



**Charlotte City Council**  
**Jobs & Economic Development Committee**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**January 6, 2025**

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**COMMITTEE AGENDA**

- I. Ongoing Initiatives
  - II. Upcoming Strategic Plans and Schedules
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**COMMITTEE INFORMATION**

**Meeting Duration/Location:** 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.; CH-14, CMGC

**Committee Members**

**Present:** Malcolm Graham, Chair  
James Mitchell, Vice-Chair  
Tariq Bokhari  
Ed Driggs  
Marjorie Molina

**Other Council Members**

**Present:** LaWana Mayfield

**Staff Resource(s):**

Tracy Dodson, City Manager’s Office  
Monica Holmes, Planning and Development  
Erin Gillespie, Economic Development

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**DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS**

What follows is a high-level summary of the meeting. Verbatim comments, specific questions and answers may be found by viewing the [City’s YouTube page](#).

Council member Graham called the meeting to order, asked everyone to introduce themselves, and provided an overview of the agenda.

## **Ongoing Initiatives**

### **Corridors of Opportunity:**

Staff provided an overview of the Corridor’s team activities and upcoming initiatives for the year. The Corridors of Opportunity program focuses on supporting six underinvested areas in Charlotte to foster thriving communities for residents and businesses, build lasting legacies, and promote equitable growth. Since 2020, the City has invested nearly \$100 million into these efforts, with Charlotte Water contributing approximately \$600 million.

Key program collaborations include Opportunity Hubs, the Pilot E-Bike program, the Start-Scale-Sustain Business District initiative, House Charlotte+, the Business Matching Grant program, Workforce Development initiatives, Youth Employment opportunities, the In-Language Small Business program, SIA, and GreenPrints.

A notable public-private partnership under the Corridors of Opportunity initiative was the City’s purchase of the former Economy Inn in the Sugar Creek corridor. This site is being transformed into 39 new affordable townhomes for sale and a new public space. Staff also highlighted the potential for additional public-private partnership opportunities in the Corridors.

Staff shared updates on Small Business programs, including the Breaking Barriers to Business cohort funded by the Truist Foundation and the Hartford Small Business Accelerator Grant Award, which supports small business and retail incubators. They emphasized efforts to expand small business and workforce development, supported by City Council funding for six Opportunity Hubs—one in each corridor. The Freedom Business Collective, one of these hubs, had its grand opening last September.

Another highlighted project was the partnership with DreamKey Partners, Trips for Kids CLT, and Wells Fargo Championship, which contributed \$300,000 to pilot the E-Bike program. This collaboration underscores the City’s commitment to innovative community solutions.

### **Office Vacancy:**

Staff provided an update on the current state and impact of office vacancies in Uptown, South End, Ballantyne, and University, highlighting potential tools and opportunities for 2025. Some buildings are undergoing owner-led renovations to enhance tenant amenities and reposition them in the market. Staff also discussed a building currently in foreclosure that may be auctioned off. Additionally, there were conversations about properties being converted into hotels and residential spaces, as well as consolidations into bank-owned properties.

Furthermore, staff briefly touched on C-PACE, a program that could serve as a valuable tool to support new construction and redevelopment efforts, helping to advance these projects. More to come on C-PACE in February.

## **Small Business and Workforce Development**

Staff gave a brief overview of what’s to come in February for the Small Business strategic plan and Workforce Development update.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:30 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 3, 2025

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## MEETING MATERIALS

All meeting materials are available on the [Charlotte Legistar Site](#) or viewed on the [City's YouTube page](#).

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# CORRIDORS OF OPPORTUNITY

January 6, 2025

Jobs & Economic Development Committee Update



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## Corridors: 2 + 2 = 5

Corridors is an agile, collaborative **“team of teams”** approach to intentional, equitable investment into the six geographies



**Corridors of Opportunity**  
*Community, Legacy and Equity*



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# Corridors of Opportunity

## Corridors of Opportunity supports six underinvested areas in Charlotte to:

- Foster thriving communities for residents and businesses.
- Build lasting legacies.
- Grow communities equitably.

**Nearly \$100mm in City funding since 2020**



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# Corridors Framework

Corridors of Opportunity implements projects, programs, and partnerships that accomplish six of the ten goals of the Charlotte Future 2040 Plan

**CHARLOTTE FUTURE**

**2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



**Implementation team**  
60+ city and county staff organized by six workstreams



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## Collaborations with other programs

Opportunity Hubs  
 Pilot E-Bike Program  
 Start – Scale – Sustain Business District Program  
 House Charlotte+  
 Business Matching Grant Program  
 Workforce development strategy support  
 Youth Employment expansion  
 In-language small business programming  
 SIA + COO  
 GreenPrints

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## Putting the approach to work

### Start at key intersection

- Beatties Ford at LaSalle

### Co-create a vision and funding priorities with community

- Corridor Playbooks

### Align project delivery

- Public-private partnerships
- Housing, economic development, infrastructure and placemaking



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## COO + Public/private partnerships

### Former Economy Inn

- Sugar Creek corridor
- 13 months from purchase to transfer
- 39 new for-sale, affordable townhomes and new public space

### In the pipeline

- Future P3 opportunities in Corridors
- LISC REDi emerging developer training series begins in 2025



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## COO + small business

### Sugar Creek Business Association formation and expansion

- Breaking Barriers to Business cohort funded by Truist Foundation
- Hartford Small Business Accelerator Grant Award for small business and retail incubator
- Aliza Diggs-Bailey, owner of D3 concepts



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## COO + Small Business + Workforce

### Freedom Business Collective

- One of six Opportunity Hubs
- Grand opening in September
- Already home to over 20 small businesses
- FBC Advisory Team provides springboard support to entrepreneurs



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## COO + E-bikes

- **DreamKey Partners + Trips for Kids CLT**
- **House Charlotte +**
- **30+ e-bikes distributed**



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# COO + impact partners

- **8+ Investment/ funding partners**
- **25+ program partner organizations**
- **United Way: partner for measuring impact and success**
- **Partnerships create opportunities for future funding**



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## Corridors: 2 + 2 = 5

Corridors is an agile, collaborative

**“team of teams”**

approach to intentional, equitable investment into the six geographies



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# Policy Topic Referral: Office Vacancy

JOBS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

JANUARY 6, 2025

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## 2024 Policy Referral Summary

### ◀ Background

- The prevalence of remote work that started in 2020 out of necessity during the pandemic has endured, at least in part, more than three years later. In Charlotte, the central business district is largely populated by services industries (banking, legal, audit and accounting), and the major employers have emphasized flexibility for their employees in terms of in-office or remote work.
- Despite record office vacancy rates nationally, disjointed performance since 2020 has driven the older-vintage “commodity” segment of the office market to bear an outsized proportion of impact—today, 30% of existing office buildings comprise more than 90% of total vacancy on the market.

### ◀ Policy Question

- What effective strategies can the **city** employ to mitigate the impact of **Uptown** vacancies through economic development efforts to ensure positive growth in tax base and **Uptown** vitality.

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# Policy Referral Summary

## ◀ Committee Charge in 2024

1. Conduct a comprehensive review of other cities.
2. Review initiatives underway.
3. Develop a framework for strategies/policies on how the city might participate.
4. Propose for consideration of full City Council any recommended strategies/policies.

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# State of Charlotte

FIGURE 10: Market Statistics by Submarket & District

Q3 2023

Submarket/ District	Inventory (SF)	Total Vacancy Rate (%)	Total Availability Rate (%)	Under Construction (SF)
<b>East</b>	1,940,511	18.9	14.1	-
<b>I-485 South</b>	7,254,557	26.4	27.4	-
Ballantyne/Toringdon	5,438,596	32.9	31.2	-
Highway 51	1,815,961	12.9	15.9	-
<b>I-77/Airport</b>	10,121,722	22.8	28.2	-
<b>Midtown</b>	6,289,454	20.3	20.8	1,289,382
Central	987,807	13.7	27.8	643,000
Cotswold	179,591	1.6	3.5	-
FreeMoreWest	813,070	41.1	38.8	225,000
LoSo	283,103	62.8	48.6	-
South End	4,025,883	15.6	14.3	421,382
<b>North</b>	2,012,268	12.4	21.2	-
<b>North End</b>	1,230,864	48.1	48.0	410,288
NoDa	903,677	64.5	64.6	260,288
Plaza Midwood	327,187	2.7	2.3	150,000
<b>Northeast/University</b>	4,911,667	27.2	39.1	770,000
<b>Park Road</b>	280,266	32.4	31.5	-
<b>South Carolina</b>	3,137,196	26.1	29.4	170,000
Fort Mill	2,474,005	30.3	34.6	-
Rock Hill	663,191	10.3	10.1	170,000
<b>SouthPark</b>	5,039,356	18.3	20.6	45,357
<b>Uptown/CBD</b>	22,434,560	18.5	21.4	410,880
<b>METRO TOTAL</b>	<b>64,652,421</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>3,095,907</b>

FIGURE 10: Market Statistics by Submarket & District

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<b>East</b>	1,940,511	28.3	26.1	-
<b>I-485 South</b>	7,334,716	29.3	29.2	-
Ballantyne/Toringdon	5,553,519	34.0	33.0	-
Highway 51	1,781,197	16.5	17.4	-
<b>I-77/Airport</b>	9,906,109	23.3	24.1	-
<b>Midtown</b>	7,086,720	21.0	23.3	643,000
Central	987,807	6.5	12.4	643,000
Cotswold	179,591	0.3	10.3	-
FreeMoreWest	1,013,070	42.7	44.6	-
LoSo	296,889	31.5	32.0	-
South End	4,609,363	19.4	20.8	-
<b>North</b>	2,014,595	15.2	16.6	-
<b>North End</b>	1,229,949	38.4	38.6	150,000
NoDa	902,762	51.7	51.9	-
Plaza Midwood	327,187	1.7	1.7	150,000
<b>Northeast/University</b>	4,827,218	30.8	46.6	-
<b>Park Road</b>	564,359	28.1	28.4	-
<b>South Carolina</b>	3,547,670	33.3	36.8	-
Fort Mill	2,561,442	30.3	33.0	-
Rock Hill	986,228	41.0	46.8	-
<b>SouthPark</b>	4,463,620	20.9	23.3	-
<b>Uptown/CBD</b>	21,248,052	22.2	24.4	410,880
<b>METRO TOTAL</b>	<b>64,163,519</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>1,203,639</b>

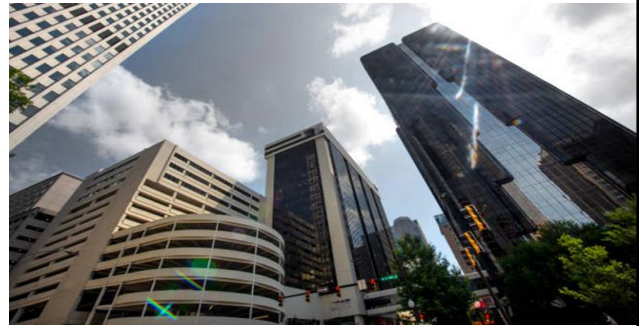
Source: CBRE Research Q3 2024

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## State of Charlotte-Uptown 2024

### Looking into the future

- Next 18 months – 1.7M SF expiring
- Ranging from 9,000 – 330,000 SF
- 17 Buildings - All built before 2000



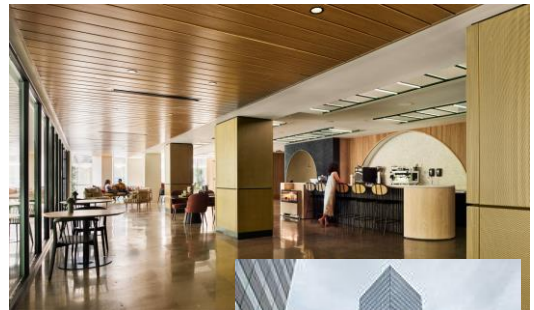
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## State of Charlotte - Uptown



**550**

Built 2009  
395,000 SF



**One South:**

Built 1974  
891,000 total SF



Owner investments to enhance tenant amenities in order to reposition buildings

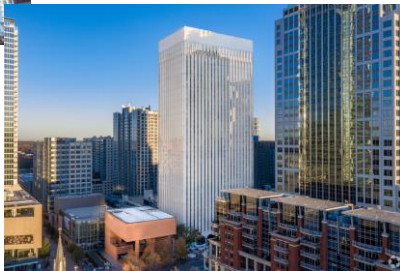
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# State of Charlotte - Uptown



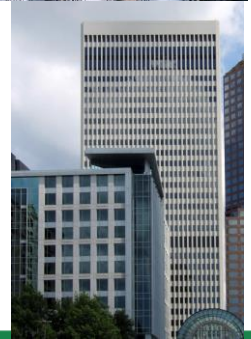
## 400 S. Tryon

Built 1974  
587,000 SF  
2018 purchase for \$133.5M  
Foreclosure - \$93.5M loan  
Estimated \$18-24M demo  
Estimated \$4M operating



## Two Wells Fargo

Built 1955  
830,000 SF  
2023 Tax Value: \$204M  
Estimated mkt offers 70% below



# State of Charlotte - Uptown

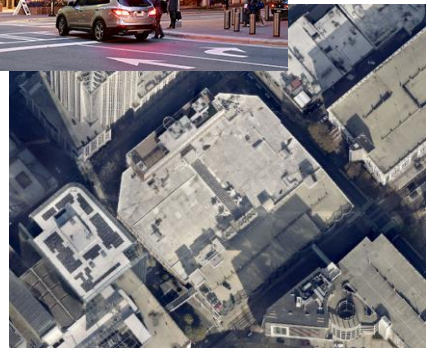
## Johnston Building

Built 1924  
172,000 SF  
Purchased \$19.3M  
Conversion to 245 room hotel



## 200 N. College

Built 1988  
458,000 SF  
Purchased \$32.9M  
Conversion to residential



# State of Charlotte - Uptown



## Bank of America

Exited 280,000 SF from Gateway Center  
Exits 316,00 SF from Fifth Third building in July 2025  
Consolidation into bank owned properties



# State of Charlotte – South End



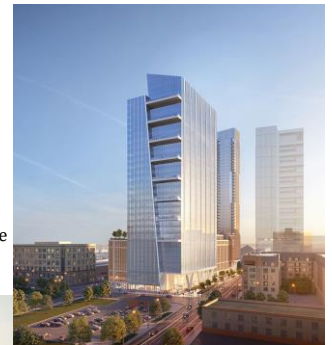
## Carson & Tryon

Planned  
565,000 SF Office  
31 Floors



## Queensbridge

Planned Mixed Use  
Residential Under  
Construction  
Up to 600,000 SF Office



# State of Charlotte – South End



**110 East**  
24 floors  
375,000 SF  
Delivered 2024 w/o tenant  
\$91M tax valuation

# State of Charlotte - Ballantyne



**RXO Expansion**  
\$13.7M investment  
Expand 216 jobs  
Retain 647 jobs in Charlotte

**Ballantyne Reimagined**  
\$42.5M (\$25M TIG) City Investment  
4.5M SF Office



## State of Charlotte – University



### Escent

159,000 SF

Delivered 2021

No tenants to date

Building is consistently toured for life science prospects

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## Public Sector Role

### 1. Questions and Impact from 2024

- a. Will investment expedite market correction?
- b. How long to consider investments?
- c. How feasible are conversions?
- d. Is demolition a possibility?
- e. What is the impact of doing nothing?



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## Public Sector Role

### 1. Recommendations to consider in 2025

- a. Partner on broad study for tools to support stronger office occupancy
- b. Study ordinance changes to allow better alignment with the office market
- c. Consider supporting new financing options such as C-Pace
- d. Consider creative incentive options (local and state)
  - a. *Historic Tax Credits*
  - b. *Job Development Investment Grant (JDIG)*
  - c. *Business Investment Grant*
  - d. *City/County incentive alignment*
  - e. *Demolition Fund*



## Today's Discussion and Proposed Next Steps

### 1. Today

- a. What further information would the committee like to receive?
- b. Is there an appetite for public investment? If so, begin to discuss a framework for next steps.

### 2. Potential Near-Term Next Steps

- a) Potential Studies and Partnerships (Q1 2025)
- b) Consider mechanism for alignment on City/County BIG incentives (Spring 2025)
- c) C-Pace education and support – (Q1 2025 – post county support)
- d) Deeper dive in zoning constraints and opportunities specific to office vacancy challenges (Spring 2025)