

# Charlotte Area Transit System

## 2026 CATS Transit Pass Design Contest

### APPLICATION FORM

#### WHAT IS THE THEME OF THE CONTEST?

Participants will design art to be displayed on a CATS monthly pass promoting public transit in Charlotte. Your art must address the theme of **"Where do you move forward?"** You may interpret this in any conceptual way that you can visually represent, but we ask that you focus on celebrating the places transit takes you. Some historical and fast facts about Charlotte Area Transit System and the technical guidelines can be found in this application.

#### WHO CAN ENTER THE CONTEST?

The contest is open only to legal residents living in North Carolina or South Carolina, who are at least 18 years of age. Submissions must be made by individuals. Group entries will not be accepted.

#### WHEN IS THE DEADLINE?

All entries must be received by **5 p.m. on Friday, May 15, 2026**. Entries may be submitted here: <https://wkf.ms/4mmRXfi> or mailed to Charlotte Area Transit System, Attn: Logan Lover, 600 E. 4th St., 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Charlotte, NC, 28202.

#### HOW WILL THE ENTRIES BE JUDGED?

Entries will be judged by a committee consisting of transit staff members, city officials and local art professionals. Entries will be ranked to identify first, second and third place winners. When evaluating the entries, the committee will consider the following:

1. Does the design address the theme and promote multi-modal transportation in Charlotte in specific or general terms?
2. Is the design eye-catching and well-composed?
3. Is text absent from the design?

#### PRIZES FOR WINNERS

Three individual winners will be selected and announced. The winners' designs will be used on the 2027 monthly passes as follows: first place – Local Monthly pass; second place – Express Monthly pass; third place – Express Plus Monthly pass.

Winners will receive a 2027 monthly pass of their choice, and additional prizes will be awarded as follows: first place – \$500.00; second place – \$300.00; third place – \$100.00.

#### QUESTIONS?

Contact Logan Lover at [Logan.Lover@charlottenc.gov](mailto:Logan.Lover@charlottenc.gov).

# CATS History & Fast Facts

- CATS is the largest transit system between Atlanta, GA and Washington, D.C.
- In 1976, the City of Charlotte began operating bus routes as "Charlotte Transit." Then as the population grew, the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) was formed, and CATS was established in 2000.
- The Blue Line is the first major rapid rail service of any kind in North Carolina and serves as a revival of rail transit within the city since the original streetcar network was discontinued in 1938.
- CATS services include bus, light rail, streetcar, vanpools, special transportation service and microtransit.
- CATS has more than 60 local, express and regional bus routes.
- Safety and quality are integrated into everything that CATS does.
- CATS received TSA's Gold Standard Award for security in its bus system in 2024.
- Public art is integrated into bus stops, rail stations, park & rides and bus depot facilities by local and national artists.



# Technical Guidelines for Producing your Art

## FOR ART PRODUCED BY HAND

Drawings, paintings and 2-dimensional media should be completed on a smooth, white substrate showing adequate contrast for printed reproduction in vinyl (i.e., bold outlines and colors). To avoid contrast issues, DO NOT USE COLORED PENCILS OR CRAYONS. The art must fill the entire template enclosed. Art should be scanned or photographed to at least 600 dpi in JPEG or TIFF format. CMYK color format.

## FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographs must be in digital format and taken at the highest resolution possible with a resolution of at least 300 dpi and in JPEG or TIFF format. Photographs must be cropped to fit the entire template enclosed. CMYK color format.

## FOR DIGITAL ART

All files must be in vector format as a layered AI or EPS file. The art must fill the entire template enclosed. CMYK color format.

## DESIGN TIPS

- A design with large focal points will be more eye-catching than a design with a lot of small elements.
- Bright, bold colors will stand out better than softer, low contrasting colors.
- Please do not sign your artwork.
- Do not use any copyrighted or AI generated material.
- To avoid cropping, size work to enclosed template (2" H x 1-15/16" W).

Designs containing sexually explicit, obscene, violent or other inappropriate content, as determined by CATS in its sole discretion, are ineligible for this contest. AI generated imagery is ineligible. Please refer to full contest rules and guidelines for further information.

# Application Form

Please print. Must be signed and submitted with entry.

---

**Name**

**Phone**

---

**Home address**

**City**

**State**

**Zip**

---

**Email**

## RELEASE AGREEMENT

I certify that the art I have created and submitted to the Charlotte Area Transit System is my original work. I understand that, upon submitting my design, that I authorize the City to freely use, edit, reproduce and distribute for any purpose my design. I agree that the city may use my name or art with any necessary changes or alterations in current and future promotions. I further agree to abide by the full contest rules and guidelines.

---

**Signature**

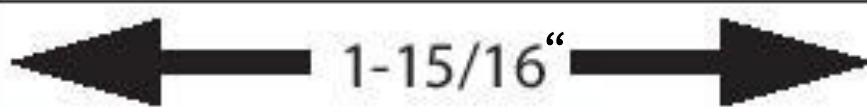
**Date**

## DEADLINE

Entries must be received by **5 p.m. on Friday, May 15, 2026**. Entries may be submitted here: <https://wkf.ms/4mmRXfi> or mailed to: Charlotte Area Transit System, Attn: Logan Lover, 600 E. 4th St., 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Charlotte, NC, 28202.

For more information, contact [Logan.Lover@charlottenc.gov](mailto:Logan.Lover@charlottenc.gov) .

# Local Monthly JANUARY XXXX



2"

Art work size



INSERT HERE

