

Frequently Asked Questions

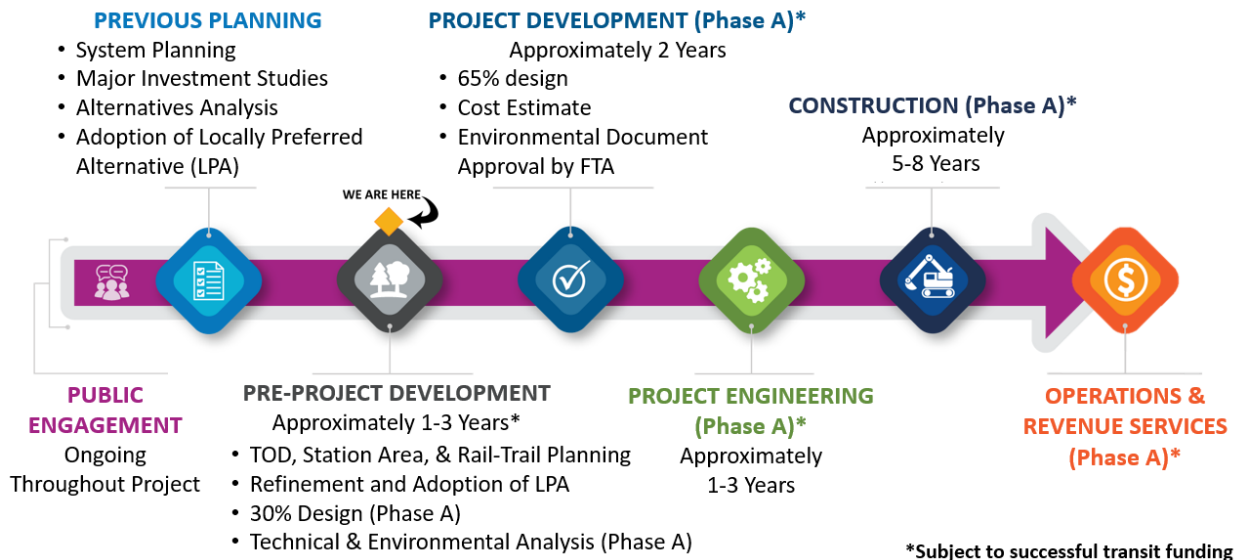
LYNX Silver Line Light Rail

January 2023

Process

Where is LYNX Silver Line in the planning process?

The LYNX Silver Line light rail is in a pre-Project Development phase. CATS has not yet requested entry into the formal Project Development stage, which would be required to receive federal funding. In preparation for entry into Project Development and environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), CATS has initiated field work for technical studies and continues to refine design for the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). As part of the larger LYNX Silver Line program, the City of Charlotte continues to evaluate Transit Oriented Development (TOD) opportunities, station area plans, and rail-trail plans.



Are there any updates on funding?

There are currently no updates on funding for the LYNX Silver Line light rail. The timing of a potential referendum remains uncertain at this time.

What is a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)?

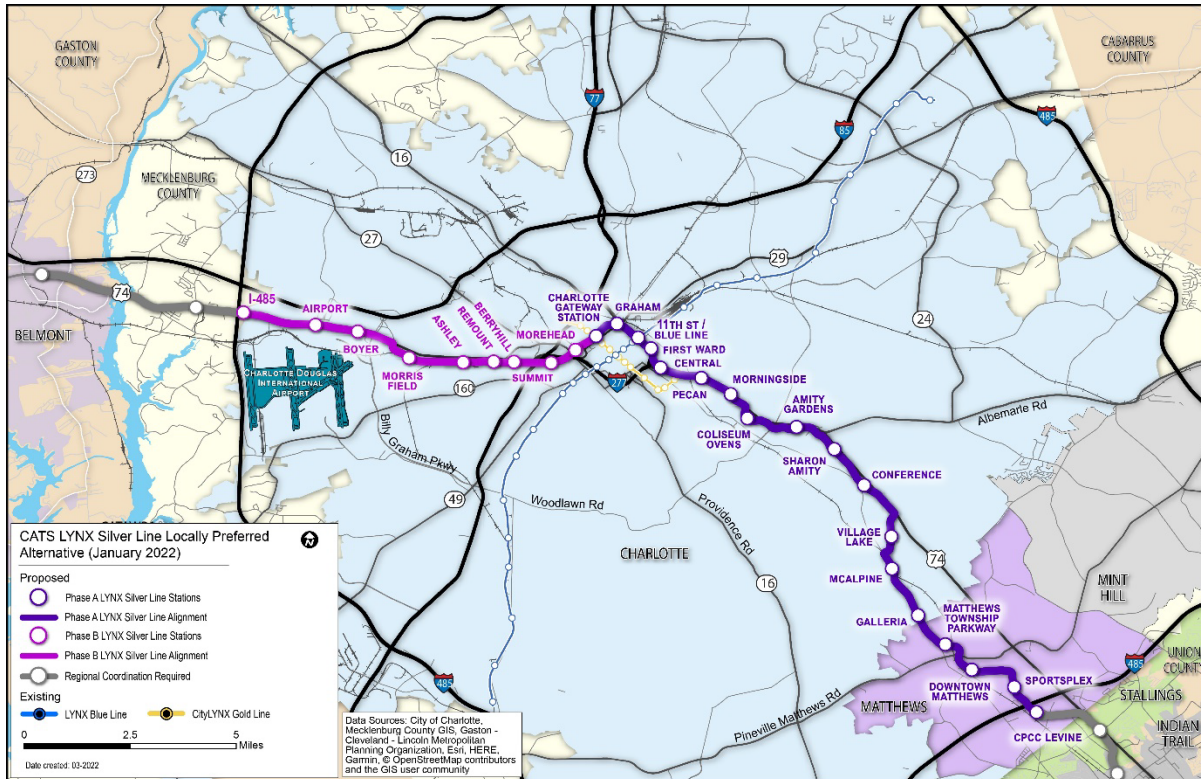
A Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) has been evaluated through a local planning (and public) process and adopted as the desired alternative by the appropriate local agencies and official boards.

What is the LPA for LYNX Silver Line?

In January 2022, after soliciting additional public and stakeholder feedback, progressing conceptual design, and preparing preliminary ridership forecasts, cost estimates, and a high-level environmental screening, CATS' policy board, the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) adopted a refined LPA and phasing strategy for the LYNX Silver Line.

A light rail LPA in the Southeast Corridor (from Center City Charlotte to Matthews) and West Corridor (from Center City Charlotte toward the airport) had been previously adopted in 2016 and 2019, respectively, with extensions and refinements/modifications adopted since then. The LPA alignment in Center City has been along 11th Street since 2019. The January 2022 LPA is a planned 29-mile light rail alignment (with 31 stations) from the City of Belmont in Gaston County, through Center City Charlotte and the Town of Matthews in Mecklenburg County, and into Stallings and Indian Trail in Union County.

The January 2022 adoption also included a phasing strategy which designated the approximately 15-mile segment from Center City Charlotte southeast to Matthews as Phase A or the initial segment to carry through the NEPA process, project engineering, and construction.



Would there be a lag between the initial segment (Phase A) and second segment (Phase B)?

CATS anticipates implementing the LYNX Silver Line in phases as funding allows. The current strategy is to begin design on Phase B before construction for Phase A is completed. Staggering the design and construction would help to minimize the time between the two phases, while maximizing resources to advance Phase A.

Why does CATS continue to evaluate refinements/modifications to the LPA?

Over the last couple of years, CATS has gathered feedback from the public, stakeholders, and professional organizations, started field surveys, and developed 15% design plans for the January 2022 LPA. As a result, CATS is gaining a more comprehensive idea of the cost associated with that alignment, as well as environmental and design challenges. As CATS continues to gather feedback from the public and stakeholders, assess environmental impacts, and advance design, the LPA may be further refined.

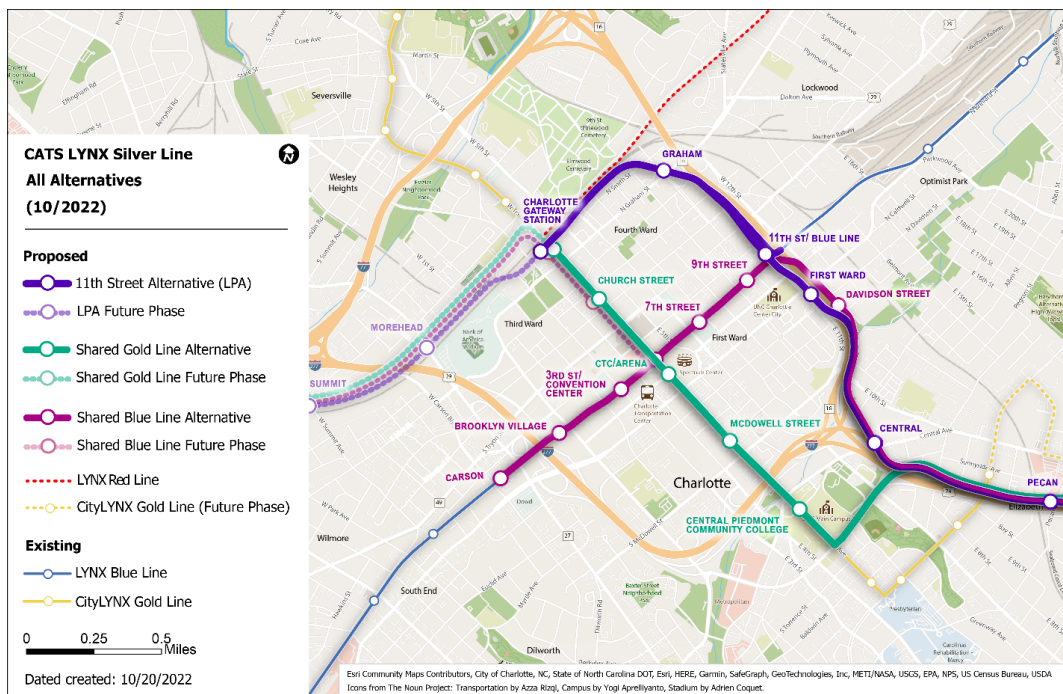
Why did CATS consider additional alternatives to the LPA in Center City?

The stakeholders and elected officials requested peer reviews by Urban Land Institute (ULI) and American Public Transportation Association (APTA). ULI and APTA feedback, as well as additional design information, renewed interest in alternatives that share infrastructure with existing transit lines. In addition to the January 2022 LPA, CATS evaluated two additional alternatives in Center City Charlotte: the Shared Blue Line Alternative and Shared Gold Line Alternative. Similar alternatives were considered in previous planning studies, but based on very conceptual information at the time, CATS recommended the LPA alignment along 11th Street.

How does CATS use my input?

Public input is an important piece of the decision-making process. CATS gathers feedback from area residents, business owners, and other stakeholders at several key decision points in the project. Most recently, in November 2022, CATS requested feedback on alternatives in Center City Charlotte, a potential refinement near Bojangles Coliseum, and a potential extension of Phase A from Charlotte Gateway Station (CGS) to the future Morehead Station. CATS analyzes this feedback and shares it with local elected officials and the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC).

Center City Alternatives



Why is a tunnel under Center City not part of the project?

It is possible to build light rail and stations underground; however, this concept was eliminated in previous planning studies primarily due to the very high cost as well as construction risks and operational challenges.








Would the Shared Blue Line or Shared Gold Line Alternatives use three car trains?

The LYNX Silver Line is being designed to accommodate three car trains to meet long-term capacity goals. If either the Shared Blue Line or Shared Gold Line alternatives are selected, the existing platforms that would be shared with the LYNX Silver Line would be extended for three car trains.

Would the Shared Blue Line Alternative terminate at Charlotte Gateway Station (CGS) in Phase B?

If the Shared Blue Line Alternative is selected, Phase B would start at the Charlotte Transportation Center (CTC) and share tracks with the CityLYNX Gold Line on Trade Street before going under the Norfolk Southern rail tracks at CGS. It would then turn west and run parallel to the Norfolk Southern tracks to the future Morehead Station, and then on the same alignment as the January 2022 LPA towards I-485.

How do travel times compare between the 11th Street (LPA), the Shared Blue Line, and the Shared Gold Line Alternatives?

TRAVEL TIME: Trip from Conference Drive station to CTC		
1	2	3
11th Street Alternative (LPA) <i>Previously-adopted concept along 11th Street</i>	Shared Blue Line Alternative <i>Silver Line trains share tracks with Blue Line in Center City</i>	Shared Gold Line Alternative <i>Silver Line trains share tracks with Gold Line on Trade Street in Center City</i>
 22 min. • Ride Silver Line train to 11 th Street / Blue Line station	 27 min. • Ride Silver Line train to CTC station	 25 min. • Ride Silver Line train to CTC station
 8 min. • Walk to 9 th Street station and wait for Blue Line train		
 4 min. • Ride Blue Line train to CTC station		
Total Trip = 34 minutes	Total Trip = 27 minutes	Total Trip = 25 minutes

Does the Shared Gold Line Alternative require shutting down Trade Street?

At a minimum, the Shared Gold Line Alternative would involve some reconstruction of the existing CityLYNX Gold Line and Elizabeth Avenue/Trade Street, but it may require a full reconstruction depending on further analysis.

What would be the impact on traffic if the Shared Gold Line Alternative is chosen? Would there be a dedicated right-of-way?

The Shared Gold Line Alternative includes reconfiguration of Trade Street and Elizabeth Avenue between Charlotte Gateway Station and Charlottetowne Avenue to provide a dedicated right-of-way for LYNX Silver Line and LYNX Gold Line trains in the center of the street, as well as automobile access in both directions in the outside lanes. Automobiles may



be restricted for short stretches of the corridor between Church and Poplar Streets and between Pease Lane and Charlottetowne Avenue, but access to existing parking garages and driveways would be maintained throughout the corridor. On-street parking would be removed from the corridor and the transit guideway would be physically separated from the automobile lanes to minimize potential rail service disruptions due to autos being too close to the tracks.

How would someone transfer between LYNX Silver Line at 11th Street and LYNX Blue Line?

In order to transfer to the LYNX Blue Line, passengers would disembark the LYNX Silver Line train at the elevated 11th Street station and descend the stairs/elevator to the Blue Line level. Passengers would then walk approximately one block south on a well-marked pathway to the LYNX Blue Line 9th Street station.

Bojangles Coliseum Area

What refinements/modifications were evaluated in the Bojangles Coliseum area?

CATS evaluated and proposed a shift in alignment from the west side of Television Place to the east side, and a shift in station location slightly closer to the Bojangles Coliseum and Ovens Auditorium buildings. The proposed shift appears to offer better bus and special event circulation, and better pedestrian access from the station to adjoining special events buildings. It would require a higher bridge over Independence Boulevard, but it would not require the substantial changes to the street network that the January 2022 LPA would require, thus minimizing potential changes to traffic patterns on Television Place.

Property Impacts

How can I find out if my property would be affected by the LYNX Silver Line?

The LYNX Silver Line is still early in planning process, and CATS is narrowing the “thick alignment line” to a more thin, precise alignment line. Changes to design due to public input, coordination with stakeholders, and coordination with regulatory agencies during the environmental review may result in additional modifications. Therefore, it is premature at this stage to identify parcel-specific impacts. CATS will continue to engage the public as the LYNX Silver Line progresses into NEPA, Project Development, Engineering, and Construction.