

TRAC MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 12, 2014 - Noon
DART CENTRAL STATION – MULTIMODAL ROOM

TRAC Members Present:

Randy Anderson, Rod Van Genderen, Greg Boesch, Daniel Rittel, Cyrilla Gregory, Tonia Crawford, Alexander Grgurich, Michael Barber

TRAC Members Absent:

Laura Friest, Patrick Karnes, Dina Ricketts, Jay Peterson

TRAC Staff Present:

Kirstin Baer-Harding, Jennifer Long, Ethan Standard, Jim Tishim, Jamie Schug, Suzanne Robinson

Others Present:

Mr. Michael Barber's associate

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Greg Boesch at 12:05 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Notice of the meeting was duly posted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Chair called for corrections to the January 8, 2014 meeting minutes.

Hearing none, it was moved by Randy Anderson and seconded by Rod Van Genderen that the minutes be approved.

The minutes from the meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

ACTION ITEMS

1. 2014 TRAC Goals

Chair Greg Boesch listed each Goal:

Goal 1 – Bus Service

Responsible departments: Operations, Planning

Implement a third year of service expansions, as adopted by the DART Commission, in keeping with the DART Forward 2035 Plan.

Goal 2 – Technology

Responsible departments: Planning, Marketing

Ensure the successful implementation of real-time information on MyDART products, including Trip Planner, interactive voice-response phone line, and alerts.

Goal 3 – Technology

Responsible departments: Marketing, Planning, Public Affairs, IT

Develop and implement open data feeds for DART's schedule and real-time data.

Goal 4 – New Fare Policy

Responsible departments: Finance, Public Affairs

Develop a staff recommendation for a new fare policy in preparation for a new smart cards system in 2015.

Goal 5 – Shelters

Responsible staff: Planning

Continue work to expand shelters in DART system. Steps in 2014 include finalizing the locations of downtown Des Moines shelters and installing a majority of the 13 new shelters DART has already purchased.

Jim explained that these goals must be approved by the DART Commission, and will be presented at the next Commission meeting in April.

It was moved by Rod Van Genderen and seconded by Alexander Grgurich that the Goals be approved, and presented to the DART Commission for its approval at the April Commission meeting.

The motion carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. FY2015 Service Changes – Jim Tishim, Planning Director

Jim listed the highlights in a power point presentation:

- Weekday Fixed Routes: Additional trips on #8 and #17

- Weekday night service: Improved frequency on #3, #6 and #16
- Express routes: Additional trips on #92, #93 and #98.
- #73 Urbandale/Windsor Heights Flex Planning Study Implementation
- Weekday Fixed Routes: Additional trips on #8 and #17
- Weekday night service: Improved frequency on #3, #6 and #16
- Express routes: Additional trips on #92, #93 and #98.
- #73 Urbandale/Windsor Heights Flex Planning Study Implementation

Weekday Peak Hours

- #8 Fleur Dr
 - 1 additional morning trip
- #17 Hubbell Ave/Altoona
 - 3 morning peak trips to Altoona Wal-Mart
 - 5 afternoon peak trips to Altoona Wal-Mart
 - Provides 30 minute peak frequency to Altoona Wal-Mart

Weekday Night Service

- #3 University
 - Increase frequency from 60 to 40 minutes
 - Provides 20 minute service on University between DCS and 42nd St, with #60 currently at 40 minutes
- #6 Indianola Ave
 - Increases frequency at Southridge Mall and between Watrous Ave and DCS from 60 to 30 minutes
 - Increases frequency on each leg from 2 hours to 60 minutes
- #16 Douglas Ave
 - Increase frequency from 60 to 30 minutes
 - Improves recovery, runtimes and DCS connections.
- Changes increase number of routes with higher frequency
 - #60 University/Ingersoll Loop is the only route under 60 minutes
 - #3 & #60 provide 20 minute service on University between 42nd St & DCS
 - Southridge, Merle Hay and Valley West Malls have 30-40 minute service.

Express Route

- 92 Hickman Express
 - Up to 2 additional AM and PM Trips
- #93 NW 86th St Express
 - Up to 2 additional AM and PM Trips
- #98 Ankeny Express
 - Up to 3 additional AM and PM Trips

Also, Jim listed some of the survey findings and recommendations concerning the #73 Urbandale/Windsor Heights Flex service, including the collaboration with the City of Urbandale, the Urbandale Chamber of Commerce and the businesses at the Urbandale Business Park to come up with recommendations for service improvements. Alexander asked how the improvements will be marketed to the affected parties. Kirstin replied that both the Marketing and Customer Service

departments will be involved in marketing and educational efforts when the information is ready to disseminate. There was discussion on route timing, and the encouragement for residents to catch the service at bus stops rather than residences.

Tonia described using the Flex Route for the first time the day before, and wondered why there was no destination signage on the outside of the vehicle. Jim responded that new vehicles will have the technology to show destinations of flex route vehicles, but that the current vehicles in the fleet don't have the technology to do this. Tonia continued with describing her experience, and said that

the driver, instead of pulling into the drive of the business that was her destination, dropped her off across the four-lane, heavily trafficked street that she then had to cross to get to her destination. Finally, the driver forgot to pick her up after her appointment. Jim said he would look into the problems in her experience and get back to her.

Jim went over the timeline for the next steps in the process and stated that there would be public meetings scheduled in April, with the DART Commission set for final approval at its May 6 meeting.

2. Windsor Heights Wal-Mart Substation – Jim Tishim, Planning Director

Jim showed some photos of the difficult bus stop location at the Windsor Heights Walmart. It consists of a graveled concrete island in the middle of a morass of parking lots and surrounded by drive passthroughs and businesses. Bus riders, many of whom are visually impaired, must climb over curbing and dodge shopping carts that are left around the space, and also contend with the fueling station for the nearby convenience store. It is a dangerous situation. Jim said that a committee was formed consisting of surrounding businesses and city officials to decide on a course of improvements. A preliminary design has been accomplished, and now the property owners, city, and businesses are taking the design to their officials for approvals and funding. If things go smoothly, construction may start _____.

TRAC COMMUNICATIONS

Alexander Grgurich asked about the bus stop signs for the D-Line, and why they don't list the route number (#42). Kirstin replied that the current signs are too small to list all the routes that should be listed. She said DART would be looking at new, larger signs down the road, but that it will be a fairly lengthy process. Alexander then asked why DART couldn't replace the trolleys with regular 40-foot buses. Kirstin said that the idea could be passed along to the planning, transportation and maintenance departments for consideration, as well as other downtown partners of DART that must also have input.

Rod asked about the situation in Pleasant Hill with the proposal to Fareway for a park-and-ride lot on their property. Ethan responded that Fareway has denied the request, so DART is looking at other options in Pleasant Hill. Ethan said that he believes when the new Fareway has had time to see their customers' parking needs, that they will find they do have room for parking for DART customers.

Alexander asked if DART will be included in the talks about building a new airport terminal. Jim replied that to this date, the airport has never generated bus riders, but it might be possible that would change with a new terminal, especially if there is lots of other development around it.

STAFF UPDATES

Jamie

Budget

The DART Commission approved a 6 ½ % property tax increase for the FY2014-15 DART budget.

Ethan

Shelters

- Cowles Commons: There will be a bump-out shelter at the corner of 4th and Locust.
- Altoona: There will be 13 shelters placed
- We are researching putting schedule holders at bus stops.
- We are also researching braille signage at bus stops.

Michael Barber asked about getting verbal information by pressing a button at the bus stops. Jim said that DART has no funds to institute a system such as this, but that it could be considered at a later date when BRT will encourage the building of larger platforms for bus stops.

Kirstin

Marketing

- There will be a promotion for Route #51 that will advertise Free Rides for the entire month of April.
- RideShare is offering 25% off the first three months fare for new members. They are also targeting some central Iowa communities hoping to increase ridership on vans that aren't full.

Jim

Real Time Location System

- Some issues are being fixed today.
- Some testing yet to be done
- Now looking for deployment date.
- After getting advice from other transit systems, we will do rigorous and lengthy testing process.

Alexander asked why we will have such a long testing process. Jim replied that there were some variables because some of the products were new to the vendor, but we knew going in that in order to get a good discount on this product that we would be a beta tester, and that the process would take longer. That was the only way it would be affordable with our limited grant funds.

RideShare is offering a promotion for

Alexander asked about the open data project, and Kirstin said DART was reviewing the process that other transit systems have used. Once this research is completed, staff will better know how to implement the project.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Snow Removal
- Bus Stops

NEXT MEETING DATE

Wednesday May 14 at Noon
DART MultiModal Room

MOTION TO ADJOURN – 1:21 PM

It was moved and seconded that the TRAC adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.