

# Quarterly NEWSLETTER

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# ▶ A Fresh Perspective on History



## DART, city look to bring historical building back to life in Downtown Carrollton

The City of Carrollton takes great pride in the historical look, feel and vibe that its downtown area gives off. With its unique mix of eclectic shops, restaurants, and businesses nestled into buildings that were constructed more than half a century ago, the downtown area is a source of civic pride for the city.

A few hundred feet from the heart of downtown Carrollton is DART's Downtown Carrollton Station, one of the light-rail system's busiest stops along the Green Line. The station features an aerial platform with views of downtown Carrollton's entertainment district to the south and the downtown area's residential district, which lies along the current Silver Line Regional Rail tracks, to the north.

Carrollton has a long and established history with trains and railyards, with several former (and current) freight and passenger trains crossing through the city's downtown area. At the heart of that history is the historic Carrollton Crossing Depot.

"The Historic Carrollton Depot is a sacred piece of living history for the people of Carrollton and is seen as a physical touchstone where so many generations experienced their first impression of Texas after arriving from other parts of the country and world," said Caitlin Holland, vice president of real estate and economic development for DART. "The depot was the place where families said their goodbyes as U.S. soldiers were deployed overseas during World War II and was tied to the area's farming and commerce, as evidenced by its proximity to downtown's historic grain silos. We see it as a past beacon for the area's economic engine."

The depot was initially built in 1924 and used as the city's passenger rail station until 1935, when it was converted for freight usage. As freight demand waned over time, the depot became irrelevant and was left abandoned until it was repaired and relocated by DART to its current location across from the new Silver Line Carrollton Station, below the Green Line aerial station.

Making sure current and future Carrollton residents and visitors are aware of that history while finding a productive use for the building is why DART has partnered with the city to include an adaptive reuse program as part of the Downtown Carrollton Master Plan. The city's 20-year plan looks to address residents' wants and needs for the next 15 to 20 years, ensuring



the popular destination area remains viable while staying safe and walkable while maintaining its entertainment options and historic charm.

The plan fits into DART's vision to create more fantastic spaces – places where people want to gather and spend time – along its transit network. The historic depot's location, situated along the planned Cotton Belt Regional Trail that is being built in conjunction with the Silver Line, also proves advantageous for DART customers and regular visitors to the downtown area with connections to exiting trails and the two transit stations.

"We've worked closely with city officials to ensure that everything we're doing to bring the Silver Line to life keeps or enhances the vibrancy of the downtown Carrollton area," said Trey Walker, vice president for capital design and construction for DART. "Our public engagement team has done a tremendous job gathering the pulse of the community so they are aware of the mobility benefits the Silver Line will bring."

Finding a new purpose for the historic depot is something the city, public and DART all agreed should be done. DART recently gathered public feedback through several community presentations and a survey asking what uses Carrollton residents and visitors to the downtown area thought were most beneficial.

The feedback gathered centered the depot's primary use as a focus for the community and the trail system, with almost 50% of survey respondents in agreement that the building's reuse plan should be tied to the Downtown Carrollton Master Plan, the trail system, and the DART rail stations. Additionally, 84% of respondents said adapting a reuse program for the depot would have a positive impact on Downtown Carrollton overall.

Potential popular uses for the facility could include a coffee shop (the most popular suggestion), a small community center, a museum, seasonal retail space for trail amenities and a police substation. DART is in the process of trying to secure grant funding to apply toward the adaptive reuse program and continues to work with city officials to determine a timeline of when it could open.

“Our process all along has been to utilize the depot in a way that everyone recognizes its historical value to the area while providing a modern use. We hope by the time we're done everyone will be happy with what it adds to Downtown Carrollton,” said John Hoppie, DART program manager and lead on the Carrollton depot adaptive reuse program.



# ➤ First Responders Get Initial Chance at Training

## Fire fighters, police from Silver Line cities get hands-on experience at emergency response

Firefighters from Richardson Fire and Rescue got a first-hand look at DART Silver Line trains near the future Silver Line Equipment Maintenance Facility (EMF) and the Shiloh Road Station in Plano on a recent Friday in October.

With the vehicle parked on the tracks, four different groups of 12-15 firefighters, went through the process of checking the train from inside out to learn how to handle passengers, staff, and bystanders in the event of an accident or emergency. The groups went through the various scenarios as part of a training DART and HTSI, its contract operator, began for first responders in each of the seven Silver Line partner cities.

“We basically provide them with a high-level overview of the vehicle and our operations, so they’ll have a better understanding of what to expect during an emergency,”



said Tod Byrd Jr., HTSI Silver Line safety manager. “The goal is to give them enough information, so they feel prepared to handle the situation and respond as quickly and effectively as normal.”

The group that went through the training process in October wasn’t the first and won’t be the last. The training sessions are part of federally mandated emergency response requirements DART, and its partner cities must go through prior to the beginning of revenue service operations. The Silver Line is scheduled to take its first trips with ticketed passengers from the Shiloh Road Station to DFW International Airport at the end of next year or by early 2026.

Some of the officers were surprised to learn that the vehicles were more like heavy rail trains, not the usual light-rail vehicles many are used to seeing when assisting DART Police. The multiple diesel engines were another unique surprise – “Wow, they’re not electric?” was a common response – as was the ability to walk across the entire car without having to step off the vehicle to assist passengers.

Learning how to get emergency vehicles like fire engines and ambulances as close to the train or tracks as possible, but still out of harm’s way during an emergency, was also discussed. It’s these little things that DART, HTSI and each city’s emergency personnel believe will make a difference in getting people to safety in a timelier manner when the stakes are high, and people’s lives are possibly in danger.

“Safety is paramount in everything we do at DART and especially on this project, with so much construction involved and the introduction of new vehicles,” said Trey Walker, DART vice president of capital design and construction. “While required, these trainings also serve as a great way for our first responder partners to familiarize themselves with the trains and our support staff that will assist them in any emergency situation.”

DART has hosted multiple emergency training sessions to date and will host additional sessions at the Silver Line EMF facility or its tracks over the next few months. Coppell Fire and Safety, a Plano Police SWAT unit and DART PD have all completed trainings. Byrd said the sessions cover serious matters but are relaxed enough that first responders feel comfortable enough to ask questions that may sound “dumb or elementary” in the field.

DART will continue with segmented testing through Q1 and Q2 of 2025, so once vehicles are on tracks in various segments of the Silver Line corridor for testing, additional emergency trainings could take place at those remote sites to simulate conditions away from a station during a service run.

# ➤ A Memorable First Impression



## UTD students get a sneak peek at Silver Line vehicles during TCNT tour

While the announcement and construction of the DART Silver Line Regional Rail project has brought out many proponents and supporters of the future rail line, there's has been little doubt who has been its No. 1 fan.

Like tween girls flocking to Taylor Swift, students at the University of Texas at Dallas have been head over heels about this project from the moment it was announced. Now, roughly a year from opening for revenue service, UT Dallas students have been found at meetings across the area, on campus, and online touting the benefits the Silver Line will bring to the City of Richardson and the university.

"I believe that the station will be vital to students on and off campus because it will provide easy access to DFW Airport and the CityLine Bush Station, which is how we usually get to Downtown Dallas for university-sponsored

events," said UT Dallas Student Government President Harison Sakura. "Personally, I look forward to using the Silver Line to travel to Wal-Mart [in Dallas] near the Knoll Trail Station and to Koreatown via the Downtown Carrollton Station."

The ability to connect riders to various parts of the Dallas area via an East-West rail route is another reason why the Transit Coalition of North Texas (TCNT) has also been a huge supporter of the project. Members of TCNT took part in a transit tour across the area with partners agencies Trinity Metro and Denton County Transit Authority to see their latest innovations in public transit.

A stop along the Silver Line was a must for the group and they got a huge surprise upon arrival at the UT Dallas Station – a parked train waiting for passengers. And while they weren't able to take a trip to the next station, they did get to take a seat, walk the aisles, open the doors and learn more about the vehicle while checking it out in person.

Students from the UT Dallas Student Government and Comets for Transit group were invited to the sneak peek event and didn't miss the chance to mingle with other Silver Line fans and ask questions about the vehicles and stations. Arguably the project's most vocal supporters, UT Dallas students enjoyed taking photos with and of the train while telling other guests how big of a "gamechanger" this would be for their school.

One of the students attending even rode his bike and used the storage compartment to hold it in place as he pretended to prepare for a future trip to Addison or Plano with friends. He was thankful for being included in the opportunity to see the trains firsthand, but said he'd be even more grateful once the Silver Line is in service.

"This train line will allow people to live near another station along the Silver Line and still be within an easy train or bike ride from UTD, which is huge for students given the cost of parking and lack of affordable housing around campus," said Benjamin Goodine, vice president with UT Dallas Student Government. "I thought the trains were wonderful. Very sleek and modern with the luggage storage and bike racks adding a very nice touch."





# *first look*

inside Silver Line







## DART celebrates groundbreaking of new Silver Line Equipment Maintenance Facility in Plano

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) celebrated an important milestone with the ceremonial groundbreaking of its new Silver Line Equipment Maintenance Facility on Thursday, Oct. 24 in Plano.

Speaking to a gathered crowd, DART President and CEO Nadine Lee, told the invited elected officials, federal agency representatives, business executives and DART employees about the benefits of the new facility and its impact to the surrounding area.

“We are grateful to our partners at the City of Plano for sharing the vision of bringing this facility to Plano, allowing DART to continue investing our agency’s assets into our member cities and growing transit opportunities across the DART service area,” Lee said. “The Silver Line is a major piece to solving the mobility puzzle in North Texas by providing a strong east to west connection between Plano and DFW Airport.”

The new facility is being built behind a 20,000+-square foot office building DART purchased earlier this year at 3201 Technology Drive in Plano’s industrial district. The purchased office building will serve as the operations and maintenance home for Silver Line staff once the regional rail is in revenue service.

Construction will take place within DART’s rail right-of-way (approximately 14 acres), near the end of the Silver Line track alignment and a few hundred feet from the Shiloh Road Station, causing minimal

impact on road traffic and the surrounding area. The facility will feature two new buildings for the Silver Line vehicles to be housed, cleaned, and maintained as well as an underground fueling tank, a canopy structure for cover when dispensing fuel and a storage yard for all the vehicles.

By working with Plano officials to secure the construction of a full maintenance facility, DART saved over \$30 million in capital





costs and almost \$1 million in annual operating expenses in comparison to a shared facility off the Silver Line alignment, which was discussed. The proximity to an existing station also reduces the number of “deadhead” or empty trips needed to begin daily operations and provides DART personnel quicker and easier responses to any track- or vehicle-related issues once the Silver Line is in service.

“The Silver Line EMF is proof that it takes a lot of various groups working together to deliver a project that will benefit many,” said Dee Leggett, DART executive vice president and chief development officer. “With the area’s continued growth, we believe DART having a dedicated presence in Plano is a win for everyone.”

Once constructed, the Silver Line EMF would become just the fourth regional rail facility in the North Texas region and the only one in Collin County, joining Irving (TRE), Lewisville (DCTA) and Fort Worth (Trinity Metro). DART anticipates the entire 40,000 square foot complex to house 65 current and new permanent employees with additional room to grow in the future.

Residents and commuters in the area have familiarized themselves with Silver Line trains over the past few months. DART has been operating simulated test runs between the Shiloh Road Station in Plano and the University of Texas at Dallas Station in Richardson since this summer. Testing in other segments of the 26-mile alignment, which runs from Plano to DFW Airport, will continue until revenue service begins late next year or early 2026.



# 2025

## Winter Biannual Community Meetings

Visit us online to stay informed on upcoming biannual meeting dates and locations.



# Silver Line Testing Continues in 2025

## DART advancing vehicle test runs to the west, between Carrollton and DFW Airport

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) will begin segmented testing within the Silver Line Regional Rail project's western corridor, between DFW Airport and Carrollton, beginning in January 2025.

The move ensures that incoming travelers to the North Texas airport as well as residents and commuters in Carrollton, Coppell and Grapevine will see DART's sleek new trains running on Silver Line tracks prior to the start of revenue service in late 2025 or early 2026.

Segmented testing, which describes testing of the train and operating systems on a specific segment of the track on the project, is necessary as construction progress varies across the 26-mile rail corridor. DART began testing the track, signals, operating systems and rail crossings in November to prepare for this upcoming vehicle testing.

"We're excited to get these vehicles running on a different track alignment and show a different segment of people in the area how the Silver Line will operate," said Trey Walker, vice president of capital design and construction for DART. "We worked out some kinks from our initial test run from Plano to Richardson and are making great progress to testing the entire 26-mile corridor this upcoming summer."

In October, DART completed Silver Line segmented testing between the Shiloh Road Station in Plano and just past the University of Texas at Dallas Station in Richardson. Silver Line trains ran at different times and at various speeds, with DART testing to ensure crossing signals matched up with the timing of the trains.

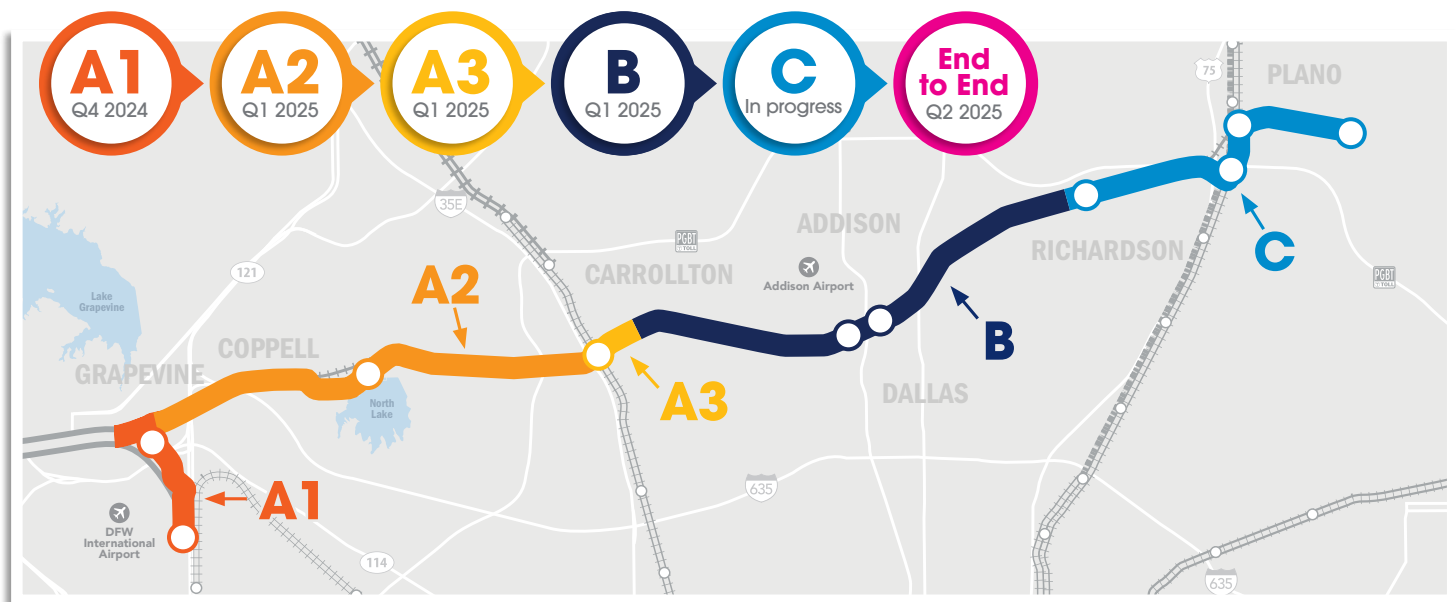
Testing in this segment will run from the Terminal B Station at DFW Airport to the end of the constructed track at Interstate 35 in Carrollton with simulated stops at the DFW Airport North Station in Grapevine and the Cypress Waters Station in Dallas, bordering Coppell. If necessary, flaggers will be on hand during signal and crossing tests to ensure drivers know when they can safely cross the tracks.

Once in revenue service, much of the Silver Line will operate under a quiet zone ordinance. Quiet zones are established to limit noise, with trains only sounding their horns if there is something that will affect the vehicle's passage on or near the tracks. During segmented testing, however, the trains will use their horns to warn of their passing at all rail crossings.

DART is more than 85% complete with the Silver Line overall and has installed over 200,000 linear feet of new railroad track throughout the corridor. The project will add 10 new stations to DART's existing rail system, with seven of them 90% complete.

Designed and manufactured by Stadler in Salt Lake City, the Silver Line trains are powered by electric diesel multiple-unit-powered (DMU) engines that meet strict EPA standards. With seating for over 230 passengers and updated amenities like multidirectional seats, overhead storage and internal CCTV cameras, the trains are similar to Trinity Metro's TexRail vehicles, and will provide passengers a safe, quiet and comfortable ride.

The Silver Line is a 26-mile regional commuter rail that traverses seven North Texas cities (Grapevine, Coppell, Dallas, Carrollton, Addison, Richardson, Plano) between DFW Airport and Shiloh Road in Plano. The alignment crosses three counties (Collin, Dallas, Tarrant) and will provide service to improve mobility and accessibility across the northern portion of the DART service area.



# Construction Update

## Dallas prepares for Hillcrest Road to re-open in 2025 while Carrollton gets new facade at Josey Lane Bridge

DART and Archer Western Herzog (AWH), the design-build contractor, staff have routinely met with residents in North Dallas to provide regular project updates and answer questions about the DART Silver Line Regional Rail project. One of the first questions asked at each of the meetings focused on one specific topic: Will Hillcrest Road open in January 2025 as scheduled?

The answer? Yes.

The reconfiguration of the rail guideway in North Dallas, which brought the roadway underneath the rail guideway, required Hillcrest Road to close in February of 2024 for a complete reconstruction of the roadway and installation of the rail guideway. It is scheduled to re-open Thursday, January 23, 2025, with a minimum one lane of traffic moving in each direction.

AWH construction crews excavated almost 18 feet of rock and soil to build a new Hillcrest Road between McCallum Boulevard and Meandering Way. With the excavation completed in the summer, crews spent the fall finishing the retention walls underneath and laying down concrete for the new roadway. Roadway work and the installation of the aesthetic finish to the retention walls is currently underway.

Construction of a pump station, which will eliminate the threat of floods from heavy rain on the new Hillcrest Road, along with the installation of the eastbound and westbound rail bridges and pedestrian bridge is also complete.

The pedestrian bridge will provide a walkway connecting users to both sides of the Cotton Belt Regional Trail, which will run adjacent to the Silver Line throughout most of the corridor. Noise and betterment walls, which are over 90% installed in the North Dallas area, will separate the regional rail from runners, walkers, and bikers on the trail.

Hillcrest Road is scheduled to reopen in January 2025. Construction of the trail in the North Dallas area is expected to begin early next year with it scheduled to open around the start of Silver Line revenue service in late 2025 to early 2026.

In Carrollton, AWH finished the painting and setting of the decorative facade on the Josey Lane Bridge. Crews finished one side of the rail bridge earlier this year and both east- and westbound sides are now complete, with the installation of track to connect the bridge and guideway west into the Downtown Carrollton Station continuing.

Progress at the Downtown Carrollton Station continues, with the station exceeding 60% completion status overall.

Crews are focusing on finishing the platforms and are preparing to install the pedestrian bridge's elevator structural tower in January connect to existing Line light-rail service.

Steel elevator towers that will connect future passengers from the street to the aerial platform at the 12th Street Station light-rail station in Plano are in place and beginning to take shape. The adjacent 12th Street Silver Line Station is nearing completion, with the artistic finishes recently installed and electrical work awaiting completion.

In Richardson and Addison, the stations are even more official, with the platform towers already showcasing their names and a DART logo.



# DART STUDENT ART CONTEST

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