

Comments:

- Beatties Ford residents were very clear that CATS should not look to use the water treatment plant as a location for the maintenance facility for the streetcar.
- It was concern that the quality of the streetscape would differ from one side of town to the other and may not be equally distributed. CATS' representatives replied that the amenities will be consistent throughout the corridor.
- There is solid support for this project, as planned, from the Biddleville and Smallwood communities, as well as other neighborhoods in the Beatties Ford Road corridor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

End Memo

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Appendix B-2
Community Workshop Summary

SUMMARY REPORT – FIRST COMMUNITY WORKSHOP CATS CENTER CITY STREETCAR PROJECT

To: Dave Dickey, PE, Project Coordinator; URS Corporation

From: Harvey B. Gantt, FAIA; Gantt Huberman Architects

Workshop Date: November 18, 2004

Location: Charlotte Government Center

Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Prepared: November 29, 2004

I. Public Notification

The community was notified of the initial streetcar workshop primarily through notices in the newspaper and post card mail outs. The stakeholders who participated in the interview sessions held in October, were contacted by personal letters and invited to attend. We also made selected phone calls to business and neighborhood leaders. Approximately 1,500 post cards, 42 personal letters, and 30 direct phone calls were made in an eight-day period prior to November 18.

II. Attendance

The workshop attendance was approximately 80 persons including consultants, city officials and media. The sign-up sheet totaled 56 persons representing business, institutional and neighborhood leaders. Twenty-eight (28) of the signees to the workshop identified themselves as living in the four (4) primary sub-areas that are impacted by the proposed streetcar route. Non sub-area citizen attendees expressed a general interest in the overall development of the city – or the overall development of the CATS transit program. All attendees expressed some interest in attending follow-up meetings related to the streetcar development. (See attached attendance list).

III. Meeting Format

The workshop was structured with an opening introductory session, followed by four breakout sessions set up around the geographical and phasing projected for the streetcar route. A concluding joint session with

all attendees summarized the work of the four breakout groups. The overall time was approximately two hours starting at 6:00 p.m.

IV. Introductory Sessions

The attendees were greeted with an introduction and general description of the streetcar project by Willie Noble, project manager for CATS. Dave Dickey of URS Corporation introduced consultant design team members and followed with an historical perspective on streetcar development in the U.S. describing generally the changing technology and cities around the country that were using, or planning to build, streetcars as a part of their transit network. Mark Dorn, of URS, described in some detail the Portland, Oregon streetcar project.

A question and answer period followed in which audience participants raised issues on streetcar technology, i.e. lane-of-travel, mixing with autos, streetscape improvements, and burial of utilities.

Willie Noble concluded the session with instructions for breakout sessions.

Visual Support: Power Point Presentation

V. Breakout Sessions

The workshop structured four (4) breakout sessions based on route of streetcar travel and sub-area neighborhood. The four sub-areas were:

Beatties Ford Road – from I-85 to I-77 / Trade Street

Trade Street – from Gateway Village (I-77) to Government Center

Elizabeth Avenue – from CPCC to Hawthorne Lane (Presbyterian Hospital)

Hawthorne Lane to Central Avenue (Eastland Mall)

A facilitator who was assisted by an assistant to record the comments of the audience led each sub-area. All sub-area groups used visual support material that defined the route of the proposed streetcar, identified land uses along the corridor and showed issues, opportunities, and constraints to real estate development that might be influenced by the streetcar addition.

In summary, in all four breakout sessions, the participants reported positive feedback and support for the streetcar project. Notwithstanding the clear support, each session raised its own unique set of issues and citizens seemed to make it clear that they wanted to protect their

neighborhoods from any future circumstances where transportation (by auto or transit) or real estate development would negatively impact their communities. A description of sub-area concerns recorded in the meeting is given in sections VI through IX below.

Visual Support: Power Point Presentation
30 x 42 colored maps

VI. Beatties Ford Road Corridor

Ten members of the Beatties Ford Road community came out to voice their opinions on the streetcar system. Streetcar stops, historic landmarks, the maintenance facility and predictability and safety of the streetcar system were the primary issues discussed.

The stakeholders are concerned about the phasing of the project. They do not want the Beatties Ford Road phase to be last. These stakeholders are willing to participate in the design process so the streetcar system can directly serve their community's needs. Several safety concerns were raised, i.e., job training, related to the operation of the streetcar, appropriate buffers to protect residents, and their property and traffic merge problems at the Interstate and interchange points.

Stakeholders recognize there may be rezoning required for redevelopment of certain areas along their corridor and would like to be involved in these decision making discussions. However, it has been requested that the streetscape and land uses remain consistent with what is planned for the area.

Johnson Smith University welcomes the first terminus point of the streetcar and is most interested in the infrastructure of the streetcar system as it has a fiber optic network operating under Beatties Ford Road.

VII. Trade Street Corridor

The sixteen Stakeholders representing the Trade Street Corridor sub-area group discussed parking, the multi-modal station, the Gold Rush service and traffic pattern issues.

Residents of the Third and Fourth Wards expressed concern in maintaining the integrity of the historic buildings located in these neighborhoods throughout the redevelopment and construction of the project. The aesthetics of these historic neighborhoods is not to be comprised with overhead wiring and other unsightly changes.

The stakeholders of the Trade Street Corridor had an overall concern in the improvements of the transit system. Transit oriented questions included the distance between rails, the distance between stops, and the number of streetcars that will run simultaneously and the location of the multi-modal station. Stakeholders spoke favorably of the Gold Rush and suggested that the Gold Rush system operate as the connecting loop for the Streetcar System. There was also a desire to have ADA compliant streetcars.

There is concern that implementing traffic calming measures on Trade Street will cause unsolicited traffic problems on the adjacent thoroughfares, i.e., 4th and 5th Streets. As redevelopment and retail shopping increase, stakeholders insist that the parking component not be neglected. Special attention will need to be paid conflicting loading zones with curbside loaded streetcars.

Most stakeholders expressed concern about the existing streetscape being altered or removed. There is a general consensus that the streetscape should not be altered to accommodate new development.

VIII. Elizabeth Avenue Corridor

Approximately eleven Elizabeth Avenue stakeholders attended the workshop. Connectivity, prominent stops, safety and development were the major concerns of this sub-area group.

The Elizabeth Avenue redevelopment project will benefit most from the streetcar system. There should be a stop in this area as well as Central Piedmont Community College, Presbyterian Hospital with connectivity to Mercy Hospital near 5th and Hawthorne.

Safety concerns included the overhead wiring, the streetcar turnaround and accessible pedestrian signage for the corridor. This sub-area group prefers a curb-loading streetcar for safety and accessibility reasons. On board information system for ease of use was also requested.

Park-and-Ride parking lots would be welcome along this corridor. Overall the Elizabeth Avenue stakeholders are enthusiastic about the implementation of the streetcar as a part of their neighborhoods overall growth and development.

IX. Hawthorne/Central Corridor

Approximately fifteen people represented the stakeholders of the Hawthorne/Central sub-area group. The issues discussed focused

primarily on the positive impact the streetcar would have on their community. Among these issues were locations of important stops, streetscape concerns, pedestrian safety.

Among the stops discussed, Flywood, Plaza Road and the Briar Creek Greenway system are favored as primary streetcar stops.

There is currently a new streetscape along the Central Avenue corridor and there is concern how the addition of the streetcar may negatively impact this improvement. Culvert Avenue may also prove to be challenging for construction along this corridor.

Stakeholders of this corridor expressed an interest in the connectivity with the Bus Rapid Transit system, designed to run along Independence Avenue, and the Southwest Corridor Light Rail Transit system. This connection would be viewed as a catalyst for traffic calming, increasing pedestrian safety. Well lit, universal street crossing signs should also be added to increase safety at all intersections.

The potential redevelopment and reconfiguration of Eastland Mall was discussed, as well as the possibility of Internet connectivity on the streetcar.

Overall, the eastside residents and stakeholders are excited about the Center City Streetcar Project and would like to bring the system to their area ahead of the proposed schedule presented by CATS.

X. Concluding Session

Willie Noble reconvened the workshop at approximately 7:15 p.m. He reiterated the schedule of upcoming events, stressing the sub-area workshops to be brought to the various neighborhoods in 2005. He identified key contacts in CATS, namely Kiera Terrill, public information officer.

Each sub-area group chose a citizen representative to report on the discussion of their respective group. Little in the way of discussion followed these presentations.

The workshop adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Enclosure: Attachment "A" – Citizen Attendance List

Appendix B-3
Interview Questions and Summary

Center City Streetcar Corridor CATS

Stakeholder Interview

Date: _____

Time: _____

INTERVIEW WITH:

Name: _____

Company/Neighborhood: _____

Address: _____

I. CHARLOTTE ISSUES

1. Compared to other cities, how would you rate your ability to move around/travel within Charlotte?

_____ very easy
_____ easy
_____ same as other comparable cities
_____ difficult
_____ very difficult

II. BUSINESS LEADERS OR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

2. In general, how do you/your employees travel to work?

_____ Auto
_____ Public Transportation
_____ Other

3. Are there incentives offered by your company/agency for alternative commute options?

_____ yes
_____ no
If yes, what type _____

III. NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS

4. In your opinion, how has your neighborhood been affected by public transportation? Would you describe your neighborhood as one that has been affected positively, negatively or remained stable?

5. In your opinion, would increased public transportation services benefit your neighborhood?

_____ yes
_____ no
If yes, what would these increased services be?

Center City Streetcar Corridor CATS

Stakeholder Interview

Date: _____

Time: _____

IV. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

6. How would you rate the city's traffic condition on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very poor and 5 being very good?

- _____ 1 very poor
- _____ 2 poor
- _____ 3 average
- _____ 4 good
- _____ 5 very good

7. What do you think are the biggest transportation needs to support future growth in Charlotte? (Transit; Streets and roads; Parking; Pedestrian Facilities; Bicycle Facilities)

8. What means of transportation do you use to get to work?

- _____ Auto
- _____ Public Transportation
- _____ Other

9. How much time does it take to travel to work?

10. Would you consider alternate means of transportation for your commute?

- _____ yes
- _____ no
- _____ maybe

11. What characteristics of a transit system would make it more appealing to you?

- _____ type of transit vehicle
- _____ speed
- _____ destinations (routes traveled)
- _____ convenience (stop locations, schedule, flexibility, user-friendly, frequency of stops)
- _____ comfort
- _____ cleanliness
- _____ safety

V. TRADE STREET STREETCAR PLAN

12. CATS is planning a new streetcar system to run from I-85 & Beatties Ford Road at the west end to Eastland Mall at the east end using Trade Street, Elizabeth Avenue, and Central Avenue. Do you view this development as a positive for Charlotte?

- _____ yes
- _____ no, why? _____

(If no, skip to last question)

13. What concerns do you have about building a streetcar along Trade Street?

Center City Streetcar Corridor CATS

Stakeholder Interview

Date: _____

Time: _____

14. Would you use the streetcar?

_____ yes

_____ no

If yes, for what purposes?

_____ work

_____ special events

_____ daily activities (lunch, dinner, etc.)

_____ other

15. How much time does it take to travel to work?

**16. How important is it to improve the sidewalk environment along the Trade Street corridor?
(Lighting, Sidewalks, Landscaping and Streetscape, etc)**

17. Should the streetcar stops differ from the bus stops in density (stops/mile) and/or appearance?

_____ yes different appearance

_____ no same appearance

_____ more stops per mile

_____ fewer stops per mile

18. Any specific areas where you would like to see streetcar stops (e.g. Government District, Arena)

19. Do you think the fare should be different from other transit systems in Charlotte?

_____ yes

_____ no

If yes, how much should the fare be? _____

20. Are there any other areas or major destinations that could support Streetcar? If so, what roads should be included in the Streetcar system?

VI. COMMITMENT TO PARTICIPATE

21. There will be several more opportunities for input to the Trade Street Streetcar Study. Would you like to be included in those?

Community workshop _____ Yes _____ No

Sub-area workshops _____ Yes _____ No

Would you like to be on our mailing list? _____ Yes _____ No

What is the best way to keep you informed? _____ E-mail _____ Fax _____ Mail

Center City Streetcar Corridor CATS

Stakeholder Interview

Date: _____

Time: _____

INTERVIEW WITH:

Name: _____

Company/Neighborhood: _____

Address: _____

I. TRADE STREET STREETCAR PLAN

1. CATS is planning a new streetcar system to run from I-85 & Beatties Ford Road at the west end to Eastland Mall at the east end using Trade Street, Elizabeth Avenue, and Central Avenue. Do you view this development as a positive for Charlotte?

_____ yes

_____ no, why? _____

(If no, skip to last question)

2. What concerns do you have about building a streetcar along Trade Street?

3. Would you use the streetcar?

_____ yes

_____ no

If yes, for what purposes?

_____ work

_____ special events

_____ daily activities (lunch, dinner, etc.)

_____ other

4. How much time does it take to travel to work?

5. How important is it to improve the sidewalk environment along the Trade Street corridor? (Lighting, Sidewalks, Landscaping and Streetscape, etc)

6. Should the streetcar stops differ from the bus stops in density (stops/mile) and/or appearance?

_____ yes different appearance

_____ no same appearance

_____ more stops per mile

_____ fewer stops per mile

7. Any specific areas where you would like to see streetcar stops (e.g. Government District, Arena)

Center City Streetcar Corridor CATS

Stakeholder Interview

Date: _____

Time: _____

8. Do you think the fare should be different from other transit systems in Charlotte?

_____ yes

_____ no

If yes, how much should the fare be? _____

9. Are there any other areas or major destinations that could support Streetcar? If so, what roads should be included in the Streetcar system?

II. COMMITMENT TO PARTICIPATE

10. There will be several more opportunities for input to the Trade Street Streetcar Study. Would you like to be included in those?

Community workshop _____ Yes _____ No

Sub-area workshops _____ Yes _____ No

Would you like to be on our mailing list? _____ Yes _____ No

What is the best way to keep you informed? _____ E-mail _____ Fax _____ Mail

SUMMARY REPORT – STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWS

Date: November 11, 2004

To: Dave Dickey, PE, Project Coordinator; URS Corporation

From: Harvey B. Gantt, FAIA; Gantt Huberman Architects

Re: CATS Center City
Streetcar Corridor

I. INTRODUCTION

Stakeholder interview sessions were included as a major part of the public involvement process. The interview instrument was a questionnaire designed to gather as much information from key business, civic, and neighborhood leaders who lived, in the area and were likely to be impacted by the streetcar project. These interviews were the initial thrust of the Streetcar project into the community, so the questionnaire was structured to gauge initial support for broad based city initiatives such as growth management, transportation, and public transportation. The final part of the interview was oriented to the streetcar corridor and issues associated with its development.

Our list of interviewees was derived from a variety of sources, including the Chamber of Commerce, Center City Partners, the Planning Commission, and by indigenous sources in the neighborhoods along the streetcar route. The list of key stakeholders numbered more than 150 persons, representing a good cross section of leaders who either lived, or worked within five minutes distance of the streetcar route.

From that list we selected and interviewed 42 persons in 31 sessions. The interviewees represented the following leadership categories:

<u>Category</u>	
Business	23
Civic/Institutional	4
Neighborhood	15

On average the interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes to one hour. Our team included myself, and Grace Uitenham-Mayfield from our office, and Kiera Terrell from CATS. On occasion, we were joined by Dave Dickey of URS.

II. SUMMARY OF RESPONSES:

A. Charlotte as a Livable City

It was noteworthy that more than two-thirds of the stakeholders had lived in Charlotte more than 15 years. Almost all of the stakeholders (99%) believed that Charlotte was an aggressively growing city that had good features to support livability. Most of them defined livability in terms of transportation and movement – particularly the ability to get to and from work and major activities. Quite a few of our interviewees suggested that the city could achieve greater livability with more sidewalks, more bike trails, and more green ways and parks. Some stakeholders (about 20%) mentioned social issues that needed improvements such as affordable housing, more focus on seniors, improved education, etc.

While most stakeholders were upbeat on Charlotte, they all expressed concern about things that might inhibit livability. The lack of public investment in education, and physical infrastructure (i.e. roads, public transportation, parks) was a common response from business as well as neighborhood leaders. But a majority of responses also felt that the community could suffer from uncontrolled growth and sprawl, and neglecting social issues like housing decay, building affordable housing, and environmental degradation.

B. Transportation

Most of the respondents (54%) gave Charlotte good marks for ease of movement to and from work. Almost 90% of stakeholders used their automobiles to commute to work. The average commuting time was between 15 and 30 minutes. More than 55% rated Charlotte traffic conditions to be from average to very good.

Public transportation was not a highly used service by most respondents. Nevertheless, 40% said they would consider it as a real alternative to the automobile. When asked what features or characteristics of a public transportation system would entice greater ridership by people with options, they listed a variety, ranging from the novelty and comfort of the vehicle (streetcar, light rail, fancy bus) to features of convenience and preferred destinations. An aggregate of 70% of the stakeholders listed convenience, safety, cleanliness, comfort and key destinations as important characteristics for good public transportation.

C. The Streetcar in Center City

The streetcar project was unanimously and positively received by the stakeholders. Almost all of them had some elementary knowledge of streetcar technology. It was noteworthy that no one questioned the proposed route of the streetcar, and many thought that various of the neighborhoods along the route could experience enhanced economic development.

Even with overwhelming support, stakeholders across the board, expressed mild concerns about its chances of successful implementation. A variety of opinions were expressed. The most common concerns heard were:

Some neighborhood leaders expressed concerns about additional takings for rights-of-way, and yet did not wish to give up automobile lanes to streetcar.

Will the streetcar cause more auto traffic on other streets – i.e. 3rd, 4th, and 5th streets.

Streetcar should not be a novelty – must move people efficiently.

While there seems to be an understanding that the streetcar must be made to work within existing right-of-way, most stakeholders (93%) were very open to the notion of expansive changes in the streetscape, to include more trees, streetcar stops that were well-designed, wider sidewalks, etc.

The most important stops along the streetcar route was almost unanimously agreed upon. Most respondents identified well-known locations like Johnson C. Smith University, Gateway Village, the Square, CPCC, and Presbyterian Hospital. What did not seem clear to most was how many stops were "appropriate" and how might that impact convenience, time of travel, and traffic safety.

What was most encouraging was the fact that 88% of those interviewed said they expected to use the streetcar, primarily because of its convenient route and connection to key destinations in the City. Of those who would ride, 30% felt that the fare should be uniform across CATS, with no distinction made for the type of transit used.

All of the stakeholders interviewed expressed interest in following the streetcar project as it developed and wanted to be contacted for future workshop sessions.

Appendix B-4
Public Meeting Summaries

**SUMMARY OF CENTRAL/ HAWTHORNE AVENUE
SUB-AREA COMMUNITY MEETING**

Date: April 26, 2005

To: Mr. Dave Dickey – URS Corporation

From: Mr. Harvey Gantt – Gantt Huberman Architects, PLLC

Re: Charlotte Center City Streetcar Project
Hawthorne/Central Avenue Sub-Area Community Meeting
Eastland Mall - Activity Room

Time: 6:30pm

Team Attendees:

Mr. Willie A. Noble, Senior Project Manager; Charlotte Area Transit System
Mr. Jerry Roberson; Assistant Project Manager; Charlotte Area Transit System
Mrs. Kiera Terrell, Public Information Specialist; Charlotte Area Transit System
Mr. Stan Leinwand; Charlotte Area Transit System
Ms. Linda Murdaugh, Coordinator Assistant; Charlotte Area Transit System
Mr. Dave Dickey, Vice President; URS Corporation
Mr. Mark Dorn; URS Corporation
Mr. Craig Amundsen; URS Corporation
Mr. David Showalter; URS Corporation
Mr. Williams Jones; URS Corporation
Mr. Brain Piascik, Transportation Planner; URS Corporation
Ms. Jan Anderson; RS & H
Mr. Vince; RS & H
Mr. Chris Oginrunde; Neighboring Concepts
Mr. Fran Reiner; HNTB
Mr. Harvey Gantt; Gantt Huberman Architects, PLLC
Ms. Grace Mayfield; Gantt Huberman Architects, PLLC

I. Introduction:

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Willie A. Noble, the CATS team leader for the Center City Streetcar Project. He extended greetings to the audience, introduced the project team members and reviewed the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

II. Presentation of the Central Avenue Corridor:

A brief review of the overall streetcar project was given by Willie Noble which included an historical reference to Charlotte's earlier experience with the streetcar. Noble also reviewed the fact that Charlotte was a part of a new trend in streetcar development – and outlined the number of cities that had, or were developing streetcars a part of their mass transit plans.

He reviewed the schedule for development and the phasing currently projected; (1). Trade Street Corridor from Johnson C. Smith University to Presbyterian Hospital or The Plaza projected for completion 2009; and (2). Beatties Ford Road from I-85 to Johnson C. Smith University – and The Plaza Central Avenue to Eastland legs projected for completion in 2017.

Mr. Noble then introduced Mr. Dave Dickey of URS Corporation who then proceeded in describing the routes, stops, and alignment options of the streetcar within the street right of way as curb running and median running. Dickey also spent some time discussing the end-of –line alternatives including the Presbyterian/Hawthorne Street area, The Plaza/central Avenue and Eastland Mall.

III. Audience Participation:

Following the presentation, the audience engaged in a lively discussion. Recorded below are a sampling of the many questions raised and the team responses.

Question: Why isn't Central prioritized for streetcar installation since it has the heaviest bus traffic? It is clear that Central/Hawthorne Avenue residents believe this leg should be installed first.

Response: The 2025 plan called for Trade Street to be the first Phase I of the Center City Streetcar Project. CATS funds must be spread out over a period of time and Trade Street will be the first Phase.

Question: A Charlotte Chamber member representing the East side asked was the project delayed or backed up at all?

Response: It appears that the member may have mixed up the Southeast and West Corridor Light Rail projects with Center City Streetcar Project.

Question: Will the buses remain on Central Avenue?

Response: Yes, it is likely that buses will remain on Central Avenue. It was noted that buses and streetcars on the same route may become redundant, and if so, CATS will evaluate.

Question: What is the fare of the new streetcar?

Response: That has yet to be determined.

Question: What is the impact of a dedicated lane on traffic?

Response: The studies are inconclusive.

Question: How often will the streetcar run? What is the frequency?

Response: The streetcar will run very frequently. As rider-ship increases, the number of streetcars in service will increase to accommodate passengers.

Question: Will there be platforms to wait for the streetcar?

Response: Yes, all stops will have shelters to protect from the elements and provide riders with a safe place to wait for the next Streetcar.

Citizen Comments:

Comments: Please do not destroy the Central Avenue median. It is a project that was recently funded and is not yet complete. This median was designed to beautify the neighborhood and boost traffic calming in these areas.

Comments: The community would like to see the bike lane preserved as well.

Comments: A native Los Angeles resident stated the median lane running streetcar works best in a streetcar setting.

Comment: Wherever the streetcar can have a designated lane, it should have it.

Comment: Attendees seemed to agree that The Plaza would be favored as a terminus point.

The meeting finally adjourned at approximately 8:15p.m. However, it is noted that numerous citizens engaged the project team members well past 8:30p.m.

Summary Report
April 26, 2005
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There were 63 people in attendance for the Central Hawthorne Public Meeting.
The attendance sheet for this Community Meeting is attached.

End Memo

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SUMMARY OF TRADE STREET SUB-AREA COMMUNITY MEETING

Date: April 28, 2005

To: Mr. Dave Dickey – URS Corporation

From: Mr. Harvey Gantt - Gantt Huberman Architects, PLLC

Re: Charlotte Center City Streetcar Project
Trade Street/Elizabeth Street Sub-Area Group
Carole Hoeffner Center

Time: 6:30pm

Team Attendees:

Mr. Willie A. Noble, Senior Project Manager; Charlotte Area Transit System
Mrs. Kiera Terrell, Public Information Specialist; Charlotte Area Transit System
Mr. Stan Leinwand; Charlotte Area Transit System
Ms. Linda Murdaugh, Coordinator Assistant; Charlotte Area Transit System
Mr. Dave Dickey, Vice President; URS Corporation
Mr. Mark Dorn; URS Corporation
Mr. Craig Amundsen; URS Corporation
Mr. David Showalter; URS Corporation
Mr. Williams Jones; URS Corporation
Mr. Brain Piascik, Transportation Planner; URS Corporation
Ms. Jan Anderson; RS & H
Mr. Vince; RS & H
Mr. Chris Oginrunde; Neighboring Concepts
Mr. Fran Reiner; HNTB
Mr. Harvey Gantt; Gantt Huberman Architects, PLLC
Ms. Grace Mayfield; Gantt Huberman Architects, PLLC

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A brief review of the overall streetcar project was given by Mr. Willie Noble which included an historical reference to Charlotte's earlier experience with the streetcar. Noble also reviewed the fact that Charlotte was a part of a new trend in streetcar development – and outlined the number of cities that had, or were developing streetcars a part of their mass transit plans.

Willie Noble notified the Trade Street Community members the circulator may extend outside of the I-277 loop.

Mr. Noble then introduced Mr. Dave Dickey of URS Corporation who presented the following couplet options for the Trade Street Corridor:

- Trade Street - bi-directional curb side running
- Trade Street – bi-directional median running
- Trade Street – 4th Street curbside running
- Trade Street – 5th Street curbside running

Dickey then reviewed the end of the line options for the Trade Street Corridor as follows:

1. Presbyterian Hospital
2. The Plaza and Central Avenues

Mr. Dickey assured the audience that the frequency of the service on Trade Street promises to be often. He further listed the potential amenities that may be found at each stop along this corridor as:

1. Platforms with shelters at all stops
2. Ramping for easy ADA access
3. Pedestrian operated stop lights for friendly use of the streetcar

III. Audience Participation:

Following the presentation, comments and questions were posed by the audience, and the responses are as follows:

Question: Is it the intention of CATS to replace the Gold Rush service?

Response: Possibly but it wouldn't happen until 2025 when the circulator is completed.

Question: What is the order of magnitude for funding for the project?

Response: It is too early to guess at funding amount at this time. At the end of conceptual design we will have a better idea of cost and possible funding avenues. All corridors include and assume we will get 50% federal funding. The conceptual design process is being funded by the ½ cent sales tax.

Question: Is the South Corridor project competing for the same funds as the Streetcar Project?

Response: Light-rail and Streetcar are not in competition for the same funds. CATS has six corridors and they are advancing them simultaneously, usually funding one corridor at a time. However, we are competing at a national level for federal funding.

Question: What other Streetcar systems has URS worked on?

Response: Portland, Seattle, Tampa, San Diego Salt Lake City. URS has had extensive experience in dealing with utilities.

Question: If there is a median running streetcar near Gateway Village would it interfere negatively with established and blossoming retail business along the corridor?

Response: Not necessarily. The median is being explored in the Gateway Village area to minimize conflicts with the right turning vehicle lanes and utilities.

Question: What is the projected population growth for the Uptown community?

Response: Preliminary studies indicate the population will double by 2025.

Citizen Comments:

Comments: There is so much going on on Trade Street that a couplet might make more sense and would be embraced by the community. The 4th Street couplet is preferable to the 5th Street couplet.

Comment: The curb running option may not be a good option for Trade Street.

Comment: Willie informed the community of the intent to go after "Small Starts" funding with the FTA. It is a new process, earmarked for smaller projects.

There were 15 people who attended the Trade Street Public Meeting. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:45p.m. Individual concerns and additional conversations took place well with citizens and team members until after 8:00p.m.

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April 28, 2005
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End Memo

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3.3 Other Communications

Meeting notices were placed on the following websites, brochures, and bulletin boards:

- Center City website (www.charlottecentercity.com)
- Johnson & Wales University student/faculty newsletter(Charlotte Campus Update) and information center
- YMCA Charlotte's bulletin board
- Northwest Community Development Corporation newsletter
- First & Third Ward neighborhood informational boards/distribution list
- Elizabeth Avenue Neighborhood Association Distribution list
- Businesses, libraries, churches, and schools along the corridor
- Rider Alerts brochures were placed on the Gold Rush, Trolley, and local buses 9, 7, 17, and 39

The City of Charlotte uses a cable government channel to inform its citizens of events and decisions. The channel uses an electronic billboard (also known as Electronic Bulletin Board) to post information for public meetings, road closings, employment opportunities, etc. These series of announcements air several times a day. Notifications for the public meeting were placed on the board from March 30, through May 4, 2005.

A press release from CATS Marketing Department was sent via email/fax to newspapers, radio, and television stations (WCCB-FOX Charlotte, WSOC-ABC Charlotte, WBTV-Charlotte, NBC6) throughout the Charlotte area. The initial press release was sent on April 20, 2005. A follow-up media advisory was also transmitted on April 24, 26, and May 4, 2005. In addition, a meeting announcement was placed on the City of Charlotte and CATS websites.

An electronic version of the meeting notice was emailed to all CATS employees, citizens, and organizations that are listed in the database on April 6, 2005. This meeting notice was also included in Corporate Communications C-Mail on April 13, 2005.

Media Stories:

- Charlotte Observer- April 23, 2005
- Charlotte Observer-April 24, 2005
- Mecklenburg Neighbors-May 1, 2005

4. Meeting Procedure

4.1 Presentation

Mr. Willie Noble reviewed the overall scope of the project and its various phases. He noted that the proposed Trade Street segment would run from Presbyterian Hospital area to Johnson C. Smith University, and is scheduled to be completed by 2009. Mr. Noble also pointed out that the Beatties Ford Road extension to I-85 and the Central Avenue extension to Eastland Mall are slated to be completed by the year 2017. Mr. Noble also

revealed that the fact that historically Charlotte had streetcars in the earlier half of the twentieth century and in large part the new proposed streetcar system tracks will follow the historical routes. Other points of discussion are as follows:

- Possible stop locations, alignment options and routes
- Pros and cons of median vs. curb running lanes
- Possible end of the line treatments

Following the question and answer period, the attendees were invited to take a closer look at the presentation boards to provide feedback on the project elements.

5. Summary of Public Input

Following the presentation, the audience engaged in a lively discussion. Recorded below are a sampling of the many questions raised and the team's response.

1. Question: How much will the project cost?

Response: It is too early to tell. This portion of the work covers 10% of the design and we will have an estimate of likely cost at the end of the year.

2. Question: Will the No. 7 bus be replaced?

Response: Buses will continue to serve the neighborhoods. It is likely that if the streetcar is successful then No. 7 may not be needed eventually.

3. Question: Can you provide us with more details about the maintenance facility and its location?

Response: The maintenance facility will provide the means and place for servicing the streetcars and should ideally be located near the streetcar route. A location for the maintenance facility has not been determined.

4. Question: How much will the fare be to ride a streetcar? Will it differ from the current bus fares or the light rail system?

Response: The streetcar fare has not been determined. Fare pricing for bus and light rail has been determined, but for streetcar various factors has to be considered including travel distance, convenience, consistency, etc. before we can determine a cost per ride.

5. Question: Will this project be funded to cover all phases?

Response: The intent of CATS is to request funding to complete all phases of the system. However, funding availability from federal and state sources is not a guarantee.

6. Question: How will Charlotte pay its portion of the streetcar funding?

Response: The ½ cent sales tax that is set aside for transit will be used for the local share of all CATS transit development.

7. Question: How many new jobs will be created?

Response: We believe that the streetcar project will stimulate economic development in the long term. It is difficult to determine the number of jobs that will result from development activity or construction work associated with the building the system.

8. Question: What is the environmental impact of the streetcar project?

Response: As a part of seeking federal funding, we are required to complete an environmental impact assessment. Once this phase is completed, we will be able to know exactly what sort of an impact the system will have on the environment. Furthermore, with more people riding transit (i.e. streetcars, light rail, buses, commuter rail, etc.) and with fewer cars on the street it is more likely that the air quality will become better.

9. Question: Is the streetcar going to get enough ridership? Is it truly a form of mass transportation?

Response: The streetcar has proven to be popular in other cities, and given the current ridership on the No. 7 we believe it will get substantial increases in ridership. Streetcars are considered one part of the layer mass transportation system CATS is building/

Citizen Comments

1. Comment: The second phase of this project should be definitely accelerated. 2017 is too long to wait for the system.

2. Comment: The turnaround should be located at the new bus transit center on the opposite side of the I-85 Bridge.

3. Comment: I am very concerned that if the project is not funded entirely, then our community will not get the benefits of the streetcar.

4. Comment: I see little change of the environment improvement because people will not abandon their cars.

There were 40 members of the community in attendance. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:10 p.m. A number of citizens stayed afterwards to review the drawings and provide feedback with the project team members.

Mr. Willie A. Noble extended greetings and invited the attendees and stakeholders to enjoy the lunch provided for this meeting. He allowed time for participants to get their lunch underway before thanking everyone for attending this lunchtime Sub-Area Public Meeting. He introduced the project team members and reviewed the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

I. Presentation of the Trade Street Corridor:

A brief review of the overall streetcar project was given by Mr. Willie Noble which included a Power Point presentation highlighting the history on where CATS derived the streetcar system idea. The system is designed to improve bus routes, create a more pedestrian friendly city and will investigate an east-west transit corridor that may eventually provide a transit line to the airport.

He described the project elements of the four phases of the streetcar project. The final phase known as the Uptown Circulator will have legs leading to the other transit corridors. He briefly reviewed the project schedule.

After acknowledging the design team and other city representatives who were present, Noble then introduced Mr. Craig Amundsen of URS Corporation.

Amundsen reviewed the approach of how the streetcar would function on Trade Street. He noted the five components for a successful streetcar project:

1. Simple and inexpensive
2. Minimize the impact on parking
3. Minimize construction
4. Blend with the existing neighborhoods
5. Create a pedestrian oriented environment

He also discussed the possible alignment options for Trade Street. The two options are:

1. Curb running – streetcar and stops are at curb side (right lane)
2. Median running – streetcar and stops are in left lane

Fran Reiner discussed land use and development opportunities surrounding the streetcar. He stated there would be primary and secondary redevelopment opportunities involving future and existing land use.

Members of the community were invited to attend one or more of five discussion groups that were located throughout the room. The discussion groups covered five neighborhoods along the Trade Street corridor:

1. The Government Center
2. Gateway Village
3. Arena

4. Tryon & Trade Street (The Square)
5. Charlotte Gateway Station

Participants were encouraged to discuss the following topics to optimize input from the community:

1. Future land uses
2. Great Southern Streets (Trade Street)
3. Median versus curb running streetcars
4. Unique design or Tryon Street model
5. Continuity or district diversity
6. Historical/Traditional/Contemporary Identity through street furniture

Each break-out session had several members of the community at each table. Facilitator recorded the thoughts and ideas of the participants and presented an overall view of the each groups' discussion.

5. Summary of Public Input

Following the presentation, the audience engaged in a lively discussion. Recorded below are a sampling of the many questions raised and the team's response.

Following are the comments and questions recorded by each facilitator for each of the discussion groups:

Multi-modal Station

- The multi-modal station is located in the wrong place Uptown
- The name of the station should be changed. It is easily confused with Gateway Village
- There is a major concern with safety for the median running streetcar
- The frequency of the streetcar should not exceed ten minutes
- The area surrounding the station should be heavily landscaped
- The community favors the variation of district furniture and amenities though the opinions differ on contemporary versus traditional schemes
- Make the streetcar and multi-modal stations convenient

Gateway Station

- If there is a streetcar running in the median, how will the streetcar pass under the bridge on Trade Street near Graham?
- Future land use issues included:
 - growth on 5th Street
 - on-street retail access to increase density and business to area
 - there should be a historic use of Trade Street as a Boulevard
 - this area is a historic gateway; should use Johnson and Wales Way and surrounding parcels as a gateway
- These were the ideas and concepts discussed for a ‘Great Southern Street’
 - trees are critical; it creates the southern environment
 - family identity
 - distinguish Trade from Tryon Street (promote the history of Trade Street)
 - create opportunities that activate the street (copier stores, dry cleaners)
 - Create outdoor rooms where people want to dwell, i.e., pockets parks filled with activity that insures security.
 - There is concern that if the streetcar is median running riders might only be commuters rather than retail customers
 - Curb running streetcars limit the use of valet parking for restaurants and deliveries for businesses
 - The streetcar could be a traffic calming measure
 - Severe grades on Trade Street at Sycamore limit retail opportunities
- Trade Street versus Tryon Street
 - Creating a unique identity, moving from station to station (shelters should signify a difference)
 - Use history to determine the different areas throughout the corridor
 - A “front porch neighborhood” creates a welcoming atmosphere

- Pockets of green space linked together creates a unique Boulevard
- Amenities of Trade Street
 - Historic and Traditional were the preferred street furniture choices
 - Trade should use the existing amenities from Gateway and J&W Way and build on it
 - Functional art makes people comfortable. A chess park could be a focal point
 - Increased lighting near the I-77 bridge could better connect Gateway Village to Wesley Heights. This area currently acts as a barrier.

Trade and Tryon Street

- Enhance station identity as it is the center of the city
- Median running streetcar preferred
- Stop location should be a block away from Trade/Tryon intersection
- A high priority should be placed on on-street retail

Government Center

- Pedestrian safety is a priority especially crossing at Elizabeth Avenue
- Based on history – trolley line used to run on Elizabeth Avenue
- Stop amenities could include coffee shops and newspaper stands
- The streetscape should keep its uniqueness reflecting the district’s purpose
- Combine taste with utility when choosing street furniture
- The streetcar itself could be the unifying element
- In favor of curb running for curb side boarding and safety

Arena

- Access for the visually impaired community and understanding of the system for the handicapped
- There are advantages to median running in the arena area

- Parking and circulation on game days are a concern
- There should be a unique quality for the arena district

There were a total of 70 members in attendance. The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:30p.m.

3.3 Other Communications

Meeting notices were placed on the following websites, brochures, and bulletin boards:

- Center City website (www.charlottecentercity.com)
- Johnson & Wales University student/faculty newsletter(Charlotte Campus Update) and information center
- Northwest Community Development Corporation newsletter
- First & Third Ward neighborhood informational boards/distribution list
- Elizabeth Avenue Neighborhood Association Distribution list
- Business, libraries, churches, and schools along the corridor
- Eastland Area Strategies Group distribution list
- Art & Science Council distribution list
- City Council Members distribution list
- Spanish translator present(project materials were available in Spanish)

The City of Charlotte uses a cable government channel to inform its citizens of events and decisions. The channel uses an electronic billboard (also known as Electronic Bulletin Board) to post information for public meetings, road closings, employment opportunities, etc. These series of announcements air several times a day. Notifications for the public meeting were placed on the board from June 6-23, 2005.

A press release from CATS Marketing Department was sent via email/fax to newspapers, radio, and television stations (WCCB-FOX Charlotte, WSOC-ABC Charlotte, WBTV-Charlotte, NBC6) throughout the Charlotte area. The initial press release was sent on June 17, 2005. A follow-up media advisory was also transmitted June 21-23, 2005. In addition, a meeting announcement was placed on the City of Charlotte and CATS websites.

An electronic version of the meeting notice was emailed to all CATS employees, citizens, and organizations that are listed in the database on June 16, 2005. This meeting notice was also included in Corporate Communications C-Mail on June 8th and 22nd and City Page June 17th ..

Media Stories:

- Charlotte Observer- June 20 & 22, 2005
- Metro Monitor, Inc.-(WSOC-ABC)-June 21, 2005
- Progressive Railroading.com-June 21, 2005
- Carolina Clean Air Coalition Weekly Air Updates
- News14

4. Meeting Procedure

4.1 Presentation

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Willie A. Noble, the CATS team leader for the Center City Streetcar Project. He extended greetings to the audience, introduced the project team members and reviewed the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

Approximately 35 members of the community attended the workshop.

I. Presentation of the Central Avenue Corridor:

A brief review of the overall streetcar project was given by Willie Noble. The streetcar will fulfill many roles as the Charlotte transit system continues to grow and improve.

He reviewed the project elements of the three corridors for which the streetcar is scheduled to run and the Uptown Circulator. They are listed as follows:

- 1) Trade Street Corridor will run from Johnson C. Smith University to Presbyterian Hospital or The Plaza projected for completion 2009
- 2) Beatties Ford Road extension to I-85 from Johnson C. Smith University
- 3) The Plaza/Central Avenue to Eastland Mall extensions
- 4) The Uptown Circulator which has changed since the initial concepts of the Streetcar system. It will no longer be designed to be a closed loop but will have legs leading to other transit corridors.

All work is scheduled to be complete in 2025.

The purpose of the streetcar is to improve efficiency and quality of CATS' two most heavily traveled bus routes. The installation of the streetcar system supports the 2010 Center City vision. It will be designed to serve and support the neighborhoods of Charlotte.

Noble explained the scope of the conceptual design phase and stated the project will be 10% complete when the conceptual design phase is completed in December 2005. The final design phase is scheduled to be completed in December 2006. Completion of the construction phase of the Trade Street Corridor is scheduled for summer 2009.

At this time it is still uncertain where the terminus for the Hawthorne/Central Avenue extension will be located. The choices are still Presbyterian Hospital or Central Avenue and The Plaza area. The design team has not completed the drafts of the analysis as of yet. The CSX line crossing is still an issue and viable options are still being investigated.

Mr. Noble then introduced Mr. Dave Dickey of URS Corporation who described the process in which URS Corporation will develop, design and install the streetcar. Their five design goals are:

- 1) Keep it simple and inexpensive
- 2) Minimize the loss parking
- 3) Minimize the impact of construction
- 4) Blend with the existing neighborhoods
- 5) Create a pedestrian oriented environment

Dickey then discussed the pros and cons of a curb-running and median-running streetcar. He informed the public that at this time, CATS is considering a curb-running alignment for the Hawthorne/Central Avenue corridor. This decision is not final but comments made in previous community meetings regarding the newly installed median have been considered.

Chris Ogunrinde presented a comparison of streetcar versus light-rail. He stated that he will focus on the quality of the built environment and the connectivity of existing neighborhoods with the new streetcar.

He then used each of the presentation boards to explain the design teams' concerns for the handicapped, wheel-chair accessible, visually and hearing impaired.

Stan Leinwand discussed ideas on street furniture and amenities. The Urban Design components define the quality and aesthetics of a neighborhood as well as the redevelopment possibilities as we move forward through the project.

Noble stated that CATS will work diligently not to destroy the existing streetscape but to enhance what is already present. It is not part of the Center City Streetcar budget to destroy and rebuild any of the existing amenities.

He also informed the public that CATS' "Art in Transit" program assigns artist to each stop to reflect that particular neighborhood's characteristics. The art work at each stop should reflect the culture and characteristic of the neighborhood.

Following the question and answer period, the attendees were invited to take a closer look at the presentation boards to provide feedback on the project elements.

5. Summary of Public Input

Following the presentation, the audience engaged in a lively discussion. Recorded below are a sampling of the many questions raised and the team responses.

Question: Are you looking in terms of land use when you speak in terms of redevelopment for 2017?

Response: Yes. We are looking at redevelopment in terms of land use. We are strictly focusing on the land use around the stops. Some land use alternatives are conducive to development from the streetcar.

Question: If CATS runs a curbside streetcar, will the bike lanes be maintained?

Response: Yes. We CATS will work to preserve them by diverting the bike lanes around the stops.

Question: How fast will the streetcar run on the city streets?

Response: The speed of the streetcar will not exceed 35 miles per hour.

Question: When the streetcar is installed, bus stops will be reduced. What will bus riders do to catch a bus? How will they get to it?

Response: Bus riders may have a little longer walk to the stops. Bus operations will be supplemented or eventually replaced.

Question: Traffic lights are integrated with the buses. Will the streetcar also be integrated with the traffic lights?

Response: Streetcars operate in the same lanes as cars; it will sit in traffic just as cars sit in traffic.

Question: Could you go over the funding and budget process again?

Response: Though we haven't applied yet, 50% of the funding will come through the Federal Transit Authority (FTA); 25% will come from the state of North Carolina and 25% will come from the local taxes. We have a definitely advantage with the transit growth and land use.

Question: Do streetcars qualify for federal funds?

Response: Yes, the streetcar qualifies for federal funds through the Small Starts program. It is new funding through a rewritten program designed to fund smaller transit projects.

Question: At one time funding for the streetcar was to be funding left over from the light rail funds, is this no longer the case?

Response: This is no longer the case. CATS seeks federal funds for all the transit corridors.

Question: What can neighborhood leaders do to help implement the streetcar project?

Response: Interact with your City Council representatives to let your wishes be known regarding development and land use surrounding the stops.

Question: What type of density is expected for this corridor?

Response: Density will likely increase along the corridor. Please keep in mind that Central Avenue is currently the heaviest traveled transit corridor.

Question: What type of development should we expect within a ¼ mile radius of a streetcar stop?

Response: Please keep in mind that the reference to the ¼ mile radius is intended to show how far people are willing to walk to the streetcar stop. It is not intended to focus on land use.

Questions: During construction how will CATS manage traffic and bus routes along the corridor?

Response: At the time of construction CATS will maintain access to and from businesses and neighborhoods at all times. CATS will also create a through-way for bus operations.

Question: How will the disabled use the system and sidewalks?

Response: When developing the streetcar system, CATS will gladly comply with all ADA requirements in order to accommodate all riders. This is necessary in order to qualify for federal funding.

Citizen Comments:

- We would like to see the first phase of the streetcar go out to The Plaza-Midwood neighborhood.
- The community would like to see the median remain.
- Please know that Rosehaven and Winterfield are high density areas.

There were a total of 35 members from the community in attendance. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00p.m. However, it is noted that numerous citizens engaged the project team members well past 8:30p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Willie A. Noble, the Senior Project Manager for the Center City Streetcar Project. He extended greetings to the audience, introduced the project team members and reviewed the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

I. Presentation of the Beatties Ford Road Corridor:

Noble reviewed the overall scope of the project and its various phases. He noted that CATS has met with other city entities including CDOT, City Planning and Charlotte City Center Partners to seek their input on the streetcar project. CATS will continue to seek input from the public to ensure that the streetcar system is an asset to the community.

The streetcar system will be implemented in four phases:

1. The Trade Street segment will run from Johnson C. Smith University to the Presbyterian Hospital area or Central and The Plaza area. The terminus for this route has yet to be determined.
2. Beatties Ford Road extension will run from Johnson C. Smith University to the I-85.
3. Central/Hawthorne Avenue extension will run from Presbyterian Hospital or Central and The Plaza area out to Eastland Mall.
4. The Uptown Circulator, whose design has recently expanded, will no longer operate as a closed loop but will operate in the form of a 'spider' reaching out to the different areas of transit connecting riders back to the streetcar system.

We are in the initial phase of planning the streetcar system. This phase is known as Conceptual design. This phase is scheduled to conclude in December 2005. At that time only 10% of the project design will be complete. We will then move into Preliminary Design of the first phase of the Trade Street segment followed by Final Design which is scheduled to conclude in December 2006. The Construction phase will run from 2007 and is scheduled to conclude in 2009. The Trade Street phase of the streetcar system will be up and running in summer 2009. Project schedules are subjected to change.

Portland, Oregon is the streetcar model CATS is using for the Center City Streetcar Project. The approach taken will be similar in that we will keep it simple and inexpensive. Our goal is to minimize impacts to parking and minimize construction. CATS will work diligently to blend with existing neighborhoods and create a pedestrian oriented environment.

Noble noted the alignment options as curb running and median running. No decisions had been made on which option which would be used on the Beatties Ford Road corridor.

Chris Ogunrinde addressed the urban design portion of the streetcar project. He states the streetcar will be new and simple. In a continued effort to consider accessibility issues the streetcar system will be friendly and passenger-oriented. The stops will be developed as

amenities to each community. The quarter mile radius walk to each stop should be reflective and memorable.

Mr. Stan Leinwand introduced the streetscape elements that will be present at each stop. The stop amenities will be attractive and comfortable. There will be more amenities in the Center City but the extensions will have them as well. The design choices are historical, traditional and contemporary. Examples of amenities were displayed on Power Point and on display on boards throughout the room. Examples of amenities were shown from Tryon Street South Park Area and Gateway Village.

Following the question and answer period, the attendees were invited to take a closer look at the presentation boards to provide feedback on the project elements.

5. Summary of Public Input

Following the presentation, the audience engaged in discussions with various Team members. Many residents reviewed the boards and asked question regarding land use and redevelopment options. Recorded below are a sampling of the many questions raised and the team responses.

Question: Upon completion of phase one, what will happen to transit options on Beatties Ford Road to I-85?

Response: Bus operations will continue without interruption during the first phase.

Question: What is the time frame for implementation of the streetcar?

Response: The Trade Street corridor will be completed first in 2009. The extensions are scheduled to be complete in 2017. It is unclear which extension will be first. Eventually the streetcar will replace buses.

Question: What will be the impact on residences and businesses during construction?

Response: One lane will be shut down during construction but access to homes and businesses will be maintained throughout the construction phase.

Question: Will artist be considered for the Beatties Ford Road corridor?

Response: Yes. CATS Arts in Transit program will choose an artist for each stop along the corridor.

Question: Once the streetcar is running, will bike lanes be implemented?

Response: Bike lanes have not been addressed for the Beatties Ford Road corridor primarily because they are not present now.

Question: Will handicapped accessibility concerns be accommodated?

Response: Yes. The streetcar system is totally accessible.

Question: What if we don't receive federal funding will CATS still build the streetcar with accessibility issues in mind?

Response: Yes, the system will be completely accessible even if federal funds are not available.

Question: Will there be shelters to keep riders dry?

Response: Yes. The streetcar system has stops not stations but they will be protected.

Question: Why does Johnson C. Smith University have a median running streetcar lane?

Response: The median running streetcar near Johnson C. Smith University is designed more as a traffic calming measure.

Question: Will there be monitors to address safety issues at each stop?

Response: CATS has not gotten that far in the design process.

Question: Will there be lights to give people time to cross near the stops?

Response: Yes. CATS will utilize existing stops and will add and improve where necessary.

There was a total of 35 members from the community in attendance. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:30p.m. A number of stakeholders stayed afterwards to review drawings and ways and to discuss the design with the project team members.

**Public Meeting Summary
Center City/ Streetcar Corridor
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
Chamber Room
600 East 4th Street
September 27, 2005**

1. Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this meeting was to update the public and receive input mainly on the proposed conceptual alignment and the following items:

- Role of the Streetcar
- CATS approach to the streetcar project
- Streetcar operations
- Urban Design-amenities along the corridor
- Concerns/Issues along the corridor

2. Meeting Date, Time, and Location

The Center City Streetcar team held this meeting at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center on September 27, 2005. The meeting room was located in the Chamber Room (main room), CH-14 & 18 from 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

3. Public Notices

3.1 Mailings

A total of 1, 567 notices announcing the meetings were mailed on September 9, 2005 to people who are listed in the Center City Streetcar database. The list consists of council members, city wide employees, neighborhood leaders, media representative, churches, and other citizens who have an interest in the streetcar project.

3.2 Newspaper Announcements

An ad was placed in the local newspapers persuading interested citizens to come out and learn more about the project and to provide input. Below you will find a list of newspapers and dates that were used to publicize the meeting:

Charlotte Observer	Sunday, September 18, 2005
The Charlotte Post	Thursday, September 22, 2005
The La Noticia	Wednesday, September 21, 2005

3.3 Other Communications

Meeting notices were placed on the following websites, brochures, and bulletin boards:

- Center City website (www.charlottecentercity.com)
- Northwest Community Development Corporation distribution list
- First & Third Ward neighborhood informational boards/distribution list
- Elizabeth Avenue Neighborhood Association Distribution list
- Business, libraries, churches, and schools along the corridor
- Eastland Area Strategies Group distribution list
- City Council Members distribution list
- Spanish Translator was present(project materials were available in Spanish)
- Rider Alert brochures were placed on the Gold Rush, Trolley, and local bus service 9, 7, 17, 39.

The City of Charlotte uses a cable government channel to inform its citizens of events and decisions. The channel uses an electronic billboard (also known as Electronic Bulletin Board) to post information for public meetings, road closings, employment opportunities, etc. These series of announcements air several times a day. Notifications for the public meeting were placed on the board from September 13- 27, 2005.

A press release from CATS Marketing Department was sent via email/fax to newspapers, radio, and television stations (WCCB-FOX Charlotte, WSOC-ABC Charlotte, WBTV-Charlotte, NBC6) throughout the Charlotte area. The initial press release was sent on September 21, 2005. A follow-up media advisory was also transmitted on September 27, 2005. In addition, a meeting announcement was placed on the City of Charlotte and CATS websites.

An electronic version of the meeting notice was emailed to all CATS employees, citizens, and organizations that are listed in the database on September 19, 2005. This meeting notice was also included in Corporate Communications C-Mail on September 13, 2005 and City Source September 14, 2005.

Media Stories:

- Metro Monitor, Inc.
- Carolina Clean Air Coalition Weekly Air Updates
- Charlotte Observer-October 24, 2005

4. Meeting Procedure

4.1 Presentation

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Willie A. Noble, Senior Project Manager for the Center City Streetcar Project. He extended greetings to the audience, introduced the project teams, including URS Corporation, RS&H, Neighboring Concepts, HNTB, Elcon Associates and Gantt Huberman Architects. He then reviewed the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

It is the goal of CATS that the public, specifically this audience, will become thoroughly familiar with the Center City Streetcar project. Mr. Noble reviewed how the streetcar will operate and asked for the public to provide input and comments in the question and answer session immediately following the presentation. Comments were welcomed on the proposed alignment, proposed streetcar stops and the next step in the process. Attendees were invited to three break-out rooms to review the display boards showing all three corridors. He encouraged everyone to complete and return the comment cards.

The maps in the break-out rooms displayed all of the proposed stops. Mr. Noble stated, "Please note the names of the stops are "working" or temporary names. There is a naming process in which CATS performs to name all stops. The Streetcar project will go through the naming procedure for the streetcar stops."

PRESENTATION OF THE CENTER CITY STREETCAR PROJECT

Mr. Noble introduced the project to the audience. He listed the key steps of progress of the project to date. He described the role of the Advisory Board members and stated their purpose and role in helping CATS decide what would be most acceptable in each neighborhood affected by the streetcar. He then acknowledged all Advisory Board members that were present. Mr. Noble discussed the following:

The role of the streetcar

- The streetcar will increase efficiency on the top two utilized bus routes
- The streetcar is more efficient because it's a larger vehicle and able to carry more passengers on less trips
- The streetcar supports the 2010 Center City Vision Plan
- It supports various neighborhoods and sparks economic development potential
- Eventually an East-West spine will link all five (5) corridors to Uptown

The streetcar is one of six (6) CATS transit corridors being advanced at once. The Conceptual Design of the project will be finalized in December 2005. At the end of this phase ten (10) percent of the project will be complete. The next two (2) phases are Preliminary Engineering and Final Engineering.

The Trade Street corridor is the critical element of the project in that it is designed to connect Johnson C. Smith University and Johnson & Wales University to Presbyterian Hospital while servicing both transportation centers, i.e., that is the existing transportation center and the proposed center to be located on Graham near Trade Street.

Elements of the project

- The first portion of the project will operate along Trade Street running from Johnson C. Smith University to Presbyterian Hospital or to The Plaza and Central Avenues. This phase of the project is to be completed and running in the year 2009.
- The second portion of the project will be to add the extensions of the Beatties Ford Road and the Hawthorne/Central Avenue corridors. This work is scheduled to be completed in 2017.
- The final phase of the project will be the Center City “spokes” which are extensions off the new streetcar routes, revised through analysis, to create a connection through the neighborhoods. This work is tentatively scheduled to be complete in the year 2025.

CATS approach to Center City Streetcar Project

- CATS will seek to keep construction and implementation simple and inexpensive
- CATS will seek to minimize the loss of parking along the corridors
- CATS will seek to minimize the impact of lengthy and complex construction. The goal will be to build and install approximately 700 feet of track in a three week timeframe
- The streetcar stops and street furniture will blend with the neighborhoods it services
- The streetcar will hopefully enhance a pedestrian-oriented environment

Noble noted that the installation of the streetcar track is a relatively quick process. Even so, CATS will build temporary bridges to allow access to driveways and parking lots affected by the construction.

Streetcar Operations

- The streetcar will possess a higher passenger capacity than a bus
- The cost to build and operate a streetcar system is less than the cost of light rail
- The streetcar will be only one element of a larger system of buses and light rail.
- Other vehicles will be able to operate in the streetcar lanes
- The streetcar will operate in a curb running lane on Beatties Ford Road and Hawthorne/Central Avenues
- It will operate in a median running lane in selected areas along the Trade Street corridor
- It will operate in a three lane section in some areas

There will be six (6) stops along the Beatties Ford Road corridor. There will be 12 stops along the Hawthorne/Central Avenue corridor. And there will be thirteen (13) stops along Trade Street. Streetcar stops are more frequent than light rail but less stops than an average bus route. The locations of the stops chosen are to compliment pedestrian oriented-environments.

Amenities Along the Stops

- There will be ticket machines to administer tickets located at the stops as well as signage to display schedule information
- All stops will have ADA accessible ramps for boarding
- There will be ample lighting and well marked pedestrian crossing zones to promote safety
- Each stop will have a shelter, benches, leaning rails and trash receptacles
- All stops will be landscaped and display art work

Mr. Noble then showed computer simulated slides of what the streetcar system could look like in Center City Charlotte.

He noted that there were project elements that have yet to be resolved. For example, CATS has not found a location for the maintenance facility for the streetcar project. This element is important because the vehicles will need to be serviced, maintained and stored when necessary. It is still unresolved on how and where to terminate the first phase. And a major unresolved issue of the project is the implementation and funding of the project.

Funding

Noble discussed the funding of the project. A portion of the projects' funding will come from the half-cent sales tax and a portion of it will come from funding that CATS will apply from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding. CATS is poised to apply for funds from the Small Starts Program. He noted that all phases of the streetcar project cannot be built at once because Small Starts Projects cannot exceed a \$250M project total in order to qualify for these funds.

Schedule

The proposed project schedule is as follows:

- 2005 – Completion of Conceptual Design
- 2006 – Submit FTA Small Starts application for proposed funding
- 2017 – Complete two major phases of the project
- 2025 – Complete all phases of the project

Upcoming activities

Following are the next steps or activities that CATS will be performing for the forward progress of the Center City Streetcar Project:

- Continue coordination with Elizabeth Avenue streetscape
- Wrap-up the planning and urban design effort
- CATS will complete the environment documented study
- Complete the operation and implementation plans, including funding

If more information is desired please go to the CATS website at:
www.ride.tranist.org

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Question: How will bike lanes be impacted by the streetcar?

Response: Along the streetcar corridors, curb-side running bike lanes will be maintained. The bike lanes will be moved behind the streetcar stops. It may not be safe to ride bikes along the tracks.

Question: When service begins will it at least run from Johnson C. Smith University to Presbyterian Hospital?

Response: Yes. The Trade Street line will operate between those two destinations.

Question: Will overhead wiring be integrated into the existing plan for the streetcar?

Response: New power poles and buried power lines will be in the Elizabeth Avenue area. The Grubbs plan has allotted for the cost of poles and underground wiring in their plan. CATS has not budgeted a cost for this work.

Question: Is the Center City Streetcar Project working in conjunction with the West Corridor transit line?

Response: Yes, the Center City Streetcar project is advancing at a different schedule than the West Corridor but they are working together.

Question: What will be the noise levels of the streetcar as it runs through the neighborhoods?

Response: Streetcars are relatively quiet vehicles, on straight tracks. Curves and bends may generate some noise. Overall the system is relatively quiet.

Question: Is it possible to place the power lines underground while the ground is being dug up for the tracks?

Response: The funding mechanism is not in-place for this type of work. CATS committed to look into this possibility further.

Question: Charlotte has serious traffic problems will the streetcar help in this area?

Response: It is believed from transit modeling that the streetcar will help alleviate some of the traffic and transit challenges Charlotte faces.

Question: What are the demographics of the streetcar riders?

Response: The streetcar may replace the existing bus lines along Central Avenue and Beatties Ford Road. Therefore, many streetcar riders may be former bus riders on these two major transit corridors.

Question: Will the streetcar eliminate the bus routes along Central Avenue permanently?

Response: No, the streetcar will not eliminate the buses altogether. Buses still serve a great deal of the community off the main corridors.

Question: Will the streetcar impact traffic on Independence Blvd?

Response: No, the streetcar will not impact traffic on Independence Blvd at all.

Question: Will the streetcar be handicapped accessible?

Response: Yes, the streetcar will be handicapped accessible. There will be a bridge-plate to accommodate wheelchair and stroller users.

Question: What is the major decision factor regarding whether the streetcar will stop at Presbyterian Hospital or the Plaza?

Response: Real Estate. Rail lines are the major issue to overcome. CATS must bridge the existing rail in order to get out to the Plaza.

ADDITIONAL CITIZEN COMMENTS

Comments were transcribed from comment cards collected by CATS.

Comments: Please start the meetings no earlier than 7:00 PM.

Comments: Please do not use transit dollars for unnecessary power conduit. Other funding sources will be needed if this work is done at this time.

Comments: The presentation was excellent!

Comment: Many citizens were concerned about the cost of riding the streetcar.

Comment: Please be mindful of the cyclist needs. Please include bike racks at the stops.

SUMMARIZED COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

Comments have been divided into six subject categories:

- Alignment Considerations
- Platform Comfort and Aesthetics
- Bicycle Issues
- Costs and Operations
- Construction, Traffic, and Phasing
- Transportation System Integration and Routes

Alignment Considerations:

- How does The Plaza stop work, does it go around one way on Central, Thomas, Morningside, and The Plaza?
- Consider closing Sunnyside Avenue, moving the development over, and creating a wider transit road north of Independence Blvd.
- Could the streetcar ever extend to South Park?
- Why not use Davidson Street instead of McDowell for the Belmont Spur?
- Reconsider a spur going through Belmont neighborhood (to Davidson).
- Consider an alternative alignment from Presbyterian Hospital to The Plaza area (Hawthorne to 5th or 7th Street to Caswell to Pecan)

Platform Comfort and Aesthetics:

- Install safety features at all curbside stops such as timed crossing, crosswalks, pedestrian crossing signals, lighting.
- Will the streetcar be handicapped accessible?
- Provide prettier trashcans than Portland did with landscaping.
- Provide emergency phones / panic buttons at shelters.
- Will the landscaping still be there for median stops?
- What determines the size of shelters? They need to fit at least 10-12 people.

- There will be a greenway at the creek in between Arnold Dr. and Masonic Dr. This would be a good pedestrian route to the stop from the Merry Oaks and Commonwealth neighborhoods. Maybe incorporate the platform closer to where the greenway crosses Central.
- Central & Briar Creek development and the development of Renfrow-Plummer properties needs to be pedestrian oriented with at-sidewalk buildings, vertical elevations to provide both residential and retail density to support the streetcar. These developments also need pedestrian access to the platforms.
- Why is the placement of the end-of-line platform at Eastland Mall so far from the mall? Why can't it be incorporated adjacent to the mall itself?
- Will the streetscape improvement be part of the project?

Bicycle Issues:

- How many bikes could fit on the streetcar?
- Can you put bikes on during rush hour?
- Would you have to get your bike off the streetcar if a handicapped person gets on and needs the space or will there be separate wheelchair and bicycle facilities?
- Will there be covered bike parking / lockers at stops in case a bike cannot get on at any time?
- How will the bikes be safely routed on the portion of Elizabeth Avenue that will have no bike lanes and that have curb-side alignment? How will they be incorporated into the idea of switching from median to curbside running for Trade & Tryon?
- The map shows no bike lane bypass around the platform at Landsale Dr. / Rosehaven Dr. and Eastway, or any stop on Briar Creek, Arnold, Morningside, Veterans, and The Plaza. Will there be a safe way for bikes to get around the streetcar there?
- Central between Wembly and Morningside is narrow, and might restrict a bicycle lane, but re-development of the properties between these roads would provide room for a bike lane on Central Avenue, particularly from the greenway to Wembly. If there is not room for a bike lane, then safe access for bikers to leave Central and get onto the greenway and down to Commonwealth should be created for bicyclists to connect to Uptown.

Costs and Operations:

- What will be the fare system?
- What is the operation plan for serving end-to-end?
- Where will the maintenance facility be?
- What will the hours of operation be?

- Will the fare be the same as the bus or LRT?
- Will the redevelopment of Hawthorne to include the turn lanes/bike lanes/and curbside alignment affect the Sunday street parking on Hawthorne for church services?
- Be careful where you place the maintenance facility.

Construction, Traffic, and Phasing:

- Can overhead power lines be put under ground as part of the streetcar project?
- What will be the noise levels of the streetcar as it runs through the neighborhoods?
- Make the Beatties Ford section happen sooner.
- Make the Central Avenue section happen sooner.
- Why could it not make it to The Plaza in the first phase?
- What will be the phasing on Center City Spokes?
- Will there be traffic impacts at the Trade/Tryon intersection with the road diet/change of alignment?
- Will streetcar ridership help alleviate traffic conditions on Independence?
- How long will construction take?

Transportation System Integration and Routes:

- Will it integrate with the West LRT corridor?
- Will it connect to North Commuter Line?
- Will there be connections to Southern LRT?
- Will there be connection to Southeastern LRT?
- Will there be connection to Northeastern LRT?
- Will the light rail be in Trade Street?

There were 100 members of the community present for this very important Public Meeting. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:45p.m. Most of the attendees moved to the breakout rooms to review drawings to discuss the project further with CATS team members.

CATS Center City Streetcar Project

Meeting: March 7, 2006
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Trade Street Corridor Sub Area Advisory Group Meeting

Attendees:	Robert Bischoff	Advisory Board Member
	Dennis Marsoun	Advisory Board Member
	Wanda Towler	Advisory Board Member
	Virginia Woolard	Advisory Board Member
	Willie Noble	CATS
	Dave Dickey	URS
	Brian Piascik	URS
	Stan Leinwand	CATS
	Jerry Roberson	CATS
	Keira Terrell	CATS
	Linda Murdaugh	CATS
	Harvey Gantt	Gantt Huberman Architects

Willie Noble, CATS Senior Project Manager, opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees. He noted that it had been some time since Advisory Meetings were held last fall. The delay in meeting was to ensure that they had new information to share, and the need to further define the concept design. In his remarks, Noble covered the following items:

- (a) Announced the date of the public meeting on March 16, and encouraged the advisory group to come out and bring their neighbors.
- (b) Described a new initiative by the Federal Transportation Administration "The Small Starts Program." He believes the program funding criteria fits well with the Streetcar project (under 250 million dollars) and indicated that CATS would be pursuing funding.
- (c) Outlined the agenda for the meeting:
 - Review streetcar manufacturers.
 - Presentation of urban design program and principles.
 - Presentation of concept design for shelters.
 - An analysis of potential location for the Streetcar maintenance facility.
- (d) He concluded his remarks by outlining the steps that would lead to final design and construction. He noted that the streetcar project would go before the MTC, and key decisions would have to be made on priorities of funding. The streetcar project competes as one of five major corridors.

CATS Center City Streetcar Project

Mr. Noble completed his presentation, and turned the meeting over to Dave Dickey of URS. Dickey reviewed adjustments made in stop locations in the Rozzelle's Ferry / Wesley Heights area along Trade Street.

Stan Leinwand followed with an extensive discussion of the urban design principles along the Trade Street corridor.

Dave Dickey and Harvey Gantt presented the proposed concept design for the shelters along the corridor.

Dave completed the presentation with a discussion of five potential locations for a maintenance facility, and a review of the various models for streetcars.

A discussion followed, primarily centered on the potential location of a maintenance facility in the Gateway area. Even though the URS team felt that they could camouflage the maintenance operations in a structure housing parking and other functions, some members of the Advisory Committee strongly objected.

In general, the balance of the discussion period indicated solid approval for all of the proposals related to urban design, shelters, and streetcar manufacturer's models of potential cars.

The meeting ended at approximately 8:00 PM.

Distribution: Attendees
File

CATS Center City Streetcar Project

Meeting: March 8, 2006
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Hawthorne/Central Avenue Sub-Area Advisory Group Meeting

Attendees:	Debra Gilbert	Advisory Board Member
	John Nichols	Advisory Board Member
	Tom Poston	Advisory Board Member
	Josh Saah	Advisory Board Member
	Michael Smith	Advisory Board Member
	Marvin Snyder	Advisory Board Member
	Jerry Roberson	CATS
	Kiera Terrell	CATS
	Linda Murdaugh	CATS
	Stan Leinwand	CATS
	Brian Piascik	URS
	Harvey Gantt	Gantt Huberman Architects

Jerry Roberson noted in opening the meeting that Willie Noble would not be in attendance and that he, as associate project manager, would be substituting. He proceeded to give an outline on the meeting's agenda and purpose and reviewed the following:

- (a) Announced the date of the public meeting on March 16, and encouraged attendance by neighborhood group members.
- (b) Described the Small Starts Program newly introduced by the FTA. The program's funding criteria addresses small transit projects in the 250 million dollar range. CATS is looking into pursuing streetcar funding under this program.
- (c) Roberson discussed next steps in the process. He noted that the project would soon be reviewed by the MTC in June/July with hopes that a decision would be made to move forward in September.

Stan Leinwand of CATS followed Roberson and reviewed the urban design concepts and principles for the Trade Street Corridor. This was followed by a discussion of the uniqueness of Trade Street when compared to other important "signature" streets like Tryon Street. It was pointed out that some aspects of the urban design standards may be appropriate in the extensions to Central Avenue and Beatties Ford Road.

Leinwand and Harvey Gantt then reviewed the concept design for the streetcar shelters. They traced the evolution of the design and pointed out that the concept embraced the need to be distinctive, compatible with other shelters previously built (like Tryon Street), and adaptable to both median running and curbside stops. The shelter design was received favorably.

Brian Piascik reviewed changes in the stop locations in the Five Points / Wesley Heights Area. He also reviewed the survey of streetcar manufacturers and the models of various streetcars that might be selected.

CATS Center City Streetcar Project

Piasek concluded the presentation by reviewing the sites for the proposed maintenance facility. One site located in the vicinity of the Plaza/Central Avenue area was favorably received by the Advisory Board members. That site had the benefit of extending the first phase to the Central Avenue area, which was seen as beneficial.

During the question/answer period, the following questions arose:

Q: Will the shelter design on Trade Street extend to the extensions?

A: The team responded "Yes." The modifications may come in the size or length of shelters and in minor adjustments between curb and median running stops.

Q: How do you incorporate public art?

A: Public art may be incorporated in elements of the shelters - such as at wind screens, paving, seating, etc.

Q: Will the streetcar design be modern or traditional?

A: The design is likely to be modern, rather than traditional. Traditional design would limit the passenger capacity of the streetcar, making them less attractive for maximizing ridership.

The meeting ended at approximately 8:00 PM.

Distribution: Attendees
File

CATS Center City Streetcar Project

Meeting: March 8, 2006
6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Beatties Ford Road Sub-Area Advisory Group Meeting

Attendees:	Kelly Alexander	Advisory Board Member
	Calvin Banks	Advisory Board Member
	Sarah Heinrich	Advisory Board Member
	Gwenarda Isley	Advisory Board Member
	William Lisk	Advisory Board Member
	Aaron McKeithan	Advisory Board Member
	Jerry Roberson	CATS
	Stan Leinwand	CATS
	Kiera Terrell	CATS
	Linda Murdaugh	CATS
	Brian Piascik	URS
	Harvey Gantt	Gantt Huberman Architects

Jerry Roberson noted in opening the meeting that Willie Noble would not be in attendance and that he, as associate project manager, would be substituting. He proceeded to give an outline on the meeting's agenda and purpose and reviewed the following:

- (a) Announced the date of the public meeting on March 16, and encouraged attendance by neighborhood group members.
- (b) Described the Small Starts Program newly introduced by the FTA. The program's funding criteria addresses small transit projects in the 250 million dollar range. CATS is looking into pursuing streetcar funding under this program.
- (c) Roberson discussed next steps in the process. He noted that the project would soon be reviewed by the MTC in June/July with hopes that a decision would be made to move forward in September.

Stan Leinwand of CATS followed Roberson and reviewed the urban design concepts and principles for the Trade Street Corridor. This was followed by a discussion of the uniqueness of Trade Street when compared to other important "signature" streets like Tryon Street. It was pointed out that some aspects of the urban design standards may be appropriate in the extensions to Central Avenue and Beatties Ford Road.

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Brian Piascik reviewed changes in the stop locations in the Five Points / Wesley Heights Area. He also reviewed the survey of streetcar manufacturers and the models of various streetcars that might be selected.

CATS Center City Streetcar Project

Piascik completed his presentation by reviewing the potential sites for the streetcar maintenance facility. One of the sites, Beatties Ford Road at the Brookshire Freeway, was of great interest to the Advisory Board members. They asked questions related to the size of the building, the architecture, the amount of investment, and the potential extension of the line for an additional stop on Beatties Ford Road. The Advisory Committee was enthusiastic on locating the vehicle maintenance on the Beatties Ford Road site. Some members expressed a desire to "lobby" for location to the site - seeing its placement there as an asset for improving the appearance at the entrance to the interstate/gateway.

Following a lively, but positive Q & A.

The meeting ended at approximately 8:05 PM.

Distribution: Attendees
File

CATS Center City Streetcar Project

Meeting: March 16, 2006
6:30 PM
Charlotte Government Center
Room 267
Community Meeting

Attendees:	Willie Noble	CATS
	Jerry Roberson	CATS
	Stan Leinwand	CATS
	Kiera Terrell	CATS
	Linda Murdaugh	CATS
	Dave Dickey	URS
	Brian Piascik	URS
	Tom Furmaniak	LTK Associates
	Harvey Gantt	Gantt Huberman Architects

Introduction and Project Update

Willie Noble, CATS project manager, called the meeting to order following introduction of key staff. He proceeded to give an update of the project's timeline, route adjustments and re-alignments since the last community meeting in September 2005. He noted that CATS was seeking to initiate the federal portion of the funding for the Streetcar project through the new "Small Starts" program for small projects up to \$250,000,000 project cost. He thought that the project had an excellent chance of being favorably considered.

Noble then proceeded to outline next steps. Most immediate would be presentation in May to the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) where the Streetcar concept design would be evaluated and a priority for moving forward would be up for consideration. He reminded the audience that the Streetcar project competed with the other five corridors for priority in funding and implementation.

Noble then closed his introductory comments by outlining the agenda for the balance of the meeting:

- A review of vehicle maintenance sites
- A survey of models and manufacturers of streetcar vehicles.
- A description of the Trade Street Urban Design Vision
- A presentation of the prototype streetcar shelter design

He noted that following the presentation the audience would have opportunity for questions and answers and to interact with CATS and URS team members.

Brian Piascik of URS Corporation reviewed the potential sites that had been studied or will be studied for a vehicle maintenance facility. Sites identified were:

- Brookshire Freeway and Beatties Ford Road.
- 1-77 Ramp at Fifth Street in Gateway Area

CATS Center City Streetcar Project

- Gateway Site in Third Ward
- Clement Avenue Site in the Plaza/Central Area
- Lamar Avenue Site 17

Piascik outlined the assets and liabilities associated with each site, noting that size of land area, surrounding land uses, and neighborhood support could impact their viability or chance of selection.

He then showed slides of the potential aesthetics and architectural features that a maintenance facility might have to meet the measure of compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood.

Tom Furmaniak of LTK Associates made a presentation on the various streetcar models that may meet CATS standards for passenger capacity, accessibility, design, and other amenities. All of the manufacturers of streetcar models were European or Asian companies. There were eight (8) models shown.

Stan Lienwand followed with a presentation of the urban design vision for Trade Street. He noted that Trade Street was a very important street and the urban characteristics should be reflective of the area's history. Characteristics of the streetscape design might extend to the routes out Beatties Ford Road and Central Avenue.

Harvey Gantt of Gantt Huberman Architects presented the evolution of the streetcar shelter concept design. He noted that the design needed to have its own unique character, and yet not seem "foreign" to the existing "signature" shelters built along North Tryon Street. The shelters also had to be readily adaptable to the size and passenger requirements for routes beyond the Center City-Trade Street Corridor. Also noted was the degree to which each shelter and station could accommodate public art.

Gantt invited the audience to come for a closer look at the design concepts.

Following Gantt's presentation, Willie Noble fielded a few questions then adjourned the meeting and invited more informal review of the presentation boards with CATS and the URS staff. During this time, the following typical questions/discussions arose:

- What will the VMF look like?
- How much will the VMF cost?
- Was there a single favored VMF site yet?
- Will the streetcar design be modern or traditional?
- Will the streetscape amenities proposed for Trade Street be included on Beatties Ford Road and Central Avenue alignments as well?
- Will the shelter design on Trade Street extend to the extensions?
- How will public art be incorporated?

The meeting ended at approximately 8:30 PM.

Distribution: Attendees, File

METROPOLITAN TRANSIT COMMISSION

METROPOLITAN TRANSIT COMMISSION

June 28, 2006

Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center

Room 267

5:30 p.m.

AGENDA

5:30 p.m. I. Call to Order Parks Helms

II. Approval of May 24, 2006 Meeting Summary Parks Helms

III. Special Recognition

IV. Report from the Chairs of the
Citizens Transit Advisory Group Jerry Fox

V. Report from the Chairman of the
Transit Services Advisory Committee Paul Edmunds

VI. Public Comment on Agenda Items

VII. Action Item

a. Northeast Corridor Refined Locally
Preferred Alternative David Leard/John Muth

VIII. Information Item

a. Streetcar Project Study Results
and Alignment Alternatives Willie Noble
b. Art-in-Transit Program Annual Update & FY07 Plan Pallas Lombardi

IX. Chief Executive Officer's Report Ron Tober

X. Other Business Parks Helms

XI. Public Comment on General Items

7:30 p.m. XII. Adjourn

June 28, 2006

Table of Contents

Item No. Item Description Attachment No.

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of May 24, 2006 Meeting Summary 1

III. Special Recognition

IV. Report from Chairs of the Citizens Transit Advisory Group

V. Report from Chairman of the Transit Services Advisory Committee

VI. Public Comment on Agenda Items

VII. Action Item

a. Northeast Corridor Refined Locally Preferred Alternative 2

VIII. Information Items

a. Streetcar Project Study Results and Alignment Alternatives 3

b. Art-in-Transit Program Annual Update & FY07 Plan 4

IX. Chief Executive Officer's Report

May Ridership Analysis Appendix A

Upcoming MTC Agenda Items Appendix B

X. Other Business

XI Public Comment on General Items

XII. Adjourn

METROPOLITAN TRANSIT COMMISSION

Meeting Summary

June 28, 2006

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Presiding: Parks Helms, Chair (Mecklenburg County)

Present:

Mayor Pat McCrory (Charlotte)

Mayor Lee Myers, (Matthews)

Ralph Messera (Matthews)

Mike Rose (Pineville)

Mayor Randy Kincaid (Davidson)

Bill Coxe (Huntersville)

Marion Cowell (NCDOT)

Paul Edmunds (TSAC)

Brian Welch (Mint Hill)

Jerry Fox (CTAG)

Andrew Grant (Cornelius)

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Ron Tober

I. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Metropolitan Transit Commission was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chairman Parks Helms.

II. Review of the May 24, 2006 Meeting Summary

The meeting summary was amended to include Mayor Kim Phillips, Town of Huntersville, as present. The meeting summary was then approved.

III. Special Recognition

Betsy Bailey, Executive Director of the North Carolina Public Transportation Association (NCPTA), presented Ron Tober with NCPTA's 2006 Distinguished Service Award.

IV. Citizens Transit Advisory Group Chairman's Report

Jerry Fox, CTAG chairman, reported that CTAG met on June 20, 2006 and heard a presentation on the Northeast Corridor's Options and Alternatives. The group recommended and unanimously adopted the following items:

- CTAG recommended the adoption of the lower cost NCRR designed option in the Locally Preferred Alternative and that further study and evaluation be conducted during Preliminary Engineering for both the adopted NCRR option and the alternative Sugar Creek/North Tryon Street alignment option. If the Sugar Creek/North Tryon Street alignment is ultimately chosen for economic development reasons, any additional cost associated with it should be covered from sources other than transit funds.
- CTAG recommended the adoption of the UNCC design option in the Locally Preferred Alternative.
- CTAG also recommended the adoption of the I-485 South design option in the Locally Preferred Alternative.

Discussion

Chairman Parks Helms asked if CTAG discussed where the additional funds would come from to pay for the Sugar Creek/North Tryon alignment. Mr. Fox said no, but the recommendation states that funding would have to come from sources other than transit funds.

Mr. Helms asked what the additional costs would be. Ron Tober said the current estimate is \$26 million. He noted that number is not a net total because some of the land acquired for the alignment may be available for resale thereby reducing the net cost of the alternative.

Mayor Myers asked if CTAG voted unanimously not to get the line across of I-485. Mr. Fox said it was unanimous because of the additional cost of \$30 million to extend the line north of I-485 and the low initial ridership potential.

Mayor Pat McCrory noted that in the budget recently approved by the Charlotte City Council, \$17 million was taken out of future capital funding for transit corridors, leaving just \$2 million for transit projects. Mayor McCrory said he thinks that decision will have severe consequences on any future transit decisions inside of Charlotte's city limits. He also said he will continue to work on getting that \$17 million back into transit projects and said he will need the support of all the towns to get it done.

V. Transit Services Advisory Committee Chairman's Report

Paul Edmunds reported that TSAC met on June 8, 2006. The group heard presentations on Northeast Corridor Options and Alternatives, the County-wide Transit Services Plan and hybrid buses. The group also discussed service issues.

Mr. Tober noted that CATS will start using fleet-wide ultra low sulfur diesel fuel in fiscal year 2007, starting in October of 2006.

VI. Public Comment on Agenda Items

Ed Garber, Vice President of Eastway/Sheffield Neighborhood Association, spoke in support of streetcar coming to East Charlotte. He said that East Charlotte has really developed over the years with its first high rise apartment building and office building on Central Avenue as well as the diversity of the area between Midwood and Eastland Mall. He added that he thinks the Streetcar would help spawn an economic boom on the eastside.

Calvin Banks of Johnson C. Smith University also showed his and the University's support of the Center City Streetcar. He said there are several benefits of the streetcar that directly impact the University such as improved safety for students and staff who must cross Beatties Ford Road to get from one side of campus to the other by slowing traffic and easing congestion, as well as giving students, staff and visitors another transportation options. He also added that the Streetcar has the potential to enhance economic development along the corridor.

Dixon Flemming, partner with CASTO Property Group, spoke in support of light rail in the Northeast Corridor. He said that about a year ago his company bought Shops at University Place with the specific idea of being able to redevelop the area, which is why they want light rail to come to the Northeast sooner rather than later.

George Maloomiam, vice-chair of University City Partners, also spoke in support of light rail in the Northeast Corridor. He said with the significant growth the University area has experienced over the past 15 years along with the \$80 million in economic development along the area that light rail is an ideal option.

Nancy Carter, Charlotte City Council member, spoke in support of streetcar in East Charlotte. She said that riders of Route 9 Central Avenue are the greatest supporters of transit in the area, which is evident by their ridership numbers, and that streetcar would be another transportation choice for them.

Michael Barnes, Charlotte City Council member, spoke in support of light rail in the Northeast Corridor. He said he would prefer the alignment at North Tryon and Sugar Creek because it would allow for development of the entire corridor from Sugar Creek north to UNCC. He noted that the Hidden Valley Community would benefit from light rail because there are a number of businesses along that area that need redevelopment and light rail would provide opportunities for further economic development and added tax base to the City. He added that both the North Tryon Business Development Group and the Hidden Valley Community Group supports the alignment and as the area develops economically and structurally having light rail through that part of the City will create a new Charlotte and will improve the economic vitality of the area.

Mayor McCrory told the speakers that they need to let the State know that they support transit in the Charlotte region so the City can get funding for transit projects because right now the State has no designated matching funds to help match the City's money on any other corridor projects.

VII. Action Items

a. Northeast Corridor Refined Locally Preferred Alternative*

David Leard, Senior Project Manager for the Northeast Corridor gave a presentation on staff's recommendations for the Northeast Corridor.

Mr. Leard gave the MTC an overview of the project, which is a dual-track light rail that is an extension of the South Corridor, running 11 miles from Center City Charlotte and Seventh Street to I-485 with 12 proposed stations and service from 5 a.m. to 1 a.m. with 7.5 minutes service in each direction during rush hour and every 15 minutes during the off peak. Fare will be equal to the local bus fare at that time. He said there are 13 stations identified about $\frac{3}{4}$ miles apart from the NoDa district out to I-485, which is very similar to the South Corridor and consistent with light

rail around the country.

Staff recommends the adoption of the NCRR design option with the provision that the Sugar Creek/North Tryon alignment be included in the DEIS and evaluated further during preliminary engineering, focusing on the economic development piece. Mr. Leard said another design option is the UNC-Charlotte or North Tryon Alternative. Both options travel up North Tryon Street past Harris Boulevard with a Station at J. W. Clay.

The UNC-Charlotte alignment would dip into the campus with a station very near the new Student Union then come back out, following the greenway to the North Tryon/Mallard Creek Church area where the North Tryon alignment stays in the median. He said staff recommends the UNC-Charlotte alignment with an additional station on campus.

Mr. Leard said the final design option would stop short of I-485 with a station and probably a parking garage just south of I-485 or a similar option that would cross I-485 with a station and facility to the north. He said staff recommends that the line stay south of I-485 due to the high cost of bridge construction over I-485 and the low daily ridership projection for a station north of I-485.

Mr. Leard said staff's recommendations for the Locally Preferred Alternative with the three options identified, NCRR, UNC-Charlotte and stopping south of I-485, would cost an estimated \$585 million, with an estimated ridership of 17,500 riders per day.

Mr. Tober pointed out that the \$585 million number is in 2006 dollars. It is not an escalated number because staff hasn't laid out a schedule for when the project would be implemented. He noted that when an implementation plan is developed the projected cost may change to reflect the expected time of construction.

John Muth gave a presentation on the project's Preliminary Project Evaluation, which includes an evaluation of system plan principles, land-use, mobility and operations, environmental impacts and financial impacts. He said that the project has high user benefits and strong land use potential and that its potential for Federal funding was medium-high and for state funding was medium.

Mayor Myers said he did not follow Mr. Fox's comment about funding during his CTAG presentation and asked if the Sugar Creek Alignment was chosen would the City have to come up with an alternative funding source. Mr. Tober said CTAG thought that the funds should come from either the City or from real estate that could be sold to the development community. He added that there may be some economic development grants available either through the State or the Federal Government.

Mayor McCrory said he needed more clarification on why staff needs to further study the Sugar Creek/North Tryon option if it is obvious that it cost more than the other options staff recommended. Mr. Leard said from a technical perspective, because staff has identified it as an option it will continue to be carried forward in general discussion. He also noted that the City will lead a study on the economic development portion of the alignment.

Mr. Tober said CATS' staff along with the City's Economic Development Department and the Planning Commission staff also feel that there is a significant potential for redevelopment in that section of North Tryon and the opportunity to do that would be in conjunction with the transit investment in that area. He also said that the reason staff is still studying that option is to get better information on costs to determine if the actual difference in cost is \$26 million, \$10 million or \$35 million. He noted that the City is also looking into that area's economic development

potential with the North Tryon Street Economic Development Study.

Mr. Tober said the stations in the Sugar Creek area and the stations that are in the Old Concord Road area are very close together, about ¼ mile away from each other, and from a transit ridership perspective, the station location on the two different alignments are so close together that the modeling shows no difference in ridership. The difference is the cost of the alignments and that cost is primarily driven by real estate costs and the need to widen North Tryon. He said there is a 100-foot right-of-way in that area and the state is requiring the purchase of additional right-of-way if the project is built in the medium with a 36-foot transit right-of-way. Mr. Tober said the purchase of that additional 18 feet on either side is the primary reason the cost goes up with the North Tryon alignment.

Mayor McCrory said he is hearing a lot of negatives regarding the Sugar Creek/North Tryon option and is trying to determine if it is worth more study because he doesn't want to waste resources if staff already knows what they are going to do. He asked if staff is continuing to study that alignment to satisfy FTA requirements. Mr. Tober said that is part of the reason, but if CATS were to drop the Sugar Creek/North Tryon alignment now and the City were to later complete its economic development studies and say they would like to do go with that alignment, staff would have to go back and take the time and money to do a supplemental Environment Impact Statement, so by continuing to study this alignment we can avoid that.

Mayor McCrory said he's not sure where the City would get resources to help fund the Sugar Creek/North Tryon alignment. He also wanted to know what impact the North Tryon alignment would have on the automobile. He said what he doesn't want to do is interfere with a road that is a major relief to I-85.

Bill Coxe asked if the timeframe for the Economic Development Study and the timeframe for whatever additional information staff needs coincide with the MTC's decision making this fall. Mr. Tober said no and that the decision on which alignment would be chosen would come once staff has completed the Draft Environment Impact Statement.

Laura Harmon said the City should have the Economic Development Study complete by the end of the year.

Mr. Tober said if the MTC decided it wanted to go ahead and push the Northeast Corridor into the New Start Process and request an FTA evaluation on it, staff would present both of these as two alternatives. However, he noted that staff prefers the NCRR alignment because of its lower cost.

Mr. Coxe said he thinks the additional cost should be discussed later this fall when the MTC is dealing with the financial realities rather than trying to determine it now.

Ralph Messera asked what the \$26 million of additional cost for the Sugar Creek/N. Tryon alignment will do to CATS rating with the FTA. Mr. Leard said it would push the cost-effectiveness number from a medium-low to the low category which hurts its chances for Federal funding.

Mayor McCrory said he supports staff's recommendation along the railroad and is extremely pleased that the Chancellor of UNC-Charlotte is supporting the line through the campus. He noted that it is good news that the line will serve the students, while reducing the project's cost if staff can get an agreement from the University to not charge for the right-of-way through the university. He noted that this is an extremely positive step for the entire region to tie the campus to the mass transit system.

Mike Rose asked if UNCC has given any indication as to what its position concerning the right-of-way. Mr. Tober said there have been some positive talks. Dennis Rash, UNC-Charlotte Representative, said it is fair to say that the University has encouraged the conversation and is eager to continue to work with CATS on this process, but that decision is one that has to be made by UNC-Charlotte Board Members.

Mr. Messera asked how much of a time penalty would be incurred for going onto the UNC-Charlotte campus. Mr. Leard said maybe three minutes at the most, but it is factored into the user benefit and includes the time to go in and out of the campus. He noted that the overall runtime is about 25 minutes from the end of the line to Center City.

Mr. Helms asked for a discussion of the I-485 Terminus. Mayor Myers said by making this decision the MTC is essentially eliminating the possibility of extending the line into Cabarrus County, to which Mr. Tober said no because at some future time the line could be built across I-485.

Mayor Myers said it is realistic to think that sometime in the future the line could reach Cabarrus County, but he has a concern about stopping the line south of I-485 because at some point people on the other side of the County line are going to realize this is a good thing. Mr. Tober said staff is trying to present the best project that has the best possibility of getting funding and this project is within striking distance of the cost-effectiveness criteria and it has good land-use. He said that by going into UNCharlotte we have more riders at less cost, by staying on the NCRR we have less cost and by staying inside I-485 we are saving \$30 million. He noted that the benefit of crossing I-485 to get those couple hundred riders is just not there.

Mayor Myers said he is concerned about the future and where transit is going to be in 2030 and beyond, but he understands what staff is saying and maybe it is better to get the line built today than have it rejected by the Federal government.

Mr. Helms said the MTC probably received the e-mail from Humpy Wheeler in which he expressed his support for bringing the line across I-485. Mr. Helms said by extending the line past I-485 it will take riders up to Lowe's Motor Speedway and Verizon Amphitheater into Cabarrus County. However, he agrees with Mr. Tober.

Mr. Messera asked how many of the 17,500 estimated riders are estimated to ride the full length to the I-485 station. Mr. Leard said staff has the number of riders that might get on at the end of the line, but not a projection of how the train would load and where individual riders would get on and off.

Motion was made by Mayor McCrory and seconded by Mayor Lee Myers to approve the staff recommendations for the Northeast Corridor. The vote was recorded as unanimous.

VIII. Information Items

a. Streetcar Project Study Results and Alignment Alternatives*

Willie Noble, Senior Project Manager for the Center City Streetcar gave a presentation on the Streetcar Project.

Kent May, City Planning, spoke about the development opportunities with the project on Trade Street as well as Beatties Ford Road and Central Avenue. He pointed out the number of units planned and/or under construction as well as the number that are in the short-term and mid to long-term opportunities which indicate a very strong future for the development and

redevelopment.

Mr. Noble continued his presentation with the corridor ridership. He pointed out that there would be a public meeting on July 18th to present this information to the public. He said staff expects to have the conceptual design completed this summer. He noted that there is more work needed to finalize ridership, an implementation plan and cost estimates. Staff also has to complete a draft of the Environmental Assessment Statement.

Discussion:

Mr. Edmunds asked how many vehicles will be in this system, to which Mr. Noble said 16.

Mr. Edmunds asked if the Barnhardt location would meet CATS' needs. Mr. Noble said yes and the West Corridor is also anticipating looking at the potential for streetcar service. However, he noted that the Barnhardt location would not be big enough for both corridors.

Responding to another question from Mr. Edmunds, Mr. Noble said staff could get both sites and put the vehicle maintenance facility on one site and have storage capacity on both sites and that would accommodate future expansions to include the West Corridor. Mr. Edmunds said I assume the CMUD site was paid for by enterprise funds. Mr. Tober said I think there would have to be some transaction involved in compensating CMUD for that site, but how much remains to be seen.

Mr. Coxe asked if development on Hawthorne is compatible with a maintenance facility site. He wanted to know if it is the same issue CATS have in downtown with the terminus of the North Corridor and its compatibility with Third Ward. Mr. Noble said he hasn't seen their final development plans, but they came to staff and are asking us to locate the vehicle maintenance facility close to their existing facility, which is a manufacturing and industrial type facility. He noted that the VMF should be compatible.

Mr. Tober said staff has been told by Barnhardt and Grubb that they would not be in a position to proceed with that redevelopment on those 25 acres of land without this project being built. He noted that they are prepared to say to the Federal Government that there is a direct economic development connection between this alignment and their ability to make their development work.

Mayor McCrory said we are seeing very similar dynamics along the Central Avenue Corridor that we have seen during the past decade along the South Boulevard Corridor. What is interesting is the potential for real eastside revitalization and valuations going up as opposed to down and is occurring along the Central Avenue Corridor partly because of the vision for the streetcar. He said it is an extremely important economic development issue along that corridor with City Council, especially out toward Eastland Mall.

Mayor Kincaid asked what the fare for streetcar is. Mr. Noble said a fare hasn't been set yet, but it will be comparable to the local bus service.

Mr. Tober said this will be back as an Action Item next month. Staff will come back with recommendations on some of the alternatives that are out there for the MTC to consider and a side by side evaluation on those items.

IX. Chief Executive Officer's Report

a. Ridership Report - CATS will end the year with about an 8 percent ridership increase, which is a very strong increase and one of the biggest year-end increases CATS has seen. He also noted

a number of service changes, including a change on the 77X which has gotten some complaints from Duke Energy employees.

b. Recertification of STS Customers. Mr. Tober said there are about 5,000 people who are currently certified to use STS and staff in conjunction with Carolinas Medical Center will be recertifying them. He said they will undergo a functional assessment to make sure that the people we are transporting on Special Transportation Services are in fact eligible for it under the American's with Disabilities Act. Some individuals are likely to be decertified which may bring some complaints to officials.

Mr. Tober noted that the first light rail vehicle arrived and staff will schedule a time for the MTC members to view it and that the Huntersville-Northcross Park and Ride lot opened successfully. He also informed the group that today is Brad Miller, Manager of Operations for CATS for almost six years, is leaving to become the General Manager and Chief Executive Officer of the Des Moines, Iowa Transit System. He also introduced John Trunk, the newest addition to the CATS Senior Management Team, as Manager of Procurement or Chief Contracting Officer.

X. Other Business
None.

XI. Adjourn
Chairman Helms adjourned the meeting at 7:30.

NEXT MTC MEETING: WEDNESDAY JULY 26, 2006, 5:30 PM

CATS Center City Streetcar Project

Meeting: ADVISORY BOARD MEETING SUMMARY Trade Street -
Elizabeth Avenue Corridor
July 11, 2006
6:30 pm
Gantt Huberman Architects Offices

Attendees: Ms. Tanaya Walters, Johnson & Wales; Advisory Board Member
Mr. Todd Williams, Grubb Properties; Advisory Board Member
Mrs. Ginny Woolard, 3rd Ward Representative; Advisory Board Member
Mr. Robert Wade Kimrey; Advisory Board Member
Mr. Martin Wheeler; Advisory Board Member
Ms. Lisa Gray; Advisory Board Member
Mr. William List; Advisory Board Member
Mr. Robert Ferrin; Advisory Board Member
Mr. Willie Noble, Senior Project Manager; CATS
Mr. Jerry Roberson, Asst. Project Manager; CATS
Mr. Stan Leinwand, Transit Planner/Urban Design; CATS
Mrs. Kiera Terrell, Public Information Specialist; CATS
Ms. Linda Murdaugh, Coordination Assistant; CATS
Mr. Dave Dickey, URS Corporation
Mr. Brian Piascik; URS Corporation
Mr. Harvey Gantt; Gantt Huberman Architects

Mr. Willie Noble opened the meeting and expressed his gratitude for the interest and attendance record of the Advisory Board Members over the period of the project's development process in the concept design phase.

He then updated the group on the overall work of the design team - reviewing the streetcar routing, the proposed changes in routing to accommodate the comments of citizens, and the preferred location of the vehicle maintenance facilities on Beatties Ford Road and the Barnhardt site near Central Avenue.

Subsequently, Mr. Noble discussed preliminary cost projections for the streetcar. The estimate is 246 million dollars, or about 25 million dollars per mile. Mr. Noble pointed out that this cost projection was considerably below the cost of light rail - and because the overall project cost was below 250 million dollars, it could likely qualify for the FT A's "Small Starts" Project, which made federal funding more likely. There was even the possibility now that the project might be funded as a single-phase development rather than the three discussed in previous meetings over the past two years.

Mr. Noble reviewed the "next steps" in the progress of the Streetcar Project. He first encouraged attendance at the upcoming community meeting at the Government Center on Tuesday, July 18. Then, he indicated that MTC meetings

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would occur in late July and in September. These meetings would ultimately determine the priority rankings of the Streetcar Project and the other five corridors in the transit pipeline.

It was acknowledged by Mr. Noble, other CATS representatives, and URS team members that the Streetcar Project had been favorably received to this point. Its service area (urban population base with much-used bus route), the relatively lower project cost, along with almost consensus community support, would all be strong factors in getting to the top of the priority list.

Following Mr. Noble's presentation, URS team members presented detail evaluations of the preferred vehicle maintenance sites, and reviewed the cost estimate and issues related to the completion of an environmental assessment for the Project.

The Advisory Board responded positively to the presentation, and most questions raised related to the fact that the project might stand a chance of being treated as a single-phase development - which was significant and would speed implementation in the Beatties Ford Road and Central Avenue corridors.

Mr. Noble adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:10 p.m. and asked that Advisory Board Members encourage their neighbors to attend the July 18 community meeting.

Footnote: Similar advisory meetings were held on successive nights at Gantt Huberman's office with the agenda and substance of the meetings being similar to those referenced in the Trade Street minutes. A listing of the attendees for those meetings is attached.

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING Central Avenue Corridor

Meeting Date: July 12, 2006

Attendance List:

- Mr. Marvin Snyder, Eastland Mall; Advisory Board Member
- Mrs. Patsy Kinsey, Charlotte City Council; Advisory Board Member
- Mrs. Debra Gilbert, Briar Creek Neighborhood; Advisory Board Member
- Mr. Robert Bishoff; Advisory Board Member
- Ms. Molly Prime; Advisory Board Member
- Mr. Michael Smith; Advisory Board Member
- Mr. Tom Poston; Advisory Board Member
- Ms. Alice Galvin; Advisory Board Member
- Mr. Willie Noble, Senior Project Manager; CATS

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- Mr. Jerry Roberson, Asst. Project Manager; CATS
- Mr. Stan Leinwand, Transit Planner/Urban Design; CATS
- Mrs. Kiera Terrell, Public Information Specialist; CATS
- Ms. Linda Murdaugh, Coordination Assistant; CATS
- Mr. Dave dickey; URS Crporation
- Mr. Brian Piascik; URS Corporation
- Mr. Larry Walters, AIA; Gantt Huberman Architects

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING Beatties Ford Road Corridor

Meeting Date: July 13, 2006

Attendance List:

- Mr. Kelly Alexander; Advisory Board Member
- Mr. Aaron McKeithen; Advisory Board Member
- Mr. Calvin Banks; Advisory Board Member
- Mr. Willie Noble, Senior Project Manager; CATS
- Mr. Jerry Roberson, Asst. Project Manager; CATS
- Mr. Stan Leinwand, Transit Planner/Urban Design; CATS
- Mrs. Kiera Terrell, Public Information Specialist; CATS
- Ms. Linda Murdaugh, Coordination Assistant; CATS
- Mr. Dave Dickey; URS Corporation
- Mr. Brian Piascik; URS Corporation
- Mr. Larry Walters, AIA; Gantt Huberman Architects

CATS Center City Streetcar Project

Meeting: July 18, 2006
6:30 PM
Charlotte Government Center
Room 267
Community Meeting

Team

Attendees:

Willie Noble	CATS
Jerry Roberson	CATS
Stan Leinwand	CATS
Kiera Terrell	CATS
Linda Murdaugh	CATS
Dave Dickey	URS
Brian Piascik	URS
Jeff Weisner	URS
Paul Pattison	URS
Harvey Gantt	GHA
Chris Ogunrinde	NC
Vincent Howard	RS&H
Rick Grochushe	RS&H

Introduction and Project Update

Willie Noble, CATS project manager, called the meeting to order and proceeded to give an update of the project. His presentation generally followed four major elements:

- Project Description
- Project Benefits
- Project Costs
- Next Steps & Activities

Willie gave a quick overview of the project approach and streetcar operations, discussing briefly streetcar capacity, stops and construction. Willie presented the latest alignment and compared it against the Charlotte streetcar system that existed in 1928. Willie transitioned into development opportunities along the alignment highlighting major redevelopment opportunities and attractions, then summed the redevelopment opportunities along Beatties Ford Road and Central Avenue by development type and magnitude of development. Willie then presented information regarding the likely future ridership of the streetcar and some of the quirky facets of the modeling process. Willie discussed the operations efficiencies the streetcar would provide as well. Next came an overview two end points of the alignment followed by a discussion of the vehicle maintenance facility: the top two locations, conceptual site layout, and relevant characteristics. Willie concluded his presentation with a summary presentation of the capital costs and next steps.

Jeff Weisner then gave a presentation of the environmental analyses conducted

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for the project. Jeff began with an overview of NEPA (the National Environmental Policy Act), what it meant in terms of the types of analyses that were conducted and how the public was involved and the fact that it guided important decisions for the project. Jeff concluded with a draft set of environmental findings, noting that this project was very environmentally friendly with many positive effects (e.g. land use; displacements; neighborhood and community features; historic, archeological and cultural resources; and, secondary and cumulative impacts. In contrast, only a couple of environmental categories were anticipated to have relatively minor adverse impacts on the environment (e.g. visual and aesthetics, and noise and vibration).

Willie Noble then opened up the floor to answer questions.

Questions and Answers

Question: What is the length of time it will take a person traveling from the Rosa Parks Transit Center to the Eastland Community Transit Center?

Response: The commute time will be approximately 48 minutes assuming the streetcar will run at 7 minute headways.

Question: You mentioned the estimated costs for Portland and Seattle. Do you have exact numbers?

Response: We don't have exact numbers here at this meeting, but we believe the numbers our engineers estimated was within 1/10th of the range of the actual construction cost.

Question: You mentioned the cost of the project is \$250 million. Are we looking to seek funds for the entire amount from the federal government? If not, can you explain the breakdown for local funding?

Response: We are planning to apply for funds through Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Small Starts program. In order to qualify for these funds, the cost of the project has to fall within the \$250 million cap. The FTA will only provide 75 million dollars to a qualifying corridor/agency. In addition to the 75 million dollars from the FTA, we are seeking funds from the sales tax and some matching funds from NCDOT. The Small Starts program was designed for smaller scale projects such as the streetcar project. The FTA is working on the rules and regulations of the program. A draft was submitted earlier this year, but the plan won't be finalized until some time next year.

Question: You mentioned the streetcar will operate on Central Avenue and Beatties Ford Road. At what point will the streetcar operate in Center City?

Response: The Trade St. portion of the streetcar project will serve as a connector piece to the extensions (Central Avenue & Beatties Ford Road) from

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one end of the alignment to the other. There have been some delays to our schedule, but we believe the Trade Street portion will be operational by 2009 or 2010.

Question: Will the bus routes change on the Beatties Ford Road and Central Avenue corridors?

Response: The existing bus routes will change. Operations for those routes will be modified so that they act as feeders beyond the Center City area connecting commuters to the streetcar line so that they will be able to travel to destinations within the Center City.

Question: What happened to the Center City Spokes concept?

Response: The spokes are not shown on this alignment because it won't be operational until 2025. We will be asking the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) to approve the Beatties Ford Road, Central Avenue, and Trade Street portions as one alignment without the spokes concept at the end of this month. However, we will have to present to the MTC at a later date for an approval of the Spokes concept which will be built so that it will operate within the four wards and neighborhoods immediately outside of the I-277 loop.

Question: Will the Spokes concept be built after the Beatties Ford and Central Avenue portions?

Response: Yes.

Question: If the new alignment is approved, what would be the estimated time of completion?

Response: We won't know this until after the MTC decision in late October/November. Once the decision is made, and if streetcar gets the approval to move forward, then we will have to apply for federal funding. Once the funding process is complete, the design team will be able to put together an anticipated schedule of operation.

Question: Is there anything the neighborhood associations can do to influence the MTC's decision to vote in favor the streetcar corridor?

Response: We encourage any of you who are interested to attend the meeting. We can't guarantee that large numbers in attendance or public comments will affect the decisions that are made. However, they are very interested in public comment. The members of the MTC will weigh each of the corridor projects on an individual basis.

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Question: Is the \$250 million cost in 2006 dollars? If so, what would the cost be in 2012?

Response: Yes. The cost of the project is in 2006 dollars. We will have to project the cost, but the FTA has a schedule of increment costs which outline different figures over a 20 year period. The estimated cost in future dollars is about \$271 million, which plans construction beginning in 2010 and finishing in 2012.

Question: If or when the streetcar alignment is approved by the MTC, how will the FTA evaluate this project knowing that the North Corridor has a line going out to Mooresville? Is it possible for them to fund both projects? Is it a separate program because they're asking for 300 million dollars?

Response: The FTA will look at each project separately unless they are applying for funds at the same time within the same program.

Question: Aren't they applying for the same funds?

Response: No. The North Corridor is planning to apply for funds under the FTA's New Starts program. We will apply for funding under the Small Starts program and we are the only project whose capital cost doesn't exceed the Small Starts cap. An interesting point for clarification is that the FTA looks very favorably to communities that have dedicated local funding sources for transit. It helps the financial evaluation of the projects.

Question: Have you looked into cost savings as it relates to the Beatties Ford Road corridor linking to the West Corridor?

Response: The decision hasn't been made as to if they will operate a streetcar vehicle or not. If they decided to operate a streetcar on the West Corridor, then it will tie into the Center City Corridor alignment so that they will have access to our maintenance facility. The West Corridor will gain a cost savings by not having to build a vehicle maintenance facility.

Question: I attended a meeting where discussions took place regarding the Elizabeth Avenue streetscape project. I was told construction would begin and track work would be put in place last year. What is the hold up on this project?

Response: The city has been working on finalizing the designs for this project. There were a couple of delays in the project, but the streetcar team is in the process of reviewing the plans which are at a 90 % design. Construction for this project should begin in the Fall and we've ordered the rails which should be shipped to Charlotte by October of this year. In an effort to eliminate interruption on the corridor, we have partnered with the project team to have the rails installed while they are constructing the streetscape on Elizabeth Avenue.

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Question: Will the bridge that's being constructed for the South Corridor line have to be demolished so that the streetcar vehicle is able to pass under it?

Response: No. We will not remove or rebuild any of the bridges located on the streetcar corridor. We will be able to operate under the bridge with the overhead wire connection.

Question: Describe the Hawthorne Lane alignment.

Response: There is a stop on the Hawthorne Lane alignment located at the Barnhardt site facility. The alignment intersects the facility and connects to Clement Avenue. Adding a stop at the Barnhardt facility is beneficial for both the commuter and the project. It will be a mixed use development with great potential for ridership within the Belmont Community. Other stops along this portion of the alignment are located at Central Avenue, Independence Park, and Presbyterian Hospital. We were considering two different alignments, a northern and southern alignment. The results of the technical analysis revealed that it was cheaper to build the northern alignment because there were considerable modifications that had to be done to the bridge on Independence Boulevard and above the CSX railroad, whereas the northern alignment eliminates the need for a new CSX elevated crossing since it crosses under the existing railroad line, but will likely require some roadway modifications to address the low clearance of the structure. Also, we would have to make a sharp right turn which hugs Independence Boulevard in order to get to Commonwealth to proceed onto Central Avenue.

Question: In terms of construction, where would the streetcar alignment begin and end?

Response: Construction phasing is something that we will determine in the next phase of study-Preliminary Engineering. More than likely the Trade Street portion of the project would be built first so that it connects the outer extensions.

Question: Does the location of the maintenance facility determine which of the extensions (Central Avenue or Beatties Ford Road) is built first?

Response: No. It does not.

Question: Can you speak to some of the drivers or key factors in terms of development or traffic that will impact our neighborhoods? Also, what are some of the things that persuade you to make decisions to tweak the plans?

Response: From a traffic standpoint, the impacts to neighborhoods will be negligible because the streetcar project is replacing the existing bus service with the same frequency. In terms of the economic development, the empirical data that we have states that Portland has had \$2 billion in economic development.

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We are not saying that this will necessarily happen at the same magnitude in this corridor, but we are saying that the project will have a positive impact, both in terms of development/redevelopment potential and value (net increase) of the development. Impacts during construction will be minimized through a proactive process engaging businesses and home-owners along the corridor and a relatively quick construction process that minimizes the disruption.

The phasing of the project has potentially changed within the past two weeks. After completing the analysis for the cost estimates, we were able to come up with a revised concept for the alignment that may include constructing the entire alignment between Rosa Parks Place on Beatties Ford Road to Eastland Mall on Central Avenue.

Question: What type of mixed use development is planned for the Beatties Ford Road corridor, and how will it integrate with the streetcar project?

Response: Friendship Baptist Church has plans for a development called Friendship Village. This 100 acre area is located only a quarter of a mile past the terminus point for Beatties Ford Road. The plan calls for a sports complex, residential, and commercial development. We have met with the community and we are willing to continue to discuss future plans to connect to the village. We have also met with various committee members and private consultants who are working on the West Pedscape Plan and the New Brooklyn Initiative.

Comment: Sooner is better than later. For our neighborhoods, the economic opportunity could be lost so we think it's necessary for the project to move forward. Please send a strong message to the MTC from the neighborhoods along the corridor.

Comment: There should be more study around adding stops that provide access to the greenways (Little Sugar Creek) along the corridor.

Response: We have identified the conceptual streetcar stops based on many considerations such as driveway locations, major trip generators, on-street parking, as well as parks and greenways, and will definitely take these and additional public input into consideration as we move into the Preliminary Engineering phase. There will be opportunities to tweak the stop locations during this phase as we re-examine all of the stops to address changes in the corridor.

Question: If you are only installing rails in the existing traffic lanes, how much of an impact will the streetcar project have on local neighborhoods and businesses along the corridor?

Response: Not very much. We invite you to take a look at the boards which outlines the environmental impacts.

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Question: How are you planning to cross the railroad using the Hawthorne Lane alignment?

Response: We will not have to cross the railroad at grade. We will operate under the old bridge North of Central Avenue, loop around the Barnhardt Manufacturing site, connect to Clement Avenue, then Central Avenue, and continue on to the Plaza.

Question: Earlier in the study, you all were looking at constructing a bridge at Independence Boulevard in order to continue to operate on Central Avenue. How much was it going to cost to construct the bridge?

Response: \$3 million.

Question: I believe the trolley has a lot to do with the support that you are getting from the public. What are the options for the streetcar vehicle?

Response: There is a difference between the historic and modern vehicle. There are 6 to 8 potential candidates for the modern streetcar vehicle, and photos of these candidate manufacturers can be found on the CATS web page. Both the modern vehicles and the historic vehicles are attractive. One of the main factors contributing to why this vehicle was chosen (modern) for this project is the carrying capacity. The modern vehicle has 30 seats, and room for 90 to 120 people to stand. The streetcar has a greater carrying capacity than a bus and a vintage trolley. If we were to choose a vintage streetcar for this project, we would have less carrying capacity than the existing bus and the modern streetcar. For this project, we have decided to go with a modern vehicle. There will be many opportunities for the public to provide feedback on the design of the vehicle in the Preliminary Engineering phase. Also, once the South Corridor construction is completed, the trolley will be able to operate as it did in the past.

Question: Could the trolley operate on Trade Street?

Response: Yes, our design of the project will permit both vintage and modern streetcars (trolley pole and pantagraph) to operate on the alignment.

Question: What is the status of the streetcar stop shelters?

Response: What has been presented is just a concept and will be furthered refined/defined during the next phase of the project. The team is very conscious of the potential cost of the shelter and is exploring off-the-shelf shelters versus custom fabricated shelters and the possibility of slightly modifying off-the-shelf shelters to look like custom shelters.

Question: What will it take to convince the MTC to select the streetcar project?

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Response: MTC will weigh each project based on the individual merits, public support and overall system considerations.

Question: Is there a way to accelerate the Beatties Ford Road and Central Avenue extensions?

Response: We have recently explored building the entire alignment in a single phase in contrast to the Beatties Ford Road and Central Avenue segments following the Trade Street component. This, however, is really a financial discussion and will be made by the MTC. If, however, the MTC decides to push forward with only the Trade Street portion initially, there are a few funding sources the City could examine more closely that could be used to accelerate the extensions, including TIF, Municipal Service Districts and Certificates of Participation.

Question: Will you be able to see the MTC located on Beatties Ford Road from Beatties Ford Road?

Response: You will likely see only the top portions of the building since the parcel of land on which the facility will be located is about 20 feet below Beatties Ford Road.

Comment Cards Summary

The following summarizes the 13 responses from the submitted comment cards:

1. What issues are you particularly concerned about or wish to be addressed?

In general, the following broad topics of concern were articulated:

- Timing
- Funding
- Capital costs
- Would like greater headways of service
- Location of streetcar stops
- Pedestrian/bicycle access
- Phasing of the project
- Maintenance of the system, particularly the streetcar vehicles
- Aesthetics

2. Do you think a streetcar would be most responsive to transportation needs along the proposed alignment?

100% of the respondents answered yes.

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3. Why are you interested in this project?

The overwhelming majority (53%) responded they live nearby, followed by work nearby (21%), other (16%), and own property in the vicinity (11%).

4. Do you view streetcars as a positive addition to the existing public transportation system?

100% of the respondents answered yes.

5. On a scale of 1-4 please rate the information presented by using the following scale: 1 = very difficult to understand, 2 = somewhat difficult to understand, 3 = fairly easy to understand, 4 = easy to understand.

The overwhelming majority (75%) responded the material was easy to understand (number 4), followed by fairly easy to understand (number 3) at 25%. None of the respondents answered “difficult” or “somewhat difficult to understand”.

6. How did you find out about the public meeting?

31% of the respondents answered they found out about the meeting via postcard, 85 via the newspaper, with the majority responding (61%) the received notice of the meeting through “other” sources, such as neighborhood associations or personal contacts.

7. What would be the best way to keep you informed?

The overwhelming majority (85%) responded the best way to keep informed was through e-mail, followed by phone at 15%.

CATS Center City Streetcar Project

Attendees

Approximately 50 persons attended the public meeting, but not all signed the attendance sheets.

Bob Szymkiewicz
Deborah Cox
Nancy Carter
Karen Henning
Nancy Plummer
Gail Getz (spelling?)
Marion Terrell
John Middleton
Louise Woods
James McLeod
Calvin Banks
Philip Cardaci
Heather Mitsapoulos
Ginny Woolard
Robert Bischoff
Kenneth Forester
Beth Doovey

Damon Gregory
Joey Anderson
Keith Bowker
A.J. Forlidas
Philip Forlidas
Harry Lichter
Aaron McKeithan
John Albert
Wendy Albert
Celina Mineey
Eric Bahrs
David Brodendorp
Deborah Gilhert
Martin Wheeler
Veronica Wallace
Brian McKean

The meeting ended at approximately 8:30 PM.

METROPOLITAN TRANSIT COMMISSION

July 26, 2006
Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center
Room 267
5:30 p.m.

AGENDA

5:30 p.m. I. Call to Order Parks Helms
II. Approval of June 28, 2006 Meeting Summary Parks Helms

III. Report from the Chairs of the
Citizens Transit Advisory Group Jerry Fox

IV. Report from the Chairman of the
Transit Services Advisory Committee Paul Edmunds

V. Public Comment on Agenda Items

VI. Action Item
a. Streetcar Project Final
Locally Preferred Alternative Willie Noble/John Muth

VII. Information Item(s)
a. Southeast Corridor Study Results and
Alignment Alternatives Danny Rogers
b. West Corridor Study Results and
Alignment Alternatives Danny Rogers

VIII. Chief Executive Officer's Report Ron Tober

IX. Other Business Parks Helms

X. Public Comment on General Items

7:30 p.m. XI. Adjourn

METROPOLITAN TRANSIT COMMISSION
July 26, 2006
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Item No. Item Description Attachment No.

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of June 28, 2006 Meeting Summary 1

III. Report from Chairs of the Citizens Transit Advisory Group

IV. Report from Chairman of the Transit Services Advisory Committee

V. Public Comment on Agenda Items

VI. Action Item

a. Streetcar Project Final Locally Preferred Alternative 2

VII. Information Items

a. Southeast Corridor Study Results and Alignment Alternatives 3

b. West Corridor Study Results and Alignment Alternatives 4

VIII. Chief Executive Officer's Report

June Ridership Analysis Appendix A

Upcoming MTC Agenda Items Appendix B

IX. Other Business

X Public Comment on General Items

XI. Adjourn

METROPOLITAN TRANSIT COMMISSION

Meeting Summary

July 26, 2006

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Presiding:

Parks Helms, Chair (Mecklenburg County)

Present:

Mayor Kim Phillips, Vice-Chair (Huntersville)

Pat McCrory (Mayor Charlotte)

Pamela Syfert (Charlotte)

Mayor Lee Myers, (Mayor Matthews)

Ralph Messera (Matthews)

Harry Jones, (Mecklenburg County)

John Woods, (Mayor Pro Tem Davidson)

Leamon Brice (Davidson Town Administrator)

Mike Rose (Pineville, Asst. Town Manager)

Jerry Cox (Huntersville Town Manager)

Anthony Roberts, (Cornelius, Town Manager)

Jerry Fox (CTAG)

George Fowler, (Mayor Pineville)

Marion Cowell (NCDOT)

Paul Edmunds (TSAC)

Brian Welch (Mint Hill, Interim Town Manager)

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Ron Tober

I. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Metropolitan Transit Commission was called to order at

5:40 p.m. by Chairman Parks Helms.

II. Review of June 28, 2006 Meeting Summary

The June 28, 2006 Meeting Summary was approved as written.

III. Citizens Transit Advisory Group Chairman's Report

Gerald Fox, CTAG Chairman, gave a report on CTAG's July 18, 2006 meeting. At the meeting, the group heard presentations on the West and Southeast Corridors Study and Alignment Alternatives, the status of negotiations with Norfolk Southern for the North Corridor, and the Center City Streetcar Project.

Concerning the Streetcar Project, CTAG recommended that the MTC approve the Streetcar Project's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) as presented by staff, specifically expressing support for the alignment of Beatties Ford Road to Eastland Mall, as well as the continued study for both the CMUD and Grubb/Barnhardt locations for a vehicle maintenance facility.

The group also unanimously adopted to recommend that CATS' CEO notify the Charlotte Center City Partners of the importance of its and its members support in funding the Gold Rush in the uptown area.

IV. Transit Services Advisory Committee Chairman's Report

Paul Edmunds reported that TSAC did not meet in June.

V. Public Comment on Agenda Items

Parks Helms opened the floor up for public comment; however, Mayor Pat McCrory suggested that the staff presentation be given first since most of the speakers were present to speak about the Southeast Corridor. He believed it makes more sense to hear the report and then hear the public comments.

Ron Tober said the order of the agenda could be reversed so presentations could be given first, followed by public comment.

VI. Information Items

a. Southeast Corridor Study Results and Alignment Alternatives*

Danny Rogers, Southeast and West corridor's Senior Project Manager, gave a presentation on the Southeast Corridor Study Results. He presented the three technology choices for the corridor, which include light rail, bus rapid transit (BRT) and BRT with HOV. The proposed cost of the project depends on which technology is chosen. Light rail is the most expensive choice at \$585 million followed by BRT with HOV at \$350-\$360 million and BRT at \$315-\$325 million. He noted that while staff continues to work on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which is scheduled to be complete this fall, NCDOT is working on the highway portion of the project, which will make improvements to Independence Boulevard. 4

Garet Johnson, Charlotte Mecklenburg Planning Commission gave an overview of the project's land-use.

Kathy Ingrish, Planning Director for the Town of Matthews, continued the presentation on development opportunities in the Southeast Corridor.

Ron Tober pointed out that the cost numbers shown are 2006 dollars and staff won't be escalating those numbers until as they have a set time for when the project will be implemented.

Mayor Kim Phillips asked for more information about the managed lanes with the BRT and HOV

option. Mr. Rogers said there would be no toll booths, instead when commuters enter the lanes a device will charge/deduct the toll for their accounts.

Mayor Phillips asked how commuters would know when they entered the lanes. Mr. Rogers said there would be signs prior to each entry point so they would know how much to pay.

Mayor Phillips asked if the toll would be deducted from their account at the end of the month. Mr. Rogers said most of the systems will deduct the toll at the time they enter the lanes.

VII. Public Comment

Councilmember Nancy Carter spoke in support of the Southeast Corridor light rail and Central Avenue streetcar project. She said CATS' partnerships with NCDOT and N.C. Department of Economic Development provides unique funding opportunities and cost savings for CATS. She noted that over the years, more than 113 businesses have vacated Independence Boulevard and because of that, there is land available for development and people ready to do just that.

Ms. Carter also said to increase development, particularly on the north side of Independence between Eastway and Albermarle Road, the transitional setback of 175 feet will need to be addressed and she believes transit could help with that, as well as the problems that have been created by freeway development.

Wanda Towler, representing Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC), said CPCC has 70,000 people that come to its six campuses with its Levine and Central campuses accounting for 25,000 of those people. Because of all the people and activity that occur at the Levine Campus, she urged the MTC to extend the line beyond I-485 to serve the campus. Concerning the Central Campus, she said it's already heavily supported by the use of the Streetcar project. She said adding bus rapid transit (BRT) on the same street as the Streetcar would negatively impacted pedestrian access as well as be a deterrent to the use of the system because of the slow path it would create in that area. She noted that CPCC is running out of parking space and the streetcar would help with that problem.

Louise Woods, a resident of East Charlotte, strongly supports light rail for Independence and the streetcar in the Beatties Ford/downtown/central corridor. She said the area needs the streetcar to help stabilize East Charlotte neighborhoods and spur needed development. She said if CATS chooses the streetcar in East Charlotte as its next project it will be a win/win situation for both parties because CATS would immediately have a high ridership base and East Charlotte would have the leverage it needs to increase its economic development.

Ed Garber, V.P. of Eastway/Sheffield Neighborhood Association, said that although numbers show cost-savings by choosing BRT over light rail, looking at long-term development of the Southeast Corridor the permanence of light rail has significant advantages. He said choosing BRT has more risks because it doesn't have the tried and true performance in other cities as light rail does. He said the tax base that light rail would generate would encourage development in the Southeast, which would more than compensate for the cost-savings of BRT.

Ray Kluth, who lives within three blocks of Independence Boulevard, said he hopes full consideration is given to the proposed station at Sharon Amity and Independence in conjunction with the new interchange that is being built there. He also showed his support for light rail in the corridor. He noted that there are several benefits that make light rail a better choice for the corridor than BRT such as light rail is quieter, it reduces air pollution, and its rails will last longer than asphalt or concrete. He also noted that rail offers faster acceleration compared to motor or hybrid buses. In closing he said, the Eastside is on the way up due to the constant efforts of

Councilmember Nancy Carter and many other people and the initiation of light rail will keep up that momentum.

Gene Steward urged the MTC to take the light rail line all the way to CPCC's campus, and possibly further. He said he's in favor of the train and was thrilled when he and his family moved here in 2002 and heard about the possibility of trains being built toward Matthews.

Susan Lyndsey, an East Charlotte resident, said no expense should be spared to make East Charlotte a great place to live and work. She said her and her fellow East Charlotte residents feel that light rail is the right decision for their area, no matter how long it takes. She noted that the combination of businesses lost and the availability of land as you leave East Charlotte offers a unique opportunity to develop and redevelop quality projects, residential, commercial and retail. She continued by saying rail offers the best chance to attract investments needed to sustain growth and return dollars to the City of Charlotte, Matthews and Mint Hill.

Louise Barton, a light rail supporter, said on July 14, Seattle made the same decision that the MTC is being asked to make and they chose rail. She said they looked at the whole road and transportation system, including the marketability of rail to the eastside of Seattle. She asked the board to look at the long-term affects of its choice.

Steve Martin, an East Charlotte, resident, said he is a real fan of public transportation no matter what it is. He encouraged Mr. Tober to increase public transit for people in Matthews so they can easily go uptown, transfer and go out to the University.

Claude Shaw, President of the Eastway/Sheffield Neighborhood Association, said the Southeast Corridor is strongest for light rail based on jobs within a ½ mile radius, households within a ½ mile radius, riders per day and long-term relief of congestion. He noted that transit officials studied light rail versus BRT in Dallas, Denver, LA, Pittsburg, San Diego and San Jose and found return on its investments. He said based on the statistics, an overwhelming number of people in this area are pro-light rail and nothing fits this area better. He added that the Southeast Corridor has the ridership, the strongest base of supporting factors and the need for economic development.

Kyle Woodstra, co-chair of the Eastland Area Strategy Team, said that mass transit is not a short-term deal; it is more like a 50 to 100 year plan. He said the perception is that light rail is better than buses, therefore people are more apt to spend their dollars and redevelop an area that is known to have light rail even if it is in the future. He noted that he has received calls from businesses in New York, California and even China, asking when he will know if there is going to be light rail because they have an interest in spending money for development, but only if light rail is coming.

Clay Grubb, president of Grubb Properties, said his company worked on the Elizabeth Avenue Project five or six years ago when it was first announced that streetcar was coming to the area. He said the announcement of streetcar had a significant impact on development in that area, pushing the value of development to more than \$400 million over the next six or seven years. He added, counting what Presbyterian and CPCC are doing, the total economic development over the next five to six years will be over ½ billion in that area alone. He noted that the streetcar has a significant role in driving that. In addition, he said as the streetcar has plans to move down Hawthorne, his company has worked with Barnhardt Manufacturing to create a larger mixed-use community, which would create an economic opportunity for the City as well as create an opportunity for connectivity between the Belmont Neighborhood and Plaza/Midwood Neighborhood. He said without the streetcar going onto their property, none of that economic development would occur and that site would remain as an underutilized industrial site.

Beth Poovy, member of the Commonwealth/Morningside Neighborhood Association, said she

and her neighbors are very excited about the opportunities streetcar will bring to their community. She said they have already heard the recommendations and are very supportive of them, but they do ask that the MTC prioritize the funding for this project and make it happen sooner rather than later.

VIII. Action Items

a. Streetcar Project Final Locally Preferred Alternative*

Willie Noble gave a presentation on the Streetcar Project. He pointed out that staff recommends the adoption of the alignment along Beatties Ford Road, Trade Street, Elizabeth Avenue, Hawthorne Lane, Clement Avenue/Barnhardt and Central Avenue. The eastern terminus would be at the new Eastland Community Transit Center, which is currently under construction and the western terminus would be on Beatties Ford Road at Rosa Parks Community Transit Center, which is also under construction. Staff recommends further study of the two Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF) locations, CMUD site and the Barnhardt site.

Mr. Tober said the alignment recommendations does include going into an area of the Barnhardt facility, where they VMF may be located. He said hopefully as a result of that, more development will occur at that location.

David McDonald gave an overview of the Preliminary Project Evaluation, highlighting the system plan principles, land-use, mobility and operations, environment and financial aspects.

A motion was made by Mayor Pat McCrory and seconded by Marion Cowell to adopt the resolution approving the Streetcar Project Alignment, Vehicle Maintenance Facility Options, Terminus and Stop Location recommendations as outlined. The vote was recorded as unanimous.

Discussion:

Mayor McCrory said during the past nine years there hasn't been a day that has gone by where he hasn't gotten a letter or heard a comment criticizing him and even some of the MTC members for supporting the mass transit system, including light rail. He said he will not back down from the original vision that was talked about 10 to 15 years. He noted that there are a lot of people who disagree with mass transit and think the City should build roads only in this community, but he disagrees with that. He said this community needs a combination of new roads and mass transit.

Mayor McCrory said that as people talk about numbers not adding up, the bottom line is the numbers have to match the Federal government's equations, which the City has done and because of that it has received \$6 million an unstated line. He noted that the City has received far more funding at this point than expected.

Mr. Helms stated that the MTC will take action on August 23rd on the Southeast and West corridors.

Mayor Lee Myers said having spent almost 20 years on the Metropolitan Planning Organization he recognizes that roads are not the answer. He said he knows the City needs federal funding for these projects, but he said the MTC's decisions should not revolve around that or what the federal government wants. He said another action item should be added for the next meeting that holds off on making any decision right now.

Mayor Phillips noted that what Mr. Myers was proposing wasn't what the MTC was asking us to vote on. She said she would want to know what type of impact "doing nothing" would have on property owners.

Mayor McCrory said before the MTC considers delaying the project, they need to know the

ramifications and how long the delay would last. He said they also need to know what type of impact the delay would have on the State because its been waiting 30 to 40 years to build Independence Boulevard.

Mr. Helms said the board will have the opportunity to decide on August 23rd. He noted that this is a life changing decision that will affect the course and direction of this community, particularly the eastside and Matthews.

b. West Corridor Study Results and Alignment Alternatives*

Mr. Rogers gave a presentation on the West Corridor Study Results and Alignment Alternatives. He presented information about the two technology choices, BRT and streetcar, as well as the pros and cons of both. With the streetcar option, major concerns are the water and sewer lines under the curb lanes on Wilkinson and safety issues with moving the line into the median on Wilkinson. He said CATS continues to work with NCDOT and Char-Meck Utilities department to resolve these issues. The proposed cost for the project is \$185 million if streetcar is chosen and \$105 million if BRT is chosen.

Kent Main gave an overview of the land-use impacts on the West Corridor.

Anthony Roberts asked about the \$35 million for relocation of utilities and asked how many miles that would stretch. Mr. Rogers said about 3 miles along Wilkinson Boulevard.

Mayor Phillips asked about the streetcar travel time. Mr. Rogers noted that the streetcar's travel time is about the same as BRT, which is equivalent to vehicles.

Mayor Phillips said it is disappointing that neither one of these options goes to the Airport because it will not impact tourism whatsoever or even business travel because travelers are not going to be willing to make that transition.

Mr. Rogers said staff is continuing to work with the Airport trying to find solutions, but everything that we have come up with is extremely expensive. He said the Airport's plans for the "People Mover" worked really well, but then they changed their plans and developed a new model that works better for them, but not for CATS.

Mayor McCrory said this too should come as no surprise because it was recommended not to do this study, but due to wanting to get more facts we did spend several hundred thousand dollars to do this. He did note that the study added to their educational process. He said that the facts are disappointing, but a reality. He added that he cannot support further taxpayer investment in this project in the short-term because the facts show that it won't work. He said a short-term alternative would be a very good bus system going down Wilkinson Boulevard.

IX. Chief Executive Officer's Report

1. Ridership across all services increased 5.7 percent for the month of June 2006 compared to June 2005. Year-to-end ridership for FY2006 was up 7.8 percent over FY2005; marking the eighth consecutive year of ridership increases and representing a 62.1 percent increase since FY1998.

2. CATS Service Development staff held two public meetings to discuss a proposal to adjust the Uptown routing for 11 express routes. If adopted, the proposal would streamline the Uptown routing for Express routes and would reduce travel time in Uptown.

3. On July 17, 2006, CATS added two additional veteran CMPD police officers to its Transit

Liaison Unit, bringing the total number of officers in the unit up to four, including one sergeant.

4. In the South Corridor, CATS' first light rail vehicle, which arrived on June 23, is now being readied for testing on a stretch of test track between Clanton Rd. and Tremont Ave. Acceptance testing will begin in August and should take eight to 10 weeks to complete. Also, plans to build a pedestrian bridge over I-277 to connect pedestrians and bicyclist from South End to Uptown have been abandoned but staff is looking at alternatives involving the Caldwell St./South Blvd. corridor and the South Tryon St. corridor to provide this connection.

5. Finally, the contractor building the station and parking garage at the I-485 terminal station for the LYNX Blue line has run into unforeseen site conditions when drilling to place caissons for the garage's foundation. To date, CATS has approved a \$500,000 change order to address the situation. It is likely that additional costs will be incurred to cover the extra work required to create an acceptable foundation for the garage. Staff is continuing to work with the contractor on this problem.

X. Other Business
None

XI. Adjourn
Chairman Helms adjourned the meeting at 8:25.

NEXT MTC MEETING: WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2006, 5:30 PM

Appendix B-5
Newsletters and Other Public Information Materials

FAST FACTS

- In 1998, Mecklenburg County voters approved a 1/2 cent sales tax for transit based on the 2025 Integrated Transit Land Use Plan.
- The new arena will be a major stop for the Trade Street Streetcar. Across from the Charlotte Transportation Center, the Arena is the future home to the new NBA expansion team, the Charlotte Bobcats and the WNBA Charlotte Sting.
- The Center City and surrounding neighborhoods offer a variety of higher educational opportunities, including Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC), Johnson & Wales University, and Johnson C. Smith University.
- A new multimodal station is planned for West Trade Street. The Streetcar will connect to future CATS Commuter Rail, trains and other regional and local transportation services at this location.
- Center City is home to national corporations such as Bank of America, Wachovia Corporation, and Duke Energy Corporation. These companies are some of the largest employers in the Charlotte area.
- Streetcar operations will enhance service on CATS Route 9 along Central Avenue, which is one of the busiest transit lines in the entire CATS system.
- The 2025 Corridor System Plan projected that employment would increase in the central business district by 79% from the year 2000 to 2025. Population is expected to grow by a 146% from the year 2000 to the year 2025.
- An increased interest in living in an urban setting and the desire to live close to work has created a growing demand for residential development in the Center City and surrounding neighborhoods.



FALL 2004

Newsletter Editor:
Kiera Terrell,
CATS Community Relations Specialist

Center City Corridor
Senior Project Manager:
Willie A. Noble, P.E.

Assistant Project Manager:
Jerry Roberson

To be added to the CATS Center City Corridor mailing list, call (704) 432-3030 or e-mail kterrell@ci.charlotte.nc.us.

For more information on streetcar transit planning, visit the CATS web site at www.ridetransit.org or call CATS at (704) 336-RIDE.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Public meetings will be publicized in local newspapers, on Government Channel 16, and on the City of Charlotte – Mecklenburg County website at www.charmeck.org. Also, notices of public meetings (as well as other public information materials) will be sent directly to citizens whose addresses are listed in the CATS Center City Corridor database. To place your name on the mailing list, please contact:

Kiera Terrell
CATS Community Relations Specialist
600 East Fourth Street
Charlotte, NC 28202
(704) 432-3030
kterrell@ci.charlotte.nc.us

CATS staff members are available to speak to neighborhood, business, civic, social, and other interested groups concerning streetcar transit planning on the Center City Corridor. To request a speaker, contact Kiera Terrell at the phone number, street address, or e-mail address listed above. In addition to participation at public meetings, citizens are encouraged to send comments, questions or concerns about Center City Corridor streetcar transit planning to the corridor team.

Information on the Center City Streetcar Project



CATS INITIATES A NEW TWIST ON AN OLD IDEA FOR TRANSIT SERVICE IN CENTER CITY CHARLOTTE!!

Prior to 1950, many American cities utilized streetcars as a primary method of public transportation. It's ironic that such an old idea – mixed with some new technology - could be such a boon to Charlotte decades later! Center City commuters will be able to leave their cars at home as new-age streetcars similar to those used in Europe, Oregon and Washington will offer a fast and reliable ride to almost anywhere in the Center City.

CATS strives to fully inform citizens on all updates and information regarding transportation projects. The Center City Corridor team will provide opportunities for public input on various components of the streetcar project. We strongly encourage all interested parties to participate in upcoming meetings and workshops throughout the duration of the project. Meetings are tentatively scheduled for: January or February 2005, April 2005 and September 2005. The initial public meeting has been scheduled for:

Thursday, November 18, 2004
6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
600 East Fourth Street, Rm 267
Charlotte, NC 28202

CENTER CITY STREETCAR CORRIDOR

The Center City Streetcar Corridor is a key recommendation of the 2025 Corridor System Plan, and is conceived as a Portland type streetcar system utilizing modern vehicle technology based on the European tram that is a smaller, lighter-weight vehicle than those used for Light Rail Transit and is capable of operating in the street with mixed traffic. The streetcar will fulfill many roles including:

- Establishing an east-west transit spine that links all five rapid transit corridors in downtown an provides easy movement between the existing Transportation Center and the proposed Multimodal Station.
- Enhancing Center City mobility.
- Improving connections for neighborhoods that are immediately outside the freeway loop (I-277).
- Connecting key destinations such as the Square, Central Piedmont Community College, Johnson & Wales University, Johnson C. Smith University, Presbyterian Hospital and the new arena.
- Supplementing CATS' two busiest bus routes improving operating efficiency.

Inside This Issue:

- Center City Streetcar Corridor
- Streetcar Characteristics
- Transit Technologies
- Fast Facts



Continued on next page



STREETCAR CHARACTERISTICS



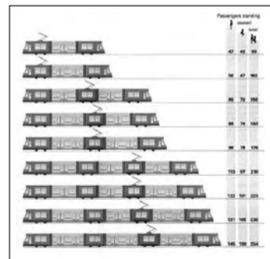
Operates on street with other traffic... Streetcars are generally smaller and more maneuverable than light rail vehicles and operate in traffic lanes on embedded rails in roads with speed limits 45 mph or less.

Transit Stations won't be required... Streetcars operate much more like a local fixed route bus service than traditional light rail transit. Stops are closer together but can have more amenities than the standard bus stop. The streetcar project will also include many improvements to sidewalks and pedestrian crossings in the corridor.



Streetcars have fewer impacts!... Similar to light rail transit, streetcars are powered using overhead electrical power. However, streetcars are less complex, require only one wire, and have fewer visual impacts on streetscape and community character.

All aboard!... By attaching multiple cars – streetcars can carry 2 to 4 times as many passengers as a standard bus.



Construction is a Breeze!... A construction technique has been perfected for the installation of the embedded rails. Traffic detours are often unnecessary.



Continued from cover

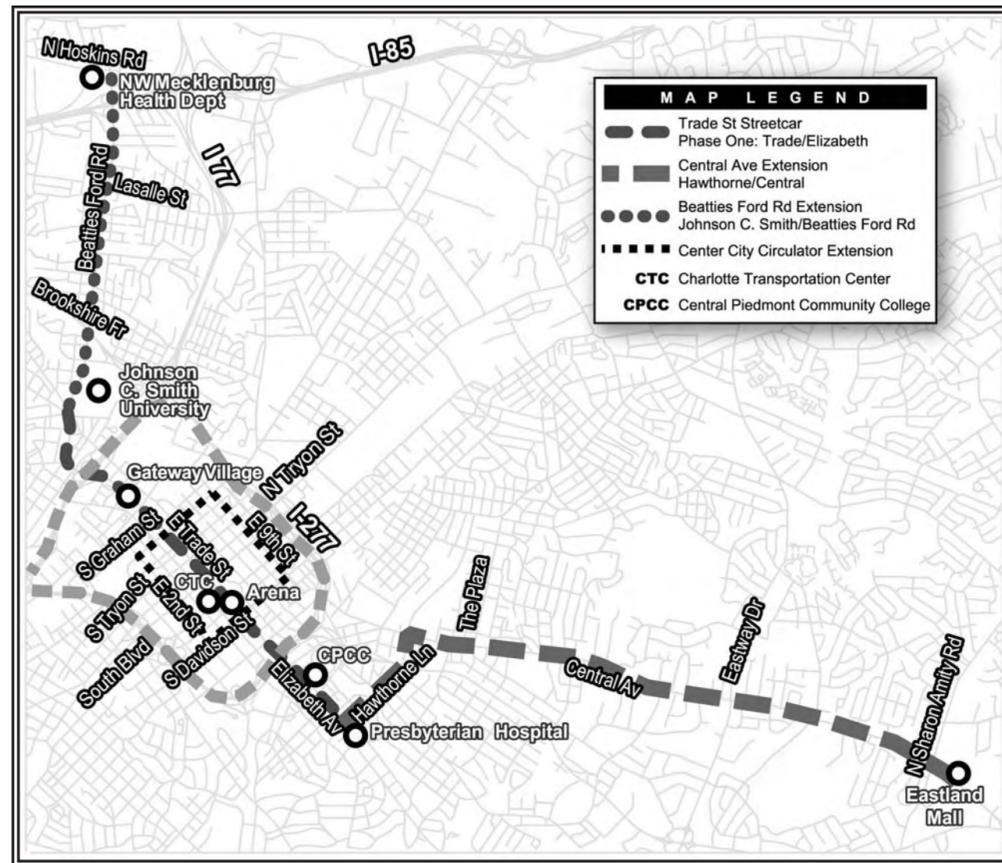
CENTER CITY STREETCAR CORRIDOR

The Streetcar Project consists of four streetcar segments:

- The Trade Street Streetcar extending along Beatties Ford Road, Trade Street and Elizabeth Avenue from Johnson C. Smith University to Presbyterian Hospital.
- The Central Avenue Streetcar extending from the Presbyterian Hospital to Eastland Mall.
- Beatties Ford Road Streetcar extending from the JCSU to I-85.
- A Center City Circulator to distribute passengers throughout Center City.



CENTER CITY STREETCAR CORRIDOR MAP



TRANSIT TECHNOLOGIES

Local Fixed Route Bus service operates along a standard alignment with frequent stops. CATS operates 30 routes that serve the Uptown Transportation Center, 3 crosstown routes, and 16 neighborhood routes.

Express Bus service is designed to transport commuters between suburban communities and major employment centers. CATS provides express bus service on 19 routes throughout Charlotte during the weekday rush hour periods.



Vanpools are ridesharing arrangements where groups of (8 to 15) individuals pool their resources to use one vehicle to commute to work. Employers and/or public agencies usually subsidize the cost of the van.

Heavy Rail Transit systems are electric railways with the capacity for a heavy volume of passengers. These systems operate in exclusive rights-of-way either elevated, underground or at-grade and require an electrified third rail. The carrying capacities of heavy rail cars range from 150 to 190 persons. Examples of heavy rail systems exist in Atlanta, Chicago, New York City, and Washington, D. C.

Light Rail Transit consists of passenger vehicles rolling along steel rails electrically-powered from an overhead wire. Light rail vehicles can accommodate over 200 passengers per rail car and are able to accelerate and decelerate quickly, which allows for more frequent stops. Light rail is capable of operating in mixed traffic or in a separate right-of-way. Houston, Dallas, Denver, and Portland all operate light rail systems. Charlotte's first light rail line will open in the South Corridor in Fall 2006.



Commuter Rail is a train with coaches pulled by a locomotive or motorized coach called diesel multiple units or DMUs. Commuter rail passengers typically use the train to commute from an outlying area



into the city for work. Commuter rail systems are located in many cities around the country, including Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia and Long Island.

Intercity Rail, like Amtrak, provides service between cities. Amtrak operates three train lines through Charlotte, the Crescent, the Carolinian and the Piedmont, to destinations along the eastern seaboard and the southeast.



Bus Rapid Transit is a type of limited-stop service developed in the 1990s that relies on technology to help speed up the service. It combines the quality of rail transit and the flexibility of buses. It can operate on exclusive transitways, high-occupancy-vehicle lanes, expressways, or ordinary streets. CATS is exploring BRT in the Southeast and West corridors.

Streetcar is a smaller version of light rail service. It consists of a single or multiple unit cars that operate in mixed traffic receiving power from an overhead wire. Streetcar systems are operated in Portland and Tacoma.

Trolleys are the oldest version of light rail and operate much the same way as a streetcar. Trolleys are generally operated as single streetcars and carry between 40 and 60 passengers. CATS recently introduced new trolley service between the historic South End and Ninth Street in Uptown Charlotte. Other systems are located in Tampa, San Francisco, Memphis and New Orleans.



TEAM CONSIDERS ALTERNATIVES TO TRADE STREET IN CENTER CITY

Within the Center City, several different roadways could be used for Streetcar operations. Each of these alignment options has specific advantages and disadvantages, prompting a detailed analysis to determine the option that operates most efficiently, minimizes negative impacts, and provides effective service to the Center City. This alternative alignment analysis examined a variety of options for streetcar operations extending from Gateway Village to McDowell Street, based on specific criteria that were defined with input from study stakeholders and various city departments.

Detailed analyses were conducted on the following four alignment options:

- A. Trade Street (bi-directional / curb-running)
- B. Trade Street (bi-directional / median-running)
- C. Fourth Street / Trade Street couplet (curb-running)
- D. Trade Street / Fifth Street couplet (curb-running)



A & B



C



D

These four alternatives were evaluated with regard to eleven specific performance measures:

- Access and traffic impacts
- Existing on-street parking
- Redevelopment opportunities
- Platforms and pedestrian environment
- Streetcar operations
- Bridge clearances
- Potential utilities impacts
- Relative capital costs
- Ease of construction
- Flexibility to improve future streetcar operations
- Compatibility with Light Rail Transit.

A relative ranking (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th) was assigned to each alternative under each performance measure. All criteria were weighted equally to determine a final ranking of alternatives. However, it is important to note that the relative ranking determined through this analysis could change with a prioritization of the performance measures.

Based on evaluation using these eleven performance measures, the Trade Street (median) alternative ranked the highest among the four options studied in depth. This alternative will impact the project in several different ways. It will minimize capital costs and utility impacts, it minimizes negative impacts on the pedestrian environment, it will have the fewest construction impacts, and it will enable effective and efficient streetcar operations. The feedback received from study stakeholders, including input from public participation, is also supportive of a streetcar alignment on Trade Street.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

- Complete Conceptual Design-December 2005
- Complete Final Design-December 2006
- Complete Construction of Trade Street Initial Alignment-June 2009
- Complete Construction of Central Avenue and Beatties Ford Road extensions-June 2017
- Complete Uptown Circulator-June 2025

SPRING 2005

Newsletter Editor:
Kiera Terrell
CATS Community Relations Specialist

Center City Corridor

Senior Project Manager:
Willie A. Noble, P.E.

Assistant Project Manager:
Jerry Roberson, AICP

Transit Planner/Urban Design
Stan Leinwand, AICP

To be added to the CATS Center City Corridor mailing list, call (704) 432-3030 or e-mail kterrell@ci.charlotte.nc.us.

For more information on streetcar transit planning, visit the CATS web site at www.ridetransit.org or call CATS at (704) 336-RIDE.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Public meetings will be publicized in local newspapers, on Government Channel 16, and on the City of Charlotte – Mecklenburg County website at www.charmeck.org. Also, notices of public meetings (as well as other public information materials) will be sent directly to citizens whose addresses are listed in the CATS Center City Corridor database. To place your name on the mailing list, please contact:

Kiera Terrell
CATS Community Relations Specialist
600 East Fourth Street
Charlotte, NC 28202
(704) 432-3030
kterrell@ci.charlotte.nc.us

CATS staff members are available to speak to neighborhood, business, civic, social, and other interested groups concerning streetcar transit planning on the Center City Corridor. To request a speaker, contact Kiera Terrell at the phone number, street address, or e-mail address listed above. In addition to participation at public meetings, citizens are encouraged to send comments, questions or concerns about Center City Corridor streetcar transit planning to the corridor team.

Please visit www.ridetransit.org to view public meeting summaries, presentations, and graphics from the public meetings that were held in April/May 2005.

UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS ON URBAN DESIGN

Trade/Elizabeth Avenue Corridor June 21, 2005 11:30 a.m. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Library St. Francis Auditorium 310 North Tryon Street Charlotte	Central/Hawthorne Avenue Corridor June 22, 2005 6:30 p.m. Eastland Mall Activity Room 5471 Central Avenue Charlotte	Beatties Ford Road Corridor June 23, 2005 6:30 p.m. Northwest School of Performing Arts Old Cafeteria 1415 Beatties Ford Road Charlotte
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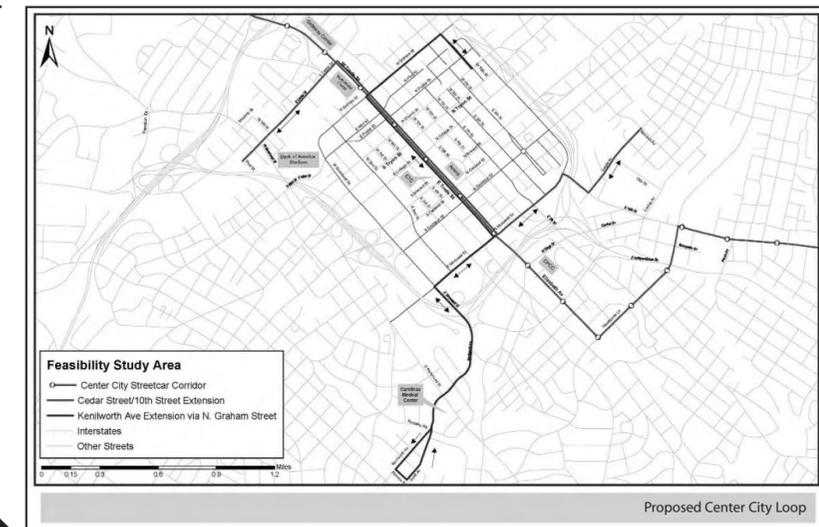
Information on the Center City Streetcar Project



STREETCAR MOVING AHEAD

An opportunity presented itself for the public to take another glimpse at the conceptual design work underway on the CATS Center City Streetcar Project. Moreover, CATS staff and its consultant team met with neighborhood representatives, business owners, and other members of the interested public at three separate community meetings. Held at different venues along the corridor, the meetings were set up to inform the public about the latest ideas for streetcar stops and alignments, and to solicit input on the project. The meetings were well attended with over 100 attendees, and CATS staff received positive feedback from neighborhood residents about the streetcar concept.

In this edition of the newsletter, a primary focus is placed on recent community meetings. This includes an emphasis on informational subject matter as well as feedback the Center City Streetcar team received from persons in attendance.



Inside This Issue:

- Feedback from Public Meetings
- Potential Streetcar Stop Locations
- Alternatives Considered for Trade Street

Center City Loop

The Center City Streetcar Team has been busily examining the feasibility of a Center City streetcar loop (Final Phase of the streetcar system). The primary purpose of the streetcar in Center City is to serve travel within the Center City, as well as provide and enhance transit connectivity between all five rapid transit corridors in Uptown. The graphic, depicted above illustrates just one of the many concepts being considered at this time.



BEATTIES FORD ROAD EXTENSION

FOCUS OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

The primary focus of the meetings was to show the alternative alignments for the streetcar segments and to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of curbside running versus median running alternatives. Both types of alignment work well depending on the corridor and segment in question. Additionally, it was important for attendees to understand how each alignment type will impact streetscape and traffic patterns. The attendees were pleased to hear that a goal of the project was to minimize the impact to sidewalks, street widths, and landscaping. The meetings were also used to continue the exchange of ideas regarding stop locations and to discuss the end-of-line configurations for each phase of the project. Meeting displays included aerial mapping with potential alignment overlays, renderings of potential stops, and computer generated animations of some of the Trade Street stops.



OPTION 2 – Beatties Ford Road Pocket Track



End-of-Line Alternatives (Beatties Ford Road)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 1 – Rosa Parks Place Pocket Track



End-of-Line Alternatives (Beatties Ford Road)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 3 – I-85 Pocket Track



End-of-Line Alternatives (Beatties Ford Road)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor

POTENTIAL STREETCAR STOPS:

- Rosa Parks Place
- Montana Drive
- LaSalle Street
- Booker Avenue/Oaklawn Avenue
- French Street
- Johnson C. Smith University



Existing Plan
Conceptual Layout at Beatties Ford and Lasalle St
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Aerial View
Conceptual Layout at Beatties Ford and Lasalle St
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Ground View
Conceptual Layout at Beatties Ford and Lasalle St
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Plan
Conceptual Layout at Beatties Ford and Lasalle St
Center City/Streetcar Corridor

TRADE/ELIZABETH AVENUE INITIAL ALIGNMENT

NEIGHBORHOODS EXCITED ABOUT CATS STREETCAR PROJECT

The first meeting was held on April 26th at Eastland Mall which concentrated on the Central Avenue portion of the Streetcar alignment. Attendees expressed support for the project but wanted assurances that the recent streetscape improvements along Central Avenue would be preserved. The second meeting was held on April 28th at the Carole Hoefener Center on 6th Street, where the discussion centered on stop locations and the phasing for the project. The Trade Street segment is scheduled to be operational in 2009 with endpoints at Johnson C. Smith University and Presbyterian Hospital or the Plaza-Midwood area on Central Avenue. The third meeting was conducted at Johnson C. Smith University on May 4th and included dialogue regarding the impact of streetcar operations on bus service, the future terminus of the Beatties Ford Road segment, and a general discussion about the economic impact/job creation potential of streetcar systems.



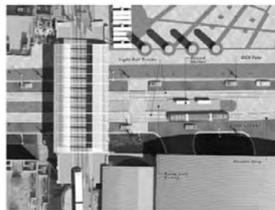
Existing Plan
Median Running Center Median Side Platform at Arena Station
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Aerial View
Median Running Center Median Side Platform at Arena Station
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Ground View
Median Running Center Median Side Platform at Arena Station
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Plan
Median Running Center Median Side Platform at Arena Station
Center City/Streetcar Corridor

POTENTIAL STREETCAR STOPS:

- Johnson C. Smith University
- Five Points
- Montgomery Street
- Gateway Village
- Future Charlotte Gateway Station
- Mint Street
- Tryon Street
- Arena/Transportation Center
- Government Center
- Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC)
- Presbyterian Hospital
- Independence Park
- Southeast Corridor



OPTION 1 – The Plaza Pocket track
End-of-Line Alternatives (The Plaza)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 2 – The Plaza Loop
End-of-Line Alternatives (The Plaza)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 3 – Thomas Avenue Pocket Track
End-of-Line Alternatives (The Plaza)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 4 – Pecan Avenue Pocket Track
End-of-Line Alternatives (The Plaza)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor

CENTRAL/HAWTHORNE AVENUE EXTENSION

WHAT'S NEXT

The Center City Streetcar Team will present an update on the project to the Transit Program Steering Team in early June and will meet again with the community to discuss urban design issues around the streetcar stops in late June 2005. The Streetcar Team will work through summer to refine the conceptual design of the streetcar system and return to the community in September to present its refined streetcar design for additional community feedback.

POTENTIAL STOP AMENITIES:

Amenities are being considered along the entire streetcar corridor.

- Shelters
- Lighting
- Ticket Machine
- Seating
- Schedule Information
- ADA Ramps
- Artwork
- Pedestrian Crossing Signals
- Landscaping
- Trash Receptacles



OPTION 1 – Central Avenue Pocket Track
End-of-Line Alternatives (Eastland Mall)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 3 – Central Avenue/Mall Loop
End-of-Line Alternatives (Eastland Mall)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor

End-of-Line Alternatives (Eastland Mall)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 2 – Transit Center Pocket Track
End-of-Line Alternatives (Eastland Mall)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 4 – Elevated Pocket Track
End-of-Line Alternatives (Eastland Mall)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor

End-of-Line Alternatives (Eastland Mall)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor

POTENTIAL STREETCAR STOPS:

- Presbyterian Hospital
- Independence Park
- Southeast Corridor
- Plaza Area
- Veterans Park
- Morningside Drive
- Arnold Drive
- Briar Creek Drive
- Eastway Crossing/ Eastway Drive
- Sheridan Drive
- Derby Acres
- Landsdale Drive/ Rosehaven Drive
- Winterfield Place
- Eastland Mall



Existing Plan
Curb Side Stop At Morningside & Central Ave.
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Aerial View
Curb Side Stop At Morningside & Central Ave.
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Ground View
Curb Side Stop At Morningside & Central Ave.
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Plan
Curb Side Stop At Morningside & Central Ave.
Center City/Streetcar Corridor

kiosks, and other amenities which are designed to create a more comfortable environment for passengers who are waiting for the streetcar to arrive. The platform height will be 4 inches higher than the sidewalk; ramps will be constructed to improve access for persons with disabilities. Streetcar stops at Eastland Mall and the Rosa Parks Place (streetcar terminus) will be incorporated into the planned community transit centers, which include more elaborate waiting areas.

Most of the streetcar stops will be designed for curbside service. These platforms will be built into the existing sidewalk for easy access. There are certain locations where the streetcar alignment dictates median operation where platforms in the median of the roadway are being considered. There are 32 proposed streetcar stop locations along the corridor. Six of those stops require median platforms, all of which will be located in Center City on Trade Street. These platforms, like the one shown in the diagram, will be located at signalized intersections or pedestrian crossings. The ramp at one end of the platform will be accessible from the crosswalk, and platforms will be designed as a "safe haven" for commuters waiting for the streetcar. Shelters will back-up to the median curb line to shield patrons from passing traffic. All crosswalks will be equipped with audible and tactile treatments for the visually impaired. These concepts are illustrated on the map located on the inside panels of the newsletter. ■

INSIDE TRACK



Willie Noble, P.E.

Senior Project Manager

Willie Noble, joined CATS in 2004 after working for transit agencies MARTA (Atlanta) and Metro in St. Louis. He has over 26 years of professional experience in engineering, construction management, and project management.

Family: Married to wife, Rosilyn for over 24 years. Two daughters, Alexia 15, sophomore at Harding University High School and Adrienne, 18 freshman at Xavier University in New Orleans. **Educational background/Certifications:** BS in Civil Engineering-Washington University, St. Louis. **Hobbies:** Photography, listening to music(especially jazz), playing bass, golf, and traveling. **Favorite Charlotte restaurants:** Taste of Havana and Harry and Jean's. **Favorite**

Music Group/Entertainer and why: Weather Report "They were a seminal band of the fusion-jazz period during the 1970's when I became interested in jazz music."



Jerry Roberson, AICP

Assistant Project Manager

Jerry Roberson, joined CATS in 2001 as a Planner in the Project Development Division. Currently he is the Assistant Project Manager for the streetcar corridor. Prior to his positions with CATS, he served as the Manager of Project Development with the Metropolitan Tulsa Transit Authority. **Hometown:** Tulsa, Oklahoma. **Educational Background/Certificates:** BA Geography, Oklahoma State University, MS Urban Planning, University of Tennessee Certificate in Project Management, UNCC. **Hobbies:** Visiting Big Cities, Domestic Travel, Architecture, Bowling

Favorite Charlotte Restaurant: Hotel Charlotte-variety of food and prices, hangouts for locals, extensive selection of beverages. **Favorite Musical Group/Entertainer:** Chicago-38 years, dozens of top 10 hits, horns, horns, and horns. They truly "Make Me Smile!"



Stan Leinwand, AICP

Transit Planner/Urban Design

Stan Leinwand is the newest member of the streetcar team. Stan began working for CATS in winter of '05. He has over 10 years of planning and design experience in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. **Family:** Married to wife, Sara-Lynne with one son, originally from Montreal, Canada. **Education:** BA Political Science, Master of Urban Planning, Master of Architecture(Urban Design) **Hobbies:** Relaxing with family, traveling. **Favorite Charlotte Restaurants:** 300 East and Providence Café **Favorite Musical Group:** Great Big Sea(celtic folk/rock band from Newfoundland), 80's music.



Kiera Terrell

Community Relations Specialist

Kiera Terrell joined CATS in the Fall of '04. Before joining CATS, she worked for the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) where she designed and implemented marketing strategies for the purpose of creating transit awareness and education. During her tenure at RIPTA, she also created the first transitional program for high school students and persons with disabilities. **Family:** Married to husband Marion, pet maltese named Remington. Born and raised as a "Ragin Cajun" in Louisiana! **Education:** BA in Psychology, minor in Criminology -State University of West Georgia. **Favorite Charlotte Restaurant:** McCormick & Schmidt. **Favorite Musical Groups/Entertiners:** Beyoncé, Frankie Beverly & Maze, Jill Scott, and Michael Jackson because of their unique sense of style and incredible talent.



Linda Murdaugh

Corridor Assistant

Linda Murdaugh is the Corridor Assistant for the streetcar corridor. She is originally from Hampton, S.C. In continuing her education, she plans to pursue a B.A. degree in Journalism/Communications and a Masters of Divinity at UNCC. She enjoys writing poetry, plays, and short stories! Her favorite Charlotte restaurant is Carraba's Italian Grill where she enjoys eating her favorite type of food.

SUMMER 2005

Newsletter Editor:
Kiera Terrell
CATS Community Relations Specialist

Center City Corridor

Senior Project Manager:
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For more information on streetcar
transit planning, visit the CATS
web site at www.ridetransit.org
or call CATS at (704) 336-RIDE.

RIDING THE STREETCAR

As shown in the photo, streetcars are designed to be very spacious inside, so it's very easy to maneuver within the vehicle for those in wheelchairs, with strollers or even bicycles. The configuration of seats has not been finalized for CATS streetcars but there will be plenty of seats and areas to secure a wheelchair. Streetcars also have large areas for people to stand, which makes passenger movement to and from the doors more efficient. Streetcars are designed for lower speeds and smooth starts and stops. ■



GETTING ON AND OFF THE STREETCAR

An important design feature of a platform is to construct it to be level with the streetcar floor. Building the platform 4 inches higher than normal curb height will allow a passenger to move to and from the vehicle without navigating stairs or stepping over gutters. Streetcars are equipped with "bridge plates" (shown in the photo) to ensure smooth access entering or exiting the vehicle by wheelchair, bike, etc. In addition to the bridge plate, the doors will be extra wide to allow passengers to exit the streetcar while others are getting on.



We hope that this information provides an insight into CATS' focus on passenger comfort. Future phases of the streetcar design will include more details regarding these efforts. ■

Information on the Center City
Streetcar Project



STREETCAR TEAM RECEIVES APPROVAL TO PROCEED ON TRADE STREET!

Recently, CATS Center City Streetcar team reached a major milestone when the Program Steering Team approved a conceptual alignment and identified the preferred streetcar stop locations for the route in Center City. An alignment that will provide median stops for many of the Center City locations was selected for Trade Street, in an effort to design a streetcar system that has minimal impacts to streetscape and adjacent properties. This alignment will provide an efficient and convenient system between Johnson C. Smith University and Presbyterian Hospital (possibly Plaza Midwood area) on Trade Street and Elizabeth Avenue.

Moreover, long-range streetcar extensions along Central Avenue to Eastland Mall and Beatties Ford Road to Rosa Parks Place are planned to operate entirely along the curbside lane. Higher traffic volumes and speeds in these corridors prescribe a curbside alignment option that becomes more attractive, due to the streetcar operating in the slower curbside travel lane. Curbside service will also avoid impacts to the recently-plant-

ed median strip on Central Avenue.

As an opportunity to determine potential extensions into the future, a preliminary feasibility analysis of service in Uptown has also been completed. Initially conceived as an uptown circulator within the I-277 loop, similar to the Gold Rush service, the concept has evolved into spokes that extend outward from the four corners of Center City. This concept broadens the reach of the streetcar to "break through" the barrier created by I-277 and will provide streetcar service to more residential and commercial areas in and around Uptown, including Carolinas Medical Center, Belmont neighborhood, and Third and Fourth Wards.

Lastly, with the alignment selection process now complete, more detailed planning and engineering can begin in earnest. The Trade Street/Elizabeth Avenue portion of the streetcar project is expected to be fully functioning by 2009, followed by the Central Avenue/Beatties Ford Road corridors to be implemented by 2017, and the final phase of the project (Center City spokes) by 2025. ■

CATS STREETCAR FOCUSES ON PASSENGER COMFORT

One of the major concerns facing designers of the CATS streetcar system is to ensure passenger comfort at waiting areas during streetcar boarding/exiting and while riding the streetcar system. Streetcars are operating in many different cities where the design team has spent considerable resources and effort to address the concerns of system users. Passenger comfort is not only important to the streetcar team when designing the system, but it will also play a major role in whether or not a commuter decides to ride the system. The following paragraphs will explain some of the important design features of the system that will create a service that is Convenient -Easy- and Comfortable! ■

WAITING FOR THE STREETCAR TO ARRIVE

CATS uses a number of considerations that assist in defining the location of streetcar stops and the amenities present on or near each platform. Pedestrian access to and from the platform is a major concern. Most of the platforms that are being considered will be located very close to crosswalks at existing signalized intersections, therefore allowing commuters to cross the street safely to and from the platform. Mid-block stops (stops that cannot be located at an intersection) will have new, signalized pedestrian crossings designed and constructed specifically for the streetcar system. Platforms are typically 12 feet wide and are equipped with shelters, benches, leaning rails, information

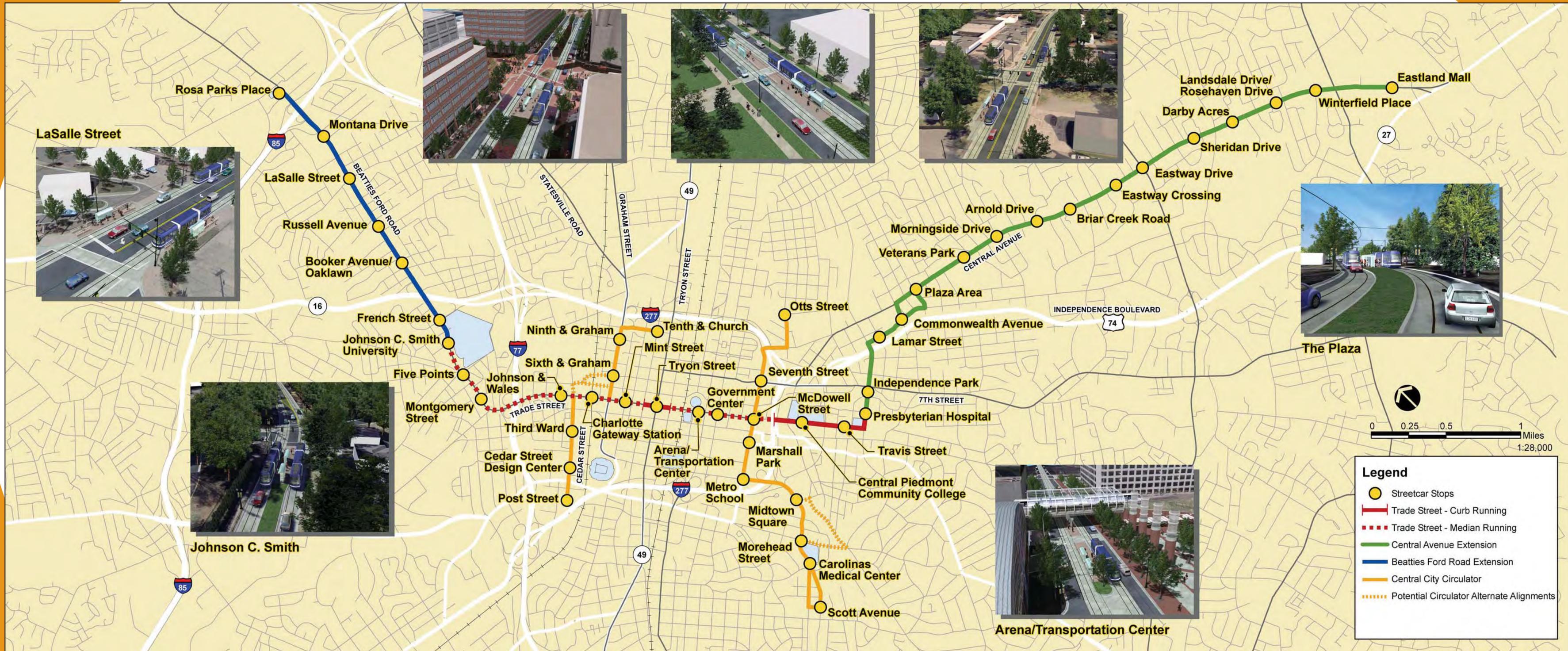
Inside This Issue:

- Proposed Conceptual Alignment
- Inside Track
- Riding the Streetcar
- Getting On and Off the Streetcar



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PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL ALIGNMENT



CENTER CITY STREETCAR FAQs



Frequently Asked Questions about the Center City Streetcar Project

The process for developing the Center City/Streetcar Corridor is heavily dependent on the participation of interested citizens. The streetcar team has compiled a series of questions generated through various public meetings, emails, and phone calls. These questions were documented and taken into consideration for the project. We have provided answers to the following questions below in an effort to keep the public informed.

How is a streetcar powered?



The streetcar is electric and is powered by an overhead wire 18 feet above the street.

Will the stops be programmed into the streetcar or will you have to pull a cord to notify the driver of a stop?

The streetcar will stop at every stop along the corridor.

How will the elderly cross the road that has a streetcar operating on it?

Streetcars adhere to the same type of traffic controls as automobiles and trucks. Streetlight control buttons can be placed to safely assist the elderly across busy streets.

What is the maintenance plan for the streetcar? How often does the system breakdown?

A comprehensive maintenance plan will be developed for the streetcar system. There are a lot of variables that determine the breakdown experience for transit systems, like: age of the vehicle, local weather patterns, and maintenance practices. Streetcars have shown similar durability and reliability of other rail system technologies.

Is the cost of this project comparable to the Light Rail System?

We are still in the conceptual design stages of this project and do not have cost figures at this time. A cost estimate will be prepared at the end of the conceptual design phase.

There is a concern about the heavy truck movement to and from Brookshire Freeway and I-85. How will the streetcar and heavy trucks co-exist?

The streetcar, like a bus, is capable of operating in traffic and would not result in additional impacts to truck traffic.

Is there a preference between curbside running and median lane travel?

This is a question on which the Center City Streetcar team is looking for input from you! Curbside running and median lane running will be evaluated against a large set of criteria, including public consensus, to determine the option that best suits the community, operations, and the environment.



704-336-RIDE • 866-779-CATS • www.ridetransit.org

Continued on reverse side

CENTER CITY FAQs

How much does income and population factor in to where transit is placed?

Population, along with employment, connectivity to major activity centers, and existing transit ridership in the corridor are primary factors that are considered when planning transit investments, and can indicate the likelihood for transit use in a particular corridor.

On Trade Street, can the streetcar operate curbside in some areas and median running in others?



Yes. The streetcar is capable of alternating between the two loading options. However, its design will limit the number of times the streetcar changes lanes, because each lane change requires traffic signals to control traffic around the movement of the streetcar. This can cause safety issues because a motorist may not expect the streetcar to change lanes. Also, the project's goal is to minimize any impacts to traffic.

We understand that the Center City Streetcar Team is exploring potential alternative streets for the streetcar to operate on in Center City. What is the rationale for creating a couplet system on 4th and Trade Street?

Coordination between the streetcar project and other CATS projects like the proposed Multi-Modal Station and the Southeast/West Corridor are critical to the successful implementation of the transit system. The couplet analysis will provide a greater understanding of the benefits and drawbacks of alternatives to operating the streetcar solely on Trade Street.

Will the Trade Street Alternatives study delay the project completion date?

No. The assessment will not affect the schedule of the project.

Doesn't Charlotte have poor air quality? How can we better our air quality?

Part of the solution to improve our air quality includes building transit systems that use technology with an improved operating system. Also, the more cars that are taken off of the road, the better the air quality will become.

Can a streetcar transport more passengers than a bus?

Yes. By attaching multiple cars a streetcar can carry 2 to 4 times as many passengers than a standard bus.

What does the streetcar look like?

The streetcar system is conceived as a "Portland" type streetcar system utilizing modern vehicle technology based on the European "tram" that is a smaller and lighter vehicle than those used for "Light Rail Transit", operates on embedded rails, and is capable of operating in streets with other traffic.



Center City Streetcar/Corridor Team

Senior Project Manager-Willie A. Noble, P.E.

Assistant Project Manager-Jerry Roberson, AICP

Transit Planner/Urban Design-Stan Leinwand, AICP

Community Relations Specialist-Kiera R. Terrell

We would like to hear from you! To get involved in the project or to present your concerns directly to the Center City/Streetcar Corridor team, please call 704-432-3030 or kterrell@ci.charlotte.nc.us

CENTER CITY FAST FACTS

Information on the Center City Streetcar Project



CENTER CITY CORRIDOR DESCRIPTION

The Trade Street Streetcar project is a key recommendation of the 2025 Corridor System Plan. The alignment will serve the central business district and provide connectivity to surrounding communities and institutions. The proposed streetcar route will begin at Beatties Ford Rd (I-85) continuing through Center City (CBD) along Trade St, traveling up Elizabeth Ave, and out to Central Ave (Eastland Mall). The Streetcar is a 21st century version of the early 20th century vehicle. It will introduce a new level of comfort, safety, and convenience for commuters traveling to and from work, special events, and other points of interest. It will also provide a more pedestrian-friendly environment along the corridor with hopes to create a more livable city and a positive addition to the transportation system.

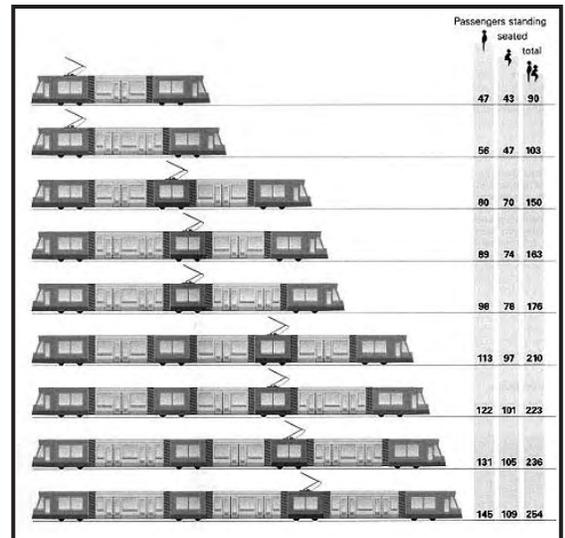
VEHICLE DESCRIPTION

The Streetcar is conceived as a "Portland" type streetcar system utilizing modern vehicle technology based on the European "Tram" that is designed to operate in mixed traffic on urban streets. Each low floor streetcar consists of a three-tier section vehicle with a capacity of 117 passengers and is designed for bi-directional operation with doors on both sides of the carbody. Modern streetcars are smaller and lighter than Light Rail Transit (LRT) vehicles and operate similar to a bus with passengers getting on and off frequent stops along the street rather than at stations, but hold a greater number of passengers than a bus.

Streetcar At A Glance

- Length: 20m (66ft)
- Width: 2.46m (8ft)
- Height: 3.4m (11ft, 3in)
- Double-ended, double-sided, 3 sections, 2 doors
- 30 Seats, 87 Standees
- Space for wheelchairs, bikes, etc.

VEHICLE CAPACITY



CATS CENTER CITY CORRIDOR TEAM

Senior Project Manager:
Willie A. Noble, P.E.

Assistant Project Manager:
Jerry Roberson, AICP

Transit Planner/Urban Designer:
Stan Leinwand, AICP

Community Relations Specialist:
Kiera R. Terrell

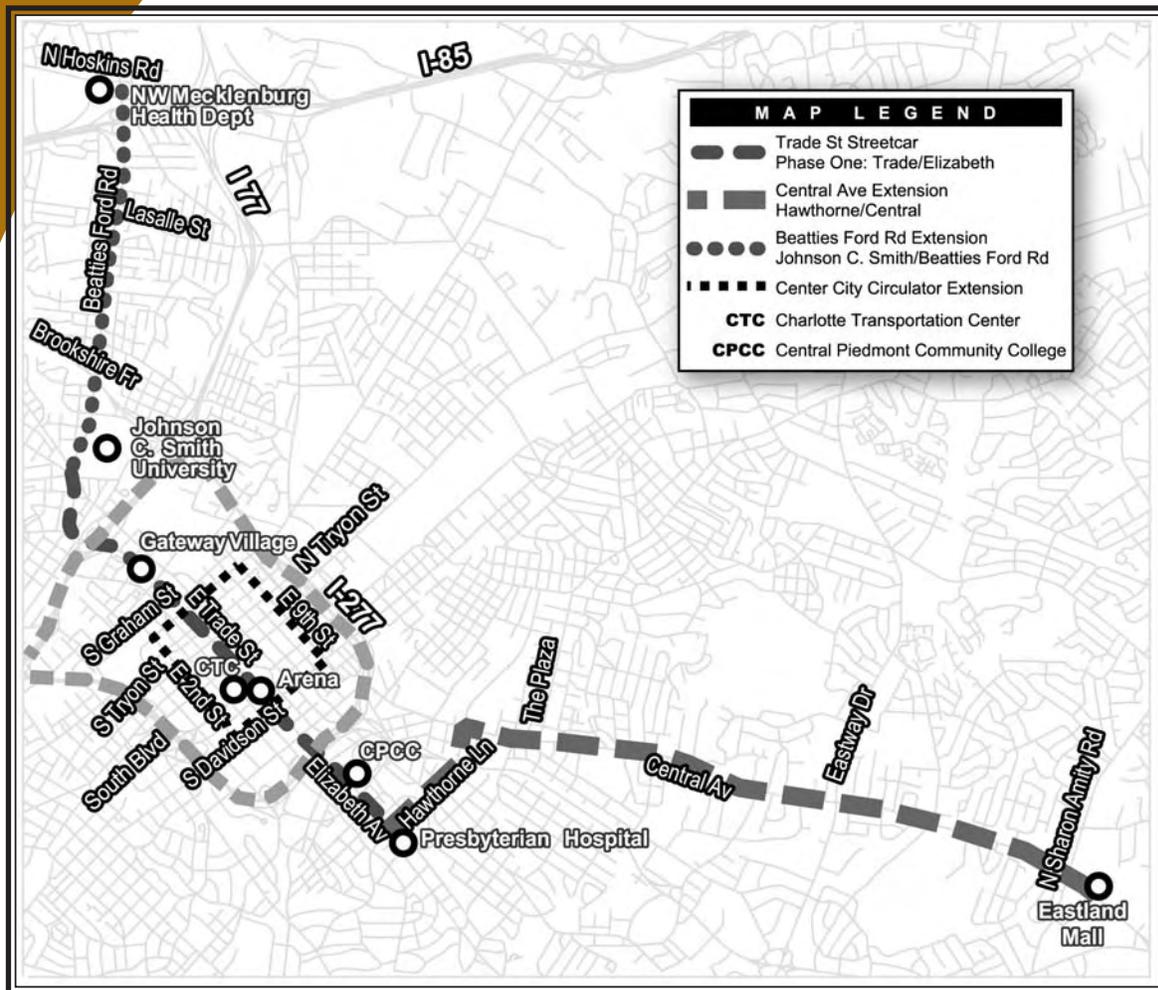


MORE MOBILITY! MORE OPTIONS! MORE SOLUTIONS! A NEW WAY TO COMMUTE TO...

...Colleges & Universities
...Restaurants

...Healthcare Institutions
...Place of Work

...Entertainment Facilities
...Shopping Centers



PROJECT SCHEDULE

- Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Conceptual Design – began September 2004 and will be completed by December 2005
- Preliminary Engineering/Final Design complete by early 2007
- Construction (Phase 1) begin mid-2007 complete by 2009
- Construction (Phases 2 & 3) complete by 2017
- Construction (Phase 4) complete by 2025

Public Meetings/Input:

- February/March 2005
- April 2005
- June 2005
- September 2005

Dates are subject to change.

To receive information on the Center City Streetcar Corridor, call (704) 432-3030 or email kterrell@ci.charlotte.nc.us.



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www.ridetransit.org

CENTER CITY TRANSITIONS

FALL
2004

Information on the Center City
Streetcar Project



CATS INITIATES A NEW TWIST ON AN OLD IDEA FOR TRANSIT SERVICE IN CENTER CITY CHARLOTTE!!

Prior to 1950, many American cities utilized streetcars as a primary method of public transportation. It's ironic that such an old idea – mixed with some new technology - could be such a boon to Charlotte decades later! Center City commuters will be able to leave their cars at home as new-age streetcars similar to those used in Europe, Oregon and Washington will offer a fast and reliable ride to almost anywhere in the Center City.

CATS strives to fully inform citizens on all updates and information regarding transportation projects. The Center City Corridor team will provide opportunities for public input on various components of the streetcar project. We strongly encourage all interested parties to participate in upcoming meetings and workshops throughout the duration of the project. Meetings are tentatively scheduled for: January or February 2005, April 2005 and September 2005. The initial public meeting has been scheduled for:

Thursday, November 18, 2004
6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

**Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Government Center
600 East Fourth Street, Rm 267
Charlotte, NC 28202**

CENTER CITY STREETCAR CORRIDOR

The Center City Streetcar Corridor is a key recommendation of the 2025 Corridor System Plan, and is conceived as a Portland type streetcar system utilizing modern vehicle technology based on the European tram that is a smaller, lighter-weight vehicle than those used for Light Rail Transit and is capable of operating in the street with mixed traffic. The streetcar will fulfill many roles including:

- Establishing an east-west transit spine that links all five rapid transit corridors in downtown and provides easy movement between the existing Transportation Center and the proposed Multimodal Station.
- Enhancing Center City mobility.
- Improving connections for neighborhoods that are immediately outside the freeway loop (I-277).
- Connecting key destinations such as the Square, Central Piedmont Community College, Johnson & Wales University, Johnson C. Smith University, Presbyterian Hospital and the new arena.
- Supplementing CATS' two busiest bus routes improving operating efficiency.



Trade Street Before

Continued on next page

Inside This Issue:

- Center City Streetcar Corridor
- Streetcar Characteristics
- Transit Technologies
- Fast Facts

STREETCAR CHARACTERISTICS



Operates on street with other traffic...

Streetcars are generally smaller and more maneuverable than light rail vehicles and operate in traffic lanes on embedded rails in roads with speed limits 45 mph or less.

Transit Stations won't be required...

Streetcars operate much more like a local fixed route bus service than traditional light rail transit. Stops are closer together but can have more amenities than the standard bus stop. The streetcar project will also include many improvements to sidewalks and pedestrian crossings in the corridor.

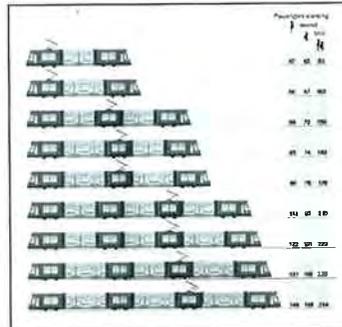


Streetcars have fewer impacts!...

Similar to light rail transit, streetcars are powered using overhead electrical power. However, streetcars are less complex, require only one wire, and have fewer visual impacts on streetscape and community character.



All aboard!... By attaching multiple cars – streetcars can carry 2 to 4 times as many passengers as a standard bus.



Construction is a Breeze!... A construction technique has been perfected for the installation of the embedded rails. Traffic detours are often unnecessary.

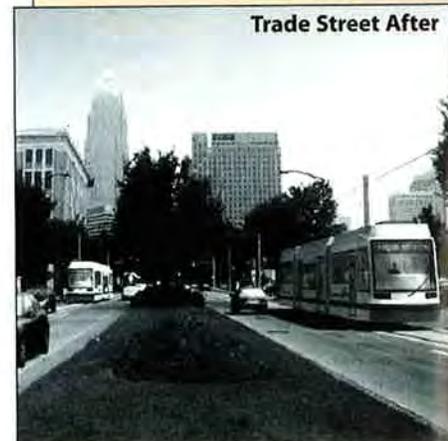


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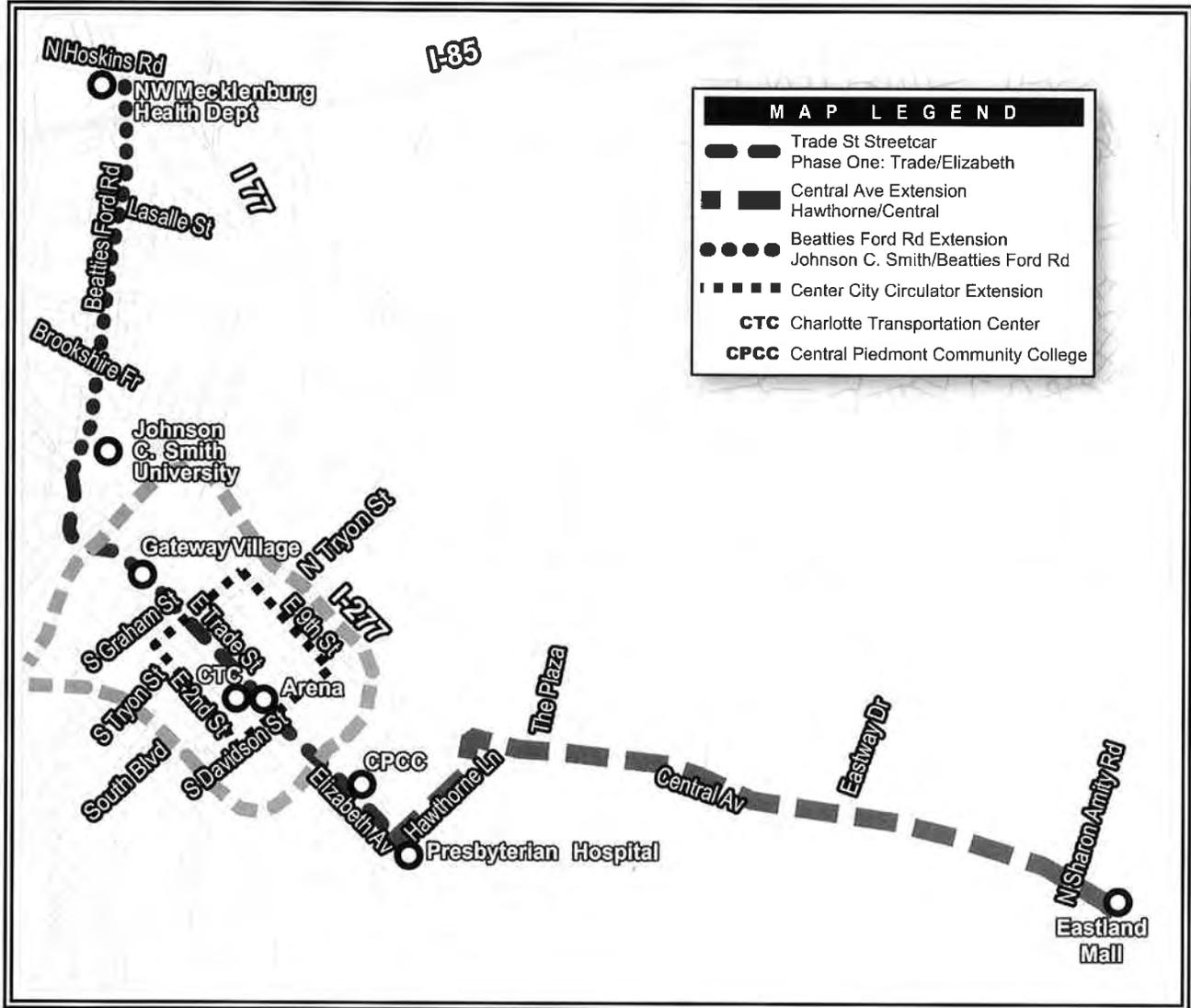
CENTER CITY STREETCAR CORRIDOR

The Streetcar Project consists of four streetcar segments:

- The Trade Street Streetcar extending along Beatties Ford Road, Trade Street and Elizabeth Avenue from Johnson C. Smith University to Presbyterian Hospital.
- The Central Avenue Streetcar extending from the Presbyterian Hospital to Eastland Mall.
- Beatties Ford Road Streetcar extending from the JCSU to I-85.
- A Center City Circulator to distribute passengers throughout Center City.



CENTER CITY STREETCAR CORRIDOR MAP



TRANSIT TECHNOLOGIES

Local Fixed Route Bus service operates along a standard alignment with frequent stops. CATS operates 30 routes that serve the Uptown Transportation Center, 3 crosstown routes, and 16 neighborhood routes.

Express Bus service is designed to transport commuters between suburban communities and major employment centers. CATS provides express bus service on 19 routes throughout Charlotte during the weekday rush hour periods.



Vanpools are ridesharing arrangements where groups of (8 to 15) individuals pool their resources to use one vehicle to commute to work. Employers and/or public agencies usually subsidize the cost of the van.



Heavy Rail Transit systems are electric railways with the capacity for a heavy volume of passengers. These systems operate in exclusive rights-of-way either elevated, underground or at-grade and require an electrified third rail. The carrying capacities of heavy rail cars range from 150 to 190 persons. Examples of heavy rail systems exist in Atlanta, Chicago, New York City, and Washington, D. C.

Light Rail Transit consists of passenger vehicles rolling along steel rails electrically-powered from an overhead wire. Light rail vehicles can accommodate over 200 passengers per rail car and are able to accelerate and decelerate quickly, which allows for more frequent stops. Light rail is capable of operating in mixed traffic or in a separate right-of-way. Houston, Dallas, Denver, and Portland all operate light rail systems. Charlotte's first light rail line will open in the South Corridor in Fall 2006.



Commuter Rail is a train with coaches pulled by a locomotive or motorized coach called diesel multiple units or DMUs. Commuter rail passengers typically use the train to commute from an outlying area

into the city for work. Commuter rail systems are located in many cities around the country, including Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia and Long Island.

Intercity Rail, like Amtrak, provides service between cities. Amtrak operates three train lines through Charlotte, the Crescent, the Carolinian and the Piedmont, to destinations along the eastern seaboard and the southeast.



Bus Rapid Transit is a type of limited-stop service developed in the 1990s that relies on technology to help speed up the service. It combines the quality of rail transit and the flexibility of buses. It can operate on exclusive transitways, high-occupancy-vehicle lanes, expressways, or ordinary streets. CATS is exploring BRT in the Southeast and West corridors.



Streetcar is a smaller version of light rail service. It consists of a single or multiple unit cars that operate in mixed traffic receiving power from an overhead wire. Streetcar systems are operated in Portland and Tacoma.

Trolleys are the oldest version of light rail and operate much the same way as a streetcar. Trolleys are generally operated as single streetcars and carry between 40 and 60 passengers. CATS recently introduced new trolley service between the historic South End and Ninth Street in Uptown Charlotte. Other systems are located in Tampa, San Francisco, Memphis and New Orleans.

FAST FACTS

- In 1998, Mecklenburg County voters approved a 1/2 cent sales tax for transit based on the 2025 Integrated Transit Land Use Plan.

- The Center City and surrounding neighborhoods offer a variety of higher educational opportunities, including Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC), Johnson & Wales University, and Johnson C. Smith University.

- Center City is home to national corporations such as Bank of America, Wachovia Corporation, and Duke Energy Corporation. These companies are some of the largest employers in the Charlotte area.



- The 2025 Corridor System Plan projected that employment would increase in the central business district by 79% from the year 2000 to 2025. Population is expected to grow by a 146% from the year 2000 to the year 2025.

- An increased interest in living in an urban setting and the desire to live close to work has created a growing demand for residential development in the Center City and surrounding neighborhoods.

- The new arena will be a major stop for the Trade Street Streetcar. Across from the Charlotte Transportation Center, the Arena is the future home to the new NBA expansion team, the Charlotte Bobcats and the WNBA Charlotte Sting.

- A new multimodal station is planned for West Trade Street. The Streetcar will connect to future CATS Commuter Rail, trains and other regional and local transportation services at this location.



- Streetcar operations will enhance service on CATS Route 9 along Central Avenue, which is one of the busiest transit lines in the entire CATS system.

FALL 2004

Newsletter Editor:
Kiera Terrell,
CATS Community Relations Specialist

Center City Corridor

Senior Project Manager:
Willie A. Noble, P.E.

Assistant Project Manager:
Jerry Roberson

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600 East Fourth Street, Charlotte, NC 28202



CENTER CITY TRANSITIONS SPRING 2005

Information on the Center City Streetcar Project



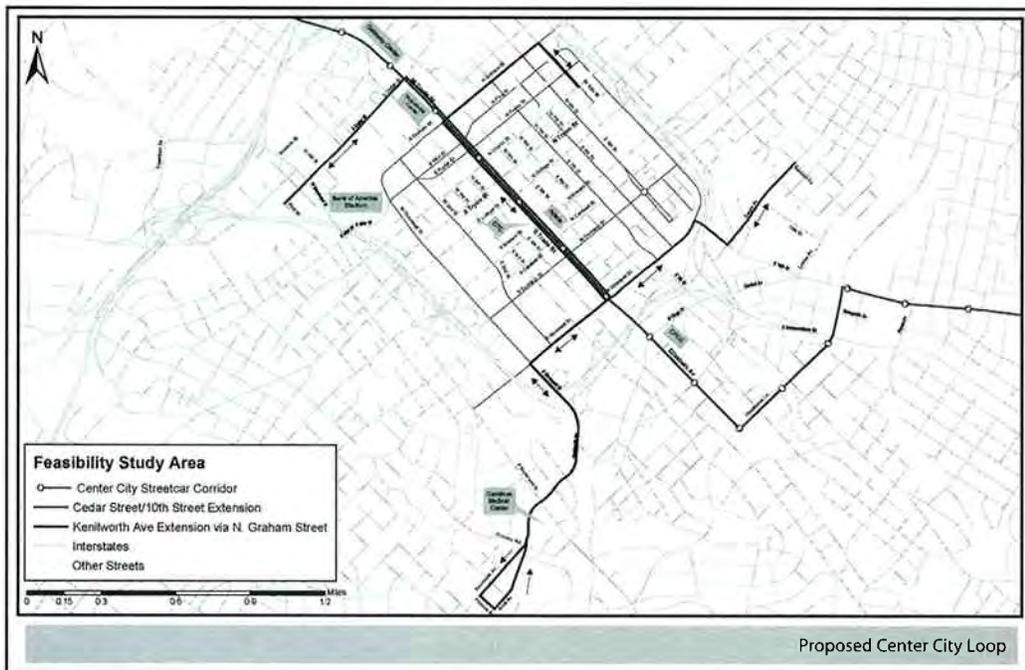
STREETCAR MOVING AHEAD

An opportunity presented itself for the public to take another glimpse at the conceptual design work underway on the CATS Center City Streetcar Project. Moreover, CATS staff and its consultant team met with neighborhood representatives, business owners, and other members of the interested public at three separate community meetings. Held at different venues along the corridor, the meetings were set up to inform the public about the latest ideas for streetcar stops and alignments, and to solicit input on the project. The meetings were well attended with over 100 attendees, and CATS staff received positive feedback from neighborhood residents about the streetcar concept.

In this edition of the newsletter, a primary focus is placed on recent community meetings. This includes an emphasis on informational subject matter as well as feedback the Center City Streetcar team received from persons in attendance.

Inside This Issue:

- Feedback from Public Meetings
- Potential Streetcar Stop Locations
- Alternatives Considered for Trade Street



Center City Loop

The Center City Streetcar Team has been busily examining the feasibility of a Center City streetcar loop (Final Phase of the streetcar system). The primary purpose of the streetcar in Center City is to serve travel within the Center City, as well as provide and enhance transit connectivity between all five rapid transit corridors in Uptown. The graphic, depicted above illustrates just one of the many concepts being considered at this time.

BEATTIES FORD ROAD EXTENSION

FOCUS OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

The primary focus of the meetings was to show the alternative alignments for the streetcar segments and to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of curbside running versus median running alternatives. Both types of alignment work well depending on the corridor and segment in question. Additionally, it was important for attendees to understand how each alignment type will impact streetscape and traffic patterns. The attendees were pleased to hear that a goal of the project was to minimize the impact to sidewalks, street widths, and landscaping. The meetings were also used to continue the exchange of ideas regarding stop locations and to discuss the end-of-line configurations for each phase of the project. Meeting displays included aerial mapping with potential alignment overlays, renderings of potential stops, and computer generated animations of some of the Trade Street stops.



OPTION 2 – Beatties Ford Road Pocket Track



End-of-Line Alternatives (Beatties Ford Road)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 1 – Rosa Parks Place Pocket Track



End-of-Line Alternatives (Beatties Ford Road)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 3 – I-85 Pocket Track



End-of-Line Alternatives (Beatties Ford Road)
Center City/Streetcar Corridor

POTENTIAL STREETCAR STOPS:

- Rosa Parks Place
- Montana Drive
- LaSalle Street
- Booker Avenue/Oaklawn Avenue
- French Street
- Johnson C. Smith University



Existing Plan



Conceptual Layout at Beatties Ford and Lasalle St
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Aerial View



Conceptual Layout at Beatties Ford and Lasalle St
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Ground View



Conceptual Layout at Beatties Ford and Lasalle St
Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Plan



Conceptual Layout at Beatties Ford and Lasalle St
Center City/Streetcar Corridor

TRADE/ELIZABETH AVENUE INITIAL ALIGNMENT



Edding Plan
Median Running Center Median Side Platform at Arena Station
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Aerial View
Median Running Center Median Side Platform at Arena Station
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Ground View
Median Running Center Median Side Platform at Arena Station
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Plan
Median Running Center Median Side Platform at Arena Station
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor

NEIGHBORHOODS EXCITED ABOUT CATS STREETCAR PROJECT

The first meeting was held on April 26th at Eastland Mall which concentrated on the Central Avenue portion of the Streetcar alignment. Attendees expressed support for the project but wanted assurances that the recent streetscape improvements along Central Avenue would be preserved. The second meeting was held on April 28th at the Carole Hoefener Center on 6th Street, where the discussion centered on stop locations and the phasing for the project. The Trade Street segment is scheduled to be operational in 2009 with endpoints at Johnson C. Smith University and Presbyterian Hospital or the Plaza-Midwood area on Central Avenue. The third meeting was conducted at Johnson C. Smith University on May 4th and included dialogue regarding the impact of streetcar operations on bus service, the future terminus of the Beatties Ford Road segment, and a general discussion about the economic impact/job creation potential of streetcar systems.



OPTION 1 - Center Platform/Center Pocket Track
 Johnson C. Smith University

End-of-Line Alternatives (Johnson C. Smith)
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 2 - Brookshire Off-Street Pocket Track

End-of-Line Alternatives (Johnson C. Smith)
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor

POTENTIAL STREETCAR STOPS:

- Johnson C. Smith University
- Five Points
- Montgomery Street
- Gateway Village
- Future Charlotte Gateway Station
- Mint Street
- Tryon Street
- Arena/Transportation Center
- Government Center
- Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC)
- Presbyterian Hospital
- Independence Park
- Southeast Corridor



OPTION 1 - The Plaza Pocket track

End-of-Line Alternatives (The Plaza)
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 2 - The Plaza Loop

End-of-Line Alternatives (The Plaza)
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 3 - Thomas Avenue Pocket Track

End-of-Line Alternatives (The Plaza)
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 4 - Pecan Avenue Pocket Track

End-of-Line Alternatives (The Plaza)
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor

CENTRAL/HAWTHORNE AVENUE EXTENSION

WHAT'S NEXT

The Center City Streetcar Team will present an update on the project to the Transit Program Steering Team in early June and will meet again with the community to discuss urban design issues around the streetcar stops in late June 2005. The Streetcar Team will work through summer to refine the conceptual design of the streetcar system and return to the community in September to present its refined streetcar design for additional community feedback.



Existing Plan
Curb Side Stop At Morningside & Central Ave.
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor



Proposed Aerial View
Curb Side Stop At Morningside & Central Ave.
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor

POTENTIAL STOP AMENITIES:

Amenities are being considered along the entire streetcar corridor.

- Shelters
- Lighting
- Ticket Machine
- Seating
- Schedule Information
- ADA Ramps
- Artwork
- Pedestrian Crossing Signals
- Landscaping
- Trash Receptacles



Proposed Ground View
Curb Side Stop At Morningside & Central Ave.
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor



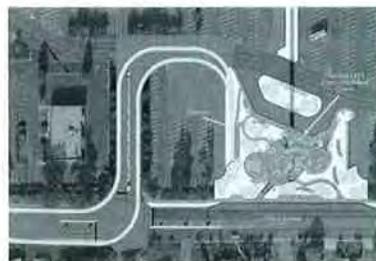
Proposed Plan
Curb Side Stop At Morningside & Central Ave.
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor

POTENTIAL STREETCAR STOPS:

- Presbyterian Hospital
- Independence Park
- Southeast Corridor
- Plaza Area
- Veterans Park
- Morningside Drive
- Arnold Drive
- Briar Creek Drive
- Eastway Crossing/
Eastway Drive
- Sheridan Drive
- Derby Acres
- Landsdale Drive/
Rosehaven Drive
- Winterfield Place
- Eastland Mall



OPTION 1 - Central Avenue Pocket Track
End-of-Line Alternatives (Eastland Mall)
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 2 - Transit Center Pocket Track
End-of-Line Alternatives (Eastland Mall)
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 3 - Central Avenue/Mall Loop
End-of-Line Alternatives (Eastland Mall)
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor



OPTION 4 - Elevated Pocket Track
End-of-Line Alternatives (Eastland Mall)
 Center City/Streetcar Corridor

TEAM CONSIDERS ALTERNATIVES TO TRADE STREET IN CENTER CITY

Within the Center City, several different roadways could be used for Streetcar operations. Each of these alignment options has specific advantages and disadvantages, prompting a detailed analysis to determine the option that operates most efficiently, minimizes negative impacts, and provides effective service to the Center City. This alternative alignment analysis examined a variety of options for streetcar operations extending from Gateway Village to McDowell Street, based on specific criteria that were defined with input from study stakeholders and various city departments.

Detailed analyses were conducted on the following four alignment options:

- A. Trade Street
(bi-directional / curb-running)
- B. Trade Street
(bi-directional / median-running)
- C. Fourth Street / Trade Street couplet
(curb-running)
- D. Trade Street / Fifth Street couplet
(curb-running)

These four alternatives were evaluated with regard to eleven specific performance measures:

- Access and traffic impacts
- Existing on-street parking
- Redevelopment opportunities
- Platforms and pedestrian environment
- Streetcar operations
- Bridge clearances
- Potential utilities impacts
- Relative capital costs
- Ease of construction
- Flexibility to improve future streetcar operations
- Compatibility with Light Rail Transit.



A & B



C



D

A relative ranking (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th) was assigned to each alternative under each performance measure. All criteria were weighted equally to determine a final ranking of alternatives. However, it is important to note that the relative ranking determined through this analysis could change with a prioritization of the performance measures.

Based on evaluation using these eleven performance measures, the Trade Street (median) alternative ranked the highest among the four options studied in depth. This alternative will impact the project in several different ways. It will minimize capital costs and utility impacts, it minimizes negative impacts on the pedestrian environment, it will have the fewest construction impacts, and it will enable effective and efficient streetcar operations. The feedback received from study stakeholders, including input from public participation, is also supportive of a streetcar alignment on Trade Street.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

- Complete Conceptual Design-December 2005
- Complete Final Design-December 2006
 - Complete Construction of Trade Street Initial Alignment-June 2009
 - Complete Construction of Central Avenue and Beatties Ford Road extensions-June 2017
 - Complete Uptown Circulator-June 2025

SPRING 2005

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CATS Community Relations Specialist

Center City Corridor

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Assistant Project Manager:
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Please visit www.ridetransit.org to view public meeting summaries, presentations, and graphics from the public meetings that were held in April/May 2005.

UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS ON URBAN DESIGN

Trade/Elizabeth Avenue Corridor
June 21, 2005 11:30 a.m.
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Library
St. Francis Auditorium
310 North Tryon Street
Charlotte

Central/Hawthorne Avenue Corridor
June 22, 2005 6:30 p.m.
Eastland Mall
Activity Room
5471 Central Avenue
Charlotte

Beatties Ford Road Corridor
June 23, 2005 6:30 p.m.
Northwest School of Performing Arts
Old Cafeteria
1415 Beatties Ford Road
Charlotte

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CHARLOTTE AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM



Information on the Center City
Streetcar Project



STREETCAR TEAM RECEIVES APPROVAL TO PROCEED ON TRADE STREET!

Recently, CATS Center City Streetcar team reached a major milestone when the Program Steering Team approved a conceptual alignment and identified the preferred streetcar stop locations for the route in Center City. An alignment that will provide median stops for many of the Center City locations was selected for Trade Street, in an effort to design a streetcar system that has minimal impacts to streetscape and adjacent properties. This alignment will provide an efficient and convenient system between Johnson C. Smith University and Presbyterian Hospital (possibly Plaza Midwood area) on Trade Street and Elizabeth Avenue.

Moreover, long-range streetcar extensions along Central Avenue to Eastland Mall and Beatties Ford Road to Rosa Parks Place are planned to operate entirely along the curbside lane. Higher traffic volumes and speeds in these corridors prescribe a curbside alignment option that becomes more attractive, due to the streetcar operating in the slower curbside travel lane. Curbside service will also avoid impacts to the recently-plant-

ed median strip on Central Avenue.

As an opportunity to determine potential extensions into the future, a preliminary feasibility analysis of service in Uptown has also been completed. Initially conceived as an uptown circulator within the I-277 loop, similar to the Gold Rush service, the concept has evolved into spokes that extend outward from the four corners of Center City. This concept broadens the reach of the streetcar to "break through" the barrier created by I-277 and will provide streetcar service to more residential and commercial areas in and around Uptown, including Carolinas Medical Center, Belmont neighborhood, and Third and Fourth Wards.

Lastly, with the alignment selection process now complete, more detailed planning and engineering can begin in earnest. The Trade Street/Elizabeth Avenue portion of the streetcar project is expected to be fully functioning by 2009, followed by the Central Avenue/Beatties Ford Road corridors to be implemented by 2017, and the final phase of the project (Center City spokes) by 2025. ■

CATS STREETCAR FOCUSES ON PASSENGER COMFORT

One of the major concerns facing designers of the CATS streetcar system is to ensure passenger comfort at waiting areas during streetcar boarding/exiting and while riding the streetcar system. Streetcars are operating in many different cities where the design team has spent considerable resources and effort to address the concerns of system users. Passenger comfort is not only important to the streetcar team when designing the system, but it will also play a major role in whether or not a commuter decides to ride the system. The following paragraphs will explain some of the important design features of the system that will create a service that is Convenient -Easy- and Comfortable! ■

WAITING FOR THE STREETCAR TO ARRIVE

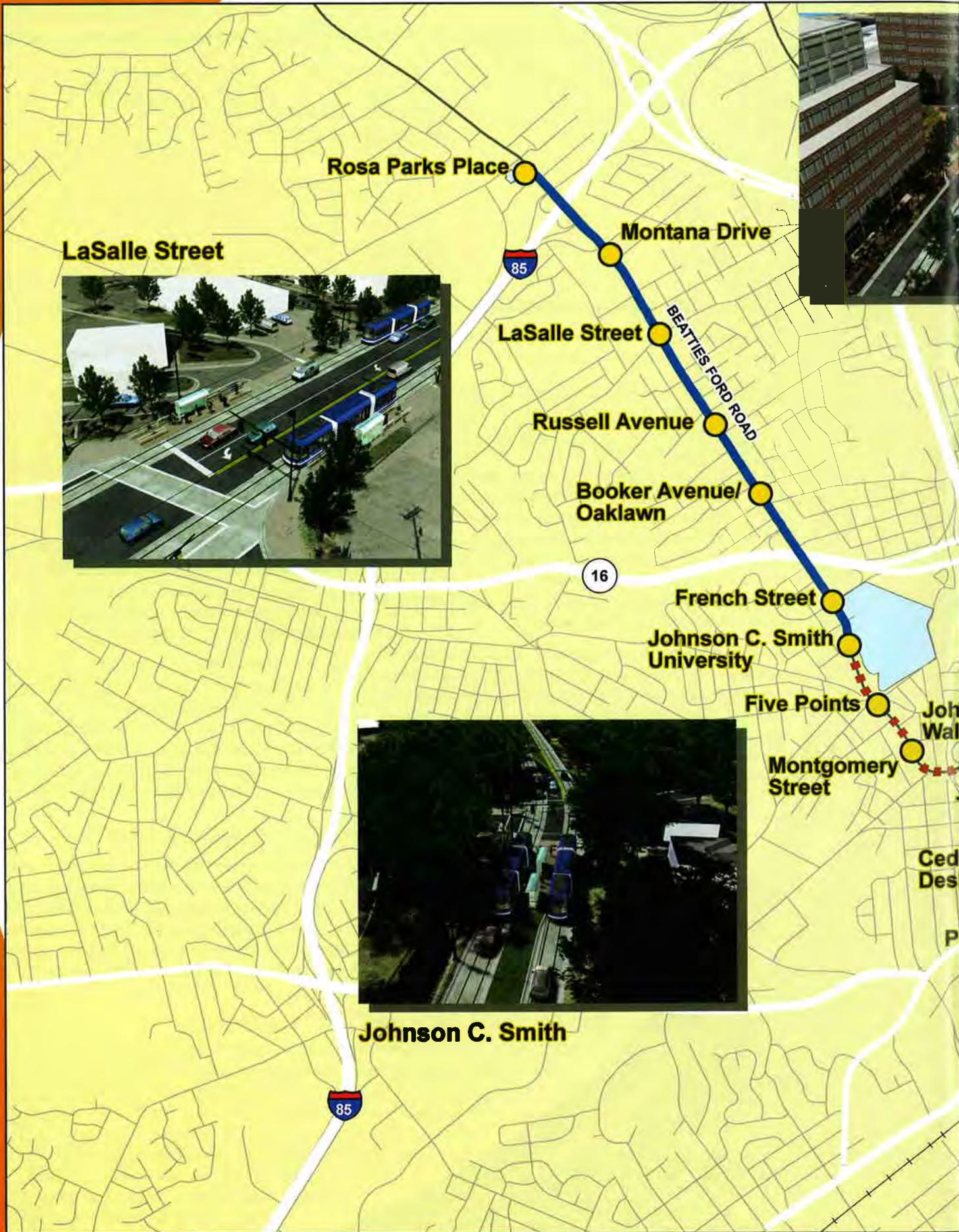
CATS uses a number of considerations that assist in defining the location of streetcar stops and the amenities present on or near each platform. Pedestrian access to and from the platform is a major concern. Most of the platforms that are being considered will be located very close to crosswalks at existing signalized intersections, therefore allowing commuters to cross the street safely to and from the platform.

Mid-block stops (stops that cannot be located at an intersection) will have new, signalized pedestrian crossings designed and constructed specifically for the streetcar system. Platforms are typically 12 feet wide and are equipped with shelters, benches, leaning rails, information

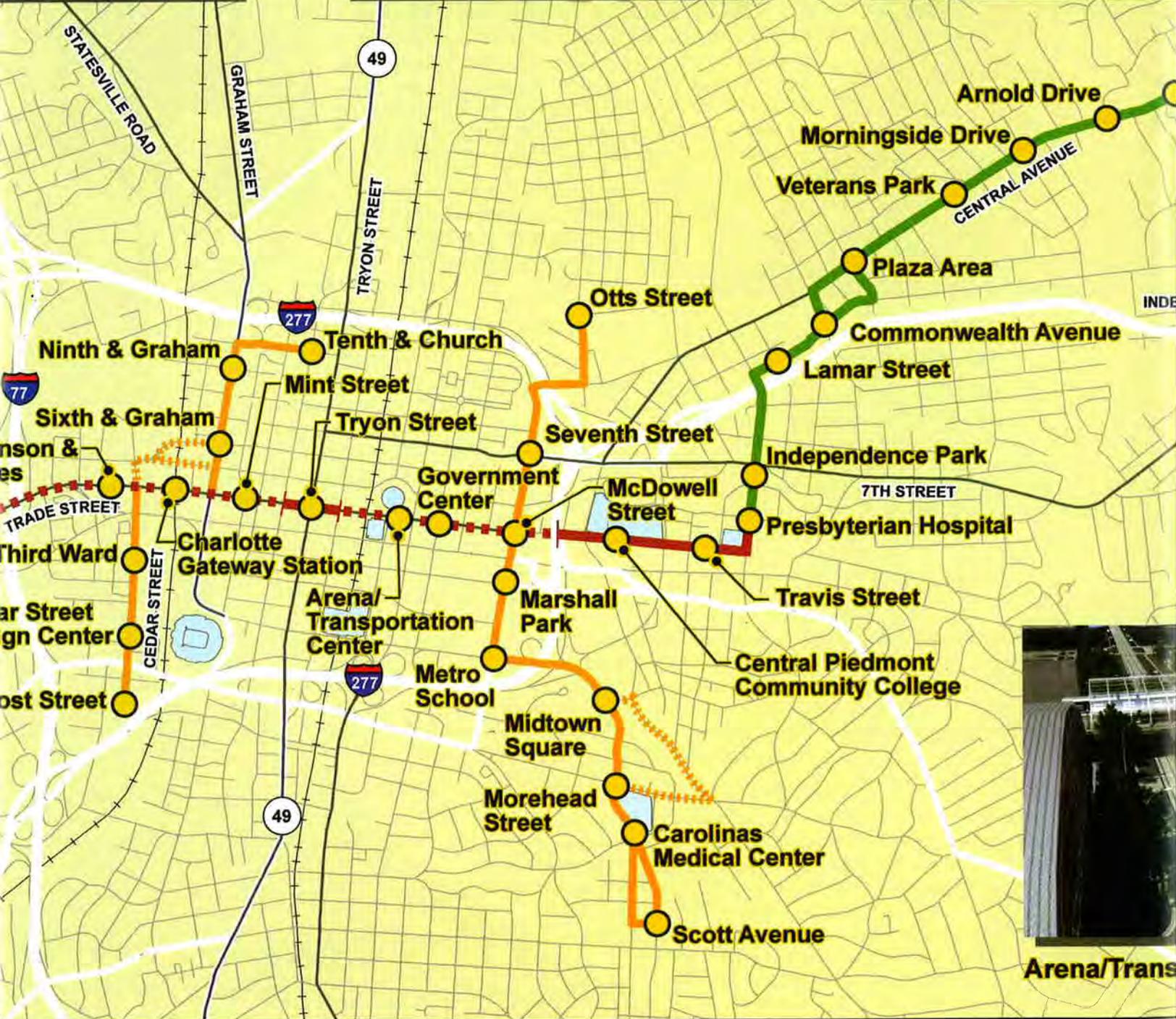
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Inside This Issue:

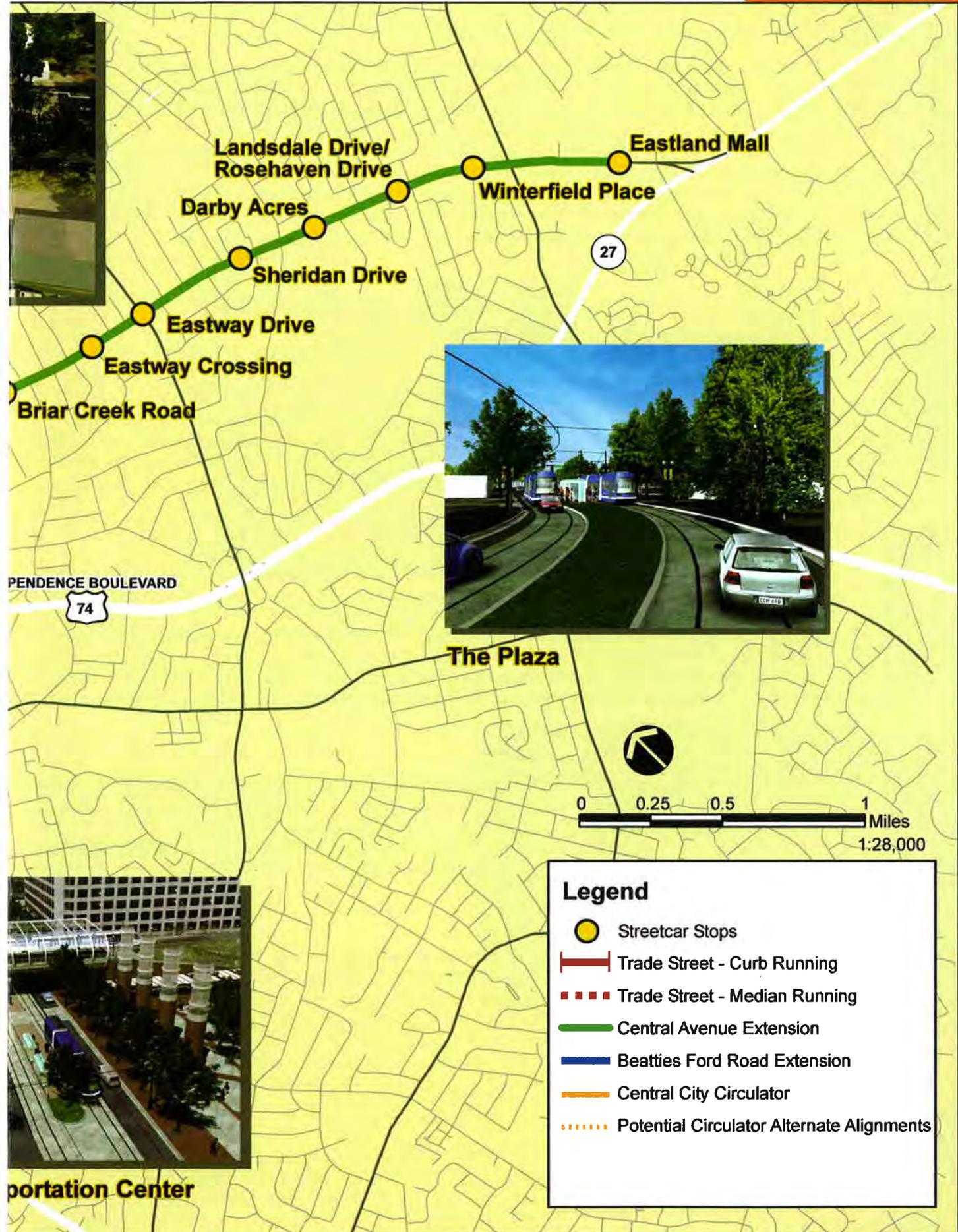
- Proposed Conceptual Alignment
- Inside Track
- Riding the Streetcar
- Getting On and Off the Streetcar



PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL ALIGNMENT



Arena/Trans



portation Center

kiosks, and other amenities which are designed to create a more comfortable environment for passengers who are waiting for the streetcar to arrive. The platform height will be 4 inches higher than the sidewalk; ramps will be constructed to improve access for persons with disabilities. Streetcar stops at Eastland Mall and the Rosa Parks Place (streetcar termini) will be incorporated into the planned community transit centers, which include more elaborate waiting areas.

Most of the streetcar stops will be designed for curbside service. These platforms will be built into the existing sidewalk for easy access. There are certain locations where the streetcar alignment dictates median operation where platforms in the median of the roadway are being considered. There are 32 proposed streetcar stop locations along the corridor. Six of those stops require median platforms, all of which will be located in Center City on Trade Street. These platforms, like the one shown in the diagram, will be located at signalized intersections or pedestrian crossings. The ramp at one end of the platform will be accessible from the crosswalk, and platforms will be designed as a "safe haven" for commuters waiting for the streetcar. Shelters will back-up to the median curb line to shield patrons from passing traffic. All crosswalks will be equipped with audible and tactile treatments for the visually impaired. These concepts are illustrated on the map located on the inside panels of the newsletter. ■

INSIDE TRACK



Willie Noble, P.E.

Senior Project Manager

Willie Noble, joined CATS in 2004 after working for transit agencies MARTA (Atlanta) and Metro in St. Louis. He has over 26 years of professional experience in engineering, construction management, and project management.

Family: Married to wife, Rosilyn for over 24 years. Two daughters, Alexia 15, sophomore at Harding University High School and Adrienne, 18 freshman at Xavier University in New Orleans. **Educational background/Certifications:** BS in Civil Engineering-Washington University, St. Louis. **Hobbies:** Photography, listening to music (especially jazz), playing bass, golf, and traveling. **Favorite Charlotte restaurants:** Taste of Havana and Harry and Jean's. **Favorite**

Music Group/Entertainer and why: Weather Report "They were a seminal band of the fusion-jazz period during the 1970's when I became interested in jazz music."



Jerry Roberson, AICP

Assistant Project Manager

Jerry Roberson, joined CATS in 2001 as a Planner in the Project Development Division. Currently he is the Assistant Project Manager for the streetcar corridor. Prior to his positions with CATS, he served as the Manager of Project Development with the Metropolitan Tulsa Transit Authority. **Hometown:** Tulsa, Oklahoma. **Educational**

Background/Certificates: BA Geography, Oklahoma State University, MS Urban Planning, University of Tennessee Certificate in Project Management, UNCC. **Hobbies:** Visiting Big Cities, Domestic Travel, Architecture, Bowling **Favorite Charlotte Restaurant:** Hotel Charlotte-variety of food and prices, hangouts for locals, extensive selection

of beverages. **Favorite Musical Group/Entertainer:** Chicago-38 years, dozens of top 10 hits, horns, horns, and horns. They truly "Make Me Smile!"



Stan Leinwand, AICP

Transit Planner/Urban Design

Stan Leinwand is the newest member of the streetcar team. Stan began working for CATS in winter of '05. He has over 10 years of planning and design experience in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. **Family:** Married to wife, Sara-Lynne with one son, originally from Montreal, Canada. **Education:** BA Political Science, Master of Urban Planning, Master of Architecture (Urban Design) **Hobbies:** Relaxing with family, traveling. **Favorite Charlotte**

Restaurants: 300 East and Providence Café **Favorite Musical Group:** Great Big Sea (celtic folk/rock band from Newfoundland), 80's music.



Kiera Terrell

Community Relations Specialist

Kiera Terrell joined CATS in the Fall of '04. Before joining CATS, she worked for the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) where she designed and implemented marketing strategies for the purpose of creating transit awareness and education. During her tenure at RIPTA, she also created the first transitional program for high school students and persons with disabilities. **Family:** Married to husband Marion, pet maltese named Remington. Born and raised as a "Ragin Cajun" in Louisiana! **Education:** BA in Psychology, minor in Criminology -State University of West Georgia. **Favorite Charlotte Restaurant:** McCormick & Schmidt. **Favorite Musical Groups/Entertiners:** Beyoncé,

Frankie Beverly & Maze, Jill Scott, and Michael Jackson because of their unique sense of style and incredible talent.



Linda Murdaugh

Corridor Assistant

Linda Murdaugh is the Corridor Assistant for the streetcar corridor. She is originally from Hampton, S.C. In continuing her education, she plans to pursue a B.A. degree in Journalism/Communications and a Masters of Divinity at UNCC. She enjoys writing poetry, plays, and short stories! Her favorite Charlotte restaurant is Carraba's Italian Grill where she enjoys eating her favorite type of food.

SUMMER 2005

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RIDING THE STREETCAR

As shown in the photo, streetcars are designed to be very spacious inside, so it's very easy to maneuver within the vehicle for those in wheelchairs, with strollers or even bicycles. The configuration of seats has not been finalized for CATS streetcars but there will be plenty of seats and areas to secure a wheelchair. Streetcars also have large areas for people to stand, which makes passenger movement to and from the doors more efficient. Streetcars are designed for lower speeds and smooth starts and stops. ■



GETTING ON AND OFF THE STREETCAR

An important design feature of a platform is to construct it to be level with the streetcar floor. Building the platform 4 inches higher than normal curb height will allow a passenger to move to and from the vehicle without navigating stairs or stepping over gutters. Streetcars are equipped with "bridge plates" (shown in the photo) to ensure smooth access entering or exiting the vehicle by wheelchair, bike, etc. In addition to the bridge plate, the doors will be extra wide to allow passengers to exit the streetcar while others are getting on.



We hope that this information provides an insight into CATS' focus on passenger comfort. Future phases of the streetcar design will include more details regarding these efforts. ■

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CENTER CITY TRANSITIONS

FALL 2006

Information on the Center City Streetcar Project



A BRAND NEW SERVICE

A brand is the symbolic embodiment of all the information connected with a company, product or service. It encompasses the set of expectations associated with a product or service which typically arise in the minds of people: employees of the brand owner, people involved with the sale or supply of the service, and ultimately consumers.

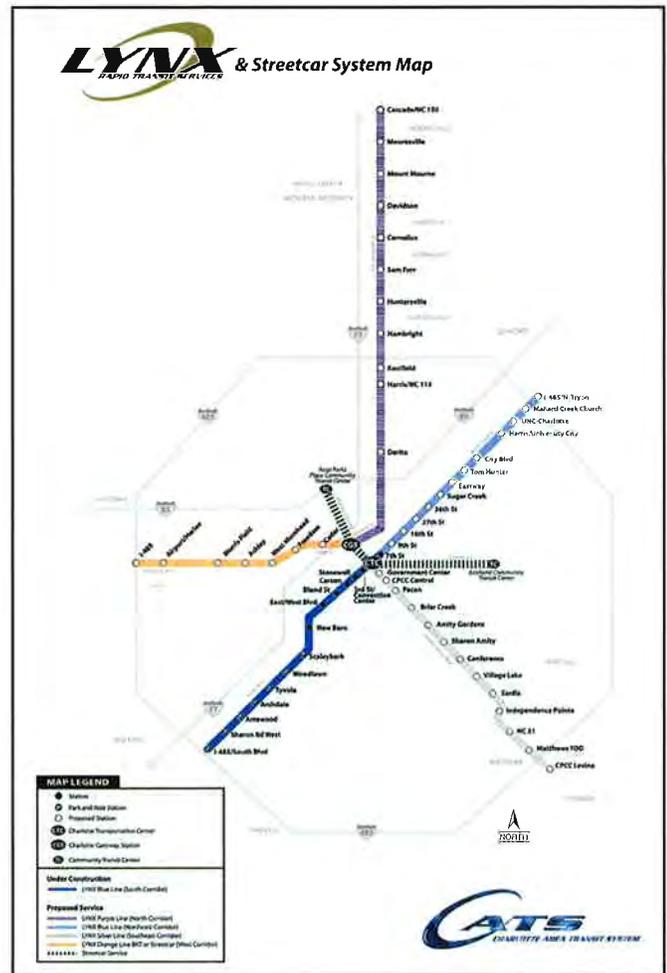
A brand tells your story. It carries the promise of a certain quality or level of service that makes it special or unique. It's what sets Nike® apart from Reebok® and McDonald's® apart from Burger King®. And it will set CATS apart from the rest.

In preparation for operation of the first rapid transit project (light rail in fall 2007), CATS has branded its rapid transit service. The rapid transit service brand complements the successful CATS brand and conveys speed, safety, convenience and connectivity associated with the new service.

Introducing LYNX.

"At its core, CATS' rapid transit service, LYNX, is about connecting people to employment and entertainment and connecting communities to each other," said Ron Tober, CATS' Chief Executive Officer.

LYNX rapid transit services will utilize line colors to easily identify the



Inside This Issue:

- **Top Two Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF) - 2**
- **Brookshire Freeway & Beatties Ford Road Site -3**
- **Hawthorne Lane & Clement Avenue Site -4**
- **Preliminary Environmental Assessment Findings - 5**



various modes. Materials associated with the proposed rapid transit projects are being redesigned to support the new brand and the quarterly project newsletters have been renamed. Even though streetcar isn't classified under the rapid transit umbrella, future editions of the Center City Streetcar Corridor newsletter will mirror elements of the LYNX rapid transit newsletters with a new color scheme of green. ■

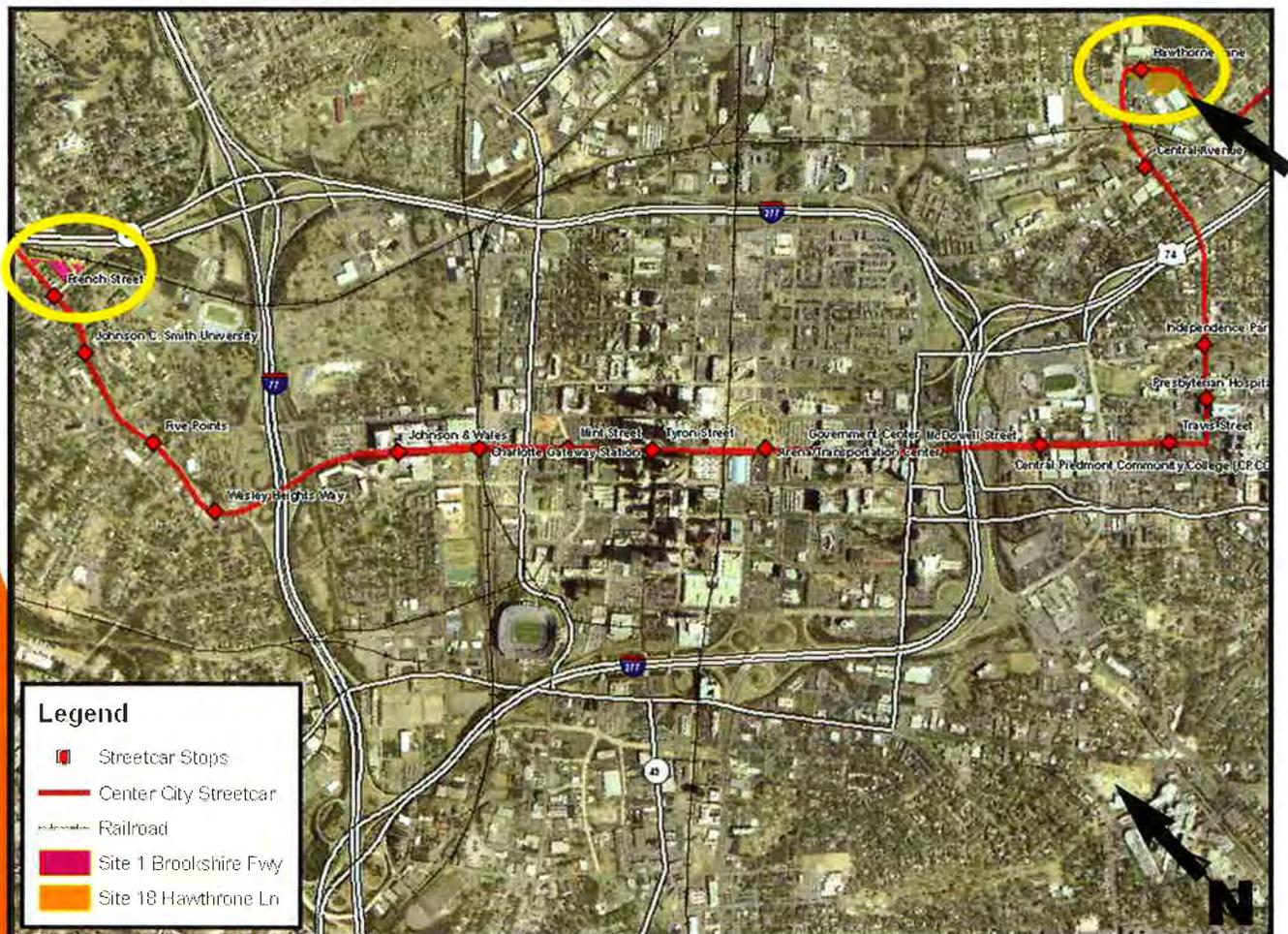
TOP TWO LOCATIONS FOR VEHICLE MAINTENANCE FACILITY IDENTIFIED

In order for the streetcar system to properly function, there must be a facility to both maintain and store the streetcar fleet. The vehicle maintenance facility (VMF) not only needs to adequately accommodate the opening day fleet, but should also be expandable to meet the needs as the system is extended and service increased. The facility must also be as close to the alignment as possible. For more detail, please see our "Planning for Streetcar Maintenance Facility Initiated" article in the Winter 2006 edition of Center City Transitions which can be found on the project website at www.ridetransit.org.

CATS evaluated more than 20 sites to identify the best possible location for the VMF, with the focus on selecting the most cost-effective site that meets the minimum site requirements and provides opportunities for efficiency and development consistent to the City of Charlotte's goals. At the end of the evaluation process, two sites stood out (see map below):

Brookshire Freeway & Beatties Ford Road Site - This site is approximately 2.26 acres in size and is bordered by Beatties Ford Road to the west, Brookshire Freeway and CSX Railroad to the north and French Street to the east. The site generally slopes down and away from Beatties Ford Road and is located adjacent to Johnson C. Smith University and residential neighborhoods with interspersed office and commercial uses. The site is currently used as a storage facility for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities and is owned by the City of Charlotte. The streetcar will be able to access the site from Beatties Ford.

Hawthorne Lane & Clement Avenue Site - This oddly-shaped site is approximately 2.5 acres in size and is bordered by a potential transit oriented development to the north, Clement Avenue to the west, light industrial development to the south and west. The site is relatively flat and is presently used for surface parking for the Barnhardt Manufacturing facility. The parcel is privately owned, but may be offered to CATS at a nominal cost. The site would be accessed directly from the proposed streetcar alignment. ■



BROOKSHIRE FREEWAY & BEATTIES FORD ROAD SITE



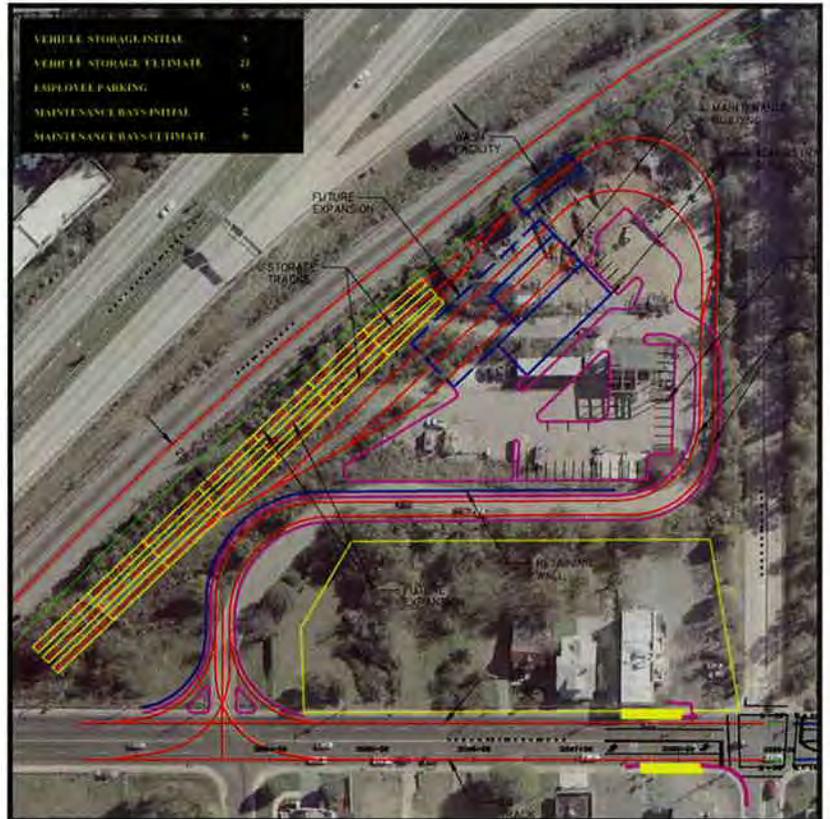
Looking south along Beatties Ford Road. The VMF is proposed to be located on ground lower than Beatties Ford Road. The VMF site is bordered by the Brookshire Freeway/CSX Railroad, French Street and Beatties Ford Road.



Looking at the VMF from the CSX Railroad tracks. The access road will wind down and around from Beatties Ford Road.



Aerial view of the VMF looking north from the Johnson C. Smith University grounds.

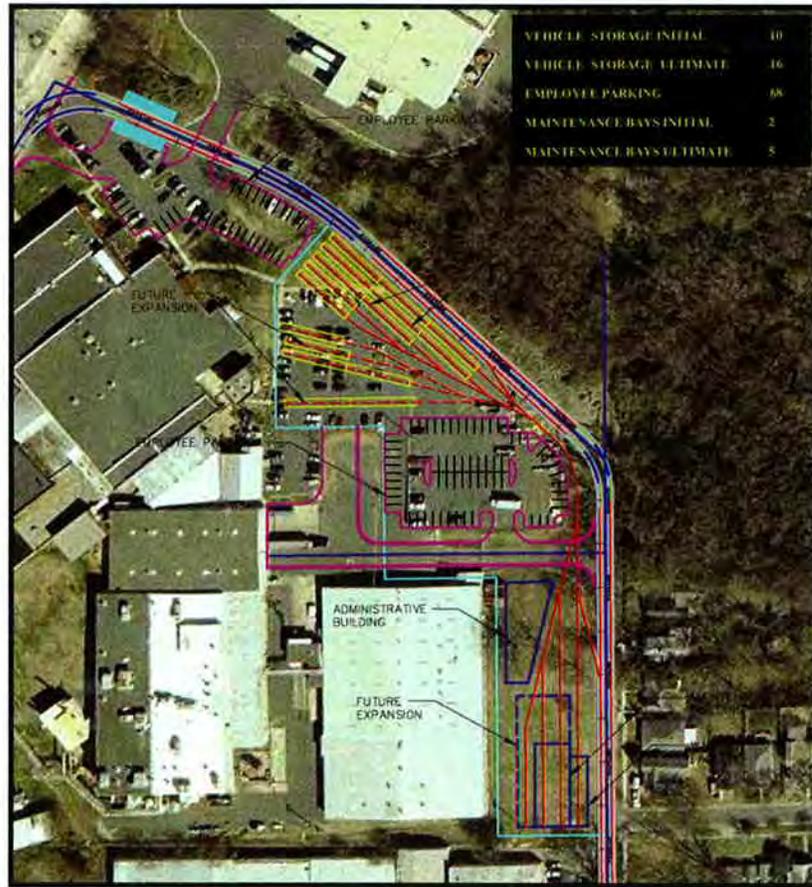


A conceptual site layout of the proposed VMF.

The drawings found on pages 3 & 4 depict a conceptual level of design showing what the proposed VMF sites could look like. The final design of the facility will be performed by architects during the next design phase of the project. Public input and response will be sought before a final design is chosen.



Aerial view of the VMF looking southwest. The VMF will be nestled adjacent to the existing Barnhardt manufacturing facility.



A conceptual site layout of the proposed VMF.



Looking at the VMF from Hawthorne Lane, the streetcar storage area will be surrounded by a wall for security and to improve its integration into the surrounding development.



Looking south towards Central Avenue along Clement Street.

As part of the project development process, public transportation agencies such as CATS work with state and federal agencies to consider the social, economic, and environmental consequences and benefits of proposed projects and activities. The environmental review process required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and related laws includes environmental impact analyses and the preparation of documentation for public review. For larger capital projects like the Center City Streetcar, environmental evaluation typically results in a detailed written assessment on the environmental impacts of the proposed project and alternatives to reduce the harm to the community and the natural environment. Typically, environmental reviews for proposed transit projects address the impact areas of air and water quality, noise and vibration, historic and cultural properties, parklands, contaminated lands, displacement of residences and businesses, and community preservation.

Projects developed under NEPA results in:

- Systematic and interdisciplinary approach
- Coordination of investigations, reviews, consultations and compliance as a single process
- Meaningful evaluation of alternatives
- Decisions made in the best interest of the public
- Early and continuous interagency and public involvement
- Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of adverse effects

The following table summarizes the preliminary findings of the environmental assessment of the Center City Streetcar:

Environmental Category	Determination of Project Effect	Mitigation
Land Use and Development	High positive effect	None required
Displacements	Minor positive effect	None required
Neighborhood and Community Features	High positive effect	None required
Visual and Aesthetics	Minor adverse effect	None required – design of streetcar will consider environmental context
Air Quality	Minor positive effect	None required
Noise and Vibration	Minor adverse effect	None required
Ecosystems	Negligible effect	None required
Water Resources/Floodplains	Minor positive effect	None required
Energy	Moderate positive effect	None required
Historic, Archeological and Cultural Resources	Not likely to have adverse effect	None required – design of streetcar will consider environmental context
Parklands	Minor positive effect	None required
Economic Impacts	Moderate positive effect	None required
Secondary and Cumulative Effects	High positive effect	None required
Hazardous Materials	Negligible effect	None required

FALL 2006

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web site at www.ridetransit.org
or call CATS at (704) 336-RIDE.

The Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) will be asked to approve an updated, overall System Plan that will identify investment priorities for each corridor over the next 25 years. In October there will be a public hearing for citizens to voice their opinions on how the community should move forward with the four rapid transit corridors and the Center City/Streetcar Corridor. In November the MTC is scheduled to vote on the 2030 Transit Corridor Plan.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Wednesday, October 25, 2006 at 5:30 p.m.

Public Hearing on the Revised 2030

Transit Corridor System Plan

This meeting will take place in the Council Chamber at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center. It will also be carried live on the City's Government Channel-Cable 16.

**News From The Charlotte Area Transit System
Featuring The Proposed Center City/Streetcar Corridor project**

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CENTER CITY TRANSITIONS WINTER 2006

Information on the Center City Streetcar Project



A MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER

Your opinion is important to the planning of the proposed Center City/Streetcar Corridor. CATS has held several public meetings beginning with our first community wide workshop in November 2004 to gain your feedback and support.

During the first workshop, staff presented the project history, introduced the modern streetcar design philosophy, and discussed the streetcar team's plans for the conceptual design phase of the project. Participants were asked to provide information on neighborhood character, desired land uses, potential stop locations, and redevelopment opportunities.

The second round of public meetings focused on refining the proposed streetcar stop locations and potential amenities at each stop. In addition to discussing stop locations and amenities, we presented potential options illustrating how the streetcar vehicle could change directions at the end of line.

Urban design was the theme of the third round of public meetings.

Participants were encouraged to discuss a variety of topics to optimize input from the community, including: future land uses, median versus curb running streetcars, continuity

or district diversity, and street furniture.

The streetcar team rolled out the proposed conceptual alignment at our last public involvement meeting where more than 100 persons attended and had an opportunity to engage the urban designers, planners, and engineers who developed the concept. The team received resounding approval and support from the public for the conceptual alignment.

The upcoming public meeting will be used to present new work activities underway including the conceptual design of the streetcar shelter, the design of the streetcar vehicle, and the on-going evaluation of potential sites for the streetcar maintenance facility.

With the progress of the conceptual design phase, we will begin development of detailed capital cost and ridership estimates for the project within the next several months. With ridership estimates the streetcar team will be able to develop a detailed operations plan and complete the assessment of the potential environmental impacts. The streetcar team plans to present this information at the final public meeting for this phase in Summer '06.

We invite you to continue to participate in all upcoming public meetings. It has been the teams' extreme pleasure working with you, and we look forward to working with you throughout the duration of the streetcar project.

Sincerely,

Willie A. Noble, P.E.
Senior Project Manager
Center City/Streetcar Corridor

Inside This Issue:

- **A Vision for Trade Street - 2**
- **Streetcar Shelters Begin to Take Shape - 3**
- **Vehicle Characteristics - 4**
- **A New Funding Source - 5**
- **Planning For A Streetcar Maintenance Facility Initiated - 5**

A VISION FOR TRADE STREET



The vision statement detailed below was created as a guiding framework for the development of a Vision Plan for future development along the Trade Street corridor. The Trade Street corridor represents the first phase of the project and is planned to have streetcars running in 2009. The plan will provide parameters for how civic identity, neighborhood character, personal experience, connectivity, operational sustainability, and public spaces should be woven with the streetcar project to create a memorable pedestrian environment.



In collaboration with the public and the Urban Design Planning Group which includes the Planning Commission, Charlotte Department of Transportation, Economic Development, and Center City Partners, the streetcar team identified the following seven elements which formed the basis of the Vision:

Role in Uptown -

Trade Street will be the most important east-west street in Uptown.

Accessibility/Connection -

Trade Street will provide circulation for streetcars, buses, automobiles, bicycles, pedestrians, and on-street parking will be optimized. Therefore, it will serve as the east-west connection in Center City for the regional transit system.



Pedestrian Activities -

Trade Street will provide a highly attractive pedestrian experience making it easy to accommodate a wide variety of pedestrian activities with appropriate circulation space, as well as flexibly designed spaces for passive uses.

Identity -

Trade Street will be a memorable signature street. The design identity will be unique to the Uptown streetscape. It will be a safe, comfortable, and inviting space convenient for users. Moreover, it will reflect the heritage and character of the adjacent neighborhoods.



Land Uses -

Trade Street will have a mixture of land uses that support and generate an intense level of pedestrian activity along the street. The ground level uses will be visible and directly accessible from the sidewalk, providing desirable activities such as cafes, restaurants, retail, and entertainment.

Commercial Support -

Trade Street will support commercial activities in a manner which enhances and attracts investments in retail business with convenient delivery, drop-off, and open space for sidewalk vending.



Maintenance and Management -

The amenities will be built with high quality durable materials and will be well maintained. Additionally, Trade Street will be managed to encourage planned as well as unplanned programs.

The photographs illustrate examples of the seven elements from Charlotte and other U.S.cities. ■

STREETCAR SHELTERS BEGIN TO TAKE SHAPE

The streetcar will bring a unique identity to Trade Street, Beatties Ford Road, and Central Avenue corridors. The new streetcar shelters will reinforce the identity of the corridors by providing a transit and pedestrian-friendly environment. The design of the streetcar shelters is an opportunity to relate to the existing and future environments.

The streetcar team considered a range of factors which guided the development of the streetcar shelter concept, including:

- need for a set of common elements and identity throughout the corridor
- opportunity to establish a signature look
- appropriateness of the design to neighborhoods
- strength and durability of the structure and materials
- resistance of materials and paint treatments to weather conditions, graffiti, fire, and other forms of vandalism
- protection from the environment
- potential greenhouse effect of roof design during hot weather
- lighting and seating to provide maximum comfort for streetcar riders

The process resulted in a series of streetcar shelter concepts that continued to be refined and ultimately concluded with the concepts illustrated on this page. The recommended conceptual design for the streetcar shelter uses the shape of the roof of the Tryon Street transit shelter as a point of departure for its more streamlined roof shape. The past and future are symbolically brought together, visually connected with this shelter design. ■



VEHICLE CHARACTERISTICS

ELEMENTS DEFINED AS STREETCAR CONCEPT ADVANCES



Alstom Citadis car operating in Barcelona.

One of the important factors of the Center City Streetcar Corridor development process is the design of the streetcar vehicles. Modern streetcars are available in a wide variety of models. The characteristics for CATS' streetcar vehicles will have a considerable impact on the design of the corridor. Design elements such as the streetcar platform stop lengths and heights, boarding methods, and accommodations of people with disabilities will influence the type of vehicle for this corridor. The streetcar specifications must be clearly defined before CATS can initiate the purchase of the fleet.



AnsaldoBreda "Sirio" car operating in Naples, Italy.

To date, only two types of modern streetcars have been supplied in the United States. These two streetcar manufacturers include Inekon and Skoda, both of which are based in the Czech Republic.

It will be challenging to procure a small quantity of streetcars, (8 to 10 initially) without allowing the design modifications of the streetcar to overwhelm the base price of the vehicle. CATS will meet with its partners and the public to discuss the basic streetcar vehicle characteristics. Once the general approach to the type of vehicle is established, design criteria covering these topics can be developed and will fall into four major categories:

- Vehicle Length and its associated platform length at the stops.
- Positioning and the number of doors on each side of the vehicle.
- ADA Compliance-accommodations for persons who use wheelchairs and who have hearing and vision disabilities.
- Vehicle Performance Characteristics – speed, braking, and turning.



Inekon-Skoda Astra car operating in Tacoma, WA.

Most modern streetcars widths range from over 7 feet to slightly more than 8 feet. Vehicle lengths range between 60 feet up to 100 ft or more. All of the candidate vehicles are articulated, with three body sections. Although some of the streetcar vehicles have only two doors per side, most of the vehicles have three doors per side. CATS will look for a streetcar that can operate in both directions, with doors on both sides to allow for curbside and median boarding.



Bombardier Flexity car operating in Austria.

The entry height to the vehicle is typically between 13 and 14 inches above the rail, which is several inches taller than a standard sidewalk or curb. Unless the streetcar stop platforms are raised to provide level boarding, streetcars have bridge plates or other means to provide access to the vehicle for people who use strollers or wheelchairs. ■



Alstom Citadis car operating in Montpellier.



Inekon Trio car scheduled to operate in Portland in late 2006 and Washington in 2007.

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) created a new "Small Starts" program that can provide Federal funding for smaller transit projects. The Small Starts program will set aside \$200 million per year, starting in FY 2007, for rail and bus transit projects costing up to \$250 million. Project sponsors, in our case the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS), may seek up to \$75 million in capital funding from the Federal government. To be eligible for Small Starts funding:

- a "substantial portion" of the project must operate in a separate right-of-way dedicated for public transit during peak hours, or
- the project must represent a "substantial investment" as demonstrated by such features as park and ride lots, stations, signage, signal priority, off-board fare collection, technology, and other features supporting a long term corridor investment.

Based on these eligibility requirements, Small Starts are likely to include streetcars, bus rapid transit projects, short light-rail extensions, and modest commuter rail projects. CATS Center City Streetcar project is an example of a candidate project which could seek funds under the Small Starts program.

Each transit project seeking Small Starts funding must also be supported by an acceptable degree of local financial commitment. Also, it must be justified based on a review of its public transportation supportive land use policies, cost effectiveness, effect on local economic development, and possibly other factors. Just like the New Starts program, (the program in which CATS received Federal funding for the South Corridor Light rail project), the FTA will rate proposed Small Starts projects at key milestones, and will submit funding recommendations to Congress.

The Streetcar Team continues to develop material that the FTA will review in their assessment of the project and will complete this work, along with the conceptual design in 2006. ■

As of March 2006, The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has not completed writing the regulations for the Small Starts program.

PLANNING FOR STREETCAR MAINTENANCE FACILITY INITIATED

One of the critical needs for a successful streetcar system is finding a place to maintain and store vehicles. CATS' streetcar team is currently using an evaluation process to identify locations that can accommodate this vital function. Although the evaluation process addresses a number of factors, the primary focus is to identify sites where a facility can be designed to support a streetcar fleet at every stage in its growth and development.

From an operational perspective, the maintenance facility must be as close to the service corridor as possible. Convenient access to the alignment, which extends from Eastland Mall (Central Avenue) to the Northeast Mecklenburg Health Center (Beatties Ford Road), is important because it minimizes the time and expense for operations getting to and from the service area. It will also improve service efficiency through faster response to increased demands for special events or service interruptions along the corridor. The streetcar system will be

implemented in phases, with plans to construct the Trade Street segment first. Therefore, the majority of the focus has been geared to the evaluation and identification of potential sites between Johnson C. Smith University and The Plaza-Midwood area.

Another important factor in site selection is choosing a location where the adjacent land uses and development will not be negatively affected by the introduction of a maintenance facility. CATS will balance the need for a good location by evaluating sites in more industrial or commercial areas. "CATS wants to find a site that meets our needs," said Willie Noble, CATS Senior Project Manager for the Center City Streetcar Corridor, "it must be convenient to the corridor, but also fit into its surrounding area and minimize impacts to the community."

At a minimum, the site must be sufficiently sized to accommodate vehicle storage, light maintenance for the vehicles, and administrative activities for the system. ■

WINTER 2006

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web site at www.ridetransit.org
or call CATS at (704) 336-RIDE.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Question: What does the inside of a streetcar look like?

Response: A streetcar can carry more than 100 passengers. Aside from seating, the vehicle has large areas for people to stand, and plenty of room for people using wheelchairs, bicycles, or strollers.

Question: What are the plans for funding the project?

Response: Though we haven't applied yet, 50% of the funding will be sought through the Federal Transit Authority (FTA); 25% will be sought from the state of North Carolina and 25% will be sought from the local taxes. We definitely have an advantage with transit growth and land use.

Question: How much will the project cost?

Response: It is too early to tell. This portion of the work covers 10% of the design and we will have an estimate of likely cost at the end of the 2006.

Question: Will this project be funded to cover all phases?

Response: The intent of CATS is to request funding to complete all phases of the system. However, funding availability from federal and state sources is not a guarantee. ■



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Appendix C
Environmental Effects Matrix

Environmental Category	Summary of Project Effect	Determination of Project Effect	Mitigation
Land Use and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project is consistent with local planning objectives Serves high density areas Project is complementary to existing urban land use densities and is supportive of proposed economic and transit oriented development activities 	High positive effect	None required
Displacements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No displacement of businesses or residences Minor acquisition of property 	Minor positive effect	None required
Neighborhood and Community Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved access to community features and services Enhances, high-quality transit services Increases transit between neighborhoods & employment centers 	High positive effect	None required
Visual and Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project is consistent with existing visual character Introduction of new visual features into landscape 	Minor adverse effect	None required – design of streetcar will consider environmental context
Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No exceedance of National Ambient Air Quality Standards Reduction in particulate matter emissions 	Minor positive effect	None required
Noise and Vibration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some noise at turns Normal operations quieter than bus service 	Minor adverse effect	None required
Ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project will be generally constructed within existing rights-of-way Project area is urbanized with intact ecosystems 	Negligible effect	None required
Water Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project supports high density land use, which is beneficial in reducing regional water quality degradation Project will generally be constructed within existing rights-of-way 	Minor positive effect	None required
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project is efficient use of energy No disruption of energy supply 	Moderate positive effect	None required
Historic, Archeological and Cultural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reintroduction of streetcar in historic streetcar alignments Potential adverse visual effect from introduction of overhead catenary system and traction power infrastructure 	Not likely to have adverse effect	None required – design of streetcar will consider environmental context
Parklands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhances access to parklands in corridor No direct effects or constructive use of parkland or other publicly owned lands 	Minor positive effect	None required
Economic Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project is supportive of economic development 	Moderate positive effect	None required
Secondary and Cumulative Effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project promotes and supports transit oriented development Project would not induce unplanned, undesirable growth and development Project would not contribute to adverse cumulative effects 	High positive effect	None required
Hazardous Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project is not likely to encounter substantial hazardous material or exacerbate existing conditions 	Negligible effect	None required



Environmental Effects
Center City Streetcar Project

