



Questions from Citizen Advisory Group Meeting #3

September 17, 2009

Land Use and Air Quality

What are non-road mobile sources? Does it include airports?

Non-road mobile sources are vehicles or equipment that have combustion engines, but do not operate on highways and roads. This category of air pollution sources includes construction equipment, lawn maintenance equipment, watercrafts and agricultural equipment. Airplanes, as well as ground support equipment at airports are considered “non-road mobile” sources of air pollution. However, not all sources of air pollution at airports are considered to be in the nonroad category. For example, fuel storage tanks and generators are considered “stationary” sources and cars, trucks and buses are referred to as “highway mobile” sources.

What times of the year do we have air quality violations?

In the Charlotte region, our pollutant of greatest concern is ground-level ozone. Ground-level ozone is a secondary pollutant formed from two primary pollutants (nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds) on hot summer days. Because sunlight is the key to ground-level ozone generation, the summer months are when the Charlotte region sees most of its violations of National Ambient Air Quality Standard for ground-level ozone.

Mecklenburg County is currently meets the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, and nitrogen dioxide.

To stay informed about when our region is expecting poor air quality days, residents can sign up to receive the Charlotte regional air quality forecast from the NC Division of Air Quality. Subscribe for free at www.enviroflash.info.

How many violations did we have this summer (2009)?

In 2009, Mecklenburg County has exceeded the current ozone standard on three days. If you expand to looking at the entire eight county Charlotte region, that number increases to five exceedance days.

Mecklenburg County has up-to-the-minute air quality data available on its website: <http://airquality.charmeck.org>. For regional information, or to compare air quality across the county, visit the Environmental Protection Agency’s air quality data clearinghouse: www.airnow.gov.

How many violations did we have in Mecklenburg County in 2007 and 2008?

The chart below illustrates cumulative ozone exceedance days (days that one or more monitors exceed .075 ppm) from the past three years in the eight-county Charlotte region.

Charlotte Regional Exceedance Days			
	2007	2008	2009
Orange (<i>unhealthy for sensitive groups</i>)	50	25	5
Red (<i>unhealthy</i>)	5	3	0
Purple (<i>very unhealthy</i>)	1	0	0
Total	56	28	5

Transportation and Air Quality

How is the connectivity index measured?

The Connectivity Index is a ratio measure calculated in dividing the number of links (street segments) by the number of nodes (intersections and cul-de-sacs). The Steele Creek Area has a connectivity index of 1.16. As an Objective of its adopted Transportation Action Plan, the City will seek to increase its connectivity ratio for areas like Steele Creek to 1.35 by 2015.

How does this interact with transit system?

More through street connectivity affords CATS more routing options for bus service.

Will transit come to this area?

Following the adopted system plan, rapid transit is already completed for the South Corridor with the new LYNX line. Additional transit may be provided in the form of bus routes, both local and express.

Are we going with the spokes and wedges plan?

Charlotte does have a mostly hub-and-spokes transit system, where most routes converge on a strong central business district. Suburb-to-suburb commutes are more difficult to serve with fixed-route transit.

Park, Nature Preserves and Greenways

What is the process for deciding park amenities?

The process for determining park amenities is twofold:

1. P&R uses survey response data compiled for the 2008 Park and Recreation Master Plan and supplements it with national park amenity demand data to determine which amenities are lacking in the county, as well as in specific park service radii.
2. When developing a vacant site or significantly altering the composition of an existing park, P&R holds a series of Master Plan Community Workshops to gather input from the community on what amenities are most needed at that location. This procedure is critical to successfully planning a park and input gathered offers an excellent guideline to meeting community needs.

What is the status of the 2008 Park and Recreation Bonds?

The status of the 2008 Park Bonds is equivalent to the bond situation for nearly every other department in County government: \$250 million was passed by voters last November. These funds will be used to update existing parks, build new parks, greenways, recreation centers, and purchase land for future development and preservation. However, due to the economic downturn, the County has instituted a strict debt diet wherein no new bonds will be sold for a period of time. The County has not made a decision on when bonds will be sold again, but it is anticipated to occur sometime in 2010. Furthermore, it is unclear the amount of bonds, and therefore, P&R's share of bonds, that will be initially sold.

How can I find out about events at McDowell Nature Preserve?

Events at McDowell Nature Preserve, as well as all P&R facilities, are posted on the P&R website: www.parkandrec.com. Events are also covered in the "Get Going Guide", a P&R publication that can be picked up for free at most P&R facilities. Many events are press released and are addressed in print, video, and audio media.

Utilities

Where will the new pump station be built?

The new Steele Creek pump station will be built behind the existing pump station, which is located on Choate Circle near the bridge crossing over Steele Creek.

Can greenways be coordinated with the construction of the new pump station?

CMU is coordinating with Parks and Recreation to plan for potential greenways.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities once considered a water treatment plant on Lake Wylie---any information on this matter?

CMU has no current plans for a water treatment facility on Lake Wylie, but does own some property which could be utilized in the future for a raw water intake or a water treatment plant.

Is Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities coordinating any efforts for water conservation because of drought situation (i.e. low flush toilets, smart irrigation, etc.)?

Our river basin is not in a declared drought situation. We are down less than 1 inch in rainfall from the norm for this time of year. The lake levels are sitting at 98% of the target elevations for October and the stream flow is recording normal activity. We are currently in a stage 0 drought status. We evaluate conditions every week and coordinate with the 20 other agencies in the basin monthly.

As for the water conservation – we are always promoting and encouraging water conservation. No, we do not have a toilet replacement program (no money) however we do have a smart irrigation program called Liquid Assets that is actively working with large irrigation users to get them to convert to smart controllers. It is a partnership with the NC Green Industry Council. I hold workshops on this program every month; the next one is scheduled for October 28th at Dukes from 10 – noon. Registration is required. It is only available to commercial customers right now. We will include residential customers in the spring.