

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for Council Committee Discussions on Tuesday, January 3, 2023, at 6:02 p.m. in Room 267 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Councilmembers present were Dimple Ajmera, Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, LaWana Mayfield, James Mitchell, Marjorie Molina, and Victoria Watlington.

ABSENT: Councilmember Dante Anderson.

ABSENT UNTIL NOTED: Councilmember Braxton Winston, II.

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Mayor Lyles said good evening, everyone. Thank you for joining us on this agenda for January 3rd, 2023. I really appreciate the work that's been going on and I am excited to hear about it this evening. First and foremost, I'd like to say Happy New Year to all of you and to all of our residents and I hope everybody had a wonderful start to the new year. You ate your blackeye peas and collard greens. You're going to have good money all year long and that you're feeling like you're ready to tackle some of the things that we are taking on our agenda. Lots of exciting meetings that are coming up all the way from where we had the infrastructure meeting to where we will soon be coming in with our housing and jobs meeting, and then a retreat. So, we've got lots of things on our agenda. So, keep being energized and ready to take on what I think 2023 will offer to this community.

As the Mayor, you know I am really feeling like it's a commitment that we all made when we chose to run for office, that our city would be better than when we came in, that we would all have the opportunity to figure out how we can have a place for people to live in a decent place and work and thrive. I'm really grateful that all of us have committed to doing this by being a part of this body. I'm looking forward to what we do and what we come up with as we think about how we make the quality of life an important part with prosperity and opportunity in our city. Even before we talk about some of the things that we've forgotten to talk about, I just want to offer my condolences to the families and the friends and the loved ones of those three construction workers who lost their lives in Monday's tragic incident on the property near Dilworth and Morehead. I want to extend our wishes for the recovery of those that are in the hospital. Hopefully, they are able to succeed and have a speedy recovery. Not just for their families, but for all of us as we go through this. You know, when we have tragedy in this community, I think sometimes we're at our very best. I know that many of us have looked around and had to experience loss as well as experience change and experienced disastrous efforts that happened to us. I think that each of us can find that place in our hearts and in our heads to come out and be stronger for it, each in our own way. To these families, we want to offer our thoughts, prayers, and our wishes during this difficult time. Know that this community stands with you.

So, thank you very much for a few minutes to talk about 2023 and all that it has to offer. So, now we are going to move into our agenda for this meeting. I had the opportunity to listen to, I think every committee meeting in a way that I could understand the debate. I just said the pictures need to be a little bit more crisp. I couldn't tell who is talking at the same time or at a different time. I want to start off with recognizing Ed Driggs, who chairs our Transportation Planning and Development Committee, to start off on our agenda tonight. Then that will be followed by our Budget and Governance, and all of that committee. It is chaired by Ms. Ajmera. So, with that Mr. Driggs, I turn over the floor to you.

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ITEM NO. 1: COUNCIL COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS

Transportation Planning and Development Committee

Councilmember Driggs said alright, thank you, Madam Mayor. So, today the Transportation Planning and Development Committee met. The members of the

committee are myself as chair, Ms. Anderson as vice-chair, Mr. Graham, Mitchell, and Ms. Johnson as committee members. We had two agenda items. One was the Silver Line alignment, and the other was the CTC (Charlotte Transportation Center). I think you know these have both been active conversations for some time on Council. The committee has now voted at our last meeting and at this meeting unanimously to recommend that we proceed with the Silver Line on the locally preferred alternative. Also, the Bus Transportation Center will be the below-ground version. We voted only on what the alignment would be of the Bus Transportation Center. Not on the entire project. The P3, on which we have more work to do. So, this is something that is actually not subject to a Council vote. However, these are both important items for the city. They will be voted on at the MTC (Metropolitan Transit Commission) formally. I think it might be appropriate tonight for us to get some information for the benefit of the Council as to how the committee reached the conclusion it did, starting with the locally preferred alternative. I think at this point, we do have a couple of slides that Mr. Mock, I believe is going to narrate for us. Is that right [inaudible]?

Councilmember Winston arrived at 6:08 p.m.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much.

Andrew Mock, Transit said thank you, Councilmember Driggs. Thank you, Council Committee. I'm here to give you an update on what we presented today at the committee meeting and where we are as far as the Center City alignment evaluation as part of the City Lynx Silver Line project. So, I'm going to give a brief talk about what brought us here. Committee engagement we've undertaken over the last couple of months, the public and stakeholder feedback we've received, the analysis for the Center City alignment, the summary of that, and our staff recommendation.

So, what brought us here? I really just kind of give a very quick summary of the history behind this. The Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) along 11th Street was first adopted in 2018 as part of the Lynx system update. The primary goal was to get to Charlotte Gateway Station to serve economic development opportunities and have an East-West connectivity between the southeast and the west. The alignment at that time was mostly at-grade or not elevated. The Locally Preferred Alternative was adopted along 11th Street. In 2020, the Silver Line Design Team really got into the details of this alignment. We really started to evaluate the engineering and implementation challenges of the alignment and that led to more of an elevated guideway with elevated stations. This increased the cost and the technical challenges for the project. It also created some concerns with Council and stakeholders regarding the connection between the Silver Line and the Blue Line. That led to a ULI (Urban Land Institute) evaluation, which was in early 2022. They noted several challenges with that multi-modal connection because of the aerial guideway. They also recommended that we evaluate interlining as an opportunity to lower costs and increase ridership. That's what we've been doing since early in the year.

So, regarding committee engagement, we came to the Transportation Committee in June to give an overview about the findings of the ULI process. In November, we came back with a presentation of the Center City options that are under consideration. In December, we had the evaluation of the update in providing some initial public engagement from the public meetings we had in November. This morning, we presented some additional information including ridership for the Center City options. The committee voted unanimously to recommend to the full Council endorsement to reaffirm the LPA following 11th Street and Center City.

This map has been widely presented. I'll give a very brief overview. Really the three alternatives reflect Option 1, which is the LPA and that's along 11th Street. That's the purple line. That goes along with kind of the newer northern side of the Center City along 11th Street with a station above the Blue Line, above Graham Street, and then into at the intergrade Station and Charlotte Gateway Station. The second option is the shared Blue Line. This is something we brought to the committee back in June. That is where it comes along, a very similar type of guideway, but then enters into the Blue Line right at 12th Street. Then serves all of the same stations along the Blue Line. Then the third alternative

is a newer alternative that we came up with in the fall, which was sharing the Gold Line track, which really came in off of Charlotte Town Avenue and then merged into the reconstructed Gold Line tracks along Trade Street. That would give a whole way to Charlotte Gateway Station. Regarding the public outreach, we did have live public meetings on November 1st and 2nd. We had an extensive outreach associated with that, with 33,000 mailers, hanging rider alerts, social media rider blasts, and yard signs. We really tried to get the word out to get a good engagement. We also had a survey with an incentive. We had about 1,100 survey participants, which is very good for us, up from a little over 300 of the last rounds and over 100 virtual public meeting attendees.

Regarding demographics, this kind of shows the overall breakdown of some of the demographics for the survey participants. A couple of notes that are from the income perspective: the 50,000 to 99,000 family income range actually went up quite a bit from 21 percent of the last range. So, we're reaching different demographics than we've reached before. Also, the African Americans in the next category also went up quite a bit from seven percent in the last round to 12 percent. So, we felt like the outreach with a lot of pop-ups and boots-on-the-ground type of efforts, as well as the incentive have really helped us. I want to also note that our Hispanic outreach has been really outrageous from six percent to 19 percent. So, really good for us for that amount of outreach.

Regarding public engagement activities, we did again have the public meetings on November 1st and 2nd with the survey open the whole month, the Transportation, Planning, and Environment Committee on November 7th, TSAC (Transit Services Advisory Committee) on November 13th, The Planning Commission on November 14th, CTAG (Citizen Transit Advisory Group) on November 15th, Historic West End on November 17th, and Friends of Fourth Ward on November 21st. Then, we also had two uptown stakeholder listening sessions on November 29th and 30th, listening to input from stakeholders, including developers and institutions in Center City.

As far as the survey responses go, I will go through this very briefly. Regarding the LPA, we had about 150 comments received for the LPA: about 39 percent of them were supportive, about 24 percent neutral, and about 37 percent were opposed. Regarding the likes, people who really liked the LPA really liked the opportunities to serve new areas in Center City, but the converse of that is they really dislike missing the core of Center City. So, that's the trade-off. The shared Gold Line, 165 comments were relatively supportive at about 43 percent, with about 35 percent neutral and 22 percent opposed. The likes there include hitting the existing Center City core, but the dislikes are really tied into traffic disruption and the roadway reconstruction required for that project. In the shared Blue Line, there are about 125 comments at about 23 percent supportive, and about 43 percent opposed. It was the highest number of opposed. The big dislike on that one was about the required transfer and Center City for Phase B.

Regarding stakeholder engagement, what we heard through that process of talking with the listening session team and with the institutions, the concerns we heard are about scheduled delays at the Charlotte Gateway Station and the Amtrak Station with a potential change in the LPA, impacts the current and future development opportunities, vehicle and pedestrian access to Central Piedmont Community College, changes to the Trade Street character, and then comments about focusing on ridership as an important variable in this evaluation.

This map really kind of shows some of the walksheds between the three alternatives and what they capture or what kind of uses they would collect with the stations. I think the key takeaway is that the LPA really maximizes vacant [inaudible] parcels with 250 acres. That's really kind of the big sale on the LPA, as well as serving existing households and populations, while the shared Gold Lind really serves existing employment on Trade and Tryon and the Trade Street Corridor. The Shared Blue Line really has a larger walkshed because of the extent in the South End.

So, some of the considerations for the LPA is the most reliable transit operations because of that elevated guideway. It comes at a cost, but it also gives you very reliable and fast operations to the Charlotte Gateway Station, a high-growth area, as an integrated station

at the Charlotte Gateway Station with Amtrak. It accesses more development opportunities to the north and west sides of the Center City. It provides high-frequency transit in currently underserved areas. It has Center City stakeholder buy-in because it's been out there for quite some time. The projected ridership is not distinguished between the options based on the projected growth in Center City based on our analysis. Regarding the Center City Phase A Terminus of the Morehead Extension, this was one that was highly supported by the community, as well as stakeholders and it provided direct service to development opportunities, as well as the stadium. I'll make a note about that Morehead Extension in a moment, but our findings for the Center City for the City Council endorsement, based on the Transportation, Planning, and Development Committee, voted unanimously today to recommend a full Council endorsement of the LPA following 11th Street and the staff supports the committee recommendation. Center City Phase A Terminus or Morehead Extension, we would like to continue to evaluate that as a potential extension of the Locally Preferred Alternative implementation plan.

Regarding the upcoming meetings, we're at the end of the January 3rd process. Now we're getting ready to move into an MTC process with Council recommendation. With that, I will hand it back to Councilmember Driggs.

Mr. Driggs said thank you, Andy. So, the committee actually talked about this at length on several occasions. There were a lot of comparisons and pros and cons, but I think some of the points that led to our support for the LPA was for one, this is the most advanced. We have been working on this for several years, right and to change course at this point would mean that we would have to redo a lot of that work in the context of a different alignment. So, it has that going for it. Construction impacts are lessened if we go with LPA. Obviously, there will be some disruption whichever way you go, but less for the LPA. The economic development potential, which was a key consideration when the LPA was originally adopted, where we were working with a developer and possible partnership. It has the highest amount of undeveloped or underdeveloped acreage. So, if you look at that map, we have two lines crisscrossing Uptown, and the LPA drives development in the north part of Uptown. Reliability of operations, the LPA because it doesn't involve interlining it actually goes on an elevated railway around that Uptown area and has the greatest amount of dedicated track can offer the best prospect for very reliable service. For example, if it was colocated with the Gold Line, which is that green line there, then you would have the Gold Line trains and the Silver Line trains on the same track which would mean the Silver Line trains couldn't proceed any faster than the Gold Line trains.

Then, ridership is a very key consideration, but what the analysis indicated was that, in fact, the projected ridership among the options is not different enough for that to be a critical deciding factor. The ridership numbers look adequate for the purposes of federal grant applications. So, we will meet the requirements for federal money in either case. I think we estimated about around 30,000 a day by 2050 on any of the three alternatives. So, the bottom line is that the committee, after looking at all of these factors and looking at the pros and cons, came back unanimously recommending that we go with the Locally Preferred Alternative, the one that we originally decided on, and tonight on Council we are just telling you about this. Again, it's not really a formal Council vote situation. It's an opportunity if you want to way in to offer your comments because it is an important step.

Councilmember Winston said while Mr. Driggs says there is not a formal vote. I do think it's important that the Council give the staff and the community guidance on where we are at tonight. You know, I'm not on the committee, but I was there today. I certainly am in favor of what the committee recommended and going with the LPA. Again, I do think ahead of that MTC vote, it will be important for that body. I think they would consider what this body says very greatly as they deliberate so much so, Commissioner Leigh Altman was in attendance today at the meeting. She was able to ask questions and get a bit smarter about that ahead of the vote on the 25th. So, again I just think it is important for the staff and the community to know where we stand at this point and time. So, you can count me in with the LPA.

Councilmember Mayfield said so I have a question since I'm not on this particular committee. The stakeholder engagement activities, what we've heard the comment on vehicle and pedestrian access to Central Piedmont Community College. If LPA is the recommendation that comes from the committee, and the city and the county has made along with our private partners have made large investments into Central Piedmont for workforce development, does the LPA version impact access to Central Piedmont Community College and or does it create more connection to Central Piedmont?

Mr. Mock said thank you for the question. The Locally Preferred Alternative would actually traverse along the northern side of Independence Boulevard with a pedestrian cross along Central Avenue. So, there would be a pedestrian walk along Central Avenue connecting from the Central Avenue Station to the downtown CPCC (Central Piedmont Community College) campus, and there would be a station at CPCC Levine as part of the Locally Preferred Alternative.

Ms. Mayfield said so, not the main campus off of Elizabeth?

Mr. Mock said there would be a walk along Central Avenue directly—

Ms. Mayfield said and let me preference I'm geographically challenged. Let me put that disclaimer on the front end that I am geographically challenged. So, I am just trying to understand what we're saying.

Mayor Lyles said thank you, Ms. Mayfield. Central.

Mr. Mock said the shared Gold Line would be a station dead in the middle along Elizabeth Avenue at CPCC, while the LPA would be a little further walk.

Ms. Mayfield said okay. So, the LPA will be more off of Central. So, on the back side—

Mr. Mock said right.

Ms. Mayfield said of CP, but the line that is currently right up Elizabeth, that's going to continue?

Mr. Mock said correct.

Ms. Mayfield said but those two never connect?

Mr. Mock said they do. The Silver Line would connect with the Gold Line at the Charlotte Gateway Station.

Ms. Mayfield said that's all I needed. Thank you.

Councilmember Ajmera said I would like to thank Mr. Driggs. We have had some conversations about this because this is certainly, if you are part of the committee, you probably have taken a deeper dive into this. Whereas some of us who are not part of the committee had to sort of study this outside of it and reach out to the committee members to really understand all three options, pros and cons, and we did get this big map. That really helped for those of us who are geographically challenged. So, thank you. I know last time we had discussed this, we were looking at ridership numbers. I didn't see that in the deck that was presented. Was that something the committee had reviewed?

Mr. Driggs said yes. So, in our meeting this afternoon and again, there's quite a lot that wasn't included there because we have so much to talk about tonight. We did see ridership numbers, current estimates, and then projections going out to 2050, taking into account the anticipated development and so on, and essentially you had numbers around 10,000 more or less today and around 30,000 more or less projected. Again, there weren't big enough differences between them to be a major deciding factor in the choice of the alignment.

Ms. Ajmera said got it. I think that certainly was a concern of mine in terms of ridership numbers but knowing that it's not too far apart from one option to the other that really brings back to the important criteria, which is economic development and really having ridership closer to the population where they live. I know that there was another question that I think Mr. Driggs and I had discussed about the federal funding, but it looks like the committee discussed that in-depth, and looks like with the ridership numbers that won't be an issue. We will still be in a competitive position. Is that correct, Mr. Driggs?

Mr. Driggs said yes.

Ms. Ajmera said for us to get federal funding.

Mr. Driggs said right and that's a point to consider. The feds will be looking critically at ridership. So, that is an issue that we can't kind of just decide for ourselves. We need to meet their requirements. The indication I have from the staff is we are confident that the ridership day that we have now will qualify for federal funding.

Ms. Ajmera said okay. So, I would look at the deck that was presented at the committee meeting. I think the one that we have, it's a summary version. So, we don't have that data. I may reach out to Mr. Driggs as I've done in the past and ask you additional questions, but so far, I appreciate the work the committee has done and a lot of heavy lifting has been done by your committee, Mr. Driggs. Very much appreciated.

Mr. Driggs said I appreciate your questions. I am happy to follow up at any time.

Ms. Ajmera said thank you.

Councilmember Graham said could you go back to the slide that shows the route in purple? Yes, that one. I too, want to lend my voice in support of the LPA route. Notwithstanding that, it's more expensive, but I think when you take into consideration all that we are trying to do as it relates to transportation, I am pretty sure the chairman to get to the bus depot at some point. It does not interrupt our current planning for that, right? That route is chosen, nor does it tear up Trade and Tryon Street once again. It provides as Ms. Ajmera stated, more economic development opportunities as we begin to expand the footprint of what is considered Uptown. So, for those reasons, I'm very supportive of it, like I said, in terms of looking at it at 30,000 feet in terms of plans that are underway for the Charlotte Gateway Station, the transit center, as well as that route. I think it's really important for us to kind of look at all of the pieces on the table and how they interact with one another and how we are trying to hopefully do some timing issues of how they all kind of work together. So, I think this is a good step in the right direction. Thank you.

Mr. Driggs said, Mr. Graham, I just wanted to point out, as I mentioned earlier from a timing standpoint, that the LPA is actually preferable because there would be so much disruption to the Gateway Station project if we now introduced the new alignment that it would probably hold things up. So, I think we've been working towards a coordination of the Gateway Station with this LPA, and that's probably, from that standpoint, the best way to go.

Councilmember Bokhari said I'm supportive of whatever at this state that we're in, will make us stop deliberating on this and talking about it. So, I mean, I am a huge believer after the last decade to two of looking at what's happened in this community, that this light rail and what we've done is probably one of the most impactful economic development tools that we've had. There's no doubt about it. Now, we can argue did we hang on to that economic development value or not, but the punch line is, aside from all the other problems, this is not 20 years in the future people moving system and what we need to do. It's an economic development tool, one that we will start seeing the benefits from 15 to 20 years from now and we are talking on the topic of moving people. So, I'm not saying, you know, that the efforts perhaps won't pay off in some way. I don't think they will until the hurdles of the feds, the General Assembly, the towns, the voters in a referendum, and then countless other things actually get solved. You know, I feel like until then, we're rearranging the floor plan on the Titanic, and I think we need to be focusing our efforts on

other things. So, I don't know what the next steps in this are, but I hope that the next steps are, we don't talk about it again until one of those major factors changes and then we spend our time on realistic things that actually can be done in our lifetimes.

Mr. Driggs said so, Mr. Bokhari, if I may, Mayor, we have to do this somewhat in tandem. Like, you know, we can't sort out those issues. I agree with you entirely. I think we have huge hurdles, but if we don't have some of this information and some of these decisions made, we won't have anything to promote with the people that we need to partner with.

Mr. Bokhari said we're done with that now or there's more effort, staff, time, and money that's going to be spent in that venture?

Mr. Driggs said I think on the alignment question with this, the proposal is that we're done, that we would now, by a consensus of Council, basically ask the Mayor to go ahead at MTC and propose this alignment and end the conversation about the alignments.

Mr. Bokhari said great. So, have we spent all the \$50 million that we had initially set aside for this planning exercise?

Marcus Jones, City Manager said so, Councilmember Bokhari, I'm not sure if we've spent the entire 50. The goal is to get this to a 30 percent design so that we can get into the hopper for the federal funds. We will get you an update on where we are with that.

Mr. Bokhari said okay, and like I said, I know staff, I know a lot of people, the Mayor and Councilmember Driggs trip and yours to DC (District of Columbia), there's a lot of high potential out there. I definitely don't want to, you know, rain on the entire parade, but like every minute we spend on this, and we don't spend on our roads, or we don't spend on moving the ball forward on the Red Line or other things that are much more plausible is a waste of time until one of those big factors changes. Again, I'm not seeing any movement there. So, I hope that as nicely as like 2023 Tariq, you know, nicely as I can, I hope this was the last major effort. Look how nice I am. So, I would just like to one, tell you all how wonderful you all look today and how much I appreciate you, and two, that I hope this is the last time we speak about the Silver Line. Thank you.

Mr. Driggs said so, guys, that was sugarcoated. Be grateful we didn't get the alternative. Thank you, Tariq.

Mayor Lyles said now Mr. Driggs, anything else to wrap this up?

Mr. Driggs said I'm done if there are no other comments then I hope the takeaway from this meeting is that Mayor, you can go to the MTC with the support of the Council and propose the locally preferred alignment.

Mr. Bokhari said so, we are or aren't voting on this as a Council?

Mayor Lyles said it does not require a vote, but it will require that the MTC will have to look at this. The MTC, if I say this correctly, Brent, they've already voted to support the LPA, but I think there is some minor changes that we want to make sure that they understand as well so that we can do this. I agree that we are in a place sometimes that I just wonder if I'm like Alice in Wonderland and not able to move forward, but we take as many steps forward as we can considering the complexity of changing the city's opportunities to move people around and create the opportunities that we're talking about for and managing our growth, everything kind of lays in the idea of jobs and moving people towards work. I think it is hard. It is a very hard thing to do, and we're not all in the same starting place.

We've worked very diligently with the MTC around Mecklenburg County, gone beyond Mecklenburg County, working beyond that to get people to understand that the future for the growth in this region and the opportunities that we have are great. So how do we take that potential and begin to move forward with it? So, the MTC will be looking at the changes in the alignment, I believe, Brent. Is that correct, at our January meeting?

Mr. Bokhari said just for the record Madam Mayor, it sounds like you've got majority almost everyone's support, and you don't need it. But just for the record, since we're not voting, I'm not supportive of it, but again, if it takes it off our plate, then I'm happy, nonetheless.

Mayor Lyles said happiness is sometimes important. So, I want to say that we are working very closely with the members of the MTC. There's seven voting members, and I think that sometimes people think it's a big group of people, but it's basically the six towns and eight voting members. Mecklenburg County and the City of Charlotte, and many of them understand the complexity of this and the particularly the impact that it has as you can see on the map for our geography. So, with that, Mr. Driggs, do you have another item on the agenda?

Mr. Driggs said I do yes.

Mayor Lyles said thank you.

Mr. Driggs said so, Mayor, you have what you need on this one, right?

Mayor Lyles said yes, I do.

Mr. Driggs said okay. The second thing we talked about in committee today was the CTC, the Charlotte Transportation Center. Colleagues, you'll remember that we have seen a couple of presentations about ideas there, about alternatives, partnerships, talk about naming rights, and practice facilities, and there are many dimensions to this potential P3 project. Our focus today was on one question, which is there were a couple of different versions of the bus transit center that we considered. A below-grade option and at ground level option and above grade. We have gone through a process of looking at those alternatives in order to narrow down which one actually best serves all of the priorities for transit, for economic development, for our goals in the area. What came out of the meeting today was a unanimous vote that the so-called Concourse solution, which is the one below grade, best met our goals and requirements. That conclusion was reached without any prejudice to future conversations that we will have about the terms of the P3, the naming rights, and the practice facility. So, those conversations are all going to take place still, and I think we may have a brief presentation on this one as well.

Unknown said Jason Lawrence.

Mr. Driggs said all right. Yes. So, we'll see again as a summary of how the decision was arrived at by the committee to prefer the Concourse solution for the bus transit center, while not yet taking any action on the P3 and the other parts of that proposal.

Jason Lawrence, Chief Transit Planning Officer said thank you, Madam Mayor, Mr. Driggs, for the opportunity to come and speak to this today. Jason Lawrence leads our Planning Division within CATS (Charlotte Area Transit System). This is the same presentation that we gave today to the committee. I'll go through this and open to any questions as we get to the end.

So, at committee today, we talked a bit about what brought us to this moment, kind of go a little bit back in time about what brought us to this kind of conversation about integration of transit and land use, our design process that led to the leading options that we took out to the public in October. Some of that feedback and then ultimately summing up with our staff recommendations. So just a great zoomed-out photo of the area we're talking about. I think we all know where the transit center is but looking at this transit center in the context of the Lynx Blue Line, the City Lynx Gold Line, the intersection of two of our most impactful projects that we have constructed over the past 20 years. Also, you know, take a moment to think about what also is in this photo. You have the Spectrum Center, the NASCAR (National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing) Hall of Fame, the Charlotte Convention Center, and the opportunities that we have along Brevard Street to make that connection. So, as we look at the opportunities for a new transit center, not only are we thinking about the transit context of this, but also the kind of broader vision of what this area could

become. That did start as a vision for us in this community. You know, more than 30 years ago in the 90s about transit and land use, growth, opportunity, and how to shape growth within Mecklenburg County, and the city of Charlotte. That has changed over the years, but what has been consistent is that commitment to transit and land use. We have two maps today that help guide that conversation: a rapid Transit System Plan where five corridors converge into Uptown Charlotte and our recently adopted Envision My Ride plan. That seeks to bring high-frequency bus service throughout the county and the city of Charlotte, coming to Uptown Charlotte. Also, to mobility hubs across the county as well that serve on-demand zones. The transit center in so many instances is really a mobility hub that we have an opportunity to meet the future. That transit center had another history, too. If you think about what the transit center was prior to the CTC, it was at The Square. It was at the intersection of Trade and Tryon; two also very important intersections. All transfer activity happened at The Square; bus people that were in an open-air area, they had the shelters there, but by in large, people were out in the elements. So, at that time, with a partnership with Nations Bank, which became Bank of America, there was an opportunity to do a public/private partnership at that time to build the transit center at this current location. It did solve some problems that we had at that day, a more comfortable transit experience, a site to centralize bus transfers, and minimized some of the pedestrian automobile conflicts. It has served us well for nearly 30 years, but we have new problems to solve today.

Passenger conflicts within the center, you know over time we've realized that the amount of pedestrians having to cross bus travel lanes within the center is something that we would want to address in a new transit center. The rail trail and the Lynx Blue Line didn't exist with the transit center when it was built in the 1990s. So, now we have this opportunity to integrate both of those into this new facility, activating Brevard Street, and catalyzing the surrounding land use vision. Also, what's also very apparent when you look at this facility, it's very open. So, anybody who wants to come through the center and often they do and also drive through the center, and they aren't supposed to be driving through there, also occur. So, many of the safety and security issues we have at the center can be addressed as a design challenge to solve as well as we move forward.

Mobility expectations have changed over the past 30 years. Think about where we were in the '90s and early 2000s, and all the smartphone integration with new and emerging mobility needs. How do we integrate technology into the new center, and the electrification of our bus fleet? Those are the expectations the public tells us they need to see in our new modes as we move forward. Also, to move forward, we must find a way to fund this new development or any development at this site with the transit center. Also, we must have a temporary transit center for our location of where the busses can come to during construction and the long-held goals of activating Brevard Street and other opportunities around that facility.

So, we were faced, and some of the information we talked about at prior Council conversations we were presented with an opportunity at the unsolicited proposal to redevelop the transit center into a mixed-use development. Through a procurement process, we selected White Point Partners and Dart Interests in June of 2019, to begin the conversation of what this could look like. From a project timeline, we are very early in this process. I mentioned the 2019 RFP (Request for Proposal), the public input that we received in October that we're talking about today. It will come with a staff recommendation that needs to be adopted by the MTC and with Council endorsement in order to begin advancing the design and begin the environmental assessment. That is a requirement of the federal grant we received for the RAISE Grant. As we move forward, we have a number of transit mobility goals that must be met; the continuity in service, elevating the transit rider experience, safety, and security is very important, making sure we have seamless connections between the light rail and the bus and the streetcar, opportunities for including sustainability is a part of this design opportunity, but also how do we best integrate into a mixed-use development?

Many options were studied through that early process prior to the submission of the RAISE Grant: some were on the same block as the CT (Charlotte Transit), and some crossed over to an adjoining block. As we did our initial evaluation of the aggregate facility,

but one that we called the Terrace option would cross over Fourth Street, and one that was on the same site, that's the Concourse option that we mentioned earlier. The below-grade option. To that initial evaluation, we looked at what best improved upon the passenger experience and what which best we feel from prior engagement with TSAC (Transit Services Advisory Committee), and the public would meet the expectations of increased safety and security lighting in climate-controlled space. Through this initial evaluation, we recommended that we eliminate the street-level option. It would essentially be similar to what we have today with more of an open-air open facility with entrances off of Trade and Fourth Street, would limit the ability for mixed-use development to occur. The Terrace option, as initially envisioned, would cross over Fourth Street, creating almost like a bridge effect over Fourth Street, but would also limit our ability to use that site across Fourth for a temporary transit center. At the time we advanced the Concourse option for submission of the RAISE Grant and went forward with revising the Terrace option to a two-level Terrace option. The key differences is here listed on this slide are the natural light, bus operational flexibility, that secure climate control pace, and the passenger experience. It's important to note, in order for the two-level Terrace option to function, we have light rail bus bays at the same level as light rail eight bays, and then below that at street level bays to make up to the 14 bays. In order to access the light rail level bus bays, we need a ramp that would go from Third Street across Fourth Street to that level. So, it does create some complexities in the bus routing because you essentially have two levels of entrance for the bus routes versus the concourse, which would have an at-grade entrance to the below-grade facility coming from Fourth Street and an ability to exit out onto Trade Street.

We're here tonight to talk about the path to the recommendation. If we go back to the presentation we gave here in September of last year, the stakeholder engagement that I'm going to go through in just a minute. Today we talked to the Transportation Planning and Develop Committee about our staff recommendation and then we will go forward with a recommendation later this month to the MTC for approval pending conversations with you all today. We did a tremendous amount of outreach in one single month in October. We talked to over 400 bus riders at popups at the CTC. We had virtual public meetings and in-person meetings. We talked to a very important stakeholder and through those conversations are bus operators and talked individually with bus drivers as they began their shifts in the morning and the afternoon. I'll say if you really want to experience the transit center to understand what we're talking about here, spend some time at the transit center, walk from Brevard Street and cross the bus bays and up to the Blue Line, as many of our customers do on each and every day. We received some excellent feedback from our customers through this outreach. The two options that we showed to the public during these pop-ups and our virtual in-person meetings, this is the two-level Terrace option. You can see here where it says, Transit Terrace, that is at street level where we'd have bays where you can access from the street, but then the second level would be accessible from the light rail platform. What's important to note here is that while we still can achieve good bus-to-rail transfer, it would require us to go up and down between two different levels for bus-to-bus transfer and it does somewhat limiting in the ability to fully integrate into the mixed-use development given the access that we would be required for that second level at the light rail space.

In summary, as we get to summarizing the difference between these two options, the transfer between bus routes would be challenging. There would be a higher amount of natural lighting because one level would be at the light rail level, somewhat less climate control space than the Concourse option. The bus routing would be complicated from an operational standpoint. That's important to note that capital or a one-time cost, but operating costs are every day, every year. So, finding something that works more efficiently from an operating standpoint is very important as we move forward. Integration with the mixed-use development is possible, but less efficient than the Concourse option. Then from an environmental standpoint, based on this high-level stream that was completed, a low-level potential for negative human or natural resource impacts. The Concourse option, this is another visual at the same angle as the two-level Terrace where you see the Concourse there on the image is where the entrance to the Concourse would be. What's important to note here in this image is the ability to fully kind of integrate that rail trail and the rail option into essentially a storefront along the Lynx Blue Line there.

Then you see the City Lynx Gold Line there too. Great opportunity to integrate both of those facilities into the new facility.

In summary, compared to the two-level of the Terrace option, it's a simple transfer between bus routes. They're all on the same level. More climate control consolidated space, a single platform that is more secure and would reduce them as pedestrian conflicts, bus routing would be more efficient with an entrance just coming off of Fourth Street and be able to access it at grade from Third, maximum integration with economic development. Same from the environmental screening standpoint to the two levels, but we do feel that through the design process, careful attention to air quality should be addressed. We do feel as we're moving forward, electrifying the fleet would be able to mitigate that. Public feedback and evaluation, we hit all the surveys that I mentioned earlier that were filled out, the in-person conversations with the public and with our bus operators, the green checkmarks there on the chart there indicate where the public kind of weighed on things like the bus-to-bus transfers. They saw that the Concourse was more superior than the two-level. Bus-to-rail was better on the two-level because you got at least eight bays at the same level as the light rail. Both options, we feel will be safe and secure, but from an operations standpoint, we feel the Concourse was superior from a management standpoint. More climate control space on the Concourse and of course with a bit more natural lighting on the two-level Terrace option. You can see where the public weighed in on that. From a survey standpoint, from the bus operators and from the public, we were just over 50 percent in approval of the Concourse option.

So, we talked about earlier the problems to solve at the beginning; funding certainly is a piece of that. There were some questions about what would it cost CATS if we were to build a facility on our own, you know, without a mixed-use opportunity. We believe at an early estimate that would range between 45 and 55 million, but it would not be integrated with development as a proposal in front of you all tonight. Unlikely to receive the \$50 million RAISE Grant. The opportunity through that RAISE Grant was by in large through this integration that we were discussing, and the land value would not be a funding source through this. The land value would be locked into a new public facility if CATS were to build this [inaudible]. We still would need to find a temporary transit center location and still need to fund those operations during construction. The integrated transit center, the Concourse, and the two-level options are very similar in cost to just under 90 million, but what we'll be able to achieve is to leverage, you know, \$62 million that could not be captured otherwise in the combination of the land value, the \$50 million RAISE in then \$20 million TIG (Tax Increment Grants).

So, in summary, as we go through this effort, the recommendation, it not only must support the transit needs, but it needs to serve the overall broader vision of what we're trying to achieve in this city as a whole. We need to solve the passenger experience, certainly from the customer. That's what this recommendation keys into what we heard from the public, but also the experience of those who will come, live, work, and play within the Charlotte Transportation Center area. With that from our staff recommendation that we presented to the committee today that we recommend that the Concourse option move forward as the preferred design concept due to the factors that are listed there; more climate controlled in an efficient secured space, seamless transfer between bus routes, maximum integration with economic development, more opportunities for placemaking, and we feel it does best support the goals of surrounding development options. We also recommend as we move forward, we're very early in the process here, we're going to continue to talk to our customers as we refine this design, and we have the opportunities to increase more climate-controlled space to really provide the best waiting experience we can and increase the amount of natural light coming into the facility. But as we look through, you know, as technology changes over time, how do we bring autonomous types of conversations into this facility, not on the street, but as we enter the facility to take some of the human element out of coming into the facility, navigating the ramps and going to the bus space, we're seeing a lot of options at yard management through autonomous technology. We think as the technology improves, it would be something that we should be considering as we move forward with this design and of course, incorporating sustainable design. We have a great opportunity to do that in

electric vehicle charging. Then, with that, if Tracy wants to talk about the next steps for a minute or any other questions about the financial framework.

Tracy Dodson, Assistant City Manager said just to close this out, Councilmember Driggs mentioned several times that tonight is really just the approval of the transit center design concept. I thought it was important for you all to see this, though, that this will be an ongoing conversation that we will have with the Council throughout most of 2023. The next steps that we would come back to you on is to talk about a framework for a public/private partnership. That'll include the financial structure. Jason hit on it a little bit earlier. There's also the need for the district and the Hornet's' practice facility. Councilmember Driggs mentioned that as well as the larger community benefit. What does this overall development really do for uptown and the community? Those will then work towards an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding), which we would bring in front of the Council to vote on. We would take the MOU as we continued some of the design advancement and more of the planning and locked in on more of our numbers. We would eventually work towards a Master Development Agreement, which would also come back to you for discussion and vote. So, I just wanted to end on that, that as Councilmember Driggs said, "this does not by any means vote for the CTC as an overall project." This is just one step that allows us to continue to move through the process.

Mr. Driggs said just quickly. So again, what we're saying tonight is we will continue our talks about the CTC but include only the Concourse option and not continue to try and evaluate several different versions of the transit facility. I will also mention we brought up safety. I know safety has been an issue in our conversations. I think it's worth highlighting in particular, and essentially, what we were told was safety is a concern whichever solution you adopt. The steps that you take in order to keep it safe are that the access is limited to ticket holders. In either case, CMPD (Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department) has worked closely with CATS and is very involved in their responsibility in terms of maintaining that safety there. So, I don't think safety is a major criterion, in terms of the comparison of the two solutions. The other thing that I raised earlier was we are still working on our bus system. We don't have a CEO (Chief Executive Officer). There's a lot of work going on there. So, the question was, does making this decision now limit us in any way as we continue? Essentially, the answer there was the capacity of these two solutions is similar, and therefore, their ability to kind of align with whatever we do. We are pursuing generally with the busses through Envision My Ride, a decentralization. So, there's not such a radial structure of people riding uptown and riding back out again. But either of these solutions would support whatever outcome we get from that process. So again, not a criterion, and therefore, where the committee came out again unanimously was to endorse the Concourse option. That is also a topic that will come up at the MTC meeting, and therefore, this is an opportunity for the council members, based on that rapid-fire summary of the work that's been done to weigh in on this.

Ms. Mayfield said I have a couple of questions, but one starts with you. I want to get an understanding of our committee structure. The four committee meetings happen, and then a presentation is given to the full Council. Is that presentation the recommendation for the full Council to say, okay, just go along with that, or is that the time where we then have a full Council discussion?

Mayor Lyles said well, first, the important part was to have the ability to have discussion and comments, but several of these ideas that are coming along have already been presented once or more than once to the Council. I think at this point, it's a discussion around the ability to have the MTC understand because they will meet in January as well as the Council, but I think it's up to the Council to make a decision of how if you're ready. Ms. Mayfield said thank you for that clarification because to me this is the same presentation that we've already been given. The staff has moved forward and pretty much for me, decided that the Concourse model was the model we're going to go with. There were questions that were asked regarding other options. I don't feel like the questions that I specifically asked were actually answered. I'm also concerned that in this presentation, just in an immediate comparison to the last presentation, that actually showed the comments from the community, the concerns that they had versus just showing me where you filled in a circle of, yay, this is what we want and us not being able

to learn what were the comments that came from the community, I have concerns with because this just for me really feels like I'm being steered to this is the recommendation versus just a presentation of here are the two. A two-level Terrace, here are the environmental impacts, and then you all have a discussion between the two-level Terrace and the Concourse versus a presentation saying, well, we looked at it, but we still want the Concourse. I have concerns regarding the Concourse. We just experienced over the Christmas holiday, something that we have not experienced in this city before with the temperatures dropping, with pipes bursting all over this city. Unfortunately, around the nation, the environmental impacts, we are going to see a lot more of that. There are challenges even with electric vehicles, you could do a simple Google search. You have challenges with battery fires, which are very common. The risk of electrocution, whether or not weather is conducive. If we were to have another incident like we just experienced this past Christmas, where we have multiple pipes burst all over the city, and you have people without power for days at a time. What would the impact of an underground station look like versus what would the impact of the two-level look like?

You note in here regarding going to autonomous. What would that look like because before it gets to the facility, there should be an individual that's controlling this? We have also seen multiple challenges with autonomous vehicles. EVs (Electric Vehicles) even though it's great in theory, are also extremely quiet. There have been a number of reported cases across the nation of accidents because of how quiet it is. What is the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)? I don't have anything in here that tells me what ADA discussions were held regarding two-level and or Concourse with this. Whether that identified need under ADA is being blind or partial hearing or full loss of hearing. What that impact would be for them to transport back and forth and the accessibility? Also, back to the challenges with autonomous driving and the lack of sound specifically that poses risks to others.

There are a lot of questions that I asked initially that weren't addressed, but now, after experiencing what we just experienced with 12-degree weather and below, which we had never experienced before, that just created more questions. So, to have a presentation today that really feels like we're steered to what was originally wanted, and that's an underground Concourse. I don't think we have enough information as a Council to be making a decision to say, yes, let's move forward, as opposed to the full Council having a real conversation of what really could be the impact of having all of this on the ground versus two levels. If you have to use the escalators, how many times do escalators break down and what's the average time that it takes before that escalator has been fixed? We have some of those numbers now based on how you get off a light rail and get into Spectrum or get into any of the facilities. If any of those escalators have stopped, how long did it take for them to get repaired? Did we have any challenges within our current bus system over this past holiday weekend, like the rest of the city had challenges, and if so, what are we looking at to try to mitigate that if we were to do two-level versus Concourse? We talk about the environment. This previous Council made a commitment regarding the environment. Of course, having access to natural air is going to be a lot better than being underground. So, help me understand. Specific question. Did you even look at the most recent weather conditions in the city and overlay how that will play out in either one of these scenarios?

Mr. Lawrence said so great question. I think if I could sum up some of the comments that I heard before. Again, to that specific question, many of the things you talked about, the ADA accessibility, the access, those will be things that, you know, we're very early in the design process. ADA Accessibility has to be a part of any design, either the two-level or the Concourse. So, that will be a part of the design process. It has to be accessible from an ADA standpoint. We heard from one of our TSAC members, that's our Transit Services Advisory Committee who is blind, and talked about things that we need to consider for a Concourse option. It could be louder than the two-level option because you're in a more contained space and uses sound to help him move and navigate through the world. So, those are great comments that we've received, and we have all that public summary we can certainly share. So, that was documented. From a resiliency standpoint. So, I think that's what you're asking about from a climate resiliency standpoint, we did not specifically look at the super cold frigid temperatures that we had during the Christmas time as a

differentiator between, say, the two-level Terrace and the Concourse option. I do think that in a more cold environment, a more climate-controlled space would be more important. So, in the Concourse option, we would have more of that. I would argue it could be warmer than say just naturally than a two-level Terrace option, which would be mostly open. Many of the things that we would have to look at for any of the technologies for electrification, autonomous, and to clarify when I mentioned the autonomous conversation that was not on the street. What we're seeing in the transit center, there's opportunities to manage that within a yard and like non-passenger areas where you're just accessing like a bus bay or within a garage space. That's what I was talking about, but that's something to evaluate, something to consider, if it's a technology that's not ready, then that's not what would be right for us, but it's something that we felt should be considered as we go through this early part of the design.

Ms. Mayfield said so again, for me, it would have been helpful in this presentation, even that comment that came from a member of the committee. Those comments would have been helpful versus just seeing shaded in circles that just go along with what was already presented. Taking the time on the front end to do that research of the "what if" in this Concourse model, what if there was a battery electrical fire? Because unfortunately, that is also something that is happening repeatedly on vehicles. What is the worst-case scenario if that were to happen in either scenario and if what I'm understanding for this conversation, the recommendation is for the Concourse. We're not even having a conversation around the two-level Terrace. This is the first time that you came back with two really potential good options. So, we're looking at this Concourse option and going to potentially speed forward with it without stepping back long enough to just ask some simple questions. Have you all at least done a study to think about the impact of what if in the Concourse model, if one bus were to have an electrical fire, what potentially could happen in this enclosed space?

Mr. Lawrence said I mean, that is conversations that we'll have to have once we move forward with any design with any project. So, that hasn't happened at this point, but as we move through a threat level assessment of looking at how you would move any disabled vehicle out of the site, that would have to be part of the design. Could you get something down to remove the vehicle? What are the safety considerations for, you know, battery? Electric does bring in a new element into a confined space like that. So, that has to be a part of the design process going forward.

Ms. Mayfield said so, a threat level assessment wouldn't be discussed or even considered until you get approval to move forward for design?

Mr. Lawrence said well, approval of a design allows us to move forward with the process and I think it's hard to advance the design and move forward with the environmental process until we have a design that we're moving forward with.

Ms. Mayfield said so for clarification so that I understand this. So, if someone in a community asked me why you're looking at two proposals that you have brought before Council, a two-level terrace, Concourse with information all really pushing towards one model, the Concourse. We don't think that it is beneficial on the front end to just do a "what ifs" threat analysis just to have an overview in order to be able to have that information so that when someone does ask that question, you can say, yes we actually did look at other communities around the nation that are utilizing this model to find out, okay, tell me what's the worst case scenario of what has happened in your area?

Mr. Lawrence said so, this analysis looked at what is differentiating between the two designs, and that's what we focused on. So, anything would be similar from a safety security standpoint we mentioned earlier. We didn't see that as a differentiator between the two designs. So, for any design that moves forward, you would have to do the analysis that you were speaking of. We'd have to continue to refine and update the design. We are early in this process and so all of that will come through as we continue to advance the design.

Ms. Mayfield said okay. So, for full transparency, if we're early in this process, I would prefer more information on the two-level Terrace versus this idea of the Concourse, because just looking at a few other communities, they have had a lot of challenges regarding the safety of the individual, the safety of the passengers, and safety of the community. We have already seen an increase of crime and other things that are happening around this area. This Concourse model is a model that gives me a lot of concern. At the end of the day, it takes six votes. I would love to get a lot more information on this two-level Terrace, which seems like that will be something that's much more viable for our community the way that we're growing so that we don't do what we have done previously and that makes a large investment just because, well, this is the direction and the path that we started down and, not being nimble enough to make the adjustments on the front end. Thank you.

Councilmember Johnson said I mentioned in the Transportation Committee meeting earlier that there are other cities that have a designated area for ride-sharing, such as Uber or Lyft, and it's very efficient when you're uptown. Also, in my opinion, it's safer than letting passengers off, you know, on the street. So, I want to make sure that was included in the design or just for you all to at least research that information.

Mr. Lawrence said certainly. I mean, as we move through design, managing the curb space and the access points, that's when we can really narrow down where those kinds of drop-offs and integration can be between, could be an on-demand service like Uber, Lyft, but think about the other sharing economy mobility options like scooter and bike shares as well. Once the design is moving forward, those are things that we can look at.

Ms. Johnson said okay, thank you. I wanted to ask as far as the time frame and the problems to solve, what about the tenants who are currently in the CTC? I know just a couple of months ago we signed a five-year lease. So, I wanted to know how we're moving forward with that. Are we not signing any more leases for the current CTC? Will those tenants get the first right of refusal for the temporary facility and also the new facility? So how are we managing that lease portion?

Mr. Lawrence said I think it's maybe too early to talk about some of the tenants for the future of development because there's still discussions for that to come but from the context of the tenants within the current facility, there's understanding as I understand it, that they are aware of this development as it moves forward. If we do move forward with this, the leases can be terminated, as I understand it.

Ms. Johnson said so there's language in the lease that addresses that?

Mr. Lawrence said yes.

Ms. Johnson said okay. Before we move forward with the Master Development Agreement and Tracy might be able to answer this. There was some, I think concern about an appearance of impropriety or some relationship with the current developer and the future developer. I know you can speak on that. I wanted to know how we addressed that with White Plain Management and there being some relationship with the current owner of the proposed site.

Mr. Bokhari said just point of order. We've talked about a lot of stuff that doesn't seem to be Concourse or not Concourse related. Am I off here, Mayor?

Ms. Johnson said Mayor, it's a Master Development Agreement. It says process for Council approval. Surely, you're not going to allow a council member to censor my questions.

Mr. Bokhari said I don't care. I'm just trying to save us all a couple of hours.

Ms. Johnson said well, good. I'm glad you don't.

Mr. Driggs said that's a future topic.

mmm

Mr. Bokhari said we're going to get to that.

Mayor Lyles said I'm sorry. Ms. Johnson, I just mentioned this to the Manager because I have heard Mike Collins ask Ed Driggs that question. I've heard him ask me that question. We have sent him reports showing an organizational chart that separates it all, and we've done all of that, but it continues to be a point of contention. So that's why I think your question is valid if you would let me finish it.

Ms. Johnson said thank you. I appreciate that. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said but I think that Tracy has an opportunity to address it. So, I would go ahead and ask Ms. Dodson to address it.

Ms. Johnson said because it's a public concern, what I was going to ask is how we've addressed it, and how we're documenting that it's not. If it's not unethical, we'd want to see that demonstrated before Council would be comfortable, or all of Council would be comfortable with moving forward.

Ms. Dodson said so we're happy to continue to explain it, as the Mayor said, in clarifying it. It was not the concern, the question, the confusion that came up was not about the developer. It was about the various engineers that were working on the project or who was looking at the financial components of the project. So, let me step back and make sure everybody is clear. The development team is White Point Partners and Dart Interest. They have a team of architects and designers. We have a team of financial consultants as well as engineers, and we work together as a team because this is all one building. It has to be integrated. So, we work with them and their architects and then we cross-check with our engineers and our financial analysts to make sure that everything is on the up and up and that the deal that we are looking at or the designs that we are looking at are in the best interest of this city and the public infrastructure that we're trying to achieve.

Mayor Lyles said okay. I think we've tried to reiterate that in various ways and it's somehow, you know, it's gotten in the public domain, I think, in a lot of ways, so.

Ms. Johnson said could it be because it was an unsolicited proposal? Would an RFP be more transparent to those concerns?

Ms. Dodson said no, it really wasn't about that. I mean, honestly, I think the structures where we are today is no different than if we had an RFP. You know, if I look at this versus other projects that we have, when you select a developer and you begin working with the developers, especially with something that is vertically integrated and this complicated, it's not our part and your part. We have to work together to design a structure in a development that is efficient and works for both sides, the public infrastructure side, as well as the private infrastructure side. So, it's really coming together as a design team, but the important part to note is that we are cross-checking everything that we are doing on our side again, from a financial perspective as well as from a design perspective.

Ms. Johnson said I appreciate that from a construction perspective, but for Council and this might be a question for Patrick, is there a process that we should be considering to make sure that we can answer to our voters that there's nothing more that we could have done to make it appear more transparent. You don't have to answer that today, but I think that that's something maybe we should think about from a Council perspective because it is an issue of concern from the public. We just want to make sure that we've, I don't know, dotted our i's and crossed t's from an ethics perspective.

Mayor Lyles said I want to be clear. Ms. Johnson is asking that as a response that she is requesting from you that would be sent to the Council. So, let's go ahead and get it in writing and get it sent out. All right. Thank you.

Councilmember Mitchell said Jason, you did a great job in our committee meeting. So, thank you for the hard work, but I brought this up, and I just want to reiterate it again. Can you go back to the staff recommendation because I think a lot of times when we do a

project of this value, of this size, very seldom do the committee feel like they had input. One bullet point I think you left off is that the staff recommendations are made based on our ridership. Our citizens really had a lot of input on what they wanted, and some of the problems they wanted to address. So, I do think it would be great to get our Transit Service Advisory Committee kind of weigh in on the option as well as based on the feedback you got already from the public, you can say staff recommendation. We really listened to our riders, and this is what they also wanted to approve. So, let me touch on what I think Councilmember Mayfield brought up just a lot of issues that I think that Mr. Chairperson brought up in the meeting as well. The Chairperson brought up about having CMPD to weigh on both options. I do think that would be vital information for us as we talk about security. So, with CMPD, are they more comfortable with the Concourse or are they more comfortable with the two-level Terrace? The other one, the only model I know, but Jason, I need you to provide data to us when we went, I'm dating myself, when we went to Denver, Colorado and we saw the Concourse, the bays, the model we're proposing. So, it would be interesting Councilmember Mayfield, when you look at the two models, what data can we show to say is a Concourse safer based on Denver or is a two-way Terrace safer as well? So, do you have data that you can pull and share with us?

Mr. Lawrence said so we could talk to RTD (Regional Transportation District). That's the transit provider in Denver and look at their research for that. I think that from a safety standpoint and something we've heard from our bus operators and from customers and, from safety and security is that, you know, by in large people using the transit aren't necessarily causing the issues that we are experiencing at the current transit center that we do feel by creating more secure, limiting the amount of access points does help alleviate some of those issues and so we can look to the Denver example and bring some information back.

Mr. Mitchell said okay, and I guess, Mayor, just one more comment. I'm trying to be nice the way I say it. So, I think sometimes we miss opportunities to be totally transparent and we do have a Council meeting on January 23rd. So, all of our citizens will see our great work. Maybe we need to have a presentation for the community on the CTC as we move forward. Staff, you know, I raise my hand, I'm in support of, but I don't want us to lose this opportunity that the next time they see this could be a month or so down the road. You've got a meeting with MTC on January 25, 2023. So, I do think if the agenda is not already booked up, this could be an opportunity.

Mayor Lyles said is already on the agenda and also from the Transit Advisory Committee, which is a very active group. I mean they're very, very active in a way that they encompass every segment of our ridership. A large number of them are people that are in the towns and come into the Center City to work. Others are part of places that they live in the inner city and are going out to work. So, I think that that would be very helpful to this. I also think it would be very helpful, Ms. Mayfield mentioned that there have been opportunities where incidents have happened, whether it's with the EVs or fires and things like that, that if we have that information, if we can see where those communities are, I think it's an important thing that we claim it and own it and we have that information. So, we were all in Denver and the Amtrak Station was below ground.

Mr. Mitchell said that's right.

Mayor Lyles said So, we were all in Denver and the Amtrak Station was below ground. Right? It was probably the most crowded place I'd ever seen. You could barely walk around to get your tickets and things like that. There's a lot of changes in the way design has been made because that's been a while.

Mr. Mitchell said that's been what?

Mayor Lyles said it's been a while. So, I would say that what I'm hearing the staff says is that we have to invest in an environmental effort. That doesn't mean we stop answering questions about anything. So, you can have a recommendation to proceed to go to the MTC or get questions there, but I think that the MTC has been having this on their agenda just as often. So, my suggestion would be that we have the staff recommendation, but we

also have that list of questions to clarify what people need to respond to. If those questions come back with the ideas, that we need to do something deeper. Then we do something deeper. I think having the information, it's always better to have the data in front of us and not do things that stop our processes to keep things going because this will be on the January 25, 2023, MTC agenda.

Mr. Mitchell said thank you, Madam Mayor. Thank you, Jason.

Mr. Winston said I'll be short, and again, I think kind of echo what I said for the last item. It is time to move this forward. We've been talking about this for a long time, and we've had a lot of opportunities to ask a lot of questions and get a ton of public feedback. I think we have a unanimous committee recommendation to move forward with the Concourse option, and you can add my name to moving forward with the Concourse option as well. Thank you.

Mr. Graham said I echo those sentiments as well. I just encourage the Council to trust the process, trust the committee. This was not a rubber stamp. There's been a lot of formal and informal conversations from the chairperson and members of the committee in reference to bringing this recommendation forward. That's how the committee structure works. The committee kind of makes a formal or informal recommendation to the Council, and there's been a lot of staff and committee work done to answer some of these questions. This question of safety. CMPD has indicated that they can make any building safe, right? So, they didn't choose a preference. Their job is to make the facility safe no matter which option that we choose. The ride share and all those types of other questions will be answered. The design, as I understand it, and we talked about that earlier formally and informally. So, all those things that we're talking about, as the Mayor indicated, that I think we need to move it forward and allow some of these what I call parking lot issues to be answered offline by council members who have additional questions, all right, but trust me, there's been a lot of homework that's been done to ratify the staff recommendation other than saying that we just rubber-stamp what they gave us. There's been a lot of work that's been done in the hallways and meetings and informal conversations to get us to this point. I think the Mayor needs some action by the end of the month.

Mayor Lyles said I would like to also ask the staff – we've gotten what federal funding for this project so far?

Mr. Lawrence said so, we have a \$15 million RAISE Grant.

Mayor Lyles said and in order to complete the project, we have to be able to go through the environmental process no matter what the design is. So, we have to figure out some way to make a decision. Again, I would say the committee's recommendation, if approved by this Council, and then I think Councilmember Graham said it very well. There's a parking lot that every issue that's been raised from pipes, weather, EVs, modeling, and ride-sharing. All of those can be issues that come back as information.

Mr. Bokhari said yes, my first comment, I think I would dovetail onto Councilmember Graham there, which is we've got to like figure out how to scope these conversations in and take some of this stuff offline and take some of the other stuff and just don't ask it at all. I mean, just to show an example with a six-second Google, statistics found that for every 100,000 EVs, there are about 25 fires each year. That compares to 1,530 car fires for the same number of gas-powered vehicles annually. So, if you're worried about EV fires, rest assured it's a whole lot less than the gas-powered fires that all are there. So, a quick Google search would have saved us another 15, to 20 minutes out of that topic. I think my point is and I'll say this with an asterisk to Tracy Dodson I think your team, and everyone has done a great job with the cards you've been dealt in positioning this. I think this probably is the best option of the one you guys are presenting. I still hold firm; I don't think this should be a transit center. I think the hub and spoke model of the 20th century is antiquated and especially a model that brings the hub into the center of our most dense urban workforce environment where most of the people are connecting to try to get to other places that take 90 to 120 minutes to get to. I think there's many other solutions in the 21st century we should be moving towards, but I understand that CATS under

previous leadership did not take any action on understanding that. I know that brings challenges as it relates to the types of funding that are available to do this. So, I just think this is a huge miss. We get these opportunities once in a generation if that to change something this foundational about our transportation model and to stick with what is essentially a smaller hub and spoke model because a certain analysis wasn't done or because it brought some budgetary funding issues to the table, I think is a miss. But I definitely don't want to take away from Ms. Dodson and the team's efforts to bring forth, you know, an option that is the best among what's there.

Mayor Lyles said okay. Usually, I try to wrap this up in a way that makes sense of it. So, let me now recognize Ms. Ajmera and Mr. Driggs.

Ms. Ajmera said Mr. Driggs, do you want to respond to Mr. Bokhari's comments? I wasn't sure if your hand was raised to respond specifically to his comment. No. I appreciate the presentation. I just feel like at the Transportation Committee every topic is so loaded that, you know, it requires a lot of digging for the council members that are not part of the committee. I feel like I'm always playing catch-up with all of the presentations. So, certainly, this is one of them that I would like to go back and probably review once again. I just had an opportunity to glance at some of the discussion, but not everything. I know that the committee reviewed the Concourse and other underground options. I remember I recall several months ago when we discussed this topic, there were several concerns that my colleagues raised, especially around not at this site, to Mr. Bokhari's point, and I think Ms. Mayfield had also raised looking at other sites outside of Uptown and not sticking with the hub and spoke model. Was that something the committee viewed in depth or that wasn't part of the charge?

Mr. Driggs said so, my recollection is that we had established that there was a great deal of traffic to and from Uptown and that that was a basis on which a concentration of busses arriving Uptown should be expected. We are going towards a more decentralized hub structure, to try to reflect a new approach. So, the difficulty I have with this is we could go on forever, right? We have been talking for a long time. There is no end to the things we need to think about. We're not closing doors with this vote, but what we are saying is that we will move on this below-grade solution, which allows other processes to move forward. Like applications for federal money and so on. So, we are experiencing some weeding or delays as a result of not doing this and I think it's been out there for us to talk about and think about for a long time. I will admit personally, I'm kind of partial to the Concourse solution because I'm excited by the thought of the activation. I see a mall type, an open space area with shops and things in there next to the arena and that vision appealed to me the first time I heard about this. I think it is fair to say that the staff is partial to the Concourse, from the outset. It struck me that they were, but we have made them defend that. We have made them justify to us why that is actually, for our purposes, the best answer. So, I'm hopeful that we can allow a bunch of things to proceed that need to proceed and can't happen without this decision being made. That's why it's coming up that way tonight.

Ms. Ajmera said I appreciate that because I know when we started this conversation, I think Mr. Driggs wasn't on board and had some concerns. I'm very certain that you probably did ask questions and asked staff to justify why they were recommending the Concourse option. At times I do hear concerns that Ms. Mayfield raised that it may look like we are being steered in one direction. I think that's where the community discussion comes in, where a lot of committee work is done. You only see that when you are actually going back and looking at some of the recordings that I have done, not all of them, but some of them. So, I trust the work that you are all doing in asking difficult questions. I'll be reaching out to Mr. Driggs as I go through that and if I have additional questions, but certainly, this is another loaded topic the Transportation Committee have worked on. So certainly, a lot of work has been done. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said all right. So, I think everyone has had an opportunity to speak. What I would like to propose is that we have a list of questions that have been raised. The idea of looking at other sites, the idea of addressing pipes, weather, and EVs even though Mr. Bokhari did a Google search of it.

Mr. Bokhari said I think we can mark that one complete.

Mayor Lyles said and modeling and our ride-sharing. I think that if we could put that on a list that's separate and still move forward so that we can have something before the MTC to support. So, with that, I'm going to ask you if you're willing to have the parking lot issues addressed as well as move forward with the recommendation of both the staff and the committee. Please raise your hand.

The straw vote was taken and recorded as follows:

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mitchell, Molina, Watlington, and Winston.

NAYS: Councilmember Bokhari and Mayfield.

Okay, anyone opposed to that? One, two. So, we'll move forward. There will be a parking lot that we will be doing. Ms. Watlington, did you?

Ms. Watlington said no, I'm good. I'm just looking [inaudible]. Go ahead.

Mayor Lyles said okay. Then we will move forward with this.

Mr. Bokhari said what did we just vote on? We voted on being in support of that, what was just presented to us, right? In general?

Mayor Lyles said yes.

Mr. Bokhari said okay, I'm a no.

Mayor Lyles said okay right. I understood. That's what I thought. Okay, we're done on this one.

Ms. Johnson said can I ask a question?

Mayor Lyles said yes, please.

Ms. Johnson said on the slide it said to move forward [inaudible] and someone said that was the future. Did we vote on that? Are they moving forward?

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Driggs will be able to address that.

Mr. Driggs said I'll state again, to be absolutely clear. What we're talking about tonight and the thing on which we just voted was that the only option we will consider as we pursue the CTC further, would be the Concourse option. All other questions are not yet answered. We are not limiting ourselves as to the further deliberation about the terms of the P3 and the other dimensions. It's just we can't keep talking about this thing with two possible bus transit terminals, both in the discussion at the same time.

Mayor Lyles said okay. Got it? All right. Thank you, Mr. Driggs. It was an important meeting you had, and I really appreciate all of the work that the committee did as well. Mr. Driggs said big one, yes.

Mr. Bokhari said another thing that won't come back up again. That's amazing. That's great. Let's go.

Mayor Lyles said it's a new year, new day, new time, new accomplishments. Sorry. Now let's go to our Budget Governance and Intergovernmental Relations Committee.

Budget, Governance and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

Ms. Ajmera said so, I recognize our committee members, Mr. Mitchell, our vice-chair, Ms. Mayfield, Ms. Anderson, and Mr. Bokhari. So, we had three items on our agenda. Our first item was our federal and state legislative agenda item, and that is something critical to the work that we are all doing, especially on the transportation side. Mr. Fenton had presented the proposed 2023 federal and state legislative agenda. Do you all have a copy of this legislative agenda PowerPoint deck? So, this includes our federal and state legislative agenda and this addresses important city strategic priorities on safety, sustainability, and our mobility. So, this includes our federal and state legislative agenda, and this addresses important our city's strategic priorities on safety, sustainability, and our mobility. You will see in our federal legislative agenda we got Destination Charlotte, 2030 Transit Plan, immigration, and sustainability. In our state legislative agenda item, you will see Mobility, State Transportation Funds, and SAFE Charlotte. As you review this legislative agenda deck, feel free to reach out to Mr. Fenton or any committee members if you have any questions on a specific agenda item or if you'd like to see anything else added or changed. As you go through this, I just want to highlight one further legislative agenda item, which is immigration. Our Senator, Thom Tillis, has been a fierce advocate for immigration, specifically three items that are included in our immigration report. So, I just want to highlight the work that he has been able to advocate for and really help us push this forward. There will be continued discussion on this, but I just wanted to highlight that as he has been working in a bipartisan fashion. Also, the committee's targeting the dates in February for our State Delegation Briefing. So, I hope some of you would sign up for our State Delegation Briefing. Then in March, we will be going to Washington, DC for our Congressional Delegation. At that time, we will be going over our federal legislative agenda item. So, our committee today unanimously adopted both the federal and state legislative agenda for consideration by the full Council. So, before I go into the engagement strategy and how we plan to engage with both Federal and State Delegations, I just want to open up the floor for any questions or concerns that you have or if you would like to see anything being added to our legislative agenda.

Mr. Winston said so, I did notice in our state legislative agenda there is no housing item on there. That is something that we have had on our legislative agenda for some time and I'm wondering why. Well, why, but more so, I would suggest that we continue to have something on there. We talked about something in our Housing and Neighborhood. I'm sorry, I can't even remember the name because it got changed. It used to be our Housing Committee and we were talking about some of the NEST recommendations and the use of the homestead tax, for instance, came up. I would suggest it to our council members of last month the Mayor sent us all an email about some reports that were funded by the Republican National Convention Host Committee and they came back. It was regarding the future of local options taxes in North Carolina, and a more in-depth report on the future of North Carolina revenue, state, and local options for the next few decades. I suggest we all take a look at this because of the issue of taxes and how they play on the state and local level and how we need to fund things that we need to do. I think this provides a lot of context and not necessarily suggestions, but things that could be done in relation to some of the things that are on our legislative agenda, specifically transportation, mobility, and to this point, housing. I think the homestead tax is a place where there are intersections in the community, amongst places, amongst bodies that don't often intersect. For instance, REBIC (Real Estate and Building Industry Coalition) and the Housing Justice Coalition. The idea of housing affordability just being a Charlotte issue but being a regional and state issue as well. I think there may be some type of capacity for us to look at that. So, if it's not specifically the homestead tax exemptions, I mean expanding that, I think we need to have some type of a housing item that we carry up to Raleigh, especially this being the long session, we won't be able to introduce anything necessarily in the short session. So now is the time. I would not want to adopt the state legislative agenda without seeing that myself. That's my point. With that said, I will recognize Ms. Watlington and turn it back over to Mayor Lyles after that.

Councilmember Watlington said well, you spoke to the discussion coming out of the Housing Committee. So, there was that and then I got something else, but I think I can wait to the second half of your update.

Unknown said what did you say, Ms. Watlington?

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Ms. Watlington said I was going to speak to the homestead, Mayor Pro Tem just covered that. So, I have another piece as it relates to the Budget and Effectiveness Committee, but I think you had a second half of your presentation, that I was going to wait for.

Ms. Ajmera said yes, this is it for our federal and state legislative agenda. The remaining is just on the engagement and how do we develop an engagement strategy to get the things done, but this is it on the legislative agenda. So, if you want to go over your request, I'll write that down.

Ms. Watlington said awesome. So, I know that I have sent to you a couple of times if your committee for the budget meeting. I know Councilmember Ajmera, and we've tried to get together. We'll figure it out, but one of the things that came out of a previous conversation that was lifted up to us by most recently the Bicycle Advisory Committee chair was this notion of having a virtual option for our City Board and Commission meetings. So, I did meet with ACM (Assistant City Manager), Reenie Askew as well as Mr. Attorney and you'll find in your inbox, there is going to be an overview of what we are able to do. I will momentarily ask you to speak to what you found, but I do think we're in a position to have some options to allow for that for certain committees, given that that is a critical part of our citizens' involvement in our government. I would like to request a referral to the Budget and Effectiveness Committee to discuss how we get that option available. Again, the virtual option for select City Boards and Commissions, but I would ask Mr. Attorney to please speak to what he's found and what some of the other cities around North Carolina are doing as it relates to that.

Patrick Baker, City Attorney said yes, if I could speak to that and thank you, Councilmember Watlington. We did take a look at all of your boards and commissions and really in terms of trying to identify risk associated with going virtual or not, we're trying to look at the lowest risk that's out there. So, we identified the committees that are quasi-judicial in nature, given the fact that there is a legal right to access to these, we felt like that is probably going to be more problematic for you to go virtual without clear authority to do that. We also looked at any board or commission that you'd delegated final decision-making authority to. That is, they don't have to come back to you to actually implement something. I know the Arts and Cultural Advisory Board has some of that ability as well. So, our initial recommendation is to not try to go virtual without some sort of legislative clarity from the State Government to not go with the virtual options for those boards and commissions that are quasi-judicial in nature or have that final decision-making. I think the Arts and Culture and the Civil Service Board were the ones that had final decision-making authority. I've got a list and I can share this with you. I provided to Ms. Watlington to get the process started, but then there's a whole host of commissions that aren't quasi-judicial in nature and also don't have final decision-making. Those are the pure advisory boards, and we feel like advisory is more since they're not actually making binding decisions for the city, nor are they dealing with individual rights that you would have in a quasi-judicial, we feel like those are the lowest-risk similar to our recommendations for the individual committees that you all sit on since you're not actually making decisions. We try to stay away from those. So, I'll provide this to you if it's the will of the group so you can see that, but we have pulled that information together.

Ms. Watlington said yes. So, my request is that we, well I guess gauge the Council's interest in referring that to the Budget and Effectiveness Committee.

Mayor Lyles said Ms. Watlington, I think when we've talked about this issue, it has always been around risk management and I think if we have a recommendation from the City Attorney, it could go to the agenda. I don't know that we have to do, but I think we just need to have something that's recommended on a risk factor. Mr. Baker knows it. We talk to him all the time about what you help us do. If I recall when we were having this discussion even around how we would deal with it, it was a question of because we are elected and have authority. I mean, the Bicycle Advisory Committee is the Bicycle Advisory Committee. I don't know that we have built a bicycle advisory plan because they said they wanted one or they probably helped, but I think the issues around things where there's quasi-judicial, those zoning matters, land use matters. I think, Mr. Baker, if you could just prepare something so that everybody's informed about it, then we would be

able to have a better sense of whether or not it needs a referral because then I would do it by exception.

Mr. Baker said and would you like that at maybe a Strategy Session?

Mayor Lyles said that would be fine.

Mr. Baker said okay.

Ms. Ajmera said and to follow up on that, Madam Mayor. So, I know there has already been a referral to all the committees about reviewing Boards and Commissions. I was wondering if that could be part of our holistic conversation because we are reviewing some boards and commissions, consolidating it, or even trying to figure out ways and how do we make that process more effective. So, that could be also part of our conversation, because I did notice once you sent that request, that was already part of our agenda. So, I mean, this could be part of that discussion. I don't know if you need another referral for that, but that's what I was thinking from the process perspective.

Mayor Lyles said so, I do know that the board and commission studies that were sent out have been received and the staff has put together a report on them already. Maybe that's the same thing. Just get the report out so that everybody has a result from it. It was basically the question that I think we were asking was: Should a council member be on a board, or should a board be continued or not? We have not gotten any responses that has said you should change this. People feel that they are participating. The engagement level is high. What their participation is, they feel valued. Well, I'm just going through the report out and then you can see what it says.

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

Mayor Lyles said I don't know that there any other action based upon if you say that you ask people to serve and they feel valued, then they serve. Now, unless there was some inordinate amount of staff time that said, you know, it's not useful, although Mr. Driggs has helped, and we still struggle with one. I saw him over Christmas, and it was like, oh my god, but I think that why don't we get that report to everybody, and then by exception, we can come back and make some decisions. I think that would be better than having another opportunity to add something to your agenda.

Ms. Ajmera said yes and we'll revise our agenda. Obviously, you know, we are not married to this if it's needed if it's absolutely something that the Council feels that we need to add, we can add that. That's not a problem, but there was one item that Mr. Winston requested, the homestead exemption. Depending on how the Council feels about it, we can certainly ask Mr. Fenton for his feedback on that, along with the lobbyist group.

Mr. Winston said just to clarify, it was a housing item. I've suggested to maybe look at the homestead.

Ms. Ajmera said coming from the Housing Committee that I'm sure Ms. Watlington will go over.

Mr. Driggs said I just had a comment on the mobility piece of the state legislative agenda. I think the first paragraph, the first bullet there is pretty loaded. Mr. Bokhari, I don't know if you have an opinion, but I think going in and having this on our agenda without yet having a more kind of fleshed-out proposal, it's no secret that we're talking about a one-cent sales tax. We've done so publicly; they know about it. So, I'm wondering if going in there with that right now is going to help or hurt us. I'll put it that way.

Mayor Lyles said I agree. We've worked so hard to get it to a place that it's not just our agenda, but it's the agenda for the region.

Ms. Ajmera said right.

Mayor Lyles said and that's what I would suggest, is that we continue to focus on how we can build the regional support for it. I would agree with Mr. Driggs that even though it says we're working with regional stakeholders; it may be something that would not be as clear about. We're not asking sufficiently enough to say this is what we want. I think that when we go, we ought to have what we want.

Mr. Driggs said that's the thing. Exactly because they know what we want, but we need to tell them properly before we come to this.

Mayor Lyles said exactly.

Ms. Ajmera said so a lot of this depends on our engagement strategy. Actually, Ms. Mayfield and Mr. Mitchell had raised this at our committee meeting. I was going to go in-depth about the engagement strategy because really that's where the rubber meets the road. Where, how do we present this and as a regional issue and really develop communication strategies so that as a region we are saying the same thing in terms of our request and our ask. So, that would be part of the engagement strategy that we are developing right now based on the referral from you, Mayor. So, if there is something specific that you'd like to see it modified on here or provide feedback on how we could approach this from the engagement and strategy perspective, I'll certainly provide that feedback to Mr. Fenton, but we realize that this is going to take our regional partners. So today we did discuss this and we are going to actually be working with our regional partners like Centralina Regional Council, the Business Alliance, and also the MTC before we implement any of these interactions in February and March.

Mayor Lyles said I really want to say I just borrowed the Mayor Pro Tem's document. I didn't have a copy of this.

Ms. Ajmera said which are you talking about?

Mayor Lyles said the proposed 2023 legislative agendas. That's what I'm asking. Helping me know where I am supposed to be thinking.

Ms. Ajmera said so, there are two. Okay, so to the presentation today, that committee review, there are two items. One is the federal and state legislative agenda and the second is the engagement strategy. That was something discussed, but that's not part of the deck. That's not part of the presentation.

Mr. Driggs [inaudible] the documents.

Mayor Lyles said thank you. So, we have the federal legislative agenda that was presented, and you guys have discussed while I was out of the room, or just?

Mr. Winston said Chairperson Ajmera presented the topic that they sent these two out of committee and we started the discussion while you were gone. I made a comment. Ms. Watlington made a comment and Mr. Driggs has made a comment. Now everybody else is in line to make comments on their input onto the legislative agendas.

Mayor Lyles said so I'm going to go ahead, and I think I had Mr. Driggs, and I think both he and I would suggest that anything around mobility and transportation funds should not come specifically from a Charlotte proposal legislative agenda. So, that would be my suggestion.

Mr. Driggs said I'm interested frankly, to hear Mr. Bokhari on this subject because of some, I mean, what do you think?

Mayor Lyles said I think we were just saying that. So, I'm caught up now. I've got the paper.

Mr. Bokhari said I've already spoken to the Manager about this. I have some concerns in how some of this is phrased. Some similar to what you've said, some different things. I think, though, we don't need a huge amount of work. We just need to tweak it because

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there are some things we know now that we can be a little more explicit and say. There's some things that we know what direction we're pointing in and we need to be a bit more vague, but we don't want to either back ourselves in a corner and say, this is the only thing we're asking for, nor do we want to go too out on a limb and say something that we know is going to be shot down or viewed as divisive. So, I think over the next week or so, I can personally spend a little time on this with the staff and then give a recommendation based on the feedback I've heard and some of the work we're doing that we can see. We're not voting tonight. So, that's fine. Again, this is about kind of de-risking half of it and being more specific with the other half based on things that are yet to be figured out in the coming months. So, this is more the art of not stepping on our own toes while kind of laying it out a little more specifically. So, I'm happy to do that. We don't need to waste a ton of time right now and then I don't expect there to be any controversy in that. But if there is then before the vote, people can offer up their alternatives and put it on there. Mayor Lyles said okay. So, what I'm hearing is we would not have mobility and state transportation funds on this agenda until we have some wording that would work. I don't know exactly how we will get there, but I think it is going to take some time.

Ms. Ajmera said so just to clarify, I think there seems to be confusion. So, the committee never discussed a one-cent sales tax. So, the mobility that you see on here is a more broad discussion because we wanted the regional partners' collaboration so that we are actually reassuring the same talking points before developing a strategy because this is not just our strategy, right? This is not just our plan; this is just more broad that we will develop a strategy to get to the more specific ask so that we don't miss this very important opportunity. In our engagement strategy, there was a second topic that we discussed that you do not see on your deck, where we will be developing the framework, and that framework will require collaborating with our regional partners, especially the MTC' Centralina Regional Council and the Business Alliance to come up with the engagement strategy, the communication message, and the language before we go to Raleigh in February so that we are all on the same page. But this is just more broad.

Mr. Bokhari said so if I can go back. I didn't personally jump to one cent sales tax in this. I didn't have that problem. Where my problem was, was more along the lines of things like you've got a federal-level agenda that talks specifically more about only backing us in a corner around going after funds for light rail, for example, when you have just had a successful trip to DC where maybe new opportunities have been uncovered. So, mine was more broadening for other topics to make sure we're not limiting ourselves. The other thing is I wasn't able to be part of our conversation today, but we have purposely in committee because I was busy, we have purposely not had or allowed the inter-governmental body to take on things outside of essentially General Assembly, local like County Commission and School Board and Congress in the legislative agenda. If somebody is out there on their own building an engagement strategy with all of the towns, with all these bodies, like that's news to me. I would hope that we put a little more thought into that because that group has limited connectivity to what's actually going on in the work plan right now. So, I think that's maybe like a pause button. Let's get the agenda defined and then let's figure out beyond General Assembly and Congress who's doing what with those topics.

Ms. Ajmera said Mr. Mitchell, do you want to?

Mayor Lyles said the Manager wants to comment on this and I think this is really important. So, we'll take our time to get through it.

Ms. Ajmera said alright.

Mayor Lyles said where everybody will get a chance to speak, but it's an important topic for us.

Mr. Jones said thank you, Mayor and members of the council. Liz helped me out If I totally messed this up, okay. Words matter in this. So, transit means something in non-transit means something. So, what Mr. Bokhari asked me when he saw the federal legislative piece as the 2030 Transit Corridor System Plan. So, I checked in with Dana to make sure

that I understood what that was. So, it is more specific to bus and rail transit. So, what Mr. Bokhari was saying is, let's not limit ourselves to go to the federal government when we can also do things with roads and bike paths and potential greenways and sidewalks and things of that nature. With the state mobility, so, Dana, Right? We're okay so far? Okay. So Dana, with the state mobility piece, and correct me if I'm wrong, I thought what the concept was to keep something so loose out there.

Ms. Ajmera said right.

Mr. Jones that it is regional in nature, which gives us flexibility, so it doesn't look like Charlotte's doing it alone.

Ms. Ajmera said right.

Mr. Jones said so, I think the words matter here so that there are more people that are saying the same thing as opposed to saying different things.

Ms. Ajmera said right. Yeah, and just to follow up on that, Madam Mayor, if I may. To your first bullet point, when it comes to keeping it broad for the federal item, the last item, you see the sustainability and resilience where we do have an infrastructure. So, Mr. Fenton, would that cover Mr. Bokhari's point about keeping it broad enough where we are looking at bike infrastructure or other infrastructure on the last agenda? It's sustainability and resilience.

Mayor Lyles said on the federal page?

Ms. Ajmera said yes, on slide number five.

Mayor Lyles said so I don't have numbers.

Mr. Bokhari said maybe in the Senate, but not the House.

Mayor Lyles said but the sustainability and resilience doesn't have infrastructure. Here I see it. It is infrastructure here, but it says fleet electrification and infrastructure and I assumed the reference was electrification infrastructure.

Ms. Ajmera said the SEAP (Strategic Energy Action Plan) sort of covers all of it, right? It depends on how we look at it, but really anything that takes us away from cars, it's actually ultimately meeting our SEAP goals, which is going carbon-free, but I hear Mr. Bokhari's point whether we can add it to the sustainability and resilience slide, or we could just make the 2030 Transit Corridors System Plan more broad so that it includes all infrastructure. I would like to hear from Mr. Fenton as to his recommendation.

Dana Fenton, City Manager's Office said thank you, Mayor and Council. This has been quite a discussion and I'd like to have the opportunity to go back and kind of take all the notes and try to put them together. I think we've heard some really good comments tonight, really good feedback. I'd like to have the opportunity to go back and see what we can do. We're working with the City Manager and with others as well. There's nothing in here that's planned to prevent us from applying for grants for roadway or bike and PED (pedestrian overlay district) projects that you have that in your strategic plans. We can always use that to move forward on something like that, but still, it would be a good idea to go back to be able to take a look at this as a whole before making any comments back to the City Council.

Mayor Lyles said okay. So, the next speaker that I had was Ms. Johnson.

Mr. Bokhari said oh I'm sorry. I had just two other really quick points.

Ms. Johnson said thank you, Madam Mayor.

Mr. Bokhari said no, I'm dead serious.

mmm

Ms. Johnson said but I have been waiting a while. You can wait.

Mayor Lyles said I'm sorry.

Mr. Bokhari said I may very well be on board. I need to read what the Mayor sent, and I'm on board to explore the housing thing with you and whoever else is interested in that [inaudible] this week as well.

Ms. Johnson said point of order.

Mr. Bokhari said actually I didn't finish.

Ms. Johnson said point of order. Patrick, please.

Mr. Bokhari said call the question.

Mayor Lyles said I made an assumption that Mr. Bokhari was complete.

Mr. Bokhari said that's fine. I'm sorry I wasn't done, but I'll talk about it offline with you. That's good.

Mayor Lyles said, Ms. Johnson.

Ms. Johnson said thank you. I wanted to know if we could add to our state agenda issues on the semi-parking, the grass, and the litter on state-owned roads. I've received ten emails this year in District 4.

Unknown said [inaudible].

Ms. Johnson said no, this year, yes. Well, maybe I'm exaggerating, but quite a few but we have a huge problem in the city with semi-parking, grass, and litter, especially on those state-owned roads, and District 4 has quite a bit; District 2 as well. So, I want to know if that could be referred to either Intergovernmental or SAFE or, you know, Great Neighborhoods.

Mayor Lyles said I think that Mr. Graham and I saw your emails over the week last week about this. It is a difficult issue because federal law changed how people have to drive those long-haul trucks and I don't think that they actually had any consideration for the impact that it would have on a place like our city. I don't know that we have a way, but I think certainly we ought to explore something. I don't think it's a state issue.

Ms. Johnson said well, for us, it's state-owned roads and the parking.

Mayor Lyles said well that's because they have to park because they have to drive at a certain time and stop. They can't drive any further and nobody gave us notice to build anything for them. So, it's the driver that has to stop. So, I'm not saying I think we ought to try whatever we can, but I think we have to start where the problem began and that's with the drivers not having the ability to drive longer to stops that they had ordinarily used. It's a tough problem, but I think we ought to figure out something.

Ms. Johnson said because some of it might be that, but some of it might be the driver is staying somewhere in my district for the weekend and parking the truck. So, I would at least like to investigate at the committee level or something. Also, the grass, also the litter on state-owned roads. So, we need some help. I have a meeting scheduled with Senator Mohammed next week. He's really gracious, but we need some help from a state level and I'll raise up District 4.

Mayor Lyles said I think you're right about all of this and I would say we refer it to Housing and SAFE Community Neighborhoods for looking at the root causes and getting us options that other places have been doing.

Ms. Mayfield said is that a legislative [inaudible]?

Mayor Lyles said well, no, I was saying she's still doing the legislature. She's going to meet with Senator Mohammed.

Ms. Johnson said but it's a city-wide issue. So, yes. Whatever committee you feel is the best one, but we have to address this. Our residents have to know that we are addressing semi-truck parking, grass, and litter issues specifically in District 4.

Mr. Graham said I want to take a different approach although I agree 100 percent with you, and you saw my emails over the weekend. Maybe because I want to move quicker than the committee can move on this. Maybe, Mr. Manager from my email, maybe it's just an internal quick look at this thing from the three departments that are directly responsible, Code Enforcement, CMPD, and what's the other one, CDOT (Charlotte Department of Transportation) in terms of what we can do immediately to one, communicate to the public that we're aware of the issue, two, to enforce the rules and regulations that's already on the books notwithstanding what may have come out of the federal rule change. Then, three began to do what Ms. Johnson has talked about, working informally not through any legislative type of request, but just talking with our colleagues at the state level about their aid and their support. I think we can move quicker than sending it to a committee that doesn't meet until 30 days from now.

Ms. Johnson said well, and I don't know, but what jurisdiction do we have like on state-owned roads I'm told we have no jurisdiction. I know that Rodney Jamison was so gracious over the weekend. As a courtesy, they picked up a mattress off a state highway. So, we need some help if we're not able to install signs on these state highways, you know, clean up the grass and the litter, then we need some assistance. Can we have a jurisdiction? Is there something to stop us from creating an ordinance, Patrick, that 'semis can't park within city limits? I mean, we just need help. It's a big problem and we don't have a jurisdiction. So, I don't think there's anything, Councilmember Graham, that city can do if we don't have jurisdiction. Another huge issue is 311. The 311 operators are getting beat up in these emails, that they're not doing something. So, we need a more seamless process for our residents when they call 311, either if there's a state call center that they can seamlessly transfer or we can educate, but our residents are fed up. Thank you.

Mr. Graham said before you make a comment, Mr. Manager, the state would love for us to clean it up for them. They would give us jurisdiction in a heartbeat, and we would pay to go clean it up. I think we've done that before and we got stuck with the bill for a long time, Right? So, I really believe that it's a management issue that we need to hear from the Manager and his direct reports that are dealing on a daily basis with enforcing the current rules. Then we continue to work informally with our senators and our representatives in terms of pleading and asking for their support. I mean, informally and then allow Ms. Watlington and her committee to kind of do some of the longer-term types of research necessary to get permanent or at least some type of solution, but I think it's an immediate concern, Mr. Manager. I think sending it to the committee just basically kicks it down the road from my perspective.

Mr. Jones said so, we thought we had until the 30th of January 2023, when we would get to the Annual Strategy Meeting. We've already put the team together. I got their first initial memo on December 16, 2023. It's led by Code Enforcement. We also have CDOT, CMPD, Planning, IT (Information Technology), and Communications. We're looking at six areas, so I'd like to do it twofold. One is I'd like to spend a little time with Liz. I'm not going to make eye contact right now and to see if we are ready to give you at least the white paper about w'at we're trying to do, but again, we looked at this as an opportunity at the Annual Strategy Meeting to sit down and talk with you about that. The other thing, Councilmember Mitchell, a few meetings ago, you asked about having CMPD come back and talk to the Council. So, what we're doing is at the Action Briefing on the 23rd is a public safety discussion, which would include the CMPD. There were some questions today about, even in the Budget Workshops, what are some other opportunities, or some things being left out. So again, as we start to think about the Annual Strategy Meeting,

one of the things is priority setting. So, some of the things that you haven't talked about as a group, like what's going to happen with arts and culture, what's going to happen with some of the other priorities that you have, will be a part of that long-winded way of saying we're not sitting on our hands. We want to be intentional with it, but we could get you something prior to the Annual Strategy Meeting because we have been working on it.

Mayor Lyles said okay. So, what I heard is Ms. Johnson and Mr. Graham have been really agonizing over this from a way of organizing it. So, you heard what the Manager said, and for the session to be able to address it, then when this team would be available to do that would be something that we would talk about for priorities. Am I saying that correctly, Mr. Jones? Ms. Johnson, are you okay with that? I can still meet with the Senator. I would meet with whatever the overlays of your districts are.

Ms. Johnson said well, my question, I guess because streets like W.T. Harris, Mallard Creek, Prosperity Church, Sugar Creek, University City Boulevard, and so on and so on and so on in District 4. So, when we get a presentation at the Strategy Session, are you going to be able to describe what you can do on city-maintained roads, or is there a plan to work in collaboration with the state?

Mayor Lyles said the latter to work and I think it's not a presentation. I thought he was saying it would be a group discussion. It's not going to be what we're doing now, presentation. It would be a discussion with Code, the police chief, and people that are engaged in this work.

Ms. Johnson said but if we don't have jurisdiction, will the discussion help, or do we need to work with the state for a solution?

Mayor Lyles said that would be one of the things that I think would be discussed. I think you're right. We don't have jurisdiction and I think the discussion would be, well, we don't have jurisdiction. What do we do, right?

Ms. Johnson said right. Send it to are committed. Okay, that's fine. Okay, alright.

Mr. Graham said I'll make one last comment and I'll be quiet. It's the city residents that's throwing trash and debris on the state road, right? So, there's some local accountability with our citizens that we have to have a conversation with and that's why my email talked about really stressing the importance of this clean city campaign and kind of enforcing the codes. A lot of these issues are from these private companies whose property managers aren't cleaning up their property. That's stuff blows in the wind, etc., but I think we got to get back to, and again, we're a big city, right? So, we do a lot of great things, but some simple things like talking about picking up the trash on thoroughfares and highways and going back to when Charlotte was a model clean city. When literally our city was like, people will come here from all over the country and say, wow. I mean they still do, but they are certainly in northeast Charlotte.

Ms. Johnson said right.

Mr. Graham said there are certainly warning signs that there is an issue, and I live over there, too. It's the broken glass syndrome. If we don't nip this thing in the bud now, these 18-wheelers and trash collection and working with our Clean City Committee, etc., we're going to have a problem later.

Ms. Johnson said and how long ago was that because I know my predecessor used to talk about the same thing: litter in this area.

Mayor Lyles said I was going to say we need to invite Mr. Phipps to come to the session.

Ms. Johnson said yes.

Mayor Lyles said it is one of the things-

Ms. Johnson said I mean, maybe you all don't see it citywide, but we need some help. Okay. In District 4. My question is, when we talk about the virtual meetings for committees, the COVID (Coronavirus Disease) numbers are at a moderate level. They're rising. Some of us had COVID last week. So, I want to know, Patrick, is there an entity that you can get a proactive answer for or really seek to get an answer? I know there's a conservative interpretation on virtual meetings and we're hesitant to make a decision on virtual meetings, but if we have people that are serving on committees and they're asking for virtual meetings, I'm concerned, I guess, about the bureaucracy. If we can get an answer or some guidance from an entity. I don't know. I know you're the attorney, but I know there's a group of attorneys that are looking at that law. So, if we can get something to be able to get a solid answer instead of dissecting which committee can meet virtually, if there's a way that we can just get some guidance on that, that would be great.

Mr. Baker said okay.

Ms. Johnson said thanks.

Mr. Bokhari said send it to the committee.

Mr. Mitchell said so, Mayor and Council and Dana, while you're up there, I just want to make sure when I was at my committee discussion, I was clear on the language. So, I'm back on page nine; state mobility.

Mayor Lyles said tell me again. I don't have any numbers.

Mr. Mitchell said state mobility, PowerPoint page number five. Slide number nine. So. Councilmember Driggs, I'll be the first one to share with you that was not our train of thought when we looked at this material. It wasn't about the one percent transit sales tax. It was about a broad discussion on strategy. So, we did not have a definite project in mind. So, to me, this conversation got way to the.

Mr. Driggs said I'm just concerned about what they think, right? Like we know what we think, right? I'm sort of worrying about what this looks like to them.

Mr. Mitchell said but I want to make sure we hear Dana's true intention. I don't think that was Dana's intention as well. I think he's very sensitive to the one percent transit tax that we've been struggling with. So, I'm sure he was not going to put us in a position that it would not be successful. So, Dana, just for clarification, two bullet points: What was the intent that we voted on? Was it to enable the voters of Mecklenburg County? What was your intent on that language?

Mr. Fenton said yes, the intent of the language is to have something that could be adopted by other jurisdictions in addition to the Charlotte City Council and try to state generally what it is that the region would be looking for and to make sure that we're all on the same page.

Mr. Mitchell said okay. Thank you, because that's what I gathered in the committee meeting. It seems like we came here, and it went down a whole other path. So, I want to get us back on slide nine, page five. So, we talked about relationships and hopefully, the Mayor will get there, when she talked about strategy engagement. I would hope that we will use the same approach we've always used. We rely on people and relationships in Raleigh, all of us. We all got unique relationships. We got friends that we can call. Councilmember Graham served there for 10 years. He can pick up the phone and probably call everybody in Raleigh, some of us around this table. So, I don't want this to be a solo act. I want this to be a joint partnership with the City Council with a definite intentional strategy we all agree on.

Mayor Lyles said, and I agree with that. I would like to say that because it is something that is county-wide, it would have to not only include this Council, but it would have to include the other folks that would have to go with us to get this done. In addition, the reality of our delegation versus who's in positions of power needs to be really focused on.

So, I think what Mrs. Ajmera is saying and I guess what I was trying to get to is Mr. Jones addressed the Transit Corridor System Plan, having a broader definition of that under the federal and actually identifying infrastructure as a separate category. That's roads, sidewalks, and bridges. The bridges are probably going to come out first. Those things just getting our piece of the federal money on that. Then as we go to the state to actually think through this process that would get us to this result, and it is an inclusive one. It has to be because of just the dynamics that we all know. So, I think that we can work with that in the next couple of days and try to figure it out. Then as we go to the state to actually think through this process that would get us to this result, and it is an inclusive one. It has to be. It has to be because of just the dynamics that we all know. So, I think that we can work with that in the next couple of days and try to figure it out. That would be something that everyone would share in the opportunity to participate, okay.

Ms. Ajmera said so, we will amend the federal legislative agenda item to ensure that it's broad enough that includes bridges, roadways, bikes, bike lanes, and everything. On the state legislative agenda item, I think Mr. Mitchell helped clarify that it is just broad. Really, we are working on the engagement strategy. The intent here is to develop a sustainable strategy in developing stronger and just a more collaborative relationships with our regional partners and also with members of the General Assembly. So, Mr. Fenton and our lobbyist team is working on a communication strategy. They are developing a communication strategy and then they are going to make sure that mobility, we discussed that as a regional issue. Then they will help us schedule visits to the General Assembly starting in February. So, we will have a visit starting from February, March, and April and everyone will be given some sort of talking points where we join our regional partners in that effort. Is that right Mr. Fenton? Correct me if I'm wrong or feel free to add if I missed anything.

Mr. Fenton said that was the original intent. Of course, I think what the Mayor was saying before is that maybe the region is not exactly all together on that yet. So, we may need to make some mid-course corrections.

Mayor Lyles said yes.

Mayor Lyles said it says continue to work with regional stakeholders. It might not be reasonable, it might be a different word to use there, but they would be working with the General Assembly and stakeholders. I think this is a better way of looking at it because I don't know if they're all regional.

Ms. Ajmera said in knowing that not all our regional partners are on the same page, that's why the language you see here, it's very broad. It does not say one-cent sales tax. It's just really broad and hopefully, that will bring people together and then we work on the next steps from there. Certainly, there is more work needs to be done on this. So, work in progress.

Mayor Lyles said Ms. Watlington was your comment about this? Ms. Watlington wishes to be recognized.

Ms. Watlington said real quick question. It's actually for Dana. It's very, very simple. Obviously, we spent a lot of time talking about you and our lobbyists engaging with the elected officials at the state level and the federal level. It appears that the wording was done in such a way so that we could make sure that we are getting buy-in from our neighbors. Are we actively having those conversations before it comes to us?

Mr. Fenton said those conversations have been taking place for some time now. We do have a point at which, where I say we the city, has a point at which it's a really good idea to adopt the legislative agendas. For example, you know, in the state they have their bill filing deadlines probably sometime in March. So, we've been working on this for some time now and certainly, we recognize that we could have a situation where we'll get into a session, and we may not have that consensus we need.

Ms. Watlington said yes, that's the reason I asked because if we are talking about changing the language and this is something that our surrounding neighbors have already signed on to, I would think that has a bigger implication, but if what you're saying is that this is just something we've been working on and we think that this is something people can buy into, but we haven't actually talked to anybody else, then I would think this is an opportunity.

Mr. Fenton said I mean; those discussions have taken place with the others.

Mayor Lyles said it might be conditional acceptances.

Ms. Watlington said right and so I would hate for us to change something and then not meet whatever the conditions were. Do you see what I'm saying?

Mayor Lyles said yes, I do and I don't know that there is an answer for that because it's not that clear. It's a political process and it's just not that simple.

Ms. Watlington said just to be clear, my question is has anybody else outside of the City of Charlotte put their eyes on this particular language and said, "I like that?"

Mr. Fenton said I have not shared this with that many people.

Ms. Watlington said okay.

Mr. Fenton said because it's something for the Council to consider first, but I can share with you on a few of these things in here. For example, in the state legislative agenda at the SAFE Charlotte position, trying to get the authority for CMPD to bring in non-sworn units to investigate traffic accidents. That is something that's been worked on at the statewide level by the Association of Chiefs of Police, for example. It sounds to me talking with them that they're ready to go and ask for legislation this year. Under the federal agenda Destination CLT, that is mainly the construction of the fourth parallel runway in the north and south and around taxiways involved with it. Those talks have been going on for several years. We've had meetings with the Congressional Delegation staff just between the Aviation Department, myself, and our federal lobbying team to talk about this. They have signaled a great high-level support for the projects, and we have heard that also from our Congressional Delegation in meetings.

Ms. Watlington said you're good. You're good. I just wanted to get a sense of how firm this was and who else external to us might have already commented on it.

Mr. Jones said maybe just to help a little bit, Councilmember Watlington and I will work with Sarah Hazel. Different jurisdictions throughout the region have approved certain language that talks about revenue sources to help with transportation in transit. While it may not be these words, it's not inconsistent that folks have gone on record saying that they need something.

Mr. Fenton said that's true. Thank you. Good point.

Ms. Ajmera said informally, I have had conversations with various towns. We had a holiday event that the Business Alliance had hosted. Mr. Driggs had introduced me to the mayors of towns, especially the northern towns. I'd asked about our legislative agenda. To Mr. Jones's point, they have something similar, but not exactly the same. I think that's what Mr. Fenton is trying to work through based on the Council's approval and blessings so that he can move forward and proceed with some of those conversations and have some sort of consistency in our language as we go up to Raleigh. Also, Mr. Fenton had in my conversation with him, had also emphasized that we have to stay focused here and we are to prioritize things that we can accomplish. For example, there was a request from Chief Jennings about, I'm sorry, what is?

Mr. Fenton said it's the issue Chief Jennings brought up with the Council last summer about people charged with certain very serious crimes can be released on bond by just seeing a magistrate and he would like to see them go before judges.

Ms. Ajmera said right. We did discuss that. However, we did not add it to our agenda because the Chief is still working through association and other municipalities to build consensus before we added it to our agenda so that our efforts do not fail. So, I think it's a very delicate balance that we are trying to make here, where we are really prioritizing some items and staying focused and realistically just focusing on things that we can accomplish while on other items we can informally work through our delegation. For example, state-maintain roads or other items because those are equally important, but we can still achieve results without having it added to our legislative agenda. Is that a good way to summarize our conversation?

Mr. Fenton said I think that's a pretty good summarization, yes.

Ms. Ajmera said so that's all we have. Ms. Mayfield and Mr. Mitchell, if you want to add anything on our legislative agenda.

Ms. Mayfield said [inaudible].

Mayor Lyles said this is the consideration of changes to the form of government. Let's go. Where do we go, Ms. Ajmera?

Ms. Ajmera said so for our second topic, was changes to the form of government. Mr. Baker gave us an overview and just recapped what the Citizens Advisory Committee's recommendation was from last year or the year before. Our committee unanimously approved three items that I will go over. All of those three items will be subject to the referendum. So, first is moving to four-year terms. Second, is staggered terms and third is adding an eighth district while keeping four At-large seats. Keep in mind, that none of this requires legislative approval, but this will require a referendum if there are 5,000 signatures. There was consensus among committee members that we will get this right from the get-go, where we will put it on the referendum. So, that was something that was approved by the Council and if there is consensus among the full Council, we can take the next step, which is to bring the Resolution of Intent at our upcoming Council meeting, because we do have a stringent timeline with an election coming of filing in July. So, I would like to hear from the Council as to what their thoughts are. The last item we discussed under the form of government was the structure. So full-time versus part-time. Mr. Mitchell and I had specifically requested data as to what cities of our size that have similar forms of government, a Council-Manager form of government. What is their structure? Is it part-time or full-time? Obviously, we have been operating under this part-time structure for decades and Charlotte is a different city than it was 20, 30 years ago, right? We are the 14th largest city. So much growth has happened. So, do we seriously need to consider from the policy perspective going towards full-time or not? So, that's something the committee will be discussing at our next meeting, but that's a pending item for now. The committee is not ready to move that forward, but the other three items that I did mention were unanimously adopted by the committee.

Ms. Watlington said my main question was around the timeline. I did see the PowerPoint, but I wasn't exactly clear how to interpret that. Is the idea that whatever the proposal is, the referendum happens in November, so the election for this next cycle would remain unchanged? So, it really wouldn't be until 2025, until a change would be seen.

Ms. Ajmera said, right.

Ms. Watlington said, okay, got it.

Ms. Ajmera said and then there is a timeline, a slide that Mr. Baker can pass out, but you will see the timeline where we were targeting November's election timeline.

Ms. Mayfield said so, this is directly to the question that Councilmember Watlington just asked as far as the committee.

Mayor Lyles said okay.

Ms. Mayfield said so, we backed it in. So, the Council must vote within 60 days of the public hearing. What we're looking at is the Council adopts the Resolution of Intent and sets a date for the public hearing. A public hearing must be held at least 10 days after the published notice and within 45 days of the resolution. Council must vote within 60 days of the public hearing, meaning no later than August 28th of this year, in order for the necessary time that's needed to get it on November's ballot.

Mayor Lyles said Ms. Watlington, is that your question? Anything else?

Mr. Graham said I really hadn't been following this at all. So, a lot of this is new information for me. Ms. Watlington asked the first question in terms of when would this take place, and it should take place in 2025, which means we have to make a decision this year, which is, from my perspective, maybe problematic, right, but we'll see.

Secondly, the issue of a referendum, you know, listen, we've been down this road before, right, and I think sometimes the Council just needs to make a decision and let the chips fall where they may. If this someone wants to challenge that decision, allow them to do so. That's how the process works. I remember there were some people around this dais that made a decision about building an arena when the public said no, but we did it because it was in the best interest of the public, even if it cost some members their seats. I think we all can say that arena uptown has proven to be an appropriate vote. Notwithstanding the voice of the public, they're saying, no, we shouldn't do this. So, I think the issue of how our city should be governed is a legitimate one that we should address. I think the decision about part-time versus full-time is a legitimate issue to address based on where we are. Staff support, Council support from staff, I think you can certainly have a conversation about that. I think our staff that works with us do a tremendous job, but I certainly can use more help in terms of speechwriting other than just scheduling, right? There's research, there's a lot more things, attending meetings for me and the public, right. I mean, there's meetings I should go to. There should be meetings other staff can go to on my behalf, community meetings, etc. I think all of those are legitimate conversations, but I get back to the point of the Council making a decision. I think if we're going to do this and we're serious about changing the form of government, I think we ought to make a decision and tell the community what we're going to do and why we did it, and then let the chips fall where they may. We ought to make a decision and guide the public in terms of where we're going and allow the process to take off from there.

Mr. Driggs said so, did I hear correctly that you were saying we should add a district and maintain four At-large? Was that the recommendation of the Citizens Committee? I thought they were talking about going to three.

Ms. Ajmera said that's right. So, the Citizens Committee's recommendation was to remove one At-large and add an eighth district. However, after reviewing the Citizens Advisory Committee's recommendation, the committee, this committee because it's a new committee, because their recommendation was made last year or the year before, but this committee reviewed the Citizens Advisory Committee recommendation and said no, we would like to keep four At-large and add an eighth district because that doesn't require legislative approval. So, that was the committee's recommendation, which is different than the Citizens.

Mr. Driggs said I just wanted to clarify because it wasn't clear that that didn't follow the Citizens Committee recommendation.

Ms. Ajmera said that's right.

Mr. Driggs said okay.

Ms. Ajmera said that's right.

Mr. Driggs said also, I think having an even number of seats invites a whole lot of tiebreaking votes potentially, right?

Mayor Lyles said oh no, we're going to give the Mayor a vote.

Ms. Ajmera said that's right.

Mr. Winston said will you be the Mayor then?

Mayor Lyles said who knows?

Mr. Bokhari said several people around this dais would like to know, not me.

Mayor Lyles said no, go ahead Mr. Driggs. I'm sorry.

Mr. Driggs said that's alright. Second, where did this full-time thing come from? I don't remember the referral [inaudible].

Mr. Winston said I can tell you it comes from the hours spent at this job. I've been here 12 hours today, so.

Ms. Ajmera said so, we were discussing the form of government, and Ms. Mayfield raised a very important point, as if you're discussing the form of government in changes to form of government should we discussed part-time versus full-time, because that's not something we have ever discussed in the past because this sort of part-time has been going on for decades, right and certainly a lot has changed in our city.

Mr. Driggs said so, Ms. Ajmera I heard you from before. I understand that. I'm just saying as a procedural point, I think somebody should have offered that to the full Council and it should have had a proper referral to the committee before the group took it upon itself to introduce that as an item. So, it's a procedural question.

Ms. Ajmera said our committee's charge was to look at the form of government. So, this falls under the form of government to Mr. Graham's point. To Ms. Mayfield's point we've got to look at the form of government in a holistic fashion and not just one item here, second item here, third item here. I feel like this is déjà vu all over again. I mean, we discussed this in like what, a year ago and two years ago and there was no decision made and here it got kicked back to the committee again.

Mr. Driggs said so, correct. Sorry to interrupt because I understand that, but the outstanding items, the pending items from the prior activity of the committee did not include full-time. So, you had a couple of inherited topics that didn't get resolved when I chaired the committee, they didn't include the full-time. That's a big deal. So, I think we ought to be careful to bring that up for Council consideration through the proper process and normally those ideas don't originate in committees.

Ms. Ajmera said yes, I think this was part of the normal process because the form of government was something that was assigned to the committee, and it was a broad charge. It wasn't specific to just one or two items and that's where the committee felt that it was important to really bring holistic recommendations back to the full Council so that we don't get this item kicked back to the committee a month or two months down the road.

Mr. Driggs said okay. So, I don't support that, for what it's worth. Mr. Graham, on the subject of the referendum, I think the county conducted a referendum on four-year terms not that long ago, which lost by a wide margin. Therefore, I think there is a presumption or at least there is a concern that the public is not necessarily on board. Therefore, I would expect with a high level of confidence that you're going to get the 5,000 signatures and that the public might feel that for us to try to proceed without that referendum would be regarded as aggressive on our part.

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Mr. Graham said I disagree.

Mayor Lyles said, I know you said you disagree. You have stated [inaudible].

Ms. Mayfield said I was getting clarification from our attorney because this was not the first time the four-year terms were discussed when this committee discussed it, Mayor. So, I was having a conversation with our attorney because, as noted in our committee discussion, it was not the first time when this committee had a discussion regarding four-year terms. So, I was clarifying that with the City Attorney.

Mr. Driggs said there were some legacy items that the committee inherited, including four-year terms. The full-time one was not among them. That's what I said.

Mayor Lyles said well, did you ask him to address us?

Ms. Mayfield said yes, ma'am.

Mayor Lyles said Ms. Mayfield has asked Mr. Baker.

Mr. Baker said to be clear what understood was the legacy and what I've been hearing is that four-year terms have always been part of the discussion. It's not a new discussion. This has always been a part of the discussion. The staggered term, we really said in one word, four-year staggered, but that's always been part of the discussion as well and also, whether or not you were going to add an eighth district has always been a part of the discussion. What is new from my understanding, has been this idea of full-time, part-time, which as I said today, was more of a compensation issue. My understanding is that Mr. Bergman is going to be bringing some information to you to discuss that, but that's my recollection as to how this is all been going.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you, Attorney Baker, because that's what I wanted clarification on so that this conversation didn't take a left. The conversation that we had regarding compensation, that's where the conversation of full-time and part-time came in. That is strictly a budget piece. For the recommendation that came from this committee for the A, B, and C, it wasn't the budget conversation of compensation. That is a conversation for the full Council for us to discuss. From committee based on unfortunately it being kicked down the road for years, not just the last few years, we had this conversation when I first got on the Council, going back to 2013. So, from this committee, what we are submitting to the full Council that was just noted by our chair, were the three items. The full-time part-time piece is a budget conversation. That wasn't part of one of the three items. That is a conversation that we're going to have as a Council cause it is a compensation question. Compensation, if you're full-time, if you're part-time, here is what our comparables are. Here are the other eight large cities that are also the Council-Manager form of government, the staff is working on bringing that back.

So, for what we have submitted to the full Council to have the discussion about and what I shared with my colleagues and with all of you as far as backdating the timeline, although I personally think it's a conversation of political will versus political ability, the City Council has the ability to make the decision. I have been saying that since my first term. We have the ability, but I have also heard over the years multiple times, many council members from the dais and in front of any camera had this long debate of why it needs to go to a referendum. I say we have the ability to vote yea or nay on it. If we vote in support of four-year staggered terms, legislatively, we have the ability to do it. If 5,000 registered verified voters were to challenge that, if we do it early enough there is still time to put it on the referendum. The Council has the ability to make that decision. As was mentioned we are a city that has grown tremendously. The decision that this Council needs to make is setting up an opportunity for a future Council. Some of us may be here. Some of us may not, but the current Council has to be the one to make the decision for future councils so the people would at least have an opportunity to get in, learn the job, be of service, and actually do some good before they're having to start campaigning again in less than 18 months. Thank you, Madam Mayor.

Mr. Winston said thank you. I echo Ms. Mayfield's comments and Mr. Graham's comments. You know this is something that I agree. I've said it from day one. You know one, this is not a part-time job, and I would argue. I know Mr. Baker doesn't like to get in the middle of conversations specifically for this. Compensation, i.e., full-time or part-time, was part of the Citizen's Committee recommendations, and it actually has been taken up by this Council and decided on. I don't think it was sufficient. I will say as a single father of three children, who has to work at least four jobs to represent the people where I have to make decisions about whether to do the work for the people or put food on my family's table, that this job, you know, has changed as has been said. The reality of this when this government was chartered in 1929 and the legacy about 100 years since then, you know, this job was intended to be for old retired well-off businesspeople selected through slates of the historical chambers of commerce here in Charlotte. That is not the case anymore. For people like me, you look around this table, around this Council, you have single mothers. You have young parents. It's a joke the way this is set up. I know this council member is willing to stand behind and have this conversation about why I voted this way. When it comes down to this, this is just a Charlotte issue. Right? This is an issue of our democracy. This is a city issue. This is a state issue. This is a national issue, and it is an issue of the utmost importance. If we want to have a functioning democracy where representatives that look like, act like, and are like the people of the constituency if you want the people of a municipality, a county, a state, or a nation to be able to select those leaders versus those that can afford to be in positions like these we have to have this conversation.

This is something that when the Mayor put together the committee a couple of years ago they thought was very important on a bipartisan basis. They made recommendations. We don't have to take those recommendations, but we should utilize them as a basis of our conversation. So, I would certainly suggest that we take up this cause four years staggered terms to look at what a properly compensated executive board of a \$3 billion a year organization that has a constituency and a shareholder base of a million plus people, what the value of that is. Again, I'll be completely honest, it's difficult. It is very difficult. The amount of sacrifice that some of us have to make to do this job is frankly unfair and I hope that we set this up finally as it was said. You know, Ms. Mayfield said it's been since 2013 for her. It was very apparent when I ran in 2017. I often tell people, you know, I did not necessarily know if I wanted to run because my life wasn't set up for this. I think a lot of you have seen how that has played out in public, but because you called to serve, right, you make sacrifices, but your sacrifice shouldn't be the well-being of yourself and the well-being of your family. That's really what we are talking about here. We are not talking about political talking points. This is not an issue of partisanship. This is a serious conversation that we have to have as a nation around how our democracy functions. I think we all know that it is not functioning in its optimal pace, and this needs to be part of the conversation. The General Assembly makes \$13,000 a year. I could not run for the General Assembly because I could not afford to serve on that. Not because I wouldn't be useful. Not because that's not my proper place, but I could run for this office because I can make it work. That shouldn't be a choice. That is not a functioning democracy, and we should really lead this conversation and not be followers here. Thank you.

Mr. Bokhari said I could say a lot there, but one thing I will say about the pay raises and full-time stuff is one, you guys already did that. Like we already had that debate. I was adamantly against it and that's done. Now, this is somehow back again. Whether it's a budgetary item or a fake definition of what constitutes full-time, I vehemently disagree. This job is not for everybody at every point in their life. There are times when it doesn't make sense. However, that doesn't mean that because people are in different levels of financial viability to be here that limits their own diversity of experience. That is a totally different and I think a relevant point to make because people come from all different backgrounds, and they bring those backgrounds with them. Through those journeys, they've learned things that they can apply here. So, just saying if we don't have people that can't make a hundred grand a year to do this means we don't have a fully diverse view and representation on the body, I think doesn't hold water to me. Putting all of that aside we've already had this debate and we did it. So, I don't know why we are continuing to waste time on that.

The four-year terms and staggered, that came from the body. I will tell you I am highly concerned with the desire of folks stated out loud around here to say we won't bring this to a referendum. It doesn't look good. It's a self-serving decision of which that is a great check-in balance to put on it if you want to do it, which I'm opposed to. I'll tell you I said I would be open to debating and negotiating four-year terms with everyone early on if that came part and parcel with us going to Raleigh and asking for term limits so that other people had opportunities to serve on this body. So, if that it's the case, which it doesn't seem to be and people here end up voting for four-year terms and not going to a referendum, I will personally ensure 5,000 votes are garnered so that goes to a referendum because I think that's just inappropriate. If we want to have a debate on term limits and going to Raleigh and asking for that I'm on board and perhaps that could be a great negotiation that we could strike, but I just want you guys to know this will go to a referendum one way or another. I will personally guarantee it.

On the districts and the seats, what was referred to the committee was an eighth district and minus an At-large rep. So, this procedurally cannot make it to the Council to vote on something that then the committee said that they wanted, which was to keep the At-large reps and then add another one. One, aside from it being an even number which is a bad practice itself. The bottom line I've heard the debate and I just don't buy it. Sorry, we don't need four At-large reps to hypothesize about the city strategically. We all manage 125,000 constituents in each district, right? At the end of the day, I like one At-large person. That's the Mayor Pro Tem and all of the rest districts. The reason the working group recommended eight districts and three At-large people wasn't just for that increase and representation. It was also to better align the city with the actual demographics of Republicans, Democrats and unaffiliates because right now it is gerrymandered, where there's only two seats that can possibly hang on here. So, that was to put eight, down one At-large to better represent 20 percent Republicans and 40 percent unaffiliated. It could go either way, which right now the seats don't do. So, if this is going another route that's fine, but you guys need to get that referred by another external committee, refer it to our committee, and bring that forth because right now what came through that path was eight district seats and three At-large seats. If somebody wants to do something that's different, that's great, but that was not what was recommended. Externally that was not what was referred to the committee to vote on. So, if anything makes it to the agenda it needs to be that or nothing from that perspective.

Mayor Lyles said so, I want to make sure if you have not spoken, if you wish to speak, I have two people that have spoken that have asked to speak again. I also want to be conscious of the time. So, if you've not spoken, I think that we should hear from those that have not spoken first on this topic, on this issue.

Ms. Johnson said I've said before that a big city with small-town charm is quaint, but a big city with small-town policies is inefficient and I've said that before. I think that two-year terms and part-time and this structure could be far more improved. So, I would support changing to the four-year terms and also full-time. If it had to go to referendum that would be fine. I think our voters are informed enough that they understand the pressure and how much work that we do. I mean I have spoken to voters that would support that. My bigger question is I thought last term we talked about this, and we wanted to have a decision prior to the change in Council to avoid this kind of discussion. Councilmember Watlington, do you recall that with us having a discussion that we wanted to resolve something before the Council changed?

Ms. Watlington said [inaudible].

Ms. Johnson said so if we could get the minutes from that. I don't know. This was up for a vote. We talked about it. I don't know how it went back to the committee to kind of start over, or I don't know what part started over. So, if we can get the minutes, but we talked about this as a Council and I remember Councilmember Watlington being sort of adamant, if I recall correctly, that we wanted to resolve this with the last Council because this was foreseeable for this to be kicked down the road more. I totally agree and applaud; first of all, I applaud the committee for taking this bold step. For Mayor Pro Tem, you're absolutely right there is a privilege, and a superior structure that prohibits just anyone

serving or a diverse population serving. Most people, and I remember Councilmember Watlington saying this, 99 percent of us have to work. So, not everyone can afford to make \$13,000 or \$22,000 a year or have a business where they can, you know, get these large contracts and everything. So, most people are working class. So, I would applaud us moving forward and being able to move forward in having four-year terms and full-time. Thank you.

Mr. Mitchell said you know, hearing the discussion, I think there's some confusion about how committees' function. I've always thought that the committee accepts recommendations and accepts input, but then it's the committee that does the work and brings back a recommendation. So, do we want to micromanage the committees we have, or are we going to appreciate them sitting down, taking the time, and accepting input for those who are closer to how to run a government than we are that folks have elected? So, Mayor I just want to make sure, in 2023 that we are all clear on our committee roles and our committee responsibility. I think the advisor group, your creator did a great job. Ms. Peacock, I think she was the chair. She came and made a presentation to us. We heard it loud and clear. [inaudible]. At the end of the day, we were the committee. When the recommendation came to us we discussed it and now we are making another recommendation to the City Council. It's out of committee. So, whether you vote yes or no that's your prerogative, but for us to now saying that when you're in a committee every little thing that comes up you got to go back and ask the Mayor to send a referral, come back to the committee, I just think we are being disrespectful to the structure of the committees. We ought to make sure that the committee can do the work that are charged to do and continue to receive input. I'm a big champion of the CBI (Charlotte Business INclusion Advisory Committee) and all of the committees we have. I don't want to send them a message, but surely, they don't think their recommendations are rubber stamp for the committee that are provided input for. Thank you, Mayor.

Mayor Lyles said alright. Is there anyone else? Ms. Molina followed by Ms. Ajmera.

Ms. Watlington said [inaudible].

Mr. Driggs said Mayor, I [inaudible].

Mayor said I beg your pardon.

Ms. Watlington said [inaudible].

Mayor Lyles said I know but the queue is the system is that people have not spoken get to speak.

Ms. Watlington said right, [inaudible].

Mr. Driggs said Ms. Ajmera has certainly spoken.

Mayor Lyles said Ms. Ajmera, have you spoken?

Ms. Ajmera said I don't have to speak. If that saves us another round I don't have to speak.

Mayor Lyles said okay. So, Ms. Molina, I'm sorry. I did not see that Ms. Ajmera spoke on this topic. She introduced it as a committee person, but I don't think that she took a position besides being the chair. So, I was just giving her that allowance hearing the conversation, alright, Ms. Molina.

Councilmember Molina said thank you, Madam Mayor. I don't think I've spoken all night, actually, at all. Not once. Mostly because I'm learning. So, I take that position seriously, you know, the observation piece of being a new member. That's not an excuse. It's just to make sure that my input has the right ingredients before I give what would be my, you know, opinion on what we are discussing. I've heard so much around the room about his particular item. The only thing that I would add that I hadn't heard is the turnout for our particular, you know, voting. For our off-year elections, the turnout is dismal. We do a lot

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of work. We meet a lot of people, and as, you know, someone who's newly elected to Council, running in an off-year when people are exhausted, they are not paying attention. They're tuned out and we make some of the most important decisions that affect them directly and they're not participating in that particular vote. So, I would wonder would we take this opportunity to look at when we vote for the Council as well as we have this conversation and make sure that we can get as many of our community members to participate as we possibly can. As the divorced single mother sitting here in this room and I'm highly educated and extremely adept at many things and I am making a sacrifice to sit here. So, I can completely, to some degree align with some to the comments that are being made around the room and I feel it financially. So, I have had some decisions that I'm making personally to be able to serve, you know, my community and make it better. So, I'm definitely open to learning more about the discussion from my colleagues who have been here. As somebody who was a member of the community watching the last Council that inevitably served for three years, we almost made it to where we were talking about a beyond two-year term with the previous Council. I actually, from the outside looking in, thought ideally that the best Council to have had that conversation would have been the last Council that sat because they actually were the only Council that I am aware of that has gone beyond just two years of service and so, now we are in this unique place where we have one year of service. You know, one and a half years of service. So, we have any less than the normal term and we are going to have an even more unique conversation to extend an existing term. So, I'd like to know more, but that's what I would add to the conversation that I'd hadn't heard added by my colleagues around the room.

Mr. Winston said I second that.

Mayor Lyles said Ms. Ajmera, to the debate or comment.

Ms. Ajmera said okay, well thank you. I did provide the committee's report, but not my position on that. I agree 100 percent with the committee's recommendations. I know Mr. Bokhari could not attend today's meeting, but he did attend the meeting previously. Some of these items that the committee discussed were part of that discussion and at that point, Mr. Bokhari, you did not bring up some of the concerns around why the committee— Mr. Bokhari said I've been 100 percent consistent on this.

Ms. Ajmera said around why the committee should be discussing this or why we should not discuss this. I just feel that it's disingenuous to shoot down the committee's recommendations. I agree with some of the points that were made by Mr. Mitchell, especially when you don't agree with what the committee's recommendations are. So, I would respectfully ask that you honor the committee's work that's been done, even if you disagree. Also, I don't appreciate being interrupted while I'm talking to Mr. Driggs. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said everyone has had a chance to speak. Before we go to the second round, it might be good to have a motion to speak to. So, do we have a motion?

Ms. Ajmera said well, we have a motion recommendation by the committee, which is three items. I'll go over those again.

Mr. Bokhari said this is [inaudible].

Ms. Ajmera said that was unanimously approved by the committee. The first is going to four-year terms. The second is staggered terms and the third is adding an eighth district while keeping four At-large seats and none of this requires legislative approval.

Motion was made by Councilmember Ajmera, seconded by Councilmember Winston, to change the current form of government by adding the following items, approved by the committee, to a future agenda: four-year terms, staggered terms, and adding an eighth district while keeping four at-large seats.

Ms. Watlington said I'm sorry. Can you repeat that?

Mr. Bokhari said point of order. Mr. Attorney, is there any level of coherentness as to why this would be voted on tonight the first time the majority of the people are hearing it?

Mr. Baker said from so, from my understanding is that the purpose of these report outs are to report out what the committee is recommending. I wasn't aware that you were voting on this because some of you are hearing this for the very first time.

Mr. Winston said we will put it on a future agenda.

Mr. Baker said right.

Mayor Lyles said we can put it on a future agenda, but I think some kind of motion to speak to what we're trying to do. So, Ms. Ajmera has read the recommendations from the committee and that would have to go on a future agenda.

Ms. Ajmera said yes, and this is no different than what we took action on earlier with our Silver Line realignment.

Mr. Winston said Mayor, may I? I have a suggestion.

Mayor Lyles said I had Ms. Watlington first, and I would like since we have a motion to move this topic to a future agenda item.

Ms. Watlington said a couple of things, and I will have to ask for that motion because I want to make sure that we're separating what the intent is. I know there were some things that you had come to a decision on and others that created additional conversation. So, just one more time for the record.

Ms. Ajmera said so, and the committee unanimously approved three items to change our form of government: one is a four-year term, the second is a staggered term, and the third is adding an eighth district while keeping four At-large seats.

Ms. Watlington said okay. At this point what you're asking us to do tonight, is?

Ms. Ajmera said is to move forward with the next step. The next step involves the Council to vote on a Resolution of Intent at an upcoming Council meeting.

Ms. Watlington said okay. As far as the staggered piece, ahead of that vote will we be provided all of the details regarding staggered, who when, and what?

Ms. Ajmera said so in terms of the timeline, and how that's all going to work, Mr. Baker can provide all of that. Mr. Baker did a full flush presentation along with Ms. James. So, they can certainly give more details on that. I just didn't want to take another hour just going over all of the details.

Ms. Watlington said I just want to make sure that there's one thing to be supportive and principle, but then there's another to make sure that we are all clear about what the details are. So, I just want to make sure that there will be an opportunity to do that.

Ms. Ajmera said yes, that will be a part of the next step once the Council gives blessings on this.

Ms. Watlington said okay. So, thank you for that clarification. I did want to speak to this full-time piece. As I listen to the conversation around the dais, I can appreciate that we have folks from all different walks of life around the table. I think it's good that we have this conversation. I think ultimately each person makes an individual choice to serve and the decisions that we make around this dais have to be in the best interest of the city and that may be in the best interest of the individual and it may not be. So, I think that as we think about our positions, not only do we consider ourselves, but we've also got to

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consider what the outcome is going to be for the community. I think that if we stay there regardless of our individual situations, we can come to a place where we can decide what's best for the city. When I think about people making sacrifices, absolutely we're all making sacrifices. Some folks are sacrificing in some ways and some folks are sacrificing in another. I myself, I have a full-time job, and I'm in school full-time pursuing a Ph.D. (Doctor of Philosophy). I'm a district rep. I sit in Zoning meetings, I'll meet with developers, I meet with constituents, I go to neighborhood meetings, and I chair a committee. I'm making sacrifices to show up because I want to serve and I think that it behooves the city to have a setup in such that working professionals, because to your point Councilmember Johnson, I've said before most people have to work. If they have to feed their families that should not cut them out of being a voice around this dais. We are a growing city. We are a \$3 billion enterprise. I would submit that there are hundreds of billion-dollar enterprises that function exactly the way we function. We have professional management. We have a chief executive officer. We have a chief operations officer and our City Manager. We have part-time boards. That is not unusual and when we talk about full-time, that absolutely is a salary conversation. It's also an operations conversation. When and how often do we meet? What are the responsibilities? So, when we talk about who can do this work, we've got to also have the conversation about what is a competitive salary to pay people to come here full-time, especially if you're bringing skills that are competitive in the market. If we're going to spend that kind of money, I'd rather spend it on professional staff than on our board members because they're the ones that are doing the work, day in and day out. They're the ones who bring a particular skill set. Everybody's input is important, and we can offer that at varying levels whether we are volunteers in the community, whether we're residents, whether we are voters, whether we sit on the board, but when it comes to the execution of the work of this city, I would rather invest my money in somebody who is doing this as a professional. So, that is the stance that I take when it comes to full-time versus part-time. As we think about going forward, I absolutely expect regardless of whether we choose to move forward with a referendum or we choose to make a decision ourselves, we will see this on the ballot. We will absolutely see this on the ballot. I myself, as a citizen will make my position known at that ballot box. In the meantime, I do support in general the recommendations that have been made for the first three items. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said we've had a wealth of discussion around this topic, and I think that what we really are looking at would take six people to put something on an agenda and that's probably what we need to figure out. Do we have that? I want to make two comments and this might be something that Mr. Graham or Mr. Driggs can help me with. As we are going through this and getting ready for the implementation as Ms. Watlington talked about how do you define full-time? I don't know that I know that I've ever seen a government define full-time that's standard for every elected official. What does that mean? So, I think that there has to be some substantive definition around it. I mean, a salary amount does not make you full-time. You have to figure that out. The other question I have is if I recall, not perhaps recently, but there was a discussion around how some of the communities became under the spotlight for changes in the Council that hadn't been publicly discussed hearings and voted on. With that, there was some actions taken that actually limited what the group could do because there were people that went, and just like I said all of us know that we are a blue city in a red state, and when that happened then the legislature stepped in. So, as we are thinking about this when you talk about an engagement strategy that is going to be absolutely key if you're going to move forward in that way because we are not the final authority on how we are structured. I think it's time to make a decision about this, but I would say let's be prudent and know the consequences of the decisions that we are making and be very clear as it's proposed to go to a public hearing that addresses the concerns that people would say in a referendum and that some of those that you've heard around this dais tonight. If this is a go, everybody is going to have to put their shoulder down and make it happen and that's only with having a clear definition and clear communication around it. So, I can't remember what community that was. I don't know, but it was one that was sizable, and it made a difference, so with that.

Mr. Driggs said Mayor, could I just ask for a clarification? Did the committee action include or not include any reference to the referendum? Mr. Graham made the point, but it wasn't clear for me the way you said it whether you intended for it because I will remind you the

committee that I chaired actually did take to the full Council a recommendation to proceed on four-year terms. That's already been done. It was a prior committee, but it already happened. When we did it, we said with a referendum. So, did your committee?

Ms. Ajmera said yes, so the committee did discuss that. This was unanimously approved where it would be subject to the board of referendum, all three items.

Mr. Driggs said okay. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said alright so if you would agree to put this on a future agenda, please raise your hand.

Ms. Watlington said wait.

Ms. Ajmera said on a future agenda.

Mayor Lyles said a future agenda as Ms. Ajmera [inaudible].

Ms. Mayfield said to vote on it.

Mr. Baker said four-year staggered terms [inaudible] and four At-large council members. Mayor Lyles said with a referendum.

Ms. Mayfield said A, B, and C.

Mr. Baker said yes.
Mayor Lyles said yes.

Mr. Baker said not D.

Mr. Winston said what?

Ms. Mayfield said there was no D.

Mayor Lyles said let's take a moment and let Patrick state what he heard as a motion.

Mr. Baker said what I thought we did this afternoon was the committee was referring to four-year staggered terms, that's one and two, and adding an eighth district, but not taking away an At-large. So, there would be 12 council members as opposed to the 11 that you have now, and it would be subject to a voter referendum. That is, and I want to be clear that everyone understands when you say subject to that the Council is going to direct, this is the recommendation of the committee, the Council is going to recommend a voter referendum on all of these items.

Ms. Ajmera said that's what the committee unanimously supported.

Mayor Lyles said we have the motion. All in favor of moving this to a future agenda, please raise your hands. Alright, so the number six counts, and now we will move on to the next item on our agenda.

Mr. Bokhari said do we get to oppose it?

Mayor Lyles said oh yes, you do get to oppose it. Thank you. In opposition, please raise your hand.

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

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, Molina, Watlington, and Winston.

NAYS: Councilmembers Bokhari and Driggs.

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Mr. Bokhari said I didn't think we could shoot ourselves in the foot any harder than we just did with all of these other topics we've got.

Mayor Lyles said let's go to the next topic which is Jobs and Economic Development

Ms. Ajmera said we have one more.

Unknown said we have one more.

Mayor Lyles said alright so, one more which is the budget development calendar. Which we do need to adopt as a Council and we can put that on a future agenda, Ryan, whose recording.

Ms. Ajmera said our budget director. I'll just keep that very brief. Mr. Bergman gave an overview of our Budget Workshop topics. So, the first item on our Budget Workshop would be capital investment program topics and that will be on February 9, 2023. So, mark your calendars. That would include the capital affordability update, the city facility Capital Investment Plan, existing capital project updates, and then bond, strategy, and priority discussion.

Mayor Lyles said okay so, we'll put that on the next agenda for approval.

Ryan Bergman, Strategy & Budget Director said it's just the workshop.

Mayor Lyles said they've already been placed on the agenda.

Mr. Bergman said yes, the dates are already set.

Mayor Lyles said okay, got it. Thank you. Okay, anything else on this item?

Ms. Ajmera said oh yes, I'm sorry. In March, the Budget Workshop's topic would be employees and [inaudible] revenue update and economic forecast. Then, our last Budget Workshop will be in April, which would include the Enterprise Fund, reevaluation process, and financial partners. The committee did make a few changes. One, we added the Corridors of Opportunity to our first workshop, which is the capital investment program. Then the committee also added discussing MSD (Municipal Service District) as part of our financial partners as our last Budget Workshop. That was Mr. Mitchell's recommendation and Ms. Mayfield wanted us to look at compensation holistically. That includes the staff, the Council, and the Mayor. Those were the only changes and then the reevaluation process would be aligned with Mr. Joyner's timeline. So, that would be in April versus being in March, but those were the only changes that were made by the committee. We didn't make any other changes to the staff's recommendation. With that,

Mr. Bergman, did I miss anything?

Mr. Bergman said correct.

Ms. Ajmera said okay.

Mayor Lyles said so those dates are on the Council's calendar and the topics, you've heard what they are. So, now we are ready to move to the Jobs and Economic Development section of the agenda.

Jobs and Economic Development Committee

Mr. Graham said the Jobs and Economic Development Committee met today. The members are Vice-Chair Driggs, Ajmera, Molina, and Watlington. We had two items on our agenda. Both of those items have come before the Council before. So, there's no surprise here in reference to what we are discussing. One is the Arts and Culture Plan, as well as the disparity study draft recommendations. I'll start first with the disparity study draft recommendations. We received a report from Steve Coker, our program director in reference to the draft recommendations received from the CBI (Charlotte Business

INClusion) staff and the CBI Advisory Committee. As many of you know the Council received the disparity study last quarter, which we approved. The staff said that it would come back to us with a series of recommendations based on information that was embedded in the report.

Today what we heard was the staff's recommendations as I said earlier, both short and long-term. Some of those recommendations were to establish evaluation criteria for the MWSBE (Minority, Women, and Small Business Enterprises) participation service contracts. Strengthening the project monitoring for MWSBE goals and compliance. Those were short-term goals. The long-term goals were to explore measures to expand goals that are beyond construction and to facilitate more MWSBE [inaudible] obtaining contracts by breaking down scopes of work and showing the construction design phase. Again, these are just four examples, two short-term, and two long-term recommendations among many that were made by the staff earlier today as it relates to the disparity study and the staff's evaluation of those recommendations that they felt we needed to move forward with regarding the report. The staff also outlined a timeline for work to be done for the first quarter, January through March, which is to seek guidance from the Jobs and Economic Development Committee on further recommendations. The complete revisions to the CBI policy to craft communication and marketing plan concerning implementation, among others. They also outlined recommendations for the second quarter of 2023 in terms of things they would like to see get done. I would be remiss to say that the committee was very impressed with the work of the staff and the program director. They have committed to doing a lot of work in a short period of time in reference to getting a lot done by the end of the fiscal year, which many of you know is June 30 of this year. They are short-staffed. They have four vacancies that they are trying to fill. So, again, the work that Steve and his staff, those that report directly to him, as well as his external staff, including members of the attorney's office, have been doing a great job in terms of getting the Council ready for these revisions.

As you know, the disparity study is the legal basis for the Council to have goals that are narrowly tailored to include minority participation. It's in short, our driver's license to have a program based on race in a narrowly tailored way and I think again, the staff did a tremendous job in terms of outlining various recommendations and action items. I am also certain that you will receive a copy of the presentation that was given to our committee for your review, and you will be able to identify and see all of the recommendations and action items that the staff has put forward. Secondly, I would be remiss to not acknowledge the presence of Mayor Pro Tem Winston as well as Councilmember Mayfield, who both attended our meetings and provided input on the direction of the CBI policy. I want to thank them for their support. The second item on the agenda was the Arts and Culture Plan. Basically, as you may have noted, myself, Councilmember Driggs, and Mayor Pro Tem interviewed all council members over the month of December 2022 in reference to establishing a framework that we all can agree upon as it relates to the upcoming Arts and Culture Plan. I want to thank Councilmember Driggs and Councilmember Winston for the work they have done on the plan. Councilmember Driggs has taken the lead in terms of being the liaison for this three-member committee. I turn this portion of the report over to the vice chairman to report out in terms of things that we have done in reference to the outcomes of those meetings we had with council members and where do we go from here.

Mr. Driggs said I'm sure everybody will be grateful if I'm brief. We got today a slide show presentation and an update on the state of arts and culture report that was sent out to all of us and I'm sure that everybody read over the holidays. They are now at a stage where they are proceeding to develop on the basis of this state of culture report, the actual Arts and Culture Plan and it is therefore the time for us to provide to them any input that we may want to provide to them about that plan. So, today I circulated to everybody if you look in your inbox, a memo that talks about what has happened so far and puts out there for discussion an idea of what a council action might include. What our policy statement might be about the arts. It's just been circulated for everybody to look at. The idea is I think that we will follow up at the next committee meeting to discuss it further and to try to get the Council to a point where we can send a succinct statement to the people writing the report about what it is that we require. I think I'll leave it at that. If you just look, please

at the memo and respond to the chair, to myself, or Mr. Winston with your input, like things you would like to see in there, things you think that aren't right that might be in there, but we need to try to converge to a council action. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Graham said thank you, Vice-Chairman Driggs. So, that kind of concludes also the staff gave us an outline and we heard from the consulting firm that is working with the staff. They provided us a timeline for receiving the final report. So, the staff is working extremely hard to work with the consulting firm to hear our comments that we emailed today for us to ratify those comments at our committee meeting in February. Then working with the consultant group to use as a framework as they prepare their final report for the committee. Mr. Winston, I think you want to chime in right here.

Mr. Winston said thank you. Yes, just to kind of piggyback on what Mr. Graham and specifically what Mr. Driggs said. Mr. Driggs's memo today it's really kind of intended to frame the kind of feedback that we all got. The three of us got and having the small group conversations with you and working with the staff, [inaudible], and Ms. Martin. So, what we found in having those conversations is that there is a lot of alignment. I'll be frank, there's at least six of us that agree to a lot about what the future of arts funding should be, but there are a few contention points, and I wouldn't say contention points. It's just a place where there lack of clarity. There are cohorts of council members that are in different places. Again, going back to this memo that Mr. Driggs put together, I think he framed it really well. If you look at the draft statement of a council position, again, this is a draft statement, this is not a recommendation, but this represents an example of what we could, can, and should put together for guidance to the staff. I would say, and this is what I talked to Mr. Driggs about and the committee this morning. If you look at that last page, that draft statement of the Council position, everything above the last two paragraphs there's alignment there, but those bottom two paragraphs I think is really where we need to hone in on. I framed it the way I see what we need to determine. One in this way, I'll just read it. This is an email I sent to the group of staff and council members, Mr. Graham, Mr. Driggs, Mr.[inaudible], and Ms. Martin. What is the grant funding structure that we as a Council would like to pursue? I think there are three options here. Do we bring grant funding operations into a city function like our Community Block Grant program, or do we seek relationships with multiple outside grant-making organizations, or do we deal with one individual outside grant-making organization like we have traditionally done with the Arts and Science Council? One of my suggestions is that we could as council members talk to staff over this next month to kind of see what those options would look like, but in the end, we have to make a decision and give them guidance on which direction we need to go. Then the last paragraph Mr. Driggs kind of gets to this kind of parallel approach that we've been talking about. The way I termed it is that there's a need for the Council to identify funding priorities and to align them with the private sector via public/private partnerships. As the cultural arts plan continues to be developed, the Council needs to define what we are willing to subsidize, and what we would we like to accelerate? What do we want to incubate? How do we measure those successes? This is actually a framework that Mr. Bokhari brought forward in some of our individual conversations, but we have talked about this as a group. Again, this is what came out in those small group conversations, but there still was not a distinct kind of guidance on some of those things. I have followed up Mr. Driggs's email with the notes that we took from those individual conversations. So, you guys will have all of the notes of what your colleagues are thinking. I would again suggest using the entire context that Mr. Driggs has presented here along with those notes. We will I guess need to kind of reach back out to figure out how to best facilitate getting the staff that clear guidance on those two points.

Mr. Graham said thank you, Councilmember Winston. So, we encourage you to read the email that was sent out earlier today. The next steps that the staff is working on as it relates to the plan is now that the draft is currently being refined with steering group feedback. That's happening right now. In mid-January, those revisions goes to steering group review and approval. In February there will be a public sharing of the State of Culture Report findings. We are transitioning the strategies development by the steering group to the task force. So, a lot of work is being done and so, your input and your cooperation in terms of being timely and responding would be most helpful. Lastly, the committee presented the Corridors of Opportunity year-end review. Our annual report is

at your dais, I guess this evening now, right, evening for your review. I'm really happy and pleased with the work that we are doing at our Corridors of Opportunity. I think the year-end review reflects the work that's being done throughout the city of Charlotte. That concludes my report, Madam Mayor.

Ms. Ajmera said thank you, Mr. Graham for the report. Mr. Driggs did an excellent job with the memorandum. I did have an opportunity to review that. I just added one item, which was to include equity as we look at established nonprofits making decisions on grant-making. I just think it's important that we also look at equity in that process to ensure the organizations that may not fall under that established criteria and individual artists are also getting a grant opportunity in our city, but other than that I think it covers everything especially the sustainable funding piece, which is very key. I think that is what has gotten us to this point. So, I think that is a major point that's being addressed in the memorandum. So, I appreciate the work, Mr. Driggs, you have done and Mr. Winston and Mr. Graham to get us to this point. Thank you.

Mr. Graham said thank you, Councilmember Ajmera.

Mayor Lyles said I've looked at this and I've been listening to most of the committee meetings today and people had topics like this, but you also explored what are the intended consequences and what are the unintended consequences or, however. I can't remember. Mr. Graham talked about his specific way he accesses material and I look at this list, especially around the role of funding. I know it's like one organization, but it's really the city that has an accountability for it. So, how does it work? What does it mean to have multiples versus one? You know, what are the consequences of doing this? How much more work are we adding to a process that I was hoping that we were actually slimming down and that we were actually trying to get to a place that the community understood it and worked on it to address the principles of what do we want to accomplish and what's going to be kind of a policy document? I just look at the list and I think, you know, it's like a lot of detail in it. I'm looking at the list of what the Council comments are and the categories are great, but when you talk about the purpose of city-owned facilities and things like that, it's fine go ahead. I'm getting tired.

Mr. Winston said I hear you and that's what I was saying most of the draft statement there was agreement there. There at least six and so we have here the future of the funding plan will ensure that adequate operating funds are provided to the programs based on city-owned facilities. That's kind of how we compartmentalized some of those [inaudible].

Mayor Lyles said I don't see that for most of this. I see it as some parts that are a little bit easier. Like you know, we have to support the city facilities because we owe the debt on the buildings. So, that's like not even, well maybe for me it'd just if you're paying the rent you have to keep it up. Some of the others I think it just need a little bit of fleshing out of what the consequences are. Are there unintended consequences around the private sector? They're important in our ecosystem, yes and how what, how when? Those kinds of things, so.

Mr. Winston said the two questions that the Council needs to answer are: What is the type of grant funding relationship we want to get into? Then what does our parallel kind of investment, and what are those things that we want, those topics that we want to incubate? What are those topics that we want to invest in? Those are the two kinds of action areas that the Council is not clear on, right?

Mayor Lyles said and I think though that you've gotten a lot of comments. Somebody has to synthesize those comments under these categories, but at the same time, you also have to know that there in a relationship. If the Council's willing to subsidize something and the public partnerships aren't, how do you do this? So, it's just something to think about. There we go. I think that's it on jobs and economic development. So, is there anything else that anyone else wants to comment on, the jobs, the corridors, or the disparity study draft?

Mr. Winston said I'll make a last comment.

mmm

Mayor Lyles said okay.

Mr. Winston said because I think we are saying similar things, and this is why Mr. Driggs, Mr. Graham, and I were chosen to work on this. We agree again with the public/private partnerships, the way we have traditionally been looking at it is through those kinds of grants. Those grant-making funding mechanisms that we rely on. We have all agreed that needs to change and be adjusted, but we want to work through that paradigm. Well, that's why we have to identify what is our grant-making relationship moving forward. The Council has also said that we are interested in investing in and supporting the arts and culture in different ways through things that might be seen as more traditional economic development. Perhaps looking at things like affordable housing, affordable workspaces, workforce development, investing in industries to bring here. Those are the things that operate outside of the traditional kind of grant-making approaches that we've had with the public/private partnership, but we need to define that in a tighter fashion. Throughout that conversation, there's a framework that has been presented, but the Council has not said we want to adopt a framework like that. That is something that we need to adopt to give the staff that type of clear guide.

Mr. Bokhari said Madam Mayor, just real quick. I can't believe we are still at this point with this because we should have been done with it, weeks and weeks ago. It's two things: One is, what is the policy strategic framework, but I think you're saying this Mr. Councilmember Winston said, the problem is we just need to do it, that this Council, not is going to micromanage you, who then micromanages Pria, who does all these things. What do we value at different levels that we're going to judge you on every budget cycle or every other budget cycle? For some reason, I mean I've had this discussion multiple times now with multiple people, and yet people are still putting random ideas on notepads and handing them in. I don't know why this is happening. So, that's one. We need to do that body of work. Number two is if we are asking the question, who's going to be a grant-making partner this or that, we might as well go back and give the ASC (Arts and Science Council) the keys to the car and let them keep going down that dead end they were headed on because we'll do no better. We will literally do no better. This was meant to be a streamlining and us being arm's length and that thing being a better version of what the future needed, and I failed to comprehend how every time we come around here, it seems like a whole bunch of work has been done and none of it was on the correct things, so.

Mayor Lyles said our next report is Housing, Safety and Community. I don't think that's what the name of the group is, but anyway.

Housing, Safety and Community Committee

Ms. Watlington said right, 30 seconds or less. Today we talked about our anti-displacement overall strategy and what that needs to look like and what some of the tools are that we are focused on in that regard. One of the particular tools that was highlighted for us today is the NEST (Neighborhood Equity and Stabilization) Committee's first update of the year. They came in and made a proposal in regard to tax assistance where we were able to give feedback about the potential reboot if you will of the previous Aging in Place program. The overall conversation essentially ended up landing where the Council wasn't necessarily ready to take action today. We were encouraged by the original presentation that took a more holistic view, and we'd like to see how we can leverage that overall visibility to make individual decisions about policy. We know that we've got certain dollars from ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) that are kind of set aside that's a little bit unusual in terms of what we usually can deal with. So, we've got a little flexibility to do some things one-off, but as we move forward, we also want to consider what is the opportunity cost as we start to look into true OpEx (Operating Expenses) dollars going forward because that means that there is likely something else that we are not able to do. We did get a few comments back from the committee. Well, I'll say a few things back, and we certainly want to expand the age limits beyond just the 65 plus that we see. To be very clear our tax abatement programs, right now we don't have any actually at the city. They are facilitated by the county that comes through the state, which is what led to our previous legislative agenda request to ask for an expansion of the homestead exemption because what we're finding ourselves faced with now is trying to supplement what's

available. If we can get support at the state level to expand that program, that may enable us to focus on other tools. Namely things like creating more homeowners when people are in their prime working years for instance. We did get a review of some of the updated tools in our tool kit. Some of our down payment assistance type programs, the dollars have been increased, and like I said we want to expand eligibility of our programs beyond the current age requirements and beyond the current income requirements. So, we will be looking forward to the response from staff and the NEST Committee in regard to some of the committee's desires to see a broader plan and something that can target people in different stages of their journey because ultimately, we want to increase the ability of our neighborhoods to thrive and so part of that is home ownership. Absolutely, that creates stability in our neighborhoods. So, we'll be looking for that. One thing that I did want to lift up, and then certainly I'll open it up to our committee members to add anything that needs to be. We are the Housing, Safety, and Community Committee and I know that we have not brought a safety item yet. So, I'm just the antagonist right now because I know that we discussed it last month and it was the medics and our infrastructure there and how do we make sure that we are staffed up to be responsive with our 911? There was a question that I asked in regard to what needs to be true for us to be able to enable more remote participation. I later found out that we do certify our call takers and our telecommunicators under a statewide certification. So, that brings up a potential opportunity then to leverage call takers and telecommunicators in other parts of the state to help us in our peak times but obviously, that requires the technology infrastructure. So, anyway I just wanted to lift that up to the group that I did go make that request afterwards. So, I will be looking forward to seeing that in an update and I would love to have that on a future agenda for the city. I know Councilmember Ajmera had asked for a follow-up update when we were having this conversation as a full Council in December. So, I wanted to put that out there, but I also want to open it up to the other committee members to add anything I may have missed.

Mayor Lyles said comments, suggestions? Okay. I think we were talking about this in the elevator. I sit on one of the Federal Home Loan Bank Committees on affordable housing and they are operating a trial air properties discussion first in terms of examining what are the rules and what prevents people from inheriting their property. Also, they have a target program where I believe we can apply for a grant that provides some funding. So, I think a lot of times we look at HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development), but there are a lot of other places around that are trying to address this issue of housing and the crisis that we are in for affordable housing. I'll send you the woman that working on the air property program out of the Atlanta bank, okay?

Mr. Winston said just to re-up something I mentioned in the intergovernmental report out, but one of the recommendations from the NEST Committee was that the city, I'm sorry I don't have it in front of me, but champion expanding the homestead tax situation, expanding that exemption, yes. Something that Mr. Bokhari mentioned in that committee meeting was the desire to prioritize work that would get the most impact and that is probably the effort that would bring the most impact to people that need it most in terms of the amount of people in our city, our county, our region, our state, so I just wanted to raise that up.

Mr. Mitchell said Ms. Chairperson, how much money is in the homestead? How much do we appropriate each year?

Ms. Watlington said at the city level we actually don't have a program. It is administered through the county, but it's state funding.

Mr. Mitchell said got it. Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Ajmera said [inaudible] the Staying in Place program that we are going to discuss during the budget. [inaudible]

Mayor Lyles said okay, Mr. Baker, I think that we have exhausted all of our committee reports and I know that we have a closed session.

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ITEM NO. 2: CLOSED SESSION

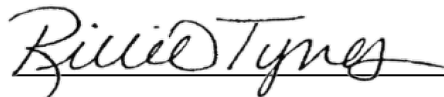
Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Watlington, and carried unanimously to go into closed session pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with the City Attorney in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the City Council in the matter of Daedalus LLC et al v. City of Charlotte.

The meeting was recessed at 9:58 p.m. for a closed session.

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ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:09 p.m. at the conclusion of the closed session.



Billie Tynes, Deputy City Clerk

Length of Meeting: 3 Hours, 56 Minutes
Minutes Completed: October 11, 2023