



Board Chair Report

A performance update from your regional transit agency

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LYNN FLINT SHAW
DART Chairman
of the Board

Status report on the Orange and Blue Line expansions || *A special message from Lynn Flint Shaw*

We're proud of our national reputation for building and opening rail systems on time, and we're totally focused on delivering on our commitments to Irving and Rowlett in 2011 and 2012, respectively. Since we first announced the dramatically higher construction costs — especially concrete, steel, copper and construction labor — for the Orange Line and extension of the Blue Line, the Board has directed staff to go back to the drawing board and look at every

part of the agency to identify sources of additional funds as well as closely scrutinize all capital projects for possible savings with the goal of trimming \$900 million from the updated project cost.

During our December 11 meeting, Board members heard from staff about their three-pronged approach to addressing the funding issue. We are reviewing possible cost reductions to the projects, adjustments in the 20-year Financial Plan that might provide additional construction cash, and exploring new revenue sources such as grants, expanded advertising or public private partnerships with entities along the rail corridors.

The Board has made no decisions in any of those areas. The subject will be formally discussed again at regular Board meetings on January 8 and 22.

It's important to remember we are still comparatively early in the development of the Orange Line and the Blue Line extension. The project is only at the 10% design stage – an early point in the cost estimation of DART's rail projects. Additional project updates are performed as planners and engineers complete 30%, 65% and 90% levels of design in preparation for actual construction to begin as early as 2008.

This is a significant challenge for DART and our region; unlike any we've faced in a long time. Working together, with resolve and creativity, we've weathered economic and political storms and have built a transit system that's established a national model and standard for quality. The City of Dallas, as do all of the cities along our growing rail network, have big plans for their current and planned rail stations. We also have an ambitious 2030 Transit System Plan that's the blueprint for the next generation of bus, rail and high occupancy vehicle services in our region. Working with you, staying focused on long-standing commitments to our member cities, we will all enjoy riding DART Rail to even more new destinations.



Green LINE UPDATE

DART successfully completed the major portion of the Bryan/Hawkins project in Downtown Dallas during the long Thanksgiving weekend. Rail operations between Mockingbird and West End stations were replaced with bus service for five days during the holiday to complete the straightening of the "S" curve near Pearl Station in order to

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Green Line Update

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create a more direct rail route in and out of the subway under North Central Expressway. This will make train trips faster and smoother and reduce wear and tear (and associated maintenance costs) on track and trains. The remaining work is scheduled for completion in January and no other service disruptions are planned.

When complete in 2010, the 28-mile Green Line will connect Pleasant Grove, downtown Dallas, Farmers Branch and Carrollton. The first phase, between downtown Dallas and Fair Park, is scheduled to open September 2009 in time for the State Fair.

Level Boarding construction begins

In late November work began on the level

boarding project, a two-year effort to raise DART Rail platforms to accommodate the new Super Light Rail Vehicles (SLRVs) that will feature level boarding for customers. This will allow people with disabilities - plus others currently using the wheelchair lifts to board with strollers, bicycles and the like - to step or roll directly onto the train from the platform. The platform improvements also will enable us to operate longer three-car trains to meet our growing ridership. St. Paul Station is the first to be modified, with work continuing there through February.

Follow DART construction and see the latest photos and video of the project at www.DART.org/constructionupdates.



**Agency
News**

Ridership

DART systemwide ridership (bus, rail, HOV lanes, paratransit services and vanpools combined) rose 2.9% in October 2007 (the first month of FY 2008) when compared with October 2006. More than 9.4 million trips were made on DART in October.

The Trinity Railway Express (TRE) posted a near 12% gain in ridership (October to October) and DART's growing HOV network enjoyed a 6% gain for that period.

New HOV lanes open in December

A new six-mile extension of the I-30 East R. L. Thornton HOV lane from Jim Miller to Northwest Drive in Mesquite is scheduled to open on December 17. The lane currently runs from Jim Miller to Downtown Dallas. The lane uses movable barriers put in place by Barrier Transfer Vehicles, commonly referred to as "zipper trucks," and is open to westbound traffic from 6 to 10 a.m. Monday through Friday and for eastbound traffic from 3:30 to 7 p.m.

Work also is being completed on a new 14-mile HOV lane extending north from the "High Five" interchange on I-635 LBJ to Exchange Parkway in Allen. This lane is scheduled to be open to the public December 21.

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