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Dallas city manager hopes to keep AT&T 'in the city'

Dallas Business Journal

By [Plamedie Ifasso](#) – Staff Writer, Dallas Business Journal

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The city manager and the Dallas EDC shared their commitment to keeping AT&T in the city during a Sept. 2 meeting. JAKE DEAN

Dallas officials are working to keep [AT&T Inc.](#)'s headquarters in the city, City Manager Kimberly Tolbert told the Dallas Economic Development Corp. on Sept. 2.

During her briefing to the Dallas EDC board, Tolbert shared that the city is actively working to ensure that the "future of AT&T is in the city of Dallas." Her comments came a few days after Dallas Business Journal reported that the telecommunications giant has [explored large office sites in the suburbs](#), which could portend a headquarters move, although AT&T has not commented on the search.

The company has toured sites including The Park at Legacy, a 107-acre mixed-use corporate campus at 6501 Legacy Drive in Plano, sources told DBJ.

It's unclear what, if any, incentives or other deals Dallas could be offering AT&T as part of negotiations.

Public safety concerns from some AT&T executives and a desire to shorten commutes after the company mandated five days in office per week are among the reasons sources have cited for the company's real estate search.

Tolbert also revealed that she and Linda McMahon, CEO of the Dallas EDC, have met with AT&T (NYSE: T) as a part of a business retention strategy in which they checked in with existing businesses. The business retention meetings saw the pair check in with several other organizations such as Texas Instruments, Comerica and Jacobs, Tolbert said.

"The more we're out there doing those meetings, the more we can get in front of those issues," Tolbert said. She said she was "pleased to" meet with John Stankey, AT&T's CEO, "to hear about some of the challenges. And I said, 'Let's get to work because I'm a problem solver.'"

Linda McMahon, CEO of the Dallas EDC, echoed Tolbert's sentiments about [keeping AT&T in Dallas](#) in an emailed statement to the Dallas Business Journal and said that the company and its employees are "part of Dallas; they are integral to the city's very identity."

"We understand that businesses must continually assess what best serves their interests, customers, and shareholders," McMahon said. "According to the latest report from the Dallas Business Journal, AT&T is actively engaged in this evaluation process. We deeply value the significant contributions AT&T has made to our city and remain dedicated to ensuring that Dallas continues to be their home for global headquarters."

AT&T has been headquartered in Whitacre Tower in downtown Dallas since 2008. It's unclear if any moves the organization is thinking through could result in it relocating its headquarters, but the new comments from Tolbert and the Dallas EDC highlight how the city is stepping in to try and avert that possibility.

"We've got to make sure, at all costs, they stay in the city of Dallas," Gilbert Gerst, chairman of the Dallas EDC board, said during the Sept. 2 meeting. "We'd love for them to stay downtown but hopefully in the city of Dallas."

AT&T is the second largest public company in North Texas, with a total revenue of about \$122 billion and approximately 141,990 employees. The company is the anchor tenant at Whitacre Tower and leased its space until August 2030.

According to Steve Triolet, senior vice president of research and market forecasting for Partners, AT&T is looking for about 1 million square feet in suburbs including Richardson, Irving and Plano.

Boston Consulting Group estimated in a February 2025 report that an AT&T out of Dallas move could result in a 30% decrease in property values, which could mean a \$62 million loss in annual property tax revenue.

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