

# Rail to cross 288 by bridge

## DCTA plans to build \$3.5 million overpass to cross Denton's loop

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By Bj Lewis / Denton Record Chronicle

The Denton County Transportation Authority plans to add a bridge over Loop 288 for the A-train, a 21-mile passenger rail line that will connect Denton and Carrollton.

The agency has already broken ground on Medpark Station in Denton and is coordinating efforts with the city and the Texas Department of Transportation to begin work on the overpass.

"It's designed and ready — it's just waiting to be built," said Dee Leggett, vice president of communication and planning for DCTA.

The 793-foot bridge is expected to cost \$3.5 million.

DCTA officials have tentatively set the end of the year into the beginning of 2010 as the construction start date. "There is some coordinating we're going to have to do with TxDOT as they are finishing their improvements on 288," Leggett said. "Luckily, we have been working with them throughout the design process so we wouldn't impact the work they have done."

As officials work with TxDOT, DCTA is also expected to deliver final amended plans on the overpass to the city, said transportation director Mark Nelson.

"We're anticipating their final plans here within the next several working days," Nelson said.

He said Denton officials were looking at how DCTA's plans would fit in with infrastructure already in place, including drainage.

"We have an existing water line in the corridor," Nelson said. "We want to make sure any drainage features, sound walls or retaining walls are not in conflict with existing utilities."

If they are, Nelson said, officials will look at what solutions DCTA will propose to make its plans work. Both the city and DCTA have needs that are being addressed, he said.

Construction will take four to six months, though DCTA officials are looking at ways to reduce construction time, said Tom LeBeau, vice president of rail development and capital projects. During that phase, DCTA will coordinate with TxDOT and the city as route changes are made to Loop 288, lanes are closed off and changes are made to the median, he said.

"We plan on giving the public as much notice before those changes as possible," LeBeau said. "There will be some growing pains as we construct that area, especially when I know the public just finished experiencing Loop 288 with TxDOT."

LeBeau said DCTA is trying to be proactive to eliminate any difficulties with the overpass construction.

The agency has started work on Hebron Station in Lewisville. Before breaking ground on the overpass, DCTA plans to start work on the Old Town Station site in Lewisville in September and the Highland Village/Lewisville Lake Station, and get permits worked out to continue clearing trees at the Medpark Station site, LeBeau said.

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