

Point B

A New Vision for Mobility in North Texas

DALLAS AREA RAPID TRANSIT
STRATEGIC PLAN
JUNE 2024



DART

®

Joya at Oran Good Park - Farmers Branch, Texas
On the Cover: Deep Ellum Station, Traveling Man – Dallas, Texas



Letter from the President & CEO

Our Strategic Plan process started with a simple concept: To move DART from where we are today (Point A), to where we want to go (Point B). Defining what we want to be in the future meant taking a close look at the context of both our past and our present. Our 40th anniversary in 2023 was the perfect backdrop for the process, allowing us to acknowledge and honor the work that went into building today's DART, while also setting our sights on the next 40 years.

Over the past year, we have articulated a clear vision of Point B and unified our agency around an ambitious set of strategic goals. The overarching theme of our vision for the future is to move DART from being a service that people sometimes use, to being a valued regional economic and mobility asset that helps cities and people thrive. Three principles underpin this vision: operational integrity, seamless mobility, and strategic relationships.

This plan paints a vision of a future that we all aspire to achieve. It envisions a region in which transit plays a far more substantial role than it does now. Where more people use and rely on DART because its services are more attractive and convenient. Where DART's full potential is unlocked, and our cities and partners leverage our transit system as a catalyst for achieving economic and quality of life objectives. Where people are proud to work at DART, choose to live, work, and play in areas served by DART, and think of DART first for their mobility needs.

While our Point B vision defines what we plan to achieve, the six strategic goals outlined in this plan define how we will deliver this promise. By itself, each goal has an important purpose. Together, they have the power to create long-lasting and meaningful outcomes for everyone – employees, customers, service area cities, and our region. We hope this Strategic Plan inspires you to contribute your own actions and ideas to help us achieve a new vision for mobility in North Texas going forward.

What we do matters, and I invite you to be part of DART's journey to Point B.

Sincerely,



Nadine S. Lee
PRESIDENT & CEO







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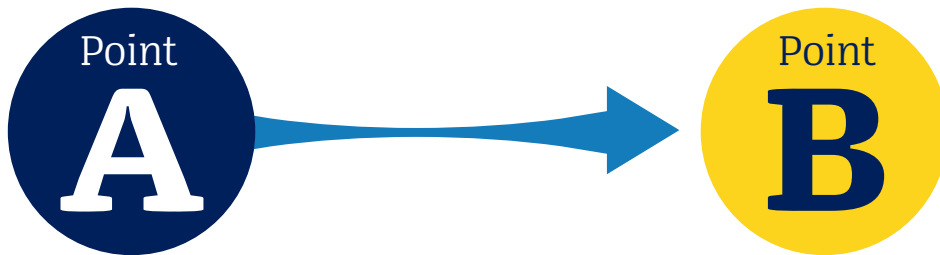
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Point B represents what success looks like for DART in the future and lays out a more substantial role for DART in our rapidly growing region.

Introduction

Point B: A new vision for mobility in North Texas



Where We Are

Where We Want to Be

Over the last 40 years, DART has connected millions of North Texans to jobs, education, entertainment, health care, and more. Today, we operate a multi-modal network of bus, light rail, regional rail, microtransit, and paratransit services across a 700-square mile, 13-city service area. Our investments in service and infrastructure have helped to catalyze an estimated \$17 billion in development around our stations.

But this is just the beginning. North Texas is projected to be the third largest region in the U.S. within ten years and will add four million people and three million jobs over the next 20 years. This much growth will bring challenges as well as opportunities. The challenges include accommodating more people and more cars on a constrained transportation network within a sprawling region. DART is poised to help our region move forward and be even more successful. Our opportunity is to ensure that transit plays a more substantial role in the future in order to maximize social and economic benefits and limit the costs and impacts often associated with rapid growth.

Point B represents a new vision for DART as we look to the future. It is a vision where our professional pride and quality service have elevated the DART brand experience, and our seamless journey approach made transit fast, convenient, and easy. It is a future where cities embrace DART as an important part of their quality of life objectives, and where we've created engaging and fantastic spaces within the communities we serve. Ridership is higher than ever as people think of DART first for their mobility needs, and DART is recognized and valued as a key mobility and economic asset in the region.

Purpose of the Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan serves as our guide as we move from Point A, where we are, to Point B, where we want to be.

Key purposes of the Strategic Plan are to:

- Align and focus agency functions on a common vision and goals;
- Help us prioritize resources and efforts to accomplish those goals; and
- Outline a process to report and measure progress.

The Strategic Plan is organized by six strategic goals focused on three things – our agency and employees, our customers, and our communities. Each goal is supported by key objectives and a series of initiatives. The Plan uses a five-year

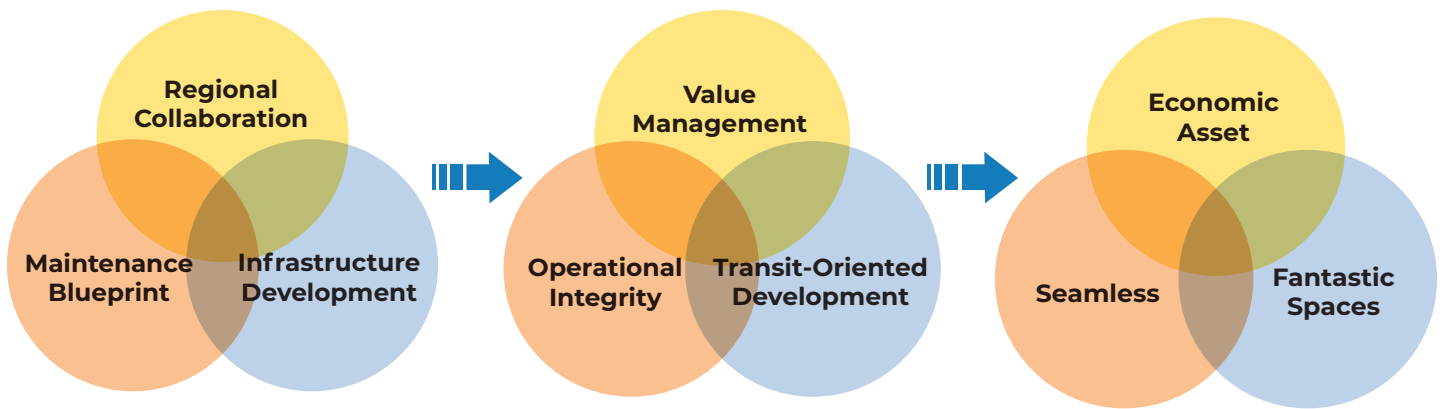
timeframe from FY24 to FY28 with an eye towards a ten-year horizon as some initiatives are already underway and some will take longer to accomplish. DART strives to be a good steward of public funds, balancing risk with fiduciary responsibility. As such, advancement of the Strategic Plan will be subject to financial constraints and established standards consistent with the annual budget and financial plan review process and final approval of the annual budget and financial plan by the DART Board.

Getting to Point B will require making time for new initiatives while also focusing on continuous improvement. This ambitious plan represents a turning point that will begin to move the agency, our communities, and the region towards a better future.



Our Journey

Our journey builds upon the success and collaboration of our first 40 years and addresses the challenges and issues facing our industry and identified by our customers, employees, and stakeholders today. Strategic relationships and cooperation will be key as we focus on the customer experience and work to align our efforts with our cities’ quality of life and economic objectives.



Our Past

Building Out and Connecting Communities

When DART was formed in 1983, we were focused on expanding services and infrastructure to connect communities. Relationships were formed and expectations developed as we successfully established ourselves as a leader in the industry.

Where We Are

Turning Challenges into Opportunities

The pandemic magnified challenges facing DART and our communities, leading some to question our value but also created an opportunity to take DART into a new era. Our focus shifted to operational integrity and the customer experience. Purposeful changes and organizational trust are key as we move forward.

Where We Want to Be

Moving from Afterthought to Preferred Choice

In the future, our professional pride and quality service have elevated the DART brand experience, and our seamless journey approach made transit fast, convenient, and easy. Cities embrace DART as an important part of their quality-of-life objectives, and we’ve created engaging and fantastic spaces within the communities we serve. Ridership is higher than ever, and DART is recognized and valued as a key mobility and economic asset in the region.



Point A: Where We Are

Point A provides context for understanding current perceptions of DART and the realities DART faces.

In many ways, Point A highlights not what we are doing – but what we aren't doing. It sheds light on what we need to be aware of to approach the future differently and be more successful in our pursuit of a new vision. Conversations and research around Point A highlight several themes about where DART is now and about the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

Service Area Cities

Economic Development and Quality of Life.

Many cities fail to connect the role of transit with economic development. DART is often seen as a cost to be justified, not an asset to be leveraged, and the value and opportunities it provides are not always clear or captured. This feeds a perception that DART has exhausted its strategic relevance and is not a necessity integral to a city's economic vibrancy and quality of life.

Collaboration and Relationships. Some stakeholders perceive that the DART system is self-serving. More conversations and collaboration are needed to uncover the opportunities for service area cities as they work to enhance quality of life for residents in ways that can be beneficial for DART as well. Better communication is needed to build and sustain relationships and shift the focus toward the future.

The Region

Auto-Centricity. An extensive freeway system makes moving around the region easy for people with access to a personal vehicle, and major roadways are generally designed to move cars while other modes are secondary. This focus on car travel affects the efficiency and competitiveness of transit, and creates a perception that transit is for those who have no better alternative.

Development Patterns. Most growth is occurring outside areas that are well-served by transit or in areas with no transit at all. This means that most people coming to the region will adopt a car-dependent lifestyle. New growth is largely auto-oriented as well, making it hard to capture new transit trips, and making it difficult to serve new areas in the future. There is also a mismatch of jobs and housing between the north and the south, and a growing number of dispersed job centers outside traditional downtown areas that are often harder to serve. Coordinated planning, advocacy and partnerships will be more important.

Governance and Funding. The governance structure for transit in the North Texas region has proved complicated and raises equity concerns over who benefits and who pays – both within the DART Service Area and more broadly in the region. Voters in DART cities elected to dedicate 1% of sales tax revenue to DART in 1983. Many of those cities have grown significantly and are now located adjacent to high-growth areas that allocate their sales tax to other priorities, but still get benefit from the system. As land use and travel patterns have changed, conflicts around service and funding are becoming more apparent.

Trends and Opportunities

Remote/Hybrid Work Effects on Travel. The pandemic accelerated a shift to remote and hybrid work, reducing peak period commute trips where transit held the greatest competitive advantage compared to driving. While the number of trips is similar now, these new trips are shorter and more likely to occur during off-peak times and weekends. This creates an opportunity for new riders, with more efficient use of capacity across the day.

Customer Experience Focus. The pandemic also created a situation where fewer riders were on the system and unsheltered individuals saw the system as a safe space. Compounded by operator shortages in 2022, service quality and service reliability suffered. DART was successful in addressing staff shortages and expanded efforts around security, cleanliness, and reliability. Continuous improvement around enhancing the customer experience along with a strong outreach strategy have the potential to make a substantial difference in perceptions of DART.

Rider Input. Rider input transmitted through groups such as the DART Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) and through recent surveys suggests that riders view transit as a necessity and place value in it because of the benefits it offers, such as environmental improvement, financial savings, connectivity and access, and opportunities for upward mobility. They would like to see the view of transit shift to "transit-by default", meaning transit that is available and promoted as the primary choice to get around whether for everyday trips or for special events. Reliability and frequency are important to support shorter wait times and more flexibility.

Workforce. While hiring and retaining top talent in the region and nationally has been a challenge, it also means that DART has a unique opportunity to introduce a new generation of workers to public service. DART has a mission that resonates with people and it can be a very exciting place to work for individuals who care about public service. With the right adjustments and a clear vision, DART can build a highly effective and loyal workforce.

Partnerships and Advocacy. Interviews with stakeholders revealed that many people and organizations are eager to collaborate with and advocate for DART. Several regional leaders saw opportunities to partner with DART that could yield benefits for both organizations. A program of sustained and intentional outreach to stakeholders, built on trust and with true back and forth, is a significant opportunity.

Innovation. Stakeholders and employees have voiced consistent support for new ideas that could improve DART and public transit. With new technology, new grant opportunities, and willing public or private partners, DART can explore new ways of thinking and pursue service and technology innovations to benefit the system and our customers. The strategic plan offers an opportunity to open that door.

Point B: Where We Want to Be

Point B represents what success looks like for DART in the future.

Our overarching goal is to move DART from being a service that people sometimes use, to being a valued regional economic and mobility asset.

Where more people use and rely on DART because its services are attractive and convenient. Where DART's full potential is unlocked, and our cities and partners seek to leverage transit as a catalyst for economic prosperity and better quality of life. Where people are proud to work at DART, choose to live, work, and play in areas served by DART, and think of DART first for their mobility needs.

Point B is anchored by and reflected in our Vision Statement, Mission Statement and Values.

Our Vision Statement expresses why we do what we do. It reflects our aspirational goal of being first-in-mind for mobility and a valued partner for life, whether that be with our riders, our cities, businesses, or the many stakeholder organizations in the region. Our Mission Statement defines what we do every day and is fueled by the Vision. Our Values provide the shared foundation for how we go about pursuing our vision – individually and together – so that DART's reputational goals shine through.



Our Vision

Your first-in-mind mobility partner.

Our Mission

We create best-in-class mobility experiences that help people and communities connect and flourish.

Our Values

We are in this TOGETHER.

This means being always respectful and honest with each other. Saying what we mean and meaning what we say. And understanding that we are all working toward a common vision.

We are COMMITTED to serving.

This means being diligent, thoughtful, and creative in our work. Focusing on what is right, not who is right. Knowing that our individual and collective contributions are valued by our customers and communities.

We are PROFESSIONAL in all we do.

This means taking pride in our work. Conducting ourselves in a manner that allows integrity and compassion to shine through – and that reflects the DART reputation. Recognizing that we are responsible and accountable for our actions.

We are DART

Key Themes of Point B

Our strategic vision for Point B is captured in three main themes:

- Operational Integrity: Best-in-class, first-in-mind.
- Seamless Mobility: Moving people, not cars.
- Strategic Relationships: Enrolling partners, creating fantastic spaces.

Operational Integrity: Best-in-Class, First-in-Mind.

DART's fundamental purpose is to operate a public transit system that is attractive, competitive, and ultimately joyful to use. Operating best-in-class services will make DART a stronger and more powerful economic force in the region. Providing an unparalleled and delightful journey through exemplary services and fantastic spaces will help riders thrive and enjoy greater mobility

independence. DART will strive for operational performance that goes far beyond the imperatives of cleanliness, security, and reliability, to provide a transit network that people look forward to riding at any opportunity.

Seamless Mobility: Moving People, Not Cars

Given the car-centric nature of our fast-growing region, DART must offer a product worth buying. The most critical need is to shift away from the idea that the first goal is to move cars and toward the idea that moving people is the top priority, with policies and investments to match.

DART will support this shift by taking a “total journey” approach that focuses on delivering a seamless network in which most residents,

Heritage Park - Irving, Texas



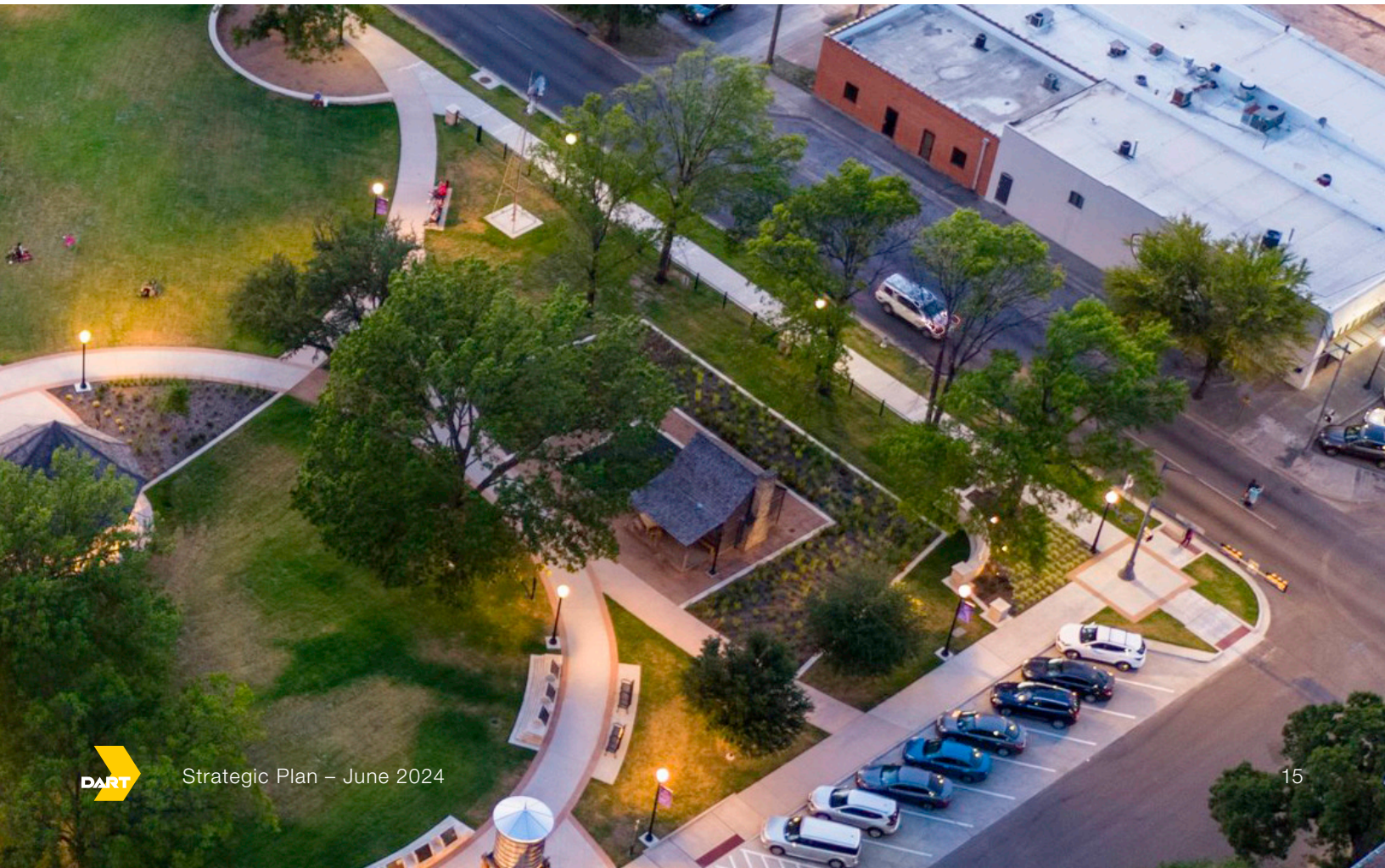
businesses, and services are no more than a 10-minute walk or wait from a high-frequency (every 10 minutes) transit option – our 10x10 aspiration. Speed, convenience, and ease of access are the key components. The core of this network will be a stronger bus and rail system, with supplemental shared options where appropriate. With better service and stronger partnerships, we aim to make DART the preferred option for transportation in North Texas, with productivity benefits that provide quantifiable competitive advantages for cities and businesses within our service area.

Strategic Relationships: Enrolling Partners, Creating Fantastic Spaces

The third main theme of our strategic vision focuses on building relationships across a broad

network so we can align our mutual objectives and do more together. The nature of DART's work is collaborative – virtually everything we do requires working with the private sector, other agencies and organizations, and the public.

This is especially true when creating desirable destinations where transit is a centerpiece instead of an afterthought. We want to collaborate with our city partners to create “pockets of brilliance” in the voids around transit stations and transfer centers, a significant extension of our transit-oriented development (TOD) program. These spaces will become a draw for economic and social activities and create customer experiences that are not only welcoming, uplifting, and inspiring, but also have a positive impact on community wellbeing and perceptions of DART.



Our journey toward Point B will be guided by six related but distinct strategic goals.

Goals, Objectives, and Initiatives

These goals and their associated objectives and initiatives are discussed in the following sections, which outline how DART plans to work toward achieving its vision. An action matrix summarizing planned initiatives is provided in Appendix B.

The first two goals, **Empowered Agency** and **Culture of Contribution**, are internally focused on DART and its employees. The second set of goals, **Quality Service** and **Seamless Mobility**, are customer-focused but can only be realized in relationship to the first two. The final two goals, **Fantastic Spaces** and **Strategic Relationships**, are focused on community- and relationship-building. Both are critical to engaging others, adding value, and creating advocacy around transit's role and potential in the region



Empowered Agency

Build a nimble organization that can act quickly and effectively by streamlining processes and empowering employees.



Culture of Contribution

Create a culture that aligns roles and responsibilities with the DART vision, deepens organizational trust, and encourages growth.



Quality Service

Deliver a quality customer experience defined by strong rider advocacy and built on professional pride and continuous improvement.



Seamless Mobility

Integrate mobility options to create a seamless travel experience defined by frequency and reliability that positions DART as first-in-mind.



Fantastic Spaces

Create fantastic spaces that add value to our communities, enhance the rider experience, and foster a sustainable and thriving region.



Strategic Relationships

Position DART as a collaborative leader and recognized regional economic and mobility asset.



Goal 1: Empowered Agency

Build a nimble organization that can act quickly and effectively by streamlining processes and empowering employees.

To achieve its vision, DART needs to tackle challenges quickly and effectively. This goal will require simplifying and streamlining business processes and removing unnecessary administrative burdens. Doing so will allow DART employees to be more responsive and better able to capture and expedite opportunities that add value for our riders, cities, and partners.

This goal is critical as DART's organizational focus shifts from construction-centric to an emphasis on operations, asset management, and strategic investments that expand and leverage the value of the transit system. Increasing employee confidence in agency systems and processes, empowering staff to exercise sound discretion to expedite decisions, enhancing productivity, and freeing up time to focus on other initiatives are all key to moving us toward Point B.

Objective 1A: Streamline the Most Critical Processes First

Streamlining and updating processes takes time and effort, especially if these processes remain in use during the change. Improvement is most effective when processes are redesigned from scratch. The processes and systems most critical to the strategic initiatives in this plan are related to procurement, hiring (including recruitment and retention), and data management.

Initiative 1A.1: Update procurement policy and procedures with support from new technologies

Beginning with procurement is essential because it touches every department and everything the agency does. A streamlined procurement process can speed up everything at an agency and pay dividends

for many years to come. Reworking this process has already begun with the introduction of Bonfire software and will be further supported by a new Enterprise Resource Planning system. As part of the sustained multi-departmental effort needed to make improvements, DART will consider removing outdated or unnecessary language or approvals, accepting calculated risks that can streamline the process, implementing new or updated technology, ensuring standards for vendor performance, and more.

Initiative 1A.2: Continue to streamline the hiring process, bolster recruitment, and increase retention

Recruiting and hiring is another process that touches every department. Achieving the goals in this plan will require the recruitment of top talent, which will require a faster hiring process and greater attention to employee needs. DART has made substantial progress in this area with the Workday system, but opportunities remain to accelerate and enhance onboarding, increase retention, and establish DART as an employer of choice. DART will take a holistic approach and consider numerous ideas, including hiring long-time seconded staff, consolidating and updating employee manuals and compensation guidelines, growing workforce development programs, and updating remote work policies.

Initiative 1A.3: Develop an agency-wide internal data and knowledge management strategy and process

More data is available than ever before. This initiative will foster effective use of data and work to ensure that consistent, digestible, and easily accessible data and information are available within the agency for planning and reporting. This process will include the development of a data and knowledge management strategy and must include all departments.

Objective 1B: Create New or Improved Processes To Expedite Decisions And Responsiveness

Creating new or improved processes can empower employees and allow DART to better advance and accelerate progress toward strategic goals. Empowerment stems in part from creating new avenues through which employees can share and execute their ideas.

Initiative 1B.1 : Align the budget and financial planning process to ensure resources adequately support the strategic plan, consistent with Board policies that seek to improve operating efficiency, increase mobility, and promote ridership

Point B is intended to drive policy and direction for the organization over the next 5 to 10 years. During that time, DART will need to continuously review its portfolio of practices, projects, and programs against this plan and align its activities with the strategic vision and Board approved financial and service standards. This may include discontinuing efforts that no longer fall within the scope of the plan so that resources can be allocated to high-value and high-impact projects and programs. DART will also aggressively seek new funding sources and grant opportunities to leverage local funds. Advancing initiatives in this Strategic Plan will be subject to final approval of the annual budget and financial plan by the Board.

Initiative 1B.2: Monitor and update policies, procedures, and processes to reflect changing agency needs

Many processes have been in place for years and were set up during a time of significant expansion. While many still have value, there is an opportunity

to review and update workflows or processes to move faster as DART priorities and projects evolve. Technology obsolescence can also create inefficiencies and hinder progress. DART will review and update policies and procedures to enhance productivity and coordination and continue to monitor them as needs change. This effort will be a cross-departmental, collaborative effort.

Initiative 1B.3: Create a process for new ideas and proofs of concept to address challenges identified by staff

A proof of concept (POC) is a great tool to test new technologies and ideas at no or low cost to DART. DART will refine and elevate its existing unsolicited proposals program to focus on challenges and ideas identified by staff, so that firms interested in proposing and moving forward with a new technology or approach can be fairly evaluated on whether their idea has merit. This program can encourage employee innovation and streamline adoption of new technologies that support continuous improvement and help DART address specific issues.



Goal 2: Culture of Contribution

Create a culture that aligns roles and responsibilities with the DART vision, deepens organizational trust, and encourages growth.

The foundation of any successful team is a culture of trust. When a culture of trust is in place, great things can and will happen.

This goal focuses on intentionally deepening trust within the agency to enhance contribution levels, performance outcomes, innovation, and accountability; foster collaboration; and align employee roles and responsibilities with the vision. Communication with employees will be key.

Once trust is established and becomes foundational, professional pride will follow. Professional pride means believing in what you do and why it matters. It comes from a strong focus on the organizational mission and vision and the feeling of having produced or contributed to an excellent product. People take pride in their work when they see that it makes a difference, when they feel supported by others, and when they are rewarded for diligent effort and positive outcomes. This will ensure DART is an employer of choice.

Objective 2A: Build Trust Across the Agency

DART will take several steps to build trust across the agency. This will improve work performance and employee satisfaction, engagement, and pride. Trust is the foundation that enables employees to feel appreciated and inspires them to excel and grow.

Initiative 2A.1: Ensure a consistent employee survey process that focuses on follow-up and results

Trust between employees and leadership is built on the idea that leadership is listening to their people, and, more critically, responding to their concerns.

DART's employee survey is a critical tool for building trust. A consistent survey, in which results are transparently shared across the organization, can be a catalyst for building trust and employee satisfaction if DART commits to following through and is able to communicate progress over time in response to employee feedback.

Initiative 2A.2: Redesign internal communications to ensure timely access to key information and to improve engagement

Internal communications can be as important to an agency as external communications and are critical for building trust. DART employees are spread across several locations and many work around the clock. DART will hire or assign appropriate resources to this initiative and develop a plan that includes creative and innovative ways to meet the diverse needs of employees across the organization. Some potential tools include daily huddles or stand ups, or playbooks where teams share information about their roles and responsibilities, how to work with them, and/or current projects/initiatives.

Initiative 2A.3: Demonstrate consistent support for operators and frontline staff

Frontline employees such as DART operators, dispatchers, maintenance workers, custodial staff, customer service employees, and police interact with customers every day. If frontline employees feel supported and have trust in management, this will shine through to customers. Consistent support for operators can take the form of regular in-person visits, early involvement and recognition, direct lines of communication to management, support outside of normal business hours, and supportive work environments. DART will lay out a plan and communicate it clearly to the workforce.

Initiative 2A.4: Celebrate employees' successes and contributions

One of the best ways to build trust across any organization is to publicly recognize achievements where merited. DART employees across the organization work hard to accomplish many tasks that often go unnoticed. DART will build on recent changes to employee recognition programs to encourage contribution and foster loyalty. This includes a fair and transparent nominating and review process for awards that is inclusive of all departments, and an event to celebrate outstanding employees among leadership and peers.

Objective 2B: Foster Greater Collaboration among Departments

To be effective in accomplishing the goals of this plan, all parts of DART will need to work together. Organizational silos are common and can be overcome through specific strategies intended to foster communication, coordination, and collaboration.

Initiative 2B.1: Develop a job shadowing program to increase connections across departments

Job shadowing, where a person observes someone else's job for short period or a day, can give people from different departments a greater understanding of what it is like to work in other DART positions, particularly frontline jobs. This can be an effective way to increase connections, promote collaboration, and deepen understanding of how one person's role may relate to others. It can also support succession planning. A job shadowing program will be developed to advance these opportunities for all DART employees.

Initiative 2B.2: Increase opportunities for social and professional networking to build relationships and enhance knowledge sharing

The post-pandemic world of increased hybrid work has made social interaction at the office more challenging. DART will create engaging interdepartmental social programs that encourage employees to network, learn to work together, and open new opportunities for growth.

Initiative 2B.3: Establish department and project charters to define roles and desired outcomes from agency initiatives

Because most projects at DART involve multiple departments throughout their lifecycle, it is important to ensure that relevant departments are brought into the process early, before critical decisions have been made. All projects should begin by developing a charter to outline the specific goals of the project and define roles and responsibilities for everyone involved. The charter should be signed by participants and department leads, so they know the staff commitments they are making. The process will also serve as a prompt for managers to consider who needs to be at the table. Department charters should also serve to align work programs with the agency's vision and goals.

Initiative 2B.4: Structure agency leadership teams and meetings to support strategic goals

Advancing strategic goals is the responsibility of DART leadership, who in turn will support and manage their teams to accomplish the work. The framework for agency leadership teams and the meeting cadence they follow should encourage regular and open discussion to track progress on initiatives, identify opportunities for collaboration, and address internal or external obstacles or issues. Success may also require assigning cross-departmental innovation teams to solve specific challenges. Leadership teams will support communication efforts within their departments to reinforce the strategic vision and employees' roles in supporting specific goals or initiatives.

Objective 2C: Create an Environment Where Employees can be Successful

Building an effective agency culture begins with every employee's first day and continues every day after. Investing in a longer and more comprehensive onboarding process can be incredibly beneficial for new employees and instill in them a sense of collective purpose. DART will extend the process to existing employees to reinforce the strategic vision and help employees understand how they can contribute.

Initiative 2C.1: Regularly communicate the strategic vision, goals, and values in this plan

All employees, new or not, should be expected to understand the vision and goals outlined in this strategic plan and understand their role. This is especially important so that existing employees can support change and new ways of thinking. DART will develop a workshop that educates all new employees on the strategic plan and gives them an opportunity to discuss their role in it. For existing employees, DART will need to effectively communicate its vision and goals in all aspects of the organization and ensure these goals and values are integrated into the work.

Initiative 2C.2: Develop and conduct training that grows agency knowledge, professional pride, and customer service skills

DART will create training modules focused on agency knowledge and customer service for all employees. Modules will provide training for interactions with customers, essential facts about the system (funding, operations, cities), who our customers are, and strategies for addressing behavior not in line with the DART code of conduct. This will include tools and knowledge to represent the DART brand and advocate the value of the

organization. New employees will undergo this training during onboarding, but all employees will be required to take it at least once.

Initiative 2C.3: Develop focused leadership training to enhance contribution management

DART leadership is responsible for creating the environment for DART employees to succeed. This means making sure employees know what to do and how to do it, and addressing issues that interfere with their ability to do their job. DART employees are eager to broaden their impact and make a positive contribution. Focused and intentional leadership training will equip leaders and supervisors with tools to enhance contribution and productivity, ensuring employees have the tools to think critically and solve problems in support of the vision.

Initiative 2C.4: Develop and implement a plan to update and modernize workplace facilities

People feel better about their jobs and their lives when they work in a place that is comfortable, pleasant, and indicative of a company that values its employees. DART will develop and implement plans to update and modernize all its workplace



Downtown Garland Square – Garland, Texas



facilities, with specific criteria to determine priorities and strategies for appropriate budgeting. Initial efforts to modernize operating facilities and headquarters are underway.

Objective 2D: Cultivate Opportunities for Employee Growth and Discovery

A culture focused on contribution is essential for success. One highly effective way to foster this culture is to invest in the professional development and technical skill of our employees.

Initiative 2D.1: Provide enhanced project management training

Many employees at DART, at some point in their careers, will find themselves in the position of managing a project. Project management is a skill that is typically learned, and yet it is rarely taught to those who need to know how to do it. DART will expand project management training programs to provide ongoing education for those who want to continuously improve their project management skills and better understand how to access and use the tools available to them.

Initiative 2D.2: Formalize process for DART employees to solve challenges

The best ideas for improvement within an agency often come from those who confront organizational challenges every day. DART will develop a program to reward employees and protect their innovations, especially ideas that generate revenue, reduce costs, save time, improve safety, and/or enhance customer experience. This will empower people and foster creativity while encouraging collaboration.

Initiative 2D.3: Strengthen DART's connections to the communities we serve through employee engagement and volunteerism

DART's vision is to be first-in-mind and foster the full social and economic potential of the people and communities we serve. Employee engagement, philanthropy, and volunteer activities are key to building these connections and having a visible and meaningful impact in the community. New opportunities will be identified that build on current programs. This will not only allow employees to build stronger connections in the communities they serve but strengthen community pride in DART.





Goal 3: Quality Service

Deliver a quality customer experience defined by strong rider advocacy and built on professional pride and continuous improvement.

Quality means the product DART puts on the street will be best-in-class service that is attractive, reliable, safe, and even joyful.

Our customers and stakeholders will experience the DART brand in a new way. People will look forward to using transit and organize their lives around that possibility. DART employees will take tremendous pride in their work, reinforcing our connections with the community, improving productivity, and leading to greater workforce recruitment and retention.

A commitment to meeting customer needs related to cleanliness, reliability, and security will be integral to DART's DNA. In addition, our focus will turn to aligning DART's operational capabilities with customer expectations. Employees will be encouraged to step out of their lanes to add value and encourage innovation. Leadership will focus on providing adequate resources or reallocating resources to ensure employees have the tools they need, together with the inspiration, to provide best-in-class service and positive experiences in DART's everyday operations.

Providing a superior experience also requires continually listening to and engaging with customers and improving or adjusting the product to meet their needs so we can build advocates and partners for life.

Objective 3A: Ensure Customers Always Feel Secure on DART

One of the most critical elements of a good customer experience is personal security. DART will create a customer environment that is safe and secure. This, in turn, can foster a positive atmosphere where people respect the rules and treat one another with kindness.

Initiative 3A.1: Develop a progressive and innovative security strategy

Our vision for security on the DART system imagines an environment where riders feel free to use DART at any time. A secure transit environment benefits riders, employees, and the community at large. It also reduces the need for DART to enforce rules by creating conditions that facilitate a sense of community ownership of the system.

Initiative 3A.2: Build upon current collaboration with cities and partner organizations to enhance outreach to and support for vulnerable populations on the system

The issues on DART that often make people feel unsafe are not necessarily ones that can be solved with policing alone. DART is piloting teams of personnel, including social workers and paramedics, to assist customers in need and connect them to appropriate resources. DART will evaluate this pilot program, take the lessons from it, and move forward with a permanent program or other partnerships or programs that can accomplish desired outcomes.

Initiative 3A.3: Revise, communicate, and enforce the rider code of conduct to enhance public care of the system

Sometimes the little things add up to big things. A single passenger taking up multiple seats, smoking a cigarette, or yelling and cursing can be a big issue for many people; cumulatively, such incidents create an environment that negatively impacts customer experience. DART will review, revise, and communicate its code of conduct to lay out exactly what is expected of customers and then strictly enforce that code.

Initiative 3A.4: Evaluate and implement facility improvements that enhance security

DART Police regularly evaluate transit facilities and document a range of potential improvements to enhance security and deter crime. DART will improve the process for integrating these ideas, as warranted, into facility improvements. Where possible, security improvements will be undertaken in concert with facility modernization to minimize budget impacts and disruptions. Along with the security strategy, such improvements can also minimize fare evasion.

Objective 3B: Create a Culture of Customer Service and Employee Pride Around the DART Brand

Delivering a superior customer experience will require infusing a culture of customer service throughout the agency. A laser-like focus on the customer does not just appear out of nowhere – it must be grown and cultivated over time. DART aims to get to a point where customer-centric thinking is second nature.

Initiative 3B.1: Expand the development, publication, and monitoring of metrics for service quality and customer advocacy

DART reports and monitors a variety of metrics for service quality and performance. Additional metrics need to be developed to capture the customer experience, and DART should undertake that effort in collaboration with customers. Customer experience metrics can extend beyond the Net Promoter Score captured in current DART surveys and be incorporated into a public dashboard. This will improve accountability and create opportunities to promote stories about DART's progress.

Initiative 3B.2: Create and implement a program for internal and external groups to conduct regular, documented customer experience audits

DART will perform regular audits of the system from a customer experience perspective. These audits will not be announced and will collect similar data each time for comparison purposes. Regular audits can capture things that metrics do not and can inform new metrics, highlight key issues that need to be resolved quickly, and prompt new ideas to enhance the customer experience. Employees should be actively involved in this program, and results must be reported to the responsible department for appropriate action. Any customer engagement effort

will consider language or other needs to ensure inclusive feedback.

Initiative 3B.3: Introduce new technologies to enhance the customer experience

DART buses largely operate in an analog manner when they could be taking better advantage of modern technology. For example, drivers could potentially use real-time navigation aids to avoid delays and circumvent obstacles. Cameras can document and report violations in bus lanes or at bus stops, and new technologies can improve safety by automatically detecting potential crashes and alerting the operator. DART will investigate new technologies that can be added to buses to enhance customer experience, improve travel times, and improve safety.

Objective 3C: Ensure Operational Reliability, Safety, and Quality by Focusing on State Of Good Repair and Modernization

Quality service that is reliable and safe requires all assets to be brought into a state of good repair (SGR). When assets are well-maintained, they function more effectively, cost less to operate, and require fewer repairs. Modernization goes beyond SGR to support a sustainable and resilient system and best-in-class service.

Initiative 3C.1: Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to bring the system into a state of good repair

DART will use the results of the 100% SGR condition assessment to inform a capital and funding strategy to bring assets into SGR within 10 years. This should include updates to and incorporation of lifecycle costing for all existing and new capital projects to ensure that operations and maintenance costs are accurately captured in budgets. Keeping lifecycle costs, as well as asset replacement cycles, front and center will increase fiscal responsibility and allow for ongoing provision of quality service.

Initiative 3C.2: Advance modernization efforts that support a best-in-class system for customers and employees

A comprehensive System Modernization Program across all modes will align significant upcoming

investments with customer needs and new technologies. This will be a systematic effort over 10 years to ensure that SGR investments take advantage of modernization opportunities while also helping DART leverage efficiencies in the delivery of related program elements, maximize external funding, and minimize disruptions to customers and operations. Core program elements include revenue vehicles, stations and passenger amenities, bus and rail operating facilities, signal systems, and other support system elements.

Initiative 3C.3: Ensure accurate inventories to avoid service disruptions

Parts inventories are critical to maintaining and ensuring a quality and seamless rider experience. This will become increasingly important as service grows, fleets transition, and multiple parts become necessary. DART will assess procurement processes, storage needs, and distribution procedures to minimize costs, increase efficiencies, ensure the accuracy of automated systems, and prevent service disruptions.

Initiative 3C.4: Build a proactive safety culture

Safety is a core responsibility of any transportation provider, and meeting this responsibility requires embedding safety in the provider's culture. Implementing DART's agency safety plan will ensure that several safety aspects are better integrated throughout the agency's functions. This includes mitigating risk by identifying issues early for any changes that may introduce new hazards or impact safety performance, including changes to organizational structures and operations or maintenance procedures. Safety must be a focus for new capital projects, and/or modifications to equipment, vehicles, and facilities. Training and promotion will also be enhanced as part of DART's commitment to a strong safety culture.

Objective 3D: Enhance Customer Engagement to Develop Partners for Life

Communication and engagement are key to ensuring that customers have accurate and timely information throughout their entire journey and to designing that journey so it is as seamless and easy as possible. Access to up-to-date information and the opportunity to provide feedback will help customers feel like they matter and foster loyalty to DART.

Initiative 3D.1: Create and advance a customer experience plan

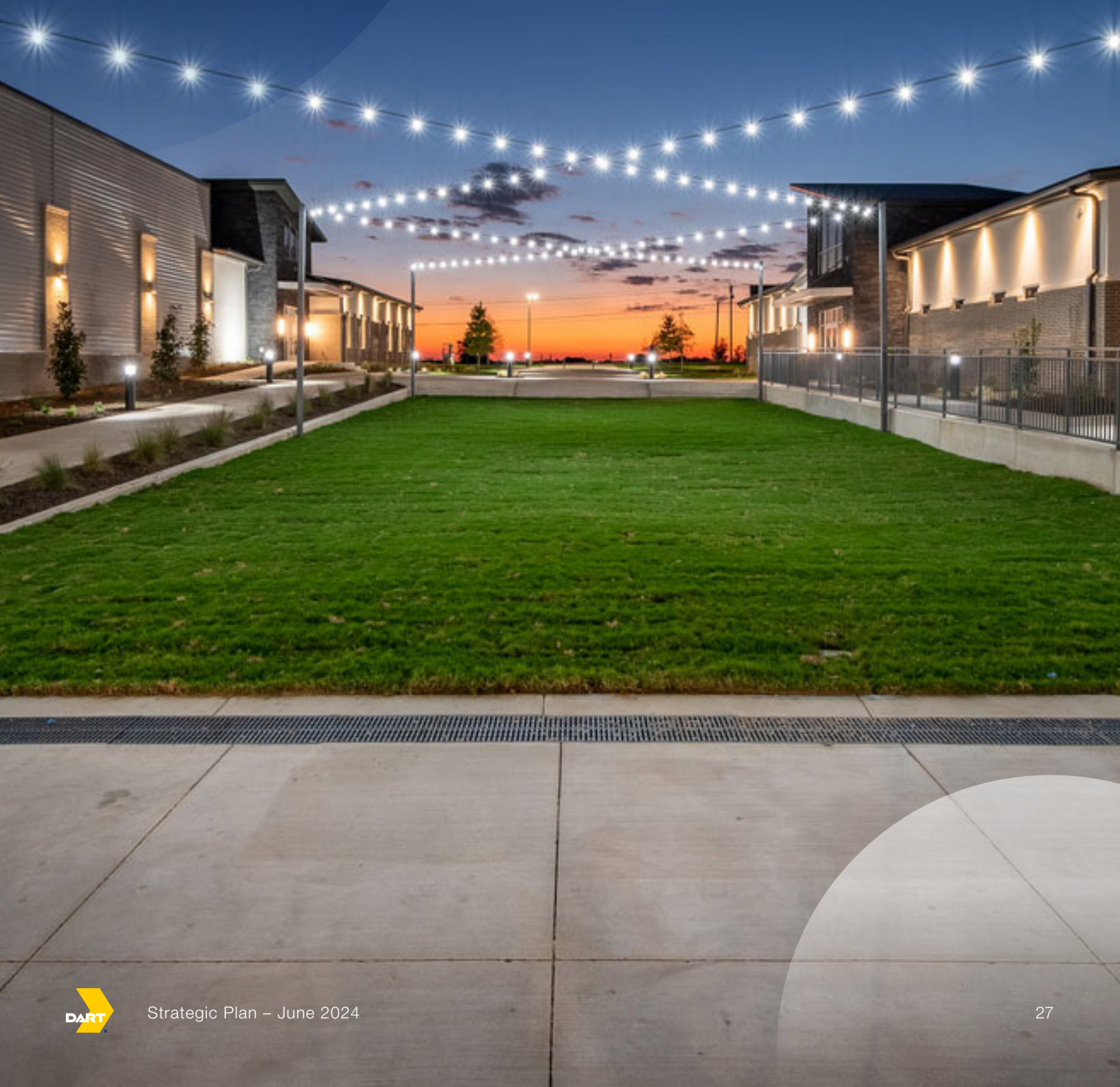
To best understand the experience of DART riders, we must look at the entire rider journey. That journey begins the moment a prospective rider considers taking DART. Every interaction and touchpoint can influence the customer's decision to use DART and incorporate transit in their lifestyle. Having a rider-focused mindset means putting an understanding of our customers' situations, perceptions, and expectations at the center of everything we do. DART conducts regular customer engagement surveys and offers other touchpoints, but to truly address customer barriers and connect with riders at a deeper level, it is critical to understand the "voice of the customer." The voice of the customer conveys insights, not only about opportunities but also about how customers perceive and communicate these opportunities. This plan aims to identify new ways to intentionally engage and take to heart customer needs to build lasting relationships and foster advocates for DART.

Initiative 3D.2: Use crowdsourcing to support issue resolution

Transit customers have some of the best ideas about how to solve transit problems. Private sector innovators often develop new technologies and do not necessarily know how these technologies could apply to transit. Both untapped resources can generate solutions to problems with the system. DART can engage customers in a variety of ways to develop innovative solutions to challenges, including by reviewing customer service request categories to inform needs. Adequate resources to identify and implement solutions are needed too, so that DART can review and advance new ideas, create customer benefits, and foster a deeper sense of ownership and community.

Initiative 3D.3: Recognize and reward frequent riders who exemplify the code of conduct

Airlines have recognized for decades the value of rewarding their top customers. DART should do the same by allowing customers to bank their rides in exchange for rewards. Potential rewards could include discounted DART passes, DART merchandise, or discounts from local business partners. Rider recognition at DART facilities or events can also foster these relationships and build brand ambassadors.





Goal 4: Seamless Mobility

Integrate mobility options to create a seamless travel experience defined by frequency and reliability that positions DART as first-in-mind.

We will achieve the DART vision by integrating regional mobility resources to create a seamless travel experience in the region, defined by expanded access to and choice of mobility options.

These choices, along with frequency and reliability, will inspire more people to use the network. We propose to use a 10x10 frame of reference for planning, where the aim is to use innovation and creativity to get most people within a 10-minute walk or wait of a 10-minute frequency level of service. This goal will position DART as a competitive option for travel and support people who lack access to a personal vehicle while creating opportunities for others to choose a car-free lifestyle as the region grows. The competition (i.e., private cars and rideshare services) currently offers on-demand service from anywhere in the region to anywhere else in the region, albeit at a higher price, so a 10x10 framework is important.

DART's aim is to offer a product that people with other options still want to use, which can translate into more ridership and more fare revenue. Creating this dynamic is critical for the region's economic growth, safety, air quality, and equity. DART will start by tackling the aspects of our service that are most within our control – how easy it is to use DART, how other options and providers are integrated, where the service goes, and when and how frequently it runs. DART can also work closely with cities and agencies to enhance access, speed and reliability in transit corridors to further support seamless travel.

Objective 4A: use the 10x10 frame of reference for service planning, with consideration of a balanced approach and route performance measures

The point of the 10x10 concept is to increase transit availability and enable people to travel around the DART region quickly and efficiently without a private car. Advancing the 10x10 aspiration will take time and creativity, given our car-centric region. It must use a balanced approach that addresses city and rider needs while working to strengthen service performance within DART Board-approved Service Standards.

Initiative 4A.1: Continue to advance service improvements informed by customer input and city priorities

DART is developing future service plans to build on the recent DARTzoom Bus Network Redesign. These plans will outline phased improvements to service wait times, frequency, and coverage that are responsive to customer needs, and align with city priorities and development plans. These service plans will need to be integrated into DART's budget and long-range financial plans, balanced with other agency goals, and assess how service improvements align with Board-approved Service Standards while measuring progress toward the 10x10 aspiration. Regular reviews of Service Standards should be conducted to guide service planning efforts.

Initiative 4A.2: Determine appropriate ongoing applications for GoLink microtransit as a tool for mobility and access

Concurrent with the development of fixed-route service plans, DART will consider how to provide frequent service to areas that do not have the

characteristics to warrant fixed route service. DART operates an extensive microtransit system that works well for first- and last-mile connections to transit hubs or for short trips within a zone. Zone-to-zone pilots and monitoring of costs and productivity compared to other options will inform decisions on the expanded role of microtransit in medium-length trips, or in areas where barriers may exist or infrastructure may be lacking. Other possibilities include vanpooling, carpooling/sharing, and partnerships with private providers.

Initiative 4A.3: Integrate mobility options to enhance access and coverage

DART is part of a larger transportation network that it can leverage to support the 10x10 objective. For example, anyone accessing DART must walk or roll, but others may also choose to bike, scoot, drive (or be driven), or use a different transit mode. DART will focus on convening a range of options to support a seamless travel experience by working with other providers or vendors for better access to and integration with transit facilities and stations.

Objective 4B: Collaborate with partners to create coordinated, seamless end-to-end trip experiences

Delivering seamless travel journey experiences requires collaboration with partners across the region. While DART may be able to provide high-frequency services to much of the region, it has no control over streets or other transit services, so working with the partners that own these assets is key.

Initiative 4B.1: Coordinate with transit partners to enhance interfaces and connectivity

Customers do not distinguish between different transit service providers and will often need to use

more than one to get to their destination. DART will work with other providers to coordinate schedules, routes, and physical connectivity to provide a more cohesive and seamless experience.

Initiative 4B.2: Collaborate with cities to create and implement better access to transit

Getting to a bus stop or rail station can be difficult and act as a barrier. Conversely, safe and convenient access to transit is an important part of the rider journey. DART will work with cities to identify and improve pedestrian and bicycle access to stations, including looking for opportunities to partner and leverage funding to advance mutual objectives. This can include improving sidewalks, crosswalks, curb cuts, and bike connections, and/or reducing speed limits on streets near transit facilities, among other measures.

Initiative 4B.3: Work with other agencies to prioritize transit operations within public rights-of-way

Challenging operating environments and growing traffic congestion affect DART operations as well as travel time and reliability for our riders. Speed and reliability improvements can support frequency improvements and keep costs down while also providing a better customer experience. DART will partner with cities, TXDOT and others to elevate the role of transit in the network and to make improvements that will help move more people more efficiently, including express lanes, dedicated lanes for buses, transit signal priority, and other treatments.

Initiative 4B.4: Implement simplified fare policy, structure, and enhanced payment options

DART is currently reassessing its fare policy and fare structure with a focus on simplicity,

equity, and ease of use. Coupled with continued improvements to GoPass, the GoPass tap card, and open payment options, implementing fare recommendations will be key to creating a seamless, understandable fare payment system that is responsive to diverse rider needs. This will include improvements to special programs, equitable application of fare capping, and integration of appropriate discount options based on pilot programs.

Objective 4C: Enhance customer information and wayfinding

A critical feature of a seamless system is that it provides accurate and helpful information to customers when they need it. DART will upgrade how, where, and how well it provides information to customers in a way that puts customers at ease and helps them make better decisions regarding their trips, including during incidents. This will give customers the confidence to keep riding.

Initiative 4C.1: Provide accurate real-time information on vehicles and at bus stops, transit facilities, and rail stations

For many customers, knowing how long they'll have to wait is in many ways more important than the actual wait time. People like predictability and want to know when their ride is arriving, and though they often have this information at DART rail stations, they do not have it at all bus stops. While many customers can look on their phones for bus information, not all of them can, and it is far more customer-friendly to have a real-time sign right at the stop. DART will work to implement real-time arrival information at all bus stops.

Initiative 4C.2: Review and update information and signage at transit facilities and rail stations

System signage and information can be difficult to understand. Wayfinding systems and messaging need to be more intuitive, accessible, and inclusive for riders of all abilities and for riders who speak other languages. While phones and maps can help people with where to go and how to get places, good wayfinding signage gives people confidence that they are going the right way. DART will review how its stations and facilities provide information through signage and design and develop an approach and plan to make improvements. This can include partnering with cities and organizations to enhance connectivity with surrounding destinations.

Initiative 4C.3: Review and update incident management procedures and customer communication protocols

Customers understand that things can go wrong. When they do, customers expect immediate communication, which makes them feel safe, valued, and more in control of their own journey. Well-designed plans and protocols will go a long way toward building customer trust. DART will perform a comprehensive review of incident management procedures and customer communication protocols to ensure that the system in place is highly effective and gives customers what they need. This will include looking at how technology and/or facility improvements can enhance incident management and communication capabilities.



Goal 5: Fantastic Spaces

Create fantastic spaces that add value to our communities, enhance the rider experience, and foster a sustainable and thriving region.

This goal emphasizes community building and collaboration to create the social and economic activity that allows communities to thrive while also allowing riders to experience DART in new ways.

The intent is to expand the DART Transit Oriented Development (TOD) program to capture a more diverse set of opportunities. Fantastic spaces can range from little pockets of brilliance in unexpected places to large mixed-use developments that are built to leverage transit access. Either way, these spaces become high-visibility indicators of how DART contributes to the quality of life and vibrancy of our service area and region.

Opportunities to transform transportation in the region are linked to land use, so planning needs to be coordinated. DART is not a land use authority but can work with cities to influence transit-supportive policies and can use its own assets to bring about change. DART property assets can be reimaged to support economic development, while also building ridership and making the customer journey more pleasurable from end to end.

The goal is not just to develop these spaces but to have them serve as a model for future development. Auto-oriented development is not financially sustainable and creates negative externalities including pollution, inequity, and congestion. When people have viable options that avoid these problems, people will choose them. It is DART's responsibility and intention to lead the way.

Objective 5A: Maximize the value and use Of DART Property Assets

DART owns numerous facilities and parcels of underutilized land that can be transformed to

maximize value for DART, its customers, and the region. These assets can spark economic growth, encourage transit ridership, and improve customer experience.

Initiative 5A.1: Modernize and simplify real estate procedures to set expectations and create uniformity for the use of DART property

DART will focus on updating and streamlining its real estate procedures, forms, and template agreements, and use of technology to elevate its property management capabilities. This initiative will also include finalizing TOD procedures to complement DART's TOD Policy. Our new TOD procedures will include a formalized unsolicited proposal process to allow the private sector to bring market-based perspectives and initiate projects utilizing DART property. They will also outline opportunities for private and public entities to leverage DART assets for short- and long-term uses beyond conventional real estate development. This information will be promoted in a manner that encourages increased use of DART properties and, in turn, generates increased ridership and revenue.

Initiative 5A.2: Inventory all property assets to identify opportunities for improvement, advancement, or development

Before taking steps to maximize the value of its assets, DART must better understand its inventory. This will entail an enhanced comprehensive review of all property assets, to develop an accurate inventory and identify opportunities to make positive changes that can advance DART or community objectives. This inventory will include regional rail corridor assets. At the same time, DART will refresh its review of properties with current TOD potential and evaluate properties where functions could be relocated to create TOD potential. This process will need to be monitored, in coordination with relevant

city authorities, to ensure that it remains accurate and that potential opportunities can be identified.

Initiative 5A.3: Collaborate with city partners to plan and design initiatives aligned with city quality-of-life and development goals

Developing areas near DART stations and transit facilities is a critical step toward creating a transportation system where public transit is convenient and easily accessible. DART will work with cities to develop area plans, station plans, or corridor plans to find common ground between city goals and DART goals. These plans will be designed for mutual benefit, identify opportunities to leverage other funds, and be focused on supporting quality of life and positive economic outcomes.

Objective 5B: Create appealing and engaging spaces for riders and communities to enjoy

DART's land assets can be more than just engines for economic development. They can also become treasured spaces, part of a set of iconic areas that help define the North Texas region. DART will seek opportunities to transform these assets into places that foster positive experiences for customers and everyone else in the region.

Initiative 5B.1: Reduce and repurpose parking to activate space and enhance accessibility

The land surrounding transit stations is valuable, and parking extracts very little of that value compared to other uses. Even at transit stations with plentiful parking, most passengers arrive by other means. Reducing parking at DART stations and passenger facilities will enable the use of that space for more productive purposes, including for economic development or to host events and activities that

can translate into positive experiences for people. Other uses of these spaces can also better DART's connection with the community. Another key element of this effort will be to incorporate TOD concepts like efficient circulation, improved accessibility and walkability, and open space.

Initiative 5B.2: Enhance bus stops through better amenities, design, and integration into city streetscapes

Bus stops offer another, often-overlooked opportunity to create fantastic spaces. In high-traffic areas, bus stops can act as hubs that house other amenities while also providing safe and pleasant accommodations for waiting. They can even become the focal point of a community. Integration into city streetscapes can make bus stops more inviting. DART will look for opportunities to improve bus stops by working with cities, adjacent property owners, and private sector partners on innovative ideas for creating positive experiences.

Initiative 5B.3: Transform existing transit facilities into community assets with amenities and services that are responsive to local needs

A bus passenger facility can be more than just a place where buses go to facilitate transfers. It can be a community asset that reflects the neighborhood and integrates services and amenities that contribute to community well-being. DART will transform its existing facilities into more useful assets by modernizing their spaces and internal functions, incorporating sustainability, and working with communities to add appropriate elements and amenities to meet rider and community needs. Facilities can be redesigned and right-sized as part of TOD projects to reflect current and future transit needs.



Goal 6: Strategic Relationships

Position DART as a collaborative leader and recognized regional economic and mobility asset.

DART is a regional leader but it has not fully leveraged its value as a strategic asset for supporting other local and regional priorities.

This goal focuses on positioning DART as a collaborative partner and catalyst for broader efforts to support people and communities in reaching their full social and economic potential. To play this role, DART must first understand the strategic priorities of our partners and stakeholders, including the cities we serve, so that we can align our mutual objectives.

DART will focus on building professional and personal relationships across a broad network. These relationships are essential for DART to realize its vision, undertake new initiatives, and build coalitions with civic, corporate, and political leaders, as well as advocacy groups. All these partners and stakeholders can be allies in achieving DART's goals while also advancing their own.

As the largest transit agency in a fast-growing region, DART will also work collaboratively with city and regional leaders to explore opportunities related to transit policy, funding, and governance and to address concerns about the current regional transit structure.

Objective 6A: Build trusting relationships with partners that can help DART accelerate progress toward Point B.

DART's strategic vision will require stronger partnerships and relationships. To go from an afterthought to a central regional asset is not just about providing better services, it is about building a coalition that wants to invest in the same goals. This can be done through a combination of strategic alliances and strong messaging.

Initiative 6A.1: Refine DART's approach to agency and city relationships

For DART to be successful, it will need strong partnerships with other agencies and cities throughout the region. Much of what DART needs to accomplish to get to Point B is beyond DART's direct control and therefore requires an approach that focuses on understanding our partners' strategic vision and working with them to advance mutual objectives. For example, DART will need help from other transit agencies to provide seamless services, and it will need help from cities to prioritize transit and strengthen transit-supportive policies in ways that align with cities' different visions. DART will need to strengthen and maintain these relationships to ensure that our partners are with us in implementing this strategic plan from the very beginning.

Initiative 6A.2: Align external communications to promote DART's strategic vision and goals

Part of creating a new mindset about DART's role in the region is messaging and communications. DART will work proactively with media and other communication channels to promote its strategic vision and the work we are doing. This includes developing a media strategy and communication plan that puts DART leadership front and center in the region, actively puts out messages that get ahead of stories, shares performance data, and transparently communicates both success and failure. Better communication will build trust in the larger community, thus deepening local and regional support for when it is needed.

Initiative 6A.3: Leverage business relationships to advance DART's role as a strategic economic asset

DART will use its relationships with businesses and major corporations to better understand how

DART can support them and serve as an asset for meeting their economic and social objectives. This can include discussing new approaches to corporate pass programs and thinking about better integrating DART services at or near business locations. Benefits can include new riders and enhanced revenues for DART, increased access to workers and greater productivity for businesses, and a reduced environmental footprint. These collaborations can also extend beyond businesses to major institutions in our service area cities and the region.

Initiative 6A.4: Build and expand DART's network of supporters and advocates

Many potential new allies for DART are just waiting to be tapped. They include non-profits, community organizations, chambers of commerce, and businesses that support transit's role in the region. DART will strive to strengthen and amplify their support by meeting with these allies, responding to their concerns, and working with them to deliver on what they need. DART will also play a leadership role in educating and building a network of advocates who can speak out in support of our strategic vision and a more sustainable region. DART will begin by undertaking a comprehensive stakeholder mapping exercise to identify new and/or under-engaged stakeholders and effective strategies for building new relationships.

Objective 6B: Explore long-term policy and funding changes that support transit and contribute to regional success

As the Dallas-Fort Worth region has grown, current funding and governance structures around transit and transportation have created concerns about equity, economic competition, and means for better increasing transit availability within the

region. DART, along with the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), and other transit providers, will collaborate on forward-looking solutions to support regional transit.

Initiative 6B.1: Collaborate with regional partners on potential long-term governance changes to benefit transit

The governance structure for regional transit has been a topic of discussion for several years and is becoming increasingly important given the region's fast pace of growth, especially in areas where no formal mechanisms for providing sustainable transit exist. This initiative will explore potential changes that could deliver improvements for the entire region, including existing transit authorities. A regional transit study is being advanced by NCTCOG and will need to be undertaken as a collaborative effort. DART leadership should play a key role to ensure that DART's strategic vision and goals are integral to the effort.

Initiative 6B.2: Collaborate with regional partners on long-term options to fund regional growth and community mobility

DART has relied on voter-approved sales tax collections to fund the operation and build-out of an extensive capital program. Operations, improved services, and capital programs including expansion, state of good repair, and fleet and facility modernization are a significant part of DART's future and will continue to require a significant and sustainable funding source. Funding options including but not limited to sales tax revenues must also be reviewed and analyzed to ensure that DART continues to function as a key mobility and economic asset and can keep adding capacity to the region's constrained mobility network while also supporting community-level objectives.





The Strategic Plan outlines a clear vision for transforming DART from a service that people sometimes use, to a valued regional economic and mobility asset that helps communities and people thrive.

Conclusion

Our Point B vision is a region where transit plays a far more substantial role than it does now. We will have realized our true strategic potential when people are proud to work at DART, choose to live, work, and play in areas served by DART, and think of DART first for their mobility needs.

The Strategic Plan serves as our guide to achieving this vision. The goals that comprise this plan, and the detailed objectives and initiatives we have identified under each goal, will help DART prioritize resources and activities over the next five years, from FY24 to FY28, but with an eye to a longer, 10-year horizon. This timeframe recognizes that some of the initiatives described in this plan are already underway while others will take more than five years to accomplish.

Financial Considerations

The Strategic Plan serves as a living document that outlines the vision and strategic goals for DART. The objectives and initiatives in this plan document how the agency will work toward implementing these long-term agency goals. DART also maintains a 20-Year Financial Plan. The role of the DART financial plan is to determine the affordability of ongoing operations and capital programs as described in the Strategic Plan.

The 20-Year Financial Plan is updated each year to demonstrate that, based on current information and assumptions, DART has the financial capacity to meet our long-range transit system plan commitments, continue programmed levels of service, and repay our debt while advancing the agency's strategic vision and goals. Several

Strategic Plan initiatives were previously anticipated and are within the 20-Year Financial Plan. However, the Strategic Plan also identifies some new initiatives that are not yet well defined. As the details and scope of Strategic Plan initiatives are defined, those that need additional operating or capital funds will be presented as part of the budget and financial plan process for consideration by the Board. DART's financial standards include controls to maintain a structural balance to the budget, which means annual sources of funds are sufficient to pay for all ongoing obligations (operating and debt service) in every year of the financial plan.

Regarding specific financial plan considerations of the Strategic Plan, existing staff will accomplish most initiatives within the Empowered Agency, Culture of Contribution, and Strategic Relationships goals. These goals are less about new operating expenses and capital projects, and more about approaching work in new, innovative ways to benefit our customers, stakeholders, and cities. Some initiatives may require additional consulting resources or expertise but should result in offsetting internal efficiencies that reduce costs, save time, and/or increase responsiveness. Culture of Contribution Initiative 2.C4, to develop and implement a plan to update and modernize workforce facilities, is an exception. Current studies underway may identify capital improvements that are beyond programmed funding. However, the objective is to create a workplace environment where employees can be successful and productive.

Many initiatives under the Quality Service goal are already included in the financial plan but may require additional funding as they become more fully defined and are phased in over time to benefit our customers, cities, and region. For example, initiatives under Objective 3A related to customer security will be developed as part

of a broader security strategy or may be subject to pilot programs. Initiatives under Objective 3C are related to state of good repair (SGR) and modernization. The FY 2024 20-Year Financial Plan includes \$8.9 billion in capital expenditures over the next 20 years, nearly 82% of which is for capital maintenance and timely asset replacement. The 5-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) includes \$4.5 billion in capital expenditures, 71% of which is associated with SGR and modernization initiatives. The recent SGR baseline assessment and strategy will support prioritization and may identify additional projects to be considered in future budgets and financial plans.

Seamless Mobility goal initiatives, such as service improvements for all modes, will be presented to the Board for consideration as part of the annual budget process and available resources. Service changes will be based on Phase 2 Bus Network Redesign Tier 1 and Tier 2 recommendations, which have been presented to the Board and will continue to be refined with our cities and riders through engagement and outreach. This goal will also entail funding enhancements for bus amenities expansion, bus corridor investments, and access improvements, all of which are partially funded in the financial plan.

Fantastic Spaces goal initiatives could range from DART-led projects to licensing underutilized land to cities or private entities for improvements or transit-oriented developments that could generate revenue for DART; thus, costs and/or revenues are unknown until those projects are defined in collaboration with our service area cities and other private partners.

As initiatives move forward, it is also important to consider key risk and opportunity areas:

- **Sales Tax** - As a major revenue source, sales tax can affect DART's ability to meet its strategic goals. Historically, sales tax growth has been stable outside of major economic disruptions. The annual budget is flexible enough to match spending to any changes without major service disruptions in the short term.
- **Inflation & Other Expense Drivers** - Inflation rose above 9% in June 2022, which has negatively impacted DART's operating and capital costs. However, projections show inflation normalizing at a rate under 3% over the life of the financial plan.
- **Federal Funding** - DART continues to maximize use of federal formula funds and to apply for federal discretionary grants for upcoming capital projects. DART is conservative in programming new discretionary funding. Even so, successful grant awards can help to offset inflation or free up capacity for new initiatives.
- **External Service Relationships** - DART Board Policy III.07 allows DART to provide contract services to a municipality or county outside the service area for up to 36 months under certain conditions. Regional transit coordination and continued discussions around governance and funding options as outlined in Objective 6B could influence potential service expansion beyond the DART Service Area.

Ultimately, operating programs and capital projects that advance the strategic goals will continue to be subject to financial constraints and the annual budget and financial planning process.

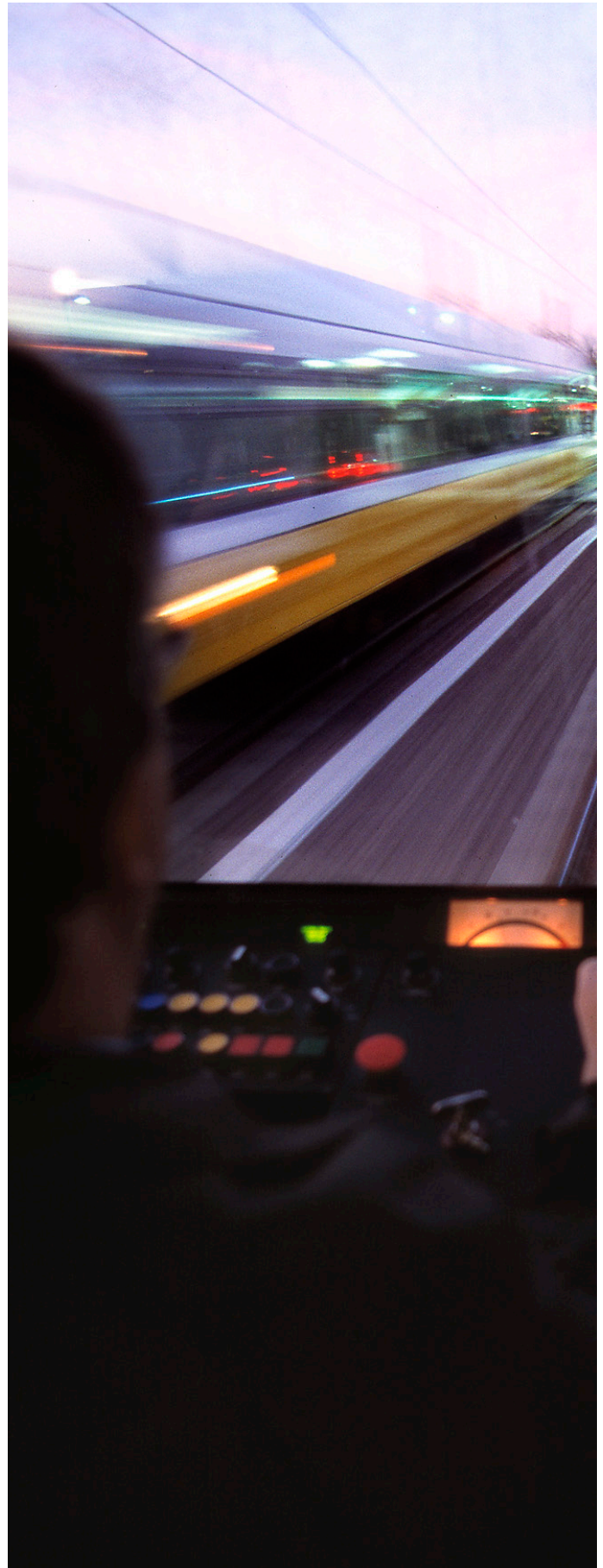
Tracking Progress

The goals, objectives, and initiatives in this plan are intended to be ambitious but achievable, and tracking progress will keep DART accountable.

Appendix B includes an action matrix summarizing the initiatives along with anticipated timelines and metrics for measuring progress.

The matrix will be used as an internal tool to collaborate and track progress on initiatives. DART will also develop annual reports to communicate progress to a broader audience, noting accomplishments or the need for potential refinements. This information will be shared with the DART Board, service area cities, and internal and external stakeholders, and reconciled with the agency's key performance indicators. The Strategic Plan will be updated every five years to assess progress, reflect on outcomes, adjust where necessary and outline next steps on our journey.

In summary, the work that we will do together to advance our vision and strategic goals has the power to create long-lasting and meaningful outcomes for everyone and represents the beginning of a new era for transit in North Texas. DART is excited to have you be part of the journey.



Appendix

A



Plan Development Process

The Strategic Plan process consisted of five steps, which are described below. Acknowledgments and key information sources are also summarized.

Establishing Point A and Point B.

The process to develop the Strategic Plan started with understanding where we are today (Point A) and defining where we want to go (Point B). Point A provides context around the perceptions and realities of DART, both internal and external, and examined key regional needs and national trends related to mobility. A variety of inputs and interviews informed this step, ranging from employee surveys, customer feedback, agency plans and studies, service area city leadership and DART Board member interviews, DART senior management input, and partner agency and organization discussions. National experts and thought leaders in transportation and public policy were also interviewed to understand national and global context. This allowed DART to review, consolidate and reconcile a range of strategic insights with the aspirations of the President & CEO as the future vision was developed. These aspirations are captured in the future vision of Point B, providing a clear picture of what DART will look like when success has been achieved.

Defining Strategic Goals.

Once the strategic vision was established, DART focused on developing key goals that would be necessary to achieve transformative change over the next five to ten years. Through a series of workshops, six strategic goals were articulated in detail with each one designed create momentum toward Point B. The vision and goals were discussed on reviewed with senior management and the DART Board to ensure understanding and to begin to shift the mindset toward the future.

Developing the Objectives and Initiatives.

Each goal was further defined by more concrete objectives, as well as specific initiatives the agency is already advancing or will advance to help accomplish

each objective. These objectives and initiatives were developed through an iterative process in collaboration with senior management representing departments across the entire agency. The initiatives represent what DART will do over the next five to ten years and reflect what DART believes is necessary and important to achieve the goals. The initiatives are intended to be ambitious and challenging, while still being realistic and achievable.

Refining the Vision, Mission, and Values

As part of the Strategic Plan development process, DART reviewed its Vision Statement, Mission Statement and Values to ensure alignment with the new vision and strategic goals. A key consideration is our reputational goals with employees, customers, and stakeholders. The Vision Statement reflects our desired future state as a mobility and economic asset, no longer an afterthought but a preferred choice and valued partner. Our Mission Statement is why we exist and should inspire employees to make a difference and reflect our desire to create best-in-class experiences that provide opportunity and support economic vitality. Values are principles that define our workplace atmosphere and create culture. They represent our beliefs, actions, and a positive reflection of the DART brand.

Finalizing the Strategic Plan

After completing the draft goals, objectives and initiatives, a draft plan was developed and shared with DART leadership and DART Board members so objectives and initiatives could be clarified and refined, and responsibilities and timelines established. The final plan was developed and includes a summary matrix to assist with tracking progress and to enhance collaboration as initiatives advance. A variety of communication methods will be used to raise awareness of Point B as we move forward with employees, customers, DART Service Area cities and key stakeholders.

Acknowledgments

DART would like to acknowledge the following groups and organization for their participation during the process. Along with employee surveys, customer surveys, and focus group feedback gathered during recent efforts such as the Value of Transit Study, the range of input provided DART with valuable perspectives across a broad cross-section of stakeholder groups.

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Paul N. Wageman (Plano)

DART Stakeholders

DART Leadership Roundtable
DART Senior Management Team
DART Citizen’s Advisory Committee (CAC)
Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 1338

DART Service Area City Leadership

Addison
Carrollton
Cockrell Hill
Dallas
Farmers Branch
Garland
Glenn Heights
Highland Park
Irving
Plano
Richardson
Rowlett
University Park

North Texas Agencies and Organizations

Dallas Citizens Council
Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport
Dallas Innovation Alliance
Dallas Morning News
Dallas Regional Chamber
Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition (DRMC)
Denton County Transportation Authority (DCTA)
Downtown Dallas, Inc. (DDI)
Love Field Airport
North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)
North Dallas Chamber of Commerce
North Texas Commission
North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA)
Southern Dallas County Inland Port Transportation Management Association (IPTMA)
Trinity Metro
Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
Visit Dallas

National Transportation and Public Policy Leaders

Benjamin de la Pena, Shared Use Mobility Center
David Bragdon, Executive Director, Transit Center
David Zipper, Visiting Fellow, Harvard Kennedy School
Rob Puentes, President & CEO, Eno Center for Transportation
Beth Osborne, Director, Transportation For America
Brian D. Taylor Ph.D., UCLA Institute for Transportation Studies
Asha Weinstein Agrawal, PhD, San Jose State University

Key Information Sources

DART 2019, 2021, 2022 Customer Satisfaction Survey Results
DART 2022 Employee Culture Survey Feedback
DART 2021 and 2023 Employee Engagement Survey Results
DART 2022 Board Workshop Reputational Goals
DART 2045 Transit System Plan
DART 2023 Value of Transit Study, including Rider Survey and Focus Group Feedback
DART FY23 Budget and 20-Year Financial Plan
DART FY24 Budget and 20-Year Financial Plan

Consultants

Augment Consulting Group
InfraStrategies



Appendix
B

Strategic Plan Action Matrix



Goal 1: Empowered Agency

Build a nimble organization that can act quickly and effectively by streamlining processes and empowering employees.

Initiatives	Actions	Timeline	Measures
Objective 1A: Streamline the most critical processes first.			
Initiative 1A.1	Update procurement policy and procedures with support from new technologies	Year 1-3	Improvement in procurement time from initiation to contract award; Reduction in time taken to complete procurement processes
Initiative 1A.2	Continue to streamline the hiring process, bolster recruitment, and increase retention	Year 1-3	Improvement in time-to-fill for open positions; Improvement in employee retention rate
Initiative 1A.3	Develop an agency-wide internal data and knowledge management strategy and process	Year 2-3	Completion of strategy, which will include metrics for measuring improvement; and percentage of staff using the new system
Objective 2B: Create new or improved processes to expedite decisions and responsiveness.			
Initiative 1B.1	Align the budget and financial planning process to ensure resources adequately support the strategic plan.	Year 1-5	Align funding requests to each initiative in this plan according to the timeline specified and department leads
Initiative 1B.2	Monitor and update policies, procedures, and processes to reflect changing agency needs	Year 1-5	Dates of most recent updates on all policies and procedures
Initiative 1B.3	Create a process for new ideas and proofs of concept to address challenges identified by staff	Year 2	Process created and implemented; number of POCs; number of successful implementations resulting from POC



Goal 2: Culture of Contribution

Create a culture that aligns roles and responsibilities with the DART vision, deepens organizational trust, and encourages growth.

Initiatives	Actions	Timeline	Measures
Objective 2A: Build trust across the agency			
Initiative 2A.1	Ensure a consistent employee engagement survey process that focuses on follow-up and results	Year 2,4	Increase in self-reporting from employees when asked about their confidence that changes will be made as a result of employee survey; increase in employee survey participation rate
Initiative 2A.2	Redesign internal communications to ensure timely access to key information and to improve engagement	Year 1-2	Improvements over time in answers to question in employee survey about how respondents feel about engagement and timeliness of receiving information
Initiative 2A.3	Demonstrate consistent support for operators and front-line staff	Year 1-2	Improvements over time in answers to question in the employee survey that asks operators and front-line staff whether they feel supported; Number of support initiatives implemented.

Initiatives	Actions	Timeline	Measures
Initiative 2A.4	Celebrate employees' successes and contributions	Year 1-2	Number of employee recognition events held and results from post-event survey to measure effectiveness
Objective 2B: Foster greater collaboration among departments			
Initiative 2B.1	Develop a job shadowing program to increase connections across departments	Year 2	Development of program; participation rate in program; data from follow-up interviews with participants
Initiative 2B.2	Increase opportunities for social and professional networking to build relationships and enhance knowledge sharing	Year 1	Number of events organized; attendance at events; and an employee survey question about their effectiveness
Initiative 2B.3	Establish department and project charters to define roles and desired outcomes from agency initiatives	Year 1-2	Number of charters established relative to agency projects; measuring how well their outcomes are achieved individually and collectively based on metrics in the charters
Initiative 2B.4	Structure agency leadership teams and meetings to support strategic goals	Year 1-2	Refined internal structures, meeting cadence and topics
Objective 2C: Create an environment where employees can be successful			
Initiative 2C.1	Regularly communicate the strategic vision, goals, and values in this plan	Year 1-5	Employee awareness of strategic mission, vision, and goals
Initiative 2C.2	Develop and conduct training that grows agency knowledge, professional pride, and customer service skills	Year 2	Development of training and post-training surveys on effectiveness; number of employees who have completed the training
Initiative 2C.3	Develop focused leadership training to enhance contribution management	Year 1-2	Development of training and post-training surveys on effectiveness; number of employees who have completed the training
Initiative 2C.4	Develop and implement a plan to update and modernize workforce facilities	Year 1-5	Development of plans with a timeline for improvements; adherence to that timeline based on budget authorization.
Objective 2D: Cultivate opportunities for employee growth and discovery			
Initiative 2D.1	Provide enhanced project management training	Year 2-5	Development of training and post-training surveys on effectiveness; number of employees who have completed the training
Initiative 2D.2	Formalize the process for DART employees to solve challenges	Year 2	Establishment of process, rewards provided, money saved or other improvement metrics as warranted
Initiative 2D.3	Strengthen DART's connections to the communities we serve through employee engagement and volunteerism	Year 1-5	Number of such events held each year and number of touchpoints at these events.



Goal 3: Quality Service

Deliver a quality customer experience defined by strong rider advocacy and built on professional pride and continuous improvement.

Initiatives	Actions	Timeline	Measures
Objective 3A: Ensure customers always feel secure on DART			
Initiative 3A.1	Develop a progressive and innovative security strategy	Year 1-2	Report on new strategy and evaluation of results through metrics identified in the strategy
Initiative 3A.2	Build upon current collaboration with cities and partner organizations to enhance outreach and support for vulnerable populations on the system	Year 1-2	Review metrics from existing program and make any necessary changes
Initiative 3A.3	Revise, communicate, and enforce the rider code of conduct to enhance public care of the system	Year 2	New code of conduct, inclusion in enforcement protocols; compliance with revised code
Initiative 3A.4	Evaluate and implement facility improvements that deter crime	Year 1-5	Review of CPTED reports and Inclusion of security recommendations in facility improvements and modernization program; track implementation of CPTED recommendations; reduced number of offenses.
Objective 3B: Create a culture of customer service and employee pride around the DART brand			
Initiative 3B.1	Expand the development, publication, and monitoring of metrics for service quality and customer advocacy	Year 1-2	Development and availability of metrics
Initiative 3B.2	Create and implement a program for external and internal groups to conduct regular, documented customer experience audits	Year 1-2	Creation of program and documentation of audits, number of audits conducted, follow up actions based on audits
Initiative 3B.3	Introduce new technologies to enhance the customer experience	Year 1-5	Customer experience metrics through survey; documentation of new technologies
Objective 3C: Ensure operational reliability, safety, and quality through state of good repair and modernization			
Initiative 3C.1	Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to bring the system into a state of good repair	Year 1-5	Final strategy; incorporation of strategy and needs into financial plan and TAM plan; implementation of strategy; improved SGR ratings for the system based on routine inspections;
Initiative 3C.2	Advance modernization efforts that support a best-in-class system for customers and employees	Year 1-5	Document system modernization projects under design or construction; reduction in frequency and severity of service disruptions or delays; customer experience metrics
Initiative 3C.3	Ensure accurate inventories to avoid service disruptions	Year 1	Refine existing inventory system; increase inventory accuracy rating; service disruptions per passenger mile

Initiatives	Actions	Timeline	Measures
Initiative 3C.4	Build a proactive safety culture	Year 1-2	Safety incidents per passenger mile; awareness campaigns on system and at facilities
Objective 3D: Enhance customer engagement to develop partners for life			
Initiative 3D.1	Create and advance a customer experience plan	Year 1-2	Develop plan; document and track customer experience metrics per plan
Initiative 3D.2	Use crowdsourcing to support issue resolution	Year 3-5	Issues raised and resolved, and new ideas generated
Initiative 3D.3	Recognize and reward frequent riders who exemplify the code of conduct	Year 2-5	Program developed; Rewards and recognition given



Goal 4: Seamless Mobility

Integrate mobility options to create a seamless travel experience defined by frequency and reliability that positions DART as first in mind.

Initiatives	Actions	Timeline	Measures
Objective 4A: Use the 10x10 frame of reference for service planning with consideration of a balanced approach and route performance measures			
Initiative 4A.1	Continue to advance service improvements informed by customer input and city priorities	Year 1-5	Service improvements implemented and resulting improvements in access times; frequency and reliability
Initiative 4A.2	Determine appropriate ongoing applications for GoLink microtransit as a tool for mobility and access	Year 1-5	Improvements in access times; frequency and reliability due to microtransit changes
Initiative 4A.3	Integrate mobility options to enhance access and coverage	Year 1-5	Integrations achieved and resulting access time improvements
Objective 4B: Collaborate with partners to create coordinated, seamless, end-to-end trip experiences			
Initiative 4B.1	Coordinate with transit partners to enhance interface and connectivity	Year 1-5	Interface and connectivity improvements; customer survey responses on seamless connections/transfers
Initiative 4B.2	Collaborate with cities to create and implement better access to transit	Year 1-5	Interface and connectivity improvements; customer survey responses on seamless connections
Initiative 4B.3	Work with other agencies to prioritize transit operations within public rights-of-way	Year 1-5	Number and types of transit priority projects in design or construction; other improvements as noted

Initiatives	Actions	Timeline	Measures
Initiative 4B.4	Implement simplified fare policy, structure and enhanced payment options.	Year 1	New fare policy and payment improvements implemented
Objective 4C: Enhance customer information and wayfinding			
Initiative 4C.1	Provide real-time information on vehicles and at bus stops, transit facilities, and rail stations	Year 1-3	New real-time displays installed, accuracy of these displays
Initiative 4C.2	Review and update information and signage at transit facilities and rail stations	Year 2-4	Delivery of final plan; approval of recommendations plan; signs updated
Initiative 4C.3	Review and update incident management procedures and customer communication protocols	Year 1-2	Completion of review and recommendations; procedures updated; new communication protocol finalized



Goal 5: Fantastic Spaces

Create fantastic spaces that add value to our communities, enhance the rider experience, and foster a sustainable and thriving region.

Initiatives	Actions	Timeline	Measures
Objective 5A: Maximize the value and use of DART property assets			
Initiative 5A.1	Modernize and simplify real estate procedures to set expectations and create uniformity for use of DART property	Year 1-2	Development and approval of new procedures
Initiative 5A.2	Inventory all property assets to identify key opportunities for improvement, advancement, or development.	Year 1-2	Asset inventory completion; documentation of priorities by category
Initiative 5A.3	Collaborate with city partners to plan and design initiatives aligned with city quality of life and development goals	Year 1-5	Initiatives planned, designed, and implemented
Objective 5B: Create appealing and engaging spaces for riders and communities to enjoy			
Initiative 5B.1	Reduce and repurpose parking to activate space and enhance accessibility	Year 3-5	Parking spaces repurposed, access time reduction
Initiative 5B.2	Enhance bus stops through better amenities, design, and integration into city streetscapes	Year 1-5	Enhancements and amenities implemented, customer survey feedback
Initiative 5B.3	Transform existing transit facilities into community assets with amenities and services that are responsive to local needs	Year 3-5	Review and recommend facilities for renovation and modernization; number of transit facilities designed and updated



Goal 6: Strategic Relationships

Position DART as a collaborative leader and recognized regional economic and mobility asset.

Initiatives	Actions	Timeline	Measures
Objective 6A: Build trusting relationships with partners that can help DART accelerate progress toward Point B			
Initiative 6A.1	Refine DART's approach to agency and city relationships	Year 1-2	Touch points by President & CEO and leadership; documentation of opportunities and collaboration
Initiative 6A.2	Align external communications to promote DART's strategic vision and goals	Year 1	New external communications plan
Initiative 6A.3	Leverage business relationships to advance DART's role as a strategic economic asset	Year 1-5	Touch points with businesses; corporate pass sales growth
Initiative 6A.4	Build and expand DART's network of supporters and advocates	Year 1-5	Development of databases and touch points with supporters
Objective 6B: Consider long-term changes to improve outcomes			
Initiative 6B.1	Collaborate with regional partners on long-term governance changes to benefit transit	Year 1-3	Final report on transit governance; development of supportive legislative changes
Initiative 6B.2	Collaborate with regional partners on long-term funding options to support regional growth and community mobility	Year 1-3	Final report on funding options; development of legislative changes for enhanced funding

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