

THE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT COMMISSION AND CENTRALINA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS PRESENT THE

# Regional Transit Summit 2018



Thursday, May 17, 2018

UNC Charlotte Main Campus • Popp Martin Student Union



  
**CONNECT**  
*Our Future*  
Vibrant Communities - Robust Region

# Welcome

## Philip Dubois

*Chancellor, UNC Charlotte*

Philip Dubois became UNC Charlotte's fourth chancellor in July 2005. Now in his thirteenth year as Chancellor, Dubois has focused his efforts on building the University's visibility and support in the Charlotte region; long-range planning for an expected enrollment of 35,000 students; completion of key capital construction projects including UNC Charlotte Center City, and implementation of an intercollegiate football program. Dubois has many accomplishments including the Higher Education Civic Engagement Award from the Washington Center (2016), the World Affairs Council of Charlotte's World Citizen Award (2016), the CASE III Inclusion and Diversity Leadership Award (2015), and the Charlotte Regional Partnership "Jerry" Award (2009, for public sector contributions to economic development). Dubois attended the University of California, Davis, where he graduated with highest honors in 1972 with an undergraduate degree in political science. He then earned master's (1974) and doctoral (1978) degrees in the field from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



## Our Keynote Speakers



## John Martin

*Transportation Futurist, President and CEO, Southeastern Institute of Research, Inc.*

John W. Martin is a futurist, mobility expert, award-winning author and the CEO of Southeastern Institute of Research, Inc. (SIR), a strategic consultancy headquartered in Richmond, Virginia. Founded in 1964, SIR helps corporations, government agencies, universities, nonprofits, and even entire communities understand what tomorrow will bring and what to do about it today.

John is also the founder and managing partner of SIR's Institute for Tomorrow. The Institute is a national research-based think tank that identifies and reports on major demographic and cultural trends shaping America's future. Tapping into over 50 years of SIR's research and insights expertise, the Institute for Tomorrow has helped hundreds of organizations connect the dots and navigate the changes ahead.

No stranger to the stage, John has delivered hundreds of eye-opening keynote presentations on the future of transportation for transit agencies, TDM organizations, MPOs, and DOT's. His insights have also been sought out by organizations like Walmart, Google, Circle K, AARP, Wells Fargo, and even the rocket scientists at NASA.

Frequently sought out by the media for his opinions and insights, he's appeared on *NBC, CBS, CNBC*, and in articles in *BusinessWeek, TIME, The Washington Post, The New York Times* and countless others. Along with his business partner Matt Thornhill, he's the co-author of the acclaimed book, *Boomer Consumer*.

## Maria Garcia Berry

*Founder & Chairman of the Board, CRL Associates, Inc.*

Maria Garcia Berry is the guiding force behind what is today one of the most influential public affairs firms in Colorado. Serving a broad spectrum of clients from transportation to professional sports teams to real estate developers – the services of Ms. Garcia Berry and her associates are sought by clients across the United States.

There are few transportation projects in Denver that have not felt her effect, including FasTracks, the nation's largest proposed mass transit expansion effort at the time; the I-25 T-REX Project completed in 2006, which reconstructed 17 miles of two interstate highways while simultaneously adding 19 miles of light rail; and the redevelopment of Denver's Union Station. She is a much sought-after consultant for other locales striving to bring an integrated and comprehensive transportation program to their area. She has been a strategic consultant to a number of transportation-related initiatives around the country, including a transportation master plan for the seven-county Tampa Bay region adopted by the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA) and a regional transportation referendum in the 10-county Atlanta region to fund transportation improvements.

As chairman of the board of CRL Associates, Inc., she successfully manages CRL's broad client base that includes a variety of high-profile projects such as the transformation of the 125-acre National Western Center in north Denver, the Master Plan and redevelopment of the former Stapleton International Airport and the completion of Denver's Pepsi Center, Coors Field, Sports Authority Field at Mile High.

Highly respected for her skills in negotiation, mediation and advocacy, Ms. Garcia Berry is experienced at forging links between diverse interests and groups. She is widely recognized in her field for her expertise in government and public decision-making, strategic planning, coalition building, crisis communications, community outreach, public positioning, and legislative advocacy.

Maria Garcia Berry joined the board of the Latino Leadership Institute; serves on the Rose Community Foundation's Committee on Aging and recently joined two national boards: the Cuba Emprende Foundation and the Cuba Study Group. Ms. Garcia Berry is a member of the Urban Land Institute.

She is married to Chuck Berry, currently the CEO and president of Colorado's Association of Commerce, and Industry and formerly Colorado's Speaker of the House. They have three children.



Time	Session
8:30 – 9:00 AM	Registration and Networking Coffee
9:00 – 9:45 AM	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>John Lewis, CEO, Charlotte Area Transit System  Ron Smith, Executive Director, Centralina Council of Governments  Philip Dubois, Chancellor, UNC Charlotte  The Honorable John Torbett, NC State Representative, District 108</p>
9:45 – 10:45 AM	<p><b>Winning Communities and Regions – What Does it Take?</b></p> <p>John Martin, President/CEO, Southeastern Institute of Research, Inc.</p> <p>In this era of globalization, regions around the world compete for talent and industry to foster economic vitality for current and future residents. Change is rapid. Shifts in demographics and the values they represent have an enormous impact on markets, preferences, and the choices people have about where to live. Join us for a look into the future, to hear how building livable communities with transit fits in. John Martin is a national leader and futurist. Using his firm's research-inspired lens, he will not only identify the major headwinds, but also the positive tailwinds shaping the future of transit oriented development (TOD) and equitable-living communities. Don't be discouraged, long-term trends are in our favor. Learn how to make the case and why our work is so important.</p>
10:45 – 11:00 AM	Break
11:00 – 11:30 AM	<p><b>Statewide and Regional Context</b></p> <p>Debbie Collins, Director, NCDOT Public Transportation Division  Michelle Nance, Planning Director, Centralina Council of Governments</p> <p>As our region grows, how do we ensure that people of all ages, income levels and abilities remain connected to their communities and have the means to access services, amenities and employment opportunities? A variety of mobility options and cross-county coordination will be key. Learn about the NCDOT's Public Transportation Statewide Strategic Plan and the key strategies recommended for our region, and hear the results of an 8-county listening tour and public survey that speak to our region's next best steps in terms of transit mobility.</p>
11:30 – 12:15 PM	<p><b>Transit as a Regional Economic Development Strategy</b></p> <p>Moderator: Ned Curran, President, Northwood Office  Stephen Allen, Planning Services Manager, York County  Jonathan Marshall, Deputy County Manager, Cabarrus County  Earl Mathers, County Manager, Gaston County</p> <p>Companies like Amazon are being very clear about the importance of regional transit in their selection process and local businesses are including transportation in their conversations about expansion and reinvestment. What does the business community need in terms of transportation for their employees and how might regional transit help local communities and the region attract and retain jobs and remain globally competitive?</p>
12:15 – 12:30 PM	Lunch Served
12:30 – 1:30 PM	<p><b>Transit as a Catalyst for a Winning Region – A Denver Case Study</b></p> <p>Maria Garcia Berry, Founder &amp; Chairman of the Board, CRL Associates, Inc.</p> <p>Denver, CO is known for its connected multimodal transportation system that provides viable travel choices. The Regional Transportation District (RTD) FasTracks program greatly expanded regional mobility for all, but it took a regional effort to make it happen. Learn how Colorado-based practitioners and elected officials worked together to develop a state-of-the-art transit system to increase mobility for the region. Hear about the partnerships necessary for their success, how smaller/suburban communities have benefitted from the system, learn about the challenges they overcame, and their next steps for continued collaboration.</p>
1:30 – 1:45 PM	Break
1:45 – 2:40 PM	<p><b>CONNECTing Our Future – A Regional Call to Action</b></p> <p>Moderator: John Martin, President/CEO, Southeastern Institute of Research, Inc.  Mayor Miles Atkins, Mayor Pro Tem Julie Eiselt, Mayor Walker Reid, The Honorable Gary Simrill, SC State Representative, District 46</p> <p>A regional transit planning effort emerged as a clear next step from the 2017 Metropolitan Transit Commission and Centralina Council of Governments' work. Elected leaders from across the bi-state region will provide their views on the benefits that transit could provide for communities, the need for a shared regional transit vision, and the importance of multi-jurisdictional leadership and cooperation.</p>
2:40 – 2:50 PM	<p><b>Wrap Up and Next Steps</b></p> <p>John Martin, President/CEO, Southeastern Institute of Research, Inc.</p>

## Summit Speakers



**Stephen Allen** AICP, is currently the Planning Services Manager for York County. He has served as Planning Services Manager for York County for the past 12 years. Prior to joining York County, he worked 12 years in progressive current and long-range planning positions in Colorado, Washington and Oregon. He has a BS in Geography from Portland State University, and a MA in Urban and Regional Planning, with a concentration in Transportation Planning, from University of Colorado – Denver. In his present position, he coordinates long range, transportation, open space, and historic preservation planning initiatives with local, regional and state agencies addressing impacts of being one of the fastest growing areas in the country.



**Miles Atkins** serves as the Mayor of the Town of Mooresville and also works as the Director of Corporate Affairs and Government Relations for Iredell Health System. In his role as Mayor, he serves on various elected boards and committees including: US Conference of Mayors, National League of Cities, NC Metropolitan Mayors Coalition, Centralina Economic Development Commission and others. Originally from Tampa, Florida, Miles began his career in sales and marketing and was recruited to Charlotte to work in the communications industry. He has since worked in key business development, sales and product marketing, and market development services.



**Debbie Collins** is Public Transportation Division Director at the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) where she oversees the day-to-day operations of the division fostering the development of intercity, urban and rural public transportation in North Carolina. Debbie comes to NCDOT from NC State University's Institute for Transportation Research and Education (ITRE) where she previously served as Co-Director of the Institute's Public Transportation Group, as well as Program Manager for the Urban Transit Assistance Program and Manager of the North Carolina Transit Program. She is a 1977 graduate of Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, VA. where she received a BA in Economics and Political Science. She also holds a MS in Civil Engineering from the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, VA.



**Ned Curran** is CEO Emeritus of Northwood Office. With a career in commercial real estate and accounting spanning nearly 40 years, Curran most recently served as president of the company overseeing strategy and daily operations. He will continue to stay involved in an advisory capacity. Previously, he was President and CEO of The Bissell Companies. Before joining Bissell, Curran worked at McDevitt Street Bovis (MSB) as Vice President – Taxes. Before working at MSB, Curran began his professional career as a CPA with Ernst & Young, where he served as Director of Tax for the Charlotte office. Curran serves on the boards of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, Charlotte Executive Leadership Council, ARIC and Street Management Company and is the Past Chair of the North Carolina Board of Transportation, the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce and the United Way of Central Carolinas.



**Julie Eiselt** was elected in 2015 and is serving her second term on Charlotte City Council. On December 4, 2017, Eiselt was selected by her colleagues to serve as Mayor Pro Tem. Eiselt earned a BA in Spanish from Indiana University and a MA in international management/finance from the American Graduate School of International Management in Arizona. Eiselt moved to Charlotte in 1998 and in 2007, founded Neighbors for a Safer Charlotte (NSC). Most recently, Eiselt has focused her civic engagement in the area of public education, advocating at both the local and state levels for increases in teacher pay and resources for students. Eiselt participates in the following Mayor-appointed council committees: Community Safety and Transportation and Planning.



**Anthony "Tony" Lathrop** joined the NC Board of Transportation in March 2017, as an At-Large Member, where he chairs the Finance Committee and serves on the Multimodal Committee. He was a member of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Planning Commission from 2011-2017 and served as its chair from 2014-2017. He currently chairs the Charlotte Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Advisory Committee. Lathrop is a partner with the law firm of Moore & Van Allen, PLLC in Charlotte, where he specializes in commercial litigation, zoning, land use and dispute resolution. A resident of Charlotte, Lathrop holds both undergraduate and law degrees from UNC Chapel Hill.



**John Lewis** is the Chief Executive Officer of the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS), where he led a significant stage of growth to construct the LYNX Blue Line, advance the CityLYNX Gold Line, and advance the long-term transit plan. His initial focus is on customer service and ensuring a safe and reliable transit system for the region. He is the former CEO of the Central Florida Regional Transit Authority where he provided strategic leadership to Central Florida's primary mass transit system. Lewis held several leadership positions as the CEO of the Greater Richmond Transit Company and served as Director of Rail Operations and Director of Bus Operations with the Maryland Transit Administration. Lewis is a graduate of Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania and holds a BA in Political Science.



**Jonathan Marshall** AICP, is the Deputy County Manager in Cabarrus County. Marshall joined Cabarrus County in 1988 as a land use planner. During his tenure, he has held the positions of Senior Planner, Planning and Zoning Director, Commerce Director and now Deputy County Manager. He is an appointed board member for the Water and Sewer Authority of Cabarrus County and the Concord Downtown Development Corporation. He is a graduate of UNC Chapel Hill and has been accredited as a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners since 1994.



**Earl Mathers** is the Gaston County Manager and assumed his duties in 2014 after serving for seven and one-half years in a similar capacity for Gallatin County, Montana. While his career path has been far from linear, Earl has worked in public and non-profit administration for more than thirty years. After obtaining a BA from the University of Montana, an MPA from the University of Wyoming and an Economic Development Finance Professional certification from the National Development Council, he worked in economic development and public management in Wyoming for ten years. During that time, he also performed a series of short-term consulting assignments assisting local governments in Russia with the formation of economic and community development capacity. This led to long-term assignments in Lithuania and Romania. Subsequently, he worked in the Washington, DC area for eight years and most of that time was spent as a Senior Executive with the Graduate School, USA.



**Michelle Nance** AICP, is the Planning Director for Centralina Council of Governments. Her work is focused on helping local governments address shared, long-term issues through collaboration and partnerships. She is the former Director of Planning and Development Services for the City of Gastonia, and has over 23 years of experience in state, regional, and local government planning and governance. Michelle holds an undergraduate degree in Planning and a MPA from East Carolina University. In 2017, Michelle was honored as one of the 50 Most Influential Women in the Charlotte region and was named 2017 Woman of the Year by the *Mecklenburg Times*.



**Walker Reid III** is the Mayor of Gastonia. Reid retired as an Assistant Fire Marshal Fire & Life Safety Educator (23 years) from the Mecklenburg County Fire Marshal's Office in 2009. Prior to this, he was a Firefighter (3 years) and Fire Inspector (6 years) for the City of Gastonia. He was also a Fire Service Instructor at Gaston College (15 years). Mr. Reid is a 1975 graduate of Hunter Huss High School and received his A.A.S. Degree in Fire Science Technology from Gaston College. He is a Graduate of the North Carolina Fire College and the North Carolina Fire Prevention School at the Institute of Government, at UNC Chapel Hill. Mr. Reid is also a graduate of the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland and the R. Kennett Scott Fire Prevention School. He retired as a Level III Certified NC Fire Inspector and Level III Life Safety Educator.



**Representative Gary Simrill** is the South Carolina House Representative to the 46th District. Representative Simrill obtained his BS, Marketing from Winthrop University. He has served in the SC State House of Representatives from 1993 to the present and is currently the House Majority Leader. He was first elected to the Chamber in 1992 and is currently the President and CEO of Carolina Motorsports.



**Ron Smith** is the Executive Director of Centralina Council of Governments (CCOG). Through program development, oversight, and leadership, his role is to ensure that the mission, vision and goals of the CCOG Board are carried forward and its policies and directives are implemented. Ron has over 20 years of experience in local government and has served in the role of Planner, Planning Director, and Assistant County Manager. Prior to joining CCOG, Ron was the Iredell County Manager where he assisted the Board of Commissioners by aligning two economic development corporations into one and hiring one Executive Director, developing a Special Services Division of EMS for convalescent transport, building the County's fund balance to a level that allowed for debt-free construction of a \$26 million detention center, and achieving the County's first AAA bond rating. He is a member of the International City/County Management Association and the North Carolina City and County Managers Association.



**Representative John A. Torbett** currently serves as Representative of The Peoples' House District 108 in the North Carolina General Assembly which encompasses most of Eastern Gaston County. John's committee work spans a myriad of complex issues where he applies his strengths and focus for the people of the 108th district and those throughout North Carolina. 2017-2018 NCGA Session Committee Appointments include Chairman of the Appropriations Committee on Transportation and Chairman of the House Select Committee on Strategic Transportation Planning and Long-Term Funding Solutions. Representative Torbett also served as a Gaston County Commissioner from 2002-2010.

# Why Plan for Regional Transit Now?

As one of the fastest growing areas in the country, the Charlotte region is expected to add 1.8 million people by 2050. To meet the demands of this growing population, additional transportation choices will be needed.

In the 14-county, bi-state CONNECT Our Future regional planning effort, transportation choice was identified as a top priority. Communities of all sizes across the region expressed a desire for increased transit service.

- Over 50% of our region's population works in one county and lives in another
- Cross-county public transportation options support job access, economic development, and access to medical facilities/services
- Long-term transit planning should be accelerated if we are to remain a leading, competitive region, nationally and globally

## How can a Regional Transit Plan benefit individual communities?

- Provides a unified vision and coordination
- Supports economic competitiveness for all in the region

**For more information about Regional Transit activities go to: [bit.ly/RegionalTransit](http://bit.ly/RegionalTransit)**



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