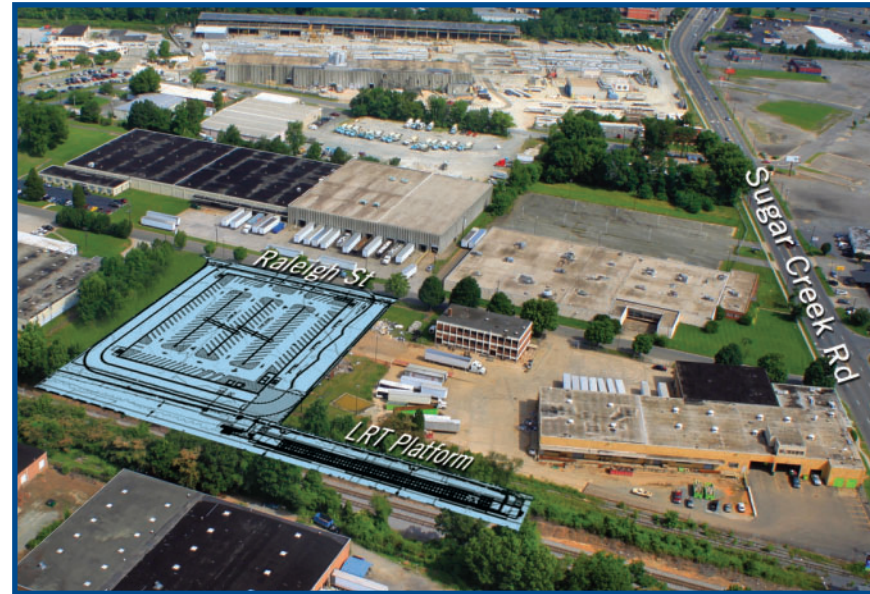


Sugar Creek Station Park and Ride gets a LIFT

We have great news for future riders at the Sugar Creek Station! In April 2014, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) approved CATS' request for a design change at the Sugar Creek Station from two surface lots to a parking deck. The parking deck will be located along Raleigh Street on one of the parcels identified for the two surface parking lots. The four-level parking deck will provide approximately 600 parking spaces, as well as bicycle parking and bus bays.



The Sugar Creek parking deck option was considered during Preliminary Engineering for the BLE project but was eliminated in cost reductions in January 2011. Due to recent cost savings from lower than anticipated bids on major contracts, CATS determined that a deck is financially feasible.

The Sugar Creek parking deck will improve accessibility, visibility and safety of the parking facility for users of the light rail system. Parking spaces will be much closer to the station, significantly reducing walking distance and improving the accessibility and convenience of the station. An adjacent project is North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) Sugar Creek Grade Separation Project. NCDOT is planning to construct a bridge for Sugar Creek Road over the North Carolina Railroad tracks to replace the current at-grade crossing. Changing the surface lots to a parking deck will increase the visibility of the station and park and ride.

As part of FTA's approval process for the Sugar Creek parking deck, CATS performed an environmental re-evaluation for the station area. The re-evaluation determined that building a parking deck rather than two surface lots would not result in significant changes to environmental impacts. The re-evaluation is available on the CATS website at www.ridetransit.org.

Pedestrian Safety Tips Continued

- Use extra caution when crossing driveways. Turning motorists are often focused on approaching traffic and may not see pedestrians.
- When walking in the evening or at night, wear reflective or light colored clothing and if possible, carry a flashlight or similar device.
- If you must cross a roadway at night in an area without crosswalks and/or signals, try to cross near streetlights or other light sources so that you are visible to approaching motorists.
- Never assume that a vehicle will stop.

Stay Connected

Construction will cause some disruptions, so CATS will share information about how to stay informed and who to contact when you have questions. The use of social media will also help in providing additional outreach avenues to keep residents and business owners informed throughout the construction of the BLE. The two new social media sites dedicated to BLE information are ready for your use to give you the most up to date information and answer your questions.

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter

 www.facebook.com/CATSBlueLineExtensionUpdates

 @BLEupdates

Register to Receive Updates

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MOVING CHARLOTTE FORWARD

Blue Line Extension: Northeast Corridor

Spring 2014

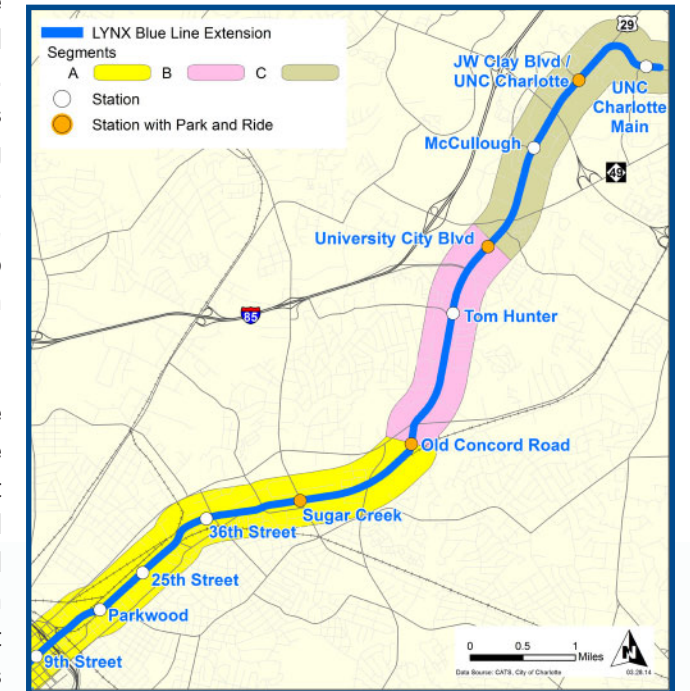
Civil Construction Begins Along Entire BLE Alignment

Spring of 2014 brings a major shift in the activities for the LYNX Blue Line Extension light rail project. The advanced utility relocation work is scheduled for completion this summer. Crews have moved waterlines, gas lines and storm sewers farther back from the center of North Tryon Street, making room for the new roadway to be built in the coming months. Duke Energy is installing and energizing new utility poles, while local utility companies prepare to move their lines into the newly constructed joint duct bank that will run the length of North Tryon Street.

The majority of the work in Segment A is focusing within the existing Norfolk Southern Railroad right-of-way to prepare for construction of the new BLE light rail tracks and transit stations. Crews removed old track and railroad ties and cleared the areas where new track will be laid. Existing railroad tracks will be relocated in some of these areas. East 36th Street between Cullman Avenue and North Davidson Street is currently scheduled for closure this summer, with detours posted on North Tryon Street, East Craighead Road and North Davidson Street. The closure of East 36th Street is expected to last two years because of the complicated sequence of construction here. First, the contractor will build a new railroad bridge for the existing Norfolk Southern railroad tracks. Next, Norfolk Southern will move their tracks onto the new bridge, allowing room for the BLE contractor to build the new light rail bridge and station. Lastly, the BLE contractor will rebuild East 36th Street to travel under the railroad tracks once the bridge is complete.

The Eastway Drive bridge lengthening is also about to start. The bridge will close to all vehicles and pedestrians on May 28 for eight to 10 months. The contractor will extend the north end of the bridge to make room for the light rail tracks that will travel under the bridge. North Tryon Street and East Sugar Creek Road will provide the detour around the bridge closure. Residents and businesses will still have local access on both sides of the bridge. Please look for and follow the detour signs.

Civil construction is also starting in Segments B and C. Work will begin near the UNC Charlotte campus soon. The first steps will include building a construction entrance and haul road to bring construction equipment and materials to the job site along the northern edge of the campus. Early work will focus on building a temporary bridge over Toby Creek. Over the summer months, motorists may experience lane closures during the day on North Tryon Street between JW Clay Boulevard and north of Institute Circle as crews prepare for the cut-and-cover (tunnel) light rail entrance onto the UNC Charlotte campus. As the utility work is completed, crews will build the remainder of the retaining walls to support the future widened roadway.



Weather and unforeseen circumstances occasionally prevent work from being completed as scheduled.



704.336.RIDE (7433)
www.charlottefuture.com

Thank You

for Helping to Shape Your Community

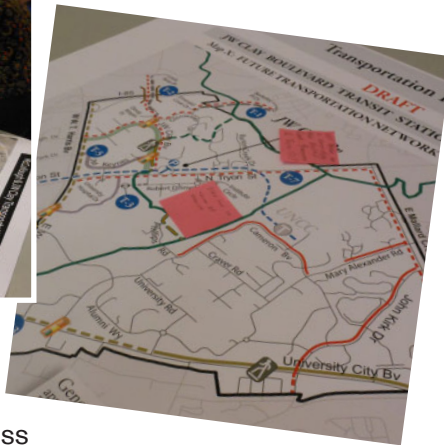
University City Area Plan Nearing Review and Adoption Phase

The Planning Department is actively requesting feedback from the community for the ongoing University City Area Plan (UCAP) process. In addition to the BLE update at the March 11 public meeting, the Planning Department and Charlotte Department of Transportation brought draft policy recommendations for the UCAP for the following:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Community Design
- Infrastructure and Public Facilities
- Natural Environment



Residents and business owners provide feedback on potential future development, land use and infrastructure.



Similar to the previous two meetings, an open house followed the presentation to hear the community's ideas about draft policy proposals. The materials from that meeting are available on the UCAP project website www.charlotteplanning.org. We encourage you to try the new Online Public Comment Tool that is also on that website so you can share your ideas with us online. We are also happy to answer any questions you may have.

After the three public workshops and the feedback received from residents, business owners and development community, we realized that this area needed a more detailed look at land use and design policies. The community's generous feedback has been greatly appreciated and we hope that you will continue to provide your input and ideas. **We will compile all of this information and come back to you this summer with more refined policies for you to review.** We anticipate beginning the review and adoption process this fall.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any additional questions or comments at BLEStationAreaPlans@charlottenc.gov. We appreciate your time and effort to stay up to date with the BLE and UCAP projects!

Let's Do Business!



Jennifer Duru
Neighborhood & Business Services
LYNX Blue Line Extension
Business Liaison

As BLE construction progresses, I'm hearing more from business owners who are concerned about access and sign visibility. We understand the importance of access and sign visibility not only for the business owners, but also for the employees, customers and suppliers that come to your establishment to do their business. Access to your business may change as civil construction gets underway. This is where the *Notify Me* function and detour map on the www.charlottefuture.com website comes in as a major mechanism to stay informed of access changes. I can't stress enough the importance of signing up for *Notify Me* – a notification system that will send you automatic updates on the topics you select. After clicking on the *Notify Me* logo, check the Blue Line Extension box under the Rapid Transit section to receive newsletters (such as this), road closure information, construction updates and upcoming milestones. If you're a business owner who would like site specific information on access, please do not hesitate to contact me at 704-336-5577 or jduru@charlottenc.gov.

Sign visibility has also been in the forefront, especially as utility relocations continue and civil construction begins. Neighborhood and Business Services works with business owners during construction to reach signage solutions that are in compliance with the City of Charlotte Zoning Ordinance. Business signage was the featured topic at our first Quarterly Business Meeting on May 15.

Charlotte is celebrating Small Business Month in May, so the month will be packed with a variety of workshops focusing on business topics such as strategic innovation, business accounting and capital financing. Workshops are hosted by community organizations including Central Piedmont Community College, the Small Business Administration, and the Wake Forest School of Business. These events are fun, informative and designed to support Charlotte's small business community. Please visit www.charlottesmallbusinessmonth.com for details.

Community Feedback

Meet Mario and his crew from The Kangaroo Express on North Tryon Street. When asked to rate his experience (1 to 10) during BLE Construction, Mario gave the project a 9.



"The work changes due to rainy weather were very frustrating, but the contractors have been very accommodating."

Pedestrian Safety Tips Near Construction Zones

You can greatly increase your chances of having a safe walking trip near construction zones by following these tips:



- Use sidewalks when they are available.
- Look for "Sidewalk Closed" signs and/or "Construction Zone" signs that may be along the walking route and change your route as needed. Do not attempt to walk around the signs or walk through construction zones.
- If proper signs are not in place to keep you from walking into a work zone, call 311 and report the location and the concern.
- Cross at intersections, marked crosswalks, or signalized intersections when at all possible.
- If you must cross the street in an area with no crosswalks or signals, remember to look both ways (left-right-left) before crossing the street. Always look in the direction of the approaching vehicles for the lane you are crossing.
- At intersections, always use the crosswalks. Do not attempt to cross between stopped cars away from the intersection; approaching vehicles do not expect pedestrians crossing away from the intersection.
- Pedestrian signals provide guidance on the proper time to cross and not to cross intersections.
- When crossing the street you should always make eye contact with any stopped or approaching motorists to make sure that they see you.

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