



**WHAT'S INSIDE:**

Page

**Information:**

CityLYNX Gold Line Phase I Road Closures and Construction Sequencing.....	2
Blue Line Extension Project Status Update.....	3
Smart Growth America and National Complete Streets Coalition Pedestrian Safety Report .....	5

## INFORMATION:

### **CityLYNX Gold Line Phase I Road Closures and Construction Sequencing**

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The CityLYNX Gold Line Phase 1 is preparing to install major and special pieces of track work for the project. The minor track work has been installed between Caldwell Street and Kings Drive including the Davidson and McDowell intersections. The next step is special track work pieces to be installed on Trade Street in the block between the Charlotte Transportation Center (CTC) and Brevard Street, in the Caldwell intersection, in the Kings Drive intersection, and on Hawthorne Lane from the intersection of Fifth Street through the intersection of Elizabeth. The following reflects proposed closures, depending on weather and contractor performance.

- **May 27 – July 7:** Trade Street is scheduled to close between College and Brevard Streets on Tuesday, May 27. It will remain closed through July 7 in order to accommodate the special track work between the CTC and Brevard Street. This will impact bus operations because they will have to use the Fourth Street entrance until bus egress can be re-established on Trade Street.
- **June 14 – August 1:** The Caldwell intersection is scheduled to close on June 14 after school lets out. Caldwell is scheduled to remain closed through August 1 in order to install the special track work in Caldwell/Trade Street intersection and in the area between Caldwell and Brevard.
- **June 14 – August 1:** At the same time as the Caldwell closure, Hawthorne Lane between Fifth Street and the Elizabeth intersection is scheduled to close on June 14. It is scheduled to remain closed until August 1 in order to install the track work in the Elizabeth intersection and in Hawthorne Lane. Access to Novant Presbyterian Medical Center will be maintained from Fourth Street. Also, local access will be maintained to the businesses along Elizabeth Avenue.
- **August 1 – September 5:** The last major piece of special track work on the Trade Street/Elizabeth corridor has to be installed at the intersection of Kings Drive. Both Hawthorne Lane and Caldwell Street must be reopened to traffic prior to the closure of the Kings Drive intersection. Pending the reopening of both intersections listed above, the Kings Drive intersection is scheduled to close on August 1 and remain closed through September 5 in order to install the track work across the Kings Drive

intersection. The closure would begin while CPCC is on summer break and would extend through Labor Day effecting their first 3 weeks of the Fall Semester. We are coordinating with Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) to notify the students of the Kings Drive closure.

The project team has been developing the road closure schedule while considering the schedules of Charlotte Mecklenburg School System, Charlotte Transportation Center, CPCC and Time Warner Cable Arena. In addition, the project team received input from local businesses, Novant Presbyterian Medical Center, and Charlotte Center City Partners. The City will continue to provide information about these closings to the public and to mitigate the impact on local traffic to the best extent possible.

You can stay up to date on the CityLYNX Gold Line through various ways.

- The website dedicated to information about the CityLYNX Gold Line is [www.charlottefuture.com](http://www.charlottefuture.com). This website houses information about project updates, project documents and road closures. Visitors to the site can also subscribe to receive email updates [here](#) or by clicking the Notify Me button at the top of the CityLYNX Gold Line homepage.
- You can also stay informed on the project through social media: Twitter at @CityLYNXupdates and on
- Facebook at /CityLYNXGoldLineConstructionUpdates.

For media inquiries, please contact Hillary Ryan, CATS, 704-432-2549 or Traci Etheridge, Corporate Communications and Marketing, 704-353-1157.

### **Blue Line Extension Project Status Update**

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In 2010 the Blue Line Extension Project was required to reduce the budget to show financial capacity to construct, operate and maintain the project. In order to do that, several desirable options were eliminated or downsized to meet this requirement. The primary cost cutting measure was to shorten the project. Others were less obvious, but also difficult choices. Four years later the project is in a much better status. At this point the largest contracts have been awarded, and the bids have been significantly lower than the estimates. There are several reasons for this. The most obvious has been the competitive bid environment.

When the project was approved by FTA and the federal Full Funding Grant Agreement was signed in October 2012, our required contingency amount was \$224 million. After awarding contracts for demolition, three Advanced Utility contracts, the Civil A contract, Civil B/C contract and the Track and Systems contract, the BLE has approximately the same contingency

remaining than when the FFGA was signed. Total savings on bids versus engineer's estimates is approximately 14%. The current total contingency for the project is \$223,485,000.

As stated above, the BLE project scope was reduced in 2010. At this point the project team has identified several items that were eliminated or scaled back at that time that are now available to add back to the project. The most significant item was a parking garage at the Sugar Creek Station. During the cost reduction efforts, this garage was replaced with two large surface lots. The surface lots provided sufficient parking, but they move the majority of the spaces to a less convenient location across a street from the station. Our experience on the South Corridor indicates that these remote spaces are less likely to be utilized. By adding back the garage as originally planned, the proximity of the spaces is greatly improved, and therefore should result in greater ridership.

Other project enhancements being proposed to add back to the project include an additional level to the JW Clay Station. This is the last parking station on the line and is expected to be highly utilized, much as the I-485 station is on the South Corridor. Additionally, we are requesting to expand maintenance capacity at the North Yard storage and dispatch facility. Again this was scope that was originally in the project prior to 2010. This item is critical to accommodate the expanded fleet required by the BLE. In 2010, when this change was made, the BLE anticipated acquiring 18 vehicles; however, due to favorable vehicle pricing and FTA concerns about operations, 22 vehicles were purchased. These additional vehicles stress the capacity of the existing South Boulevard Light Rail Maintenance Facility. Some other smaller items being returned to the project include additional ticket vending machines and pedestrian lights at the station areas along North Tryon Street.

In order to return these necessary items to the project, additional design work is required. A contract amendment (Agenda Item # on May 27, 2014) is being requested to the STV contract to make the changes.

The project is currently under construction and significant progress has been made. However, many challenges remain. One of the most significant concerns to this point has been the effort required to move utilities, both public and private. In order to maintain an opening day in the spring of 2017, multiple contractors will be operating in the same locations. This will require much more construction coordination. In response to this need the project team will be requesting approval of additional funding to add resources to the construction management team provided by HNTB. No additional project funding is requested. These funds would come from the savings realized this far in the project bids. This request will be brought to the Council in June.

## **Smart Growth America and National Complete Streets Coalition Pedestrian Safety Report**

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Smart Growth America and the National Complete Streets Coalition recently published a report entitled “*Dangerous by Design*”. The report ranked the 51 largest U.S. metropolitan areas according to their danger to pedestrians. According to the report, the Charlotte-Gastonia-Concord region ranks as the 10<sup>th</sup> most dangerous metropolitan area for pedestrians. The report summarizes pedestrian injury crashes, including fatalities, and emphasizes the importance of “Complete Streets” design and programs to increase pedestrian safety nationally.

The report recommends initiatives to help prevent deaths and injuries as well as to promote public health such as (1) adoption of complete streets policy (2) lowering speed limits (3) collaboration with other agencies such as law enforcement and (4) collecting better data.

The City of Charlotte is working to build a safer and more comfortable pedestrian environment through adopted policies, programs and projects including:

- A City Council adopted complete streets policy (the Urban Street Design Guidelines)
- A City Council adopted Transportation Action Plan
- Revised land development codes
- The development of the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan
- Collaboration with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department to address high-speed related crash locations
- Successful street conversions and new road projects built in accordance with the Urban Street Design Guidelines
- Annual funding for the Sidewalk & Pedestrian Safety Program and the Comprehensive Neighborhood Investment Program
- A comprehensive traffic safety database that contains more than 16 years of crash data to determine mitigation strategies that lead to project development
- Implementation of a variety of the measures to improve pedestrian safety, many of which are recommended in the report.

The City of Charlotte is creating a safer and more walkable community through implementation of these and other initiatives over the coming months and years.