

## 22.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND AGENCY COORDINATION

This chapter describes the early and continuous efforts to involve the general public, interested and affected parties, and federal, state and local agencies in reviewing and selecting alternatives, identifying topics to be assessed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) along with involvement in minimizing, reducing or avoiding potential social, economic and environmental impacts.

### 22.1 Scoping Process

The process of project scoping initiated the public involvement activities for the initial phase of the “Transportation Improvements within the Northeast (University) Corridor” (i.e. LYNX BLE). Project scoping, required by federal law as part of the preparation of an EIS, is designed to encourage active consultation and participation of the public and all interested parties (including state and federal regulatory agencies) early in the EIS process. Scoping helps to identify alternative transit alignments and modes to be evaluated, as well as social, economic or environmental issues related to the proposed alternatives.

A Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS was published in the *Federal Register* on September 29, 2000. The NOI described the proposed project and the project alternatives, the proposed scoping process, and included the public scoping meeting schedule, as well as the contact information for the Project Manager. In addition to the NOI, a separate scoping meeting notice was sent in advance (August 17, 2000 and August 31, 2000) to governmental agencies with jurisdiction in the corridor, inviting them to attend the agency scoping meeting. The advertised public scoping meetings were held: September 26, 2000 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church (ten people in attendance); September 27, 2000 at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center (12 people in attendance) from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; and on September 28, 2000 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Sugaw Creek Recreation Center (25 people in attendance). The purpose of these meetings was to receive input on the alternatives analysis and the potential impacts to be included in the scope of the EIS.

The agency scoping meeting (joint meeting with all of the corridor projects with a Center City Charlotte focus) was held on September 27, 2000 from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center (CMGC). The comprehensive list of invited agencies can be found in the *Major Investment Study (MIS) Scoping Summary Report* (2001). The purpose of the agency scoping meeting was to present information on all four corridor MISs and provide federal, state and local agencies an opportunity for questions and comments on the four corridors. Input and comments received at the agency scoping meeting were primarily related to how various resources should be addressed in the definition and analysis of alternatives. Specific questions and comments from all scoping meetings can be found in the *Major Investment Study (MIS) Scoping Summary Report*.

At the initiation of the Draft EIS, CATS solicited public and agency input through a scoping update process in 2005 and 2006. The purpose of these additional scoping outreach activities was to keep the public and other interested parties informed of the proposed LYNX BLE progress and to receive additional input as conceptual engineering and the Draft EIS progressed. During these efforts, concern was expressed to CATS regarding the alignment not entering and serving the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNC Charlotte) campus and regarding the proposed station spacing in the University City area. As a result of the scoping update process, the proposed project alignment was modified to include a campus alignment with a station and the station locations were adjusted within the University City area. The additional scoping outreach activities, including the public and agency written comments, are documented within the *Scoping Summary Report Update* (October, 2005).

In June 2006, the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) adopted these changes and the Refined-Locally Preferred Alternative (R-LPA). The R-LPA was incorporated into the agency's *2030 Transit Corridor System Plan* and CATS subsequently entered into the Preliminary Engineering phase.

### 22.2 Public Involvement Program

A detailed Public Involvement Plan (PIP) was developed for the proposed LYNX Blue Line Extension Northeast Corridor Light Rail Project (LYNX BLE) to involve all stakeholders in the proposed project study process and to help the project team to define the transit and land use issues that characterize the

Northeast Corridor. The PIP is a plan for actively seeking input from the public throughout the planning, design and construction phases of the proposed project. The PIP identifies strategies to inform citizens of study activities and milestones and identifies forums and tools for public participation. The PIP reflects the CATS and the City of Charlotte’s well-established history of conducting proactive outreach programs in the community and focuses on achieving public awareness and interaction throughout the entire project LYNX BLE development process.

The PIP goals include the following:

- Inform/educate citizens in a factual and objective manner about the transit/land use plan and its associated opportunities and challenges in the Northeast Corridor;
- Proactively seek the participation and views of the Northeast Corridor community so transit/land use improvements reflect the needs of the community;
- Incorporate citizen feedback and input at all levels of the decision-making process; and,
- Ensure that all public involvement activities identify and address the needs of area minority and low-income populations in the Northeast Corridor.

Direct public participation includes scoping and focus group meetings, mailings, individual/group contacts, and the Draft EIS public hearing and circulation process. These activities are summarized below. Public participation will continue during final design and construction if the Light Rail Alternative, or its design option, is selected for implementation.

**22.2.1 Public Workshops**

Public workshops were held, beginning in July 2000, to obtain feedback on the proposed LYNX BLE. Throughout the planning process, representatives from the community have been invited to participate in public workshops to offer input on the proposed project. Between July 2000 and November 2009, 34 public workshops were held with a total of approximately 1,438 people in attendance. Public workshops generally follow an open-house format with a formal presentation. Attendees are given the opportunity to provide verbal and written feedback regarding the proposed project. Table 22-1 provides the dates, purpose, location and number of attendees for each meeting, and if applicable the number of postcards distributed for notification.

**Table 22-1  
Summary of Public Workshops**

Date	Public Meeting	Attendance	Postcard Notification
07/20/2000	Corridor Kickoff Public Meeting, CMGC	93	n/a
09/26/2000	Major Investment Study (MIS) Scoping Public Meeting, Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church	10	n/a
09/28/2000	MIS Scoping Public Meeting, Sugaw Creek Recreation Center	25	n/a
01/08/2001	MIS Screening Public Meeting, Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church	18	n/a
01/23/2001	MIS Screening Public Meeting, Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church	36	n/a
10/09/2001	MIS Public Meeting, Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church	22	n/a
08/27/2002	MIS Public Meeting, Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church	64	n/a
02/22/2005	EIS Kick-off Outreach Public Meeting	9	8,000
02/24/2005	EIS Kick-off Outreach Public Meeting	10	
03/01/2005	EIS Kick-off Outreach Public Meeting	25	
04/05/2005	Northeast Corridor Public Meeting	31	8,000
04/07/2005	Northeast Corridor Public Meeting	26	

**Table 22-1 (continued)**  
**Summary of Public Workshops**

Date	Public Meeting	Attendance	Postcard Notification
06/07/2005	Northeast Corridor Station Location Workshop	18	8,500
06/09/2005	Northeast Corridor Station Location Workshop	20	
09/06/2005	Northeast Corridor Station Area Planning Workshop	23	8,500
09/08/2005	Northeast Corridor Station Area Planning Workshop	28	
12/06/2005	Northeast Corridor Public Workshop	29	6,600
12/07/2005	Northeast Corridor Public Workshop	25	
05/01/2006	Northeast Corridor Design Options Public Meeting	38	8,000
05/02/2006	Northeast Corridor Design Options Public Meeting	26	
06/05/2006	Northeast Corridor Public Meeting - Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) Presentation	40	8,000
06/06/2006	Northeast Corridor Public Meeting - MTC Presentation	34	
03/03/2008	Preliminary Engineering (PE) Kick-Off Presentation - Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church	85	12,711
03/04/2008	PE Kick Off Presentation - University Hilton	105	
04/29/2008	UNC Charlotte Public Forum	100	n/a
07/10/2008	Sugar Creek vs. NCRR Alignment - Oasis Shriners Center	52	12,046
07/15/2008	Sugar Creek vs. NCRR Alignment - Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church	84	
01/13/2009	Sugar Creek/NCRR Alignment Study Results and Recommendation and Station Site Plans - Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church	94	11,580
01/15/2009	Sugar Creek/NCRR Alignment Study Results and Recommendation and Station Site Plans - Oasis Shriners Center	49	
02/16/2009	LYNX BLE Update - CMGC, City Employees	64	n/a
03/24/2009	Community Art Meeting - University Hills Baptist Church	10	n/a
03/31/2009	Community Art Meeting - Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church	37	n/a
09/29/2009	LYNX BLE Update - Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church	54	11,000
09/30/2009	LYNX BLE Update - Oasis Shriners Center	54	
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1,438</b>	

**22.2.2 Individual Meetings**

As of November 2009, representatives from CATS’ LYNX BLE staff have participated in speaking engagements to inform the community and interested parties on the progress and scope of the proposed project. Several different organizations were involved in the individual meetings such as: home owners associations, chambers of commerce, and neighborhood organizations. LYNX BLE staff held a total of 86 individual citizen meetings with a total of approximately 3,613 people in attendance. Table 22-2 provides the dates, organizations and number of attendees for each meeting. In addition, CATS has met regularly with major stakeholders in the corridor, including representatives of the railroads, UNC Charlotte, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).

**Table 22-2  
Citizen Meetings**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Organization/Event</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
06/08/2000	Optimist Park Neighborhood Association Meeting	25
02/07/2001	Historic Rosedale Neighborhood Association Meeting	13
02/18/2001	Hunters Chase Neighborhood Association Meeting	15
03/13/2001	Autumnwood Neighborhood Association Meeting	13
06/22/2001	Belmont Neighborhood Jamboree	16
07/19/2001	Hidden Valley Neighborhood Meeting	21
07/24/ 2001	Derita Area Meeting	34
11/05/2001	Graham Heights Neighborhood Association Meeting	31
04/18/2000	First Union CIC Advisory Group Meeting	18
06/20/2000	First Union CIC Advisory Group Meeting	35
06/20/2000	I-85 Improvement Study Meeting	10
10/12/2000	Tryon North Development Corporation Kick-off	80
11/16/2000	Tryon North Development Corporation Meeting	38
07/18/2001	Tryon North Development Corporation Meeting	25
07/25/2001	UNC Charlotte Urban Institute Meeting	5
07/27/2001	Lowe's Motor Speedway	1
08/02/2001	Mayor's International Cabinet	40
08/21/2001	Landex (developer of King's Grant)	1
08/21/2001	Verizon Wireless Amphitheater (formerly Verizon Pavilion)	2
09/28/2001	University Research Park Stakeholders Meeting	10
10/02/2001	Southwest Cabarrus Rotary Club Meeting	25
11/29/2001	Meeting with Northeast Corridor Business/Neighborhood Leaders	22
06/01/2002	Historic North Charlotte Historic Home Tour and Festival	15
07/07/2002	University City Area Council Luncheon	60
08/15/2002	Tryon North Development Corporation representatives	4
08/15/2002	Cabarrus County Commissioners Meeting	45
11/13/2002	Hidden Valley Community Development Corporation	14
06/24/2004	Tryon North Development Corporation	25
07/08/2004	University City Area Council Luncheon	40
07/14/2005	University City Area Chamber	80
10/18/2005	North Davidson (NoDa) Business and Homeowners' Associations	28
10/20/2005	Northwest Area Council Economic Development Conference	200
04/12/2006	District Four meeting with Councilman Barnes	25
02/06/2007	Rotary Club, Lowes Speedway Club	21
11/01/2007	University City Partners (UCP) Annual Conference	80
11/12/2007	University Research Park (URP) Community Meeting	10
01/02/2008	Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods	40
01/29/2008	Coldwell Bankers	22
02/13/2008	University City Partners	55
02/18/2008	UNC Charlotte Students - History/AIT project	30
03/05/2008	North Tryon Development Corporation	35
05/01/2008	UNC Charlotte Students Exhibit - History/AIT Project	60

**Table 22-2 (continued)  
Citizen Meetings**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Organization/Event</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
06/03/2008	Hidden Valley Community Association	35
06/03/2008	NoDa Business and Homeowners' Associations	60
06/10/2008	Howie Acres and Herrinwood Community Meeting	8
07/17/2008	Developers Meeting	24
08/05/2008	NoDa Neighborhood Association	40
09/12/2008	UNC Charlotte Engineering Class	60
09/30/2008	NoDa Board	10
10/01/2008	UCP Urban Design Meeting	10
10/02/2008	UCP Annual Meeting	60
11/08/2008	Carolinas Medical Center	8
11/11/2008	NoDa Neighborhood Association	30
12/02/2008	Hidden Valley Community Association	12
01/27/2009	Knollwood Acres Homeowner's Group	15
02/04/2009	North End Partners	20
02/10/2009	Villa Heights	24
02/19/2009	Quarterly Stakeholder Meeting	12
03/24/2009	WBAV FM (V101.9) radio interview with Bea Thompson	n/a
04/14/2009	NoDa Board Meeting	7
04/22/2009	UCP – Economic Development Conference	80
04/22/2009	Earth Day Event at UNC Charlotte	50
04/26/2009	Welwyn Home Owners Association	25
05/03/2009	Fanta Festival at McAlpine Creek Park	75
05/05/2009	NoDa Neighborhood Association	25
05/16/2009	Neighborhood Symposium	452
05/21/2009	La Tremenda radio station (1310 AM)	n/a
05/27/2009	Quarterly Stakeholder Meeting	8
06/08/2009	Charlotte Area Bicycle Alliance (CABA)	23
06/18/2009	Charlotte Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting	125
08/03/2009	Johnson & Wales University Charlotte (JWU) orientation fairs	100
08/04/2009	Hidden Valley National Night Out	150
08/17/2009	Latin American Chamber of Commerce of Charlotte	35
08/20/2009	Quarterly Stakeholders Meeting	17
08/27/2009	UNC Charlotte WOW! Fall Vendor Fair	30
09/01/2009	Johnson & Wales University Charlotte (JWU) orientation fairs	100
09/09/2009	CATS Interim CEO provided an update to CATS rail operators and maintenance employees	32
09/12/2009	Hidden Valley Neighborhood Annual Parade and Festival	25
09/28/2009	UNC Charlotte - Geography Class	15
10/01/2009	University Research Park	40
10/12/2009	Sixth Annual North Carolina Transportation Hall of Fame	300
10/13/2009	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill - Navigating America	14
10/17/2009	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill - Navigating America	14
10/26/2009	Professional Engineers of NC (PENC), South Piedmont	25
11/12/2009	Howie Acres Neighborhood Association	23
11/19/2009	UNC Charlotte - Urban Transportation Design	26
<b>Totals</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>3,613</b>

**22.2.3 Newsletters**

The LYNX BLE project team publishes a newsletter, entitled *Blue Line Extension (Northeast Corridor) Transitions*, to provide interested citizens with updates on the proposed project. The newsletter features articles about the proposed project and includes information about land use, economic development, upcoming meetings and other projects within the corridor. The publication is mailed to those on the project mailing list and e-mailed to those enrolled in the City of Charlotte’s electronic subscription service. The newsletter is made available at, but not limited to, corridor public meetings, neighborhood presentations, transit fairs and the CATS offices in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center. Table 22-3 lists the newsletter distribution for *Blue Line Extension (Northeast Corridor) Transitions*.

**Table 22-3  
Blue Line Extension (Northeast Corridor) Transitions  
Newsletter Distribution**

Newsletter Issue Date	Circulation Per Newsletter
Winter 2005	n/a
Summer 2005	1,485
Spring 2006	n/a
Fall 2006	860
Winter 2007 (2030 Corridor System Plan Summary)	n/a
Summer 2007	868
Winter 2008	874
Spring 2008	870
Summer/Fall 2008	762
Summer/Fall 2009	775

**22.2.4 Website**

Throughout the course of the proposed project, a LYNX BLE project specific web site has been maintained. The website is available through a link on CATS primary website located at [www.ridetransit.org](http://www.ridetransit.org).

Information contained on the website includes the following:

- Description of the proposed project
- Map of the proposed alignment and station locations
- Information about light rail stations and vehicles including renderings
- Transit Station Area Principles
- Published editions of the *Blue Line Extension (Northeast Corridor) Transitions* newsletter
- Notification of upcoming public involvement activities
- Summaries and presentations of past public meetings
- Frequently asked questions about the proposed project
- Comment card allowing users to provide input into the proposed project
- LYNX BLE Fast Facts
- Draft EIS and supporting documents

**22.2.5 Citizens Transit Advisory Group**

The Citizens Transit Advisory Group (CTAG) is an ongoing advisory committee of the MTC with system-wide responsibilities. The CTAG reviews long-range transit system planning and proposed operating and capital programs from the community’s perspective, and makes recommendations to the MTC – the policy-setting board for CATS. While the CTAG is not a policy-making body, its recommendations to the MTC ensure public involvement in transit planning. CTAG contains 13 citizens appointed by the MTC members from their respective jurisdictions. The Mayor of Charlotte and Chairman of the Mecklenburg

County Board of Commissioners also appoint one member each. The CTAG membership is as follows (with number of appointees from each MTC member jurisdiction in parenthesis):

- Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners (3)
- City of Charlotte City Council (3)
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Board of Education(1)
- Town of Cornelius (1)
- Town of Davidson (1)
- Town of Huntersville (1)
- Town of Matthews (1)
- Town of Mint Hill (1)
- Town of Pineville (1)

#### 22.2.6 Transit Services Advisory Committee

The Transit Services Advisory Committee (TSAC) reviews, makes recommendations and provides input into short-range transit operations. The TSAC is made up of customers of CATS and are appointed by the City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, and the six Mecklenburg County Towns. The TSAC focuses on day-to-day operations of the transit service to ensure that it meets the needs of the community. It makes recommendations to the MTC on issues within its sphere of interest, and promotes public involvement in short-term transit planning.

#### 22.3 Project Mailing Lists

CATS maintains a county-wide, corridor database for use in direct mail contacts with corridor property owners, occupants and other stakeholders. The original list of approximately 500 names was obtained from the *2025 Integrated Transit/Land Use Plan* public involvement efforts. The corridor database has been supplemented with additional individuals, organizations and other interested parties who have requested to be added to the list. The current database for all of the CATS Corridors contains approximately 6,800 contacts.

The LYNX BLE project database is part of the CATS Corridor database and includes a mailing list for people specifically interested in the LYNX BLE. There are currently 870 mailing addresses (as of November 2009) listed in the LYNX BLE project database, including individuals located in and around the Northeast Corridor study area and/or individuals who have expressed specific interest in the LYNX BLE. The LYNX BLE project database is used for distribution of LYNX BLE public meeting invitations, newsletters and other relative LYNX BLE information, as needed.

CATS also maintains a list of property owners and residents within a ¼-mile on each side of the proposed project alignment and/or property owners and residents within ½-mile of the proposed transit stations. This list is developed using the parcels contained in the Mecklenburg County Geographic Information System (GIS). The property owners and residents list supplements the LYNX BLE project database and is used for notifications of public meetings.

Additionally, there are approximately 1,161 email subscriptions to the City of Charlotte's electronic subscription service. These email subscribers receive public meeting, newsletter notifications and other relative LYNX BLE information, as needed.

#### 22.4 Environmental Justice Outreach

The proposed LYNX Blue Line Extension (LYNX BLE) is committed to meeting all environmental justice requirements necessary to comply with Executive Order 12898. As such, CATS identified specific communities of concern located along the proposed alignment where the community is primarily minority or low-income. Concentrations of transit-dependent populations, such as elderly, children and households without a vehicle, as well as other special population groups near the proposed project, such as Limited English Proficient (LEP) were also identified. Additional information about these communities of concern is detailed in Chapter 6.0: Neighborhoods, Community Services and Environmental Justice.

CATS outreach has been customized and personalized to ensure that everyone in the community has an opportunity to engage in the public process. Given the importance of outreach to the communities of concern with potential project impacts identified in this Draft EIS, CATS has designed outreach to specifically target environmental justice communities. As detailed in Chapter 6.0: Neighborhoods, Community Services and Environmental Justice, communities of concern with potential adverse impacts include: Pines Mobile Home Park (located within the Hidden Valley neighborhood), Hampshire Hills, and Mallard Creek Apartments (located within the University City South neighborhood). To date, targeted outreach has included:

#### Hampshire Hills

Residents and business owners located in Hampshire Hills received notification and had the opportunity to participate in the public meetings held at Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church, located adjacent to the Hampshire Hills neighborhood. These meetings were advertised in English and Spanish and made accessible to residents and business owners located within this community of concern. Due to the proximity of the Hampshire Hills neighborhood to the Hidden Valley Neighborhood, the additional meetings described below for the Hidden Valley neighborhood were also made accessible to residents and business owners of Hampshire Hills.

#### Pines Mobile Home Park (Hidden Valley)

The Pines Mobile Home Park is located in the Hidden Valley neighborhood. Residents and business owners in Hidden Valley received notification and had the opportunity to participate in public meetings held at Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church, located across from the Hidden Valley neighborhood. These meetings were advertised in English and Spanish and made accessible to residents and business owners located within this community of concern.

Hidden Valley has multiple registered neighborhood groups including a community association, neighborhood association, community development corporation, and a political action committee. CATS has made presentations at several neighborhood meetings. CATS was able to coordinate door-to-door distribution of bilingual project updates and public meeting invitations with the distribution of the neighborhood newsletter. Additionally, CATS was able to distribute bilingual project updates and public meeting invitations at Hope Haven, located within the Hidden Valley community. CATS staff participated with an information booth for both the annual Hidden Valley National Night Out event as well as the neighborhood festival. These neighborhood events were also open to adjacent neighborhoods like Hampshire Hills.

#### Mallard Creek Apartments (University City South)

The University City South neighborhood area includes several neighborhood and condominium associations as well as multiple managed apartment communities. Since there is no single neighborhood association for this community of concern, public meetings were held within proximity to the University City South Neighborhood; the location of the Mallard Creek Apartments. These meetings were advertised in English and Spanish and made accessible to residents and business owners located within this community of concern.

Additionally, CATS held a forum at UNC Charlotte, which was open to the public, and held adjacent to the Mallard Creek Apartments. This meeting was advertised through CATS and UNC Charlotte with the purpose of reaching out to residents living both on campus, and off-campus in the surrounding apartment communities, which includes the Mallard Creek Apartments.

#### Special Population Group - LEP Outreach

The proposed project corridor contains areas with concentrations of heavily Spanish-speaking populations. Specifically, limited English proficient Spanish-speaking populations are located within the Hampshire Hills and Hidden Valley communities of concern. For that reason, CATS provided additional Spanish language outreach to target these special population groups, both within the project corridor and the communities of concern. Outreach to date has included the following:

- A staff appearance on an hour-long talk show on La Tremenda (1310 AM) Spanish radio, providing project information in Spanish to listeners;

- An information booth with bilingual staff and project information at the annual Fanta Festival, a regional Hispanic festival;
- Door-to-door distribution of bilingual project updates and public meeting invitations in the Hidden Valley community;
- Distribution of bilingual project updates and public meeting invitations at Hope Haven, located in the Hidden Valley community;
- Project presentation updates at the Latin American Chamber of Commerce Charlotte, whose members represent Hispanic businesses in the community;
- Project presentation updates to the Latin American Coalition, Charlotte's oldest and largest Hispanic service agency;
- Spanish advertisements published in local Spanish papers to announce all project public meetings;
- Bilingual project materials posted on the CATS' project website, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;
- Bilingual customer service staff available through the CATS call center to provide translated project information as well as information about public meetings; and
- All public meetings are held at locations in close proximity to and easily accessible to communities of concern.

CATS plans to continue targeted outreach to communities of concern. Postcard notification that the Draft EIS is available for review and public comment, as well as the locations of public meetings and public hearing, will be sent to property owners located within ¼ mile of the alignment and ½ mile at the station areas. Bilingual letter notification that the Draft EIS is available for review and public comment, as well as the locations of public meetings and public hearing, will be sent to organizations, groups and associations within the project corridor limits who are listed on the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department "Neighborhood Organization Contact List," including the communities of concern. Bilingual letter notification that the Draft EIS is available for review and public comment, as well as the locations of public meetings and public hearing, will also be distributed property owners with potential project impacts, including property owners with potential impacts within communities of concern.

Additionally, CATS will make efforts to distribute bilingual materials to communities of concern and when permitted post materials within common areas of property management offices. CATS will seek opportunities to present the Draft EIS findings to the communities of concern during their regularly scheduled meetings, where possible. Bilingual staff members will be available as requested during these meetings. Staff will also make an effort to appear on the local Spanish radio station to provide project information in Spanish to listeners, including public meeting and hearing information, as well as instructions on how to provide comments on the Draft EIS.

## 22.5 Agency Coordination

### 22.5.1 Federal Transit Administration/CATS Coordination Activities

CATS and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) hold Quarterly Meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to review the status of CATS projects, including the LYNX BLE, address major issues and federal requirements, and for FTA to provide federal oversight and guidance.

### 22.5.2 City-wide Interdepartmental Coordination

CATS and the City of Charlotte have developed an integrated and coordinated approach to provide oversight and management of the LYNX BLE. A Project Management Plan (PMP) has been developed to assist with the management of all elements of the LYNX BLE. It provides an overview of the management requirements and programs that are needed to implement an efficient and cost-effective light rail system. The PMP describes the coordinated project management approach to planning, design, and implementing the proposed project. To accomplish this, three teams have been formed:

- Growth Strategy Steering Team (GSST);
- Corridor Collaboration Team (CCT); and,

- Blue Line Extension Project Team (BLE Project Team).

The GSST, chaired by the Assistant City Manager, is comprised of Key Business Executives (i.e., Department heads), and Deputy Directors from CATS, Engineering and Property Management (E&PM), Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department (Planning), Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT), Neighborhood and Business Services (NBS), and Corporate Communications. The GSST provides City oversight and policy direction for growth strategy initiatives in all corridors, including the LYNX BLE. The GSST discusses the LYNX BLE on an as-needed basis at their regular meetings which are held twice a month.

The CCT facilitates proactive collaboration among the various city departments that have active projects located within the LYNX BLE corridor. Members of the CCT come from E&PM, CATS, Planning, CDOT, NBS Neighborhood and Economic Development, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities (CMU) and Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation (MCPR). These members are responsible for program/project development and implementation, including land use planning, economic development opportunities, transit projects, station area infrastructure initiatives and corridor infrastructure initiatives. The CCT meets monthly.

The LYNX BLE Project Team is an interdepartmental team with members from all CATS divisions, and other City and County departments involved in the planning and design of the proposed project, including Planning, CDOT, E&PM, NBS Neighborhood and Economic Development, CMU and MCPR. The LYNX BLE Project Team meets bi-weekly and reviews the status of the proposed project, discusses issues, and reviews and approves the scope of the proposed project.

## 22.6 Continued Coordination, Required Permits and Agency Approvals

To ensure that issues of the proposed project are fully evaluated, several agencies have been consulted during the planning and preliminary engineering phases of the proposed project, including the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department. Pertinent correspondence relative to the interests of some agencies is included in Appendix B: Agency Correspondence. Coordination with local, state and federal agencies will continue.

### 22.6.1 Section 4(f) *De Minimis* Findings

As described in Chapter 9.0: Parklands and Chapter 8.0: Cultural Resources, FTA is seeking public input on the proposed *de minimis* Section 4(f) findings through the public and agency circulation of this Draft EIS. See also Appendix B: Agency Coordination for correspondence with MCPR and SHPO regarding the *de minimis* Section 4(f) findings.

### 22.6.2 Required Permits

**Section 404, Clean Water Act:** As a result of the identified impacts to surface waters and wetlands, it is anticipated that a Section 404 permit issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be required for either the Light Rail Alternative or Light Rail Alternative – Sugar Creek Design Option. The permit application must be completed during Final Design before construction activities may commence. This permit will require the discussion of the measures employed throughout planning and design in order to avoid/minimize impacts to waters of the U.S. The 404 permit application must also include a compensatory mitigation proposal, which outlines the plan to provide compensation to offset permanent losses of waters of the U.S.

**Erosion and Sedimentation Control:** The North Carolina Division of Land Resources requires that an erosion and sedimentation plan be obtained before construction activities may commence. This permit will be issued by Mecklenburg County on behalf of the State.

**Stormwater (NPDES) Permits:** The North Carolina Division of Water Quality must issue stormwater permits for operators of point source discharges associated with construction activities when construction-related land disturbances are expected to exceed one acre. Charlotte Stormwater Services will also be consulted to ensure continued involvement and compliance with NPDES.

**Air Quality Permits:** In accordance with the Mecklenburg County Air Pollution Control Ordinance, two Transportation Facilities Construction Permits from the Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Agency (LUESA) Air Quality Section will be required. These permits are required for the parking garages at the Sugar Creek Station Park-and-Ride Option 2 and the I-485/N. Tryon Station.

Mecklenburg County LUESA Air Quality Section recently notified CATS about the newly developed EPA on-road mobile source emissions model known as the Motor Vehicle Emissions Simulation (MOVES) (Appendix B: Agency Correspondence). MOVES will replace the previous Mobile 6.2 model. Once the EPA publishes a Notice of Availability in the Federal Register, MOVES will be the official model for mobile source emissions. This change may affect the methodology required to apply for a Transportation Facilities Construction Permit. As such, CATS will continue coordination with the Mecklenburg County LUESA Air Quality Section. This coordination will need to occur prior to modeling air quality for a Transportation Facilities Construction Permit, and before permit application. CATS will confirm the determination of the use of MOVES, as well as the applicability of the permit for each proposed park-and-ride facility. All of these activities will take place once the station site plans have been approved for construction.

### 22.6.3 Agency Approvals and Agreements

**NCDOT Municipal Agreement:** The City of Charlotte and NCDOT will execute a Municipal Agreement for the construction of the proposed project within the median of North Tryon Street/US-29.

**State Property Office Approval:** The UNC Charlotte Board of Trustees and the State Property Office have approved the granting of an easement for the alignment onto the UNC Charlotte campus through state owned property.

**Other Third Party Agreements:** A number of agreements with third parties would be required to implement the proposed project, including agreements with railroads and utilities, related to the construction, operation and funding of the LYNX BLE.