



KNIGHT  
FOUNDATION



CITY OF  
CHARLOTTE

# FIVE POINTS PLAZA PROGRAMMING PILOT IN THE HISTORIC WEST END



GRANT PROPOSAL | JULY 26, 2019



**ON BEHALF OF THE HISTORIC WEST END  
COMMUNITY, THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE ASKS  
THE SUPPORT OF THE KNIGHT FOUNDATION  
TO ESTABLISH A PROGRAMMING PILOT  
PROJECT TO MAKE FIVE POINTS PLAZA A  
VIBRANT & ACTIVE HUB FOR THE ENTIRE  
WEST SIDE OF CHARLOTTE.**

# STRATEGY

## GRANT REQUEST & INTENDED IMPACT

The City of Charlotte, the Historic West End, and the greater west side community will work together to co-create a sustainable programming solution for Five Points Plaza. The team will work together to grow capacity in the community and build tools to program the space while celebrating the area's history, identity, and culture.

## OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

The City of Charlotte is building its first public space since the completion of Polk Park in 1992. This plaza is half an acre in the heart of Charlotte's Historic West End, a focus area for the Knight Foundation. This project is also the number one identified project in the West Trade/Rozzelles Ferry Comprehensive Neighborhood Improvement Program (CNIP). City staff have worked for over 5 years in its identification, planning, and design.

The role of public space, especially its management and programming has changed drastically since the City of Charlotte owned a Park and Recreation department in the 1980s. Currently, the City is not equipped with resources to ensure this signature project is programmed with and by the community in a way to ensure it is well-loved. This grant would allow the City to show through success the need and impact a Public Space programming committee would have on City-owned space. This is required for the sustainable health and vibrancy of Five Points Plaza over time.

Funds and staff time for programming would facilitate the City to work with leaders and community to fully leverage Five Points Plaza for community activities and events, and establish a regular programming schedule. It is the goal of the City not to duplicate or replace efforts in the Historic West End but to build upon and support them. While the City will always retain ownership of this public space, through this project, ownership of its use and identity will be transferred to Historic West End and the greater west side of Charlotte.

Establishing this project will also allow the City to establish a process by which to obtain private sponsorship for events, facilities, or services moving forward. This will ensure sustainability in funding for Five Points Plaza.

Additionally, implementing this programming project would inform City staff to streamline requirements that make programming challenging in the Historic West End, including permitting, liability requirements, and unrealistic fees. In creating a programming solution with the City of Charlotte, staff can facilitate and eliminate red tape for community leaders to make Five Points Plaza their own.

## ACTIVITIES

- Offer regular weekly events that meet the goals of the community (fitness, music, entertainment, fresh food, etc.)
- Hire and train a member of the community to work as a part-time Event Coordinator
- Work with the JCSU Work Program to hire student ambassadors for the space
- Fund contract labor and vendors
- Work with leaders and community hosting their own events in Five Points Plaza by facilitating their efforts through City requirements and processes
- Support their events through marketing
- Create a web page, communications and marketing strategy for Five Points as part of a larger organization (outside of City of Charlotte)
- Identify appropriate sponsorship opportunities to contribute to funding and future programming

## OBJECTIVES

- Create a sustainable programming solution for Five Points Plaza with community leaders
- Facilitate financial sponsorship for long-term success
- Ensure that Five Points Plaza reflects the identity, culture, and history of a historically African-American community during a time of displacement and gentrification
- Support the City of Charlotte in establishing a programming solution co-created with communities for City owned public spaces

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

In Charlotte, Knight Foundation is focused on supporting a more livable, equitable and engaged Historic West End. This grant not only ensures that a community space is successful, vibrant, and reflects the identity of transforming neighborhoods, it also brings together engaged Historic West End neighborhoods to work together around their most visible and central public space.

# FIVE POINTS PLAZA

Five Points Plaza is located on a highly visible and central hub for the Historic West End community. It is located in the West Trade/ Rozelles Ferry CNIP area and is the most highly ranked project identified in that planning process. The project, as envisioned by the community leaders, will be a cultural, educational, and entertainment hub that reflects the identity, culture, and history of the area. This vision has been built for years along the corridor - leaders have consistently programmed several adjacent locations at Mosaic Village and State and Trade Streets. Five Points Plaza is an evolution identified and championed by leaders as a future home for this Historic West End.

## THE SPACE & ELEMENTS

Five Points is made of two plazas on either side of the intersection. The Trade St. plaza provides direct views to the Charlotte skyline and a flexible seating space to accommodate a variety of activities. The State St. plaza provides unique spaces including a promenade with swings, an amphitheater, and a large public art piece. The entire plaza will be enhanced with shade trees and landscaping. A total of a half an acre, it will include elements identified by the community to support activities and events they envision in their public space. These include:

- 1 Splash Pad
- 2 Amplitheatre and tiered seating
- 3 Custom swings
- 4 Flexible Paved Area
- 5 Movable tables and chairs
- 6 Public Art Sculpture (30+ ft. tall)
- 7 Enhanced Landscaping



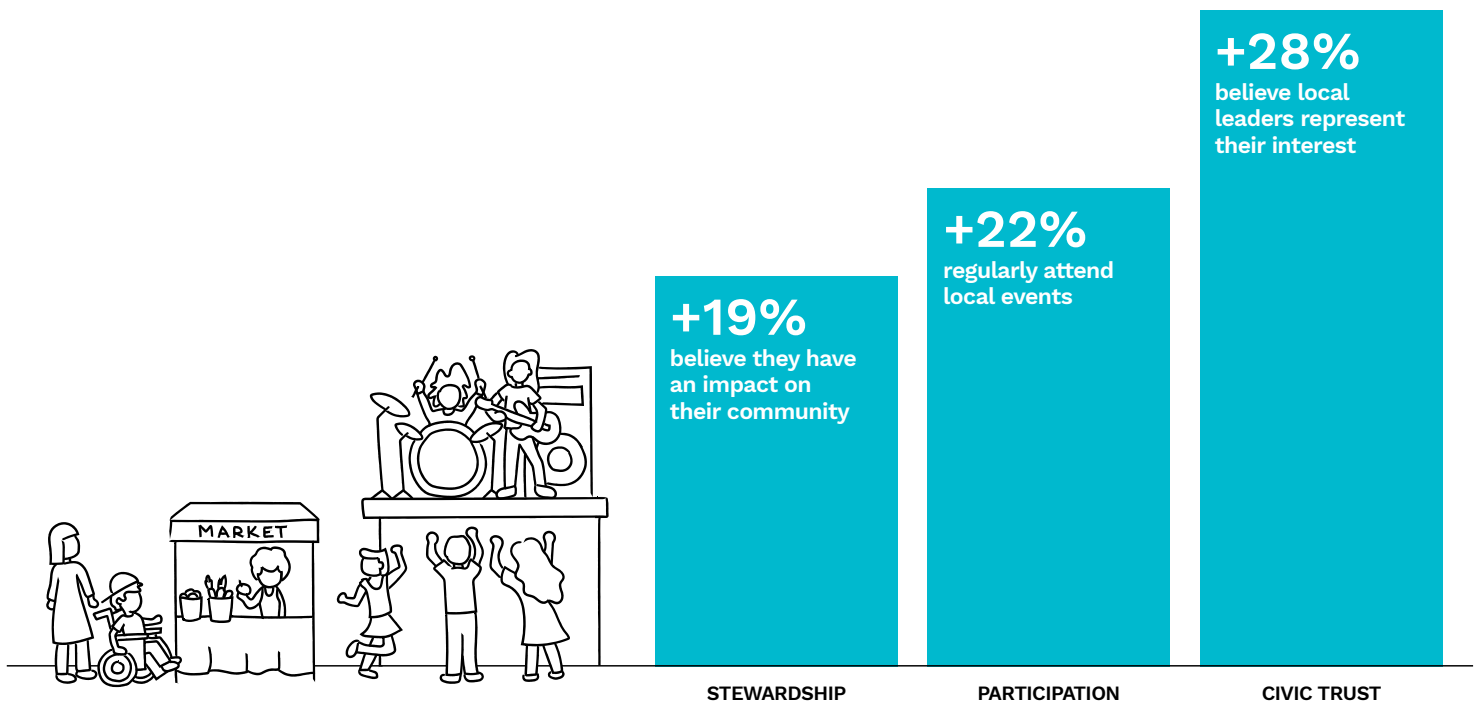
Images: Lynchburg Park and Recreation, Smithsonian, Charlotte Five, Balanced You, Union Square NYC, AASArchitecture



# PROGRAMMING & EFFECTS ON CIVIC LIFE

The Center for Active Design has done significant research on public space and programming, most recently presented in their Civic Assembly Design Guidelines. They reported (figure below) that “people who report a higher number of events in their community score significantly better across measures of civic trust, participation, and stewardship relative to people living in places with few community events.”

A programming solution co-created and co-managed by the Historic West End community can not only ensure that a new infrastructure investment is fully leveraged, it can encourage greater engagement in civic life. This is perhaps even more crucial in an area threatened by gentrification and displacement. Additionally, research on public meetings show a large increase in interest when held in an outdoor public space. Hosting community meetings in Five Points Plaza could positively effect engagement in neighborhood organizations.



Credit: Center for Active Design

## Programming and events can attract more people to a public space, supporting participation in public life and enhancing civic trust.

When the Center for Active Design studied Gov Porch in Charlotte, they found that when the space was activated with food trucks and programming, respondents were 23% more likely to report that “local government understands my concerns.”

## Research also points to a connection between community activities and informed local voting.

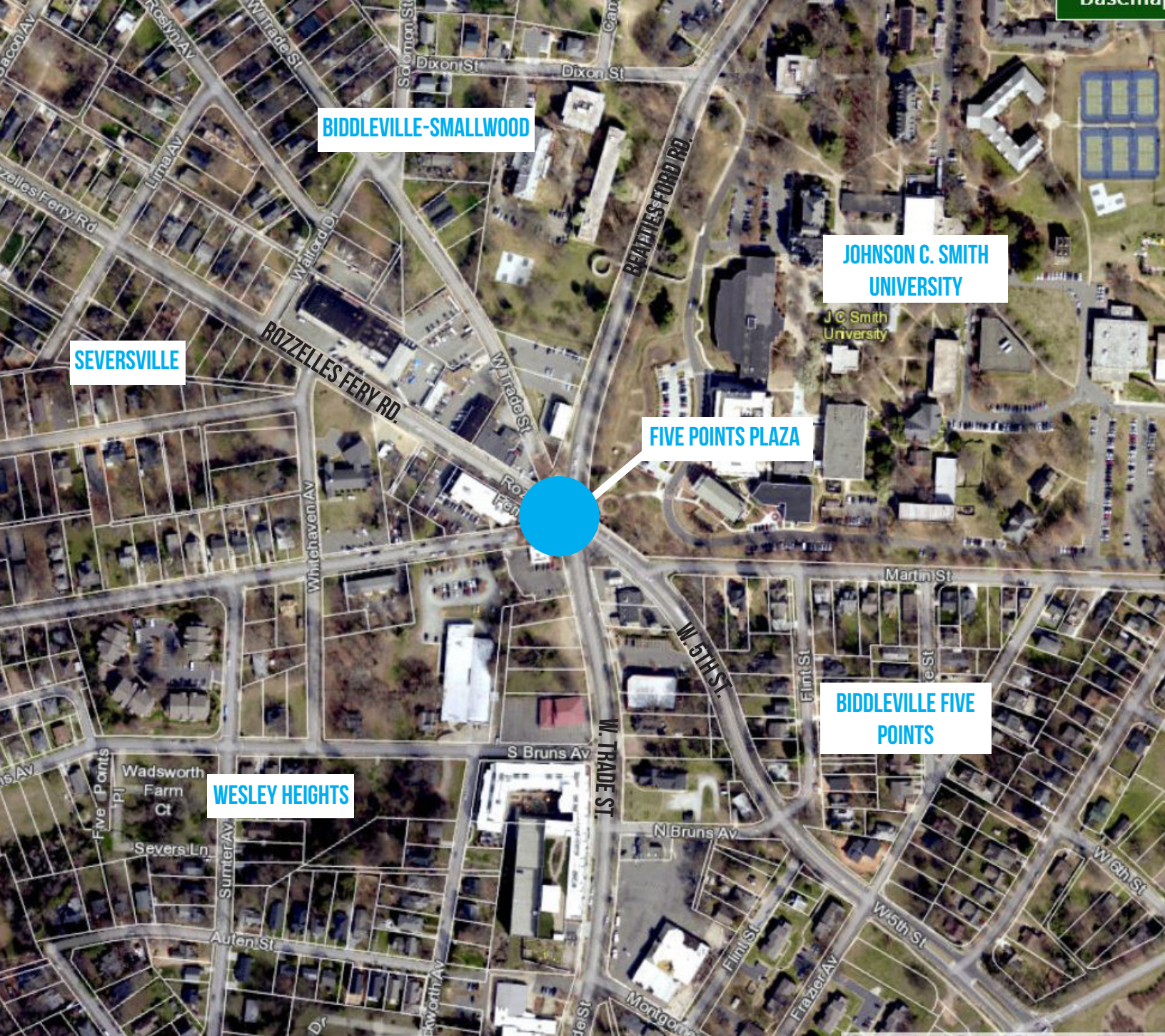
Analysis of a 2005 Gallup Survey found that an increase in social offerings, from cultural activities to casual meeting spots, was associated with elevated measures of local voting - specifically, signing petition and casting a ballot in local elections.

## Outdoor Community Meetings

Using sample flyers with different images (indoor meeting vs. outdoor meeting), respondents showed an increase of 21% in interest in attending.

Credit: Center for Active Design





## THE LOCATION

Five Points Plaza is located at the W. Trade St./W. 5th St./Beatties Ford Rd./ Rozzelles Ferry Rd. intersection in the heart of the Historic West End.

### Adjacent Neighborhoods:

Biddleville-Smallwood  
Seversville  
Wesley Heights

### Directly Adjacent Landmarks & Investments

Johnson C. Smith University  
Gold Lynx Streetcar

### Active Community Groups:

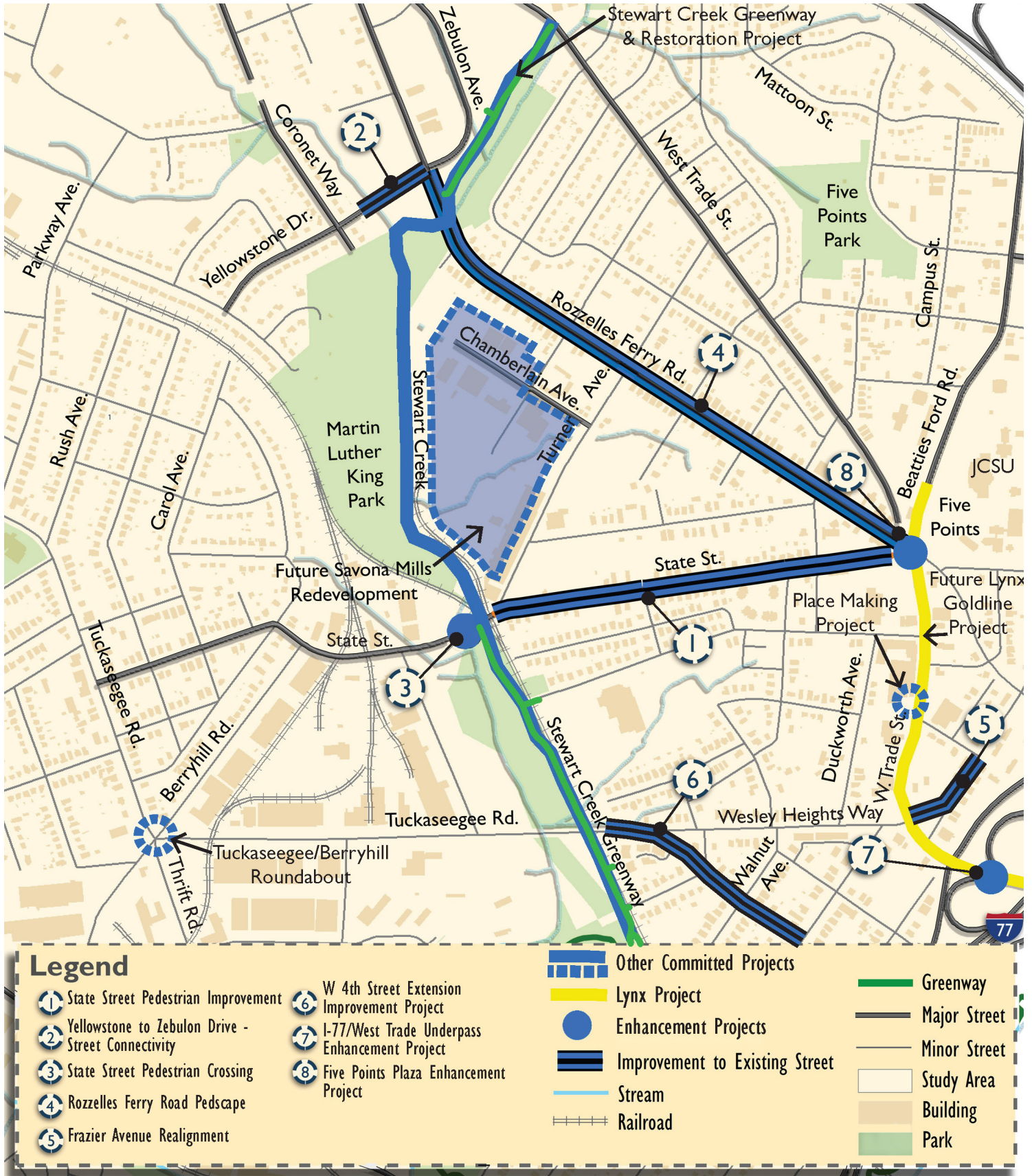
Historic West End Partners  
Five Points Collaborative  
Historic West End Neighborhood Association  
Northwest Corridor Council of Elders/ Indaba

Five Points Plaza is not only important to the Historic West End but the entire west side. Before artificial divisions were made through communities by highway and infrastructure projects neighborhoods along the Beatties Ford Rd. and Freedom Drive corridors were more connected and integrated. This grant project will work with all neighborhoods on the west side to create a programming solution for Five Points Plaza.



# LEVERAGING PUBLIC INVESTMENT

Five Points Plaza is located in the heart of significant infrastructure investment by the City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, and private development. The plaza itself will be better connected to adjacent neighborhoods by the State Street Pedestrian Improvement project, the Rozzelles Ferry Streetscape project on the Lynx Gold Line. A programming solution for the plaza is leveraging \$100 million+ dollars in investment.





# TRADE ST. PLAZA



Trade Street Plaza - Intersection View



Trade Street Plaza - Rozzelles Ferry View



# STATE ST. PLAZA



State Street Plaza - State Street View



State Street Plaza - Intersection View



# TIMELINE



Timeline can vary depending on construction completion



JUNE – DEC 2023

9.



TRANSITION TO  
CITY PROGRAM

8.

NOV 2020 – DEC 2023



PROGRAMMING

NOV 2020

7.



RIBBON CUTTING &  
OPENING WEEKEND

6.

OCT 2020

EVENT COORDINATOR





# PROJECT STEPS

## 1. CONSTRUCTION

A bid for Five Points Plaza has been accepted and construction will begin late fall in 2019. If construction progresses as expected, it will last approximately 12 months with an expected opening in November 2020. Any unexpected delays or coordination with the Gold Lynx Streetcar project would see it opening in winter 2021.

## 2. IDENTIFY INTERNAL & EXTERNAL CHALLENGES

City of Charlotte current processes inhibit programming by community groups. Liability and insurance requirements and cumbersome permitting processes often are a deterrent for regular programming that is required of a public space like Five Points Plaza.

Additionally, there may be external obstacles that we are not aware of in the community that will make building a programming solution challenging. These might include a lack of volunteer capacity, funding, or different priorities.

## 3. ADDRESS OBSTACLES WITH CITY & COMMUNITY

It's important to address as many known challenges as possible before Five Points Plaza is opened. City staff will work internally with departmental requirements and leadership to amend policy around public spaces during the construction phase. City staff will also work with community leaders to identify volunteers or groups in adjacent neighborhoods that are interested in using the space for existing programming. The team will also address any external challenges identified in the previous phase.

## 4. PROGRAM PLANNING & ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

In the months leading up to the opening of the plaza, City staff will work with the community in engagement sessions to determine what types of regular programming they'd like to see on a regular basis in the Historic West End. Staff will also identify existing events and activities planned by the community that could be hosted in the plaza to maximize the programming investment into Five Points. Leaders who identify themselves as interested in helping plan the programming for the plaza will be invited to work with City and programming staff to build an events calendar before the opening of the project. Throughout each program year the team will collect input and adjust programming based on interest and data.

The City of Charlotte will work with Project For Public Spaces (PPS) to implement an engagement, sponsorship and programming plan focused on equity and inclusivity.

## 5. PURSUE SPONSORSHIP

Throughout this programming pilot project, City staff and community leaders will work to identify appropriate sponsorship for infrastructure enhancements to the space (ie: Wifi) and future programming. This is crucial to maintain sustainability moving past this pilot.

First, staff and leaders will establish goals and requirements of sponsorship, including protections of public space and the identity of the neighborhoods. City staff will then engage with the Economic Development team to identify corporate and community sponsors whose goals align with that of the Historic West End.



## 6. HIRE EVENT COORDINATOR

City of Charlotte will hire a part time contractor from the Historic West End community to be an Event Coordinator, scheduling and managing activities in the space, and serve as a liaison between the Historic West End and City of Charlotte staff. The Event Coordinator will be part of the The Urban Design Center in Planning, Design & Development in order to become well-versed in programming policy, permitting requirements, and processes. This will allow him or her to better facilitate events planned by the community. Additionally, after this grant project concludes this person may be rolled into a full time position to work on programming in city-owned public spaces. This will allow for a more sustainable programming solution for Five Points Plaza and other possible spaces in the Historic West End.

The Event Coordinator will be responsible for planning and managing smaller weekly regular events, facilitating larger events by the community, handling volunteer coordination, running social media, managing logistics such as safety, bathrooms, and trash pick up, and be a contact with interested community partners.

## 7. RIBBON CUTTING & OPENING WEEKEND

Five Points Plaza will be opened upon construction with a ribbon cutting with leaders and community in attendance, as well as a weekend festival that will be co-created and run by City staff and community leaders. This weekend will represent the identity and message that the community wishes to celebrate. It will also kick off the implementation of the programming pilot grant project.

## 8. PROGRAM YEARS 1-3

The Event Coordinator, with the support of City Staff and leaders and community will be responsible for planning weekly events in Five Points Plaza. These will happen 2-3 times a week as budget allows. Some examples include: 1) fitness classes; 2) education & training offerings; 3) open mic nights; 4) food truck rallies; 4) concerts; 5) "Popsicles" in the Plaza, etc.

Additionally, leaders and community will be invited to host their own events in Five Points Plaza, working with the Event Coordinator on scheduling and logistics. City staff, leaders, and community will work closely with public, private, and non-profit partners to host their program offerings in Five Points Plaza.

## 9. TRANSITION TO CITY PROGRAM

Throughout this grant project City staff will be tracking attendance and qualitative data to demonstrate the success of programming in Charlotte's public spaces. In response to this grant, there will be monthly leadership meetings between top level Planning, Design, & Development, General Services, Economic Development, and Solid Waste Services staff to create a long term solution for programming public spaces. The lessons learned and data collected from Five Points Plaza will inform budget asks, conversations with the City Manager's Office, and the next steps for sustainable programming.



# THE VISION

The **Historic West End** community leaders have built a strong foundation of programming on which to create a solution for Five Points Plaza. The vision of this grant project is in no way to replace the efforts of leaders, but to **facilitate the growth** of their endeavors in this public space in a way that reflects their **history** and **identity**.

## PROGRAMMING ROUNDTABLE

During the planning phase of the Five Points Plaza design project, the team hosted a workshop with community leaders to identify a programming model that they would like to implement. The team explored three relevant models: 1) Grassroots Partnership; 2) Event-based Model; 3) Public-Private Partnership. The community felt strongly that they'd like to have a Grassroots Partnership, but they also realized that they would need to work with the private sector to secure funding to support their work. Maintaining control and having influence over how the space reflects the identity of the history and culture of the neighborhoods is paramount in choosing this model.


In further discussions with the leaders, the Grassroots Partnership model continues to ring true and reflect the role that the community sees themselves taking in the programming of Five Points.



### GRASSROOTS PARTNERSHIP

- ▶ primarily volunteer-led
- pros:** keeps costs low; strengthens social networks; community-ownership
- cons:** consistency, organizational capacity & equity are a challenge
- example:** *Duboce Park (San Francisco)*

photo: David Lytle



### EVENT-BASED MODEL

- ▶ activates spaces for defined periods
- pros:** socially activates space; draws revenue; attracts investments
- cons:** temporary in nature; high wear & tear; event production is demanding
- example:** *Seattle Festival Streets*

photo: Bruce Englehardt



### PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

- ▶ government & private businesses partner to maintain/program the space
- pros:** high management resources that are professionally run & accountable
- cons:** less responsive to community
- example:** *Powell St. Promenade (SF)*

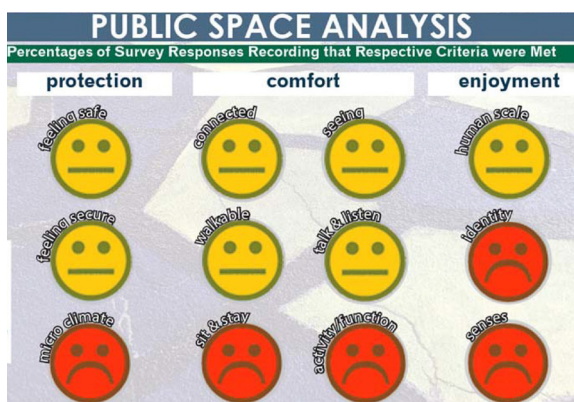
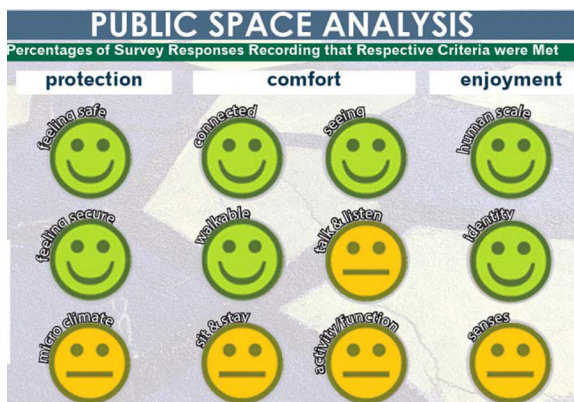
photo: SPUR





# FIVE POINTS BETTER BLOCK

November 17-18, 2017 the Five Points Project team and community hosted a Five Points Better Block in the public space that is designed. They tested the design elements of the conceptual design. Volunteers collected data around how the space was used and which elements were the most successful. This informed the final design of the plaza, as well as, created a foundation by which to possibly build a programming committee or leadership group. Volunteers spent weeks planning, designing, permitting, and implementing a weekend of food, entertainment, vendors, and activation.





# THE VOICE OF THE HISTORIC WEST END

On June 4th, 2019, the City of Charlotte and leaders and community met to identify a vision and identify resources for programming at Five Points Plaza. Representatives from Seversville, Wesley Heights, Biddleville-Smallwood, Washington Heighs, Oaklawn Park, and Parkview identified the events they wanted to host in the plaza, current resources they have to meet that vision, and the resources they needed to ensure Five Points is an active and vibrant public space.

## WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO IN FIVE POINTS PLAZA?

Friday Night Concert Series	Christmas Tree lighting festival & JCSU caroling	Fitness & meditation	Kwanzaa 7-Day Celebration
Movie Nights on the Plaza	"Cultural" market	Family entertainment (face paint, bubbles, jugglers etc.)	Food trucks & vendors
Educational classes, workshops, & retreats	Spoken Word/ Open Mic Night	Savory Saturdays	Police/Fire Community Relations
Art Exhibits & Classes	Access the internet	Juneteenth Celebrations	Dance!
See plays & productions	Read-a-Thon	Play Games	Health displays & Senior Resources Fair

## WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU HAVE NOW TO MEET THAT VISION?

JCSU staff, students, library & Sustainability Village	City dept. resources	Local businesses	ASC Culture Blocks
Local churches	Museums (Beecher/Gantt)	Gold Line Streetcar	Northwest School of the Arts
Velma Leake Senior Events	West Charlotte Sr. High School Band	Environmental Education & Stewardship Programs	Savory Saturdays
Weddings (other non-traditional events)	Parkview Back to School Party	Proximity to Uptown	NNO
Family Reunions	Crossfit studio classes	Open Streets 704	Walk CLT

## WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU NEED THAT YOU DON'T HAVE?

A consistent source of funding	Communication between groups & their activities	A community marquee/info board	A fee schedule for programming
A way to advertise events in/near plaza	A way to collect reservations	A coordinator/event staff	A corporate/private sponsor
Wifi & charging ports	placemaking	Smart benches with idea boxes	A strategy & implementation plan
Master calendar	Volunteers	Website with donation button	Giveaways & promotions
Experience & Knowledge	Organizational Capacity		

- Music
- Fresh Food Markets
- Festivals
- Education
- Games
- The Arts
- Entertainment

- Local Government
- Community Organizations
- Anchor Institutions
- Public Schools
- Local Businesses
- Artistic Institutions

- Consistent Funding
- Corporate Sponsors
- Communication
- Reservation System
- Giveaways & Promotion
- Volunteers & Organizational Capacity
- WIFI
- Entertainment





# IMPLEMENTATION

## RISKS

- **Building Capacity:** Event planning, logistics, and permitting takes a significant amount of time. While there are some seasoned community leaders who have done this work, there will need to be a concerted effort to recruit more volunteers for a programming committee or events team. This project will take advantage of an exciting new asset in the community to attract previously unengaged neighbors to use the space. Their interest in programming the plaza can be leveraged to get them more engaged in the community in general.
- **Identifying Sponsorship:** The sustainable programming of public space will be dependent on private funding once this grant is complete. If the project team can't identify sponsors programming won't continue and the value of this public space will be diminished. City staff will work with the Economic Development team and the Project for Public Spaces to develop a sponsorship strategy and most importantly transfer the fundraising capability to community leaders.
- **Maintaining Equity:** While this public space is squarely located in the Historic West End it is a city-wide amenity and should be maintained as a public space for all, especially the entire west side. City staff and community will work with the Project for Public Spaces to implement and engagement, sponsorship, and programming strategy that focuses on equity.

## INDICATORS

- **Attendance & Revenue:** Counting the number of people in attendance for each event and the money made by vendors
- **Reservation Requests:** The measuring of the number of reservations made and requested for the use of Five Points.
- **Volunteers:** Maintaining an active and sufficient volunteer base to show the sustainability to a program
- **Sponsor Interest:** the number of sponsors, or ease of finding a sponsor interested in sponsoring events in Five Points will demonstrate the capability of securing funding
- **Recognition of City leadership:** City staff will keep leadership informed of the project, lessons learned and progress made to influence future phases of city-wide programming solution for public space

## OTHER FUNDERS

It is important not to eradicate or duplicate the efforts of a strong and vibrant Historic West End. We will work closely with leaders and community to identify events already planned or funded and integrate them into our programming plans in addition to events funded by this grant. Community events already taking place will drastically contribute to the programming of Five Points Plaza and build a tradition of the community taking ownership of the space.

### Comprehensive Plan - Future 2040

During the second year of their grant funding, the Charlotte Future 2040 team will partner with us and provide financial support from the Knight Foundation's Equitable Engagement grant. This project aligns with that grant's purpose to engage the residents of Historic West End and West Charlotte communities in contributing to Charlotte Future 2040. The financial support of \$30,000 will support three larger events that will tie to the Charlotte Future 2040 process in the spring and summer of 2020. This timing aligns with the Comprehensive Plan's draft policy and implementation strategy development and this collaboration allows for targeted Historic West End participation. These funds will be used to:

- Make it easy for West End residents to participate in the comprehensive plan process by coupling it with events at the 5 Points.
- Engage and support community influencers to co-create and implement programming that builds partnerships and fosters equitable development in the West End.
- Demonstrate the value of participation, planning, partnerships, processes that are inclusive of diversity of voices and perspectives, balanced growth and creating shared accountability.

### Digital Inclusion & Education

Setting up Wifi in the space allows it to serve as an educational hub for the Historic West End. Digital Charlotte, The Civic Tech Experience, and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library are all interested in offering education and training sessions in Five Points Plaza. The Library will bring its "Mobile Library Truck" to the space and events will include Study Hall to support students without WIFI access, story time and work literacy, and additional digital inclusion training opportunities.

The project team will work closely with leaders and their interested partners to curate the appropriate educational opportunities for the community.



# FUNDING REQUESTED

Five Points Programming Funding			
	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022
<b>Positions</b>			
Part-Time Event Coordinator @ \$25/hr	26,000	26,000	26,000
JCSU Student Ambassadors (\$20 hrs/week @ \$10/hr)		10,400	20,800
Community Facilitation - Lee Institute (Chrystal Joy)	6,000	3,000	
Project for Public Spaces	41,000	15,000	
Subtotal:	73,000	54,400	46,800
<b>Events</b>			
Community Engagement Kick Off Event	500		
Ribbon Cutting/Opening Weekend Festival	6,000		
Weekly Activities (Fitness, Market, Food Trucks, Open Mic, etc)	2,400	62,400	80,800
Subtotal:	8,900	62,400	80,800
<b>Equipment</b>			
PA System	350		
5 Tents	750		
Website	4,000	250	250
TShirts/Giveaways	2,500	2,500	2,500
Printing & Marketing	1,000	9,900	9,900
Postage	1,000	1,000	1,000
Games	1,000		
Wifi Equipment & Service	7,500	7,500	15,000
Subtotal:	18,100	21,150	28,650
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>137,950</b>	<b>156,250</b>
<b>TOTAL OVER 3 YEARS</b>	<b>394,200</b>		









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