

ORDINANCE NO. 3977

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FARMERS BRANCH, TEXAS, ORDERING AN ELECTION TO BE HELD IN AND THROUGHOUT THE CITY OF FARMERS BRANCH, TEXAS, ON MAY 2, 2026, TO DISSOLVE THE DALLAS AREA RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM (DART) IN THE CITY OF FARMERS BRANCH, TEXAS, SUBJECT TO THE CONTINUED COLLECTION OF SALES TAXES FOR THE PERIOD REQUIRED BY LAW; PROVIDING FOR LOCATION OF POLLING PLACES TO BE DESIGNATED AT A LATER DATE; PROVIDING FOR EARLY VOTING; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Farmers Branch has partnered with DART for decades, contributing \$500 million since 1984. Over the years, the City has made repeated requests for updated transit service and has formally asked for data demonstrating the return on its investment.

WHEREAS, from inception to 2025, Farmers Branch has contributed over \$500 million to DART. Independent analysis shows that in 2023, the City contributed \$24.3 million, while only \$20.8 million was spent in Farmers Branch.

WHEREAS, while DART promotes itself as a regional transit system, its operations are funded almost exclusively by thirteen member cities. A truly regional transportation framework requires a funding mechanism that makes it equitable and desirable for any municipality to join. DART's membership has never expanded, even though millions of people have moved into the Metroplex; and

WHEREAS, DART member cities, having dedicated one percent of their local sales tax to support the regional transit system, operate at a competitive disadvantage relative to non-member cities in terms of fiscal flexibility and budgeting, an inequity reflected in DART's inability to attract new member cities since its inception, underscoring the structural challenges of its current business model; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature, through enactment of Senate Bill 2 during the 86th Legislative Session in 2019, established a statutory limitation on the annual increase in property tax revenue for most local taxing units to 3.5 percent over the preceding year unless a higher rate is approved by voters; and

WHEREAS, this state-imposed revenue cap places municipalities that dedicate one percent of their local sales tax to regional transit agencies at a distinct fiscal disadvantage, as their capacity to generate and allocate discretionary revenues for essential municipal services, including public safety, emergency response, and capital infrastructure improvements, is allocated to mass transit.

THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Farmers Branch has determined that it is in the best interest of the City to call an election and submit the issue of continued participation in DART to the citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FARMERS BRANCH, TEXAS, THAT:

Section I. The City Council, by its own initiative, hereby calls a special election to be held on Saturday, May 2, 2026, at which special election the following proposition shall be submitted to the qualified voters of the City of Farmers Branch:

Shall the Dallas Area Rapid Transit System be continued in the City of Farmers Branch?

Yes _____
No _____

Section II. The Polling Places and county election precincts whose qualified voters shall cast ballots at such locations in the above-mentioned election, shall be the regular polling places and regular precincts for elections conducted in the City of Farmers Branch, and will be designated at a later date; and will be published in a Notice of Election, as required by law.

Section III. The polling places, county vote centers, and the county election precincts whose qualified voters shall cast ballots at such locations in the City of Farmers Branch for the 2026 Special Election will be designated by the Dallas County Election Administrators. A full list of voting locations will be provided in a subsequent Election Notice.

Section IV. Early voting by personal appearance for the above-designated election shall be conducted at the polling places, county vote centers, and the county election precincts, whose qualified voters shall cast ballots at such locations in the City of Farmers Branch for the 2026 Special Election will be designated by the Dallas County Election Administrators. A list of voting locations and hours will be provided in a subsequent Election Notice.

City of Farmers Branch Main Early Voting Location
Farmers Branch Manske Library
13613 Webb Chapel Road
Farmers Branch, TX 75234

Applications for ballots by mail shall be mailed to the county address below and must be received no later than the close of business on Monday, April 20, 2026:

Dallas County Elections
Paul Adams
Elections Administrator
Dallas County Elections Administration
1520 Round Table Drive
Dallas, TX 75247

Section V. The Mayor, through the City Secretary, is hereby authorized and directed to publish and/or post, in the time and manner prescribed by law, all notices required to be so published and/or posted in connection with the conduct of this election.

Section VI. The governing body will give notice of the election pursuant to Texas Transportation Code Section 452.655 (c) to the executive committee of the authority, the Texas Department of Transportation, and the comptroller immediately upon calling the election.

Section VII. This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its passage.

DULY PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 4TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2025.

Terry Lynne, Mayor

ATTEST:

Erin Flores, City Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Nicole Corr, City Attorney