Mike Rawlings came to Dallas in 1976 with a couple hundred dollars in his pocket and plans to work as a radio reporter. He didn't think he'd stay long. But over the next four decades, Rawlings proved that Dallas is truly a city of opportunity.

Today, Mike Rawlings is the 61st mayor of Dallas and the longest-serving mayor in more than 57 years. Over more than seven years in office, he has focused on spurring economic development in the long-overlooked southern portion of Dallas through his GrowSouth initiative, improving public education, combatting poverty and domestic violence, developing parks, elevating the city's international profile and turning Dallas into a top destination for artists, young professionals, families and corporations.

A Borger, Texas, native and proud Boston College graduate, Mayor Rawlings worked his way up from an entry-level position at TracyLocke, then the largest advertising agency in the South, to become the CEO. Later, he took the helm of the world's largest pizza company, Pizza Hut, and grew it to record sales. He previously served as Chairman and Managing Partner of private equity firm CIC Partners, where he is currently the vice chairman.

During the time that Mayor Rawlings has led the ninth-largest city in America, Dallas has experienced tremendous economic growth. The year that he took office, the overall property value in the city was $83 billion. That value as of July 2018 was $130 billion, an increase of about 56 percent. The city's labor force has grown every year since Rawlings took office and unemployment was reported to be 3.4 percent as of October 2018, the 44th consecutive month that Dallas equaled or outperformed the national and state unemployment rate.

The success is not confined to one area of the city, as the mayor's GrowSouth initiative has led to major progress in southern Dallas. From fiscal 2011 to 2018, the southern Dallas tax base grew by 60 percent.

Thanks to the incredible work of the Dallas Police Department, the city is also the safest it has been in decades. Per capita crime is reported to be at levels not seen since the 1960s.

Mayor Rawlings also continues to keep Dallas in the national and international spotlight. In 2016, he was selected as a Vital Voices Global Partnership honoree for his work to eradicate domestic violence. He was the 2017 recipient of the Joseph P. Riley Jr. Award for Leadership in Urban Design. And last year he received the National Award for Local Arts Leadership from Americans for the Arts and the U.S. Conference of Mayors. He is as an executive committee
member for the U.S. Conference of Mayor and travels the globe as a member of the DFW International Airport Board of Directors.

Both DFW Airport and Dallas Love Field airport received major accolades during the mayor's tenure. In 2019, DFW Airport was named the world's top airport by Air Transport World, the leading media brand serving the global airline and commercial air transport industry for more than 50 years. Also this year, customer service at both DFW Airport and Dallas Love Field was recognized as among the best in North America by Airports Council International.

Public service has long been important to Mayor Rawlings. In the years before his 2011 election as mayor, he served as the Chair of the Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau (VisitDallas), the city's Homeless Czar and president of the Dallas Park Board. Voters re-elected Mayor Rawlings by a wide margin in 2015 to his second and final four-year term, which runs through June 2019.

Rawlings and his wife, Micki, live in the Preston Hollow neighborhood of Dallas. Their daughter, Michelle, an artist, and their son, Gunnar, and his wife, Gaby, also live in Dallas.