

Dallas Business Journal  
By Nicholas Sakelaris  
October 14, 2013

### **Grapevine has paid \$45M into TEX Rail since 2006**

Since voters approved a 3/8 cent sales tax hike in 2006, Grapevine has contributed at least \$45 million toward building passenger rail service that would run from downtown Fort Worth to Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, City Manager Bruno Rumbelow said. So far, it hasn't gotten much for its money.

The project, now known as TEX Rail, is still several years off. To date, Grapevine is the only partner to join Fort Worth on the project, which will run on the Cottonbelt rail line. It will have two stations in the city plus one inside D/FW Airport when the passenger rail starts operating in 2017. Because Grapevine is an original partner, the city's downtown station will have more amenities than other cities along the route.

Dallas Area Rapid Transit is building a separate extension of the Orange Line into D/FW Airport that will be operational by December 2014.

"Typically with public transportation projects like this, there's always delays, there's a lot of bumps in the road that take place," Rumbelow said. "They don't always happen in the most opportune time frame."

The project has picked up steam in recent months. The Fort Worth Transportation Authority has finalized a needed environmental impact study, though it can't be reviewed during the federal government shutdown, said Curvie Hawkins, assistant vice president of planning for The T.

The majority of the existing Cottonbelt track, which is owned by DART, will have to be rebuilt for the smoother ride that is required for passenger traffic.

The track north of downtown will follow the Union Pacific railroad right-of-way but will be built as a separate track to not interfere with that line, Hawkins said.

Finally, the track heading into the airport itself will be brand new track.

The hope is to start construction in 2014, though that could be delayed, Hawkins said. Other cities, such as Haltom City and North Richland Hills, could join The T and get their own stops, Hawkins said. There's a possibility that Haltom City could get on board in time to have a station on the opening day of service, Hawkins said.