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More seats, easier boarding

New super DART Rail vehicles make their debut

The next generation of light rail vehicles is in service as DART begins introducing the larger-capacity super light rail vehicle (SLRV). The first car began carrying customers on the Blue Line between Downtown Garland and Ledbetter stations during morning rush hour on June 23.



Additional information about the SLRV and high-resolution photos are available at www.DART.org/factsheet/slrvt.

The modified cars are known as Super Light Rail Vehicles (SLRVs) because of the greater length and added passenger capacity. The SLRV will seat approximately 100 passengers compared with 75 on the current vehicles. Standing passengers on the vehicle can nearly double the capacity.



Level Boarding at St. Paul Station

The key is a new center section of the vehicles that adds seating capacity for about 25 more passengers and improves access through level boarding, which will allow passengers with disabilities - plus people with strollers, bicycles and the like - to step or roll directly onto the trains without using mechanical lifts. The newly modified cars will be placed in service as they are finished. The vehicle conversion is scheduled for completion by the end of 2010.

Because the initial SLRVs are modifications of the current fleet of 115 LRVs, they also have another advantage: the inserts are less expensive than full-sized vehicles. However, DART will need to modify all current stations, except Victory Station, which was built to accommodate level-boarding at the time it was constructed. The platform work began in November 2007 and will continue for two years.

The SLRVs - designed in partnership with rail vehicle manufacturer Kinkisharyo of Osaka, Japan and are assembled at two DART facilities in Dallas. DART's first SLRV, Car #170, went into service on the Blue Line in 2002 as a prototype.