1995 to 2010

A Division of DelDOT

Celebrating 15 Years of Service

DART has a seat for you...on Weekends!

#1

DART First State
APTA Outstanding System Winner
In early 1993, it was decided that the only way to provide fully intermodal transit services throughout Delaware was to bring the various transit agencies together into one cohesive organization. In June 1994, the General Assembly voted to allow for the merging of the Delaware Administration for Regional Transit (DART), the Delaware Administration for Specialized Transit (DAST), the Commuter Services Administration (CSA) and the Delaware Railroad Administration (DRA) into the Delaware Transit Corporation (DTC). In 1995, DTC, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) operating under the name of DART First State (DART), was lead by its first Executive Director, Nancy Shevock and introduced to the public.

Since its inception, DART has grown to offer 50 transit bus routes, 3 Intercounty bus routes, 6 Resort Transit routes, statewide Paratransit service, expanded regional commuter rail service contracted through SEPTA, and car/van pool ride matching services through RideShare Delaware.

DART’s bus fleet has grown to 418 (217 Fixed Route buses and 201 Paratransit vehicles). Additional services include 40 Park & Ride lots, 15 Park & Pool lots, 6 Pedal & Park facilities, Senior Citizens Affordable Taxi (SCAT), Operation Lifesaver railroad safety awareness programs, Travel Training and much more.

In 2009, DART provided 11.2 million passenger trips to our customers. And we’ve been able to offer all of this without raising our basic fares.

A few of the many highlights of DART’s past fifteen years are:
1995 – Started the NASCAR Race Express bus service.
1996 – Opened Christiana Mall Park & Ride.
1997 – Newark Commuter Rail Station opens.
1998 – Held the first Stuff the Bus Thanksgiving food drive.
1999 – Raymond Miller is named as Executive Director.
2000 – Fairplay Train Station at Churchmans Crossing opens.
2001 – DARTCards are introduced.
2002 – Wilmington Trolleys go into service.
2003 – DART wins “Public Transportation System Outstanding Achievement Award” from APTA.
2004 – Conducts Wilmington-Amtrak Train Disaster drill.
2005 – Stephen Kingsberry is named as DART’s 3rd Executive Director.
2006 – Administrative office moves to Lower Beech Street.
2007 – Introduced the Newark Trolley.
2008 – DART wins the Grand Champion Award at the 33rd International Bus Roadeo.
2009 – Installed new fareboxes on all fixed route buses.
2010 – Started construction of the new Dover Transit Center.
The Delaware State Legislature passes legislation, which creates the Delaware Transit Corporation as a fully intermodal agency that would include the Delaware Administration for Regional Transit (DART), the Delaware Administration for Specialized Transit (DAST), the Commuter Services Administration (CSA) and the Delaware Railroad Administration (DRA).

In December, as part of its public introduction, DART went on line becoming the first transit provider in the nation to offer its route schedules on the Internet.
1995

DART initiated the NASCAR Race Express Bus Service. During the first race DART carried 129 customers and provided parking for 54 cars. For the race held in the fall of 2007, DART carried 10,421 customers and provided parking for more than 3,400 cars.

DART began installing on-board camera systems to enhance the safety of both customers and drivers. Later camera systems were also installed on all Paratransit vehicles.

Operating since 1990 as Delaware Resort Transit, the sixth season celebrated the introduction of DART First State Resort Transit to the Sussex County beaches.

Having been initiated by the Delmarva Rail Passenger Association in 1992, the RAIL to the FAIR excursion operates in its 4th year as a service of DelDOT and DART First State.
1996

DART added 55 new Gillig “Phantom” wheelchair accessible buses to its fleet.

Created a second New Castle County transit hub at the Christiana Mall near I-95.

DART added Routes 54 and 55 to better serve the fast growing US 40 area.

Delaware’s first “Transit Only” lanes were established along SR-1 in Rehoboth for DART’s Resort Transit buses.

Bike racks were installed on all of DART’s Resort Transit buses.

Launched Resort Transit Routes 207 to Long Neck and 208 to Fenwick Island.

Routes 206, 210, 211 and 212 were introduced in Sussex County.

In August, DART celebrated the opening of its new administration facility on South Madison Street along Wilmington’s Riverfront.

First wrapped DART First State bus debuts, displaying an ad by Diver Chevrolet, featuring an image of a Chevy Blazer.
1997

The carpool and vanpool ride matching services of RideShare Delaware became part of the DART system.

The Newark Commuter Rail Station opened bringing SEPTA R2 train service back to Newark after an absence of 16 years. Launched SEPTA TrailPass program where train riders can ride New Castle County fixed route buses for free.

DART implements the Job Works and Get-A- Job, Get-A-Ride programs to help job seekers get to both their interviews and their new employment locations.

Serving downtown Wilmington and the Riverfront, the new City Circuit, Rt. 32, was introduced.

DART bus schedules got a new look, featuring cover photographs of landmarks that help identify each route.

Seventy-two new paratransit vans helped support a 16% increase in paratransit ridership.

Resort Transit service introduces the dolphin and “Wave Away Traffic” theme.
1998

DART received the American Public Transportation Association’s (APTA) National Bus Award for Excellence in Safety.

The first “Stuff the Bus” Thanksgiving Food Drive was held. More than 5,965 pounds of non-perishable food was collected for the Food Bank of Delaware. In November 2009, the 12th the annual “Stuff the Bus” Thanksgiving Food Drive collected 29,184 pounds or 14.6 tons of food.

DART extended its Paratransit service into southern New Castle County.

All 14 of Delaware’s State Service Centers signed on as DART ticket outlets.

DART’s new website, www.DartFirstState.com is introduced. In 1998, the website has 2,437 visitors. In January 2010, the site had more than 2.4 million visitors.

DART’s Business Partners in Transit Program is launched.

DTC’s first Director, Nancy Shevock, retires.

The employee newsletter, DTC NEWS, is launched, replacing the earlier DART FIRST STATE NEWS of 1996 that later became the HUB.

“Transit Talk” the riders newsletter debuts.

DART’s Maryland Avenue bus Rt. 5 gets service improvements including: 9 new rider benches, 2 new shelters, 4 refurbished shelters and 2 new solar powered illuminated shelters.
1999

In March, DTC’s new Executive Director, Raymond Miller is named. Within months of accepting the position, he oversees the creation of DART’s Vision Statement and new management organizational structure.

DART’s first Rider Appreciation Month is held in May.

The School Transit Education Program is launched.

Introduced 30 new “Startrans” paratransit buses.

The first Ozone Action Transit Month is implemented by DART.

Received the Ozone Action Partnership award that recognized DART’s efforts to improve the region’s air quality.

DART received the American Public Transportation Association’s (APTA) National Bus Award for Excellence in Safety for the second consecutive year.

Bus Routes 32 and 40 get new Saturday and extended service.

DART’s first Transit Awareness month is held in September.
2000

Introduced DART’s first annual Student Transit Poster Contest.

DART promotes its new tag line, “Getting There Starts Here.”

In cooperation with DelDOT, WILMAPCO, TMA & I-95 North Working Group, DART initiated 2 dedicated “Expresso” bus routes during highway construction. The successful completion of this multi phased traffic mitigation project received national attention.

Fairplay Station at Churchmans Crossing became DTC’s third commuter rail facility in Delaware. The Wilmington Amtrak Station is also a commuter rail facility.

Six new MCI coaches were added to the fleet to serve customers on the Intercounty Rt. 301.

Opened 3 new Park & Ride lots along the Intercounty Rt. 301 route. The lots are at Boyd’s Corner, Dover and Odessa.

Introduced the Rt. 208, Coastal Connection, to Ocean City, Maryland as part of the Resort Transit Services.

Introduced the Rt. 65 Elkton – Newark service for Maryland commuters wishing to access other DART routes or SEPTA R2 service.

The first low-floor buses were added to the DART fleet.

Groundbreaking held for DTC’s new Dover Operations & Administration facility.

Launched leading edge real-time “NextBus” info and satellite-based bus locator systems to aid rider and driver convenience and safety.
2001

DART Cards were introduced. They were designed to reduce the need for handling cash, make it easier for customers pay their fare, provides a discount and remains valid as long as there is value on the card.

The Rt. 305 “Beach Connection” began offering weekend service between Wilmington, Dover and Rehoboth Beach.

Launched the high tech, hand held “Remote Talking Sign” System for blind and visually impaired riders on the Resort routes.

DART is given awards for its Ozone Action Clean Air promotion, Tourism Delaware efforts, and Welfare to Work program.

DART’s new $11 million Kent County Administration and Operations Center opened on the DelDOT campus in Dover.
2002

Harrington-Dover shuttle service began in partnership with “A Better Chance” Welfare Reform Program. DART now operates this service as the Rt. 117.

Sixty-three new NABI wheelchair accessible buses were added to DART’s Fixed Route fleet.

METRO Magazine named DTC one of the nation’s “10 Most Improved Transit Systems.”

New Dispatch Center opens in Georgetown.

The weekly “Getting There Starts Here” radio program debuts on WILM 1450 AM News Radio, garnering national recognition for public outreach.

Extended Resort Transit Service on weekends through October.

Friday night service added to Rt. 305 “Beach Connection”.

Wilmington Trolleys, Rt. 32, began operating between downtown Wilmington and the Riverfront.

DART held its first month-long Railroad Safety Awareness Campaign.

DART partners with the Wilmington Police Dept. for the Cops & Kids Christmas Party at the new PAL Center on Market Street, Santa arrived at the party on a DART First State Trolley with a police motorcycle escort.

New DART musical jingle was created and introduced to the public.

DART’s Customer Service breaks barriers with new call center language interpretation service.

New statewide passenger survey is conducted totally in-house, saving thousands of dollars over the 1997 survey.

U.S. Flag wrapped bus debuts on a Rt. 301 MCI Coach, drawing rave reviews.
2003

DART was presented the American Public Transportation Association’s (APTA) “Annual Public Transportation System Outstanding Achievement Award.”

DART partners with Fannie Mae to launch the nation’s first statewide “Smart Commute” Mortgage Program.

All 12 Delaware ACME Markets became sales outlets for DARTCards and Paratransit Passes.

DART introduced the “How to Ride Guide” to assist customers to become familiar with transit.

Started sending out Rider E-Mail Alerts.

DART partners with the City of Wilmington and the Wilmington Police Dept. to establish the Nuisance Crime Prevention Program.

Go-Link Night Service and Paratransit Transfers were introduced in Kent County.

Partnered with the Rehoboth Beach Dewey Beach Chamber of Commerce to wrap a Resort bus as the “Fun Express.”

Partnered with Clear Channel Radio for the Holiday Trolley Toy Drive benefitting Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

Opened the Riverfront Parking Deck, adjacent to the Wilmington Train Station, adding 422 spaces to transit center’s parking inventory.

Debut of the new, innovative Z-Pocket map for the Rt. 32, Wilmington Trolley, which was distributed by 40 downtown Wilmington merchants.

Launched the Favorite Driver Recognition Program.

DART is given an award for its Tourism Delaware efforts for the Wilmington Trolley.

Established a connection with the Cape May Lewes Ferry bus at the Rehoboth Park & Ride.
2004

Created the first statewide transportation directory

DART opens a new Paratransit maintenance facility, DART 3, on 2nd Street in Wilmington, near the main Fixed Route garage on Monroe Street.

Introduced the first edition of the New Castle County “Z-Pocket” Transit Map.

Debut of DARTCard E-Sales on DartFirstState.com.

DART partnered with Junior Achievement to open a “Bus Stop” exhibit in JA’s new Enterprise Village and Finance Park in Wilmington.

Established guidelines for Trolley charters through a contracted operator.

Extended Rt. 207 to serve the Pot-Nets communities.

DART conducted the Wilmington-Amtrak Train Disaster Drill along with public safety and emergency response agencies to test communication abilities and preparedness.

Broke ground at DART’s Mid-County Maintenance Facility near Wrangle Hill Road.

DTC’s Executive Director, Ray Miller, leaves to take the reigns of the public transit agency in Tampa, Florida.

First “Sussex County Transit for the Future” forum conducted.

Two hybrid-electric buses were delivered as part of DART’s environmental and technology programs. Today DART has 22 hybrid-electric buses, 10% of the Fixed Route fleet.
DART celebrated 10 years of service to the public.

Seaford-Laurel-Delmar shuttle service began.

Rt. 61 began service along Naamans Road, linking Brandywine Town Center at Concord Pike with the Claymont Train Station off of Philadelphia Pike.

All of DART’s Fixed Route buses are wheelchair accessible and bike rack equipped.

DART sponsored a section of I-95 as part of the Adopt A Highway program.

In July, Stephen Kingsberry became DTC’s third Executive Director.

Three new rubber-tired trolleys are added to the DART fleet to allow for expansion of service in Newark.

DART partnered with WJBR Radio for Operation Warm to collect donations for new winter coats for children in need.

Resort Transit weekday service was extended to mid-September.

In June, the web site, DartFirstState.com, sets a visitor record with over 200,000 requests.

In partnership with DelDOT’s Toll Operations, DART wraps one of its MCI Intercounty Rt. 301 coaches to promote Delaware’s E-Z Pass program.
2006

In January DART moved from it’s South Madison Street site due to development along the Riverfront. The New Castle County Administrative offices relocated to a new, larger facility on Maryland Avenue at Lower Beech Street in Wilmington.

The Mid-Atlantic Chapter of Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) recognized DART for creating Go-Link, a “unique, in-depth and innovative project to address the increasing demand.”

DART worked with the Film Brothers, producers of film “Jack of Clubs,” a movie featuring a young man learning about the benefits of public transit while working with the Boys & Girls Club. The film had its world premiere in Wilmington in 2007

Introduced on-line reservations for Paratransit services.

DART received the State Tourism Award for creating the “Tour Delaware” logo to encourage residents and out of state visitors to use transit to visit many of the historic, outdoor and entertainment sites in the First State.

Won the 2nd place Grand Champion Award at the 31st International Bus Roadeo in Orange County, California. The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) sponsored the event.
2007

SEPTA began Rt. 306 bus service to DART’s Brandywine Town Center Park & Ride, allowing for connections to Rts. 2, 35 & 61.

DART introduces solar powered bus stops in New Castle County providing light to help bus drivers better see waiting riders at night. Nine solar-lit bus stops were installed.

First DART on-line On-Board Survey was conducted.

Electronic message boards were placed at 21 DART shelters in New Castle and Kent Counties.

In November, DART introduced the Newark Trolley, Rt. 31.

First Norfolk Southern Operation Lifesaver safety train trip, that highlights the grade crossing hazards that train engineers face on a daily basis.
2008

Translations of DART website information is available in eight different languages by clicking on the word “translate” at www.DartFirstState.com.

Opened DART’s Newark Transit Hub that was designed to ease downtown traffic while providing a more user-friendly transfer location for the 6 bus routes that serve Newark along with the Newark Trolley.

DART received the 2008 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Award for Success in Enhancing Ridership. The award was presented at a ceremony in Washington, DC.

Introduced pilot programs providing Sunday service on 7 routes in New Castle County and Saturday service on 5 routes plus the Harrington-Dover Shuttle in Kent County.

Began installing informational panels in selected passenger shelters.

DART introduces its cyber store at www.DartFirstState.com under the name DART’s Shop Delaware.

Resort Transit had record ridership season with 333,406 passenger trips.

Won the Grand Champion Award at the 33rd International Bus Roadeo in Austin, Texas. The event was sponsored by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA).
2009

Introduced 2 BRT type Hybrid Electric buses to the fleet for use on the new Rt. 45 operating between Wilmington and the Odessa Park & Ride.

A connection was created with SEPTA’s Rt. 113 at Tri-State Mall to DART’s Rts. 1 & 61.

DART introduced the latest in new farebox technology on all Fixed Route buses.

Began construction on the expanded Odessa Park & Ride serving Rts. 43, 45 & 301.

Broke ground for the expansion of DART’s Mid-County facility.

Introduced 35’ hybrid buses to the Dover area.

DART’s Automated Phone Access (APA) System was activated providing a way for Paratransit customers to request, cancel and confirm their trips.

Introduced the RouteFinder program on DART’s website to provide customers with a user-friendly way to find bus routes to specific locations.

Started renovations to the Wilmington Amtrak Train Station.

Created a new Georgetown Transit Hub at Railroad and Layton Avenues.
2010

DART was presented with a “Statement of Support for the Guard and Reserve” in recognition of the company’s honoring and enforcement of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

Began to install passenger shelter advertising on a limited basis.

Launched the “Rider of the Month” program to highlight faithful passengers who have been nominated by fellow riders.

Construction began on the first phase of the new Dover Transit Center. This project is scheduled for completion by December 2010.

Introduced DART’s green logo.

Started the Shelter Replacement Program that replaces old or weathered shelters.