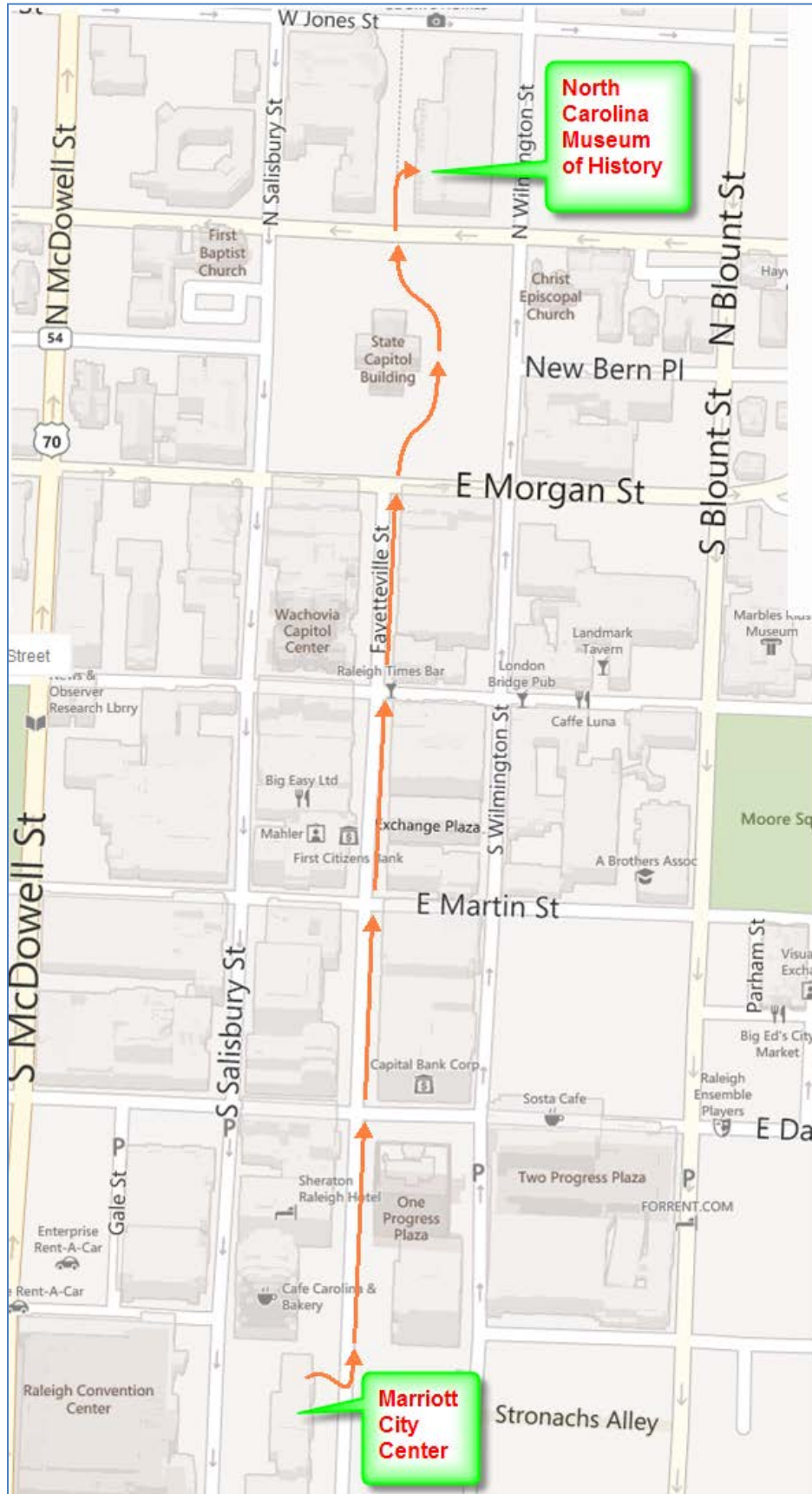


Wednesday's Social Banquet North Carolina Museum of History



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Coach transportation will be available to take you from the Marriott to the social banquet at the North Carolina Museum of History. Those wishing to take the first coach should assemble in the Marriott lobby at 5:30 PM, and the coach will return to make several trips thereafter. You will also be able to return via coach.

If the weather cooperates, however, we encourage you to consider a walk along Raleigh's historic Fayetteville Street. It is an easy, flat walk, just a little over ½ mile one-way. In 20-30 minutes you can stroll at an easy pace with a little time to explore the storefronts as well as the monuments on the grounds of the State Capitol.

Fayetteville Street is the source of some interesting tidbits of Raleigh history. Once Raleigh was electrified in 1885, Fayetteville Street became a main thoroughfare for electric streetcars operated by Progress Energy's predecessors (Carolina Power & Light, and before that, Raleigh Electric Company). The streetcars stopped running in the 1930's but the street remained the heart of Raleigh. Suburban expansion in the decades that followed pulled some businesses away, and in 1977 the street was completely converted into a pedestrian mall in an effort to revitalize Raleigh's downtown. Original overhead distribution lines were removed and replaced with underground distribution as part of the "streetscape" project.



A view down Fayetteville Street from the state capitol, circa 1910. The future home of Memorial Auditorium is at center.

(Photo from NC Division of Archives and History)

Decades later many yearned for the original feel of Fayetteville "Street," and in 2006 a new project removed the mall and converted the street back into its former self, and it was open to vehicles once again. Since then, destruction of the old convention center (replaced with a new one just to the east of the Marriott) restored a direct line of sight between the State Capitol, erected in 1830, and Raleigh's Memorial Auditorium, built in 1932. The last five years have seen a real sense of vitality come back to Raleigh's "Main Street."