



## ASSOCIATION OF INSPECTORS GENERAL

524 West 59th Street, 53334HH  
New York, NY, 10019  
212-237-8001

July 26, 2024

Honorable Mayor Johnson and  
Members of the City Council  
1500 Marilla Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Dallas, TX 75201

### ***Re: Inclusion of Charter Amendment Questions on Office of Inspector General***

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

The Association of Inspectors General (AIG) is an independent, non-partisan 501(c)(3) organization that has represented thousands of members working in hundreds of Inspectors General offices across the United States and internationally in advancing the mission of independent oversight in government for more than 30 years. The AIG promulgates the Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General, known as the Green Book; that provides guidance and best practices considered to be the gold standard for state and local government Offices of Inspector General.

The AIG is following the Charter Amendment process as it relates to potential enhancements to the independence and effectiveness of the Dallas Office of Inspector General (Dallas OIG).

The AIG enthusiastically supports proposals to amend the City Charter and incorporate critical elements of independence and establish law enforcement authority. Indeed, putting the inclusion of these issues before the residents of Dallas for a vote represents the highest level of independence for the OIG.

#### Independent Legal Counsel

The AIG Principles and Standards establishes those elements necessary for the establishment of the “Legal Authority for an Office of Inspector” including that of “Independence” where “Independent counsel” is addressed:

The OIG should have on staff, or have access to, legal counsel to advise the OIG, independent of the agency or jurisdiction subject to the OIG’s oversight.

The ability of an OIG to access fully independent legal counsel when it determines that doing so is appropriate is among the most fundamental elements of independence and one for which there is no substitute. Indeed, without it, inherent conflicts of interest will inevitably impair the efficiency and effectiveness of an OIG. Given the nature of the subject matter and the parties that will inevitably be under review in OIG matters, it is simply not possible for the counsel representing the City of Dallas to also represent the Dallas OIG, an entity charged with conducting independent investigations within City Government.

### Budget Independence & Security

The AIG Principles and Standards establishes those elements necessary for the establishment of the “Legal Authority for an Office of Inspector” including that of “Independence” where “Funding” is addressed:

The OIG should be funded through a mechanism that will provide adequate funding to perform its mission without subjecting it to internal or external impairments to its independence. For example, some OIGs are funded based upon a portion of the budget of the agency or jurisdiction subject to the OIG’s oversight, or through a dedicated percentage (millage) of the jurisdiction’s revenues.

Additionally, the AIG supports provisions that ensure a heightened level of budget security also impacts the independence of OIGs. The AIG supports budgeting provisions that require OIG budgets to be coded independently of other elements of government, that any reduction in budget be specifically addressed during a public meeting with opportunity for debate and public input, be supported with specificity in writing, and require more than a simple majority vote.

These provisions and others like them that ensure an OIG’s budget independence and security create important transparency budget decisionmakers are subject to the OIG’s jurisdiction.

### Law Enforcement Authority

The AIG Principles and Standards section on “Legal Authority for an Office of Inspector General” includes “law enforcement authority (police powers)” as an appropriate exercise of an OIG’s authority. Indeed, OIGs at all levels of government are vested with law enforcement powers. The AIG supports the inclusion of this and other powers and duties for Dallas OIG.

The benefits of an independent and robust Inspector General's office, including greater accountability and enhanced public trust are undeniable.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions if we may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Will Fletcher

President, Association of Inspectors General

DM/wf

cc:

Eric L. Johnson, Mayor  
Chad West, District 1  
Jesses Moreno, District 2  
Zarin Gracey, District 3  
Carolyn King Arnold, District 4  
Jaime Resendez, District 5  
Omar Narvaez, District 6  
Adam Bazaldua, District 7  
Tennell Atkins, District 8  
Paula Blackmon, District 9  
Kathy Stewart, District 10  
Jaynie Schultz, District 11  
Cara Mendelsohn, District 12  
Gay Donnell Willis, District 13  
Paul Ridley, District 14