

MICHAEL S. RAWLINGS
Mayor of Dallas

February 17, 2015

Dear Friend,

As your Mayor for the past three and a half years, I'm humbled to lead what I believe is one of the great cities in America. Working together with the various communities that weave together to create the tapestry of our city, *we're making Dallas even better.*

I also believe that we're just beginning to realize our true potential, and that the very best days for our city still lie ahead. That's why, along with my wife Micki, I made the important decision to run for re-election as your Mayor.

I'm honored to serve you, and I'm proud of what we've accomplished as a city. Here is just a snapshot of where we've come over the past few years:

- Crime is down for the 11th year in a row, with an unprecedented decrease in violent crimes. In fact, our murder rate is the lowest it's been since the 1930's.
- Crime is down 11% in our city's 27 hotspots, which are the areas that tend to generate a disproportionate number of our city's crimes – this is a critical accomplishment.
- Our city has enjoyed 48 months of economic growth, adding jobs at an impressive rate and outpacing active working citizens by nearly 5% nationally.
- Property values are on the rise again, going up more than 4% in 2013, and continuing to climb in 2014.
- Retail vacancies are the lowest since 2007, and sales tax revenues increased nearly 6% in 2014.
- And finally, a recent study showed that Dallas citizens rate their quality of life, quality of service from their city and value from their tax dollars significantly higher than the national average.

We're doing it right here in Dallas. But as a young, healthy, growing city that's only beginning to realize it's potential, I feel now is not the time to take our foot off the gas pedal and coast on a good economy. *Instead, it's the perfect time to address the longer-term issues that will truly shape the Dallas of our next generation.*

If I'm fortunate enough to earn re-election as Mayor, my focus will be taking on these game-changing issues. And while I understand that the last thing on your mind right now is reading a long political letter – I hope you will take a few minutes to finish reading this letter, and understand my vision for our city and its future:

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Continued focus on the basics. We can't be a great city without basic services and infrastructure. That means a solid network of streets, public transit and bike lanes that connects all parts of our city. Parks and green spaces that promote a healthy lifestyle and improve our quality of life. And, fire and police protection that gives us all security and peace of mind. The number one job of a city is to keep citizens safe and provide the infrastructure for life and growth – and as Mayor, I will continue to protect, improve and establish a worthy foundation for tomorrow's Dallas.

Improving public schools. My parents were both teachers and my son and daughter have worked as teachers, so for me, education is personal. It changed my life, and I have no doubt quality education will redirect our city and the lives of so many of our Dallas families if *we can just get it right*. Our schools have been in need for decades, so this is not a problem that will be easily solved – we're not going to get it perfect on the first try – but there's no other issue that will impact our future more. It's a challenge we must continue to confront. As Mayor, I'm committed to continuing to push through political, racial, socioeconomic and geographic barriers to find solutions on this critical issue. I have spoken my mind and will continue to do so because better schools are a necessity for growth – we will never reach our full potential without taking on this issue.

Developing Southern Dallas. On a personal level, one of my proudest accomplishments as Mayor so far has been launching GrowSouth, creating a tangible “to-do” list that supports stronger neighborhoods and new growth in Southern Dallas. In just three years, we've taken down more than 850 unsafe, vacant homes, which opens up real estate opportunities and reduces crime – and for the first time, the investment rate in Southern Dallas is rising at a greater percentage than Northern Dallas.

We've attracted new developments like The Home Depot Distribution Center, Lancaster Urban Village and Trinity Groves (with more than 14 new restaurants and gathering places and more to come) – these projects and others have led the revitalization of Southern Dallas, creating new jobs, new pockets of economic vibrancy, and generating new tax revenues that boost our entire city. As Mayor, I'll continue being one of Southern Dallas' biggest advocates – working to bring new growth, because Southern Dallas is not a charity case – it is one of the best investment opportunities in the region.

I also continue to believe that the Trinity River Corridor Project will be the most transformative capital project for Southern Dallas, as well as *all of Dallas*, in the 21st century. It's critical that we build the parkway, which is key to providing accessibility and mobility for workers in all parts of our city, but especially those who live in the South and drive throughout the city to their jobs. We must also use this opportunity to create the parks and public spaces that provide connectivity between North and South – it's time for Dallas to be whole and, done properly, the Trinity can accomplish that goal.

As your Mayor for the past three and a half years, I hope I've demonstrated the passion I have for our city. I hope that you are proud of where we are going as a city – I know I am.

I also hope that you're proud of how we've conducted ourselves on a world stage not only in the spotlight of the JFK 50th Anniversary and as host of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, but also in the crisis of being home of the first Ebola case in the U.S., and in tackling ugly issues like domestic violence.

For me, that's what running for re-election is all about – helping our city to shine, under good circumstances or bad, continuing a pursuit of excellence and working to help this city that I love realize its full potential. *It's that simple.*

If you agree with this vision for Dallas, with the priorities I've outlined – and if you agree that the Dallas of tomorrow is defined by actions we take today, then I would be honored to have your support in my campaign for re-election. Please take just a moment to fill out and send back the enclosed reply card.

You can help by listing your name as an endorsement, by taking a yard sign, and by making a donation. But most importantly, I would like to know what you love about our city, and what you think we can do to make it even better. I believe that being a good leader means listening – so please know that your input is not only valuable, but it's also necessary.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter – it shows your concern and commitment to our city and its future. I'm honored to serve as your Mayor, and I look forward to earning the job of serving our city for another four years.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Rawlings", written in a cursive style.

Mike Rawlings
Mayor of Dallas

