



## For Immediate Release

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## Plano Explores Option for DART Withdrawal

In response to citizen inquiries regarding City of Plano withdrawal from the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) service area, Plano staff has worked with DART to determine the steps required to initiate such a process.

DART President Gary Thomas said in a March 5 letter to the City, "Chapter 452, Subchapter Q of the *Texas Transportation Code* requires Council action, a canvassing of the vote and a formal acknowledgment to DART to withdraw...the next opportunity for a withdrawal election is 2014."

While service to Plano would immediately cease if voters provided the required majority to approve withdrawal, contractual payment of sales tax to DART would continue for an estimated 8.8 - 16 years depending on collection rates at that time.

Since joining DART in 1984 Plano has contributed nearly \$794 million, with \$53.1 million in sales tax funding the current 2009 contribution.

While criticism of DART and the City's funding contribution has been questioned by some of Plano's citizens, there is no indication how a public vote for withdrawal might go.

Plano officials acknowledge the downside to any future savings would be the elimination of both bus and light rail service to Plano residents. Nine Plano bus routes currently boast ridership of over 974,000 persons annually, with light rail

service making Plano a regional destination for not only daily commuters but for tourists and visitors as well.

DART estimates they have invested over \$126 million in direct infrastructure improvements in Plano through permanent transit facilities, with an additional \$40 million invested in street and signal improvements. Future plans call for connections to DART's western service area, including DFW Airport.