



DALLAS AREA RAPID TRANSIT

ADVOCACY TOOLKIT:

A Comprehensive Resource for Championing DART



INTRODUCTION

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) is essential for enhancing mobility and driving economic growth in the North Texas region. As we approach the 89th Texas Legislative Session, your organization's support can significantly influence the future of public transit. This toolkit provides detailed strategies, resources, and communication tools to empower you and your members to advocate effectively for DART.





Quick Facts About DART

180,000



riders served daily

13

cities

700

square miles

2.6 million residents

(2024 NCTCOG Estimates)



Since 1983, the 1% sales tax has fueled the growth of DART's multimodal system. The 2000 bond referendum secured another \$2.9 billion to accelerate the much-anticipated light rail expansion. A tax rate reduction would mean the loss of about \$6 billion in revenue over 20 years, requiring severe cuts to service and critical capital projects.



\$687.2 million operating budget

(FY 2024)

\$870.8 million forecasted sales tax revenue

(FY 2024)

CITIES SERVED:



Addison, Carrollton, Cockrell Hill, Dallas, Farmers Branch, Garland, Glenn Heights, Highland Park, Irving, Plano, Richardson, Rowlett, and University Park.

Understanding DART's Legislative Agenda

KEY PRIORITIES

1. Support Key Legislation

Advocate for policies that enhance DART's role as an economic asset.

2. Monitor Legislative Issues

Stay updated on issues like sales tax funding, operational funding, and regional transit studies.

3. Promote Collaboration

Work with stakeholders to strengthen public transit advocacy efforts.

4. Oppose Threatening Legislation

Actively oppose any proposals that could substantially impact DART's mission, finances, governance or operations, including changes to DART's sales tax statute.

5. DART's Strategic Plan

DART's strategic plan focuses on enhancing service quality, expanding regional transit coverage, and integrating sustainable, innovative technologies to meet the evolving transportation needs of the Dallas-Fort Worth area. The plan emphasizes improving accessibility, increasing ridership, and fostering collaboration with stakeholders to create a more connected, customer-centric transit system that supports regional growth and sustainability.

1. Educate Your Members

Resource Materials: Provide brochures, infographics, and presentations that detail DART's impact on the community and the economy.

2. Engage with Stakeholders

Coalition Building: Form coalitions with other transit agencies, local businesses, and community organizations to amplify advocacy efforts.

Joint Events: Organize joint events or forums to discuss public transit issues and gather community support.

3. Communicate with Legislators

Advocacy Days: Plan organized visits to the Capitol where members can meet with their representatives to discuss DART's needs.

Letter-Writing Campaigns: Encourage members to write letters or emails to their legislators advocating for DART.

4. Participate in Advocacy Events

Public Meetings: Attend DART board meetings and public hearings to voice support for initiatives.

5. Educate Your Community

Social Media Campaigns: Utilize social media to disseminate information about DART's importance and its legislative priorities.

Community Meetings: Host informational sessions in local communities to discuss DART's impact and gather feedback.

6. Support Funding Initiatives

Local Funding Initiatives: Advocate for local government support for public transit funding.

Grants and Federal Funding: Stay informed about grant opportunities and support DART in pursuing additional funding sources.

7. Monitor Legislative Developments

Subscribe to Updates: Join mailing lists for updates on legislative sessions and critical bills affecting public transit.





Key Public Transit Organizations Supporting DART


- 1. American Public Transportation Association (APTA):** A national organization representing the public transit industry, APTA advocates for increased investment in public transportation. [apta.com](https://www.apta.com)
- 2. Transit Center:** A nonprofit organization that works to improve public transit across the U.S. and engages in advocacy to strengthen urban mobility. [transitcenter.org](https://www.transitcenter.org)
- 3. Texas Public Transit Association (TPTA):** Advocates for public transit funding and policies that support transit agencies across Texas, including DART. [tpta.org](https://www.tpta.org)
- 4. North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG):** Collaborates on regional transportation planning and funding initiatives, working to enhance public transit in the North Texas region. [nctcog.org](https://www.nctcog.org)
- 5. Mpact:** An organization dedicated to promoting transit-oriented development and public transportation initiatives to enhance communities. [mpactmobility.org](https://www.mpactmobility.org)
- 6. National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO):** Focuses on urban transportation issues and supports policies that improve public transit accessibility and efficiency. [nacto.org](https://www.nacto.org)

Social Media Advocacy

f Sample Facebook Posts @DARTDallas

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (Official DART page)
Nov 20

Did you know that DART transports more than 170,000 passengers every day? Supporting public transit is crucial for our community's growth! Let's work together to ensure DART receives the funding it needs. [#SupportDART #PublicTransit](#)



Like Comment Share

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (Official DART page)
Nov 20

DART helps create jobs, generate investment, and boost property values across the Dallas-Fort Worth area. From supporting local businesses to driving major infrastructure projects, DART is integral to our region's economic future. Ready to ride and support growth? [#DART #EconomicOpportunity #TransitForGrowth #NorthTexas](#)



Like Comment Share

X Sample X Posts @dartmedia

dartmedia @dartmedia • Nov 20

Public transit is vital for economic growth and accessibility! Be a vocal advocate for DART and make your voice heard. [#DARTAdvocacy #TransitMatters](#)



Comment Retweet Like

dartmedia @dartmedia • Nov 20

From job access to economic development, DART is an essential part of the region's growth! Strong transit = strong economy. [#DART #EconomicOpportunity #PublicTransit #NorthTexas](#)



Comment Retweet Like

in Sample Linked Posts @DART (Dallas Area Rapid Transit)

DART (Dallas Area Rapid Transit)
Nov 20


As the North Texas region grows, so does the importance of our public transit system. Join us in advocating for DART to enhance mobility and support economic prosperity. Together, we can make a difference! [#DART #PublicTransit](#)



Like Comment Share

ig Sample Instagram Posts @dartdaily

dartdaily



Like Comment

dartdaily DART is more than just a bus service; it's the backbone of our community! Let's advocate for a strong public transit system. [#DART #SupportPublicTransit](#)
NOV 20





Additional Resources

ADVOCACY MATERIALS

Advocacy Materials: [DART SharePoint](#)

Brochures: Download brochures detailing DART's services and impact.

Infographics: Use visuals to convey statistics and benefits of public transit.

Presentations: Prepare slideshows for community meetings or workshops.

HELPFUL LINKS

DART Official Website: DART.org

Legislative Tracking Tools

GovTrack: govtrack.us

Texas Legislature Online: capitol.texas.gov

Public Transit Advocacy Organizations

American Public Transportation Association (APTA): apta.com

Transit Center: transitcenter.org

Texas Transit Association (TTA): txtransit.org

North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG): nctcog.org

Mpac: mpactmobility.org

National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO): nacto.org

Q: How many cities does DART serve?

A: DART serves 13 cities: Addison, Carrollton, Cockrell Hill, Dallas, Farmers Branch, Garland, Glenn Heights, Highland Park, Irving, Richardson, Rowlett, Plano, and University Park.

Q: Which modes of transportation does DART provide?

A: DART offers light rail, Trinity Railway Express commuter rail, bus routes, GoLink on-demand services, and paratransit services.

Q: How is DART funded?

A: DART's most significant funding source is the 1% sales tax contribution from our member cities, which makes up 75% of DART's funding over the next 20 years. The remaining 25% comes from debt issuances, federal funding, operating revenues, interest income, and other operating and capital contributions.

Q: What is the current discussion around the 1% contribution?

A: Six of the 13 DART city councils approved resolutions that support capping or reducing DART sales tax revenue by 25%.

Q: Do the city councils of the member cities have the authority to enact the reduction?

A: Only the DART Board has the authority to lower the sales tax rate in current state law.

Q: What would happen if the DART Board chose to support the 25% reduction?

A: This would result in service cuts for all modes of transportation, job loss, and the loss of service access for more than 125,000 residents.

Q: How has DART's rider sentiment improved over the past year?"

A: Customer satisfaction rose noticeably in 2024 to 72%. Percentages represent respondents who were somewhat satisfied or very satisfied with the services provided by DART (the top two categories on a 5-point scale of satisfaction). This rating improved 14 percentage points from 58% in 2022 and 62% in 2023.

Stay Connected

For updates on how to support DART, visit [DART.org](https://www.dart.org) or contact us directly.

CONCLUSION

By working collaboratively, we can ensure that DART continues to thrive as a vital transportation resource for the North Texas region. Your advocacy is essential in shaping a robust public transit system that benefits everyone.



DART DRIVES INVESTMENT

The DART System adds value to the regional economy.

BY THE NUMBERS:

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

\$980MIL
IN DEVELOPMENT

within ¼ mile of DART stations

31 PROJECTS

DART continues to transform the communities it serves.

HOW IT HELPS:

- Provides connectivity and multimodal access in a rapidly changing landscape
- Facilitates transit accessibility while enhancing regional economic well-being
- Creates more lifestyle options

JOBS AND WAGES

10K NEW JOBS
\$738MIL
IN WAGES

In 2019-2021, DART put North Texans to work.

HOW IT HELPS:

- Steady employment for North Texas families
- Increased local economic activity
- Financial freedom for project employees

ECONOMIC STIMULUS

\$17BIL
PROPERTY VALUE

Local businesses and communities benefit as property values increase near DART stations.

HOW IT HELPS:

- Developers spend money on local suppliers and services
- Businesses move to our region due to proximity to public transit
- Transit-accessible destinations see increased traffic

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

\$49.6MIL
STATE & LOCAL FUNDS

New transit-oriented development generates substantial tax revenue.

HOW IT HELPS:

- More funds to support North Texas schools, emergency services, healthcare programs, and other community services
- Increased support for the arts and cultural programs
- Neighborhood revitalization and infrastructure improvements

SECURING OUR FUTURE

\$1.8BIL
TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

DART's total contribution to the regional economy was considerable despite the challenges in recent years.

HOW IT HELPS:

- Capital investment in our economy
- New business development
- Planning for population growth and expansion



DART not only transports people from point A to point B. It powers an economic engine that helps create fantastic spaces, adding value to our communities, enhancing the rider experience, and fostering a sustainable and thriving region.



Source: University of North Texas Economic Research Group

Together, let's champion a brighter future for public transit in the region!



CONTACT INFORMATION

Eron Linn

Manager Federal Relations
elinn@DART.org | 214-215-5290

Damarcus Offord

Senior Manager of State Relations
dofford@DART.org | 214-240-6312

Cimajie Best

Senior Manager of Local & Regional Relations
cbest@DART.org | 214-505-9580

