

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for an Action Review on Monday, October 9, 2023, at 5:03 p.m. in Room 267 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Pro Tem Braxton Winston II presiding. Council members present were Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, Lawana Mayfield, and James Mitchell.

ABSENT: Mayor Vi Lyles.

ABSENT UNTIL NOTED: Councilmember Dimple Ajmera, Danté Anderson, Marjorie Molina, and Victoria Watlington.

* * * * *

Mayor Pro Tem Winston said the meeting is in order. Thank you very much. We will start with introductions.

* * * * *

ACTION REVIEW

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

Mayor Pro Tem Winston said Ms. Harris, do we have any items that have been pulled from Council members?

Marie Harris, Strategy and Budget said no, sir. Ms. Mayfield, did that answer your question?

Councilmember Mayfield said I would like for Number 33 to be pulled aside for comment. Thank you, Ms. Harris.

* * * * *

CONSENT AGENDA

ITEM NO. 2: CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 25 THROUGH 39 MAY BE CONSIDERED IN ONE MOTION EXCEPT FOR THOSE ITEMS REMOVED BY A COUNCIL MEMBER. ITEMS ARE REMOVED BY NOTIFYING THE CITY CLERK.

Motion was made by Councilmember Winston, and seconded by Councilmember Bokhari to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Councilmember Mayfield said so Item Number 33 is the Blanchard Development Training. I reached out to get just a little bit more detail, because what we have on here is to approve a not to exceed contract for \$820,000, but this is specifically for the training of our staff. We have around 5,500 participants over the five-year contract term. This is the situational leadership style competency that's being developed to meet people where they are and provide them what they need. Some of the courses are situational leadership, coaching essentials, conversational capacity, building trust and self-leadership. It costs around \$150 per person to attend the trainings, but I want to say that I am happy that this is a training program that is offered to leadership to make sure that we are, to the best of our ability, working towards creating true equity in the conversations.

Councilmember Johnson said pretty much, this is supervisory development materials. Mr. Jones, will we have any benchmarks, or will there be any surveys before and after, or any assessments in this training, so that we can see the effectiveness of the training?

Marcus Jones, City Manager said I'd like to call up Sheila Simpson, who could address any types of benchmarks that you have with the training.

Sheila Simpson, Deputy Director, Human Resources said thank you members of Council. I'm Sheila Simpson. Thank you, Manager Jones. The first set of sessions have been held across the City with our leadership teams, and we do have several testimonials about the session, but I think your question was, "Do we survey?" Was your question a survey?

Ms. Johnson said do we have any quantitative measurements for the effectiveness of this training, such as, maybe pre-assessments and then post-assessments?

Ms. Simpson said we did not conduct pre-assessments. So, we do have feedback from participants, and it is not in a quantifiable way. It is in a testimonial format.

Ms. Johnson said so, Mr. Manager, I would just say for \$820,000, it's a lot of money. So, if there are any type of tools that we can use to demonstrate the benefit and the effectiveness of the leadership training, perhaps a 360 Evaluation, or surveys from the employees, or something to justify and quantify this spending?

Councilmember Ajmera arrived at 5:09 p.m.

Ms. Simpson said we can implement a pre-training questionnaire, and a post-training effectiveness questionnaire, and for that amount of dollars, the cost is about a little bit less than \$150 per person.

Ms. Johnson said okay, and I don't know, maybe if we're looking at turnover rates in different departments and see if that decreases or just to measure the effectiveness of the management training. Thank you.

Ms. Simpson said thank you very much.

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

The following items were approved:

Item No. 25: Federal Grant Supporting DNA Analysis

Authorize the City Manager to accept funding through the Fiscal Year 2023 DNA Capacity Enhancement for Backlog Reduction Program in the amount of \$573,989 from the U.S. Department of Justice.

Item No. 26: 2022 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Acceptance

Authorize the City Manager to accept a grant for \$1,234,090.90 from the United States Department of Homeland Security for the 2022 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program.

Item No. 27: Fire Apparatus Purchase

(A) Approve unit price contracts for the purchase of Fire Apparatus with the following vendors for an initial term of three years: Atlantic Coast Fire Trucks, Atlantic Emergency Solutions, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contracts for up to two, one-year terms and amend the contracts consistent with the purpose for which the contracts were approved.

Item No. 28: Bond Issuance Approval for Alleghany Crossing Apartments

Adopt a resolution granting INLIVIAN's request to issue new multi-family housing revenue bonds in an amount not to exceed \$40,000,000, to finance the development of an affordable housing development known as Alleghany Crossing Apartments.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 639-641.

Item No. 29: Bond Issuance Approval for Fairhaven Glen Apartments

Adopt a resolution granting INLIVIAN's request to issue new multi-family housing revenue bonds in an amount not to exceed \$19,000,000, to finance the development of an affordable housing development known as Fairhaven Glen Apartments.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 642-645.

Item No. 30: Construct Storm Water Repair and Improvements

(A) Approve a contract in the amount of \$4,013,968.45 to the lowest responsive bidder United of Carolinas, Inc. for the Storm Water Repair and Improvement FY2024-C project, (B) Approve a contract in the amount of \$5,711,700.00 to the lowest responsive bidder Onsite Development, LLC for the Storm Water Repair and Improvement FY2024-D project, and (C) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contracts consistent with the purpose for which the contracts were approved.

Summary of Bids

Action A

United of Carolinas, Inc.	\$4,013,968.45
Onsite Development LLC	\$4,213,115.00
Zoladz Construction Co., Inc.	\$4,920,880.00

Action B

Onsite Development LLC	\$5,711,700.00
Zoladz Construction Co., Inc.	\$6,039,993.00
United of Carolinas, Inc.	\$6,387,238.69

Item No. 31: Pump Stations Roofing Repairs and Replacements

(A) Approve a contract in the amount of \$886,148.00 to the lowest responsive bidder Tecta America Carolinas for pump station roofing repairs and replacements, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

Summary of Bids

Tecta America Carolinas	\$886,148.00
Davco Roofing & Sheet Metal LLC	\$954,360.00

Item No. 32: Water Meter and Automated Meter Reading System Replacement Consulting Services Contract Amendment

(A) Approve a contract extension for nine months to the contract with Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. for water meter and automated meter reading system replacement consulting services, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract and this amendment was approved.

Item No. 33: Blanchard Development Training Materials

(A) Approve the purchase of supervisory development materials by the sole source exemption, (B) Approve a not-to-exceed contract for \$820,000 with Blanchard for the purchase of supervisory development materials for the term of five years, and (C) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which this contract was approved.

Item No. 34: Resolution of Intent to Abandon a Portion of Old Dowd Road

(A) Adopt a Resolution of Intent to abandon a Portion of Old Dowd Road, and (B) Set a Public Hearing for November 13, 2023.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 646.

Item No. 35: Set a Public Hearing on the Savona Mill Historic Landmark Designation

Adopt a resolution setting a public hearing for November 27, 2023, to consider historic landmark designation for the property known as the "Savona Mill" (parcel identification number 071-114-17).

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 647-648.

Item No. 36: Set a Public Hearing on the Wyche-Dobson-McCoy House Historic Landmark Designation

Adopt a resolution setting a public hearing for November 27, 2023, to consider historic landmark designation for the property known as the "Wyche-Dobson-McCoy House" (parcel identification number 080-102-08).

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 649-650.

PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

Item No. 37: Property Transactions – Bryant Farms Road Extension, Phase 1, Parcel # 1

Resolution of Condemnation of 5,852 square feet (0.134 acres) Fee Simple outside of Right of Way, 6,088 square feet (0.140 acres) Utility Easement, 2,077 square feet (0.048 acres) Slope Easement, 1,115 square feet (0.026 acres) Sidewalk Utility Easement, 1,035 square feet (0.024 acres) Waterline Easement, and 47 square feet (0.001 acres) Temporary Construction Easement at 11607 Parks Farm Lane from Benjamin J Elliott and Courtney A Elliott for \$87,250 for Bryant Farms Rd Extension, Phase 1, Parcel # 1.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 651.

Item No. 38: Property Transactions – Bryant Farms Road Extension, Phase 1, Parcel # 5

Resolution of Condemnation of 4,548 square feet (0.104 acres) Fee Simple, 2,394 square feet (0.055 acres) Storm Drainage Easement, 691 square feet (0.016 acres) Water Line Easement, 44 square feet (0.001 acres) Utility Easement, and 40,378 square feet (0.927 acres) Temporary Construction Easement at Grand Oak Drive from Windsor Oaks Homeowners Association of Mecklenburg, Inc. for \$282,625 for Bryant Farms Rd Extension, Phase 1, Parcel # 5.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 652.

Item No. 39: Property Transactions – Bryan Farms Road Extension, Phase 1, Parcel # 10

Resolution of Condemnation of 4,292 square feet (0.099 acres) Fee Simple, 1,123 square feet (0.026 acres) Water Line Easement and 2,085 square feet (0.048 acres) Temporary Construction Easement at Flanders Street (located in the Reavencrest subdivision) from Reavencrest Homeowners Association, Inc. for \$29,700 for Bryant Farms Rd Extension, Phase 1, Parcel # 10.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 653.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 3: ACTION REVIEW AGENDA OVERVIEW

Marcus Jones, City Manager said thank you, Mayor Pro Tem and members of Council. So, we have two items on the agenda for tonight, and they're the Eastland Redevelopment update that we had committed to you to come back to you within a 45-day period, I think we're at maybe Day 42, as well as an update on social districts. There is a public comment, not a public hearing, but a public comment period tonight. We just wanted to make sure that, while we had given you some written documents, this had got bumped before, so we have the social districts. Mayor Pro Tem, we also have,

during the Manager's report, an update on the Digital Inclusion. However, if there's time permitting here, we'd be able to provide that report too.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 4: ACTION REVIEW ITEMS

Tracy Dodson, Assistant City Manager said thank you, Mr. Jones and Council, good evening. I am not going to bury the headline on this, and I'm just going to let you know that it has been a fantastic 42 days. As the Manager said, we promised we would come back within 45 days. What we've really done is, really both teams have done an excellent job in collaborating, and we can see a path forward of how these two proposals can come forward as one vision. So, before I go into the presentation, I do want to thank both of the teams, as well as Todd DeLong, who have worked on this day in and day out of the 42 days, as well as years going into this. Ms. Ivory, Edge Sports; Robert Bolton, CSA (Compliance, Safety, Accountability); Southern Entertainment. Everybody's been fantastic and really come together in such a collaborative way. I will be honest, 41 days ago, I was not so sure about this, if we could really make this work, and so it's really exciting to see where we are.

So, going into tonight, we want to remind you of some of the recent Council actions, and what you've asked of us back on August 28, 2023. We want to demonstrate the progress that we've made in the 42 days, and then we also want to ask, it's a little bit unusual, but we want to ask for your support to continue this momentum going forward beyond tonight. So, two important things happened over the summer. First, you set aside in a resolution \$30 million, \$20 million of which was from tourism, \$10 million from CIP (Capital Investment Plan) for the redevelopment of the 29 acres. Now, this is on top of other investments that we had already committed to on the remaining 80 acres of the site in working with Crosland.

Second, on August 28, 2023, you asked us to investigate merging these two proposals together, and I quote, "Collaborate on a vision that would include indoor/outdoor sports, food and retail, and community." That's what we're doing tonight. We're bringing forward the vision. We're not 100 percent there yet, but we see a path forward. Before we jump into what this vision looks like, though, I want to remind you of a couple of things. What Eastland was and what Eastland is intended to be. It was a gathering place that was an economic engine for the East Side, and it will undoubtedly become a gathering place for East Side community, but also a catalyst to attract others, and celebrate what makes this part of our City so special, it's diversity.

So, Eastland Yards is a community. We are creating a community, and one thing that we realized after August 28, 2023, is we haven't spent a lot of time talking. We were so focused on the 29 acres. There is a community that is being created out there today, and the work that Crosland is doing on the 80 acres and putting the infrastructure in, but this will bring single-family housing, senior affordable housing, multi-family with ground floor retail, as well as a county park, all in phase one. There will be room for future phases that can accommodate more than 100,000 square feet of commercial uses. So, of the 80 acres, the community and the creation of this community, has already started. The 29 acres was really intended to be a recreation anchor, and that's what we'll talk about a little bit more tonight.

So, for a lack of a better name, we're calling it The Complex, and we'll shift to this specific 29 acres. It has been reimagined and rethought, as we merge the two proposals together. This new vision does fulfill the vision as a recreation anchor. It's connected to Eastland Yards, as well as the East Side. It will be diverse in how it will bring people to the site. It will be active with all these diversities of uses and bringing and giving people a lot of different reasons to visit Eastland Yards. So, I'm going to jump in really quickly to the components. I'm going to give you what's in and what's out. What's in?

Indoor sports still remains, with a facility large enough to host tournaments with several courts. It is planned to include ice, as well, in its first phase. It will have community space for learning and after school, e-sports, workforce development, and training. It will also have the community access.

Outdoor sports. We will still have soccer fields and the ability to host tournaments. Up to six soccer fields will be included. Again, this comes with community access for play and gatherings.

Arts and entertainment. Community gathering and events are still a part of this, and they should be. Arts and entertainment should not be lost in this. The ability to host festivals and bring people to the East Side. However, what we do want to do is reposition this and get you to think about it a little bit differently. We're not just talking about large-scale events. We're talking about events of many different sizes. Think about a jazz festival or the Hola Charlotte Festival that was just held in Uptown this past weekend, celebrating the Latin culture. Why couldn't that be here? Look at what South Park has with Symphony Park and their concerts. Large events don't happen often. They should be intentional, and they should be special, but I do want to point out one thing that is not in here, in this new rethought concept, is an 18,000 person amphitheater. Again, it was brought up multiple times in the last go around of an amphitheater to hold that many people.

Next, restaurants and retail. Having food and beverage as a component of the 29 acres is very important. It will tie to the retail underneath the multi-family, as well as the retail that's proposed adjacent to the county park. All of this locates on three corners that are an arrival point onto the site, and it creates a sense of place that is inviting for people to come and stay. What's not included on this site of the 29 acres, is a hotel. That doesn't mean that a hotel can't happen on the site. If you remember a little bit earlier, I talked about having future phases that can accommodate more commercial. So, just because you don't see it on the 29 acres, doesn't mean that it can't happen here on this site.

Lastly, there's multiple ways for the community to engage in the indoor/outdoor facilities with the recreation, the learning center I mentioned, access for things like after school programs, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education, access to digital literacy. This fabric of creating a gathering place for residents and visitors is very much in the forefront, and having access throughout will be one of the elements that we continue to work with as we push forward. So, quickly, I'm going to ask Todd to come up and take over, but it's been 42 days. We've made a lot of progress. There's been a lot of collaboration on the vision, and there's still work to do in this progress. We're excited about the capacity and the expertise these partners bring, and increased the opportunity of uses, and what this might become as we move forward. So, with that, I'm going to allow Todd to give us some more details.

Todd DeLong, Economic Development said thank you Tracy. I have the distinct pleasure of providing you with more details of what is in The Complex. So, The Complex, it's a product of a collaborative development approach combining to the two teams to offer key elements from each team's proposal to create an improved asset for the community. It's a combination of indoor and outdoor facilities, creating a year-round athletic hub to benefit the East Side and the greater Charlotte community.

Before I get into a little bit more of the details of what's actually in The Complex, I want to take another minute to reiterate some of the gratitude and appreciation that Tracy shared a bit earlier. We asked a lot of the team and the players who are shown here on the screen 41 days ago. It's really impressive the way they came together, the way they worked together almost seamlessly. They barely knew each other, to come together, compromise in areas that needed a compromise, lean in on the areas that needed a lean in to create a special place in East Charlotte and in this site. It's really impressive the way they did it, and really appreciate and have a [inaudible] of gratitude for each person in each organization that's shown on this list. Really look forward to working with them together over the next several months as we continue to make progress in implementing what's been proposed.

So, a little bit more detail. In the indoor sports facility, looking at 120,000 square foot facility, multi-purpose courts, which can be converted to 10 basketball courts, 16 volleyball courts, 30 pickleball courts, turf and other special purpose materials for cheerleading and other special events, a more robust food and beverage offering within the facility with concessions, bar, restaurants, a fitness center that would be available for participants of the tournaments and leagues, as well as for the community, an ice rink that would also be available for tournaments, leagues, and the community.

Councilmember Watlington arrived at 5:20 p.m.

A leasable space for complimentary uses for medical, physical therapy, things like that, and then STEM education, an e-sports center, and a community learning center.

Outdoors, we have six multi-sport artificial turf fields, which would focus on sports like soccer, flag football, lacrosse, and field hockey. Then, we also have a food and beverage pad, which is about 6,000 to 12,000 square feet. The final sizing in the concept really to be contingent upon the economics and really focusing on, how do we start to cultivate local entrepreneurship, local businesses to really participate in this space, and really create a special and unique place for East Charlotte.

Also, had 800 parking spaces associated to support the tournament activities and programming. With respect to community use, the community learning, which serves as a hub offering community event space, workforce development, academic programming and social support, a STEM education center, which would include, among other things, after school programming, involving tech, education and gaming, senior-oriented programming, neighborhood access to facilities on non-event days, overall, about 5,500 hours of community programming throughout the year. Again, the multiple food and beverage options and select cultural and arts events as Tracy alluded to a little bit earlier. The Complex as proposed would generate significant economic impact from the tournaments and programming. About \$169 million in total economic impact per year, and generate 126,000 room nights per year, and would support 500 plus jobs through the development and the programming there.

Through the different components that would be within the facilities, also offer workforce development programming and job training opportunities for local residents. The estimated project cost is between \$90 million and \$100 million. The allocation between private and public is still to be determined. We are working with a certain amount of information that's somewhat limited to the site plan we received in the last 42 days. We are focusing on the amount that was previously committed by Council through the resolution from June 2023 really entailed \$30 million in public investment via hospitality and CIP funds. If additional funding is going to be necessary to finish this, we would certainly come back for Council review and approval. Again, we are working with sort of limited information that we've done over the last 42 days, and we need to continue working with the team to really get a little bit more clarity and certainty around the numbers that have been presented so far with respect to the infrastructure improvements, what the scale and scope of those improvements are, as well as the programming within the indoor space and the construction of the indoor and outdoor components.

Again, we asked these two teams to collaborate and provide a reimagined proposal within 45 days. Forty-five days is a short amount of time to do a lot of work and to really get to where we need to be and where we are today. After 42 days of working really well together, their proposal we believe, achieves the following objectives. Indoor and outdoor facilities [inaudible] tourism activity and creates a new attraction for a diverse group of visitors, a diverse mix of food and beverage options with potential for community-based tenants and operators, community impact through the community learning center, a STEM education lab, and health and wellness programming, and acts as an arts and entertainment hub for East Charlotte.

As Tracy mentioned, it is a bit unusual to request approval or actions on the night we actually present during these sessions. In order to keep us moving in a more positive

direction and continue moving forward with a good schedule and a brisk pace, we are seeking approval for the following two actions, which is lucky number 13 in your agenda tonight. The first is to endorse the revised proposal and authorize staff to move forward with the new team. The second is to approve up to \$30 million for reimbursement of expenses associated with public infrastructure improvements and the indoor and outdoor amateur sports facilities that was outlined in the resolution that was adopted by Council on June 12, 2023.

We still have a lot of work to do with the team and we're really looking forward to continuing working with them. The last 42 days have been really successful in our mind, and we're looking forward to the next 42, and the next 42 after that, and the next 42 after that, to continue making progress on this site and getting this to a point we're actually getting shovels in the ground and going vertical on all sides of the site, and not just on one side of the site. So, with that, I will end my remarks and open it up for any questions and comments.

Mayor Pro Tem Winston said thank you very much. Again, as Mr. DeLong said, we will be asked to take an action on the second part of our meeting in the Business Agenda side, so we can discuss that item during that time. So, I know some folks on Council do have questions or comments about this presentation.

Councilmember Mayfield said Mr. DeLong, I believe either Ms. Dodson or you stated, the amphitheater has been removed from this, correct?

Mr. DeLong said correct.

Ms. Mayfield said so, there is no more amphitheater, because I know Park and Rec was building an amphitheater. Also, over these 42 days, was there opportunity for the community to stay engaged in these conversations as we were looking at merging, because I'm looking at this breakdown of development team. I guess these are the larger businesses that are on the slide, where we have the logos, and we have other project partners included. I want to make sure that one, did the community have a chance to stay engaged with these new conversations?

Mr. DeLong said so, I can't say for certain which community members were engaged throughout the process. We had 42 days, and I will say, we used every minute of these 42 days, leading up to today's presentation, to get to where we are now. It is my understanding that both of the teams have met with Charlotte East or members of Charlotte East and other individuals, to kind of keep them engaged and apprised throughout the process.

Ms. Mayfield said and just for esthetics, I'm looking at this development team and project partners. We had two separate entities that were interested in being the development leaders. How do some of the groups get reduced down to a project partner, when this was what I thought was coming back to us in 45 days, was a true partnership collaboration, not a, I'm going to lead this and you're just going to be a project partner? Help me understand how that conversation changed a little?

Mr. DeLong said so, the makeup is largely the same as it was prior to the new team that we have today. The project partners of the development team that I mentioned here on the left, the Edge Sports, the Charlotte Soccer Academy and Southern Entertainment, they are the main drivers of the development activity and the programming that will be occurring on the site. The other project partners have been really integral to getting us to where we are today and will continue to be an integral to the programming and other pieces, and they'll be partners with Edge Sports Global, Soccer Academy and Southern Entertainment, as we continue to move forward. So, from the makeup respective, it hasn't really changed a whole lot from who is kind of leading and driving the development activity on either of the teams.

Ms. Mayfield said so, we know words matter, and we know language matters, especially when it comes time to having contracts. Again, for my understanding, when I supported

the idea of adding an additional 45 days to these conversations, is that what would come back to us is a showing of true partnership, just initially, because I know not going to necessarily identify the specific agency, but one we can do a Google search on. Financially, they're in a very different position, which was one of the challenges that we had on one of the initial proposals, is that we didn't think that they had the financial wherewithal and backing to move forward. Well, that is the case for one of the other partners.

So, I just want to make sure that we're being as transparent as possible when we're looking at government dollars, to make sure that that language is creating space, not for, as a partner you don't really have a true voice in the design and the makeup, when you started out competing to lead a project and then encourage to be more of a sideline partner. What I want to ensure, to the best of our ability, is that we haven't taken a group, that for some of us presented a strong proposal, and they are moved to a diversity box, for the lack of a better word right now. So, I want to make sure that we're keeping as much transparency as far as the true viability.

Mr. Manager, I also would like to make sure that we are very clear in our language of that \$30 million period, because in here in this presentation, is a public/private allocation to be determined. Our allocations, it should be very clear is a full stop period at that up to \$30 million.

Marcus Jones, City Manager said so, thank you, Ms. Mayfield. So, as you heard in the presentation earlier tonight, that's exactly what we understand. If it's more than that, we come back to you to have a further discussion before we would do anything.

Ms. Mayfield said that is what I heard that was shared, that if it is more, then it will be coming back to Council. I would like for us to consider a full period at that up to \$30 million, because we've been having these discussions. So, to even give the impression that there is the possibility for additional negotiations, because one or two of the groups might not be able to move forward, we are having this conversation multiple times. We are having this conversation now because you have said, "We are the ones that can make this happen," because we didn't have the support on either side to move forward. If you are the group that can financially make this happen, there should not be an additional conversation later of any additional funds, when we have said Council has approved \$30 million, because we have a lot of other projects and needs in our City. Thank you.

Councilmember Anderson arrived at 5:31 p.m.

Councilmember Ajmera said great job, Ms. Dodson and your team, for bringing the best of both worlds. I think the biggest challenge the community had was amphitheater, and that was addressed. Clearly, community had quality of life concerns around noise, especially the neighborhood of Wilora Park within a few blocks of this site. So, I'm sure that Wilora Park neighborhood and the East Side is very appreciative of the work that you both have done to address those concerns.

I'm really excited to see that we are going to have indoor sports, as well as the soccer facility, and multiple food and beverage options, so that we don't have to drive all the way to other districts to get food and beverage. So, really excited to see this. A couple of questions. At the soccer facility, I know that some members on the East Side had asked me this question about, would that be artificial turf or the natural?

Mr. DeLong said at the current time, it is planned for artificial turf, just to allow for multi-purpose events and more events without the reduction of challenges with weather and maintenance and other things.

Ms. Ajmera said yes. So, I understand that Ms. Dodson mentioned Symphony Park in South Park area, and that has natural atmosphere that really attracts a lot of diverse concerts and festivals. I think that's a great facility. If we can explore that option for the East Side, because we are talking about our youth. We want to make sure that they are

safe as they play any sports. I'm not an athlete by any means, but if you ask any athlete, they would prefer natural versus artificial turf. So, if we can just take a look at that and see how we can help with that.

You provided 38-months' timeline, that just seems a little bit long. We're talking about three years. I may not even be here in three years, but is there is a way to figure out a little bit more condensed timeline? I know that East Side has been waiting for this for the catalyst for far too long. I would like to see if we can figure out, maybe a little bit sooner timeframe. I know that when we were presented with both proposals couple of months ago, we had more condensed timeline then 38 months. So, I'd been interested in seeing that just more aggressive timeline. I know a lot of these public and private allocation is still being worked on, but this \$30 million of City's funds, \$20 million is from the tourism dollars, and \$10 million is from the CIP, that's reimbursement, right? That's not our first money in, is that right?

Mr. DeLong said correct.

Ms. Ajmera said okay. You may not have gotten to this level yet, but I would be interested in seeing the debt and equity ratio, just being mindful of the environment that we live in right now with financing rate being so high. I would like to see debt to equity ratio just being more reasonable. Other than that, I mean, majority of my questions have been addressed. I really appreciate the work that's being done, and I look forward to supporting this and I can't wait. So, thank you.

Councilmember Graham said I too want to just lend my voice of excitement and enthusiasm for where we are today versus where we were some 42 days ago. I think the collaboration made sense 42 days ago. It makes more sense today, as I kind of see what we have done in terms of talking the best of both worlds to combine them for one project for Eastland. So, I'm very excited about it. I'm also excited about the work that Tim is doing. I never want to forget that, that Crosland Southeast has been out there doing the work since last August 2023. So, I don't want that point to be missed in all of the talks about Eastland, is that work has been commencing out there for well over a year now on the outer section of the site, which is some cases may even be more important, because it's housing, it's jobs, it's senior housing, etc. It's the four to five-acre park that Mecklenburg County is going to do that will join this 29 acres once it's completed. So, I want to thank Tim, I know he's in the audience, for his continued support and his patience, and the work that he's done.

I think this is a marvelous collaboration, and I look forward to voting tonight in the affirmative, which is basically a vote of confidence. Confidence in the work of the staff, confidence in the work of the collaboration between the two parties. I personally stayed away from it for the last 42 days, getting periodical updates from both sides. I'm just glad that we're at this point and look forward to further comments tonight around the dais, but I think is exactly what we said we wanted to happen 42 days ago.

Now, as we move forward, the devil's always in the details, and you're getting ready to do a whole lot of details in terms of the financing, the debt equity, those type of things, whether or not we should go above or below the \$30 million. Those things will be explored as you kind of dig deeper moving forward. So, certainly, when you guys come back to us, I think that's the conversation we should have then versus having that conversation now, because again, I said it right from the very beginning that if we went down this route, we own it. I was very clear about that. There's not a whole lot of turning back from this point. So, we've got to make sure that we dot i's and cross t's, that we take the public expenditure into consideration for sure, in terms of anything that we do, whether it's this project or other projects. There is, from my perspective, based on what I'm hearing today, which is I think is we're moving in the right direction. I'm not sure there's a whole lot of turning back from here. Thank you.

Councilmember Mitchell said Todd, can you bring up the program overview slide? Thank you. What was the decision to move E-sports Center indoors to the sports

facility? I thought it was a stand alone on one of the proposals. So, what was the decision to move it indoor?

Mr. DeLong said so, in one of the proposals, the E-sports was part of the hub, which was the 25,000 square foot building facility. It really comes down to size, and it actually fit well within the indoor facility in terms of their square footage and placement. So, it seemed like a natural fit to have it inside of that, which also saved room to accommodate for the six fields and adequate parking for both facilities, both indoor and outdoor facilities.

Mr. Mitchell said so, the original 25,000 square foot wasn't needed for E-sports Center?

Mr. DeLong said it was in the original proposal, because we didn't have a larger indoor sports facility in that other proposal. That was the only building that was in the previous proposal.

Mr. Mitchell said so, how much square footage does E-Sports Center need now?

Mr. DeLong said that's what we're working through for the next phase. We're still working through what the finite [inaudible] details are with how to divvy up the square footage for the different elements that fit into there.

Mr. Mitchell said and my last point I would make, I think there'd be great community buy-in if we can have a naming contest. So, the community would continue to feel they are a part of this complex. I like the placeholder now of The Complex, but I have heard names, like they're called, The Yard. So, to get community buy-in, I think that'd be a great way of making sure District 5 says, we own this and we're supporting it. So, I hope that's something we can engage the citizens in District 5.

Councilmember Driggs said so I'm really excited to get this news. I have to admit, I was a little skeptical that maybe the two proposals might turn out to be mutually exclusive, and the fact that we have been able to come up with something that captures the best of both of them and is responsive to East Charlotte, is a big win as far as I'm concerned. So, I am prepared to support our proceeding tonight.

What I will say, though, is picking up on comments of Ms. Mayfield and Mr. Graham, there's a lot of information that we don't have. I mean, I'm seeing this tonight for the first time. I'm trying to assimilate it quickly. I have questions. So, I'm wondering what the timeline looks like and what kind of check-in do you expect with us, or what kind of updates will we get, so that as the other information is available, and I know in particular, there is one line in there that says additional public funding may be necessary. I think, thinking about what Ms. Mayfield said, we need some clarity about that. So, how do you imagine going forward? We vote tonight, and the Council says yes, appreciate what you've done, and like where you're going, and then what?

Mr. DeLong said so from here, we go into the next phase. What Councilmember Ajmera talked about and Councilmember Graham talked about, getting into the details of the financial structure, understanding the scope and the scale of the infrastructure improvements. It was more complicated, and what makes it more complex is, Crosland Southeast is out there on the site today. So, there needs to be a nice smooth handoff between what Crosland Southeast is doing and what the team will be doing when it comes to site improvements with infrastructure, roadways, greenways, things like that. So, we need to start mapping through what that schedule looks like, what the cost of that might be, the vertical improvements. We need to better understand what specifically that is. We'll also need to understand how the components fit within the indoor sports facility with respect to the square footage allocation, to Councilmember Mitchell's point.

So, I think there's a number of details we have to work through, and the cost is part of that, but there's also some of these programmatic elements that we have to work through with them as well. This is 42 days' worth of work, which is really exciting to where we

are today. I think the next 42 days, we hope to make some additional incremental progress to get into the where we need to be and have a little bit more certainty around where we are and then the next 42 after that. So, I think we're going to continue to make incremental progress, and we can huddle internally to talk about what that looks like in terms of updates to Council. If we need additional funds or if that's what the numbers are telling us, then we'll certainly need to come back in an environment like this or something else to actually update Council on what the needs may be and to see if there's support for that going forward.

Mr. Driggs said so, again, when would you actually check in with us? I mean, are you assuming that if we vote tonight, then you're done as far as the Council is concerned?

Mr. DeLong said no, we can provide updates as we go along, whether it's through committee or through an environment like this. So, I think we can look at the Council's schedule, getting into the end of the year, and what it looks like for the timing. I think we would need to talk through with the development team to understand what looks good for them as well, because we don't want to come back to the Council if we don't have sufficient updates for that. We don't want to put the cart before the horse and provide updates before we're really ready with the development team either. So, I think before Christmas could be a good time, and before the holiday season it could be a good time to come back to Council, maybe for an update, but I think we've got to continue vetting what this looks like before we can actually set this as, we're going to come back in X number of days.

Mr. Driggs said so, my personal message to you would be, go ahead. Yes, love what you're doing, but I really want to know when some of these issues get resolved, how they came out. So, there's a presumption that we are in support, but if you could just fill us in as you go along, I think that would be valuable. Thank you.

Councilmember Johnson said I'm curious about the business structure kind of piggybacking off of what Councilwoman Mayfield said. I know it's 42 days, they've gone well, we're in the honeymoon stage, but we essentially required a partnership where there was not one. So, is there any type of joint and severable liability in this agreement? How are we requiring the partnership that the partnership stays together?

Mr. DeLong said that's something else we'll need to work with them on. Presumably, there will be an LLC (Limited Liability Company) that gets set up, with sort of a partnership of different organizations that will create that LLC, and they'll have their own rules and responsibilities amongst themselves. They want to make sure that they stay together, and we'll have a separate agreement with that LLC and that group of individuals or that group of organizations. So, those are some things in the details we've got to continue working through, that we just haven't had enough time at this point to really fully vet and actual work through and solidify.

Ms. Johnson said so, we're approving tonight for you to move forward. Is it possible that that agreement come before Council, so that we know who we are in contract with and how that's going to look? Ms. Mayfield talked about the partnerships and the equity and how that looks. I think that's important that Council is aware on what that joint structure looks like.

Mr. DeLong said so, the joint structure, I'm trying to think of how long. It could take a little bit of time for them to work through. Again, they just met each other 42 days ago. So, I think they need some time to figure out where they actually fit, and how they fit, and with their own attorneys, and where they all sit in together. So, it's hard to say at this stage and at this time, what we can definitely have in order to continue moving forward at a pretty expedited pace, to make sure we're delivering the asset and the amenity for the community.

Ms. Johnson said so, let's say that it didn't work out. Then, Council would contract with just one party? I mean, I know we're still working that out, but I think that that's something that should come before Council, maybe a final approval after that

partnership is set up, to ensure that everything's transparent and that everything that has been listed and promised, is delivered.

Mr. DeLong said so, I'd have to double check on this, but I think the way the action is actually presented in the Council action, it is a merging of the two proposals and the two teams. So, if one team were to not be included any further, we would need to come back to Council for additional approval if we were to move forward with one or fewer than the two teams that are listed.

Ms. Johnson said okay, and you're certain of that?

Mr. DeLong said I'm not an attorney but based on my understanding.

Ms. Johnson said we have an attorney at the table. Mr. Baker, can you give us some guidance or a comment or?

Patrick Baker, City Attorney said so, I'm just going to say it this way. If you want clarity to make sure that you know exactly what the deal looks like, you can ask the staff to bring it back to you. There are a couple of things in here, and obviously if, for instance, the \$30 million piece, or what have you. If it starts to bleed over \$30 million, that's not something that the authority, that you're talking about here, would allow the staff to go forward with, but given some of the questions that have been raised, if you want that level of certainty, you can just ask the staff to bring it back to you for an update, or this is where we are, to answer those questions. Yes, if there's a material change in the structure that's in front of you, that would not allow the staff to go forward based on what's here, but again, there's a deal that needs to be constructed, and our office will be with the staff every step of the way to put that together, but we don't have that deal in front of you right now. That's to be constructed, and if the Council wants that level of assurance, that it is consistent with what you're authorizing tonight, there are ways to bring this back to you so you can see it and we can do that.

Ms. Johnson said I mean, that's something that I would think that we would want to see before we approve the \$30 million to be spent. I think that that's important, but it's up to Council as a whole.

Mr. Jones said thank you, Mr. Baker. So, however you would like to sure up the language tonight, that's definitely the will of the Council, but what we're trying to do tonight, and I thank you Tracy, Todd and the entire team, is to make sure we didn't get to a place where it's no go. So, if we start to think about it in the framework if this is go, there's a lot more that you have to do, there's parameters, don't spend a dime over \$30 million without coming back to us, and you may even put more parameters around it tonight. What I will say is that many people tonight said, "I'm not sure that this thing was going to work."

Councilmember Molina arrived at 5:50 p.m.

So, it's good that 42 days in, everybody's talking, everybody's at the table, and we would just ask you to let us stay at the table and let us stay talking, and we don't want to frustrate you. So, if you ask us to come back next week, I'm convinced we won't have much more than we have tonight.

I like what Todd said, coming back before the holiday season, around the season, to make sure that we're giving you an update. I will commit to you, the first time that it seems like all of a sudden, we went from go to no go, we're going to also come back and talk to you then too.

Ms. Johnson said thank you. I don't want to slow the deal down, but I just think that's important when we're talking about a partnership that wasn't there before that we sort of required. I think it would be appropriate to at least ensure that all parties are at the table before the money is spent. Thank you.

Councilmember Watlington said I concur with some of the comments around the table. Overall, I'm very, very pleased with what I've seen here. Thank you to everyone who's worked on this. I look forward to seeing what it ends up looking like. I had the same questions about, well what exactly is it that we're looking at. So, I would be supportive of some kind of absolutely a head nod tonight, but when it comes to the specifics of the contract and what not, would like to see that come before Council again before final execution.

I did have a question. One of the things that stuck out to me in the previous conversation, was the idea around community ownership in the way of a board in which, because of the amount of public investment, there was still some public governance with the project. So, I'm curious as to has that been discussed yet and what that governance will look like, because I saw there would be a mix of some outright sales, but then also some ground lease. So, I wanted to know whether or not that component of a previous proposal will still retain?

Mr. DeLong said so, the idea of community governance will be part of the next round of conversations with them. So, we have not forgotten about the comments you had over the last almost year now. So, we want to make sure that those are integrated into the next phase of conversations we have with them and make sure it still stays a top priority of what we're looking at with them.

Ms. Watlington said awesome, thank you so much. This looks very, very promising. So, I look forward to seeing where it goes.

Councilmember Anderson said I am very excited to see what's in front of us this evening, and just 42 days after we had the concept of having a collaboration of these two entities. This will clearly bring vibrancy and activity to the Eastland Mall site in a way that has been missed for years. So, I'm very, very excited about that. It does sound like effectively that we have a good outline of what the project will entail, but there's chunks of details that we need to create and suss through over the next couple of months. So, it makes sense that we, the Council, would have an update before the holiday break, on how those details are materializing, so we can help shape and form the go-forward plan. So, I do support that as well.

I did notice on page 18, that in terms of next steps, the direct ask on the agenda, of course Item 13, is for the endorsement of the approval and authorize staff to move forward with the new team, which I clearly will support. What I have a question around is, item B underneath that aspect. So, if we're not quite sure how much the overall project will cost, and I see we have t-shirt size which is great, but if there is an additional ask over \$30 million and our \$30 million is specifically earmarked for reimbursement purposes, just help me understand why we need to approve that aspect of the agreement this evening, if you're going to come back to Council during the holiday season with an update? So, I'm assuming that there won't be an excessive amount of dollars spent between now and before the holidays, where you come with an update. So, why do we need to include B in our motion this evening?

Mr. Jones said Todd, I'll help, okay. So, I think without B, it's almost as if you're just saying go for it. So, we started to say, let's make sure that at a minimum, we have the parameters that we started with the last time you told us to move forward. So, it was more or less putting parameters around us, then just having A.

Mr. DeLong said you said it perfectly.

Mayor Pro Tem Winston said If we don't put the \$30 million on there, then we could be saying \$50 million.

Ms. Anderson so, I understand that, but putting the \$30 million towards the project, which I'm in complete support of, I want to be unequivocally clear on that, but that doesn't preclude then an additional ask on top of the \$30 million that could materialize by the end of the year.

Mr. Jones said you're correct, and then we would come back to you, but 100 percent understand your thinking, which is if we had to come back anyway, why put the \$30 million to begin with? So, again, we just wanted to make sure that Council didn't think that we were making some assumptions that we could do anything outside of what you've already given us the authority to do.

Ms. Anderson said sure, okay. Thank you for that explanation. I completely understand 42 days is not a long time. So, what we have in front of us, is there's been a lot of heavy lifting within 42 days to have this new proposal. I just want to ensure, when we come back in before the holidays, that there's a concerted effort to have a clear understanding of the financial stack that will support this program on a go-forward basis, understanding that the market changes, I get that. We need to at least understand the elements of our financial stack, so we can have a deeper dimension than the t-shirt size allocation that we have right now. Thank you.

Ms. Mayfield said a followup, Mr. DeLong, based on response to Ms. Johnson's question. Forty-two days in, we're creating a new structure. We don't know what that structure looks like. The action items bullet, as well as continue to work through. For me, it would make sense for this Council to look at that last line of nodding our head to continue to work through the agreements necessary. I've already shared my concerns on the fact that we've already allocated \$30 million. What I just heard the Manager respond to, is that can be interpreted to give the impression that we are open as a blank checkbook for them to come back for additional, since the \$30 million is for reimbursement. We need to see exactly how these funds are going to be allocated, because if one or two of the new entities does not have the financial capability, we need to be able to clearly see that on the front end.

One of the concerns of many that I have with my initial question is, we have approved a lot of contracts in this City. We have approved a lot of contracts with [inaudible]. We have seen plenty of times, especially when it has come to black-owned/minority-owned subs, their contractual amount has not always been fulfilled when the contract moves forward. We say, well, that's a separate conversation, whatever reasons. If what we have in front of us, is language of the possibility of a creation of something new, it will be helpful to know exactly, as Councilmember Johnson mentioned, what is that new that we're committing to, because what I would not like to happen, is for this Council or a future Council, since there will be a minimum of one change, potentially two changes or more, in November 2023 for a new Council coming in in December 2023, and it is a completely different proposal that's presented to them, because this conversation fell apart.

It's great to say in these 42 days, before we approve an allocation other than, continue to work through agreements necessary to implement the proposed development, we need to make sure that we are truly doing our due diligence as the representatives that are allocating \$30 million plus for a project that's added to the \$100 million plus that we've already allocated to this area.

Also, if we go back to the economic impact and transaction structure slide, slide 17, we have on there the significant impact from the tournaments and programming. Second bullet, 126,000 room nights per year. Have we identified, since we stated that in this new proposal, the hotel has been removed. We already know, when we have our current sporting events, how quickly locations in Uptown for apartments and other things are filling up. It would be helpful when you bring back the information, where we anticipate in these room nights going, when we don't necessarily have the transportation system to get you from Uptown over to the East side for these events. Are we looking at shuttles or are we looking at an additional cost in order to help offset that, since we no longer have the hotel as a component of this, because in that proposal, that would have been an automatic connection for me. I'm not going to speak for my colleagues. Well, we have these events, these events are going to generate so many room nights, we have a locale right here. It will be helpful to know what that looks like, so that again, the next conversation is, now that we moved forward with this, we need to identify where the people are going to stay when they come visit, or we're going

to need additional funding to help with a shuttle or to help with some type of special transportation, or are we looking at a PGA (Professional Golfers' Association) type of thing where they park at South Park, they figure it out. If we're going to put in there how many potential room nights are in there, and we removed a component that would've housed a couple of hundred people, it will be helpful to really have an understanding.

Mr. Manager, I hope you're hearing the piece of, yes, I support the idea of staff continuing to work through the agreements, but right now we don't have an agreement. We have some individuals that have been having conversation, we have a spreadsheet that identifies a couple of leads and a couple of partners, when that is not what we were told when we approved the idea of an additional 45 days. What was supposed to come back to us, I was thinking, was going to be more collaborative than what we're seeing.

We know the \$30 million is out there, but the idea of endorsing the revised proposal and authorize staff to move forward with the new team, we don't have a new team. We have an idea in here. Mr. DeLong just mentioned, "Well, we don't have a name. We don't have an LLC. They're still working on it." We need to be careful with the language, because the City Attorney has already shared that when Council approves certain language and that language is kind of vague, when it's time for it to come back to his office, and it's time to negotiate some very specific requests, not saying that that is the case this time, but his office has received pushback from developers saying, "Well, that's not what Council approved, i.e., that's not what Council mandated."

We need to be very careful in this language as we move forward with this partnership to make sure your local body that's approving this, have a clear understanding of who we are getting into a contract with. Thank you.

Mayor Pro Tem Winston said thank you. I just would point out that about 42 days ago, staff came back to us with a recommendation of moving forward QC East. My understanding of what we are going to be asked to vote on today, is that they're changing that recommendation to move forward with a combination of the two. What was presented tonight is quite similar, I think, to what was presented 42 days ago, when the recommendation was to move forward QC East. These details have to continue to be worked out, and again, this is staff's recommendation. So, I don't see any others.

Councilmember Molina said my apologies to my colleagues for coming in a little bit later, but I guess I'd be remiss without saying, hats off to you, Mr. Manager, and your team. I realized that when we began this process, it would not be easy. We have two completely divergent ideas. I don't even know if I've ever heard of two people who were competing for the same slot, saying now I want to work together so that we can have the best outcome for the people of East Charlotte. So, I know we have a few of them in the room, and they're sitting together. Do you see what I'm saying? I mean, I think that for this Council, we have to honor the fact that we've got two people who were competing for the same exact spot, to say they want to work together, and they're in the room with us sitting together.

So, I am above the moon, and I know that we have a lot to still answer here. I am 100 percent on board with continuing to have two people sitting beside each other, who have the people that I represent in mind, and coming up with the best opportunity for them. I feel honored, I feel blessed to have a Council that was even willing to support me to do it, and I'm even more blessed to have people who are willing to do it. So, I think some very important points have been brought up, and I'm sure the team will be working to answer some of those questions. I'm looking forward to the followups, but I think we have the ingredients for a great recipe, that I encourage anybody who wants to do business with the City of Charlotte, to model the behavior of the two entities that we have, because the optimal outcome is the outcome that considers the people in the City, and that's what we have here.

So, again, Mr. Manager, Tracy, Todd, option A and B, Mr. [inaudible], I really appreciate you guys. It means a lot to me, and I know it means a lot to the people of East Charlotte that you're deciding to this. So, thank you to the team, and I look forward to the update.

Mr. Jones said so next we have Debbie Smith and team will come up and talk a little bit about Social Districts. As I mentioned earlier tonight, there's a public comment period when we get into the chamber, but just wanted to let you know where we are with Social Districts.

Debbie Smith, Transportation Director said alright, good evening, Mayor Pro Tem, Council. So great to see you this evening. Mr. Jones gave 90 percent of my opening remarks here. So, Debbie Smith. I serve as your Transportation Director, and with me tonight is Casey Mashburn, and he serves as your Deputy Division Manager within our Development Services Group, and so he oversees the group that involves special events. So, many of you have interacted with Casey on special events. He also receives our right-of-way section. With that, Casey's presentation, that I'm here to support at the end, really is about the highlights of what it means to be a Social District and what's unique about the Charlotte area. Then, we're really going to dive into the details on the Plaza Midwood Merchant's Association, their application, and all the details related to their application. So, without further ado, I'm going to turn it over to Casey. So, thank you.

Casey Mashburn, Transportation said thank you, Debbie. Good evening, Mayor Pro Tem, members of Council, City Manager. My name is Casey Mashburn with Charlotte Department of Transportation, and I'm here to give you an update on Social Districts in Charlotte. So, as a refresher, Social Districts are areas where people can walk around with open to-go containers of alcoholic beverages. Those beverages must be purchased from within the district in a special to-go container, and they must also be consumed within the district boundaries. In August of 2022, Council adopted an ordinance enabling the creation of Social Districts in Charlotte. Our ordinance established the legal framework by which we could consider community proposals, and it authorized the creation of those standards and provisions document to guide the process. Since that time, C-DOT (Charlotte Department of Transportation) has published the final standards and provisions, and we have been receiving pre-applications and applications.

In North Carolina, there are approximately 32 Social Districts operating currently, and what all those districts have in common, is that they're within one centralized core geography in their city or town. They were also established by their city or town that they're in. So, how is Charlotte different? Well, early on, we heard from our residents how important it was to consider multiple areas of Charlotte. Charlotte is full of vibrant and unique communities, such as South End, Plaza Midwood, NoDa, and many others, and this is really unique from other jurisdictions, and that's the reason for the ordinance framework. The Charlotte approach empowers and enables community-driven proposals. It lets the community tell us where their priorities are. So, to guide the applicant and staff, the ordinance also enabled the creation of the standards and provisions document, and we've heard some talk about our milestones within the document, but it's really meant to serve as a basic guide. It covers things such as an application, Management Maintenance Plan, and the need for community engagement and public comment.

Next, I'd like to talk a little bit about the Social District approval process, and the first milestone within the process is a pre-application and a meeting with City staff. I think of this as the exploratory phase of the process, where both the applicants and staff get to sit down and learn about the proposal. They may or may not choose to move forward, but if they do so, they would begin developing their application to meet the City and State requirements. Once they've done that, they would then submit to City staff for review, and we would ensure that it does indeed meet those requirements, and at that point, we would look to the move the proposal forward to Council in the form of a public comment period, where you would hear a little bit more about the proposal and receive comments from the public. At a subsequent business meeting, you would then have the opportunity to vote on an ordinance amendment to approve the district if you choose to do so.

So, I know I've talked a lot about an application. So, I just want to cover what's in an application, and it's really three basic components. First is a boundary map, so where is the district located? Next is the Management Maintenance Plan, so how is the district going to be operated and maintained? Lastly, is documentation of community engagement. I want to touch on community engagement a little bit more, because this is something we heard loud and clear from our residents. They want to have a say in what happens in their neighborhood. So, we built this into the process by requiring that the applicant demonstrate clear support by way of a simple majority petition for the district. We also require that they hold a community meeting and provide at least two letters of support from neighboring HOAs (Homeowners Association) or other business organizations.

So, who's interested? Well, as you can see on the screen, we've received several pre-applications to date, and these groups represent various parts of our community, but I do want to emphasize these are pre-applications. They're not obligated to move forward at this time, but they may choose to do so in the future, and to that point, we have received one application to date from the Plaza Midwood Merchant's Association. So, with that, I'd like to transition to tell you a little bit more about the Plaza Midwood proposal. First, I'd like to orient you to the map provided by the Plaza Midwood Merchant's Association, and this area is just east of Uptown along Central Avenue in the Plaza Midwood area within Council District 1, Councilmember Anderson's district, and the green lines on the map denote the district boundaries, and the blue dots represent the signage that is required by State Law. The district is generally located from west to east along Central Avenue from 10th and Louise to Morningside Drive, and also from south to north along Pecan Avenue from Chesterfield to Hammerton Place. In total length, the district is approximately 1.3 miles long and is a rough size of 44 acres.

So, a few details about the proposal. First, the operating hours are proposed to be Monday through Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., in accordance with our ordinance, and the Management Maintenance Plan specifies that the district will provide all of the funding for initial and ongoing proposals. They will establish a committee for oversight of the district. They will provide all of the boundary and business signage that's required, and they plan to utilize reusable stainless-steel cups to meet our sustainability goals. For community engagement, they did provide a petition, so in clear support from the community by way of simple majority. They held their virtual meeting on June 1, 2023, with approximately 75 attendees, and the Commonwealth Morningside and Chantilly Neighborhood Associations both provided letters of support. In summary, this application has met the minimum City and State requirements.

So, as part of the process, this application did undergo multi-departmental review to ensure we gained a broad prospective from potentially impacted City departments. So, the Office of Sustainability had no objections to the proposal and supported those sustainability goals within the application. The Attorney's office, Planning, C-DOT, and Solid Waste had no objections pending minor revisions to the Management Maintenance Plan. These really circled around clarifications related to citing applicable general statutes and City code. Also, clarifications related to trash and recycling responsibilities, as well as the removal of some language related to the permitting of vendors in special events. CMPD (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department) also had no objections to the proposal, but would like to continue the conversation with the applicant on the opportunity to enhance public safety, and specifically, they want to discuss the addition of intentional sighting for excluded or opted-out locations, continue conversations on the district boundaries and potential impacts to surrounding areas, and lastly is clarifications related to providing a Community Liaison to work with CMPD.

So, lastly, I want to talk next steps. Later on tonight, you will receive comments from the public and the applicant will also be on hand to answer any questions that you may have about the proposal. Your October 23, 2023, Business Meeting would then be your first opportunity to vote on an ordinance amendment that would approve the district, if you choose to do so, and assuming a successful vote, the applicant staff would then work on the final details to implement the district. With that, Debbie or I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you for the presentation. I have a couple of clarifying questions. In committee, we just received an update on our review of our City Code of Ordinances. One of the things that was in that review, specifically our ordinances of potential relevance to policy referral, beer and wine consumption, possession of open container, disposal of containers, masturbation in public, urination, and defecation on certain property prohibited. I am trying to understand how we have that conversation, and part of the challenge in the presentation from CMPD, is we changed some language where we're not tracking certain challenges. Currently, all of us have received a couple of emails, some more than others, regarding us instituting our open container, indecent exposure and public urination current ordinances. With the idea of trying to move forward with Social Districts, how are our current ordinances going to be solidified and enforced when we are already having challenges for events that are happening around our City where we're seeing these challenges without having a specific Social District. So, help me understand how a conversation just last week, in regard to CMPD's interaction for these concerns, and Social Districts which is a direct determinate of some of these same issues, help me understand how they correlate?

Mr. Mashburn said yes. So, I think first off, great question, and they are definitely correlated in some ways. I mean, naturally it's the same topic of conversation. I will say our ordinance right now was amended in August of 2022 when we adopted the Social Districts Ordinance to have a provision to specify that while open containers may be an ordinance violation, they are approved in certain situations, such as a Social District. Now, our conversations with CMPD and the applicant, have really circled around that we are going to continue to enforce the rules as we can. Open containers are only approved in the special to-go containers within the district. So, you can't purchase some other type of beverage, or another means or method to receive an alcoholic beverage and then walk around with the community. It has to be in that specific to-go container, and this is something that CMPD will obviously work on to enforce in their means and mechanisms.

Ms. Mayfield said so, as we're having this conversation, again, we just received a presentation stating how, honestly CMPD is not tracking a lot of these incidences the way they once were, because we're having them a lot more often and we need our law enforcement to be focusing on other things. Is anywhere in this language the expectation for the businesses to contribute with their own paid-for security to ensure? Because again, if we're already having a challenge in chapter 15-3 of beer and wine consumption, possession of open container and disposal. So, we're saying we're going to create a Social District. You can have that container in that district whether it's going to be the increase of trash cans, whether it's Bigbelly or whatever it is, we have gone through Uptown. You can go through Uptown on the weekend and see trash overflowing, see trash on the ground. We don't need that in our waters and streams. Masturbation in public, 15-82, 15-83, urination and defecation on certain property that's prohibited. What are we saying that we're putting in place to protect the residents?

So, we look at Plaza Midwood. You have a lot of residents that are there. So, you're in a Social District. You are a person that unfortunately does not know how to hold your alcohol. You have your container, but then you cause property damage, whether that property damage is through one of three that I've called out, or another way. What protections are we putting in place for those homeowners that are now going to have the regular occurrence of drunkenness and the impact of that on their property and in their community?

Mr. Mashburn said so, there's a couple of points in there I'd like to speak to. First, I'd like to touch on the litter and recycling aspect that you mentioned. We have addressed this within the proposal, and a real key to that is the applicant has agreed, and as part of the process, they will be responsible for any trash directly related to the Social District, so specifically the reusable cups. They also plan to utilize the reusable cups, not only for our sustainability goals, but it also helps to minimize the potential for litter and other items such as that. On some of the other items, such as drunkenness in public and things of that nature, this does not change any of the existing laws out there. So, public intoxication is a state law at this point, and so that would still be enforceable by CMPD. I

will say the applicant and the application does not have any provisions that the district will provide any additional policing or any things of that nature.

Ms. Mayfield said Manager, before moving forward, even though we're going to have a public hearing, it will be helpful to have our law enforcement to be a part of this conversation. As I mentioned, if we have our current open container, indecent exposure and public urination ordinance. If we were to reinforce that, how would that impact this conversation, and what will be the financial impact on taxpayers with the increased law enforcement that is going to be called into these areas? Thank you.

Ms. Anderson said thank you, Mayor Pro Tem. Thank you both for the presentation. This is actually a salient moment. It's a milestone in our Social Ddistrict process. Casey and Debbie went through this pretty easily, but there has been months and months of meetings, interfacing, answering a lot of questions with the Plaza Midwood Merchant's Association, myself, the two of them, as well as CMPD, the Legal Department, Solid Waste Services, C-DOT. Everybody has been a part of this process. Ms. Mayfield just walked out, but I wanted to assure her, as well as everyone else, that CMPD has been at the table, and they've put their thumbprint on this as well. You're going hear in the forum later on tonight from a couple of individuals that are part of this development process.

What I do want to say about Plaza Midwood Merchant Association is, they really and truly do have a process. They have developed a process for the rollout of the Social District. So, not only the reusable cup, but they have a process by which there will be dating and tagging of that cup from where that drink came from. There will be clear signage, as we mentioned earlier, around the boundaries. In addition to that, they're going to have ambassadors once the Social District is open. They're establishing an ambassador program. So, once the district is open, there will be members from the Merchant Association out on the streets just socializing what this means to be a Social District, and the behaviors that are expected and should be active in this area. So, there will be an educational piece for the community as well. They see it, and I see it as well, as an opportunity for increased walkability for a neighborhood.

This is a neighborhood where there are lots of residents that live on the outskirts of the nucleus of Plaza Midwood, and they would potentially have to drive or take other transportation services to get to the actual social center. With this, unlocking this opportunity, community members can walk from their houses, from their friend's houses, to establishments, and do it legally and enjoy their community. So, it will be increased walkability and increasing the opportunity to have a greater nightlife in Plaza Midwood from a safe perspective.

So, I am very, very happy that we're at this point. I know the Merchant Association is as well. We've had some questions from community members as it relates to safety and other things, and the staff has done a great job of connecting the dots with the ABC (Alcoholic Beverage Control) Board and other entities who have gone through this process. We're not the first community to stand up a Social District in North Carolina, and we're not the first community to stand up a Social District within Mecklenburg County. So, there is some precedence for this, and those Social Districts are doing well. So, of course, they'll be some unknowns, but as we roll it out, we'll address those as we do, but I just want to say thank you for all of the work that you guys have done to spearhead this process, and looking forward to hopefully voting for the first Social District in the City of Charlotte in an upcoming meeting.

Mr. Graham said just one question, thank you, and thank you for all the work, Councilmember Anderson, that you have put into this. Is there any callbacks? I mean things go sour or we want to go backwards, are there any callbacks?

Mr. Mashburn said yes, absolutely. So, as Councilmember Anderson mentioned, I mean this is going to be an iterative process. This is our first one. We're learning on the go, and we're going to continue to learn. The comebacks would be if we see any opportunities that we can address at a staff level with the applicant, we would naturally

do so. Ultimately, the hope is never to have to come back in front of this body to address an issue like that, but it is an option. There are no requirements that once we establish the district, that we can't revoke the district at some point in the future. Hopefully, we don't, but there is that opportunity there if needed.

Mr. Graham said okay, thank you.

Ms. Johnson said a couple questions. Do we have any data if Social Districts increase alcohol consumption?

Mr. Mashburn said fantastic question. So, I will say there's a lot of anecdotal information around Social Districts. I don't have a particular answer to that unique question. I can certainly look to follow up in a report, but my assumption is, I've done a lot of research on this topic, is that I doubt there is an answer to that exact question, specifically because these are still relatively new within the state [inaudible].

Ms. Johnson said okay, thank you. So, last week, the ABC Board was here, and they talked about training merchants on recognizing excessive alcohol consumption, if there's any resources to help keep residents safe and patrons safe. So, I'd like to see the merchants in the Social District to ensure that they have the training, and also if there's any tools for ideas to reduce drinking and driving. If there's any resources out there, let's make sure that we're equipping the merchants and also the patrons with tools to be safe while they're having a good time. Thank you.

Mr. Mashburn said yes, ma'am. So, I will add just one point on that. So, the ABC Commission, every establishment that will sell alcohol within the district is an ABC registered body. So, they're receiving that training from the commission as well. We will continue to kind of amplify that message for you.

Ms. Johnson said okay, and then if there's anything the CMPD offers, I mean just any ideas to reduce the drinking and driving. If there's coupons, I don't know what it is, but let's make sure that we are considering that. Thank you.

Mr. Mashburn said we have the same goal there.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 5: CLOSED SESSION (AS NECESSARY)

No closed session occurred.

* * * * *

The meeting was recessed at 6:29 p.m. to move to the Meeting Chamber for the regularly scheduled Business Meeting.

* * * * *

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina reconvened for a Business Meeting on Monday, October 9, 2023, at 6:37 p.m. in the Meeting Chamber of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Pro Tem Braxton Winston II presiding. Council members present were Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, Lawana Mayfield, and James Mitchell.

ABSENT: Mayor Vi Lyles.

* * * * *

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Councilmember Graham gave the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by all.

* * * * *

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

ITEM NO. 6: INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY

Councilmember Anderson read the following proclamation:

WHEREAS, throughout the centuries, American Indians have shared their knowledge of land and resources while continuing to play a part of the development of the City of Charlotte, the State of North Carolina, and the nation; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina is the home to more than 204,000 American Indians and have eight historic tribes legally recognized by the State of North Carolina, the Coharie, Eastern Band of Cherokee, the Saponi, Lumbee, Meherrin, Occaneechi Band of Saponi, Haliwa-Saponi, and Waccamaw Siouan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Charlotte enjoys a positive relationship with the American Indian citizens, recognizes and encourages the acknowledgement of the historic contribution and sacrifices of indigenous peoples, and respects the cultural and economic contribution that American Indians continue to make; and

WHEREAS, the City of Charlotte promotes the closing of the equity gap for indigenous people's through policies and practices that reflect the experiences of indigenous people, ensure greater access and opportunity and honor the nation's indigenous roots, history, and contributions; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous People's Day was proposed in 1977 by a delegation of native nationals to the United Nation's Sponsored International Conference on discrimination against indigenous people populations in America:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Vi Alexander Lyles, Mayor of Charlotte do hereby proclaim October 9, 2023, as

"INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY"

in Charlotte and commends its observance to all citizens.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 7: CHARLOTTE WOMEN'S SMALL BUSINESS MONTH

Councilmember Mayfield read the following proclamation:

WHEREAS, women-owned small businesses are an economic engine and own 42 percent of all U.S. businesses, employing eight percent of the private sector workforce, 66 percent of American female business owners are the sole owners of their companies; and

WHEREAS, the Charlotte metro area ranks number one for women-owned firms for growth in number and economic clout; and

WHEREAS, approximately 92,500 women-owned small businesses in the Charlotte metro area are generating \$13.3 billion in sales, employing 70,000 people; and

WHEREAS, the City of Charlotte values local women-owned small businesses and celebrates the diversity of ownership in goods and services they provide, as well as the contributions they make to our community; and

WHEREAS, October has been designated as National Women’s Small Business Month, to celebrate the achievements of women business owners, and is also designated as Charlotte Women’s Small Business Month, to celebrate the achievements of women business owners in the Charlotte region.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Vi Alexander Lyles, Mayor of Charlotte, do hereby proclaim October 2023 as

“Charlotte Women’s Small Business Month”

in Charlotte, and commend its observance to all citizens.

* * * * *

PUBLIC HEARING

ITEM NO. 8: PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED CREATION OF THE PLAZA MIDWOOD SOCIAL DISTRICT

Jason Michel, 2902 The Plaza said good evening, honorable Mayor Pro Tem, City Council. I’m Jason Michel, Executive Director of Plaza Midwood Merchant’s Association. Clifton is the President, a sweet guy if you’ve met him. We are a small-business organization that represents 70 plus businesses in the Plaza Midwood area, that represents decades of experience in retail and service industry sectors, including the many on-premises permittees that have responsibly managed serving alcohol to the public for decades. We are very excited to finally be here in this process. It has been a challenge, but that challenge has only made our plan stronger and better, and we look forward to stewarding the Social District if you grant us that privilege.

The main goals that we have come upon that we’re excited to see come to life and enhance in Plaza Midwood, like what’s happening in other districts around the state that have been in existence for almost two years now, is to activate the pedestrian network, support our local businesses, facilitate community, and improve public safety. A lot of these districts definitely helped these business sectors and communities thrive, especially during COVID. Plaza Midwood is obviously growing and facing a lot of challenges. A lot of businesses have been impacted, but we take a lot of pride in being a widely diverse community with people from all across the spectrum of humanity, and this kind of activity we see as just a way to really facilitate community, have people being able to move about, have community celebrations with ease. So, that’s it. I hope we get to be the first. Thank you.

Russell Fergusson, 1220 Thomas Avenue said thank you, honorable Mayor Pro Tem, Council. Pleasure to be here as a human, not a lawyer. I’m a board member of the Plaza Midwood Merchants Association. So, I’m here in the capacity as a board member. I’m a community member. My wife and I are also business owners of one of the oldest establishments in a second generation. The process hasn’t been easy. We’ve gotten stronger for it. You’ve heard that. You guys are familiar. It’s been a little bit like the rezoning process, except it was being built as we worked with City staff. Thank you, City Staff. It’s not been easy for them either. It’s been new to the City, and thank you to Council, particularly our District Rep, Councilmember Anderson. You made us really warm and fuzzy inside when we heard you on TV.

So, from the boundaries to reusable cups, the components of management, we have a plan for this. It involves our residences. We’re unique in that we’re a Merchant’s Association that is run by people that own businesses and live in the neighborhood. It makes us a good candidate to test run this and try it out. The biggest issue that’s come up is a question about the boundaries, and that is something that we needed to do to be inclusive of our membership and of our neighborhood, and to speak to the properties that aren’t as fancy or as well known as the properties that are much more expensive and higher rents. We really appreciate the grace to be able to move forward with that. Biggest thing here is, if it doesn’t work, we’ll be the first to know and we’ll be the first to

reduce or eliminate it, if we get to that point. We don't believe it. There's over 30 districts that have done this without horror stories, two years in Kannapolis, this will be the third in the county.

So, I guess as a greater thing to this and something that speaks to a lot of other issues by the Council, is we kind of believe in trying to plan for something that the best of us and most citizens of law-abiding intentions can enjoy. We don't think that quality of life issues has to be defensive all the time. We think we can plan to do something as a community to make it good, and we think we can manage it, and we're going to try, but we're going to keep evaluating. We're going to work with law enforcement and with City to make sure we do it right. We'd appreciate that you guys support us on this and vote for it when it comes up in a few weeks, and I'll end with the most frequently asked question, is when? We've got to do this. I'm getting stopped on the street. I've done too many news things, and everybody's asks, "When are you going to do this? You're supposed to do this. You said you were going to do this." We're working on it. So, please, please, please vote for this. Thank you, and I'm here. If you have questions, I'll come back.

Bernie Petit, 2808 Atteberry Drive said thank you, honorable Mayor Pro Tem, and Council members. I will not be as eloquent as Russell was, unfortunately, but thank you for granting me the time tonight. My name is Bernie Petit, and I have been a Plaza Midwood resident for 18 years. In addition to being here as a long-time resident, I am also here as a board member for the Plaza Midwood Neighborhood Association or PMNA. PMNA's mission is to foster an attitude of neighborhood spirit and involvement on the part of the residents of Plaza Midwood through the development of recreational, social, cultural and educational programs and facilities in the Plaza Midwood area. As such, PMNA's board is in support of the Plaza Midwood Merchant Association's efforts to create a Social District. We believe this effort will support our small businesses and help maintain an environment that encourages a diversity of music, art, dining, and entertainment in our neighborhood's business district.

The Merchant Association has provided regular updates to both the board and residents throughout this process, and they have worked to address both board and resident concerns throughout the process. Their willingness to listen to neighbors, to find outcomes that illustrate a respect for what they've heard, should be commended. Moreover, the members of the Merchant's have been incredible supporters of both PMNA and the neighborhood, and many of them live and work in the neighborhood, which is why we have trust that they will not do anything that brings negative attention or light to our neighborhood.

For PMNA's board, this Social District is about more than walking around with beer. It's about creating an environment where residents and visitors are encouraged to visit and support our local businesses. I appreciate your time and hope you will join us in supporting Plaza Midwood businesses. Thank you.

Yazan Humaideh, 917 Central Avenue said hello everyone. My name is Yazan Humaideh. I'm the owner of Sip City Market & Bottle Shop. We're a small retail shop with really good Mediterranean food, a large variety of beers, wines, kombucha's, non-alcoholic beverages, and a lot of different varieties of items, as well as snacks and desserts. I've been in the area in Plaza Midwood for five months now. I'm actually moving with my wife to live in Plaza Midwood, October 28, 2023. Being there for five months, I've gotten to see what the neighborhood is like as a community. Everyone truly goes out together as a community, gets to know each other. Like a lot of the new customers that come to my store, it will be a husband and his wife and kids, and you will see some other people walking with their wives and kids, and they're like, "Oh, that's my neighbor and that's my neighbor." Everybody is a community there.

So, with that being said, everyone walks and supports each small business. There are several businesses that offer the same services as I do, in the same environment and vibes as we do, but what Plaza Midwood likes to do is, they support the small businesses equally. Like I did that, actually yesterday. I got off work, went with my wife.

We walked from my store to the Thirsty Beaver Bar, which is right down the street. We had a drink there. We went from that shop to the next shop, had a beverage. This is over like a five hour, of course, period of time, but we went from business to business to hang out, but one thing we kept seeing is like, when we're ready to go, we don't want to stay at a place for too long, 30 minutes, an hour, we're having to finish our drink, chug the whole thing and then walk to the next business. So, it's actually forcing us more to drink more before we go to the next place, but truly if we were able to have our beverage with us going from this bar to a boutique shop, like Winnie's Boutique, we're able to go from this place, shop around for some clothes with a beverage, go to the next shop. It creates a cool community vibe, and that's what Plaza Midwood already is. So, that's my speech. So, hopefully ya'll are able to help us support this. Thank you.

Motion was made by Councilmember Winston, seconded by Councilmember Bokhari, and carried unanimously to close the public hearing.

Mayor Pro Tem Winston said before we move on, my apologies, I was just made aware that we do have members of our American Indian population here to receive the proclamation that Ms. Anderson recited earlier. So, please come down.

Councilmember Anderson said thank you, Mayor Pro Tem. I'm going to invite our members of Metrolina Native American Association to come down and receive the proclamation. They represent several tribes in our community.

* * * * *

POLICY

ITEM NO. 11: CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Marcus Jones, City Manager said thank you, Mayor Pro Tem and members of Council. I have in front of you the 30-day memo that we give to you each time that we have a Business Meeting. I would like to use the time I have tonight to give you an update on the Smart Charlotte Digital Inclusion Plan. As you will recall, back in January 2023, you uplifted the concept of bridging the digital divide as a Council priority. So, we're trying to make sure that we keep you updated with that, and so I assure you that these aren't super heros that are coming down, but they really have cool names, like Markell Storay and Rachel Stark, and they'll talk with you a little bit about what's happening around the Council priority around Smart Charlotte, The Digital Inclusion Plan update.

Markell Storay, Chief Technology Officer said thank you, thank you, thank you. Mayor Pro Tem, City Manager, Council. My name is Mark Storay. I'm the Chief Technology Officer and IT Director for the City. Today, the team will give an update on the Smart City and Smart Charlotte Digital Inclusion update. So, at this time, I'll turn it over to Rachel Stark to provide that update.

Rachel Stark, Innovation and Technology Department said good evening, Mayor Pro Tem, Council and City Manager. Great to be with you all. Thank you for having me here tonight. I'm Rachel Stark, the Smart Cities Program Manager with Innovation and Technology Department. On the heels of Digital Inclusion week, I really wanted to say a heartfelt thank you to you all for your commitment to closing the digital divide here in Charlotte. It's such important work, and you guys have been really supportive and great in these efforts. Tonight, I'm just going to provide a really brief update on our digital inclusion work, since our last update was at the end of February 2023.

So, tonight, we really have three main updates that we're going to be giving, and then with these, I want to remind you and ground you in the fact that our digital inclusion work is not just about internet access and making sure people have access to computers and the internet, but really making sure people are benefiting from the

internet access that we're providing them and really benefiting from these digital tools that we're putting out there for people. This slide probably looks familiar to you. It's the same format that we've used before. With this, as a reminder, back in December 2022, we closed out our first pilot around internet access and we launched a new update to this program Access Charlotte in June 2023. We also have made progress on the Digital Literacy work, continuing to support the Center For Digital Equity, and our Digital Navigator program through that, and we have also been testing out computer enabled devices through a pilot Learn2Earn program that we just ran this summer.

Lastly, the universal service platform down towards the bottom, we are doing some work with google.org and an open-source software called City Form to really streamline people's access to the services and resources we offer. So, this also probably looks familiar. These are our most updated numbers for 2022, so it's updated from what you saw last. These came in just a few weeks ago. We have made really great strides to closing the digital divide around internet, but we still have a ways to go around computer access, but those numbers are looking really good at 25 percent drop, down to 50,164 households that do not have internet at home or may only have dial-up or cell phone use only, cell phone data plans, and then with homes without computers, looking at people with no computer access or a cell phone device only.

So, again, thanks to the work of Council, the investment of Council, and our ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funding. We are now at 3,600 households connected to the Access Charlotte program, and then additionally, we have 15 community spaces with internet provided, and this launched on June 20, 2023. So, we expect those numbers to continue to rise over the next few months with the adoption work that we're doing on the ground. Also, with this work, it's important to note, you may have heard Dana Fenton's update early this year with committee, saying that the Affordable Connectivity Program federal funding is set to run out probably in early of 2024, and therefore, we should be considering what we need to be doing as we move forward. Thankfully, we've been doing that through this Access Charlotte work, and we're working with our partners to figure out a sustainability plan for this work.

So, moving on to Digital Navigation on the other side of this slide. We are continuing to work with the CDE (Center for Digital Equity) team, and so far, 130 residents have been supported through this program, not only around Access Charlotte and the ACP (Affordable Connectivity Program) program, but really thinking about the work that's needed to get people devices, affordable computers, upskill around the digital skills and then getting that technical support for things that they may need to be doing around the computer. Continuing this work, Jamar Davis, as our Access Charlotte coordinator, is on the ground in the community working with our Digital Navigation team, as well as with Spectrum to help make sure people have what they need.

So, as we move forward, we know it's not just about internet. We really need to be looking at all the other things people need, including devices, getting computers that they need, making sure that they also have the digital literacy skills, so that they have the confidence to really go about their work on the computers and internet that we get out in the community. So, with this work, we're trying to make sure that we're promoting upward mobility with this technology, improving our own tools, so that it's easy for people to use the tools that we set out there, and building pathways for innovation technology that is inclusive and equitable.

So, digital inclusion is definitely about upward mobility, because in this day and age, we all use the internet, we all use computers, and we want to make sure that we're getting that first step that people need to get familiar with those tools, with that internet access, how to navigate safely, and really making sure that, by having internet, by having those devices and those digital skills, that we're unlocking a world full of opportunities.

With our Learn2Earn concept, as we worked on this, we realized that there are many different efforts related to this going on in the community, and rather than create something completely new, we found that there are some opportunities to really galvanize some of the work that's already been done on the ground, and really work

with out partners. So, for example, the library serves as a fundamental training space, and people are comfortable going to the libraries and getting training. We also wanted to make sure that we're thinking about a plan that is getting people quality computers, something that's functional and can serve all their different needs and can be used for a wide variety of angles that each of them may have. Part of this, for example, is thinking about HIRE Charlotte. We've talked about that a lot in Council. This is a baseline to get them to HIRE Charlotte as one of many different things that someone could go in their pathway towards upward mobility.

So, before we went full scale on the amount of funding that's set aside for this, we wanted to make sure that we piloted and tested out, what would be a really good solution for this effort, and we worked with the West Boulevard Library. They have the Meck Tech Connect Program that they were running, and we said, okay, we know that people aren't getting internet in this area. Let's also provide them with some devices and digital literacy upskilling opportunities. So, we did some direct outreach to over 750 residents, and additional outreach through flyers and Nextdoor App, and word of mouth, and we reached a lot of different people, and in the end, we had 100 spaces available, 69 people applied to the program, and 13 people successfully completed this program. This gave us the opportunity to really learn what it is that draws people to this kind of learning environment. What it is that motivates them to participate. What are they trying to achieve beyond what we think that they're trying to achieve, so that we can really shift our curriculum courses and credentials to really meet the needs and goals of the people who are trying to serve and really benefit them.

What we want to do is make sure, through this program and the learnings, we're actively getting feedback from people who participated in the program, either fully completing and graduating or moving on to continue to work with the community to get to the additional 43 people, I believe it is, who did not quite complete the program, work with them to figure out what it is that they need to really be successful and get that computer in the end.

So, the recommendations we have are that we continue to work with our partners. Everyone had a lot of different things. There were instances where some people became really sick and they weren't able to continue on the program. They had other priorities, they found other devices that they could get an easier way. So, this program was really tailored and meant to be something that everyone could shift and choose. For example, like what computers they would like to use, and what they would need as they move forward. A lot of people do want to have that opportunity to shape what it is that they're trying to learn and not just be focused into a pigeonhole of, oh, you need to learn about resume writing, when they may be really skilled at resume writing, but there's some other workforce development skill that they may really need.

So, to end on this update, we are continuing to work on the Smart Charlotte Program to make sure we're building that pathway for innovative technology, knowing that we need to work with the residents we're working to serve. As we move forward, we want to make sure we really understand how we can deliver tools holistically that serve their resident's needs around digital inclusion, and we also want to make sure that we are better including residents and shaping the technologies that we select as a City that are intended to benefit them, or may positively impact their experience throughout the City. With that, I am thankful for the time to be here, and I will take any questions or feedback.

Councilmember Mayfield said thank you for this detailed report, and congratulations on the work that you all are doing. I have a couple of questions. The main one is, we are experiencing both, a lot of young people, as well as a population of elders that is increasing. Unfortunately, we also know that for some, as we get a little older, there are some challenges, whether that challenge is the beginning stages of dementia, other things, sometimes energy or excitement may arise. What are we putting in place at our libraries to ensure specifically our elders have access? I don't know about my colleagues. I would assume they also received an email. I received an email from an elder in the community. I can only ascertain from reading between the lines, even

though I'm not psychic, nor do I play one on television, that there was probably a heated conversation, but they've been banned from the library, and that's their main source of communication, that's also their safe space.

So, I would like to know if you've had any thoughts or any conversations on the what if, because if it is beginning stages of dementia or Alzheimer's, unfortunately the reality is, we've done studies, that aggressiveness and anger issues are part of that transition, not for all, but for some. So, when we think about resources, what resources are we putting in place for specifically our elders, and for our residents that may be on a level of the spectrum, where if they're running into challenges and getting a little frustrated, to help them maneuver or navigate, or have you possibly even considered the what ifs on that?

Ms. Stark said definitely. I mean seniors and people with disabilities are both on the list of people most impacted by the digital divide. With those, what we find so far in our work with the pilot and with continuing conversations with people in the community, is that we need to work with those trusted community partners that work with them. So, there are these specialized group that work with different groups, whether it's seniors specifically, or people with different abilities and trying to make sure that their needs are covered and met. We also have the Digital Navigation program that anyone can reach by calling 311. There's also a web version online that people can use for just one on one connection with somebody. So, we're trying to basically build out a lot of different pathways for people to get that service and support that they need.

Ms. Mayfield said I will also add, if you can consider adding that as a part of our CLT+ App for individuals that are a little bit more comfortable with a computer versus calling 311, but this is amazing work. Thank you for all that you have done and thank you for already taking in consideration the impact of our elders and those who may need a little more assistance.

Councilmember Ajmera said great job, Rachel, with this presentation. Appreciate the work that you're doing with the pilot, and I like how you identified focus areas, because every part of our City has unique needs, where you have youth, seniors, immigrant, low-income, English language speakers. I know there are organizations that work with seniors have limited English proficiency. Have those groups been identified? I know some of them also need a device. I know this is just the pilot, but I was wondering if there is a plan in place to address that, because there is a digital divide that we do need to address, because a lot of community services that we access is through internet. When you don't have access to a device, or do not know how to use it, it's a huge barrier from accessing community services.

Ms. Stark said definitely. So, on that note, there are some organizations that we know of, but what we're trying to do too, right now, is to make sure we reach out to the people who either got the word previously or participated in part, but did not fully complete the program. Even online, we have a new button on the Smart Charlotte webpage, where we're asking people to give feedback to find out who it is that they work with, what are the community groups that they work with, so that we can start to identify who else we can reach out to.

Obviously, the library had a great advantage, because they already have devices and internet in their locations. With the Access Charlotte service, we have 15 community space sites set up and these are facilities mostly for seniors, and I think one is for people with disabilities, and those 15 locations, we can obviously provide digital literacy training there onsite with internet access. The Center for Digital Equity also has tablets that people can use to get their initial learning complete. Once people have finished that learning, then they earn a brand new computer that they can take home and continue to advance their learning, or use it for other needs. I think one of the other learnings for this, is some people may not need a full-on computer. There may be some people who are okay with a tablet, but because so many tablets have been put out there, and so many smart phone devices, there's a really big gap out there for people who need a full-functioning, low-maintenance computer.

Ms. Ajmera said I'll connect with you offline, where an organization had reached out that had a need. So, I'll connect you with them offline.

Ms. Stark said that sounds perfect, thank you. That would be amazing. If anyone else obviously has some connections, we're welcoming all that input and feedback.

Councilmember Johnson said thank you for the presentation. I just have a question. I have a nonprofit organization where I assist individuals in the community, and I worked with Bruce Clark, Queens College. So, they have a program for devices through the City, is that correct?

Ms. Stark said so, they are providing our Digital Navigation service. So, those are the ones under contract for that Digital Navigation support. So, they're supporting not only the 311 outreach that people can get connected to. Also, Ms. Mayfield, I forgot to mention, we do have the Digital Navigation on the CLT App currently, so people can use that program, which is offered through CDE and Queens University. So, that is the same person that we're working with.

Ms. Johnson said okay, so an individual would call 311, then be connected to the Digital Navigator to help them get a device or internet access or whatever their needs are, is that correct?

Ms. Stark said correct, any digital needs. So, we've had people who call and they want to figure out how to get a job in technology, and some people call because they're trying to set up their internet at home, or connect their devices that they just got from, maybe their child just brought over a new smart phone or a smart computer, and they want to figure out how to connect. So, it's a wide range of services that they offer, but there is a big focus on how do we get those basic connections in there including digital literacy, devices and internet?

Ms. Johnson said thank you. So, I know your programs are for the end users, but there are areas in the City, Mr. Jones, where we know are dead zones for internet, and I've talked to Reenie Askew. She's been wonderful. I've called her from 77 on my way headed to the university area. There's this wall, I promise you, and you can't get internet from 77 until you're off Statesville. So, we've talked about that. What projects are there, because we're the 14th or 15th largest city now? We want, when we people travel through our City, to be able to use the internet or have access to the Wi-Fi. So, what are we doing as a City to improve internet access in those large areas? W.T. Harris, near the Research Park. I mean there are large pockets where you won't have phone service, so what are we doing?

Mr. Jones said I will tell you that, and I believe I'm right with this, we did set aside some funds early on for those future technologies as it comes to bridging the digital divide. So, as those technologies come on board, we didn't want to spend everything just on devices and connectivity, because we were also anticipating that there would be some more breakthroughs, and so we stand ready as those breakthroughs come through. There's a bunch of folks to my left and right that I really think have a big opinion of that.

I will say this, and I hope that you see this. What you did the last Annual Strategy Meeting, I hope you see it's all starting to come together, that a lot of things that we are doing is more horizontal then vertical, and I think that we have the right priorities. We'll try those again when we get back into January 2024. It's interesting to see Renee, and I'll leave you alone Renee, on the edge of her seat, because she seems like she wants to jump back into this, but there's a lot of passion around trying to do this.

Ms. Johnson said and she didn't mention that she was identifying areas, and providers where their gaps are. So, I don't know if there's an update.

Mr. Storay said so, what you're referring to is gaps from a [inaudible] perspective. So, we would have to work directly with those [inaudible] identify those gaps and see if they're going to rectify those in the future.

Ms. Johnson said thank you.

Councilmember Anderson said thank you both for this presentation. You know I'm very passionate about the digital divide and digital literacy, but it's clear from what you've presented tonight that we live in an age where digital literacy is a prerequisite for work readiness, with 91 percent of the jobs requiring some baseline digital skills, and we also live in an age where high-speed internet is effectively a basic infrastructure need. Just as we need water, gas and electricity, our residents need access to high-speed internet, and you've made tremendous progress by bridging that gap by 25 percent in 2019 until today. So, I want to thank you for that.

I also just want to say this concept you have, the Learn2Earn, is a fantastic concept, and I know you piloted it in West Boulevard in my colleague's district, but if you're ready to do a second pilot, or if you're ready for like a phase one rollout, a couple ideas, a couple neighborhoods or corridors, the Sugar Creek corridor, the Bridlewood, Hampshire Hill area, and the Central Avenue corridor are three great corridors in District 1 that hit those populations that you're looking for, and would be very happy to work with you to do an additional pilot or a phase one rollout. So, thank you for the work and continue with a good job.

Councilmember Mitchell said Rachel, great presentation. Just two quick questions. One, do we have any data that shows those who have lack of access? I'll just take the pilot area we're looking at in West Boulevard. Do we have any data?

Ms. Stark said we do have that data and it's available online at a couple of different locations to see a map of the digital divide and where it's highest, and that breaks it down by both devices and also internet subscription.

Mr. Mitchell said and my second, just a followup. We get asked the question all the time, "How does the City partner with CMS (Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools)?" I think is one role we can play to solve some of the challenges. So, do we have any idea how many CMS families are in need of connectivity or access to the internet?

Ms. Stark said we know that 71,000 households qualify through some of the services that are offered. Some of them have been taken up over the last few months, of the 71,000 students, they are applying and getting the service for the ACP, but that's how we start. It's just looking at what are the qualifications. Some of them are through the lunch programs and some of them are just through the school themselves.

Mr. Mitchell said thank you, great. My last comment, City Manager, let's continue to let Rachel do the great job, but I think collaborating with CMS could be a win for all of us. So, thank you.

Ms. Mayfield said Manager Jones, as they step away, thank you for the report, but I wanted to follow up with you on some previous requests. So, I wanted to give you a chance, because I think you were shaking your head that you didn't have an additional update for tonight, or you do?

Mr. Jones said sure. I know there's a couple of questions that you had with the breakdown of homeownership versus rental. We were going, I think, down a path that we shouldn't have, and that was the assessor. We're now working with the Planning Department, and I think we're going to be able to give you a preliminary number as early as next week.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you. I wanted to also ask, and this might be really a question for Planning, but I'm going to ask you as part of your report, what do we currently have in place, and if not, what could consideration look like, and also for my colleagues to take into consideration? When we're looking at approving developments, to my understanding, we don't have a setback for when you're building near a cemetery. So, we're doing a lot of infill building, and we have a number of cemeteries in our area. I was driving around, out and about throughout the City, and noticed that a new

development is going up and is rather close. I don't know if there is a setback in our language regarding how far, like with some developments 50 feet, 100 feet, 150 feet from the closest development. Do we have any language when we're looking at cemeteries, because a good number of them are also connected to our religious institutions? So, as we're building and as we're having conversations, making sure just to get an idea of what we have in place, if anything, and if not, consideration, so that when I'm asked, I'll be able, and my colleagues will be able, to respond.

Also, just want to get an update off of tonight's conversation. So, earlier on the second floor, I mentioned that we received a report out last week, and it somewhat feels like we're giving conflicting information regarding that report out, when we look at our review of our City code and ordinances. Does that conflict or complement this conversation that we're having a week later regarding Social Districts, and what is the impact to that? Even in Greenville, Greenville, North Carolina approves Social Districts, but their times are 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., not 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., but we have some clear identified challenges that were presented to committee last week. I want to make sure that our language is creating the best possible outcome, and that we're not contradicting in that language with a presentation one week and a different conversation the immediate week after. How is there a possibility to complement versus conflict?

Mr. Jones said that's a great question, Councilmember Mayfield. As Councilmember Anderson indicated earlier, there were a number of discussions among staff as it relates to the Social District from CMPD being part of that, but I think what's clear to me tonight, is you would also like to hear CMPD come and talk about their thoughts around, not just only the Social District, but some of the issues around decriminalizing certain ordinances.

Ms. Mayfield said our code of ordinances?

Mr. Jones said yes.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you, Mr. Manager.

Ms. Johnson said yes, I had one last question for Rachel, and this may not be for Rachel. I remember during the height of COVID, there were hotspots that were given to homeless families, I believe, there were hotspots, or given to CMS. So, when we talk about the CMS students, how are we serving those, I think, 3,000 to 5,000 CMS students, I believe that's the number, that are homeless? Is there any type of mobile device that families are given or is that a county role or is there thought to that?

Ms. Stark said I do not have the most recent update on CMS hotspots, but I'm sure we can find that information. As for the internet right now, we are really working with our housing providers to get that internet through Access Charlotte, and that's not on the go, on demand, but it is providing people internet in their homes.

Ms. Johnson said so, we may want to work with the homeless shelters to get that information to find out if there's a gap there that we need to bridge, or if there are families that we can consider giving access to the internet. Thank you.

Ms. Stark said definitely.

Mayor Pro Tem Winston said thank you all very much. Thank you for the presentation.

* * * * *

BUSINESS

ITEM NO. 12: A HOME FOR ALL SUPPORT – PROPERTY PROVIDER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PILOT

Motion was made by Councilmember Watlington, seconded by Councilmember Anderson, and carried unanimously to (A) Approve the use of \$500,000 from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund to fund a Property Provider Recruitment and Retention Pilot administered by the United Way of Greater Charlotte, and (B) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to execute, amend and renew contracts as needed to complete this transaction.

ITEM NO. 13: EASTLAND REDEVELOPMENT – SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Molina, and seconded by Councilmember Ajmera to (A) Authorize the City Manager to move forward with the revised proposal, the Complex that is a rethought and reimagined concept which is the result of the requested collaboration of the two previous proposals of QC East @ Eastland Yards and Eastland Yards Indoor Sports Complex for the eastern 29 acres of the former Eastland Mall site, and (B) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute agreements for the reimbursement of costs for expenses associated with indoor and outdoor amateur sports facilities, public infrastructure, and other public improvements in an amount not to exceed \$30,000,000, which will be reimbursed from a combination of Capital Investment Plan and Convention Center Tax Fund future Certificates of Participation, as outlined in the resolution adopted by City Council on June 12, 2023.

Councilmember Molina said I know that some people may be just joining the meeting. In an earlier portion of the discussion, my colleagues had some very pointed questions about the followup with regards to Eastland. I just want to iterate how excited I am to see everything that has come together as a result of this exercise. Both parties, they have representation here tonight, and I want to iterate the thank you to them, to the staff members, to our Council, for their willingness to support the East Charlotte community in this endeavor. I just want to lift that up for anybody and encourage them to go back and make sure that they follow along for any updates that we'll have in the future with regards to Eastland Yards.

Councilmember Ajmera said well, in addition to what my colleague, Councilmember Molina, said, I just want to recognize all the work that the Charlotte East had done. Greg Ascuitto, thank you for your leadership throughout this process, and Caroline Millen and others, who had joined us previously. We certainly appreciate your advocacy for the East Side. As a fellow East Side resident, I'm very appreciative of that, along with Councilmember Molina. Obviously, I'm very grateful for the development team. Mr. Durkin, Mr. Bolton, appreciate your collaboration here, and obviously Mama Ivory and Papa Canty, thank you for all the late-night calls and messages. Certainly, appreciate all the community engagement that's being done.

I'm just really pumped. I'm really excited. I've been on City Council for almost seven years, and this has been something that has been a topic that we haven't been able to address in past 10 years, and this is the closest we have been to bringing a catalyst for the East Side that deserves a catalyst that's going to bring jobs and opportunities. So, I'm just super excited that finally we'll be able to deliver. It might be a tall order, Ms. Dodson, for you, but if we can do anything about it, where we don't have to wait 36 months, that would be great, because I think our East Side residents have waited far too long. So, thank you.

Councilmember Watlington said in light of our discussion upstairs, I know that it sounds like, I believe, that there was tremendous support around the dais to definitely give the head nod to staff, but I also heard the concern, if you will, about locking in the \$30 million or what might be more than \$30 million later. It just sounded like we'd like some language that would reflect agreement to move forward, with also the intent to come back to Council for an action to actually execute negotiations. So, I wanted to understand from the Attorney what that language could potentially look like, and then, if

it would be pleasing to the Council, would offer up a friendly amendment to the motion if that is appropriate.

Patrick Baker, City Attorney said so, what you have in front of you is, I wouldn't call these deal points, but basically a general concept as to what we're trying to accomplish. If you were interested, and I think I understand your question, if the Manager is in agreement, we can bring something back to you that will show that we have done what we said we're going to do on this sheet. So, the issue is, not to use that as an opportunity, not suggesting that you would, but as we're negotiating with the partners out there to not bring something back to you, and then have something new show up that night that isn't on this particular sheet, what we'd like to do. I say we, I should only speak for myself, the Manager can speak as well, but if you're talking about that, then I think you can add a friendly amendment to the motion that the administration, the City Attorney, City Manager, however you want to do that, we'll bring the agreement back to Council to show that it is consistent with what was approved tonight.

Mayor Pro Tem Winston said do you have a specific ask?

Ms. Watlington said yes. I was wondering if the motion maker would accept a friendly amendment to add that component.

Ms. Ajmera said can you read the language? Could you pass that around?

Mr. Baker said it's in my hand. I can put something out for you, but the gist of this is that, in addition to A and B, you're also asking the administration to bring the completed agreement back to Council to show that it's consistent with what you have passed tonight.

Mayor Pro Tem Winston said that's inherent in what we do.

Ms. Watlington said it's just a question to the motion maker. You can or you cannot. Either if you'd like to or if you don't like to, I accept whatever the will of the motion maker is.

Ms. Ajmera said I have a question. Mr. Jones, because I thought that was already the intent of this motion that's here in front of us.

Marcus Jones, City Manager said the last time you guys voted, it was unanimous. It would be nice to get unanimous again. So, it's the intent, and maybe intent is not strong enough of a word. So, clearly if we go outside of this \$30 million, we'd come back. We're coming back even if we're within the \$30 million. We're just not going to all of a sudden do a deal without having a conversation with the Council with something that's so important as this.

Ms. Ajmera said got it. So, in that case, I didn't see an amendment, because it's going to come in front of us anyways, because that's how I interpret it. Is that right?

Mayor Pro Tem Winston said it's the regular order of business.

Ms. Ajmera said yes. So, I mean, I don't see a need for an amendment then, if it's going to come back to us anyways.

Ms. Watlington said if that's what I'm hearing that it is absolutely coming back, then.

Ms. Ajmera said are you okay with that Ms. Watlington?

Ms. Watlington said yes.

Councilmember Mitchell said so I'm just going to do a lot of thank yous this evening. One, I've got to tell a small story how this all started in 2016 at an ED (Economic Development) meeting, when a young lady, who was representing District 2 at the time,

said that we ought to get into amateur sports. That young lady, over the years, had just had tremendous passion about getting amateur sports in our community. So, fast forward, she's no longer as young, she's still young, and I see she's young at heart and young in spirit and young with passion. So, I want to publically thank Ms. Canty for sticking with your vision since 2016 to make this a reality for our community.

This has been a tough lift for us, so I've got to thank Dr. Victoria Watlington, and how you pulled us together in the late hour, to make sure we can get something that this Council can be supportive. Thank you for your leadership. I knew it was tough, but you were committed to make sure that there would be consensus. Thank you to Councilmember Carter, Autry and Newton. Three years, you all have said, "We need something on the East side," and tonight we have that. So, thank you for your continued support and passion over the years. Charlotte East, your patience, your advocacy, and believing that this Council would do the right thing to give you something that's transformative as we continue to say.

There's one change I would like for staff to do and I mentioned it in room 267. So, I want to make a public announcement about it. Right now, the placeholder for this development is called The Complex. I think this would be a good time to engage the citizens in District 5. What name do you think is appropriate for this new development? I think of a name that has to reflect your desire, your energy, your commitment, to make sure there's something special on those 29 acres. So, hats off to the new team. I see Bob up there, I see Raymond, I see Ms. Canty, and I see Mr. Bolton. Thank you all for collaborating, and not only doing what's best for your vision, but more importantly doing what's best for District 5. So, hats off to you, and let's get it done. Thank you.

Councilmember Graham said I too am extremely excited that we've gotten here, and the road of 1,000 miles starts with one step. We've taken several steps since we got an unsolicited proposal in December of 2022, to get us where we are today. Doing it in mind that one, to fill the obligation that we have made for East Charlotte. I continue to remind the public that the 29 acres is not the start of this, it's the end of it. Last year, we had a tremendous groundbreaking in East Charlotte, where we broke ground on affordable housing, senior housing, 18,000 square feet of retail, a four to five-acre county park, etc., and this 29 acres concludes it. It's the best of both worlds, in terms of taking what works from QC East, as well as the Synergy proposal, and blending them together for one. It makes good business sense to do that.

The Complex represents the identity of East Charlotte, i.e., the six soccer fields is a wink and nod to the changing demographics over there that plays that sport. The Amateur Sports Complex gives a wink and a nod to Charlotte as a destination location for amateur sports, whether it's AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) basketball, cheerleading, wrestling, volleyball, whatever. It creates a synergy for a place there for arts and entertainment, and the City have made the appropriate investment of \$30 million, and we did that three months ago now, knowing that we wanted to be a part of the investment there. I think the total investment, once this is all said and done, is going to be upwards to about \$80 million to \$100 million for East Charlotte, which is not small change. It's a good bit of money.

I will say, however, that the devil's in the details. There's more work to be done. I had the opportunity to talk to both of the petitioners at the dinner meeting after we voted, and I'm excited about their commitment to work together. I'm excited about their commitment to make it work, their commitment to value engineering. I think we all know what I'm talking about, to ensure that when it does come back, and it should, Councilmember Watlington, to dot i's, cross t's, to make sure that we protect the public investment, short-term and long-term, that we can kind of stay within the box, if we can. As I said at the dinner meeting, this Council owns it, and there's no way for us to get around that. We cannot afford to not make this work and work within the box. I'm excited about it. I told my daughter, who's a college basketball coach, about what was on the agenda tonight, and she played AAU basketball, played college basketball, and she said, "Where was it when I was growing up?"

So, obviously there's this place, and basically what we're doing is placemaking, and it's not just for East Charlotte, although, it's located there. We want this facility to be a regional destination for citizens throughout Mecklenburg County to come to East Charlotte to participate at the facility, that while they're there to shop and dine and invest in East Charlotte, etc. So, I'm excited about it. I'm cautiously optimistic, because it's not done until it's done, but I like the commitment of the team blending together. When Victoria and I talked that Sunday night, we both said, could this actually work? We said yes, because let's take out what works and put to the side what didn't work. Even Councilmember Bokhari, when I called him that Monday morning, gave me the side eye, like, are you serious, and he has come full circle saying I think we can do this.

So, I'm excited to see that we've been able to, and this is a political saying that I say all the time, it's really quiet here tonight. We've been able to block out the noise and focus on the work. When you focus on the work, and you take politics away from it, we can kind of see what the vision is. Small people, smaller groups coming together as one for a singular vision for our community. So, Ms. Dodson, a lot more work to be done, but I'm committed to making sure this gets across the finish line. Thank you very much.

Councilmember Driggs said are we done talking about any modifications?

Ms. Watlington said oh yes.

Mr. Driggs alright, okay, well good. Having watched this for years and years, I am so pleased that we have come as far as we have, and Crosland Southeast has done a lot to help us get there. We now have this last thing that we needed to deal with after the Tepper withdrawal from the site. So, I look forward to supporting this. We all need to understand that we have to provide something of a mandate to the staff, and that's why if we started putting in all kinds of conditions and stuff, then their ability to negotiate. So, I trust that it will get done as described, and if there's any discrepancy from the description, that we will have an opportunity to be told about that, but meanwhile let's go for it. Let's get it done. Thank you.

Ms. Molina said I just want to circle back. Again, I want to iterate, I guess, the lift, because I think Councilmember Mitchell has continued to speak to it. The inception of what you see today actually started with a conversation with Councilmember Watlington and I, where we peeled the entire opportunity apart, and we agreed to work together with what allies we have on the Council. She split some of that responsibility with me. We called Councilmember Graham. We had a three-way call, and we talked about how we could execute this possibility.

As I've said once, and I'll continue to say again, what it means to do something like this, and how important it is for the lift, it's very important to have a collective lift, and divisiveness is absolutely not the way, especially for something as important as this. I love John Autry. He is my political mentor, and I have been with him since day one. I have lived in Charlotte for 19 years. So, I've seen Eastland Mall be there and I've seen Eastland Mall no longer be there. So, it means just as much to me as a homeowner, as someone who actually lives in East Charlotte, bicycle distance from the opportunity, to see this be realized and for, not only myself and my family, but the people who I know, I love and I serve in East Charlotte, and I think that's the most important thing here. This was very hard. I've never seen anything, for as long as I've orbited politics, as hard as this has been. As seemingly divisive as this initially started out, and to see where it has landed, I think that's the most important thing here. I think I share the sentiments of my colleague, the Chair of the Economic Development Committee, in saying that I am cautiously optimistic. I absolutely look forward to there being a wonderful outcome for all parties, but I look forward to it being as stated originally, and the followup, and any necessary adjustments that we make.

I ask of everybody involved, that we keep what's the most important in front of us, and that is always to resolve this extremely long-standing issue. As a body, I am absolutely grateful for all of us coming together, for the wisdom that exists already on the Council, and as a newer member coming as a resident to represent the people that I live

amongst for your willingness to be malleable and be open to something as dynamic as what we were able to achieve, because what we've done was unprecedented, and we've done it together. I think that's what's important. We've done it together as a team, and I'm grateful to each and every one of you. So, I look, again, forward to the updates. I have no doubt that the team is going to continue to work hard for East Charlotte, and I look forward to going ahead and resolving those remaining 29 acres. So, thank you all.

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

* * * * *

NOMINATIONS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Mayor Pro Tem Winston explained the rules and procedures of the appointment process.

ITEM NO. 14: NOMINATIONS TO THE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The following nominations were made for two appointments for a partial term beginning upon appointment and ending December 31, 2024.

- Tammy Brock, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mitchell, Molina, and Winston
- Juan Contreras Juarez, nominated by Councilmembers Anderson and Mayfield
- Juan Euvin, nominated by Councilmember Watlington
- Matt Weschler, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Bokhari, Driggs, Johnson, Mayfield, Molina, Watlington, and Winston

Motion was made by Councilmember Ajmera, seconded by Councilmember Molina, and carried unanimously to appoint Tammy Brock and Matt Weschler by acclamation.

Ms. Brock and Mr. Weschler were appointed.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 15: NOMINATIONS TO THE BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a three-year term recommended by the Black Chamber of Commerce beginning April 29, 2023, and ending April 28, 2026.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a three-year term recommended by the Certified SBE-Hispanic Contractors Association beginning April 29, 2023, and ending April 28, 2026.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a three-year term recommended by the Latin American Chamber of Commerce beginning April 29, 2023, and ending April 28, 2026.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

The following nomination was made for one appointment for a three-year term beginning December 14, 2023, and ending December 13, 2026.

- Curtis Hayes, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, Molina, Watlington, and Winston

Motion was made by Councilmember Ajmera, seconded by Councilmember Molina, and carried unanimously to appoint Curtis Hayes by acclamation.

Mr. Hayes was appointed.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 16: NOMINATIONS TO THE CHARLOTTE TREE ADVISORY COMMISSION

The following nominations were made for two appointments for a three-year term beginning December 14, 2023, and ending December 13, 2026.

- Sarah Hart, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, Molina, Watlington, and Winston
- Charlie Welch, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, Molina, Watlington, and Winston

Motion was made by Councilmember Ajmera, seconded by Councilmember Molina, and carried unanimously to appoint Sarah Hart and Charlie Welch by acclamation.

Ms. Hart and Mr. Welch were appointed.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 17: NOMINATIONS TO THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The following nominations were made for two appointments for a partial term beginning upon appointment and ending June 30, 2025.

- Joycelyn Bailey, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mitchell, Molina, and Winston
- Charles Boufford, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, Molina, Watlington, and Winston

The following nominations were made for one appointment for a three-year term beginning October 1, 2023, and ending September 30, 2026.

- Marian Orr, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, Molina, Watlington, and Winston
- Raymond Palma, nominated by Councilmember Mayfield

Motion was made by Councilmember Ajmera, seconded by Councilmember Molina, and carried unanimously to appoint Joycelyn Bailey, Charles Boufford, and Marian Orr by acclamation.

Ms. Bailey, Mr. Boufford and Ms. Orr were appointed.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 18: NOMINATIONS TO THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVISORY BOARD

The following nominations were made for one appointment for a partial term beginning upon appointment and ending September 21, 2025.

- Heber Diez, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, Molina, Watlington, and Winston

Motion was made by Councilmember Ajmera, seconded by Councilmember Molina, and carried unanimously to appoint Heber Diez by acclamation.

Mr. Diez was appointed.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 19: NOMINATIONS TO THE HOUSING APPEALS BOARD

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a three-year term for a City Within a City Tenant category representative beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

The following nomination was made for one appointment for a three-year term for a Housing Industry category representative beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2026.

- Cemental Grayson Rountree, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, Molina, and Winston
- Nakia Savage, nominated by Councilmember Watlington

Motion was made by Councilmember Ajmera, seconded by Councilmember Molina, and carried unanimously to appoint Cemental Grayson Rountree by acclamation.

Mr. Rountree was reappointed.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 20: NOMINATIONS TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a partial term for a Resident Owner of Hermitage Court beginning upon appointment and ending June 30, 2024.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 21: NOMINATIONS TO THE INLIVIAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The following nomination was made for one appointment for a three-year term beginning upon December 18, 2023, and ending December 17, 2026.

- Antoine Dennard, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, Molina, Watlington, and Winston

Motion was made by Councilmember Ajmera, seconded by Councilmember Molina, and carried unanimously to appoint Antoine Dennard by acclamation.

Mr. Dennard was appointed.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 22: NOMINATIONS TO THE KEEP CHARLOTTE BEAUTIFUL COMMITTEE

The following nomination was made for one appointment for a partial term beginning upon appointment and ending June 30, 2024.

- Doris Shivers, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, Molina, Watlington, and Winston

Motion was made by Councilmember Ajmera, seconded by Councilmember Molina, and carried unanimously to appoint Doris Shivers by acclamation.

Ms. Shivers was appointed.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 23: NOMINATIONS TO THE PASSENGER VEHICLE FOR HIRE BOARD

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a Hospitality/Tourism Industry category representative for a partial term beginning upon appointment and ending June 30, 2024.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 24: NOMINATIONS TO THE TRANSIT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE


There were no nominations made for one appointment for a Vanpool Rider category representative for a three-year term beginning February 1, 2022, and ending January 31, 2025.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

* * * * *

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.


Billie Tynes, Deputy City Clerk

Length of Meeting: 2 Hours, 43 Minutes
Minutes completed: