



Board Chair Report

A performance update from your regional transit agency

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RANDALL D. CHRISMAN
DART Chairman
of the Board

Board Financial Plan Continues

A special message from Randall D. Chrisman

DART currently has the financial capacity and authority to fund the construction of its planned projects through 2018 with the use of debt repaid through operating revenues and federal formula fund receipts. To reduce the cost of borrowing, we would prefer to use debt backed by the one-percent transit sales tax. Doing this now would require legislative or voter approval. We plan to pursue this in the 2009 legislative session. We also plan to use sales tax backed debt to fund future projects outlined in our long-range 2030 Plan. We'll keep you informed as those projects develop.

Prospective Orange/Blue Line contracting teams making plans

Design-build contracting teams are being invited to submit their proposals for the Orange and Blue line projects. The Request for Proposals is scheduled for release on April 9. Competitors are scheduled to submit their proposals in October with an anticipated contract award around the end of 2008.

The design-build contract delivery method is being used to

construct the first two segments of the Orange Line (Bachman Station to Belt Line Road) and the Blue Line extension from Downtown Garland to Downtown Rowlett. We believe this method will expedite the overall project schedule through concurrent efforts on design and construction. This fast-tracking approach could also enable DART's contractor to identify, quantify and secure construction materials earlier in the process, potentially locking in the lowest available prices.

The Board is continuing its review of DART's FY 2008 Twenty-Year Financial Plan, which supports the construction of a 14-mile Orange Line northwest to the Las Colinas Urban Center in 2011 and to Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport in 2013, as well as a 4.75-mile extension of DART's existing Blue Line to Rowlett in 2012. The Plan also supports the Downtown Dallas Transit Study, including a second rail line through the Dallas Central Business District with revenue service scheduled for 2014, and a Blue Line extension from Ledbetter Station to UNT-Dallas in 2018. Combined, these projects are projected to cost \$2.3 billion.



Green Line going strong

Green Line construction is proceeding on schedule and budget for the initial opening to Fair Park in September 2009, just in time for the State Fair of Texas. Keep in mind we'll also commence daily DART Rail service to Victory Station at that time. Over the next four months, an average daily workforce of more than 2,000 people will be working on the \$1.8 billion, 28-mile project that in 2010 will link Pleasant Grove in far southeast Dallas to northwest corridor employment centers and the cities of Farmers Branch and Carrollton.

About 95% of the crews working on the project are local residents. That's great news for the local economy. The safety record also is strong. DART officials report the agency has experienced workers' compensation and liability insurance expenses significantly below the national average within the construction industry. Keeping those costs down goes a long way toward helping us deliver the project on budget.



Deep Ellum Station is one of four new stations scheduled to open in September 2009.

Safety training is a key to our success. We've conducted more than 250 safety-training classes on this project alone – including more than 120 in Spanish. What's more, we keep up with our workers after training. Working with our construction partners, we've developed an innovative mentor program where senior construction workers guide new hires through their first months on the job to make sure they understand how to work as safely and efficiently as possible.

All of the details about the Green Line – including maps, photos and video clips – are available at www.DART.org/factsheet/greenline. To get the latest construction information delivered to your computer, web-enabled PDA or cell phone visit www.DART.org/constructionupdates.

Ridership gains continue

North Texans are responding to skyrocketing fuel prices by getting on board with transit. More than 350,000 trips per weekday are made on DART. Comparing total ridership for February 2008 with 2007, DART recorded gains in bus (2.7%), DART Rail (13.9%), TRE (6.8%), Paratransit (9.3%) and Vanpool (40.6%). The DART Rail gains continue a trend that began in December.

The new HOV projects on I-30 East R. L. Thornton, U. S. 75 and I-635 that opened in December and January are already showing impressive usage. The total ridership for February was 3,886,600 – a nearly 41% increase over the same month last year – and the average weekday ridership was more than 147,000, an increase of almost 32% over February 2007.

Customer satisfaction is growing

More than 90% of DART's customers say they're satisfied with the transit agency's services and 93% of them would recommend DART to others, according to a new customer survey.

In the survey, nine out of 10 respondents had good things to say about bus and rail operator courtesy. And the Customer Information Center received a "thumbs up" of nearly the same proportion. In both cases, DART saw big improvements over the last customer survey, conducted in September 2006.

The survey was conducted by our Marketing and Communications Department in October and November 2007 among more than 5,500 customers representing all DART modes and member cities, and has a margin of error of plus or minus 1.3% at a 95% confidence level.

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