

**MINUTES
SILVER LINE TASK FORCE
WEDNESDAY, JULY 1, 2020
7:00 PM
ZOOM REMOTE MEETING**

PRESENT: Chairman Bill Stevens; Members Lou Abernathy, David Blackley, Natasha Edwards, Chris Hough, Bo Hulsey, Jim Johnson, Kerry Lamson, Lynn Lewis, Scott Phillips, Jana Reeve, Jennifer Saunders, and Walter Wright; Planning Director Jay Camp; Town Engineer Susan Habina-Woolard; Transportation Planner Dana Stoogenke; Senior Administrative Specialist/Deputy Town Clerk Shana Robertson

ABSENT: Members Fred Baylor, and Wyatt Dixon

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bill Stevens called the meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM

WELCOME

Transportation Planner Dana Stoogenke reviewed discussions at the June 17, 2020 meeting of the Silver Line Task Force.

Scott Phillips motioned to approve the minutes from the June 17th meeting with spelling correction. Jim Johnson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATION BY CATS TEAM

Andy Mock, Senior Project Manager for the LYNX Silver Line, Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) introduced himself to the members of the Silver Line Task Force. He took the members on a virtual tour of the LYNX Blue line using the Google Earth application. Mr. Mock said that the station in South End, the East West station, was the closest comparison that could be made for a potential Downtown Matthews light rail station. The South End station featured a walk-up style platform, no parking, and a rail trail behind the platform. During the tour, Mr. Mock reviewed each station and focused on the artistic styles of each.

Lou Abernathy asked if CATS had made a decision on the power option for the catenary system, 750 volts DC or the 25,000 AC option. Mr. Mock said that the Lynx Blue Line used 750 DC and the Silver Line would use the same. He added that 25,000 AC powered catenary system was more for heavier rail systems.

Chris Hough asked if the stations would be at grade or below grade. Mr. Mock said that stations that were aerial and below grade did not seem to perform as well and CATS preferred at grade stations.

Kerry Lamson requested information on the length and width of the station platforms. Mr. Mock said that the length for the platforms was usually between 286.5 feet to 300 feet and the side platforms could be anywhere from 15 feet wide to 28 depending on if there was an elevator or it was a large station stop.

Mr. Lamson asked if there was flexibility in the design and paint effects used on the poles. Mr. Mock said that they were open to different paint schemes but they did get minor damages during construction. Mr. Mock added that custom paintings were harder to maintain.

Walter Wright asked how CATS determined station locations and if bus service would be integrated with the light rail system. Mr. Mock said that CATS used land use pattern and added that Downtown Matthews was where people want to be. Mr. Mock said that they are looking at the current land use and what that might be in the future to make a determination

on where people want to go. There could be bus shuttle services to the Silver Line from other locations as the route takes its form and that was something that CATS would need to take a hard look at for the best value to community.

Mr. Stevens asked if shuttle buses would be smaller than regular buses. Mr. Mock said that the bus size would depend on ridership of the neighboring community. Mr. Mock showed images of existing park and ride stations that also have bus service.

Lynn Lewis asked how much land area would be required for the rails and rail trail. Mr. Mock used the South End station as an example and said that it was a 70 foot corridor that included a planting strip, two sidewalks, and the rail. The width of the track was about 32 feet and needed to include a 12 foot buffer and about 12 feet for bicycle movements. This would be about 50 feet in all but he added that it was not a design standard but a good practice.

Ms. Lewis asked if there were planned stops for vehicle traffic. Mr. Mock said that there were going to be roads that the Silver Line would need to cross. The timing would be calculated through the track circuit-timer and that would create a sequence that would time when the gate would lower, the lights flash, and bells would ring. This would make it possible for train to not have the need to stop. Mr. Mock said this would cause a 30 to 45 second delay in vehicle traffic to ensure that the trains provided reliable fast service.

Mr. Stevens asked if there was a process or design standard to allow for retail style businesses. Mr. Mock said that those decisions would be made on what was best for the community and the vision that community wished to obtain. Town code requirements would need to be examined for parking, bus bays, pedestrian and bicycle requirements.

Mr. Mock reviewed the art in transit designs at the current stations. He said that CATS has found that the important aspects to riders included operational vending machines, transit time reliability, and how the stations looked.

Natasha Edwards asked if CATS had looked into any LEED or site certification. Mr. Mock said that in the past they had not looked into seeking certification for the Blue Line because those were only for enclosed spaces. The facilities are not air conditioned. He said that horizontal sustainability certifications and project LEED were just recently discussed and are being evaluated and how those may apply to the Silver Line.

Mr. Lamson asked about CATS policies on advertising on trains. Mr. Mock spoke about fencing frames for advertising panels. Discussion ensued on advertising within the downtown area of Matthews and the need for future discussions on advertising and marketing with the Matthews Town Board.

Mr. Mock presented to the Task Force the CATS Transit 2006- 2030 Corridor Plan (Exhibit A attached and made part of these minutes). Information was provided about the process, schedule, benefits/risks, and the LPA of the LYNX Silver Line.

Mr. Lamson asked if the quarry property was being considered. Mr. Mock said that the quarry alignment was not being evaluated.

Mr. Hough asked if there was a more detailed map that could be provided for the LPA. Mr. Mock said that CATS was working on those maps and they may be made available after their August 5, 2020 Steering Committee meeting.

Mr. Phillips asked that future development be taken into account as Matthews continues to grow.

Mr. Johnson asked if the CSX was something that should be considered. Mr. Mock said that CATS had worked with the railroads in the past and there were three options that included a bridge over the CSX tracks, shared occupancy, or to work to relocate the CSX tracks. Mr. Mock said that relocation of the tracks would be very difficult.

NEXT MEETING: Proposed Topics and Frequency

Transportation Planner Dana Stoogenke reviewed the list of future meeting dates and topics that would be discussed

(Exhibit B attached and made part of these minutes). Ms. Stoogenke said she would send the date listing out to the members of the Task Force.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned 8:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shana Robertson', is written over the typed name and title.

Shana Robertson
Senior Administrative Specialist/Deputy Town Clerk

APPROVED
7/15/2020



LYNX Silver Line Program

Matthews Task Force

July 1, 2020



1. Introduction



2. LYNX Blue Line Virtual Tour



3. How We Got Here



3. LYNX Silver Line Program



4. Advancing the Silver Line Program



5. Conclusion

An aerial view of a city skyline, likely Atlanta, Georgia, with a monorail system in the foreground. The image is overlaid with a blue tint. The monorail tracks run through a green, tree-filled area. In the background, several skyscrapers are visible, including the Bank of America Tower. Street signs for 'McNinch St.' and 'W Morehead St.' are visible on the left side of the image.

LYNX Blue Line Virtual Tour



photo credit JoAnn Sieburg-Baker



photo credit JoAnn Sieburg-Baker

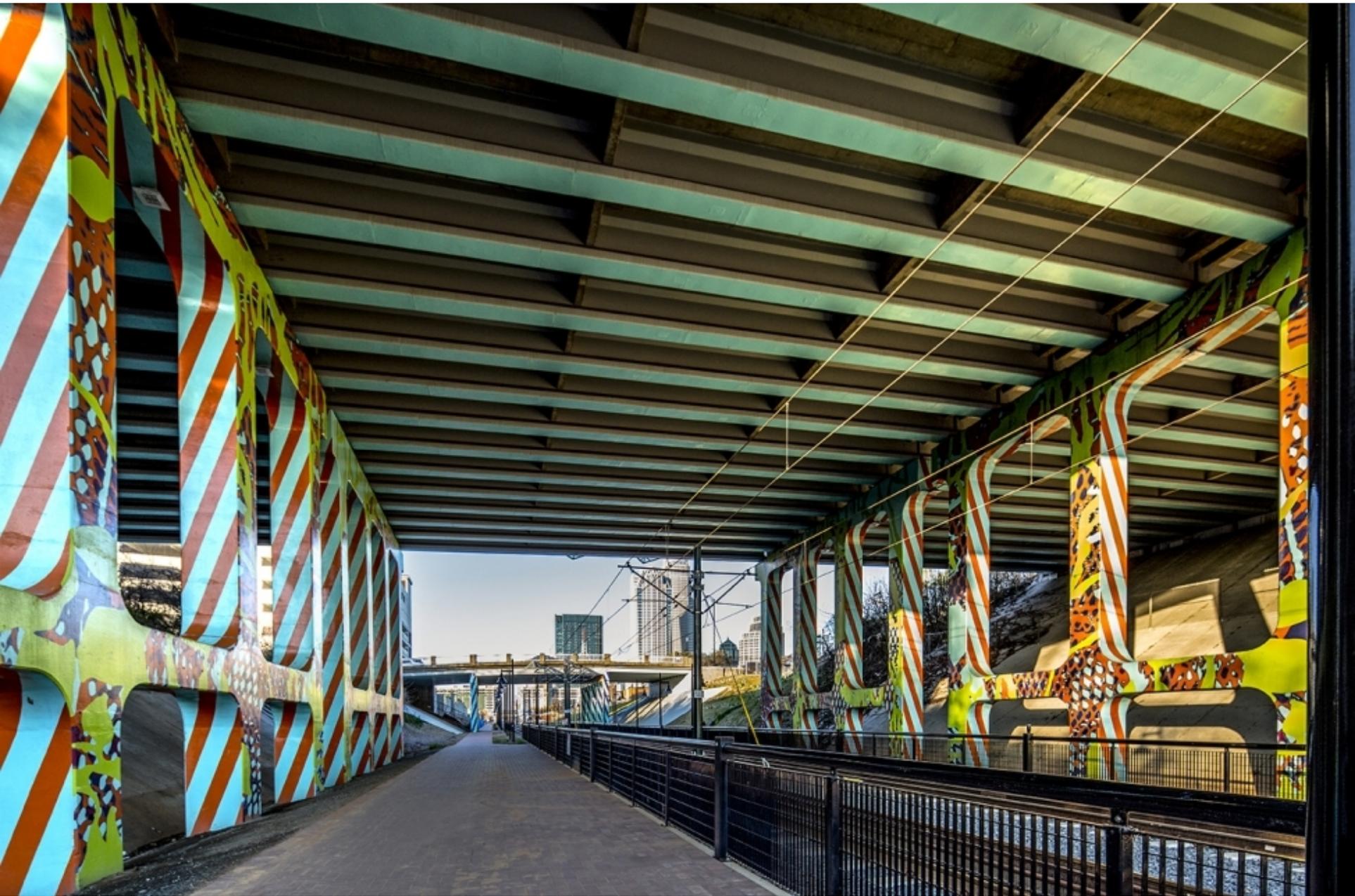


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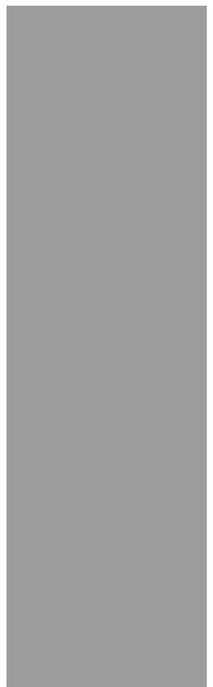


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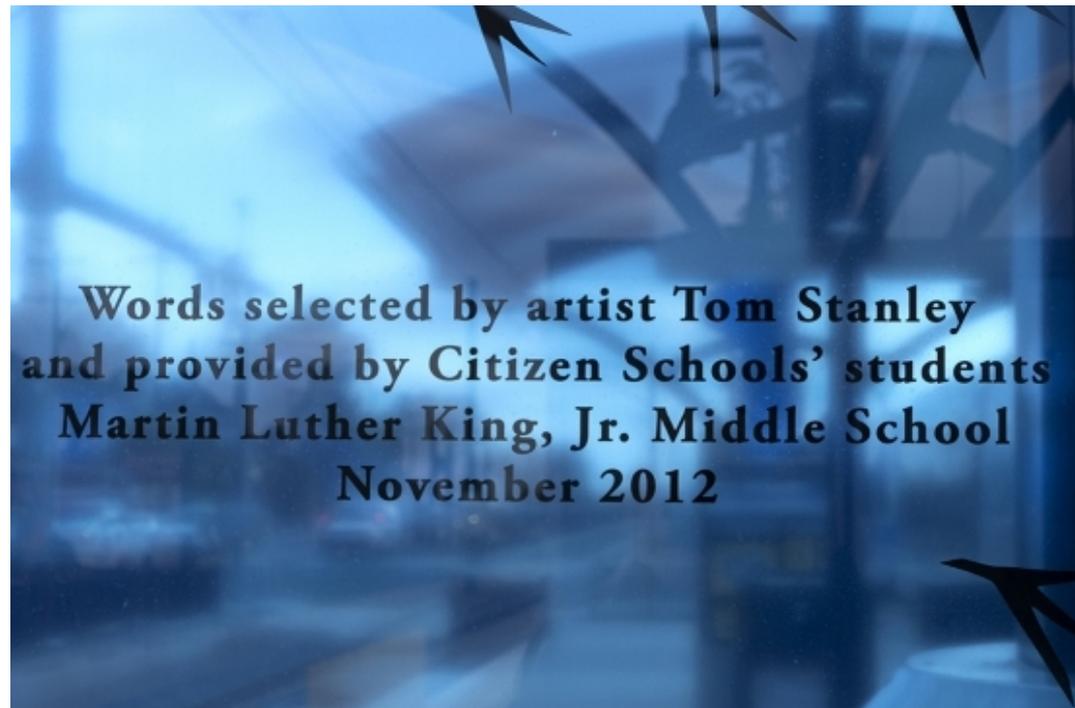


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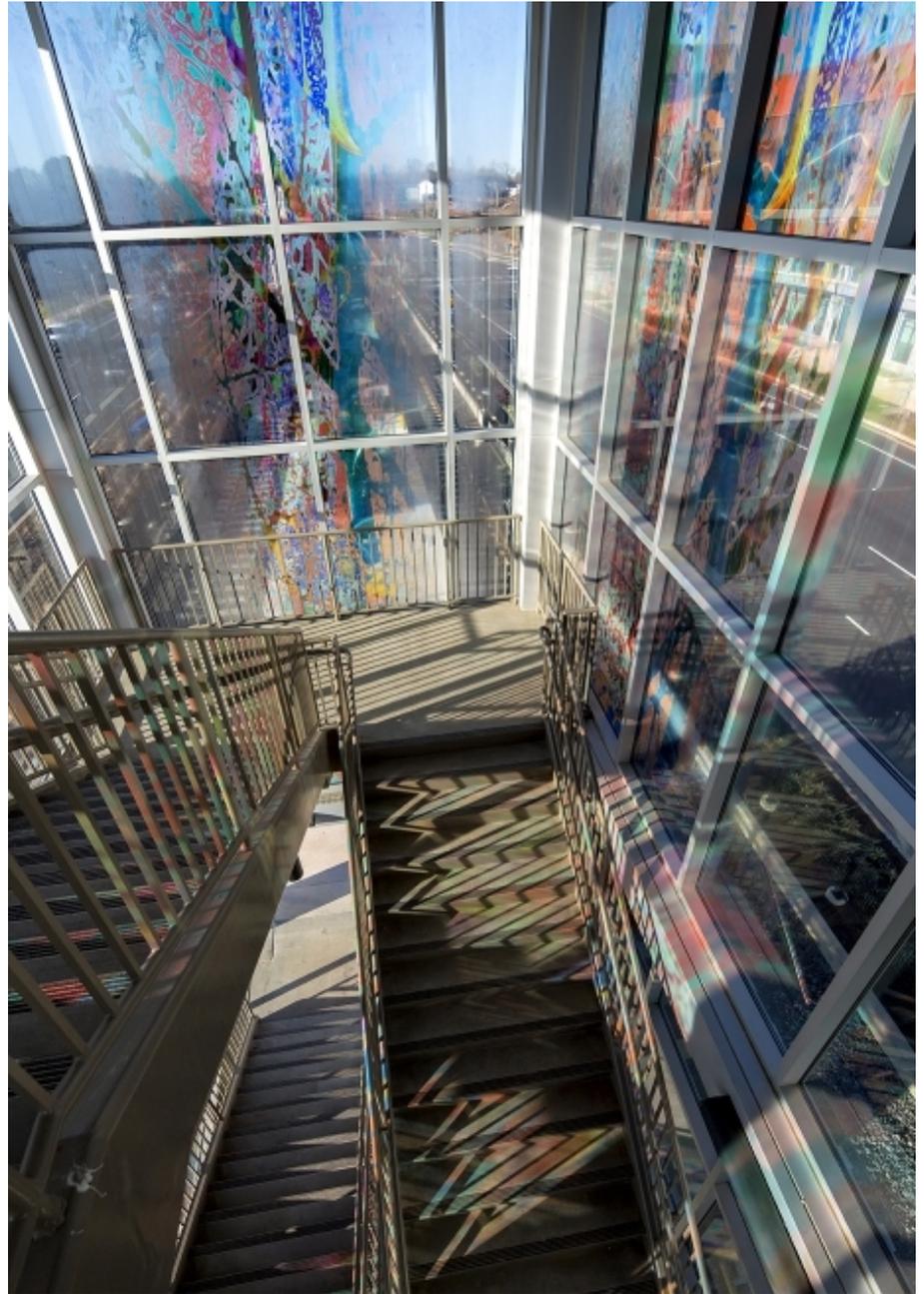


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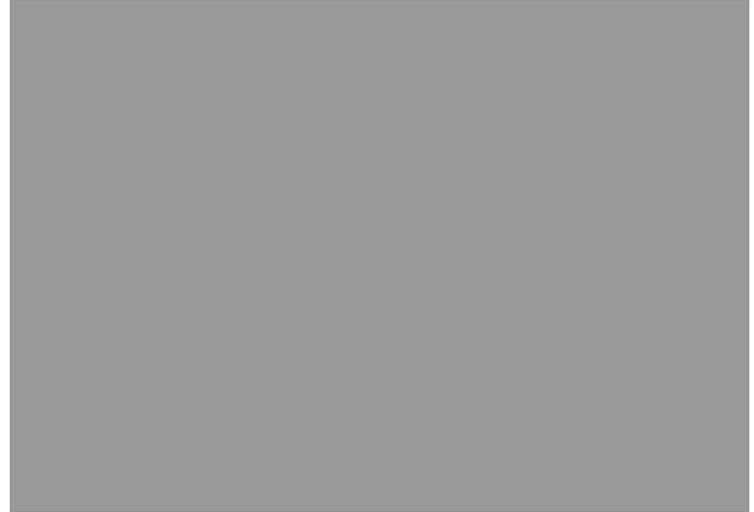
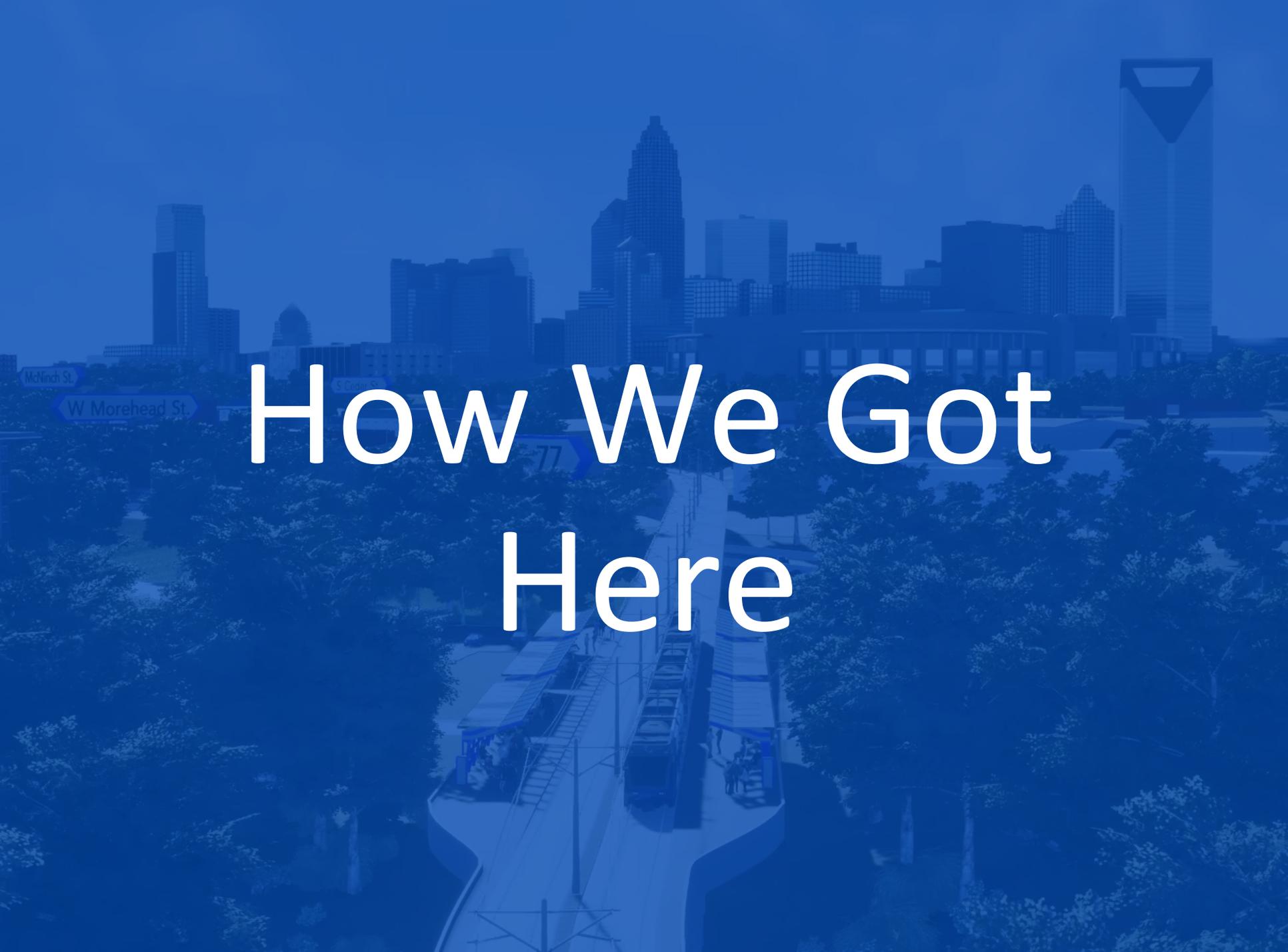


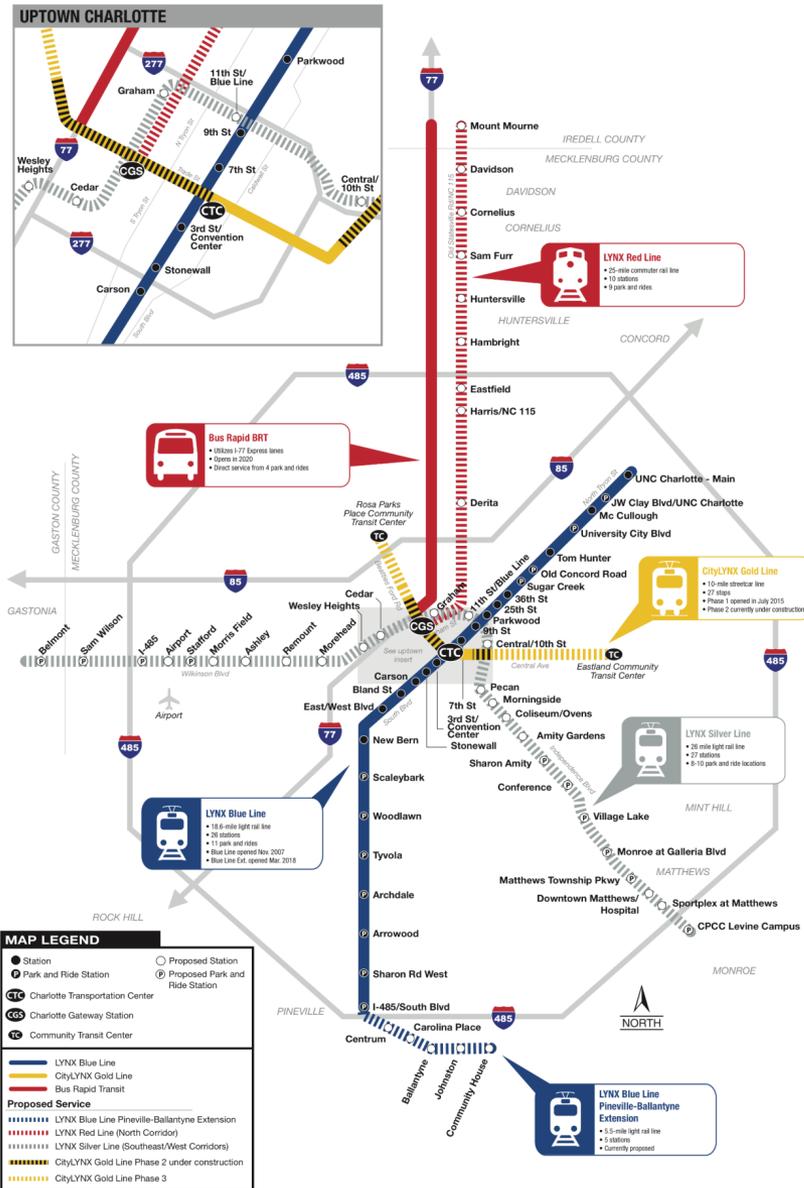
photo credit JoAnn Sieburg-Baker



McNinch St.
W Morehead St.

How We Got Here

2030 Transit Plan



2006: Updated 2025 Transit System Corridor Plan to 2030 Transit System Corridor Plan.

2007: LYNX Blue Line opened.

2009: Sprinter Enhanced Bus provides direct service between Uptown and the Airport.

2015: Phase 1 of the CityLYNX Gold Line Streetcar opens.

2016: Light rail transit is adopted for the LYNX Silver Line in the southeast. CATS launches “Envision My Ride,” a total redesign of the bus network.

2018: The LYNX Blue Line extension opens. Envision My Ride changed over 40 bus routes and 700 bus stations.

2019: CATS made several updates to 2030 plan

2020: CONNECT Beyond launches

2020: The LYNX Silver Line project enters pre-project development.



Establish **reliable transit** to connect the region, enhance quality of life, and strengthen access to opportunities



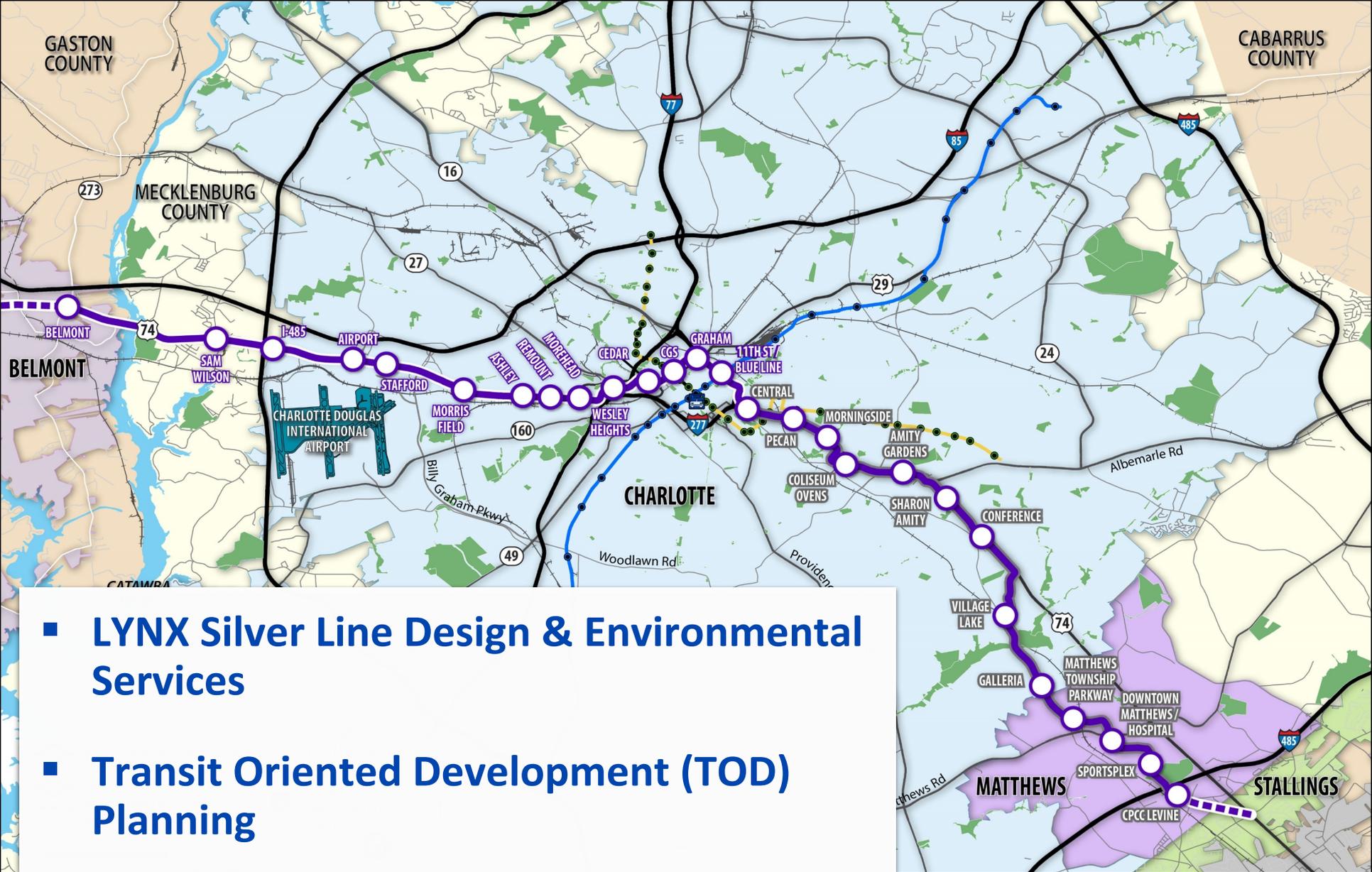
Use transit to **influence and shape growth** while respecting community character



Increase **mobility** in each corridor through effective transit investments

An aerial view of a city skyline, likely Atlanta, Georgia, with a monorail system in the foreground. The monorail tracks run through a dense forest of trees. In the background, several skyscrapers are visible, including the Bank of America Tower. The entire image has a blue tint. Two street signs are visible on the left: 'McNinch St.' and 'W Morehead St.'.

LYNX Silver Line Program



- **LYNX Silver Line Design & Environmental Services**
- **Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Planning**
- **Rail Trail Study**



LYNX Silver Line Design and Environmental Services

Silver Line

- **Refine the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)**
 - ✓ Environmental screening
 - ✓ Surveying
 - ✓ Design criteria
 - ✓ Refine alignment and station locations
- **Advance design and cost estimate**
 - ✓ 15%, 30%, and 65% design plans
 - ✓ Capital cost estimate
 - ✓ Risk assessment



- **Complete environmental process**
 - ✓ Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement
- **Third party coordination**
 - ✓ NCDOT
 - ✓ Railroads
- **Public involvement**

How can WE leverage transit to support our communities?



**Improve
Mobility**



**Encourage
Transit
Supportive
Development**



**Enhance
Community
Character**



**Expand
Opportunities**



- Branding concepts that reflect community context.
- Develop a continuous path to be adopted into local plans

- Integrated rail-trail concept that recognizes the various operating LYNX Silver Line operating environments; side running, median running, and elevated





Advancing the LYNX Silver Line Program



Phase 1 (2020) Priorities

Silver Line



- Stakeholder Engagement
- Public Involvement
- Alignment Refinement





Stakeholder Engagement

Silver Line

- **Conducted stakeholder interviews in January through May**
- **Met with the following Stakeholders:**
 - ✓ City of Belmont
 - ✓ Town of Matthews
 - ✓ Stallings and Indian Trail
 - ✓ Belmont Abbey
 - ✓ Cedar Yards Developers
 - ✓ Office and Retail Developers
 - ✓ Charlotte Airport
 - ✓ CSX
 - ✓ Norfolk-Southern
 - ✓ Novant Hospital
 - ✓ CRVA
 - ✓ Charlotte Center City Partners
 - ✓ City Planning & Economic Development
 - ✓ Affordable Housing Developers and experts in the City
 - ✓ CPCC
 - ✓ Private Developers
- **Interviews provided an opportunity for stakeholders to share thoughts on the LPA and share current planning efforts going on in their community/area**



100+ attendees
at in-person
events

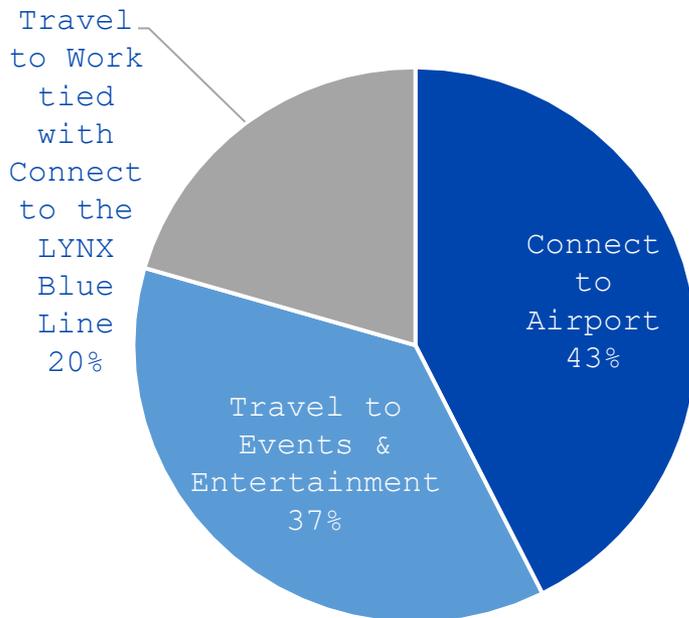


450+
presentation &
AskCATS views;



190+ surveys

Top 3 reasons to use LYNX Silver Line



Priorities ranked from most important to least important

- Improve connections to major destinations
- Competitive travel time
- Enhance opportunities to preserve existing neighborhoods and develop affordable housing opportunities
- Enhance access to economic development opportunities tied with local community connectivity



Public Involvement

Silver Line

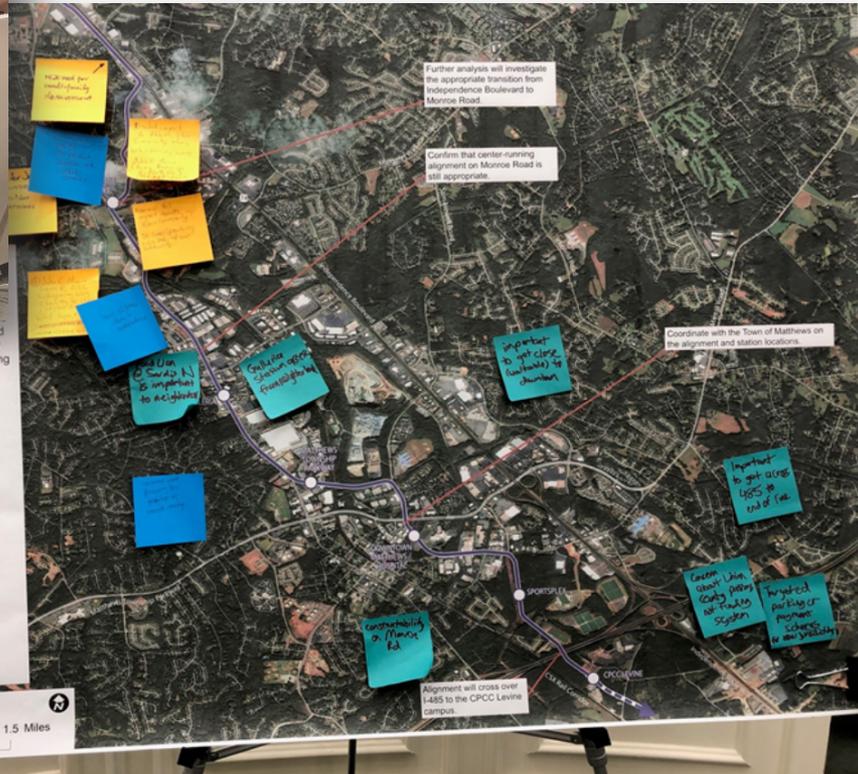
Matthews Public Meeting



Center of Monroe Road
crosses Township Parkway
as mostly side-running
line.



LYNX Silver Line
LYNX Silver Line Stations
0.75 1.5 Miles



***To comply with COVID19 Stay-at-Home orders, we changed our public engagement approach and hosted multiple virtual meetings with neighborhood & community organizations**



Why do we need to refine the Silver Line alignment?

Engineering
evaluation

Environmental
consideration

Changes in the
corridor

Lessons Learned
from Blue Line

Additional
coordination with
land use and other
projects



Alignment Refinement: *What have we been doing?*

Silver Line

JANUARY

Silver Line Program Kickoff

Kickoff program with all stakeholders



- Mid Jan – Early March: Review Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for Benefits, Risks and Opportunities
- Stakeholder Interview process

FEBRUARY

Alignment Refinement Workshop 1

Determine options to the LPA



- Continued Stakeholder Engagement
- Review Stakeholder documentation
- Review Decision Making process with stakeholders
- Coordination with TOD Team



Early Coordination

Silver Line



- **LYNX Silver Line Kickoff** brought stakeholders together to learn about each others communities and how the Silver Line can complement it
- **Alignment Workshop #1** identified any potential risks or missed opportunities with the LPA and identified options/adjustments for consideration





Alignment Refinement: *What have we been doing?*

Silver Line

MARCH

**Public Meetings
Round 1**

**Public Education for Silver Line
awareness and public feedback on
priorities**

✓ *Design Consultant Contract Officially
Executed March 3rd, 2020*

APRIL-
MAY



- April: Present alignment options to Steering Team
- April- May: Evaluate opportunities for Virtual Public engagement

MID MAY

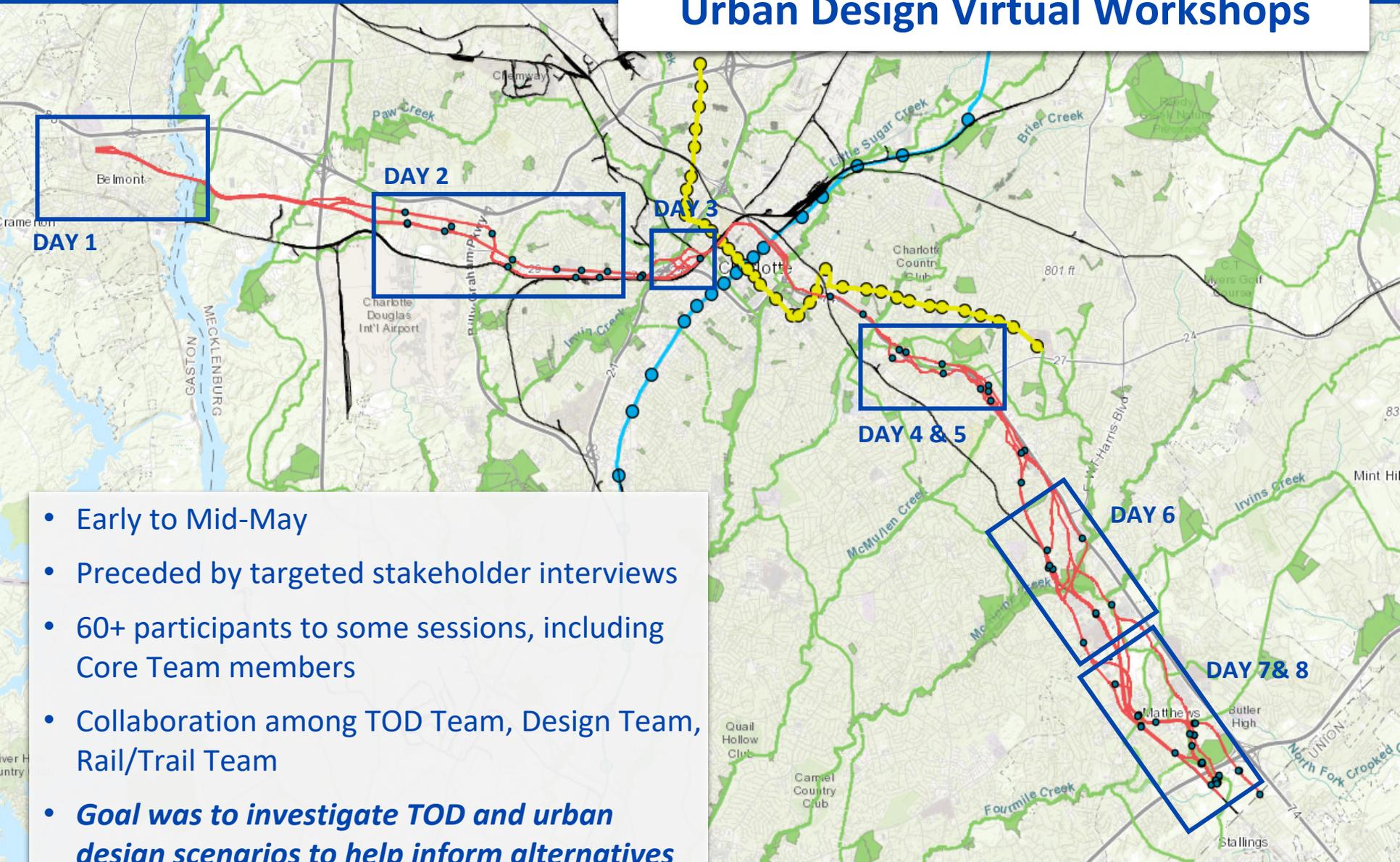
**Urban Design
Workshops**

Input for TOD-related metrics

LATE
MAY

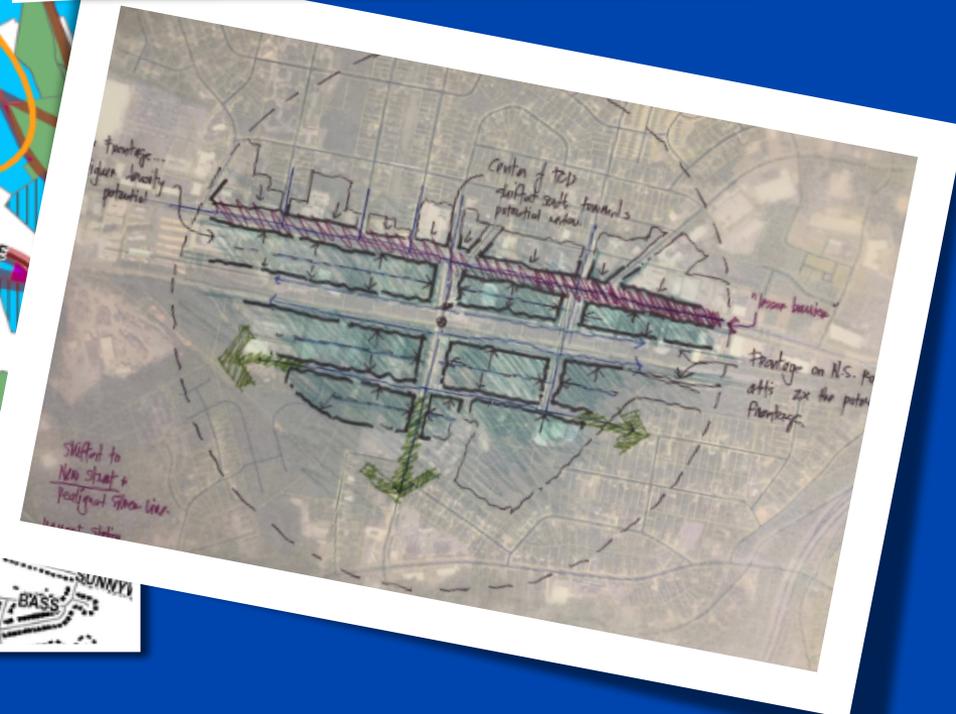
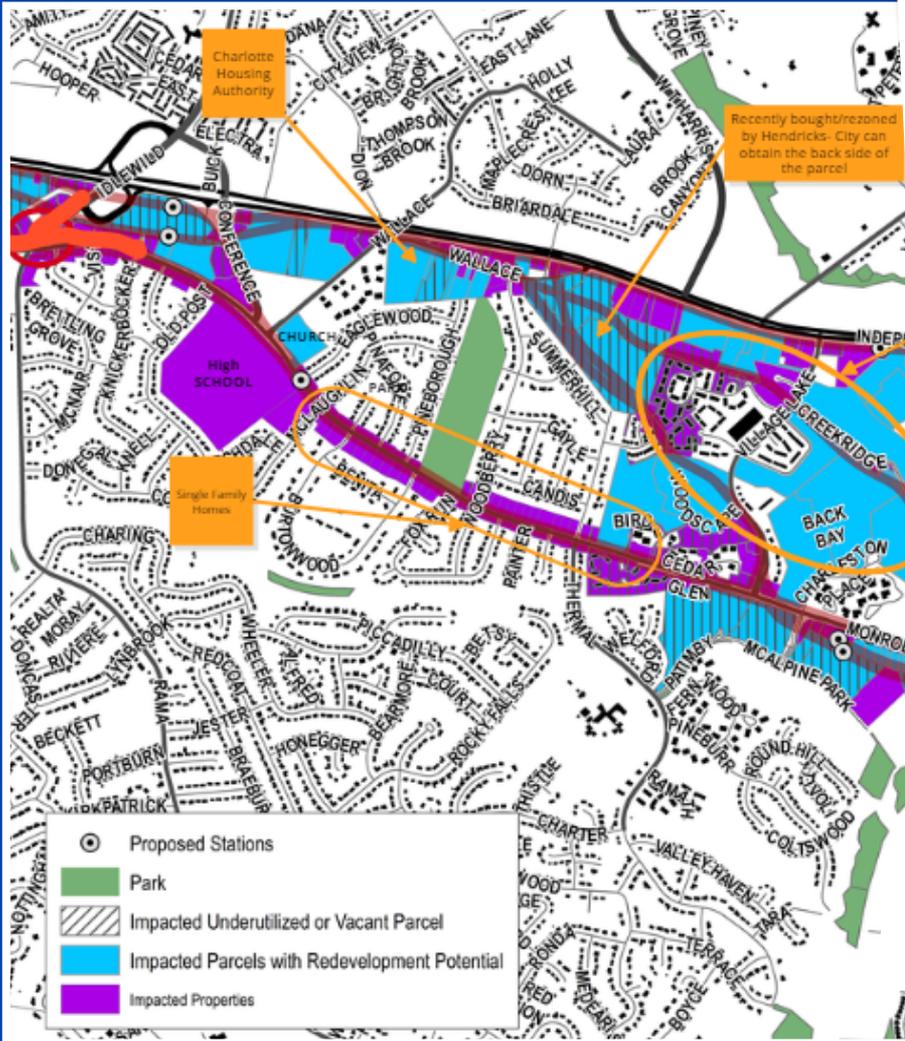
- Late May: Focused follow-up conversations on Urban Design workshop concepts and TOD Metrics

Urban Design Virtual Workshops



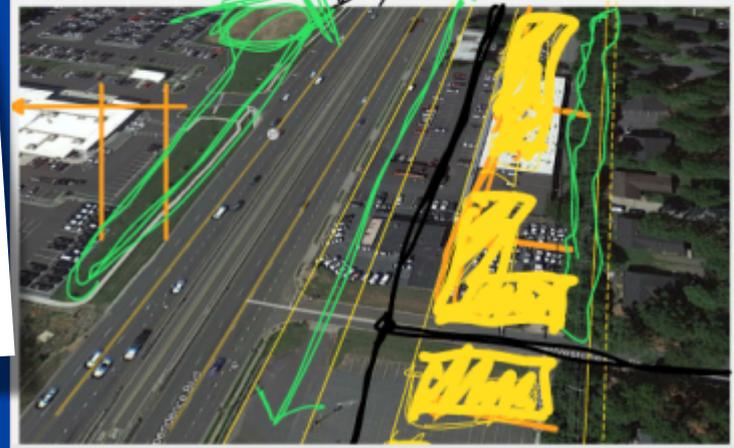
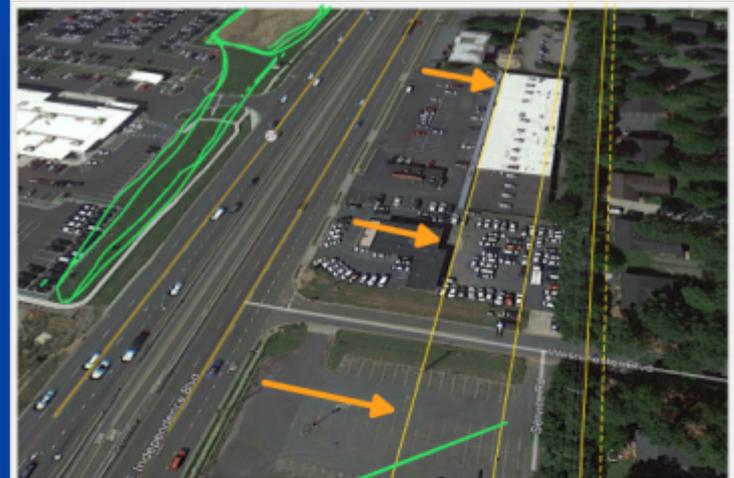
- Early to Mid-May
- Preceded by targeted stakeholder interviews
- 60+ participants to some sessions, including Core Team members
- Collaboration among TOD Team, Design Team, Rail/Trail Team
- ***Goal was to investigate TOD and urban design scenarios to help inform alternatives analysis/selection***

Morning Sessions: TOD Opportunities & Constraints

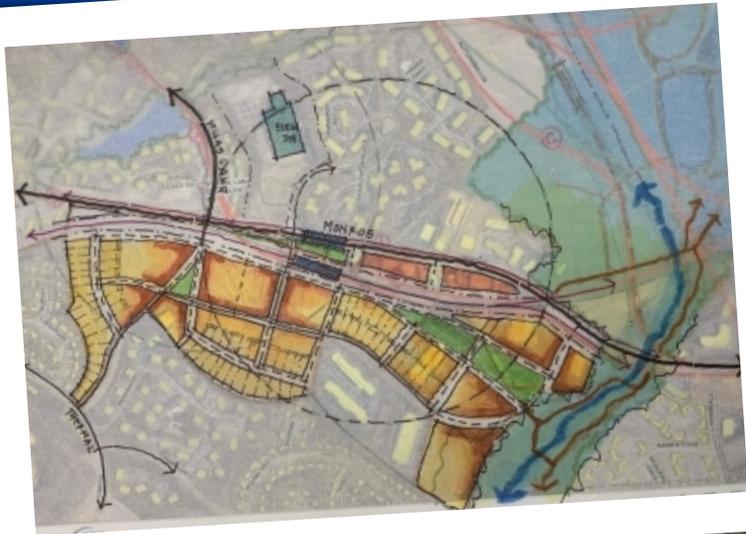




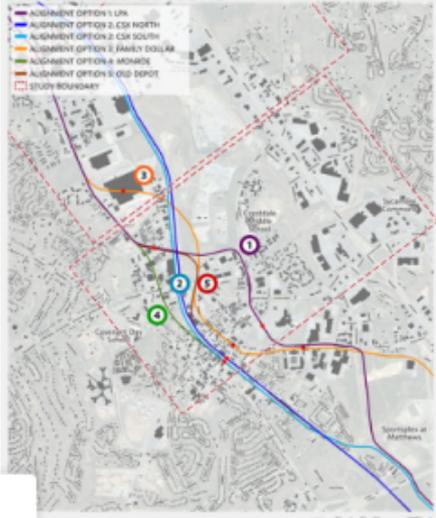
Midday Sessions:
Break-out groups develop TOD scenarios/site-specific discussions based on morning's input



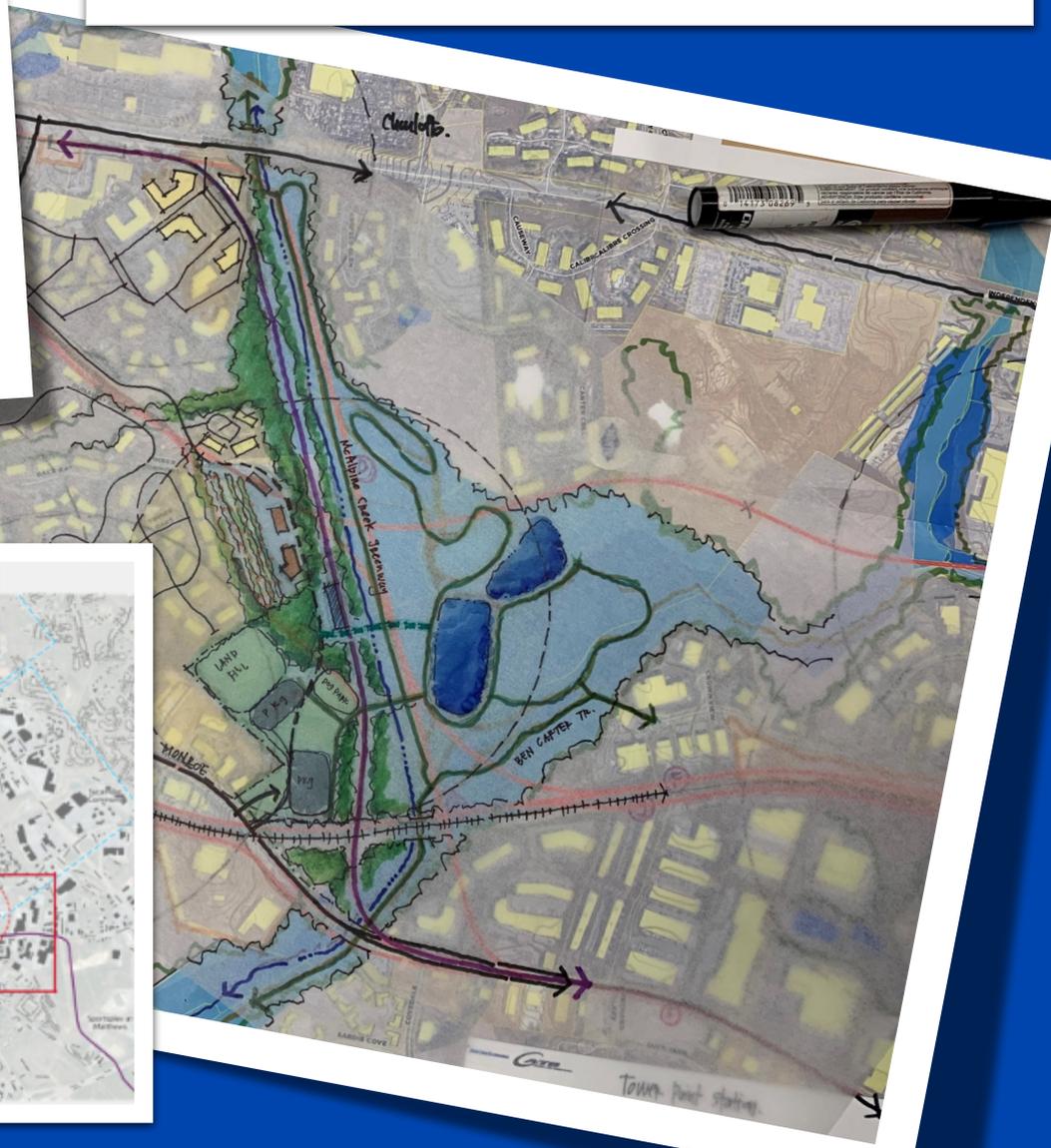
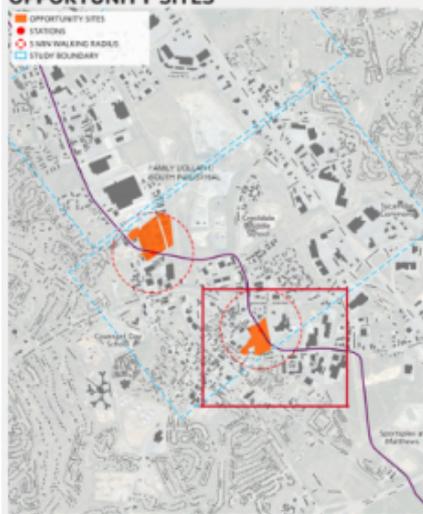
Afternoon Sessions: “Pin Up” Session to share TOD scenarios and preliminary performance measures



ALIGNMENT OPTIONS



ALIGNMENT 1: LINE OPPORTUNITY SITES*



➤ There are currently 3 groups of alignments under evaluation (with several sub-options) near Downtown Matthews

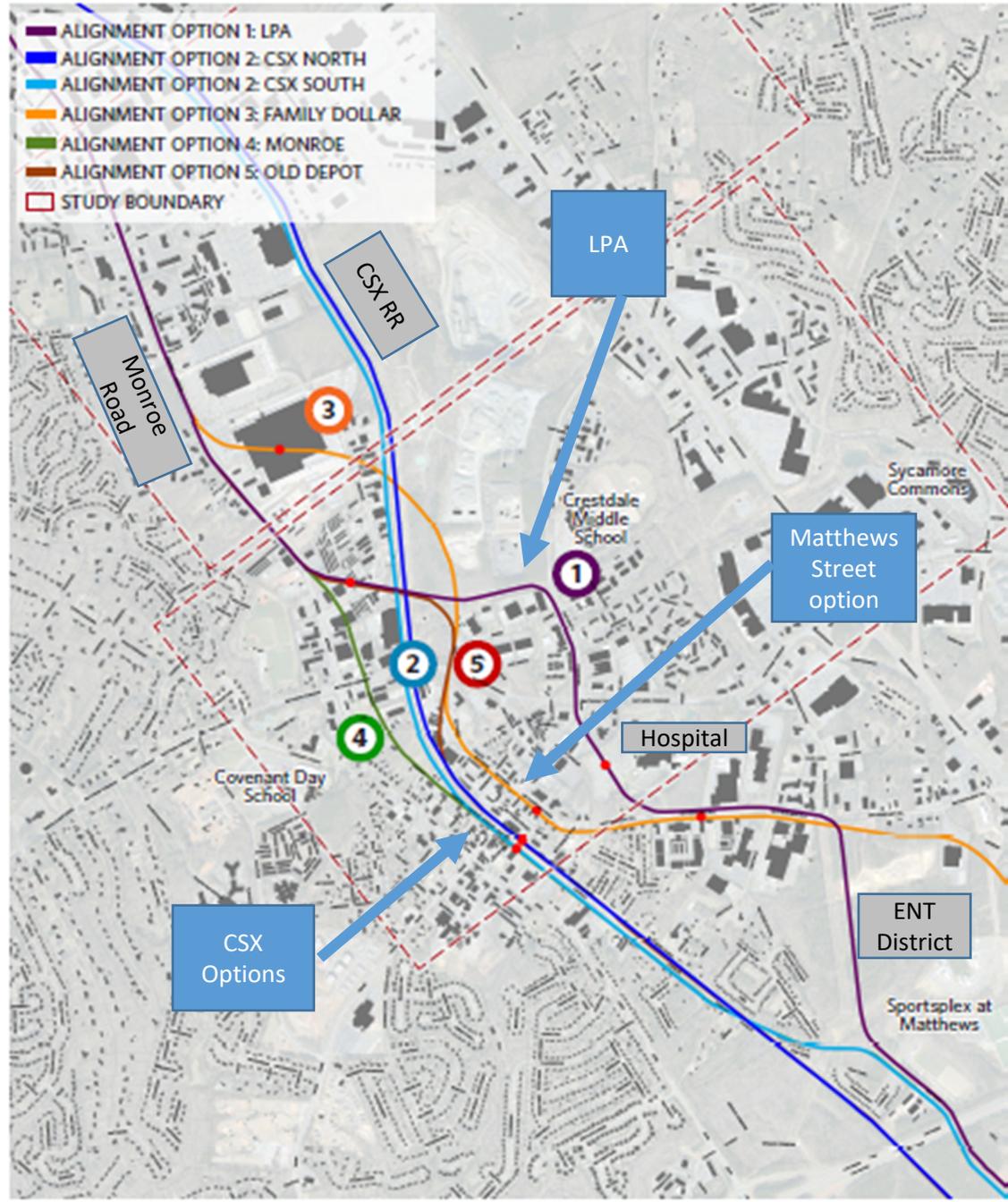
- LPA
- Matthews Street
- CSX

➤ All options are not equal and each have their benefits, risks, and opportunities.

➤ Some may have “Fatal Flaws” that will cause them to be removed from consideration (i.e. – “CSX Options” through downtown)

OVERVIEW

ALIGNMENT OPTIONS





Monroe Road

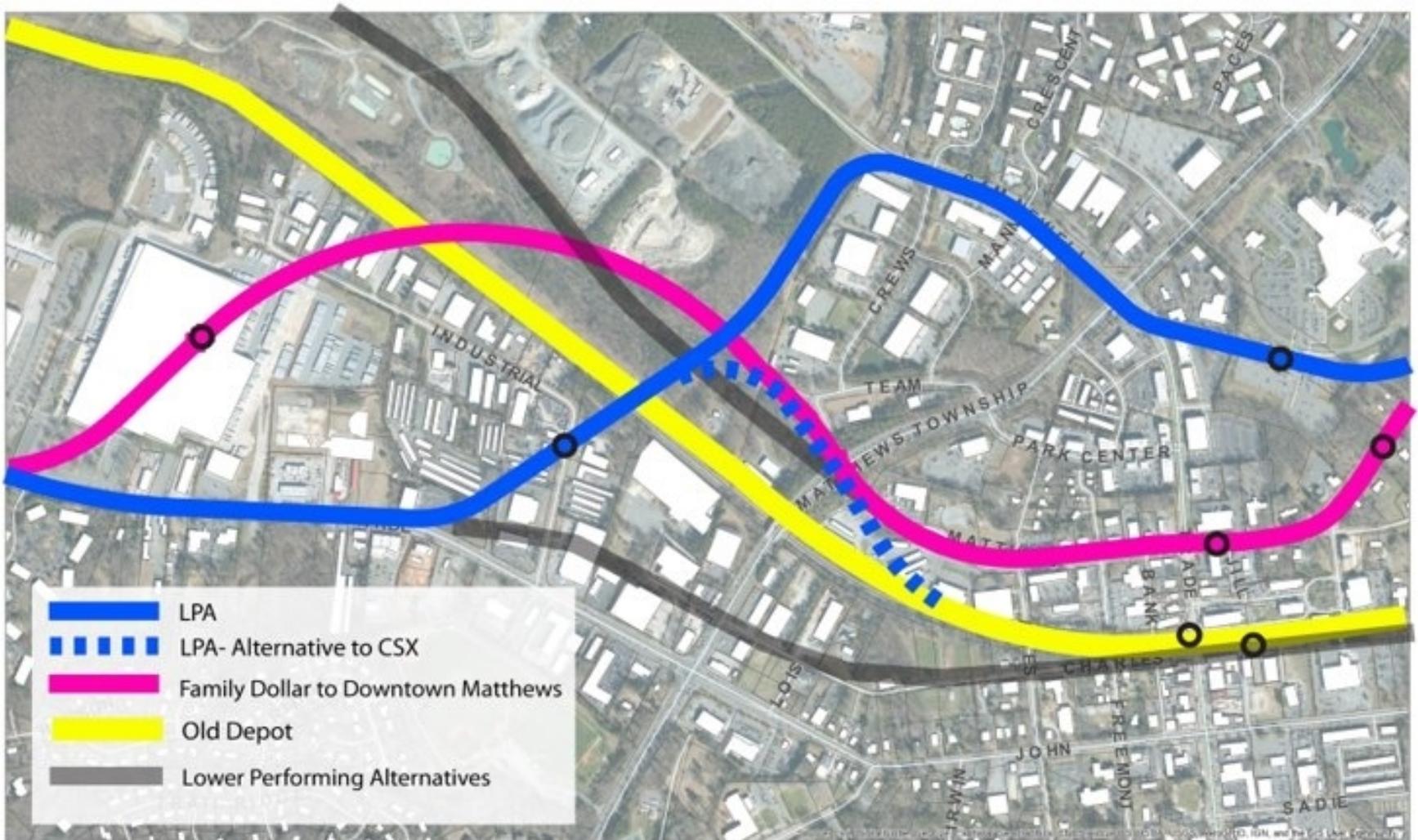
Silver Line





Matthews Downtown

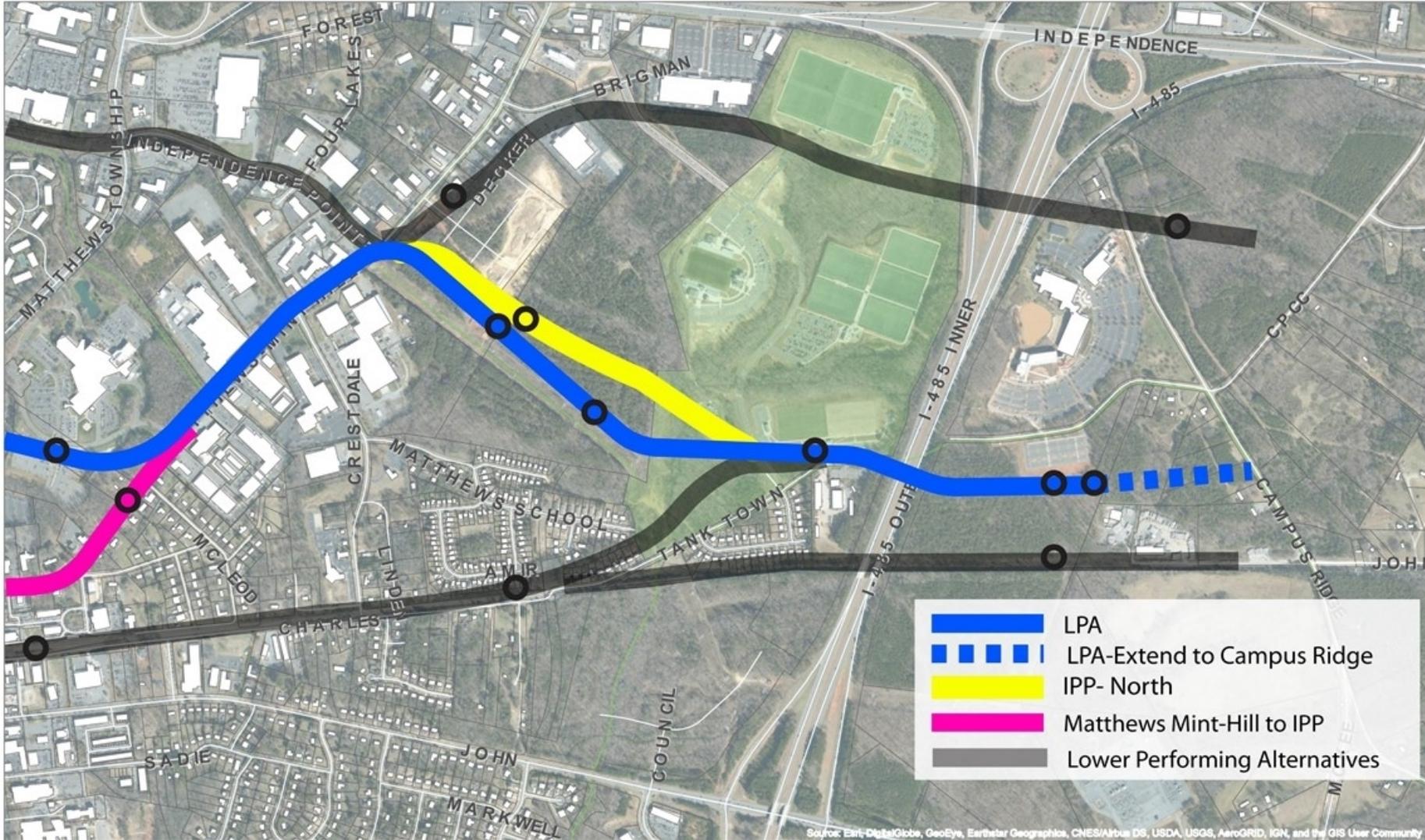
Silver Line

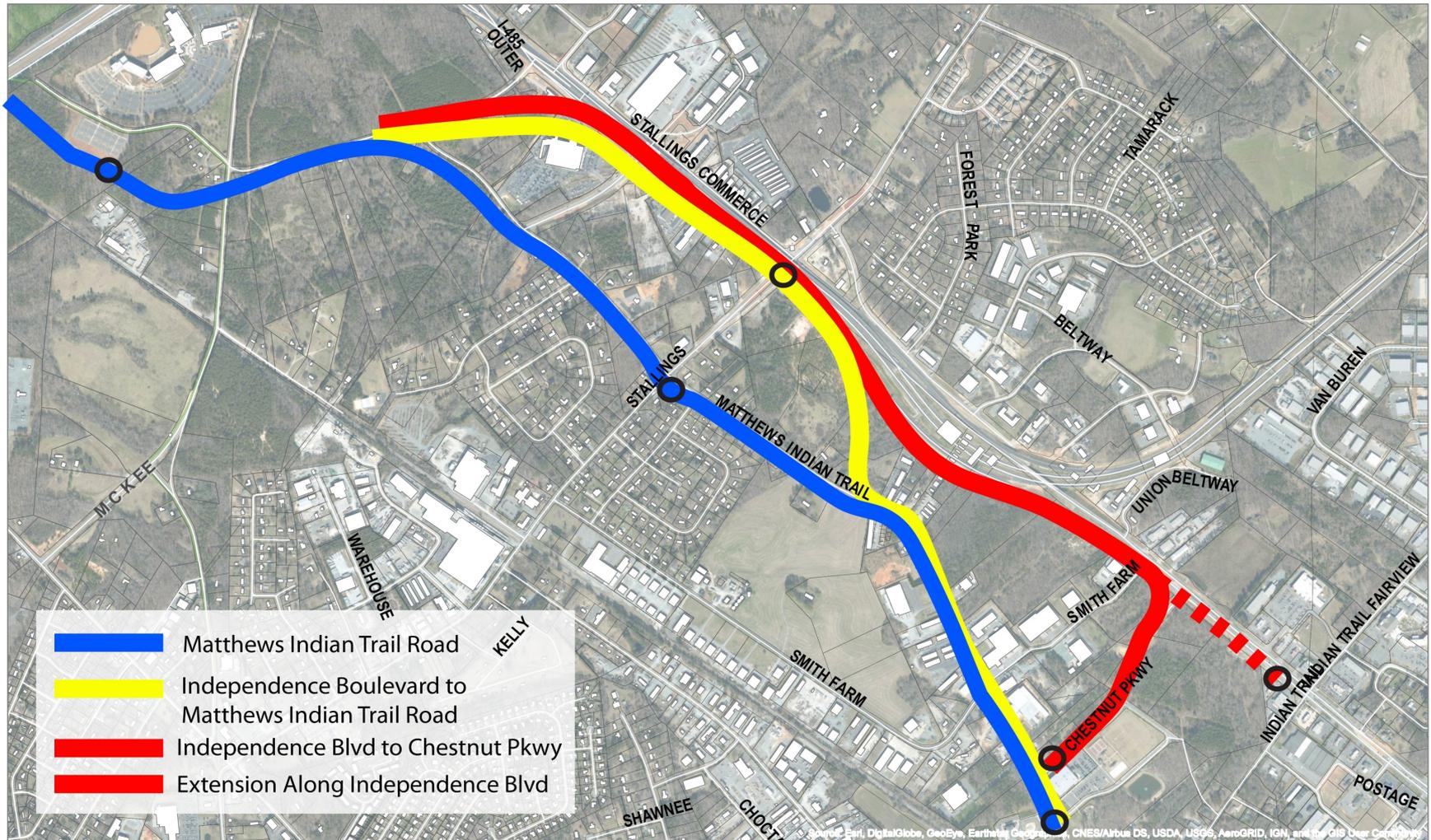




Independence Pointe Parkway

Silver Line





- Matthews Indian Trail Road
- Independence Boulevard to Matthews Indian Trail Road
- Independence Blvd to Chestnut Pkwy
- Extension Along Independence Blvd



Alignment Refinement: *Where are we now?*

Silver Line

JUNE

Scorecard Evaluations

Preliminary Evaluation of Decision Making “Scorecard”

- Initial evaluation of refinement options by Core Team over 3 weeks
- Stakeholder Check-ins of preliminary scorecard
- Oversight Team review of scorecard recommendations



LATE JUNE /
EARLY JULY

Alignment Refinement Workshop 2

Determine “short list” of options (identify options for public review)

- July 10: Steering Team validation of short list
- Mid July: Outreach to local officials
- August 14: Steering Team preview of public meeting content



WHAT’S NEXT?

Silver Line

Consideration of **benefits** and **risks** to address project implementation

Benefits

Competitive and reliable travel time

Promote Equitable Transit Oriented Development

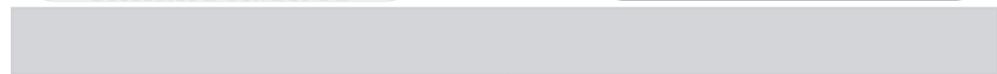
Improved access to destinations and local connectivity enhancements

Risks

Dependencies on other projects & third parties

Capital and operating costs

Environmental screening



Option that Best Achieves the Desired Benefit / Minimizes Risk

Benefit / Risk	LPA	Design Option A	Design Option B	Basis
Competitive and reliable travel time	✓			
Promote Equitable Transit Oriented Development		✓		
Improved access to destinations and local connectivity enhancements	✓			
Dependencies on other projects & third parties		✓		
Capital and operating costs	✓			
Environmental screening			✓	

Metrics not numerically weighted, but benefit / risk related to “key driving variable” can be easily highlighted; some consideration of prioritization of benefits / risks is needed for each decision point



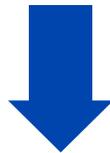
Alignment Refinement: *What's next?*

Silver Line

SEPTEMBER

**Virtual Public
Meetings Round 2**

Early Scoping, Gather public input on Purpose and Need and “short-listed” options



- September – November/December:
Additional detailing of “short-listed” options

NOVEMBER/
DECEMBER

**Public Meetings
Round 3**

Identify proposed recommendations



- November/December – February/March:
Stakeholder review and finalization of proposed recommendations

★ *Town of Matthews resolution of alignment(s)*

FEBRUARY/
MARCH 2021

**MTC Adoption of
Recommendations**

Adoption of design options for detailed environmental review



Thank You!

Meetings- Wednesdays @ 7pm:

- June 17, 2020 (Introduction) ✓
- July 1, 2020 (Blue Line and LPA) ✓
- July 15, 2020 (Follow Up Questions)
- August 5, 2020 (CATS-Alignment Review)
- August 19, 2020 (Discussion)
- September 2, 2020 (Discussion)
- October 7, 2020 (Review Public Input)
- November 4, 2020 (Final Recommendation)
- November 9, 2020 (Board of Commissioners Meeting)