

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for an Action Review on Monday, April 13, 2026, at 4:04 p.m. in Room 267 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Pro Tem James Mitchell presiding. Council members present were Dimple Ajmera, J.D. Mazuera Arias, Malcolm Graham, Lawana Mayfield, Joi Mayo, Kimberly Owens, and Victoria Watlington.

**ABSENT:** Mayor Vi Lyles, Councilmember Renee Johnson

**ABSENT UNTIL NOTED:** Councilmembers Danté Anderson and Ed Driggs

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**Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell** said good evening, and I thank you all for joining us here in person, and those watching online. Let's start with introductions. Thank you all for being here for our Business Meeting Agenda Review. I'm going to turn it over, City Manager, to you to introduce the one and only.

**Marcus Jones, City Manager** said okay, so thank you, Mayor Pro Tem. We'll start off with our agenda review where we'll have any questions that you have from Marie, and I'll say after that we have a pretty stacked agenda today. We have the CATS (Charlotte Area Transit System) Budget Outlook, and we have a number of items that have made their way through the committee process, like the Street Vending Regulation, the Safety Committee, as well as the Passenger Vehicle for Hire Ordinance from the Safety Committee, the Housing Trust Fund from the Housing Committee, and we'll have a Stellar Awards update. I do believe we have three closed session items for today, and Mayor Pro Tem, unless you have any questions, I'll turn it over to Marie.

**Councilmember Driggs arrived at 4:08 p.m.**

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## **ACTION REVIEW**

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

**Marie Harris, Budget Director** said thank you and good evening, Mayor Pro Tem and Council. At your seat you'll find additional information on some of the consent items, and clarifications you've asked for this evening, and at this time I'd like to take any other questions or any highlights you'd like to make.

**Councilmember Mazuera Arias** said thanks, Marie. I had a question on Item No. 26, the Real Estate Legal Services. I want to know why did we receive only one response to this RFP (Request For Proposal), and are we ensuring that there's a competitive procurement process in terms of avoiding sole source patterns?

Ms. Harris said great, thank you for that, and yes just to clarify, we currently have four vendors registered. Recently, we had one vendor that we had a contract with that withdrew. They're retiring. So we did definitely. We want to have at least five. So, we have four, and then we're going to be putting out again here shortly, to your point since we only have one, to hopefully get at least one more.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said thank you, Marie. Mayor Pro Tem, if I may, I have another question for agenda Item No. 33, Airport Customer Support Services for Terminal Operations, a contract with VIP Hospitality, LLC. Since this is a subcontractor potentially hired by the City, how are we ensuring that they are held accountable to ensure good wages, benefits, and safety standards to their employees?

Ms. Harris said so, as far as the safety and training, they definitely are trained by our staff on the specific requirements of their duty, and while we don't have the legal authority to dictate, we work with vendors as much as possible, and this one the lowest wage would be \$17 an hour, and that's for entry level with no experience. So, they do

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have the opportunity to continue to grow, and they have benefits and retirement and time off with their employer.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said thank you, Marie.

Ms. Harris said thank you.

**Councilmember Watlington** said Marie, these are questions that I asked earlier, but just wanted to make sure that the clarifications were on the record. When it comes to Items No. 38, 33 and 24, they all are looking at some sort of design services or some sort of on-call services. I just wanted to make sure that it was clear for the public the delineation between them, because there are some here that are assigned to CRTPO (Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization), some that are mechanical and design services for ongoing City things. As we think about the work going forward with the \$19 billion in revenue coming, I want to make sure folks understand where these buckets sit, because some of them are federal and they don't have any CBI (Charlotte Business INClusion) connection at all. I just want to make sure that it's clear, because there were a few items here that might have been confusing.

Ms. Harris said yes, thank you, and for the good of the public, any of them that currently have federal goals that are federally funded, we currently do not have CBI goals, and to your point though, there's one on here that is funded by the Operating General Fund. I mean, we definitely would have CBI, but it's one that they're doing 100 percent of the work, so there wasn't a subcontracting opportunity, but to your point, yes, we definitely do have that program in place where it's allowed.

Ms. Watlington said and just so folks, as they're looking through these items, the services that we're talking about here are separate and apart from the work that we're saying is tied to the upcoming sales tax revenue that we'll be getting over the next 20 or so years, that \$19 billion. There's a lot of conversation around that and how we're going to ensure participation goals are met. So, I just want folks to be clear that what they're seeing here is not that. That conversation is still outstanding.

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

**Councilmember Mayfield** said Marie, I have a followup for additional question on Item No. 33.

Ms. Harris said yes, ma'am.

Ms. Mayfield said for this support services, do we currently have a vendor that's doing this work? Is this a new contract?

Ms. Harris said let me look at the thing.

Ms. Mayfield said where we're choosing a new vendor, and as you identify that, mainly what I'm thinking about is, recently there was an article where we have a vendor at the airport where a new vendor was identified based on costs, but I don't believe we have language that protects our current employees, so that they are first on the list for a transition when we make a decision to go with a new contract to ensure employability versus just asking them to consider the current employees. It will be helpful to know if there's any legal constraints on that when we are looking at companies and others that are doing layoffs all around, not only within Charlotte, but within the region, and the impact that that is having. That can be an additional follow-up for our Attorney to just look at our language to make sure that we have some protections in place. Do you have an idea, Marie?

Ms. Harris said not what was happening with the existing, but this is a current service arrangement and it's a new vendor, so it's an RFP, and this is a new vendor awarded.

Ms. Mayfield said so, the current vendor, we are now identifying a new vendor to take over this contract. Do we know if there's any protections or language to ensure that the current employees are the ones that are identified. Because we're looking at an annual expenditure to be around \$3.5 million for this, and even with saying a minimum pay of \$17, even though by law we do not have the ability to identify pay, we should have the ability to ensure that the current employees are not displaced during this. I'm not sure Attorney Fite, and I apologize for not sending this earlier to give you all time to review it, but hopefully we can get an idea of not right now prior to, if this is something that we're going to be voting on in this room that I'm going to be asking for us to pull this aside in order to get that additional information.

Ms. Harris said and so, legally we can't, but we encourage usually them to review the existing staff, but sometimes the existing staff want to stay with their parent company and don't want to come to us, so it's a different situation and it's case by case, but no.

Ms. Mayfield said the parent company's shutting down. Okay, so that's helpful, and that's something, Attorney Fite, you can follow up on, and thank you Marie. I thought, thanks to our wonderful partners in Raleigh, that we have some restrictions on what we're able to do, but I do want to make sure that we are having a real conversation on, if we're going to identify a new partner, and that is for a service that's already being provided, that we are making sure to the best of our ability, we're protecting our residents, because our residents are the ones that are paying taxes here. So, we don't want to have a large workforce that not only can't afford to live in our City, but also you're not able to contribute, because your job has been eliminated.

Ms. Harris said thank you.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said so, Councilmember Mayfield, is it still your pleasure we pull Item No. 33?

Ms. Mayfield said yes, sir.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said okay, thank you.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said this is question is for Attorney Leslie-Fite. What is our minimum wage of City, \$24.00?

**Andrea Leslie-Fite, City Attorney** said it is \$24.00.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said \$24.00, and this is more so of just curiosity understanding. When we hire a subcontractor, what is the ability for the City to encourage the subcontractor to set their wages to our standard if we're hiring them or we're having a contract with them? I just want to know the legality, and I know the answer, but I want it to be on the record.

Ms. Leslie-Fite said sure, and thank you for the question. So, by state law, cities aren't able to set the wage requirements for subcontractors, or any contract relationship. Our ability to manage wages is simply for our employees, and that is under state law. Now, I will say the City does a really good job with encouraging vendors to have trainings, and some of the other things that've been outlined here today, but as far as wages, those are prohibited by state law.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said thank you so much, and so I just wanted to ask that to make sure it's on the public record, as my colleague, Councilmember Mayfield said, thanks to our wonderful partners at the General Assembly, that the City does not have authority to set certain wages, because we're not allowed to, but thank you, Mayor Pro Tem.

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**ITEM NO. 2: CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 23 THROUGH 52 MAY BE CONSIDERED IN ONE MOTION EXCEPT FOR THOSE ITEMS REMOVED BY A COUNCIL MEMBER. ITEMS ARE REMOVED BY NOTIFYING THE CITY CLERK.**

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Ajmera, and carried unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda as presented with the exception of Item No. 33 which was pulled for a separate vote, and Item No. 44, Item No. 45, Item No. 46, Item No. 47, and Item No. 49 which were deferred.

The following items were approved:

**Item No. 23: Building Controls and Related Electrical Components**

(A) Approve the purchase of building controls and related electrical components from a cooperative contract, (B) Approve a contract with Schneider Electric for the purchase of building controls and related electrical components for a term of two years under Omnia Partners Purchasing Agreement #2023003495, and (C) Authorize the City Manager to extend the contract for additional terms as long as the cooperative contract is in effect, at prices and terms that are the same or more favorable than those offered under the cooperative contact.

**Item No. 24: Mechanical Engineering and Design Services**

(A) Approve contracts for mechanical engineering and design services for a term of three years with the following: CMTA, McKim & Creed, Inc., RMF Engineering, Inc., Salas O’Brien, Inc., and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contracts for one, two-year term with possible price adjustments and to amend the contracts consistent with the purpose for which the contracts were approved.

**Item No. 25: Ornamental Fountain and Splash Pad Maintenance Services**

(A) Approve contract amendment #2 for \$320,980 to the contract with Ponds R Us, LLC for ornamental fountain and splash pad maintenance services, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract and this amendment were approved.

**Item No. 26: Real Estate Legal Services**

(A) Approve a contract with Hoard Law PC dba HW Legal Group (MBE) for real estate legal services for a term of three years, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contract for up to one, two-year term with possible price adjustments and to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

**Item No. 27: Irwin Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Chemical System Improvements**

Approve a contract in the amount of \$893,837.50 to the lowest responsive bidder Gilbert Engineering Co, Inc. for the Irwin Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Chemical System Improvements Project.

**Summary of Bids**

|                               |                |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Gilbert Engineering Co., Inc. | \$ 893,837.50  |
| Basinger                      | \$1,015,450.00 |
| State Utility                 | \$1,098,250.00 |
| Harper                        | \$1,237,630.00 |

**Item No. 28: Iris Drive Storm Drainage Improvement Project**

(A) Approve a contract in the amount of \$647,893.57 to the lowest responsive bidder Carolina Wetland Services, Inc. (WBE, SBE) for the Iris Drive Storm Drainage Improvement Project, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

**Summary of Bids**

|                                  |               |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Carolina Wetlands Services, Inc. | \$ 647,893.57 |
|----------------------------------|---------------|

|                             |                |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| JM Custom Construction, LLC | \$ 679,967.98  |
| Eagle Wood, Inc.            | \$ 725,316.50  |
| United of Carolinas, Inc.   | \$ 891,158.00  |
| On-Site Development         | \$1,443,435.15 |

**Item No. 29: Shamrock Gardens Storm Drainage Improvement Project**

(A) Approve a contract in the amount of \$6,610,650.20 to the lowest responsive bidder Zoladz Construction Co. Inc. for the Shamrock Gardens Storm Drainage Improvement Project, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

**Summary of Bids**

|                                        |                 |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Zoladz Construction Co., Inc.          | \$ 6,610,650.20 |
| United of Carolinas, Inc.              | \$ 6,788,084.60 |
| Hux Contracting, LLC                   | \$ 6,951,876.80 |
| Sealand Contractors Corp.              | \$ 7,342,000.00 |
| Eagle Wood, Inc.                       | \$ 7,590,168.30 |
| Sanders Utility Construction Co., Inc. | \$ 7,591,337.60 |
| Crowder Construction Company           | \$10,463,694.44 |

**Item No. 30: Storm Water Repair and Improvements Projects – G**

(A) Approve a contract in the amount of \$4,888,252 to the lowest responsive bidder Onsite Development, LLC for the Storm Water Repair and Improvement FY2026-G Projects, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

**Summary of Bids**

|                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| On-Site Development | \$4,888,252.00 |
| United of Carolinas | \$5,148,506.33 |
| Hux Contracting*    | \$5,997,771.00 |

\*Please note Hux Contracting Bid amount is different than what was read during the Bid opening due to mathematical errors on Hux Contracting Bid Form.

**Item No. 31: Airport CLT Logistics Center Relocation**

Approve a contract in the amount of \$3,446,501 to the lowest responsive bidder Keach Construction, Inc. for the CLT Logistics Center Relocation project.

**Summary of Bids**

|                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Keach Construction, Inc.     | \$3,446,501.00 |
| Edison Foard                 | \$3,636,000.00 |
| Cleveland Construction, Inc. | \$3,748,277.00 |
| Cinderella Partners, Inc.    | \$4,265,047.80 |

**Item No. 32: Airport Communications Coverage Reimbursement Agreement**

(A) Authorize the City Manager to execute a reimbursement agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration for a Communications Coverage facility, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the agreement consistent with the purpose for which the agreement was approved.

**Item No. 34: Airport Fourth Parallel Runway 1C-19C and Connectors Change Order**

(A) Approve change order #3 for \$9,638,706.46 to the contract with Hi-Way Paving, Inc. and ES Wagner Company, LLC, a Joint Venture, for the Fourth Parallel Runway 1C-19C and Connectors Project, (B) Authorize the City Manager to execute a Specific Operating Agreement with the University of North Carolina at Charlotte for the Airfield Pavement Management System - Digital Twin Technology research initiative, and (C) Authorize the City Manager to amend the Specific Operating Agreement consistent with the purpose for which the agreement was approved.

**Item No. 35: Airport Perimeter Fence Phase II Construction**

Approve a contract in the amount of \$2,073,049 to the lowest responsive bidder Hi-Way Paving, Inc. for the Perimeter Fence Phase II project.

**Summary of Bids**

|                                  |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Hi-Way Paving, Inc.              | \$2,073,049.00 |
| Delta Specialty Contractors, LLC | \$2,473,999.31 |
| Fence Builders, Inc.             | \$2,920,170.00 |

**Item No. 36: Airport Surveillance Radar and Center Airfield Lighting Vault Relocation Design Services**

(A) Approve a contract in the amount of \$4,982,483 with AECOM Technical Services of North Carolina, Inc. for design services for the Airport Surveillance Radar and Center Airfield Lighting Vault Relocation projects, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

**Item No. 37: Airport Transfer-Point Canopy Construction**

Approve a contract in the amount of \$2,799,159 to the lowest responsive bidder Edison Foard, LLC for the Transfer-Point Canopy project.

**Summary of Bids**

|                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Edison Foard, LLC  | \$2,799,159.00 |
| Keach Construction | \$2,880,293.00 |

**Item No. 38: Professional Engineering and Planning Services for the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization**

(A) Approve contracts for professional engineering and planning services for a term of five years with the following: Bolton & Menk, Inc., Centralina Regional Council, Fountainworks Inc., HDR Engineering, Inc. of the Carolinas, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., RS&H Architects-Engineers-Planners, Inc., VHB Engineering NC, P.C., WSP USA Inc., and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contracts consistent with the purpose for which the contracts were approved.

**Item No. 39: Meeting Minutes**

Approve the titles, motions, and votes reflected in the Clerk’s record as the minutes of: February 9, 2026, Business Meeting, February 16, 2026, Zoning Meeting, February 23, 2026, FY 2027 Budget Workshop #1, and February 23, 2026, Business Meeting.

**Item No. 40: Resolution of Intent to Abandon a Portion of Winona Street, Penman Street, and the Adjoining Alleyway**

(A) Adopt a Resolution of Intent to abandon a portion of Winona Street, Penman Street, and the adjoining alleyway, and (B) Set a public hearing for May 27, 2026.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 56, at Page(s) 290.

**IN REM REMEDY**

**Item No. 41: In Rem Remedy: 2831 Columbus Circle**

Adopt Ordinance No. 1112-X authorizing the use of In Rem Remedy to demolish and remove the structure at 2831 Columbus Circle.

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 70, at Page(s) 021.

**Item No. 42: In Rem Remedy: 5728 Ganymede Place**

Adopt Ordinance No. 1113-X authorizing the use of In Rem Remedy to demolish and remove a structure at 5728 Ganymede Place.

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 70, at Page(s) 022.

**Item No. 43: In Rem Remedy: 1126 Mineral Springs Road**

Adopt Ordinance No. 1114-X authorizing the use of In Rem Remedy to demolish and remove structures at 1126 Mineral Springs Road.

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 70, at Page(s) 023.

## **PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS**

### **Item No. 48: Property Transactions – Harrisburg Road Shared-Use Path Winterwood to Sam Dee, Parcel # 1**

Resolution of Condemnation of 3,808 square feet (0.087 acres) inside right of way, 2,157 square feet (0.049 acres) sidewalk utility easement and 1,556 square feet (0.035 acres) temporary construction easement at 8012 Winterwood Place from Lois McClendon Polk and Unknown Heirs of Robert Victor Polk for \$6,425 for Harrisburg Road Shared-Use Path Winterwood to Sam Dee.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 56, at Page(s) 291-292.

### **Item No. 50: Property Transactions – Kuykendall Road Improvements, Parcel # 10**

Resolution of Condemnation of 421 square feet (0.010 acres) in sidewalk utility easement and 1,170 square feet (0.027 acres) in temporary construction easement at 5030 Kuykendall Road from Southeast Charlotte Greek Orthodox Parish, Inc. dba Saint Nektarios Greek Orthodox Church for \$4,475 for Kuykendall Road Improvements.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 56, at Page(s) 293-294.

### **Item No. 51: Property Transactions – Kuykendall Road Improvements, Parcel # 11**

Resolution of Condemnation of 37,532 square feet (0.862 acres) inside of right of way and 11,364 square feet (0.261 acres) outside of right of way, and 278 square feet (0.006 acres) in temporary construction easement at 5108 Kuykendall Road from Southeast Charlotte Greek Orthodox Parish, Inc. dba Saint Nektarios Greek Orthodox Church for \$97,025 for Kuykendall Road Improvements.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 56, at Page(s) 295-296.

### **Item No. 52: Property Transactions – Village Lake Drive, Parcel # 2**

Resolution of Condemnation of 3,320 square feet (0.076 acres) in storm drainage easement at Village Lake Drive from HVM / Creekwood Limited Partnership for \$150 for Village Lake Drive.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 56, at Page(s) 297-298.

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## **ITEM NO. 33: AIRPORT CUSTOMER SUPPORT SERVICES FOR TERMINAL OPERATIONS**

**Councilmember Mayfield** said my apologies, Mayor Pro Tem. My iPad for some reason keeps freezing on me when I was trying to scroll back through it. Marie, let me just ask a clarifying question, since we do have representation from the airport. Will there be any challenges if we were to do a deferral to our next Business Meeting?

**Marie Harris, Budget Director**, said yes, there might be a service lapse in our ability to handle the flow of the public as well.

Ms. Mayfield said so, we have notified the current vendor, and it's coming before Council for us to vote on tonight, and we did not leave any wiggle room in case there was any conversation to ensure that we didn't have loss of service.

Ms. Harris said it wouldn't be lost, but it could be service degradation, because we have to get them up and trained, and to have some overlap. So, we're still having the other contract, but we want to train the other people up.

Ms. Mayfield said oh, so as you're firing me, you want me to train you on how to do my job. Okay, just for clarification.

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Ms. Harris said no, just so you know, they're trained not by each other, the contractors don't train the other ones.

Ms. Mayfield said okay, just verifying. I'm not going to be motioning to approve this, though. Somebody's going to need to do that.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, and seconded by Councilmember Graham to (A) Approve a unit price contract with VIP Hospitality LLC for customer support services for Airport terminal operations for a term of three years, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contract for up to two, one-year terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

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

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Driggs, Graham, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens, and Watlington

NAYS: Councilmembers Mazuera Arias and Mayfield

Ms. Harris said thank you.

**Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell** said Dr. Watlington just informed me that Chief Infrastructure Officer, Jack Christine has been awarded and named the recipient of 2026 Outstanding Airport Professional of the Year. Jack, first of all, congratulations, sir, but any words you would like to share. Congratulations.

**Jack Christine, Charlotte Douglas International Airport Chief Infrastructure Officer** said thank you very much, sir. All I will say is that I've had a wonderful, blessed opportunity to work for this airport and this city for the last 29 years. That award is as much about the people that I've worked with and the sacrifices that my family has made on all those 29 years, and I very much appreciate the fact that you acknowledged it for me. It's definitely something that I will cherish, especially since it's named after someone that I had the pleasure to work with for such a long time. So, thank you very much.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said congratulations, sir. Thank you, Dr. Watlington.

Mr. Christine said thank you.

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### ITEM NO. 3: ACTION PREVIEW OVERVIEW

**Marcus Jones, City Manager** said we'll start off with the CATS budget presentation, and Mayor Pro Tem and members of Council, this is a long time coming. It's a really great day here in Charlotte for this presentation, and the reason I say that is, thanks to the Mayor and the Council, the vision and the resolve to stay the course, the business community that played a big role, and the community in general that believed in mobility as our future, this is the upcoming budget that will begin the implementation of the 30-year transit plan. The good news is you don't have to wait 30 years to see things. What you'll see, the one percent sales tax will be levied on July 1, 2026. So, you know we have the current half cent sales tax at Article 43, and Article 34 is the one percent sales tax, and in this budget, which Brent and CATS you've done a wonderful job, there's a prioritization around safety and security, of course advancing the Red Line to 30 percent, and executing the Better Bus. So, you will see many improvements essentially immediately. Underneath all this is well-managed department, and I know we have at least one MPTA (Metropolitan Public Transportation Authority) representative here today, and we believe that we are going to hand over to you an entity in sound financial



footage. Brent I can't begin to thank you enough for the team that you've pulled together to put us in this place. What's interesting about this budget, it'll be half of the year CATS operations will fall under the City of Charlotte, and the other half of the Fiscal Year the operations will fall under the new Authority. We're building this budget together, which is extremely important, but again, a very, very good day, and Mayor Pro Tem, I'd like to turn it over to Brent.

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

**Brent Cagle, CATS Interim CEO** said Mayor Pro Tem, members of City Council, thank you for having me this evening. I'm Brent Cagle, Interim CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of CATS. Not to correct my boss, but we have two members of the MPTA here, so I'll recognize Reverend Mack and Ned Curran, both members of the MPTA Finance Committee.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said wait a minute, Brent. Could those two individuals please stand. I mean, we don't know you, so can you please stand and be recognized. Thank you, Ned. Thank you, Corine.

Mr. Cagle said okay, I'll move through this pretty quickly. Mr. Jones did a great job. I think he took all of the major points that I had, so this is going to be easy. We're going to move through this pretty quickly. Really, when we think about the last four years or so, we have been focusing our budgets and our actions on fundamentals, people, assets, safety and security. In the transit world assets, you'll hear us say state-of-good repair, again, people, assets, state-of-good repair, and safety and security. We've been focusing on that for many years, and this budget is no exception. We do feel like the budget helps us build on the progress that we've made, and to enable us to start delivering the promises that were voted for as part of the sales tax referendum back in November 2025.

So, a little bit about the budget. This is an interesting budget year, in that I am presenting a 12-month full Fiscal Year budget to you, but this budget will be marked by two governing bodies, we believe, throughout that 12-month full Fiscal Year. So, you'll see that a little bit as we go through the budget. First of all, our budget looks at how do we continue to support the current services we provide? What we're doing today, how do we make sure we continue doing that? Second, we look at how we expand service via the 2055 Transit System Plan, or TSP, what the voters approved back in November 2025? Third, a category we're calling strengthen organizations capacity and resiliency. These are the increases necessary to help us become part of an authority, or conversely no longer part of the City of Charlotte. So, there are certain functions that CATS receives from the City of Charlotte, certain functions that all departments get as being part of the larger organization that we will still need, but now we have to provide those functions independently, because we're not part of the City of Charlotte. So, again, organizational capacity and resilience to some degree, what's necessary to make this transition possible?

Okay, let's start with the revenues. I will walk through these pretty quickly. Transit revenue are the revenues we generate internally. Farebox revenues, advertising revenues, all those things that transit generates as part of our function. So, total projected transit generated revenue is \$18.8 million. On the local tax side, Article 43 revenues, that is the existing half cent sales tax that has been in place since 1998, are projected to generate \$165.7 million; Article 34 revenues, that is the new sales tax revenue, projected to generate \$198.9 million; and then the U-Drive-It rental tax projected to generate \$20.1 million. In addition to that, we have projected state grants at \$9.2 million and federal grants at \$56.1 million. It's important to note here that the revenues and the expenditures, this is a structurally balanced budget. We do not anticipate drawing down from our cash reserves. In fact, it's just the opposite. We believe that with this revenue projection, we will be able to increase our cash reserves to enable us to do the capital projects associated with the Transit System Plan over the

next five, 10, 15, 25 years. I will also note that at this time we have tentatively planned for an issuance of Certificates of Participation, or COPs, that is tentative. Those COPs may be pushed to Fiscal Year 2028. Those COPs would be for vehicles associated with the Transit System Plan, and we have to understand what the delivery schedule with the current orders are already in with the vehicle manufacturer to know if we're going to issue COPs in the current Fiscal Year. So, that is a possibility, but it is only tentative at this point.

Okay, this is a chart showing Article 34 and 43 sales tax revenue projections. Really, we just wanted to show this to underscore the significant additional revenue stream that Article 34 presents, and in FY (Fiscal Year) 2027, we project a total sales tax revenue stream of \$365 million, and then growing at a roughly four percent rate of growth both taxes beyond that.

Total operating and capital revenues by Fiscal Year. So, I wanted to show you this slide. This shows the difference between those sales taxes, which are very, very even and grow at a predictable rate, about four percent, sometimes a little different, but generally four percent. What this shows is all revenues, and so you'll note in FY2027, we project \$572 million of total revenues, but then if you note FY2030, a very significant increase in revenues, \$846 million. What that really shows is the effect of additional federal grants and issuing revenue bonds. So, when we issue revenue bonds, the revenue bond revenues come in, and that increases revenues. What that's really signaling is that is likely the first year of significant construction on the Red Line, and that's why you see that. So, the federal grants would be coming in, in addition to what we receive annually. The federal grants for the Red Line will be coming in, as well as we would anticipate issuing revenue bonds out there in the 2030 year, and that's why you see that the sales tax revenues are predictable and grow at a fairly standard pace, but then total revenues can go up and down based on project grants, federal grants, and revenue bonds.

**Councilmember Anderson arrived at 4:29 p.m.**

Expenditures. So, for the first year, Fiscal Year 2027, we project a total of \$571.7 million of total expenditures. That breaks down as \$314.1 million in operating expenses; \$224.9 million in capital expenses; \$18.1 million in existing debt service, that is debt service on debt that has already been issued. Then we would anticipate just under \$15 million being transferred to our reserve account or to the cash balances at the end of this year.

So, our operating budget. Again, you'll see it separated out into these three primary categories, again with a focus on people, assets and safety. We also have additional personnel associated with the 2055 Transit System Plan. That is primarily those personnel are to support the capital projects that we'll start to move forward, the Red Line and the Silver Line are the first two of those, as well as additional operators and support staff for Better Bus, which will be the first element of the Transit System Plan that we are really able to operationalize and put out in the community so that they see those differences.

Strengthening organizational capacity and resilience. Again, personnel associated with that, also technology. Again, we use the City of Charlotte's technology. Anos part of an authority, we need our own technology, and so technology expenses as well as other managed services expenses associated with critical functions.

Getting into some of the detail. Our total FY2027 Operating Budget is \$314.1 million. To maintain current services it's \$286.4 million, the Transit System Plan is \$8.3 million, and organizational resiliency and capacity is \$19.3 million.

This is a little bit of an interesting slide, and I struggled on how to describe this slide, so I'm going to take a look at this slide, and then I'm going to move to that slide. So, I'll go back, because I know I was moving fast. This shows our operating expenditures for the City of Charlotte, and what this is really saying is, while we're talking about a full 12-month budget, we believe the City of Charlotte's operating expenses budget will comprise about 50 percent of our 12-month budget, or until January 1, 2027. So, Fiscal

Year starts July 1, 2026, we're halfway through at January 1, 2027, that half of the budget is for the City of Charlotte and that's why you see nothing beyond that. At the same time, we are projecting the rest of the operating budget for the MPTA, and so what you see in 2027 is the other half of that 12-month budget plus future budgeted expenditures beyond that.

What are we spending the money on? Safety and security is a priority. We have approximately \$5 million budgeted for off-duty CMPD (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department) support, that is again the full year cost. We also have an additional \$5 million programmed for fare enforcement, a dedicated unit to go through and increase fare enforcement activity throughout the system, not just on rail, but bus and rail throughout the entire transit system. We have an additional \$2 million for microtransit service expansions, \$6 million in support of Better Bus, \$4 million increase to support our state-of-good repairs in our facilities group, and then again approximately \$19 million for the organizational capacity and resilience. That is really targeted staffing for new functions, selected outsourcing, managed services, and system upgrades to sustain reliability of the system and compliance with federal guidelines.

A little bit deeper dive, safety improvements. I'm sure you are all aware that we have been funding between 1,200 and 1,400 hours a week of off-duty CMPD officers. This will continue the program. Actually, every week so far for this month, and every week except for the first week of February 2026, we've seen 1,400 hours or more. We will continue that program into next Fiscal Year. Then again, our Ambassadors, that is an increase of approximately \$10 million from the current year to next year's budget. Now, I will note that if you go all the way back to 2022, 2023, it's taking our total security spend from about \$10 million back then to about \$30 million in this budget.

Next, we'll talk about state-of-good repair. Again, this is doing the things that we've said that we needed to do. It's increasing our facilities budget. This constitutes approximately a 55 percent increase in our facility spending, and it will nearly double our spend by FY2028. The truck overhaul project. We've talked about that in the past. That was something that we've been working on since 2023. That project is the oldest vehicles that had been unmaintained, they're almost complete with full maintenance and up to date, and the contract allows us to continue moving through with the newer vehicles. You'll recall, our Light Rail vehicles have two series. The first series, the one and two series, we purchased when the Blue Line was new, the original Blue Line. The second series, we purchased with the Blue Line Extension. So, the first two series, the original vehicles were overdue. They are now caught up and will be caught up, but the contract allows us to then move into the newer series of vehicles to ensure that they do not come out of maintenance compliance.

We are also focusing on Better Bus, microtransit, and Special Transportation Services. We have seen a 48 percent increase in enrollments for Special Transportation Services, STS. So, we are adding staff and adding vehicles to better support the demand of STS. This budget will add 30,000 bus service hours, that's about a five percent increase in total bus service hours, and allows us to start to convert those 15 largest routes, not all of them, but some of them, down to 15-minute service, as we said we would. You will see the number of routes in future years increase above this year. The biggest limiting factor for us today, this budget focuses on hiring operators, but they're limited by the number of vehicles we have. So, we can make some of the service improvements today by hiring operators, but at some point we don't have enough vehicles. So, this budget will also purchase vehicles so that you can see those improvements ramping up even more over the next two and three, four and five years.

Okay, on the capital side.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said can we do questions on the operating side before we do the capital?

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said this is a long presentation, do you mind?

pti:pk

Ms. Ajmera said yes, I just want to keep the capital separate from the operations, because it's a long presentation.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said I'm just afraid if we start questions, we might not get through the whole presentation. So, can you give me some grace. I'm promise, you're first when we get to Q&A.

Ms. Ajmera said okay.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said alright, thank you.

**Councilmember Owens** said can I be second?

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said you're second. I got you in the hopper, I got you. Go ahead, Mr. Cagle.

Mr. Cagle said alright. So, again, capital budget, you see it broken down into the three categories, supporting current services, expanding services for TSP, and then strengthening organizations capacity and resilience. Again, I won't remind you what those are about, we'll just dive right into the details. Total capital expenditures estimated for FY2027 are \$224.9 million, so just shy of \$225 million, that's \$66.1 million for existing service, \$129.6 million for Transit System Plan, and about \$29.2 million for resiliency, and most of that \$29.2 million is in software systems necessary, especially HR (Human Resources) and Financial Systems necessary for the MPTA. Again, this slide shows the City's part of the five-year capital, and then the MPTA's part of the five-year capital program.

Alright, let's talk a little bit about some of the projects, and I promise I'll pick it up, because I hear there's at least two questions in store, maybe more. South End Station. Seen a lot about the South End Station. This is a new station on the Blue Line. It's roughly right around the Publix area. This station was eliminated from the original design for cost reasons, and due to growth in the area and demand, this will establish the South End Station. All in, the project is about \$37 million, and it will add a new station platform, a pedestrian crossing. It will complete the Rail Trail segment in that area; and it will complete some special track work, a crossover in that area, which operationally is good for CATS allowing for a crossover in that area.

Hambright Park and Ride. This project is approximately \$15 million all in, it is underway. This is a modern Park and Ride in Huntersville right at Hambright Road and the I-77 North Toll Lane Direct Connect exit there at Hambright. This brings about 450 parking spaces, driver break rooms, internal pathways throughout the property for people to move around, micromobility and shared ride areas. It will have full technology capabilities with cameras, bike and pedestrian features, and it will feature art and transit. I will note that this is also an example of a great collaborative project with Huntersville, as well as NC-DOT (North Carolina Department of Transportation). The land was donated by NC-DOT for this Park and Ride, and we work closely with Huntersville as we are designing and building this Park and Ride.

Safety and technology. The safety and technology investments are spread across all of the years. I'll mention a couple of the most important things. One is a consolidated control center for all of our safety functions. You may recall, I refer to sometimes the ROCC, the Rail Operations Control Center, and sometimes I refer to the BOCC, the Bus Operations Control Center. We want one control center, and so that will make it more efficient and better for our safety and security and our operators as we move forward. So, that is a good example of safety and technology improvements moving forward, is the consolidation of the two control centers.

Better Bus. We will begin the purchases for future expansion. So, we'll place the orders for the buses. We have approximately \$70 million in this budget for bus purchases. It takes about 18 months to get buses, so we're placing those orders now, and inside of this budget we would anticipate making at least, if not more, improvements to 100 bus

stops throughout Charlotte and Mecklenburg County in this year. There will ultimately be more than 2,000 improvements, but in this year at least 100, if not more, and I can tell you as we look for ways to be more efficient and do this faster, if we get 100 done and we're not through with the year, we're going to keep going. We will not stop, we'll keep moving, but we are looking for ways to expedite the improvements to the bus shelters throughout Charlotte.

Red Line Commuter Rail Project. This is the design work to bring the Red Line to 30 percent design, and to start and complete the environmental work associated with the Red Line. Silver Line. Again, 30 percent design and environmental work for the Silver Line, Charlotte Douglas International Airport, over to Uptown, across to Bojangles.

Technology infrastructure. Again, I mentioned there is a large amount on this for technology infrastructure associated with the MPTA, primarily Workday, the HR and Financial System. So, again, that is driving a lot of those FY2027 expenses.

Adoption process. Now, this is a fun slide, because there's a lot going on on this slide. Okay, I will jump right into April 2026 and say, it's not even on this one, we're here on April 13, 2026, to talk about this, next step will be April 16, 2026. The MPTA will be meeting at their regularly scheduled Business Meeting, and they will approve setting a public hearing date for them to consider approval of this budget. On April 22, 2026, that's not this Wednesday, but a week from Wednesday, this budget will go in front of the MTC (Metropolitan Transit Commission), and we will ask them to endorse and approve this budget per the interlocal agreement that they have, and that then brings us to April 30, 2026, where the CATS budget is submitted to the City of Charlotte Strategy and Budget Department for inclusion in the Manager's proposed budget. All of that brings us to June 8, 2026, for this body to consider the City of Charlotte, including CATS budget, and projected June 10, 2026, for the MPTA to consider the CATS or transit budget. With that, I am happy to take questions.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said Mr. Cagle, thank you. Before we go around the table and let Council members engage, I'm going to turn it over to the City Manager to add some brief comments.

**Marcus Jones, City Manager** said thank you, Mayor Pro Tem, and thanks Brent. I'll start where Brent left. It is extremely complicated to get three bodies to approve one budget. I started off by saying this is a very good budget, and I don't think it's going to be a problem, because there's constant communication between the three bodies. I had to step out for a moment, so I would be remiss if I didn't say that employees are number one with this, absolutely, full stop, and that's the most important thing. Brent and I sent a letter out to employees, the big things, no one will lose their job, no one will lose their benefits, no one will lose their accrued leave or the sick leave bank, no one loses their tenure, they remain in the retirement system, and that's in the act, and that's so important to keep employees first.

The last two things I think are extremely important, it's been great collaboration between the City and the MPTA officers, and I think that's really, really important, and it's great to have MPTA members here tonight. It's also important that, while Brent was talking about 60 percent of the one percent, 40 percent is coming to the City and the towns, and that's very, very important, that's \$100 million in year one. With that \$100 million, the City is going to be able to fund Vision Zero, lighting, sidewalk repairs, some of the SIAs (Strategic Investment Areas), some of the road projects, and the orphan roads, so let's not forget about the orphan roads, and that's been a part of the mobility plus plan. So, to put it altogether, there's 60 percent that's headed over to the MPTA, but 40 percent that's coming to the City and the six towns. So, thank you very much, Mayor Pro Tem.

Ms. Ajmera said great job, Mr. Cagle, you're a rock star. Certainly, you made progress on all fronts. On safety, you made tremendous progress on safety, and I appreciate the work that the MPTA is doing to restore confidence back into our system. There were high-profile incidents last year that were politicized, and now that impacted how people

perceive overall our transportation system. So, our job now is to rebuild that confidence and that trust through stronger presence, and I've heard that there has been stronger presence of security. I've personally been to several transit stations, and I have seen better presence, and that actually helps us with building stronger confidence in our system. Also, what I would like to see is having measure around perception. It's great to have data on safety, but perception matters. So, if we can have perception as real performance metrics, that will help us bring the riders back with our public transit system.

I do have a couple of questions on operating side, and then I'll ask on the capital side. I appreciate how we are prioritizing Better Bus and bus shelters, and I know that's something we had promised to our residents last November 2025, so it's great to see that we will be delivering and prioritizing Better Bus, as well as restoring dignity to those who ride our public transportation system, especially shelters. If we can also ensure that we are looking at and working with our C-DOT (Charlotte Department of Transportation) in terms of sidewalks, because there are several bus stops that do not have sidewalks to reach there. So, I think having that collaboration is important to ensure that people who ride our bus system have safe infrastructure.

Mr. Cagle said yes, ma'am.

Ms. Ajmera said second, in terms of, on the operating side, as well as capital side, I know on the \$100 million, which is the 40 percent that the City of Charlotte is getting from the sales tax revenue, we are looking to issue a bond. Is MPTA doing similar where they will be issuing a bond to front load some of the investments in our transit?

Mr. Cagle said Yes. So, as the MPTA gets established, one thing that the PAVE (Projects for Advancing Vehicle-Infrastructure Enhancements) Act enables is the MPTA is now enabled to issue revenue bonds. That is not something that could be issued for transit in the past. That is a game changer, and we are working to look at how we leverage those cash receipts into revenue bonds. Part of that is just establishing credit worthiness. It's a brand new entity that has never been rated, but yes, the plan will be to create a plan of finance that leverages those cash receipts into revenue bonds.

Ms. Ajmera said well, that's great to hear, because the need is now, and if we can expedite any of these capital investments now, that will help us address the transit. Because transit is ultimately a pathway to great opportunities, to good schools and everything in between. Is this the last budget that the City of Charlotte, or the Council, will have a say in this? We will obviously have a say through our appointments, but I guess in terms of the budget review by the Council?

Mr. Cagle said yes.

Ms. Ajmera said okay. Well, I'll certainly miss that part.

Mr. Cagle said it's the end of an era, I guess.

Ms. Ajmera said what I would also like to see, I know this is in the beginning phase, but having a dashboard on progress that you are all making, not just in terms of Better Bus program, but the shelters and everything else that MPTA is investing from the operating side, as well as capital side, so residents can see how their sales tax dollars, what they are actually funding.

Mr. Cagle said yes, ma'am. You brought it up in two different ways, but I will mention that on April 27, 2026, we will be bringing forward to Council consideration of a construction project management contract that is with two firms, Lochner and HNTB. Those two contracts together, the intent is to utilize them to help us find innovative ways to speed delivery, and to do things exactly like you said, dashboards and reporting on project status.

Ms. Ajmera said that's great, and you talked a lot about investing in our safety improvements, and I appreciate this data where it shows that operator assaults have gone down significantly, almost half. At some point, we were looking at a physical barrier between operators and passengers, and I didn't see that in one of the presentation slides. Could you speak to the investments that we are making to ensure that our operators are safe?

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said Brent, if I may, because Councilmember Ajmera is bringing up some very important points that I think the viewers need to see. So, can I have IT (Information Technology) put the slide up she's referring to?

Ms. Ajmera said yes, that's slide number 16.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said 16, can we have 16, and IT if you can follow other Council members as they articulate some of their points, I think it'll be good if we have the slide?

Mr. Cagle said got it.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said okay, thank you.

Ms. Ajmera said thank you.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said go ahead, Mr. Cagle.

Mr. Cagle said so, the rail cars already have a cab that the operator is separated, so you're talking about buses. All of our buses have barriers today. We are looking at, and have been exploring, as is the industry, what can be done to create enhanced barriers or more complete barriers, all of those things. It is an industry-wide focus, but all of our buses today have barriers and they will continue to have barriers, and we will continue to work with the industry to see how that barrier technology is enhanced over time.

Ms. Ajmera said okay. I know at some point we were looking at, I forget the term.

Mr. Cagle said bullet-resistant?

Ms. Ajmera said yes, yes, bullet resistance.

Mr. Cagle said yes. So, bullet-resistant glass or bullet-resistant barriers, we are aware of one transit agency that is piloting it on one bus, it's SEPTA (Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority), and we are following that closely with them to see what the pros and cons are, certainly what happens in the field. The biggest concern with bullet-resistant barriers is two-fold, they're very heavy, so it puts a lot of weight on the front axle of the bus. If you think about where the bus operator is sitting, it's putting a lot of weight on that front axle. It also could create a hazard in the event of an accident if those barriers broke free, because they are literally several hundred pounds for the door and those kinds of things, it is a very, very heavy piece of glass. So, those are some of the concerns that the entire industry has around bullet-resistant barriers, is the weight of the glass.

Ms. Ajmera said well, I look forward to more update on that. The last question that I have on the operating side, I know that we had adopted SEAP (Strategic Energy Action Plan) citywide, that included CATS, to ensure that our buses, especially the ones that were diesel based, were being retired. As we are transitioning to MPTA, what happens to some of those sustainability goals, as we are buying and purchasing these buses that will be around for the next 20 years or more?

Mr. Cagle said yes. So, useful life is about 12 years, but certainly we have some that are beyond 12 years. When I started, our average fleet age was over 10 years. Our average fleet age today is about seven years. The FTA (Federal Transit Administration) requires you to keep them 12, so that average age reflects the new vehicles and the older. To your question, we have about 35 full battery electric buses. They have been

good vehicles, but there are challenges in our operating environment utilizing them. We have committed to electric hybrid buses, and we continue to buy those, and we will continue to buy full battery electrics, as to monitor how the technology progresses. The two biggest issues that we see with the battery electrics today are the amount of time, the run time. About 30 percent of our routes would require multiple buses, if you were using battery electrics, because one charge can't satisfy the entire route. The other problem is the overnight charge time. It's between three and six hours to charge a bus, the ones we have, and we run about 20 hours a day. So, you run into a problem of you don't have quite enough time to charge overnight, but we know the technology will get better and we're watching that as it progresses.

Ms. Ajmera said exactly, yes, and on the capital side, if we can go to slide number 24. So, you talked about South End Station and Park and Ride in Huntersville. Was this planned before this referendum was approved, or is this something new?

Mr. Cagle said these are existing projects.

Ms. Ajmera said existing projects.

Mr. Cagle said correct.

Ms. Ajmera said and what's the funding source for both of these?

Mr. Cagle said federal grants and local transit dollars, and then donations in the case of Hambright from NC-DOT.

Ms. Ajmera said got it. Well, that's all I have. I appreciate all the work that you have done, and I appreciate, I know we have MPTA Treasurer here, and a former CPA (Certified Public Accountant), so I certainly appreciate he'll be keeping close tab on the budget, and thank you Reverend Mack for your service as well. That's all I have.

Ms. Owens said thank you for the presentation. I do appreciate it, and a lot of my questions are probably driven just because this is my first rodeo, if you will. I appreciate Councilmember Ajmera's focus on resilience. That was actually one of the areas that I was going to ask questions on, and I just want to put a finer point on that. Some of the environmental commitments that we've made as a city, I just would like to appreciate better how those translate into the goals and how they translate into the budget before me. I don't see a lot in this budget, for example, that gives me clarity on assumptions that may have been made with respect to fuel costs, assumptions that may have been made, with respect to tariffs or any of the drivers, no pun intended, of long wait times to get additional buses and technology. Could you give me some clarity on that?

Mr. Cagle said yes. We certainly see tariffs as a driver of increased capital cost, 100 percent for sure. It is one of the drivers of the South End Station. I think that its original budget was \$20 million, and it came in at around \$37 million. Tariffs are a factor in that. Cost escalation for capital is certainly a factor. Fuel we hedge, we do fuel hedging. I can get you more information on the fuel hedging contract, but we have a fuel hedging contract with James River, and Mr. Howell can certainly provide the Council with more information on that hedge. People or other factors, technology and other factors. It wasn't people, it was the vehicles. When we order vehicles, it takes us about anywhere between 18 and 24 months to receive vehicles, and we are factoring that into our schedule for increased bus service based on the delivery schedules that the manufacturer will give us, but that's why it's important to order buses now. We already have started talking to the vehicle manufacturer, in this case it's Gillig, to talk about their delivery schedule to start to slot that, so that we know when those vehicles are coming, and we know when we need to start hiring to get ready for those vehicles to arrive.

Ms. Owens said okay, thank you. If I could just take you back to the first part of my question, though. With respect to the focus on resilience, can you help me articulate somewhere in this budget where we address the transference of some of our environmental goals into the new budget process and where those are picked up? Is it



in the technology area? Is it in the resilience area? I look at some of the assumptions that I think we made about the pace at which we were going to electrify our fleet, and the pace at which we were going to drive sort of that 50/50 mode share and get folks engaged a bit differently with their commutes. Can you identify where in the budget those things are addressed?

Mr. Cagle said so, sustainability is absolutely one of our core principles. To answer the question directly, does the SEAP apply to the MPTA? No, it does not. Will their sustainability policy apply? Yes, but they have not created that yet, and so we have made no assumptions about SEAP applying to the MPTA as an example, but we have not then assumed that we are not committed to sustainability. We have assumed we will continue purchasing electric hybrid buses, because of our commitment to sustainability, but no, City policies will not apply to the MPTA.

Ms. Owens said okay. If I look at the Better Bus slide, which I think is slide number 27, and we talk about making improvements to the bus stops, the assumptions made here, are they also driven by some environmental concerns? Are we looking for example at solar power on some of these? Are we able to be creative in the ways that we're engaging with electric at these bus stops?

Mr. Cagle said yes. So, all of our bus stops, we actually just put one in front of Southwest School for the Arts, and that was one of the newest bus stop designs. It's solar powered with lighting. I believe it has Wi-Fi, let me double check that. It also has chargers for your phones and devices, and it is solar powered, and so yes, we are incorporating all of those things into our design as we move forward as well as for other facilities, yes.

Ms. Owens said and then my final question, on slide number 29, I had an inquiry from a resident around the costs of the Silver Line if we go forward with the I-77 widening. There's a sense out there, or some communication out there, that the cost of the Silver Line will go up. Do you have any input in that? I didn't have an answer for the question when it was asked of me, so I'm just asking.

Mr. Cagle said so, no, I would not make the assumption that the cost of the Silver Line will go up if I-77 South Toll Lane project moves forward. However, if I-77 South Toll Lane project moves forward, we have been for months having conversations with NC-DOT to protect the right-of-way of the Silver Line to the extent that it interacts with I-77 South Toll Lane project. We would anticipate over the next 30 to 120 days, working directly and possibly bringing forward to this Council, an intergovernmental agreement with NC-DOT doing exactly what I just said, protecting the Silver Line right-of-way, because that will be necessary if that project moves forward, because certainly the Silver Line interacts in a very important place with I-77 South as it's designed or proposed today.

Ms. Owens said thank you, Mr. Cagle. No more questions.

**Councilmember Anderson** said Mr. Cagle, thank you for the presentation. I wanted to pick up on something Ms. Owens just said. So, for the 100 bus stops that will be improved, is there is a uniformity to the bus stops? Like you mentioned you've been working on a design. Will all bus stops effectively look the same?

Mr. Cagle said not all bus stops will look the same, but the basic design criteria, benches, trash cans, shelters, they will be consistent, but not necessarily every bus stop will look the same, because they may have to be applied a little bit differently depending on where you're talking about.

Ms. Anderson said okay. I would just encourage us to try to have as much of a consistent experience as passengers can have at the bus stops. So, to that end, whether you have one design or three designs, but I feel like the experience should be consistent.

Mr. Cagle said if there is a bus shelter, it will have solar lighting and chargers, and those things, and so that will be consistent. As you apply it, it has to be a little bit different based on field conditions.

Ms. Anderson said okay. On slide five, you've listed the federal funding for \$56.1 million in grants. Where are we with that? Do we feel like that is rock solid, or is that potentially soft money?

Mr. Cagle said we feel like that's rock solid, that is formula funds primarily or already awarded grants. This is not future grant competitive grants for the Silver Line. This is the formula funds that we receive on an annual basis based on revenue miles and ridership.

Ms. Anderson said okay, and then where you talked about the software expenditures for the MPTA, what portion of those dollars would be dedicated to software expenditures?

Mr. Cagle said hold on, let me see if I have the exact answer. Predominately on the capital side, the vast majority of it is software expenditures, but it's also network infrastructure. So, it's Workday, HR and Financial System, and that's the software, but then it's the network infrastructure that's needed that again we have to look at.

Ms. Anderson said and as they roll out Workday, will it be stood up in time for them, when we transition the assets over, or will we still have to have a service level agreement with them for our backbone?

Mr. Cagle said it is anticipated that there will need to be a service level agreement, but the MPTA just recently hired EY (Ernst & Young) as their Transition Consultant, and they have a huge team. I think there's no less than two former North Carolina Secretaries of different divisions on the team. It's a really impressive team. They're working through all of that, and they will be approaching the City to talk about that, and it may require a Transition Services Agreement, but that's to be determined.

Ms. Anderson said okay, okay, and then last question when you're walking through the Red Line Commuter Rail, we know that 50 percent of the Red Line must be complete in order for other projects to be jumpstarted, right?

Mr. Cagle said correct.

Ms. Anderson said where is the 50 percent completion projected here, or do we have a projection of when it would be 50 percent complete?

Mr. Cagle said we don't have it projected at this time primarily because, as we go through design and environmental, we will be looking at project delivery methods that may enable us to speed up construction, alternative delivery methods like P3's or design build, or other things, and so the cash burn if you will, is dependent on the project delivery method, and that will come as we get closer to that 30 percent design and environmental as we start to look at project delivery.

Ms. Anderson said understood. I just think that's really important. I can appreciate the movement that you have on the bus side, so that passengers and residents will feel the difference very quickly, within a five-year window, but for this 50 percent completion, as effectively pigeonholing the other rail projects. So, to the extent that we can increase the delivery through the delivery model, I would definitely encourage us to think about it.

Mr. Cagle said the other thing to clarify on this is the PAVE Act says that no other rail project can complete before the Red Line is 50 percent complete. Just logistically, the Red Line is the most ready, it's the furthest in design, it's all those things, and so it is not the case that we will sit waiting for that 50 percent mark to say, okay, now we can start other things. There will be concurrent work on other lines as well, because you kind of come to the same place. You can't complete another rail project before the Rail Line is 50 percent complete, but you can start them.

Ms. Anderson said excellent. Thank you.

Mr. Cagle said okay.

**Councilmember Mayfield** said Mr. Cagle, thank you for the presentation, and to our MPTA representatives, thank you all for showing up and for your willingness. I'm going to backtrack, but I'm going to stay here on 28, because what you noted is that we're the furthest in design. A lot of community conversation, all of last year when this was being discussed, there are very clear concerns on that first stop, when we look at Gateway to Derita and then Derita jumping over to Harris. There is a lot of economic development that has happened along our current rail with the ground floor retail. With us saying that this is the furthest along in design, where in the slide is the continuation of community impact, because that is large swaths of, let's be honest, majority minority community, majority working class community, that is basically going to have a train run right past them? Where do we continue to have conversations to actually let the community know that what they supported is something that's actually going to benefit them?

Mr. Cagle said yes, that's a great question. So, this is what we call the Locally Preferred Alternative. It has been the LPA for 20 years. There are some issues with this LPA, and we know what they are. One is, everyone can see that when this was done North End was a very different place than it is today, and so clearly there needs to be a stop in North End, and as we do design, we've planned for that, and we're planning for that as we continue design. To change the LPA is a separate process and it comes through design, and ultimately the MPTA will be asked to do final approval of the LPA, or Locally Preferred Alternative. The second major problem with the LPA is, right now the LPA reflects a terminus in Mount Mourne, which is in Iredell County. That is the LPA. It has been the LPA for 20 years, but we do not have the legal right to terminate the Red Line in Iredell County at this time. That decision and that conversation with Iredell County and Mooresville needs to be had, because the Red Line cannot go beyond Mecklenburg County line without their approval. So, those are all questions that need to be addressed in setting the LPA, and that is part of the process as design moves.

Ms. Mayfield said so that doesn't completely answer my question as far as community impact. So, when we're talking about a locally preferred plan that was identified 20 years ago, the City of Charlotte has seen a major growth transition just in the last five years. So, I'm hoping to hear that we've identified that we need a little more flexibility versus saying, well, this is what we identified 20 years ago, and so this is the plan we're moving with, and clearly identifying community engagement prior to, and alongside, with MPTA, because again what we thought growth would look like in Charlotte in 2020 versus 2019 to now 2026, is a very different conversation. So, trying to hold on to an idea from 20 years ago, and not taking into consideration what we are seeing on the ground, I think we're missing an opportunity. So, you don't have to have an answer for this now, but at some point in the near future, I would expect for us to see a clear guideline of how community will be engaged, and not just rely on, well, we identified this 20 years ago.

Mr. Cagle said I think we're saying the same thing.

Ms. Mayfield said it didn't sound like it, so that's why I wanted to clarify.

Mr. Cagle said absolutely, there is a process, it's setting the Locally Preferred Alternative. The MPTA will need to do that as design advances, and the community will be engaged in that.

Ms. Mayfield said okay. I want to make sure we have it on record, a Locally Preferred Alternative should be the alternative that community is leading in that conversation, since they're the ones that's going to be impacted. Also, if we go back one to slide 27, I want to make sure that we're very transparent with community on, how will these routes, neighborhoods, actually be prioritized? You and I have had conversations over the years, where routes have been realigned and reassigned. I've always had an interest in how we decide what communities. We've received numerous emails and/or run into

people in the community that utilize our bus transportation system on a regular basis. Buses will be on the App saying it's coming. The route will completely disappear. It will be 30 minutes late. It will be 45 minutes late. It will just not show up at all. So, are we using the high concern data that's coming in to identify the priority routes? What is the actual process?

Mr. Cagle said we can provide you information on that. There's two drivers in the early phases. The primary driver is ridership. The highest ridership route should be taken to the 15 minutes as fast as possible, but there are also concerns with route length and the number of vehicles required and all of those things, but we can provide you more information on the anticipated route upgrades.

Ms. Mayfield said so, here's what I would like for us to consider. What you noted is the highest ridership. I'm not going to have high ridership on my route if my route is 30 to 45 minutes late on a consistent basis. So, logic will tell me that if accessibility is the priority, what we will be tracking first are the routes where we have received multiple concerns and/or complaints and/or questions regarding why the route changed or why the bus didn't show up. That should be the priority versus where high ridership is. High ridership is in South End, and there are certain areas where they're not challenged by their bus not arriving on time, or arriving within a five, maybe six-minute window. We have other areas in this community where, when that individual misses that bus, that is putting them potentially in a position where if they're attempting to go to work, they're an hour and a half to two hours late. To me, that's a greater priority, because we're tracking all of that information through our CATS App, through all the emails that come to Council, and Manager this is more so why this is still under our authority before it goes over to a whole other entity. If we're saying that the priority is public transportation, and we want to build confidence with our community, why would we default that higher ridership to be the main criteria versus identifying where we have the pain points and building from there out? That is something I would like to be considered.

Mr. Cagle said well, Central Avenue is the highest ridership route, always has been, probably always will be. Beatties Ford is the second highest ridership route, probably again always has been, always will be. Tryon North and South is one of the highest ridership routes. Again, the South End itself, there are high ridership routes that go through, I guess generally speaking, the South End, but most of the high ridership routes are the major thoroughfares throughout the community, north, south, east and west. The other thing I'll say, and again, when I started, we saw missed trips over 10 percent, and a missed trip is the bus didn't come. We said it was going to come, and it never showed up. That is an incredibly high missed trip rate, that's really, really high, that's off the charts. We have worked very, very hard in the last four years. Our missed trip rate hovers around one percent or less at this point. Once we got missed trips under control, we said on-time performance, is it on time? If we said it was going to be there, is it there when we say? The standard is at least 85 percent OTP, On-Time Performance. Again, we were in the 78 percent to 80 percent range. We are consistently at 85 percent or better as we've made these changes. So, I understand how frustrating it is for all of our riders when the bus doesn't come or when it comes late. We are actively making those changes as part of this budget and we're making the improvements. So, instead of a bus on Beatties Ford coming every 25 minutes, it's coming every 15 minutes, just like the service standard, or the other major routes, and so I wasn't trying to say that it's only ridership. We need to look at where we have issues with routes. Some routes are very difficult from an on-time performance standpoint. South Tryon is one of them, and it's because of two things. One, it's a very long route. It starts Uptown and goes all the way out almost to the lake, not Lake Norman, but out to the other lake, anyway, and it goes through South End where there's all kinds of construction, and so it's impacted. That's a hard route for OTP, but we look at how we make those improvements to that route, specific to the route.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you for that. The transparency that I would like to see is, when we're presenting this, when this information is being presented to Council, but also when it is presented to community, is a clear line of how the routes are being identified. I appreciate we look at high travel, high ridership. What I'm also saying is we need to

clearly identify, not just percentages, because unless we're going through the actual 3D models of any graphs, we're not looking at the real numbers. Numbers never lie, but they can be used to mislead.

So, at the end of the day, we know that there are pain points. You all are already capturing information through the App, through other ways, where we are having clear misalignment with routes. I want to make sure that what we're showing the community is accurate as possible, and letting the community know how they can best get the information that they need and share the concerns that they have, and share the wins, because constituents also reach out to us to say thank you when things go right, and we try to get that over to the team. If we're talking about hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of investment, it will be helpful to make sure that we can share with the community, when they reach out to us, a better turnaround time on getting responses to the questions that they have, because we had this great presentation, but unfortunately just at 8:03 a.m. on Friday morning we had an assault. So, we look at the breakdown of what we're going to do with security in the earlier slides and other things, but when you have an individual who we witnessed, and video shows, a male following a female onto the bus, there being an assault, them both leaving the bus, and there is nothing that stops that in between, and we have a police report that's out there doing whatever process that they need to do. The City of Charlotte has invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in support of domestic violence awareness, domestic violence outreach and support. If we see an incident happening, that's not a direct assault onto one of our driver's, what is the protocol to ensure that, one, those individuals are separated, but two, that there is protection? Because to just say where the camera shows both the male and the female leaving the bus, but there's no followup of that, but yet the female was kicked and beaten, and this is the assault of a female near the Center Street, which is all over the news today, and directly connected to our bus.

Mr. Cagle said the operator immediately called the police. They were responding to that, and that's the exact protocol that they needed to follow. That operator did exactly what they were supposed to do.

Ms. Mayfield said so, that's the clarification. What I'm saying is, if me and Mr. J.D. got into an altercation and he's about 6' 5' and I'm about 5' 2', I'm just saying that is just our policy, and this is just a question for clarification, is that versus stopping the bus and doing one of those everybody get off.

Mr. Cagle said the bus never moved.

Ms. Mayfield said I'm going to ask my question, and then you can respond to it. So, for clarification, our bus driver's response and training is to call law enforcement, not to intervene, because we're not supposed to intervene, and that's it. We're just supposed to call and hopefully stop at one of the routes where we know the officer says, okay, well I'll be at your next stop, and that's the stop we stop at. What is the actual protocol in that?

Mr. Cagle said the bus never moved. Two people boarded the bus. They were in a verbal altercation. The operator called the police, and that bus never moved, and the police arrived and those two people had left.

Ms. Mayfield said so, the verbal altercation turned into a physical altercation, but we do not get involved with the physical altercation, because of multiple reasons. We call police, and however long it takes for law enforcement to arrive, then that becomes law enforcements responsibility? I'm just asking for clarification.

Mr. Cagle said yes, that is the responsibility of law enforcement or security, whichever responds first, but the operator was stopped. A female boarded the bus. A male came right behind her. They were in a verbal altercation. The operator never moved the bus. They did exactly what they were supposed to do. They held and called police and said the police is on the way, and the two people then exited the bus, as I understand it, before the police came, but they were not traveling, they were not passengers on the

bus. They boarded it, but it never moved, and the operator called for assistance from security, CMPD.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you. I just wanted clarification for that since I've had two people reach out asking me about it, and since you were here, it was an ability to say what our process is. I don't necessarily agree with it, but I don't have to, because ya'll about to be gone in about a couple of months anyway.

Last piece, Wi-Fi access. While we're looking at making the infrastructure investments, are we considering at our Park and Ride stations, since a lot of people will be going to work or school or anything like that, to be able to partner to have Wi-Fi access while we're waiting?

Mr. Cagle said yes. So, our vehicles are Wi-Fi enabled, and yes, as we do new facilities or facilities upgrades we look to enable with Wi-Fi, including bus shelters as well.

Ms. Mayfield said that will be great if that could just be added as one of the bullets in the presentations to just let people know, because I think that's a great opportunity for those that may be waiting. Thank you, Mr. Manager and Mayor Pro Tem.

**Councilmember Graham** said I'll be very quick. I know we're short on time. I'm looking at the clock. Brent, I just want to thank you for your leadership. I also want to thank the members of the MPTA who are here for their leadership as well. I'm a political junky, so I do watch some of your meetings. I get a feeling of what you guys are doing and where you are in the process, and I just really want to thank you for leaning in on public transportation for us. Brent, I want to underscore safety. Obviously the conversation we just had, unfortunately bad things happen to good people, and it happened on public transportation, and so hopefully we begin to double down on the investment that you guys are making on public safety on the bus, on the train, at the stations, and at the shelters, so I want to underscore that. I also want to underscore and get just a little bit more clarification. I think 100 bus shelters should be the absolute floor. I think we should have the capability to do more than 100. So, I'm going to challenge you when you basically said it yourself that you should be able to do 100-plus or more. I'm going to focus on the "or more," and help me understand that all bus shelters will have same standards, like a basic car, and others are going to have more features based on location. Help me understand that?

Mr. Cagle said so, depending on the utilization of the stop. Some stops have 100 boardings a day, some have 10 or two boardings a day, depending on utilization, as well as investment, as well as equity in the area. That drives the decision on the level of amenities. All those amenities are consistent, but they are not the same amenities on every stop. Some may have benches, some may have benches and shelters, some may have other things, but again, all those amenities are consistent. We don't go out and buy a different kind of shelter for each one, but there is a policy dictating the level of amenities that go on each stop.

Mr. Graham said well, just Malcolm, I think they all should have benches and shelters, I'm just saying. It rains on two people the same way it rains on 100, and so hopefully Minister Mack, you would hear that, and that no matter it's a ridership of two or ridership of 100, ridership that starts on Beatties Ford Road or ends in Ballantyne, the standard should be the same throughout the system, just my thought.

I'm pivoting to micro transportation, hopefully that we can also demonstrate quick results. I think the public really want to see their dollars at work quickly, and the quickest way to do it is through the Better Bus program, the micro transportation program, and getting shelters up and running, and protecting people from the rain and the sun, and having some place to sit while their waiting on the bus, as well access to sidewalks. I mean, those are basic functions that folks voted yes for. I just think that there should be no compromising from my perspective on that.

Then, lastly, you didn't touch much on handicap access, but hopefully there's some conversations around the blind and the limited sight passengers, and those who need handicap access on the buses, on the trains, that there's an investment area in the budget that talks about making sure that those folks who need assistance get the type of support they need as well. Thank you.

Mr. Cagle said yes, sir.

**Councilmember Driggs** said I think it's worth pausing for a moment here to recognize we're actually at a moment in history for our City. This is an extraordinary event that is taking place, and we are talking about matters, some of which we will not control. So, in my mind, as the Chair of Transportation when I look at this, I'm thinking in terms of moving out, going forward. You can take transit out of City government, but you can't take transit out of the City and out of the County. So, in fact, the critical thing for most of these issues is the ongoing basis of our partnership with MPTA. I believe Ms. Mack left, or has stepped out of the room, but I want to stress the fact that our role in all of this will be one of advocacy for our constituents, because we were elected by them, so we're appointing board members, but we're the interface with the public. They're going to look to us and they're going to say, okay, who did you appoint? Are they doing the things that you know we want? We will not have the immediate control over many of the issues that we've been talking about here. So, what we really need to focus on is that question of the partnership and how it moves forward. It took us five years to get here. I think it's really exciting that we're having this conversation. I remember the mobility task force, and it all seemed a little remote, and the first time I heard the suggestion of a half-cent sales tax I said, "Don't be ridiculous, the legislature will never let us do that," and yet they did and the people approved it.

In my mind, one thing that's critical that I have said publically a number of times is, the referendum passed by a vote of 52 to 48, and what is on my mind is, we have to make clear to the 48 percent that in the end this was actually a good thing to do. So, there are a lot of ways that we can do that. We have to allay the concerns. There was an element of distrust, and we struggle with that in our community. We are struggling with that on I-77 as well. It's hard to have a serious policy conversation among people if they don't trust each other. So, in my mind, the partnership that we have with MPTA is critical. We will appoint those 12 members, yes, but aside from that we have to work out the terms and conditions for the transition of the assets to the MPTA of the employees. We have to make sure that the terms are fair to Charlotte, and that we take very good care of our employees. The safety issue is one that I'm confident will be addressed by the MPTA. I appreciate the fact that the way that board appointment process worked, we have quite a diversity up there. There's not going to be any issue that is not being represented by somebody in that group, and in alignment with our mix of interests here. So, I'm very optimistic about the outlook for that.

At this point, as we look at these things, we need to be mindful of the fact CATS can enter into agreements, for example, that might be binding on the MPTA going forward, but ultimately they have to be able to do what they were appointed to do and to run this thing, and our job is to make sure that the way they run it aligns with the things that we aspire to for our City.

I did have, for example, one question, and that is, you say they'll be 100 shelters and these bus routes. You've made some reference to how they are prioritized, but is this just a data exercise?

Mr. Cagle said no. I mean, I guess, what do you mean by that?

Mr. Driggs said I guess what I'm getting at, maybe related to Ms. Mayfield's question, because the question has been put to me, "How many of these shelters are we going to get, and will they all have a roof over them?" There's a lot of interest in the shelters, because those are a near-term prospect, and they have implications socially, as well as from a numerical standpoint. So, I'm just wondering whether we have a sequence for over 2,000 of these in five years? Who goes first? Who goes last? How does that work?

Mr. Cagle said that is a great question. The MTC passed an updated policy about four and a half years ago, just pre-Brent, just before I got there, maybe four and a half or five years ago, and that sets out the prioritization of how you score and rank bus shelters, bus amenities, and all of the bus stops are scored and ranked per that policy, and it's all out there, and actually has been for a while, and so that lists all of those things. Now, the only thing that has to be updated is, with microtransit there will be some bus stops that are removed, because in a microtransit zone where you are is the bus stop. You don't walk to a bus stop. The microtransit vehicle comes to you. So, we have to fix that, but otherwise, that is the MTC policy. Now, I say all of that to say, we have already brought that and presented that to the MPTA, not that they have to approve that policy as written and approved by the MTC, but as a starting place for what they can consider as they create a policy that dictates level of amenities and prioritization of those amenities.

Mr. Driggs said thank you. I will note that a great majority of the employees of the new MPTA will be CATS people. So, we will be exporting everything that we have built into CATS when we cause that transfer to happen.

Finally, I think I will just note, we are extraordinarily fortunate to have somebody of your ability and insight working for us at this very complicated time. I thank you for that.

Mr. Cagle said thank you.

**Councilmember Mazuera Arias** said thank you, Brent, for the presentation, and thank you to the MPTA members who are here in attendance. I did have a question about whether, in your exercise of projecting these numbers, was there a time and place that you all included the revenues as well the estimated loss from fares, particularly the ones on the Light Rail?

Mr. Cagle said so, we have calculated as an analysis. I started looking for it like it was there, it's not in one of these slides, but let me try to answer your question. We have already calculated what we believe, through analytical, not account, but an analysis, what we believe is the rate of fare evasion in the system. In all modes combined, we put that at roughly 50 percent, all modes, bus and rail.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said 50 percent?

Mr. Cagle said 50, five, zero, a little bit lower on bus, a little bit higher on rail, but averaged at 50 percent. We also calculated, in response to either the FTA or the Office of State Auditor, projected lost revenues. I can get you that number, but I believe it was somewhere around \$3 million to \$5 million annually in lost revenues.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said yes, colleagues, the reason I ask this question is more so, not only about efficiency, but safety, to ensure the safety of the passengers on our bus, to prevent things like what happened this past Friday morning from happening, as well as encouraging our MPTA trustees that are in the room here to relay the message to the other folks. I appreciate that we are incorporating \$5 million in fare enforcement, but also finding a very sound way to implement that and to ensure that we're not using 50 percent of revenue that is supposed to be coming from fares. I mean, that's a huge lost opportunity, and let's remember that it is those revenues that also take into account the operating costs and budgeting to make sure that we're providing great public transportation service.

The other question I had is, while I can understand that we're not going to go through every project, could you talk to me about the Uptown Transit Center. This is a Center that is in desperate need of modernization, and particularly because we are one of the rarest bus systems in the Country where all the buses meet in that place. If you live in East Charlotte in District Five, and you are wanting to get to West Charlotte or another part of town, you have to go to the Transit Center here in Uptown. Can you talk about any potential upgrades to that center?

pti:pk



Mr. Cagle said yes. So, we have done a condition assessment of the CTC (Charlotte Transportation Center). The short story is the CTC needs to be renovated and rehabilitated for sure. It is a 30-year-old facility, and it needs some work. So, we are working through how to bring it up to the state-of-good-repair level that is required by the FTA that is included in the budget, but we are also looking long-term what our options are for complete redevelopment of a transit center. To your second point, do other transit systems have a central transit center? Yes, most do. In Charlotte, we especially need a central transit center, because of the road network and because Uptown Charlotte is a significant employment center. Now, included in Better Bus is also more point-to-point connectivity, so that instead of all buses needing to come Uptown and then across, there are also buses that can bring people around the edges and skip Uptown, and that would be the difference between a hub-and-spoke and point-to-point, but incorporating that, but we certainly need a central transit center in Charlotte.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said right, yes, I appreciate that, because not all folks work in Uptown, and so we want to make sure that everybody has access to opportunity in all parts of Charlotte. I join my colleagues, and this is more of a comment about the equity when it comes to shelters and the bus stops across the City. It has to be consistent, because although perhaps one stop might just have two to five people waiting there a day, we are growing exponentially. Again, 157 people moving to the region, does not include specifically the City number, but that means that we're seeing exponential growth in South End and East Charlotte and all parts of our City, and so we want to make sure that the infrastructure is equitable from a stop in South End to a stop on Central Avenue or on Beatties Ford Road, etc. Also, Councilmember Mayfield spoke on this. We're looking at, for example, the LPA that was 20 years ago for the Red Line. We need updated scores for the prioritization of modernizing our bus stops, because that was done five years ago, and again, we've grown exponentially, and so I would love to see an updated criteria on that.

Then the other thing is just speaking to what Mr. Driggs was talking about, our partnership with MPTA. Something I was thinking about, as we were talking about the Red Line and how we have to adjust and update and whatnot, I wanted to make it very clear to folks that the transit plan that the City worked on is now in the hands of MPTA, and so that plan might change. I just want to make that very clear, because when I was against the transit sales tax, no secret, I made it very clear that this plan might change, and so I think, as Mr. Driggs says, it is on us to respond to our constituents and advocate on their behalf when it comes to ensuring that community input is incorporated to a revised LPA for the Red Line, as well as where do we redirect funds if additional costs will be incurred on adding a rail stop to the Red Line or extending the Silver Line or halting the Gold Street car, so all of those questions. I think it's just very important for us to ensure and remind ourselves that this is a collaboration, particularly with our 12 appointments, and having good faith relationship with the MPTA. That's it, Mayor Pro Tem. Thank you.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said Council, thank you for the great questions, and Brent, we thank you for the great presentation. Let me remind our citizens, though, this agenda item will be before us four more times. A public hearing will be held on May 11, 2026; on May 18, 2026, our budget adjustments; June 1, 2026, straw votes; and then June 18, 2026, budget adoption. So, we encourage [inaudible] our citizens would like to weigh in on this important agenda item on May 11, 2026, public hearing.

With that said, I want to do two more things, team. One, I would like to do a time check, and then two, we have some outstanding students that I want to recognize in the audience this evening. There are political science students from The Queens University of Charlotte. Thank you for joining us for the meeting. Will you please stand up and be recognized at this time. Would the alum of Queens like to add anything else?

Mr. Mazuera Arias said absolutely. These wonderful students are also taught by the incredible Professor, Dr. Margaret Commins, if you can stand up please, who is a

former professor of mine, and is the reason why I love politics and policy, and also is an engaged citizen with the City of Charlotte by being the Chair of the Mayor's International Cabinet as well. I just also want to add that, not only am I an alum of the Queens University of Charlotte, but so is our Mayor, Vi Lyles. So, thank you so much for being here. They took a tour of the Government Center earlier, and thanks for being engaged.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said alright, team, we need a time check. We have four more items, and we have a closed session. My goal was, we need to accomplish four items, plus a closed session here in 267 by 7:00 p.m. Okay, I'll turn it over to our Public Safety Chair, Danté Anderson, who is going to speak to street vending regulations and Passenger Vehicle for Hire Ordinance revision.

Ms. Anderson said thank you, Pro Tem. First and foremost, I just want to recognize my Committee and thank them for the effort that they've put into both of these items. We've had several meetings. We've had touch points with the community, both with street vendors and with residents. So, I just want to recognize Councilmember Ajmera, Graham, Mitchell and Driggs, that they comprise the Public Safety Committee. I'm going to go ahead and hand it over to Charlie, but just to frame it a bit. This item was referred by the Mayor last year actually in April 2025, so it's been in Committee for quite some time. As you'll see, as Charlie walks through some specific slides, we are the only major city or medium-sized city in the great state of North Carolina that does not have citywide street vending regulations. So, as it's been referred to this evening several times, as we continue to grow, we need to as a Council address this idea of citywide street vending, but I'll stop talking now and I'll pass it over to Mr. Jones. Thank you.

**Charles Jones, Department of Transportation Deputy Director** said thank you. Good evening, Mayor Pro Tem and members of Council. I can do one thing well, and that's follow instructions. I understand you've got a packed agenda, so I'm going to go quick. If I go too quick, please tell me to slow down.

A quick overview of our existing street vending ordinances. Street vending is governed by Chapter 6 of the City Code of Ordinances. We made updates to that last year, including the peddler's section, and we increased the violations of those ordinances in civil fines up to \$500. Real quick, level set the geography. Citywide street vending is legal without a permit in all areas outside the Congested Business District. The Congested Business District, street vending is illegal, except for the Tryon Street Mall Vendors Program. The CBD (Congested Business District) was expanded by Council to include streets in NoDa last year. Tryon Street Mall street vending is legal, but does require a permit, and that program is administered by the Charlotte Center City Partners. We've got the footprint there, but it's a little easier to see on the map. So, you can see our current Congested Business District includes most of the streets in Uptown and a small area in NoDa.

So, real quick overview of the policy timeline. Councilmember Anderson gave a pretty good overview of that. So, last year in April 2025, policy referral by Mayor Lyles. The Housing Safety Committee approved two policy recommendations in June 2025 to expand the Congested Business District, and to create a NoDa pilot program for a period of six months. June 23, 2025, Council approved those Committee recommendations. September 1, 2025, permitted vendors actually began selling items in NoDa as part of that pilot program. On January 5, 2026, the Safety Committee approved sunseting the NoDa vendor pilot program.

So, there was no action taken, and the program expired on February 15, 2026. March 5, 2026, the Safety Committee approved two policy recommendations for Council consideration, and we'll get to those at the end of this presentation, but real quickly, it's extends street vending regulations citywide, and then create a criminal enforcement option for CMPD that would be a Class 3 misdemeanor.

So, community feedback. We've had two public input sessions, one last year to really get a feel for the concerns of the community, and had another public input session in February 2026 to gather feedback around additional policy proposals and to garner

feedback from the pilot program after its conclusion. We've had numerous emails, as all of you have, calls, and staff interactions with vendors, residents and businesses. Continue to hear from folks about unlicensed food sales, inconsistent results from the increased fines we have, challenges with permitting and compliance during the NoDa pilot program. We had permitted vendors that set up in the wrong places. We had unpermitted vendors setting up in NoDa, so we had a lot of challenges with that pilot program. Then, we also had concerns from adjacent communities during the NoDa pilot. So, a lot of the folks that were vending in NoDa left that area and went to other areas of the City to sell their wares. I do want to note these two photos, these are from this year. Someone was selling animals in NoDa, and there's a food cart set up in the street during a stadium event, cooking hot dogs and other things in the street, so we continue to see and hear about these challenges in the community.

Some of the benchmarking work we did beyond just what North Carolina has. We looked at what we consider peer cities, large cities with diverse populations. All of those cities have citywide vendor regulation. So, no other city that we found has an unpermitted type system that's our size. Three of the six cities have a criminal penalty option. We've got an asterisk there by Nashville and San Diego. While they don't have a criminal penalty option, they do allow their local Department of Transportation with assistance from the local police force to remove items from the right-of-way. It's one of those things, if someone refuses to move, the local Department of Transportation calls the police department, and they physically remove the items. Common elements we saw throughout these cities are restricted locations due to insufficient right-of-way widths. So, think of the narrow sidewalks in NoDa, those locations would not be allowed to have street vendors in most of these cities' programs.

Prohibitions on proximity to businesses. That's one of the complaints we've heard of people setting up in front of a store and blocking the entrance and exit of that business. Size restriction on displays, authority to remove and impound vendor materials. Almost all of the cities require a valid business license from the vendor, and some municipalities actually require insurance, and the city to be listed as an additional insured, and require photo identification for vendors. So, there's a wide range of what's required from vendors in our peer cities.

That brings us to the two items, consideration tonight, or discussion. Safety Committee vote was to extend street vending regulation beyond the existing Congested Business District citywide. So, some of the staff analysis behind this, citywide regulations consistent with the results of our benchmarking review. Street vending regulation is in the interest of public safety and public health, particularly around the unlicensed food vendors. Street vending regulation helps level the playing field with our brick-and-mortar businesses. One thing we've heard consistently through the public input sessions is that our brick-and-mortar businesses have a lot of hurdles to jump through to open and run that business, and they want at least some level of skin in the game from the street vendors. Of course, we want to maintain exceptions for City authorized programs such as the Tryon Street Mall program. We think the nonprofit partners that manage our Municipal Service Districts are well equipped to run and maintain those street vending programs, and then we want to continue also to allow vending during festivals and other events, as currently codified in our ordinances.

Then, the other vote was to establish a criminal penalty option, Class 3 misdemeanor, for illegal street vending. Our analysis about this was, it's a stronger enforcement tool, particularly for repeat offenders. We had several vendors who received citations almost daily, and there's nothing CMPD can do to force that individual to move from their location, other than right another citation. The misdemeanor classification also allows for CMPD to track repeat offenders more effectively and gives them a path to resolve recurring issues beyond just writing another citation. I wanted to note, and we noted this during the Committee discussion, is officers have a wide discretion on when to escalate misdemeanors to an actual arrest. The implementation approach on a criminal penalty, we would work very closely with the City Attorney's Office to make sure we adhere to the state statutory considerations, and then we really want to make sure that CMPD relies on progressive enforcement tools, voluntary compliance, verbal warning, civil

citation, and then criminal penalty, not an immediate criminal penalty, and it would mainly be based on the circumstances of the offense.

So, next steps, based on Council feedback this evening as desired, staff can draft ordinance modifications for a future vote, or take any other direction that Council may deem necessary. With that, I'll turn it over for any questions.

Ms. Ajmera said first, I want to acknowledge Mr. Jones and Mr. Heath, and the entire team for doing this work in terms of implementing the pilot program, as well as providing us the feedback, and they have done all of that within the same capacity of their staff, so no new members, so I certainly appreciate the work that you and your team have done within the current capacity.

So, I just wanted to share some of the feedback that I heard from the public hearing. I had an opportunity with Councilmember Anderson, we both attended the public hearing where we heard both from street vendors, as well as from brick-and-mortar businesses. What we heard clearly from both groups is that the current system is not working for vendors, as well as for small businesses, and we need to fix that. So, we heard from street vendors and brick-and-mortar businesses, and the solution has to respect both sides, so that we are not picking the winners and the losers. This is about leveling the playing field and not tipping the scale in either direction. So, I think I was the only Council member at the Committee meeting who supported the first recommendation, which is to extend the street vending regulations beyond the existing Congested Business District citywide, but I did not support the second recommendation of establishing a criminal penalty option, and I'll tell you why. Here is my reason, because as I attended the public hearing, I got insight from street vendors, as well as small businesses. We have to ask why we are holding street vendors, these are small entrepreneurs, to a higher enforcement standard than brick-and-mortar businesses, because there is no misdemeanor or criminality option for brick-and-mortar businesses, though we don't regulate them, there is none that exists today. So, I think that is an equity concern that we need to take seriously.

Also, I heard from street vendors specifically that we should not apply one size fits all systems approach. So, at our public hearing, there were street vendors that were working specifically in arts and creative space, so these are artists, these are creatives. They shouldn't face the same regulatory burden as food vendors, because they don't have to go through the whole public health requirements that food trucks would have to. So, we need to ensure that our enforcement approach is not disproportionately impacting the very entrepreneurs that we are saying that we want to support. So, what I would like to see is having a pathway for creatives and for artists that is not as stringent as those who are operating in some sort of food space.

Also, I heard that permitting process is difficult. We have the same team with no additional capacity doing the permitting process. That doesn't speak to the work that Mr. Jones and his team have done, but we have to also factor in this has added quite a bit of work to the team without adding capacity. So, we do need a faster permitting process, and that was feedback that I received consistently from the public hearing that I attended, and clear distinction between artists and who are going to be doing some sort of food truck business.

Also, I took notes when I attended the meeting, so I want to make sure I got everything. Also, we need an enforcement approach that prioritizes fairness, as well as compliance. Knowing that we don't have additional heads to do permitting process, I think having that option of issuing a misdemeanor shouldn't be the first solution that we should consider, because I do believe that if we expand our permitting process where it's streamlined, where we have dedicated team just working on that, we can clearly have more compliance, rather than just going this enforcement route, especially the criminal penalty option, because there were a few street vendors that talked about how criminal penalty could end up affecting other parts of their life. You're talking about housing, having a reliable job, and everything else in between. So, I think we need to take that

very seriously, because that will not be the level playing field, in my perspective, and that's all I have. Thank you.

Ms. Owens said thank you for the presentation. I'll be brief. I think I just want to lift up some of what Councilmember Ajmera was talking about. I too sat in on the session. I'm not a member of the Safety Committee, but I was inclined towards something citywide, but also was pretty resistant to the situation of criminal penalty. I do draw a distinction, as she does, between food, and I would not necessarily say artists, but I would say goods. To be able to sell t-shirts, or there are just a variety of things that seem to have less risk to the public than food does, and so I'd like to explore that. Another aspect that I did lift up in that meeting that I would like to hear your thoughts on is where we stand with respect to the seizure of goods. I was under the impression that we have the ability to seize goods, but we really have a failure of some of the systems that would enable us to house those goods during a period of seizure. Could you speak to that, and see if that's an additional way that we can get around necessarily criminalization?

Mr. Charlie Jones said so, if the objects are blocking the right-of-way, we do have the ability to remove the items from the right-of-way. I think where some of the gray area comes in is what constitutes blocking the right-of-way? Is it blocking a pedestrian path? If they scooch it back out of the way and meet that minimum width we're looking for, is that okay? The other challenge we have is that would require C-DOT or Code Enforcement, some staff, to go out to do that, and working in the field in those situations, we would not be comfortable without CMPD being present to do that, and so now we're tying up additional resources to remove a table of items. The storage, of course, is on that back end, where do we put those things, and how do we account for it, and make sure that everything's documented, so that after a week, if they come back and say, oh, I'm missing \$5,000 worth of goods, when they had \$20 on the table to start with? So, there's a lot of logistical challenges with removing those items in the right-of-way. The items street maintenance or C-DOT tends to remove are abandoned items or things that are blocking the roadway, not an item where somebody is actively there with their property.

Ms. Owens said understood. I'll be brief again. I just want to lift up the comment that I had made at the Committee meeting around getting some sense from some of these cities that do take items, what their experience with that is, because again I appreciate that we're issuing fines right now, those fines are going unpaid, because there's really no way to impose a lean or anything on the unpaid fine, because there isn't a vehicle necessarily. I think that my sense from seeing vendors on the streets, is that they do have a fair amount of money in their inventory, and that the threat of having that seized and not returned to them, and the devil's going to be in the details as to how we do that, but I would really like to explore that before we explore out-and-out criminalization. I do appreciate that that's hopefully a last resort that CMPD would go to, but to the point that you've raised that CMPD would have to be involved in the seizure, CMPD's obviously going to have to be involved in the criminalization as well. So, I mean I do feel as though we're already somewhat going down a path to having more CMPD engagement on this, but I do appreciate if we could get some more knowledge on how cities that do seize goods, what their experience is with enforcement. Thank you.

Mr. Charlie Jones said okay.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said thank you so much for the presentation. While I do agree that we should have some form of regulation around street vending, I don't agree with the criminalization of street vending. As I was doing some of my own research, I saw that other cities in North Carolina generally regulate street vending, but do not rely on criminal enforcement. Instead, they're using, as you discussed in your presentation, civil citations, even zoning restrictions or permit revoking. Also, cities like Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago and San Francisco, who first started to criminalize street vending, are now decriminalizing street vending. Many have started to do that in the last decade, shifting to administrative fees. I think criminal penalties, such as putting a misdemeanor, really will create long-term harm. I think having a misdemeanor on your record could really impact and affect employment, housing, immigration status, and access to public

benefits. I say this particularly, and I am impassioned by this topic specifically because my District, District Five in East Charlotte, is filled with wonderful street vendors, who are selling flowers or mangos, etc., but also because they come from different countries or have language access barriers, the permitting process is not accessible to them, and I think there's a gap there. I also was a little bit concerned about the sentence that said that officer discretion is wide. I think having wide officer discretion really increases the risk of unequal application, and when escalation is subjective, I think the enforcement will often mirror existing inequities that a lot of marginalized communities face, particularly black and brown immigrant communities, who are typically the ones in my District doing the street vending.

I also think that this recommendation does not really address the underlying issue that I think both our small brick-and-mortar businesses and our street vendors are trying to raise to us, which is a lack of vending opportunities, unclear rules, and insufficient designated spaces for our street vendors. I think, if anything, rather than thinking short-term and relying, which I feel like a lot of times governments rely on a lot, instead of criminalizing we should be thinking of a better way to create creative solutions to the problem.

Then, I also in my research saw that cities that criminalize vending often see lower compliance from those folks, because they don't want to engage with their local PD (Police Departments). I think ultimately the goal should be to create a system or a vending permitting process that is fair, that it's predictable, and rooted in community wellbeing. I think we should focus on, as a solution, accessible permitting, an administrative enforcement that is consistent and transparent, without criminalizing the livelihoods of folks that maybe only have street vending as their only source of income, and so I don't take a lot, if any, appreciation towards the criminalization of street vending, particularly as I know that it is street vending that makes East Charlotte very vibrant.

So, what I would ask staff or the Committee, is to provide perhaps a detailed comparison of civil versus criminal enforcement outcomes in peer cities, such as the ones you mentioned earlier, which thank you so much, because that answered most of my questions, and also a clear and objective criteria for when enforcement escalates, and how discretion is limited if this Council does decide to criminalize street vending, and then potential locations. For example, you had the Tryon and NoDa of designated vending zones, so we can create outside markets or things like that.

The last thing is an equity impact analysis of introducing criminal penalties versus strengthening civil enforcement and cooperation with the City instead. So, thank you. Oh, and any community engagement plan that would help us inform this policy better. That's it for me.

**Councilmember Mayo** said I echo a lot of the same points that a lot of my other co-workers have given. I wonder if we were to criminalize this, does the DA (District Attorney), Spencer Merriweather's Office, do they even have the capacity to really be able to enforce and get this done. I don't want us to set ourselves up if it's already difficult for them to execute their current responsibility. So, that would be my first question, is this even realistic? My other question would be, I know I've talked to the City Manager about this in my last one on one about being proactive, partly what J.D. was saying, with some designated space. I'm all about thinking about solutions. We know we've already had some conversations about City-owned property and their Housing Committee. I've already had some conversations for ones in my District, in District Three, which also has a large street vending population. So, just thinking through, can we temporarily activate some of our City-owned parcels to provide a space for some of our existing street vendors to go? I think that would be kind of fun in general. People can go have like a festival kind of vibe, go to one place, one-stop shop, to kind of explore different opportunities and options. So, I would like to learn more about that. I look forward to seeing that in a report, because I did ask our Manager when we would receive answers to these questions that people are raising, and he said Thursday. So, I look forward to hearing on Thursday about, yes, I texted you.

Mr. Marcus Jones said next Thursday.

Ms. Mayo said oh, next Thursday, oh, okay, sorry. Well, you know I like deadlines, you know this, I like timelines, so thank you. I look forward to hearing the answers to all of the questions that my colleagues have raised. I think that there are opportunities for us to think outside the box, and not just do business as usual. So, excited to hear about some of those solutions. Thank you.

**Councilmember Watlington** said I just wanted to add a couple of things in the spirit of solutions. Well, first I'll say this. As was mentioned in the presentation, we've been talking about this for some time now, and so I appreciate the continued engagement of brick-and-mortar business owners, as well as vendors, and trying to come to a solution. I echo many of the statements that my colleagues have made in regards to how do we do this in a way that is equitable, and that ultimately delivers the kind of culture and thriving tourism city that we're looking for. Many of the things that we see with our street vendors help to provide that cultural landscape that's unique to Charlotte, that give people a reason to visit and a reason to stay. So, I definitely want to see some kind of Citywide effort here. I do think that regulation is necessary to do so in a consistent manner.

I just wanted to offer up, even as we think about things like parking and these kiosks that are going to go across the City, why not just go ahead and designate particular places, and if there's a kiosk or some kind of QR Code, you can just go ahead and get your permit. How do we automate that in a way that it doesn't take additional staff or manpower just like you would do for ParkIT? Why can't you use that for a vendor space that's already designated, and then we can talk about what that looks like in terms of security and surveillance and whatnot, so that if you are there, you're automatically registered in? So, I just think there's some ways we can leverage technology to make this a lot more simple than maybe it would've been in the past. More to come. Thanks.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you for the presentation. Mine is really just adding on to what my colleagues mentioned. I think we also have an opportunity to look at our Faith In Housing initiative, and look at partnering, because as a community we want festivals, we want events. We just also want there to be safety. I do not want to support a business pulling up in front of a brick-and-mortar and utilizing their electricity to run whatever it is. We all receive emails and concerns from Uptown where people are out and they have boom boxes or other things going, when you have also residential area, people actually want to sleep. Some of us like to be in bed by 10:00 p.m., and you up partying until 2:00 a.m., 3:00 a.m., isn't necessarily as conducive, but we have places around where you can. So, you think about the fact that we have the farmers market that's right here at the church. Well, we recently lost I think the farmers market that's off of Statesville. So, I had someone in my church asking me yesterday about what's the process if we wanted to use the parking lot in order to have a farmers market. We have an opportunity to think outside of the box. We know Portland's tagline, Keep it Weird. Well, when we look at Faith In Housing, and we look at the fact that our church community has parking lots, has parking, that might be a better way to actually get in community and have some festivals.

I definitely love the idea from Dr. Watlington with utilizing the kiosk to get the permitting, but I do want it to be very clear that I do support us having an actual process in place. because I do not think that we should put the burden on that brick-and-mortar to have handle when I decide I want to set up my business in front of your business that, one, is blocking you from having customers come in; two, potentially direct competition; three, I'm using your electricity in order to do it. So, I have a real challenge with that, because there should be a process in place.

I have concerns about the criminalization of it, but I do think what we're doing so far, if we're not able to get the funds if you are fined, I think checking in with our legal representation of what does it look like if you hit a certain number of complaints, if we were to confiscate items. We have enough warehouse space. We do a surplus sell off every so often a year, so we've got space. We can identify a room, because I'm not

anticipating us putting enough things in there where it'll be more than a closet, yet we do need to have some clear rules. I think we have an opportunity, and I would hope that my colleagues will consider that as well, how we can partner with Faith In Housing through Housing and Neighborhood Services to potentially support the festivals, support the growth and the creativity. We were at Charlotte Shoppe this weekend, amazing event. How do we create more of those throughout the City, and not just only a certain time of year.

Mr. Driggs said I think like many things the difficulty here is recognizing that many of these vendors are small businesses whose presence enhances their location, and so we want them. We want to encourage them and enable them. On the other hand, some are genuinely bad actors. They set up in a place that impairs a business or they create a nuisance or obstruction. They create a hazard in some cases. So, the question is how do we draw that bright line, and that's the hard part? I can hear both sides of the argument there. I do think that, from what CMPD has said, that their ability to deal with the bad actors is improved if they have this criminal sanction possibility in their pocket, because otherwise people get fines and it's a business expense, and they just stand there and basically stick their tongue out. I do think our officers need to be able to perform their public safety function supported by a genuine remedy if they are defied openly or if people just keep paying fines. It's like some people park wherever they want, and they don't care. They keep getting tickets and they keep paying the tickets, and it's just the cost of parking. So, personally, I guess we could start down a road without the criminal things and see how effective other things that we are doing can be, and see if we can accomplish it that way. My personal view is that we would be better off giving the police something that they could fall back on in the event that they're dealing with one of those bad actors. Thank you.

Ms. Anderson said thank you, this has been a really good conversation. I just wanted in closing to say, this topic is out of Committee, so it was voted out of Committee. It's now in the hands of Council, and it's an opportunity for us to modernize our ordinance into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as we are nearing a City of a million people, and we've heard from small businesses, vendors, residents that some level of regulation is needed. So, the onus is on the entire Council to come up with that process, and working with Mr. Jones, thank you for all the work that you've done throughout the last several months. I also wanted to make a comment around the food vendors, because food vendors were brought up several times. Food vendors are permitted through Mecklenburg County, so if a resident or someone is selling food on the street, they already have to go through a process, and if they don't have a permit from Mecklenburg County, then they are out of alignment. So, from a street vending process, if you're selling food, you already have to go through a process, including food trucks. Food trucks are regulated through the Board of Health, which is under the purview of Mecklenburg County.

I do also just in closing want to say, and Mr. Jones could potentially speak to this as well, but even in NoDa where street vending is restricted, we have some vendors who continue to go out and set up shop and vend, and that is creating some challenges. We also had a shooting in NoDa that was an altercation between two vendors, and so we need to think about, as we lay out an ordinance to regulate street vending Citywide, we also want to create some level of stickiness or teeth that will allow, not only Code Enforcement, but CMPD to administer this with some of level of stickiness. So, this is our first discussion, more discussions to come, and I greatly appreciate the engagement that you all had on this topic. Thank you.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said Madam Chair, you have the next item, Passenger Vehicle. Oh, I'm sorry, City Manager.

Mr. Marcus Jones said okay, I don't want to hurt this great moment. I just don't know where this is now. It's not in Committee. It's with the Council, and we're just in a strange place.

Ms. Anderson said so, Mr. Manager, if I can just respond. I think, and please colleagues help me if I'm misinterpreting this, but from the conversation that we've had this

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afternoon, it sounds like there's an appetite to have some level of Citywide regulation. However, there were several questions to Mr. Jones, as it relates to peer cities, how they administer their citywide regulations. There were questions around seizing items, and also criminalization in other cities as well. So, City Manager, I'm under the belief that Mr. Jones will come back with some level of a draft of an ordinance and with additional information, based on the questions that were asked.

Mr. Graham said I'll be very quick. I think that the most expedient thing to do is just send it back to Committee, and then we can resolve these outstanding issues there, and bring it back to the Council for a final vote.

Ms. Mayo said I agree with Councilmember Graham, and I would like to make the motion, but I can wait since you may want to go around, but when we come back I'm doing it.

Ms. Ajmera said I was going to say combine what Councilmember Anderson said and what Graham said, you bring back to the Committee with all the answers, because we need answers in order to take the next step, so that the Committee's prepared to take the next step. That's all.

Mr. Driggs said so, I think in response to the Manager's question, this was considered and voted out of Committee. Everything we've just talked about was part of that conversation, therefore, the next step is that something goes on the agenda for Council action, and we use that opportunity for the full Council, and not just the members of the Committee, to participate in the conversation. I don't know what is going to be different if the Committee sees it again, because everything we just talked about was part of the Committee conversation the first time.

Ms. Ajmera said I'll be real quick. So, I understand that's his perspective, but from what I hear, the majority is not okay with the criminal option. So, now we need to find a solution, and what I heard is that people would like to see streamline permitting process, use of these bar codes at the kiosk, and all the other questions that everyone else asked, so I don't think we are ready for this to be in front of the full Council. So, we need to do more work at the Committee level, answer all of the Council's questions, before it comes up in front of the full Council.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said Manager Jones, is there anything in the rules and procedure that prohibits us from sending it back to Committee? I'm sorry, Attorney Leslie-Fite.

**Andrea Leslie-Fite, City Attorney** said no, there's nothing in your rules.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said yes, so I agree. I think in order for us to do the best job possible and come up with the best solution, we should send it back to Committee. So, I support my colleagues.

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| Motion was made by Councilmember Mayo, seconded by Councilmember Graham, and carried unanimously to send Street Vending Regulation back to the Housing and Safety Committee to have questions answered and work through more things. |
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Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said Madam Chair Anderson, I'm going to turn it over to the next item.

Ms. Anderson said okay, thank you, sir. Our next item also has been voted out of the Public Safety Committee, so it's no longer in Committee. This topic will be focused on Passenger Vehicles for Hire. I recognize my Committee again, Ms. Ajmera, Mitchell, Graham, and Mr. Driggs. As a Committee, we've had robust discussions on this topic, and thank you to City Attorney, Ms. Battle, who has led us through this effort. We've had listening sessions with individuals who operate these businesses. We had several touchpoints. They've been very engaged in our Committee meetings as well. So, we're

at a point now where the Committee voted on a specific method to address this topic, and I'm going to allow Attorney Battle to walk us through that. So, thank you, Attorney Battle.

**Jessica Battle, Assistant City Attorney** said good evening, everyone. Before we get started on Passenger Vehicle for Hire, I would be remiss if I didn't thank my colleagues in the City Attorney's Office, the City Manager's Office, and our PVH (Passenger Vehicle for Hire) stakeholders for all of their input throughout this very intentional and thoughtful process.

So, as we get into tonight's presentation, we'll briefly talk about the background and sort of how we got here in PVH. We will look at the legal considerations, we will then discuss proposed ordinances, and end with our recommendations from the City Attorney's Office. A little bit of background here. This kind of started in August of 2024, after stakeholders submitted a letter to the City Manager and the City Attorney's Office about proposed changes to our PVH Ordinance. I will note to the group, or just remind everyone, that the PVH Ordinance has not had a major update since 2017. In Fall 2024 and Fall 2025, the Chief of Police, the City Attorney's Office, and the City Manager's Office had several meetings to discuss these proposed changes from our stakeholders. In June 2025, I know that seems like a big leap, but we were doing a lot of research and some potential drafting and discussion, but in June 2025, we had an in-person meeting with the City Attorney's Office, the City Manager's Office, and a small group of our stakeholders just to get their initial input and thoughts on what direction the City should move in. In October 2025, I came before full Council to discuss PVH at a Business Meeting, and then in December 2025, we had two stakeholder meetings, one in the daytime, one in the evening, so that we could reach the widest audience possible in order to again meet with those stakeholders to update them on where we were in the process and get additional feedback and concerns. In January of 2026, Mayor Lyles referred PVH to the Safety Committee for consideration, and out of Committee in February 2026, we held a virtual input session with PVH stakeholders and members of the Safety Committee. It was a very informative discussion to have a larger group of our stakeholders provide additional input as we continue through this process, and then in March 2026, the Safety Committee voted the PVH matter out of Committee based on the recommendations of the City Attorney's Office at the time.

So, some of the legal considerations, when we talk about PVH, these are just reminders what we've been discussing for the past year and a half or so. North Carolina grants municipalities express authority to regulate taxicabs. However, on the other side of that coin, state law explicitly prohibits local municipalities from regulating Transportation Network Companies, often abbreviated as TNCs, or colloquially known sort of as rideshare companies where you can hail a vehicle through an App. With those sort of legal considerations in mind, we looked at the different proposals from our 2024 stakeholder letter, and the City Attorney's Office made some recommendations. I believe you all should have before you a sort of green chart that has the full language of the current ordinances and some proposed changes along with the recommendations of our office. This slide is just sort of a brief summary of those, but there were about 19 changes that were proposed from our stakeholder group, everything from the application process, drug screening, training for PVH drivers, upfront pricing, rate changes for limos and black cars, things about vehicle wrecks, metered vehicles at the airport, and third-party background checks, just to summarize what's in that larger chart that you all have before you.

Actually, we had some similar proposals from our input sessions, but also received some additional input that we had not previously been made aware of from our stakeholder community and PVH. One of those was to cut the lookback period for the background checks from 10 years to five years. There were also several proposals from the limo industry about having black car stands at the airport and in various locations in Uptown. There were concerns and thoughts about adding fleet vehicle minimums, that companies must have a minimum number of vehicles to operate under Passenger Vehicle for Hire. There were frequently questions about adding an ordinance section to specifically address limos and black cars, including rate changes for those limos and

black cars, and universal upfront pricing. I will go ahead and say that the upfront pricing is a large and passionate point from our PVH community, that's something that they have given us a lot of feedback, a lot of input, and a lot of ideas on. The City Attorney's Office thoroughly and thoughtfully looked into all of those options as we considered what recommendations we would make to the Committee, and therefore, moving to full Council.

With that being said, our City Attorney's Office recommendations are encapsulated on this slide, the first being about application processes and also changing and adding a definition of operator to our PVH Ordinance, that someone could be an operator and also separately own a PVH company. The third is about training requirements and removing the requirement for PVH drivers to take a sort of history of Charlotte lesson, where they have to learn about different landmarks and points of interest in the City. Given the wide availability of Google and GPS, that was something we thought that PVH drivers could get on the road quicker without having to schedule those training courses. We also are recommending to change the current drug screening to a five-panel test. Right now, it's much higher, but the five-panel is very similar or the same, as to what the North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles has for commercial drivers, and sort of mirroring the DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) requirements there. Changes in criminal history for number five would include that, currently if a person has any sort of pending criminal matter on their record, their application would stop in the PVH process until that criminal matter was resolved. We are proposing that applications with pending criminal matters continue through the PVH application process unless one of those pending charges is one that, if they were to be found guilty, would disqualify them. So, if it's a criminal charge that would not disqualify someone from getting a PVH permit, that application would continue.

We also looked at rate changes for agency vehicles, meaning that rate changes for an agency ride would not cost any more or less than it would be if that ride were to be booked traditionally. A lot of the agency rides are with CMS (Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools) or the DSS (Department of Social Services) system. We also looked at proposed metered vehicles at the airport must use a meter and not a sort of rideshare App if you are a taxicab. Also, currently vehicles must be removed from the road for PVH at the 10-year mark, and the City Attorney's Office is proposing increasing that age limit to 15 years, so long as the vehicle is operable and passes safety inspection.

For number nine, roof lighting was something that the industry brought to our attention that a lot of that roof lighting you see in a traditional taxicab is only made by a few companies and can be expensive to purchase and/or replace, and so we are proposing to allow, in addition to roof lighting, the sort of LED lighting that you see in some of the vehicles that have rideshare with the name of the particular rideshare company in their windshield just to offer various forms of lighting to give notice to the community that this is a PVH or available taxicab. Number ten, we recommend that black car and limo stands are placed in Uptown. They do not have to be anything new. They could use the existing taxicab stands; however, we are not recommending at this time that we make any changes to the limo or taxi stands at the airport. Number 11, we do recommend a completely new section to cover black cars and limos in our PVH Ordinance. Right now, the current draft of our PVH is geared more towards taxis and metered rides, and so we are proposing to add a section that deals more specifically with limos and black cars. Recommendation 12 would be to change to incremental billing for black cars and limos, and we'll discuss a little bit more on fares in the next slide.

So, I'm going to go a little bit out of order here, if you will allow, and I'll do universal upfront pricing sort of last on this particular slide, but the City Attorney's Office is recommending incremental billing for black cars. As it currently sits, no matter the length of the ride, if a patron hails or books a black car ride, they must be billed for a period of one hour, even if they are only taking a ride that is a few blocks long. So, what we are recommending is incremental billing in a 15-minute increment, so no matter how short the ride is, the minimum bill would be 15-minutes increments, then 30, then 45 and an hour. We heard a lot of feedback from our black car and limo community on that, and it

benefits their companies and consumers in sort of an equitable way for having a closer bill to the actual time in that black car.

Previously, it was discussed about adding additional flat rate pricing from CLT (Charlotte Douglas International Airport) to different points of interest in Charlotte. The City Attorney's Office recommends we do a little bit more research and development into that, because obviously we have areas like University City, Ballantyne, SouthPark, NoDa, and we need to look at how that would fit into a map and also the considerations with time of day and day of the week, and so if that's a route that Council wants to go down, we would recommend a little bit more research and development before we could fully recommend adding any additional flat rate pricing from the airport.

Now, getting back into universal upfront pricing. Again, this is something that our PVH community has been very, very passionate about, and we certainly appreciate all of their communication as it relates to these discussions. Right now, we do not recommend universal upfront pricing as it would eliminate the need for the PVH Ordinance and for meters in a taxi. If all rides are sort of prearranged and paid upfront when a person hails the cab, there would be no reason to have a meter in a taxicab. To give you all an example of what upfront pricing looks like, it would be someone hailing a cab, and when the driver stops, they would negotiate a sort of price that they would pay for that particular fare. However, given the fact that it is a taxicab and metered under our PVH Ordinance, the meter would have to run during that fare. This gives us a sort of, one, high probability of disparities or potential discriminatory or predatory fare setting, but also could create different public safety concerns if someone gets to their destination point and realizes that the agreed upon rate is far higher than the metered rate, and that could cause different types of disputes where law enforcement would need to be called out when we have people arguing about metered fares versus prearranged fares, but likewise it could happen with our PVH drivers as well if the meter is higher than what the prearranged cost is.

When we talk about some level of prearranged and upfront pricing in Charlotte, we actually do have somewhat of an upfront pricing option for taxicabs. There are Apps, like Curb and Arro that are sort of dispatching and brokerage Apps where people can hail a cab in the same way that they would hail a traditional TNC. When I was looking into cities that have upfront pricing, the large majority of cities that have upfront pricing are those that use or permit the usage of Apps like Curb and Arro. In New York City and Washington D.C., they both allow the use of the Curb App. Pennsylvania has flat rates for certain routes within their city. In San Francisco, their PVH also allows usage of Curb, Arro, and another App called Flywheel. Those are Apps, again, that persons would use to hail a traditional metered taxicab, and the price would be upfront before they select to take that particular ride. It is my understanding also that a few of our taxicab companies in Charlotte do utilize these Apps and there is a level of upfront pricing for taxicabs in our current PVH Ordinance. I say that it's a level because, either a cab will drive with a metered fare, or they would use an App like Curb or Arrow, but they would not use both. In essence, if a taxicab were to use one of these Apps, they would be a TNC for that particular fare, and then they could later pick back up on a metered fare if they wanted to, but I did want to offer that to Council, as I know this has been a major sticking point, and has had lots of questions from our Council members and our PVH community members about upfront pricing. We certainly understand someone leaving an airport and wanting to know, I have \$10, how far will that get me? Well, there is an option to learn how much a fare could be through those particular Apps without the City instituting its own upfront pricing. If the City were to do that, the City would need to create its own App. Generally speaking, a lot of accretion could be in the six-figure mark. It would also cost time and money to create and maintain the City's own sort of upfront pricing taxi App. In the research that I did, I have not seen any city create its own upfront pricing App; therefore, the City Attorney's Office is not recommending moving forward with upfront pricing, but to continue with PVH as it sits right now for fares.

So, the goals of these recommendations are to adjust to industry changes and rideshare availability. We certainly understand the somewhat predicament that our small

businesses have been put in competing against bigger TNC companies, but we also want to keep in mind consumer safety, service quality and making sure that we have an improved experience for citizens, drivers, and companies, and also that our internal PVH policies and processes are transparent to our PVH community and efficiently processed, so that we can get drivers on the road as soon as possible. Again, the City Attorney's Office was very thoughtful in these recommendations, and we certainly believe that many of our recommendations align with frequent changes, proposals, and requests from our PVH community, and we look forward to continuing to support small businesses, transportation, travel, and tourism in Charlotte, as we update this PVH Ordinance. Again, this was a collaborative effort between different City departments and our PVH stakeholders to get us to this point of making recommendations to this full Council.

Next step would be to follow up with Council on any particular questions not addressed this evening, and whenever Council is ready, we can certainly bring forward draft ordinance refinements and updated as needed.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said thank you.

Ms. Anderson said again, I just want to thank Attorney Battle for all this work. It's been very detailed work and very grassroots work, working with the small businesses within this space, and so I want to thank you for that. The Committee did recommend, as we voted it out of Committee, the actual revisions that Attorney Battle just walked through, and as I mentioned and as she mentioned, we've had lots of touchpoints with the community, and specifically the small businesses within this space.

Ms. Ajmera said . I also would like to echo Councilmember Anderson's point about thanking you for the work that you have done, and I appreciate that you have incorporated a lot of feedback from the PVH community into the update. I would like to recognize that, based on the public hearing that I and Councilmember Anderson attended with our PVH community, is that what we had clearly heard is that small businesses that operate in this space want a level playing field. I think you addressed that in your presentation, because that's a fair concern that we need to take it seriously. Because, if we restrict our local operators, while Uber and Lyft are using flexible pricing, more dynamic pricing, we risk putting the small businesses out of business, and we put them at a disadvantage, because these are the local operators who showed up, shared their concerns, and are trying to compete in a changing environment, in a changing market. We need to make sure that we somehow find a way to address their concerns, while also acknowledging that we are addressing if there is pricing discrimination if there is a hybrid approach that we can take without having to develop an App internally. I have seen in many cities where at the airport there is an operator that actually does upfront pricing for the PVH community. Have we explored that model, because I have seen it in at least two to three airports across the nation?

Ms. Battle said no, we have not explored making changes from the airport to different destination points. We believe one of those steps will be sort of mapping out the different points of interest in Charlotte and then making calculations from there, and that's certainly something we can look into.

Ms. Ajmera said I think that will help in terms of helping small businesses compete with Apps like Uber and Lyft, because Uber and Lyft model is not based on the distance. It's based on the day, it's based on the time, and it's based on the demand. So, if we are not taking that into consideration, some of these businesses will not be in business. So, I think that is a serious concern that we do need to take it seriously, while keeping in mind that there might be discrimination that we need to address, and I think there is a way that other cities have done. I can at least think of three cities that I have taken a cab from their airport, and there is a third party. It's sort of like an operator that actually tells you, this is how much it's going to cost. If it's late at night, I will pay a higher price, and rightfully so. If there are operators working after 6:00 p.m., they should be able to charge more versus someone who is working 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. I just think it's common sense. I mean, we pay shift differential to our employees. Why wouldn't we

support our small businesses who do that? I think we need to find a solution, rather than just saying there is a discrimination. Yes, there is a discrimination that could end up happening, but we need to find a solution. So, I really hope that we come up with some sort of model that other cities have done where we are not putting our small businesses out of business. Thank you.

Ms. Owens said I just wanted to park just very briefly on this. I completely appreciate all of the work that has gone into this and am fully supportive of what you've offered, with the sole exception of the universal upfront pricing. I do travel a lot, and while this is completely unscientific, I do share Councilmember Ajmera's thoughts with respect to a thoughtful approach that keeps these folks in business. I was most recently in D.C., and I had an opportunity to talk to the taxi driver, because he had quoted me a fare and didn't use the meter, and there's a request for flexibility there that I am very sympathetic to. I feel as though the State has made a decision with respect to the things that we can regulate, and if we continue to regulate them in a manner that is inconsistent with commerce, that we will no longer have taxis. So, I'm very sensitive to this upfront pricing model. I would encourage us to reconsider perhaps that element, as well as to expedite the research and development on the flat rate pricing from the airport. Thank you.

Ms. Mayo said yes, I just briefly wanted to agree with Councilmember Owens and Ajmera, just seconding that. I think that is imperative for our small businesses. So, I'm hoping that we'll have a little bit more research and we'll be thoughtful of some of that flat rate pricing, so that they compete against the Ubers and Lyfts of the world. Thank you.

Ms. Ajmera said yes, and I think we have a couple of small businesses here in the room.

Ms. Anderson said absolutely, and they've been very much engaged in this process.

Ms. Ajmera said yes, they have been engaged, so I just wanted to recognize them. They contribute to the local economy and bring jobs.

Ms. Anderson said absolutely. Thank you.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said Madam Chair, thank you for your leadership, and Council thanks for your questions. So, team we're going to call a different play. We're going to call an audible, and so we're going to have our Housing Trust Fund be presented during the City Manager Report downstairs, and then we're going to go with the Stellar Awards, and remember we still have two closed session items we're going to do up here. We're going to do the Stellar Awards now, two closed sessions up here, and then we're going to proceed downstairs. Mr. Bagwell, no pressure.

**Steve Bagwell, CEO of CRVA** said yes, I'm going to make this update efficient. Mayor Pro Tem, members of Council, appreciate the opportunity to be here today to give Council an update on an exciting event coming to Charlotte, and that is the Stellar Gospel Music Awards will be here in August 2026, this year, and this is truly a strategic event for our community. There is so much enthusiasm in Charlotte about this. I know this from all the asks that I get about what's happening with Stellar Awards. It's going to drive economic impact and visitation into our community, and it'll certainly bring a lot of recognition to Charlotte through the large viewership that comes along with the Stellar Awards themselves. So, I wanted to give you some information about the event. First of all, Stellar Awards is the pinnacle celebration of gospel and inspirational music honoring artists, producers, and influencers that move audiences spiritually and culturally, and you can see some of the statistics that are a part of the package that's coming to Charlotte. Stellar Awards has been produced for four decades; this will be the 41<sup>st</sup> year. It's a time in Charlotte broadcast to 3.6 million people across the Country, and so number one gospel music franchise, and that broadcast coverage covers 90 percent of the United States, so deep penetrating coverage across the Country there. Don Jackson founded Central City Productions in 1970, and then later Stellar Awards was founded in 1984 to honor the accomplishments of gospel music performers. Central City

Productions is located in Chicago. Don continues to run and lead this organization today after all of these years, and we are really fortunate to have Don Jackson, CEO and Chairman of Central City Productions, and Jennifer Jackson, who is COO (Chief Operating Officer) and President of Central City as well. We are so pleased to have them with us today. They get a gold star for making it through this meeting, and also they've learned a lot about Charlotte. So, thank you to you both for being here and for being great partners as we go down this endeavor. Also, Charlotte is among elite cities that have hosted Stellar Awards. You can see where the event has been previously. So, really proud to have this coming to the Queen City.

Okay, so a lot of impacts that we can expect to receive in Charlotte for hosting Stellar Awards. First of all, again, I mentioned the 3.6 million households that it's broadcast to across several different networks, including BET (Black Entertainment Television), Bounce, the Stellar Network themselves, which is cable and streaming, and then there will be a lot of coverage through national syndication as well that will be done at the local level. Charlotte's, of course, going to be on the national stage with this broadcast. Our skyline is going to be featured. Lots of mentions about Charlotte being the home to the Stellar Awards this year, of course driving economic impact in the community. We expect 5,000 folks to visit from out of town to participate in the activities that go along with Stellar Awards, and of course a powerful social media presence as well. Over 60 million social media impressions will be generated from hosting Stellar Awards, and 8.5 million video views through all the different social media channels that's managed by Central City Productions.

So, a full schedule for the entire week. This is not just the awards themselves. There is a full week of activities that run from Wednesday through Saturday associated with these events. I just wanted to highlight a few things very quickly. On Wednesday, there will be a community event focused at school-age kids that will feature a gospel music artist, so outreach to the community there. Thursday, they'll be the unplugged event concert. This is a concert featuring secular music artists with gospel backgrounds, and then we move into the big-ticket items, Friday, the preshow. The preshow is an awards presentation similar to Stellar, but not broadcast in the same way. All the nominees will be there. There'll be awards for artists, radio nominees. There'll be 10 performances as well that take place at that preshow event, and it will be broadcast on the Trinity Broadcast Network, better known as TBN. This will be the toughest ticket for the week. It's a very popular event. It's going to be at the Carolina Theatre, which is much smaller obviously than Spectrum Center, so this will be a very popular event.

Then, we move into the big event itself. On Saturday, the Stellar Awards will kick off at Spectrum Center. This is going to start with the sort of glamorous red-carpet introduction to the event. If you're familiar with the Oscars and the Emmys, you'll have the same feel for this event. This red-carpet affair will have over 200 media in attendance interviewing the nominees, sponsors, performers and guests. This will be one of the primary PR (Public Relations) drivers for the event, will be the red-carpet event, preceding the awards themselves. This will also flow into a sponsor and media reception that will take place at 5:00 p.m. that day. Then we'll move in at 7:00 p.m. to the event itself. The Stellar Awards will honor excellence across 28 different award categories, including the big awards, artist of the year, song of the year, and album of the year, and these will feature the biggest names in gospel music. They'll be giving powerful live performances that span traditional, contemporary and urban gospel styles. So, definitely a really exciting event for our community that will have a huge impact, and the after party, a lot of the nominees will be at that as well, along with special guests, that will also be at Spectrum Center. So, this is definitely the highlight of the activity. Everything builds and culminates with the Stellar Awards themselves.

So, my final update will just be what's happened so far and what the next steps are associated with the event. We've got the major event fund at the state level has been confirmed to provide up to \$995,000 to support the operating expenses for Stellar Awards. Spectrum Center has been contracted. The Hornets have been great partners on this to craft a package that's customized to the needs of Central City and Stellar Awards. We're greatly appreciative of their partnership. Room block agreements, we

talked to Jennifer last night, and we think we're going to get those finalized this week. We will be working with Jennifer and her team to finalize the venues, Carolina Theatre, very close to contracting there, also several other ancillary venues that will be needed for the production of the event. Then, outreach to the faith community, corporate connections, the CRVA (Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority) will be supporting Stellar Awards in that regard, and probably reaching out to members in this room to help establish those connections and find ways to support this great event for Charlotte. We'll of course be providing logistical support on transportation, welcoming guests, all those things that we typically do at the CRVA. So, a quick, but hopefully very interesting update, we're excited about this event coming to Charlotte, and be happy to take any questions.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said Steve, thank you.

Ms. Mayfield said Mr. Bagwell, thank you for the presentation. Just a couple of questions, because we're talking about three months, that in three months this is going to be happening, and I noticed you had a number of previous host cities. Do you by any chance know what the lead time on the previous host cities were? To my understanding, historically, we're like a year, two years out when we're planning a major event to help ensure that whoever the organization is has the time to do the fundraising they need to do and all of that. So, do you have an idea of what the lead time for the previous host cities were?

Mr. Bagwell said I don't have the numbers on that. I have been in contact with Jennifer. They're very comfortable with the pace of planning. I believe they've characterized it as typical on what they experience when they arrive at a new city, but I certainly have heard concerns on that front, and we want to make sure and move urgently, in partnership with Stellar, to get them the connections and get the planning going on that front. I've certainly heard those concerns, and we've talked about addressing that urgently.

Ms. Mayfield said so, historically, when it comes to the CRVA, what is our lead time? Because I know like we're hosting the National League of Cities again in 2029, and we're in 2026. So, historically my understanding is we're again two-plus years out for planning, so what's generally our lead time when we're seeking to submit for a bid in order to give enough leeway, because also this runs right up on completely different target, but our Charlotte Crown kicks off at that same time. So, we have that that'll be going on at Bojangles, and we're going to have a lot of people. So, I just want to make sure we're not setting ourselves up where we're creating a new precedent where another event later on may present what they identify as an opportunity, and then we tell them, well, the City's process usually is a year to three years out, and then they're going to be able to say, well, in actuality, you did this in a six-month period. So, what's our usual lead time when we're seeking to show off the beauty of our City?

Mr. Bagwell said yes. I think the lead time varies in the events that we work with. Certainly, you have League of Cities, CAA that traditionally have very long lead times. I think the planning is probably on a different level as far as complexity, and the processes and support that need to be brought together. This one has come together probably quicker than normal for an event like this, but again, we're staying in close contact about the planning process and feeling comfortable with where we're at, but I'm also hearing the urgency that you've expressed to me and others to make sure that we're moving forward with the planning processes as quickly as possible, and we're listening to that and responding.

Ms. Mayfield said so, I have not shared that as an urgency, just for clarification. I just want to make sure that what we're doing is within the guidelines of what we normally do, because also what I did not see in there, if there is an ask for the City, and historically we're a partner, we don't lead. I think even when we hosted the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) Image Awards, they had already identified a certain level of funding outside corporate funding on their own, the State put in a little bit, the City put in a little bit, the County put in a little bit. So, I'm concerned that



we're in April 2026. We're looking at this in August 2026. We don't know, outside of the State contributing, what the total cost, what the ask, if any, from the City is going to be, and how soon is that going to be coming back to us, when we are looking at April 13, 2026, as of today, and we're talking about having this start August 13, 2026 to April 17, 2026. So, if there's an idea of what that ask is going to be, if there's any updates of what funding they've identified through corporate relationships, it will be helpful to know that just so that we can stay consistent for all of the programs and opportunities that we have moving forward.

Mr. Bagwell said understood. We'll make sure and keep updates on that flowing.

Ms. Anderson said thank you, sir, and excited about the Stellar Awards coming to the Queen City, welcome to the Queen City, and some really spectacular spaces in the Spectrum Center and Carolina Theatre, which both happen to be in District One, so I'm here for you. So, I greatly appreciate that. I know my family members are excited about this event. I do agree with Councilmember Mayfield. It felt super fast. It felt like this sort of came out of nowhere, which is wonderful to have this event, but I just have a process question, because when we received some documentation a couple weeks back, maybe about a month or so in our packets, there was a communication that stated that there would be a financial ask from both the City and the County, and my question at that time and I asked the City Manager about this as well, it seems like our processes are inverted. If there's a financial ask associated with an event, that of course will drive tourism and all the things that we want to check the boxes for, it feels like that vote and that ask should be done ahead of the big announcements and the press conferences, etc. So, that was my question about the process, and I felt like it was inverted when I received the communication. Can you speak to that, Mr. Bagwell?

Mr. Bagwell said yes. So, we were focusing on the State support. We have a small Business Development Fund contribution from the CRVA, but in the planning process that was sufficient to move forward with the event. I am aware of that item that's out there. The CRVA is not leading those conversations regarding City support, and we're focused on the levers that we put in play to support the event financially.

Ms. Anderson said okay, so just as a point of clarification, is there a need for financial support from the City in order for this event to be successful?

Mr. Bagwell said well, again, I feel like we put the package together that provided the sufficient support with State and Business Development Funds. There are conversations outside of what the CRVA has worked on that I'm just not leading, and I'm probably not in the best position to answer that question.

Ms. Anderson said okay, thank you.

Ms. Ajmera said thank you, Mr. Bagwell, and also thank you, Mr. Graham, for your leadership in bringing the Stellar Awards to the Queen City, and welcome to the Queen City. So, this is new to me. Is there a financial ask from us? I'm not aware of a financial ask from the City that is separate from CRVA. Mr. Jones, could you speak to that? Is there a financial ask that will be coming in front of us?

Mr. Marcus Jones said I believe there will be a financial ask. What the magnitude is, I don't know. It would not be different than some other sponsorships that the City has had in the past. So, I think that's a fair question, and right now I don't know exactly what that number would be.

Ms. Ajmera said got it. Okay, so in the past where we have hosted large events, there has been a financial ask. For an example, Golf Championship, but that has all come from the Tourism bucket. So, I'm assuming this would be no different, is that correct?

Mr. Marcus Jones said I want to make sure that if we start talking about the Tourism bucket that when we start to think about heads in beds and what would an event bring

to the City, that's really where we start talking about tourism, and sometimes there have been General Fund carveouts for sponsorships also.

Ms. Ajmera said there has been General Fund carveouts?

Mr. Marcus Jones said yes. I'm not sure that we didn't do the NAACP out of tourism. I'm not sure if we did it out of tourism or out of the General Fund.

Ms. Ajmera said well, first, let me thank Mr. Bagwell for your leadership on the CRVA side of things. I appreciate you keeping things moving, because the deadline is coming up fast, but I guess in terms of the financial ask, I agree with my colleagues. If there is an ask, then we need to be aware of that now, not later, and if there is a General Fund ask, we need to have that conversation. Like, we should have had that conversation yesterday. So, I'm getting concerned now, not knowing what the ask will be and not knowing what source of funding, because we have so many other priorities when it comes to our General Fund buckets. So, I would not be comfortable with touching the General Fund bucket when we have affordable housing crisis. We need to spend money on public safety, infrastructure, economic development, workforce development. So, we need to be having this conversation about the source of funding. I wouldn't be okay with General Fund, let me just say that very clearly now. So, if there is an ask from General Fund, I will not be voting for it. Thank you.

Mr. Graham said I'm extremely excited about this opportunity, and it's not an opportunity that I brought to the City, it's an opportunity that the Convention and Visitors Bureau booked and sourced for the City. The Mayor asked me in 2024 to follow up on a letter that she received from Central City Production, and so we've been in contact and communication with them since 2024. They came to town when the Spectrum Center was under renovation, and they took a look at both Bojangles and Ovens Auditorium for the 2025 production. That was not suitable for their needs, and so they politely declined coming to the City. They came back in 2025, after the renovations were completed at Spectrum Center, and the Carolina Theatre was now open. They visited the community once again. They toured the arena. They toured the Carolina Theatre. They fell in love with the investment that we made in both facilities to lure travel and tourism to our City.

It is a national production, and so they are bringing to the City national sponsors as well, and so they will be sourcing and identifying local corporate support. That process has already started, and they've been pretty successful in doing so. There will be an ask, and I spoke with the Manager almost a year and a half ago about keeping him and the Mayor updated every step of the way in reference to when they applied for the State funding, when they received the State funding, and the wonderful opportunity this would be for our community. So, as the NAACP, and other conventions that have come to our town seeking financial support from the City or the County, I don't see this being any different as well.

So, in terms of the short period of time, it is not like a national convention. It's a musical production, similar to when a concert comes to town. They book the facility. There's a runway for the production to be executed. They execute the production, and I'm speaking for them, they don't need a two-year runway or a year runway to produce the event. It's having a concert at the Spectrum Center or having a concert at Carolina Theatre. So, this is a tremendous opportunity for the City. I think it's worthy of our investment and those dollars. Again, those decisions will be made by the management and the management team based on our input as we always have done, and so I think those discussions will be coming forth with as we go into our budget discussions, and I look forward to supporting it.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said thank you, Steve, for the presentation, I really appreciate it. Thank you, Councilmember Graham, for the context. For me, it's more purely out of curiosity, because I'm a new Council member. What does the process look like when an organization selects us as a city, and there's a financial ask attached to it? I just want to know kind of like the procedural steps, because am I right to say that this would be the first music-centered event that the City would potentially financially support?

Mr. Marcus Jones said so, over the years we've had a half a million dollars that we have put into SHOUT.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said to SHOUT, that has musical production into it.

Mr. Marcus Jones said yes.

Mr. Graham said yes, but again, the programatic aspect is musical, but it's an event for the City that happens to be a musical event, so it could be the NAACP Convention, or it could be the Stellar Awards or it can be the CIAA (Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association), which is basketball, etc. The genre that we're talking about is music specific.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said gotcha, thank you. If there's a memo or something in terms of like procedures when organizations choose us as a city, and like what the process looks like, I think myself, and I apologize if I'm speaking for my other two new Council members, I think that would be helpful for us to understand, as well as there was a mentioning of, Councilmember Graham, you said a year and a half ago, the conversations were had with the Mayor and the City Manager?

Mr. Graham said no, what I said was every step of the way, since 2024, when there was a milestone decision to be made, both the Manager's Office and the Mayor's Office were informed.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said gotcha, gotcha, okay, well, thank you. Purely out of curiosity and wanting to understand the process better. Thank you.

Ms. Watlington said thank you, sir. I'm going to just double down on a couple of questions, because I want to make sure I'm clear too. From a process standpoint, when we talked about milestone decisions, can you help me understand what decisions have been made to date as it relates to the key milestones that we the City was actually involved in versus what CRVA might've been involved in?

Mr. Graham said none, because this is clearly a CRVA booking of the event. The initial inquiry from Central City Production came into the Mayor's Office. The Mayor handed it off to me as the Chairman of the Economic Development Committee to follow up with this to see where it goes. It went to an initial visit from Central City Production in 2024, who looked at our older facilities. That was not acceptable to them. They said no. They came back in 2025, when both the Spectrum Center was back online, and the Carolina Theatre was opened, and they said, "We like what we see."

A milestone step was when Steve informed me that, hey, they are going to apply for the State funding. I informed the Mayor and the Manager that they're going to apply for State funding. When they received State funding, and they got it the week of Christmas. I looked at a text. I texted the Manager on Christmas day thanking him for the rum cake that his wife baked, and said, oh, by the way, they got the state funding, almost \$950,000. In January 2026, when they said they were coming to the City to make a decision, a milestone point, I informed the Mayor and the Manager that they were coming, and Mr. Mitchell at that point, because he was then the new Chairman of the ED (Economic Development) Committee, that they had made a decision that they wanted to embrace Charlotte and they were coming to the City, so those milestone decisions in terms of steps along his process. There was nothing for the City to do, other than me, as the Chairman, now former Chairman, of the Economic Development Committee is to foster the relationship with them while Steve and Mr. Bagwell booked the business.

Ms. Watlington said okay, thank you for that, that's helpful context. So, in terms of booking the business specifically, when we talk about booking the business, you're sourcing hotels, you're helping to secure the venue, all these things that cost money to put deposits down, and that money that was paid from the State funding or whatever other private funding was paid.

Mr. Bagwell said so, just a better understanding of the State money. This would be a reimbursement of expenses to support the event that takes place in the state of North Carolina. What we got approval for was for Central City to be reimbursed for that spending in the State up to that amount.

Ms. Watlington said okay, and I think my councilmember/colleague had a question just to clarify, what is the nature of the business of Central City Productions? Is it a nonprofit? Is it a for profit?

Ms. Ajmera said it's a profit.

Ms. Watlington said for profit, okay, alright.

Mr. Graham said it's a nonprofit arm that they're running the awards show through.

Ms. Watlington said okay, so it's the nonprofit arm that the rewards show is being run through, got it, okay. So, when it comes to the [inaudible] the performer for the whole event, or you're just waiting on an ask?

Mr. Bagwell said we've seen the activity that is associated with the event, yes.

Ms. Watlington said the reason I ask the question is because I'm wanting to, two questions. First of all, what is the request? At this point, four months out, I would think that rooms have been booked by attendees, the talent has been booked, there's some sort of external promotion that's already going on, so the event is baked. So, whether or not the City support, sounds like it's not a make or break of whether or not this event happens, is that correct?

Mr. Bagwell said well, the CRVA's contribution to organizing the event was to get the State funding in place. We also have a Small Business Development Grant that the CRVA is providing to support operations for Stellar Awards. So, that's the extent of what we're leading to support the event financially.

Ms. Watlington said and so that's CRVA, but we're talking about City investment too. So, I'm trying to get a sense of, is this gap financing, or but for the City investment, is this event still going to go on?

Mr. Bagwell said yes.

Ms. Watlington said okay, thank you. So, given that then, I don't have to ask about contingency, because it sounds like the plan is already there. So, discussion is what do we as the City want to contribute, which leads me to my next question then. If you already have the dollars, you don't have to answer this right now, I'd be interested to know what meaningful support looks like. It may not necessarily even be cash at this point, it may be something else, and I feel like that conversation still needs to be had, because we don't want to just be throwing money at folks if that's not really what the need is, if the need is more so something else, how do we amplify it? How do we create additional partnership? How do we help expand the event or do whatever it is? It sounds like that conversation still needs to happen. Am I thinking about that correctly?

Mr. Graham said I think there are a number of ways that we can support them being successful in Charlotte, being a financial partner would be one of them for sure, and I submit to you that I think we should be a financial partner, and that's a discussion that we need to have with the Manager that we probably won't resolve today.

Ms. Watlington said yes, and I'm not opposed to that. I just would like to know what those dollars would be driving that would make the event significantly different than what it already is today, alright, thank you.

Ms. Ajmera said based on my colleagues' questions and discussion, I feel like we need to have a policy on ask when we have major events like this. We have a Tourism Fund

for a reason. So, when we are bringing tourism activity, we should be looking at Tourism Fund to bring more tourism dollars. So, I know that tourism dollars look at number of beds, the economic impact, and all of that, but that gives some sort of certainty to event hosts, and right now we don't have a policy that I'm aware of, Mr. Mitchell. So, I think there needs to be a policy that we need to work on, so that we are applying the same standards for all major events that come to our City. I was going to ask a what if question, but I think Councilmember Watlington did a great job, because usually we ask what if for any incentives, but the answer is pretty clear in this case that they've already chosen the Queen City. How can we be a partner using our Tourism bucket and CRVA, who's been a great partner who helps us bring great events to our City? How can we support them to be successful in the Queen City? So, I hope that you will continue to find ways to help support them, as well as I know there have been other asks that have come our way that I sent your way. I appreciate the work you and your team have done to support, not just large, but also mid-size, as well as smaller events that come to our City that brings tourism. That's all I have. Thank you.

Ms. Mayfield said Manager Jones, I hope you're hearing that some of us are saying we need an actual process laid out. I think us being able to host the Stellar Awards would be an amazing opportunity. The concern I have is this timeline, because as was mentioned, as the former chair of the Economic Development Committee, which the Mayor has done it with multiple chairs, her schedule gets crazy, she'd say, "Hey, can you have this meeting." We're saying this conversation started back in 2024. We're getting a presentation that came on the heels of us seeing media response, press conferences that were done before Council actually had a discussion, and still don't really know what the ask is. So, having an actual process in place, and it's a little confusing for me to compare to like a concert. Cardi B was here last night; she sold out, so she didn't ask for any money. New Edition Bell Biv DeVoe and Toni Braxton were here two weekends ago; they didn't ask for any money. The Lovin' Life concert, what they asked for from us was security and police assistance in Uptown; they didn't ask us for any money. NAACP Image Awards asked us for money. We sought out and seek out the CIAA (Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association) Championship. We sought and applied and had to show that we can raise the money needed in order to win National League of Cities to come back. So, having a consistency would be helpful, but to have a conversation now to say, well, Manager Jones, you were aware of this conversation for more than a year, and that it was just stated that you were a part and received updates, whatever those updates were, but your full Council is getting this information tonight on April 13, 2026, still without a clear ask, when this thing is three months away. If it is a hospitality and tourism, then let's identify that bucket. If it's something other than, then you should be able to tell us, this is how much corporate dollars we've already raised, so here's the ask. Is the ask \$250, because that's what we gave to the last people? If we're using the logic of, well, we gave this organization this amount, so we're going to ask for the same amount, let's create a process moving forward, so future Councils don't have to have these conversations. If it's a specific but for, which we just said wasn't a but for, then what is that amount? Because I'm not saying I don't want to support. I want to make sure that our process is in place, so that anyone that is interested in having an event in our beautiful City, know that there's a process, and not only that, our leadership with CRVA, when they go out and do PGA (Professional Golfers' Association) and all of that, that's still a year plus in advance when they come and say, here's what we're asking for. So, the concern is that this started in 2024. They received the allocation from the State 2025. We're now in April 2026. There were opportunities for us to be aware prior to us just seeing a press release and/or an announcement or seeing something posted on social media that Council was not fully aware of.

Mr. Marcus Jones said so, thank you, Councilmember Mayfield. I think two things are really important. One, this is a CRVA event, and Steve has done a great job with this event. As a part of that event, there has not been an ask from CRVA to me regarding any types of sponsorship. I think what's also important is, let's think about the World Military Games. It's out there, and I would be shocked if there wasn't an ask of the Council with that. So, I think Councilmember Ajmera said it best, or I'm sorry it may have been Dr. Watlington. There will be something of value that's good for the Council

that's a good investment, but up to this point there hasn't been an official ask of a particular amount for an investment.

Mr. Graham said and the Military Games will be asking us for money.

Ms. Mayfield said and I expect they will come to the table [inaudible].

Ms. Mayo said I would just ask that if it's possible for the Economic Development Committee to work on this protocol and procedure for this. So, I would ask that, as the Chair, maybe that's something you do when you can present to us in a couple months, and then we just hold everybody accountable, so peer pressure. As a former middle school teacher, I know that can be a good tool. So, I think holding each other accountable for following the procedures that we create is essential.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mayo, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to make a referral to the Economic Development Committee to create a process to recruit events that seek funding.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said Steve, thank you.

Mr. Bagwell said thank you.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said thanks, Steve.

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

**Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell** said so, team, here's what we need to do, and our audience, I'm going to turn it over to City Attorney, we're about to go to closed session, and those who are part of Project ACE, could you stay here. If you're not part of Project ACE, we appreciate you being here, and we'll see you in the dais.

Motion was made by Councilmember Owens, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to go into closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in Charlotte, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations.

The meeting was recessed at 7:41 p.m. for a closed session in Room 267. The closed session recessed at 8:54 p.m. to move to the Meeting Chamber for the regularly scheduled Business Meeting.

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#### **BUSINESS MEETING**

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina reconvened for a Business Meeting on Monday, April 13, 2026, at 8:54 p.m. in the Meeting Chamber of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Pro Tem James Mitchell presiding. Council members present were Dimple Ajmera, Danté Anderson, J.D. Mazuera Arias, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, Lawana Mayfield, Joi Mayo, Kimberly Owens, and Victoria Watlington.

**ABSENT:** Mayor Vi Lyles, Councilmember Renee Johnson

**Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell** said good evening, everyone. I'd like to call to order this City Council Business Meeting. I'd like to thank everyone for joining us in person, and those 8,000 people who are joining us watching online, for our April 13, 2026, Business Meeting. Now, let's begin with introductions.

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### INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

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

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### AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

#### ITEM NO. 6: NATIONAL ARBOR DAY

**Councilmember Mayo** read the following proclamation:

**WHEREAS**, Urban Forestry is a very important municipal responsibility, providing countless benefits to the City of Charlotte, including enhancements of the quality of life; and

**WHEREAS**, trees can reduce the erosion of our precious topsoil by wind and water, cut heating and cooling costs, moderate temperature, cool the air, produce oxygen, and provide for wildlife; and

**WHEREAS**, trees in our City increase property values, enhance the economic vitality of our business areas, and beautify our community; and

**WHEREAS**, trees, wherever they are planted, are a source of joy and spiritual renewal; and

**WHEREAS**, Charlotte has been recognized for the 46<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, 2025, as a Tree City USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation and desires to continue its tree planting ways.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Vi Alexander Lyles, Mayor of Charlotte, do hereby proclaim Friday, April 24, 2026, as

#### “ARBOR DAY”

in Charlotte, and urge all citizens to support efforts to protect our trees and woodlands, support our City's Urban Forestry Program and plant trees to gladden the hearts and promote the wellbeing of present and future generations.

**Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell** said do we have anyone here from National? Thank you so much for being here, and appreciate your patience, and Councilmember Mayo will greet you. Thank you, Councilmember Mayo.

Ms. Mayo yes, sir.

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#### ITEM NO. 7: NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

**Councilmember Watlington** said so I'm excited to be reading this proclamation, because I am one of those kids that could usually be found in the library. There, we always had our free time, and a lot of kids would go outside and certainly I was no stranger to recess, but one thing I love to do is go into the library and to this day, I am a

pti:pk

hard copy girl. I want to turn the pages, I want to dogear them, I want to mark them up, and so from practicing the Dewey Decimal System to using the projector in the back, I love the library. The technology in the library, of course, has changed over the years. I don't know how many of you were in the library recently, but you'll notice that oftentimes you'll see fewer books and more computers, and more digital learning spaces, more collaborative spaces, more co-working spaces, and I think that's a good thing. I think that the purpose of the library is to educate and it's to convene and provide that community space. As long as it's doing that, I think it continues to be a vibrant part of our community, and we are very blessed that our Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library system not only houses our books and our digital library. By the way, if you don't have the Libby App, download it, it's excellent. With your library card, you have access to all of the database and the inventory across Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library, and so that's an excellent way to expand your repertoire. Beyond just the books and the media, our library has demonstrated partnership through our community in several different ways, whether it's through Corridors of Opportunity. How many of ya'll know how many branches of the library we have? Within our service area, there are 21 branches of the library, and how many of you can tell me how many of our Corridors of Opportunity have a library? What if I told you that all six Corridors of Opportunity have a library. That's significant, because like I said, not only does the library provide a place to come and study, but it's also a key connection and arm into the community. So, from digital equity and technology tutoring for adults, to immigrant innovation and the welcome CLT initiative, to supporting unhoused populations, and to workforce development programs, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library system is doing the work, and if you haven't been to a Verse & Vino, you are missing out.

**WHEREAS**, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library serves as a vibrant community hub, connecting people with knowledge, technology, and resources, fostering civil engagement, critical thinking, and cultural enrichment, sparking creativity, fueling imagination and inspiring lifelong learning; and

**WHEREAS**, the library provides free and equitable access to books, digital tools, and innovative programming, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of background, have the support they need to learn, connect, and thrive, protects the right to read, think and explore without citizenship, I'll say it again, without citizenship, and stands as champions of intellectual freedom, and free expression; and

**WHEREAS**, the library partners with schools, businesses, workforce development partners, and nonprofit organizations to maximize resources, increase efficiency, and expand access to essential services; and

**WHEREAS**, the library strengthens the entire community, empowers job seekers, entrepreneurs, and lifelong learners by providing access to resources, training, and opportunities that support career growth and economic success; and

**WHEREAS**, the library's dedicated workers provide welcoming spaces that inspire discovery, collaboration and creativity for all, nurture young minds through story times, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) programs and literacy initiatives, foster curiosity and a level of learning that lasts a lifetime while offering the space where individuals of all ages can find joy through exploration and discovery.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it resolved that I, Vi Alexander Lyles, Mayor of the City of Charlotte, recognizes April 19<sup>th</sup> through 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026, as

### **“NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK”**

in Charlotte, and encourages all residents to visit a Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library branch, explore its resources, and celebrate all the ways that the library helps our community find joy.



I'd like to invite Interim CEO, Angie Myers, and Board of Trustee, Tracy Montross, to come on down and receive the proclamation.

**Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell** said Angie, I might get in trouble, but they already fired me. This is my last meeting anyway, but can you go to the microphone, please, Ms. CEO, and make some brief comments.

**Angie Myers, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library CEO** said hi there. Good evening, everybody. Thank you first of all for the recognition tonight. Councilmember Watlington, your words were beautiful. We need you to write our scripts for our future meetings, that was excellent. Really, I just want to thank you all for this recognition. We are your Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library. Fifteen of our 21 branches are within the City of Charlotte, so we are here to serve just like you are. We are so grateful for the many investments you have already made in our services, and the impact that we've had together. We hope to do more of that in the future. We're always willing to brainstorm and be courageous and think of new and creative ways to serve together, so reach out any time. I want to thank Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell as well for attending our inaugural State of the Library event back in January 2026. It's the first annual one, so I hope to see more of you there this year. Speaking of this year, our beautiful, impactful, new main Library of Opportunity will open in April 2027, and you all have many, many chances to get involved over the next year and get excited for that. So, thank you so much.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said thank you.

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## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

### **ITEM NO. 8: PUBLIC HEARING ON THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FISCAL YEAR 2027 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

**Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell** declared the hearing open.

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| There being no speakers, either for or against, a motion as made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mazuera Arias, and carried unanimously to close the public hearing. |
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## **POLICY**

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

**Marcus Jones, City Manager** said so, I'll yield my time to Councilmember Mayfield, so we can have an update from the Housing Trust Fund recommendations.

**Councilmember Mayfield** said thank you, Manager Jones. So, first, I would like to acknowledge the Housing and Neighborhood Services team, that is my colleagues, Councilmember Renee Johnson, as well as Councilmember Joi Mayo, Councilmember Kimberly Owens, my Councilmember Mazuera Arias. What we're going to be listening to is, our staff is going to be presenting recommendations for affordable housing development support in response to the recent Housing Trust Fund request for proposals. This is the third funding cycle following the approval of our initial \$100 million Housing Bond, and Council's adoption of the affordable housing funding policy. We received a total of 18 proposals in the categories of rental housing production, homeownership and innovation. The request for new multi-family development exceeds the funding that remains in the Housing Trust Fund for that category, which is approximately \$11.2 million. Staff's recommendations tonight are based on the financial

feasibility and alignment with the investment priorities in our funding policy. They have negotiated funding amounts and affordability terms to bring us a slate of recommendations that, if we approve them, would deliver around 479 rental units and 214 homeownership units, while staying within the allocation goals set by our Council policy. Following tonight's presentation, staff will provide detailed information on each application in our Council packets that we'll receive on Thursday, and I am going to be reaching out, because we're planning to have a special Housing Committee meeting to discuss the proposals next week. So, I'm going to be reaching out to the Committee, so that we can have an additional meeting, because we're scheduled for Council to vote on these funding recommendations. The schedule right now is identified for April 27, 2026. So, with that, I am going to turn this over to the amazing Director of Housing and Neighborhood Services, Ms. Rebecca Hefner.

**Rebecca Hefner, HNS Director** said thank you, Chair Mayfield, and good evening, members of Council. I want to acknowledge you have your also amazing housing staff in the room, your Assistant Director, Warren Wooten, and your Development Services Manager, Michael Englehardt, along with quite a number of your housing development partners who have stuck it out with you tonight who were watching the clock, and I want to just appreciate all of you for joining us this evening and for the partnership that it requires to get this incredible work done.

So, tonight I am going to share the staff recommendations for affordable housing development support in the current round of the Housing Trust Fund. As Chair Mayfield shared, this is our third round, and we received a total of 18 proposals, and we're going to go through those tonight. You did receive, in your Council packet on April 2, 2026, a memo and report summarizing the proposals that were received. Housing Committee reviewed that summary and also talked through the proposal evaluation process at their Committee meeting last Monday, April 6, 2026. There's some of that information tonight that, given the time constraints, I'm going to move through pretty quickly just in terms of the overall context setting, so I can get right into the recommendations, but I do want to invite, especially anyone watching who wants to know more about the Housing Trust Fund process, to take a look at the Committee meeting from April 6, 2026.

So, your Housing Trust Fund, again, provides gap financing for affordable housing developments. You have a standing RFP process that we'll be talking about tonight. As a reminder, you also have separate rolling RFP processes for rental housing preservation and land acquisition, so you do have a rental housing preservation item on your business agenda tonight following this presentation, 1001 Tyvola, that we talked about back in March 2026. Importantly, for the round of applications in front of you today, this winter RFP schedule aligns with the State's tax credit application deadlines in May 2026, so that does a couple of things. It drives the schedule for our proposal and your consideration. It also means that you have a lot of tax credit applications in your pool, and so you'll see that tonight that the multi-family development proposals are all tax credit applications. Your staff go through an extensive evaluation process looking at each project for financial feasibility but also looking at alignment with your Affordable Housing Funding Policy. As a reminder, that policy sets three primary goals around economic mobility, neighborhood affordability, and residential stability, and your policy incorporates five investment priorities around vulnerable populations, location priorities, resident services, partnerships and leverage, and innovation. So, tonight as I walk through the recommendations, I'll be touching on each of these items as it relates to the proposed recommendations, and then on Thursday you will receive in your packet the infamous HTF (Housing Trust Fund) Booklet. This isn't your Thursday one. This is an old version. We're not quite finished with this round, but this is what it looks like, and you'll have details on each development in that booklet, and it'll walk through an evaluation of each of these investment priorities.

So, we've got two slides in here that give you a sense of where we are in relation to your allocation of the \$100 million Housing Bond. This is for the visual processors, and then this slide will kind of break down the math by category. So, out of your \$100 million Housing Bond, in your Housing Policy you had allocation goals for specific categories, and this slide shows you where you stand with the allocations and the balance. So, your

current balance in the Housing Trust Fund from the 2024 bond is just over \$44.2 million. You also have a couple of open recommendations and RFPs, that \$3.5 million under rental housing preservation is again the Tyvola Road development that you'll be considering tonight, and then there's estimated holds for open RFPs for housing rehab and the administrative and evaluation components of the bond. Those holds total around \$9.1 million, leaving you with an unprogrammed balance of just over \$35 million.

So, your Housing Trust Fund RFP schedule for this round, the RFP was released on December 4, 2025. Proposals were due on January 30, 2026, and then you had a Council committee discussion in Housing Committee on April 6, 2026. We are here tonight for action preview on April 13, 2026, with a City Council vote planned for April 27, 2026. As Chair Mayfield indicated, we're also working to schedule a special meeting of the Housing Committee that will take place the week of April 20, 2026, to dive deeper into the proposals.

Alright, here's where the slides start getting teeny-tiny. So, this information was also provided as a summary in your packets, and you will see that on this slide there are only 16 proposals, and we indicated that 18 came in, so two of those have been withdrawn. You'll note that Cherry Gardens is no longer on this list. Cherry Gardens is, however, still planning to move forward. They had a relatively small ask of the Housing Trust Fund, and staff were able to work with them to identify an alternate path forward where they could still make the project work without your funding. So, that project is still planned to apply for rehabilitation tax credits. So, again, a total of eight developments under rental housing production, and then the majority of the remainder as homeownership, and you had one proposal come in under the innovation category. So, what I'm going to do for expediency sake is cut to the punchline right here at the beginning, and share with you that staff are recommending four of the rental housing production communities, that is Mineral Springs Commons II, Oak Valley Family, The Village at Grier Heights, and Evoke Living at Wilora Lake, and then we are recommending for approval all of the remaining homeownership developments, and so we'll be going through each of these tonight.

Ms. Mayfield said so, Rebecca, let's slow down a bit, because I don't want us rushing through this. What four are you saying that you're recommending?

Ms. Hefner said so, I will go through each of them, but I wanted to just summarize for you for now. So, row two, Mineral Springs Commons; row four, Oak Valley Family; row six, The Village at Grier Heights; row seven, Evoke Living at Wilora Lake. All of the homeownership applications we're recommending for approval. We'll go through them one by one, but I wanted to give you the overview at the outset. There's a map of the applications that is included in your packet, so that you can see the locations. You received applications in a fairly broad range of geographies across the City. For Rental Housing Production, you did receive development proposals across Council Districts One through Five, and under homeownership you also received an application in District Six. We did not receive anything under District Seven. As a reminder, though, you did approve a Housing Trust Fund allocation in District Seven in just the last round. So, one of the things that we're going to do for you in your booklets is to provide an overview of the investments as you have made them for the entirety of the 2024 bond, so that you can see more than just this small piece of staff recommendations.

So, I'm going to move into the recommended developments. Again, I'll go through each of the recommended developments with you tonight. Additional details are, again, going to be included in your HTF booklet. So, the first two developments that we're recommending are both nine percent tax credit projects. So, we discussed in Housing Committee last week about the importance of tax credits as a production engine for creating affordable housing, and also the difference between the nine percent and the four percent tax credits. The nine percent tax credits are a highly competitive process. You have two of them in front of you tonight. They will go in May 2026, if you approve them. They will proceed to the state, North Carolina Housing Finance Agency application process, and the process there is that they would be notified in August 2026 or September 2026, about funding.

So, the first one is The Village at Grier Heights. So, The Village at Grier Heights is a planned 80-unit affordable housing community for seniors proposed by DreamKey Partners. This is part of the master plan development of land owned by Mecklenburg County off of Randolph Road in the Grier Heights neighborhood. This is a 14-acre site. The master plan on this County-owned land is comprised of a mix of homeownership and rental communities. In a previous Housing Trust Fund round, you all approved Ellington Townhomes, which was 35-units of affordable homeownership on this site. You also deferred a previous iteration of this development in that round. This round, you received two proposals from DreamKey for multi-family communities on this site; this one, The Village at Grier Heights for seniors, is recommended for approval; and the other is recommended to be deferred. You also received an additional homeownership application also on this site from Crossroads Community Development Corporation, which your staff is also recommending for investment, which you'll see later in this presentation. So, this development plan and the partnership really reflects a coordinated investment of land, funding and community partnerships that are intended to support long-term affordability. So, Mecklenburg County is contributing the land, including a long-term ground lease for this development, and conveyance of land for affordable homeownership and some infrastructure investment. The City previously committed \$2.2 million in funding through CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) resources for site work at the entire 14-acre site and also secured additional federal funding for the development through congressional appropriations. There's an additional partnership in this master plan with Crossroads Community Development Corporation. As a community-based partner, they're helping to align the project with neighborhood priorities, and to engage residents, and again they also have a homeownership proposal in your slate of recommendations tonight.

So, the overall funding recommendation for The Village at Grier Heights is just over \$3,063,000. You'll note here that your staff are recommending \$2.763 million of funding from the Housing Trust Fund, and \$300,000 of federal home funds to make up that \$3,063,000. The unit mix provides 26 percent of the units at 30 percent and below of AMI (Area Median Income), that exceeds your HTF requirement of 20 percent, and nearly half the units are two-bedrooms, which serves a gap in the senior market. The development is proposed to be affordable for 99 years, which again is the longest allowable by State law, and which makes this a very efficient investment at \$287 per unit per year. So, as I'm going through, I'm really just highlighting some of the things that are on this slide under the financial summary and the key indicators. One thing to note is that the investment per unit, which is just over \$38,000, is significantly lower than the previous application for this development, which came in a little over \$70K per unit. I think this is a great example of City and staff and County and our partners at DreamKey working together to create a more efficient proposal for this round.

This site, you'll note under location summary receives a high location score. It has access to transit, grocery, pharmacy, medical care, and retail services. We talked quite a bit in Committee about the change score and the components. The high change score reflects the rapidly increasing home sales prices in the area and the nearby new residential development. You'll note that the diversity score is a little bit lower, that reflects in part the higher number of Housing Trust Fund investments nearby. You'll note in the bottom right corner of key indicators, and this will be on each slide, the number of Housing Trust Fund investments within a half mile of the site. This is a location indicator that you all have asked us in the past to add, so you'll also see that on your maps in the Housing Trust Fund booklet. This site is served by the route 15 bus line, and that is actually a bus line proposed as a 30-minute frequency under Better Bus. So, one of the things that Housing Committee asked staff to do is to evaluate the site scores, under the future transit plan for both Better Bus and the Light Rail lines, and while we were not able to actually calculate how that would change the location score with just a week's time, we were able to kind of estimate what that looks like. For this particular proposal, the proximity score for this site would actually reduce under future transit, because of that 30-minute frequency of the bus line.

So, one of the things that your policy has identified is the importance of resident services that can promote stability and mobility for residents living in the communities

that the City supports. In this community, resident services will be provided through partnerships with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library Outreach Department, so our partners who were just here, along with the Mecklenburg County Senior Nutrition Program. I wanted to just also note that DreamKey did meet the community engagement requirements. So, the Housing Trust Fund requires one community meeting, and we have some parameters around making sure that notice is sent out, and our partners are required to complete meeting minutes and share with us what they heard at those meetings. So, there was not a large amount of attendance, because this particular development has been proposed before, but notably one of the participants in the meeting shared that she had grown up in the neighborhood, and is interested in staying there, and even asked if she could go ahead and be added to the waitlist for the development. So, I think it's just reflective of the kind of development that DreamKey and the County are trying to create in Grier Heights, creating places where people can age in place even in a rapidly changing neighborhood.

The next proposal for your consideration is Mineral Springs Commons II. So, this is your other nine percent tax credit development that is recommended in this round for funding. Mineral Springs Commons II is a planned 91-unit affordable housing community for seniors proposed by Wesley Community Development Corporation. As its name indicates, it is indeed phase II of the Mineral Springs development. The site is located at the intersection of Graham Street and West Sugar Creek Road. Mineral Springs I is located right there on the adjacent parcel. Mineral Springs I is also a senior affordable community that you invested in previously with Housing Trust Fund investment. That development provides 73 units of affordable housing they completed in 2023. It's fully leased and has a waitlist, which indicates strong demand for additional housing there at the proposed community. So, the funding recommendation for Mineral Springs II is \$1.1 million. The unit mix provides 30 percent of units at 30 percent and below AMI, again, exceeding your HTF requirements of 20 percent, and this development provides 31 percent of the units with two bedrooms. The development has a proposed affordability period of 60 years, and combined with the low investment per unit, makes this again a very efficient investment at \$201 per unit per year of affordability.

So, when you think about the site, this site is located within the Sugar Creek I-85 Corridor of Opportunity. The site itself receives a moderate site score. It does have access to transit, groceries, a pharmacy, park, financial institution, and shopping center. The proximity score, however, is not yet transit points in the current site score. With planned transit investments, the site score will improve both in proximity and access. So, this site is serviced by the route 22 bus line, which connects University City to Center City Charlotte, and along Graham Street. That's one of the bus lines that's proposed to increase to a 15-minute frequency under Better Bus. The site's also adjacent to the Red Line commuter rail and within one mile of the proposed Derita Station.

The Mineral Springs Commons development is structured as a faith-based partnership, so you'll see your Faith In Housing logo here on the slide indicating it as such. So, in this case, the Board of Trustees of the Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church serves as the ground lease holder, retaining ownership of the land, while enabling affordable housing development on the site. Wesley Community Development Corporation leads the development activities, and this is the same development team that completed Mineral Springs I.

Resident services at this development will include resident activities coordinated by the property management team, and what I would say is this is fairly standard for a rental community. We believe it could be potentially strengthened to better meet the intent of your funding policy. So, resident services is not the strongest part of this proposal, but with other strengths, the efficiency of the proposed investment, staff believes this offers a very strong value proposition for Council. Wesley CDC (Community Development Corporation) did meet the community engagement requirements for the Housing Trust Fund. Again, one participant that joined, shared some concerns for the safety of the residents as they're crossing the street. So, the site is directly across the street from a

Walgreens, and then in the other direction from a Food Lion. So, one of the things we wanted to note is that it's also part of your West Sugar Creek Strategic Investment Area. So, complete street upgrades are planned for both Graham Street and Sugar Creek at this intersection. So, in the future, it will be not only well-served by transit, but has planned complete street upgrades as well. So, those are your two nine percent tax credit developments.

The next two are four percent tax credit developments, Evoke Living at Wilora Lake and Oak Valley Family. So, Wilora Lake is a planned 120-unit affordable housing community for seniors. So, this is your third senior proposal in this round proposed by CSE (Crosland Southeast) Communities, which is an affiliate of Crosland Southeast. The community is proposed along North Sharon Amity Road near the intersection with Central Avenue, nearby to the neighborhoods of Wilora Lake, Windsor Park and Sheffield Park. So, you will likely recognize the Evoke Living name. CSE communities has completed five tax credit communities in Charlotte, and this proposed community follows a similar model and program. So, in addition to the five completed, Evoke Living at Eastland is also an affordability senior community that Council invested in and is currently under construction at Eastland Yards approximately a half a mile from this site.

The funding recommendation for Evoke Living at Wilora Lake is \$5.85 million. The proposed unit mix here includes 24 units at 30 percent AMI and below, which meets your HTF requirement and includes 40 percent of the units with two bedrooms. The development period has a proposed affordability of 99 years, and a more average investment per unit of just over \$48,000. So, this is the highest investment per unit that you're going to see in this HTF round; however, it is on par with your average investments over the last several years. The site itself has a moderately high location score with proximity to medical, groceries, financial services, shopping center and a pharmacy. It's served by a bus stop along North Sharon Amity connected to the 29 and 222 bus lines, and within a half a mile of a stop on Central Avenue on the high frequency route 9, which again will be enhanced with signal priority and enhanced stops under Better Bus.

So, the site is located, and you'll be very familiar with this from the rezoning, located in District Five, within the Central Albermarle Corridor of Opportunity. So, as you look at the location summary, it does have a lower diversity score, and that's reflective of the concerns that have been raised by community about lower household income in the surrounding area relative to other parts of Charlotte. With its proximity to the transformative investment in Eastland Yards, and a relatively high change score, which really indicates increasing construction activity, rising sales prices, and increased risk for displacement, this development meets the location priorities of your Affordable Housing Funding Policy. However, there was of course significant community concern raised about the proposed development during the community meeting, and the recent rezoning process. Much of what was recorded in the community meeting, specifically for the HTF investment, focused on traffic concerns, safety, potential neighborhood impacts, tree and open space preservation, and overall lack of amenities in East Charlotte. Ultimately, City Council approved that rezoning, enabling consideration of this Housing Trust Fund request. Related to the infrastructure and traffic safety concerns, it's worth noting that this location is part of the Albermarle Central Strategic Investment Area, which has a planned mobility hub and planned complete street upgrades along Sharon Amity Road. In the more near term, the site will benefit from both infrastructure improvements underway as part of the Eastland Yard's redevelopment and proposed infrastructure improvements on the site by the developer.

This particular development includes several partnerships that are intended to support resident services and long-term affordability at the site. As with other Evoke Living communities, the nonprofit Freedom Communities will serve as the primary owner, which provides both a property tax exemption for the development, but also allows the cash flow to support the work of Freedom Communities across Charlotte. The development is planned on land to be acquired from the adjacent Charlotte Calvary Church of the Nazarene, with a portion of sale proceeds supporting the church's community programs. Currently, those include things such as food pantry, backpack

ministry, and community enrichment services. There's also a partnership with Kennedy Properties and Development that's planned to develop 11 market rate townhomes on the same site, which will be staged to transition from the multi-family community into the single-family community adjacent. Resident services will be provided at Wilora Lake by Apartment Life, similar to other Evoke Living developments. Apartment Life is a third-party provider, and plan to provide services on a weekly basis funded through the property operations to support housing stability and encourage community engagement. So, more details on those type of services will be in your booklet.

The last recommended rental housing production development that staff will share tonight is Oak Valley Family. Oak Valley Family is a planned 188-unit affordable housing community proposed by Horizon Development Properties. Horizon is an affiliate of INLIVIAN. They've also, for this development, engaged a partnership with Urban Atlantic. This again is a four percent tax credit proposal. The site for Oak Valley Family is located off of Green Oaks Lane, that's tucked between Central Avenue and Commonwealth Avenue in District One, adjacent to Briar Creek. This community is also part of a larger development and replacement of the former 50-unit Oak Valley Apartments, which now sits vacant. So, if you go out to that site, there were previously 50 units of housing provided by INLIVIAN. They have been around for quite some time, and for safety issues were closed down, and the residents were relocated, and now the site itself is fenced off and the buildings are vacant. INLIVIAN also proposes a 76-unit senior community at this location, but they are not seeking Housing Trust Fund investment for that particular community. So, again, Oak Valley Family is also a revision from a previous iteration of the project that you received in a previous round. That iteration envisioned a 500-unit mixed-income development on the site, so much higher density and also a substantially higher public investment. For this iteration of Oak Valley Family, the funding recommendation is \$1.5 million. The unit mix provides 25 percent of units at 30 percent AMI and below, again exceeding your HTF requirement. One important thing to note about these 47 units at 30 percent AMI is INLIVIAN will utilize project-based vouchers that they have through HUD (Housing and Urban Development), and so residents in these units will pay only 30 percent of their income on rent, even when allowable rental rates increase in tax communities over time. So, those project-based vouchers enable them to further support stability of residents at the very low income.

As a family community, Oak Valley will provide 69 percent of units with two or more bedrooms, including 24 three-bedroom units. Those will be distributed across each AMI level. The proposed affordability period is 99 years and combined with a low investment per unit. Even if you account for the replacement of the existing units, the affordability term makes this another efficient investment. This site, again, has a moderately high location score, primarily due to its high change score, so that one 9.8, again 10 is the highest in each category, again, indicating the increase in construction activity, rising home sales prices, and increased risk for displacement.

So, if you've been on Oak Valley Lane, it's a lovely residential street with indeed large and mature oaks. That particular street is served by the 17 bus line directly in front of the community, but it's also located within a half mile walk of several stops on Central Avenue on the high-frequency route 9. The site has the highest access score among the current recommendations, which reflects its proximity to Center City and also that access to the high-frequency bus line. The site itself actually presents limitations for development, because of wetlands and floodplains, but another way of looking at that is fantastic. It will also conserve 10 acres of the site as natural, heavily forested greenspace preservation. So, they have plans to limit the impact on the land by avoiding the areas of environmental significance, and then again conserving those 10 acres. INLIVIAN is also pursuing the development using an advanced green building program, helping to create a more sustainable community, and also reducing long-term costs for operations and for residents.

INLIVIAN and Oak Valley Family will provide resident services through their nonprofit affiliate, which is called CORE, Creating Opportunity for Resident Empowerment. This is a program that offers voluntary individualized coaching and support for residents

focused on economic mobility and housing stability topics, such as employment readiness, financial literacy, education and training, asset building, and homeownership preparation. So, INLIVIAN as a partner has many of the same goals for economic mobility as the Council has set out in your Housing Policy. INLIVIAN did complete the community engagement requirement, and primarily resident feedback noted appreciation for the revision to the overall site plan from previous iterations, including the reduction in density and building size, reduced parking and traffic concerns. One important thing to note, as this was a previous community, former residence of Oak Valley Apartments who had been relocated, received priority to return to the new development upon completion if they wish.

So, those are your four multi-family recommendations. I'm going to move into homeownership, and again, for homeownership the proposals from your development partners were within the funding amount still available in your homeownership category, and upon evaluation from staff, we believe that they are all good candidates for your investment. So, this is again a reflection of your staff putting forward the full slate of recommendations that came in for homeownership. I'll go through these much more quickly than your multi-family ones, because those we had evaluation and a limited number we could bring forward to you to stay within that \$11.2 million cap.

Billingsley Homeownership is a planned 21-unit homeownership community proposed by CrossRoads Community Development Corporation. As noted earlier, this is part of that master planned development on County-owned land in Grier Heights. The proposal will add 19 affordable single-family homes, and then two duets in this community, along with the previously approved 35 townhomes. The recommended investment is \$1,050,000, and it's proposed to serve households at 50 percent, 60 percent, 70 percent, and 80 percent AML. You can see the breakdown of units here on the slide, and the information in front of you. The affordability period for Billingsley is proposed as 15 years. So, one thing I will note is all of your homeownership developments will have the same proposed years of affordability at 15 years. Each of your partners handles the affordability terms for homeownership a little bit differently, so I'll talk about that as we go through, but the baseline is 15 years, and that is intended to balance wealth building for the first-time homeowner, but also the investment per year, and to maintain homeownership opportunities at affordable levels over time.

Your next recommended development is the South Crigler Duets. This is a planned six-unit homeownership development composed.

Ms. Mayfield said so Rebecca, I wish we were able to do this earlier, and since we're looking at the time, this is a lot of information that we were planning on sharing with everyone. So, I think we have an opportunity, since everyone has the PowerPoint, I think it might be helpful since we're going to be working to get a meeting on the books next week for the Committee for us to detail, but I think it will be helpful to highlight now mainly the ones with the faith, how do we identify what's considered Faith In Housing? It's almost 10:00 p.m. I hate us cutting short our presentation, because there's a lot in here, but with us being able to have a meeting next week, we'll be able to keep the community engaged.

Ms. Hefner said absolutely. How about I just run through the names and unit number of these homeownerships, which will take me right to the summary slides, which will give you the context of the overall recommendations?

Ms. Mayfield said that would be very helpful, thank you.

Ms. Hefner said excellent, alright. So, this is West Side Community Land Trust, six units, Hovis Road. Prosperity Alliance and True Homes Foundation, these are partners in the Faith In Housing initiative, 39 units. Legacy at Paw Creek, Kingdom Development Partners, this is 23 units of affordable, but also 54 units of market rate at this site. Aveline at Prosperity Church, a DreamKey Partners proposal, 16 townhome units. Zion Hills, which is a Habitat for Humanity proposal, 20 units of homeownership. One thing to note about the homeownership model for Habitat, you'll see the note that the effective



period of restrictions is 45 years. The last two are actually both land acquisition for homeownership, Oakdale Road, which is quite a large site in District Two, proposed to accommodate 65 affordable homeownership units, and Wisteria Drive in District Six, expected to accommodate at least 24 homeownership units.

So, again, details about each of those will be provided in your booklets, and Committee will have a chance to ask additional clarifying questions. So, when you get to the summary then, staff is recommending tonight four multi-family communities, totaling \$11,213,000. That is the exact dollar amount available in the balance in that category in the Housing Trust Fund, and you may recall as we discussed Village at Grier Heights, that we were recommending \$300,000 in home funds, that was so that we could accommodate the needs of that project, but not go over the amounts in your allocation goals. We had just about that much money left in home funding, and then in homeownership \$9.654 million for a total recommendation of over \$20 million. It's important to note when you're looking at AMI levels what that means in terms of rent and sales prices. This slide gives you that information, but as Chair Mayfield noted, even with just over \$11 million remaining in the Housing Trust Fund, your staff did a fantastic job negotiating getting costs down for particular projects, extending affordability terms, and with that providing a recommendation that could create 479 rental units and 214 homeownership units. So, this is the current Housing Trust Fund balance, and a look at the forecast if these recommendations were approved. Again, much like the Manager provides his budget to you in May 2026, and hands it over to you at that point for you to work with, the same is true here. Your staff tonight are providing recommendations for the way that developments meet your Affordable Housing Funding Policy, and tonight we turn it then over to you.

The current recommendations for nine percent developments is \$7.35 million. It's important to break this out, because again, these, if approved by Council, would then go to the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency for approval, and those would be awarded in August 2026/September 2026 timeframe. So, there have been times in the past where you approve a recommendation that then doesn't receive an award from the State. Those funds will then revert to the Housing Trust Fund balance for you to reallocate. So, the ending balance then, if these recommendations were to be approved, would be just over \$23.3 million. As a reminder, however, you do have these holds for open RFPs and Committee recommendations. So, if all of those moved forward, that would leave your Housing Trust Fund balance at just over \$14 million.

So, next steps. Again, on Thursday the HTF booklet will be delivered with detailed project information in your Thursday packets. We're tentative, but working on the definitive right now. The week of April 20, 2026, Chair Mayfield will host a special meeting of the Housing Committee. On April 27, 2026, Council will vote on staff's recommendations at a Council Business Meeting, and then what we have proposed with Chair Mayfield is that in the May 2026 Committee Meeting, on May 4, 2026, Housing Committee would have an opportunity to review the deferred multi-family proposals, and you have also received two NOAH (Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing) applications to your rolling RFP that have come in, but are not reflected yet in your recommendations here tonight. So, if you were to approve this slate of recommendations, there would still be several other developments to review, and so we've proposed the Housing Committee can take a look at those on May 4, 2026.

As a reminder, especially for those watching, this is still a long process ahead of us to bring new units online. If the Council were to approve developments on April 27, 2026, there's financial closings, design and permitting processes, and construction. Typically, we're looking at a 12- to 24-month timeline to bring new construction units online. It's late, but I am here for you, so if you have questions, I'm ready.

**Councilmember Mazuera Arias** said yes, thank you so much, Rebecca, I really appreciate it, and as always, thank you so much for breaking down the numbers. So, I just have a few bit of concerns that I had posed at the Committee meeting. When did the Housing Trust Fund applications close?

Ms. Hefner said the application closed on January 30, 2026, I believe.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said okay, and can you provide some clarity or clarification around when folks apply for the Housing Trust Fund, are they supposed to have their rezoning, if they need a rezoning, approved by the time the application closes?

Ms. Hefner said under your current RFP, the site control and appropriate rezoning, which are your two baseline requirements, are required to be in place before Council receives and votes on recommendations. So, you do have a situation in this round where you received an application from Wilora Lake on January 30, 2026, and the rezoning was not complete until March 2026. Because the rezoning was approved, it then made that development eligible for Housing Trust Funding.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said thank you. For my Committee members, I think it would be sound and reasonable for us to evaluate that policy and our recommendation, because what we see often, and not only during this Council, but the previous Council, is developer submitting the application before the rezoning is approved. It oftentimes leads to this false assumption that they are guaranteed Housing Trust Fund dollars, when that is not the case, and so when they do go to the community and they make the pitch to the community that this is going to be affordable housing and it's going to use Housing Trust Fund dollars, that's misleading. It's misleading to the community. It's confusing to Council. This is not a clear kind of explanation out there that says, that what Rebecca just explained very eloquently, that they need to have the rezoning approved before it comes to Council. I don't think it's fair. I don't think it really sets up for a competitive landscape with other developers that might also be novel to this business, and have this same I think ability to compete for these Housing Trust Fund dollars.

The other thing is really, I thank you so much for showing the score and the, what's it's called, the location summary score. I think for me is, some of these developments, including one in my district, I mean is most expensive per unit coupled with significant community concerns plus a site 0.5 miles away that is the same concept. I mean, it is literally the same development at Eastland Yards. I think again Committee members, we should look at kind of that location summary, and how we can make sure that it is equitable, not only within the District, whereas I've mentioned before, I have sounded the alarm multiple times, we won't build our way out of the affordable housing crisis by reconcentrating low-income communities with low-income housing. Not that I am against affordable housing. I am pro affordable housing. I'm more necessarily pro affordable housing equity, meaning that we have to couple affordable housing with high opportunity zones. If we're coupling affordable housing with areas that lack amenities, then we're just repeating the same cycles that we're trying to build our way out of, and so I just want to leave that for food for thought. Thank you so much, Rebecca.

**Councilmember Mayo** said this actually is a bit aligned with what J.D. is talking about. So, I thought this was a great presentation. I was a little disappointed that the River District mixed income was not part of the recommendations, particularly as I know Councilmember Mayfield and I have talked often that we don't want River District to be coming out of Ballantyne. We want to make sure that there are opportunities for everyone to be able to live there, not just our most affluent residents, so that is something I'll be talking to a lot of my colleagues about, and J.D., for your project I know that was two years they have to go through the Housing Trust Fund potentially, so maybe that's the conversation we have. We pass on Wilora Lake maybe this year. Sorry, I don't know if there's a question to me or just chatting. Then we think about reallocating some of those funds to River District, and we still haven't even talked about innovation. So, there's still \$4.2 million that would be allocated there that could go to some of that River District, but I just want us to make sure we're not making the same mistakes we've made previously, and the fact that River District was not on there is concerning.

Ms. Hefner said if I may, Mayor Pro Tem, clarifying about the developments that you don't see recommended. So, in my haste at the end, I skipped over this part, which is again you'll see all the detail on those developments as well. One of the ways that your

staff prioritized recommendations tonight is based on the proposed time to construction, we want to get units moving quickly. We were also careful to stay within the amount that you have allocated for each investment, but those again are not hard caps, so you have the ability to discuss the remaining funds in the Housing Trust Fund, and specifically for River District, the first phase of that was just recommended in your previous Housing Trust Fund round, and has not closed yet, and so staff looks at that as one of the factors in what kind of recommendations that we bring forward. So, the other development, Nevin Road, is also a tax credit development, again deferred. They are not declined. These are good projects with strong value propositions, as well as the other multi-family community proposed by DreamKey at the Mecklenburg County site. So, again, we're primarily attempting to bring forward recommendations that fit within your allocation categories. The last thing to note on your innovation proposal, which we didn't discuss, we're also recommending that for deferral, it's an exciting idea, modular single-family homes with ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Unit) proposed by West Charlotte Land Trust; however, there's no specific sites identified yet, and so our recommendation on that one is actually to defer it under innovation, work with the partner to identify sites, and then bring it back to you as a homeownership proposal. Thank you.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said I agree with some of the comments that's been made by my colleagues. I think clearly we have an opportunity here to recommend a proposal where we do not have community opposition, and clearly we need more affordable housing in River District, because otherwise it will become an area where it's out of reach for many people. So, I will be hearing more from the Committee. I look forward to Committee's recommendations. At some point, we do need to address location policy, because I think we at the dais have talked about location multiple times, and unless we change the policy, we are not going to see different recommendations from staff. So, I hope that we can refer that item to the Committee. So, do I need to make a motion to refer the location policy to the Housing Committee?

Ms. Mayfield said sure.

Ms. Hefner said one thing to note is that the overall Affordable Housing Funding Policy is already an open referral to the Housing Committee, and location priorities and the location score are a component of that discussion. The Committee has talked about that actually already twice, and just for your consideration, that overarching policy is already active in Committee.

Ms. Ajmera said okay, so, yes, because Councilmember Mazuera Arias, as well as Councilmember Mayfield, we talked about some of the concerns around the rezoning last week. We need to see different results, especially recommendations from staff that address those concerns, because if we truly want to tackle upward mobility, we cannot tackle upward mobility if we keep concentrating affordable housing in one or two parts of our City. In fact, OneMECK also reached out to us, and they advocated for having affordable housing distributed throughout the City, especially close to great schools, in District Six and District Seven specifically, so that we can really tackle upward mobility crisis. Also, I want to thank Habitat for Humanity for the great work that you are doing to give people a shot at American dream, especially housing, and also I see DreamKey Partners, as well as Laurel Street. Thank you for the work that you do. That's all I have.

**Councilmember Owens** said I appreciate the opportunity. I'll be brief. First and foremost, I'll say if you're looking for a spot for an ADU, my backyard in District Six would be one that you can consider. I want to get back to this Evoke Living at Wilora Lake, because I may be misremembering, but did we not approve the rezoning contingent on them getting Housing Trust Fund dollars, and then it would revert back to what it was if they didn't get the dollars?

Ms. Hefner said no, the rezoning is a separate and distinct process.

Ms. Owens said no, I understand that. I thought that they had said that they would revert to by-right.

Ms. Hefner said so, what they had indicated as a community benefit is that they would be proposing affordable housing on the site, and they indicated that they would try for that for two rounds, at which point they would be pursuing development at that increased density, but with no affordability restrictions.

Ms. Owens said okay, thank you, I appreciate that. So, it was two rounds, so okay, got it. Thank you, that's all I had.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you all of you for your comments, and Rebecca for the presentation. I will share that I'm looking forward to us having an additional meeting next week where we really get to dig in, and also for the Ad Hoc. So, just for full transparency, our Ad Hoc will be made up of a couple of the Committee members, so that we can continue the conversation. When we look at the River District, specifically, which was once upon a time my pride and joy, and the reason it was my pride and joy is because we had very direct conversations regarding not creating another Ballantyne, having both workforce housing that is rental and for sale. Now, unfortunately, what I learned over the years is that previous staff leadership that was having those discussions, because you know we can have a conversation with developers, then we rely on staff to then go in and put the legal language in place, as well as do whatever economic development negotiation that should happen. Previous staff did not do that.

So, I had a chance to meet with our Attorney and learn that the language that was discussed, of which I have minutes and notes on, of what an expectation was going to be when we worked to get public transportation, the bus system, as well as widening, as well as additional incentives that were created to help move the development and construction of the River District forward, did not happen in writing. Yet, with that said, I see us having a greater opportunity if we were to look at what that support looks like versus a project that, one, because I feel like we're giving a mixed message. We say, well, with the River District project, it hasn't closed yet, and simultaneously we have a project that did not have a rezoning that was completed prior to them applying. So, in theory, their application should not have even been accepted, because you didn't have everything taken care of, that was many months later, which is why in Committee we've got to have a more detailed conversation, so that we can have a clear guideline, so it doesn't look like we are creating favorites. I'm not going to say winners and losers. It's a why does one organization or set of individuals get to do one thing, when we have language in place saying, okay, the deadline for this is January 2026, but these are all the things that you should have in place. You didn't have a major piece in place until many months later, but we have another one where it hasn't closed yet, but in the scoring how do we offset that to understand what we're creating out there, when if you go onto the River District's website right now, their rental for a studio that's 619 square feet starts at \$1,539, for 619. The one-bedroom that's 679 square feet is \$1,625. That was never the intention, but yet unfortunately we allow staff to do what staff does. I didn't necessarily have the leadership that continue what the conversation was around the table, where we were going to have diversity for the workers to actually be able to live there.

So, when we get to Committee, and I wanted to just share, since we have new members around the table who weren't around in 2017 when the River District was just land that hadn't even been clearcut yet, what the initial expectation and actual verbal commitments were, and those verbal commitments were around mixed income workforce housing, both in rental and homeownership. The houses out there now are \$700,000, \$800,000 plus. We, local government, put a lot of investment and infrastructure investment in that area with the expectation of creating what a true diverse community could look like, and this was one of our last times to be able to do that, because of the amount of land.

So, I appreciate, and will always appreciate the hard work that staff does, but staff is also limited based on the language that we have approved. So, if we want better language, we, Council, starting with Committee, need to present stronger and more directed language, which we did two years ago when myself, Dr. Watlington and Councilmember Driggs, we had done something that had never been done before with

the reallocation. Now, it's just a time to tweak that a little bit more to identify areas where we have opportunity, so that we don't have areas where we already have multiple projects that have been approved within a three- to five-mile radius when we have areas that are not getting the opportunity. Yes, it might be a little bit more, but it's worth it if we can get it in Uptown parts of District One, Six, Seven, and the River District area specifically of District Three.

So, I look forward to us having, and hopefully again, our staff liaisons will be reaching out to all of the Committee members for us to identify a date, so that we can get this other meeting in, but also keep in mind we did have a recommendation from the Mayor, as well as the Manager knows where we're going to be having an Ad Hoc discussion specifically for Housing and Neighborhood Services. So, Committee members, a couple of us are going to be working on that as well. Thank you so much, Rebecca, you and the entire team, for everything that you do. We know we have to give you all the language in order for you to move forward, but I did want to make sure that we level set, especially when we see, hey, River District is on here, what are we doing? We have an opportunity to do some things differently to try to protect the investments that we made with an understanding of something that was supposed to happen that was not codified through legal language.

**Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell** said so, let me just take a brief moment, 30 seconds, to say thank you to the Committee. This is a lot of work, a top priority for us, and I appreciate how you all have used your Committee meetings very productively. Let me echo Housing Chair Mayfield, staff thank you, and to our providers, Councilmember Ajmera recognized you all, thank you for being partners with us in this business of affordable housing, so thank you all. Council, I'm going to ask you all a favor. I'm going to be respectful, it is 10:15 p.m. I promised your wives and husbands and your boo that I was going to have you all home by 11:00 p.m., so you don't have to get a hotel room, and so I'm going to be very brief, and when I read out the next policy business items, if there's anything you'd like to highlight, please add. So, but we're going to move brisk, because we still have a closed session for three items.

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#### **ITEM NO. 10: SOLID WASTE SERVICES ORDINANCE AMENDMENT**

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| Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Ajmera, and carried unanimously to adopt Ordinance No. 1111 approving amendments to Chapter 10 Articles I and II of the City Code as recommended by the Housing Committee. |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 70, at Page(s) 001-020.

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#### **BUSINESS**

#### **ITEM NO. 11: 2026 WATER SEWER REVENUE BONDS AND CONSTRUCTION PERIOD FINANCING**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Motion was made by Councilmember Mayfield, seconded by Councilmember Mazuera Arias, and carried unanimously to excuse Councilmember Watlington from Item No. 11, 2026 Water Sewer Revenue Bonds and Construction Period Financing. |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 56, at Page(s) 281-285.

\* \* \* \* \*

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to (A) Adopt an initial findings resolution that makes certain Statements of Fact concerning the Water Sewer Revenue Bonds and Revenue Bond Anticipation Notes, (B) Provide for the issuance of Water Sewer Revenue Bonds in an amount not to exceed \$570,000,000, (C) Provide for the issuance of Water Sewer Construction Period Financing in an amount not to exceed \$530,000,000, (D) Provide for the issuance of additional Water Sewer Revenue Bonds for optional redemption to refund all or portion of the city's outstanding Water and Sewer System Refunding Revenue Bonds for approximately \$633,000,000 Series 2018, Series 2019, and series 2020 through tender and purchase of such bonds, and (E) Authorize city officials to take necessary actions to complete the financing, including making the application to the Local Government Commission.

**ITEM NO. 12: MUNICIPAL AGREEMENT FOR THE METROLINA REGIONAL TRAVEL DEMAND MODEL**

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mazuera Arias, and carried unanimously to (A) Adopt a resolution ratifying interlocal agreements for the development and maintenance of the Metrolina Regional Travel Demand Model for a term of five years with the following local governments: City of Concord, City of Gastonia, City of Rock Hill, (B) Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute the interlocal agreements to reimburse the City of Charlotte for the development and maintenance of the Metrolina Regional Travel Demand Model for a term of five years with the following state agencies: North Carolina Department of Transportation, South Carolina Department of Transportation, and (C) Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute all documents necessary to complete the interlocal agreements.

**Councilmember Watlington** said I just wanted to say that, for whoever may still be watching, this regional travel demand model, nothing in here precludes the broader discussion that we're having about I-77. So, just if anybody is wondering, just wanted to make sure that what we just voted on is not in any way impacting the opportunity to make some adjustments there.

**Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell** said excellent. Thank you, Councilmember Watlington.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 56, at Page(s) 286-287.

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**ITEM NO. 13: JOHNNETTE DRIVE AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONTRACT AMENDMENT**

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, and seconded by Councilmember Mazuera Arias to (A) Adopt an amended resolution approving the modified terms for the sale of City-owned property at 6048 Johnnette Drive (parcel identification number 103-221-16) to TDC Farm Pond, LLC, and (B) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute all documents necessary to amend and complete the sale of the property.

**Councilmember Mazuera Arias** said I just really wanted to touch briefly on this. This is something that's been in the works for a while. It was delayed previously, the previous Council. Just quick talking points on this. This is like a sliver of City property that is landlocked behind Hickory Grove Baptist Church. Drakeford Company owns 18 acres of that land, and so the fact that they're using that City property where the City will be selling that property to and putting two affordable housing homeownership units is great. The modification is warranted to accommodate the land development process/timeframe needed to prepare lots for building. This is also a community

supported rezoning, which is very important. There was a little bit of pushback at the beginning, but concessions were made. This is housing as well that won't look different, no poured floors, no poured ceilings, Councilmember Owens. Then, the land development, as I've spoken to the developer, will start in late summer/fall when final land development permit is issued. Staff, correct if I'm wrong. Good, okay, good. So, I just wanted to provide a little bit of level set, because I know it's an interesting business transaction.

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

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 56, at Page(s) 288-289.

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**ITEM NO. 14: NATURALLY OCCURRING AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRESERVATION SUPPORT FOR 1001 TYVOLA APARTMENTS**

Motion was made by Councilmember Mayo, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to (A) Approve a Housing Trust Fund allocation in the amount of \$3,500,000 to 1001 Tyvola CSLC LP for the acquisition of the 1001 Tyvola Apartments, and (B) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate, execute, amend, and renew contracts as needed to complete these transactions.

\* \* \* \* \*

**ITEM NO. 15: CHARLOTTE FUTURE 2040 COMMUNITY AREA PLANS AND REVISED POLICY MAP**

**Councilmember Driggs** said so, let me explain to you here that we have a situation in which the staff, working with the community and Council members proposed changes to the Area Plans in the time between November 2025 and now, and that was the result of robust ongoing engagement. The glitch that came up was the Planning Committee looked at those changes, and didn't agree with all of them, and so in fact they felt that some of them I think ran counter to our core UDO (Unified Development Ordinance) policy, and 2.1. So, you have a sheet of paper in front of you here in that little folded packet, and it outlines all of these things. I think I will ask Planning Director Holmes to just briefly talk us through what these issues are, and then I will comment on the situation that we're in as a result of them.

**Monica Holmes, Interim Planning Director** said yes. So, you have before you the document that on the left has staff proposed changes, which are based on community input, feedback, and added new policies, specifically in regards to a neighborhood change in environmental justice and infrastructure. Then, on the middle column you have, so Planning Committee recommended to adopt it, but they changed the language of five of the recommended changes. So, you will have the option to either go with staff's proposed changes or Planning Committee recommendation, if you so choose to adopt it.

Mr. Driggs said so again the details are in front of you. I don't think we need to go at them line by line, and I would like to confirm with the City Attorney that it is entirely within our authority to go ahead and approve the changes as agreed with the staff, noting the Planning Committee's issues with some of them, and with the goal I think that we would then work with the Planning Committee to resolve any concerns that they have, but there's nothing that prevents us from approving the staff recommended changes, is that right?

**Andrea Leslie-Fite, City Attorney** said that is correct, Mr. Driggs. Council retains the authority to move forward without adopting the recommendation from the Planning Commission.

Mr. Driggs said so, colleagues, based on the fact that the staff recommendations are the product of that continuing engagement that we held out for, that some of us did, but that we worked at very hard in order to reach a certain place, which is where we are now. Therefore, the motion I'm going to make will reflect that preference that we have for the staff changes. The other point I want to raise is that I believe Councilmember Mayo has a proposal, and why don't you go ahead and make that and I will incorporate that also in my motion.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mayo and seconded by Councilmember Driggs to adopt the following Community Area Plans with Staff's proposed changes and the changes shown on Attachment 1, changing the Policy Map from Manufacturing and Logistics to Innovation Mixed Use on the area labeled 3, bounded by Markswood Road, I-485, Shopton Road, and Steele Creek Road in the West Outer Community Area Plan: North Inner, West Middle, East Middle and Outer, West Inner, West Outer. Northeast Middle and Outer. North Middle and Outer.

Mr. Driggs said we are talking about adopting the Area Plans, and this is a great moment. It's too bad it's so late. It would be nice to spend a minute or two talking about it and acknowledging the heroic efforts of the staff, but at the same time I think we are at a point where we really need to move ahead. We've designed this car ad [inaudible] now we need to drive it and see if it work. That is what the map that we all received indicates. So, we have an illustration of that.

**Councilmember Ajmera** said so, I just want to make sure. So, to your motion, Councilmember Mayo, that addressed Steeleberry Acres concerns?

Ms. Mayo said yes.

Ms. Ajmera said okay, got it, because I know that was an outstanding item.

Ms. Mayo said oh no, we finished that.

Ms. Ajmera said okay, great.

Ms. Mayo said that's why I kept stepping out earlier.

Ms. Ajmera said okay. Well, first, I just want to start by acknowledging the great work Monica you and your team have done to get to this point. I know there were many, many discussions that have taken place, so I certainly appreciate that. This is a significant step forward on building consensus within community as well as within the City Council. I appreciate the focus on environment sustainability, making sure that we are reducing impacts, improving transition between land uses, and also aligning growth with infrastructure capacity, because that is a concern that comes up at almost every Zoning Meeting, keeping up with the infrastructure as we are growing, and those are some critical improvements from where we were six months ago. At the same time, we are seeing new pressures now, data centers, and particularly around high-impact uses we have seen near nature preserves. So, they are raising some real questions. I've heard concerns around energy, water usage, quality-of-life concerns, and these are some valid issues.

So, we need to be proactive, not reactive, when it comes to this type of development, because there is one coming in front of us pretty soon. So, I would like to ask you. I know we had talked about just high level, but can you just provide an update on the timeline for developing regulations once these Policy Maps are approved, specifically when it relates to data centers, and how will that align with the implementation of these Area Plans?

Ms. Holmes said so, really important to get in place is that within the Area Plans is a policy to make sure we take into account emerging land uses, and that we use that as a foundation for our regulation. So, around things like data centers, we've also heard

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about vape shops, etc. Some of these emerging land uses that five, 10 years ago we could not have predicted. By having this adopted, we now have the policy in place to then take the next step. We have had staff researching data centers. We've attended several meetings with other cities, top 30 cities, to really understand what are other cities doing, how are they impacted, and we'll be ready to kind of start that work as soon as we close out this work, and start bringing before you, with ya'll's referral and support, kind of what the next steps are, what does that look like, and what are the things we can do within State Statute, and how can we look at development of data centers through existing statute?

Ms. Ajmera said so, to follow up on that, what's the timeline like for the regulations, because it's one thing having a policy, but where rubber meets the road is the implementation and regulations?

Ms. Holmes said I would say I think we're well on our way with the groundwork. I would say three to six months you'll start seeing solid recommendations as to what direction we should be moving in. We really, again, the State landscape is really important and what we can do kind of within our bounds, so we want to make sure we take that into account. So, I would say three to six months you'll have something in front of you. We're timing this with our regularly scheduled maintenance text amendment, which includes policy in it, is end of summer schedule, so I would look to align to that, so end of summer we would include that in those recommendations. Then, it follows same process as any text amendment, a hearing and then an adoption.

Ms. Ajmera said I appreciate that timeline, Monica. I know other cities in North Carolina, what they have done, they have put pause on any data center proposals until they get some sort of regulations in the book. Can we explore that option, because what we are seeing right now is data centers coming so close to residential neighborhood, and we are hearing loud and clear from the community, and these data centers are coming especially in the crescent areas, and I'm sure it's not going to be the last that we see. So, until we see some sort of regulations, we need to have a pause on some of these requests that are coming in front of us, because we are talking about massive impact when it comes to electric grid, energy usage, water impact, quality-of-life concerns, this noise 24/7, that humming noise, and these are some real concerns that I have, and I've heard that from community as well. So, we need to urgently look at data centers and how can we pause until we have regulations in the books, because once we approve it, it'll be too late. There is nothing we can do once it's approved, and there will be irreversible impact it will have on the communities those data centers go in.

Ms. Holmes said that's something I would like to further discuss with the Attorney's Office.

Ms. Ajmera said sure, if we can get an update on that, that would be great, in next week's memo. Thank you. That's all I have.

**Councilmember Mayfield** said thank you, Mayor Pro Tem. Monica, thank you for slowing down. I know there was a lot of interest in us approving all of the plans at one time. I clearly had concerns about that. I am thankful that community had the opportunity to have additional recommendations and conversation. I do agree with the recommendation that came from community around Steeleberry Acres. We say we want aging in place, but it has been our language over a 10-year period that has allowed manufacturing that is moving people out of their residential homes.

We had old language from 2007 around data centers. We say that this is a living document. The moment the data center opened up in Uptown we had the opportunity to start looking at that language now. We should not be concerned now about the what ifs. We should've been working on that the moment that a data center was approved by-right in Uptown and we realized that our language was not adequate for how data centers are used today. Manager Jones, as you are our representative and the staff is a reflection of what you direct them to do, I hope you are hearing from members of your Council that we would prefer not to see that particular type of proposal without us

having the clear language in place of what does it look like, because we have a SEAP program. Well, environmental noise is a part of SEAP. That constant humming is a challenge. I reached out to Director Angela, and we had a conversation months ago regarding, okay, a data center comes, you need to have an internal cooling system, an internal recycling system. How do we make this cost prohibitive for you not to tap into our water when we just created an opportunity to partner with Gastonia and open up water?

So, as we're talking about potentially finally saying yes to what's in front of us, I would feel a lot more comfortable if this is done with the clear understanding, and full disclosure, I am weary of all of you, based off the fact that contracts were not done the way that they should've been done regarding that dog-gone River District. So, I am weary of all and any conversations that are not in writing. I am going to hope that as we move forward, that we are going to make sure that not only Steeleberry Acres is going to be protected based off the language, our language that came from Mt. Holly, Mountain Island Lake area, from the West Side, as well West Boulevard area, the corridors, Sugar Creek, from also that data center implementation investment development within our City limits is going to not move forward until we have very clear language of what the expectation is. Thank you, Manager Jones.

**Councilmember Mazuera Arias** said thank you, Monica, for the presentation. I just have to echo my colleagues, Councilmember Ajmera and Councilmember Mayfield about the data centers. I mean, the one that's going to come before us in District Five, although not an AI hyperscale data center that we're hearing about in the news, it's a telecommunications one, smaller in scale, small size. Regardless though, it is a data center, and if we rezone that then there's an opportunity, regardless of all the community plans, the community benefits and plans and whatnot, there is an opportunity to extend that usage in the future, even if there's any conditions attached to it. So, I just really want to implore staff and Council to take a look, how do we couple the Community Area Plans that are about to be adopted with our language and intention of how we address data centers, particularly within our City limits. We don't know the impact of them right now, but we are seeing cases come from Oregon and come from other places that have demonstrated awful health and environmental impacts, and if you have it near a residential neighborhood, that is very concerning. Also, folks talk about data centers like it's workforce development and economic opportunity. It employs two to five people. It doesn't take that many people to maintain a data center, and so I just really want to implore that.

Also, not related to Community Area Plans, and I know it's super late, but since we're on the conversation, I know you all have been receiving emails from constituents in District Five about this data center reopening, so I would appreciate you all taking a look into that. I want to thank you and the team, and particularly the Council members and the previous Council that advocated to slow this down to make sure that we go it right. I was talking to other folks today. It is a living and breathing document, but we need to make sure that we're slowing down and really, really leaning into smart growth and smart development. Just like I said about affordable housing, how we can't build our way out of it, we can't build our way to just keep up with growth, the pace of growth, and how fast we're growing, if it's not coupled infrastructure and amenities and services, and creating high opportunity zones in areas that have been historically disadvantaged. That is not the way to grow in this City, because as much as I know the Business Alliance and other partners, corporate partners love to throw that number, 157 people moving to the region a day. What about the people that already live here? So, I appreciate staff really engaging with community, and I appreciate you all engaging with District Five. I know they had a separate meeting, and thank you, Monica. You scanned it one time, two times, three times, to ensure that East Charlotte had a plan that would reflect more amenities, more mixed-use development, more high-density in the main corridors, but as well as preserving single-family neighborhoods and as well as environmental. When I say that the City Council can do yes and, we can do both. Two truths can be held at the same time. We can respect and preserve historical single-family neighborhoods, and we can also embrace high density and more mixed-use development. So, thank you so much.

**Councilmember Owens** said briefly, I just want to go on record and just inspire us all to have an open mind with respect to data centers. I'm not suggesting that I think that you are all out of line with your concerns. I will just say that we all know that AI is here. I've heard time and again as we turn to our workforce, and particularly opportunities for young folks, that we are trying to help them lean into an economy that is coming, and an economy that is going to have significant disruption because of AI, and so I want to be conscious of that fact. I'm not saying that they should be located near homes. I am encouraging us to be creative in how we inspire them to build in a manner that is reusing water or being thoughtful about solar panels on their roofs or all the myriad things that they may be able to do to offset some of the costs of the environmental concerns that we've all expressed. I've heard from a number of people in District Six recently on these data centers, and they're attending these meetings and they're very amped up, but they're also appreciative of the fact, and I think Derek Thompson in his book "Abundance" said it best was, "We are at risk if we do a moratorium on these things that they all go offshore." I think that there is a real risk to that as a country, and I just would encourage all of us to perhaps do a deeper dive on the issue of data centers, and not to be as reactive as our constituents are being, because I do think we need to play to where the puck is going, and AI is here and data centers need to live some place, so I'm just putting out there, I don't necessarily agree that they should be in residential.

Ms. Ajmera said yes, that's the point, it's the residential.

Ms. Owens said I don't want them all offsite either. I don't want the United States to suddenly go no data centers, and then all of our data is being housed in foreign countries, and we all see that that's a tumultuous time. So, enough said. Thank you.

Ms. Ajmera said I think Councilmember Owens raised an important point about just overall security. The concern that I have is that the ones that are being proposed are close to nature preserve, and they're in residential communities, and they are in the crescent area, not in the wedges, that is the real problem. We are seeing concentration in certain parts of our City and that's a problem, because we are hearing from communities, and some of these communities are not as organized as communities are in the wedges. There is an equity issue. There is also an issue around being so close to residential communities. We wouldn't have heavy industrial next to residential. Well, data centers are no exception. It shouldn't be, because no one wants this 24/7 humming noise, and while these data centers generate billions in economic revenue, they are passing the cost of economic electricity, water usage to consumers, that's like us. So, I think we need to be very serious about addressing those issues. I agree, in terms of having solar system or recycled water or cooling systems in place, but let's address no data centers in residential communities, because no one deserves to live next to data centers that is generating 24/7 humming noise just because they live in other Districts or in the crescent area. Thank you.

Ms. Owens said thank you, Mayor Pro Tem. I just want to say I hope that my tenure on here has already shown I will not vote for something in one of your Districts if I would not vote for it in mine. So, I am not suggesting that six and seven are excluded from my thoughts with respect to this issue. So, thank you.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said I'm so sorry, I just also want to implore our Council. I agree with Councilmember Owens, because I was in that same conversation. Security is a huge issue, and if we're offshoring data centers to other countries with our personal data, that is very concerning. That being said, to Councilmember Ajmera's point, they have consequences in areas that we still don't understand, and I think perhaps, not a moratorium that bans data center, but really providing that policy language of like, how do we ensure that they're not impacting the cost of water, environmental, residential impacts, etc. So, I appreciate the dialogue that my Council members are saying, because at the end of the day, it is a booming industry that they're in right now. Regardless of whether it's telecommunications or AI or what have you, data centers are booming, so we've just got to make sure that we're smart and creative about the solution we're providing to our constituents, but also to the security of our data.

Mayor Pro Tem Mitchell said thank you, everyone, great conversation.

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

Mr. Driggs said all I can say is wow guys, good job. So, in conjunction with what we just did to adopt those plans, we now need to amend the previously adopted plans in order to incorporate the changes that evolved from our discussion of the last few months.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Owens, and carried unanimously to amend the following Community Area Plans with staff's proposed changes: Northeast Inner, East Inner, South Middle, South Outer, Southwest Outer, Southwest Middle, and South Inner.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Owens, and carried unanimously to adopt the Revised Policy Map to include the Community Area Plans that were approved and amended tonight.

Mr. Driggs said Mayor Pro Tem, if I could just say Ms. Holmes, Ms. Cornett, Ms. Mahoney, congratulations. You work so hard, and we're in budget season, I'm going to recommend a pay increase.

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 70, at Page(s) 023A-023UU.

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## **NOMINATIONS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

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

### **ITEM NO. 16: NOMINATIONS TO THE BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The following nominations were made for one appointment for a three-year term beginning April 29, 2026, and ending April 28, 2029:

- Sary Chakra, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Mayfield, Owens, and Watlington.
- Phil McNeary, nominated by Councilmember Johnson
- Bobby Reger, nominated by Councilmembers Anderson, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Graham, Mayo, and Mitchell.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield and carried unanimously to appoint Bobby Reger by acclamation.

Mr. Reger was appointed.

The following nomination was made for one appointment for a three-year term recommended by the Asian American Chamber of Commerce beginning April 29, 2026, and ending April 28, 2029:

- Abhijit Shende, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens and Watlington.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield and carried unanimously to appoint Abhijit Shende by acclamation.

Mr. Shende was reappointed.

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a partial term recommended by the Black Chamber of Commerce beginning upon appointment and ending April 28, 2027.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a partial term recommended by the Certified SBE-Hispanic Contractors Association beginning upon appointment and ending April 28, 2026, and a three-year term beginning April 29, 2026, and ending April 28, 2029.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a partial term recommended by the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance beginning upon appointment and ending April 28, 2026, and a three-year term beginning April 29, 2026, and ending April 28, 2029.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

The following nomination was made for one appointment for a three-year term recommended by the Latin American Chamber of Commerce beginning April 29, 2026, and ending April 28, 2029:

- Badih Arana, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mayo, Mithcell, Owens and Watlington.

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| Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to appoint Badih Arana, by acclamation. |
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Mr. Arana was appointed.

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a three-year term recommended by the National Association of Women Business Owners beginning April 29, 2026, and ending April 28, 2029.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a partial term recommended by the Metrolina Minority Contractors Association beginning upon appointment and ending April 28, 2026, and a three-year term beginning April 29, 2026 and ending April 28, 2029.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a partial term recommended by the Metrolina Native American Association beginning upon appointment and ending April 28, 2026, and a three-year term beginning April 29, 2026, and ending April 28, 2029.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

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## **ITEM NO. 17: NOMINATIONS TO THE CHARLOTTE BUSINESS INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The following nominations were made for one appointment for a partial term beginning upon appointment and ending February 28, 2027:

- Jeremy Johnson, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mitchell, and Watlington.
- Devin Rankin, nominated by Councilmember Mayo.
- Namrata Yadav, nominated by Councilmembers Anderson and Owen.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to appoint Jeremy Johnson by acclamation.

Mr. Johnson was appointed.

The following nomination was made for one appointment for a partial term recommended by the Black Chamber of Commerce beginning upon appointment and ending February 28, 2027:

- Fitzgerald Light, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens, and Watlington.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to appoint Fitzgerald Light by acclamation.

Mr. Light was appointed.

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a three-year term recommended by the Carolinas Association of General Contractors beginning March 1, 2026, and ending February 28, 2029.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a three-year term recommended by the Hispanic Contractors Association of the Carolinas beginning March 1, 2026, and ending February 28, 2029.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a three-year term recommended by the LGBT+ Chamber of Commerce beginning March 1, 2026, and ending February 28, 2029.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a three-year term recommended by the Metrolina Native American Association beginning March 1, 2026, and ending February 28, 2029.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

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#### **ITEM NO. 18: NOMINATIONS TO THE CHARLOTTE INTERNATIONAL CABINET**

The following nomination was made for one appointment for a three-year term recommended by the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2028:

- Maxwell Olle, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens, and Watlington.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to appoint Maxwell Olle by acclamation.  
Mr. Olle was appointed.

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**ITEM NO. 19: NOMINATIONS TO THE CHARLOTTE WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a Financial Expert category representative for a partial term beginning upon appointment and ending June 30, 2027.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

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**ITEM NO 20: NOMINATIONS TO THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

The following nominations were made for four appointments for a partial term beginning upon appointment and ending June 30, 2028:

- Martina Ackridge, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Johnson, Mayfield, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens, and Watlington.
- Brandi Barron, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Graham, Mayfield, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens, and Watlington.
- James Bello, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Driggs, Graham, Mayfield, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens, and Watlington.
- Patricia Campbell, nominated by Councilmembers Mazuera Arias and Johnson.
- Rae Hallow-Gordon, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Johnson, Mayfield, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens, and Watlington.
- Barbara Ratliff, nominated by Councilmember Johnson.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to appoint Martina Ackridge, Brandi Barron, James Bello, and Rae Hallow-Gordon by acclamation.

Ms. Ackridge was appointed. Ms. Barron was appointed. Mr. Bello was appointed. Ms. Hallow-Gordon was appointed.

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**ITEM NO. 21: NOMINATIONS TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD MATCHING GRANTS FUND**

The following nominations were made for three appointments for a Neighborhood Representative for a two-year-term beginning April 16, 2026, and ending April 15, 2028:

- Brie Carlson, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Johnson, Mayfield, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens, and Watlington.
- Destiny Crawford, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens, and Watlington.
- Terri Robert, nominated by Councilmember Graham.
- Jeffrey Simpson, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens, and Watlington.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to appoint Brie Carlson, Destiny Crawford, and Jeffrey Simpson by acclamation.

Ms. Carlson was appointed. Ms. Crawford was reappointed. Mr. Simpson was reappointed.

The following nomination was made for two appointments for a Non-Profit Sector Representative for a two-year term beginning April 16, 2026, and ending April 15, 2028:

- Minu Kalu-Ezikpe, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens, and Watlington.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to appoint Minu Kalu-Ezikpe by acclamation.

Kalu-Ezikpe was appointed.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

The following nomination was made for one appointment for a two-year term Recommended by School Superintendent beginning April 16, 2026, and ending April 15, 2028:

- Latisha Hensley, nominated by Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayfield, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens, and Watlington.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to appoint Latisha Hensley by acclamation.

Ms. Hensley was reappointed.

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## **ITEM NO. 22: NOMINATIONS TO THE PASSENGER VEHICLE FOR HIRE BOARD**

There were no nominations made for one appointment for a Company Operating Certificate Licensee category representative for a three-year term beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2028.

Nominations will be kept open until the next Business meeting.

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

Motion was made by Councilmember Mazuera Arias, seconded by Councilmember Driggs, and carried unanimously to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) to preserve the attorney/client privilege in the matter of Michael and Christy Kernea versus City of Charlotte, file number 3-22CV00659, and pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in Charlotte, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations.

The meeting was recessed at 10:51 p.m. to move to CH-14 for a closed session.

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### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:19 p.m. at the conclusion of the closed session.

  
Stephanie C. Kelly, City Clerk MMC, NCCMC

Length of Meeting: 5 Hours, 34 Minutes  
Minutes completed: May 19, 2026