

Charlotte North Carolina



**Urban Land
Institute**

Daniel Rose Center for Public Leadership in Land Use

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Charlotte North Carolina

Reenergizing, Repositioning, and Ensuring the
Long-Term Viability of Independence Boulevard

January 11–14, 2011
A ULI Daniel Rose Fellowship Program City Study Visit Report

Urban Land Institute
Daniel Rose Center for Public Leadership in Land Use
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About the Urban Land Institute

The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

ULI is committed to

- Bringing together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs;
- Fostering collaboration within and beyond ULI's membership through mentoring, dialogue, and problem solving;
- Exploring issues of urbanization, conservation, regeneration, land use, capital formation, and sustainable development;
- Advancing land use policies and design practices that respect the uniqueness of both built and natural environments;
- Sharing knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, and electronic media; and
- Sustaining a diverse global network of local practice and advisory efforts that address current and future challenges.

Established in 1936, the Institute today has nearly 30,000 members worldwide, representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. Professionals represented include developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academicians, students, and librarians.

ULI relies heavily on the experience of its members. It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of the world's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

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About the ULI Rose Center

The mission of the ULI Daniel Rose Center for Public Leadership in Land Use is to encourage and support excellence in land use decision making by providing public officials with access to information, best practices, peer networks, and other resources to foster creative, efficient, practical, and sustainable land use policies.

Daniel Rose, chairman of Rose Associates, Inc., in New York City, in 2008 committed \$5 million to the Urban Land Institute to create the center. Rose Associates operates throughout the East Coast as developer and manager of more than 30 million square feet of major office towers, commercial retail centers, mixed-use complexes, and high-rise residential buildings. Rose has pursued a career involving a broad range of professional, civic, and nonprofit activities.

The Daniel Rose Fellowship is the flagship program of the Rose Center. The Rose Fellowship is a yearlong program (from fall of the first year to fall of the next) intended to benefit the individual fellows through leadership training and professional development opportunities and to benefit their respective cities through technical assistance on a local land use challenge. The Rose Fellowship focuses on leadership, integrated problem solving, public/private collaboration, and peer-to-peer learning.

For the 2010–2011 fellowship year, the Rose Center invited the mayors of Charlotte, Detroit, Houston, and Sacramento to participate. Each mayor selected three additional fellows and a coordinator to serve as the Rose

Fellowship team from his or her city. Each city's Rose Fellowship team selected a specific land use challenge on which they receive technical assistance.

During the city study visits, two assigned Rose Center faculty members, one fellow from each of the other three cities, and additional experts spend four days visiting each of the fellowship cities to learn about their land use challenge. Modeled after ULI's Advisory Services panels, these visits include briefings from the host city's fellows and other local officials, a tour of the study area, and interviews with stakeholders. The visits conclude with a presentation of initial observations and recommendations from the visiting panel of experts, as well as ongoing assignments for the fellowship team. Each city's fellowship team also works with its assigned faculty at the ULI Fall Meeting and at two working retreats, and Rose Center staff and faculty return later in the year to conduct a follow-up visit.

The Rose Center also holds forums and workshops on topical land use issues for public sector leaders. Recent subjects have included implementing approaches to green building, responding to multifamily foreclosures, and finding creative solutions to local fiscal challenges. In addition, the Rose Center provides a limited number of scholarships for public sector officials to attend the annual ULI Fall Meeting.

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Acknowledgments

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Special thanks go to Brian Horton and Jeanine Singleton of the Charlotte Transportation Department, Sandra Stewart of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department, Angela Maynard of the Charlotte City Manager's Office, Erica Johnson of the Charlotte Mayor's Office, Wendy Lapish of the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and Theresa Salmen of ULI Charlotte for their time and assistance during the panel's visit.

Interviews were conducted with numerous stakeholders, including elected officials from the city of Charlotte, the town of Matthews, and the village of Wesley Chapel; community and business organizations in the Independence Boulevard study area; representatives of the real estate, community development, and urban design professions at ULI Charlotte; and staff from the city of Charlotte and North Carolina Department of Transportation. These stakeholders provided invaluable information and diverse perspectives that greatly aided the panel's understanding of the city's selected land use challenge. The panel thanks all those who gave their time to be part of the process.

Land Use Challenge and Summary of Recommendations

Located in the Piedmont region of the Carolinas and encompassing nearly 300 square miles, Charlotte is the 17th-largest U.S. city, with 731,424 residents, and has experienced strong growth of 35 percent since 2000, according to the 2010 U.S. Census. The city is growing a bit faster than the region as a whole—the 33rd-largest U.S. metropolitan area at nearly 1.8 million people—which had 32 percent growth over the same period.

Charlotte is a two-hour drive east of the Appalachian Mountains and a three-hour drive west of the Atlantic Ocean. It has the second-largest financial center in the nation (behind only New York), is a regional distribution and transportation center, and has developed into a major wholesale center with the highest per capita sales in the nation. As Charlotte continues to grow, the city has adopted solid land use and transportation policies to ensure that growth occurs in a well-organized and cost-effective manner.

Its overarching growth strategy, Centers, Corridors and Wedges Growth Framework (adopted in 1994 and updated in 2010), responds to Charlotte's historical growth pattern of wheels and spokes by guiding high-intensity development into areas where existing infrastructure can support it and directing lower-intensity development to areas with less infrastructure demand. Much of Charlotte's future moderate-to higher-intensity development is targeted within five major growth corridors, also identified as rapid-transit corridors, and in designated activity centers. Low- to moderate-density residential and services supporting neighborhoods are targeted for areas between the corridors, referred to as wedges.

Land Use Challenge

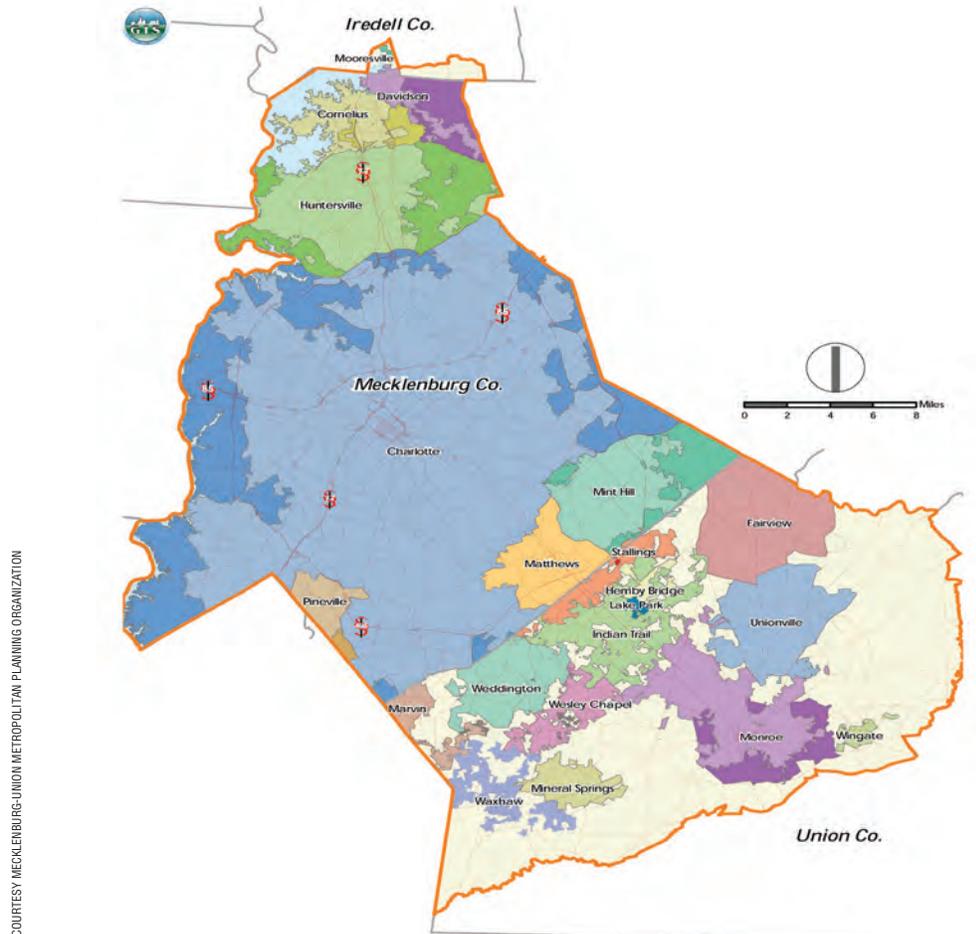
For their land use challenge in the Daniel Rose Fellowship program, Mayor Anthony Foxx and the Charlotte fellowship team asked the Rose Center to identify initial implementation steps to reenergize, reposition, and ensure the long-term viability of development along Independence Boulevard, one of Charlotte's five major growth corridors and an historically important commercial arterial.

Completed in 1950, Independence Boulevard was Charlotte's (and North Carolina's) first urban expressway, providing motorists with quick access to the eastern edge of the city. The East Independence Boulevard corridor developed rapidly in the 1950s and 1960s. The high volume of commuters driving through the city's east side encouraged the opening of the old Charlotte Coliseum (now Bojangles' Coliseum) and adjacent Ovens Auditorium in 1955, Amity Gardens shopping center in 1958, and a great deal of commercial strip retail oriented toward customers driving along the corridor.

Independence Boulevard is part of U.S. Route 74, which extends from southeastern Tennessee to Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) began converting it into a limited-access highway in the 1980s. Sections of the old expressway closest to uptown Charlotte became local streets or were replaced by the I-277 inner loop, while the sections converted in east Charlotte became known as the Independence Freeway.

The conversion of East Independence Boulevard from a commercial arterial into a limited-access highway has been an expensive, slow, and painful process for all stakeholders: businesses along the corridor and

Charlotte, in light blue, sits in the center of Mecklenburg County.



residents in adjacent neighborhoods, as well as regional commuters and interstate freight haulers. Now into its third decade, the project has proceeded in multiple phases. The first built segment, 1.25 miles between Briar Creek and Eastway Drive completed in 1993, allows some right-in, right-out access to adjacent properties. A 1.5-mile segment connecting this initial middle segment to I-277 in the west, completed in 1998, has only limited-access entrance and exit ramps. The 1.5-mile eastern segment between Eastway Drive and Albemarle Road, completed in 2002, also has right-in, right-out access to some adjacent properties. These three segments, totaling about 4.25 miles, cost more than \$80 million to build and include express bus lanes that the

Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) operates between Uptown and Sharon Amity Road in east Charlotte.

The next segment, for which NCDOT has started acquiring property, is 1.6 miles between Albemarle Road and Conference Drive. It will cost about \$172 million, more than \$90 million of which is for property acquisition. However, nearly another six miles will still remain to be built from Conference Drive to the I-485 interchange (the outer loop) in the town of Matthews. This final six-mile segment (which currently lacks an identified source of funding) is intended to connect to the 21-mile, \$756 million Monroe Parkway project that will extend east to Marshville as a toll road, expected to be completed in 2015.

With the freeway conversion planning and construction underway, in 2006 the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC)—which is responsible for public transit planning and policy in the Charlotte region—adopted its 2030 Corridor System Plan. The plan calls for bus rapid transit (BRT) service along Independence Boulevard from uptown Charlotte to Sam Newell Road, where it would leave Independence and follow a route along existing and future portions of Independence Point Parkway through the town of Matthews, terminating at Central Piedmont Community College’s Levine campus east of I-485. This 13.5-mile Southeast Corridor, the Silver Line, would have a total of 16 stations (including eight park-and-rides) and operate in the median of the converted Independence Freeway for most of its length.

The 2030 Corridor System Plan also includes a special provision instructing city staff to “coordinate the design of the highway improvements (Independence Boulevard) to protect the possible construction of bus rapid transit or light rail transit.” Consequently, the total proposed cross section for the remaining segments of the Independence Freeway would include an envelope for

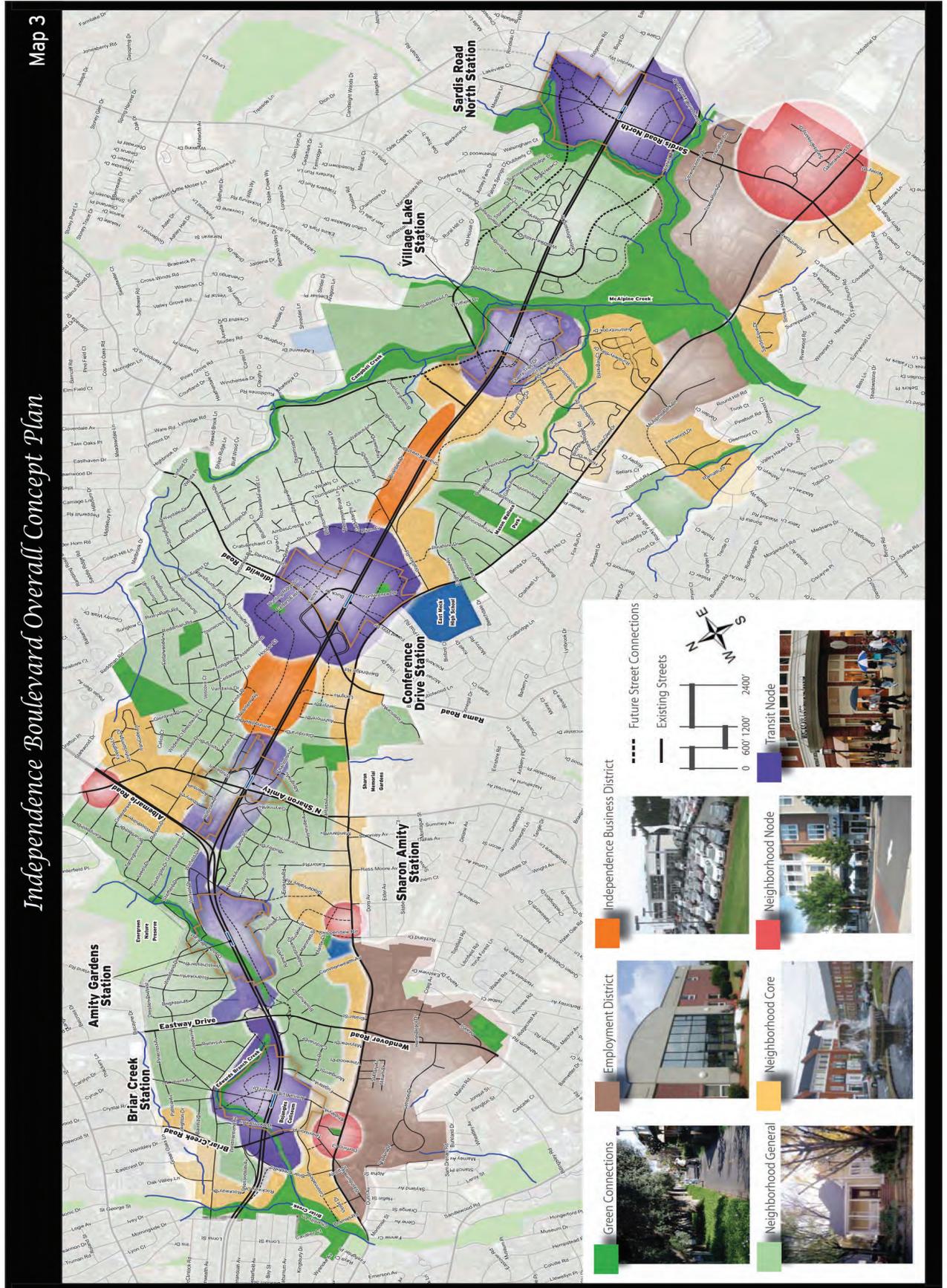
transit, high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lanes in each direction, and three general-purpose lanes in each direction, ranging from 250 to 280 feet wide, in the remaining sections of Independence Boulevard.

As the freeway conversion has slowly progressed, considerable abandonment, deterioration, and deferred maintenance of the commercial properties along the corridor (and very little new investment) has occurred because of all the uncertainties about the freeway conversion project: when it will be completed, which properties it will affect, and how access will work. This uncertainty has cast a cloud over real estate investment decisions in the corridor and negatively impacted the neighborhoods of east Charlotte, which have witnessed this physical decline and lost access to nearby goods and services.

Residents of east Charlotte have observed the transformative effect of light rail in Charlotte’s South Corridor—where new transit-oriented development (TOD) has occurred around the more urban stations—while they struggle with the timing and effects of the freeway conversion. Stakeholders were upset by the MTC decision to use BRT instead of light rail: the other four of Charlotte’s five major radial transporta-

A section of Independence Boulevard has been converted to a limited-access highway, with express bus lanes in the median.





Independence Boulevard Overall Concept Plan

Map 3

Commercial properties are struggling along the corridor because of uncertainty about the timing and final design of the transportation infrastructure improvements.



tion corridors have a controlled-access highway (in the form of interstates 77 and 85) and have either rail transit in place (South Corridor light rail) or officially proposed (Northeast Corridor light-rail extension, North Corridor commuter-rail line, West Corridor streetcar line). For that reason, the MTC directed that implementation of the Southeast Corridor be delayed until 2011 to allow CATS to coordinate with NCDOT on the potential to operate light rail instead of BRT in the corridor. However, recent financial projections by CATS reflecting the fiscal impact of economic slowdown conclude no funding will be available for either BRT or light rail in the Southeast Corridor for at least 25 years.

Also in response to stakeholder concerns, the city of Charlotte in 2008 began a land use plan for the Independence Boulevard Corridor. Consistent with NCDOT's and the MTC's plans, the land use plan assumes the freeway conversion would eventually be completed in its entirety and some mode of transit would operate in the median. The planning area encompassed more than 5,800 acres between Briar Creek in the northwest and Sardis Road in the southeast, including a large portion of the Southeast Growth Corridor designated by Charlotte's Centers, Corridors and Wedges Growth Framework and six of the proposed Silver Line transit stations.

Adopted by the Charlotte City Council in May 2011, the Independence Boulevard Area Plan seeks to provide a more viable land use and transportation vision in response to the significant deterioration and abandonment of the area's commercial buildings as the corridor transforms from a major arterial to a limited-access expressway with plans for a proposed transit line. The plan calls for reorienting development away from the future Independence Freeway toward new internal street connections to create a more walkable development pattern that can be supported with nodes of higher-intensity retail, office, and transit-supportive residential development that enhance existing neighborhoods. It envisions more intense redevelopment occurring around those transit stations (centers), highway-oriented retail elsewhere along the corridor, mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented redevelopment along Monroe Road (a secondary route that runs parallel to Independence to the south), and preservation of the residential character of established neighborhoods (wedges).

Although the land use plan identifies a few potential catalyst sites, the city asked the Rose Center's study visit panel to recommend initial implementation steps and suggest tools that might be needed to achieve the plan's vision.

Summary of Recommendations

The panel sought to address the primary goals of regional and local transportation, local economic revitalization, and community development by building and expanding on the excellent work accomplished by the city in the corridor land use plan. Furthermore, the panel wanted to be clear about solutions that address regional challenges versus those that address local challenges, and how both can be accomplished.

In doing so, the panel made three key refinements to the current plans:

- Rather than operate in the median of Independence, rail transit service should run elsewhere in the plan area (such as Monroe Road, a parallel street to the south of the Independence corridor that could have a streetcar similar to the service planned for Central Avenue, a parallel street to the north) to promote the land use plan's goals of more mixed-use development, neighborhood-serving retail, and a greater diversity of housing types.
- A form of highway BRT or express bus service should operate in shared HOV/HOT lanes in the Independence Freeway, rather than having both a dedicated transit right-of-way plus HOV lanes.
- Auto-oriented retail should be promoted in strategic locations along Independence, while a neighborhood-serving mix of uses should be focused at the intersections of key connector streets between the Independence, Monroe, and Central Avenue corridors.

Transforming Independence into a limited-access expressway means fewer access points to improve travel performance and more capacity to address regional transportation needs, consistent with NCDOT's plans. Introducing BRT service on Independence—but designing it to operate in shared HOV/HOT lanes—would provide right-of-way savings to minimize the effects of the transitional setback to adjacent properties and preserve more land for auto-oriented uses to develop adjacent to the corridor. Tolls from the HOT lanes could also create a revenue stream to be used for transportation and related infrastructure projects in the neighborhoods.

Adding streetcars to Monroe Road along with those already proposed along Central Avenue—with a possible loop on Albemarle/Sharon Amity and potentially extending along Monroe to Matthews—is consistent with stakeholders' expressed desire for rail transit on the east side of Charlotte and would help implement the land use plan's goals. Local feeder bus service should be provided along arterial roads that link to transit service along these three corridors (Central, Independence, and Monroe).

This transportation framework translates into a community structure with five key components, consistent with the land use plan:

- Given the nature of the freeway, auto-oriented uses should be retained and grown along the Independence corridor, such as the new Walmart.
- The streetcar corridors should have a neighborhood-oriented mix of uses with slower-moving traffic, including more housing, places that people would like to visit, and a walkable street environment.
- Connector streets should be friendly to bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit to allow users to get to the transit corridors through residential neighborhood areas—or in the case of Sardis Road North, an employment area (as designated by the land use plan).
- Consistent with the land use plan, economic development could be concentrated in some nodes. The panel suggested focusing on three rather than all six proposed station areas (perhaps Briar Creek Station, Conference Drive Station, and Sardis Road North Station), but these can change as other factors, such as development potential, are examined.
- Consistent with the land use plan, residents desire smaller-scale open space within the neighborhoods. Opportunities exist for public open space to connect the Central, Independence, and Monroe corridors.

These land use concepts proposed by the panel are consistent with the community's vision for the Independence Boulevard study area.

Panel Observations

The panel was briefed by Charlotte's Rose Fellowship team, toured the Independence Boulevard and Monroe Road corridors, took the opportunity to ride the Blue Line light rail along the South Corridor and visit the proposed Central Avenue streetcar extension (north of Independence), and spoke with east Charlotte residents and business owners as well as representatives from NCDOT, Charlotte city agencies and City Council members, local government officials from Mecklenburg and Union county communities, and the private development community.

Public Leadership

The panel lauded Mayor Anthony Foxx for selecting Independence Boulevard as Charlotte's land use challenge for the Daniel Rose Fellowship program. On his very first day in office as mayor, Foxx met with NCDOT secretary Gene Conti (whom he subsequently selected as a Rose Fellow) to discuss the city's concerns about the next phase of the conversion project and its frustrations about the timing and funding issues for the next six miles of the project, and to brief him about the goals of the then-draft city land use plan for the corridor. Mayor Foxx showed exceptional leadership by escalating these issues, and by doing so on his first day in office, he signaled to east Charlotte stakeholders and to city and state officials that he was making Independence Boulevard a priority for his new administration. He deserves credit for choosing to tackle this decades-old problem.

This discussion led to the discovery that NCDOT officials were also deeply concerned about the slow pace of the freeway conversion. In response, Mayor Foxx and Secretary Conti formed a joint task force of city and NCDOT staff to explore options for solutions. Although the so-called super-street design concept proposed by the task force's

technical committee ultimately proved infeasible to implement, it created a spirit of collaboration between the city and the state to address Independence Boulevard. The panel commended the cooperative spirit exhibited by the city and NCDOT, since these kinds of problems often pit city and state governments against one another as adversaries because of the different policy priorities they are trying to address. The panel also commended the city of Charlotte for its leadership in undertaking the difficult process of developing a new land use plan for the corridor, especially in light of the infrastructure uncertainties.

Implementation Obstacles

The land use plan does an excellent job capturing stakeholder consensus about needs: the need for more travel capacity in the corridor (for both private auto and transit), the need for more local economic development along the corridor and its adjacent neighborhoods, and the need to start implementing change and not just plan. But the panel observed that lack of agreement on details of key issues is creating uncertainty that is slowing implementation of the plan's goals.

The study visit panel interviewed stakeholders to learn about their perspectives.



Specifically, uncertainty over roadway design and transit mode impedes the city’s and the state’s ability to secure public funding. At the same time, uncertainty about the timing and final design of the transit and roadway projects has clearly harmed the local real estate market.

The panel was also struck by the challenge posed by the context of the proposed transit corridor (regardless of what mode is eventually selected and built) in relation to the land use plan goal of developing urban centers around the stations. Given the 350-foot total right-of-way setback for any development adjacent to the corridor, the fact that pedestrians would have to walk across a busy bridge of at least that length to access the transit stations, and the noise generated by the proposed eight lanes of traffic, the panel has difficulty in conceiving of the station areas as redeveloping in a pedestrian-oriented pattern similar to certain South Corridor stations, which are better integrated into the existing street pattern and urban fabric.

This problem revealed an underlying conflict between the land use plan goals and the proposed transportation infrastructure: too many hybrid solutions and design compromises are hurting the chances for synergies between the various plans (roadway, transit, and land use). For some of their goals, the plans may even be at cross purposes with one another.

For example, the panel felt that various stakeholders were asking the Independence corridor to accommodate too many users (interstate auto

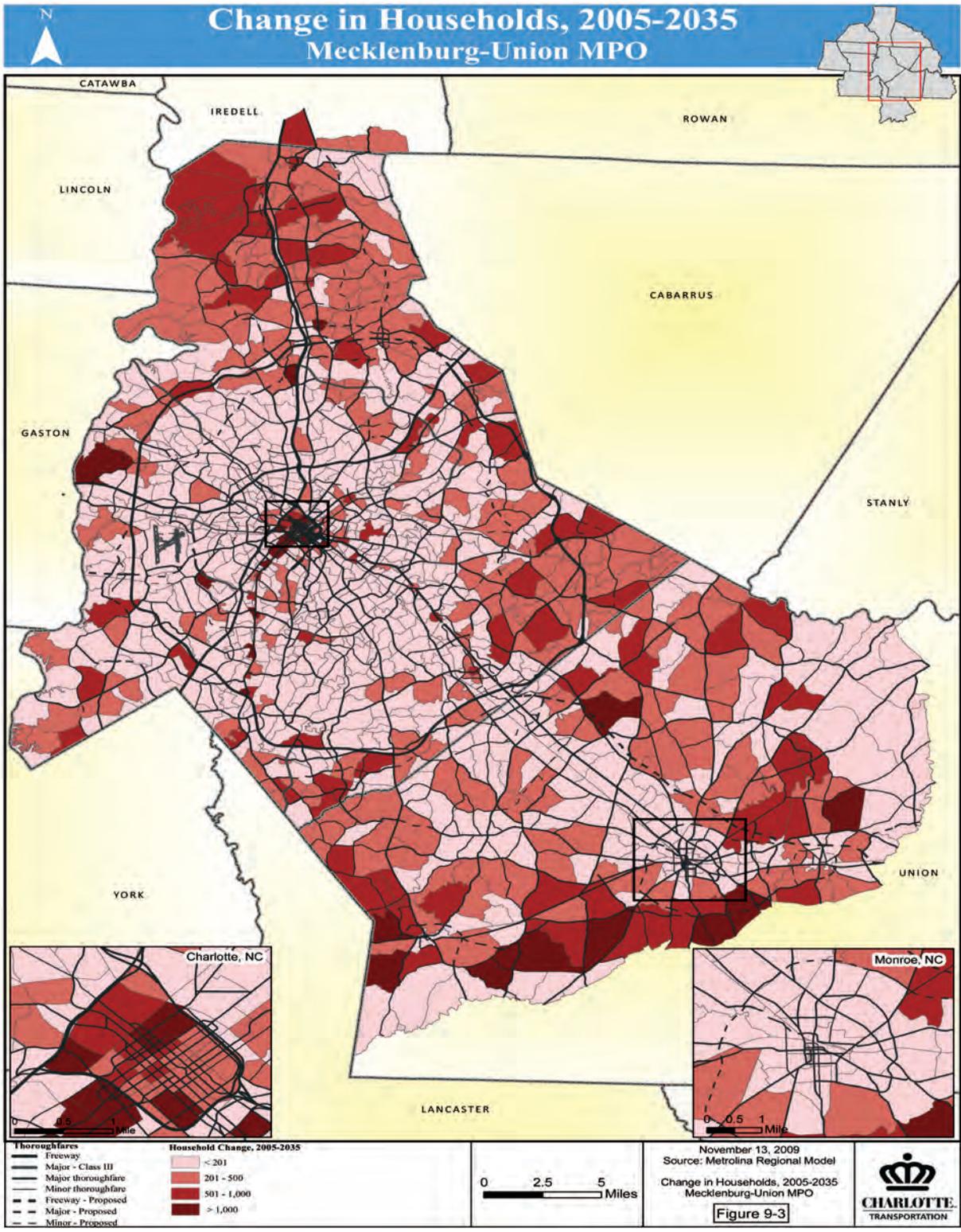
trips and freight transport, regional commuting auto trips, regional commuting transit trips, local auto trips, local transit trips) and solve far too many problems (serving interstate, regional, and local transportation; encouraging local economic development; and creating walkable urban centers) to serve all of them well while also achieving the intended land use goals.

The two distinct transit markets—regional commuters and local residents—have different transit needs. Any transit vehicle choice has inherent tradeoffs. Some do a better job of serving local or regional riders; they have different speed and reliability profiles, and different modes need different amounts of space to operate. For example, local bus service works well for shorter trips and operates in mixed traffic, so it does not need additional right-of-way and has service flexibility. On the other end of the spectrum, commuter rail needs a dedicated guideway and right-of-way and has fewer stops for access, so it can operate at a higher speed with higher reliability. Streetcars and BRT have the most flexibility: they can operate in both mixed flow or dedicated rights-of-way to serve those different travel markets.

Looking at forecast growth in Mecklenburg and Union counties only emphasizes this problem. Most of the growth southeast of uptown Charlotte will occur in southeastern Mecklenburg and far western Union County. With few alternatives to this radial arterial corridor, regional travel demand is sure to increase along Independence in the future.



The previously proposed cross section for Independence Boulevard, including an envelope for general purposes, HOV lanes, and transit lanes.



Land Use and Transportation

The panel agreed that the transportation needs that have been identified in the various plans are valid: the Independence corridor is a functional long-distance connection to uptown Charlotte and an important regional connection for adjacent counties as well as coastal traffic. The need for

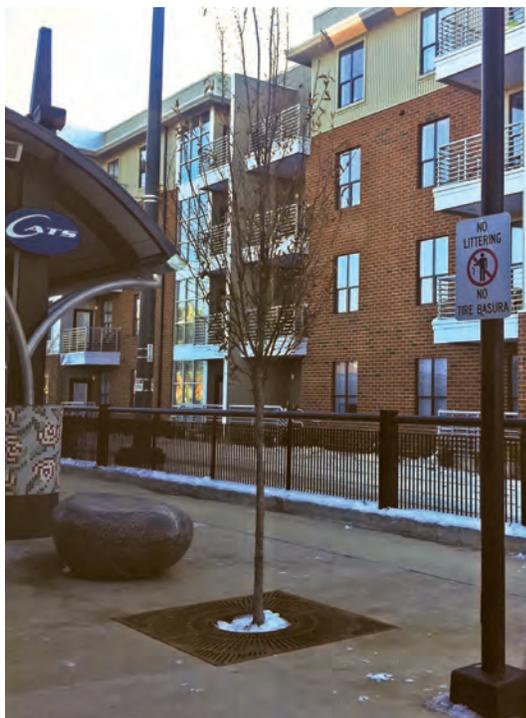
additional capacity for commuter movements has been clearly articulated. Independence has higher truck freight activity (about double) than any of the other four regional spoke corridors. But its adjacent parallel spokes and connecting roadway network (e.g., Central, Albemarle, Monroe) create opportunities for multiple transportation options that a lot of other communities do not have.

Five express bus routes are operating today in the Independence corridor, serving about 1,000 longer-commuting trips a day. Neighborhood bus service along Central and Monroe generates some of the highest ridership in the CATS system: Monroe has double the ridership of Independence; Central is six to seven times as high. Some development response to the planned streetcar along the Central corridor has also occurred.

An example of light-rail access over a freeway, from Denver's Southeast Corridor.



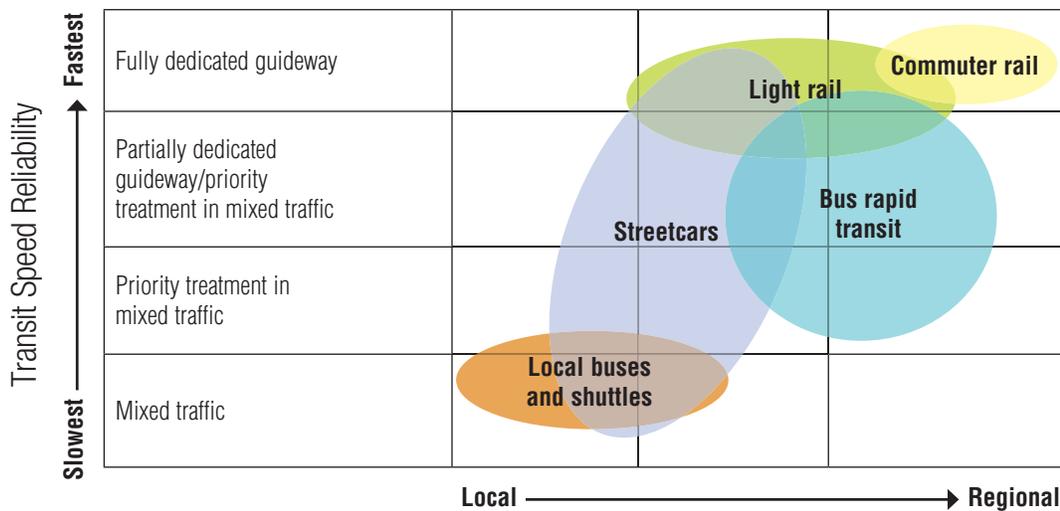
Transit-oriented development occurring around Charlotte's South Corridor light rail.



Transit Options

The panel considered the transit options for the corridor, which include light rail and BRT. Because Independence is planned to become a limited-access freeway, considering how light rail in a freeway environment functions differently from in a street-grid environment is important. Denver's Southeast Corridor is a good example of light rail in a freeway environment. It provides higher-speed service, but even though its alignment is on one side of the highway, access to station locations can be challenging for passengers, resulting in the need for very long pedestrian bridges. Opportunities for TOD are very limited when facing a 300-foot or longer walk in a hostile environment to access a station from the nearest development parcel.

Light rail integrated with a neighborhood street grid, as Charlotte has accomplished in its South Corridor, has worked well. Rider-



Tradeoffs between transit reliability and access provision.

ship has been strong, and development is responding, which will cause ridership to grow even more. As the line is extended to the north, performance should continue to improve. The decision of where to place the light rail has led to these outcomes, because the context of transit is a very important component for how development responds to the investment of public infrastructure.

Rubber-tire transit, such as BRT and express bus, can yield very high quality transportation performance. For example, Houston’s over-the-road coach bus service, which operates in a 100-mile network of HOV/transit lanes with park-and-ride access, has led to 39,000 new-choice transit riders.

The Central Corridor in Charlotte is planned for streetcar service, which fits in with its neighborhood scale. Streetcars can provide a wide range of high-quality transit service in a fixed guideway that attracts new riders to transit.

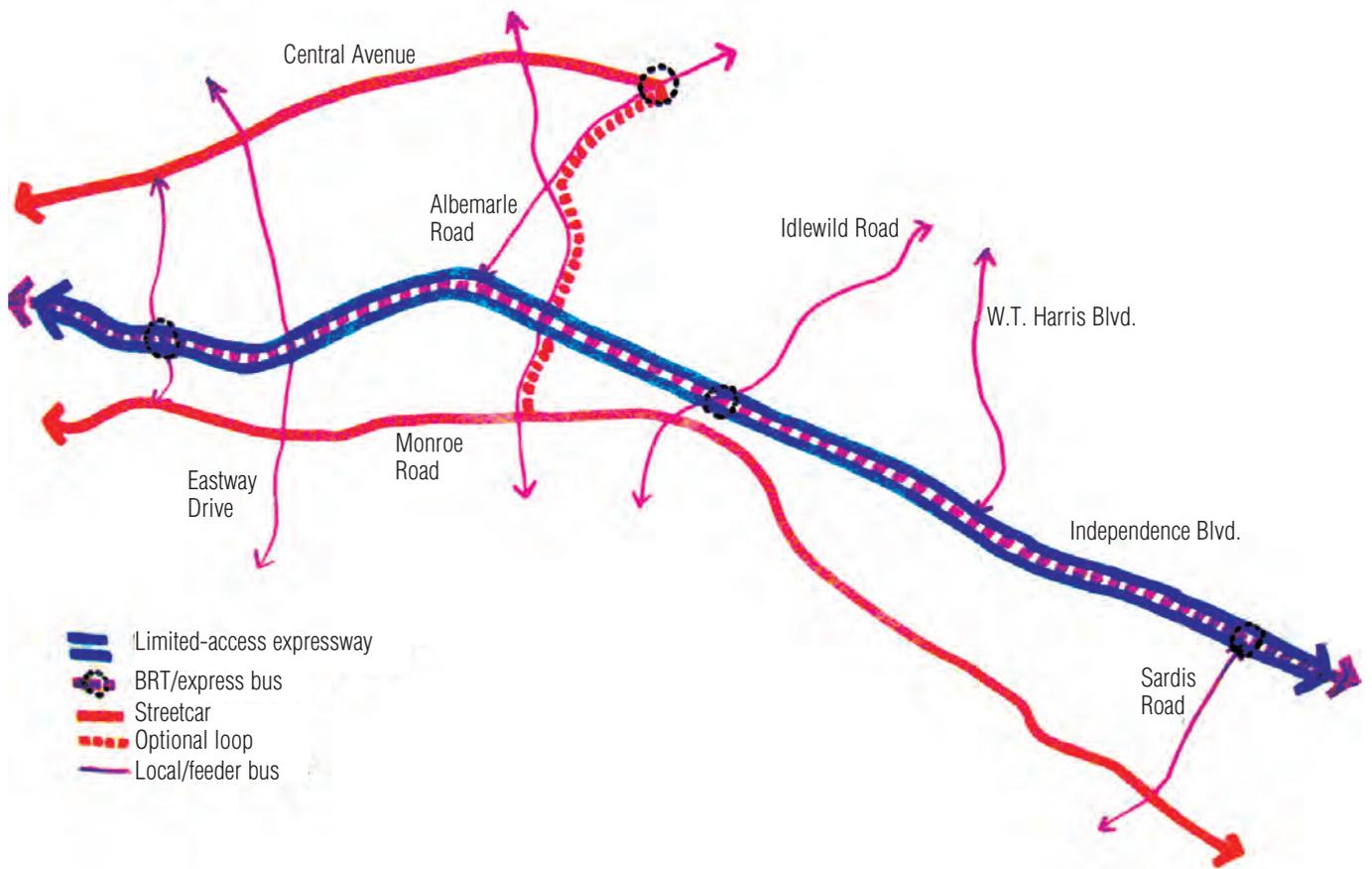
Transportation Recommendations

The panel believed that going with what is already working well in Charlotte is important. Ridership and TOD in the South Corridor are impressive, and the planning of streetcar service in the Central Corridor seems to be the right transit mode to fit its development

patterns. Investment activity has continued along both these corridors despite the economic slowdown, which is a testament to the good decisions that were made regarding public investment in this transit infrastructure.

Recognizing the commitment to rail-transit investment in east Charlotte is also important. The panel’s transportation concepts honor that commitment by adding service to Monroe and potentially connecting it to planned service on Central. The panel saw BRT on Independence as the best way to serve the needs for high-quality transit for longer-distance commuters, who are more concerned about speed and reliability and a quick connection to uptown Charlotte.

The design of the proposed Independence right-of-way is quite wide because of the desire to include a dedicated transit guideway in the median of the freeway. The panel saw an opportunity to reclaim some of that space by sharing transit in HOV/HOT lanes and moving rail service into the neighborhoods where it has a much greater potential for economic impact than in the middle of a freeway. The panel’s transportation concept includes fewer stops for the BRT service along the Independence Corridor, with connections to the streetcar corridors and feeder bus, bicycle, and pedestrian access, and a potential streetcar loop via Sharon Amity.



The panel's proposed transportation framework.

Transportation Benefits

The panel saw significant benefits to making these refinements. If BRT can share the HOV/HOT lanes, the roadway footprint can potentially be narrowed by about 50 feet, which would eliminate the need for the transitional setback and affect fewer properties as well as lower property acquisition costs for NCDOT. It would also create the opportunity for a revenue stream from the HOT lanes, which could be dedicated to paying for improvements to Monroe, Central, and the neighborhood-connecting streets to enhance transit, bicycle, and pedestrian access and neighborhood livability. CATS could use such a new revenue source to meet bonding requirements for raising capital improvement funds.

Land Use Benefits

These refinements could result in the preservation of more commercial properties along Independence. Walmart is locating on a section of the corridor that will be operating as a limited-access freeway, and one would expect other retailers to follow its lead if they see market potential here, especially because east Charlotte is in need of more commercial goods and services. This fits the auto-oriented retail land use recommendation for properties along Independence and helps grow the city's tax base. These recommendations would also support more neighborhood-scale economic development opportunities along Central and Monroe as more walkable streets with improved transit service. Moreover, building complete streets infrastructure on the connecting streets would provide new multimodal transportation options for residents to access those corridors and Independence.

Community and Economic Development

During the study visit, the panel heard from various stakeholders (property owners, residents, businesses) who were concerned about value creation in their neighborhoods. They perceived that values are lower relative to other parts of the region and complained of a lack of local access to goods and services.

A lot of these market problems have stemmed from the uncertainty about the future of Independence Boulevard. By starting to make some firm decisions, Charlotte can provide certainty to the market and reverse these trends. Each one of the infrastructure options has different implications and opportunities for economic development.

In addition, the demographics of east Charlotte are changing as more immigrant groups have located into the area. These newcomers will continue to add to the area's diversity and bring new entrepreneurship to the neighborhoods and corridors.

Independence Business District

As an auto-oriented, limited-access freeway, Independence Boulevard can function as a commercial business district serving regional and local markets. This recommendation is consistent with the land use plan's identification of the Independence Business District character area as consisting of predominantly auto-oriented commercial uses such as the auto dealerships and gas stations that exist today, but the area would also include large-format and other kinds of retail.

The city's goal should be to retain as many existing businesses as feasible and to attract new ones that meet articulated community needs by preserving opportunities to attract auto-oriented commercial retail. These kinds of businesses will require high traffic volumes (currently, 70,000 vehicles per day use the corridor and 90,000 are forecast after it is converted to a limited-access freeway, which



The panel's proposed community structure mirrors the Independence Boulevard Area Plan land use map.



A new Walmart is coming to Independence Boulevard. This kind of retail development should be encouraged adjacent to the limited-access highway.

are strong numbers for retailers) and connection to regional markets (which will be improved by the freeway conversion).

These businesses require good visibility, which often results in large signage or billboards, a need that will have to be balanced with community aesthetics. They will also require clear access to and from the freeway. This need will have to be accommodated in the freeway access design, through a combination of signage and access improvements. A good example is how Walmart has successfully worked with NCDOT to allow right-in, right-out access to its site from Independence at the old Amity Gardens Shopping Center near Albemarle Road.

Retailers will also require adequate lot size to accommodate parking requirements. Limiting the size of the roadway footprint by operating transit in HOV/HOT lanes should help preserve more land for these zoning requirements. Of course, certainty of zoning is needed no matter what the land use vision, so developers and owners do not have to go through an arduous or unpredictable process to get their entitlements to build. Walmart's new investment on Independence bodes well for other retailer interest.

Nodes on high-speed, auto-oriented corridors do not create good conditions for walkability and TOD, however. The land use plan tried to strike a compromise by suggesting Transit Node character areas along Independence could achieve some pedestrian scale, but implementing that suggestion would be challenging, considering the transit's proposed location in the median of a 350-foot roadway setback.

Central and Monroe Streetcar Corridors

A better location for true walkable TOD nodes would be along Monroe Road, especially if streetcar service is available along these corridors parallel to Independence. Although Central Avenue is not covered in the land use plan, the plan does recommend a variety of character types along Monroe based on existing context, including Neighborhood Node, Neighborhood Core, a couple of Employment Districts between Wendover Road and Sardis Road North, and Neighborhood General in a lower-density area surrounding Mason Wallace Park.

The plan defines Transit Nodes and Neighborhood Nodes similarly, including mixed use, apartments, townhomes, ground-floor retail, and office primarily serving the adjacent neighborhoods with a high level of internal and external connectivity, noting the presence of transit in the former. Along Monroe, one node is mapped between Washburn Avenue and Chipley Avenue, another between Richard Drive and Commodore Street. The Neighborhood Core areas, which make up the vast majority of the Monroe Road corridor, are composed of moderate office or residential with some neighborhood-scale services. Locating streetcar on Monroe Road would further encourage implementation of this land use vision, as it is already doing on parts of Central Avenue, where it is planned to extend all the way to the Eastland Mall site east of Sharon Amity Road.

New mixed-use development along Monroe and Central should include neighborhood services that depend on local transportation and walkability, such as dry cleaners and coffee



New investment is already occurring on Elizabeth Avenue around the planned streetcar line. This kind of development should be encouraged on Monroe Road.

shops, which have small floor plans of perhaps 1,000–2,500 square feet. The zoning needs to accommodate and encourage these kinds of users in these kinds of spaces and to require an active streetscape with transparency between the buildings and the street.

From an economic development perspective, these corridors will provide a different employment opportunity from Independence. They will offer small-scale spaces that will be attractive to entrepreneurs to open new businesses, because they understand the cultural and market context of the community. The city will need to align its toolbox along with its land use regulations to allow and encourage this kind of economic investment in these corridors.

The challenge to implementing mixed-use residential development is often the perception of low-income areas (regardless of the actual market data), declining property values of existing housing stock, and few new middle-income market entrants. Tools that can help the city deal with these challenges include making corrective rezonings, using contextual and sustainable design, implementing tax increment financing, creating public/private partnerships for housing, using community

marketing campaigns, improving streetscape, obtaining foundation and philanthropic support, and taking advantage of public land assembly and entitlements.

Neighborhood Connector Streets

The connector streets between the corridors—such as Briar Creek Road/Washburn Avenue, Wendover Road/Eastway Drive, Sharon Amity Road, Idlewild Road, and Sardis Road North—can accommodate Neighborhood General, Neighborhood Core, and Neighborhood Node character areas where they intersect with transit, as recommended by the land use plan. Where these streets intersect the other corridors, more density and other uses such as commercial and employment may be appropriate.

Because of the role they play in neighborhood connectivity, the panel recommended that these streets be as complete as possible from an infrastructure perspective. That means they should be designed to comfortably accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, local buses, and private autos within their right-of-way, so they can channel users to destinations along the other corridors.

Green Infrastructure and Community Building

The land use plan also recognizes the importance of Green Connections, which it designates as a character area. These open spaces—such as along Briar Creek, Edwards Branch Creek, Campbell Creek, and McAlpine Creek—provide natural ecological functions such as stormwater management, create a sense of place through their natural features, and provide priority off-street pedestrian or bike links through the community. As such, they can offer significant transportation infrastructure by connecting to transit nodes and add value to adjacent development that has direct access to the greenway network.

Potential catalyst projects could provide a new destination along the corridor that brings the community together and create and strengthen social networks. For example, Little Sugar Creek Community Garden near uptown Charlotte is a communal food-share

garden that brings residents together to learn eco-friendly gardening techniques.

The panel suggested that the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Community Services' Charlotte Regional Farmers Market could be relocated to one of the underused properties along Independence Boulevard today. Currently located on 20 acres off Billy Graham Parkway, the market underperforms relative to other farmers markets in the state. It attracts only 600,000 annual visitors, in part because of its poor visibility, compared with about 1.4 million to 3.5 million in places such as Asheville and Raleigh.

A centrally located state farmers market would not only serve the neighborhoods around Independence Boulevard but also attract other people to the area. Farmers markets can be engines for revitalizing neighborhoods as well as a tool for creating healthier cities, and they serve as an incubator for small business development.

Farmers markets provide access to healthy food, serve as community centers, and offer opportunities for small entrepreneurs.



Concluding Thoughts and Next Steps

Charlotte has developed a national reputation for its leadership in urban planning, civic engagement, and project implementation. The Centers, Corridors and Wedges Growth Framework; the successful development of the South Corridor light rail; and the subsequent TOD that has been built along the South Corridor—even in an economic downturn—are all examples that other cities are emulating. Few cities of Charlotte’s size have the amount of engagement exhibited by Charlotte’s private sector. City leaders from around the country have visited Charlotte to learn the secrets of these successes.

The Panel’s Recommendations

Building on these successful traditions, the panel recommended establishing a task force made up of the appropriate neighborhood, business, and public sector leaders along Independence Boulevard to provide advocacy and leadership for its continuing needs. The panel’s interviews indicated that the business community has not been as engaged with planning and decision making for Independence as it needs to be.

A more formalized stakeholder organization should be of great long-term value. The benefits include gathering more information and meaningful input from a variety of stakeholders, helping build consensus among stakeholders as they build trust and discover common interests from working together, providing diverse perspectives and opportunities and challenges, and promoting a unified voice that can serve as a more effective advocate for the corridor in competition with other parts of the region and state for precious public resources.

As the city, state, and stakeholders move ahead with any implementation, they need to be clear about the difference between solu-

tions for regional challenges and those for local challenges. Trying to solve everyone’s needs in the same place can result in compromises that yield poor performance across the board. The panel also reminded Charlotte to build on its transportation and economic development experiences that have already worked well.

Most critically, the panel asked the city to think about three main refinements to all the existing plans:

- Streetcar service on Monroe Road in addition to Central Avenue (with a possible loop) to serve local transportation needs;
- BRT service on Independence in shared HOV/HOT lanes to serve regional transportation needs, minimize property impacts and costs, and create a revenue stream that can be used for transit or local improvements; and
- Promotion of auto-oriented commercial retail along Independence and neighborhood-serving mixed use along Monroe to provide local community and economic development needs.

One must acknowledge that the current transportation and land use plans face financial hurdles for implementation and have unclear time frames for implementation. This situation has added to the uncertainty and frustration the panel heard from stakeholders. In light of these challenges, the panel believed that its suggestions could provide significant community benefits that also address regional needs at lower costs. These suggestions could give Charlotte the potential for quicker implementation of the goals of the existing plans, while providing more certainty for the private market to make investment decisions in the corridor and east Charlotte.

Next Steps

As its homework assignment, the panel asked the city's fellowship team to share these recommendations with state and local officials, public stakeholders, property owners, and the development community. It also asked the fellows to continue Charlotte's tradition of effective planning and engagement by assembling a stakeholder task force.

Following up on this assignment, the fellows in July 2011 convened a task force of key stakeholders moderated by Rose Center staff to develop consensus on implementation strategies for future transportation infrastructure within the Southeast Corridor that will accelerate improvements for local and regional mobility and support land use, economic development, and quality-of-life goals. Over the course of three meetings that concluded in September 2011, the task force developed an outline of expected deliverables, guiding principles and evaluation

measures for proposed implementation strategies, and a plan of action for implementation by the city of Charlotte and the MTC.

Next steps for the other panel recommendations include the following:

- Continuing to implement the vision of the land use plan, such as securing a location for the Charlotte Regional Farmers Market, retaining businesses within the corridor, assisting development of the catalyst sites identified in the plan area, and seeking funding for the voluntary acquisition program for Independence Boulevard and the Monroe Road Streetscape Plan; and
- Seeking policy actions to remove the special provision for the median of Independence that would allow a near-term transit project within the HOT lanes, retaining rail transit in the east Charlotte area, and studying new, long-term alternatives for rapid transit.

A stakeholder task force meeting July 16, 2011.



About the Fellows and the Panel

DANIEL ROSE CHARLOTTE FELLOWS

Anthony Foxx

Anthony Foxx is mayor of the city of Charlotte. He began his political career in 2005 with his election to the City Council as an at-large representative and served two terms before being elected mayor in 2009. As a Council member, he chaired the Transportation Committee and was a member of the Economic Development and Planning Committee. He was Council's Representative to the Charlotte Mecklenburg Development Corporation and the Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Foxx received his law degree from New York University School of Law as a Root-Tilden Scholar, the university's prestigious public service scholarship, and his bachelor's degree in history from Davidson College. He is a member of the Mecklenburg County Bar and a graduate of its Leadership Institute.

Since 2002, Foxx has been a member the Mecklenburg County Education Budget Advisory Committee. He has served on the boards of the Mecklenburg County Bar Foundation, Community School of the Arts, Trust for Public Land (Carolinas Region), Focus on Future Leaders, and YMCA Camp Thunderbird. He has been recognized as one of the *Charlotte Business Journal's* "40 under 40" and is a recipient of the North Carolina Bar Association's Citizen Lawyer Award.

Before joining DesignLine Corporation as deputy general counsel, he was an attorney at Hunton & Williams law firm. He also served as a law clerk for the United States Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, a trial attorney for the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice, and a staff counsel to the United States House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary.

Debra Campbell

As planning director for the joint City-County Planning Department, Debra Campbell is responsible for planning services for the city of Charlotte and works closely with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission. The department oversees rezoning, historic district designation, subdivision administration, annexation, and capital needs assessment processes. It also provides staff support for long-range transportation planning (Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization), zoning administration, and interpretation.

Campbell joined the City-County Planning Department in 1988 as a senior planner and held several positions, including interim director, assistant planning director, and planning division manager, before being named planning director in 2004. She began her full-time public service career with the Tennessee State Planning Office and was a housing consultant with the Enterprise Foundation/Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise before moving to Charlotte.

She received her master's degree in public administration and her bachelor's degree in urban planning from Middle Tennessee State University.

Campbell is a member of the American Planning Association, the Urban Land Institute, and the National Forum for Black Public Administrators. She serves on the board of directors of Charlotte Center City Partners, Center for Real Estate at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation for the Carolinas, Catawba Lands Conservancy, and the Metropolitan YMCA of Greater Charlotte. She is a graduate of Leadership Charlotte.

Gene Conti

North Carolina transportation secretary Gene Conti has more than 30 years of public service and private business management experience. From 2001 to 2003, Conti served as chief deputy secretary for the North Carolina Department of Transportation. He was responsible for cash management, safety initiatives, transportation planning and programming, and technology.

Before his appointment to chief deputy secretary in 2001, Conti served three years as assistant secretary for transportation policy at the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). He was a principal adviser to U.S. DOT secretary Rodney Slater on infrastructure, finance, transportation safety, environmental impacts, economic growth, technology and mobility, and strategic planning.

Conti worked as district director for PBS&J's mid-South district, overseeing all business development efforts and community relations. Given his background and expertise, he consults nationally on transportation finance, programming, and management issues.

This is Conti's second cabinet-level appointment. From 1995 to 1998, he served as secretary of the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.

Danny Pleasant

As director of the Department of Transportation for the city of Charlotte, Danny Pleasant is responsible for road and transportation planning and operations, including policy development and neighborhood traffic projects (street lights, street and sidewalk construction and maintenance, traffic signal operations, pedestrian and bicycle programs, and right-of-way management). He also oversees capital project prioritization.

The department is responsible for 2,100 miles of streets and traffic signals at more than 630 intersections. It also provides planning services for the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization and recently developed a Transportation Action Plan to deal with expected growth in the next 25 years.

Pleasant joined the city of Charlotte in 2002, following a 14-year career as transportation planning bureau chief for the city of Orlando, Florida. He also worked as a transportation planner for the cities of Atlanta, Georgia, and Chapel Hill and Fayetteville, North Carolina.

He received his master's degree in urban planning from Texas A&M University and his bachelor's degree in parks and recreation administration from North Carolina State University. While a student at Texas A&M, he worked as a research associate with the Texas Transportation Institute.

Pleasant is a fellow of the Institute of Transportation Engineers and a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners, the Urban Land Institute, and the Congress for the New Urbanism. He is affiliated with Walkable Communities and has served on several of its expert advisory teams focusing on finding solutions to urban design problems.

CONSULTING FELLOW

Jim Schumacher

As an assistant city manager for the city of Charlotte, James W. (Jim) Schumacher is responsible for developing policies that guide and manage the growth of the city. This involves coordination of the Transportation Focus Area with planning, transportation, land use, and economic development initiatives. He also represents the city on issues related to the Charlotte Bobcats NBA team and arena, as well as the Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority and NASCAR Hall of Fame. Schumacher leads the "Run the Business" work team and the staff team managing construction of the NASCAR Hall of Fame Complex.

Schumacher joined the city of Charlotte in 1978 as a staff engineer and held a number of positions in the Engineering & Property Management Department before being named city engineer in 1999. His responsibilities included creation of Charlotte's stormwater utility and obtaining the city's stormwater quality permit, the first in North Carolina.

As city engineer, he led the project design and construction team for the new Charlotte Arena,

directed the extensive infrastructure improvements along the South Boulevard Corridor, the improvements in the Convention Center that allow the trolley and light-rail trains to pass through the building, and many other public works projects. He participated in the public/private team that won the NASCAR Hall of Fame and is now leading design and construction of the Hall. He has an outstanding history of completing projects on time and on or under budget. He began his full-time public service career in 1977 with the West Virginia Department of Highways.

Schmuacher received his bachelor's degree in civil engineering from West Virginia University and is a licensed professional engineer. He is a board member and past president of the National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies and served as president of the Water Resources Division of the North Carolina Chapter of the American Public Works Association. He is a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

ROSE CENTER CHARLOTTE FACULTY AND STUDY VISIT PANEL COCHAIRS

Hilary Bertsch

As an architect and associate principal at EE&K Architects/Perkins Eastman, Hilary Bertsch has a broad range of experience in the implementation of large-scale mixed-use developments, including waterfronts, transit centers, and urban retail complexes across the country.

Her sensitivity to existing urban contexts and her success in carrying out the firm's unique design vision results in reimagined and reinvigorated communities for their users. This expertise in leading project teams in the creation of new public environments that create lasting value for clients in both the private and public sectors is at the heart of some of the firm's most high-profile projects, including the firm's current work at Buffalo's Inner Harbor. Bertsch is leading the project team through this dynamic, complex redevelopment effort, commonly referred to as "Canal Side," which comprises over 20 acres of Erie Canal waterfront and \$300 million in public and private investment.

Bertsch holds a master of architecture degree from the University of Texas-Austin and a bachelor of arts degree in computer science and economics from Brown University.

Carlton Brown

Carlton A. Brown is a founding partner and chief operating officer of Full Spectrum. He is a 1973 graduate of Princeton University School of Architecture and Urban Planning. He has also studied real estate finance at New York University.

After college, Brown worked for architecture and planning firms until 1976, when he joined AT&T as a manager in the real estate division. During his ten-year tenure at AT&T, he directed the development and construction of over \$2 billion of real estate for the company. His experience included corporate planning, site acquisition, facilities development, and project design and leasing for high-performance laboratories, data centers, and office facilities.

Brown's vision has led Full Spectrum to be recognized as a national leader in the development of affordable green or smart buildings in emerging urban markets. Brown is currently leading Full Spectrum's pioneering development of a 14-square-block green, mixed-use development in downtown Jackson, Mississippi, which will feature community scaled green infrastructure, 4,000 units of mixed-income housing, and nearly a million square feet of office and retail space.

Brown believes that all communities, regardless of race, ethnicity, or income, are entitled to a sustainable future and is committed to ensuring that all Full Spectrum's development projects meet these high performance standards. Since assuming leadership for development, Brown has led Full Spectrum in the development of more than \$300 million in green development and in boosting Full Spectrum to the Black Enterprise top 100 Companies in 2008 and *Inc.* magazine's list of Green Companies to Watch in 2008.

Brown serves on several boards, including AIA New York, 651 Arts, Global Green, and the national board of the U.S. Green Building Council. He has been designated as a "thought leader" by

the Clinton Global Initiative for his “leadership on climate change and sustainable equitable development.” Brown is member of New York City mayor Mike Bloomberg’s Sustainability Advisory Board, which is tasked with establishing and meeting 2030 goals for sustainability for the city.

ROSE CENTER CHARLOTTE STUDY VISIT PANELISTS

Cathy Crenshaw

Catherine Sloss Crenshaw is president and CEO of Sloss Real Estate, a multidiscipline commercial real estate firm in Birmingham, Alabama. Under her leadership, the company focuses on urban development and revitalization in Birmingham’s city center and other projects that incorporate “healthy city” design principles. The company’s projects include renovation of historic buildings, construction of new buildings that honor their surroundings, and provision of planning services and land use consulting to various projects throughout the Birmingham region.

An active member of the Urban Land Institute, Crenshaw has served on its Inner City Council. Currently, she is on the national steering committee for LOCUS, a network of real estate developers and investors who advocate for sustainable, walkable development. She created and manages the Pepper Place Saturday Market, a nationally recognized public market, and has been on the Farmers Market Advisory Board of the Ford Foundation.

A recognized civic leader, Crenshaw serves on the boards of the Lakeshore Foundation, the Birmingham Museum of Art, Leadership Birmingham, and Auburn University Center for Architecture and Urban Studies. She is a member of the University of Alabama at Birmingham President’s Advisory Board and the University of Alabama Board of Regents. She also served on the steering committee for a comprehensive update of Birmingham’s City Center Master Plan.

Crenshaw attended Harvard University in 2007 and 2008, first as a Loeb Fellow at the Graduate School of Design and then as a visiting scholar.

While there she worked to improve her knowledge of good design principles and green building. She also studied innovative models for mixed-income, mixed-use neighborhoods and is interested in building green neighborhoods and cities through the preservation and creation of urban trees and urban forests. Crenshaw has a broad working knowledge of farmers markets in the preservation of small family farms, the revitalization of urban centers, and the health of communities and low-income citizens.

Karla Henderson

Daniel Rose Detroit Fellow

Karla Henderson was appointed by Mayor Dave Bing as the group executive of planning and facilities on August 2, 2011. With more than 14 years of increasingly responsible management experience in the administration of public services and resources, Henderson oversees the Buildings, Safety Engineering and Environmental Department, Building Authority, Planning and Development Department, Land Use plan and the Mayor’s Demolition Program. Henderson’s original appointment by Mayor Bing was as the director of the Buildings, Safety and Engineering Department in July 2009.

Prior to joining the city of Detroit, Henderson was manager of the Field Operations Services Unit for the city of Ann Arbor. In this capacity she was responsible for the overall management and strategic planning for the unit, including planning, coordinating, and directing the operations of the water, sewer, storm utility system; park operations and forestry; natural area preservation; refuse and recycling collection; street maintenance; signs and signals; radios; technical services; and the compost center. She also participated in labor management processes.

From 1996 to 2001, Henderson served as director of special programs for the city of Highland Park, Michigan. Her primary responsibilities were developing operational budgets, developing a master plan, supervising and directing staff, maintaining city facilities, and evaluating community needs, future programs, and special events for the city.

Henderson holds a BS in public resource management from the Michigan State University and resides in Detroit.

Glenda Hood

Rose Center Advisory Board Member

Glenda E. Hood served as Florida secretary of state from 2003 to 2005 and as mayor of Orlando from 1992 to 2003. Before being elected Orlando's first woman mayor, she served as a City Council member for 12 years and was president of her own public relations firm.

As mayor, Hood was a strong advocate of growth management strategies and smart growth principles to build safe, livable neighborhoods, revitalized downtowns, and strong local economies. Under her leadership, the city's land area grew by 50 percent; older and historic in-town neighborhoods were revitalized; compatible new mixed-use infill was constructed; the city's largest parks initiative built new parks and refurbished existing ones; unprecedented partnerships in education were established; transportation alternatives were championed; Orlando became a high-tech center and competitive world marketplace; and the arts became a civic priority.

She spearheaded the reuse plan for the Orlando Naval Training Center, the most ambitious economic development project in the city's history, which has been recognized across the country as one of the finest examples of reuse of former government properties and a model for incorporating all elements of smart growth. She has been a key adviser on domestic security and disaster preparedness for the state of Florida and the federal Department of Homeland Security.

As secretary of state, Hood was responsible for the Department's Divisions of Administrative Services, Corporations, Cultural Affairs, Elections, Historical Resources, and Library and Information Services.

Hood has served as president of the National League of Cities and the Florida League of Cities, and as chair of the Florida Chamber of Commerce. She is a fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration; an active participant with the

Urban Land Institute's Advisory Services panels and ULI's Daniel Rose Center for Land Use and Leadership; and long-standing board member and past board chair of Partners for Livable Communities. She serves on the corporate boards of Santa Fe HealthCare, Baskerville-Donovan, Inc., and Urban Trust Bank as well as Florida's Blood Centers and Florida Trust for Historic Preservation.

Hood is president of Hood Partners LLC, a business development and consulting group.

Jeremy Klop

Jeremy Klop brings over a decade of experience in multimodal transportation planning, modeling, and operations analysis. With this integrated understanding of both the multimodal planning and operation implications, he provides a wide range of services, including complete streets policy and design; multimodal transportation planning in campus, medical, and downtown settings; transit operations and signal priority; corridor studies and livable street design; and smart growth modeling and forecasting.

In addition to project experience, Klop publishes and presents on the relationship between urban form and trip generation, complete streets, and bicycle and pedestrian facility planning, including a role as coauthor for the Bicycle and Pedestrian chapter in the *ITE Transportation Planning Handbook* (2009).

He is a member of the American Planning Association and the Institute of Transportation Engineers, and currently serves as the vice president of communications for the Colorado American Planning Association.

Thomas Kronemeyer

Thomas Kronemeyer is an associate principal with Community Design + Architecture, an urban design and planning firm based in Oakland, California.

He has 17 years of experience in the fields of urban design and city planning, and during this time he gained broad expertise in the design of multimodal transportation corridors, streets, and transit facilities. His work focuses on the

successful integration of urban design, land use, and transportation with an emphasis on pedestrian- and transit-oriented design.

Kronmeyer holds master's degrees from the University of California at Berkeley in city planning and landscape architecture and a Diplom Ingenieur degree in landscape architecture from the Technical University in Hanover, Germany.

Mike McKeever

Daniel Rose Sacramento Fellow

Mike McKeever was appointed executive director of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) board of directors on December 17, 2004. Previously, McKeever was project manager of the Blueprint Project at SACOG.

Over his 30-year career specializing in the field of planning, he has owned and managed two private businesses that specialized in working with local governments on innovative multijurisdictional projects. He has been instrumental in developing cutting-edge planning techniques to integrate land use and transportation planning.

McKeever was the founder and president of McKeever/Morris for 13 years and then a senior supervising planner for Parsons Brinckerhoff before joining SACOG as blueprint project manager in 2001. More recently, McKeever was the principal creator of PLACE3S planning method and software, designed to help professional and citizen planners understand the connections between land use, transportation, and air quality issues. He has authored several manuals and guidebooks on various aspects of local government collaboration and has taught "Stretching Community Dollars" seminars throughout California for the City, County, Schools Partnership.

McKeever has also been involved in projects with the Sacramento Regional Transit District and regional planning projects in Portland, Oregon; Salem, Oregon; San Diego, California; San Francisco, California; Chicago, Illinois; Albuquerque, New Mexico; Austin, Texas; and Victoria, British Columbia. He is a native of Nampa, Idaho, and received his BA with honors from the University of Oregon.

John Sedlak

Daniel Rose Houston Fellow

John Sedlak is the executive vice president and director of strategic partnering at the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (Houston METRO). His primary responsibility is to assist the president and CEO and to provide a focus on building and sustaining partnerships with stakeholder organizations across the Houston-Galveston region, one of METRO's strategic priorities.

Since joining METRO in 1983, Sedlak has served as director of facilities design; assistant general manager of planning and development; and vice president of planning, engineering, and construction. He was responsible for the development of METRO's Capital Program, including the 100-mile HOV lane system (largest in the United States); all transit facilities, including transit centers and park-and-ride lots; METRO's Administration Building; and METRO's first light-rail line.

Before joining Houston METRO, Sedlak worked with the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) for nine years on the planning, design, construction, and operational start-up of the \$2 billion first phase of the Atlanta Rapid Rail System. As MARTA's manager of architecture, Sedlak was responsible for the architectural design management of all public transit facilities.

Sedlak is a graduate of the Pennsylvania State University with a bachelor of architecture degree and a master of science degree in architecture and urban planning. He is a registered architect and serves on several national transit and transportation committees dealing with the planning and design of transit facilities and project management. He has participated as a member of the Urban Land Institute and as a member of a federal international study team examining the design and operation of transit systems in South America. Sedlak is also a lecturer at the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Rice University on Urban Transportation Planning and Engineering.



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