

A-train expansion could bring new transportation options to TWU

By AMBER GAUDET

Staff, faculty and students at Texas Woman's University might be getting a new option for commuting to the Denton campus – eventually.

Denton County Transportation Authority officials are considering expanding the A-train route for Highland Village and Lewisville residents, including a possible north-bound extension to both TWU and US 380, according to Community Impact. The 21-mile A-train track, which currently runs from Downtown Denton to Lewisville and connects to Dallas Area Rapid Transit's Green Line, will also be expanded south to connect to DART's Cotton Belt line.

DCTA officials hope the expansions will help alleviate road congestion and prepare North Texas for expected growth.

"[The board] has to look out decades from where we are now and plan," DCTA board member Diane Costa told Community Impact. "And we realize now that Collin County and Denton County are going to significantly grow, and we are going to need to

find a way for all of those people to get around."

Though plans are still in the preliminary stages, TWU administrators said they are open to working with DCTA.

"TWU is very interested in collaborating with DCTA today and in our future," Monica Mendez-Grant, vice president for Student Life, said. "All the discussions have been very preliminary, but the locations have generally included a DCTA stop on the north-east side of the campus."

Administrators say expanding the A-train to campus could be beneficial for several reasons.

"I think any expansion that is close to TWU would be a tremendous asset to the campus," Grant said. "It would allow faculty, staff and students to have another option in terms of transportation to and from the campus."

Jessica Burchfield, assistant director of Commuter & Distance Education Student Services, said she feels the expansion could help mitigate transportation barriers for commuter students.

"I believe it's safe to say that we have a good num-

ber of commuter students who struggle with transportation, whether it be access to transportation or costs of fuel and vehicle maintenance," Burchfield said. "Having an expansion to DCTA offerings could potentially alleviate some of this struggle."

While some TWU community members might have concerns that the creation of an A-train platform could extend construction, Mendez-Grant said the university does not anticipate it would create any major barriers to navigating the campus.

"It is our hope that some of the construction will actually be complete fall 2019," Mendez-Grant said. "TWU is very sensitive to the needs of our students and would consider the advantage of the services provided and calibrate the need for the service with the ongoing need to traverse the existing campus."

Mendez-Grant said partnering with DCTA in expanding the A-train would not only benefit commuters, but also enhance TWU's standing in the community and help encourage students and faculty to reduce their fuel consumption.

"TWU wants to be a good community partner so that if we can encourage more sustainable options - including public

transportation - we want to encourage these choices," Mendez-Grant said.

To explore current transportation options and ac-

cess commuter resources, visit twu.edu/care.



Denton DART station