



CITY OF WACO

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Waco Selected to Participate in “What Works Cities” Initiative

Waco is Now One of Twenty-one American Cities Participating in the Nation’s Most Comprehensive Initiative to Help City Halls Use Data and Evidence to Improve Residents’ Lives.

Waco, Texas (December 10, 2015) – Today, Mayor Malcolm Duncan, Jr. announced that Waco has been selected to participate in Bloomberg Philanthropies’ “What Works Cities” program – one of the largest-ever philanthropic efforts to enhance the use of data and evidence in the public sector. Launched in April 2015, the \$42 million initiative is already providing support to City Halls in eight cities and will admit up to 100 cities on a rolling basis through 2017.

“The What Works program gives the City of Waco access to national organizations with expertise in managing municipal data,” said Mayor Duncan. “That knowledge will help us deliver meaningful, accurate public data to our citizens in a manner that is easily accessible and understandable.”

Waco joins twelve other new cities in publicly committing to enhance their use of data and evidence to improve services, inform local decision making and engage residents. Along with the mayors of Anchorage, Alaska; Bellevue, Washington; Cambridge, Massachusetts; Denton, Texas; Denver, Colorado; Independence, Missouri; Las Vegas, Nevada; Lexington, Kentucky; Saint Paul, Minnesota; San Jose, California; San Francisco, California and Tacoma, Washington, the City of Waco will receive support from world class experts in addressing local issues specific to our city.

What Works Cities collaborates with participating municipalities to review their current use of data and evidence, understand where they are utilizing best practices and identify areas for growth. Through its expert partners, What Works Cities will help Waco through customized approaches that will optimize the use of data and evidence for daily operations and keeping our public informed.

The consortium of leading organizations that has been assembled by Bloomberg Philanthropies to provide a program of support includes Results for America; the Center for Government Excellence at Johns Hopkins University; the Government Performance Lab at the Harvard Kennedy School; Sunlight Foundation; and The Behavioral Insights Team.

"Cities around the country are looking to use data more effectively, and the new What Works cities range from Alaska to the East Coast. They understand that data is a tool that every city can use to improve public services, and our What Works Cities initiative will help them do just that," said Michael R. Bloomberg.

With the addition of the new cities to the program, What Works Cities is now working in 21 cities in 15 states, the majority of which are “red” states. Fully one-third of the 21 cities state they are “just starting out” using data and evidence. The selected What Works Cities represent over 8 million Americans, with annual budgets exceeding a combined \$31 billion. Ten of the 21 mayors are in their first term in office; and four of the 21 mayors are women. The cities’ major industries include education, high-technology, oil refining, finance, manufacturing, health care and tourism.

Bloomberg Philanthropies named the first eight cities in August 2015. Since then, these cities have made substantial progress by passing open data policies, launching performance management programs, and undertaking new efforts to evaluate programs and manage contracts more effectively.

To receive updates on the What Works Cities initiative, please visit www.whatworkscities.org.

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