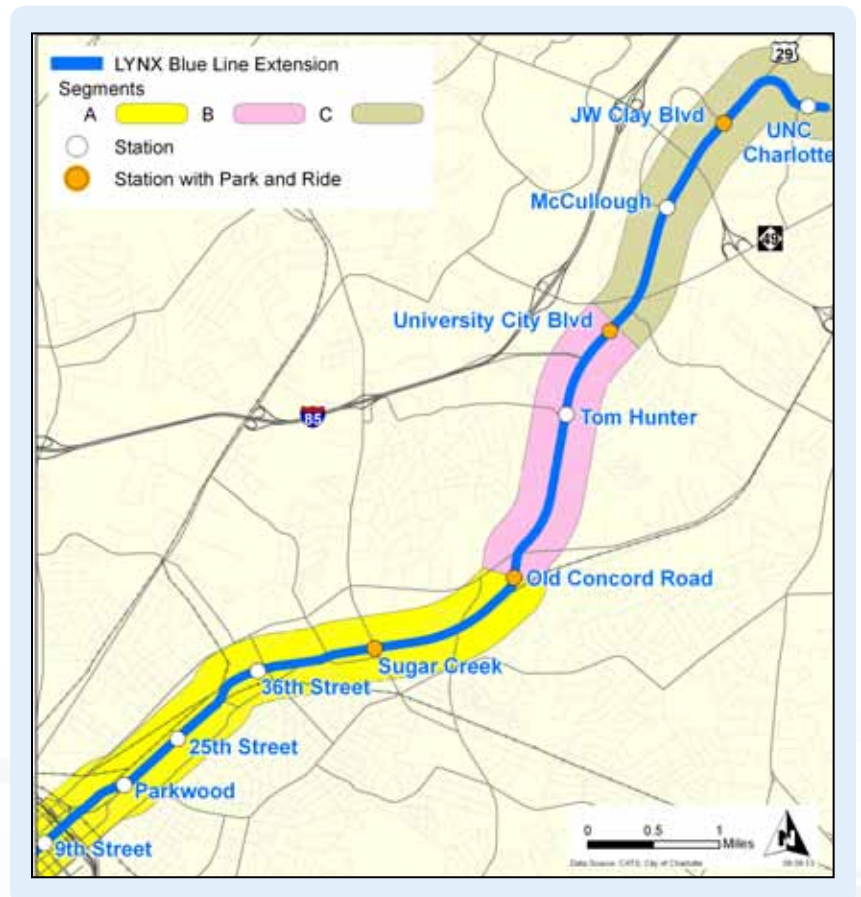


## Do you see the light at the end of the tunnel? Watch for it because **THE TRAIN IS COMING!**

Advance work is underway as CATS prepares for construction to start in early 2014.

If you travelled along the future LYNX Blue Line Extension (BLE) recently you know that crews are out in full force getting the light rail corridor ready for major work next year. Crews have cleared trees, shrubs and vegetation to prepare for utility relocations. Soon you will see the local utility companies relocating their facilities to allow for the widening of North Tryon Street.

The project is divided into three segments for construction purposes. (Segments are indicated on the map). The advanced utility work is underway in Segments A and C of the project. The utility work involves grading, erosion control, traffic control, and construction of joint utility duct banks and retaining walls. Storm drainage, curb and gutter, driveways, and water main and sanitary sewer lines will also be installed in designated areas. Residents, business owners and commuters will see temporary business signs due to the removal of some signs that are in the line of work. The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) is also distributing Open for Business signs to assist with navigation during construction. Most of the upcoming work is outside of the roadway, although there may be occasional right lane closures for equipment deliveries and some construction operations. Lane restrictions on North Tryon Street will occur during off-peak hours between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.



LYNX Blue Line Extension Alignment Map

Demolition on 11 parcels started in May. Most of the demolition is complete and the lots cleared. The few parcels remaining will be demolished during the construction phase starting early next year.

CATS held three public meetings and two business meetings between May and July 2013 to provide an update on the project and to share information about what to expect through the summer months with the preconstruction activities. Project team members spoke to approximately 250 residents, property and business owners. We can feel the excitement building in the community. Thank you for your interest in the project and your questions and comments throughout the project process! Now, we ask for your patience too as the project enters the construction phase.

# CATS Hosts a Business Opportunity & Outreach Symposium

CATS is proud to provide opportunities for businesses to create local jobs through the advancement of transit projects. CATS also seeks to create an environment that gives small, socially challenged and economically challenged local businesses the opportunity to compete for publicly funded contracts by participating in the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Small Business Enterprise (SBE) programs.

Beginning this fall, CATS will be putting out for bid several contracting opportunities for the LYNX Blue Line Extension. Don't miss this opportunity to learn about future CATS business opportunities, how to become a DBE or SBE, how to locate subcontractors participating in these programs and how to meet federal bidding requirements.

Sign up today at  
[www.ridetransit.org](http://www.ridetransit.org) for this  
**FREE** information session.

**September 10, 2013**  
**9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

Charlotte-Mecklenburg  
Government Center  
Council Chamber  
600 East Fourth Street  
Charlotte, NC 28202

## Federal, State and Local Officials Come to Charlotte for the LYNX Blue Line Extension Groundbreaking Celebration

On July 18, Federal Transit Administrator Peter Rogoff, North Carolina Governor Patrick McCrory, Charlotte Mayor Patsy Kinsey, UNC Charlotte Chancellor Philip Dubois, Mecklenburg Commission Chair Pat Cotham and Charlotte Area Transit System CEO Carolyn Flowers commemorated the beginning of construction for the LYNX Blue Line Extension with an official groundbreaking near the future Ninth Street Station. The 9.3 mile alignment will run from Center City Charlotte to the UNC Charlotte campus and include 11 light rail stations and four parking facilities. This \$1.16 billion project is scheduled to begin service in 2017.

"CATS serves as a model across the country of how to build a successful transit system in conjunction with land use. By developing an integrated system we look forward to serving thousands of riders every day by giving them an alternative over congestion," said CATS CEO Flowers.

CATS would like to thank all of the federal, state and local dignitaries that participated in the groundbreaking. We also thank all the community leaders, business owners and residents who joined us for the celebration. More than 150 community members attended the event, which received international exposure.

Daily ridership on the BLE is estimated to be 18,000 when operations begin in 2017. That is in addition to the 16,000 daily riders on the LYNX Blue Line today. The completion of the BLE will give Charlotte more than 18 miles of rapid transit in the city. The BLE's groundbreaking marks another important milestone in Charlotte's growth and national stature.





## Let's Do Business!

Signage is a vital method of conveying to existing and potential customers the location and existence of business establishments. Some businesses in the University City area (the Blue Line Extension technical term is "Segment C")

relocated or removed their signs to make room for advance utility work that commenced in July. CATS provided temporary signs for these establishments to assist in communicating their presence in the corridor.

In April, I reached out to approximately 40 business and property owners to prepare for the advanced utility work in the University City. Conversations centered on ensuring the correct business names are placed on the temporary signage to be installed by CATS, and providing general updates on the Blue Line Extension project. These conversations were also a great opportunity to introduce myself, explain my role and listen to concerns and questions about future construction. Some business owners used our initial contact as an opportunity to learn more about specific work near their site. They requested that Blue Line Extension team members from Engineering, Real Estate and Zoning divisions visit property and business owners to further explain the Blue Line Extension as the project relates to their property.

CATS also had a great turnout for the Blue Line Extension Business meetings held on May 14 and May 16. We give special thanks to Boardwalk Billy's and Amelie's for being wonderful hosts for these events. Over 50 business and property owners showed up to learn more about the project and how we can stay connected as we move forward with the Blue Line Extension construction.

I have enjoyed growing more knowledgeable about the business concerns along the Blue Line Extension alignment for the past few months and look forward to working with you over the next few years. I invite you to propose ideas to me as to what you would like to see as we move through this journey together. If you're a business owner interested in receiving more information about the Blue Line Extension, or have feedback or ideas you would like to share, please do not hesitate to contact me at 704-336-5577 or [jduru@charlottenc.gov](mailto:jduru@charlottenc.gov).



*Jennifer Duru*  
Neighborhood and Business Services  
LYNX Blue Line Extension Business Liaison

## 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](http://www.facebook.com/CATSBlueLineExtensionUpdates)

 [@BLEupdates](https://twitter.com/BLEupdates)

### Register to Receive Updates



If you prefer to go online, please visit [www.charlottefuture.com](http://www.charlottefuture.com) or [www.ridetransit.org](http://www.ridetransit.org) to connect with BLE project information, rapid transit planning and future construction information. You may register to receive electronic public meeting updates by clicking the Notify Me icon at the top of the web page. You can also call CATS customer service at 704-336-RIDE (7433).

## Community Feedback

*"The Blue Line Extension Team has been responsive and extremely helpful."*

*– Charlene Green, Property Manager  
Colonial Grand at Mallard Lake Apartment Homes*



# Real Estate Phase Critical to Blue Line Extension Project

The City of Charlotte's Engineering and Property Management (E&PM) real estate staff is working diligently to meet deadlines and navigate federal regulations for the needed property acquisitions for the Blue Line Extension (BLE) project. More than 300 parcel transactions are required with commercial property owners, Mecklenburg County, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Norfolk Southern and North Carolina Railroad and private utility companies. The number of parcels combined with the federal process makes this the most complicated set of transactions Real Estate has ever handled for the city.

"E&PM real estate staff are key members of the BLE Project team," said John Muth, Deputy Director of the Charlotte Area Transit System. "They are doing a wonderful job working with property owners, steering through the federal process and keeping the project moving forward."

E&PM real estate staff has contacted all the properties owners of the impacted parcels. To date, more than 200 properties have been acquired. Appraisals have been completed and offers have been made on 86 percent of the parcels. The exacting work of E&PM staff helped ensure the successful start of BLE construction

## PLAY IT SAFE AROUND CONSTRUCTION



As football teams across the country get ready to safely tackle another season, CATS wants you to be ready to play it safe in and around construction zones along the BLE. Crews working on advanced utility relocation are in the field in several areas in University City. We will do our best to mark the changes along the corridor, but we need your help to keep the work zone safe for you, workers and others travelling in the same area.



### REMEMBER...

- Detour signage is in place for your safety
- Always travel at a safe speed
- Drivers should get in the correct lane well in advance and constantly be on the lookout for vehicles merging into adjacent travel lanes as they approach a work zone
- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings
- Watch out for workers in the construction zone
- Pedestrians are advised to cross only at signalized intersections and use pedestrian walk signals where available
- Watch for construction trucks that may be entering or exiting the construction area
- Pedestrians walking near work zone areas should be alert, cautious and allow extra traveling time
- Drivers should double their following distance
- The construction crew members are working to improve your future commute
- Please follow all signs and signals to keep everyone safe