CHARLOTTE

City Council
Follow-Up Report

September 28, 2012

September 24, 2012 - Citizens' Forum, Zoning and Business Meeting

Citizens' Forum - Nate Huggins, Transportation Support for Disabled Adults
Staff Resource: Larry Kopf, CATS, 704-432-0497, lkopf@charlottenc.gov

During the September 24 Citizens' Forum, speaker Nate Huggins stated that the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) stopped giving rides to his clients to his adult daycare, Blessed Assurance. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 requires transit systems to provide comparable door-to-door service to individuals with disabilities whose trip origins and destinations are within 3/4 mile of a local fixed route. This law does not distinguish by trip purpose. The transit system is obligated to meet all such trip requests.

Mr. Huggins' Blessed Assurance Adult Daycare is beyond the 3/4 mile threshold. The CATS Special Transportation System (STS) provides door-to-door service to Mr. Huggins' location after all ADA required trips are met first. CATS routinely transports individuals with disabilities to Blessed Assurance. Recently, for two days, STS was unable to provide service for some customers traveling to Blessed Assurance because of its obligation to, first, provide service to customers under the ADA and to adhere to the law.

The situation has been corrected. CATS has hired two additional STS drivers, and four more new drivers are expected to begin work on October 15, 2012. Three other STS drivers who had been out on long term disability have returned to work. STS is now staffed to meet its ADA obligation and to provide additional trips for clients traveling to Blessed Assurance.

In the future, STS will continue to meet its obligation under ADA first, and trips to Blessed Assurance will be provided to qualifying individuals as capacity allows. Current staffing levels are such that STS expects to meet both needs at the present time.