

THE
PRESIDENT'S

viewpoint

February 2006

Smart for DART and for UTD

Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) is considering an expansion project that could potentially put The University of Texas (UTD) on the light rail map.

This summer DART's Board of Directors will vote where to establish an east-to-west light rail line that eventually will extend all the way to DFW Airport and Fort Worth. One option for the expansion is to use the existing Cotton Belt Line, a 54-mile stretch of railroad already owned by DART, which runs east to west through Richardson and Addison. If the Cotton Belt proposal becomes a reality, it would include building a DART rail stop on the north end of UTD campus.

Debate and discussion about the use of the Cotton Belt Line is heating up. Proponents of this plan argue that it makes the most sense for DART and for taxpayers because it could save millions of dollars compared to alternative plans. And having a rail station on campus would be transformative for UTD and would improve access to and from campus in myriad ways, including:

- Providing better access to classrooms, libraries, and other University facilities for K-12 students throughout the Greater Dallas area
- Providing easier access to UTD for students who live off campus and for potential students who live in remote areas with limited transportation options
- Broadening UTD's reach to recruit employees, and providing people who live in other areas with more access to on-campus job opportunities
- Offering more convenient access for guest lecturers and others who travel from out of town, especially after the expansion to DFW Airport is completed.

Construction of a UTD rail stop would also mean a full makeover for the north end of campus, and with that comes the promise of new commercial development, including shops, eateries, and other establishment that would help to make the University an even more exciting destination for students and the surrounding community.

The City of Richardson and the City of Addison both support the Cotton Belt proposal. In order to express my personal support of the plan, I have joined a group of distinguished community leaders that includes a senator, several state representatives and area mayors, and respected business leaders, to form the "Cotton Belt—Smart for DART" coalition to demonstrate support for the proposal and educate decision-makers about the potential benefits.

To voice your support or to obtain more information about the proposed Cotton Belt expansion, send an email to info@smartfordart.com or call 214-871-7755.

THE
UNIVERSITY
OF TEXAS
AT DALLAS



FROM THE
DESK OF
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