

An aerial photograph of the Charlotte, North Carolina skyline. The image shows a dense cluster of skyscrapers in the center, with the Bank of America Tower being the most prominent. The surrounding area includes lower-rise buildings, parking lots, and green spaces. The sky is blue with a few scattered clouds.

Regional Transit Planning: The Charlotte Story

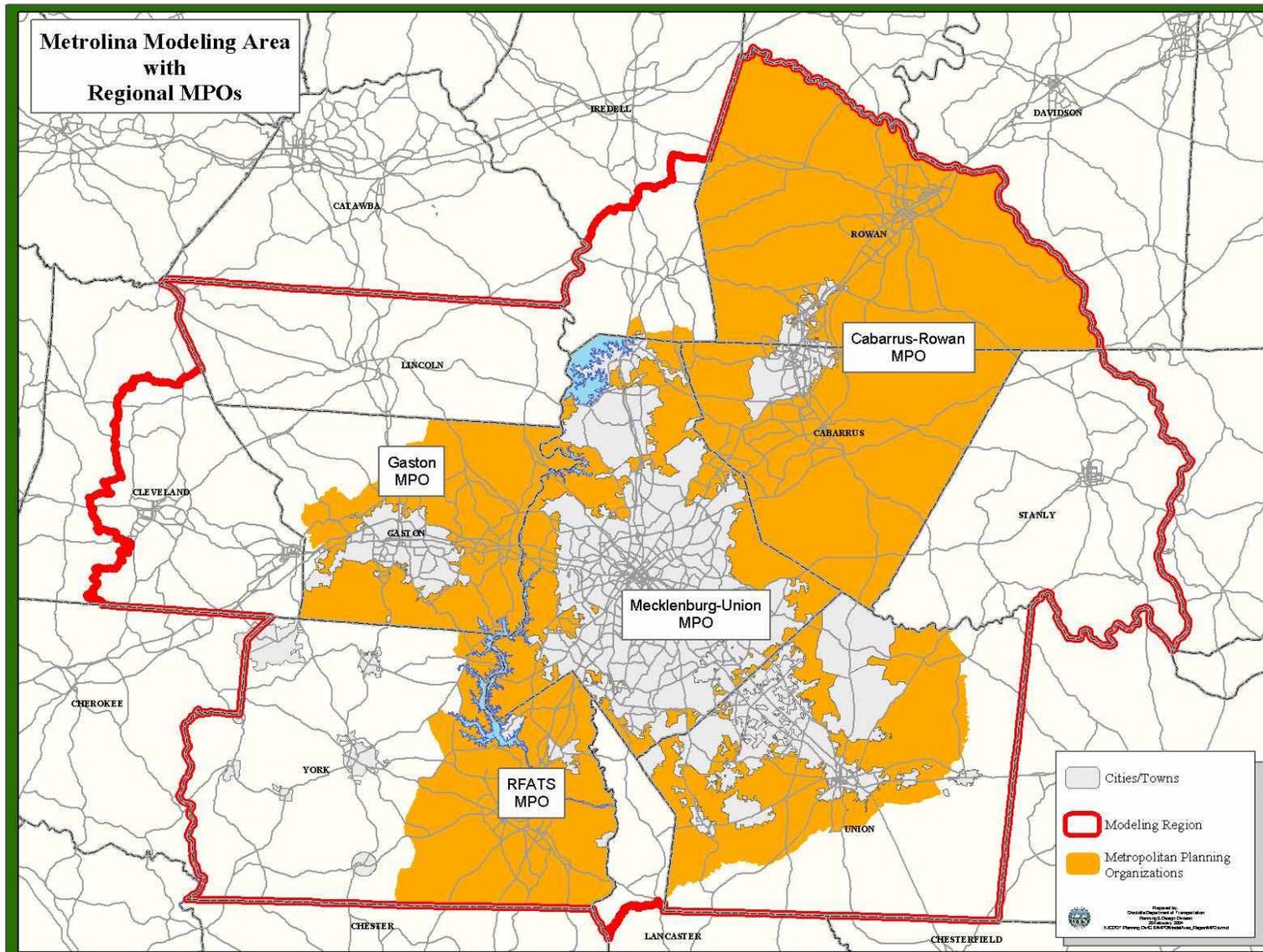
**John M. Muth, P.E.
Chief Development Officer
Charlotte Area Transit System**

Presentation Overview

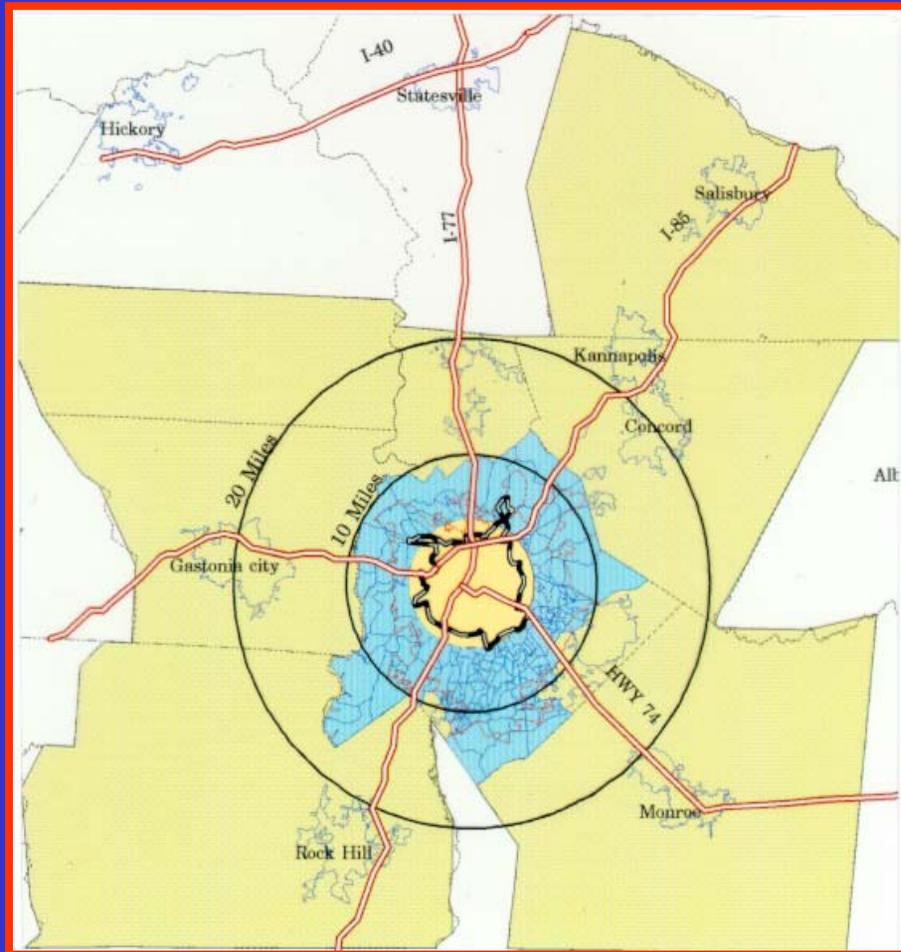
- **Charlotte Region**
- **Adopted Multimodal Corridor System Plan**
- **Pursuit of a dedicated local funding source**
- **Governance Structure**
- **System Plan Development**



Four MPO's in Region

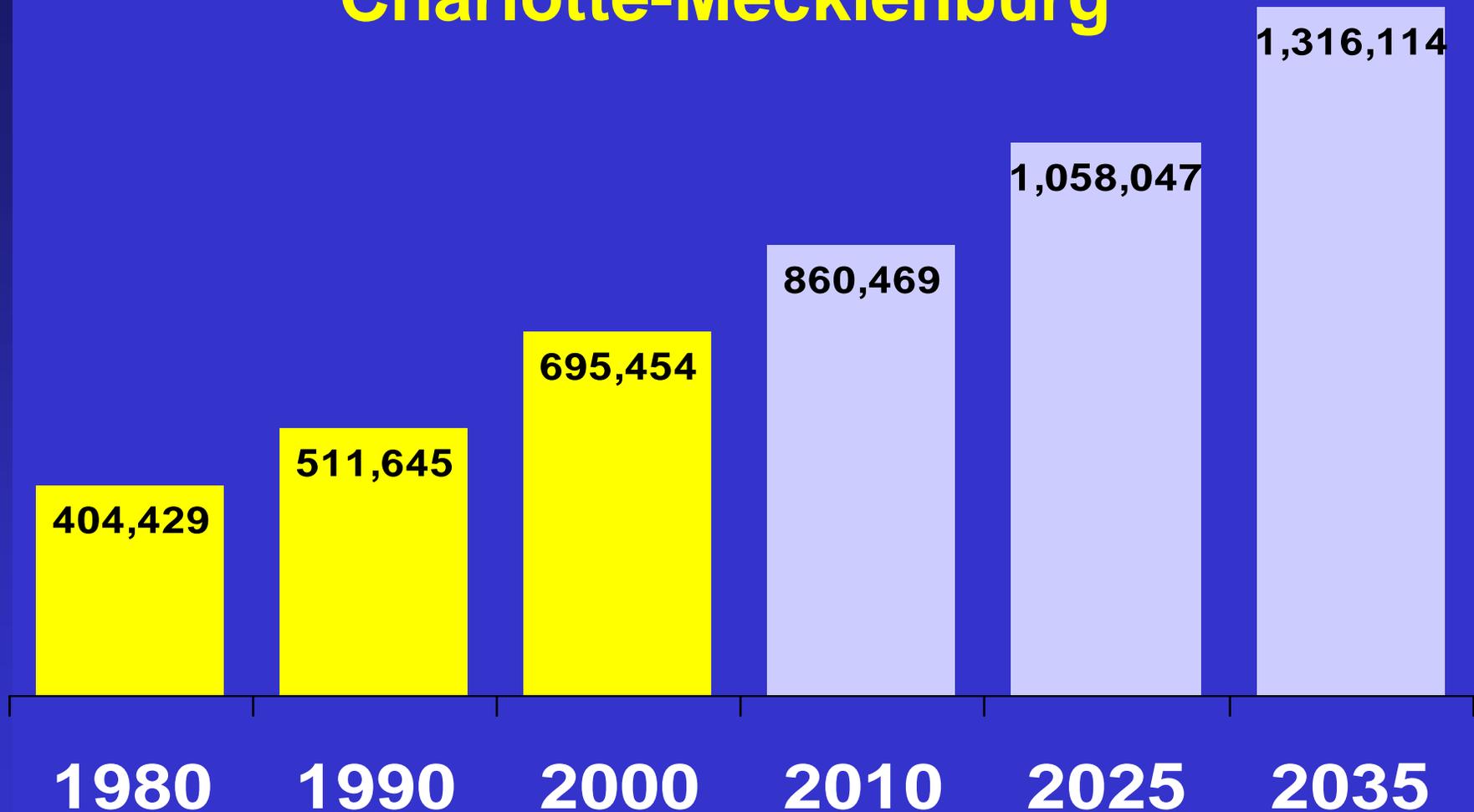


Charlotte-Mecklenburg Region

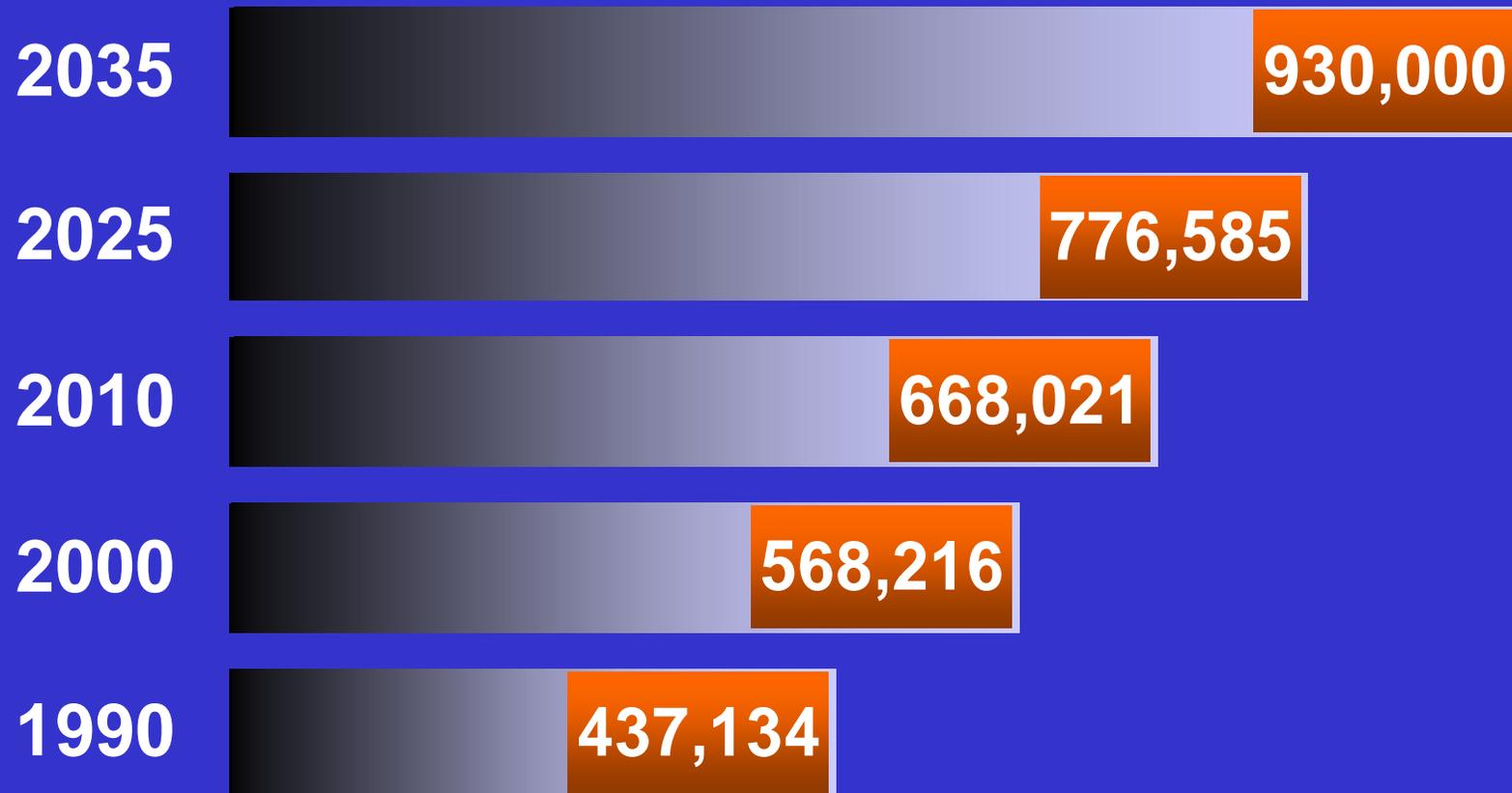


- 7 county region
- 20+ mile ring
- 1.5 million people
- 34th largest metro area

Population Growth Charlotte-Mecklenburg

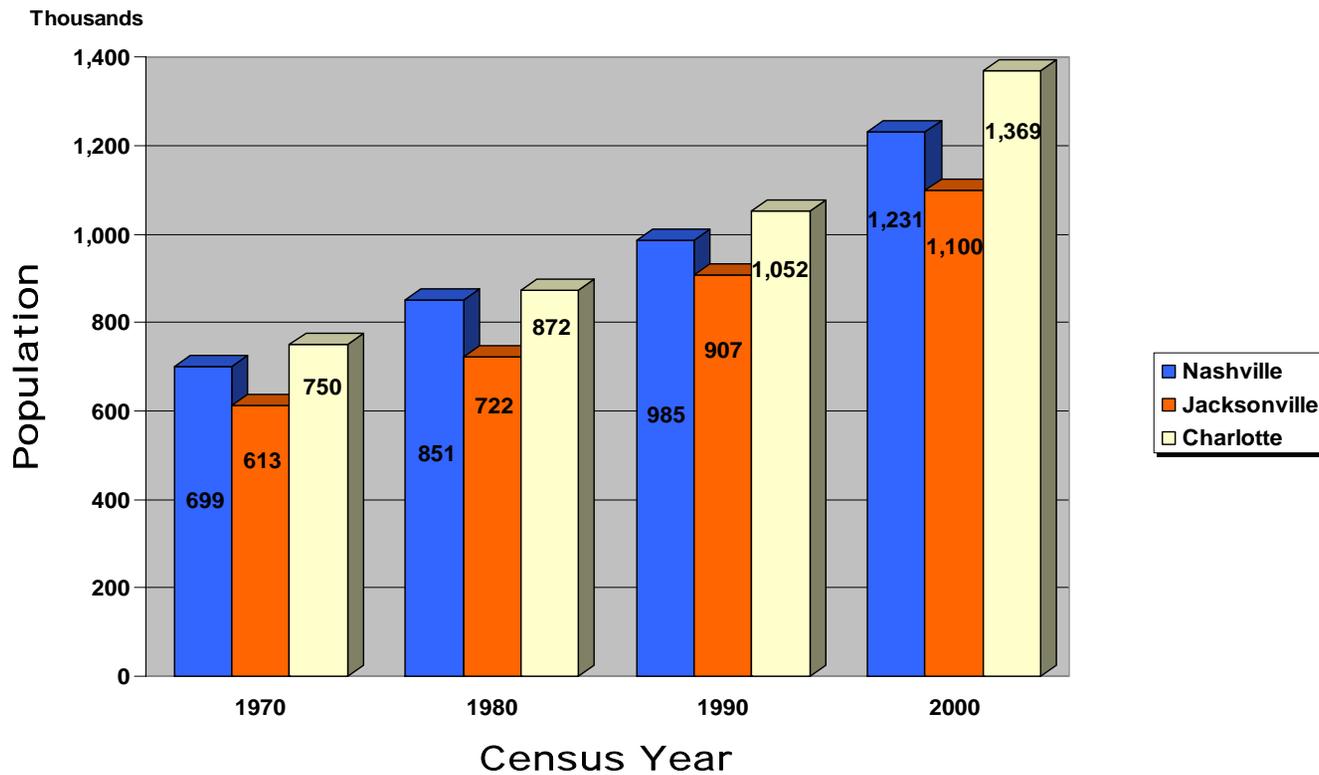


Employment Growth



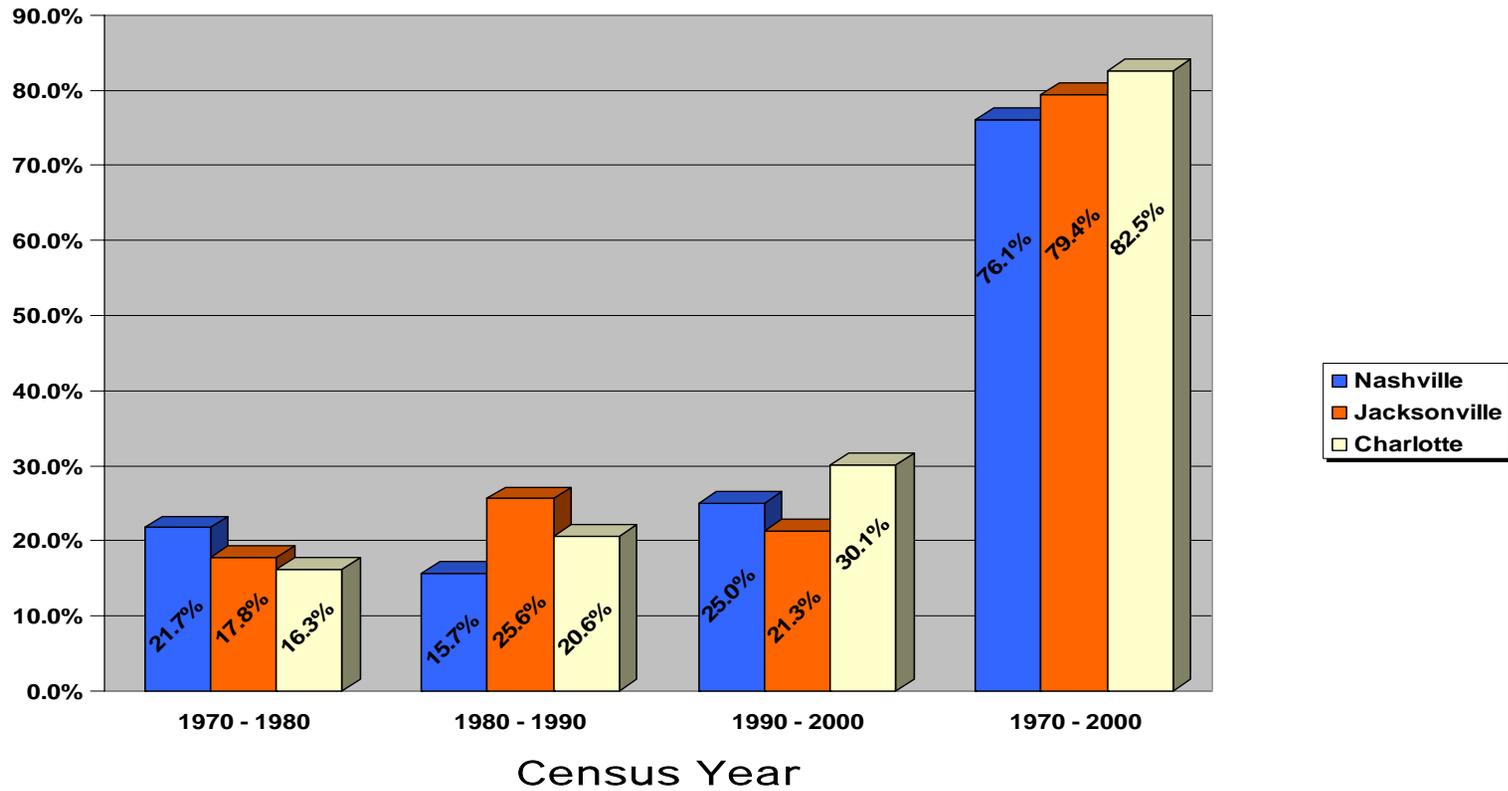
Community Profile

MSA Population



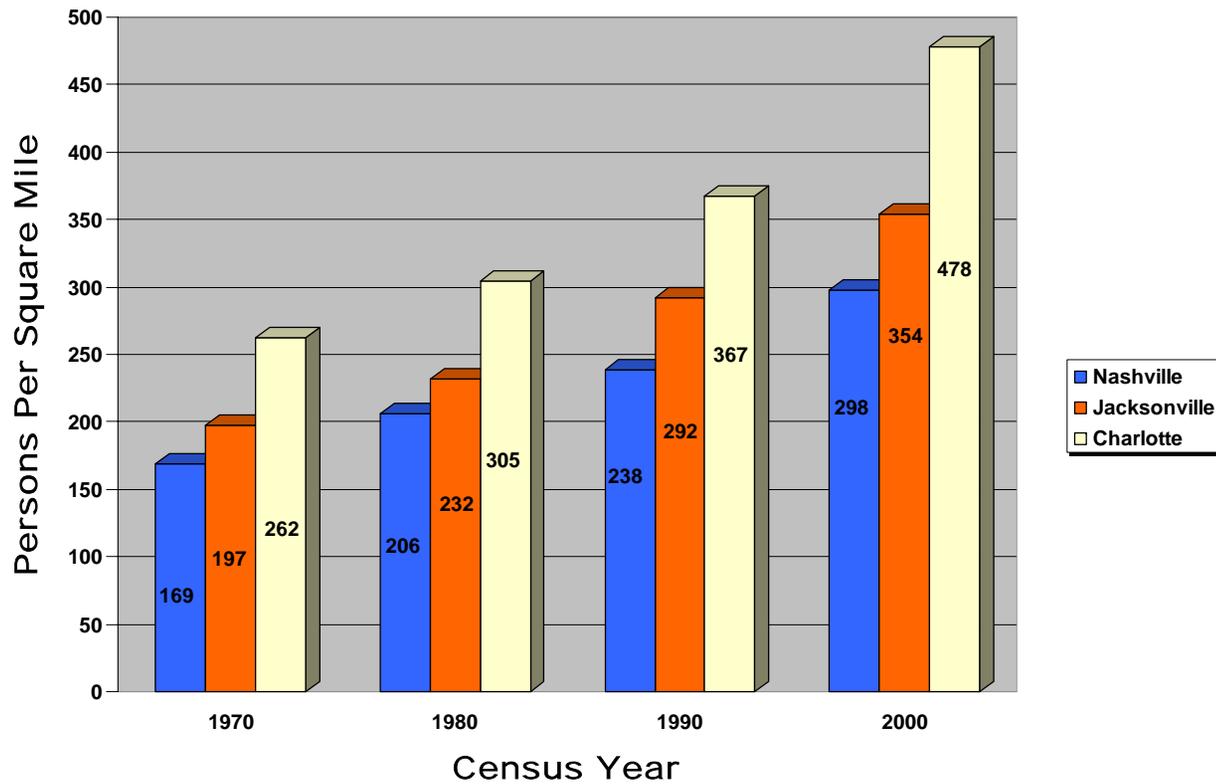
Community Profile

MSA Population Growth



Community Profile

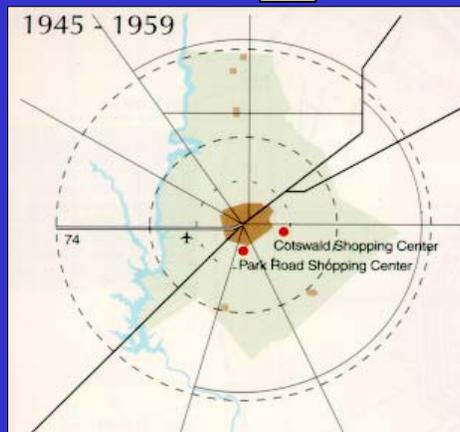
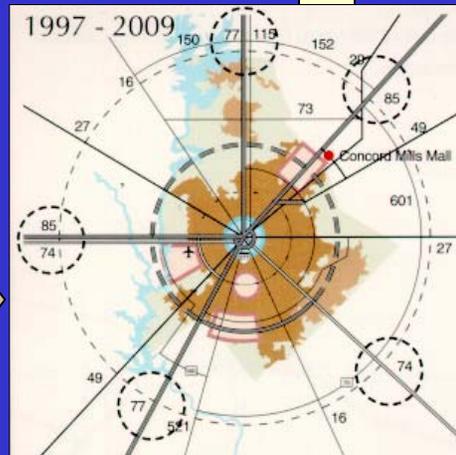
Population Density
(Based on 1990 MSA Land Area)



Challenge: Build and Maintain a Sustainable Region



How well we understand national and regional change, and anticipate and plan for growth, along with revitalization, will have a significant impact on life in the region for years to come.



The seven county metropolitan area will grow from 1.5 million people in 2000 to 3 million residents by 2050.

85% of the metropolitan area's growth can be expected to occur outside of Charlotte.

The pressure for continued outward, auto dependant development will intensify within the metropolitan area and wider region.

Trend growth v. sustainable growth will be a choice with significant consequences now and more so in the future.

Transit Planning – The Early Years

- 1977 Long Range Transit Plan – “transitways” in corridors
- 1988 Independence Blvd HOV Lane Plan
- 1989 Transit Corridor Study – high capacity transit in eight corridors
- 1994 Transitional Analysis



Committee of 100 (1994)

Composition

- 100+ members from Mecklenburg County and 5 adjacent counties
- Included elected officials and business community reps

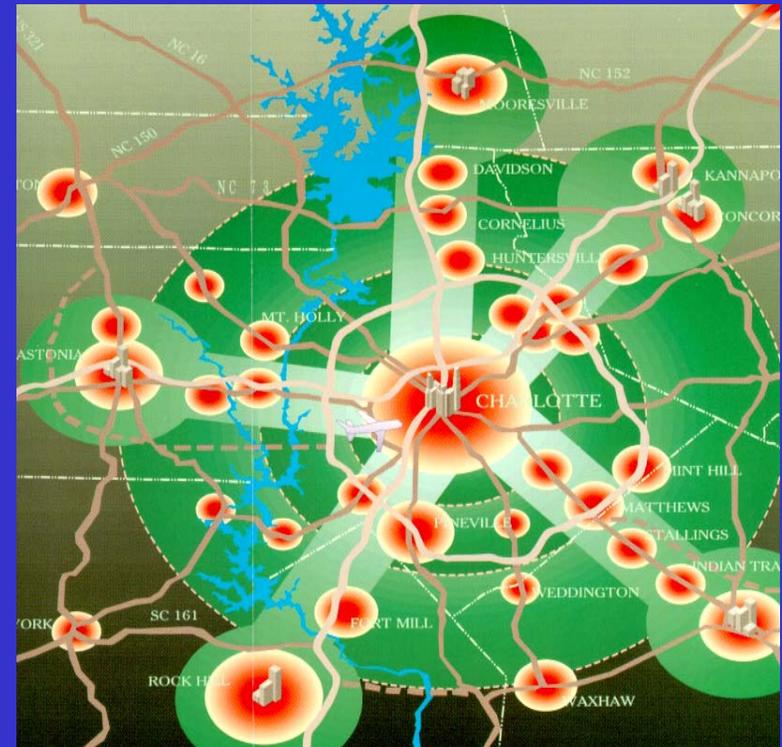
Charge

- Develop Community Consensus on Vision for Land Use and Transportation
- Define Major Revenue Sources
- Determine Organizations Structure



Committee of 100 Recommendations Land Use and Quality of Life

- Long-term growth management strategies for Charlotte-Mecklenburg
- Five primary transportation and development corridors
- Transform unfocused development patterns in corridors and wedges to compact mixed-use development along corridors and in station areas



Committee of 100 Recommendations Transit Alternatives

- Improve Express, Local and Regional Bus Service over next 3-5 years
- Improve and Expand Bus Service as Primary Short-Range and Long-Range Solutions
- Plan and Execute High Capacity Transit to Meet Long-Range Needs



Committee of 100 Recommendations Organization Structure

Create Regional Planning/Coordination Office at Centralina Council of Governments (funded on per capita basis)

- Office plans/coordinates regional transit/high capacity transit
- State DOTs constructs roads
- Local governments implement local and express bus service improvements



Committee of 100 Recommendations Revenue Sources

- Seek Enabling Legislation for up to 1% Sales Tax Authorized Locally
- Revenues Generated by Each County Must be Spent in that County
- Local Autonomy in Project Selection

Other Funding Options Considered

- Vehicle Transfer Fee
- Rental Car Tax
- Local Gas Tax
- Sin Taxes
- Land Transfer Fee



Sales Tax Advantages

- Least Objectionable form of Tax/Fee
- Ease of Collection
- Generates Significant Amount of Revenue
- Applies to All
- Generates Revenue from adjacent Counties
- Grows with inflation



Committee of 100 Final Report

- Adopted by all Ring Cities
- Sales Tax implemented by South Carolina
- York County funding Highway Projects and Transit Studies with new Tax
- So What Happened on the North Carolina Side?



GOOD LUCK!
- KEVIN MEYER



KEVIN MEYER ©1994 THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER

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Committee of 10 (1996/1997)

Composition

- Chair of Committee of 100
- 2 Charlotte City Council members
- Area representatives on NCBOT
- Several key business leaders

Charge

- Review and Reaffirm/Revise Recommendations of “Committee of 100”
- Determine Which Recommendations are Most Feasible and Develop Strategy for Implementation
- Collaborate with State’s Transit 2001 Commission to Address Charlotte’s Needs Through Their Proposals



Committee of 10 Results

- 5 Year Transportation Plan
- Support for “Local Option” Revenue Sources for Transit Improvements
- Led to Enabling Legislation for ½ Cent Local Option Sales Tax

**CHARLOTTE'S
FIVE YEAR
Transportation
PLAN**

They also incorporated ideas from seven commissioned studies by national experts. These studies looked at the issues and opportunities the City faces as it constructs a transportation system for the future. What is done now to improve transportation will influence Charlotte for generations to come.

The Next Step

Learning from the experiences of older metropolitan areas, Charlotte is at a critical juncture on its way to becoming a major city. This five-year plan will allow Charlotte to meet its short-term transportation needs. With the population expected to reach 815,000 in Mecklenburg County by 2015, it will be essential for neighborhood groups, employers, community leaders, transit riders, and the general public to continue building on this plan. By re-thinking a traditional "roads-first" approach, Charlotte will foster a varied transportation system that will promote its economic, social, and environmental well-being.

Giving You More Options Than Ever

As Charlotte continues to grow, easy and convenient transportation is essential for maintaining our City's distinctive character. The Charlotte City Council has approved a five-year transportation plan designed to respond to traffic congestion and pollution while providing more options for buses, carpools, and other alternatives to cars. Funding for the plan is still being determined.

To create the five-year plan, City Department of Transportation officials surveyed hundreds of local citizens, including neighborhood group representatives, community leaders, transit riders, employers, and the general public.

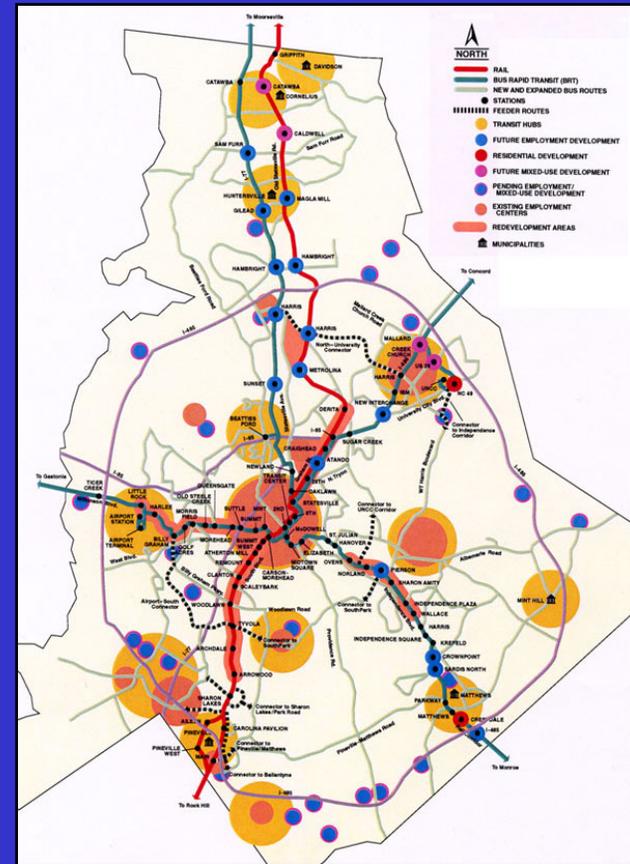
CHARLOTTE
Department of Transportation



2025 Integrated Transit/ Land Use Plan

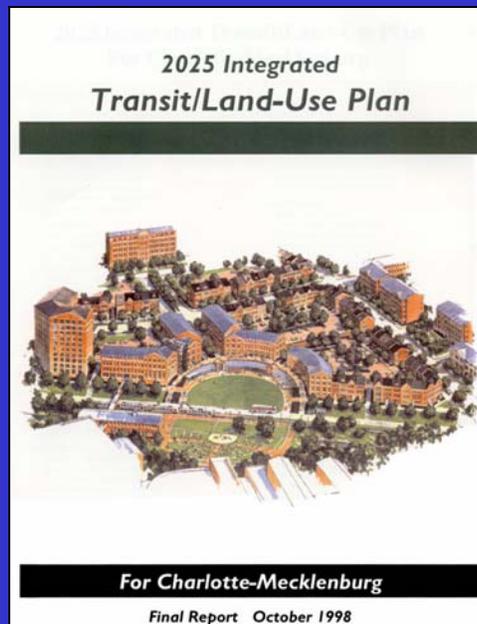
Goals

- Support Centers and Corridors Land Use Vision
- Provide Choices in Mode of Travel
- Develop a Regional Transit System
- Support Economic Growth and Sustainable Development



Success in 1998!

- Voter referendum on ½ percent sales use tax for public transportation on November 1998 ballot
- Promoted by Chamber and paired with \$100 million Road Bond
- Sales tax approved 58% to 42%



Transit Governance Interlocal Agreement (1999)

Governance Structure Characteristics

- 8 equal votes amongst 8 Mecklenburg County jurisdictions
 - **1 vote each on the MTC**
- Ex officio involvement of surrounding jurisdictions and State DOT's
- Chair rotation between Charlotte Mayor and Mecklenburg County Board of Commission Chair
- City Administration of transit system:
 - **CATS is a City department**
 - **CEO reports to the City Manager**
 - **Administration under City policies**
 - **City Council approves contracting actions**
- City Council and Board of County Commissioners must approve annual transit program/budget
- Towns can withdraw/dropout



Metropolitan Transit Commission

- **Public Transit System Governing Board**
 - ✓ Provides policy direction for system development and operation
 - ✓ Oversees management activities
- **MTC Composition – 23 members**
 - ✓ 16 from Mecklenburg County
 - ✓ 5 ex-officio from 5 surrounding counties
 - ✓ 1 NCDOT (ex-officio)
 - ✓ 1 SCDOT (ex-officio)
- **Citizen Advisory Committees**
 - ✓ CTAG (planning and finances)
 - ✓ TSAC (service delivery)
- **Governance Structure Review in 2004**



Mandatory Governance Review

Following is the paragraph from the Transit Governance Interlocal Agreement explaining the requirements for the Citizens Transit Advisory Group's (CTAG) study.

Section IX.C

Mandatory Governance Review

During FY04, the CTAG shall undertake a comprehensive governance review which shall consider the effectiveness of this Agreement and the governance structure established hereunder as well as other possible governance structures including, but not limited to, various forms of a transit authority. The governance review shall be conducted in a manner that ensures public and transit stakeholder input and participation. No later than June 30, 2004, the CTAG shall provide the governing boards of the parties to this Agreement with its report and recommendations.



Evolution of Transit Department

Pre - 1999

- Bus system operated by City DOT

1999

- Signing of Interlocal Agreement
- Creation of Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC)
- Transit Department created within City (November)
- Ron Tober hired as Public Transit Director

2000

- Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) created



System Plan Development

1999

- South Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS) begins

2000

- Completion of South Corridor MIS and final selection of Light Rail Transit (LRT)
- Major Investment Studies begin in four remaining corridors
- Preliminary Engineering of South Corridor LRT (November)

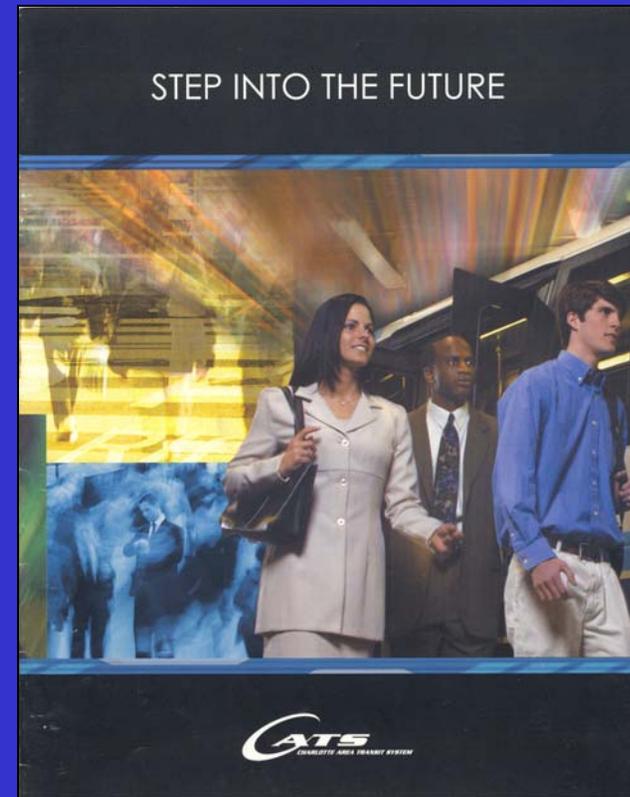


System Plan Development

(continued)

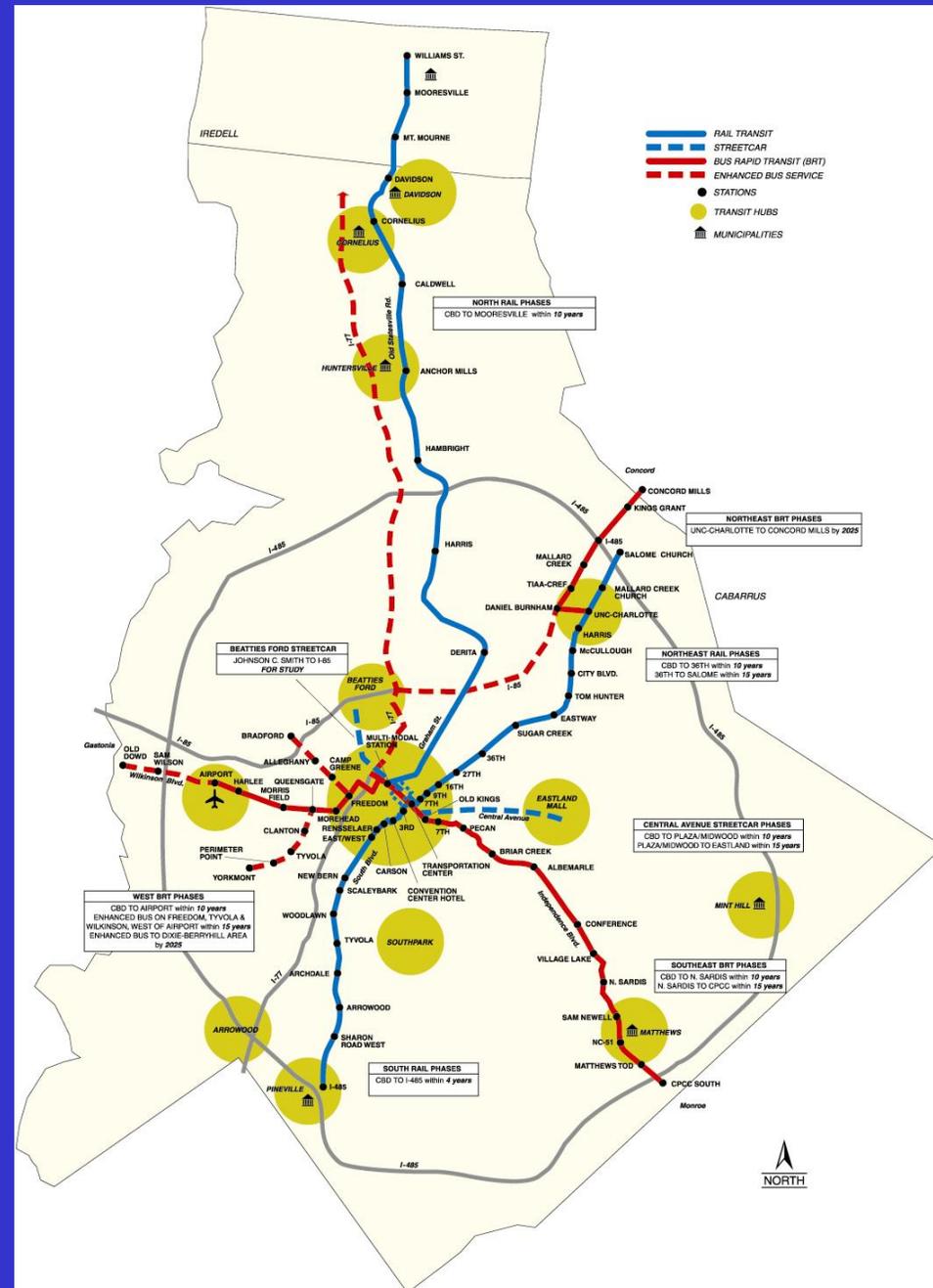
2002

- South Corridor LRT receives “highly recommended” rating from FTA
- Corridor Major Investment Studies completed
 - Staff recommends 2025 System Plan
 - MTC adopts System Plan with amendments
- South Corridor Preliminary Engineering completed and DEIS issued



Recommended System Plan

- Serve 205,000 – 215,000 daily transit riders by 2025
- 28 miles of BRT guideway
- 21 miles of LRT
- 11 miles of streetcar
- 29 miles of commuter rail
- Extensive network of bus and other types of transit services throughout the region





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Implementation Plan

Corridor	First 10 yrs. (to 2012)	First 15 yrs. (to 2017)	By 2025
South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LRT to I-485 		
North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commuter rail to Mooresville • Enhanced bus services on I-77 HOV lanes 		
Northeast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LRT to 36th St. (NoDa) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LRT to I-485 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRT / enhanced bus to University Research Park Area
Southeast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRT to N. Sardis station • Central Ave. streetcar to Plaza / Midwood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRT to I-485 • Streetcar to Eastland Mall 	
West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRT to Charlotte Douglas Int'l Airport • Beginning of enhanced bus along Freedom Dr. and Tyvola Rd. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced bus on Tyvola Rd. • Enhanced bus on Freedom Dr. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced bus on Wilkinson Blvd. west of airport
Center City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Street facilities and streetscape • Trade Street Streetcar • West Trade Multi-Modal Station • Transportation Center improvements • Beatties Ford Road Streetcar 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center City streetcar loop

2025 CORRIDOR SYSTEM PLAN COSTS AND FUNDING

- Capital Investment
 - Costs estimated at \$2.9 billion (inflated \$)
 - Funding:

Federal	56%
State	26%
Local/Sales Tax	18%
- Operating Costs
 - Net Cost estimated at \$3.1 billion (inflated \$)
 - Funding:

Local/Sales Tax	64%
Local/Other	21%
State	15%



South Corridor Project Milestones

LPA Adopted	February 2000
FTA Approval to Enter PE	September 2000
ROD Received	May 2003
FTA Approval to Enter FD	August 2003
65% Engineering Plans	February 2004
Request LONP for Vehicles	February 2004
Award Vehicle Contract	March 2004
Submit FFGA Application	August 2004
Congressional review of FFGA	Oct.-Nov. 2004
Receive FFGA	December 2004
Start of Service	October 2006



South Corridor Overall Status

- Demolition contract awarded by City Council 7/26
- LRV's in final design by Siemens with CATS staff & consultant.
- Upcoming Contracting activities under Letters of No Prejudice:

Vehicle Maintenance Facility (\$20m)	Sept. 27th
Roadbed, Trackway and Structures (\$75m)	Nov. 8th
Signals and Communication (\$33m)	Nov. 23rd
- Land acquisition status:
 - Acquired 82% of property needed including Norfolk-Southern
 - 35 of 36 "full takes"
 - 6 of 100 "partial takes"
 - \$32.76m expended to date (vs. \$39.83m budget)



Goals of Next Phase of Work

- Continue to progress all corridors
- Refine the Locally Preferred Alternatives from adopted Corridor System Plan
 - Alignment
 - Station Locations
 - Technology (Southeast / West Corridors)
- Evaluate potential environmental impacts and define mitigation measures
- Prepare engineering plans and cost estimates
- Refine implementation schedules



Innovative Approach to Advance Corridor System Plan

- **Begin NEPA process (i.e. prepare DEIS) in all corridors**
- **After DEIS, submit New Start Package for near-term elements to be rated for funding**
- **Complete PE and Final Design and negotiate FFGA on near-term elements approved by FTA**
- **Complete NEPA process for mid and long-term elements to establish stations and preserve alignments**
- **Memorandum of Understanding signed with FTA on June 22, 2004**



Keys to Success

- Land use connection
- Thinking and acting regionally
- Demonstrating progress
- Funding: Local, State and Federal
- Controlling costs of transportation system
- Safe, user-friendly design

