

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for an Action Review on Monday, September 9, 2024, at 5:18 p.m. in Room 267 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Council members present were Dimple Ajmera, Tariq Bokhari, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, Lawana Mayfield, and James Mitchell.

**ABSENT UNTIL NOTED:** Councilmembers Danté Anderson, Tiawana Brown, Ed Driggs, Marjorie Molina, and Victoria Watlington.

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**Mayor Lyles** said good afternoon, everyone. We are now going to begin the Charlotte City Council Consent Action Review portion of our agenda tonight, but let's start with introductions.

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### **ACTION REVIEW**

#### **ITEM NO. 1: MAYOR AND COUNCIL CONSENT ITEM QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**Mayor Lyles** said all right, thank you, everyone. So, we've called our meeting to order and we've had our introductions. So, now let's move to the Consent Items that are on our agenda. Are there any Consent Items that any Council member would like to have for a separate vote or for comment?

**Councilmember Ajmera** said Item No. 33.

Mayor Lyles said 33 for a separate vote or a comment?

Ms. Ajmera said well, I have a question about that.

Mayor Lyles said so separate vote.

Ms. Ajmera said yes.

**Councilmember Johnson** said Number 28, please.

Mayor Lyles said 28. Question or a comment?

Ms. Johnson said question.

Mayor Lyles said okay, got it. Okay. Anyone else?

**Councilmember Mayfield** said still same one, 28, but I would like to pull up a separate vote because there is a response that I need to follow up on.

Mayor Lyles said okay, that's 28. Okay. We will have a separate vote for those with questions and then we'll go from there.

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**ITEM NO. 2: CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 19 THROUGH 36 MAY BE CONSIDERED IN ONE MOTION EXCEPT FOR THOSE ITEMS REMOVED BY A COUNCIL MEMBER. ITEMS ARE REMOVED BY NOTIFYING THE CITY CLERK.**

Motion was made by Councilmember Mayfield, seconded by Councilmember Johnson, and carried unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda as presented with the exception of Item No. 28, and Item No. 33 which were pulled for a separate vote.

The following items were approved:

**Item No. 19: Housing Counseling and Education Services**

(A) Approve contracts with the following companies for Housing Counseling and Education Services for an initial term of two years: DreamKey Partners, Inc., Community Link Programs of Travelers Aid Society, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contracts for up to two, one-year terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contracts consistent with the purpose for which the contracts were approved.

**Item No. 20: Program Administration Services for Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS**

(A) Approve a contract in an amount up to \$3,639,166 with Carolinas CARE Partnership to administer the Housing Opportunities for Persons with Aids program for a term of three years, and (B) Authorize the City Manager or his designee to negotiate, execute, and amend the necessary documents to complete the transaction.

**Item No. 21: Fleet Heavy Truck Collision Repair Services**

(A) Approve a contract with Rush Truck Center for heavy truck collision repair services for an initial term of three years, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contract for up to two, one-year terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

**Item No. 22: Sign Fabrication and Installation Services**

(A) Approve contracts with the following companies for sign fabrication and installation services for an initial term of three years: Carolina Signs and Wonders, Inc. (WBE), RLM Group Charlotte, LLC (SBE), JKS Motorsports, Inc. (WBE), and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contracts for up to one, two-year term with possible price adjustments and to amend the contracts consistent with the purpose for which the contracts were approved.

**Item No. 23: Waterproofing Services**

(A) Approve a contract with Strickland Waterproofing Co., Inc. for Waterproofing Services for an initial term of three years, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contract for up to one, two-year renewal term with possible price adjustments and to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

**Item No. 24: Engineering Services for Ashe Plantation Phase II Upgrades**

(A) Approve contract amendment #1 for \$489,500 to the contract with Highfill Infrastructure Engineering, P.C. for construction administration and observation services, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract and this amendment were approved.

**Item No. 25: Collective Storm Drainage Improvement Project - Series AA**

(A) Approve a contract in the amount of \$2,375,802 to the lowest responsive bidder OnSite Development, LLC for the Collective Storm Drainage Improvement Project AA, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

**Summary of Bids**

|                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| OnSite Development, LLC       | \$2,375,802.00 |
| United of Carolinas, Inc.     | \$2,768,090.60 |
| Efficient Development, LLC    | \$2,777,777.75 |
| Mountaineer Contractors, Inc. | \$3,201,700.70 |

Zoladz Construction Co., Inc. \$3,407,927.60

**Item No. 26: Construct 4101 High Ridge Road Project**

(A) Approve a contract in the amount of \$1,458,114 to the lowest responsive bidder Nassiri Development, LLC (SBE) for the 4101 High Ridge Road project, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

**Summary of Bids**

|                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Nassiri Development, LLC      | \$1,458,114.00 |
| NJR Group, Inc.               | \$1,587,613.50 |
| OnSite Development, LLC       | \$1,613,119.20 |
| Dane Construction, LLC        | \$1,969,383.79 |
| Zoladz Construction Co., Inc. | \$2,562,537.60 |

**Item No. 27: Amendment to Engineering Services for South End Station**

(A) Approve a contract amendment for \$988,723.42 with Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. for engineering services to plan and design a new light rail station in South End, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

**Item No. 29: Vanpool Operations and Management Services**

(A) Approve a contract with Enterprise Leasing Company Southeast LLC for vanpool operations and management services for an initial term of three years, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contract for up to two, one-year terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

**Item No. 30: Airport Electric Ground Service Equipment Vehicle Charger Parts**

(A) Approve the purchase of PosiCharge vehicle charger parts, by the sole source exemption, (B) Approve a contract with Averest, Inc. for the purchase of PosiCharge vehicle charger parts for an initial term of three years, and (C) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contract for up to two, one-year terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

**Item No. 31: Airport Fire Protection Equipment Maintenance Services Amendment**

(A) Approve contract amendment #1 for \$99,425 to the contract with VSC Fire & Security Inc. for Fire Protection Equipment Maintenance Services, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract and this amendment were approved.

**Item No. 32: Land Acquisition for Tree Canopy Preservation Program**

(A) Approve the purchase of approximately 7.609 acres of land (parcel identification numbers 113-251-53, 113-251-54, 113-163-01, 113-163-02, 113-163-03, and 113-163-04), located at Windy Grove Road and Brenda Ann Road for \$850,000, (B) Authorize the City Manager or his designee to negotiate and execute any documents necessary to complete this transaction, and (C) Authorize the City Manager or his designee to grant a conservation easement to the Catawba Lands Conservancy.

**Item No. 34: Meeting Minutes**

Approve the titles, motions, and votes reflected in the Clerk's record as the minutes of: June 6, 2022, Strategy Session, June 13, 2022, Business Meeting, June 20, 2022, Zoning Meeting, June 27, 2022, Business Meeting, July 11, 2022, Business Meeting, and July 18, 2022, Zoning Meeting.

**PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS**

**Item No. 35: Property Transactions - Bryant Farms Road Extension Phase 1, Parcel # 9**

Acquisition of 2,905 square feet (0.067 acres) Sanitary Sewer Easement, 2,617 square feet (0.060 acres) Water Line Easement, 2,617 square feet (0.060 acres) Sidewalk Utility Easement and 10,964 square feet (0.252 acres) Temporary Construction Easement at 12049 Parks Farm Lane from Raeburn Homeowners Association, Inc. for \$55,475 for Bryant Farms Road Extension Phase 1, Parcel # 9.

**Item No. 36: Property Transactions - Saint John Lane 6072, Parcel # 2**

Acquisition of 1,008 square feet (0.023 acres) Storm Drainage Easement and 878 square feet (0.020 acres) Temporary Construction Easement at 6200 Sharon Hills Road from John Christopher M. Robicsek and Caroline Spielmann Robicsek for \$11,500 for Saint John Lane 6072, Parcel # 2.

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**ITEM NO. 28: CATS MICRO-TRANSIT SERVICE**

**Councilmember Johnson** said I just wanted to hear a little more about the micro-transit and just hear some more about it and talk about it possibly in the university area and where we are with that. Thank you.

**Marie Harris, Strategy and Budget** said thank you. We'll have Brent Cagle from CATS (Charlotte Area Transit System) come up.

**Brent Cagle, Interim CATS CEO** said Mayor, members of City Council, good evening. My name is Brent Cagle. I'm interim CATS CEO. Ms. Johnson, to your question, micro-transit, it's a new mode that we are rolling out. With this contract, it will enable us to roll it out in the northern towns. We say that it's in the northern towns. It's Davidson, Cornelius, Huntersville, but also in Charlotte for the initial roll out because it includes the area generally around Northlake Mall. So, there are elements in the initial rollout. To your question of what's the plan, there are 19 different zones, micro-transit zones, throughout the County. The plan is to, over the next few years, to roll out micro-transit in all of those zones pending funding. Specific to University City, it is the next on the list. So, funding allowed, it will be the next area that we look to roll out micro-transit. We are currently having conversations with University City Partners and some of the businesses in the University Research Park to see if there's a way for us to either roll it out on a limited basis sooner or to see if there are partnerships with some of the private businesses to enable us to roll it out as soon as possible. It is next on the list to focus on as a roll out area.

Ms. Johnson said thank you, that is something we've been talking about for a long time so it's good to hear that we'll start Northlake Mall area in District Four and then University City in District Four is next. Thank you.

**Councilmember Mayfield** said thank you for the information, Mr. Cagle. I wanted to highlight; Marie was able to answer some of the questions I had. I personally always have a challenge when we look at an outside company. This company that we're talking about moving forward with is out of California somewhere, when we have local companies. I do know that our local company just [inaudible] ride share did not apply, yet I do say that I appreciate the extra work that was done. So, this is not a getting ready to fuss at you, I wanted to acknowledge the fact that you, as a team, that you all went out and you created a relationship, because my challenge is an outside, out of state company does not have the relationships locally. They don't know the drivers. They don't know the community. Mapquest is not always your friend in Charlotte when you don't know Charlotte roads, so that can be challenging. So, I do appreciate that we have an organization locally that was identified. This is the question. To my understanding, the way that this particular contract is written, there is also opportunities for other local ride share, even though the contract is asking us to give the main contract to a company that is out of state.

Mr. Cagle said that is correct, ma'am. So, there are several opportunities. One would be through expansion. So, I mentioned there are 19 zones. These are three of the zones.

Each of those zones we could look to expand on the existing contract or run new RFPs (Request for Proposal) for expansion as well as the ability of other providers to come in and partner with MV or just stand alone and provide the service on their own. So, there is the ability to expand. That is also why we unbundled service provision from the software. Had we put those together, it would have been very, very difficult for smaller companies to provide both, so we unbundled those to provide the service as a separate contract from the software to create more opportunities locally.

Ms. Mayfield said I'm glad you spoke to that because I was going to ask that question as well, just really for public and for us to have it noted in the meetings that you all are listening to what Councilmember Mitchell and others have asked as well as myself with how do we unbundle these projects to give more opportunities. Mr. Manager, I would like for us to just take into consideration we have local companies. We have a number of local companies in the City that unfortunately have packed up and moved to other cities because of honestly lack of support. So, I do appreciate that we do have one of our local organizations that has a considerable commitment of 38.14 percent on it and they will probably be reaching out to others. I do think we have an opportunity to really look home, look in our own backyard, and see how we can support our businesses to get them to the level for them to be able to move a conversation, because this request is asking for a minimum three-year initial term, with also authorizes this as A, B, C, and D, authorizing you the ability for up to two additional one-year terms. So, that potentially could be five years that this one company has access. Even though we're going to be expanding to other zones, we need to make sure there's opportunity to have Charlotte growth in Charlotte. Thank you, Mr. Cagle.

**Councilmember Mitchell** said I'm going to be very brief. I'm just going to echo Councilmember Mayfield. Brent, thank you. CATS has shown a tremendous desire to be very passionate about CBI Inclusion (Charlotte Business INclusion). So, thank you and 38.14 percent of participation, we haven't seen these numbers in a long time, so, thank you, sir. Thank you, Mayor.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said so Mr. Cagle, I wanted to follow up from Councilwoman Johnson's question. You mentioned there are 17 areas that's been identified. Could you please send us what those 17 areas are?

Mr. Cagle said yes, ma'am.

Mayor Lyles said all right.

Ms. Ajmera said that's all I have. Thank you.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mayfield, seconded by Councilmember Johnson, and carried unanimously to (A) Approve a contract with MV Transportation Inc. for Micro-Transit Services for an initial term of three years, (B) Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a contract with Spare Labs Inc. for Micro-Transit Services using Software-As-A-Service solutions for an initial term of three years, (C) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contracts for up to two, one-year terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contracts consistent with the purpose for which the contracts were approved, and (D) Authorize the City Manager to purchase such additional software licenses, services, hardware, maintenance and support, and system upgrades/expansions as required to maintain the system for as long as the city uses the system.

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**ITEM NO. 33: MUNICIPAL RECORD RETENTION AND DISPOSITION SCHEDULE UPDATE.**

**Councilmember Ajmera** said so transparency issue keeps coming back. I know there have been conversations about backlog of record requests. What implications would this have on our backlog of record requests, if any?

**Marie Harris, Strategy and Budget** said so, I will also defer to the Clerk if they have anything specific to add, but this should have no impact. This is just updating the retention schedules and the terminology to be consistent with the current standards.

Ms. Ajmera said yes, I did review that, and this looks like more of a state requirement for maintaining public records. At some point we would like to get an update on where we are with the backlog, how long some of these requests have been in our queue, and what are the steps we are taking to address these issues, especially from the transparency perspective.

Ms. Harris said yes, ma'am. We'll work on that for you.

Ms. Ajmera said thank you.

**Councilmember Mayfield** said we do have our Assistant City Clerk here. Just for clarification, we were advised earlier that there was a considerable backlog regarding our meeting minutes. We had a number of challenges with staff as well as transitioning training, so actually the minutes that we are working on approving is actually getting us caught up. This is a question, not a statement. Is this helping to get us caught up because of the backlog that we previously had? So, to my understanding, as we're going through and approving these, this is to help us get back on track because of previous staff shortages and challenges that we had.

**Councilmember Brown arrived at 5:29 p.m.**

Ms. Harris said yes, ma'am. That's correct. They didn't want to inundate you, the Clerk's office didn't want to send you all at once, so they've been breaking them into packages. So, if you recall at the last Business meeting, you got six, you got six today, and they might put four more because there's only one meeting in October to hurry and get you more caught up. But, yes, ma'am.

Ms. Mayfield said which I'm going to say I appreciate because this has given us small bites to have to go back through and read, so I appreciate that. I just wanted to clarify. So, thank you for that.

Ms. Harris said thank you.

**Mayor Lyles** said I think the question is there's the records and then there are minutes. The minutes are on our agenda for approval in our Business meeting. They are I think 2022 minutes, but this is about the records, authority that we have to have, what we have to keep up, and what can be disposed of. So, I don't want to mix the two because we do have one item on the agenda here and then one in the retention area on this agenda right here.

Ms. Mayfield said so, for clarification, I was specifically speaking to the meeting minutes and why we are getting them at this point because of a backlog previously within the City Clerk's Office and now they're playing catch-up because of some challenges. So, I was clarifying that.

Mayor Lyles said right.

Ms. Mayfield said right now what we're getting are the minutes to help us get back on track, but this isn't because of any neglect. We had some staff challenges.

Ms. Harris said correct, yes, ma'am.

Mayor Lyles said that is correct.

**Marcus Jones, City Manager** said I guess two things. You've already approved item number 34, which are the minutes and what was pulled was item 33, which the Mayor was saying was something different.

Mayor Lyles said the records. The records are different than the minutes. That's all I wanted to do and make sure that we were okay.

Ms. Ajmera said so, the memo will be on the records.

Mayor Lyles said the memo would be on the records. Correct.

Ms. Ajmera said yes.

Ms. Harris said yes, ma'am, sorry. Ms. Ajmera, you had requested the backlog of current record requests if I heard that correctly.

Ms. Ajmera said yes.

Ms. Harris said okay.

Mayor Lyles said okay. So, we'll get that additional information because as you know we've had, as Ms. Mayfield has said, a difficult time with getting people out and ready these for approval.

**Councilmember Johnson** said I just wanted to clarify that we would like a report on the minutes and also the records retention, so we'd like an update for both. If the minutes, if we're looking at minutes from 2022, we'd like to know what the schedule is for them to be caught up.

Ms. Harris said yes, ma'am.

Ms. Johnson said thank you.

Motion was made by Councilmember Johnson, and seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, to approve the updated North Carolina Municipal Records Retention and Disposition Schedule.

**Councilmember Anderson arrived at 5:32 p.m.**

The vote was taken on the motion and recorded as unanimous.

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### **ITEM NO. 3: ACTION REVIEW AGENDA OVERVIEW**

**Marcus Jones, City Manager** said thank you, Mayor and members of Council. We have three items that are on Action Review agenda for tonight. They're really carryovers from the Committee meetings from last week. What we tried to do is in the Action Review set you up for future votes for items. So, the Community Area Planning update, Monica Holmes will kick us off with that. That was in Committee last week. It's not necessarily a vote for you in an upcoming meeting, but we thought it was important to make sure that the Council is fully aware of the engagement that's going on with the Community Area Planning and how that also works a little bit with the strategic investment areas and all the engagement that's going on with that. Then we have two other items that came out of Committee, the Arts and Culture Governance, which will lead to a future Council action, and the Financial Partner Policy, which will lead to a future Council action. Mayor, if for any reason from a time perspective, if anything needs to be moved to my piece under policy, we can do that also. Okay?

**Mayor Lyles** said okay. Thank you.

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#### **ITEM NO. 4: ACTION REVIEW ITEMS**

**Monica Holmes, Planning, Design & Development** said okay. Good evening, Mayor and Council. Monica Carney Holmes. I'm the Deputy Planning Director and I am just going to introduce this topic and then I'm going to turn it over to our acting Long Range Division Manager, Kathy Cornett, to really talk about the nuts and bolts of Community Area Planning and where we are in the process. So, this process kicked off in the winter of 2023. Our team has been hard at work further refining the Charlotte Future 2040 Plan, really drilling down into those 14 sub-areas, engaging the community, looking deeply at the policy map, and kind of working through phases. So, you'll hear from Kathy we're in phase three of the project right now. We are in the middle of an intense engagement season this fall. We just had our first set of meetings last week, had over 100 attendees on the West Side, both virtual and in-person, and are excited to really talk to you tonight about how Community Area Planning and this area plan update can further refine that vision that we set several years ago that has really set us on a course linking together our mobility, our infrastructure investments, how we access our daily needs, and how we grow as a city. So, with that, I'm going to turn it over to Kathy. Please feel free to ask questions. We are excited to share with you where we are.

**Kathy Cornett, Planning, Design & Development** said thank you, Monica. Kathy Cornett, again acting Long Range Division Manager. Thank you very much for letting me be here this evening.

#### **Councilmember Watlington arrived at 5:34 p.m.**

So, as you all know and as Monica mentioned, with the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 2021 and then the Strategic Mobility Plan and the Unified Development Ordinance, our City has made tremendous strides in modernizing and broadening our toolbox to help manage growth. We know that planning is an iterative process and it's never finished. We are hard at work on all of the implementation items that come from those plans for all three different efforts. I'm going to concentrate tonight on the Community Area Planning process as Monica mentioned. So, in 2022 immediately after the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, we began the first major implementation item, which was the adoption of the policy map. I want to make sure that you know where we are with refining that map through the Community Area Planning process and also, as Monica mentioned, go into a little bit more detail on what our engagement looks like and what the workshops look like.

So, Community Area Planning is that third tier of guidance that's needed to implement our vision. They'll provide more detailed development guidance than the Comprehensive Plan does across the 14 planned geographies. They demonstrate how the Citywide vision and goals play out for each in the unique context of each of those geographies. So, we're developing all 14 plans concurrently over a two-year period, so no area of our community is left waiting for the guidance. The expected outcome of this effort is 14 Plan documents. The intended use of those is for decision-makers like yourselves to inform processes such as rezonings, also capital investments, and then the revised policy map.

So, this is what the process looks like over that two-year period. The first four phases are scheduled to be completed at the end of this year and then we'll move in to review and adoption in 2025. So, phase one, which we called Setting the Stage, identified each geography's greatest needs in terms of access to housing, jobs, goods and services, and also towards reducing any environmental impacts. This work is summarized in Community Reports, which are available on our project website. They kind of are the background work that we did leading into the next two phases. So, phase two, which we called Creating Great Places, really reviewed the place type designations and was very focused on the place-based policies. That work resulted in the revised policy map, which was released on March 12, 2024. So, if you go to the project website, the adopted policy map is there and the revised policy map is there as well.



Our next phase is called Supporting the Vision. That's what, as Monica mentioned, we kicked off last week. Here we have been working throughout with our interdepartmental partners, both at the City and the County level. In this phase of our workshops, they are really the star of the show because we know that the growth of the City is not just based on the place-based policies but it's also very, very tied to projects and programs to help achieve that vision. So, that's what's happening during this phase. I'll talk a little bit more in detail about that in a minute. Phase four is developing, and that's almost concurrent with this phase, is developing the Plan documents, so there will be 14 Plan documents that will be ready right before we start review and adoption. I'll talk a little bit more about that in a minute as well. To talk a little bit about phase two engagement, give you an idea of what that looks like, it wrapped up in the spring. We put our engagement really in three different buckets, constant, coordinated, and collaborative. So, a lot of not great things happened out of the pandemic, but I would say a good thing that happened is we really, really enhanced what we call our constant toolbox. So, the things that are available on our website 24/7 and people have really grown to expect that that will be available.

Then the coordinated is kind of the more in-person type events, the workshops, and the meetings that we go to and all of those things that we're used to. Collaborative is what we're doing here tonight, what we do with elected and appointed officials, Planning Commission, etc. So, that work had, all of that engagement in phase two, over 130,000 interactions, so we had 42 workshops for the 14 geographies, so for each geography there was a virtual option and two in-person options. We had almost 500 participants and almost 900 comments. In addition, for that period, six, nine-month period, once a month we were available at a library in each of the geographies.

**Councilmember Molina arrived at 5:41 p.m.**

We attended a bunch of other meetings and then as I mentioned, our virtual platforms continued to be very popular and really garner the most input as well. The in-person workshops focused on organized conversations around specific areas in each geography in terms of access to housing, jobs, goods, and services.

What that work resulted in, phase one and phase two, the comments collected fed into this revised policy map. You can see the revisions are shown in the bright yellow color on the map. That was both internal and external engagement, so not only talking with community members but also our interdepartmental partners. All of that fed into the map. Actually, the map revisions resulted in a six percent change, which you can see how that plays out across the development of the map in general in a few slides, but bottom line is we really think that we've been able to incorporate the comments, we've kept a consistent methodology throughout our whole community, so we're treating one area in one part of the community the same as we're treating another in terms of specific issues. This map informs rezoning decisions. So, again the adopted map is on our project website and the revised map as well.

**Councilmember Driggs arrived at 5:42 p.m.**

In addition to that at the same time that we released the revised policy map, we released a policy map manual. So, what that does is really describe how the map was created. It describes the methodology, place, types, etc. It also talks about how the policy map relates to the UDO (Unified Development Ordinance) and the zoning districts, and then it talks about how the policy map can be updated. So, that's planning-related updates, like we're doing right now with the Community Area Planning process, but also minor plan map amendments, what the criteria are for those. You see those mostly through the rezoning process. Then also major map amendments. So, when we look at the development of the policy map since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and then immediately, the Comprehensive Plan was adopted in June 2021 and in July of 2021 we immediately began this large implementation piece. You can see here the different comments that are received through each phase of the process and also the different engagement methods that we used. What I'd like to point out here is that you would notice that the comments are decreasing as we go through. From 2021 to

2022 the development of the adopted policy map and then since 2023 with the revisions that have been made, the comments have been decreasing, as they should. You can see also all of the different types of engagement methods that we used as well. So, I'll talk a little bit more about that in a second, too. I'll also mention that from the policy map perspective, the revised policy map, you should have in your August 29, 2023, agenda packet received what we call a Briefing Book that breaks down all of these map changes by Council district. So, there's more data that's broken down by district and also overall for the City as a whole.

So, phase three engagement, so the phase that we're in right now, talking about projects and programs. Our interdepartmental partners are stars of the show. We've added another component, which are focus groups, that we've partnered with UNC Charlotte, two professors of planning there in the Geography Department. That was over the summer. Those were six sessions that were very intentionally small and focusing on folks that we typically don't hear from and also transit-dependent folks as well. There were six sessions across three study areas, two of them line up with the Corridors of Opportunity and also have some overlap with some Urban Heat mapping that these two professors are doing as well. You can see some of the themes that were discussed. Three of the sessions were in Spanish and three were in English. In addition to that, we have our workshops, our traditional workshops. We've divided the 14 geographies into four cardinal geographies, so we're talking about three of the sub-geographies at each of these workshops. We have eight total workshops. There's one virtual option, which is Tuesday at lunchtime, which we've found that's a very popular time for folks in the virtual setting. Then in-person workshops on Thursday from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The workshops are a drop-in format. There's no formal presentation. There is an orienting video that is when folks come in. They watch the video and they're free to, I'll talk a little bit more about details around it in a minute, but they're free to visit as many stations as they want, stay as long as they want, and more importantly be able to ask questions and engage with all of the partners that are in charge of and developing these different projects and programs, get questions answered, and more importantly provide input on those as well. We're re-creating this in-person experience online, using a web tool that offers 24/7 opportunity to engage. It's active from early December 2024 until mid-November 2025 and it includes basically the exact same components that you would find in an in-person meeting, but it also includes embedded surveys to help collect feedback.

So, if you look at where and when the workshops are, completed the west last week, next up is the north, there's a little bit of time in between each of the workshops because every time we do this and every time we go out, we know that there's something that we can improve in or tweak, so that allows opportunity to do that. You can see across the bottom when I talk about the different stations, these are the stations that we have, mobility, sustainability, and open space public services, community, character, and special districts. You can see there's pretty much almost 20 different City/County departments, and also our Municipal Services districts represented at each of these meetings. So, it's really a one-stop shop for folks that are attending so that they can get information, questions answered, and provide input as well. So, if you were to go to one of the stations at the workshop, what does that look like? This is a sample of the Mobility station, so these are posters that are created that illustrate different projects and programs and other information that you find from CATS, CRTPO (Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization), and also C-DOT (Charlotte Department of Transportation) with the strategic investment areas. So, each attendee is given a passport when they arrive. There are questions within the passport that we've designed with our partners that they're asked to fill out. If they don't feel like doing it in person writing it down, there's a QR code and they can do that online later or they can add more things they've thought about since they've gone home later. These are some samples of some of the questions that we've asked. All of this input will be shared with our partners as well.

I mentioned the web tool, which is how we are providing the same experience online, so we use this web tool both in the virtual meeting setting and then it's available for folks to use 24/7 as I mentioned. It uses dynamic maps to share the same sort of information.

So, instead of having static posters, we have dynamic maps folks can scroll through. There're embedded survey questions for them to provide input. Also, there is an online mapping comment tool there as well, which we have used throughout the policy map process and folks are very used to that. We've tried to keep that experience in how the comments are made, especially regarding the online mapping tool, consistent throughout so that people are pretty used to it. I mentioned the next steps in the Planned Development, so there will be 14 individual documents. There will be a guide kind of at the front that explains an introductory piece and also includes pieces that will apply to all 14 geographies. In these documents you can expect to find the community profile, existing conditions and demographic information, an overview of each area's priorities as it relates to the Comp Plan's goals, maps of recommended place type refinements that are made through the policy map, lists of planned projects and program, illustrative concepts, and an implementation strategy. Again, all of this is work that feeds into one of the pieces that you would look at as you consider rezoning petitions, capital projects, etc. So, that is all I have. I'm happy to answer any questions that you might have.

**Mayor Lyles** said thank you for the information, Kathy. It's a lot of work, a lot of effort, I can see already.

**Councilmember Driggs** said so, we've had a lot of conversations about this, appreciate the work. I think some of us may still be looking forward to finding out more about what this actually looks like and how it's going to work. You had a date up there where the draft was to be ready, which was in February 2025. Is that right?

Ms. Cornett said that's right.

Mr. Driggs said so, at that time, you will release to us something like 500 or 600 pages of area plans, all at once. Right? We will then have an update of the policy map to go with that, reflecting the final alignment process or whatever else has come on board. How much time do you expect it will take to get from the release of the draft to the adoption?

Ms. Cornett said well, that's always as much time as you need, but we are working on the draft right now so that we can't begin review and adoption until we have those documents complete, as you mentioned. I will say that we're trying very hard to make the slim documents that really cut to the meat of each of the areas and they'll be very visual as well. Once we get through the workshop process, I think the next step for us in addition to producing these documents is really to refine what that review and adoption schedule looks like and have a couple of different options for that as well.

Mr. Driggs said will you have engagement with Council members on a district by district and area by area basis before the release of the draft?

Ms. Cornett said we can do that, yes.

Mr. Driggs said I would encourage you.

Mayor Lyles said I would definitely encourage that that happen, that each district person have the opportunity to see the draft before.

Ms. Cornett said okay.

Mayor Lyles said we shouldn't print anything without the Council members in the districts reading it.

Ms. Holmes said I also want to chime in that the policy map has been revised a couple times without adoption, so the briefing book was handed out. We can start having those conversations specifically around the policy map sooner rather than later because we have been revising that along the way so that is in a more refined state heading into that adoption process. So, we can start doing that soon, basically, it's already online. It will

go through another round of revisions following this community engagement, but it's been iterative so it's already out there.

Mr. Driggs said there will not be a binding change to the policy map before that point in time when we adopt the area plans and the updated map. Is that right? So, we're getting updates on the draft but there is no intention to act on that until we have the area plans and the whole thing becomes effective as a package.

Ms. Holmes said yes, that is correct.

Mr. Driggs said all right, thank you.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much because I think that's a really important point. I know that we get a lot of information, and this is a lot of information. If there is a possibility of ways to code what we're getting, let's just say Ms. Molina is always going to be in blue because she has blue paper, because she's in a blue dress today, and her document will always be blue. I think this is important because it is absolutely how do we communicate with the citizens in the area as well as all of the district people. So, if you can find ways to kind of adjust for us to be able to determine what we're really working on and be able to do deep dives, that would be helpful.

**Councilmember Jones** said thank you, Mayor, members of Council. That's one of the reasons why we're presenting tonight. What we've learned over time is that there are different ways that you communicate with the residents, and we don't want to be in a situation where as you mentioned 500 pages comes to you on a Thursday and you say what are we doing.

Mayor Lyles said right.

Mr. Jones said as much feedback as we can get today, that'd be very helpful.

Mayor Lyles said well, thank you, Mr. Driggs, for opening that up because I think that is essential to what we have to do. You have any other comments?

Mr. Driggs said no, I was just going to mention maybe for us, this process is supposed to have the effect of aligning the UDO better with circumstances in individual areas. It doesn't modify the UDO by itself. I think it's important to know that the UDO as it stands will essentially remain. I mean, it's always subject to some text amendments and revisions. The intention of this is not to create 14 UDOs in 14 different areas but simply to clarify the application of the UDO, the appropriate existing UDO categories in different areas. I'm hoping that the outcome of this is going to be that we have fewer instances where rezoning applications come in and they're not consistent with the plan and we approve them anyway because that's not a good situation, that's a transitional thing. We have to get to a place where the plan is working well enough that most of the time a petition that is consistent with the plan gets approved. So, that's my comment. Thank you.

**Councilmember Johnson** said I just want to piggyback off Councilmember Driggs. When we were considering the UDO, it was my understanding that these community area plans were kind of the meat and potatoes of the UDO, or how it actually applies to the different neighborhoods. Thank you for the presentation. We want to make sure that we're receiving feedback. We talked about that a lot with the UDO. Even with all of the feedback that we received, I think the numbers, when you compare to the entire population, was just a small percentage of the residents actually were engaged. So, if we can ensure, and I've said this multiple times, this is a lot of information. We have to have more simplified ways of getting this out there. I know I have a group that I would like this to be presented to and I think that as a Council we can recommend different neighborhood groups, like the District Four Coalition and different areas. So, I want to make sure that we're getting this out. Is there a way that you can put this slide, the phase three engagement slide, the phase three workshops. Is that going to be on social media?

Ms. Cornett said yes, we do use social media. We actually boost our social media and then see what kind of results that's getting us, but yes, it has been on social media. If you'd like to put it on your social media, we have ready-made graphics that you can use.

Ms. Johnson said that would be great. Thank you.

Ms. Cornett said okay.

Ms. Johnson said you also mentioned that you had sent something out to Council, a breakdown by district, that was sent to us.

Ms. Cornett said yes, it's called a Briefing Book, and it was in your August 29, 2024 packet.

Ms. Johnson said okay. Thank you. That's all I have. Thank you.

**Councilmember Brown** said thank you so much for your presentation. So, there's a lot of information that you've shared with us. I know that I wanted to drop in on the planning sessions that you were doing specifically in my district and was not able to do so. The drop-in piece where you said there's no specific agenda, they can just walk in. When they walk in, what are they getting? What's there for them?

Ms. Cornett said so, when they walk in, they go the sign-in table as their first stop and they sign in. We use the Eventbrite. We kind of do that really to gauge about how many people might be there. They don't have to do that Eventbrite. They sign in and then they're handed one of these passports. They're escorted to a video that's a two-minute long video that kind of describes what the process is, the history of it, and then what they're doing there tonight. Then once they're finished with the video, there's a room set up where there's all of these different stations with the posters that I'd shared on a subsequent slide. There's plenty of staff there. There's one to two representatives from each department that are very knowledgeable about all that that department does generally speaking and then the projects and programs that they're highlighting there that night. They're also able to ask questions. There's prompting questions of feedback that each of the departments would like on their projects that's in the passport. Again, if they don't want to do it there at the meeting, there's an online way they can do it as well.

Ms. Brown said okay. So, you did two that I know of this week or last week in my district.

Ms. Cornett said, yes, yes, we did.

Ms. Brown said so, the virtual. Do you know how many? Did you send me the information on how many attended virtually?

Ms. Cornett said 78.

Ms. Brown said 78 virtually. How many were in-person?

Ms. Cornett said about 30.

Ms. Brown said okay. You have data from those meetings?

Ms. Cornett said we're still processing that, but yes. We will share that with departments.

Ms. Brown said okay. When will you be doing another one?

Ms. Cornett said the next meeting? The next meeting will be the north and it'll be Tuesday. The virtual piece will be Tuesday, September 24, 2024. They're all on a Tuesday and they're all from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The in-person will be at the Oasis Shriner's Temple on the 26th from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Brown said okay. That's all that I have right now. If I have any other questions, I'll get back with you. Thank you so much for compiling the presentation for us so it gives us a general idea. It is a lot of information.

Ms. Cornett said yes.

Ms. Brown said one other thing I just thought of it. Community leaders, like that are over their community organizations. How can we get them involved to be there? For instance, Wesley Hills, Clinton Park, those communities, Yorkmount, the people that are in the district that actually lead the efforts for the community and get the word out to other people. How can we get that information out to them?

Ms. Cornett said we have a very extensive mailing list that we've kept since the comprehensive plan process, and it does include all the neighborhood leaders.

Ms. Brown said okay.

Ms. Cornett said we try to strike a balance of providing timely information and status and when meetings are without blowing up their mailbox. So, something went out to them this afternoon, kind of as a follow-up from last week's sessions.

Ms. Brown said so, are you physically mailing it and emailing, or are you doing one or the other?

Ms. Cornett said we're emailing it but we also do have some canvassing that goes on where paper flyers are handed out. I would have to get the details of exactly where that is happening.

Ms. Brown said right, no problem. So, how do we know who gets to the e-mail list? How are you compiling and composing that e-mail list?

Ms. Cornett said the e-mail list was compiled through the Community Area Plan process and it was a sign up for the most part, so we have permission to email folks.

Ms. Brown said so, when I check with certain individuals that want to be involved, if they're not on your e-mail list, how can they get on your e-mail list?

Ms. Cornett said they can sign up on our project website, they can call, or they can e-mail me. There's a variety of ways.

Ms. Brown said okay. Thank you so much. That's all. Thank you, Madam Mayor.

Mayor Lyles said thank you. This is good work. Thank you very much.

**Councilmember Bokhari** said yes, I was just going to quickly comment that as a district rep, from my own experience, I don't know if others have it but I'll just speak for myself and I've got to imagine others, too, the number one thing practically that I need out of this exercise, and hopefully based on what it looks like it should be scoped into this, but if not it needs to be, is a view of the infrastructure needs and backlogs. Not just at a current state, but at a state where now with the UDO we have increased density in units and trips and all the other things that are there. I mean, if I had a nickel for every time I'm in the middle of a scenario with a neighborhood where pre-UDO there was an acre and a half that could have gotten eight dwelling units on it and now it's 29 units by right or 30 or 35 or 37, and there is no game plan for what the backlog and the increase that that dumps onto it for the roads and the trips, for the water and the sewer, for literally everything that is considered infrastructure. I mean, we have by design purposely dumped all of this extra stuff there and we don't have any sense of what the right answer is of are they where they need to be with infrastructure or not. So, hopefully when I read that part that says you're focusing on projects and programs needed, that will be an overlay of a map that shows me current state, this is like the level of failing or

adequacy of all the components of infrastructure, and then elaborating out to how much people then can go with the UDO to build, in addition to that what the gap is.

Ms. Cornett said okay.

Mr. Bokhari said because until we have, anything else with the meetings and all that stuff is real nice, but what we practically need on the ground as district reps is an understanding of the anger that is bubbling up over the lack of infrastructure and planning around this stuff.

Ms. Cornett said understood.

Mr. Driggs said so, strongly agree with that. I think a lot of that thought is going on. I would just mention on mobility, which is a key infrastructure component, we expect to start a planning process based on the reality of the allocation of funds that has been permitted by the State, which is going to involve a lot of engagement and outreach. The interesting challenge is to harmonize the planning that we do for mobility with the planning that we do for land use and in our UDO and understand that those two things act on each other. If you build the Blue Line, for example, going south, you get South End. So, you can't do these things in isolation. It does have to be a coordinated process where we harmonize the mobility plans and the development plans and other infrastructure. So, appreciate that and agree with you.

Mayor Lyles said okay. Thank you very much. Good work and great questions and a lot to do coming up quickly for us. All right. So, Mr. Jones, we've done Community Area Planning. How about Arts and Culture?

Mr. Jones said okay, sounds good. I think we're going to turn this over to the Chair of the Committee.

**Councilmember Graham** said thank you, Mr. Manager. I don't have much, Mayor and Council members. I just wanted to provide a quick overview before I turn it over to Julia Martin with the City Manager's office. Last Thursday the Jobs and Economic Development Committee heard a presentation regarding the Council's potential participation in the new Arts and Science culture governance structure. There are a few important points that I want to just highlight. One is the core priority of the Charlotte Arts and Culture plan, which Council accepted in November of 2023 with public sector collaboration. Then secondly through the Fiscal Year 2025 budget both the City and the County approved historically high allocations to support the Arts and Culture, \$11 million from the City and \$10 million from the County. Governance collaboration amongst the public sector and the Arts sector at large is the next step. On September 3, 2024, as I indicated, the Committee voted four to one to move it to the full Council for consideration. I will turn it over to Ms. Martin.

**Julia Martin, City Manager's Office** said good evening, Mayor and Council. Here to talk about Arts and Culture governance. I'll quickly talk through the policy referral that went out in August 2024. If you notice the note on the bottom, concluding this presentation we'll be seeking consensus on participation in a new arts governance structure, so it doesn't require a formal vote, but we'll just be looking for consensus to move forward with that. Here's the referral. So, what role should Charlotte City Council serve within the governance structure? Then the charge below really focusing on what that structure is going to do and how Council's participation would support furthering the Charlotte Arts and Culture plan. As Councilmember Graham said back in November 2023, the Council accepted the first ever Charlotte Arts and Culture plan. Eight priorities in that plan. Two have been called out here for you tonight. Priority one is about collaboration with the public and private sector and then priority two is really more about funding and governance. Again, as Councilmember Graham said, a great year for arts in Mecklenburg County and the City of Charlotte. A combined \$21 million across the organizations. You can see Mecklenburg County's \$10 million allocation in blue and then the City of Charlotte's \$11 million allocation in green. Important to note a bulk of our funding, \$9 million, is going to support the annual operating organizations that

receive annual operating support every year. That money goes right to the Foundation for the Carolinas and gets distributed directly to the organizations.

Again, a little bit of background and then we'll get to what the new governance structure will look like. Back in May 2024 a memo went out from Cathy Bessant at the Foundation for the Carolinas to the Charlotte City Council, Mecklenburg County Commission, and the Arts and Culture Advisory Board. A couple of key points in that memo, the first of which is that the ASC, Arts and Science Council, would be restructured to become a legally-affiliated supporting organization of the Foundation. So, what that enables is the ASC to really build upon their tradition and history in this community of supporting artists, implementing grant programs, while enabling the Foundation, who again has a long history of business and admin management to do more of the back office functions required with supporting those grants. In that letter a new governance structure was proposed and that included participation from the City, the County, and cultural leaders. As of June 2024, that new supporting organization, the Arts, Science, and Cultural Council, ASCC, has been incorporated under the Foundation. So, here's a look at the ASCC governance structure, five appointees each for the City and the County, three appointees for the Foundation, two from the Mecklenburg County towns, and then two from the ASCC Grants Board. That Grants Board, as you can see on the screen, is really comprised of Arts and Culture professionals who are the ones that can advise on grant making, the types of grants, and they would make funding recommendations to the governance structure who would ultimately have the final say.

So, the role of the ASCC Governing Board, much similar to the ASC where they played a central role in our community in terms of convening the arts ecosystem and organizing the sector as a whole, this ASCC Governing Board would look to play a similar role. In FY (Fiscal Year) 2025 they'll also be responsible for distributing the \$10 million from Mecklenburg County in addition to any private allocations and corporate support that they might receive. I think especially important for the City Council to know is that part of this Board's charge is to help guide the implementation of the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan. There are a number of priorities and strategies within that plan, not all of which, or not even the majority of which, fall under the public sector's purview. So, how can this group galvanize the sector as a whole and help start moving that plan forward. Then a priority as well as a through-line of the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan was to ensure that programs and funds are delivered in an equitable and inclusive manner. So, again that is a central component and charge of this Governing Board. So, just a reminder about the City's allocations, I'll draw your attention to the dashed box in the bottom in light green and you'll be able to see that on the next slide. So, everything in blue in the hardline box will be distributed by the ASCC in FY2025. This year we are moving forward with Charlotte Is Creative to distribute the \$2 million that you see in the dashed box. A couple of reasons for that. We have a long history of working with Charlotte Is Creative through the Infusion Fund. Additionally, the ASC would typically be the organization that would help distribute those funds for us, but given the changing nature of that organization, we wanted to make sure that we could get that money out into the community as soon as possible. Should Council choose to participate in the governance structure, there is the potential for a future contribution of \$2 million to that grant pool that again the ASCC governance structure would help distribute into the community. Similar to how Mecklenburg County has put buckets of money in parameters, Council of course would be able to do something similar.

As Councilmember Graham said, Committee took action on this on September 3, 2024, and voted four to one to support Council's participation on the ASCC Governance Board, seeking Council consensus tonight to participate on the Board. Then looking ahead, we would move forward with the standard appointment process managed by the Clerk, striving towards end of October 2024 for Council action on actual appointments. With that, I'll turn it back over to the Mayor.

Mayor Lyles said let's open the floor for Council discussion.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you for the presentation. I have a couple of questions. If we go back to slide seven where we look at the governance structure. So, I need clarification.



You have on here a 17-member Governing Board. Tell me the difference between County appointees and Meck Town appointees, since aren't the towns part of the County?

Ms. Martin said yes, so it is just a separate carve out that two appointees from the County would have to come one from the northern town, one from a southern town.

Ms. Mayfield said so, why 17 versus 15 and the County has their five versus County having seven representation and the City having five?

Mr. Jones said Julia, if you can go to a slide that I think really represents the money that this new Board would have oversight over. So, if you start to think about it, the Mecklenburg County is taking roughly the entire \$10 million and sending it to this Board for distribution. I'll use a term that was used two budget cycles ago. \$9 million of the City's money is hardwired. Basically, what's going to happen, it's going to go to organizations and there's a very limited overhead to distribute the money. What this proposed governance structure would really have oversight over is \$2 million of the \$11 million, so therefore the concept is a greater weight of the votes, it'd go to let's say the County and the towns because so much more of the money is under this Board's jurisdiction from the County.

Ms. Mayfield said okay. So, we keep this slide in mind, which is slide 10, and we go back to slide five, the background. So Fiscal Year 2025 Public Sector Arts Participation. Mecklenburg County was \$10 million, City of Charlotte \$11 million, \$9 million of that \$11 million is our hard services, so this is currently what we've allocated is \$11 million.

Ms. Martin said correct.

Ms. Mayfield said what is being proposed on slide 10 is that along with our \$11 million, we're looking at an additional \$2 million, or we're saying instead of the \$11 million commitment we're looking at potentially only a \$2 million commitment.

Ms. Martin said \$2 million. So, in FY2025 here is the City's allocation. So, \$9 million has already gone to the Foundation. We are working with Charlotte is Creative on the \$2 million. In FY2026 and beyond, should you choose to, you have the option to contribute up to \$2 million or whatever amount to this ASCC Governance Board. So, this does not impact FY2025, this would be FY2026 and moving forward.

Ms. Mayfield said so the \$2 million potentially for Charlotte Is Creative, Charlotte Is Creative is separate from the Foundation for the Carolinas?

Ms. Martin said correct.

Ms. Mayfield said so, this is yet an additional organization. When we fund the Foundation for the Carolinas, for Foundation for the Carolinas to get money out to the Arts organizations?

Mr. Jones said some great questions, Councilmember Mayfield. Hopefully we will get to a point in time where there is no such thing as \$11 million and \$10 million, there's \$21 million. Then there are certain things that are important to the County, certain things that are important to the City. When you put it all together, it is a broad brush that goes from those organizations that occupy our buildings, the buildings that we have to keep the light on, all the way to the individual artists. So, I know it's tough tonight, but over time this should be a public sector contribution to the ecosystem that's very different than anything we've done before.

Ms. Mayfield said so Mr. Manager, what I would like to request, sooner rather than later, there have been a number of leadership changes over at Foundation for the Carolinas. Foundation for the Carolinas needs to come present to full Council. It would be good for us to get an idea of their plans because we support a number of line items through tax dollars, through Foundation for the Carolinas. So, it would be helpful to get an idea from

Foundation for the Carolinas, the direction they're going in, as well as an update, because little amounts being presented to us individually over a period of time, it would also be helpful to get an idea in totality for the number of different initiatives including arts that the City, i.e., tax dollars, are distributing through Foundation for the Carolinas, that would be helpful to know since if I'm understanding, and if I'm not please correct me, the \$9 million that we have allocated is administrative. I don't know how much of that \$9 million is actually covering salaries or anything at Foundation versus if all of it is going right back out into the community. We don't have the answer to that. I need to see it in writing. So, what that looks like. At some point we may get to a single line item, but for right now while we have City funding as well as County funding, it would be very helpful to be able to share if I'm asked where your tax dollars since basically taxpayers are paying twice. You pay two-thirds of your taxes to the County, you pay a third of the taxes to the City, I'm paying out of both of those sets of taxes to cover this. It would be helpful to say exactly how City dollars are going right back to the community.

Mr. Jones said so, Councilmember Mayfield, I think it's very important that at least I answer the first piece. I don't know what the new number is. For the first three years, putting all of this money out, the markup was like \$60,000 on \$9 million.

Ms. Martin said yes.

Mr. Jones said so, there's no way in the world as a city that we could administer something like that for such a very low, so we're not paying salaries with this administrative fee, it is literally being able to cut checks, get the dollars out, and be accountable to how the dollars are spent.

Ms. Mayfield said I appreciate that. Part of that accountability is for them to come in and do a report out. Thank you.

**Councilmember Watlington** said I've just got a few questions because as we all know this is one component of an overall discussion around arts and culture and the budget, so I want to make sure that I'm clear about some of the other items as we consider this. So, just for clarity's sake, I see on slide five, City of Charlotte there's an \$11 million contribution. Can you help me understand the money that the City is putting in to support the buildings. Where is that on this slide?

Mr. Jones said, Julia can bail me out. It's not here at all.

Ms. Watlington said I didn't think so.

Mr. Jones said there's, I don't know, \$15 million. There's a big number that we're doing each year just to pay the debt service on the buildings. What also is not here is that we need to maintain those buildings, HVAC, roofs, things of that nature. They're our assets. We work through it. This is simply an allocation that is going into the ecosystem, to organizations. It is not the debt that we pay, and neither is it the maintenance. There's a second referral that I believe is in your Committee, Mr. Graham, where we're trying to see other options as it relates to these grants, operating support, other than the General Fund, which was simply that you brought up during the budget discussions.

Ms. Watlington said thank you, that's very important to me in this conversation because I want to make sure that to Councilmember Mayfield's point, everybody's clear about what is the overall sum of money that's going to support this particular industry and how do we best do that in a way that makes sense. The second question that I have is in regard to the \$9 million annual operating support for organizations in the City to be distributed by the Foundation. As I understand it, these particular organizations are the same organizations that are in the buildings that we're already supporting. Is that correct?

Mr. Jones said correct.

Ms. Watlington said the idea is that these same organizations every year will get investment.

Mr. Jones said let me clear that up. These organizations are the organizations that traditionally have been funded by the ASC, a combination of private sector funds and public sector funds, both the City and the County. So, what occurred in this first year of this collaboration is that the County took on all of those smaller organizations that were in the towns, not in the City proper. The City continued to fund those organizations that had been a part of this group, and maybe its 30 plus organizations, and almost I would call it two categories, maybe three. The first category are the ones that I think are near and dear to everybody and that are those institutions that we're paying debt on. Then there are some other large organizations. Then you could make a case that there's a number of organizations that may receive \$100,000 or less. So, because the plan basically said stability in the ecosystem, the first thought process wasn't to just eliminate the folks who had been receiving funds over the years, but make sure this first year, and maybe even going forward, that there's still stability in that group, but also with all this new money, how are you able to do more things with individual artists and some organizations that have been on the outside looking in.

Ms. Watlington said so, that's going to be pretty important to me as we think about this. I appreciate you saying that this is this year, but I notice you said ongoing. I don't want, by any means, that any vote in the affirmative for this is an endorsement that these are the organizations going forward in perpetuity, so that I would need some more clarification on.

Mr. Jones said can I take a shot at it? Two different things.

Ms. Watlington said okay.

Mr. Jones said this is a governance structure to get funds out into the community and have accountability. The Council decides the amount that goes in and whatever are the levels works for those groups with this is a very different mechanism. Again, two pieces, getting money out into the ecosystem, but you also want to make sure there is some accountability, that the organization is doing what they said they're going to do, which is consistent with elements of the plan.

Ms. Watlington said I heard you say that Council would decide the allocation amount, but I didn't hear a discussion about who. So, is the idea that the same organizations in perpetuity are going to get something?

Mr. Jones said I would say yes, but let me go a little further. One of the things that I believe this body didn't want to do is have dozens of organizations come up annually during the budget process to have, I guess, a bite at that \$9 million, or whatever the number is going to be. Instead, to have the amount and the amount is, I guess, more important than having individual organizations come to you during budget. Just think about financial partners. If all of a sudden you had arts financial partners, I think we'd have a much longer budget process.

Ms. Watlington said I appreciate what you said. It still gets a little murky. Are you saying that we decide how much, but there is no opportunity for organizations in this community who are also taxpayers to get a bite because now the distribution will happen in an organization that is separate and apart from the Council?

Mr. Jones said so, again, if we think about this as one pot of money, during the Infusion Fund there was \$11 million a year, \$12 million a year. You have \$21 million a year, so there are much more resources for everybody versus then. I would say Council can decide what Council can decide. Ultimately, I sure hope that Council would have a willingness to let a Board that you appoint folks to, look at the bigger picture.

Ms. Watlington said so, you've answered my question. The intent as its written here is that this \$9 million, whatever we do with the other \$12 million, this \$9 million is an

earmark for certain organizations only. So, I'd like to understand that a little bit more going forward because I do think that all of it should be something that could be equitably accessed. Absolutely we understand that each organization plays a different role within our community, but we need to be open to the idea that where we invest might change. So, that's going to be a sticking point for me. To your point about the Board, so Foundation for the Carolinas and ASCC, certainly Foundation for the Carolinas is a known quantity at this point. I'd like to understand a little bit more about the ASCC. Who is appointing the members of that Board?

Mr. Jones said you are, the County, and the Foundation for the Carolinas.

Ms. Watlington said I'm sorry. I might be calling it the wrong thing. I'm not talking about the left side, I'm talking about this light green box here, ASCC Grant Advisory Board. Who are they?

Ms. Martin said so, the ASCC will still have staff members. So, part of their job is to convene a group of experts that represent cultural perspectives from across the ecosystem. There's not yet a set number of how many people are on that Advisory Board, but that is the job of that staff to cultivate who is on that Board. That's really thinking more people who live and breathe arts every day.

Ms. Watlington said so, in that sense then, this Governance Board will choose the Advisory Board who then chooses appointees that goes on this Governing Board? Am I reading that correctly?

Ms. Martin said I don't believe so. The ASCC will have its own staff. Part of their job will be finding the individuals who comprise the Grants Advisory Board. I don't know how they'll select who those two governance structure boards are, maybe the governance structure appointees are, perhaps they do it as an Advisory Board and we say we want Julia and Marcus to be a participant in this. They have their own staff and that is how that will go, just as the Foundation has their own staff.

Ms. Watlington said okay, I'd like to understand that a little bit more because I don't totally get it.

Ms. Martin said the role of those people is to really help provide the perspective of artists and people employed, active, and working in that space. So, it's to have a much closer feel to what's happening on the ground and speak to, "Hey, here's why we recommended this grants program, here was the discussion amongst our Board, this is food for thought for you guys."

Ms. Watlington said that Advisory Board is appointed by staff of the ASCC.

Ms. Martin said I believe so.

Ms. Watlington said then that Advisory Board selects two people to sit on the Governing Board for the ASCC?

Ms. Martin said I'm going to say I believe so. It's in flux.

Ms. Watlington said okay. That's a red flag for me. The other question that I have is just as it relates to the County and the City appointees, how is that split in terms of Council appointees, Mayor appointees, I guess the County the commission just does them all. I'm not sure how that particular piece works. How is that split?

Mr. Jones said my understanding from the Clerk's office, this is a situation where you have five. It's typically either one, the Mayor, and four, the Council, or two, the Mayor, and three, the Council.

Ms. Watlington said okay, when will that be shown? I would assume it's ahead of the vote.

Mr. Jones said yes.

Ms. Watlington said we're not going to leave the details to be sorted out by staff. Right.

Mr. Jones said no, no. I guess that the other question I have is at some point there is going to be a nomination process like you typically do. So, I don't know if you're going to have an ordinance, an RCA (Request for Council Action) and then a nomination process or if you'll just move forward with the nomination process. I think what initially we have said is one-four and I don't believe, Julia, that we need anything other than moving forward when Council is ready to have nominations for the Board.

Ms. Martin said correct, because this is not a City Board, it's a private Board, and you are just making nominations.

Ms. Watlington said okay.

Ms. Martin said so, it would be through your typical process.

Ms. Watlington said okay. Then the last thing I will say is just as I look at the Foundation appointees to this Board as well, we are appointing people to the Foundation and then the Foundation is also appointing people to this particular thing, when we start to get with appointed people making appointments, to me that's a step too far away from accountability to the public, so I just want us to really think about this as we put it together. That's all. Thank you.

**Councilmember Mitchell** said I was a yes vote in Committee to move this forward and have this great conversation, but I did raise one issue and I just want this Council, for us to be very careful with the type of modeling that we try to establish. So, Julie, if you go to slide number nine. The distributed by Charlotte Is Creative. I think we need to be very careful not to sole source opportunities when we know that we have other firms in our CBI that can do the same work. So, I would prefer that to be a procurement process to select someone who can provide the \$2 million grant. Staff, I do not know about Charlotte Is Creative, they could have a great reputation, but as Council we have to be careful to give everybody opportunity when we know there's other firms out there that can do the same job. So, is this time-sensitive that we can have a procurement process and we can award who will be providing the grants?

Ms. Martin said so, I'll say a couple reasons we selected Charlotte Is Creative. Through the Opportunity Fund we have worked with Charlotte Is Creative. They worked with a subcontractor who helped them with some marketing. In terms of here in Charlotte, there's really two main entities that distribute Arts and Culture grants on a large scale, and that's Charlotte Is Creative and the Arts and Science Council. So, because the Arts and Science Council, again that organization is currently in flux with their staffing and their operations, in order to get these funds out into the community sooner, we went with Charlotte Is Creative. So, the current plan is for them to start advertising the grants and the opportunities in October 2024, do really extensive community engagement, and then to have the money out into the community early in the calendar year of 2025.

Mr. Mitchell said so let me do a follow-up because I think all of us around this table know people who can provide grants. So, what makes this unique is because it's an arts grant.

Ms. Martin said correct. Charlotte Is Creative is an exclusive arts non-profit. They do a tremendous amount of work in engagement in the community in terms of spreading Arts and Culture, they know art people, they really have the expertise to advise us who are not Arts and Culture grant experts on here's what is the best thing for the arts community. So, the capacity building component was something that they had added because they had learned from their experience through the Opportunity Fund we really need to give artists and small collaboratives experience writing grants because that's an area that was really lacking and prohibiting them from getting other grant opportunities.

Mr. Mitchell said so if we did a procurement process, wouldn't you be comfortable with Charlotte Is Creative would still score high enough to be awarded the contract? I think part of this is transparency and being fair. So, I'm trying to separate this from the policy discussion. So, I raised my hand, but I'm too passionate about CBI and procurement opportunities for us to, in this particular case, we sole-sourcing, we have selected this firm to distribute grants. We're talking about grants and we know of companies today that can provide grants. So, Council, I'm going to be a big no for this particular reason. We're going down a slippery slope if we have staff start just sole-sourcing opportunities when we know we've got capacity in the community. Thank you, Mayor.

Mr. Jones said I want to make sure that as we're going through this that I put a couple of things into the record. I do believe that the Foundation for the Carolinas has done a great job over the course of the last few years with the Infusion Fund. I'm not so sure that we could be where we are today with this level of collaboration without having the Foundation for the Carolinas. I feel confident that even in distributing that \$9 million, I think the fee is \$150,000 but that also includes performance measures and things of that nature. I'm not going to leave you out there, Julia. The concept with Charlotte Is Creative was we just didn't know. We didn't know what July 1, 2024, would be like. We didn't know if there would be an ASCC, and we didn't want a lot of the organizations that had gained this great momentum through the Infusion Fund to feel like, okay, here we go again, it's going to take forever for us, almost like starting over again. So, Mr. Mitchell, I don't disagree with you with the look of this as it seems like we're just picking somebody. The concept was because they had distributed some of the Infusion Funds that as this other \$10 million was trying to get out, that again there wouldn't be any step back from the previous three years because \$11 million was being deployed. I just wanted to make sure that that was some of the thought process. I totally understand where you're coming from.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said all right, well, I'm glad Mr. Jones went before I did. Let me first say this. I understand Mr. Mitchell's perspective on being fair and transparent in the process. I also understand that staff was trying to get the money out sooner. A lot of organizations were concerned after the whole reorganization of the structure, so they were concerned about whether they were going to get funding or not. If we had delayed it, it would not have looked good. Surrounding this case, I understand why this organization was chosen. I will say this, I have been to Charlotte Is Creative events. Every Friday they host various artists in town. In fact, myself, former Councilmembers Egleston and Winston along with Bokhari, we attended Charlotte Is Creative event and we were part of the panel. That's the first time I got to see majority of the movers and shakers in the arts community under one roof. So, certainly I appreciate the work that they have done and they have really built relationships in arts culture. This is a very niche area that you have to have expertise in, in order to distribute funds, so I can certainly attest to their expertise. I think to Mr. Mitchell's point, if they have the expertise, even if you go through the process, they are going to do well and they are going to actually be our partner. So, yes, I think from transparency perspective and fairness it does make sense to go through that process and I'm pretty sure they will score much higher than other organizations because of their expertise. Well, that was not my question. My question was about more to follow up on Councilwoman Watlington's and Mayfield's question. I just want to make sure I heard this correctly. So, this structure doesn't have anything to do with funding commitment. Correct?

Ms. Martin said correct.

Ms. Ajmera said okay. So, we are not aligning or committing any amount, whether it's \$2 million, I understand \$2 million was approved in the budget that we just adopted, but moving forward, it could be nothing or it could be \$5 million or it could be anything in between.

Ms. Martin said correct.

Ms. Ajmera said okay.

Mr. Jones said that's true, that's absolutely true. It would go against one of the pillars of the Arts and Culture Plan if all of a sudden let's say Mecklenburg County said we're only going to give \$2 million and not \$10 million, so there is the concept, again you can't bind a future Council, that you can't create stability if each year you're going to change it.

Ms. Ajmera said I understand, but I also want us to be mindful that just because we are committing to the structure does not mean that if they are not able to raise additional private funds that it will become City and County's responsibility. Yes, our commitment is at \$2 million, but if they don't go out and raise whatever the amount that they have raised in the past, it doesn't automatically, the City and the County is not the backup plan.

Mr. Jones said the concept here is in the past private sector came in and you know the story. The public sector came in and at some point we dipped below \$4 million. As we move forward, this public sector/public sector combination, there are no private sector dollars in those \$21 million, but what the private sector is doing is starting to sponsor more programming and things of that nature, fundraising, things of that nature. I just didn't want the Council to leave tonight believing that anywhere in those \$21 million are private sector dollars. It's over and above this.

Ms. Ajmera said okay, so anything, this is just the basic.

Mr. Jones said correct.

Ms. Ajmera said they will raise more based on the programming. There is no adjustment for any increase or any discussion about that at this point.

Mr. Jones said correct.

Ms. Ajmera said okay. Is there any management fee that we are committing to? Because of this new structure?

Mr. Jones said so, in terms of getting the money out, \$150,000 is what they have done, similar to in the past it was \$60,000. The difference is they're also going to do a bit of performance measures on this because there's criteria. It's not as if even with, and maybe we should have just set it up this way, even with the organizations that have been receiving funding over the years, there are some requirements in terms of collaboration, there are some requirements in terms of equity, to make sure we're just not writing checks to these organizations. So, part of what that fee will do is to make sure that these organizations are adhering to what they said they would do in order to get the money in the first place. That was very important to the Council to make sure that it wasn't just writing checks to these organizations.

Ms. Ajmera said so, what I'm hearing is it is more involved process when it comes to distribution of dollars, so \$150,000 of \$2 million?

Ms. Martin said 150 of 9 million.

Ms. Ajmera said 9 million.

Ms. Martin said yes, so it's about one and a half percent.

Ms. Ajmera said okay, okay. Because I was like seven and a half percent management fee, that's unheard of. Okay. All right, that makes sense. Okay. So, I understand that currently we have picked the Charlotte Is Creative non-profit to assist us with getting this \$2 million out. Moving forward with this structure, ASCC will distribute the entire \$11 million, or just the \$2 million?

Ms. Martin said just the \$2 million, if Council chooses.

Ms. Ajmera said got it. So, in that case, Charlotte Is Creative will not be part of this model in any way?

Ms. Martin said should Council choose to give the \$2 million to the ASCC governance structure, they might solicit additional organizations or help, capacity building, etc., but should Council choose to give the \$2 million to the ASCC, we will not have a direct relationship with Charlotte Is Creative.

Ms. Ajmera said I understand. So, the decision just was recently made to choose this non-profit, Charlotte Is Creative, and now it's not even been six months, we are changing, we are bringing in a new organization, ASCC. Has there been any concerns about Charlotte Is Creative's capacity to do this continuous work? Why change just in middle?

Ms. Martin said in our conversations with them, not at this point. You can see the buckets of funds that will be distributed through the ASCC, which are the blue, for Mecklenburg County, and the \$4.5 million is largely culture blocks, which is a grant that the ASCC has been distributing for years. So, my presumption is that they will have the staff retained to be able to administer that program themselves. So, in terms of Charlotte Is Creative's expertise is really around individual artists and small organizations capacity building, so haven't heard from them that they think they would be tapped to distribute some of these additional funds, nor would there be a capacity issue for us this year.

Ms. Ajmera said so, I would like to hear from Charlotte Is Creative since they are involved currently, what is their take on this? I see that Committee had voted four to one, so what was the Committee's, or at least a Committee member's opposition, with going with this model?

Mr. Graham said Mr. Bokhari voted in the negative and he can speak for himself.

Mr. Bokhari said were you asking why I voted no? What was it? Sorry, I just tuned in here. To me, we've been on a long-term journey with this, trying to take something that over multiple decades was on a decline, the Arts and Culture funding community because of a simple reason, the business community had disengaged in a way that they had before. So we ripped the Band-Aid off in 2019 and 2020, we worked hard, we redesigned it, we fixed some of the broken parts and basically it went back on a bit of a rough path. We focused in on part one of two parts, which was dump a ton of money in there, which was really good theoretically, but we fell short on part two which is how is this going to be governed long-term, so not only does the money make it to the right places but the government money becomes a way to reignite the engine of the broader ecosystem to engage, to shape where it goes in the future, and make it sustainable over time.

So, the reason I voted no is not that I don't think we're on somewhat the right path, because I have a lot of faith in the expertise and ability of Foundation for the Carolinas being a big part of this at the table. Where I have a problem is similar to where I have problems in other fronts, is a bunch of people that are going to make the decisions and help steer the course of this longer-term being just appointed by us is not the recipe for success. It's a recipe for friends and folks in the community to get appointments to something that they're not equipped to necessarily do, which is completely chart a new path to restart the engine of the private sector being engaged in all this. So, if you strip all that away, we could just do one-time stuff without the Foundation, we could do the \$11 million without anybody's help. We could literally have staff toss the \$2 million out the door, we know where the \$9 million is going. The whole reason for this governance structure and being associated with this conversation is the hope that some new thing is going to rise out of the ashes of all this and then start a new vision, chart a new path for the future. I have a huge problem that we're just dicing up and saying, "Okay, well, we'll appoint five here." You see how we appoint people to stuff. Right? I think I don't need to say more on that.



So, what I would suggest we do is the \$11 million is nearly baked. I think that the Charlotte Is Creative folks have the on-the-ground expertise to get stuff out fast, which they did in the past. I think their reason is changing for them in the future, so I would think that we get behind in the near-term goal Foundation for the Carolinas and let them provide the business acumen where Charlotte Is Creative provides the grassroots understanding and allow them to put a little governance and take this \$2 million that's literally going to get out one way or another, whether we RFP it or give it out through staff or let them do it, and let them kind of have a little bit of an ability to pilot something and show us the outcomes of that \$2 million so that when we're sitting back here for the next discussion, which needs to be an overhaul of who's on that Board to make sure the right people are on it, but also how much more money is going to be given in the future, we have something tangible to look at. I think that might be the solution in the near-term because it's clear with all the negotiations we're not going to fix the governance structure right now right away. It's also clear that most of the money knows where it's going, so let's use the little bit of it, there is discretion, to keep doing what's been done, okay, which is Charlotte Is Creative finding the opportunities and the different things, but allow the Foundation to do what they do well, which is put the business acumen and governance around it to structure something where we get back an opportunity to see how well they did. Then we can make big, broader decisions going forward. I don't know what the question was, but I hope that addressed it.

Ms. Johnson said okay. I've got a couple questions. My first question is can the folks in the dais see this meeting? Do they know why we're late? They can see. Is it on the screen in the dais?

Mayor Lyles said it's on the screen outside in the chamber.

Ms. Johnson said it is on the screen?

Ms. Holmes said yes, they can see. Did I say that correctly? Yes.

Ms. Johnson said I just wanted to make sure because we always go over.

Mayor Lyles said yes, we do.

Ms. Johnson said because of the agenda. Well, I mean, we have to be allowed to ask questions. My second question. Is this item up for a vote? We're talking about it like there's a choice, I mean, like we're voting on it. Are we voting on this or is this a done deal?

Mr. Jones said absolutely not. So, the Council will decide whether or not you will move forward with this governance structure.

Ms. Johnson said when is that vote?

Mr. Jones said so, my understanding is it's not necessarily a vote. If you say you're going to move forward, then you would go back to your normal appointment process.

Mayor Lyles said I thought that Julia said it's some consensus around the Council, so when they say that I assume that means that at some point most of the Council says yes, go forward, and others may not. I'm just saying that's pretty much the way it works.

Ms. Johnson said that's not the way it works. We vote.

Mayor Lyles said we'll vote for consensus, that's what they ask for.

Ms. Johnson said so, you don't need Council vote.

Mr. Jones said no, you can add an additional step that we could bring an RCA forward. You can vote on the RCA. After you vote on the RCA, you can make appointments.

Ms. Johnson said okay. No. So, it would be up to us if we want to move a different direction. Okay. My third question. Is there a difference in the allocation that the individual artists are going to receive with this structure versus the old structure? Is there a difference in the allocation? Is there less money for the individual artists?

Mr. Jones said so, with what we have on the screen, for the last three years, the green has been what has gone into the ecosystem plus some portion of these culture block grants. In terms of the Infusion Fund, \$11 million went into the community each year over the last three years.

Ms. Martin said \$12 million.

Mr. Jones said \$12 million, sorry.

Ms. Johnson said so, \$12 million, and this year would be?

Ms. Martin said \$21 million.

Ms. Johnson said \$21 million. Okay. My concern is always equity and transparency. If we are allowing the Foundation for the Carolinas or another group to be accountable or responsible for public dollars when we as elected officials are responsible to answer to the public. I've also shared my concern with just a few organizations being responsible for that level of funding. I know, Mr. Jones, you said we would have all these grassroots organizations coming to us at budget time, but that might be okay with some of us. We know that there's an equitable lens and we can really take a look at who's getting the funding because there was a grant I can think of last year that I recommended several grassroots organizations apply and none of them received them. So, we want to be able to answer to our constituents that there's oversight of these dollars. So, I just as a Council member in the direction that we're going with our public dollars, I'm hesitant to award just a few large organizations that much control and power, or responsibility and stewardship over the public dollars. That's all I have. Thanks.

Mr. Jones said Councilmember Johnson, one of the options early on was to create a new department with a lot of staff to do all of this, and even in the previous city, I haven't said this in a long time, that I was in, we had it. It was big. So, to some extent, the concept was how can you get, if you set the parameters, if you set the rules, if you set the goals that's important to the public bodies, how can you get as much money out without having a lot of overhead? So that was kind of one of the thought processes early on.

**Councilmember Anderson** said this is always a confusing conversation every time we hit on Arts and Culture. In think we just have to work to demystify this because sometimes it feels like an over-rotation. If we just take a step back, there's just been a lot of historical skepticism and lack of transparency, lack of trust within the Arts and Culture ecosystem in the City of Charlotte. It's going to be an uphill battle, a heavy lift to try and engender the loss from residents and from members of the artist community. I personally think that the Foundation for the Carolinas are an excellent steward choice to help us get this, right this ship, and to help from a governance perspective so that we do have the right pieces on the table to ensure that we have a thriving Arts and Cultural community in Charlotte. We should want that. I personally want that.

I feel I'd like for Charlotte to be known as an arts town. I would like to have that feeling, aesthetics, as people walk, come to visit our city and as we enjoy it, just as we believe that we're a sports town. Right? So, that's a heavy lift. If anybody is, I think, equipped to do it, I have tremendous faith in Cathy Bessant's leadership over at the Foundation for the Carolinas with input from us, of course. I would say standing up a City department, adding additional overhead to manage something like this and then we'd have to go out and hire experts to actually do this doesn't feel like the right way to manage this from an executive perspective because there are entities out in the community that have that expertise.

I feel like there's three things that we need to focus on here. Not necessarily about the \$9 million and the \$2 million, but really what has been missing, at least from my perspective, is a collective voice from all aspects of Arts and Culture in our community. We have people who are a part of that community who have felt like their voices haven't been heard, that they've been left out from a funding perspective. So, as we're thinking about the new model and a new governance structure, ensuring that that collective voice is present, is critical. The other piece, we're already doing it, but just continuing to do that, and that's supporting our existing institutions that we've mentioned several times this evening and ensure that they have the right support so that they can grow as well. Then thirdly, we have to make sure that there's equitable access to funding and support from artists small to large, to the Blumenthal Arts and some of our other blueblood institutions.

So, I hope that as we get to a point where on this slide we're thinking about the appointees, I think there's specific acumen and characteristics of these appointees that we really need to be thoughtful about because they will be by and large responsible for ensuring that the arts community grows, the commerce of the arts community grows and fits in with the overall feel of what are other goals are across the board. So, I really want to lean in and focus on this structure and the individuals, the characteristics and the acumen that we need in order to be successful, for this governance structure to be successful in the long run. Thank you, Madam Mayor.

Mr. Driggs said so, I think it's appropriate that a lot of questions are being raised here. I just want to offer a little perspective. Right? A few years ago, we had gotten to the point where the City was putting \$3.4 million into an ailing ASC and there were culture blocks being funded by the County. We've come a long way. We're now talking about an amazing partnership and understand it's a partnership. The County and the City and the Foundation have all come together to tackle this issue of funding the arts and I think that's an amazing feat in itself frankly, because we haven't had that kind of cooperation. The involvement of the Foundation is important because they're the connection to private sector. The Manager mentioned, and I've been told by private sector leaders, their intention is to be sponsors and to in fact step up their investment in the arts. What one executive told me was he went to an event that was hosted by the Arts and Science Council and another sponsor's name was all over the thing and this company was not even acknowledged because of the way they had funded. So, the company's do want to get the benefit at least of some recognition, some name recognition. So, I think we can expect to see that. A lot of what's been talked about is going to need to be worked out, but we've also accomplished a lot here.

The understanding is for one that although we are committed for the first year, the intention is to make this a kind of a sustainable effort, to create an expectation that this will continue. Another expectation is that the grant making Board will consist of creatives and people from within the arts community who know what's what and what's going on there. So, it will be up to us through our appointment power and oversight to make sure that that works the way it's conceived. That was something we agreed early on we wanted to do. We did not want politicians or people like that actually deciding on grants, so this is a process that it was intended to create the partnership among those three entities and then give the grant making to people who know about art. So, I just think that we rightly question a lot of these things, but there is a cause for celebration here. We have finally figured something out that was nowhere for 10 years. Thank you.

Mr. Graham said I'll be quick. I know we're short on time and I won't reiterate what Councilmember Driggs and Anderson have articulated. I think they're spot on. Again, the Committee did vote this out four-one, so it's in the hands of the Council to do as you choose. I think I would love to advance it as submitted, but if there's Council members that want to cut around the edges of it, that's your prerogative to do so. I think what Councilmember Anderson and Driggs have outlined demonstrates a year and a half, two years' worth of work that we've been trying to get to this point to really advance this discussion to a conclusion. Right? So, I would hope that Council would continue to ask the very important and valid questions that's here today but prepared to vote for it. Right? Because I think we're closer to the end than the beginning. We can see the goal

line. Again, everything that we do won't be perfect, but I think we've got to a point with this where I think there's a meeting of the collective minds with the City, the County, the Foundation for the Carolinas, structurally putting a structure together. That's what we're voting on, is the structure of how we advance Arts and Science in this community. Obviously, there will always be discussion about what we fund, how we fund, to what extent we fund. I think that's a separate conversation and I'm willing to have that conversation as well. I just had a great visit with the History Museum last Friday and we're about to see them get in the game. Right? So, I'm separating the funding of what we're doing versus today, which is really approving the structure of governance for the Arts and Science with community partners. I would encourage us to put it on the agenda relatively quickly and move it forward. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said thank you. So, Mr. Jones, do you have an action step that you'd like to take or talk about?

Mr. Jones said I think the Committee Chair just did that. I just want to make sure, Mayor. I talked to Councilmember Ajmera, the financial partner policy is still in committee, so it shouldn't be discussed tonight even during the Manager's piece. So, that's still in committee.

Mayor Lyles said so, it's still in committee and we're not going to discuss that until it comes out of committee.

Mr. Jones said right.

Mayor Lyles said okay. So, this has been a really great conversation. People are asking for explanations. People are expressing their thoughts and ideas on this. I think that if we are going to be in this City where we have public/private partnerships, where we work with our foundations in lots of ways, and as well as we can maintain the infrastructure that we have for the arts community that we support and have supported through our debt funding and all of that. The idea of programming really requires expertise. I think that we have to look at where we're going to get that and how we're going to get it. So, I don't know. I think Mr. Graham made a motion to accept the structure, if I'm saying that incorrectly.

Unknown said what was asked for, just for clarification, Mayor, at the end of the slide, what they asked for was a nod.

Ms. Mayfield said not a motion.

Mayor Lyles said yes, that's what I'm saying.

Ms. Mayfield said so, are we saying the nod is saying move forward, because as it stands right now, based on what we are presenting, I am a no to that nod.

Mayor Lyles said I understand that. I wanted to make sure because I think Ms. Johnson talked about, well, you know, so it has to be a vote because it was a nod, but I think Ms. Johnson said it was better if we had some kind of effort around how do we raise our hands. So, I'm just trying to get to someplace to the next step because we have a recommendation to have this consensus to participate. It says proceed if you agree with that, that's fine. So proceed with standard appointment process.

Ms. Watlington said if we're making a motion, what I'm hearing around the room is that there is some work around the edges, if you will, like you said to be done. I would rather we do that work and then bring it back for consideration.

Mayor Lyles said that's what I'm trying to get at. Tell me what you want so that we can actually move on.

Ms. Watlington said so, if it needs to be in a motion, I will move to do that.

Motion was made by Councilmember Watlington, and seconded by Councilmember Brown, to do work and bring it back at the first Business meeting in October 2024.

Mayor Lyles said I think what we're trying to figure out is that we are going to come back and do some more work on this. The Mayor Pro Tem has said give us a timeline because these groups are not going to be able to operate without having this funding that we will need.

Mr. Graham said who's going to do the work?

Mayor Lyles said and do the work.

Ms. Watlington said Mr. Manager, how much time do you need to work in the edit since you heard at this dais?

Mr. Jones said okay, the first thing is that \$9 million is gone. That is hardwired. Okay? So, there's \$2 million that we can park and there's a governance structure that you want more answers to, and we can bring something back to you at the first Business meeting in October 2024.

Ms. Watlington said fantastic.

Unknown said 14th.

Mr. Graham said because it's not about the money. It's about the structure. It's the structure.

Ms. Brown said we all need to be on the same page. I listened to you guys. I listened to you attentively and from what I heard mostly from everybody is come back.

Mr. Graham said I don't think everybody said come back. I think some.

Mayor Lyles said I think that we're going to come back at the first meeting in October 2024.

Mr. Graham said I don't think it's the majority either.

Ms. Brown said well, so then what's your motion? What's your motion, Mr. Graham?

Mayor Lyles said Councilmember Brown, I don't think that we have to have a motion. This was on for the action committee. We've had a discussion and I believe that the Manager said the first meeting in October 2024 he would come back. What Mayor Pro Tem said is let's make sure we have a timeline, so that will be the timeline.

Ms. Brown said so, we don't have to make a motion and vote on it? We're going to come back? Go ahead.

Ms. Watlington said I was going to say point of order. It had been moved and properly seconded. There was a motion on the floor, so if we want to vote for it, then we need to.

Mayor Lyles said if we want to vote for it.

Ms. Watlington said if it votes down, then Mr. Graham may be correct that it's got the votes to move forward, so.

Mr. Graham said I mean, I just [inaudible].

Ms. Brown said well, you were making comments, so you have something to say.

Mr. Graham said no, I've already said it once. I think we're focusing on the governance, not the money, maybe \$2 million may be at play. It's time sensitive, and I think that Mayor Pro Tem and the Manager said with the next business meeting or something like that, I think that makes sense.

Ms. Brown said yes, I agree with that. I'm not in opposition. I was just wondering. You said not most people.

Mr. Graham said I'm just being facetious.

Ms. Brown said with all due respect, Manager, I understand exactly what's going on. So, we're going to bring it back the first business meeting in October 2024?

Mr. Jones said yes.

Ms. Brown said is that the first Monday in October?

Mr. Jones said it may be the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Anderson said the first one is the Committee Meetings.

Ms. Ajmera said the first Business meeting, so the second Monday.

Mr. Jones said the first Business meeting so it's the second Monday.

Ms. Brown said the second Monday in October 2024. Okay. I just wanted to be sure. All right. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said and it's to focus on the governance issue.

Ms. Brown said correct. I understand it. Yes. I just want to understand.

Mayor Lyles said all right. We have people downstairs. Let's go downstairs and start our regular meeting.

No vote was taken on the motion.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### **ITEM NO. 5: CLOSED SESSION (AS NECESSARY)**

No closed session occurred.

\* \* \* \* \*

The meeting was recessed at 7:14 p.m. to move to the Meeting Chamber for the regularly scheduled Business Meeting.

\* \* \* \* \*

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for a Business Meeting on Monday, April 11, 2024, at 7:20 p.m. in Room 267 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Council members present were Dimple Ajmera, Danté Anderson, Tariq Bokhari, Tiawana Brown, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, Lawana Mayfield, James Mitchell, Marjorie Molina, and Victoria Watlington.

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#### **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE**

Mayor Lyles gave the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by all.

\* \* \* \* \*

## **PUBLIC FORUM**

**Mayor Lyles** said so tonight we're going to have several recognitions and awards. I thought that we would start first, though, because we are keeping people that came down earlier to petition this Council for their ideas and their thoughts, so we will go ahead and have our public forum recognition. We have speakers. Speakers will have three minutes to talk with the Council. In this case we do not reply, but you will have someone on the staff to address your question and you will get some information, if not immediately tonight then sometime over in the next week or so. So, we have 11 speakers tonight, I believe, and one on our actual business item.

### **Transforming Nations Ford - Parcel 20517125**

**Joi Mayo, 409 Goldstaff Lane** said hi, I'm Joi Mayo. I'm the Board Chair of Transforming Nations Ford, a new community development organization. I'm here to highlight the urgent need for space for our youth so that they can feel safe, thrive, and see a brighter future. Parcel 20517125 at East Arrowood Road and England Street offers a key opportunity to address the disinvestment and crime that has long impacted our neighborhood. This area, home to many low-income minority and immigrant families, desperately needs safe, enriching spaces. On March 19, 2024, community members met with City officials to discuss the parcel's development. The consensus was clear. Our youth need a place to gather and engage in positive activities. We envision amenities like basketball courts, soccer fields, a playground, a pavilion, and community-needs space. So, the parcel that I mentioned is actually owned by the City. We'll talk more about that. We urge the City of Charlotte to sell portions of the parcel to Mecklenburg County for \$1, prioritizing community needs. Additionally, we ask the City to subsidize rent in the proposed mixed-use facilities at the parcel for non-profits like ourBridge for Kids, Despierita, and the Urban League's Alternatives To Violence Program, allowing them to continue vital work in the community. Transforming Nations Ford has collected over one thousand signatures from City of Charlotte residents who believe investment is critical. I am requesting a meeting with each City Council member to discuss this proposal further and will follow up with you via e-mail to arrange a time. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration on this important matter.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much, Ms. Mayo. We look forward to that conversation.

### **Southwest Charlotte Resources**

**Sil Ganzo, 1000 Land Grant Road** said good evening, everyone. My name is Sil Ganzo, and I represent ourBRIDGE, an organization dedicated to fostering the education, acculturation, and well-being of newly-arrived refugee and immigrant children and their families. Since 2014 ourBRIDGE provided after-school programming and wrap-around services to over a thousand refugee and immigrant children. We primarily always worked on the east side of town. However, the pandemic led us to expand our reach to the southwest, specifically the South Boulevard, Nations Ford, and Arrowood Corridors because a growing number of immigrant families were carpooling to our community site on the east side. As we began developing relationships with newly-arrived families in the southwest, we learned that they want access to English classes, more recreational activities for their children, and after-school programs that could help their kids with homework and stay connected with friends through healthier activities. Throughout 2020 and 2021 we spent time meeting with local leaders, understanding the available resources, identifying service gaps, and listening to what families needed. We found out the southwest area is now the biggest pocket of immigrants in the County. In fact, 60 percent of the neighbors there identified as Hispanic or Latino. The more we learned, the more concerned we became with the future of the children growing up in the southwest as the gaps were bigger than we initially identified. More specifically, I'll use three apartment complexes at the corner of Arrowood and Nations Ford, about two

blocks from the parcel Joi just mentioned. Eighty-two percent of the residents in those three apartment complexes are Latino. Remember that. Thirty-six percent of the homes in the neighborhoods have access to internet compared to 80 percent of the rest of the County. While life expectancy in the City is 72 years old, it drops to 60 years old in the southwest area, and in this apartment complexes where 82 percent of Latinos live, life expectancy is 48, 48 years old. Inequities are stark and that is not okay. I know we can do better. So, I am proud here to stand in support of Joi Mayo, the [inaudible] leaders, and the neighbors who have been advocating for investment in that area for the past 40 years. I urge our City Council to consider this leader's request and work with the County to enhance the quality of life for all families in the southwest. Thanks.

### **Animal Care and Control**

**Kristen Coughlin, 522 Oakland Avenue** said Council members, first I want to thank you for your time today. Before I get into the topic at hand, a little bit about myself. I am proudly a born and bred Charlottean. My mom was raised on a farm off Sandy Porter Road and attended Olympic High School. I myself graduated from South Mecklenburg High School, went to App State University, and missed the City so much that I moved back after graduating to pursue a career in finance. I started fostering for ACC (Animal Care and Control) back in April 2024. A call went out to the community, asking anyone who had capacity to take a dog while the shelter underwent renovations for three weeks. I drove over to the shelter, picked up a very handsome black lab mix, and took his home. The three weeks came and went and when I was faced with the choice of fostering until adoption or returning him to the shelter, it really wasn't much of a choice. Returning him to the shelter meant that he faced the very real possibility of being euthanized. I believed he deserved an advocate and a fighting chance at adoption. I am happy to report that that dog was adopted into his forever home on July 15, 2024. Over the course of my time fostering, my eyes have opened to the struggles that the shelter faces. ACC operates on a bare bones budget that does not reflect the exponential growth the City has experienced in recent years. This underfunding results in inadequate resources for basic necessities such as food, medical care, and proper facilities. Because of this they struggle to maintain a humane environment for the animals they care for. If I'm being honest, going to the main shelter off Byrum is something that I try to avoid doing very regularly. The reason is because it's not a pleasant place to be. When I'm there, before I walk inside, I have to take a very deep breath. The air feels heavy and the front desk staff are overwhelmed or absent. Most of the time there are scared, confused animals being surrendered. They're often caked in dirt and neglected. The other reason I avoid the shelter is the bigger one, because I'm asked to. Almost weekly I receive an email telling us please not to come to the shelter, they're understaffed, they have no capacity, so unless you are a community member coming in to foster or adopt an animal, it's an emergency for your foster pet or you are a volunteer, please avoid coming in. As you can imagine, many staff members at ACC are burnt out. They are tasked with not only handling the daily care of animals, but also administrative duties, outreach efforts, and community education. Investing emotionally in the animals and community is taxing, especially when they know that not every dog who walks through the front doors will walk out. That's a heavy thing to experience day after day. I love that, as a citizen, I have the ability to cast my vote for the candidates whose platforms reflect the causes I care about. In that way I am able to advocate for myself. The tough thing with animals, though, is that they don't get to do that. They rely on us to act as their advocates. I firmly believe we have a responsibility to create a framework that gives them a fighting chance at a life worth living. Thank you.

**Annagrace Blount, 12001 Olympic Club Drive** said hi, my name's Annagrace Blount and I'm a foster for the animal shelter. Shelter advocates have been asking for two things that can significantly improve the pet homelessness crisis in our City, a new adequately staffed shelter and an independent City department. I support both of these requests. I want to extend my gratitude as well for the recent approvals of additional staff, which will benefit both animals and caretakers. While we're thankful for the new staff positions, they remain insufficient, and the need for a new shelter and independent City department is urgent. Operating under the Police Department causes multiple bureaucratic challenges, including low noncompetitive pay for key roles like



veterinarians. As a foster I see the desperate need for more clinic staff to manage the overwhelming number of animals requiring care. Beyond staffing, the shelter itself is outdated and ill-equipped to handle the growing demand. A new facility is essential to improve animal care, provide adequate space, and reduce strain on both staff and resources. Earlier this year I found a dog tied to a tree in a parking lot, abandoned after recently giving birth. I brought her to the shelter, and she was placed on a mandatory three-day stray hold despite her condition and obvious mistreatment. To my surprise, someone did reach out looking for her and promised to retrieve her by the end of the day, but they never showed up. Her name was Honey. I was able to find a foster home for her but due to strict procedural obligation, the shelter had to extend the stray hold by an additional 10 days because contact was made. During this extension, Honey contracted kennel cough, a highly contagious respiratory infection that can lead to pneumonia. After two weeks of waiting in a kennel in discomfort, the previous guardian finally arrived but chose not to take her back due to her illness. Honey's illness had developed into pneumonia, and she suffered immensely for over a month. Honey's suffering could have been significantly reduced with a less crowded, appropriately designed shelter and more veterinarians to manage care of the animals. For people like myself and many others who are here today, it is tiring and overwhelming to work for a system that does not work for us. Furthermore, the current structure heavily impacts public perception. People are less likely to support or trust in a system that seems more concerned with red tape than with the actual welfare of the animals and the community members it serves. As Charlotte continues to expand, the need for a better shelter facility and more adequate staffing grows simultaneously. I also urge you to consider the significant benefits of designating the shelter as an independent City department and to take action to ensure that the shelter can operate with the autonomy needed to best serve our community. Thank you for your time and consideration.

The following persons submitted written comments regarding this item pursuant to S.L. 2020-3, SB 704. To review comments in their entirety, contact the City Clerk's Office.

**Melissa Chambers, [mbchambers@gmail.com](mailto:mbchambers@gmail.com)**

**Alexander Buskey, [a-buskey@onu.edu](mailto:a-buskey@onu.edu)**

### **Nations Ford Road Transformation**

**Thomas Vinson, 9318 Jasper Crest Lane** said hello, how are you doing? I'm here speaking on the transformation of Nations Ford. I'm here with Ms. Joi Mayo and also with [INAUDIBLE]. I'm a native Charlottean. I've been here 46 plus years. I'm closer to 50 than 40. We know it's a resource desert in the Nations Ford area. Mr. Mitchell used to be my mentor 30-something years ago. He used to come pick me up because we had nothing over there. He would come pick me up to go to [INAUDIBLE] Smith. We've never had anything over there. The crime rate has escalated tremendously over in the Nations Ford Road Corridor and that's because they don't have anything to do. We are in the top four in the City in violent crime, makes up eight percent of it and we are only one percent of the land mass in Charlotte. We're just asking for the help from the City to put up something over there so we can get the youth something to do, which also can bridge the gap between the youth and the elderly by bringing us all together, because it can also be a place for the elderly to come and play bingo, have little dances and do different stuff. So, it'll just be something for y'all to think about, let us get that parcel, you know, help us out. Everybody claimed the four, we are the four, so put something on the four, invest in the four. Thank you.

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### **AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

**Mayor Lyles** said so now I'd like to go to the time that we would have for recognitions here. For the very first recognition that I would like to have been that we just lost a major leader in our City, a leader in civil rights, leader in equity and inclusion, at the age of 75 Kelly Alexander passed away this past week. I just wanted to acknowledge him. He has

been a part of a family of legacy and always about talking about how do we make sure that people have their civil rights, that people have the opportunity. He will be missed so much from this community. We also know that his family loved him deeply and the legacy that he left as a businessman and a legislator is very important for us to recognize. So, if we could just have a moment of silence for Kelly Alexander, I would certainly appreciate it. Thank you.

I would also like to recognize and thank the Knight Foundation for the investments that they made on a visit with their Board of Directors to the City of Charlotte. This investment included a really deep dive into one our Corridors of Opportunity along Beatties Ford Road. Not only did they look through the Beatties Ford Road template of what was going to happen, thank you to Tonya and all of the residents along Beatties Ford Road for this, but they also left an investment of almost \$17 million in economic development initiatives for the Corridor. So, for that I want to say thank you to the Knight Foundation and the work that they do. They are part of what we used to have as our newspaper and they have been a part of this community in so many ways for a very long history and we need to recognize them for what they've accomplished and what they contribute. They also left funding for our Culture and Arts program, so hopefully we'll see that five or so million dollars in some way that we can figure out a way to get it out to the community and work with them because that is really important. I think that they, again, should be recognized for that.

#### **ITEM NO. 6: NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH**

**Mayor Lyles** read the following proclamation:

**WHEREAS** suicide and suicide attempts affect the health and well-being of families, friends, loved ones, coworkers, and the community, suicide is especially affecting our young people with suicide being the second leading cause of death for young people the ages of 10 to 34, for young black males the ages of 10 to 24, and on college campuses. It is the number one cause of death for police officers not in the line of duty. In the United States, one person completes suicide every 11 minutes, resulting in almost 50,000 suicides in 2022 according to the Foundation for Suicide Prevention; and

**WHEREAS** the stigma around global mental health is the number one reason why people won't seek help and fuels the suicide rate, suicide is a global health crisis and not a personal character flaw. Mental health conditions and suicidality work against suicides by discouraging persons at risk for suicide from seeking life-saving help and further traumatize survivors of suicide loss and people with lived experience of suicide; and

**WHEREAS** organizations like the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Wellness Action Recovery, Mental Health America, and others, continue to work to help those suffering in silence and prevent suicide through advocacy, education, research, and action:

**NOW THEREFORE**, we, Vi Alexander Lyles, Mayor of Charlotte, and George Dunlap, Chair of the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissions, do hereby proclaim the month of September 2024 as

#### **“NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH”**

We ask all of our citizens to honor this observance.

**Fonda Bryant, 3110 Patrick Henry Drive NW, Concord** said thank you. I'm going to try to get through what I say without crying. Sometimes I have those days. When I was coming in this evening on 277, there was a black man up on the bridge wanting to jump. CMPD (Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department) was there, I hope and pray that they get him down. I know what that pain feels like. So, I wanted to let you all know on July 1, 2024, CMPD lost their fourth officer in two and a half years to suicide. According to BlueHelp.org, the organization that tracks first responder suicides, as of today we have

lost 62 police officers nationwide to suicide, eight more since Officer Brent Simpson died. Where is the call to action? Where is the help? At his memorial, his wife talked about the pain he was dealing with daily. I know that pain. If it wasn't for my Aunt Spanky 29 years ago recognizing the warning signs of suicide, I wouldn't be here and neither would others. I would have missed out on so many good things if I had taken my life on February 14, 1995. I would have missed my son growing up and my grandson Bryce. Suicide isn't a warm or fuzzy subject. It's a hard subject to talk about, but we must have these uncomfortable conversations to become comfortable invoking change through action. Words are just words if action doesn't come behind them. We can share how sorry we are when someone dies by suicide. We need more than mere words. We need to do better as a community, a culture, and a society when it comes to preventing suicide. Education is the key to preventing suicide. Suicide is the most preventable death of all deaths, and it is everybody's business. No one should have to deal with the pain and tragedy of losing someone to suicide. Everyone needs to care and everyone needs to get involved to stop the global health crisis that is suicide. I put pins on y'all's desks for y'all to wear. Tomorrow, September 10, is World Suicide Prevention Day. The Duke Energy building will shine teal and purple for that day. Everyone needs to take a moment and recognize that whether directly or indirectly, suicide affects all of us. Thank you.

**Councilmember Driggs** said glad you're still here.

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## PUBLIC HEARING

### ITEM NO. 8: PUBLIC HEARING AND DECISION ON HUDSPETH AREA VOLUNTARY ANNEXATION

**Mayor Lyles** declared the hearing open.

There being no speakers, either for or against, a motion was made by Councilmember Watlington, seconded by Councilmember Ajmera, and carried unanimously to (A) Close the public hearing, and (B) Adopt Annexation Ordinance 836-X with an effective date of September 9, 2024, to extend the corporate limits to include this property and assign it to City Council District 4.

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 67, at Page(s) 309-312.

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## POLICY

### ITEM NO. 9: CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

**Marcus Jones, City Manager** said thank you, Mayor and members of Council, what I would like to do is I was going to have Julia Martin come up and talk about the Strategic Progress Tracker. Don't want to do it tonight, but we did send some information out to you last month. You will remember at the Annual Strategy Meeting we were trying to make sure we could align our goals, objectives, and performance measures, so that has gone live. We will make sure that we get information out to you on that. We're really excited about that. At a future meeting we'll give you a go through with it.

**Mayor Lyles** said all right. Thank you very much.

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### ITEM NO. 10: AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDING POLICY

**Mayor Lyles** said so we will hear from the Committee.

Motion was made by Councilmember Watlington, and seconded by Councilmember Mayfield to approve the Housing, Safety, and Community Committee's recommendation to create affordable housing funding policy guidelines inclusive of housing goals and outcomes, investment priorities, and investment goals across affordable housing categories to help direct city housing investments through local funding sources.

**Councilmember Watlington** said so I just want to say that I thoroughly, thoroughly, thoroughly enjoyed working on this with staff and my colleagues, my Vice Chair LaWana Mayfield, and Councilmember Driggs, who was able to join us as an unofficial Committee member over the summer. We were tasked with thinking about how are we going to deploy this \$100 million in our Housing Trust Fund. We know that we've done 50 million over the last several years and that was a step change at the time and now we're ready to take another step. We want to do it in a way that is not just doubling the amount of funding, but we want to make sure that we are updating our funding to reflect our community's current needs. I think that we did that. So, I'm very excited to see this come to the table. It was supported by our Committee and thank you to our Housing Safety and Community Committee members Brown, Mayfield, Johnson, as well as Ajmera. Thank you for your work on this and thank you for your input. Thank you to the community. We were able to get community engagement executed and we're in the process of getting that feedback. I do believe that what we've got here is reflective of the broader goal. So, I'm excited to see the investment in home ownership at a level that we've never done before. I'm particularly excited about the \$5 million we've got in an Innovation Fund that will really allow the market to tell us what is it that we could be doing at scale that we just have not set up a tool to do. So, I look forward to the great ideas that come out of that. Once again, just very, very proud of the work that staff has done. I'll turn it over to Vice Chair Mayfield.

**Councilmember Mayfield** said I again want to echo. While a lot of people were off on summer break, we, the three of us, were trying to dig in to come up with some really creative ideas. What I would like to add is we have a survey. We worked very hard together to push out the importance. The survey honestly takes five minutes to complete. We already have a list of priorities. You are literally just moving the sentence up for what is your number one priority. We have less than 400 surveys so far that have been submitted. I have shared it on my social media, the City of Charlotte, on my Facebook as well as Instagram, the City of Charlotte's Facebook page as well as all of our social media. The link is on there for the input. I promise you it takes five minutes. This is a way for you all to let us know if the ideas that the three of us and the entire Committee that we thought we heard from you as the community that is of importance. We are now giving it back to you. I can say so far for the almost 400, we are right in alignment. The idea of how we are looking to allocate the funds and support our community and not just do another 50 percent more of what we've previously done but to look at outcomes, not just quantity, that was very important. For those 400 right now, those will be the ones that say, "Hey, this is what we want," so we really, really, really want everyone, all of your family, all of your neighbors, all of your church members, all of your friends, make it a challenge. Go in, who can complete the survey first. Get the survey done because we want to hear from you. Thank you, Madam Mayor.

Ms. Watlington said Madam Mayor, I apologize. I would be remiss if I let this moment pass without acknowledging our Assistant City Manager Shawn Heath, Director Rebecca Heffner, and Warren Wooten out of Housing Neighborhood Services. They did a tremendous job supporting us this summer and being very responsive to the questions that we asked. They provided excellent data and the research that they did, we could not have done it without you all. So, thank you for once again knocking it out of the park.

**Councilmember Driggs** said at the time we adopted our budget over actually my opposition, I did express a concern that we were increasing our housing commitment to \$100 million and in my view, we weren't specific enough in targeting it. We didn't have accountability around results. I think that earned me a slot on the working group. I have to say, I did enjoy working with you ladies very much. I want to also chime in on the staff. The amount of material that the staff brought to us and the analysis they brought to us and the way they responded from what we said in one session to the next session was really remarkable. So, very impressed with that. I'm pleased with where we came out. I think what we have now is a more clearly expressed intent around our investment in affordable housing and the goal is to make sure that the people who benefit the most from it and who deserve it, get it, and that we are going to be accountable about being able to prove that that was the case. So, I think we came out in a good place. I'm going to try and get my summer back this fall sometime. I appreciate you ladies. Thank you very much.

**Councilmember Anderson** said Mr. Driggs, I think a few of us need some more days from our summer, from the work that we did. I want to commend the Committee on the work that you all did on this presentation. I was able to sit through a couple of meetings and I really liked the strategic approach and the focus on economic mobility and residential stability. One of the things that I noticed a couple years ago when we were talking about Housing was the percentage of the units for sale to promote home ownership in our community was very low. In this proposed structure, we have increased the dollars approximately 150 percent towards home ownership, which many of us know can have a generational impact on families. The other piece is really that workforce housing, the middle housing that's missing, and that is one of the key issues of a growing city is not having proper housing for our workforce to stay inside of the city proximate to where they work. Without that housing, it breeds flight out of the city and therefore tax base and resources. So, really love the focus on that specific area as well. Lastly, I'll just say I know that we're going to go through a tremendous community education process, but this will be just one of three bonds on the ballot in the fall, so I really encourage our residents to educate, please take the survey as Ms. Mayfield stated, but educate yourselves. Keep a look out for all the information that we as a City will be pushing forward on information around the bonds because they're really critical to ensuring that we have a city that can grow and thrive properly. Thank you, Madam Mayor.

Mayor Lyles said I, too, want to say thank you to the Committee members and those self-appointed and some of those that were just anointed. I want to say that because this City has worked many years to figure out how can we do this better, how can we do it, and I think that what you did was exceptional. It only works if we come out and vote for the \$100 million in bonds. So, this good work needs financing and funding and we will be accountable for that, but we will need your vote to make it happen and make it possible. This ballot's going to be almost I think two pages long, so when you come in it's always going to start with the President and bonds are always at the bottom. We need to really understand that and as you go out and talk about this wherever you are in your community, your neighborhood, your church, your schools, just know that we need you to follow the ballot all the way until the end and support these bonds because that's the way we will implement change and opportunity. So, thank you very much. Thank you again to the Committee for the work that they've done.

The vote was taken on the motion and recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Brown, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, Molina, and Watlington

NAYS: Councilmember Bokhari

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**BUSINESS**

**ITEM NO. 11: APPROPRIATE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION GRANT FUNDS**

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Ajmera, and carried unanimously to adopt Budget Ordinance 837-X appropriating \$417,600 from the North Carolina Department of Transportation for consolidation and coordination of regional public transportation to the CATS Operating Fund.

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 67, at Page(s) 313.

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**ITEM NO. 12: MORRIS FIELD DRIVE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENTS**

Motion was made by Councilmember Ajmera, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to (A) Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to negotiate and execute a Supplemental Agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to accept Surface Transportation Block Grant Direct Attributable funds in the amount of \$1,745,000 for the Morris Field Drive Bridge Replacement Project, (B) Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to negotiate and execute a Supplemental Agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to accept Surface Transportation Block Grant funds in

the amount of \$857,000 for the Morris Field Drive Bridge Replacement Project, and (C) Adopt Budget Ordinance 838-X appropriating \$2,602,000 from the North Carolina Department of Transportation to the General Capital Projects Fund.

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 67, at Page(s) 314

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 324-325.

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**ITEM NO. 13: REA ROAD WIDENING PROJECT SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT**

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Ajmera, and carried unanimously to (A) Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to negotiate and execute a Supplemental Agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to accept state resurfacing funds in the amount of \$300,000 for the Rea Road Widening Project, and (B) Adopt Budget Ordinance 839-X appropriating \$300,000 from the North Carolina Department of Transportation to the General Capital Projects Fund.

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 67, at Page(s) 315.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 326.

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**ITEM NO. 14: CONTINUED AUTHORIZATION FOR SPENDING OF OPIOID LITIGATION SETTLEMENT**

Motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell, seconded by Councilmember Molina, and carried unanimously to adopt a resolution to direct the expenditure of opioid settlement funds.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 327-328.

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**ITEM NO. 15: EASTLAND REDEVELOPMENT SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT**

Motion was made by Councilmember Molina, and seconded by Councilmember Ajmera, to (A) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute a master development agreement with the sports complex team (Developer) setting forth the general terms and conditions of the city and Developer's partnership, (B) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute an agreement for the reimbursement of costs for public infrastructure in an amount not to exceed \$18.994 million, which represents an additional \$8.994 million from previous City Council approval, which is expected to be reimbursed to the Developer in full by the 2024 Bond Referendum or split between the 2024 and 2026 Bond Referendums or in a combination of payments from other municipal sources of funding, (C) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute agreements for the reimbursement of costs for expenses associated with indoor and outdoor amateur sports facilities and other public improvements in an amount not to exceed \$22.334 million, which represents an additional \$2.344 million from previous City Council approval, to be supported by the Convention Center Tax Fund, and (D) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute any further ancillary instruments or non-material changes to the agreements as may be necessary.

**Greg Ascitutto, Executive Director Charlotte East** said good evening, all. My name is Greg Ascitutto and I'm the Executive Director of Charlotte East. We are the community development organization dedicated to developing social and economic capital in East Charlotte. Your vote tonight is the last, last turn of key needed to restart an economic engine that promises to bring a \$169 million annual economic impact, 500 jobs to East Charlotte. This project, these outcomes, are what thousands of East Charlotteans have spent two decades fighting for. While last year saw a very public and contentious advocacy cycle, we would not be here tonight without it. As this chapter closes, we're excited to start a new one by welcoming Bolton-Ivory-Cantey, Edge Sports Group, Southern Entertainment, and Charlotte Soccer Academy to our community, and I believe all of them are here tonight. We are incredibly excited and cannot wait to see the transformative impact that their work is going to have on East Charlotte.

I would like to say this is a laudatory public comment. I am grateful to the City of Charlotte for its investment both in the site and our organization. With roughly a quarter million in support via the Corridor's team, Charlotte East is excited to embark upon a two-year effort to establish and formalize a Greater Eastland business district. Our goal is to help our business community navigate the opportunities and challenges posed by this development, ensuring existing small businesses are given the supports they need to thrive and stay in place, while opening the door to those who want to do business on our side of town. In case it gets lost or I don't get another public opportunity to do it, I would like to thank all members of Council tonight for helping us arrive at this moment in time regardless of the ultimate decision and your vote. Some specific thanks to the following. Councilmember Ajmera, thank you for ensuring that the Sports Complex did not die in Committee last summer. Councilmember Watlington, thank you for your constant support of our community and leadership in the formation of this merged proposal. Councilmember Bokhari, thank you for helping shepherd this final funding request through to tonight's finish line. Councilmember Graham, thank you for your oversight of this project since Tepper's departure.

Lastly, I would like to give a huge, huge thank you to Councilmember Mitchell for ensuring East Charlotte had a seat at this negotiating table from day one. Thank you for your day one support, your guidance, and your delivered promises. I'm going to wrap up and truly say thank you to everyone here. Thank you again for your support of Eastland. I look forward to working together in coming months to ensure that both our residents and 100,000 plus annual out of town visitors will be able to get to it via train. Thank you.

**Mayor Lyles** said all right. Thank you very much for your remarks.

**Councilmember Molina** said I spent the weekend deciding, just collecting my thoughts and my words around this. So, in order to make sure that I didn't leave anything out, I wrote my thoughts down, so I'm going to read them to you the way that they came from my mind, collecting everything that has happened over the past almost two years now. Tonight marks a monumental step forward for East Charlotte and our entire region. Today, we officially close the transaction on the Norfolk Southern rail line, which is an essential part of what could become a comprehensive regional transportation system. This acquisition opens the door for connecting neighborhoods, reducing traffic congestion, and fostering economic opportunities. It represents the type of forward-thinking infrastructure investment that will benefit generations to come, providing East Charlotte and our entire region with the much-needed access to Citywide transit.

Just today I interacted with a dedicated, long-time community member who brought more concerns to my attention. The message was, for too long East Charlotte has been underserved when it comes to transportation and infrastructure. Independence Boulevard, one of the busiest roads in the region, has been a corridor of frustration for residents and commuters alike. From the demolition of the Coliseum Shopping Center on Independence Boulevard in 2017, once a bustling retail hub, and to the bustling retail hub that was Eastland Mall, the community of East Charlotte has felt left out. I want to acknowledge that sentiment. The closures have left gaping holes in the hearts of East Charlotteans. Despite high hopes, the area still awaits meaningful development and the promised economic revival that has yet to materialize. I commit, with the announcement of both items today, about these key milestones for as long as I hold this duly elected position, to continue to push for solutions that serve East Charlotte's long-term needs.

Now for the main event. I want to focus on Eastland Yards, a crown jewel of East Charlotte's future. As many of you know, Eastland Mall once stood as a vibrant center of commerce and community gathering. When it closed in 2010 it left a void in both the economic and social fabric of our district. Since then we've been on a long and sometimes difficult journey to revitalize the site. I've been deeply involved in this process as a member of the Jobs and Economic Development Committee in both election years 2022 and 2023, and we've carefully reviewed every proposal for Eastland Yards. From those early discussions to where we are today, the project has undergone multiple iterations. What began as a singular A and B is now a comprehensive option that considers a broad and comprehensive range of desires from the East Charlotte community. It's a mixed-use development that will combine residential housing, retail, and green spaces, bring jobs and economic vitality back to the area. Tonight, we will finalize the last major decision, approving an additional \$11 million to complete the final 30 acres of this development. When I asked our City staff and this Council to support the combined option on August 28, 2023, and return the results in 45 days, it was a risk, a risk that I was willing to take to consider the broad needs of our community members in East Charlotte. That ask was supported unanimously by this Council, which I am extremely grateful for. I am encouraged by the outcome, and I am proud to support the additional funding in what will be a long-awaited solution for the community that I represent on this body. As a Councilwoman, a 20-year Charlottean, and someone who has lived through the ups and downs of this community, I understand the frustrations that many have expressed. East Charlotte has been traditionally overlooked and I've heard those concerns loud and clear. Since taking office, I've been committed to ensuring that East Charlotteans get the attention and resources it deserves. Tonight's decision is not just a new development or infrastructure, it's about creating the future that we've all been waiting for, a future where East Charlotte is a thriving part of Charlotte's community story.



Tonight's decision on Eastland Yards and today's acquisition of the Norfolk Southern rail line are critical steps towards addressing longstanding gaps in transportation and economic development for our district and the entire City of Charlotte. East Charlotte has traditionally been underserved, I'll say that once again, but I feel strongly that we are now on the right track. We are laying the foundation for a future that will bring jobs, housing, and transit options that have been long overdue. I am proud to be a part of that journey. I look forward to continuing the work with my colleagues, the community, and business leaders to ensure that East Charlotte reaches its full potential. Thank you, Madam Mayor.

**Councilmember Graham** said in August of 2012 the City purchased approximately 80.4 acres of the former Eastland Mall property. The mall itself was demolished in 2013 and since those times, we had a lot of discussions about Eastland Mall in a wide variety of ways. On a personal note, I tell the Council all the time, I used to work at Eastland Mall at Webster's Menswear selling clothes when I was a student at Johnson C. Smith University. I had the opportunity today as I was shopping in East Charlotte [inaudible] to drive by the site and was extremely impressed by what I saw in terms of the development. Crosland Southeast, and I see Tim is up there, has been doing a fantastic job building the senior housing, the affordable units, retail is going to be out there. Mecklenburg County continues to work on creating a four-acre park. By the end of the year, there'll be people actually living on the grounds. I think that deserves a round of applause for the waiting for 10 years.

Then there's the concept that we're fulfilling today, working with a wide variety of community partners to have indoor sports, basketball, pickle ball, volleyball, outdoor sports, soccer, arts and entertainment, restaurant and retail, all with community access to the property. It's a great day for East Charlotte. There's a commitment that this Council has taken to heart. I want to thank the Committee because Greg is right, we had a pretty interesting year and a half of Committee meetings and the residents for being honest brokers and advocating for their community. I appreciate what you've done and your advocacy. I want to thank the Committee for working with me, Vice Chairman Mitchell, Mr. Bokhari, who I enjoy working with, I really do, I like my hot dog with mustard and ketchup on it, so I really enjoy working with them, Mr. Driggs for always being a reasonable member, and certainly the district rep. When she first got here in 2019 it was intentional that she served on the Economic Development Committee because we knew that this project was long overdue, and her advocacy and her voice was desperately needed. I want to thank the team, Edge Sports Global and the Charlotte Soccer Academy, Southern Entertainment, all for really working together. I see the handshake up there because we didn't know if this was going to work. We really didn't. You guys took the time, negotiated among yourselves, negotiated with the City, to come to a conclusion that represents the best interest of this community. So, I want to thank you for your leadership, thank you for your commitment to East Charlotte, and partnering with the City of Charlotte. Lastly, I also want to thank the staff. Tracy and Todd. I've seen the emails go back and forth for a year and a half trying to make sure that we dot I's and cross T's and our professional staff is good at what they do. They protect the interest of the City for sure and that's what they're supposed to do. So, I want to thank the staff for their commitment.

I was telling the Manager earlier today this was the easy part. The hard part now is to build it and the operation of it, the maintenance of it, the upkeep of it. That's the hard part. I'm committed. I know that the right team is there to get it done. I think there's no doubt about that, that these folks are committed, partnering with the City to ensure that when we have this groundbreaking sooner than later, that that facility is going to be up there for years and years to come. That will be a landmark, a destination location, for not only the citizens of East Charlotte but for the region. It's a regional destination which will bring growth, development, jobs, housing, all those types of things necessary to fulfill the mission of the project. So, I'm happy that we're here. This is only a halfway there. We got a lot more work to be done, for sure, but I'm committed to working with the team and the membership of it, Tim, as well as you, to kind of finish what we started, to accelerate the pace of where we're going. I want to get there sooner than later. I think we all do. Certainly, this is a good day for East Charlotte. It demonstrates

when people come together what they can do. It demonstrates the commitment of the City to create jobs, economic opportunities, affordable housing, senior housing, sports and entertainment, all wrapped up in one facility. So, thank you very much. I look forward to voting yes.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said Councilwoman Molina is correct. This is a monumental step in the right direction. This feels like a dream that is finally being realized. I mean, I've been on the City Council for over four terms now, so to see this as an Eastside resident, as a former district Council member, I waited for this moment for a long time. I know certain members that are in the community that have waited way longer than I have. I remember talking to Diane [inaudible] Carolyn Millen, and others. When I first met with them, they would show me big binders that had presentations after presentations of every proposal that's been out there. That's how passionate our neighborhood leaders are. They all deserve a big hand from us. I'm proud to live in a community where residents, neighborhood leaders come out. They are engaged throughout the process. They are committed. We are talking about committee meetings that happen during the daytime, they are there. They are that at neighborhood events. When Tim had done various community events, all of these neighbors showed up and Tim had done not one, not two, not three, there's so many community events that Tim and his group had done to ensure that this was a community development project. I appreciate the work that you have done along with both development teams. I would be remiss if I did not thank District Councilwoman Marjorie Molina for taking this to the finish line, for steering this project to the finish line. I also think about our predecessors, especially Matt Newton, John Autry, Nancy, and others. They really laid the foundation and groundwork for us so today we stand on their shoulders. This has been a truly collaborative effort every step of the way with Charlotte East and neighborhood leaders, so thank you to Charlotte East for your leadership in this process. This is just a transformational investment. As Chairman Graham said, this is going to be a destination point not just for the Eastside but for our region. We are talking about a sports and entertainment district. Transformational investment that's going to unlock economic success for generations to come. So, I'm really excited and I can't wait for the groundbreaking to happen soon.

**Councilmember Johnson** said I just want to say that I'm honored to be a part of this transformational vote also, and also to stand beside my colleague. Congratulations, I know there was a lot of work and a lot of late nights, so I'm honored to support you and honored to support this development. The speaker mentioned \$169 million worth of economic benefits, but I also want to acknowledge the community benefits that will be a part of this project. So, we talk about youth violence and tools to address youth violence. This is a resource in the community for those youths to answer or to respond to the violence in our community. There will be a sustainable year-round athletic ecosystem that benefits not just the Eastside but the Charlotte community. There's over 9,000 hours of free community access to the facility, onsite physical therapy and sports medicine, Carolina Sports Walk of Fame, local artists in interior and exterior murals. Over 500 jobs that are going to be created, a diverse mix of food and beverage options, so that's going to benefit those small businesses and small business owners. Also, development through community learning center, STEM education, and health and wellness programs. So, this Center checks so many boxes and meets so many of our priorities. So, I'm honored to support. Thank you to both the developers, Ms. Canty, and the other group, I'm sorry, thank you. It's just awesome to see you all sitting together. That's collaboration and partnership. It's great. We're honored to support today. Thank you. Thank you.

**Councilmember Anderson** said this really is a historical moment. I've shared my story. I'm a Charlotte native, born and raised. When Eastland Mall was constructed, it was a unique destination and really a magnet for yes, Charlotteans, I spent endless weekends there, just hanging out, having fun, and meeting my friends there. It was also a regional destination as was mentioned before where people outside of the City of Charlotte would come to Eastland and spend an entire day, shop, have a meal at Darryl's, watch people on the ice rink. It was really a destination that brought economic dollars into East Charlotte. So, I'm really, really happy to be a part of the vote in the affirmative to bring

yet another economic driver and destination on the very grounds where something unique had been many, many years ago. So, this, what we're voting on today has taken months and months and months, Ms. Molina. We've had conversations with the developers. You guys are awesome. Iteration after iteration, answering the questions, being there for all the Council members who had questions and wanted to see something really meaningful come on this site. So, Mr. Graham is right that this is really the easy part. We have to build it. But I am so excited to see the end product and be able to walk through this facility and see all the East Charlotte residents that just have tremendous engagement throughout this across the board. It's going to be such a day of joy for East Charlotte when this is constructed and we're able to really embrace it as a community.

So, I want to thank everyone for their engagement with this, in particular Ms. Molina who's the district rep. Many of us who have been district reps, I think pretty much all of us, we know that when something happens in your district, it's all hands-on deck, all the time, answering questions, e-mails, phone calls. So, anything that occurs, especially something historic in a particular district, the district rep has done extreme heavy lifting to bring that to the community. So, I want to thank the district rep for her involvement and all the other Council members, too, because this really has been a full Council effort because we all care so much about Eastland Mall, that site, and bringing economic vitality back to the Eastside. Thank you, Madam Mayor.

**Councilmember Driggs** said having been on Council for over 10 years, I've experienced a lot of the saga of Eastland and the sheer futility. The mall went broke, there was no commercial solution, nobody saw a feasible way of developing it through the normal means of just tearing things down. So, the City recognized we had to get involved in order to make something happen there and remove this sore spot. The City bought the land, the City then razed and cleaned up the site to make it more accessible and continued to consider possibilities. A breakthrough came then when the partnership with Crosland Southeast came about and really do appreciate that. I think Crosland was willing to move in when others weren't, and it's one of the main reasons we were able to get to where we are today. After that, we all know there were setbacks. There was supposed to be soccer there and then there wasn't. Then we went through a whole new round of what happens at that location. I remember being in a number of conversations with people who had ideas for development there that I thought weren't good ideas. They involved a huge amount of public money and not much other investment, weren't necessarily supported by the kind of substance that I would like to see for Eastland. Because you had to think about we need to do something where we can be confident about success and there was no point in seizing upon a plan that had with it a great risk of just not being able to be completed.

Then as everybody knows, we got into a late situation where there were two proposals, and we were sort of stuck wrangling those proposals. So, I'm incredibly pleased that after too much time, and it's taken a lot of time, but we've arrived in a good place. I think we've got the best of those two proposals. We resolved that. The City's willing to step up and increase its investment in order to allow this plan to move ahead, and I hope the people of East Charlotte appreciate that. There is a history of underinvestment and I've been told about it often, but on this occasion, we are stepping up and we're doing so out of a concern for the future of East Charlotte. I want to commend Councilmember Molina. She has been through a lot here. I think most of us in the room know what it was like. I'm glad I wasn't in the middle of that. I can tell you that. There weren't easy answers and you hung in there. You fought for your people, and I respect that. I admire that. So, I'm a yes. I look forward to seeing this come true. Thank you very much.

**Councilmember Bokhari** said good work, everybody. It was a heck of a journey. Thank you all.

**Councilmember Brown** said I just want to speak to what Mayor Pro Tem said about Eastland Mall. Knowing the history of Eastland Mall, living here my entire life, definitely experienced some of the things that happened over at the ice-skating rink and just being at Eastland Mall with my mom, those memories are priceless. They will never,

ever go away, because we would catch the bus from Southside Homes to Eastland Mall. I just want to thank my colleague because we go daily with 100,000 people that we have to support in these districts, and I think everybody could just point the finger at us. I'm wanting to just give her her flowers right now. I've been in this chair since January 2024, but Eastland has been going on long before I got here. If anybody can speak to Eastland Mall, it's me, because I probably spent more time at Eastland Mall than anybody in this arena. I would like to say that it's hard when you have all of these questions. Going back to it, it's really difficult and I just want to commend you for all of the work. I've seen all of the e-mails and I'm going to stand in solidarity with you and support your vote. People don't understand the magnitude of this job, all of the e-mails. It's easy to say what we don't do, but I don't think people know what we do do behind these closed doors, so I'm standing with you and I'm going to vote with you and just keep moving forward. This is a hard job and if y'all don't believe us, try us. Come take our seat. Do it. It's very, very hard. It's not easy at all. There's a lot of e-mails, there's a lot of phone calls, a lot of text messages, lot of going back and forth. We work really hard. So, it's easier said than done, and it's easy to point a finger and say what you're not doing. I know what you are doing, so I stand with you in solidarity. I'm ready to vote. It's a yes for me.

**Councilmember Mitchell** said so, I've got to tell it from the standpoint of a journey, so y'all bear with me. Mayor, I promise not to go over 30 minutes. So, back in 2008, I think the only one that was on the ED Committee was Councilmember Mayfield when we first had this conversation about something transformative on the Eastside. Through that we tried several projects that we thought were a good fit. People have already acknowledged the previous District Five representatives who were passionate about doing something special for the Eastside. Then 2019 this young lady replaced Al Lawson as District Two representative, and she attended a meeting, and she raised a question during the ED about amateur sports and how much money was amateur sports and we should be playing in that market. I remember at the time Ron Kimble did a study. Amateur sports in 2019 was a \$6 billion industry. Six with a B. That Council member at the time made a joke. She looked at the City Manager and she said, "When I get off City Council, I'm going to become an amateur consultant and I'm going to do something special for the City of Charlotte." Here we are today, 2024, and this has not been an easy journey.

There were four other opportunities to put this vision, this transformative project, in other parts of our City. So, sometimes it is the right project with the right leader at the right location. Tonight, I think that's why we're going to vote for this transformative project. Tim, thank you for having the leap of faith and being the first developer there. Charlotte Sports Academy and Bob, thank you for joining forces for what I think is going to be known as a top project for the region, for nationally. Talked to CRVA (Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority) today, Steve Bagwell, and Steve said, "We're so excited about this project. We've got to make sure we do all we can to make sure it's successful." The National Junior College Athletic Association, headquartered here in Charlotte, have already committed championships to when this facility can be built and up and operating. So, to the visionary, to the young lady in 2019 who told us that she had an idea, thank you for your patience, thank you for your perseverance, and thank you for going let's take a pause, yes, ma'am. Can you stand up? Ms. Canty, can you please stand up? Can you please stand up? Thank you. And as with any leader, she knows she needed to surround herself with people who can help her along the way. A young man came from the corporate community, Mr. Robert Bolton. I didn't even know Robert Bolton. Robert. So, Eastside, Eastside, thank you for your patience. Carolyn, you can stop coming to ED meetings now. Greg, you can stop calling me on Saturdays. We are here to deliver. I'm going to echo Jordan Lopez, the future House Representative. Jordan said it might be called Eastland, but it's going to have so much energy, so much national recognition, that it's going to have one name. We're going to call it The Yard. So, thank you. I'll be supporting the motion and raising my hand with my proud t-shirt saying thank you for your patience, job well done. Thank you, Eastside.

Mayor Lyles said is there anyone else that would like to also put their hand out and understand that this is going to be a vote that's momentous to this community? I do

want to say to all of you, the housing is important because once we have housing we have people, people that can have opportunities around them for whether they want to work or if they just want to be a person that can remember and create the new balance of whatever Eastland is going to be with all of this after it's done. We won't be able to talk about the ice rink anymore. We'll be talking about different things, probably a lot more on STEM education and a lot more on ideas around basketball and sports that really leaves us an opportunity. Sports is a big business. I looked at Sunday, the game, I shouldn't say which game, but on Sunday watching the game and they have four screens up now. Imagine what that can be when we get to Eastland. So, what I would like to say to you is thank you for what you've done so far but let's make sure that what we do at the end of this day celebrates every one of you who began this journey. We really appreciate you.

The vote was taken on the motion and recorded as unanimous.

Mayor Lyles said thank you, everyone, that's participated in this.

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**ITEM NO. 16: ACCEPT BYRNE DISCRETIONARY COMMUNITY PROJECTS GRANT**

Motion was made by Councilmember Johnson, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to (A) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to accept a grant in the amount of \$963,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice for the Community Assistance: Respond, Engage, and Support Team Program, (B) Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute an interlocal agreement with Mecklenburg County through its Public Health Department to provide an alternative civilian response to calls for service related to homelessness and mental health, and (C) Adopt Budget Ordinance 840-X appropriating \$963,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance to the General Grants Fund.

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 67, at Page(s) 316.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 329

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**ITEM NO. 17: LAND ACQUISITION FOR CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to (A) Approve the purchase of 11.79 acres of property located on Woodridge Center Drive (parcel identification numbers 143-012-01, 143-012-02, 143-012-03, 143-012-04, 143-012-05, and 143-012-09) in the amount of \$7,100,000 for the relocation of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department's Aviation Division and expansion of the Special Operations Unit, and (B) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute all documents necessary to complete this transaction.

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**APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

**Mayor Lyles** explained the rules and procedures of the appointment process.

**ITEM NO. 18: APPOINTMENT TO THE CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG PUBLIC ACCESS CORPORATION**

The following nominee was considered for one appointment for a partial term beginning upon appointment, and ending June 30, 2026:

- Dawn Gibson, nominated by Councilmembers Anderson, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, and Watlington
- Sasha Tomaszycski, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Mayfield, Molina, and Watlington

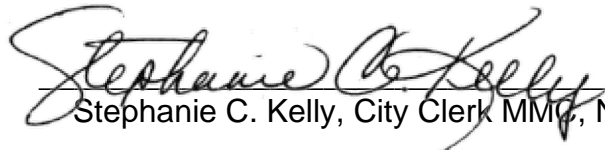
Sasha Tomaszycski was appointed.

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### ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Mayfield, seconded by Councilmember Johnson, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

  
Stephanie C. Kelly, City Clerk MMC, NCCMC

Length of Meeting: 3 Hours, 19 Minutes  
Minutes completed: January 15, 2025