Garland and Mesquite.

Roads and Bridges

Another way of helping you move through the county is by routinely partnering with our municipalities to share in the expenses of repairing, replacing and constructing roads. To date, we have worked on 13 projects in Dallas, have plans to help repair TxDOT designated bridges in Garland, repair Spring Valley Road in Richardson and work on the roads that connect to Mesquite. We are also working to transform our urban Road and Bridge office located in Garland into a facility that will provide space for community meetings and other interactions. I will host a meeting to share my vision and listen to your input about how a redesign can benefit our community.

Clean Air

I continue to push for higher standards for the air we all breathe. Dallas County has an extraordinarily high rate of asthma, allergies and lung related issues because of the way the winds blow here. We see the effects of the coal-fired energy plants to our East that result in lost school and work days, premature deaths and a negative impact to our economy. I will continue to work with, and fight if necessary, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Environmental Protection Agency to make sure Dallas County residents have clean air.

Obviously I am not done yet, so the upcoming year will be busy. Improvement in health/mental health services, criminal justice delivery, trails and roads, and clean air issues all in the environment of maintaining county buildings and helping our 6,500 employees deliver better services. Bring on 2017 and may it be a good one for you, yours and all of Dallas County!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Theresa M. Daniel".



Dallas County
District 1

The Year in Pictures

