STIMULATING TIMES

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CHARLOTTE

Building Charlotte's Reputation as an Energy Leader

POWER2 CHARLOTTE
WE ALL HAVE IT IN US

Whether it's while driving by or viewing the GOV Channel, more people are learning of Charlotte's energy ingenuity.

This spring more than 240,000 drivers around Charlotte will be introduced to the Power 2Charlotte campaign. Billboard advertisements were strategically placed along Independence Boulevard, I-85 near Glenwood Road, and I-77 at the Woodlawn exit. Thanks to these billboards (Independence Boulevard ad pictured below), as well as other educational initiatives, more people are learning about what the City and its partners are doing to become a leader in energy and sustainability.

A public service announcement (PSA) has also been created and is currently running on the GOV Channel (Time Warner Cable 16). The PSA is available for all partners to run on websites and will be used for community presentations. The City of Charlotte is also approaching media outlets to run the spot as a public service. The PSA can be viewed at the following URL: *http://bit.ly/Power2PSA*.

The "Power2" campaign is designed to engage and educate the community on energy efficiency and sustainability. The program offers resources and services to help Charlotte residents, business owners and local government save energy, money, and the environment. The citywide program promotes and encourages increased conservation and the use of clean, renewable energy. It also provides our citizens with information so they can make better decisions which will reduce the overall energy consumption in our community. The campaign is paid for with $200,000 from the Outreach and Education project of the stimulus-funded Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant.

To learn more about the Power2Charlotte campaign or register for the monthly e-newsletter, visit *Power2Charlotte.com*.

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- *Gang-of-One program cooks up a new lease on life*
- ***NC Office of Economic** Recovery gets new director*

North Davidson CATS Garage Readies for Spring Opening

Everything old is new again at the CATS Davidson garage.

Monifa Hendrickson, project manager of the North Davidson Street bus maintenance facility

The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) is nearing completion of renovations on the North Davidson Street bus maintenance facility. The project received $20.7 million in funding thanks to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The renovations include an upgrade of the mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems, along with replacing bus maintenance equipment, and construction of a multi-level staff parking garage. The project will also enable CATS to support operations and maintenance of up to 200 transit buses.

According to Monifa Hendrickson, project manager, CATS officials looked at two options in determining the best use of the funding. "We could do a complete demolish and rebuild or look at the project and recycle what we could. And for CATS, it's reuse of an entire campus, as opposed to having to rebuild from the ground up. It's more of an efficient way to approach construction."

Hendrickson added that the North Davidson renovation project has been a part of the department's strategic plan, and that having the ARRA funding enables CATS to do more with today's dollars. In addition to facility renovation, the campus will consist of a new area for administration and operations for Special Transportation Services (STS). With a fleet of 83 vehicles, STS provides transportation to individuals with disabilities certified as eligible based on the Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines.

"This is more than just a construction project for us," Hendrickson said. "It does contribute to being a more efficient operation, consolidating both our para-transit with our bus fleet and being able to approach bus operations and maintenance from an overall standpoint." Project completion is slated for later this spring.

The North Davidson Street bus maintenance facility undergoing final renovations

Gang-of-One's Recipe for Success

The Gang-of-One teams with Johnson and Wales to cook up something special.

You might say things are really cooking at Charlotte's Gang-of-One program. Based within the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, the program received a grant of $339,765 from the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to develop a model re-entry program for young people seeking to escape gang involvement in Charlotte.

The Gang-of-One is a gang prevention and intervention initiative for youth, using local resources to address needs surrounding gang involvement. The program teams community resources to youth, along with their families. It provides assistance to participants seeking to get out of a gang or stay out of one. Gang-of-One also educates the community about gang trends.

The work at the Greenville Center complements the existing program. Participants will learn life skills such as team building, leadership, and vocational training. According to Fran Cook, director of the Gang-of-One program, "we began working with them individually, but now we can bring them together collectively, creating community and sharing meals and learning experiences."

A primary component of this program is the development and implementation of a culinary curriculum in partnership with Johnson and Wales University. According to Cook, program and university representatives want to introduce the food service industry because of the variety of job opportunities it offers for young people. "We are looking at several best practices curriculum throughout the country," she added.

Story continued on back

Fran Cook examines old cooking appliances for possible use in the future culinary program

Gang-of-One (continued)

The grant not only gives participants a new lease on life, but also gives the Greenville Center facility another chance to serve local citizens. The center had been closed due to budget cuts, but grant funds are bringing the center back to life, enabling the Gang-of-One and other community agencies and organizations to utilize the facility.

Cook says the program aims to build and demonstrate success through strong outcomes. Presently, there are 35 active clients, with ten pending, and two case managers overseeing program participants. "The program is growing more rapidly than we expected," Cook said. "We could have 60-80 by years-end." While the culinary portion of the program will not kick off until later this year, small group case work began in the Greenville Center this month, focused on vocational training and life skills. "It's a wonderful opportunity for our young people and community," Cook added. "We've got awesome folks who are making a difference in the lives of young people."

Fran Cook, director of Charlotte's Gang-of-One program

NC Recovery Office Gets New Director

Bob Etheridge

Bob Etheridge, former U.S. Representative from North Carolina's 2nd Congressional District, recently took office as the new director of the Office of Economic Recovery and Investment. Etheridge was appointed by Governor Beverly Perdue and replaces Dempsey Benton, who stepped down after leading the office for more than a year and a half.

In his new position, Etheridge will oversee how the funds are dispersed, ensuring that money continues to be spent in a timely fashion with high accountability, and will make sure the projects under contract are getting done.

The federal stimulus package has brought more than $10.5 billion thus far in direct aid to North Carolina to rebuild and expand our state's critical infrastructure, create jobs, and provide additional money into the state through grants.

"I look forward to seeing the improvements in our infrastructure and maximizing our opportunities with state and local governments, small businesses and nonprofits," Etheridge said. He is visiting Charlotte in early April 2011.

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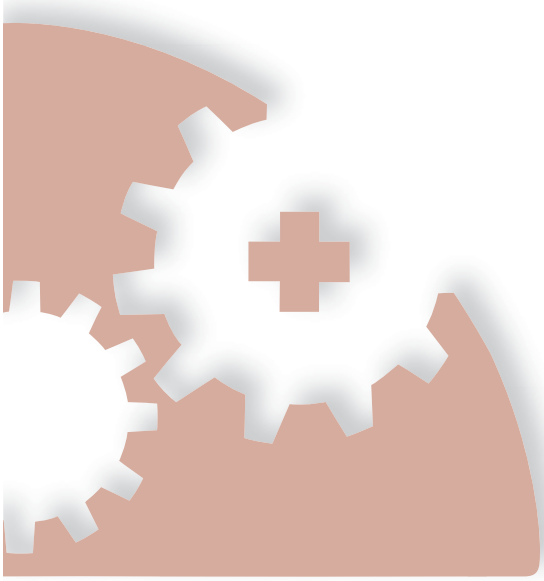
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