



## OFFICE *of* MAYOR VI LYLES

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600 East Fourth Street  
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[Charlottenc.gov](http://Charlottenc.gov)

To the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community,

As I reflect on the tragic murder of Iryna Zarutka my heart continues to go out to her family and our community as we try to make sense of this horrific and senseless loss.

Over the past several weeks as our community has worked to understand this, what we know is that this was a tragic failure by the courts and magistrates. Our police officers arrest people only to have them quickly released, which undermines our ability to protect our community and ensure safety. We need a bipartisan solution to address repeat offenders who do not face consequences for their actions and those who cannot get treatment for their mental illness and are allowed to be on the streets. We have partnered before on legislation like North Carolina's pre-trial integrity act, and we stand ready to partner again at the local, state, and federal level.

I want to assure the community that we are taking action, and we will continue to take action.

Last week CATS leadership presented to Charlotte City Council and the Metropolitan Transit Commission about the ongoing work to address safety and security on our public transit system. Over the past two years, we have doubled the number of CATS security personnel, tripled the safety and security budget from \$5.8 million to nearly \$18 million, and are shifting from a corporate security model towards a stronger transit policing model.

Effective immediately, CATS security personnel will be re-deployed for a stronger presence on Blue Line platforms and to increase fare enforcement. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department will also be increasing patrols at key areas across the transit system. These changes will allow CATS to fully execute the transit system policing plan, including the Blue Line.

Over the next two to three weeks CATS will be rolling out new safety operations including bike units and urban terrain vehicles. CATS is actively recruiting and will be adding nearly 30 additional security personnel over the next few months. CATS will also be bringing an agreement for council approval to Council's next business meeting on September 22 which will expand the authority of CATS to provide security around the transit system.

Residents across our community and visitors to our region depend on public transit. We owe it to them to make sure our public transit system and our city are safe and secure.

*Vi Lyles*