

A photograph showing a woman with a cane boarding a bus. The woman is wearing a pink vest and blue pants. The bus driver, wearing a blue cap and safety glasses, is assisting her. The bus has the number 311 on its side. The scene is set outdoors during the day.

Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority

Published September 2017

TRANSIT IMPACT REPORT

Enriching Lives, Connecting Communities, Expanding Opportunities

Regional Transit: An Overview

The Greater Des Moines region has changed dramatically in recent decades with a growing reputation and vision for competing on a global level. A significant part of our community's ability to compete is tied to workforce, infrastructure and economic vitality.

Transportation is a critical component of a region's competitiveness—vibrant, growing communities have strong public transit systems at the heart of their infrastructure to connect citizens with jobs, education, shopping and more.

The DART Commission and staff have worked diligently to improve the regional transit system since it was formed in 2006. This impact report captures key information about DART's customers, services, efficiencies and

advancements at a historic time in its evolution. DART is 11 years into its formation and is on the brink of a new governance structure and key decisions about transit in the region.

As we plan for the future, we continue to hear from businesses and residents in the region who have unmet transportation needs. We hope this document gives you a vision of what DART has done to try to meet these needs and provide the best possible service with the resources we have.

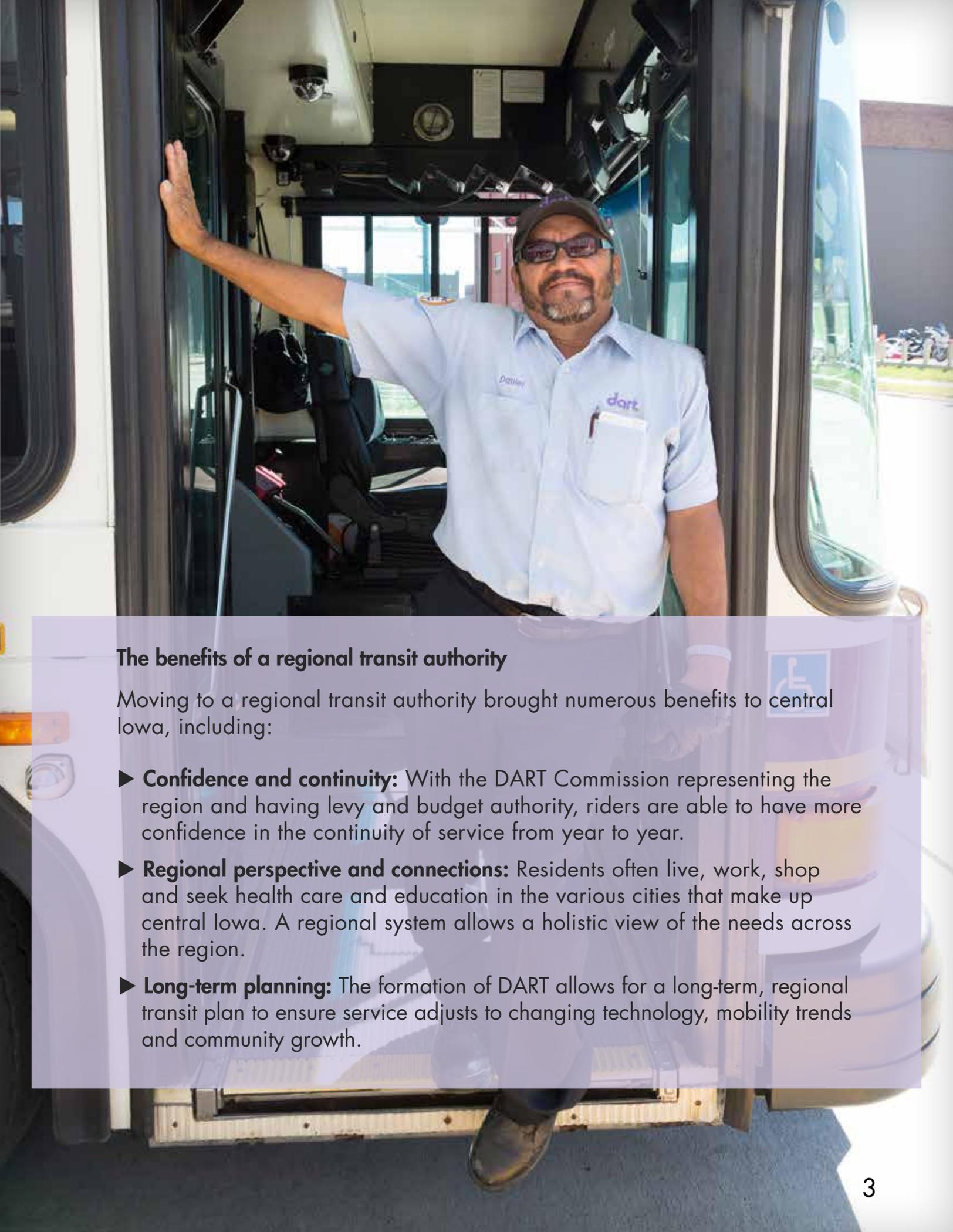
We also hope you'll get a glimpse of some of the possibilities the future holds for public transportation and our region.



Elizabeth Presutti, AICP
DART Chief Executive Officer

Local and state leaders created the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority, or DART, out of the Des Moines Metropolitan Transit Authority, or MTA, in 2006. The move enabled the agency to evolve into a regional transit system, serving 19 member governments.

- ▶ Alleman
- ▶ Altoona
- ▶ Ankeny
- ▶ Bondurant
- ▶ Carlisle
- ▶ Clive
- ▶ Des Moines
- ▶ Elkhart
- ▶ Granger
- ▶ Grimes
- ▶ Johnston
- ▶ Mitchellville
- ▶ Pleasant Hill
- ▶ Polk City
- ▶ Polk County
- ▶ Runnells
- ▶ Urbandale
- ▶ West Des Moines
- ▶ Windsor Heights



The benefits of a regional transit authority

Moving to a regional transit authority brought numerous benefits to central Iowa, including:

- ▶ **Confidence and continuity:** With the DART Commission representing the region and having levy and budget authority, riders are able to have more confidence in the continuity of service from year to year.
- ▶ **Regional perspective and connections:** Residents often live, work, shop and seek health care and education in the various cities that make up central Iowa. A regional system allows a holistic view of the needs across the region.
- ▶ **Long-term planning:** The formation of DART allows for a long-term, regional transit plan to ensure service adjusts to changing technology, mobility trends and community growth.

Table of Contents



Regional Transit: An Overview.....	2
Safety, Service, Schedule	6
Services Provided by DART	8
▶ Fixed Route	10
▶ Paratransit.....	12
▶ RideShare	14
System Enhancements.....	16
The Customers who Rely on DART	18
Safety Record	20
Customer Satisfaction Rating	22
Service Reliability.....	24
Technology Advancements	26
Funding	28
Operational Efficiency	30
Key Accomplishments in FY 2017	32
Looking to the Future	34
Board of Commissioners and DART Leadership.....	36
Board of Commissioners, Effective October 2017	38
Sources.....	40

Safety, Service, Schedule

DART staff prioritizes safety, service and schedule in its everyday operations.

- ▶ The number one concern for DART is to provide a **safe** and **secure** environment for its customers and employees.
- ▶ Following safety, DART works to provide exceptional **service** and experiences for all of its customers.
- ▶ The third priority for DART is to maintain its **schedule** for all of its routes and services.



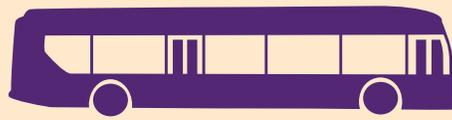


Services Provided by DART

DART operates a family of transportation services in the Greater Des Moines region, including 29 Fixed Routes, Paratransit and On Call service as well as provides resources for those who vanpool, walk or bike.

Our fleet of 150 buses and 112 RideShare vans travel thousands of miles daily throughout the region, transporting riders to work, events, shopping, schools and home.

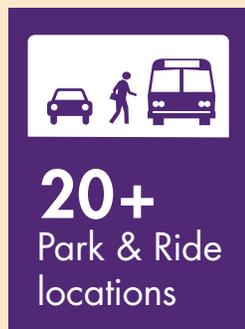




150 Fixed Route, Flex/ On Call, and Paratransit vehicles



112 RideShare vans



Top 5 reasons people ride DART²



Work
43%



Health/ Medical
16%



Shopping
13%

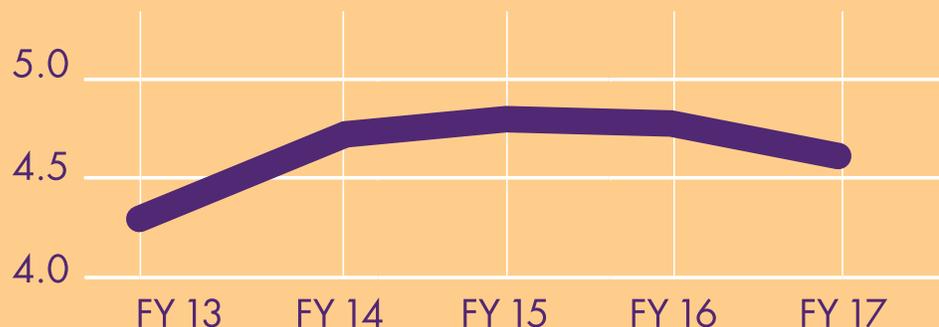


Social/ Recreation
9%



School
7%

Annual DART ridership in millions^{1,3}



Fixed Route

LOCAL ROUTES

1 3 4 5 6 7 8 10 11
13 14 15 16 17 52 60 D L

- ▶ Travel through the core of the metro
- ▶ Service up to seven days a week
- ▶ Frequent rush hour and midday service

EXPRESS ROUTES

92 93 94 95 96 98 99

- ▶ Travel between the suburbs and downtown Des Moines
- ▶ Use the freeway to provide quick, direct service
- ▶ Monday through Friday, rush hour service

FLEX ROUTES

72 73 74

- ▶ Travel through the core of the suburbs
- ▶ Option to “flex” up to one mile off route for an additional fee
- ▶ Service up to seven days a week, must call to schedule a trip

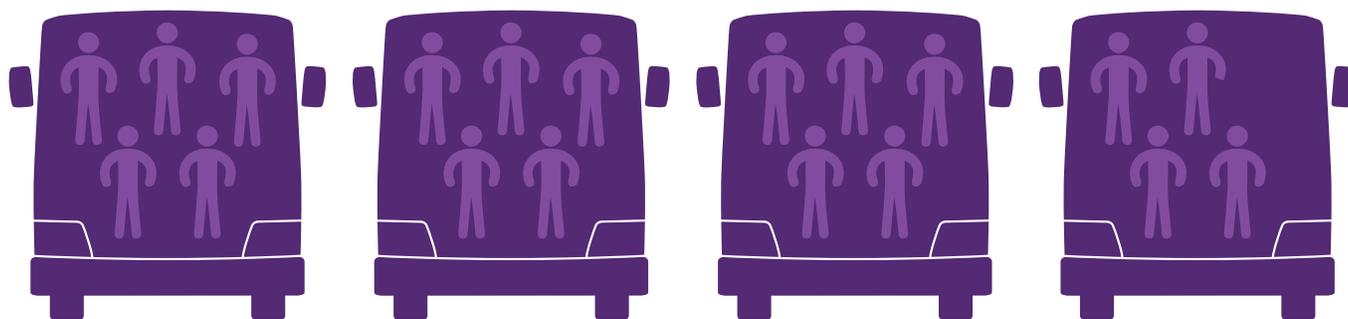
ON CALL



- ▶ Door-to-door service available in specific communities
- ▶ Connects to Local or Express service
- ▶ Service times vary in each community, must call to schedule a trip

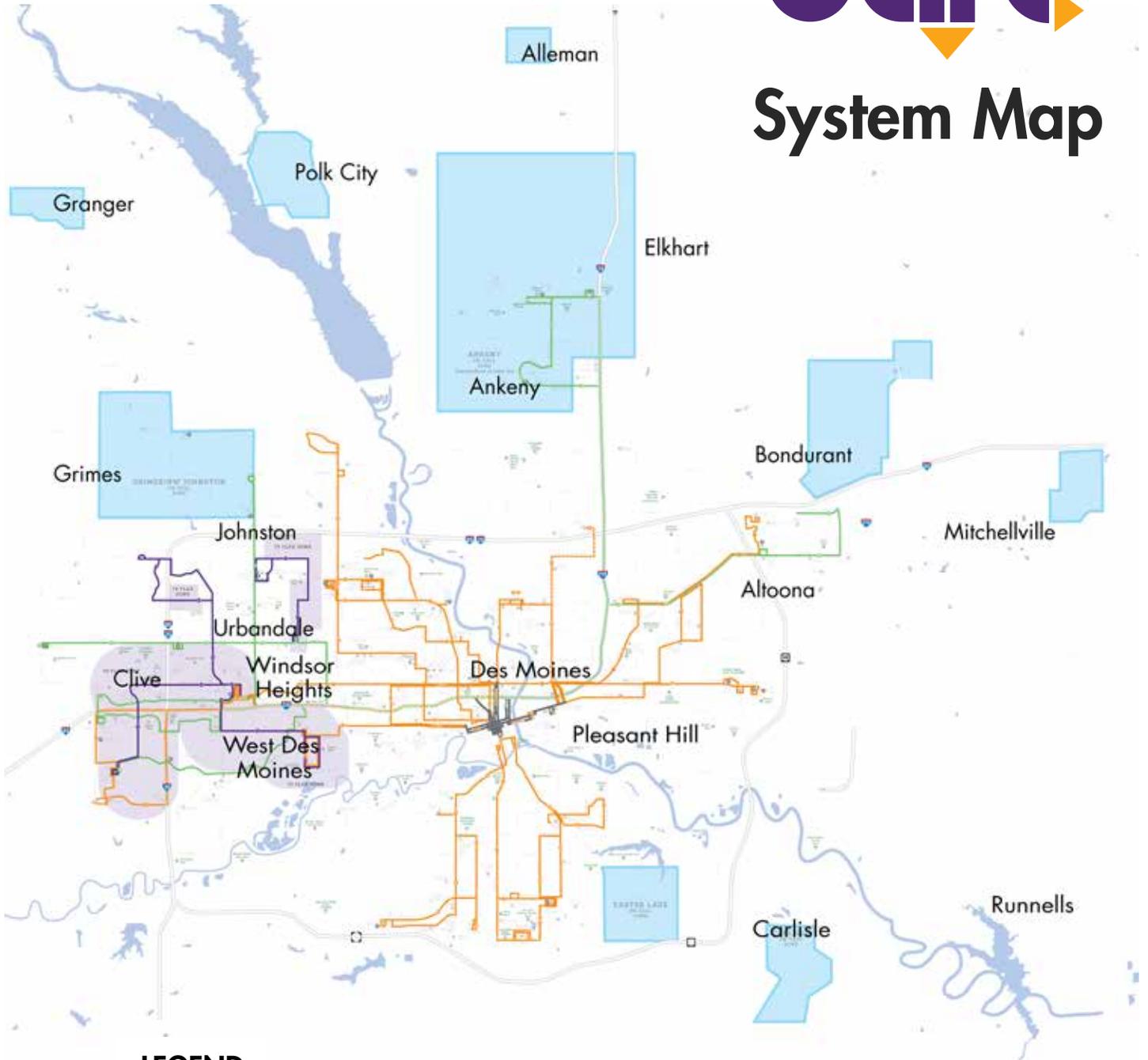
19.4

Fixed Route boardings per hour¹





System Map



LEGEND

- Local Routes 
- Express Routes 
- Flex Routes 
- On Call 

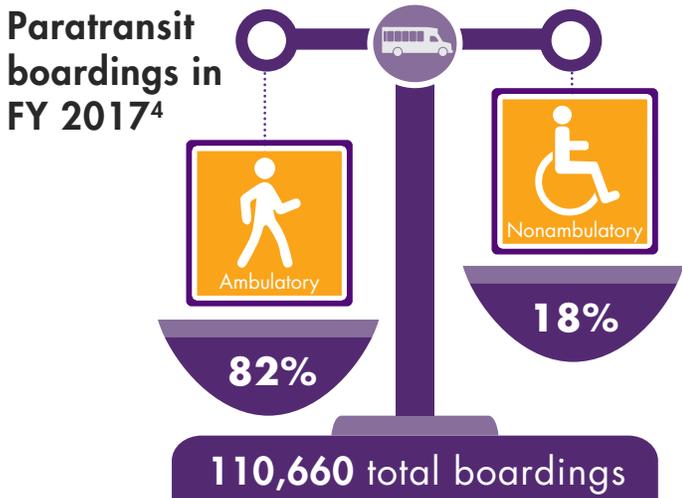
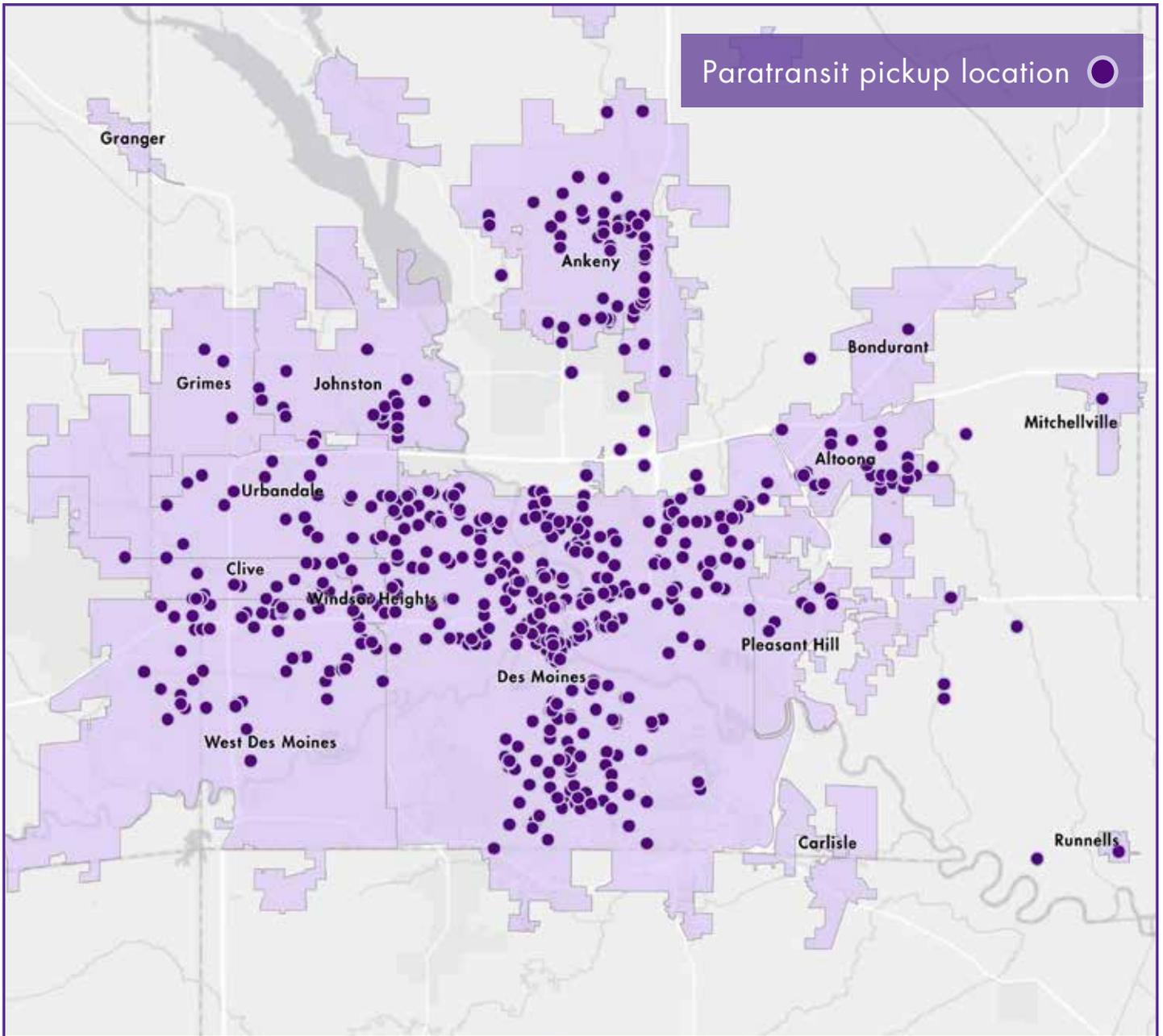
Paratransit

Paratransit is a door-to-door and wheelchair accessible service available for senior citizens and persons with disabilities who are functionally unable to independently use DART Fixed Route bus service.

Individuals who want to use Paratransit need to fill out an application. Once the application is approved, customers can call and reserve a trip up to seven days prior to the trip date, but no later than 5 p.m. the day before the trip.



Locations served by Paratransit during the average work week⁴



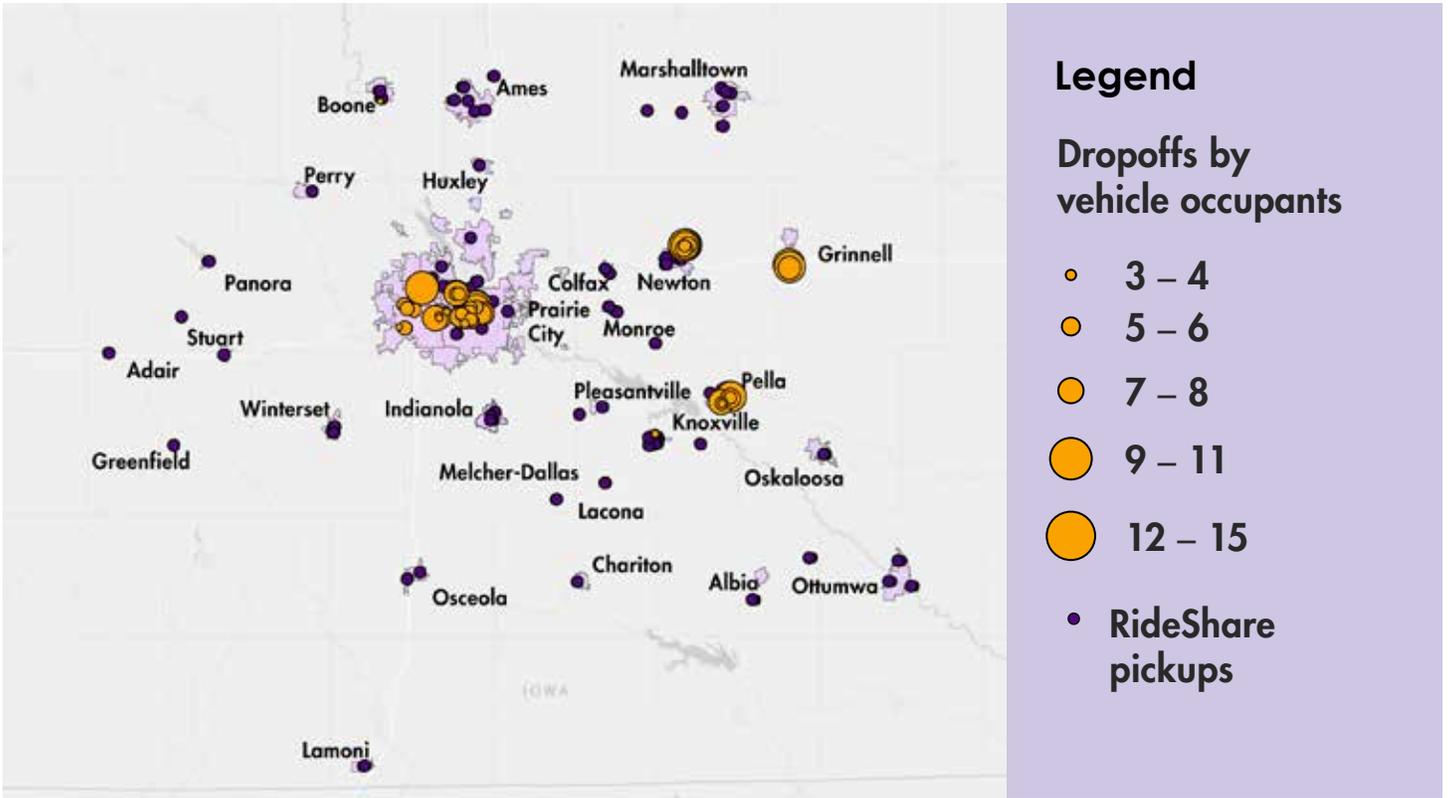
RideShare

RideShare serves an 18-county region in central Iowa, helping commuters locate others with like travel patterns to share rides in vanpools.

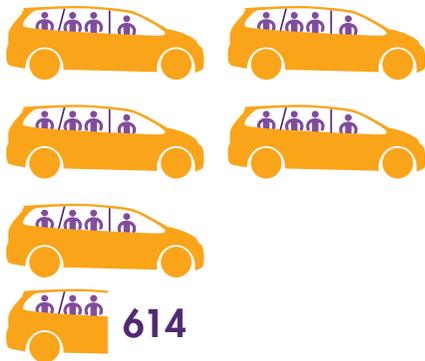
DART has a fleet of vans used by groups of five to 12 commuters for trips to and from work, with nearly 100 vanpools in operation. RideShare is a self-supported service with fare revenue covering the cost of operations.



RideShare pickup and dropoff locations⁹



RideShare customers¹

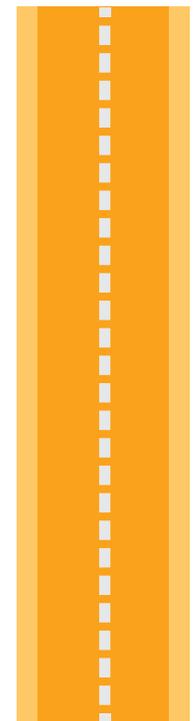


Annual miles of vehicle traffic saved



Annual miles traveled in FY 2017¹

1,658,464



9,430,102

Annual vanpool trips¹

195,658

System Enhancements



DART was formed in 2006 as a regional transit system providing service throughout Polk County and surrounding areas. The new structure enabled long-range planning for services that best meet the needs of the region. As a result, DART has expanded service to new communities and developed the region's first long-range transit services plan, DART Forward 2035.



2006

Created an Unlimited Access program for employers to help their employees ride DART for free



2007

Added Sunday service on popular Local Routes



2008

Began the free D-Line service between the Iowa State Capitol and Western Gateway Park



2009

Added hybrid buses to DART's fleet

dart Forward
2035

2011

DART Forward 2035 was adopted by the Commission



2012

Service redesign resulted in the addition of new routes



2012

Opened DART Central Station—the region's first-ever major transfer and multimodal transportation facility



2013

Expanded service hours to better meet the needs of service and retail industry employees



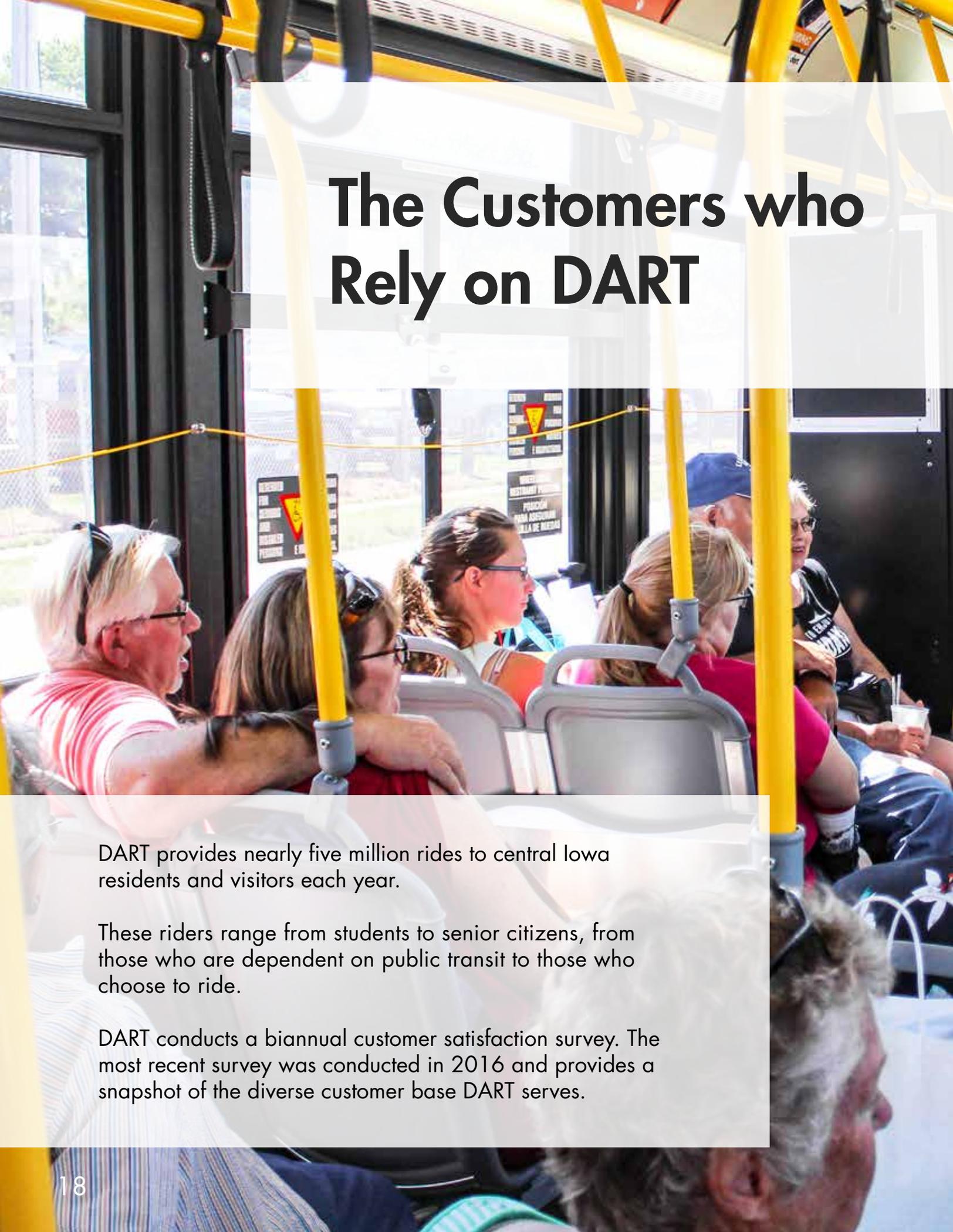
2016

Added Local Route 10 along East University in partnership with Broadlawns Medical Center



2017

DART and the Des Moines Bicycle Collective opened six mobility hubs with bus shelters and BCycle stations

A photograph showing the interior of a DART bus. Several passengers are seated in rows of grey seats. A woman in a red and white striped shirt is in the foreground, looking out the window. Other passengers include a woman with glasses and a blue cap, and a woman with blonde hair. Yellow handrails are visible throughout the bus. The background shows a view of a parking lot and buildings through the windows.

The Customers who Rely on DART

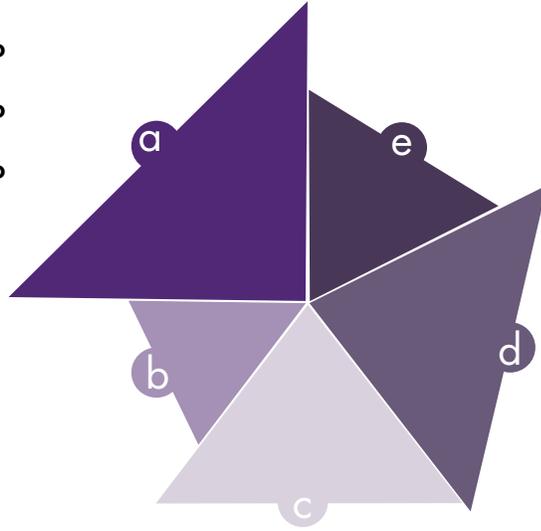
DART provides nearly five million rides to central Iowa residents and visitors each year.

These riders range from students to senior citizens, from those who are dependent on public transit to those who choose to ride.

DART conducts a biannual customer satisfaction survey. The most recent survey was conducted in 2016 and provides a snapshot of the diverse customer base DART serves.

Age²

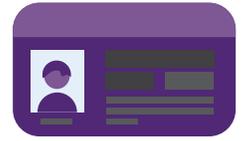
- a** 34 and under: **25%**
- b** 35-44: **15%**
- c** 45-54: **21%**
- d** 55-64: **22%**
- e** 65+: **17%**



Valid driver's license²

NO
46%

YES
54%



Total household income*²

\$75,000
and up

9%

\$50,000 -
\$74,999

9%

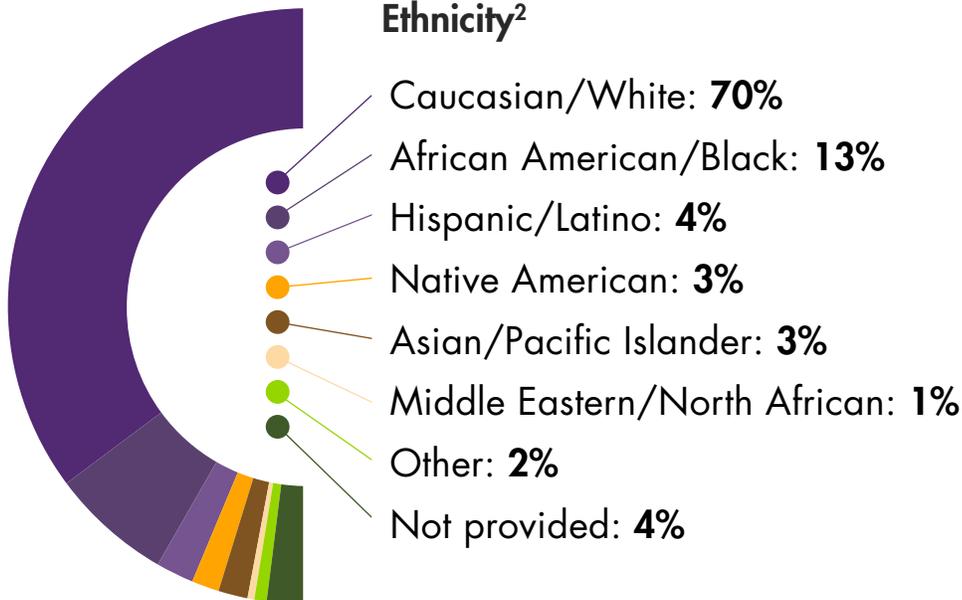
\$25,000 -
\$49,999

16%

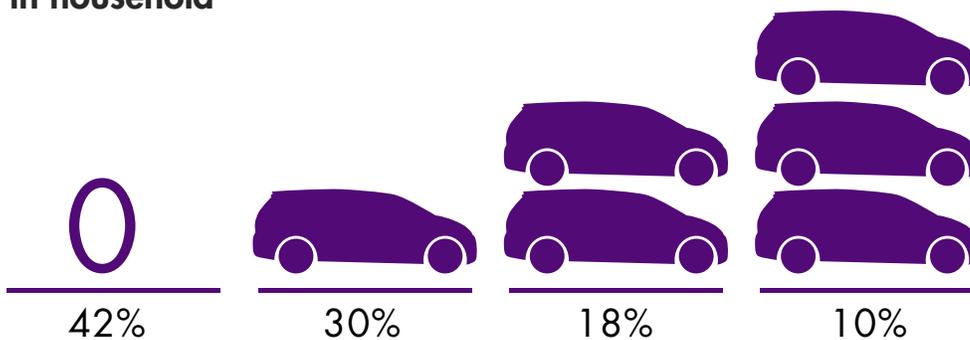
Less than
\$24,999

66%

Ethnicity²



Working vehicles in household²



*Excluding RideShare

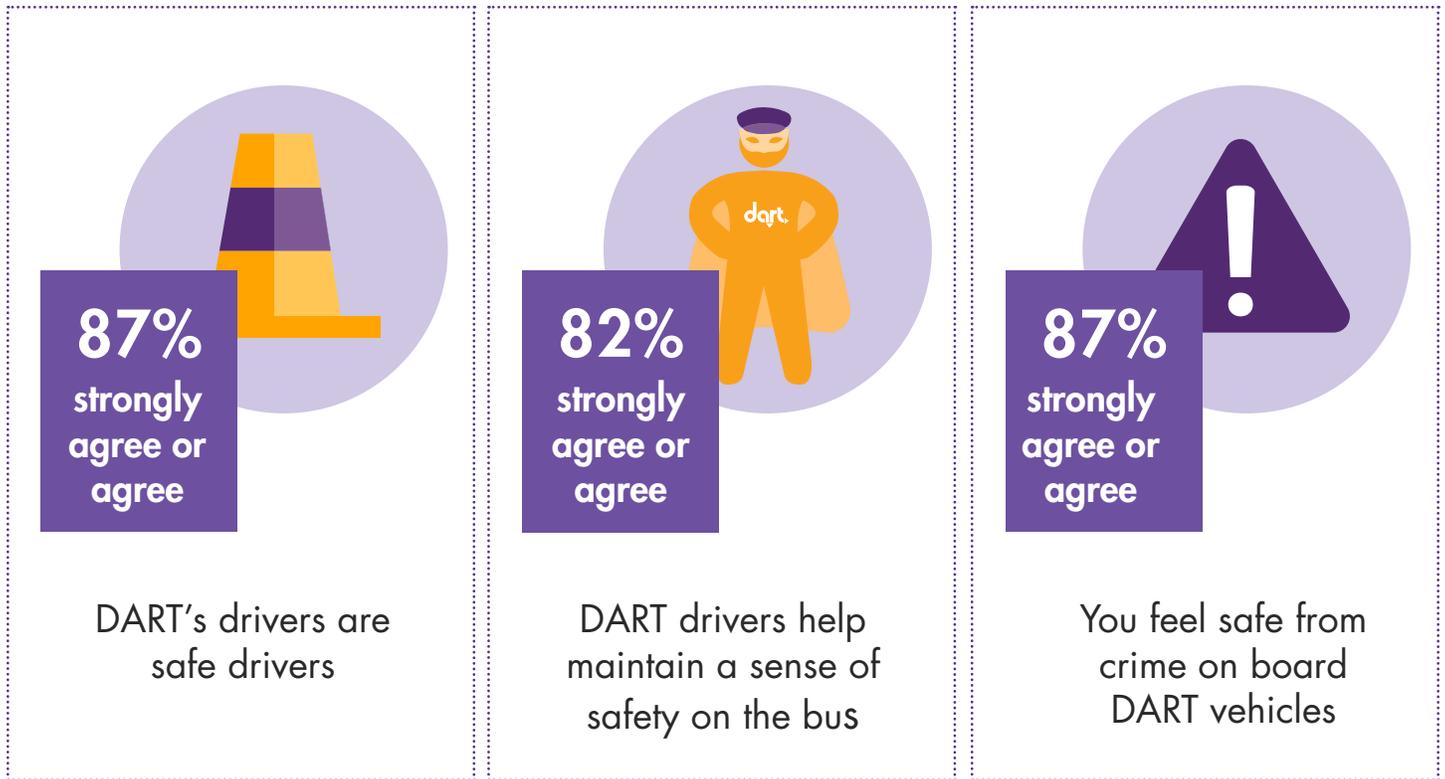
Safety Record

Safety is DART's first priority. This includes the safety of our riders, employees and the public. DART takes great pride in offering safe and secure services. In fact, DART received the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) Bus Safety Excellence Award in 2011. Efforts to ensure safety, include:

- ▶ Monthly safety meetings for all bus operators and maintenance personnel.
- ▶ Incentivizing safety in the workplace by distributing annual safety awards to operations and maintenance staff.
- ▶ Establishment of a safety review committee to identify strategies to mitigate hazards.
- ▶ A review of routes to determine if modifications could be made to improve safety.
- ▶ Installation of audible left turn alarms to warn pedestrians of buses.
- ▶ Cameras on all buses and at DART Central Station.
- ▶ Security or Des Moines Police officers present at DART Central Station when the facility is open.



Fixed Route customer satisfaction survey results⁶



Preventable accidents per 100,000 miles⁵



DART is a member of the American Bus Benchmarking Group (ABBG). This allows DART to compare its performance to similar size transit agencies in the United States. The above chart reflects the number of preventable accidents per 100,000 miles for nine mid-sized transit systems.

Customer Satisfaction Rating

Customer service is another top priority for all DART staff. In 2012, DART established a baseline of customer satisfaction when it administered its first-ever customer satisfaction survey.

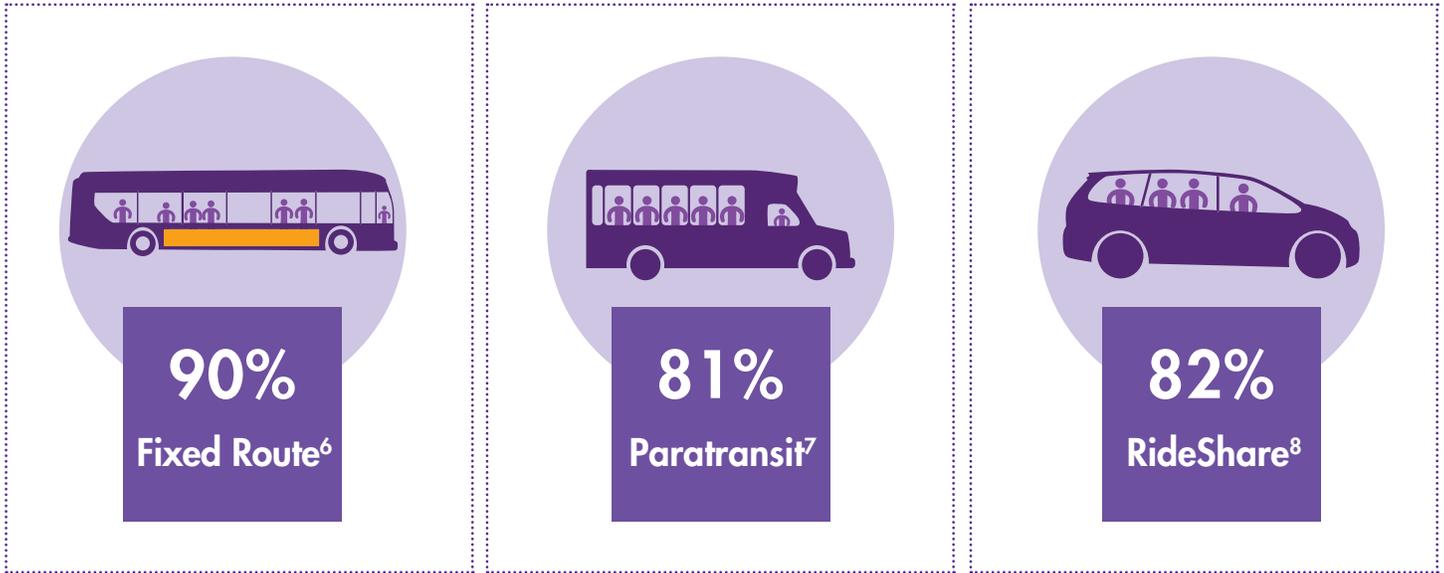
Since then, DART has added service, expanded hours, opened DART Central Station and enhanced tools riders can use to access DART information.

These enhancements have directly impacted DART's customer satisfaction rating, which is measured biannually. In the most recent survey, conducted in fall 2016, DART received an overall satisfaction rating of 84 percent, one percent higher than in 2014 and an extremely high rating for a transit agency.

CUSTOMER SERVICE



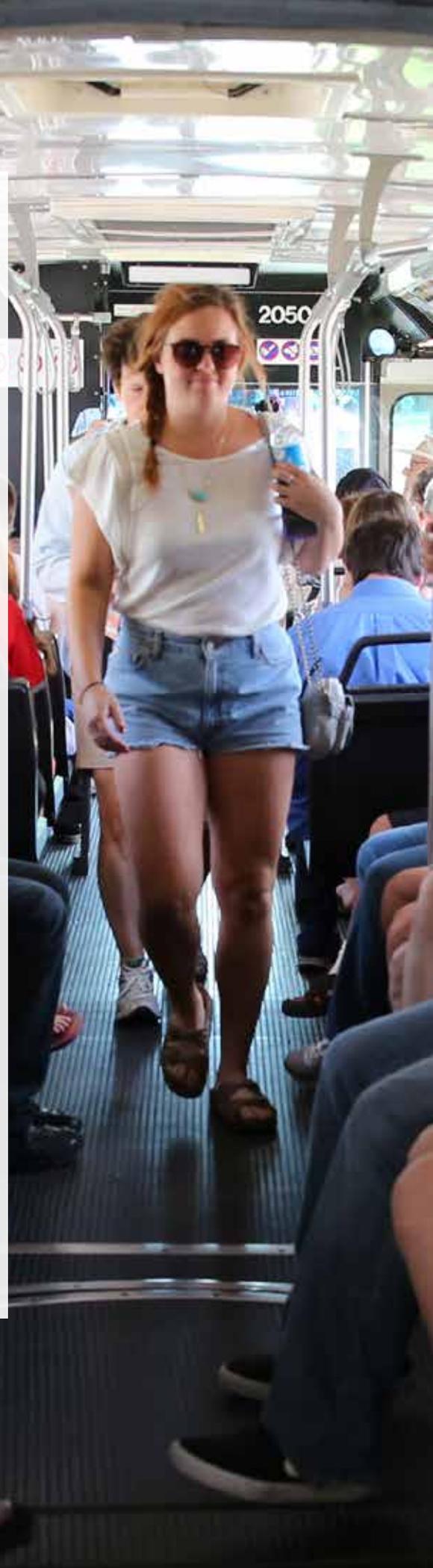
Riders who indicated they were very satisfied or satisfied with the overall quality of service received from DART



Service Reliability

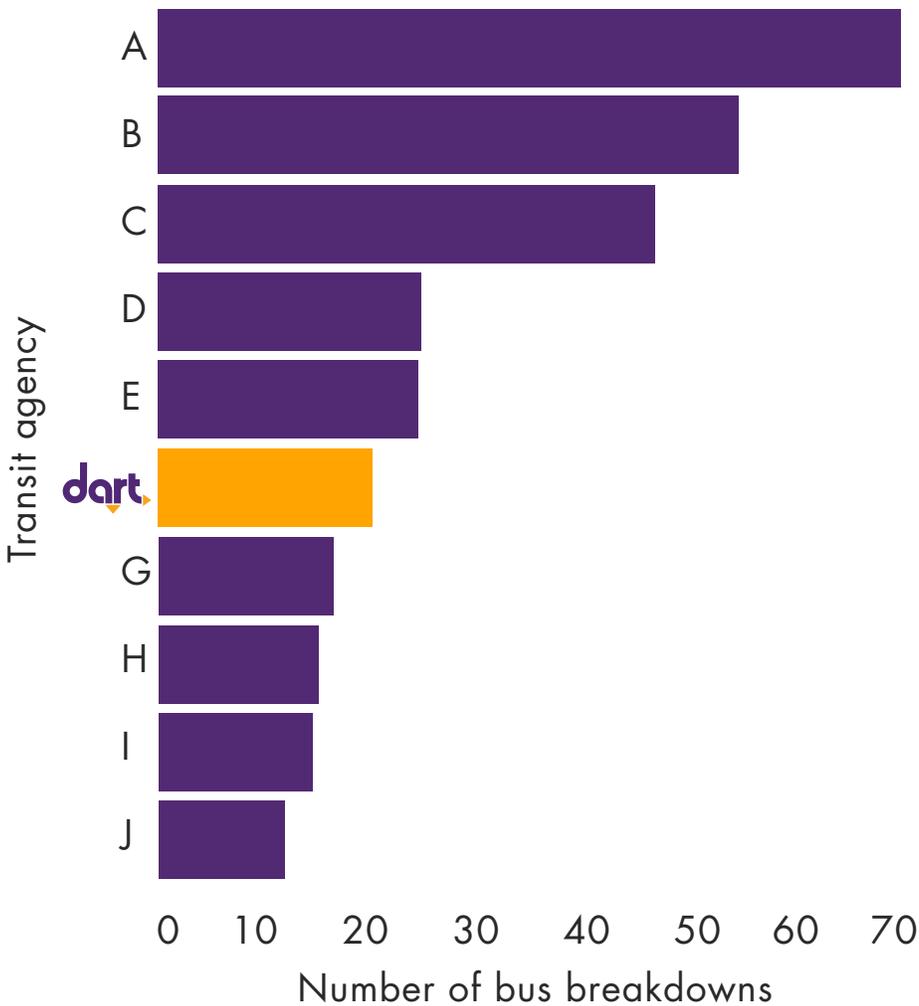
Reliability, or operating as close as possible to the published route schedules, is another area of focus for DART. DART utilizes two key metrics to evaluate its reliability: on-time performance and miles between bus breakdowns.

- ▶ **On-time performance (OTP)** measures whether a bus operator is early or late. An operator is out of compliance if he or she is more than five minutes late or one second early. DART has greatly improved its Fixed Route OTP in the past two years, from 67 percent in October 2015 to 83 percent in June 2017.
- ▶ **Bus breakdowns** directly impact reliability, therefore transit systems strive for a low number of bus breakdowns per 100,000 miles traveled. DART performs in the low- to mid-range when compared to peer systems and is working to further improve this metric.





Number of bus breakdowns per 100,000 miles⁵



83%

Fixed Route
On-time
performance¹



DART is a member of the American Bus Benchmarking Group (ABBG). This allows DART to compare its performance to similar size transit agencies in the United States. The above chart reflects the number of bus breakdowns per 100,000 miles for ten mid-sized transit systems.

Technology Advancements

Since DART was formed nearly 11 years ago, the organization has adopted and implemented many new technologies to improve the rider experience. Some of these improvements include:

- ▶ An online trip planner was added to DART's website in 2013. External sources, like Google and Bing Maps, also began using DART schedule information for trip planning that year.
- ▶ Real-time bus location information was added to the online trip planner, and was available in a real-time map in 2014.
- ▶ A real-time bus schedule app was launched in 2015. Real-time information was available through text and phone services that same year.
- ▶ A one-year Wi-Fi pilot project began in February 2017, providing free Wi-Fi for riders on 20 of DART's buses.
- ▶ A mobile ticketing app with trip planning and real-time information will be available in the fall of 2017, allowing riders to purchase bus passes using their smartphones.



COMING in 2018:
New fareboxes



Mobile ticketing



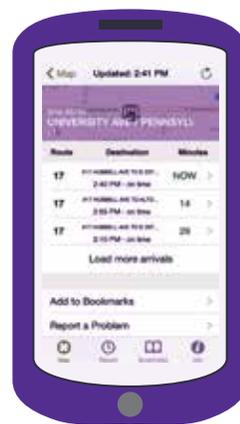
Wi-Fi pilot on
Routes 52 & 98



Real-time information
on Google Maps



SMS text alerts



Real-time bus
schedule app



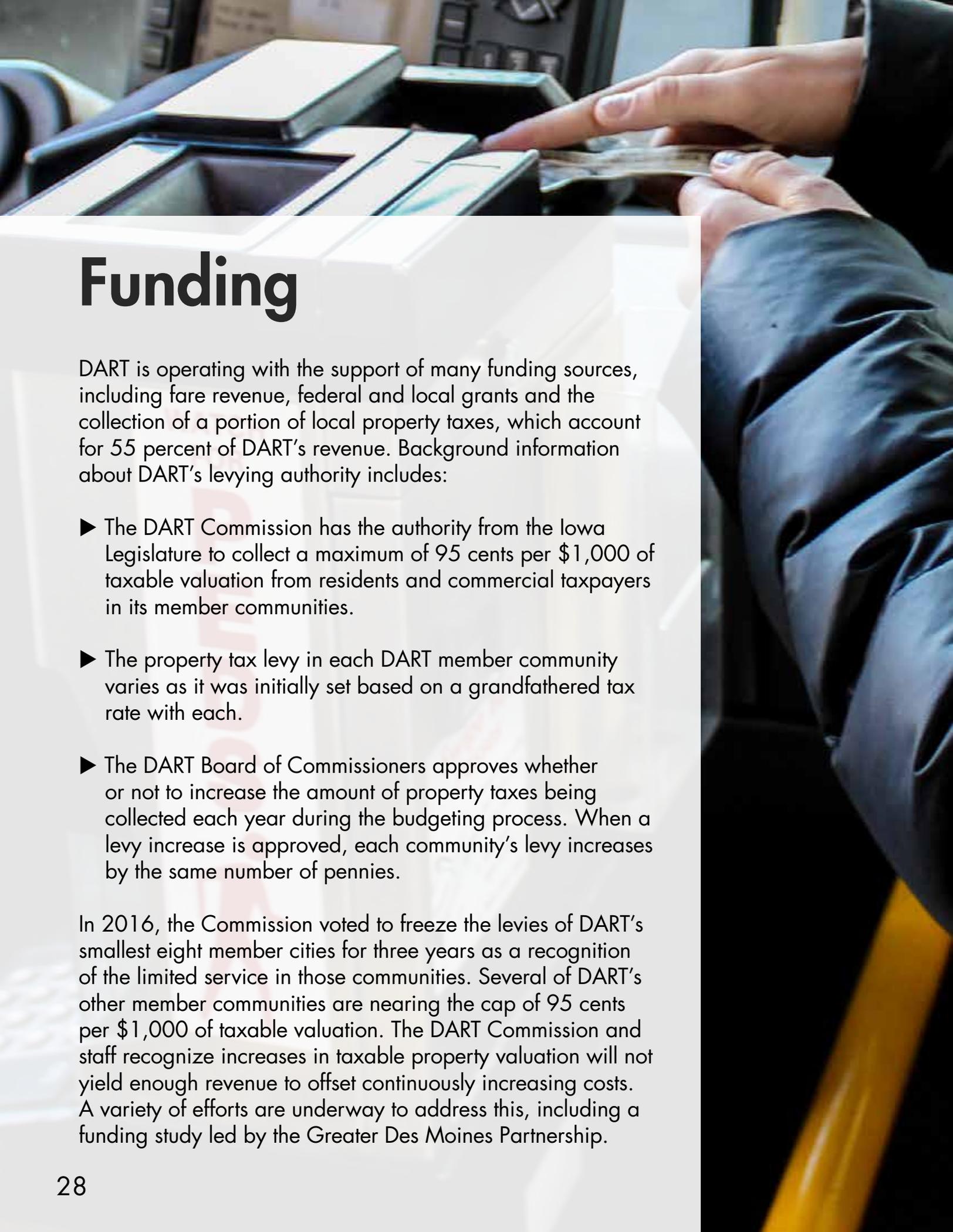
Real-time information on
ridedart.com



Real-time and schedule
info recordings



Trip planning on
ridedart.com

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a banknote over a payment terminal. The person is wearing a dark blue jacket. The terminal has a screen and a keypad. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a public transit station or a similar setting.

Funding

DART is operating with the support of many funding sources, including fare revenue, federal and local grants and the collection of a portion of local property taxes, which account for 55 percent of DART's revenue. Background information about DART's levying authority includes:

- ▶ The DART Commission has the authority from the Iowa Legislature to collect a maximum of 95 cents per \$1,000 of taxable valuation from residents and commercial taxpayers in its member communities.
- ▶ The property tax levy in each DART member community varies as it was initially set based on a grandfathered tax rate with each.
- ▶ The DART Board of Commissioners approves whether or not to increase the amount of property taxes being collected each year during the budgeting process. When a levy increase is approved, each community's levy increases by the same number of pennies.

In 2016, the Commission voted to freeze the levies of DART's smallest eight member cities for three years as a recognition of the limited service in those communities. Several of DART's other member communities are nearing the cap of 95 cents per \$1,000 of taxable valuation. The DART Commission and staff recognize increases in taxable property valuation will not yield enough revenue to offset continuously increasing costs. A variety of efforts are underway to address this, including a funding study led by the Greater Des Moines Partnership.

FY 2017 Operating Revenues



56%	Local Property Tax
26%	Fares & Contracts
10%	Federal Funding
8%	State Funding
<1%	Miscellaneous

FY 2017 Operating Expenses



64%	Salaries, Wages & Fringes
11%	Fuels & Lubricants
8%	Services
5%	Equipment Repair & Parts
4%	Local Match
2%	Supplies & Materials
4%	Insurance
1%	Miscellaneous
1%	Utilities

The average \$200,000 home annually pays:



Farebox recovery ratio*¹



*Includes fares, Unlimited Access/ partnerships, advertising and other revenue DART generates.

New revenue partnerships established in FY 2017:

- ▶ **Broadlawns Medical Center** – Local Route 10
- ▶ **City of Des Moines** – Saturday D-Line service from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- ▶ **United Way** – Hiatt Middle School pilot
- ▶ **Downtown Farmers’ Market** – Saturday D-Line service from 7 to 10 a.m.
- ▶ **Adsposure** – Bus and shelter advertising, generated \$200,000 in revenue in FY 2017



Operational Efficiency

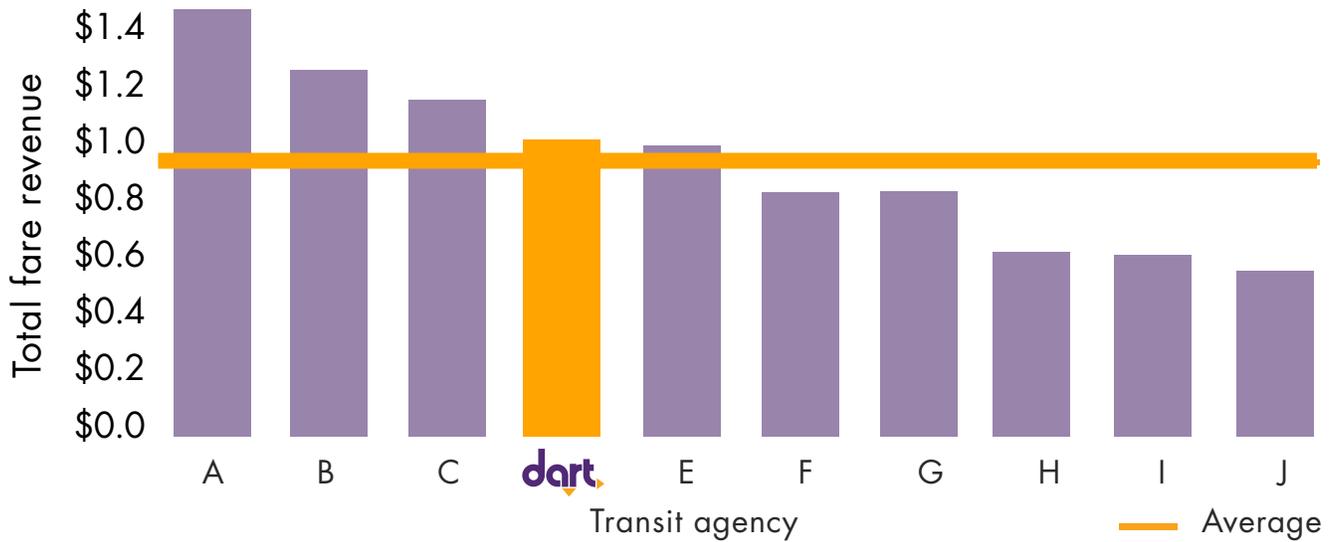
DART strives to provide the best possible service with the resources it has. This is measured through a variety of key performance indicators, and by comparing DART's performance to other similar-sized transit agencies through the American Bus Benchmarking Group (ABBG).

Formed in 2011, ABBG is a group of public, medium-sized, urban bus operators that agreed to compare performance and share best practices with peers in similar cities throughout the United States.

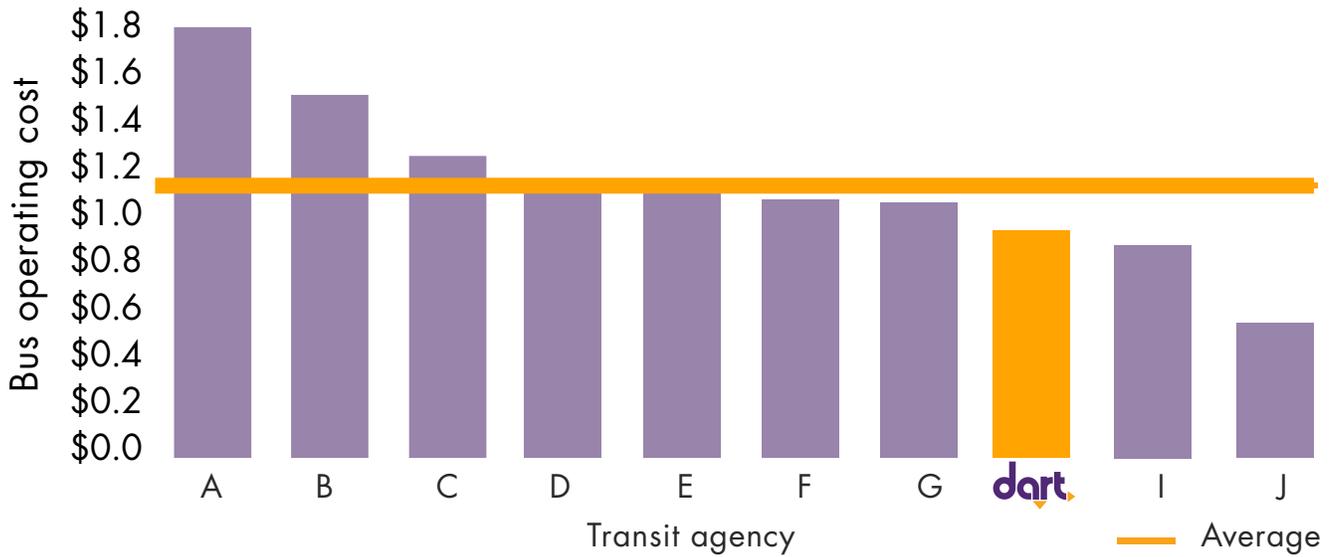
When compared to nine other mid-sized transit systems, DART has the:

- ▶ **4th highest total fare revenue collected per passenger boarding**
- ▶ **3rd lowest bus operating cost per passenger mile**
- ▶ **2nd lowest bus operating cost per vehicle hour**

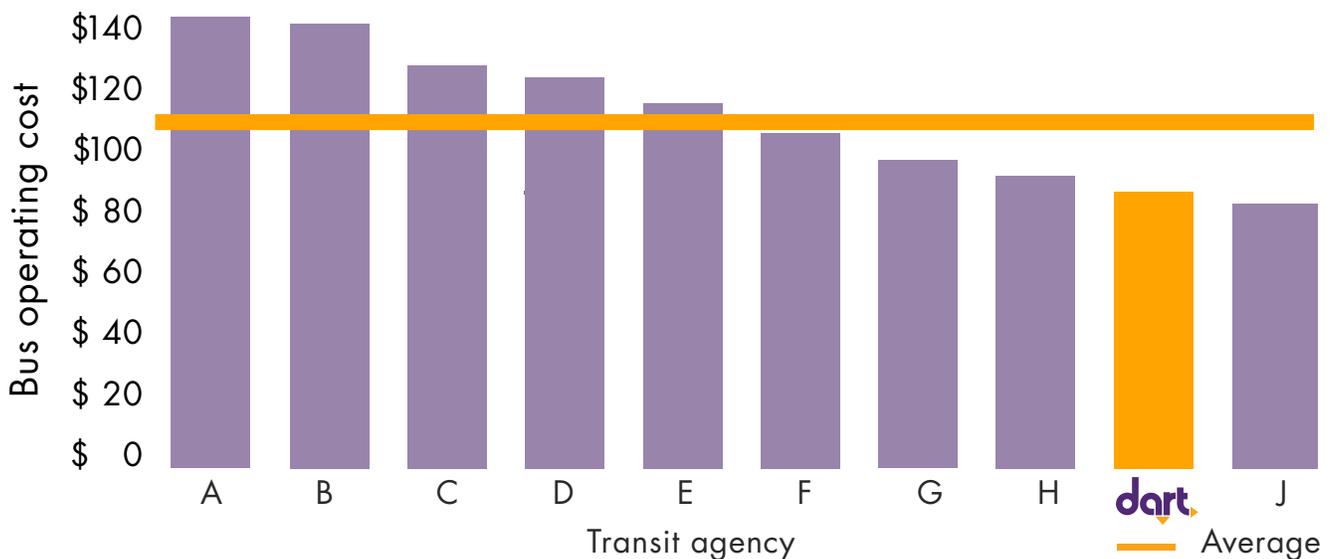
Total fare revenue per passenger boarding⁵



Bus operating cost per passenger mile⁵



Bus operating cost per vehicle hour⁵



Key Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2017



Route 10 was added in November 2016, providing transit service to the new Broadlawns clinic on East University, as well as midday service to Pleasant Hill.

Saturday D-Line service was added in 2016 for two years thanks to a partnership with the City of Des Moines. In addition to its weekday service, the free downtown shuttle now operates between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Saturdays from the East Village to the Western Gateway.



Hiatt pilot with Des Moines Public Schools & United Way started in December 2016, providing unlimited free rides to all students of Hiatt Middle School. Funded by United Way of Central Iowa, the pilot program will evaluate if transit access improves student attendance.



DART Forward 2035 Year Five Update draft plan was shared with the public for input from October through December 2016. An online survey yielded more than 2,100 responses ranking transit priorities, and more than 1,400 individuals indicating which plan option they preferred.



Wi-Fi pilot on Routes 52 & 98 began in February 2017 for one year to evaluate the impact on ridership and rider satisfaction. Twenty buses were equipped with free Wi-Fi and, in just the first six months, riders have used it more than 26,000 times.

Paratransit software was implemented in the spring of 2017. The new software has optimized scheduling of Paratransit service, improved operational efficiency and is enabling DART to provide a better overall experience to customers.



Looking to the Future

Technology advancements are rapidly transforming the transportation industry. DART is constantly investing in and researching innovative technology and partnerships that meet the needs of riders efficiently and effectively.

Recent technology advances:

- ▶ A one-year Wi-Fi pilot project began in February 2017, providing free Wi-Fi for riders on 20 of DART's buses.
- ▶ A mobile ticketing app will be available in the fall of 2017, allowing riders to purchase bus passes using their smartphones.
- ▶ Coming in 2018, new fareboxes will allow DART more options and new technology for collecting fares.

More mobility options

In addition, providing access to more modes of transportation is becoming increasingly important. Several mini mobility hubs, combining BCycle Stations and bus shelters in a single location, were installed throughout the region in August and September of this year. Future plans could include larger hubs with space for a bus stop, car share, rideshare, vanpool pickup location, bike share and more.

On-demand technology

The technology that is driving Uber and Lyft is spurring a host of new "on-demand" options for public transit. From partnering with Uber and Lyft to creating new apps to deliver buses on demand, public transit agencies are testing and piloting a variety of options. DART is carefully examining which option(s) may best serve customers well into the future.



What do our citizens want for the future?

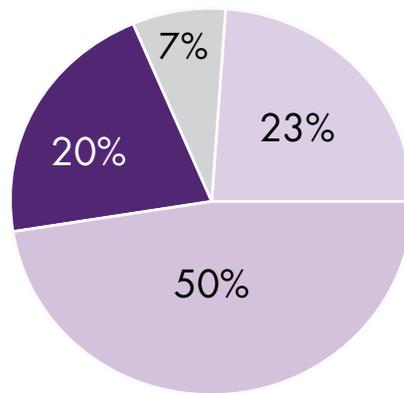
In 2016, the DART Forward 2035 Year Five Update was initiated in order to update DART's long-term transit services plan and gather feedback from the community as to what they want for the future. Public feedback indicated a strong desire for more public transit in the region. Below are two key stats that came from a statistically significant survey of non-riders¹⁰.

Is public transit important to a thriving community?



Eighty-four percent of respondents understand how **important** public transportation is to the future of our community.

How do you think the level of funding for public transit should change over the next five years?



- Much Greater Than It Is Now
- Somewhat Greater
- Stay The Same
- Be Reduced

Following this and other feedback from the community, several next steps were initiated by the Commission, including changes to DART's governance structure and an independent funding analysis to examine ways transit could be funded in the future.

As DART continues to prepare for a rapidly changing future, there is a steadfast commitment to its mission: Enriching Lives, Connecting Communities and Expanding Opportunities. Through the changes the future may bring, DART staff will continue to work every day to provide the highest quality service in the most safe and efficient way possible; helping ensure Greater Des Moines continues to be a top place to work, live and play.

Board of Commissioners

Effective through September 2017

**Tom Gayman,
Chair**



District 4: Granger, Grimes,
Johnston and Urbandale
Alternate: Paula Dierenfeld

**Christine Hensley,
Vice Chair**



District 3: Des Moines
Alternate: Larry Hulse

**Steve Peterson,
Secretary/Treasurer**



District 2: Clive, West Des Moines
and Windsor Heights
Alternate: Kevin Trevillyan

Skip Conkling



District 1: Altoona, Bondurant,
Carlisle, Des Moines, Elkhart,
Mitchellville and Runnells
*Due to the passing of Mayor
Conkling, Alternate Jon Woods is
the District 1 representative.*

Angela Connolly



At Large Polk County
Alternate: Mark Wandro

Gaye Johnson



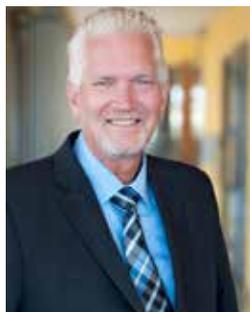
At Large Polk County
Alternate: Ruth Randleman

Gary Lorenz



District 7: Alleman, Ankeny,
Des Moines and Polk City
Alternate: Bobbi Bentz

Skip Moore



District 5: Des Moines
and Pleasant Hill
Alternate: Ben Champ

Joann Muldoon



District 6: Des Moines
Alternate: Jason Harmer

DART Leadership Team

Elizabeth Presutti, AICP



Chief Executive Officer

Timothy Sanderson



Chief Operating Officer

Jamie Schug, CPFO



Chief Financial Officer

Katie Stull, PHR, SHRM-CP



Chief Human
Resources Officer

Amanda Wanke, APR



Chief Engagement and
Communications Officer

Board of Commissioners

Effective October 2017

Alleman

Commissioner: John Hathaway, Council Member
Alternate: Bobby Jones

Altoona

Commissioner: Vernon Willey II, Council Member
Alternate: Scott Henry

Ankeny

Commissioner: Gary Lorenz, Mayor
Alternate: Bobbi Bentz, Council Member

Bondurant

Commissioner: Doug Elrod, Council Member
Alternate: Marketa Oliver, City Manager

Carlisle

Commissioner: Ruth Randleman, Mayor
Alternate: Andy Lent, City Administrator

Clive

Commissioner: Michael McCoy, Council Member
Alternate: John Edwards, Council Member

Des Moines

Commissioner: Frank Cownie, Mayor

Elkhart

Commissioner: Michael Just, Council Member
Alternate: Kyle Michel, City Clerk

Granger

Commissioner: Mike Backous, Council Member
Alternate: Kristy Trzeciak, City Clerk

Grimes

Commissioner: Jeremy Hamp, Council Member
Alternate: Kelley Brown, City Administrator

Johnston

Commissioner: Paula Dierenfeld, Mayor
Alternate: Tom Cope, Council Member

Mitchellville

Commissioner: Jon Woods, Mayor
Alternate: Joe Crook, Council Member

Pleasant Hill

Commissioner: Sara Kurovski, Mayor
Alternate: J. Benjamin Champ, City Manager

Polk City

Commissioner: Jason Morse, Mayor
Alternate: Jeff Walters

Polk County

Commissioner: Angela Connolly, Polk County Supervisor
Alternate: Steve Van Oort, Polk County Supervisor

Runnells

Commissioner: Gerald Lane, Mayor
Alternate: Stephanie Herbold, City Clerk

Urbandale

Commissioner: Tom Gayman, Council Member
Alternate: Robert Andeweg, Mayor

West Des Moines

Commissioner: Steven Gaer, Mayor
Alternate: Tom Hadden, City Manager

Windsor Heights

Commissioner: Zac Bales-Henry, Council Member
Alternate: Joseph Jones

The DART Commission voted unanimously in June 2017 to change to a new and more representative governance structure. This reorganization was recommended by an independent task force facilitated by Scott Raecker of The Robert D. and Billie Ray Center at Drake University and Cassandra Halls of 2 the Top, and supported by the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines.

Key elements of DART's new governance structure include:

- ▶ Each DART member government has one representative on the Commission, effective October 2017.
- ▶ The mayors of each member community appointed one representative (who must be an elected official) and one alternate. In the case of county representation, the Board of Supervisors chose the representative and alternate for the Commission.
- ▶ Weighted votes will be allowed, if called, in specific situations. Weighted voting would be 1 vote per 25,000 population. Weighted votes need to have three-quarters approval of the representatives present to pass.

Sources

- ¹ DART System Summary Performance Report, June 2017. (Pages 9, 10, 15, 25, 29)
- ² Combined (Fixed Routes, RideShare and Paratransit) Customer Service Satisfaction Survey. ETC Institute, 2016. (Pages 9, 19)
- ³ DART System Summary Performance Report, June 2016. (Page 9)
- ⁴ Adept, through March 19, 2017, and Pass, beginning March 20, 2017 and beyond. (Page 13)
- ⁵ American Bus Benchmarking Group, 2015 fixed-route data. (Pages 21, 25, 31)
- ⁶ Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority Customer Service Satisfaction Survey: Fixed Routes. ETC Institute, 2016. (Pages 21, 23)
- ⁷ Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority Customer Service Satisfaction Survey: Paratransit. ETC Institute, 2016. (Page 23)
- ⁸ Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority Customer Service Satisfaction Survey: RideShare. ETC Institute, 2016. (Page 23)
- ⁹ lowarideshare.org. (Page 15)
- ¹⁰ Des Moines Area Regional Transit Non-Rider Survey. ETC Institute, 2016. (Page 35)



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