



**Dallas Area Rapid Transit**  
P.O. Box 660163  
Dallas, TX 75266-0163  
**214-749-3278**

December 14, 2020

Mr. Mark Israelson  
City Manager, City of Plano  
1520 K Avenue  
Plano, Texas 75074

Dear Mr. Israelson:

Thank you for inviting Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) to provide a Quarterly Briefing to the Plano City Council on December 14, 2020. This letter provides an update for DART's service and projects in addition to the Quarterly PowerPoint Briefing.

DART serves the City of Plano through light rail, bus, GoLink supplemented by UberPool and paratransit service. Light rail ridership for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 (through October 31, 2020) was 50,145 riders. Bus ridership for the same time period was 34,699 riders and GoLink ridership for the same time period was 2,283 riders. There are three GoLink zones in the City of Plano: Legacy West Zone, Far North Plano Zone, and North Central Plano Zone. Lastly, paratransit ridership for the same time period was 3,619 riders. In addition, DART also operates DART Rides, which is a rider assistance program for registered residents of qualified cities, including Plano, who are age 65 or over or have a certified disability.

DART continues to be committed to the safety and wellbeing of our riders and operators during the pandemic. In accordance with Governor Abbott's Executive Order, riders are required to wear a face covering on all DART vehicles. DART operators have provided face coverings to riders upon request and DART installed face mask and hand sanitizer dispensers on all buses, light rail vehicles and streetcars. Furthermore, DART installed respiratory droplet shields on buses to help protect riders and bus operators. Light rail vehicles and buses are cleaned with Halosil Foggers that use a hydrogen peroxide-based cleaning solution with antimicrobial silver ions to sanitize and disinfect vehicles ensuring all surfaces are cleaned. Light rail vehicles also receive a thorough cleaning at the eight terminus stations throughout the day with a focus on cleaning high touch areas with an EPA approved cleaning agent known to kill the coronavirus. Buses are cleaned on a rotating basis with EPA approved cleaning agents and over 70% of buses are equipped with SanUVAire Breathe Safe Germicidal UV Systems that utilize ultraviolet germicidal irradiation technology to kill viruses as air is recirculated throughout the bus. We are currently reviewing several technologies that may be implemented on the remainder of the bus fleet and the entire rail fleet to help filter the circulated air in the vehicle.

The pandemic has certainly impacted DART's ridership causing a reduction in ridership beginning in mid-March and continuing through the current time period. In response to these ridership changes, DART made service adjustments including implementing a modified weekday service schedule on April 6, 2020. As ridership has increased due to the Texas economy slowly reopening, on October 19, 2020, DART implemented a service change that included a 90% restoration of service, and the replacement or discontinuation of less productive routes. The following October

service changes were made to the City of Plano: Red Line rail operates at 20-minute service until 7 p.m. followed by 30-minute evening service, bus routes 410, 451, and 452 have returned to full pre-pandemic levels. Bus routes 210 (alternative service on bus route 208 and Red/Orange Rail Lines) and 211 (alternative service on bus route 452) are discontinued due to low performance, and the remaining bus routes 208, 347, 350, 841, 843, and 870 continue to operate on a modified weekday service schedule.

DART continues to make significant progress with our Capital Projects, which include the Silver Line Project, the Dallas Central Business District Second Alignment (D2) Project, and the Red and Blue Line Platform Extensions. The Silver Line project is a 26-mile long, regional rail, extending from Shiloh Road in Plano to DFW International Airport. The project will interface with three existing rail lines: the Red/Orange Lines in Richardson/Plano, the Green Line in Carrollton, and the Orange Line at DFW International Airport. The date of the projected revenue service for this project is 2023. As part of the Silver Line project, DART has collaborated with City staff in designing the Silver Line 12<sup>th</sup> Street Station, which will allow customers to transfer from the station to the new elevated 12<sup>th</sup> Street Light Rail Station. Enhancements for the Silver Line 12<sup>th</sup> Street Station include a covered pedestrian walkway between the Silver Line and the light rail station, enhanced landscape and lighting and covered stairs and a plaza at the light rail station. DART also collaborated with Plano residents as part of the 12<sup>th</sup> Street Station's Art and Design Program.

The D2 Subway project is a future second light rail line through downtown Dallas that extends from Victory Park to Deep Ellum. The D2 Subway will help to ensure the sustainability of the entire DART system by providing needed capacity and improving system reliability and passenger service through downtown Dallas.

The purpose of the Red and Blue Line Platform Extension Project is to modify platforms at 28 Light Rail Transit stations, which were originally constructed prior to 2004. This includes Plano's Downtown Station and the Parker Road Station. The extension of the Downtown Station was completed in November 2019 and the Parker Road Station was completed in April 2020. To date, 16 stations, including the Downtown Station and Parker Road Station, have been completed, 6 stations are currently under construction, and we will begin construction on the 6 remaining stations. The projected revenue service date is February 2022.

In addition to DART's Capital Projects, DART is also in the process of redesigning our bus network through the DARTzoom: A New Bus Network project. The project will define an approved mix between ridership and coverage goals. In November, the DART Board unanimously adopted a policy governing ridership and coverage goals for the project. The Board's policy directs DART to develop a final bus network based on the hybrid network concept with a ridership/coverage ratio between 75%-25% and 70%-30%.

During the week of November 16<sup>th</sup>, DART staff, DART's Service Area City Staff, and the Bus Network Redesign consultants, Jarrett Walker and Associates, virtually met to design a draft Bus Network Plan based on the Board's directive. The next steps for this project entail working on the draft Bus Network Plan and presenting the plan to the Board in February. Public engagement is planned in Spring 2021, with approval of the plan in Summer 2021, and service change occurring in January 2022.

Another project that DART has coordinated with City of Plano staff includes the Traffic Signal Priority (TSP) project. TSP technology assists buses by allowing a green light extension or an early green light along rapid bus corridors, corridors with traffic congestion and corridors with efficiency issues. DART has continued to work with City staff to discuss TSP implementation. Currently, the proposal is to implement TSP on Route 452, which serves Legacy, Preston Road, Parker Road and Parker Road Station. DART is considering centralized TSP, which will meet the Cities' needs and is cost effective.

Lastly, in July the DART Board approved a resolution to allow a Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program (VRIP), which was offered to employees to support DART's response to the pandemic. The VRIP offer enables the agency to reduce its headcount budget to no more than 3,748 employees and lowers its operating budget to \$542 million for FY 2021, from a FY 2020 budget of \$562 million. Based on these changes, DART's current budget status is strong and sustainable. VRIP was offered to employees at least 55 years of age with at least 10 years of continuous, full-time service by September 30, 2020. There were 739 submissions for the program and 370 employees accepted the offer. Of the 370 employees who accepted the offer, 55 employees are Administrative employees and 315 employees are Operations employees. The effective retirement date for Administrative employees was November 20, 2020, and December 15, 2020, for Operations employees. To allow for a smooth transition, the DART Board approved temporary employment assignments for 16 employees to support the agency's continued operations and capital projects. In addition, I also announced my retirement on October 30, 2020, which will be effective January 31, 2021. The DART Board approved the appointment of David Leininger as Interim President/Executive Director effective February 1, 2021 to serve until such time as a permanent President/Executive Director is appointed. Mr. Leininger was employed on November 30, 2020, as Deputy Executive Director and will serve in this capacity until January 31, 2021.

If you have any questions about this information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (214) 749-2544 or by email at [gthomas@dart.org](mailto:gthomas@dart.org).

Sincerely,

/s/ Gary C. Thomas

Reviewed and approved, but not signed due to  
COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic

Gary C. Thomas  
President/Executive Director

c: DART Board  
David Leininger, Deputy Executive Director  
J. Todd Plesko, Interim Executive Vice President, Growth/Regional Development  
Edie Diaz, Vice President, Government and Community Relations