



Agenda

January 14, 2008

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

700 Locust St, 2nd fl board room

1. Welcome
2. DART Overview by Staff
3. Action Items
 - a. Chair and Vice-Chair
4. Discussion Items
 - a. Public Involvement Policy
 - b. Mission and Goals
 - c. Review of DART Suggested Agenda Topics
 - d. Review of TRAC Suggested Agenda Topics
5. Future agenda items
 - a. Service Related Issues for Future Meetings.
6. Next DART Commission Meeting: January 20, 2009, 5:00 PM
7. Next TRAC Meeting: March 11, 2009, 11:30 AM

DART PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY

1. PURPOSE

To ensure the public is involved and aware of significant DART route service reductions or eliminations, fare changes, and system-wide changes.

2. DEFINITIONS

- **Public Meeting**
 - A public meeting is not required by federal regulations.
 - A public meeting is more of a discussion between interested parties and comments do not go into the public record.
 - A public meeting is a question-and-answer format.
 - A public meeting is an open discussion with a member of DART Staff to make sure comments stay focused on the proposed change and that everyone has a chance to ask his or her question.

- **Public Hearing**
 - A public hearing is required by federal or state regulations, while others are granted on a case-by-case basis.
 - A public hearing is where comments from the public go into the public record.
 - A public hearing is not a question-and answer format.
 - A public hearing is governed by rules.
 - A public hearing is governed by rules concerning who speaks when and for how long. A public hearing is overseen by a DART official.

- **Opportunity for Public Comment**
 - DART may offer an “Opportunity for Public Comment” by advertising this opportunity as it would a Public Hearing.
 - If DART staff receives one or more public requests to hold a Public Hearing, DART will schedule and hold this Hearing.
 - If DART staff does not receive any specific requests for a formal hearing, DART will continue to answer questions and take input in the form of email, website communications, or telephone comments but will not schedule and hold a Public Hearing.

3. POLICY

3.1 Significant Route Reductions or Route Eliminations

Plans for the elimination of a route or the restructuring of a route that will negatively-affect more than twenty-five percent (25%) of that route’s ridership will be published in one or more local newspaper(s) as well as posted on buses at least 45 days before implementation is scheduled. One or more public meeting(s) will be held to gather comments within two (2) weeks of the published notice.

Comments will be considered by the DART Planning Staff, the DART Commission and the DART Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC). If there is variance in the opinions by these three groups, the DART Commission's decision shall always take precedence. A notice of the final changes will be posted on buses and sent to DART email notice subscribers within 15 days of implementation.

3.2 System-Wide Service and/or Fare Changes

Proposed fare and service reductions that will affect passengers system-wide will be published for public review and comment no less than 60 days before the proposed changes are to take place. An Opportunity for Public Comment will be provided to consider holding a public hearing to listen to and consider comments within two (2) weeks of the published notice. If no public hearing is requested, DART may instead hold one or more public meetings to answer questions and receive feedback on the proposed changes.

Comments will be considered by the DART Planning Staff, the DART Commission and the DART Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC). If there is variance in the opinions by these three groups, the DART Commission's decision shall always take precedence. A notice of the final changes will be posted on buses and sent to DART email notice subscribers within 15 days of implementation.

In the event the DART Commission approves a comprehensive fare or service policy that approves multiple phases or implementations of fare or service adjustments over a period of time, DART reserves the right to modify this public comment process.

3.3 Budget, Tax Levy, & Grants Public Comments

Comments will be considered by the DART Planning Staff, the DART Commission and the DART Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC) as well as at a scheduled Public Hearing at a DART Commission Meeting. The Public Hearing must be advertised per Iowa Code, at least thirty (30) days in advance.

Mission of TRAC:

The mission of TRAC is to be a conduit of public input, to better inform DART Staff and DART Commission Members on issues and policies that impact both current and potential new DART customers, and to encourage responsiveness to customers.

Goals of TRAC:

- Be a conduit for riders to make their voices heard.
- To have open and collaborative meetings that work towards clearly articulating all riders' needs and concerns.
- Suggest and support improvements in service.
- Increase the amount of public input that riders and non-riders alike have within DART decision making processes.
- Become advocates for expanding regional public transit in Central Iowa.
- Maintain regular ridership of DART's services during TRAC membership.



TRAC

1. Create Mission and Vision statements (MM)
2. Create by-laws – determine meeting procedures. (MM)
3. TRAC needs a method to communicate in between meetings (message board, a website to log into...) (SR)
4. How do TRAC members make themselves available to the public? (cards, email addresses)
Should members introduce themselves to the public? (GW)

Service Related

1. Westown Express, #94 (HB)
 - a. Increase # of trips to include mid-day
 - b. Include a stop on Valley West mall property.
 - c. Travel along University, including 60th and University medical facilities
2. Route between VW Mall and Jordan Creek – including stops in between serving businesses along Mills Civic Pkwy. (HB)
3. Vista Express, #95 (HB)
 - a. Add a later trip in the AM (9:00 – 10:00 AM)
 - b. Add an earlier trip in the PM (3:00 PM)
4. Route 1
 - a. Most riders whom exit at Grand and E 30th walk south. Is this perception or reality, and if reality, how do we serve these riders better? (SR)
5. Guaranteed Ride Home
 - a. What other alternatives can DART provide that are in a similar vein, but go beyond emergencies (maybe working late). (CE)
6. Altoona Express, #99
 - a. Consistently runs late on 1st and 3rd AM runs. (LU)
7. Commuter Routes run at least one trip in the AM and PM day after holidays (GW)
8. Route 5 (KH)
 - a. Every run should make the loop to 63rd.

Amenities

1. How does DART increase Bike 'n Riders given limited carrying capacity on buses? Increase bike lockers, better advertising, signage and integrated maps? (SR)
2. Materials available in other languages and different sized print , including website (SR)
3. Increase # of benches and shelters (SR)

4. Lengthen transfers from 2 hours to 2.5 hours (all you want to ride) (SR)

Administration

1. Budget/Finance
 - a. Detailed description of funding streams (MM)
 - b. How does DART increase revenue streams and opportunities? Additional grants or a sales tax? (SR)
 - c. More organized billing services (CE)
 - d. Continue to advocate DART benefits to employers not in the Unlimited Access program (or those that are, but do not offer all services). (CE)
2. Description of current safety training given to Operators (MM)
3. Passes (SR)
 - a. Reusable fare card that can store funds.
 - b. Discount cards – but 10 rides, get 1 free.
 - c. 31 day pass that begins first day of use, not first day of month, necessarily.
4. Develop (or improve existing programs) a more advanced web-based service that can better connect potential riders to vanpools or bus lines. (CE)
5. Rider Communication
 - a. Communicate to riders (maybe via text messaging) when buses are running late in excess of 5-10 minutes (LU)
6. Driver appearance seems to vary a great deal – how to make more uniformed and ensure each looks very professional? (GW)