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CEO Elizabeth Presutti to Leave DART After 14 Years

Presutti and her husband are returning to North Carolina

Des Moines, IA - Elizabeth Presutti, CEO of DART (Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority), announced she will be leaving the organization to join her husband who recently accepted a position at Collins Aerospace at their manufacturing facility in Monroe, North Carolina just outside of Charlotte.

"This was a difficult decision for both of us as we love Des Moines and it has been a true honor serving as DART CEO. I never could have imagined all that we would accomplish when I first moved to Des Moines 14 years ago and I'm grateful to have been part of leading an amazing team who is committed to providing public transit service to thousands of riders each day. Now, after more than 20 years of my husband supporting my career, it's my turn to support his."

Presutti joined DART in 2008 and has served as CEO for 11 years overseeing the agency of 300 employees who typically provide nearly 5 million rides a year over a 569 square mile area of Greater Des Moines with a \$40 million operating budget. Well-known in the transit industry, Presutti came to Des Moines from the Charlotte Area Transit System and prior to that was a Senior Associate at the consulting firm Transportation Management & Design, Inc. in California.

"Elizabeth brought a wealth of expertise to DART and our region is a better place as a result of her leadership, advocacy, ability to form strong partnerships and approach to leveraging technology," said Doug Elrod, DART Commission Chair and Bondurant Mayor. "She embraces innovation and continuously works to ensure the agency provides the best service possible while balancing the needs of each member community."

During Presutti's tenure DART adopted its first-ever long-range transportation plan, DART Forward 2035. As a result of the plan, DART restructured the system and implemented a variety of service improvements between 2011 and 2015, which led to a nearly 10% increase in ridership. Service improvements included the addition of new routes, improved frequency and expanded service on DART's busiest routes as well as the elimination of underutilized services. More recently, DART has implemented new, innovative services like Flex Connect, a first-last mile connection to DART's bus routes using Uber or Yellow Cab; and its new DART On Demand microtransit service in the City of Ankeny that has more than tripled in ridership in its first 10 months of service. DART also made significant advancements to improve the customer experience through the implementation of trip planning and real-time technology tools, bus wi-fi program, new mobile payment and fare collection system, and the addition of 50 new bus shelters, many of which will include public art.

Presutti also led the organization to secure more than \$55 Million in discretionary capital grant funding to build the LEED-certified DART Central Station, upgrade its fare collection system with new fare boxes and a mobile ticketing app, purchase of 7 electric buses in partnership with MidAmerican Energy Company and a new operations and maintenance facility.

Over the last few years, Presutti has worked hand-in-hand with the DART Commission to reposition DART for long-term success. This included governance changes to provide representation on the Commission for each of DART's member communities as well as the adoption of a new property tax formula and the development of a financial model. This model led to a funding study, stakeholder engagement and an understanding of long-term funding needs to sustain and grow transit services. This work has guided the Commission as it continues to work with the Iowa Legislature to diversify revenue. Administratively, Presutti led the development of the organization's first

strategic plan, the mission of “enriching lives, connecting communities, and expanding opportunities,” and the creation and adoption of vision and values.

“This is a tough loss for all of us in the metro, both on a personal and professional level. Elizabeth is a kind, caring, compassionate leader who cares deeply about the community, her staff and our riders. She and her team have worked tirelessly over the years to ensure DART is as efficient and effective as possible,” said Russ Trimble former DART Board Chair, current Commission member and Mayor of West Des Moines. “While we owe Elizabeth a huge debt of gratitude for all she has done and are sad to see her go, thanks to Elizabeth and the talented and caring team members of DART, the organization is well-positioned for the future, and we anticipate a smooth transition when the time comes to welcome a new CEO.”

At both the national and local level, Presutti gives her time to improve her industry and her community. In 2018 she was recognized by the Greater Des Moines Leadership Institute with the Community Vision [“Connecting” Award](#) and has served as a member of the board of directors for Polk County Housing Trust Fund, a mentor for the Community Connect program and various volunteer roles for United Way of Central Iowa. A well-known and regarded leader within the transit industry, Presutti has served as a board member and other key roles for American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the American Bus Benchmarking Group, and the Transit Cooperative Research Program, just to name a few.

In the coming weeks the DART Commission will begin the process to select a recruiting firm to assist with the hiring of a new CEO as well as finalize interim transition plans. Presutti will continue to remain with DART through early January 2023.

An image of Elizabeth Presutti is available to download by clicking [here](#).

About DART

Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) is Iowa's largest, and only, regional transit agency, providing service in and around Polk County. DART operates a family of transportation services, providing nearly 4.5 million annual rides that connect thousands of people every day to jobs, school, healthcare and other essential destinations. Twelve member governments make up DART's service area, where the agency carries out its mission to enrich lives, connect communities and expand opportunities for central Iowans. For more information about DART services, schedules, route changes, or directions to the nearest DART stop, visit the website at ridedart.com, download the free MyDART app or call 515-283-8100.

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