Framing the Charlotte Light-Rail

The sixth fastest growing city, Charlotte, North Carolina has seen burgeoning demands to accommodate its population while building connections between its communities. At the core of its growth, there exists a need for developing new public transportation systems. There are several themes that surround the question into what sort of project to develop, and understanding the framing of those themes by local leaders will help to understand why the decision to implement the Blue Line light-rail project prevailed. Several trends in framing showed changes in initial reasoning behind investing in the light-rail, beginning with a focus on dealing with congestion, the financial feasibility of the project, and the environment. However, assessing by the time the project was half way complete, and after its completion, the majority of the framing around the light-rail switched to a focus on the impact of the new rail on economic development.