

# Transit-tax publicity accelerates

Ads from 1B

portation. City council member Pat Mumford, who is leading the group trying to keep the tax, said the group's "full media strategy" will be implemented this weekend. That includes yard signs, di-

rect mail and television and radio ads. The Vote Against Repeal Committee has said it will likely raise hundreds of thousands of dollars, though it hasn't released a list of donors. State law requires that advocacy groups must disclose their contributions 10 days before the Nov. 6 election.

Former county commissioner Jim Puckett, who is leading a tax opposition group, Sensible Charlotte Area Transit, said it plans to send a mailer to homeowner associations shortly. Puckett said his group will have considerably less money than the pro-tax side. He also has declined to release a list of donors.

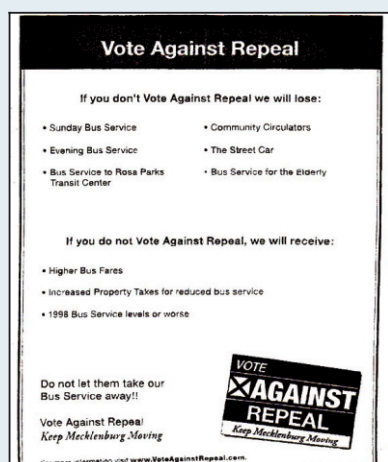
## AD WATCH

### Vote Against Repeal Committee

**THE AD:** A flier distributed recently in some predominantly African American neighborhoods.

**THE CLAIM:** Losing the tax would result in cuts to bus service, as well as the planned streetcar service. It also warns of higher property taxes to replace all or some of the sales tax revenue.

**THE FACTS:** CATS has discussed most of the claims before. The flier does make two claims that appear exaggerated: It says that the community will lose "evening bus service" if the tax is repealed. In fact, CATS said it would reduce some nighttime service that today runs until 1:30 a.m. It would end at 11 p.m. The flier also said that the community will lose bus service to the Rosa Parks transit center. The center would still be served by regular bus service, though "community circulators," small neighborhood buses, that feed into the center would be cut. — STEVE HARRISON



### Vote Against Repeal Committee

**THE AD:** A television commercial that debuted in early September, and can be viewed on the Web site www.voteagainstrepeal.com. The ad features a boy playing with Matchbox cars.

**THE CLAIM:** A narrator warns that if we stop funding light rail, commuter rail and buses, "congestion will bury us." The boy is then covered in cars.

**THE FACTS:** It's debatable how much the 2030 transit plan will reduce future congestion. Tax supporters have said the transit plan won't cure congestion by itself. CATS has said it thinks it can capture 25 percent of commuters going uptown by 2030; tax opponents say that figure is inflated. — STEVE HARRISON



### State Sen. Robert Pittenger

**THE AD:** A recent TV ad urged voters to repeal the transit tax.

**THE CLAIM:** Pittenger says the Charlotte region is "desperate" to complete many roads and widen others. He also cites retired UNC Charlotte President David Hartgen, who believes Mecklenburg should spend money on roads - not light rail. He says the cost of light rail has grown from \$1 billion to \$8 billion and that light rail will only carry 2 percent of regional commuters.

**THE FACTS:** The transit tax can't be spent on most road projects, though Pittenger wants to lobby the General Assembly to allow some or all of the transit tax to be used for road building. The entire 2030 transit plan — not just light rail — is estimated to cost \$8.9 billion in construction and operating dollars. The increase is due in part to the plan growing in scope, and a decision by the county's Metropolitan Transit Commission to put price estimates in future dollars. Tax supporters say the 2 percent estimate isn't fair, because Pittenger's 2 percent estimate is transit's share of all trips, including freight deliveries and people passing through the Charlotte region. — STEVE HARRISON



# Mallard Creek faces Vance

Rivals from 1B

other, too. Cauthen proposed a wager for Rea, who left her post as Vance principal to lead Mallard Creek: Losing principal buys lunch, either at Chick-fil-A or Bojangle's. Kind of like the bets that mayors make during NFL playoffs, he said. For others, tonight's game will be bittersweet. Wesley Bryant, an assistant ju-

nior varsity football coach at Mallard Creek, attended Vance when it opened in 1997. He eventually was named an All-America offensive lineman. Though he'll root for the Mavericks, Bryant said, "I hold Vance real close." Vance head coach Jeff Simpson said he'll treat this game like any other, though he still "thinks the world" of his former players. "(But) I don't want them to win this game," he said during a recent practice. "They can win all the other ones."

## Old vs. New

- Vance High now has 2,015 students, and Mallard Creek High has 1,461.
- Vance lost around 250 students to Mallard Creek High, including around 30 varsity football players, six cheerleaders and eight color guards.
- Mallard Creek Principal Kit Rea and Athletic Director Karen McKaig are former Vance employees.

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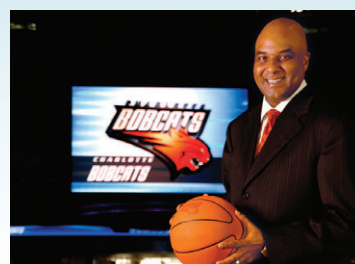
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