

TRAC Meeting Minutes
November 14, 2012, at 12 p.m.
DART Central Station – Multimodal Room

TRAC members present: Crystal Estabrook, Helen Boles, Eileen Bradley, Kelly Henry, Rod Van Genderen, Greg Boesch, Alexander Grgurich and Cyrilla Gregory, and Al Root

TRAC members absent: Peggy Chong, Randy Anderson, and Matthew Ott Jinsong Chen.

DART staff present: Garry Dupper and Gunnar Olson.

A. ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

B. APPROVAL OF September 12, 2012, MINUTES

The minutes from the September 11, 2012, meeting were adopted by unanimous vote.

C. ACTION ITEMS

1. 2013 Meeting Dates

The committee voted unanimously to adopted the 2013 schedule of TRAC meetings. The meeting dates are all the second Wednesday of every other month starting in January, with all meetings being held at noon in the Multimodal Room of DART Central Station. Those dates are: January 9, March 13, May 15, July 10, September 11 and Novemer 13.

D. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Automatic Vehicle Location System – Garry Dupper, AVL System Administrator

AVL System Administrator Garry Dupper provided a live demonstration of the Automatic Vehicle Location System. The “AVL” system provides real-time location information of the DART vehicles that are in service. He highlighted several features, including the safety features for DART operators.

Dupper said the data from the AVL can be used by planners to gauge on-time performance and, if necessary, recalibrate routes’ timepoints to improve performance.

Rod Van Genderen asked how the data from the AVL was collected.

Dupper said the data is collected in one large database, plus one reporting database.

Kelly Henry asked if all of DART’s buses had AVL, including paratransit and On Call buses.

Dupper said they were all equipped with AVL.

Henry asked if that included Flex buses, as well.

Dupper said yes.

Eileen Bradley asked if the technology was such that paratransit buses could generate automatic calls to riders prior to their arrival.

Dupper said no, not automatically. However, he added the system made it easier for operators to see information on passengers, including 5-minute call requests.

Bradley asked if the technology could tell if the buses are running early.

Dupper said yes, the system automatically tells operators how closely to schedule they're running.

Alexander Grgurich asked when the real-time departure information would be available to the public.

Dupper said he expected it would be ready in early 2013.

Grgurich asked if anyone at DART had plotted all of DART's stops on Google Maps.

Dupper said he has plotted all of the stops but not Google.

Greg Boeschen asked if having the AVL system would cause DART to make service changes at different times of the year.

Dupper said no, it wouldn't. He said the timing of the schedule changes is driven by other factors, including the opening and closing of public schools.

2. Year-End Update on Goals

Public Information Officer Gunnar Olson provided an overview of DART's efforts to date to meet the goals that TRAC set for the authority for 2012. He said DART has met four of the five goals and is within a few months of meeting the fifth. (See below for the November Progress Report on the 2012 TRAC Goals.)

E. TRAC MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

Al Root commented on longer walks for some riders under the service changes.

Helen Boles commented that more times should be offered on the Vista Express in the next round of service changes.

Henry noted issues with some routes.

Crystal Estabrook relayed a suggestion she's heard from fellow RideShare members: To add a parking lot for RideShare vans at or near DART Central Station.

Olson said that was a good idea and that he would share it with the appropriate staff members at DART.

Boeschen complimented an operator driving Route 4. He also noted that DART still needed to improve the connection between Flex Route 73 and Express Route 92.

Henry said she, too, believed the connection needed to be improved.

F. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

1. Update on TRAC Applications

Olson said that several TRAC applications had been received so far and that more were still expected before the application deadline.

He said there was at least one applicant for each of the TRAC districts with vacancies.

G. PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public were present.

H. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. Introduce New Members
2. Nominate Chair and Vice Chair for 2013
3. 2013 Goals

I. RECOGNIZE ORIGINAL TRAC MEMBERS

Olson presented the founding TRAC members with Certificates of Appreciation for their service on the committee, including Helen Boles, Eileen Bradley, Crystal Estabrook, Kelly Henry and Jinsong

Chen. They were on the original committee when it was formed four years ago, and each had served two terms of two years, the maximum allowed under TRAC bylaws.

J. UPCOMING MEETINGS

1. DART Commission – Noon Tuesday, November 27, 2012, DART Central Station
2. TRAC – Noon Wednesday, January 9, 2013, DART Central Station

K. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned.

Goals set for DART staff by the Transit Riders Advisory Committee.

GOAL 1 –BUS SERVICE

Responsible staff: Chief Operating Officer, Planning Director

Begin implementing the service improvements laid out in the DART Forward 2035 Plan.

DART is in the final stages of implementing the major service changes outlined in the Year 1 Recommendation of the DART Forward 2035 Services Plan.

DART is in the middle of holding 11 informational sessions throughout the metro area to help prepare riders for the changes. In addition, staff is holding Grab and Gos at the offices of several of its Unlimited Access partners.

The November service changes will go into effect Friday, November 23, and affect local routes. These changes include the addition of Routes 52 and 60, the “splitting” of several routes from one route number to two separate route numbers, the realignment of several routes, and the discontinuation of some unproductive route sections. At the same time, buses will move off the Walnut Street Transit Mall and over to DART Central Station.

DART will have staff ambassadors at the Walnut Street Transit Mall on Monday through Wednesday, November 19-21, to remind riders of the upcoming changes. Staff ambassadors will be at DART Central Station for the first eight days of operations there, Friday through Friday, November 23-30.

GOAL 2 – FACILITIES

Responsible staff: General Manager

Successfully open the new DART Central Station in downtown Des Moines.

1. Substantial completion of construction
2. Move staff to the new facility
3. Move of buses from the Walnut Street Transit Mall to the new facility
4. LEED Certification
5. Public Art installation

DART Central Station opened to foot traffic on Monday, November 12, and will open to bus traffic on Friday, November 23. While the station is considered complete, ongoing improvements will be made. For example, the vendor space is still in the process of being leased out to an outside business.

GOAL 3 – TECHNOLOGY

Responsible staff: Planning Director

Ensure the successful launch of new trip-planning software and GPS technology.

The underlying hardware and software are complete and installed for the GPS technology (Automatic Vehicle Location System), the trip-planning software, and the automated trip-planning call center (interactive voice response). At this stage, the launch of these technologies is on hold due to the November service changes. Because of the magnitude of the November service changes, the schedule, route and time-point data needs to be re-entered into these technology systems and then tested for accuracy. The technologies are anticipated to launch in early 2013.

GOAL 4 – CUSTOMER SERVICE

Responsible staff: Customer Service Manager

Complete a benchmark customer-satisfaction survey.

The customer service satisfaction survey was completed this summer, the results of which were compiled and presented to the DART Commission in August. The results are now being used to inform decisions by staff and will

be used as a baseline from which to compare the organization in coming years.

GOAL 5 – MARKETING

Responsible staff: Marketing Manager and Public Information Officer

Carry out successful marketing and public-education campaigns on the following:

Grand opening of DART Central Station

Three grand opening ceremonies were held in October, including a ribbon-cutting ceremony on October 23, an employee open house on October 27, and a public open house on October 28.

1. 2012 Service Changes

DART staff has produced and printed new schedules for the new routes. In addition, staff produced and printed a “MyDART Book: A guide to the new and improved transit system of Greater Des Moines,” which gives an overview of using DART Central Station and details all of the services being operated under the redesigned system network.

2. Launch of New Technologies

DART has prepared branding for the new technologies including the trip planner and Automatic Vehicle Location System. All of the technologies will share a single “umbrella” brand, which has been identified as “MyDART.” This branding will be incorporated with the technologies as they are introduced.