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To: [Maura Gast](#)
Subject: Irving City Council votes to cancel DART exit election
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Irving City Council votes to cancel DART exit election

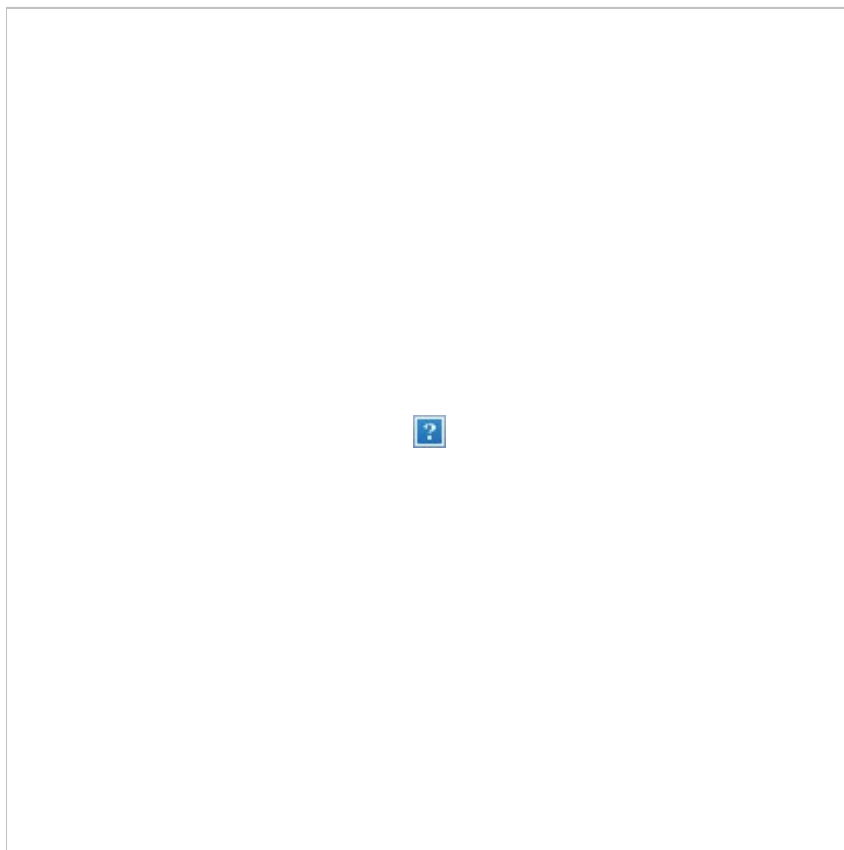
The city joined Plano and Farmers Branch in staying with the transit agency.

By [Angela Mathew](#)

Staff writer

Dallals Morning News

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Irving City Council members vote 7-2 in favor of canceling the upcoming special election in reference to keeping DART services for the citizens of Irving. The scheduled regular City of Irving city council meeting was held at Irving City Hall, 825 W. Irving Boulevard in Irving, on February 26, 2026.

Steve Hamm

The Irving City Council voted 7-2 Thursday night to cancel the May 2 election it had scheduled to ask city residents if they wanted to withdraw from Dallas Area Rapid Transit.

Dozens of residents at the meeting who spoke about the importance of transit in their city exchanged smiles and breathed sighs of relief after the council decision

The Irving vote came two days after the Farmers Branch City Council opted to scrap its election as well even as Irving council members voted later in the same evening to go forward with their pullout election.

The Irving vote also followed a DART-proposed [compromise](#) that would return some sales tax contributions to cities in exchange for them staying with the agency.

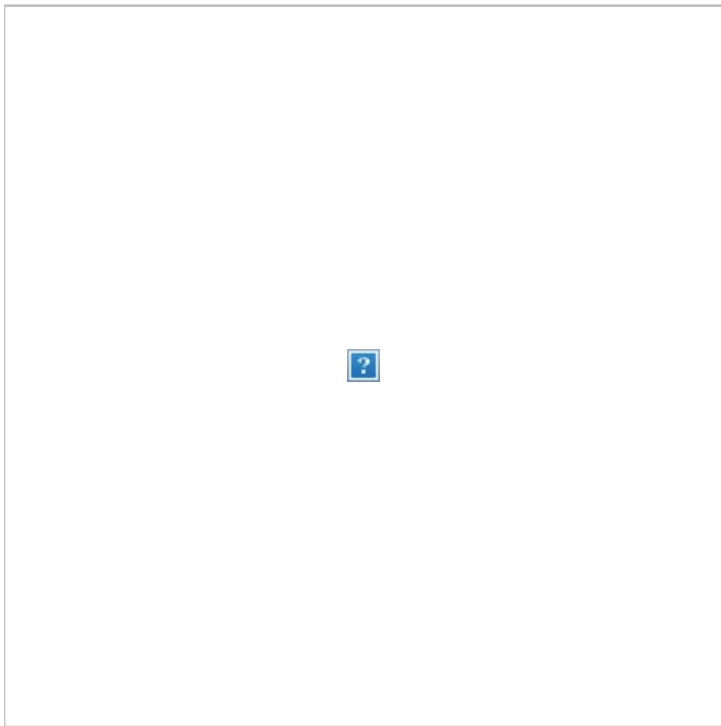
Irving council member Luis Canosa, who along with City Councilman John Bloch, voted against cancelling the election, said he hoped that DART would continue to take the complaints of its suburban members seriously.

“Do we lose all the negotiating power we have?” Canosa asked.

Irving was among six DART member cities that had called an election to withdraw from the transit agency last year, upset over concerns about funding, government, transit safety and the return on investment for the suburban cities contributing revenue to the transit agency.

Irving officials had cited declining ridership, reduced bus service and the expense of turning over 1 cent of its sales tax revenue as reasons to withdraw from DART.

But last week DART, proposed a compromise that would return sales tax contributions to cities. The agency said it would give refunds to its 13 member cities over six years, starting at 5% of annual sales tax collections in the 2026 fiscal year and gradually increasing to 7.5%. Cities would have to use that money for local mobility needs. Irving could see nearly \$54.5 million in returns under that plan.



Irving Mayor Rick Stopfer listens intently as Sharon Barbosa shares accolades for the Mayor and city staff for their diligent work on the DART issue. The scheduled regular City of Irving city council meeting was held at Irving City Hall, 825 W. Irving Boulevard in Irving, on February 26, 2026.

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Irving had initially wanted DART to refund 25% of its sales tax contributions. Mayor Rick Stopfer, who also represents the city on the DART board, struck a collaborative tone and said he hoped the two bodies could work towards that goal in the future.

“Our work is really ahead of us,” he said.

All residents who spoke about DART at Irving’s Thursday night council meeting urged council members not to split from the transit agency.

Liz Mendoza, 34, who uses the Orange Line light rail to commute to her job in Dallas said she thought Irving should accept DART’s compromise and rescind the withdrawal election.

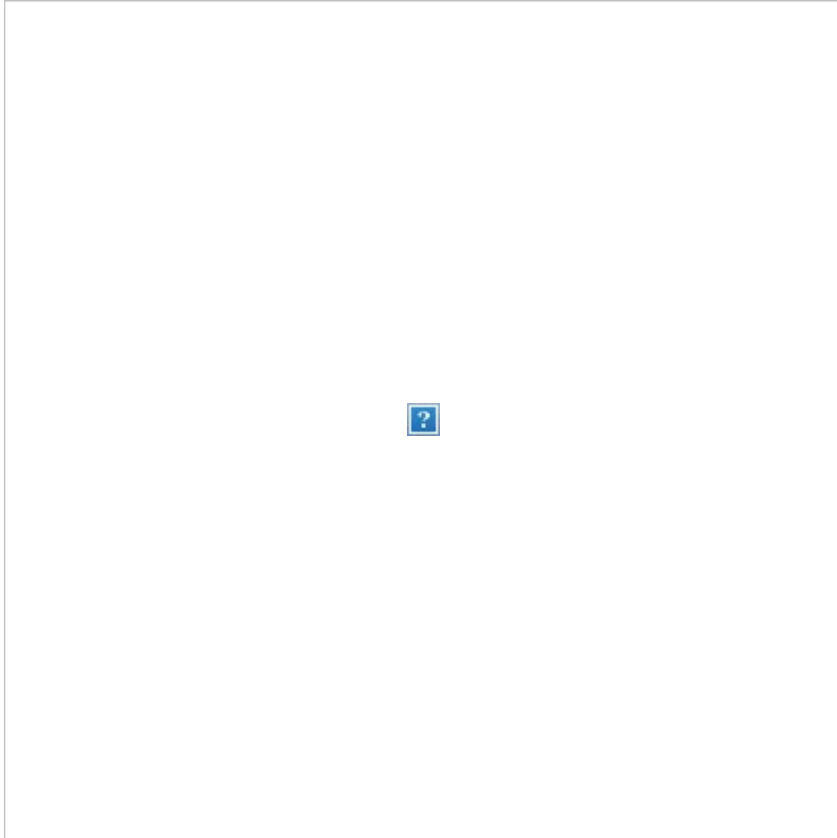
“We do not want this on the ballot,” Mendoza said. “We want to keep DART in Irving.”

Mendoza also spoke in favor of restoring bus routes 225 and 255 that were suspended on Feb. 2 because of a DART budget shortfall. The routes that passed by homeless day

center and low-income apartments have impacted residents' ability to go to work, doctors appointments and the grocery store, Mendoza said.

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“Without these routes, we are cutting lifelines,” Mendoza said.



Irving resident Patricia Owen shares her views on the DART issue during the scheduled regular City of Irving city council meeting which was held at Irving City Hall, 825 W. Irving Boulevard in Irving, on February 26, 2026.

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Council member Abdul Khabeer said he voted for the compromises with DART expecting that the transit agency will be a good partner and restore the service. “My support will be ... based on a belief that we are going to work hard in getting those two routes back,” Khabeer said.

Canosa, who opposed canceling the exit election, said he hoped the transit agency would work on giving suburban cities more governance power. The [Dallas City Council approved](#) a proposed governance framework earlier this month that would shrink the city’s voting power on the DART board to at least 45%, giving other cities more control.

“We will have to keep working with them to ensure that the governance model is addressed,” Canosa said.

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