

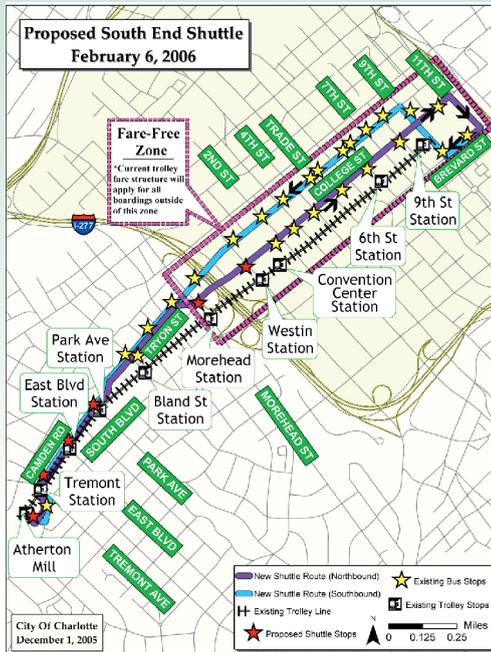
South End Shuttle Begins Service On Feb. 6

Beginning February 6, the Charlotte Trolley Line will be suspended for approximately one year as construction crews move in to build transit stations and lay the tracks for the South Corridor Light Rail Line from Tremont Avenue to Seventh Street.

To maintain the transit connection between Center City and Historic South End, Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) will implement a new service called the South End Shuttle.

The South End Shuttle service will closely mirror the Charlotte Trolley Line. It will extend past Ninth Street and end at Eleventh Street. The shuttle will operate every half hour, seven days a week just like the Charlotte Trolley. CATS will use its rubber-wheeled Gold Rush vehicles to provide the service. Riders traveling northbound between Atherton Mill and Morehead Street will pay the regular \$1 fare. Southbound passengers will pay the regular fare when getting off the shuttle between Morehead and Atherton Mill.

To learn more about CATS and its services, call 704-336-RIDE or visit us on the web at www.ridetransit.org.



Charlotte Firefighter Exam

Are you strong enough to answer the call as a Charlotte firefighter? If so register for the entrance exam for the Charlotte Fire Department (CFD) on Saturday, March 11. All applicants must register to take the exam. The registration deadline is **5 p.m., Friday, March 3.**

For more information or to register for the exam, visit www.charlottefire.org or call 704-336-2979.

Fire Training Internship

The Charlotte Fire Department (CFD) and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Academic Internship Program (AIP) is sponsoring a **Summer High School Fire Training Internship** July 17 - 21 at the Fire Training Academy.

Any rising 10th, 11th, or 12th grader with an interest in a fire protection career is encouraged to apply. Students must complete the CFD Application and the AIP application. All applications received by April 30 will be considered.

For more information, contact Sarah Price, Academic Internship Coordinator, at 980-343-2642 or Captain JD Thomas at 704-432-1706.

New Street Crimes Task Force Tackles Crime Hotspots, Targets Repeat Offenders: Citizens Can Help Reduce Crime, Too

By Police Chief Darrel Stephens

After a decade of decline, we had significant increases in violent crime last year, driven by sharp increases in robberies -- up 27.7% -- and homicides -- up 41.7%. While there were decreases in some crime categories, including aggravated assault, residential burglaries and larceny, other crime categories—rape, commercial burglary and auto theft—saw significant increases.

These increases are a major concern for us all. We take very seriously the responsibility to use our limited police resources in the most effective way. As conditions change, as they have over the past year, we must change our strategies to achieve better results. That's why we formed a new Street Crimes Task Force to aggressively and professionally attack this problem and reduce these crimes. The Task Force is made up of officers and sergeants previously scattered throughout the department. Individually, they are skilled and committed officers. Collectively, they now make up a Task Force focused on locating and arresting more criminals, especially the violent, repeat offenders. They will accomplish this by:

- Targeting crime hotspots
- Concentrating on problems and issues common to all parts of the community
- Coordinating with patrol officers, detectives, neighborhoods and businesses to focus on crime prevention strategies.

While we expect the Task Force to be successful and we will report regularly on its work, the real key to crime reduction is preventing it in the first place. It sounds ridiculously simple, but the surest way to reduce crime is to focus on the factors that put individuals at risk. And we haven't been very successful convincing people to take actions that minimize their risk. So, we will be increasing efforts to better educate business owners and residents on steps to take that make a difference, starting with a few basics.

12 Things You Can Do To Prevent Crime

1. Whenever possible, travel, jog or walk with a friend
2. Stay in well-lighted areas
3. Avoid doorways, bushes and alleys where someone could hide
4. Do not respond to conversation from strangers on the street, continue walking
5. If you carry a purse, hold it securely between your arm and your body
6. Always lock car doors after entering or leaving your car; do not leave valuables in plain site in your vehicle
7. If you think you are being followed, drive to a public place, police or fire station
8. Light is a great crime deterrent. Protect your home or business by lighting up dark areas, especially doors and windows. Use timers so that lights, radio, TV, go on and off throughout the house to indicate someone is home
9. Invest in good locks for windows and doors. Use them, even when leaving for "just a minute"
10. Close your garage door even when you are home
11. Never leave a house key available under a doormat, in a flower pot or on the ledge of the door. These are the first places a burglar will look
12. Police can't be everywhere at once, but you and your neighbors can. You're the ones who really know what's going on in the neighborhood. Watch out for each other and if you spot something suspicious, call 911 immediately

Neighbors working together in cooperation with law enforcement make one of the best crime fighting teams around.

