

CityLYNX Gold Line Phase 2 Streetcar
Charlotte, North Carolina
Small Starts Project Development
(Rating Assigned November 2014)

Summary Description	
Proposed Project:	Streetcar 2.5 Miles, 11 Stations
Total Capital Cost (\$YOE):	\$150.00 Million
Section 5309 Small Starts Share (\$YOE):	\$74.99 Million (50.0%)
Annual Operating Cost (opening year 2019):	\$4.95 Million
Current Year Ridership Forecast (2014):	4,100 Daily Linked Trips 1,288,100 Annual Linked Trips
Horizon Year Ridership Forecast (2034):	5,700 Daily Linked Trips 1,766,000 Annual Linked Trips
Overall Project Rating:	Medium-High
Project Justification Rating:	Medium
Local Financial Commitment Rating:	High

Project Description: The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) proposes to extend the CityLYNX Gold Line Phase 1 project, currently under construction, on both ends for a total of 2.5 miles. It extends approximately 2.0 miles west from the Charlotte Transportation Center to the campus of Johnson C. Smith University and 0.5 miles east from the Novant Health Presbyterian Medical Center to the Sunnyside neighborhood. The proposed project includes 11 stations, right-of-way acquisition, the purchase of seven vehicles, and the modification of six stops on the Phase 1 project.

Project Purpose: The project would improve circulation and transit connections; support economic revitalization; provide access from economically diverse neighborhoods to Uptown Charlotte; provide more efficient transit options; and connect key activity centers and facilities.

Project Development History, Status and Next Steps: In November 2006, CATS selected streetcar as the locally preferred alternative (LPA). CATS completed the environmental review process with receipt of a Finding of No Significant Impact in June 2011. The Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization adopted the LPA into the fiscally constrained long-range transportation plan in April 2014. CATS anticipates receipt of a Small Starts Grant Agreement in mid-2015, and start of revenue service in December 2019.

Locally Proposed Financial Plan

Source of Funds	Total Funds (\$million)	Percent of Total
Federal: Section 5309 Small Starts	\$74.99	50.0%
Local: City of Charlotte Municipal Debt Service Fund Pay-As-You-Go Fund	\$75.00	50.0%
Total:	\$149.99	100.0%

NOTE: The financial plan reflected in this table has been developed by the project sponsor and does not reflect a commitment by DOT or FTA. The sum of the figures may differ from the total as listed due to rounding.

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LAND USE RATING: Medium

The land use rating reflects population and employment densities within ½-mile of proposed station areas, as well as the share of legally binding affordability restricted housing in the corridor compared to the share in the surrounding county(ies).

- Average population density across all station areas is 4,200 persons per square mile, which corresponds to a medium-low rating. Total employment served by a one seat ride is 88,100, corresponding to a medium rating.
- The proportion of legally binding affordability restricted housing in the project corridor compared to the proportion in the counties through which the project travels is 3.79, which corresponds to a high rating.
- Parking costs in downtown Charlotte average \$11 per day, corresponding to a medium rating.
- The central portion of the corridor is a highly dense pedestrian-oriented downtown area. The east and west segments of the corridor are less dense and primarily automobile-oriented, but are served by sidewalks and a grid street network with some large scale institutional and mixed use development.
- Most of the corridor is pedestrian-friendly, with continuous sidewalks, landscaping, and street furniture. Several major intersections lack pedestrian amenities such as crosswalk striping.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RATING: Medium

Transit-Supportive Plans and Policies: Medium

- *Transit-Supportive Corridor Policies:* The City of Charlotte has adopted several plans and policies that support transit-oriented development (TOD) along transit corridors, including the City's General Development Policies that includes a guide for development near stations to have moderately supportive densities and pedestrian-oriented characteristics. Charlotte also has policies aimed at reducing parking requirements and capping parking within transit station areas.
- *Supportive Zoning Regulations Near Transit Stations:* Existing zoning along the corridor allows for transit-supportive densities, though it does not currently mandate such densities. Charlotte expects to re-zone the transit stations areas along the Gold Line to be TOD zoning districts that have minimum densities and requirements related to development character. Minimum densities are expected to range from 12 units per acre to 20 units per acre and the minimum Floor Area Ratio will be 0.5.
- *Tools to Implement Land Use Policies:* The construction of the streetcar project will be guided by a Communications Plan that has specific strategies for involving local stakeholders in each phase of the project as it develops, including land use planning around stations. The City and local transit agency (Charlotte Area Transit System) have engaged with the neighborhoods within the corridor to keep them informed of the project's status and its potential impact on land use. The City has adopted several regulatory and financial incentive tools to support TOD, including the Smart Growth Revolving Fund and Transit Investment Gap Financing Program. The State allows Tax Increment Financing.

Performance and Impacts of Policies: Medium-High

- *Performance of Land Use Policies:* The submittal identifies 20 projects that have been completed or are under construction in planned station areas and several others that are either planned or proposed in the corridor. The vast majority of these developments are in the central business district in the center of the corridor. These developments may have been influenced by transit supportive land use policies such as the Pedestrian Overlay District and Mixed Use District zoning that applies to most of the corridor. The east and west segments of the corridor have fewer examples of development.
- *Potential Impact of Transit Investment on Regional Land Use:* The corridor is in the center of the Charlotte metropolitan area which is expected to grow by almost 50 percent over the next 20 years. Charlotte expects to see development of 137 acres of available land within the project corridor by 2030. This development should increase corridor population by over 20,000 and employment by 60,000.

Tools to Maintain or Increase Share of Affordable Housing: Medium

- The City's assessment of the Gold Line corridor's affordable housing needs concluded that the under-supply of affordable housing is expected to grow by 700 – 1,200 units by 2035 based on redevelopment trends. There is not yet a strategy for preserving or growing the number of affordable housing units within the corridor to stem this trend, but the City has many policies in place to encourage the creation of affordable housing citywide. One of these policies is the Assisted Multi-Family Housing at Transit Station Policy that encourages the development of some assisted housing units within multi-family residential developments by transit stations.



Phase Two Small Starts Project Map Charlotte, North Carolina



CityLYNX Gold Line Phase Two Small Starts Project Map Submission.pdf

Legend

CityLYNX Gold Line	LYNX Rapid Transit	Major Highway
Phase One Opens in 2015	Blue Line Opened in 2007	Streets
Phase Two	Blue Line Extension Opens in 2017	Railroad
Phase Two Stop	Blue Line Station	Streams
	Parks	

Map Vicinity

Mecklenburg County

0 0.25 0.5 Miles

Data Source: City of Charlotte, CATS