

ORDINANCE NO. ____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF UNIVERSITY PARK, TEXAS, ORDERING A SPECIAL ELECTION ON SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2026, TO DISSOLVE THE DALLAS AREA RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM (DART) IN THE CITY OF UNIVERSITY PARK, TEXAS, SUBJECT TO THE CONTINUED COLLECTION OF SALES TAXES FOR THE PERIOD REQUIRED BY LAW; PROVIDING FOR LOCATION OF POLLING PLACES TO BE DESIGNATED AT A LATER DATE; PROVIDING FOR EARLY VOTING; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, in 1983 the City of University Park along with fourteen other municipalities formed the Dallas Area Rapid Transit ("DART") system through legislative action that created an additional 1 cent sales tax to be allocated towards DART. In 1989, two of the fifteen cities voted to terminate their membership in DART. The City of University Park has contributed substantial local sales tax revenues, totaling more than \$100 million, to support the regional transit system; and

WHEREAS, in 1989 the Texas Legislature amended the Development Corporation Act to authorize municipalities to levy an additional local sales and use tax under Section 4A for economic development purposes, and in 1991 further expanded this authority through Section 4B (later recodified as Type A and Type B sales taxes), thereby allowing cities outside of regional transit authorities such as DART to utilize the additional one percent sales tax capacity for other special purposes; and

WHEREAS, in 2015 the Texas Legislature amended the Tax Code to allow cities to hold an election to impose its general sales tax at any rate that is an increment of at least one-eighth of one percent and that would not result in a combined rate that exceeded the maximum local sales and use tax rate of two percent; and

WHEREAS, DART member cities, having already dedicated one percent of their local sales tax to support the regional transit system, were not afforded these additional taxing options and therefore operate at a competitive disadvantage relative to non-member cities in terms of fiscal flexibility and budgeting; and

WHEREAS, despite these longstanding contributions, the City currently receives minimal direct transit service, with no light rail operations within its boundaries and a substantial reduction of DART bus service over the years culminating in a single route along Preston Road; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Legislature, through enactment of Senate Bill 2 during the 86th Legislative Session in 2019, established a statutory limitation on the annual increase in property tax revenue for most local taxing units to 3.5 percent over the preceding year unless voters approve a higher rate; and

WHEREAS, this state-imposed revenue cap places municipalities that dedicate one percent of their local sales tax to regional transit agencies at a distinct fiscal disadvantage, as their capacity to generate and allocate discretionary revenues for essential municipal services including public safety, emergency response, and capital infrastructure improvements is allocated to mass transit.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF UNIVERSITY PARK, TEXAS:

SECTION 1. That a special election is hereby ordered to be held on the first Saturday in May 2026, the same being May 2, 2026 (“election day”) at which the following proposition shall be submitted to the qualified voters of the City of University Park :

Shall the Dallas Area Rapid Transit System be continued in the City of University Park?

Y e s : _____
N o : _____

SECTION 2. The Polling Places and county election precincts whose qualified voters shall cast ballots at such locations in the above-mentioned election shall be the regular polling places and regular precincts for elections conducted in the City of University Park and will be designated at a later date; and will be published in a Notice of Election, as required by law.

SECTION 3. The polling places, county vote centers, and the county election precincts whose qualified voters shall cast ballots at such locations in the City of University Park for the 2026 Special Election will be designated by the Dallas County Election Administrator. A full list of voting locations will be provided in a subsequent Election Notice.

SECTION 4. That in compliance with Section 85.001 of the Texas Election Code, early voting by personal appearance shall be conducted at the polling centers determined by the Dallas County Elections Department. A full list of voting locations and hours will be provided in a subsequent Election Notice.

SECTION 5. The Mayor and City Secretary are authorized to sign an Election Services Contract with Dallas County and other governmental entities on behalf of the City. The City Secretary is authorized to prepare a Notice of Election as prescribed by the Texas Election Code.

SECTION 6. The governing body will give notice of the election pursuant to Texas Transportation Code Section 452.655(c) to the executive committee of the authority, the Texas Department of Transportation, and the comptroller immediately on calling the election.

SECTION 7. This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its passage.

DULY PASSED by the City Council of the City of University Park, Texas, on the 6th day
of January 2026.

APPROVED:

TOMMY STEWART, MAYOR

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

ATTEST:

CITY ATTORNEY

CHRISTINE GREEN, CITY SECRETARY