



Contact
Gunnar Olson
Public Information Officer
Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority
golson@ridedart.com
515.283.5008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, May 20, 2011

**Congressman Leonard Boswell and FTA Region 7 Administrator Mokhtee Ahmad
Join DART Commissioners to Break Ground on DART Central Station**

Congressman Leonard Boswell and Federal Transit Administration Region 7 Administrator Mokhtee Ahmad joined the Commissioners of the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority today to break ground on the new, \$21 million transit facility in downtown Des Moines and announce its new name – DART Central Station.

The Weitz Company of Des Moines has submitted the lowest bid to construct the project and is likely to be awarded the contract at the DART Commission meeting on May 31st. Construction will get underway in June and is expected to be complete by fall 2012.

“Today is a monumental day for a project that demonstrates what we can accomplish when Iowans work together to bring progress and change to our state,” said Boswell, a senior Member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. “DART Central Station and the bus system are important to many Central Iowans who rely on public transportation to get around town, especially as the price at the pump continues to go up. I applaud the work of DART’s leadership team who worked tirelessly to rally private and public support for this project and many other DART initiatives. This project would not have happened without the support of metro communities and private businesses during the grant approval process. While we are in challenging times, Des Moines and the entire state of Iowa is proving that they need not be idle times. I will continue to work very hard for projects like these that invest in our communities, create jobs, and make the metro region more attractive for businesses and residents.”

“This new environmentally-friendly facility will provide residents a real, convenient, and efficient transit choice, rather than being forced to absorb near-record gas prices into their family budgets,” said Ahmad, the FTA Regional Administrator. “FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff is proud of the work that has been done in Des Moines, and looks forward to more public transportation celebrations here in the future.”

“We are on the cusp of many great changes at DART,” said Angela Connolly, Polk County Supervisor and Chair of the DART Commission. “We are redesigning the system, upgrading technology, and all around making it easier and more efficient to use our public transit system. DART Central Station will be the centerpiece in new and improved transit system in Greater Des Moines.”

DART Central Station, 620 Cherry Street, will replace the transit mall along Walnut Street as the primary boarding and alighting location for the regional transit authority. The LEED-certified facility will feature many amenities for DART's customers, including a bus pass sales outlet, indoor waiting areas, public restrooms, a café or restaurant, bicycle storage, covered bus bays, real-time arrival and departure time, public art, and more.

The new name was selected following extensive public outreach and involvement by DART's riders. DART solicited suggestions from the public and received more than 200 ideas. The public was then asked in an online survey to rank eight finalists; more than 650 responses were received. A final recommendation was made to the DART Commission by the Transit Riders Advisory Committee, or TRAC, an advisory committee comprised entirely of DART riders.

The Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority is the public transportation provider that serves Polk County. DART operates a family of transportation services that makes getting around the Greater Des Moines area easier and more convenient. For more information about DART services, schedules, route changes, or directions to the nearest DART stop, visit our website at www.ridedart.com or call 515.283.8100.