

**CITIZENS TRANSIT ADVISORY GROUP (CTAG)**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**April 15, 2014**  
**DISCUSSION SUMMARY**

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Present: Rob Watson, CTAG Co-Chair  
Hugh Wrigley, CTAG Co-Chair  
Gus Kretschmer, City of Charlotte  
George Sottilo, Town of Matthews  
Todd Steiss, Town of Huntersville  
Matt Covington, Mecklenburg County  
Jane Dunne, Town of Mint Hill  
Kenneth Carnes, Town of Cornelius  
Kate Payerle, City of Charlotte  
Anthony Davis, Mecklenburg County  
Jennifer Braganza, Town of Pineville

Staff: Dee Pereira, Allen Smith, Larry Kopf, Brandy Decker, Olaf Kinard, Paulus Ford,  
Wanda Braswell

Meeting time 7:30 a.m. – 8:35 a.m.

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**I. Call to Order**

Rob Watson, CTAG Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

**II. Approval of March 18, 2014 meeting summary**

The meeting summary was approved as written.

**III. Budget Adoption**

John Muth stated the presentation with an update on the capital projects for FY2015-FY2019

- LYNX Blue Line Extension - \$1.067 billion
- Light Rail Maintenance Facility Expansion - \$493,800
- Cornelius Park and Ride Lot - \$3.2 million
- Transit Bridge Inspection and Repair Program - \$3.9 million
- LYNX Silver Line Alternatives Analysis - \$900,000

The LYNX Blue Line Extension will be completed during FY2015-FY2019 budget cycle; four vehicles will be delivered in November 2014; testing and integration is scheduled to begin in December 2016; the line is scheduled to open in 2017

Expansion project on the light rail maintenance facility is under construction. The expansion will accommodate the additional cars that will arrive for testing prior to revenue service. The funding is included in the FY2015 budget.

The park and ride lot for Cornelius is in the planning phase with an estimated completion of 2015-16. The lot will have about 350 spaces. Bus service from this location will use the future I-77 HOT lanes. Bus route 77x will service the lot. Other routes will be determined.

Bridge inspection and repair program is required biennially by federal law. CATS light rail and pedestrian bridges fall under this requirement. Staff also inspects retaining walls.

The key recommendations for the Southeast Corridor are: bus rapid transit / express bus on Independence in HOT lanes; streetcars on Central Avenue and Monroe Road; promote auto-oriented retail on Independence and neighborhood serving, mixed-use development on streetcar lines. Staff will make final recommendation in FY2016 on the Southeast Corridor after a review of the study.

The Red Line (commuter rail) is a route from downtown Charlotte to Iredell County. NCDOT participation is necessary as a financial partner and leadership with private railroads. Staff is working with Norfolk Southern to understand impacts of their updated passenger rail policies. The Red Line is a candidate for public/ private partnership funding.

LYNX Blue Line capacity expansion will add two platforms to accommodate three-car trains; add four traction power substations and is funded by the Federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER III) grant.

CityLYNX Gold Line phase 2 will expand phase 1 up to 2.5 miles; connect Johnson C. Smith University to Sunnyside Avenue; will have 11 additional stops with 2,000 small businesses with ¼ mile. The cost is \$126 million with a 50/50 match.

CATS has an FTA grant for the proposed bus facility at the Charlotte Gateway Station and is looking at solutions to preserve this funding. NCDOT is still working with Norfolk Southern on the track alignments and capacity modeling. The gateway station will connect the region's public transportation.

Dee Pereira gave an update of the budget changes from the February presentation.

Debt Service Budget: \$ 84,964,000; Operating Budget: \$ 130,429,532

Five-Year Capital Budget: \$1,213,900,470

- Construction of LYNX Blue Line Extension Project
- Asset Maintenance
- Transit Bridge Maintenance Program
- Upgrade Fare Media and Radio Technology

**Administrative changes:**

1. Convert four temporary (75 percent) positions to part-time (75 percent) positions. No change in budget;
2. Add \$200,000 cost for CATS share of Enterprise Resource Planning System Support Center;

CTAG motioned and approved the following for the CEO to recommend to the MTC on April 23, 2014.

- Recommend 20-cent increase to base fare, effective July 1, 2014
- Recommend FY2015 Transit Debt Service Fund and Transit Operating Fund budgets as follows:

**Debt Service**

Income: \$84,964,000  
Expense: \$84,964,000

**Operating**

Income: \$130,429,531  
Expense: \$130,429,531

- Recommend the FY2015-2019 Transit Community Investment Plan as follows:

Income: \$1,323,110,261                      Expense: \$1,213,900,470

Q: Without the increase is the number of reduced hours?

A: 6,000 hours of bus service.

Q: Does fare increase reduce ridership?

A: The experience for CATS has traditionally been no, however that was because over the past 14 years we have increased service with fare increases. That has changed and staff has planned in FY15 budget that there will be a minor reduction in ridership during the first year of the fare increase. This pattern is consistent with industry studies conducted on fare increases and ridership changes.

Q: What is the estimate reduction in ridership?

A: Staff can share the document with you.

Olaf Kinard presented the fare comparison. A 2014 proposed fare increase comparison chart was distributed. Mr. Kinard talked about the weekly pass that was originally set up for five days instead of seven days. He compared fares with other agencies including the transit systems in the Triad and Greensboro area. We have cost comparison per passengers that the NTD collects. A public hearing is scheduled for March 26, 2014.

Q: Is there a one-day pass for seniors?

A: Transit does not have a one-day pass for seniors. The seniors receive a discount on monthly passes. They ride more than other passengers.

Q: How long is the public comment period?

A: March 26.

Q: What is NTD?

A: National Transit Database.

#### IV. CEO's Report

- CATS will submit a request for our new fare boxes under Tiger VI
- Positioning for a regional system
- Working to put financial literacy for the card to load the bus passes
- Met with TTA and PART; working with urban system to build a legislative agenda
- Bus and rail rodeos winners will travel to Kansas City
- The state rodeo is April 5, 2014 in Charlotte
- Rail Mechanics (skilled in repairing the vehicles) won International last year and will travel to Canada
- CEO is travelling with Mayor Clodfelter to DC on May 6 and 7.

#### Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 a. m.

NEXT CTAG MEETING: NOVEMBER 18 AT 7:30 AM