

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for Council Committee Discussions on Monday, March 3, 2025, at 6:00 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, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, Lawana Mayfield, and Marjorie Molina.

ABSENT: Councilmembers Renee Johnson and James Mitchell

ABSENT UNTIL NOTED: Councilmembers Tiawana Brown and Victoria Watlington

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Due to technical difficulties, there was no audio for this portion of the meeting.

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ITEM NO. 1: COUNCIL COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS

Mayor Lyles said alright, thank you. I think that's everyone. So, tonight I think that one of the things that I heard, and I was listening to the Housing Committee, and the work that you guys are doing is so important that I would like to ask you to be the first group to report out, and be able to tell us and give us a summary of what you would like to have Council members begin to review and ponder for the future. Mr. Jones, is that okay with you?

Marcus Jones, City Manager said absolutely, Mayor.

Councilmember Mayfield said my Chair, I'm thinking, hopefully, is right around the corner. We went through a lot today. We had one item, our policy referral on our minimum housing code. We had quite a bit of conversation. Ultimately, there are some recommendations that came out of committee and staff, as well as our legal representation regarding our In Rem process, and injunctive relief, as well as code enforcement actions. I'm going to keep this real short, so that we have a short night. What we're bringing to full committee is a recommendation around directing staff to advance new processes for In Rem repair and injunctive relief. We have had the ability of legal action through injunctive relief, but it has not been utilized. So, this is to request for us to really start utilizing that language when the ability, and Ms. [inaudible] will help keep me honest, because I did not write the notes down for this. Ultimately, our Committee next steps is also our procurement for In Rem services. Councilmember Ajmera, am I forgetting anything? It will help us to bring in In Rem repair orders forward for Council action. So, when we look at the opportunities and working with our partners, we're also going to get some actual numbers for some of the recommendations in here to know where we are budget wise. So, of course, we have about \$3 million in PAYGO (Pay As You Go) total. Well, we had a conversation around a pilot for mold testing. We're still going to get some more communication regarding how that would be implemented, and to get an idea of exactly what are the dollars that we're looking at when we look at our upstream rental assistance, and we're looking at when there's a displacement, how much money do we have available through our CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funds, and how much money does our partner, Crisis Assistance, and through our relocation contract, is still available for such events? Did I miss anything? Any questions?

Mayor Lyles said I just want to say that it is great to hear that we're examining what the old was and what the new can become. So, thank you so much for taking that in a forward direction.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you, Madam Mayor.

Mayor Lyles said so, our next committee is Budget Governance and Intergovernmental Relations, our next report.

Councilmember Ajmera said so for the Budget Governance and Intergovernmental Relations Committee, let me first start out with introducing our committee members, starting with Vice Chair, Councilmember Bokhari. In fact, he did join the meeting on his birthday today. So, thank you, Councilmember Bokhari, and Councilmember Brown, Mayfield, and Mitchell. So, during today's meeting of the committee, we discussed two important topics. First was Charlotte Water and Stormwater, which was their budget proposal and their operations priorities for the coming fiscal year. So, as you know, as part of our budget process this year, we are doing all the Enterprise Funds in the Committee. There were some questions about the rate increase for Charlotte Water, and it's in line with what we had historically. Also, we got an update on the Stormwater where staff is being proactive in asset management to ensure that we don't have a huge backlog like we had back in 2017 when Councilmember Driggs was the Chair of the Committee, and I remember discussing that back in 2017. So, I think we are in a much better state than we were back in 2017, because we are being more proactive and we are doing more on the prevention side, so that we don't end up having a huge backlog. Certainly, staff is investing more in capital improvements, both on Water and Stormwater side, so we got an overview of that. So, you're interested in learning more, obviously, there are two [INAUDIBLE] available for a deeper dive on Water and Stormwater. So, that's it on that.

There will be a rate increase for a typical homeowner. We are looking at about \$5.6, about \$5 and some cents per month, but this is critical as we continue to invest in our aging Charlotte Water, as well as continue to stay up to date with our operations investments, like PFAS (Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances) and others. We have safe water. It's an award-winning water. Certainly, something that we should be very proud of, because not a lot of municipalities can't say that. When we look our PFAS, which is the forever chemicals, as you know, there are additional regulations that came out under Biden Administration, but thanks to Charlotte Water leadership, we always stayed ahead of all of those regulations, even the regulations that are being rolled back now, when it comes to PFAS, we are still ahead of it. So, I appreciate the leadership of Ms. Charles and her entire team on what we are doing to stay ahead of the curve there.

Second topic was increasing our MWSBE (Minority, Women, Small Business Enterprise) participation in capital projects. So, you will all get a copy of the draft of our MWSBE pilot project, in terms of what we are doing to increase the participation. I'll ask Mr. Heath to provide a copy to all Council members, so you all can read it. What we are doing, just to highlight, we are streamlining our procurement process, we are expanding outreach efforts, and we are also delivering targeted support. These were all the concerns that we had heard from MWSBE businesses, and I really hope this will help us increase our participation rate. Really this plan is designed to incorporate best practices and provide data, so that we can make an informed decision.

Councilmember Watlington arrived at 6:11 p.m.

We will get data on how we are tracking, in terms of our performance, by end of the year. We are looking at percentage of contract goals that's been met, what is the total spend when it comes to MWSBEs, number of MWSBEs that are awarded prime contracts, as well as the number of new businesses that are being certified. So, I think these are really performance measures to continue to track. Council will take an action on the plan in April 2025, on April 10, 2025, to be specific. So, if you all have any questions ahead of that, if you could reach out to Mr. Heath, Ms. Allen, as well as Mr. Coker, who have been working on this extensively for the past six to eight months. It's important to note that the plan that was approved by the Committee earlier today, it does conform to our existing regulations. It also is in alignment with what this Council adopted in 2020, in terms of the CBI (Charlotte Business INClusion) program policy, and also, it's in alignment of what we discussed at our Strategy Meeting back in January 2025. I'm excited about this new plan and addresses the concerns of MWSBE businesses. You will get a briefing on this in April 2025. I'm sorry, I said April 10, 2025. This will be in front of us on our agenda on April 7, 2025. So, that's all I have. If I missed anything, Councilmember Mayfield, feel free to chime in.

Ms. Mayfield said Mayor, if I can. The only thing that I would add, Chairman Ajmera, is if you want to touch on the foundation, going back to Charlotte Water, and the conversation of having a third-party that would assist for funding, if you wanted to go over that?

Ms. Ajmera said yes. I think many of us were around, especially during the pandemic, when Charlotte Water started a nonprofit arm, which is really to help with fundraising, so that we can get funding from other agencies or private foundations. Certainly, it's going in the right direction. We were the only municipality that did not have nonprofit, but certainly that has been changed. I believe Mr. Phipps was one of the board members back when we had started it, so thanks to his leadership, as well as Ms. Charles and her entire team. It's great to see how far it has come along since we started that back in 2020 or 2021. For those of you who do not know about this nonprofit, it really helps low-income residents to help pay water bills. It's a great program to assist families, because water is essential. So, I've helped connect a few families that could not afford to pay their bills with that, and they've benefited from it, so it's a great program. That's all I have. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said alright, thank you. Our next report is jobs. Let's go to our Economic Development Committee.

Councilmember Graham said we had a great meeting today based on a longstanding commitment by this Council to support Workforce Development. Certainly, my Vice Chair, who is not here, Councilmember Mitchell, as well as Ms. Mayfield, were really an integral part of kind of bringing this forward. So, I want to thank them for their participation, and also thank Danielle Frazier for coming on board and really doing a good job, and her team, to kind of put us in this position that we are in today. I also want to thank the SchermCO team, who are here with us today, for their support along the way. Ms. Frazier has been pretty busy this year, starting off with our retreat in January 2025, with our panel discussion, with workforce providers from all over the country, and recognizing her presidency nationwide. She gave the Committee a preliminary report in February 2025, and today she came back with her final Workforce Development draft plan that was unanimously adopted today by the Committee, forwarding to the City Council for a March 24, 2025, vote; therefore, she will be making a presentation just to make sure that everyone is familiar with the recommendations coming forward. The Committee, and I want to thank again Mitchell, Driggs, Bokhari, and Molina for their support. The Mayor Pro Tem was also in attendance today. I think we had some guiding principles about today's meeting and today's vote, which was we clearly understand that as a Committee our job and responsibility in a Council is to make sure that we fly this thing at 30,000 feet, and allow Danielle and her staff and other stakeholders really to kind of get into the devil of the details of some of the work that has to be done. Staff and Ms. Frazier, again, will kind of do the deep dive with input from Council members, and we did provide several inputs for her. The motion that was carried today also had a caveat that she would kind of do some, not cleanup, but more specific work necessary to kind of give a broader perspective about some of the questions being asked. We said, one, that what gets measured gets done, so we're looking forward to a lot more measurement criteria along the way. We also wanted to understand our steady state, Mr. Manager, in terms of our budget moving forward, so that we can continue to fund the work of the Workforce Development Officer moving forward, and so hopefully we can have a better understanding of that. Support for working with outside organizations, that the City is not in this by ourselves, that we're working with a wide variety of organizations to help us fulfill this mission, and we look forward to the September 25, 2025, Workforce Development Summit. Last year was the first time that we did it, and we're going to do it again this year, from my understanding, from Ms. Frazier.

We continue to work with our opportunity hubs throughout the Corridors of Opportunity, making sure that there's opportunities within neighborhoods and communities to assess these types of initiatives relating to job and job readiness, so we look forward to that. We definitely want to continue to work with our employers throughout the community. Employer engagement is significantly important as well. Then, Ms. Molina said something that I really agree with, certainly Mr. Bokhari and Driggs had a lot of input,

and most of what I said earlier was from their questions and details that Ms. Frazier said that she would go back to adjust the presentation before a final vote, and I agree with that, but also that we'd be able to answer a simple question. This is a planning document. It's how we will move forward. A simple question is, what does it mean for the man on the street? When I said I need a job, whether that person is a first time looking for employment, whether it's someone who has been laid off looking for new employment, or someone simply looking to change careers. So, we believe we have a good format moving forward. I would like to turn the program over to Ms. Frazier, unless there's any other comments from any committee members. If not, Ms. Frazier, we welcome you to the podium to share where we are and where we're going.

Danielle Frazier, Special Assistant to the City Manager said well, thank you, Mr. Graham. Thank you, Mayor and to Council for the opportunity to share the Workforce Development Strategic Plan. I don't know if I have anything else to share. You captured almost everything, and so I really appreciate the tee up. There was a lot of pressure today being the only agenda item on the Jobs and Economic Development Committee. So, I weathered it and here I am, and glad that we had some great discussion and feedback on what's next. What we wanted to do is make the connectivity of our Workforce Development Strategic Plan and how it aligns with your Council priorities, so it aligns directly with workforce and business development. I wanted to talk about some of the key takeaways today that we discussed with Council Committee. One, to remind you all that this plan was developed with a lot of input and feedback from Council. Thank you all, again, for all of your support in the early conversations and the feedback that you provided, as well as the ongoing feedback that has been supported through Committee. SchermCo is here, Mr. Graham already mentioned them, but they have been working behind the scenes with helping to develop this plan and have done a number of stakeholder conversations with workforce partners, as well as experts across our community, nationally, and even internationally. One of the things that we want to, if we do this right, that this plan will support increasing economic and upward mobility for our Charlotte residents, as well as supporting increased access to skilled talent for our Charlotte area employers.

We've had a number of connection points and touch points with you all, Council, as well as our Committee. So, in October 2024, we presented at the Jobs and Economic Development Committee the high-level key focus areas of this plan. In January 2025, you all know, again Mr. Graham mentioned this a little bit ago, we had a great discussion at our Annual Strategy Meeting, as well as we presented the full plan back in February 2025, and today presented the final draft, and now I'm here with you presenting to full Council on this update in hopes that this will be in preparation for a decision to be made on this plan, March 24, 2025 Business Meeting.

So, I'm going to go through a couple of these slides quickly just for the sake of time. Again, many insights and feedback that we've received from committee and from Council, and we want to highlight some of those that continue to come up in our themes. The things that continue to be pronounced, as we need to make sure that we are providing navigation and career pathway services in our community, in our Corridors, focusing on industries and demand. So, that means industries and jobs that are here now and that are growing, so that we ensure we're investing in programs and resources and trainings that will support our talent, as well as our business needs, making sure that we're connecting this work to economic mobility. The Chetty Study has come up quite a few times, and of course, the measurements on related outcomes and performance data that we will measure these programs on, and I'll share a little bit more about that later on in the presentation.

So, wanted to share also a few things with committee and with Council. In the midst of all of this Workforce Development planning, there are a number of things that we've been able to do since I've been on board with team Charlotte. We started our planning with SchermCo almost about a year ago last, late, I think, winter, but since then we've deployed over \$4.5 million in Workforce Development funding, which was part of an RCA (Request for Council Action) that you all approved some time ago to support workforce services in our community. We established the Office of Workforce

Development. We launched our Education to Employment Program, as well as again, Mr. Graham mentioned, the first Workforce Development Summit that we co-created in partnership with the organizations you see here, as well as the opportunity hubs were launched to help support workforce development and small business efforts in our Corridors of Opportunity.

So, today, it brings us to the strategic plan or framework, if you will, of what our plan will look like, and I'm going to share with you our vision and our mission. Our vision is to cultivate a vibrant, diverse, and skilled workforce system that enables residents to obtain sustainable employment, and businesses to access skilled talent. Our mission of the plan is to champion innovative evidence-based workforce initiatives and solutions that meet the dynamic needs of our employees, our residents, and our business community. As we think about this plan, you all know we have the Office of Workforce Development that supports both our City employees, our 8,500 employees, that we support along their career development and advancement journey, but it's also how we leverage our external partners and resources to support our community talent.

So, that brings us to our key focus areas of this strategic plan. There's three areas that we've identified that we really could lean into and support in a greater way. One is career pathway access and awareness, two is skilled development and credential attainment, and three is job placement and career advancement. If you look under these three focus areas, or pillars if you will, you'll see that everything that we do in these three pillars are data driven, as well as employer informed. What I mean by data driven is making sure that we're focusing again on those industries in demand, the jobs that are growing, the jobs that will be here that are coming, also knowing about our talent. What are our talent faced with? What are their challenges? What are some of their barriers? So, that we understand how we can support programming that supports also the wraparound supports of the talent that will be served. Again, all of this is validated with our employers. So, understanding what our actual employer needs are within our specific community.

So, now I'm going to walk us through each one of these goals, as well as the strategies. So, under goal number one, that's to expand access and awareness of in-demand career pathway opportunities in the Charlotte area. You'll see to the right a list of strategies that we hope to execute. The first strategy is to promote messaging of career pathways within key industries to increase talent pipelines for in-demand jobs. Strategy number two is to grow career pathway awareness through career exploration and work integrated learning experiences, and three is to expand access through Workforce Development services by increasing community career navigation support. Here you see key metrics down at the bottom. This is not an exhaustive list, as I've told committee, but these are the things that come to mind as we think about how do we measure success in these very specific strategies and what our action steps will look like to do that.

So, want to talk through a little bit of what our next steps could look like to move this plan forward over the next three to six months. A lot of the conversation has been around, this is great, the plan, the key focus areas, but what does it really look like in the details and what does it look like in action. So, I want to share a little bit of what's top of mind for us as we immediately move forward, fingers crossed, once this plan is endorsed or accepted. So, these all correspond to the strategies on the previous slide, and that's, one, to leverage and promote existing tools and websites that assist with career resources for job navigation. For example, leveraging some of the tools that we have that we're using, whether it's City forms, some other websites and guidance and resources that are available virtually for those that have access to these tools and technology. The second strategy is to deploy career navigators within the Corridors of Opportunity and community to increase access to career development services, education and training programs, and employment opportunities. So, we look at these two strategies, as one, making sure that we're able to support virtual navigation, whether its in-demand industries, career pathways, or what services are in our community, but then also we want to make sure that we have boots on the ground in the community to help support high touch services to help support navigation of our

workforce development ecosystem within our community. Lastly, it's to finalize the mapping of our community workforce services and training providers to make available to community and organizations. This is also something that SchermCo has been assisting us with and helping to asset map, if you will, what services are in our community, what training programs, especially free training programs, that are in community that we can use to help our talent navigate our ecosystem.

So, our second goal is to enhance workforce skills and education to support demand for current and future talent needs. Some of our strategies around that will be to support skill-based training and industry recognized credential programs for unemployed individuals. Our second strategy will be to invest in skill growth opportunities for underemployed talent through targeted education and specialized training programs. You'll notice that we have two specific strategies around how we support unemployed talent, as well as underemployed talent. So, helping individuals that may have no or low skills to get into training programs, as well as that lead to the jobs, as well as that individual who may need an upskill or a reskill to be able to move to the next career move or to be able to increase, whether it's their wages, or promote within their career path. Lastly, it's to connect more untapped and under skilled talent to education and training programs. So, we want to make sure that we are being intentional about the talent and being inclusive and making sure that our [INAUDIBLE] talent, whether it's our veterans [inaudible] opportunity or justice involved, etc., that we are supporting them with the resources they need to get the training skills that lead to sustainable employment.

Some action items for those over the next few months that we feel we can get moving pretty quickly. One, there's a lot of work around this particular goal, and that's to make sure we validate the data. I spoke a little bit about this earlier. It's ensuring that we know what data we hear, whether it's labor market industries that are in demand that are growing, but we want to make sure we validate that information with our business community. We want to review our workforce development and ecosystem strengths. So, when we know what industries are in demand, we have about six to seven of those across our region. Looking at that we don't want to boil the ocean. That was some of the conversation we had in committee today. Making sure that we really hone in on those industries and those areas that we really want to impact over time. A part of that is to identify the target talent. When we talk about the talent that we want to support, is that K through 12, under skilled, underemployed, untapped, or a combination of, and that also will help us to identify opportunities for innovative programming to pilot, and lastly, to be able to release new funding opportunities for new and/or existing Workforce Development programs and initiatives.

For the last goal. The last goal is to connect more talent to sustainable employment opportunities. So, strategies to do some of that is to expand earn and learn opportunities, such as on-the-job training or registered apprenticeships, to increase skills development and job placement. Strategy two is to expand our education to employment program to employ high school and to expand that to college students with positions within the City of Charlotte and abroad. We hope that we've somewhat started a movement, and created momentum for other businesses to come on board and support entry level roles for our graduating high school students. Lastly, it's to work with education and community partners to connect job ready talent with employment opportunities. Again, you'll see some of the key metrics below of how we plan to measure success.

So, some action steps on how we see this plan in action is to identify interested employers to support expansion of apprenticeships and on-the-job training opportunities. Expand our education to employment initiative by increasing the number of entry level roles for early talent within the City of Charlotte, and again beyond. Then, the last is to build industry specific talent pipelines of teams comprised of training providers, workforce development, and community partners to meet talent, as well as employer needs to fill available job opportunities. This last action essentially is how can the City be a stronger connector and conduit for connecting talent to jobs and businesses to talent, whether it's through funded programs that we will fund directly,

whether that's through our MWSBE opportunities, as well as with our economic development investments, or companies that are just looking to relocate or expand in our area. Just making sure that we have that stronger connection of workforce development and talent to those opportunities. So, these actions are not an exhaustive list. It's just where we see we can really move some things rather quickly once, again finger crossed, this plan is approved and accepted, and where we can really mobilize this plan. As with any plan, again, strategies vary in how they're executed and when, based on priority, feasibility, and again, our ecosystem strengths.

So, the one thing that we want to mention, and I want to mention here, is that we have a number of plans, of strategies, initiatives that are being updated, revised, created, and again, I think I've said this before, but we look at workforce development as one of these cross-cutting factors, and it touches all of these different areas that you see in these blue bubbles. I want to really call out some of the plans on the left-hand side of this slide, when we think about mobility and the opportunity potentially that this one cent sales tax can support, and the infrastructure that will need to be built out through jobs, talent, and what will be needed to help support that transformation of our transportation and transit system. When we think about SEAP (Strategic Energy Action Plan), I think some of you heard the SEAP's plan update today, and you heard that workforce development is one of their cross-cutting factors as well. So, we've been working closely with Sarah and team to identify opportunities to collaborate, Steven Coker with Charlotte Business INClusion, as well as housing. Ms. Mayfield, I think I heard workforce development come up in the housing conversation committee today, as well as, of course, connection to small business. So, want Council to know that we're being very intentional with how we're thinking about workforce development, as we think about our strategies and our implementation and how we move things forward.

Councilmember Brown arrived at 6:36 p.m.

One of the last things that I'll mention is, again, there's just ongoing work that our office is doing. I know a lot of this plan is focused on external efforts that we will support and invest in, but just want to remind you that we've got about 8,500 to 9,000 employees that we are supporting along their career development and advancement journeys through these specific programs that I've shared with committee in the past, as well as we'll continue to monitor and manage the performance report information of those programs that you all have already invested in through the \$9.1 million that you approved some time ago, and that ended up being about \$4.5 million or so, that we were able to deploy in funds, in the community. Last thing that we'll continue to do is just research best practices and make sure that we are staying abreast of what opportunities are out there that we may be able to glean from to enhance some of the services that are being supported in our community.

These were our next steps for today, and it was certainly to incorporate any feedback that Council has on the plan. Our plan was to provide an update to you all, as I am right now, and again, in preparation potentially for a decision on the next Business Meeting on March 24, 2025, and hopefully to begin moving this plan forward sometime in April 2025. One of the things that I will mention, you have in your appendix, you have current Workforce Development ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funded programs performance by organization. One of the things that, again, we heard loud and clear around making sure that we are monitoring data and performance and outcome, so that we can see the impact of the investment that you all are making as Council, and there is a list of programs that are currently in your appendix. I will not go through each of those for the sake of time, but we had a lot of great discussion in the committee around some of these data points, and I'm happy to walk through those with you at a later time. One caveat that I do want to mention about the performance information is that a lot of these programs are just getting up and running, some within the last three to six months, and so we wanted to give you a snapshot of where those programs are year to date. Those programs run and will terminate as of April 2026. So, you'll see that maybe some of those numbers look low or we haven't enrolled everyone or have served everyone, but it's because there's still a long runway to go, and that they have just started to get ramped up with their programs and services. So, we want to share these numbers with

you on a regular basis, so that you can see how these programs are progressing and performing over time. Ultimately, we will plan to have a dashboard that you all will be able to access at your fingertips at any time, so that you can always see how the programs are progressing through your investment. So, with that, I will pause and answer any questions that you all may have.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much, Danielle, for the presentation.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you, Ms. Frazier, for this presentation. I will do a plug for slide 16. I would say housing should be moved up instead of below mobility, SEAP, and business inclusion. One of the main conversations that we are having is the connection of when we have opportunities of training, that gives people better options when they start to increase their individual income. I would also, Mayor, like to ask, and Mr. Manager, ask if we can have, I guess, a few more presentations in our committee where we're actually tying in, even though it was noted that some of these numbers seem low. We approved Road to Hire back May 1, 2024, that's 10 months, with a goal of 152. They had 36 participants. So, it will be helpful if we can get some of these timelines, like six months, to make sure that we're on track, since we allocated a million and some change. Twenty-six is going to be gone very shortly, so making sure that we're staying ahead. I would also like to ask Ms. Frazier, have we looked at, and to me this seems like a low-hanging fruit, the people that actually apply for the City of Charlotte, reaching out to them, because we have people all over the city that have applied for a position with the City of Charlotte and/or the County, that may not be selected, but there might be an opportunity for other opportunities that are available. Because I want to make sure that we're looking at a broad range of education, not overly saturating our focus on those who may not have multiple years of skillset. We have a lot of people that are transitioning in their careers. We have a lot of individuals that have multiple degrees that may be underemployed or unemployed today. I don't want us missing that opportunity of higher-skilled labor being able to be connected. When we're looking at corporate relocations and other things, and they have three or four positions that's at a higher level, we already have access to individuals, because they've reached out to us on, either again, through the City or the County. That might be an easy win to go back through our own list and reach out to some of those individuals and connect them to the opportunities. Those were the thoughts that I had, Madam Mayor. Thank you.

Ms. Ajmera said great job, Danielle, with the very comprehensive presentation on Workforce Development Plan. I was going through this PowerPoint deck. I don't see anything being discussed for those with language barriers. As you know, there are certain corridors and parts of our City where we have a significant immigrant and refugee population. When it comes to barriers in terms of jobs, language is a barrier. There are organizations like Latin American Coalition, Carolina Asian-American Chamber, as well as Refugee Support Services, that actually have programs for those with language barriers in other languages. Have you all considered partnering with them in addressing that employment gap, because their needs are very unique, and how do we navigate through those challenges would be certainly very important as part of our overall Workforce Development Plan.

Ms. Frazier said I appreciate that question, and yes, we have thought about that, especially when we think about our Corridors of Opportunity and our opportunity hubs. We do know that I think it's the Latin Coalition, that just launched their spark hub. I might be getting it wrong, but that is one of the goals when you think about the career navigators and us deploying those resources in the community. We want to identify those hubs first, because those were the areas in which we've already invested from an infrastructure standpoint, and we want to make sure that we follow up and we can support from a resource and services standpoint. So, yes, thank you for that, but duly noted.

Ms. Ajmera said okay. Also, Refugee Support Services is another organization that helps those that have newly moved to the City of Charlotte, and they need services in terms of, not just addressing language barrier, but around their immigration. So, refugees have to apply for this specific certification, and so on. So, I think engaging

them would help us bridge that gap. Also, Asian-American Chamber, they have programs for Burmese, as well as [inaudible] community, where those communities have very unique challenges when it comes to access to opportunities. So, I just want to make sure we are customizing our workforce plan to address needs, because we're not going to find one solution for all communities in terms of jobs. That's all I have. Thank you.

Ms. Frazier said alright, thank you.

Mayor Lyles said I really appreciate that, Ms. Ajmera, because I started thinking about more than just the language. The life skills, you know when people are going to come out, and we have a training, and they get a paycheck. Do they know how to utilize this? How do you bank? How do you do all of these things? So, I appreciate that.

Councilmember Watlington said my question is very fundamental, because I want to make sure that as I'm thinking about this, I'm just following the dots. I see here, and you made mention of it in one of the strategies was around making sure that we're very targeted and not trying to boil the ocean. So, as I look at some of the existing programs or whatnot, help me to conceptualize this. What fundamentally is the gap in terms of our employment rate, and for whom and what are the jobs in our community that we struggle to fill? I feel like that's how I'm thinking about it, because if we start there, then that feels like it paints the picture of who our target workforce really is, and it might help us to narrow even further some of the efforts. Because I think about the Corridors of Opportunity, for example. Given the rate of change that we see there, are they still the places where the folks who we're targeting live, and are we targeting underemployed, under skilled, justice involved folks? Are we trying to target, like you said, the K-12, or do those programs already exist? Then, to LaWana's point, people who are already kind of opting in to wanting to some services. How are we really leveraging those folks, specific to, for instance we need police officers, for example, or other civil servants? Then, finally, I just think about how does this overlay with higher ed, and some of the programs that are already happening there? Are we connecting the dots to our local university workforce to make sure that there's somewhere for them to live and work within our community if they so choose? So, that's just some of the stuff that I know it's baked in here, but for me I'm not quite yet able to articulate this is the gap and this is who we're trying to help with what we have here, because I think that may help us. Sometimes we hear that some of the programs that we've invested in don't necessarily yield jobs, but they yield certifications, and I think that might be part of the connecting of the dots.

Then, finally, I just want to plus one to what Councilmember Mayfield said, in regard to the housing piece and connecting that to workforce, because that might be an angle. Like, let's focus specifically on people who are 30 to 60 AMI (Area Median Income) or 30 percent who live in public assisted homes. If we targeted there and brought folks up, that might be something that we could do quickly. So, those are my thoughts. Thank you for your presentation and thank you for the work that you've done to date. We can see that there's been a lot of thought put into it. So, I look forward to it.

Ms. Mayfield said I was sharing with Madam Chair that in our 50 to 80, our workforce latest report came out saying, to live comfortably as a single person in Charlotte you need to earn around \$100,000. Well, it's the same numbers in Tampa and in other places. Personally, I feel like we have services targeted at the 30 percent. We have a number of programs out there, but where we're missing our local missing middle, is that workforce that earns between \$50,000 and \$90,000. They also are transitioning with employment, as well as finding challenges with identifying housing and transportation.

Mayor Lyles said okay, so thanks for that. I think that's really accurate. I know when we get more data around this, we'll be able to have that.

Councilmember Driggs said I'm really pleased to see the work that we've done in this space. I think people who know me remember that I've advocated for a long time for workforce development, so that people can afford their own housing. What we did

discuss a lot today, that the chair alluded to, was the need to maybe bring a more operational perspective. So, right now we have a plan and we have the concepts that we're working with, but the appendix in the material that we got shows a couple of case studies. So, I think that being able to know what kind of metrics we will see around this, how we will measure success, how long we will keep following people that were in this program. Then, the other point, again the chair alluded to, was what is it going to take on an ongoing basis as a line item in our budget in order to sustain this effort, because we're working right now with ARPA funds. So, the vote today was unanimous by the committee to support the plan, but included a recommendation that we look at those issues of metrics and budget. Thank you.

Councilmember Anderson said Danielle, thank you for the presentation. It was a really good discussion earlier in committee. As I mentioned, on your slide 16, I really feel like the work that you're doing really cuts across. It's really that horizontal vector across all of these bubbles that you put here, housing, SEAP, etc., and we have to work on all of them in tandem. I really like the plan that you have here, your specific key metrics that you have at the bottom of a few of these slides. I think it would be really interesting to see how those metrics will come to life, and with some expectation. When you do actually bring those to life, I think you have to set the table for how long of a runway you will need in some of these programs, to some of the points that we're mentioned earlier in committee as well as here. Is a six-month runway the right runway to see traction in a program, or does it need to be a multiple of that? I think if you set the table with expectations, as you stand up these KPIs (Key Performance Indicator), that'll help us to absorb them, to understand what we're really looking at.

Then, lastly, I know we mentioned earlier leveraging the hubs in Corridors of Opportunity. I think we absolutely have to do that. I'm also thinking about the library system. I met with MT and there's several new libraries coming online. The work on the Main Library is really just beginning, but I find that I get questions, when I'm in community, around navigation. People just don't know where to go. There's a need, but they don't know how to navigate. They don't know how to find these services. So, just from an education perspective and a marketing perspective, maybe we can leverage our library system to have information there. Potentially even some touch points there, especially because there's a good amount of, at least residents in District 1 that leverage the libraries for digital services. They're going to use the computers to look for jobs, and build out resumes, etc. So, I think there's a natural connection there, and would just encourage you to investigate that. Thank you, Madam Mayor.

Ms. Frazier said thank you.

Councilmember Molina said I first want to say thank you, Danielle, for the work that you and the team have done so far. I know that this is a very unique undertaking because of the breadth of the work, and I feel like, as I suggested today in committee, that you have an opportunity, in my opinion, to really shape going into this, because I just keep giving that to you as a soft suggestion. I really am excited to have a leader with your acumen on board, but I think we have to be careful not to overwhelm this endeavor with wanting to affect change across a very broad stream of deliverables, of intended outcomes. I think, as we take a look at this, I remember the Workforce Summit last year, and all of the various stakeholders that were in that room. I mean, we're talking, it was 100 percent of public and private conversation opportunity. The CELC (Charlotte Executive Leadership Council) was in the room, a lot of our private institutions. We were at Central Piedmont. So, we have the stakeholders that are at the table, and I think now with the launch, and using a level of specificity, because it's like SEAP and all of the other things that we intend from a policy perspective. One of the most important things that we have an opportunity to affect is what we have control of, which is the City. So, the resources that we deploy, we can absolutely say that we would like to attach quantitative outcomes to those particular items, because we can control those particular variables within a project baseline, whatever program.

So, I'm passionate, not because I've been here on the Council for a very long time, but I went through WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) myself twice. I was

trained as a project management professional through the state program for WIOA, and I was trained in a one-year program for data analytics, specifically around workforce development, and that was over a 12-year difference in timeframe. So, what I can say for sure is that just because we train someone doesn't necessarily mean without, let's say experience, an employer will be willing to hire them. Those are variables that you cannot control in this endeavor. There are so many different things that you cannot control, not to mention concurrently what you have is a variation of human beings that need emphasis. We have that human being that's just starting their journey, that they're just getting basic level skills to get started in their endeavor, and then we have all the way up to some of the human beings that are transitioning at varying degrees of their lives, where just one or two things might be a touch point to get them to the next level. So, I think from a policy perspective, like what was alluded to in the committee today, we speak in access and outcome at the same time, and they are very, very different. To give someone access is to say, I'm going to provide you a service, and then I have then at that moment fulfilled by responsibility, but if I am attached to the outcome, then I have a long-term project baseline, and I intend to, over time, provide emphasis to that human being until they get to a certain level of outcome, which would then make this a budget conversation and a much deeper, more profound conversation, when we talk about what we're going to do.

So, I challenge us, from my personal opinion and experience, having been like many of us in varying places along my journey where I've had to pick back up, start over, do different things, and really regroup. I'm fortunate to have had education and a background where I've been a business owner, brick and mortar, and things like that, but we have humans that just don't have that. There will be humans that we have to put a great emphasis in, and other humans that we put a trade in, and then we can connect them to employment. So, like I challenged today, what do we consider a win? Do we consider if we've taken this person who walked in, like the Chairman said today, and said, I need a job, but I don't have relative skillsets to even get started. I don't have a computer. I don't have just the basics of what we consider basics, those of us who have them in our hands. That human being is going to need a much greater emphasis than someone who was recently laid off with a Bachelor's degree, who is just trying to reinvent what their career looks like as opposed to this human being. The Corridors even, the Corridors are going to look very, very different, like what Councilmember Ajmera alluded to, the Albemarle Road Corridor is going to look different than the Freedom Corridor, and so making sure that there's a communication. I mean, I think we have so much that we can say, it's just like Councilmember Watlington said, boiling the ocean, this is a huge undertaking.

So, my challenge to us as a policymaking body, and to you as the leader of this endeavor, this is a perfect opportunity for you to take what we know, what you have, and you've been a leader in this sector for a very long time, so I don't want to pretend to tell you where to start, but I think guidance on kind of what the baseline looks like. What do our key milestones look like? What are we trying to affect when we come out of the gate? Like what the Mayor Pro Tem said, what type of timeframe do you need in order to complete that endeavor, where we can then monitor and control our baseline and know where we're going and what type of outcomes we're intending, as we make monetary decisions that are concurrent with this issue? So, if you can't tell, this is personal for me. I really want us to be successful. I really want us to be realistic when it comes to this challenge, because it's a big challenge, and we can do so many things, but where can we be strategic and where can we impact the most humans and affect change, is really what I'm interested in personally, and I'm sure my colleagues feel aligned with that.

Mr. Jones said thank you, Mayor and members of Council. I really appreciate what you just put in the room. I just want to add a couple things. One, for us to be realistic is extremely important. I like slide 16. I love it when the Council members want to take their initiatives and make it first, which is great, because when we start to think about this, if we do this the right way, instead of having workforce development, it's connected to other strategies. It may be housing is connected to other strategies, or the SEAP, so that's extremely important. I think we're gelling as an organization to make sure we're

horizontal with this. The only other thing I'd like to say, and Danielle, I don't know if you have control to get back to slide nine. That thing up there to the top right actually says, leader, investor, convener, connector, influencer. So, there's a role for this community, and there's a role for the City. Even at the strategy meeting, you realized that many cities do not take on workforce development, because it's so difficult. It's outside of the city. So, I would say that we need to think about the players and the partners, the outcomes, and the investments. I can assure you this will not be a \$50 million program, it won't be a \$10 million program, because we should not, as a city, be funding everything, but figuring out what our role is in these various areas, whether an influencer or an investor. Again, I would like to thank the committee, and I would like to thank Danielle. So, I think this is the proper way to bring a policy initiative to the body, having the committee members have a chance to reframe this thing a bit, then coming back to the full body to get more input. So, I think we're in a very good place, and I just wanted to publically thank you, Danielle, for getting us here. Thank you, Mayor.

Mayor Lyles said thank you, Danielle. You've heard all of the opportunities and ideas, and I think the Manager has framed it very, very well. This isn't a new thing. It's just something that you have to always fill up the tank again, over and over again. I remember when Bank of America was just doing anybody that could actually be a teller. Now, there's no such thing as a teller, it's a machine. So, we have to be thinking about this in a very different way than what the traditional things would say and do, and I know that you're up for it, because you've got a whole team of people that are going to support you as we're doing this. So, I want to say thanks as well, and Mr. Graham, you've got a lot of good things to think about.

Mr. Graham said we've got a great team behind me. So, thank you very much.

Mayor Lyles said so, with that, are there any other questions or comments? Thank you for the things that you've said that have made so much sense and bring so much reality to this. So, our next discussion is on Transportation, Planning and Development.

Mr. Driggs said thank you, Mayor. The members of the Transportation, Planning and Development Committee are myself as Chair, Ms. Molina as Vice Chair, and Councilmembers Graham, Johnson and Watlington. We had two topics today, the Community Area Planning process and the Strategic Energy Action Plan. Both were for information, but I want to tell you just a little bit about them, because they are both on a timeline route toward a proposed Council adoption. I want to make sure everybody's aware of that and roughly what's coming along, and if you have concerns, inform yourself and don't wait until that day and say, oh my God, where'd that come from?

So, the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, we had a briefing today about kind of what to expect. I think the conversation in committee has been, what exactly does this mean? What will these area plans do? How will they change things? So, staff were attempting to prepare us, I think, for that, describing some of what's in there. Today, we had two very useful examples in terms of rezonings, types of rezonings, and how the area plan might affect the way they proceed. One of them was a rezoning within a Place Type, when you have something that's got one N-1 Place Type, and they want rezone it for another one, and that's consistent, and then you have one where you want to go from N-1 to N-2, and that is not consistent, so how does that work? I think one thing I want to emphasize is, there could be a comparatively short time from when we actually have in our hands the draft and relatively few opportunities to talk. So, I encourage everybody, go online. You can find a lot of this material, you'll be able to see the drafts when they go up, look at your district, and find out how they describe your district. Of course, they don't align perfectly with the districts, and know that as it stands right now, the Part 2 Application, TPD (Transportation, Planning and Development) presentation, i.e., a sequel to what we heard today, is scheduled April 2025 and May 2025, late April 2025 Action Review, and then late April 2025 going into May 2025, public comment and the proposed Council adoption. So, this is two months away. We don't have a lot of meetings before then, so it's going to come up sooner than you think.

Strategic Energy Action Plan. Again, we got an overview, and I just want to mention a couple of bullets here. For one, the draft updates goals that the plan has. Community wide goals. Charlotte will reduce community wide greenhouse gases by 72 percent by 2035 and reach net zero by 2050. Six-hundred megawatts of distributed renewable energy generation will be installed in Charlotte. Then, municipal goals. The City will source 100 percent of its electricity for use in municipal buildings from zero carbon sources by 2030 and reach net zero emissions in municipal buildings by 2050, and the City will reach net zero emissions in its light duty fleet by 2030. These are the key provisions of the plan. The focus areas of the plan are buildings, energy generation, transportation, and what's called cross-cutting. So, you can see, there's a lot of detail around that, but those are bones of it. I think it's great that we have this plan that identifies Charlotte as kind of a leader in thinking in this area, which in turn I emphasized in our meeting today, just burnishes the reputation of the City. It reinforces the perception that Charlotte is kind of a happening place. When you think of some cities who in comparison frankly are a bit tired, I mean they're playing defense, and they haven't updated these plans. So, I like the vitality around this plan, as well as the outlook for a cleaner environment. Again, the thing you need to know about this is, March 2025, finalize the draft, public review of the draft. April 2025, request to approve advancing SEAP from committee to full Council, and full Council adoption. So, in the next two months, we're going to see the community area plans, and the updated SEAP come to Council. There's flexibility, so we're not going to be jammed. If we aren't happy and we're not ready to move, then it will take longer, but that is the kind of timeline we're working on. There aren't that many meetings between now and then. So, please just be aware.

The last thing I wanted to mention that we talked about in the meeting today was that last week a bill was filed in the legislature. I think everybody's probably heard about it, but the bill that the MTC (Metropolitan Transit Commission) created and drafted, all of us, and that we approved, basically has been processed in the legislature. There was a filing on Monday by three very senior senators, the chairs of the Transportation, Rules, and Finance Committees, a powerful group. The bill they ran is not exactly the same as the one we wrote, because they separated the bill into a piece, which is a funding piece, and is a local bill, that's the sales tax portion, has the 20/40/20 split in it, and those things. Then, the other part of it was the governance piece. The creation of the authority. The appointments in the authority, and so on, which will be a public bill. So, they're on different tracks. They're both moving ahead. I think the key thing to note here is, even though this is a big deal and a cause for celebration, it's just a waypoint. So, we need to understand that there is actually a lot more that has to happen before we are where we want to be for November 2025. The bill will be the subject of, probably some horse trading frankly, among the legislators to get the votes that are needed to pass it. I'm hoping that that will not actually affect our content of the bill, but that may be up to them to sort of work out what it takes. I need this from you, and you give me that, and the way those play those games there.

So, I think it's good for us to adopt a public position of being appreciative of the filing, being hopeful for the success of the bill, but also understanding that there is more to come and that we shouldn't take anything for granted. The last thing I'll mention about it is that the bill itself is likely to get taken up, I guess, in the summer sometime. It's hard to say for sure. It's in the Rules Committee now, but one of the provisions in the bill that was written was that it doesn't become effective, even if it's approved, before the budget is adopted. So, the challenge for us is going to be to bring along the public information process in tandem with those events in the legislature, so that we don't start sometime in September 2025, trying to inform the public for a vote in November 2025, because we need to do a lot of public information. I should mention also that we appreciate the support of private sector leaders, business leaders, in helping us get to this point, and getting the legislature to recognize the importance for us of the bill. I don't know, Mr. Chair, if you want to add anything.

Mr. Graham said no, I think you were very comprehensive in your outline, and I'm too very excited about the start that we have. Mr. Driggs is right, the devil is in the details. A local bill cannot be vetoed by the Governor, a public bill can. It is attached to the budget.

The budget never gets passed in June 2025. Unlike us, we have to do it by a date certain. They will have a continuing resolution. The budget probably won't get passed until July 2025 at the earliest, October 2025 at the latest, as it was two years ago for a wide variety of reasons. There will be some horse trading for sure. The bill has not changed dramatically. It's what's left out of the bill that is concerning. The speaker, as well as the President Pro Tem said in their public statements that the bill is subject to change. So, we just need to make sure that we understand what the changes are, and it doesn't have any significant local impact here for what it is that we're trying to do, but the right people have the bill. The bill is in Rules, as Mr. Driggs said. Rules Committee does not meet. It'll be pulled out of the Rules Committee at some point in time and sent to the Transportation Committee. That generally doesn't happen until late April 2025, early May 2025, when the budget is really getting ready to be seriously debated and for some type of resolution, but anything is possible. They can pull it out of the Rules Committee tomorrow, but history suggests that it won't. We've got a lot of education to do, and even having this conversation right now I think is a part of the public education. Making sure that the public knows that this is something really important to the community for a wide variety of reasons, that we've got work to do, but certainly this Council member understands the economic impact for what I do that's chairing the City's Economic Development Committee, and what Mr. Driggs does, in terms of chairing the Transportation Committee, is kind of hand in gloves that we're working together on this. I told my former colleague, Mr. Burger, that I will be up there often, just kind of kicking the tires and demonstrate some public support in Raleigh for the bill. I would encourage all of us to kind of make a trip there from time to time, just to show your face and just to say hello. That goes a long way in terms of demonstrating that we are continuing to advocate for the measure, and making sure that it doesn't change to a point where it will cause us some discomfort once it's finally passed.

So, I look forward to working with Mr. Driggs, working with the City Manager, working with the corporate leaders, because it is certainly all hands-on deck, and then getting ready for hopefully a public education campaign where we kind of really inform the public about what it is that we're doing. No ones really paying attention to it until it passes, and that's when hopefully there will be limited opposition to what we're trying to do, because I think this is really in the best interest of the region, and certainly of the City, and protecting the investments that we've already made. So, I look forward to championing it. Thank you.

Ms. Ajmera said I have a couple of questions on SEAP. I'll come back to your second topic. So, on SEAP, can we get sort of a one-page side-by-side comparison of the SEAP that we adopted and approved in 2018, and today, so that we know what exactly the changes are. From what I understood from past two meetings is that it's going to be on heavy fleet, where it will apply to just the transportation part of it, not so much the energy generation or the building or the workforce development piece, is that correct?

Mr. Driggs said there was a special emphasis on greenhouse gases.

Ms. Ajmera said so, you know how the SEAP has goals for our buildings, energy generation, transportation, well, in terms of our internal City goal, heavy fleet. So, are these changes specifically around transportation and heavy fleet for our City?

Mr. Driggs said so, the way it was described to us was, again, that they have community wide goals and municipal goals, and I mentioned what those are, and then they had focus areas, buildings, energy generation, transportation, and then there are a lot of detailed bullets about what happens in each of those spaces. I had asked for the same thing, and I haven't actually seen it, but I think having an isolated just side-by-side, this is what we've done, and this is what we're proposed to do. I think from conversations, the idea was to sort of update the greenhouse gas targets in particular, and I have emphasized the fact that we do not want to put targets out there that are just not achievable, or that could only be achieved with bankrupting the City. I've had assurances that the way this is worked out, they have done that. Mentioned also that we should have benchmarks or waypoints, so that we actually have an ability to track

whether we're gaining on that objective we set for ourselves. I think I could ask the staff to come back and create a clearer side-by-side comparison.

Ms. Ajmera said yes, I think that would be helpful.

Ms. Anderson said Mr. Driggs, you have Ms. Hazel here directly behind you.

Mr. Driggs said I'm sorry. I didn't see you before. Do you want to come up and talk about that?

Sarah Hazel, Chief Sustainability and Resiliency Officer said so, I think your question specifically was around how the goals were changing. So, I can just quickly give you the high level, and then as Councilmember Driggs had suggested, when we come back, our goal is to create sort of a simplified summary of what is new and what remains the same, so that Council can understand that, in addition to the larger document itself. So, just a couple high points. For the SEAP Plus update, this is not an entirely new plan. It is building off of the successes and the work that has been done over the past five years. We have an updated greenhouse gas emissions inventory. What we see through that is that we are seeing a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions, and we're looking at the same focus areas based on that inventory. So, as Councilmember Driggs had mentioned, that's again, transportation being one of the leading sectors for emissions, how we power our buildings, and so buildings, energy generation, and transportation with an underlying theme of workforce development, that Danielle mentioned a little bit earlier. We're also going to focus on a cross-cutting category that does two things. One is, it highlights our connection with reduction of waste, because waste is an emitting sector that, based on some of our new data, it's clear that we need to make sure we're aligned with as we move forward, and then we also have a climate risk analysis, which is new, and that highlights the importance of continuing to move forward, how we address urban heat, something that both is of interest to the community and is one of our top risk factors in the City of Charlotte.

With all that said, the goals are a couple new goals. So, community wide it's to become net zero by 2050. Right now, it's two tons of CO₂e per person. So, that's a stronger goal than we had in the 2018 inventory, and that's aligned with science. Then, we have an interim target, which is new, that shows us whether we're on track to hit that goal, and that interim target is by 2035. We also have a goal that sets out how we go about doing that through energy generation and renewable energy in our community, that's new. Then, the question to the municipal goals, is we are now focusing on our light duty fleet by 2035, with a goal of being zero carbon in our full fleet by 2050. This is based on where we are today, where technology is today, and where we can make the biggest impact, but still aligning with those 2050 goals. Then, we're retaining the goal to become zero carbon in our buildings by 2030. So, that's a lot, and I sort of just spat it all out, but we can make sure that we put that down, so it's a little bit easier to see, in addition to the larger document.

Ms. Ajmera said yes, I think that's very helpful, because I remember having this discussion back in 2018 when I chaired the Environment Committee, where there was a debate, even back then, on our heavy fleet, because the question was, like we don't have technology now. So, I think the majority wanted to have that as 2030, but because of the technology and how there will be challenges for us to meet the 2030 goal, I see that now heavy fleet is sort of like 2050 alignment with the larger community and have light fleet, which makes sense, because there is technology available now, and we can do that. There was a debate on that back there as well. Well, I look forward to reviewing the side-by-side comparison. I think that would be helpful, and I think it's important that we are clarifying that we are using this energy generation. Because when you hear from SEAP experts, some of them do not want us to offset through energy generation, but I think clarifying that would be important as part of our overall SEAP exercise from transparency perspective. I appreciate all your work on the SEAP dashboard. I get a lot of compliments on that, because it just shows transparency on where we are in terms of meeting our 2030 goal, which is currently [inaudible] that's going to change, but thank

you. I look forward to reviewing that side by side, and I might have questions, so I'll reach out to you. Thank you.

So, now my second question is on the bill that was your second update, Mr. Driggs. So, since there are two bills, one is the sales tax portion and one is the governing structure, I'm concerned about if one gets approved and the other one does not. I hear that concern from some of the folks who really want to see this go through. Has the committee discussed anything around that?

Mr. Driggs said so, the committee hasn't. I mean, this was filed last week. We had a little conversation. I reported it out today. I think from my conversations with leaders in Raleigh, there's an understanding that one of these doesn't make much sense without the other one. So, we're expecting the governance bill to get filed and acted on kind of in tandem, again, they're related. So, I would say I don't think that's a big concern. I think members of the MTC would be reluctant to move ahead with the referendum if we didn't have the governance issues also in hand.

Ms. Ajmera said do we have any update from our lobbies team, in terms of how are their lobbying efforts going? We have certainly a state lobbies team, well, Dana, but as well as John, and I forget the name of the company, but it would be good to have an update from them in terms of how that is going, and what can we do to support that effort.

Mr. Driggs said there is a team. There's engagement going on by a couple of people we've worked with very closely throughout here and some corporate also conversations, and I heard a fair amount of feedback myself in Raleigh. I spent the whole day there, the day of the League Dinner, so that's what's coming back. Everybody up there is being a little cautious about making predictions, partly because when the full-blown conversation starts, then demands could be made by certain members, or trades could be made on votes. I mean, this is just kind of how it gets done. The other issue is, the house has a lot of new members, and a new speaker. So, I think there is some genuine uncertainty, not just sort of risk, but they just don't know exactly what could come up. I think we're fortunate that Representative Cotham has expressed support or interest in seeing this get done. She, too, is waiting to see what might occur as it moves through the House. So, I don't know there's a huge amount of information available that we don't have. I think we are in an environment of wait and see right now.

Ms. Ajmera said okay, thank you. That's all.

Mr. Graham said the devil is in the details, and I think as a community, we need to continue the path we're on, great corporate support and participation by continuing to talk to the leaders. Secondly, working in a bipartisan fashion with both sides of the isles, our local delegation as well as the bill sponsors. Being very visible in Raleigh, just to say, "Hey, how are you doing?" Mr. Driggs has been doing a really, really good job of that for sure. Then, a level of patience that we would have to have, because it's going to be a long out process. My only unreadiness is the unknown. That's why it's really important that you read the bill line by line, because every word matters, but, if, for, they all mean something, and then obviously the unfilled bill, which is the authority and the governance structure that's unknown at this point, and that's where I think where the rub is going to come in at.

Mr. Driggs said I would just note, if I may Madam Mayor, the indication we got was that the two bills represent really no more than a separation. So, the language in each bill is pretty much the same as the language that was in our bill, but they did the separation, so that one could be public and the other could be local.

Mayor Lyles said I wanted to ask about SEAP. As we were talking about how we were trying to combine things, and make sure that everything could work together, I wonder about the housing policies that we have. Do we have policies that are within our SEAP plan for the kinds of materials that we want people to use and build with, and I say this because I saw a family in Grier Heights who actually changed their heating and air

conditioning system and saved enough money to put their kid in childcare. These are the kind of things that we know about. So, Sarah, is there any connection that we have, so that people don't have to end up paying an energy bill, I mean, bill like cash for the winter, because we don't have the right materials in the housing that we're building?

Ms. Hazel said so, one of the new strategies builds off of the work that Housing and Neighborhood Services is doing with our partnership with Duke Energy, which matches critical home repair with deep energy retrofits, so using better materials, then also doing those upfits to reduce energy, so people are healthier and also save resources. So, we're working to build off of some of the work that we've already been doing, but really sort of codify it in this plan, so that we can further explore more opportunities as they arise.

Mayor Lyles said well, that's really good news to know. I think that that's part of what we ought to be trying to intersect to make sure that we can plant the trees, as well as build the houses that will make them safe and sound for a long time. So, thank you.

Ms. Molina said I'll be brief. I want to say, with regards to the SEAP program, I know that it's actually evolving, and that's kind of the way that I see it. One of the things that I'd like for us to think about as a body, when we say that we're going to adopt a policy, is it doing exactly what the SEAP is doing right now? I think as time goes on, and as we learn more things, our policies and the way in which we would endeavor to do them, they have to evolve. So, although, there may be some comparison as far as a side-by-side is concerned, etc., etc., I think I'm encouraged. I don't like the idea of us saying, it was done this way, and no offense, but in 2018, and so now in 2025, we should endeavor to do it the same way. I'm sure that in that timeframe we've learned a ton of stuff, and what I hope that we would do as this Council, is use the information that we've learned to make decisions, and I think a lot of those decisions would lend themselves to being more quantitative. We know enough about what we can measure from the City's perspective, in my personal opinion, and I'd like to see us take a look at that too. So, I like to see it evolving. I think that the evolution is a good thing.

Mr. Driggs said could I just note, Mayor, too, in my dealings with the staff on environment, transportation, and planning, the awareness that they all have of each other, and of the interdependence of these enterprises, has been very impressive. So, they're doing incredible work.

Mayor Lyles said and exciting.

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ITEM NO. 2: CLOSED SESSION (AS NECESSARY)

No closed session occurred.

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ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Watlington, seconded by Councilmember Ajmera, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.
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The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.



Ariel Smith, Lead Clerk

Length of Meeting: 1 Hour, 31 Minutes
Minutes completed: April 7, 2025

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