

AIA Dallas

A Chapter of The American Institute of Architects



August 24, 2015

Mr. Gary Thomas
President and Executive Director
Dallas Area Rapid Transit
P.O. Box 660163
Dallas, TX 75266-0163

Re: D2 Alignment

Dear Mr. Thomas,

AIA Dallas enthusiastically supports the construction of a second light rail line through downtown to expand the capacity for transit in the core and throughout the system as a whole. Based on our assessment of the nine alternates proposed by your organization, we believe that Alternative B4 alignment will 1) best fuel future development in the urban core 2) provide the highest benefit to ridership and the rail network, 3) achieve full build out without phasing the project and 4) meet our requirement for an at-grade or below grade solution.

While there is consensus developing around Alternative B4, there are certainly concerns with impacts that result from this alignment. We appreciate DART's willingness to continue to develop creative solutions to address concerns raised by stakeholders throughout the process. The most recent 'Avoidance Alternative' developed in response to some of these concerns should be weighed against the benefits this alignment provides to the overall network and all the impacted stakeholders.

AIA Dallas acknowledges that a critical piece of this process is still to come. With whatever preferred alternative DART selects to advance through the funding process, AIA believes the following considerations should be further evaluated: 1) impacts to development opportunities 2) maximizing station access and 3) coordinating with companion improvement projects such as Central Dallas Streetcar Link and High Speed Rail to maximize the benefits of each.

The detailed work of designing and constructing the second alignment requires careful thought and deliberate planning and design. AIA Dallas urges DART to develop an inclusive and holistic approach that brings stakeholders and experts to the table, looks beyond the footprint of the rail, and works to identify

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companion contextual changes to create a supportive pedestrian, bike, and development environment that enriches downtown and encourages increased ridership. This important step is necessary to maximize future opportunities that the second downtown rail corridor can bring.

AIA Dallas represents more than 2,000 architects and design professionals, including 300 design firms practicing in Dallas and throughout the North Texas region. We appreciate the opportunity to lend our thoughts at this point in the process, and we look forward to active participation in the process as a resource to DART and the community going forward.

Respectfully,

Robert Bullis, AIA

Jan Blackmon, FAIA

AIA Dallas President

AIA Dallas Executive Director

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