



April 2, 2025

The Honorable Robert Nichols  
The Honorable Tom Craddick  
Texas Capitol  
1100 Congress Avenue  
Austin, Texas 78701

**RE: Legislation impacting DART funding (SB 1557 and HB 3187)**

Dear Chairman Craddick and Chairman Nichols:

The Dallas chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA Dallas) is opposed to Senate Bill 1557 and House Bill 3187 because the legislation would cause irrevocable harm to Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) and to the economic interests of our region. Regional transit is essential to the future of our communities and creates new opportunities for economic growth, connectivity, and urban placemaking.

For over 75 years, AIA Dallas has represented the voice of architects and design professionals in north Texas. With over 2,500 members and 150 allied members, AIA Dallas partners with civic and elected leadership across the region to influence the design of the built environment. Our organization has partnered with DART to advocate for design integration of its stations and improvements to its service plans. We have confidence in CEO Nadine Lee and the locally appointed board of directors to advance our transit system forward in the best interest of the riders and our region.

The proposed legislation would undercut our region's ability to manage growth and mobility challenges in the coming decades. A 25 percent reduction in sales tax contributions from each member city would cripple the agency and harm its ability to serve regional transit riders. DART leadership is focused right now on service delivery and the rider experience; they are investing in more timely bus and train routes, safety and security improvements, and the opening of the Silver Line from Collin County to DFW Airport. A robust transit agency like DART creates new economic development opportunities for the production of new jobs, housing density, and smart growth. It is also a key component in attracting and retaining corporate locations and large-scale events like the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The potential economic harm from this bill to the North Texas region would be devastating.

Thank you for considering this feedback from AIA Dallas. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if we can provide additional information or industry expertise.

Sincerely,



Mattia Flabiano, AIA  
President



Zaida Basora, FAIA  
Executive Director

CC: Senator Angela Paxton  
Senator Brent Hagenbuch  
Senator Tan Parker  
Representative Matt Shaheen  
Dallas City Council  
City Manager Kim Tolbert, City of Dallas  
Becky Walker, Texas Society of Architects

*Enclosure:* City of Dallas resolution (March 26, 2025)

**WHEREAS**, on February 18, 2025, at a special called joint meeting with the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Board, the City of Dallas Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (Committee) received a briefing on DART; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 5, 2025, the Committee voted to recommend that City Council authorize a resolution to express its support for the full funding of the DART system at the current one-percent sales tax level; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Dallas is committed to fostering a community that is connected, accessible, and sustainable; and

**WHEREAS**, DART was established in 1983 through voter approval of a one-percent sales tax to develop, operate, and maintain a public transportation system within a 13-city service area; and

**WHEREAS**, in September 2000, voters within the 13-city DART service area approved a referendum to use the one-percent sales tax collections to support issuance of long-term bonds to upgrade and accelerate expansion of the transit network; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Dallas is the largest DART member city, contributing the most in sales tax revenue and accounting for more than half of the service area's population; and

**WHEREAS**, DART provides essential public transit services that connect Dallas residents to employment, education, healthcare, and recreational opportunities within the City of Dallas and the greater North Texas region and that connect other residents of the greater North Texas Region to employment, education, healthcare, and recreational opportunities in the City of Dallas; and

**WHEREAS**, DART supports regional mobility and economic development by ensuring equitable access to transportation for all residents; and

**WHEREAS**, since 1999, the University of North Texas Economics Research Group has undertaken a series of economic impact studies to document transit-oriented development near DART stations, with the latest 2023 study documenting development value of \$17.1 billion between 1999 and 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Dallas desires an effective public transportation system within the City of Dallas and connecting the City of Dallas to greater North Texas region and recognizes that continued investment in DART is vital for maintaining and expanding services, improving infrastructure, and addressing the growing transportation needs of the City of Dallas and the greater North Texas region; and

**WHEREAS**, the DART Board of Directors has taken steps to enhance collaboration between DART and its member cities, advancing efforts that deliver new and innovative public transportation solutions for the North Texas region; and

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**WHEREAS**, the City of Dallas supports the full funding of DART at the current one-percent sales tax (\$0.01) level to enable DART maintain and expand its services, including within the City of Dallas and the greater North Texas region.

**Now, Therefore,**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DALLAS:**

**SECTION 1.** That the City of Dallas hereby expresses its support for the full funding of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) system at the current one-percent sales tax level and urges local, regional, and state governments to prioritize sustained investment in the public transit system to ensure its long-term viability and success.

**SECTION 2.** That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the DART Board of Directors, the Texas State Legislature, and other relevant stakeholders to demonstrate the City of Dallas' commitment to public transportation growth and success.

**SECTION 3.** That this resolution shall take effect immediately from and after its passage in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the City of Dallas, and it is accordingly so resolved.