

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE August 15, 2008

TO Members of the City Council Legislative Ad Hoc Committee: Dr. Elba Garcia, Linda Koop, Pauline Medrano, Ron Natinsky, Dave Neumann, Mitchell Rasansky, and Steve Salazar

SUBJECT City Council Travel Policy

On Tuesday, August 19, 2008, you will be briefed on the policies that govern City Council travel. Attached are the briefing materials for you to review prior to Tuesday's discussion.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Suhm'.

Mary K. Suhm
City Manager

**BRIEFING TO THE
CITY COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE AD HOC
COMMITTEE**

CITY COUNCIL TRAVEL

August 19, 2008

Background

In order to serve the travel requirements of Dallas City Councilmembers, the City of Dallas provides a modest amount of funding for Councilmembers to engage in activities that benefit the City. Additionally, the Mayor and many of the City Councilmembers participate in organizations that advocate on behalf of municipalities, such as the US Conference of Mayors, the National League of Cities, the Texas Municipal League and other state and national public interest groups. The City's participation in these organizations not only raises the profile of the City of Dallas, but also ensures that the interests of the City of Dallas and the North Texas region are adequately represented when policy or legislative positions are formulated. Lastly, it is often necessary for councilmembers to travel to promote the economic development interests of the City.

Sources of Funding for Travel

There are currently four sources of City funding for Mayor and Councilmember travel:

1. City Council Travel Budget:

Funds are set aside each year specifically for Council Travel. For FY 2007-08, \$60,000 was budgeted in org 1977. Each councilmember is allocated \$4,000. These funds can and should be used for travel prior to a Councilmember's use of individual officeholder accounts, and can be used for any City-related travel purposes. Each council assistant is responsible for keeping track of travel that is charged to this org.

2. Individual Officeholder Account:

For FY 2007-08, each Councilmember receives an annual office budget of \$16,400 each. The Mayor Pro Tem and Deputy Mayor Pro Tem receive an annual office budget of \$21,150 each, and the Mayor receives an annual office budget of \$29,700. Councilmembers are not restricted from using individual officeholder accounts for City-related travel purposes.

3. Legislative Travel Funds

In an effort to promote the City of Dallas federal and state legislative agendas as determined by the City Council, funds are set aside each year for councilmember travel to Washington, DC and Austin.

In 1994, the City Council adopted a resolution governing the use of legislative travel funds. This policy was modified slightly in 2006. The policy establishes the following:

- Funds must be used to pursue items on the Dallas City Council approved federal or state legislative programs, or a matter set forth in a written request from the City Attorney or City Manager to the Chair of the Legislative Ad Hoc Committee or the Mayor.
- Prior approval will be obtained for the use of travel funds by the Legislative Ad Hoc Committee, if time permits, or by one of the following three individuals: the Chair of the Legislative Ad Hoc Committee, the Mayor, or the City Manager.
- The funds shall not be used for travel to the annual Texas Municipal League meeting or national meetings of the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National League of Cities. Travel to these meetings should be paid out of the city council travel budget or individual officeholder accounts.

4. Economic Development Travel Funds

Many councilmembers engage in economic development activities that benefit the City. In 2006, the City Council adopted a resolution governing the use of economic development travel funds. The policy establishes the following:

- Funds must be used to pursue items related to the City of Dallas' strategic plan for economic development.
- Prior approval will be obtained for the use of travel funds. If time permits, the Economic Development Committee shall approve the travel at a regularly scheduled committee meeting. If time does not permit, then travel may be approved by two of the following three individuals: the Mayor, the Chair of the Economic Development Committee, or the Vice Chair of the Economic Development Committee.