

*Email subject:*

## **Leading Mobility: From DART Assets to Fantastic Community Spaces**

**May 2024**

Dear Community Partners:

The DART System includes many incredible stations nestled in the heart of thriving mixed-use districts. Our stations at SMU/Mockingbird, Farmers Branch, and the downtowns of Plano, Garland, Carrollton, and Rowlett helped spur economic growth and reshape the landscape in each of those areas. In Richardson, DART Rail catalyzed the transformation of empty greenfields into live-work-play communities.

In Addison, the town built its transit-oriented Addison Circle development many years before its Silver Line rail station began to take shape. At Trinity Mills Station, the city of Carrollton and DART are collaborating with private developers to transform 25 acres of vacant parking lots into a vibrant destination with welcoming public spaces.

These are just a few of the success stories across the DART System. DART staff, as well as our current and former board members, have a lot to be proud of as we close in on completion of nearly 100 passenger facilities in our system. We also have so much to be excited about with the next phase of place-based developments that can spur transformative change for the cities that we serve.

Two goals in our forthcoming agency strategic plan – Fantastic Spaces and Strategic Partnerships – work hand in hand. Our vision of transforming transit facilities into community gathering spaces will come to life as we collaborate with stakeholders to understand how best to integrate their needs into our planning.

We can draw inspiration from grand stations and plazas of past eras in London, New York, and elsewhere around the globe. We aspire to build on our successes and continue developing beautiful places that draw residents and visitors together.

This edition of our newsletter includes:

- More of my thoughts on our strategic plan goal to create “[fantastic spaces](#).”
- A city spotlight on [University Park](#), including DART's partnership with SMU.
- A profile of [Randall Bryant](#), the newest member of the DART Board of Directors who represents the City of Dallas.

We are ready to work together to explore new ways to ensure a prosperous future for North Texas.

Nadine S. Lee  
DART President & CEO  
[LeadingMobility@DART.org](mailto:LeadingMobility@DART.org)

Short version for email

## **Transit Facilities Can Transform into Fantastic Spaces**

When I think of magnificent transit locations outside of the Dallas region, the stations of the London Underground immediately come to mind. Likewise, I have been very influenced by the [London Underground Station Design Idiom](#), even adopting concepts from it for the work we do here at DART.

The London Underground's idiom emphasized the importance of good design in transit facilities, and how that makes traveling easier and more enjoyable for riders, while also positively impacting how customers feel about that transit agency. I admire their focus on the customer experience and how they put their riders at the heart of every design and maintenance decision. The idiom further addresses how stations should be designed for and integrated into the places that riders are going to and that the station and surrounding area should support each other.

In that spirit, the DART strategic plan goal to create "fantastic spaces" is focused on activating DART's assets and making them more productive for the riders, communities, and cities we serve.

[Learn more about ways DART and stakeholders can work together to make transit facilities more valuable to the communities they serve.](#)

Long version for DART Daily

[Karen is getting a photo from the City of Carrollton of the drive-in movie, and a farmers market photo from Larry Henderson.]

## **Transit Facilities Can Transform into Fantastic Spaces**

By DART President & CEO Nadine S. Lee, Leading Mobility newsletter

When I think of magnificent transit locations outside of the Dallas region, the stations of the London Underground immediately come to mind. In fact, the [London Underground Station Design Idiom](#) is one of the most thoughtful and compelling set of design principles I have ever seen, and I hope to adopt concepts from it for the work we do here.

The London Underground's Idiom emphasized the importance of good design in transit facilities, and how the care we put into our infrastructure from start to finish speaks volumes about our attitudes toward our riders. Making travel easier and more enjoyable instills confidence in our work as a transit agency. I admire Transport for London's focus on the customer experience and how they put their riders at the heart of every design and maintenance decision. The Idiom further addresses how stations should be integrated into the places where riders are going and underscores the need for the station and surrounding areas to support each other.

In that spirit, the DART strategic plan goal to create “fantastic spaces” is focused on activating DART’s assets and making them more productive for the riders, communities, and cities we serve.

For example, park-and-ride lots often become underutilized voids between the adjacent neighborhoods and our station platforms. After 28 years of operating DART Light Rail, we have a good understanding of the parking capacity needed when we reach to our 2019 ridership levels.

Underutilized parking presents an opportunity for DART to collaborate with cities and private entities to create little “pockets of brilliance” in the voids that exist around our rail stations and transit centers.

We already use some of our passenger facilities as temporary public spaces. For example, this past August, the agency partnered with the City of Carrollton to host a drive-in movie on the lot at DART’s North Carrollton/Frankford Station, which is mostly empty on the evenings and weekends. This event allowed the city and agency to raise community awareness of DART’s services and the future Silver Line Regional Rail while hosting a fun, family event.

Currently, our DART Cares team is hosting a series of small pop-up farmers markets at stations and transit centers in partnership with Restorative Farms. These events attract a buying audience for the urban farmers and give improved access to fresh food for our lower-income residents who live in food deserts within the DART Service Area.

Integrating stations with other commercial and community focused uses is a key part of our transit-adjacent development (TAD) objective and a significant extension of our transit-oriented development (TOD) methodology. TAD has a substantial impact on how customers perceive their total journey and allows DART more opportunities to contribute to the vibrancy of our cities.



*The City of Plano’s Texas Forever Fest takes place in a city parking lot next to DART’s Downtown Plano Station.*

By creating appealing and engaging spaces for people to enjoy, DART will add value to our communities, enhance the rider experience, and foster a sustainable and thriving region. Leveraging our assets in this way will make our cities the best places to be in North Texas.

Short version for email

## **DART Board Director Spotlight – Randall Bryant**



This month, we introduce the newest member of the DART Board of Directors – Randall Bryant. The Dallas City Council appointed Randall to the board in late March.

Randall is the founder and chief executive officer of [Politics United Marketing](#), a firm that supports campaigns and referendums on the local, state, and federal level. He is also currently the chair of the [Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce](#), which serves as an advocate for the creation, growth, and general welfare of African American businesses in the Dallas community.

[Click here to learn more about how Director Bryant's care for our community motivates him to serve on the DART Board.](#)

Long version for DART Daily

## **DART Board Director Spotlight – Randall Bryant**

By DART President & CEO Nadine S. Lee, Leading Mobility newsletter



This month, we introduce the newest member of the DART Board of Directors – Randall Bryant. The Dallas City Council appointed Randall to the board in late March to replace outgoing board member Jon-Bertrell Killen. He has been actively involved in meetings since early April.

Randall is the founder and chief executive officer of [Politics United Marketing](#), a firm that supports campaigns and referendums on the local, state, and federal level. The company has represented public entities, large and small corporations, political campaigns, and non-profits, and specializes in demographic studies and redistricting, public relations, government affairs, zoning and land use, and political consulting.

Additionally, Randall is currently the chair of the [Dallas Black Chamber of Commerce](#), which serves as an advocate for the creation, growth, and general welfare of African American businesses in the Dallas community. He represents the chamber as a member of the [Dallas Citizens Council](#) and as a board member of the [North Texas Commission](#).

He is also the Dallas County Chair of the North Central Texas Health Facilities Development Corporation. The organization provides a tax-exempt financing vehicle for hospitals and other healthcare facilities to improve the quality of care available to Dallas County citizens.

Randall told us that he wanted to serve on the DART Board “to ensure equitable public transportation options continue to exist and grow for all residents and tourists within our member cities, from those who are DART-dependent to those who are leisurely riders.”

He said, “We know that when DART operates at its most efficient level, it greatly reduces traffic congestion and stimulates economic development opportunities by connecting people to transit-oriented developments and job hubs. I remain committed to furthering our community’s participation within DART’s master plans, while ensuring protections are incorporated that reduce our environmental impacts and overall utilization of raw energy.”

We are excited to have Randall’s fresh perspective on the DART Board where I know he will continue to advocate for Dallas residents and minority communities.



*Director Randall Bryant made remarks at the DART Bike to Work Day event at Akard Station.*

### Short version for email

The City of University Park celebrated its centennial anniversary on April 12, 2024, honoring 100 years of incorporation.

City leaders named this primarily residential municipality for its largest institution, Southern Methodist University. Since the 1940s, the population and area of University Park have remained stable in the range of 23,000 to 25,000 residents and 3.7 square miles. Dallas surrounds the city on three sides and the Town of Highland Park borders to the south.

[Click here to learn more about DART's service in the City of University Park.](#)

### Long version for DART Daily

[Karen is confirming with SMU media relations that we can use their photo.]

## **City Spotlight: University Park**

*Each month, we will spotlight a city in the DART Service Area and the service that DART provides.*

The City of University Park celebrated its centennial anniversary on April 12, 2024, honoring 100 years of incorporation.

City leaders named this primarily residential municipality for its largest institution, Southern Methodist University. The [city began as a cluster of homes](#) surrounding the fledgling university, which was founded in 1915. After both Highland Park and Dallas refused to annex the homes due to the high cost of safety and utility services, the residents voted to incorporate into a separate city in April 1924.

Since the 1940s, the population and area of University Park have remained stable in the range of 23,000 to 25,000 residents and 3.7 square miles. Dallas surrounds the city on three sides and the Town of Highland Park borders to the south.

Popular destinations include Snider Plaza, a quaint shopping district filled with stores and restaurants, and the [Holmes Aquatic Center](#), which is open during the summer months.

Bus route 237 passes through University Park along Preston Road, connecting residents to the Addison Transit Center and Downtown Dallas.



DART provides on-demand service throughout the cities of University Park and Highland Park with the [Park Cities GoLink zone](#), and also connects riders to SMU/Mockingbird Station, where they can access bus routes and DART Light Rail. A new transfer area allows for trips to shops near Marsh Lane and Northwest Highway, and riders can transfer to the Preston Hollow GoLink zone with a separate booking.

The agency also manages two site-specific [SMU Express Shuttles](#) – which SMU and DART jointly fund – to provide bus service on the university’s main and east campuses. Both the [SMU Red Express Route 440](#) and [SMU Blue Express Route 442](#) serve SMU/Mockingbird Station and get visitors close to the [George W. Bush Presidential Center](#).



During Q2, FY 2024, University Park had:

- 10,857 boardings on Park Cities GoLink
- 32,535 boardings on SMU Express Route 440 and 442 combined.
- Route 237, which passes through the city along Preston Road.

[SMU participates in the DART Higher Education Pass Program](#) and offers currently enrolled students a free annual DART transit pass. For the 2024 calendar year, SMU purchased 10,877 student passes.

DART Board Chair Gary Slagel represents University Park on the DART Board of Directors.