

May 2008



# Milepost

A periodic update from the Peachtree Corridor Partnership

## CHARLOTTE IS ON THE MOVE USING TRANSIT TO BUILD ITS "CENTER CITY"

In 1998, the residents of Mecklenburg County (Charlotte, N.C.) approved a half-cent sales tax to support an integrated transit/land use plan, which includes expanded bus routes, improved services and advancements in rapid rail and construction of a light rail line. In 2006, the Metropolitan Transit Commission adopted another plan which is intended to focus future growth along five primary transportation corridors. Before the end of 2007, Charlotte opened its first light rail transit service — 10 miles of LYNX Blue Line that is averaging more than 14,000 daily trips, exceeding first year projections by more than 55 percent. Next stop: a streetcar for the city's central business district.

The Center City Streetcar project is a key to the region's corridor-focused land use plan. The route will serve the central business district and provide connectivity to surrounding communities and institutions. The proposed streetcar line will run 10 miles along the corridor near I-85 through the center of the city, similar to the corridor along Atlanta's Peachtree Street.

According to the [Charlotte Area Transit System \(CATS\) web site](#), the streetcar is a key component to implementing the Center City 2010 Vision Plan, helping to create a transit-focused and pedestrian-oriented center city through developing an integrated transportation system of sidewalks, bikes, motor vehicles, transit, parking, and land development. CATS is proposing that half of the funding be sought through the FTA, 25 percent will come from the state of North Carolina and 25 percent from local taxes.

## PARTNERSHIP CONTINUING TO EXPLORE FUNDING OPTIONS

The Peachtree Corridor Partnership, chaired by Ray Christman, was tasked to develop an initial implementation plan of the 25-year vision recommended to Mayor Shirley Franklin by the Peachtree Corridor Task Force in 2006. Having completed the current phase of its work, the Partnership will continue advocating the long-term vision under the guidance and with the support of the [Atlanta Committee for Progress](#), a business leadership group focused on strategies to support economic development in Atlanta. The Midtown Alliance and Central Atlanta Progress will assume ongoing responsibility for oversight and advocacy for the initial streetcar project serving those areas of the corridor.

All major public/private development projects like this one, and many across the country, operate in a political and an economic context. The current economic slowdown and the resulting challenges it poses for the City of Atlanta's annual budget is a short-term issue. Under the mayor's leadership, the City is working to identify sources of revenue at the federal, regional, and state levels to provide initial funding for the streetcar.

Demographic, economic, and environmental forces are encouraging people and businesses to move back into the core of Atlanta and other cities across the country. Whether you consider it the "heart of the city" or "Atlanta's front porch," we have historically been defined by Peachtree. With quality attractions, development and more transit options, we will have an opportunity for Peachtree to define Atlanta as a better place to be for both residents and visitors.

