Connecting You to the World
In addition to having the longest light rail system in the country, DART becomes one of only a handful of transit systems in the United States to connect a major airport directly to the city center by rail.

This is a great accomplishment for DART, DFW Airport and the North Texas region. World-class cities offer at-airport access to public transportation, helping travelers get to their destinations. This rail connection puts Dallas in the company of those world-class cities.

At DART, we’re all about choices. Rail access gives folks visiting our region an easy choice to get off the plane, get on DART and go wherever they want throughout our system easily, quickly, safely and inexpensively. At the same time, Orange Line service to DFW Airport gives the approximately 60,000 employees based at or around the airport the choice of taking public transit to work.

We could not have achieved this rail opening early and under budget without the incredible partnership with DFW Airport. From the start of planning, airport officials have been an integral part of the team as we determined the station location, land availability and constructability. And we greatly appreciate former DFW Airport CEO Jeff Fegan and current CEO Sean Donohue for leading the station design and construction effort. The Orange Line extension and construction of DFW Airport Station have been a true collaboration.

Thank you to the current and former members of the DART Board for their support and guidance of this project over the years, going back to the drawing of the original plans for DART Rail. I’m also grateful to the talented and dedicated people at DART who invested many years into planning and execution to make the station a reality.

Gary C. Thomas
President/Executive Director
With the opening of DFW Airport Station, North Texans now have direct rail access between downtown Dallas and Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport.

The five-mile extension of the Orange Line terminates at the airport’s newly renovated Terminal A and grows the DART Rail System to 90 miles and 62 stations.

DFW Airport built the station as part of its Terminal Renewal and Improvement Program while DART’s contractors focused on the rail line extension. By sharing construction duties, the partnership allowed DART to open the station in mid-August, four months sooner than scheduled.

Creating World-Class Connections
The Orange Line now provides visitors and residents with improved transit access to the airport and its growing roster of international and domestic destinations. It’s an amenity to which globe-trotting travelers are accustomed. According to an Airports Council International report on ground transportation, train service is common at European and Asian international airports, and up to half of the passengers use it.

“Every renowned, world-class airport has rail service to the city center,” said Sean Donohue, CEO of Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport. “One of our key priorities is to continue to grow globally and add more international service, so to be able to provide that same access to our customers is fantastic.”

“The first Orange Line train departing downtown Dallas arrives at DFW Airport Station at 3:50 a.m. The last train departs DFW Airport Station for downtown at 1:12 a.m. weekdays; 12:12 a.m. weekends.
Beyond accommodating travelers, the new DART Rail connection provides a convenient and cost-effective commuting option for the nearly 60,000 employees at DFW Airport.

“Employees, as well as employers, really value this connectivity and it will make it possible for employers to grow their operations and their employee talent pool, and that’s a good thing for the airport,” Donohue said.

Bringing Business to North Texas

Rail service at DFW Airport provides business travelers, conventioneers and tourists with transit access to many North Texas destinations, including the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center, Dallas Market Center, Dallas Arts District, Fair Park, American Airlines Center, Irving Convention Center and numerous other businesses and districts.

“The opening of DFW Airport Station puts Dallas and our region in a more competitive position to attract larger conventions and major sporting events,” said Phillip J. Jones, president and CEO of the Dallas Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Many convention and event planners choose cities with transit options that make it easier for visitors to get around, which makes sense in terms of convenience and cost. It also gives the region an edge in attracting business travelers and tourists who prefer to use public transportation rather than rent a vehicle.

Dallas now is on more equal footing with places that are major competitors as meeting destinations – such as Washington, D.C., Miami, Chicago and Atlanta, which have rail service to the city center, and Orlando, Fla., and Las Vegas, which do not.

“We have approximately 375,000 buyers that come every year from all 50 states and 35 countries,” says Bill Winsor, president and CEO of Dallas Market Center. “For them to be able to step off the plane and take DART right to our building is a big plus for us. Similar service often has been touted as an advantage for Atlanta, but now we will be operating on the same level.”

Beyond the economic activity generated by venues, visitors spend money on hotels, restaurants, shopping and entertainment – much of which are DART Rail-accessible. According to a study released by the American Public Transportation Association and the U.S. Travel Association, hotels in cities with direct rail access from downtown to the airport receive nearly 11 percent more revenue per room than hotels in cities without a rail-airport connection.

And it’s not only business travelers, but businesses themselves that are attracted to a city with rail access at the airport.
“One of our greatest goals is to bring more companies and jobs to this region,” said Dale Petroskey, president and CEO of the Dallas Regional Chamber. “Light rail service at DFW Airport is a big competitive advantage for us because it’s something many major metropolitan areas in the U.S. cannot offer.”

In fact, transportation infrastructure ranked second in the list of most important location criteria, according to “Site Selection” magazine’s October 2013 survey of corporate real estate executives.

“North Texas already has a wonderful reputation internationally as a business-friendly environment, and the new rail connection makes it easier for international and domestic business travelers to reach employment centers across our region,” said Mabrie Jackson, president and CEO of the North Texas Commission.

According to Dr. Terry Clower, former director of the Center for Economic Development and Research at the University of North Texas, the region is well-positioned to compete in the global marketplace. “The synergy between the Dallas area’s two airports, DART and the highway infrastructure make North Texas a very competitive and compelling place to be,” he said.

Educating World Citizens
Robert Scherer, dean of the Satish & Yasmin Gupta College of Business at the University of Dallas, concurs. “The DFW Airport Station’s opening will enhance the region’s ability to attract more global corporations,” he said.

Business majors comprise more than half of the University of Dallas’ graduate and undergraduate population, and business college leaders see the airport-rail connection as an opportunity to attract more students.

“As the number of corporate citizens increases, so will the need for a well-educated, prepared workforce,” Scherer said.

Similarly, higher educational institutions such as UT Southwestern Medical Center, Southern Methodist University and The University of Texas at Dallas – also located along DART Rail – will benefit from airport access, particularly in attracting out-of-state and international students who may rely on public transit.

“Light rail service at DFW Airport is a big competitive advantage for us because it’s something many major metropolitan areas in the U.S. cannot offer.”

Dale Petroskey
President and CEO, Dallas Regional Chamber

Tensile fabric canopies and awnings provide shade and create a signature landmark for customers making an airport-to-rail connection.
Visitors arriving at DFW Airport Station will notice that it looks as much a part of the airport as it does the DART Rail System. Since the beginning, DART’s award-winning Station Art and Design Program has ensured that stations both reflect and serve as gateways to the surrounding community.

The architects reimagining the legacy areas of Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport incorporated colors and materials found throughout the airport property into the station design. Passengers waiting on the platform (located near Terminal A’s lower level) can watch airplanes taxi down a runway or soar through the sky, as well as see the Skylink train pass by overhead.

The most distinctive design element at the station is the tensile-fabric canopies that arch over the station. Similar tensile-fabric awnings line the walkways leading from the station to both Terminal A and Terminal B. The structures offer the maximum amount of shade while serving as a visible icon for the station for customers using Skylink or the roadway systems.

Immense walls rise on either side of the station to the street level above, further shading the platform. Portions of the walls feature a wave pattern cast in glass fiber-reinforced concrete, a subtle reference to the DFW Airport logo.

Galvanized steel chairs provide weary travelers a comfortable place to rest as they await the next train. The material will both withstand the elements and weather to a silvery patina.

Seating walls line the walkway between the station and terminal to create additional areas to sit. Convenience outlets located at the base of the walls offer travelers a place to charge small electronics.

The walkway is landscaped with crape myrtles and 600 red or yellow Knock Out roses – and that’s only the beginning of the thousands of drought-tolerant trees, bushes, ornamental grasses and groundcovers that surround the path in a garden-like setting.

This walkway serves as a new front door to welcome passengers arriving at DFW Airport and showcases the beauty of North Texas.
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