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Greyhound is closing its Dallas terminal, leaving low-income travelers in limbo

The downtown terminal, a travel hub for more than 70 years, will shutter in October. What’s next is unclear.



By **Amber Gaudet**
Transportation and mobility reporter

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At sunset, a passenger arrives at the Greyhound bus station on S Lamar St in downtown Dallas, January 25, 2024.

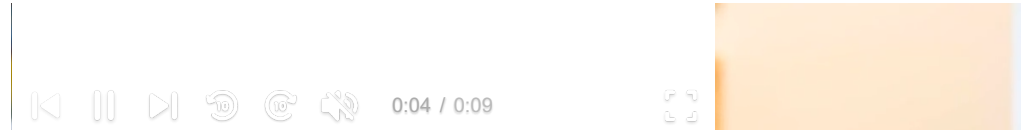
TOM FOX / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



James Watson was just passing through Dallas. Standing on the corner of South Lamar Street Thursday afternoon with a camouflage bag at his feet, a holdover from his days in the U.S. Air Force, Watson has a long wait ahead of him.

“I was trying to go back to College Station but there are no buses,” Watson said.

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Watson took a Greyhound bus to Clarksville, Tenn., to visit a friend. He made it back to the Dallas terminal, but found out there wouldn't be a bus to take him home until after midnight thanks to the weather. It would be five hours until a friend could come to Dallas to pick him up after work later that night.

Passengers like Watson soon won't be able to wait for their next ride inside the downtown Dallas terminal. After more than seven decades as a waypoint for travelers, the station will shutter when its lease expires in October.

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Downtown Greyhound bus station



MAP: Mel Fronczek

The Dallas Morning News

Twenty Lake Holdings, a subsidiary of investment firm Alden Global Capital, [purchased](#) 33 Greyhound stations across the US from UK-based First Group in late 2022 for \$140 million. Since then, terminals in major hubs like Philadelphia and Cincinnati [have shuttered](#) while their properties have been [put on the market](#).

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The lease for the downtown Dallas terminal will not be renewed, but a new location has not yet been identified, a spokesperson for Greyhound confirmed in an email Wednesday. The 26,000-square-foot property at 205 S. Lamar St. is worth \$2.8 million, according to the Dallas Central Appraisal District.

Greyhound did not respond to follow-up questions about the move, and Twenty Lake Holdings did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

James Watson of College Station looks for something to eat after arriving at the Greyhound bus station on S Lamar St in downtown Dallas, January 25, 2024. Watson's connecting bus was delayed until after midnight.

TOM FOX / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Though intercity bus travel was once essential to American life, declining ridership and federal deregulation have led to nationwide bus cuts beginning as early as the 1960s. Terminal closures often prompt bus carriers to switch to curbside service, either while they search for a new terminal location or permanently. That poses problems for the more than 60 million passengers who rely on intercity travel — often people with low-incomes and without access to a car — and the cities where they can be dropped without shelter.

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“They’re stuck in unpleasant environments, they aren’t familiar with their surroundings so they don’t feel comfortable leaving to go find another place to wait, and the weather can be brutal,” said Joseph Schwieterman, director of the Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Development at DePaul University.

Those concerns have prompted Greyhound to rethink selling connections and transfers if there isn’t a terminal in place, Schwieterman said. Passengers of intercity buses typically travel more than 250 miles across multiple states, where connections are necessary to reach their final destination.

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It’s a scary thought for riders like Christian Manning. The 56-year-old was stuck at a Greyhound terminal in Kansas City, Mo., for more than 12 hours after his 7:45 p.m. bus didn’t show up, he said. He isn’t sure what he would have done if there hadn’t been a terminal to wait in.

“It was freezing cold — nobody could go outside it was so cold, and I didn’t have any money, I didn’t have a jacket,” Manning said.

When a new terminal is opened, it can be [far from public transit](#) and operate with reduced hours.

“This is a lower-income demographic either without access to a car or who maybe can’t drive, so putting them out in, let’s say, a suburban place with low accessibility, is a big problem,” said Julene Paul, a professor at the University of Texas at Arlington who specializes in transportation planning and equity.

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It's unclear just how many passengers the Dallas terminal closure will impact. Unlike public transit, data on intercity travel is scarce since routes are operated by private companies.

Passengers purchase tickets at the Greyhound bus station on S Lamar St in downtown Dallas, January 25, 2024.

TOM FOX / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

“I will say Dallas has an outsized importance as a connecting hub due to its favorable geography,” Schwieterman said. “You’ve got traffic coming up from Mexico, lots of traffic from McAllen and Laredo, lots of migrants. East-west traffic tends to get funneled through Dallas.

“So there’s a big risk that the network will decline without a good station in Dallas.”

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Unlike public transportation, which has continued to see markedly low ridership in some areas, intercity travel has rebounded about 90% after the pandemic, Schwieterman said, with a full rebound expected by 2026.

Greyhound is not the only carrier to operate out of the Lamar Street terminal. Bus carriers often have agreements to connect passengers across lines, creating a national web for ground travel. Valley Transit also operates limited routes out of the terminal, online arrival and departure records show.

Places like Atlanta have managed to save their intercity bus terminals — Greyhound recently opened a new 14,000-square-foot central terminal with federal backing, CNN Business reports. But it's not the norm.

Passengers get off a Greyhound bus at the station on S Lamar St in downtown Dallas, January 25, 2024.

TOM FOX / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

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“Too many governments leave intercity bus lines to fend for themselves and don’t come to the table to find solutions,” Schwieterman said. “The Dallas station is right in the heart of downtown, it’s appropriately sized, it’s architecturally kind of interesting. There are plenty of reasons for the city to look to acquire the station and keep it as a public transit hub.”

City officials might not see the station in such a positive light, though. In April 2023 it was designated as a “habitual criminal property.” Properties with more than five abatable crimes in a year are eligible for [the designation](#), which carries with it an annual fee and a directive to implement crime control measures like increased security.

Abatable crimes are those listed in Chapter 125 of the Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code and exclude family violence offenses. They include crimes like prostitution, assaults, robberies, unlawful carrying of weapons, murder or sexual abuse of children.

Greyhound initially challenged the decision but dropped the appeal before a scheduled hearing in August, public records show.

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Requests for comment from Mayor Eric Johnson and the Dallas City Council offices about the impending closure were not returned by Friday afternoon.

Where Greyhound passengers in Dallas will end up after the terminal shutters isn't clear. For travelers who rely on the service, that uncertainty looms large.

“Without having a place where people at least have the right to a toilet, to make phone calls and have a space with a security guard out of the rain — you're going to see a lot of bad things happen,” Manning said.

Staff writer Everton Bailey Jr. contributed to this report.

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By **[Amber Gaudet](#)**

Amber is a staff writer for The Dallas Morning News. She's produced award-winning business and investigative work, including a housing series that led to a federal inquiry and Texas state law change in 2023. Amber holds a master's degree from the University of North Texas' Mayborn School of Journalism.

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