



The Blue Line Extension

NORTH CAROLINA JOINT TRANSPORTATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE



Presented by
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Raleigh, NC
February 10, 2012



Overview

Charlotte Area Transit System

2030 Transit Corridor System Plan

Growth Since 1999

A New Era in North Carolina: Light Rail Transportation

LYNX Blue Line Extension Light Rail Project

Appreciation for State Support



Mecklenburg County's Transit System

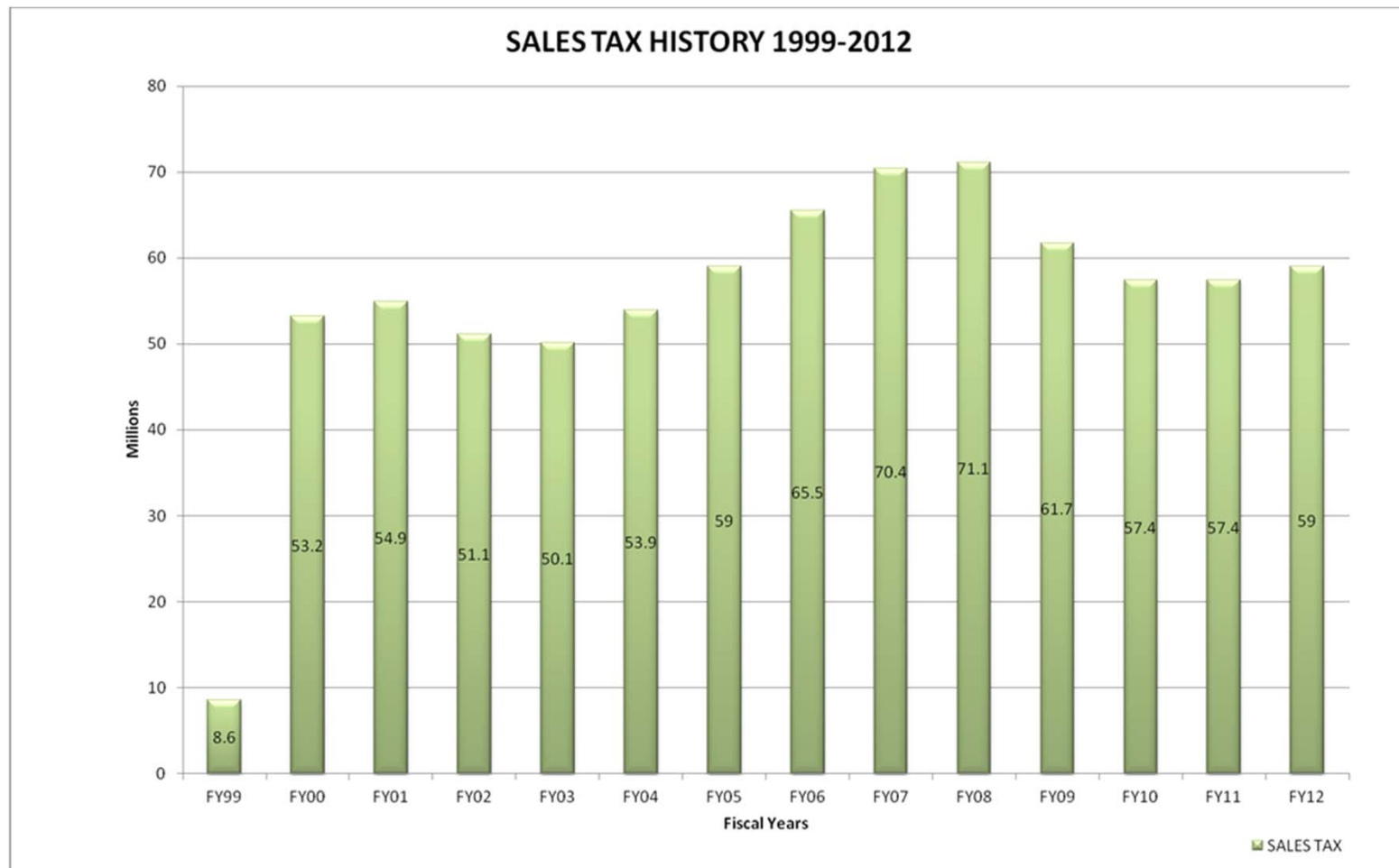
Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS)

- ☐ Governed by the Metropolitan Transit Commission
 - Represents Mecklenburg County, City of Charlotte, Towns of Cornelius, Davidson, Huntersville, Matthews, Mint Hill, Pineville and NCBOT
- ☐ Services
 - Bus, ADA and Vanpool
 - North Carolina's first light rail passenger service
 - Regional service serving surrounding counties in North Carolina and York County in South Carolina
- ☐ Ridership
 - 26 million riders annually
 - Average annual growth rate of 6.3%
- ☐ Funding
 - Federal Grants
 - State Grants
 - Half-cent Local Sales & Use Tax since 1998



Local Investment in Transit

- ☐ Half-cent Local Sales and Use Tax for transit was approved by Mecklenburg County voters in 1998
- ☐ CATS utilizes funds from the sales tax to leverage Federal and State funds to grow and sustain transit
- ☐ Mecklenburg County's investment together with Federal and State investment increases mobility options for the community and the region
- ☐ Reduction in sales tax, due to recession, has slowed but not stopped investment in transit in Mecklenburg County





2030 Transit Corridor System Plan

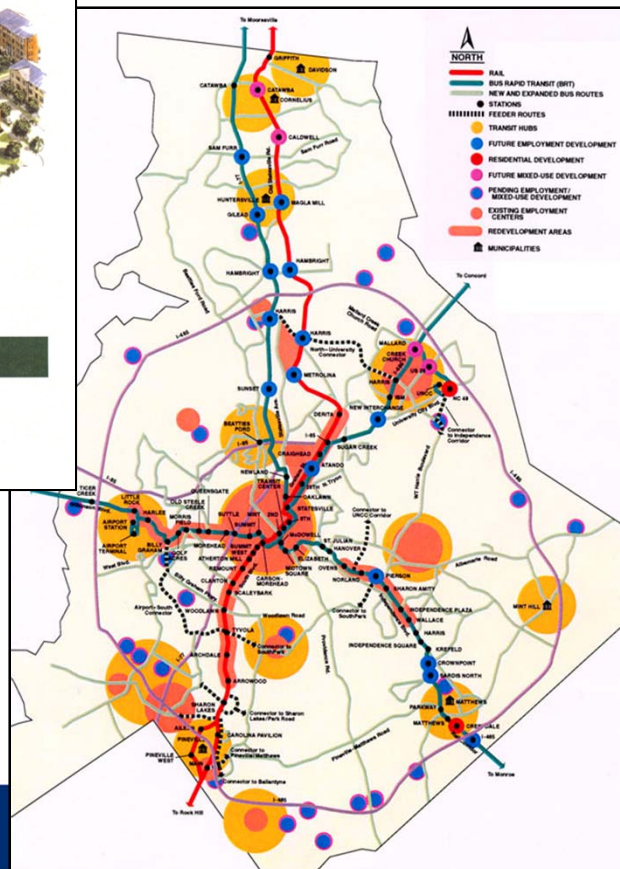
- ❑ Adopted by the Metropolitan Transit Commission in 2006
 - Guide for growth of mobility options in the region
- ❑ 30-year long range plan
 - Build-out of a multimodal transit system
 - Introduction of rapid transit modes of transportation
- ❑ Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) are key financial and technical partners
- ❑ FTA is the largest investor in projects i.e. 50% to 80% of eligible projects
- ❑ Every \$ received from NCDOT is matched $\geq 100\%$ with local half-cent sales tax funds

2025 Integrated Transit/Land-Use Plan



For Charlotte-Mecklenburg

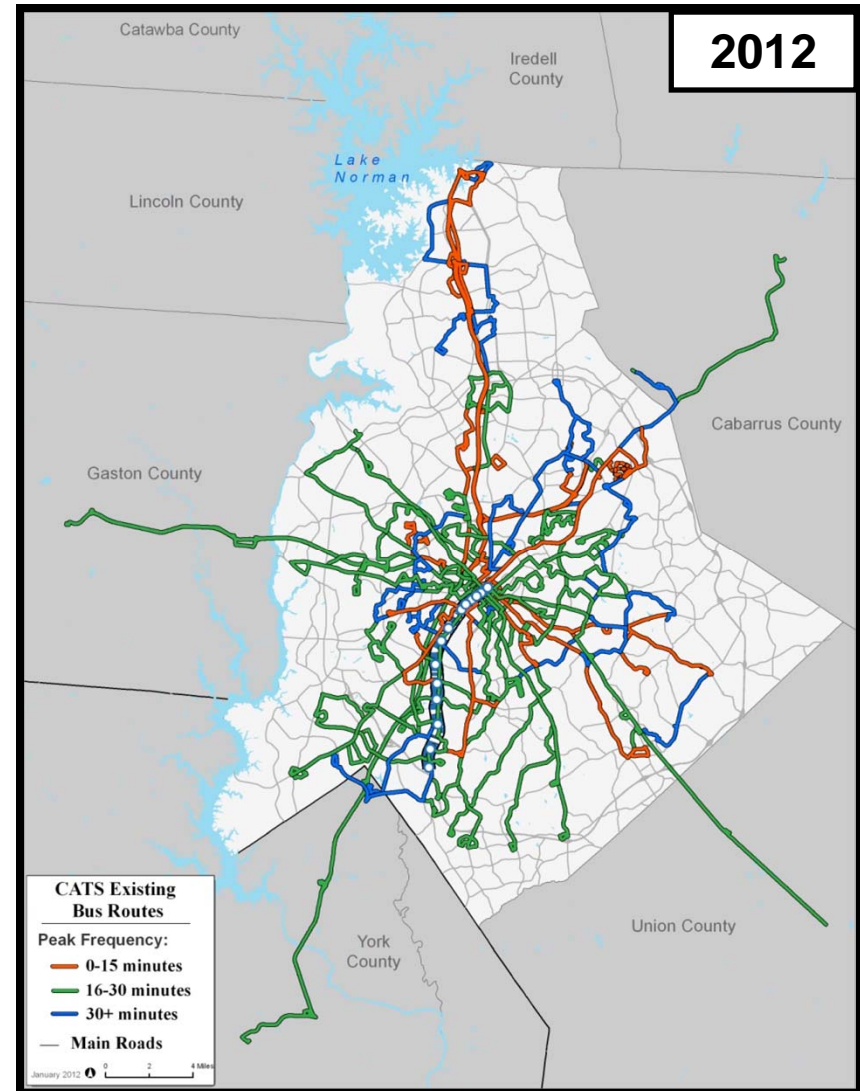
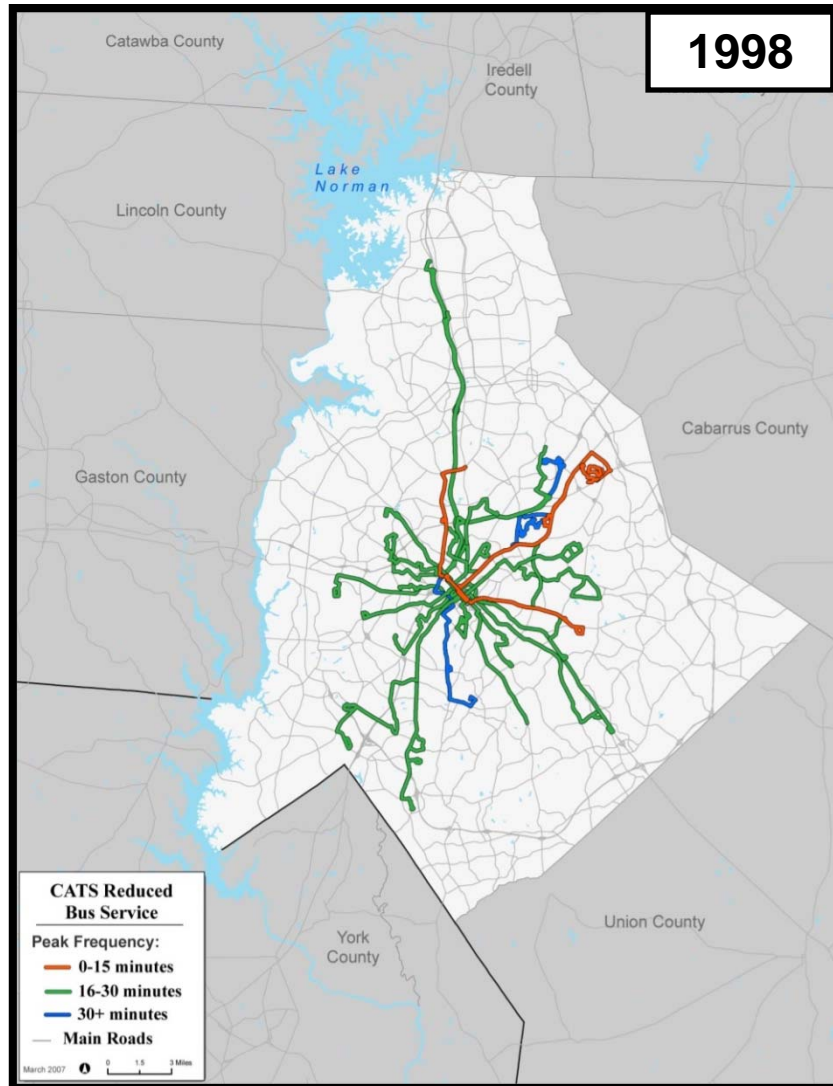
Final Report - October 1998



•1998

- Based on Centers and Corridors Land Use Vision
- Led to voters approving transit sales tax

Growth of the Bus System





Growth of Assets

CATS has leveraged Federal, State and Local funds to grow and maintain a sustainable transit system

Asset	FY1999	FY2011
Buses	173	323
Rail Cars	0	20
STS Buses	46	85
Vanpools	22	98
Park & Ride Lots (Owned)	0	11
Transit Centers	1	4
Maintenance Facilities	1	3

A New Era: Light Rail Transportation

- ❑ LYNX Blue Line entered service in 2007
- ❑ LYNX Blue Line ridership surpassed initial ridership projections by > 60% in less than three years
- ❑ TOD Impacts
 - Pedestrian-friendly development
 - Mix of residential, retail employment and civic development, \$1.4 billion Transit Oriented Development (TOD) investment
- ❑ \$18.8 million in new tax revenue (prior to revaluation)



- ❑ 9.6 miles from Charlotte Center City to I-485/South Boulevard
 - 15 stations
 - 7 park and rides

- ❑ Ridership
 - 14,000 – 15,000 daily
 - 27,000 – 35,000 special events
 - 5 million annual



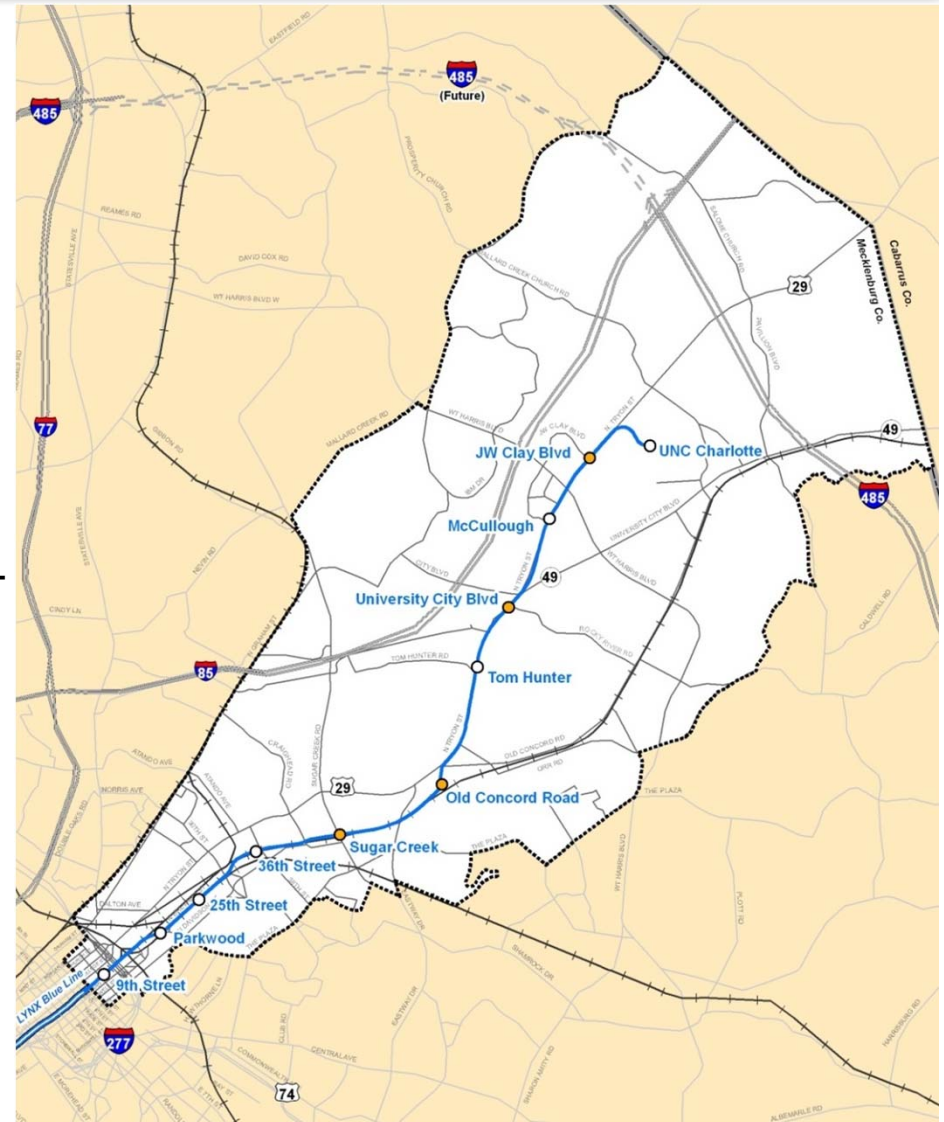
- ❑ \$462.7 million capital investment was a funding partnership between
 - USDOT \$199.0 m (43%)
 - NCDOT \$115.0 m (25%)
 - City/CATS \$148.7 m (32%)



- ❑ \$10 million annual operating cost is paid from the local Half-cent Sales & Use Tax revenue

Our Next Major Project: LYNX Blue Line Extension

- ❑ LYNX Blue Line Extension (BLE)
 - +9.4 miles
 - Implementation in 2017
 - +25,000 daily riders
 - Improvements to North Tryon Street
 - Connects UNC Charlotte campuses
- ❑ FTA approved project
 - Awarded \$39.6 million
 - 1 of 4 projects identified as “ready-to-go” in President’s FY2012 budget
- ❑ Financially sustainable project
 - \$1.10 billion (YOE)
 - FTA sets final federal funding level upon approval to enter Final Design “cost” and (May 2012)
 - FTA issued Record of Decision in December 2011



☐ Funding Partner Shares

- FTA 50%
- NCDOT 25%
- CATS/City 25%

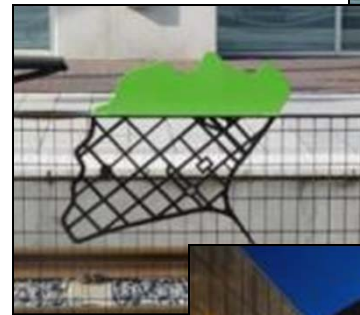
☐ State Participation In BLE Project

- NCDOT has awarded \$19.8 million in State matching funds
- UNC Charlotte has provided access for the right-of-way
- Collaboration with North Carolina Rail Road
- NC Board of Transportation has committed to fund 25% of project cost
- NCDOT financial partnership commitment is key criteria for receiving Federal FFGA
 - Anticipate execution of State FFGA in February/March 2012
 - Anticipate annual appropriation of funds, FY2012-20

☐ Federal FFGA

- Provides 50% of BLE project cost
- Scheduled for execution by December 2012

- ❑ 25,000 additional riders
- ❑ 11 Stations (7 walk-up / 4 park-and-ride)
- ❑ Accommodates 3-car trains
- ❑ Approximately 3,100 parking spaces
- ❑ Congestion-free commute
 - 22 minutes from Center City to UNC Charlotte Campus
- ❑ Connecting bus services
- ❑ Convenient and safe station amenities for customers



- ❑ Includes design elements to provide reliable, safe and secure operations
 - Support the development of pedestrian-friendly facilities and enhance pedestrian safety
 - Crosswalks, pedestrian signals, pedestrian refuge areas and railroad gates
 - Provide safe and convenient station access for autos, cyclists, pedestrians and transit vehicles
 - Light rail operates in exclusive alignment
 - Grade separation of major intersections
 - Separating freight and light rail





LYNX BLE Milestones

Milestone	Date
FTA Approval to Enter PE	November 2007
15% Design Complete	May 2009
FTA Signs DEIS	August 2010
30% Design Complete	December 2010
Complete FEIS and submit to FTA	July 2011
FTA Signs FEIS	August 2011
NEPA Record of Decision	December 2011
65% Design Complete	December 2011
NCBOT Approves Execution of State FFGA	December 2011
Right-of-Way Acquisition Begins	December 2011
NCDOT Executes State FFGA	February/March 2012
Request to Enter Final Design	February 2012
FTA Risk Assessment Complete	March 2012
FTA Approval to Enter Final Design	May 2012
Federal FFGA Signed	December 2012
Advanced Utility Relocation Begins	February 2013
Right-of-Way Acquisition Complete	October 2013
Complete Final Design	May 2014
Start Construction	September 2013
Complete Final Design	May 2014
Initiate Revenue Service	2017

02/2012

- ☐ Federal Support
 - Awarded \$39+ million in federal funds to date
 - One of four projects identified by FTA as “Ready-to-Go” status
- ☐ State Support
 - \$19.8 million
 - SFFGA approved by NC Board of Transportation
- ☐ CATS Financial Contribution
 - \$19.8 million
- ☐ Mecklenburg Congressional Delegation
- ☐ Local Business Community
- ☐ University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- ☐ University City Partners
- ☐ Charlotte Center City Partners

- ☐ Access to Jobs
 - Existing
 - Future
- ☐ Access to Non-Work Activities
- ☐ Network Ability
- ☐ Reduced Congestion
 - Petroleum consumption
 - CO2 emissions



Thank You

The Metropolitan Transit Commission

The City of Charlotte

The Charlotte Area Transit System

Are proud to leverage local investment with Federal and State financial partnerships to increase mobility options for Mecklenburg County and North Carolina

THANK YOU

Connecting People, Connecting the Region

