Expanding Boundaries

Arlington residents now can travel by transit to destinations throughout Dallas-Fort Worth. The city signed a two-year contract with DART and the Fort Worth Transportation Authority (The T) to operate the Metro Arlington Xpress (MAX), a nonstop bus service between the University of Texas at Arlington’s College Park District and the CentrePort/DFW Airport Station of the Trinity Railway Express.

Cities whose residents commute into the DART System should contribute sales tax revenue to fund the additional service required to meet the additional demand placed on the system. And North Texas should avoid creating numerous transit agencies that waste time, effort and taxpayer dollars coordinating with each other. DART also has the expertise, size and resources to provide new transit service most efficiently and economically.

Ask Gary!

Why does DART want to add more cities to its service area?

Most of the population growth in the North Texas region is outside the 13 cities in the DART Service Area. But residents in those cities want bus and commuter rail lines that feed into our transit system.

From Trail to Transit

To encourage transit use, DART is working with cities and the cycling community to promote bike-and-ride commuting and expand bicycle routes.
Arlington contracts for bus service

The nation’s largest city without public transportation soon will start a two-year trial of express bus service. The city of Arlington finalized the agreement with DART and The T in early June to create the Metro Arlington Xpress (MAX).

Arlington will pay $700,000 annually for the pilot program. The city is covering half the cost, with the balance divided between UT Arlington and business community.

Commuters will use a parking garage in the College Park District on the UT Arlington campus. The planned bus stop is within walking distance of both the university and Arlington’s downtown municipal district.

The MAX service will run Monday through Friday, and the last bus will depart the College Park area right after classes end in time to catch late TRE trains. Service starts Aug. 19, shortly before the fall semester begins.

A single day, round-trip pass will cost $5. Arlington riders must select a DART or The T pass before buying. Proponents hope the buses will carry at least 300 riders a day.

Adding New Cities

The Arlington route is the potential first step toward the city joining a transit agency. As in Mesquite — which began contract bus service in March 2012 — residents eventually must decide whether they want public transportation long term.

Per DART Board policy approved this March, a city can contract for commuter bus service for up to four years before making a serious commitment. The policy gives new cities a gradual way to join the transit authority while being fair to residents of the 13 cities that have contributed the 1-cent sales tax since 1984.

Within the first three years, the municipality must pay DART to prepare a long-term transit system plan and a supporting financial plan. And within four years, the city must call an election so residents can vote whether to join the DART Service Area and dedicate sales tax revenue to fund transit service.

New Texas law passed in May permits cities to join a transit agency provisionally by committing sales tax income once current obligations have been repaid. In the case of Arlington, the city would have to fulfill existing obligations funded by sales tax before it could use that income to fund transit. Until then, the city would have to find another revenue source to pay for contract bus service. When the entire 1-cent sales tax income is available, the city would become a full part of DART.

The law also clarified that a transit agency may provide service to any city where service currently exists, and in any county adjacent to a county where service already is provided. That means DART potentially could operate in 17 counties. Agency representatives are meeting with several cities to discuss the benefits of becoming part of the DART Service Area.

For the cities that couldn’t imagine the need for public transportation 30 years ago, mechanisms now are in place to become part of the regional transit network.

DART Vote Celebrates 30 Years

August marks the 30th anniversary of the vote to create DART. On Saturday, Aug. 13, 1983, residents in Dallas and 13 other cities elected to be a part of the new transit agency and contribute 1 percent in sales tax to fund it. Later, Cockrell Hill would opt in and Coppell and Flower Mound would drop out. More than 175,000 people cast their vote. In Dallas County, it was the largest turnout for a referendum to date.

“Light rail, commuter trains, or bus lanes: I didn’t have it firm in my mind, but I knew that this city needed to do something about transportation because we were growing fast,” Adlene Harrison, chairwoman of the first DART Board, said recently of the historic vote.

Thirty years later, DART is one of the largest transit agencies in the Southwest with the longest light rail system in the country.
Bicycles and public transportation go well together. For many, a short bike ride is a leg of the journey between transit and a destination: home, work, school or a trail entrance.

Nearly a half million people live within three miles of a DART Rail station, a comfortable cycling distance for most travelers. For some, bike riding is a viable alternative to taking a bus and could remove a barrier to taking the trains.

“In many use the region’s trail network as part of their daily commute.”

Increasing the Bike Infrastructure

Recently, the agency has partnered with some cities within the service area to promote the idea of cycling to access transit – and using transit to access trails. Many of those cities are increasing bike-route signage and designated bike lanes on city streets, making it safer to travel on two wheels.

In May, DART participated in National Bike to Work Day by co-hosting “Bike Energizer Stations” at five locations across Plano, Richardson, Garland and Dallas. Cyclists received free tune-ups and information from area bike shops, and learned more about the benefits of and tips to commuting by bike.

Then in June, DART, the city of Dallas, and Downtown Dallas Inc. celebrated the completion of Centralink, the first project of the 2011 Dallas Bike Plan. This on-road bike trail connector goes through downtown Dallas and links Oak Cliff, the Katy Trail and the Santa Fe Trail with DART Rail and TRE stations.

Transit and trails will make the Dallas area more attractive to a new generation of residents who want to walk, bike or take a bus or train.

DART’s Bike and Ride Amenities

- Low-floor boarding on the new bus fleet
- Level boarding on every DART Rail vehicle’s center car
- Bike rack on the front of all buses
- Bike hooks inside trains
- Free bike lids at many rail stations and transit centers

Families Save With Summer Fun Promotion

Families can explore more of North Texas for less with a special discount on Saturdays through Aug. 17. Through the Summer Fun Promotion, one $10 regional day pass provides rides for two adults and up to four kids under 14 to anywhere in the regional network. This promotion also is available to all individuals with a current regional pass, making the pass an even better value.

DART partnered with the TRE, The T in Fort Worth and the Denton County Transportation Association to encourage families to try public transportation for their Saturday excursions to the area’s many events and attractions. The promotion, which began in April, also coincides with the dates of Summer Adventures in Fair Park presented by the State Fair of Texas.

DON’T GET BORED this summer

Get on board!
Dallas Streetcar Gains Momentum

Line will connect
Oak Cliff to downtown

Construction is underway on the Union Station to Oak Cliff Dallas Streetcar Project along its future route across the Houston Street Viaduct, south of downtown Dallas. Project partners celebrated with a ceremonial groundbreaking in May that included a longtime transit supporter, U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-Texas).

The line will provide modern streetcar service from Union Station in downtown Dallas to Methodist Dallas Medical Center, in the city’s Oak Cliff community. The project specifically targets commuters in mixed-use districts adjacent to downtown and helps create a transit network linking urban areas to multiple transportation alternatives.

The project – a collaborative endeavor among the city of Dallas, the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), DART and the Federal Transit Administration – was kick-started by $26 million in federal grants toward the 1.6-mile starter line and two vehicles. Funds contributed by the city and DART, as well as regional toll road revenue, brought funding to more than $48.6 million.

“In this age of constrained budgets, the partnership we’ve forged with the Dallas Streetcar Project is a great model of how we can combine resources to complete and accelerate other important mobility projects,” said Gary Thomas, DART president/executive director.

In January, the Regional Transportation Council of the NCTCOG approved an additional $31 million grant. Those funds provide $8 million for two additional streetcars, $15 million for an extension to the Bishop Arts District and $8 million for future expansion near the Dallas Convention Center.

In September 2012, DART – as the technical representative acting on behalf of Dallas – awarded the joint venture of Stacy and Witbeck and CARCON Industries the design-build contract. In March, the agency announced that Brookville Equipment Corp. will construct two of its Liberty Modern Streetcars with an option for two additional vehicles.

The city of Dallas will contract with DART to operate and maintain the streetcar line. Service is anticipated to start in early 2015.

South Oak Cliff Transit Partners was chosen as construction manager/general contractor (CM/GC). The joint venture is an alliance of Stacy and Witbeck, Jerry Haynes Electric Co., Mas-Tek Engineering & Associates, Kiewit Infrastructure South, and Legacy Resource Group. The CM/GC construction services contract is worth more than $102 million.

Rail to UNT Dallas Surges Ahead

DART has awarded contracts for the Blue Line expansion from Ledbetter Station to the University of North Texas at Dallas. The extension is scheduled to open December 2016.

Blue Alliance Partners, a joint venture of HNTB Corp. and Dikita Enterprises, Inc., was selected for engineering and architectural design services and construction management. The design services contract is valued at more than $13.8 million.

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DART President/Executive Director Gary Thomas and U.S. Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the Union Station to Oak Cliff Dallas Streetcar Project in May.

DART has awarded contracts for the Blue Line expansion from Ledbetter Station to the University of North Texas at Dallas. The extension is scheduled to open December 2016.

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The 2.6-mile light rail line will extend to new Camp Wisdom and UNT Dallas stations.
DART Current and Future Services to 2016

Rail System Legend

Currently Operating
- DART Rail Red Line
- DART Rail Blue Line
- DART Rail Green Line
- DART Rail Orange Line
- DART Rail Orange Line (Selected Weekday Trips in 1-2 Hours Only)
- Trinity Railway Express (TRE)
- DCTA A-train

Under Design/Construction
- DART Rail Orange Line
- DCTA A-train (operated by DCTA)

HOV System Legend
- HOV Lane
- Future HOV Lane

To Fort Worth
- A-Train to Denton (operated by DCTA)
- Dallas North Tollway
- President George Bush Turnpike
- Trinity Railway Express (TRE)
- DCTA A-train

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**Tracking Progress**

**Mustang Crossing Branches Out**

Farmers Branch is creating a downtown centered on the city’s DART Rail station. Located near Denton Road and Valley View Lane – within blocks of the Green Line’s Farmers Branch Station – the developing area currently comprises two major projects.

The first phase of Mustang Station, a master-planned, mixed-use urban development, is well under construction. Developed by Canadian firm Western Securities and designed by Addison’s BGO Architects, the luxury apartment community features 257 residential units on the upper floors and 10,000 feet of retail-ready space on the ground level. Pre-leasing began in June and the community will be open in September for move-in.

Nearby, K. Hovnanian Homes is creating a new neighborhood of 29 single-family patio homes within walking distance of the station. The model home opened in March, and at least 10 of the lots have been sold.

Residents of the Mustang Station apartment community will have a short walk to the Green Line’s Farmers Branch Station.