

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for an Action Review on Monday, October 23, 2023, at 5:05 p.m. in Room 267 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Councilmembers present were Dimple Ajmera, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, Lawana Mayfield, Victoria Watlington, and Braxton Winston II.

ABSENT UNTIL NOTED: Councilmember Danté Anderson, Tariq Bokhari, Renee Johnson, James Mitchell, and Marjorie Molina.

* * * * *

Mayor Lyles said thank you for joining us for our review of the items that we have coming forward in the future on an agenda. So, we're going to have some staff information presented to us, but welcome to the October 23, 2023, Council meeting, where we will begin with our call to order and introductions.

* * * * *

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

Mayor Lyles said is there any consent item that has a question, Ms. Harris, or any review that you've provided us today?

Marie Harris, Strategy and Budget said thank you and good evening. No, Madam Mayor, not for consent. There was one business item Ms. Mayfield had a clarification on, and I believe that was sufficient for this minute, but that will also be one in the chamber. So, unless there's any other questions, I don't have any outstanding questions for consent items.

* * * * *

CONSENT AGENDA

ITEM NO. 2: CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 14 THROUGH 38 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 Mayfield, seconded by Councilmember Winston, and carried unanimously to approve the consent agenda as presented.

The following items were approved:

Item No. 14: National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative FY2023 Grant

Authorize the City Manager to accept a grant in the amount of \$900,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice to continue participation in the National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative.

Item No. 15: National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative FY2023: National Cold Case Initiative Grant Program

Authorize the City Manager to accept a grant in the amount of \$2,000,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice to implement initiatives that enhance investigations of violent crime cold cases.

Item No. 16: U.S. Department of Justice FY2023 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant

(A) Authorize the City Manager to accept a four-year, Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant in the amount of \$672,395 from the U.S. Department of Justice, and (B) Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager, or his designee, to enter into a memorandum of understanding with Mecklenburg County as a law enforcement partner.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 655-666.

Item No. 17: Sugar Creek Road Streetscape Project Change Order

Approve change order #2 for \$679,767.97 to Mountain Creek Contractors, Inc. for the Sugar Creek Road Streetscape project.

Item No. 18: Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan Implementation at Old City Hall

(A) Reject the low bid submitted by Cinderella Partners, Inc for Old City Hall - Americans with Disabilities Act Improvements, and (B) Approve a contract in the amount of \$853,650.00 to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder Nance Construction LLC for the Old City Hall - Americans with Disabilities Act Improvements.

Summary of Bids

Cinderella Partners, Inc.*	\$737,611.88
Nance Construction LLC	\$853,650.00
Tullace Construction	\$1,127,332.75

*Did not meet criteria to be deemed responsible for this project.

Item No. 19: Managed Print Services

(A) Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute an extension to a unit price contract with Ricoh USA, Inc. for managed print services and related products, services, and solutions for a term of four years, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

Item No. 20: Commercial Floor Coverings

(A) Approve the purchase of commercial floor coverings and related services from cooperative contracts for a term of three years to the following: Tarkett USA, Inc. (Omnia Coop #2020002143), Mohawk Carpet Distribution, Inc. (Omnia Coop# 2020002149), and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contracts for up to two, one-year terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contracts consistent with the purpose for which the contracts were approved.

Item No. 21: Security Guard Services

(A) Approve a unit price contract with Metropolitan Security Services, Inc. d/b/a Walden Security for Security Guard Services for an initial 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.

Item No. 22: Wastewater Treatment Plant Strainpress Equipment

(A) Approve the purchase of strainpress equipment by the sole source exemption, (B) Approve a contract with Huber Technology, Inc. for the purchase of strainpress equipment and startup services for the term of five years, and (C) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

Item No. 23: Airport Cooperative Contract for Snow Equipment

(A) Approve the purchase of Snow Removal Equipment from a cooperative contract, (B) Approve a unit price contract with ASH North America Inc., DBA Aebi Schmidt North America for the purchase of Snow Removal Vehicles and Brooms for a term of five years under Sourcewell contract # 111522-AEB, 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 contract.

Item No. 24: Airport Fire Protection Improvements Change Order

Approve change order #1 for \$3,358,888 to Messer Construction Co. for Construction Manager at-Risk services for the Federal Inspections Station Facility and Concourse D Renovations project.

Item No. 25: Airport Planning Consultation Service

Approve contracts for planning consultation services with the following vendors for a four-year term: AECOM Technical Services of North Carolina, Inc., Ricondo & Associates Inc., RS&H Architects Engineers Planners Inc., Landrum & Brown Inc., and Kimley-Horn & Associates Inc.

Item No. 26: Reimbursement Agreement for Runway Navigational Aid Establishment

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

Item No. 27: Set a Public Hearing on Alverton Area Voluntary Annexation

Adopt a resolution setting a public hearing for November 27, 2023, for Alverton Area voluntary annexation petition.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 667-668.

Item No. 28: Set a Public Hearing on Amavi University Area Voluntary Annexation

Adopt a resolution setting a public hearing for November 27, 2023, for Amavi University Area voluntary annexation petition.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 669-670.

Item No. 29: Resolution of Intent to Abandon a Portion of Alleyway off Roland Street

(A) Adopt a Resolution of Intent to abandon a Portion of Alleyway off Roland Street, and (B) Set a Public Hearing for November 27, 2023.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 671.

Item No. 30: Resolution of Intent to Abandon a Portion of Paragon Drive

(A) Adopt a Resolution of Intent to abandon a Portion of Paragon Drive, and (B) Set a Public Hearing for November 27, 2023.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 672.

PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

Item No. 31: Charlotte Water Property Transactions – Little Hope Creek Sanitary Sewer Improvements, Parcel #314

Resolution of Condemnation of 2,159 square feet (0.05 acres) in Permanent Easement at 1101 Barkley Road from Jon Thomas Gajewski for \$35,125 for Little Hope Creek Sanitary Sewer Improvements, Parcel #314.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 673.

Item No. 32: Property Transactions – Beckwith Meadows Storm Drainage Improvement Project, Parcel # 23

Acquisition of 654 square feet (0.015 acres) Sanitary Sewer Easement at 1712 Anderson Street from Ryan Dennison and Erin Dennison for \$20,000 for Beckwith Meadows Storm Drainage Improvement Project (SDIP), Parcel # 23.

Item No. 33: Property Transactions – Bryant Farms Road Extension, Phase 1, Parcel # 2

Resolution of Condemnation of 5,435 square feet (0.125 acres) Fee Simple, 14,378 square feet (0.330 acres) Sidewalk Utility Easement, 5,706 square feet (0.131 acres) Waterline Easement, 1,691 square feet (0.039 acres) Storm Drainage Easement and 6,186 square feet (0.142 acres) Temporary Construction Easement at 8601 Bryant

Farms Road from South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church for \$57,175 for Bryant Farms Rd Extension, Phase 1, Parcel # 2.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 674.

Item No. 34: Property Transactions – Bryant Farms Road Extension, Phase 1, Parcel # 3

Resolution of Condemnation of 3,496 square feet (0.080 acres) Fee Simple outside existing ROW, 3,067 square feet (0.070 acres) Utility Easement, 185 square feet (0.004 acres) Sidewalk Utility Easement and 7,702 square feet (0.177 acres) Temporary Construction Easement at 11924 Elm Lane from Nisbet Oil Company for \$120,700 for Bryant Farms Rd Extension, Phase 1, Parcel # 3.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 675.

Item No. 35: Property Transactions – Bryant Farms Road Extension, Phase 1, Parcel #4

Resolution of Condemnation of 4,060 square feet (0.093 acres) Fee Simple outside existing ROW. 3,006 square feet (0.069 acres) Utility Easement and 2,458 square feet (0.056 acres) Temporary Construction Easement at 11914 Elm Lane from Nisbet Oil Company for \$105,125 for Bryant Farms Rd Extension, Phase 1, Parcel # 4.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 676.

Item No. 36: Property Transactions – Monroe Road Multiuse Path, Parcel # 5

Acquisition of 1,181 square feet (0.027 acres) Sidewalk Utility Easement, 514 square feet (0.012 acres) Storm Drainage Easement and 1,928 square feet (0.044 acres) Temporary Construction Easement at 5205 Monroe Road from Bergman Brothers Realty, LLC for \$37,575 for Monroe Road Multiuse Path (MUP), Parcel # 5.

Item No. 37: Property Transactions – Monroe Road Multiuse Path, Parcel # 6

Acquisition of 514 square feet (0.012 acres) Sidewalk Utility Easement, 221 square feet (0.005 acres) Storm Drainage Easement and 1,125 square feet (0.026 acres) Temporary Construction Easement at 5215 Monroe Road from Bergman Brothers Realty, LLC for \$22,100 for Monroe Road Multiuse Path (MUP), Parcel # 6.

Item No. 38: Property Transactions – Shamrock Gardens Storm Drainage Improvement Project, Parcel # 10

Acquisition of 9,973 square feet (0.229 acres) Storm Drainage Easement, 1,478 square feet (0.045 acres) Sanitary Sewer Easement, 9 square feet (0.000 acres) Permanent Utility Easement and 5,816 square feet (0.134 acres) Temporary Construction Easement at 3630 Frontenac Avenue from Community Apartments Corporation of Metrolina #2 for \$95,975 for Shamrock Gardens Storm Drainage Improvement Project (SDIP), Parcel # 10.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 3: ACTION REVIEW AGENDA OVERVIEW

Mayor Lyles said we have two items on our Action Review agenda tonight, and I'll turn this over to the Manager for introductions.

Marcus Jones, City Manager said thank you, Mayor and members of Council. As the Mayor indicated, we have two items tonight. We have the NEST (Neighborhood Equity and Stabilization) Commission anti-displacement recommendations, and I believe we have some friends in the audience tonight that have helped with that commission, as well as arts and culture update, which I believe we'll also have some additional friends in the audience that helped with that. So, Mayor, before I turn it back over to you, I don't know if we'll have any walkup music tonight, but we do have Rebecca Hefner in the house, and she is currently serving as the acting Director of Housing and Neighborhood Services, and that's because Shawn Heath has been promoted to Assistant City

Manager. So, just good news all around in the City, and I'd like to turn it back over to you.

Mayor Lyles said so, thank you very much, Shawn and Rebecca, but I would like to actually remind myself that I made some phone calls about two years ago on the idea of how do we deal with the areas of displacement in our community, and I want you to know that both Kim Graham, who I've known since she was a baby, at Johnson C. Smith. I would tell the story about, she was taking the kids somewhere and I think she ran out of gas or hit the other car, but doesn't matter, it all worked out fine. She grew up and it was great. Then, of course, all of us know Justin Harlow. I remember Justin as we served our very first year of service with Braxton, me, Justin.

Councilmember Bokhari arrived at 5:08 p.m.

Rebecca Hefner, Director of Housing and Neighborhood Services said good evening, Mayor and members of Council. I'm excited to be here tonight. We're going to share with you the recommendations of the best commission, also known as the NEST Commission, in an effort to advance your work around neighborhood equity and stabilization. Again, I'm Rebecca Hefner. Really thrilled to be serving as your acting Director of Housing and Neighborhood Services. As the Mayor introduced, I am joined by our NEST Commission Co-Chairs, Dr. Justin Harlow, former City Council member, dentist, small business owner, and Kim Graham, Executive Director of the Greater Charlotte Apartment Association. We have a couple of nesters here in the room tonight. So, if you can say hello and be recognized. Thank you for coming out to join us this evening.

Justin and Kim have really provided tremendous leadership on this critical community issue, and I'd like to start off by thanking them, and the members of the NEST Commission for their hard work and dedication to this issue and to Charlotte's residents. So, the focus of tonight's presentation will be the much-awaited programmatic recommendations from NEST, but first I want to share a little bit with you about the commission and the City-wide anti-displacement strategy, just to put those recommendations in context.

Councilmember Anderson entered at 5:10 p.m.

So, the NEST Commission was created as part of the implementation of the Charlotte future 2040 Plan, and they've been charged with reviewing and recommending specific anti-displacement strategies and tools for protecting residents of moderate to high vulnerability to displacement. So, they began meeting in early 2022, and they've been reporting out to the Housing, Safety and Community Committee over that time. Alright, so the 15-member NEST Commission brings a really diverse set of perspectives and creative ideas to the challenges of displacement. The membership that you all have appointed is comprised of housing advocates, neighborhood leaders, residents who have experienced displacement, real estate professionals, housing finance experts, and affordable housing developers. So, this is a picture of some of those NEST Commission members at a community workshop they hosted this spring. They were out in the community collecting resident feedback on the anti-displacement strategy and recommendations.

Alright, just because I know I'm going to get some flack here, I do want to recognize that Councilmember Watlington was indeed in attendance at this community workshop. So, she and I have been kind of conveniently cropped out of both sides of this photo, but I just want to put that in the room. Alright, so here's some key milestones. NEST began their work in February of 2022. They really dug in, they analyzed the issues, they organized around three workstreams, and then delivered an initial work plan to Council Committee last August 2022. Later that fall, they were asked to develop an anti-displacement strategy that would serve as a framework for their recommendations, and they then presented that strategy to Council Committee in June of 2023, followed by a suite of programmatic and investment recommendations that were presented to Council Committee in August 2023.

Along the way, NEST has been busy. They've been reviewing and advising on current housing programs and anti-displacement efforts that includes implementation of the Staying in Place pilot, and development of the House Charlotte Plus pilot. They made a recommendation to Council Committee that the City invest in the Homes tax relief program in coordination with Mecklenburg County, which of course, you all adopted through the FY (Fiscal Year) 2024 budget process. Then, as you saw in the last slide, they've even organized community engagement activities. So, in short, they have been very, very busy, and so we have been very, very busy. So, quick moment of thanks to all the staff who provides incredible support along the way, folks in Housing, Community Engagement, the Planning Department, Strategy and Budget, and we even had help from Mecklenburg County.

So, quick overview of the anti-displacement strategy, and then we'll jump right into the recommendations. In the first half of 2023, we engaged with consultants from HR&A Advisors to develop a City-wide anti-displacement strategy. So, I initially described this work to them as cleaning out the garage. So, imagine your garage or bonus room or that drawer somewhere in your house. Our garage was full of lots of tools and programs, and opportunities, but they had become disorganized, and all stacked up and jumbled along the way. So, we asked them to pull all of those tools out of the garage, assess them for impact, what were they for and how well did they accomplish it, identify any gaps in our current programming, and then put them back together in an organized way. So, that organized way became the City-wide anti-displacement strategy.

I just want to make a note that this is not designed as a stand-alone strategy. So, anti-displacement is part of the Housing Charlotte framework. It is part of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. It supports the work we are doing in Corridors of Opportunity, and it's aligned with the community-wide Home For All plan. It's even connected to your key initiatives around the Digital Divide and Workforce Development. The primary benefit of having this strategy, is that it allows us to accelerate and scale our efforts, pivot quickly when conditions change, and over the last several years, we have seen a lot of conditions change, and it allows us to tailor our approach to best meet the needs of both individual households and our unique neighborhoods. So, what we learned, in particular, through the Staying in Place pilot program, is that we can be most impactful when we can quickly match the right tool or resource to the right household or individual in the right place at the right time.

Very briefly, the anti-displacement strategy supports four goals, you can see them here, support residents, strengthen communities, foster inclusivity, and empower business, although, the fourth strategy will be part of a later planning effort. Of course, the strategy proposes an initial set of metrics. Staff, along with NEST members, are working to build those out in a trackable and organized way, things like increasing the number of affordable units in our vulnerable neighborhoods, increasing homeownership for low-to-moderate income households, increasing access to services to build stability. As a recovering data officer, I have to say, I envision the dashboard in our future. Something that'll be easy for you all to see how we're doing implementing your goals around anti-displacement.

Finally, I just want to make a note that this work is not new and it's not waiting. So, many of the recommended activities are in progress, including investments that you all have made in supporting residents, working with neighborhoods and the Planning Department to conduct anti-displacement planning with our neighborhoods and as part of the Community Area Planning workshops, and then working on both online and physical resource hubs where materials that are accessible to individuals and families in our community, those who need them most. With that context in mind, I'd like to invite Justin and Kim to share the NEST Commission recommendations.

Justin Harlow, NEST Commission said again, I'm Justin Harlow, Co-Chair with Kim Graham.

Councilmember Johnson arrived at 5:18 p.m.

I'm glad to be back at a dinner meeting, but for being on this side of the microphone. Thank you, Mayor, for appointing us as Co-Chairs and charging us with helping lead this group to help meet some of the goals that this Council has set. I do want to, again, acknowledge a few of our NEST Commission members that joined us this evening. Thank ya'll for being here. We've got a really good team of 15, and thank ya'll for appointing all of them, and appreciate the efforts. So, Rebecca's given you the background, and I want to acknowledge Chair Watlington, and Vice Chair Mayfield, who really pushed us and pressed us. They said, "Hey look, you hired this consultant. You've set these goals. You've got this strategy. Give us the meat here. What are you recommending? What type of investment are you asking for? How can we help support citizens here in our City?"

So, we've got eight recommendations that have moved through the Housing, Safety and Community Committee that we're presenting tonight for your Action Review. The first seven of them are supporting residents, specifically that goal one of the strategy, one of which supports and strengthens communities, that's goal two. Then, goal three is really a ninth recommendation that we'll bring back to you likely in the spring. Our goal is to come to you around the budget time in the spring about kind of a sustainable funding source, kind of an anti-displacement fund. We're sprinkling those breadcrumbs on you today, but the eight recommendations are really what we'll be discussing today.

So, here's the eight. Again, this has been seen by the Housing and Safety Committee a few times, and I hope others have had an opportunity to look at it in advance. Acquisition, Rehab and Resale, House Charlotte Plus, accessory dwelling units, small landlord investments, referral sources, shared pilot programs, NOAH (Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing) communities. All of these are topics we've heard about before. We talk about these a lot when we're talking about affordable housing or we're talking about building communities and we use that G word, gentrification. So, we'll go through and map out each one of these one by one on what this means, and each of them will have the per unit cost. The total here totals up to about \$5.5 million. We understand that there's some ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds dangling around there, so the NEST Commission is asking for that. That's where we're going with this. Our subcommittee workstreams within the NEST Commission have kind of developed these eight with this ninth one that we'll continue to work on, on funding.

So, we'll start with Acquisition, Rehab and Resale. So, this is a program originally designed by the Council in 2021 with an initial \$1.5 million investment. We're asking you to kind of double down on that. Funding generally is being used to acquire a unit, rehab a unit, and then take proceeds from that sale and reinvest it back into the program. The City has already seen good success with this program. We believe that with more investment, there will be more participation and an opportunity to help also deed restrict units in a homeownership model, not just a rental model.

The House Charlotte Plus. Most of you are probably familiar with House Charlotte. House Charlotte Plus was a pilot that was launched that increased that down payment assistance that the City availed to various prospective home buyers in the Corridors of Opportunity, and this funding, of course, helps provide a forgivable loan, for downpayments for individuals up to 80 percent AMI (Area Median Income), trying to buy homes. This pilot program, we believe, should be more invested in to add another \$1 million into to help stimulate and encourage homeownership, particularly in the Corridors of Opportunity to support their Staying In Place initiatives.

Accessory Dwelling Units. So, this really hits home on all of the conversations that were being had in the UDO (Unified Development Ordinance) process. The Comp 2040 Plan process, the couple different avenues here for accessory dwelling units that we're recommending. There's a homeowner model as it relates to allowing homeowners to have up to 100 percent of construction for accessory dwelling units to, in return, deed restrict for a 15-year affordability period, and then of course, the program has to recover some of that cost over time, and that recycles back in the program. This is something that will help encourage homeowner's who've got, whether it be garage apartments or have enough land on their parcels to be able to build something, or even investors who

maybe own land or multiple pieces of property where they're able to support the Council and the City's goals of creating more affordable units in various areas, and the City participating in helping them fund some of that construction to help support and subsidize local investors or developers or local homeowners.

We've had a lot of conversation in the NEST Commission about the City having a lot of tools as it relates to supporting large-scale developers, big apartment communities and developers and landowners, but not so much for, what we're referring to as, kind of small landlords who maybe look to support the City's goals as well around affordability. So, landowners or property owners who own various duplexes or triplexes or multiple single-family units across the City, maybe want to do some type of upgrades to those things and/or build accessory dwelling units on those properties, but there's not really a true policy mechanism right now that allows for these smaller engaged landlords to participate. Most of the policies suggest that these property owners or developers have to own a minimum amount of units in order to participate, but there are folks out there that may say, "Hey, I'm okay with deed restricting by home and property, but I only have a portfolio of X amount of units." It might not qualify for Housing Trust Fund dollars, but here's another opportunity to do that. So, we're recommending some investment, \$1 million initially, for small landlords to be able to participate and create some gap funding of their own to, then of course again you'll hear this theme, deed restriction 15-year affordability restriction, if there's some City investment there.

So, those first five have a lot to do with specific adding units to the stock or rehabbing existing units already in the stock. The last three or four will focus more on reducing barriers, information, technical resources. So, this one here is reducing barriers to programs and information. So often, we hear, as community leaders, as elected officials, you hear, "Oh, I didn't know that this program existed. Things are being done to us without us." All of these types of things. We believe that there's got to be a little bit more investment in helping build up neighborhood info. Let's reinvigorate communities and neighborhood associations again. We know that post-COVID, there's been a bit of a decline in just community participation in a lot of things. So, helping reorganize and train community groups, create these neighborhood information networks, and specifically some of, what we're calling, resiliency hubs. These are neighborhood-based spaces that bring together various City resources, City information departments that help residents' kind of achieve that stability and support on the ground, into the communities that they're already living in. So, this is a \$100,000 over three-year investment that we're recommending to you all to help reduce these barriers and help reshare information about a lot of these programs.

This goes hand and hand with the next recommendation about referral sources and resources. Again, I'm not going to over sell it, but we've all heard the term silos, and we're working in this silo and that silo. People aren't working together. There's a variety of community groups in this City and this County that we believe could be brought a little bit closer together to help disseminate resources and referrals to those that need it, various nonprofits, various City agencies, County agencies, even private entities that are participating in this type of work. So, we're asking some investment as well to help kind of push that information out, and also help develop more of those partnerships through a variety of nonprofits and community networks.

Lastly, is the Shared Ownership pilot. The City, over time, has talked about, how do we support things like land trust? How do we support innovative housing models? So, we're recommending designing a pilot to increase kind of this community capacity to advance some of these innovative ownership models. We've seen, over the last few years and even this year of late, some of our local nonprofits and some of these local groups that do this work already, they've been building some capacity and receiving some investment from various agencies, the county included. So, we're asking the City to just start with a relatively small City investment, \$250,000, and some technical assistance to some community and nonprofit partners. Who gets that, I think, is up to you how that gets outlined, but over time, we're hoping that this helps support the acquisition of various residential properties, maybe for publically owned land to help support some of

this shared ownership model to try to increase some affordable units and help fight some displacement in various communities.

So, that's our eight. We're going to address some questions. I'm here for the presentation and Kim's here for the questions. I do want to leave you with this. With the anti-displacement funding, again, this has been heard a little bit every time I've spoken to the Housing and Safety Committee. We do believe that a dedicated funding source is needed. This type of work, like any other affordable housing work or any other displacement work, has to be sustainable long term. If we're going to be a city that invites growth and that invites employers to come and create an environment in a city that people want to move to and be a part of, we know that there will likely be some displacement from that. We're not a commission that believes we can solve the problem, but we do believe that with the right budget item and right operating expense and allocation, that an anti-displacement program or a fund could be created here. We're going to bring some recommendations to the Housing Safety Committee in again later this year, if not early next year, and then hopefully be a part of those 2025 budget conversations come the spring and the summer of next year. That'll be kind of our capstone for our three-year appointment for the NEST Commission.

So, with that, these are kind of the next steps. Of course, we hear things at an Action Review, and then there's discussion and emails and conversations, and we hope that my commission members will be in attendance at your November 13, 2023, Business meeting, hoping that you can support these recommendations and advance future ones going forward. So, we are open to any questions.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much, both the staff and the two co-chairs and the members. We know that there's a housing crisis in this City, and what you're doing addresses the problem, and you've brought us an array of things that we could possibly do and fund. So, I want to say very much how much you're appreciated, the thoughtfulness, the professionalism around how you approach this, and say thank you to each and every one of you.

Councilmember Mayfield said thank you, Mr. Harlow, and the entire NEST Commission for all the work that you all have been doing. Question for you. So, we have that one picture of an amazing opportunity where we had the home that was rehabbed and sold for \$239,000. That closed in December of 2020. We're now in October of 2023. Based on the most recent evaluation that home has, is now valued at what about \$60,000 in equity. What I want to know is, in this conversation before continuing to expand, and I did not ask this when you came to committee because I forgot about it, so I apologize, so I'm throwing it into the universe now, for us to look at where we have made investments and see what assistance they need now. So, we know that the City allocated funds to go along with the County to help some people with the property taxes. That's also a strenuous leap for a lot of people to go through the process, and it's \$640. If you went from a tax bill that was under \$1,000 to a tax bill that's over \$2,500, \$640 isn't fixed in that gap.

So, I think what would also be helpful as your having conversations, for us to be as intentional as possible where we have made rehab investments in the individuals that still live and that are owner occupied. I would like to see more of the focus there, for the simple fact that, what I would hope we don't want to see, is in another year or two, this home being sold on the market because they weren't able to maintain it, not necessarily because of the financial equity that's in it. We want to make sure that they can maintain the homes if that could make sense. Do you know, Dr. Harlow, if there were any discussions on that level?

Mr. Harlow said actually, I feel like you asked this, some form of this question, in the committee meeting, maybe not as specific as you're getting. I agree with you, we don't want to lose an asset that we've already invested in, and not recoup the benefit of why we invested in it in the first place. I'm going to turn to staff a little bit on this one, but I imagine we can get some data where any of those investments have been made, and see one, does the City still have a stake in this at all, or has the property been sold and

has the proceeds been reinvested back into the program. We know the market has changed significantly. I don't know if you can buy this house anywhere close to this cost anymore. We did not specifically track that, to answer your question. No, we did not specifically look at, hey, here's where investments were made, and is there more investment that needs to be made here?

Ms. Mayfield said so, what I would ask for staff to consider as we're building out these recommendations, which are absolutely amazing recommendations, I would just like for us to add on the front end, not an afterthought. Let's look at where we made investments. Here's too, a great relationship to work with the county, and look at the tax bill to see if we have any challenges with the individuals being able to meet that, and if we can be more targeted with our funding, because again, if you've gone from \$1,045 to \$2,500 on your tax bill, and you're on a fixed income, that can create a serious hardship. So, we may have an opportunity in there, Mr. Manager, to be a little bit more targeted. Thank you all.

Councilmember Driggs said this is a problem that concerned me when we were going through the 2040 Plan, because I thought there were a lot of provisions in that plan that actually give rise to the need for what you're doing. So, I guess I'm wondering how are we quantifying the problem and measuring our success and addressing the problem? How do we define the issue that this is meant to deal with?

Mr. Harlow said we see it as two-fold. One is, some of these are our pilot. Some of these are new. So, we want to see full investment being used to start, and then that creates future investments, to say, okay, hey, this was successful. People did participate in this ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) pilot. They did take advantage of this new program, and someone actually has gotten to stay in this new dwelling at a 15-year affordability period. I think that's probably the lowest hanging fruit. What we're trying to build, and we've mentioned the dashboard part of it, and then actually trying to get to a place where the City can actually track displacement, I think is the longer thing. Right now, there's not really anything that says, hey, we know for a fact, without a lot speculation, that, displacement's happening here or someone at a community meeting came and told us about something, or they emailed you all about it. So, trying to get to a true tracking mechanism. We just want to be able to know, okay, if these investments were made here, how did this affect the community short-term and long-term?

Ms. Hefner said I'm going to add just a little bit around the metric tracking. You have a fantastic data team and your Innovation and Technology Department, and they help us track displacement in several different ways. One of the ways is that, we're able to track direct displacement when large communities, for example, have displacement events. So, we can track displacement directly with residents in that way. We also have a lot of information about property sales and property taxes and other ways of looking at how frequently properties turn over. Both who is leaving neighborhoods and who is coming into neighborhoods in new housing, based on the people themselves, but also on the ways that housing costs change in those neighborhoods. So, we track displacement in a lot of different ways. There's not a single definition or a single number that we have, but we track it in these multiple ways.

when we're looking at how we know how we're doing, we're really thinking about how many deed-restricted units are available, how much homeownership has grown and how many people have accessed and leveraged the resources and referrals that are available, because we're looking at the deed restrictions help to create conditions where displacement won't occur. homeownership is a stabilizing condition for many households, and then the residents, as we connect them to services around finding jobs or childcare or transportation or all of the other resources and referrals that help households build stability, that's how we're thinking about tracking how we're doing in terms of investing in these initiatives.

Kim Graham, NEST Commission said I would also say that, built into the proforma, whether it's the ARR (Annual Recurring Revenue) program or House Charlotte, there should be a little bit of give. We expect that housing markets are going to improve. We

don't want them to go down in value. We want them to improve in value that creates more equity for the homeowner, but there should be something in the proforma that compensates for a 10 percent increase or a 20 percent increase in property taxes, such that that household's income can grow, that that equity will grow for that homeowner. If we were in a different inflationary time, they could access equity in a better way, but we know that capital is expensive right now. So, I think we should look at it from a good thing, but it is a challenge and could be a challenge. You say a \$640 increase, it could be a \$3,000 increase, and so we don't want that. That's even scarier. I do believe that proformas for those programs should at least include a five to 10 percent increase in property taxes, just as an expectation from housing property values growing.

Mr. Driggs said so, displacement versus gentrification. I mean if we look at these issues, in my mind, you've got a neighborhood, for example, and the neighborhood is kind of invaded by investors, and the owners of the homes in that neighborhood get a lot of money for their homes, and they sell voluntarily. So, that's not what we want in terms of wanting to preserve affordable housing at that location. They're not necessarily unhappy. Other situations, people are in their homes, they're not interested in selling, but they can't afford the taxes. So, I've suggested that maybe we ought to have an equity loan type of facility available to those people to insulate them from the cost of higher taxes on the basis of the increase in the value of their home. I think there's some other solutions we could still explore, but I appreciate the work that you've done. My last question was going to be for the Manager. What budget line would these funds come from? Are we going to put this in Housing and Neighborhood Development?

Mr. Jones said so, Mr. Driggs, what we would do, and it's a little strategic what we're trying to do tonight, help the NEST Commission, arts and culture, because they both are talking about sustainable long-term funding. So, the goal would be to have as much information to you as possible, so that when we get to the Annual Strategy meeting in January 2024, that you can make some decision based on that. We've been able to cobble together CARES (Community Assistance Response and Engagement Support) funds, ARPA funds, over the last few years, as well as being able to dip into the Trust Fund, but as you know and you're leading the witness, those funds have dried out.

Mr. Driggs said yes. Well, that's something that concerns me, but anyway thank you for that. We'll talk later. Ms. Graham, it's great to see you too.

Councilmember Winston said thank you very much, good work. I think, as I've said before in the committee meetings, what I'm hearing is that this work kind of has a high-fidelity to the Comp Plan. What this really is, is the Comp Plan at work, not just the creation of this NEST Commission, but what I see, what I saw, is that in the end, this commission has gone back and really dove into what are the actionable kind of menu of policy recommendations that exist in the Comp Plan, and other supported documents, as you pointed out there, that we as a community, we as a City Council, can focus on in order to address displacement that is happening now and that is coming down the line.

So, I think this is a good exercise, not just for the City Council, but for the City as a whole, to see how we as different groups, as different bodies, can utilize this document, utilize its existing policy, to move our government and move our community forward. For example, I see some things that create 10-Minute Neighborhoods in here, by bringing resiliency hubs and those resource and referral services. What I hear them saying is that these are resources that you shouldn't have to travel, you shouldn't have to get on a bus or take a car or make an appointment across town, that these are resources that can be implemented inside of neighborhoods. So, as we're thinking of building 10-Minute Neighborhoods, yes, it is the hard and heavy infrastructure investments that need to be made. Yes, it is the development of different kinds of neighborhoods and housing, but it is also putting the things into the communities, so the people that are already there can get to them quicker. So, we have to be a little bit flexible with the way we're thinking about building our neighborhoods for something that doesn't exist now.

I do have a suggestion that I would suggest City Council focus on, and then the City of Charlotte focus on, ADUs. I really think we should figure out how to do, I'll call it an ADU

blitz. Given the amount of Neighborhood 1 and Neighborhood 2 Place Types that exist across this City, there are a ton of opportunities, notwithstanding HOA (Homeowner Association) rules, that this a real potential to address potential displacement effects in neighborhoods defined by these place types and zoning districts. Thinking about, again, the idea of anti-displacement, these ADUs can provide extra income opportunities for those that are being impaired by property tax bills that are increasing. It provides opportunities for multi-generational families to age in place. These things seem to get most directly at the root of a big problem. Again, these Neighborhood 1 and Neighborhood 2, I think it's something like 85 percent of developable land space, and those are the types of Place Types where ADUs are going to be most highly concentrated. We have efforts around ADUs going on across the state. For instance, Raleigh has been doing some innovative things to where we can learn about ADU development, what's going well and where problems are. This is not something where we have to figure out starting from scratch.

Then, also taking advantage of private industries, like our partners at Lowes, and in the development community which are bringing technology solutions online right now around ADUs. I met with some folks that were using AI (Artificial Intelligence) to go into people's backyards and putting up an iPad, and they're looking at dimensions and suggesting, considering topography, and using GIS (Geographic Information Systems), what would work in certain places now. So, ADUs really do seem like that's an actionable step that can be done quickly and to increase housing supply to deal with affordability and to age in place. So, I really hope we really look at that as an actionable item over the next couple years. Thank you.

Councilmember Watlington said a couple of things. So, you guys have heard me say this before. Thanks, I'm really glad to see this work happening. Appreciate all of you and the NEST Commission and Rebecca and your team are doing as well. I'm happy to see the different recommendations at various points on the spectrum. I've just got a couple of things that like, Ms. Mayfield said, sorry that I didn't think of it until just now, but don't be mad. A couple of things. I wanted to suggest in the spirit of the ADU conversation, if the idea is to accelerate this and do it as much as possible, I'm just curious as to why we would limit it to homeowners up to 80 percent AMI? I get the idea of going in to help folks create an income for those that might be at risk of displacement, but as I think about opportunities for folks to increase the number of available units in a neighborhood, without particularly changing its character and also without causing homeowners to have to relocate or sell their property or convert to nonowner occupancy, I'm just curious as to what is driving the eligibility to stop at 80 percent AMI?

Mr. Harlow said I think we're leaving it open a little bit. Even in parentheses here, it's up to 110. Again, these recommendations as we leave tonight, they are now yours. Don't chop and screw it too much, but we do welcome those of type of gestures to say, hey, a higher AMI likely means more homeowners, and who possibly could participate. So, I think we're very open to that, and I think that the concept or the idea, I think, probably stems, and help me to make sure I'm right on this, is that for those that could benefit the most are also the people who are already at risk. So, generally, some lower-income folks who might own homes, a lot of people that Mr. Driggs was just referring to that might have this tax burden, but by all means, increase that as you all see fit.

Ms. Graham said I think the other thing is, we know that we're working with a finite pot of money. So, when we increase the percentage, you're going to open it up to more people who will probably qualify for it, and we've had this conversation in committee. Do we keep it at 80 percent, knowing that we're laser focused on a group, or do we expand it and get more people, but we might not be able to help as many people at the lower end. So, I think for you all, it's just a question of what your goals are.

Ms. Watlington said thank you. I just want to make sure that wasn't a policy or like a legislative or any kind of regulatory barrier. So, to that end, I would offer to the group that, if we want to accelerate it, we can open it up, and in the conversations around making selections, if you will, if we need to put some parameters in that place, we can do so, but I think that we can open it up to as many homeowners as possible, if we're

really trying to accelerate results there. So, that's one piece that we can talk about going forward. The other thing is that, when we talk about a dedicated funding source, I'd love to see us tie this dedicated funding source to public investment. We already know that we have this conversation every time we talk about investing in big economic development deals in transit along corridors, where we know that are going to be subject to displacement. So, I'd love to see a policy focused around, how do we ensure that whatever revenue's coming from those public investments, or as a result of the public investments, that we already bake in this anti-displacement component.

Then, finally, as we look forward, I know that we were laser focused on things that we could do within the City programmatically, but I would love to see this work expand to talk about what needs to be true at the state and at the federal level, so that we can get prepared from a policy standpoint to be able to push a legislative agenda. So, I look forward to seeing how this work expands its scope going forward, but great work, and thank you for that. I look forward to supporting it next month.

Ms. Graham said thank you.

Councilmember Ajmera said great work. Great to see you all and appreciate the work. I know Dr. Harlow was the chair of the committee when he was on Council. So, certainly now, it's great to see you being involved and leading along with Ms. Graham, appreciate your work. Ms. Hefner, data is the key. So, it's great to have someone in a leadership position who has the data background, because that's the key to addressing affordable housing crisis. As we start to address and calculate where we are and where we need to go, I think that will help us make very important policy decisions. I really like the proposal here with the ADUs. I know the cities and states across this nation have implemented similar tools to increase the housing supply, especially when it comes to ADUs. So, it's great to see that as part of your recommendations.

What I have also seen, where municipalities are trying to address barriers. We are talking about regulatory barriers to increase the housing supply, especially ADUs. Have you looked into that, or maybe that might be part of the overall ADUs who may not participate in this program. We want to increase the supply by making it more where the process is more friendly, where it doesn't cost \$15,000, \$20,000 just to apply, or just to go through the process. I think that's the biggest hurdle for a lot of you folks to even start building ADUs. Even housing providers, have we looked into the regulatory barriers and how we can address that?

Ms. Hefner said yes, thank you for the question. So, we have been implementing an ADU pilot program as part of Staying in Place. Through that pilot program, we have about seven units that are getting ready to go to contract, that will be constructed, both homeownership opportunities and the investor-owned opportunities. We've spent the last several months working across departmental team with Housing and Planning, and IT and students from UNC (University of North Carolina) Charlotte, and a couple of builders in our community. They've been looking at that very question. How can we design a program that is easy to understand, access quickly, move through the process quickly.

So, we've incorporated a couple of elements, for example, with Mecklenburg County. The opportunity to have master plans, essentially not quite preapproved, but the plan itself is approved as long as you can demonstrate that it fits on your lot and your lots appropriate for it. So, we've been working on pulling together a pattern book, essentially, of those types of plans, as well as looking at other regulatory barriers. The Planning and HNS (Housing & Neighborhood Services) have been working really closely together, looking at that range of barriers to affordable housing. We think there's a lot of different things that can be done, but that's specific to the ADUs, as well as also, we have someone on staff now who's really helping people to navigate that process, especially for individual homeowners who want to do the ADUs or participate in other programs, but they're having trouble figuring out what the process is. So, we're really trying to make it easy on anyone, whether you're an individual homeowner or an

affordable housing developer, to navigate our programs and processes, so we can get more affordable housing built across the City.

Ms. Ajmera said oh, that's great to hear. I recently read an article in the newspaper about a family where a son was building an ADU for his mother, and where they would be able to live close, but at the same time, address the affordable housing. I'm not sure if it was a local or regional story, but I thought that was really powerful, because it shows the power of how ADUs can address affordable housing crisis, but also address where multi-generation can live under one roof. If I find that, I'll definitely share that, but I think that really made me rethink about the ADUs, and how that can be a tool that we can use here locally. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said you've done a great deal of work, and we really appreciate it. I'm sure that we will call on you to do even more, because success breeds success, as they say. So, thank you very much for what you have done. Alright, very well done. So, we have one more item before we go downstairs, but I do want to mention, everyone has a Charlotte FC (Football Club) shirt. The goal is to put your shirt on, go downstairs, take a photo, and send it to Tepper Sports for just the gladness of having a soccer team that's in the play-in. So, if you choose to, please do so. If not, it's okay. Alright, the next item that we have on our agenda is Charlotte's Arts and Culture Plan, and Priya Sircar is going to begin this.

Mr. Jones said thank you Mayor and members of Council. I believe everybody knows Priya. She's the City's first Arts and Culture Officer, and tonight she's going to talk to you about the City's first Arts and Culture Plan. I do want to, if it's okay with you Mayor, hand it over to the Mayor Pro Tem, because a lot of work has been going on around this, and he has been a part of the discussion way back starting in the winter of 2021, where at that time the Mayor Pro Tem Eiselt, and Mr. Graham, Mr. Driggs, Mr. Winston, Mr. Bokhari tried to come together to figure out what's the strategy for the City to play a role in making sure that arts and culture has sustainable funding. So, if it's in order, I'd like to kick it over to the Mayor Pro Tem.

Councilmember Molina arrived at 5:58 p.m.

Mr. Winston said thank you, Mr. Jones, and Mayor Lyles, for that quick setup. I am excited for where we're at tonight in this presentation that we're about to have. There has been a lot of work that has gone into this, but I'll also remind us that this is sort of still the beginning. The City pretty much forever has never really had a policy that guides how public investment in arts and culture in the City is supposed to be done. How will it adapt and adjust over time? How is City Council supposed to interact with the Arts and Culture community to support the vital contribution that it makes to our City? As the Manager said, I was a member of the original Arts and Culture Ad Hoc Committee, and I want to acknowledge the four or five members that are still on Council, Councilmember Graham, Councilmember Driggs, Councilmember Bokhari, myself, along with Mayor Pro Tem Eiselt, really kind of took hold of this back in 2020 to start.

As I was actually doing some cleaning out of my office earlier today, I found some notes from September of 2019 where I, in my individual capacity, along with Mayor Pro Tem Eiselt, were involved and engaged in the county's effort to secure a public funding source that was failed for the arts and culture in 2019. I went through some of the notes, the minutes that the County Commissioners made, and the comments that they made resonated with the results that we heard during that campaign, that the Arts community, in particular, was unhappy with the governance structure of Arts funds, and demanded change before approving any additional funding. The community at large really wanted to know. It wasn't good enough just to say, hey we're going to give public funding to the Arts. They wanted a plan. They wanted to know what the intent was and how, again, they're elected officials, and therefore, they would interact with it. So, I've had the chance to review the plan, and I am pleased to see great alignment with the committee's letter, in addition to the recent policy framework that Council passed in March of 2023. This includes an innovative approach to public and private partnership in

collaboration, a focus on the economic development of the arts and culture industries in our City, and bringing in tourism, support for broad spectrum of creative groups and individual artists, while maintaining support for our City-owned cultural institutions, equitable and inclusive use of City assets to encourage collaboration across the sector.

I would like to thank Cyndee Patterson and Kevin Patterson, no relation, for their leadership of the Arts and Culture Advisory group over the last two years. It's been a dedicated bunch, and a lot of passion at work that's been involved in it. I believe a flourishing arts and culture ecosystem is critical to Charlotte, and really any city's future success, and I look forward to learning and hearing more. So, with that, I'll turn it over to Priya, who is going to bring it home for us. Thank you.

Priya Sircar, Arts and Cultural Officer said thank you, Mayor Pro Tem, and thank you, Mr. Jones. Good evening. It's good to back with you all. I'm delighted to be here to be able to share with you an update on the Charlotte Arts and Culture Plan and the process to get here. So, as both Mr. Jones and the Mayor Pro Tem referenced, we have been engaged in approximately, for the past 18 months, a community-wide planning process to develop a comprehensive Arts and Culture Plan to sustain and grow arts and culture in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. I'm thrilled to be able to share where we have gotten with the work of many dedicated people. Over 3,400 participants have taken part in this process to shape this community vision and the plan. We do have dedicated members of our Arts and Culture Advisory Board here tonight, as well as of the steering group that guided this plan, and so I want to thank all of you. We have more people who were here earlier and had to head out, and also who are watching at home, I know. So, thank you all for your leadership and your many, many, many volunteer hours over the past many months to get to this point.

So, we are going to share with you the highlights of the planning process and of the plan itself. We want to make sure there's some time for discussion, so we will touch on a few of the priorities and key points and make sure then that we can dig into other details if you wish, when we get to discussion. The bottom line is that we have engaged in this process and developed a plan that is of, by, and for the community, and we're excited to share that with you now. So, just to recap, we started the process last late spring, early summer 2022, and we spent most of last year doing extensive qualitative and quantitative research and analysis. So, this included looking at what other cities do, mapping our cultural assets here, places and spaces that people experience arts and culture, also doing an assessment of our local funding landscape, and also extensive community engagement through many different formats, in which we heard from folks across over 75 zip codes.

Then, in spring 2023, you may recall, we shared the results of that research and analysis in the State of Culture Report that's still available to view on the Arts and Culture Planning portion of the City's website, and those resulted in eight emerging insights that we then were able to receive feedback from the public on, and then evolved into a shared vision that all of these folks participated in shaping, including you all. Thank you for sharing your feedback to help shape the vision and priorities and the content of the plan. We also were able to receive feedback from staff of City departments, County staff, CMS (Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools), and other partners across community. These were folks from the public sector, private sector, from arts and culture organizations of all different disciplines, sizes, and types, as well as artists and creatives from many different artistic disciplines, as well as partners who are in other sectors, such as education, health, social service, and others. So, using all this information, which yielded the insights, we then developed the comprehensive vision, priorities, and then strategies and actions that make up the plan that you have received and that we will share some highlights from today.

Councilmember Mitchell arrived at 6:06 p.m.

So, what is the shared vision? A community where all people value, support, and thrive through arts, culture, and creativity. I won't read the philosophy statement to you. You can take that in at your own pace, but I just want to share that what really resonated

throughout this year and half long process, is the recognition among people all across this community from many different walks of life, about how essential arts and culture are to our community, to the vibrancy and sustainability of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. That is what you will see in the plan, our many, many different ways to underscore that importance and to make sure that we can continue to have arts and culture be a vital contributor to this community's growth.

So, you should have some printouts, because I know this text is very small, but it is also in your copy of the plan, but I'll just briefly touch on what the key priorities are. Now, these are not numbered in order of importance. I will just briefly talk about them so that you see the main concept for each one. So, priority one is about ensuring sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture through public and private partnership. That is a key theme that is throughout the Arts and Culture Plan. So, this includes public sector participation in a meaningful way, as well as ongoing and increasing private sector participation. It also includes finding ways for arts and culture entities to develop sustainable business models. Priority two is all about governance and funding and service delivery. So, this is about sustainable public/private partnership in that realm as well, and in a moment, I will talk about the proposed governance structure, so we'll come back to that in a minute or two.

Moving on to number three. This is about equitable sustainable support for those parts of our Arts and Culture Community and other populations within Charlotte-Mecklenburg that have been historically underresourced and marginalized when it comes to arts and culture support. This priority is very closely tied to priority two, because it has specific recommendations relating to governance funding and service delivery. Priority four is about access to affordable space for the creation and experience of arts and culture. Priority five is about eliminating barriers to arts and culture creation and participation all across our community. Number six is about using marketing and communication to better promote awareness of arts and culture throughout our local community about what arts and culture offerings are available, as well as outside of Charlotte-Mecklenburg to tourists and potential visitors.

Number seven is about fostering collaboration and cooperation throughout the creative ecosystem, as well as between arts and culture and other sectors, such as the ones that I have mentioned, in addition to others. Then, number eight is about strengthening arts education experiences, really across the entire lifespan of a person. So, this is from early childhood through the school experience, pre-K through 12, through higher ed, and also including professional development and training opportunities for folks who are interested in pursuing arts and culture and creative careers, or who are already involved in a creative career.

So, I'll just briefly touch on a few of these, and then we can talk further about some of the other priorities during discussion, but want to just focus on priorities one, two and three. So, as I mentioned, priority one is about using a public/private partnership, which Charlotte-Mecklenburg does so well, to ensure sustainable and reliable funding in the long term. This is a 10-year plan, so what you'll see here are strategies to ensure this over the long range. You can see that this includes both the city and county and other public sector entities, playing a very meaningful role in ongoing reliable funding, but also that the private sector will continue to play a meaningful role in ongoing reliable financial support. Then other strategies here touch on ways that we can help arts and culture entities in Charlotte-Mecklenburg to become sustainable through their business models.

Number two, as I mentioned, is about governance, including funding and service delivery, and I want to take a moment to focus on this diagram, which hopefully helps illustrate the governance structure that is proposed in the plan. You also have this in a printout at your seat and in the plan document. This governance structure has several benefits that we as a planning team are excited about. So, this leverages existing entities and assets that we have in Charlotte-Mecklenburg that are already doing work in arts and culture and leverages them in a new and innovative way that is going to be sustainable over the long term.

So, what you see here is, at the core, there's a working group of entities including public sector entities, like the City, the County, CMS, the libraries and private sector, as well as arts and culture organizations that are engaged in providing funding and services to the field. Senior staff from these entities would work together in a collaborative way to drive implementation of the plan, as well as iteration and evaluation of progress on the plan. They would report to an Oversight Committee that also has representation from the public sector, the private sector, and arts and culture sector. Then, the circles that you see on the right and left, are advisory groups, very much like the task forces that developed the strategies and actions in this plan that would focus on making sure that each priority of the plan is achieved. So, they would work with the working group of entities, and they would also have connectivity to the Oversight Committee, and this would ensure continuity between the Oversight Committee, the working group, and participants out in community, all working together to make sure that the plan is achieved.

One thing that is beneficial about this particular proposed governance structure is that, by utilizing existing entities that we already have in this new way, it is a less of a ramp up time to transition to this governance structure from what we have currently, and it continues the momentum from the planning process right into implementation, and that there are many, many opportunities for folks across this community to continue to be involved, because one thing that we've been able to do is have a collaborative process that's led to this plan, and we don't want to let that go. We want to keep that going as we move into implementation. One other thing I want to mention about this is that it also includes flexibility when it comes to funding. So, there are opportunities for synergistic or pooled funding between different types of entities, but also entities can have independent funding for various activities that also align with the plan. So, have room for a combination of restricted and unrestricted funding, both independent and pooled funding.

So, the last one I want to touch on in the presentation is, again it's priority three, and this is just to highlight that this is very closely linked to priority two, which I just shared, which is about governance funding and service delivery. Again, wanting to make sure that the way that these resources in our community are deployed, are done equitably especially acknowledging that there are various parts of our community in the past that have not received the resources that are necessary to flourish.

So, just briefly what's next? We are asking you to vote to accept the plan. We'll come back on November 13, 2023, for that step, and then we anticipate that, at your direction, the staff would develop policies and other activities that are in alignment with the plan, and then as the Manager referred to earlier in meeting, that the Council would discuss funding options at the strategy meeting in a few months. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much.

Councilmember Anderson said thank you for the presentation, and I know this work has been long in the making. We've met several times on this. So, I'm happy to see it come together. I just have a couple questions for you. On your governance structure slide, you mention that there will be three to four arts and culture organizations that will be a part of it. Can you just give us an example of who those organizations might be?

Ms. Sircar said sure. So, as we think about organizations that are serving the sector and providing funds and other types of capacity building, those would be some of the types. So, a natural one that comes to mind is, the Arts and Science Council, as one of the participating working group core entities. There are other organizations as well that are providing services and support, so one could be Charlotte Is Creative that's been involved in the sector and recently posted a panel on funding support. Then, also, other organizations that have a reach into the arts and culture sector. So, the idea with this is that, through multiple organizations, both arts and culture as well as public and private, those respective relationship networks can be leveraged together to actually reach a wide swath of Charlotte and Mecklenburg.

Ms. Anderson said okay, great. Thank you. How does the Blumenthal Performing Arts Organization fit into this ecosystem?

Ms. Sircar said sure. So, at the risk of overloading with diagrams that do not include an ecosystem that you have seen in a previous presentation several months ago. So, the Blumenthal fits into the ecosystem in a couple ways. One is that, of course, Blumenthal operates City-owned facilities, which as Mayor Pro Tem referenced in the plan, is included in terms of sustainable funding, because we want to make sure the City-owned facilities are operating sustainably and effectively, and also that the operations within that are operating sustainably and effectively. So, in that sense, the Blumenthal fits in as an organization that is a presenting organization, presenting touring performances, but also collaborating with local artists and groups that are presenting work in these spaces that Blumenthal does. Then, Blumenthal also does its own programming, such as the Charlotte International Arts Festival that took place recently.

So, the Blumenthal would be one of the organizations that could participate in the governance structure potentially, but it is to be determined how organizations and which organizations would participate. Then, on a funding level, there are some different options for how an organization like Blumenthal Performing Arts could receive funding. So, as I mentioned, this allows for there to be both restricted dollars that could go to Blumenthal or to the City-owned facilities of operations of that, or there might be other types of funding that happen through other participating entities, whether those are independent or synergistic pooled funds that could go to an organization like Blumenthal.

Ms. Anderson said so, it's a bit of a loaded question, because I'm on the board of the Blumenthal. So, I wanted to make sure that the organization is enthralled in the plan. Then, my last question is, we are about to embark on standing up an incredible main library just a few blocks away. I'm very interested. I see you have the library there, but in other cities, major cities, the arts are very much infused in the main public library. I just want us to be very mindful of that as we think about how the City of Charlotte plays a role in the new library, and how we can play a role and have a thumbprint on the arts within that new space.

Ms. Sircar said thank you.

Mr. Driggs said Ms. Sircar, I think it's fair to say I got a little cranky when we were talking offline about this. I apologize for that. I realize that the work you have done is in response to input you received from the Council. So, I'll address myself to the Council. A concern I have about the plan, as it manifests itself right now is, based on the history leading up to the formation of the plan, to the City's decision to commit resources, to the private sectors decision to commit resources, was a perception that private funding for the arts had pretty much dried up, and therefore, there was a need for us to step up. One of the motivations for us to do that was the fact that some of our legacy organizations were starving for funds and their existence was threatened, and in my mind, that was pretty key. I believe that those organizations and their tradition of acknowledging historical European culture, I'll call it, is one of the things that marks Charlotte as a world-class city. I think the way we are perceived by other cities in this country and elsewhere, is influenced by productions of notable works by historically famous artists. So, I was disappointed when I saw in the plan that there was hardly any acknowledgement of those institutions that I could identify. No explicit acknowledgement.

Then, I think one of things that set me off a little bit was then in a slide I saw, it said that we would help fund these and ensure that they had equitable programming, or something like that. My feeling is that, although our investment in the arts should further our social priorities, it is an arts program first, and it's a social program second, and that means that the scope of goals that we have for this public investment includes things like economic development, include service to all sectors of the Charlotte economy, and also include the items that are in the plan. So, I'm not excluding anything like that. I just felt that the presentation of the plan was kind of one-sided to the extent of minimizing

what I think is a critical component, and in fact, is something that's likely to take up a lot of the capacity we have for investment. I know that the private partners that we had during a three-year period, in which there was a total investment of \$36 million or \$40 million in the arts, had a particular concern also about legacy organizations.

So, I would just like to see them properly acknowledged as a goal of ours, that we will ensure the stability of those major institutions where the City owns the facilities, and given the importance that they have in how we are perceived culturally, not taking anything away from the grassroots and diversity and other goals articulated in the plan. So, that's my comment. Ms. Sircar, my question to you is, when we talked, you talked about a next step. Could you explain that a little bit for all of us here?

Ms. Sircar said sure. So, the next steps, yes, I added a bullet point after our last conversation, as we see it, are that following the November 13, 2023, meeting, where we would be asking for Council to vote to accept the plan, and in fact we can start to work on these things even sooner, but that the staff would develop a framework for a policy and practices that align with the plan. Then, as the Manager mentioned a little bit ago, the thought is that Council would take up these conversations at the Annual Strategy meeting.

Mr. Driggs said just one more follow-up then. So, we have a budget process that starts soon. What will our reference be as far as the arts are concerned, when we decide about allocations of public money to the arts?

Mr. Jones said so, Priya, you've done such a great job. Why don't you let me take that one, okay. So, Mr. Driggs, I think I'm going to steal this from the Mayor Pro Tem in a general review today. If we look, this is a three-legged stool, that even back in 2019, when there was this big concern about funding drying up for these institutions, arts and culture, one leg being the City with that \$3.5 million, and I think we got it up to \$4 million. The County put money into it also. Then, there was fundraising by the ASC (Arts & Science Culture) and the [inaudible] community put some money in.

I look at this plan, which I believe is an excellent plan, and thank you for all your work, as still having that three-legged stool, and there could be a lane that the city wants to invest in more so then, let's say maybe the county or the private sector, and what we've heard over and over and over again, is that this is an economic development opportunity for the City. So, as we start to think about what may be restricted, and Priya did a great job talking about restricted funds, and if you go back in time, the county had a lot of restricted funds and it went to culture block, so the city could decide if they would like to have restricted funds that are maybe going more so to the legacy organizations or the 38 organizations, and then there are pooled funds. In the pooled funds, if you go back to the structure, could be decided by a bigger group and it's based on priorities for all of the organizations or entities that are putting money into the pool fund.

So, in the next steps, having this Annual Strategy meeting in January 2024, this would be one of those opportunities, as we tee it up for budget discussions, is what's a funding source, how much is the funding source, and how would like the dollars to be targeted?

Mr. Driggs said so, that will be going on during our budget process and in our budget process? Okay, thank you. Thank you, Priya.

Ms. Ajmera said it's a perfect transition, because I had a follow-up to Mr. Driggs question. So, adopting what we have in front of us, it does not preclude us from supporting legacy organizations. That's what I heard, correct?

Mr. Jones said correct, and you will be accepting the report.

Ms. Ajmera said got it. So, I think we're all on the same page here, where ultimately the Council will still get an opportunity to discuss the funding, and the Council can decide, to Ms. Anderson's point about Blumenthal, I think that falls under our legacy organization,

and to Mr. Driggs point about other legacy organizations, while we continue to support historically marginalized organizations and artists. Is that correct?

Ms. Sircar said yes.

Ms. Ajmera said I just want to recognize many members of Arts Commission who put in so much time and effort into this, especially my good friend, Shefalee Patel. She is also known as cultural connection queen, and I see Alan Barber here and Tim [inaudible], who was here. They have just put in much work into this. I see them almost at every cultural event, and this is voluntary effort that they have put in. They put time and effort into this. They provide a lot of their cultural knowledge, artist knowledge, absolutely with no expectation in return. So, I appreciate the work that's gone into that, and Priya, certainly great job. I will have more questions as we discuss the funding, but for now, I'm good with this. Thank you.

Ms. Sircar said thank you.

Mr. Winston said Mr. Jones brought up the idea of the three-legged stool. I think we should all kind of remember that what this is, is we're defining what our leg of the stool is here, and that didn't exist before. The way we looked at our investments and our priorities for arts and culture in the past was to basically cut a check. If you look through the strategies and priorities and recommendations, this provides a way that is bigger than any one or group of organizations that exist that isn't just focused on a certain medium of art of culture, but again, it creates kind of a wave finder for the City to exist as it grows as we are presented with different opportunities, as we identify our strengths and our weaknesses. If you look in here, one the things that was pretty cool to me, that it touches on the need for MFA (Master of Fine Arts) programs and Bachelor's of Fine Arts Programs, in and around the City.

So, those are just things that we weren't thinking of. We didn't have policy around, and we didn't have any type of framework that would lead to any policy. So, we are really defining that leg of our stool, and this provides something we can go to those other partners, whether they be governments or nongovernmental organizations, to say how we can all tap in, and we can supplement and compliment each other to support this important part of a city and community. Thank you.

Ms. Watlington said thank you for the presentation and the plan that we were able to peruse through. I am looking forward to, I think, along the lines of what the Manager was talking about, is we think about what the City is willing to invest in, and what our approach becomes beyond what's existing here. I'm most interested in how we really create, or help enable the creation of, revenue generating sources for arts and culture. One of the things that really peaked my interest at the beginning of this conversation, was about how do we invest in a true economic development ecosystem? So, I look forward to having those details. I'm not quite sure where that sits within these priorities, but I do hope that we can have those conversations, or if you'd like to speak to, I'd love to hear a little bit more about that, because at the end of the day, we can continue to try to invest in arts, and certainly we will continue in some capacity, but if the fundamental challenge or opportunity was that we needed to help create a sustainable source, that's really about generating revenue through the arts, so.

Mr. Jones said so, I totally agree with you, Councilmember Watlington, and that's a part of the policy discussion that we'll have with you, about how we're able to enable this revenue generation to occur. So, that would be a part of the next few months.

Ms. Watlington said awesome, and you said the next few months. So, last thing I'll say is, I want to make sure I'm clear, I see winter 2023 through 2024. Am I to expect that it's going to take 14 months to move to the next step.

Mr. Jones said no, no, no. That really means January 2024, December 2023/January 2024.

Ms. Watlington said okay, thank you.

Mayor Lyles said alright. So, I think that that covers the questions on our arts and culture presentation. I can't imagine what the review will be if we cover arts and culture, NEST, budget. It's going to be a challenge. So, I hope everybody's ready for it. We're going to be ready for that. So, with that, Mr. Jones, do we have anything before we go downstairs? So, for those of you that just came in, we have the Charlotte Soccer team, and we want to try to push them off, because they are going to New York to play in the play in game, and so that if you don't want to put your shirt on, hold it up, and we'll take a picture and send it to Kristi at Tepper Sports.

* * * * *

The meeting was recessed at 6:31 to move to the Meeting Chamber for the regularly scheduled Business Meeting.

* * * * *

BUSINESS MEETING

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina reconvened for a Business Meeting on Monday, October 23, 2023, at 6:44 p.m. in the Meeting Chamber of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Council members present were Dimple Ajmera, Danté Anderson, Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, Lawana Mayfield, James Mitchell, Marjorie Molina, Victoria Watlington, and Braxton Winston II.

* * * * *

Mayor Lyles said thank you so much for allowing us to take a moment to celebrate the Charlotte FC with a big shoutout to our team by sending them some cheering on by the Charlotte City Council for their impressive win of 1-0 over Inner Miami, and making it to the playoffs. So, let's all hope that when they get into New York, the Red Bulls this Wednesday, that they have the best of luck, and we actually are able to celebrate another game. So, thank you very much.

Today, we were just upstairs, and we were talking about two major programs that we have that are coming up in the future. One was our Charlotte NEST, which is talking about how do we make sure that we can work with people to stay in their homes? Then, the second one was, how do we continue to have arts as a core inside of our values and the work that we're doing? So, now we're ready to call the business meeting to order. I want to say thank you to those that are joining us in the chamber, welcome to you, and we are grateful that we have others that may be watching on the City's TV program, and anyone else that's accessing us by the internet.

* * * * *

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

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

* * * * *

AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

ITEM NO. 6: NATIONAL ARTS AND HUMANITIES MONTH

Councilmember Winston read the following proclamation:

WHEREAS, annually, the month of October has been recognized as National Arts and Humanities Month by thousands of arts and culture organizations, including the Arts and Science Council, the City of Charlotte’s Local Art Agency, and by communities, cities, and states across the country for 30 years, and

WHEREAS, the arts and humanities help community members explore their diverse history and culture with the support and creativity of large, mid-size and small cultural organizations, creative individuals, educational institutions and local businesses, and

WHEREAS, despite significant losses to the Coronavirus pandemic, the creative industries remain among the most vital sectors of the American economy, providing opportunities for development and creating jobs and economic activity across sectors, and

WHEREAS, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg nonprofit arts industry strengthens are local economy by generating \$243 million in total economic activity annually, \$21.6 million in state and local government revenue, and by supporting the full-time equivalent of 7,600 jobs, of which I have about three or four, and

WHEREAS, the arts and humanities embody much of the cumulated wisdom, intellect and imagination of human kind and play a unique role in the lives of our families in our community:

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

“NATIONAL ARTS AND HUMANITIES MONTH”

in Charlotte, North Carolina, and call upon our community members to celebrate arts and culture and join in this special observance.

* * * * *

PUBLIC FORUM

Affordable Housing

Melissa Swanson, 1809 Shagbark Lane said thank you, good evening, Mayor and Council. I’m a local real estate investor and landlord. I manage my own properties that span from Thomasboro to Hidden Valley. I come to you tonight in regard to the lack of accountability of the City of Charlotte to hold landlords and property owners to the laws set forth by zoning and compliance. Current day, my low-income multi-family homes in District 1, are next door to a neglected trailer park full of trash, long weeds and unkept grounds. Also, current day, my commercial building in District 2, on Bradford Drive, now has to be neighbors with a funeral home and crematory that moved into an old storage warehouse and began operating without proper plan review, permits, or a CO (Certificate of Occupancy).

On the other side of Thomasboro Elementary is a gaming business disguised as a coffee shop, and across the street is another garbage infested strip mall that is still half boarded up from a fire three years ago. This strip mall still continues to operate in its dilapidated state. Numerous outreaches to 311 and our District Council persons, have done nothing to hold property owners and commercial tenants accountable. Fines and consequences are not implemented, and these businesses and individuals are getting away with it, leaving responsible owners, like myself, who went through proper CO channels, wanting to throw my hands up and sell everything, because attaining and retaining solid and reputable tenants in the commercial space is nearly impossible due solely to the visual surroundings.

On the residential side, I’m a landlord to Roof Above, INLIVIAN in conjunction with Freedom Fighting Ministries and VA VASH (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing), as

well as the Harvest Center. I'm happy to share with you my experiences of drug use, prostitution, unauthorized tenants, strip poles being built in my homes, and shower and bathroom time being sold to homeless folks. I strongly suggest you insist Freedom Fighters house a trained liaison or counselor on site.

Mayor Lyles said Ms. Swanson, thank you. I think that we've got the gist of this, and I'm going to ask Assistant City Manager to meet with you.

Ms. Swanson said thank you.

Mayor Lyles said Shawn, would you handle this, and follow up? If you have additional remarks, make sure that he gets those, and addresses and things like that. So, thank you very much.

Senior Safety

Ann Joseph, 6410 Nevin Road said good evening, Mayor Lyles and everybody on this board. My name is Miss Ann Joseph, and I don't have a formal thing put together, but I'm going to speak from the heart, something that really disturbs me. It's two things. One, I am a city bus operator. I'm fairly new on the job. I'm fairly new in Charlotte altogether. One of the situations that disturbs me, and I did try to bring it to my job, but they have no policy in place. So, I come here seeking if there's some kind of help or direction you could put me in to get this help. So, I was on the bus going to my lunch. I was not driving at this time, but going to the South Tryon garage for lunch. While on the bus, there was an elderly man that had an incident on himself. He urinated on himself in the bus, and everybody was upset, and you know, didn't really care about the old man. I told people, look, he's elderly and he couldn't contain himself.

So, the bus driver had to put the bus out of service. I was able to flag down another bus, because I work for the company and I'm in uniform. Before I left, all I could see was his eyes saying thank you, but I got to get home. I said, don't worry, they'll get you home, being naive and not knowing that this was not the case. Three and a half hours later, I'm driving my own bus on my own route, and I see this elderly man, I think it was as Tremont that we were put off the bus, so they could get a new bus. He walked three hours. This man looked like he's in his 80s, and all I could think was, what if it was inclement weather? At my company, if you hit the bus mirror, you have to take a report, the police are called, there's an accident report. So, I just need something to be done for human beings. I don't want to wait until someone I know and love this happens to.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much. Thank you for sharing that story, and understanding that it's people that are important. So, I'm going to ask Ms. Liz Babson, if she would speak with you and follow up on the story. It might take a little bit more work, but please know that you have touched us as well with your words.

Animal Care and Control

Sierra Mascilak, 5532 Alpine Lane said I'm Sierra, a volunteer and foster for Charneck Animal Care and Control. While I believe all the matters brought to this public forum are important, I just want to emphasize the magnitude of the situation. Animals are dying every day. Five animals a day were euthanized in September 2023. That's 152 dogs and cats in one month. So, that means every time we get up here talking about the same thing, know that a couple other hundred animals have been euthanized due to the issues we're addressing. I invite all of you to come to the shelter. Any of us volunteers would be happy for you to accompany us, come see the loving, deserving, resilient animals that they are, the connection you will undoubtedly make with them. Maybe you will understand the gut wrenching, heart dropping feeling that we get when we receive the third email of the month begging for help, as ACC (Animal Care Center) is complete out of kennel space, and hard decisions will need to be made.

I fostered for years but have always taken a break when I needed to. Yet, I've had a foster in my home nonstop since the beginning of May 2023, because every time I tell

myself I'm going to take a break once one is adopted, I get another email about zero space. I'm tired. We are all tired. Mayor Lyles, I understand you've informed some of us speakers that there's additional budget trying to be fast tracked for ACC in 2024, and although, this is an awesome start, this is a Band-Aid. This is not a solution to the bigger problems that lie. Kennel numbers haven't changed at the shelter in the past 20 years. Yet, the Charlotte population has almost doubled. That means that almost double of more dogs and cats. Ya'll do the math. Where are they going?

We need a bigger shelter to account for the influx in population. The shelter needs more staff to care for the number of animals they now have. We need more resources and less bureaucracy to put some of the plans ACC has into action, that will involve community outreach to stop the problem at its source, and likely lessen the intake of animals. It cannot happen while being nested under the Police Department. The shelter needs its own City Department in order to change the welfare in our City. Thank you.

City Ordinances

Stephen Henry, 519 North Pine Street said good evening. I'm here to ask the City Council to reinstate the ordinances against public urination, public defecation, and the consumption of alcohol in public. Two stories to highlight the need for these ordinances. The first occurred several months ago. I was walking from my home to Alexander Michael's Restaurant two doors down. While on the way, I came across a gentleman who was urinating on the side of Alexander Michael's as well as carrying an open container of beer. As I passed him, I asked him, "What on God's green earth do you think you're doing." He responded in some sort of incoherent gibberish, I responded, and the situation began to escalate. Thankfully, my wife was with me, and reminded me that I had my four-month-old daughter strapped to my chest, and arguing with a gentleman who was clearly inebriated and urinating on the side of a building, is clearly not a great idea.

The second instance occurred more recently. There's a gentleman who drinks regularly in the early morning hours in Fourth Ward Park. By late afternoon, he is quite inebriated. Less the City Council imagine this gentleman to be homeless, he has a regular rotating wardrobe of designer clothes. On this particular occurrence, he was standing across from where the children play on the swing set, and I heard him audibly yell at a young African American boy, no older than 10, that if he didn't shut the F up, he was going to come over there and punch him in the F'ing face.

In both instances, I called the cops, and in both instances, officers would have benefited from having these ordinances and the discretion to police this sort of uncivil behavior. Please reinstate these ordinances. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said thank you. That is certainly under consideration.

Discrimination within CMPD

Gary Marion, 812 West Craighead Road said for over three years, my neighbors have assaulted me, harassed me, threatened me, abused me, filed malicious charges against me. The damage that has been inflicted upon me is insurmountable. Over three years of abuse. To me, the worst thing than death, is betrayal. Malcolm X said that. Mayor Lyles, personally, I've asked you, Chief Jennings, to meet with me three times. You guys voted on a traffic common policy because of me, back in 2018. I did that. You got the credit, but I did it. Then you voted to get rid of it. Over 20 calls to 911, 10 police reports, multiple pleas for help, numerous emails to the Mayor and Chief Jennings. It took 22 months for the police to finally send a community service officer. That's when the harassment stopped. It starting turning into other things, filing sexual harassment, no contact orders right to the left of me, right to the right of me. I stay at my girl's house, my queen's house rather, two nights a week. I hope you all can sleep at night. I've asked you three times, Mayor, through the emails. Some of ya'll got them. Who's got the leadership skills around here, loyalty, empathy, accountability, duty and determination, energy and encouragement, respect, selflessness, honorable and humble, integrity and

innovation, passion for and pride in work? I just got back today from Camp Lejeune. My unit was in the Beirut bombing. Today's my birthday. The same day as the anniversary of the bombing. It invigorated me, but I'm suffering. I hope you can sleep at night.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Marion, let's see if we can have someone on the staff follow up.

City Employees

Mike Feneis, 2601 East 7th Street said honorable City Council, Madam Mayor, and Manager Jones, my name is Mike Feneis. I am the secretary of Charlotte Firefighters Association, local 660. I come before you with members of UE150 (United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America) and local 660, to ask you to pass the Worker Bill of Rights. We have come together to not only represent our members, but all City workers for the basic rights we should have as employees of this great City. A bill of rights is not new to the state of North Carolina or municipalities in the state. Just down the road in Durham, City Council passed a Worker Bill of Rights for its workers.

The adoption of a Bill of Rights is well under your privy, and of City Council, and is at no cost to the city. As you know, under the charter, article 2, section 4.5, you have this ability. This gives you the ability to pass a Worker Bill of Rights. Some basic rights we should have, and are addressed under the Worker Bill of Rights, for the employees to know if they're under investigation and what for, to make audio recordings of any questioning while being investigated, to have representation of the employee's choosing, including union representation, union access to new hire orientation. I think we can all agree that the hard work for all these City employees make this great City operate each and every day. Basic worker rights for these workers should be given. The Bill of Rights is not a contract, and therefore, is not illegal, and can and should be voted on by you, the City Council.

In closing, Council members, Ms. Mayor, and Mr. Jones, please take the time to read this Worker Bill of Rights. If you or your staff have any questions, please reach out to Local 660 or UE150. These two unions have just started working together on issues that affect City workers, and we are excited about what can happen working together with you.

Robert Davis, 3636 Gricklade Drive said Madam Mayor, thank you very much. I'd like to shed a little light on the Worker Bill of Rights that my counterpart here just shared with you. It is indeed a collaborative effort between our two unions, and we hope that by displaying this, you understand the gravity of the situation. We are concerned about our members. We're concerned about our fellow City employees, and this Worker Bill of Rights, it's about job security. I could share with you the last effort we placed in one of our members who was terminated. He was out of work for about three months, and some of our employees saw him on Statesville Avenue asking for change. He was fighting cancer. He just buried a brother, I believe it was. He was also taking care of his elderly mother. We won that fight for him. He was reinstated to his department, but he was given no back pay.

So, those are the types of things we want to try and avoid with this Workers Bill of Rights. That gentleman was employed in his department for 17 years. He should not have been fired. It was improperly done. We need to face these matters head on. We are going to work together collaboratively from here on out to make sure that every City employee has fair and equal treatment before they are terminated. Thank you.

Treatment of City Workers

Kass Ottley, 1015 Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road good evening, Mayor, City Manager, Mayor Pro Tem and City Council. I have had the pleasure of working with the Charlotte City workers for the last two years. I have met so many individuals that have worked so hard for the City, but I've also watched a lot of them, like Mr. Davis said, be terminated unjustly and not understand the process and not know how to navigate the system. Some of these workers don't even know how to present their argument in a room,

because they are outnumbered. There are five to six individuals that work for the City in the room, while this worker is in the room by themselves. That is a very unfair situation. What we're asking for is a civil service board, so that everyone has a fair shake, everyone has a voice at the table, these workers that work so hard to keep this city beautiful and to make sure that we have all these tourists and all these events here, are represented fairly, that their voice is heard. All they want is fairness across the board. I don't think that is too much to ask.

If we talk about this City and equity and inclusion and being a cutting-edge city, we need to make that decision and make a civil service board for all City workers. It's not going to cost the City a dime to do that, but it's going to show that we have integrity, accountability for all. Thank you very much.

Employee Benefits

Dominic Harris, 3016 Polk and White Road said I'd like to say hello to everybody. Good to see everybody. Just to let you know that the City of Charlotte has some great managers up and down. It has some great supervisors, awesome supervisors. Guys that'll look out for you, woman that'll look out for you, just all around good people, but they've also got some snakes too, and I'm just letting you know that these snakes that got into this business and they did things to employees that should've kept their job and should've been here for years and years, contributing to this City, and they put him out the door. Now, we were able to fight and get a lot of jobs back, but some of those guys just weren't able to keep holding on. We've got to do something about this situation now. The Workers Bill of Rights is a good step toward that direction. It's going to address a lot of our issues. I think if you guys sit down, read it, look at it, understand what we're asking for, understanding where we're coming from with everything that we're saying, and work on it with us, because I don't believe it covers everything that it needs to cover, but we can go a few steps further to make sure it is right and right for all City workers, not just some people in some departments.

Like I say, you can't have situations where managers are holding a grudge against an employee for something that happened when they were both in the field together, and then when the time comes for him to be able to lord that situation over him, putting them straight out the door. We can't have that. On the same token, we can't have an employee that's been taking advantage of the system continue to do that, because he has a buddy that's in a higher position than he is. We can't just keep having these situations over and over again, without them being addressed by something that's put down on paper that everybody can understand and use moving forward. Thank you.

Public Transit

Grayson Hanson, 3614 Sedgewood Circle said hello. My name is Grayson Hanson. Today, I would like to talk to you about public transit, specifically our buses and our bike lanes. Charlotte has been labeled recently as one of the worst cities for public transit. In one of my history classes, I was learning about food and food deserts, and there were low-income families who would have to set aside actually days, instead of a couple of hours to go get groceries, because they would be using the buses system and it would take them four hours to just get one bus ride. Then, they go do an activity that takes 30 minutes, and then they have to wait another four hours for buses home, and sometimes those buses don't even come. Then, there are employees, who have to use the bus system to go to work, and the infrequency of the buses, impacts the time in which they arrive to work, and overall, the reliability of them getting to work. Sometimes, if the buses don't come, they can't go to work that day. Overall, I think it's very important that we do look into our buses and look into creating a more frequent and reliable busing system for lower income people, because some people don't have cars and they can't be consistently at work or set aside a couple of hours always to go get groceries or go to the doctor. So, that's what I have to say. Thank you for listening.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much, Ms. Hanson. We want buses to be available for everyone. We don't want as many cars on the road as we have, and we just want to figure this out. So, thank you very much for your comments and advocacy.

Gun Violence

Bart Noonan, 2813 Old Steele Creek Road said yes, good evening, City Council. I believe everyone knows and received an email that I sent out a few weeks back concerning the ongoing gun violence in Little Rock Apartments, so I don't need to get into that. These families are still prisoners in their own home. I've been the Executive Director and Founder of West Boulevard Ministry. We've been on the ground, boots on the ground, in the ditch for seven plus years. We know what's going on and we know what's not going on within the communities throughout the West Boulevard Corridor. INLIVIAN, who has come a step forward and now they are managing Little Rock Apartments, they have made some progress, but it's not enough, because we going to have violence that stirs back up I no time. We have to make sure we have a plan of action that's going to be consistent moving forward, because these families, like I said, are prisoners in their own homes.

You go by Little Rock Apartments at any point in time, the children are not outside playing. They thrive at our facility, because we pick them up and we bring them to our facility, but when we have to take them home and they have to dip underneath police tape, because there's automatic weapons being shot, and they're supposed to go home and get a good night's rest and go to school the next morning, that's not happening. That's not okay in Charlotte or anywhere else in this country. That's all I've got to say about that.

So, my question to you is, who on the City Council is going to step up, meet with us? Not so much because of the residents, I can get some residents together, but they're scared. So, I'm asking City Council, who out here is willing to sit down and get a form of action, get a plan together with INLIVIAN moving forward? Who can commit right now? Thank you, Tariq. I appreciate that, brother. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said I think that we do need to have a meeting, and we need to have INLIVIAN and you to be a part of it, and so we'll work on doing that. I think that we have a committee that we'd look at for community safety, and this is really an important part of our community, plus it's in one of the districts along our corridors that we're trying to address. So, give us a moment to figure out when and how. I remember your emails, and I remember that INLIVIAN has said that they are in better shape. I don't know what that means, and I think what you're asking us to do, is determine what shape that is?

Mr. Noonan said they're making progress, but we want to continue to move the ball down the field and have a course of action.

Mayor Lyles said I understand. So, thank you. We will be getting back to on that, and we'll be working with INLIVIAN to make sure that that, as well as the district [inaudible].

Mr. Noonan said and I will add this. I've had people that reach out to me from other properties in INLIVIAN Managements. So, it's just not Little Rock Apartments.

Mayor Lyles said yes, okay, thank you very much.

Animal Care and Control

Jimmy Burke, 8810 Oakham Street, Huntersville said thank you, good evening, and I do appreciate this opportunity. I have been a cat volunteer at the animal shelter since 2017. Until 18 months ago, most cat volunteers spent our time socializing the animals, helping them be ready for adoption. For the last year and a half, due to shortfalls in staff and an overabundance of animals flowing into the shelter, cat volunteers spend the majority of our time cleaning kennels. Kennel maintenance is critically important as part of the shelter's standard of care. Equally important is the amount of time available to socialize cats in order to make them more viable for adoption. Every day, every animal

in the shelter must be fed, the kennel must be cleaned, and this responsibility falls on the kennel attendants and any volunteers that choose to help. The majority of these kennels must be cleaned, and these animals must be fed by 11:00 a.m. every day, when the shelter opens to the public. On a typical day, 176 dogs, up to 49 cats, and any number of various other species of animals are housed at the shelter. These are staggering numbers for two kennel attendants to manage. The first shift kennel attendant number is typically two. So, if no volunteers are available, two attendants have to handle upwards of almost 225 animals.

As a result of this shortage, a recent situation left 20 cats, 20 kittens all day, no fresh food, no fresh water, no clean kennel. Adding more kennel attendants will allow for the basic care of feeding and kennel cleaning according to shelter management. Every department, not just kennel attendants, at Animal Care and Control, is understaffed. A number of you have visited the shelter and you've seen firsthand that the structure is terribly outdated, particularly for a city our size with the continued rapid growth. The current state of the shelter leaves us and the animals in a terrible state. Please do all you can. Thank you, Mayor. Thank you, Council.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much, Mr. Burke. Thank you for coming down. Alright, that is the end of our public forum. Thank you all that participated, and hopefully, those that have followup will have followup sometime early this week.

* * * * *

PUBLIC HEARING

ITEM NO. 8: PUBLIC COMMENT ON CHAPTER 14 ORDINANCE REVISIONS

James Kraus, 2100 South Boulevard said hi, my name is James Kraus, and I've been hit while I've been on my bicycle by a car, and my friend was just hit this week on a bike by a car. When I saw this thing on the agenda, I just knew I had to come speak about the importance of increasing the fines for parking in the bike lane. Just this week, when we were biking around, we had to come in and out of the bike lane, because there were cars parked there, and the fine was \$25 for parking in there, but none of the cars had fines on them. They were all just parking there for free. I really hope we can get more enforcement of these rules, not just increasing the fines, but also get more enforcement of that. Hopefully, that goes towards maybe better bike lanes, separated bike lanes, less dangerous situations. I know that we're going in the right direction with this, but I just hope that we can keep going and prevent accidents like mine that I walked away from, for my friend, she went in an ambulance, and we can make Charlotte a safer city to live in. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said alright, thank you. For those that are viewing this, the ordinance which we're asking for comments tonight, is proposed revisions to Chapter 14, which will provide clarification to terms, changing trucks to vehicles, changing drive or to drive, stop, stand or park, and add the Americans Disability Standards to exceptions to align the definitions with the North Carolina General Statutes and the Unified Development Ordinance. Then, on the following terms for commercial vehicles, light, medium and large, plug-in electric vehicles and public bike paths. So, thank you, we will include this in our next deliberation. Then, adding illegal parking provisions for the categories of public bike paths, streetcar right-of-way, electric vehicle space and loading zones. The fines, if adopted, would increase from \$25 to \$100 for blocking intersections, parking on sidewalks, parking in a bike lane, illegal parking on a streetcar right-of-way, and illegal commercial vehicle parking. So, is there any other public comment?

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

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 9: PUBLIC HEARING ON PRO HOUSING GRANT APPLICATION

Mayor Lyles declared the hearing open.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, and seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and to close the public hearing.

Mayor Lyles said I want to make sure. This is not a public hearing. It is a public comment. So, there's a difference there that we have to follow.

Councilmember Driggs said the agenda says this one is a hearing.

Mayor Lyles said is this one a public hearing or a public comment? I know it says public hearing on both.

Billie Tynes, City Clerk said Number 8 was a public comment.

Mayor Lyles said it was a public comment. It was not advertised as a public hearing.

Councilmember Mitchell said excuse me, clarification. What is the difference between a public comment and public hearing?

Mayor Lyles said alright, Mr. Baker.

Patrick Baker, City Attorney said so, public comment is oftentimes you just want to hear from the public. Public hearing is a statutory process, which requires you to open the public hearing and close the public hearing. Practically, it's going to feel like the same thing.

Mayor Lyles said it is a more informal process. Mr. Baker, on item nine, I know that the agenda said this, and I want to say this, because when had Agenda Review today, and we were talking about whether or not there's formal action or informal action, my understanding was that both of these were informal actions where Council chooses to hear from the public versus the law saying you're required to have a public hearing. So, a hearing is a requirement. So, if I misunderstood what we did this afternoon, but comment is, we have the ability to ask for comment, but requirements can be different. So, with that, I'm just making sure. I know eight was a comment. I want to make sure nine is a comment as well, Mr. Baker. Nine is the City is preparing a federal grant application for pathways to removing obstacles to housing, a competitive grant program offered by the United States.

Marie Harris, Strategy and Budget said yes, ma'am, and one of the requirements to applying for the grant, is to hold a public hearing. So, it is required, and we did advertise it as conducting a formal hearing.

Mr. Mitchell said is everyone still confused like me or just me. It could be Monday night. It could just be me, but when you look at type, we put both of these on the public hearing item, and so we have a new category, and one should say public comment and the other one should say public hearing.

Ms. Harris said yes, sir, or we could put the comment sections under your policy, because it's more you're getting feedback usually on a policy. That's just the system how it's set up, but we can definitely look at adding a new category for that.

Mr. Mitchell said so, are we going to use public comments going forward?

Ms. Harris said yes, sir, and that's at your discretion, whereas, a public hearing is required. So, there's certain ordinances that require it, there's certain that don't, and there's certain things that you do that you have to formally do a public hearing, like the budget. You have to formally post a notice that you're going to conduct a public hearing,

and then formally open it and formally close it, but when you're doing comment, that's at your discretion. You're just wanting to give another avenue to get more input.

Mr. Mitchell said so, do the citizens know the difference between public comment and public hearing?

Ms. Harris, to them, it really shouldn't matter, because they're both giving input. You're opening up another avenue for them to give you input in the meeting, when you do comment.

Mr. Mitchell said thank you for educating us.

Mayor Lyles said same rules by hearing or comment for the citizen talking, but you're right, it's a difference. We talked about this this afternoon and I did not know, but I can see the value in saying, I want to hear from the public, even when it's not required. So, I think that's the way that we've looked at it and positioned it.

Mr. Mitchell said let's just level set. So, there's a public forum that we can hear from citizens, and there's a public comment that we can hear from citizens?

Mayor Lyles said on a topic. You would choose a specific topic for them to speak to.

Mr. Mitchell said okay. So, we've got two avenues to get input from our citizens, public comment and public forum.

Ms. Harris said right, in a public forum, yes. So, anyone can always sign up. If it's something to vote on, they can always sign up. Even if it's not a public forum, they can sign up to speak on that item, unless there's been a formal public hearing. So, the budget. We've had community input sessions, we held a formal publicized public hearing, and then we've closed it. Then, the night you're actually voting on the budget, they can't come and sign up on the budget then, because we've already had a public, but anything else that's for a vote that you hadn't had a formal public hearing on, like tonight, there was a speaker on social districts that had signed up, I think, earlier. That was okay, because it wasn't a public hearing you had at your last meeting. It was a public comment opportunity.

Mr. Mitchell said so, they've got three alternatives. Okay, good. I just want to make sure the public realizes they've got three opportunities, because I think us at the dais, we didn't realize that.

Ms. Harris said and one thing you mentioned, the public awareness. It would be good for them to be aware. Once there's a formal hearing and it's closed, they can't sign up when it's time to vote. So, that's their opportunity.

Mr. Mitchell said okay, thank you, Marie. Thank you, Mayor.

Councilmember Johnson said something I wanted to clarify that I just learned today. Do we have a maximum number of speakers that can speak at the public comment session?

Mayor Lyles said the public forum?

Ms. Johnson said public forum, yes?

Mayor Lyles said yes. There is a rule of procedures, yes.

Mr. Driggs said it gets 30 minutes, and therefore, 10 people get three minutes each or 15 people get two minutes each.

Ms. Johnson said okay, and that's a rule or an ordinance?

Ms. Harris said yes, ma'am, it's in your rules of procedure.

Ms. Johnson said okay, thank you.

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

* * * * *

POLICY

ITEM NO. 10: CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Marcus Jones, City Manager said all I have is the 30-day memo, which I call it the expanded, because it's a little bit more than 30 days, and if all I did was show you November 13, 2023, and November 20, 2023, I believe you would've asked me a bunch of questions. What we will have before you, during the next couple of meetings in November 2023 and December 2023, will be the 2024 calendar. We had a lot of discussions about this year's calendar, so we wanted to make sure that the clerk has an opportunity to talk with you about the calendar before you actually vote on it later. You have your swearing-in ceremony on December 4, 2023, but we're going to make sure that we give you that Eastland update that we talked about, as well as the infrastructure update that Ms. Johnson has asked about also.

We also have finally gotten some information that I think is apples to apples, as it relates to residential versus commercial ratios. One of the issues was, the way that we do it in Mecklenburg County is very different than the other 20 cities that we benchmark ourselves against. So, we had to make sure we got as close to apples to apples. So, I believe those are some of the outstanding issues that we are going to try to address for the end of the year, and let's go to your next business meeting. We'll have a discussion about the tree canopy update, as well as there will be a bus operations contract that comes before you, and we'd like to talk with you about that before the contract comes. So, we have a lot of things to do between now and the end of the year. That's my report.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 11: PLAZA MIDWOOD SOCIAL DISTRICT

Maya Henderson, 2055 Shenandoah Avenue said hi, good evening. Ladies and gentlemen of the Council, I am Maya Gail Henderson, a certified health and wellness coach, with a Bachelor of Psychology from Hampton University, and a Master of Social Work from Howard University. I am addressing the Council to inform and bring awareness to the issue of addiction, and to advocate for a solution that works. As a certified, licensed, and practicing health and wellness coach, I was gravely concerned by the Council's unanimous decision to make my neighborhood, Plaza Midwood, a Social District. I must preface by stating that, on January 4, 2023, the World Health Organization stated, that no amount of alcohol is safe for human consumption. Now, I'm not here to judge, condemn, or talk down to those who know that information, and will continue to drink despite its detrimental health and social ramifications and consequences.

I don't hate alcohol either. In fact, it has several important uses in our everyday lives. It is a solvent, it is a disinfectant, and it is a fuel. It is not a social, fun activity to be profited from. It is addiction and substance abuse. Now with that, I am here to say that I am honored to share an innovative and effective and easy way of curing addiction for good. Allen Carr's Easyway method has helped over 15 million people stop smoking, and his method now has been applied to drinking and a host of other addictions, including sugar addiction, technology addiction, cocaine, you name it. Once you understand the method, you have it for life. Thanks to Allen Carr's Easyway method, I am so proud and thankful to say, I am a nonsmoker, a nondrinker, and I do not rely on prescription drugs or abuse them. The Easyway method, in essence, is about understanding addiction and achieving the correct mindset needed to stop. Easyway has been approved and has

been partnered with the World Health Organization. Easyway success rates are unparallel.

Mayor Lyles said Ms. Henderson, if you have one more thing, could you give that to the City Clerk, and she will include it in the minutes, and so thank you for your comments this evening. So, you can hand them to the City Clerk so that she can have it for our public record, or hand it to Ms. Harris.

Motion was made by Councilmember Anderson, and seconded by Councilmember Bokhari to Adopt Ordinance No. 646, amending Chapter 15, Article XV, Section 15-322 of the City Code to establish the Plaza Midwood Social District.

Councilmember Mayfield said so I'm really trying to understand why this action is even before us tonight. When we had the presentation last week, I commented on just the Monday before we had a meeting, where we are trying to figure out how to address the concerns that we're already having in community and in neighborhoods. All of us have received emails from residents throughout District 1, and other areas of the City, where we have individuals that are sitting in people's front yards, that are messing up people's front yards, that have left their beer cans, trash and other things throughout. If we haven't clearly identified what our plan is as a Council to address the current issues that we're seeing all in uptown Charlotte, regarding drunkenness, regarding unfortunately individuals that are in the parking decks that are causing harassment at a number of the restaurants, why is this even before us tonight to approve an amendment to look at a Social District, when we're having challenges that we're not even addressing?

Mayor Lyles said I'm going to ask Mr. Baker to address the legal position of this, because I think it was established in a legislature?

Patrick Baker, City Attorney said your question is the legal aspect of it? It's a policy question.

Councilmember Winston said it's a policy question.

Mr. Baker said it's a policy question. You have the legal authority to implement a Social District, and you've done all of the legal requirements to get here tonight, but I think what you're asking about is a policy.

Ms. Mayfield said exactly. It was not a legal question, because the legal question is, yes, we've gotten here. Policy would be, we also know that there are challenges. So, it was really a question for my colleagues of why we have this, and really more importantly, a question between the Mayor and the City Manager, since it is decided between you the things that's going to come on the agenda. Just trying to get an understanding, why we're pushing for this Plaza Midwood Social District, when we have clear challenges in uptown that have been addressed multiple times.

Mayor Lyles said I have to tell you, I'm not pushing for this. This is on the agenda, and I thought it was on the agenda because the Plaza Midwood business community perhaps asked for it to be. So, I think that when people say that it's legal and it's asked for, but I'm not the person that was driving this. So, I see two people shaking their heads, Ms. Anderson and Mr. Bokhari.

Councilmember Bokhari said I think this is really simple. For people out in the public who might be a little confused now with some of this stuff, it's real simple. There's a whole other problem the City has with ordinances in other places that we still have not yet done our job. Then, there's this Social District that is highly organized that has the Merchants Association, the neighborhoods, everyone behind it, is going to be highly structured, and it is my bet based on what I've seen, it will probably be the cleanest, most organized and orderly operation around this front that we'll ever see with the benefit of also having the economic impact that we need. This is a no brainer, and no one in the community should associate all the problems you see every day with this,

which probably is going to be managed a hundred times better than your average place in town you're going see, because of all the people that have worked so hard to structure it.

Councilmember Anderson said Mr. Bokhari is exactly right, and I don't want to create confusion in the minds of constituents around what this is. The Social District is a 15-step process. It's very rigorous. The Plaza Midwood Merchants Association has been working on this for months in conjunction with myself, CMPD (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department), C-DOT (Charlotte Department of Transportation), Solid Waste Services. There have been multiple meetings. All three of those organizations within the City have no objection to this Social District going up. They have a very stringent process that they will be executing. They will have Ambassadors in the community once they bring it online. They're also planning to have a soft opening, so they can pressure test it, like retail outlets do.

So, the issues that are going on Uptown and the ordinance are completely different and disparate than this process that this organization has been working on, and have full support from staff and various departments. In addition to that support, I will say, being the District Rep, the neighborhood has tremendous backing for this effort. I have received literally three emails from constituents, and I've actually reached out and spoken to all three of those constituents. Only two of them were against it, and they have a different tenure now. So, this is where we are in the process. We've had many, many applications, and this particular application has completed the process, has support of City staff, has support of the community, which by the way is a part of the step. You have to get petitions and signatures from the community to say they support this.

The last thing that I want to say is, I don't want us to operate in a mode of fear. I've heard a lot of conversations around, "Well, if we stand up a Social District, this may happen or this may happen." We haven't seen that in the dozens of Social Districts that exist already in the State of North Carolina, nor the Social Districts that now exist in Mecklenburg County. So, I don't want the largest city in the State of North Carolina to operate from a fear-base, based on something that we've never seen. The last thing I want to say, also is, this is not a one and done. So, if we were to approve this tonight, if there were any issues to arise, and the Plaza Midwood Merchants Association are here. The members are here as a part of the leadership team. They have already stated they would be the first to say we need pause, we need to contract this, we need to reverse it. It would be a very low bureaucratic step if we needed to stop, pause or make any modifications. So, I had some comments earlier. I just want to make sure we all understand, this is not a one and done. This will be our first Social District. We'll learn from it, and hopefully they'll be other Social Districts that will learn from the first mover advantage of Plaza Midwood. I hope that helps.

Councilmember Driggs said so, Ms. Mayfield, I wanted to point out, it was in fact a robust discussion during the last Council about passing the City ordinance that allowed for Social Districts. At that time, there was a lot of conversation about the safety issues and pros and cons, and we thought about the pros. I mean the pros are that this creates a fun environment. It adds to the City's reputation as a fun place. The downside is that you don't want certain behaviors. So, when we talked about it, we put a burden on merchants and others to ensure that the outcome emphasizes the positive and not the negative. So, I'm going to support it, and will say, my own inbox has not been flooded. I don't know whether people just don't write to me about this stuff, but I can't say that I have seen a flood of emails coming in. There's always going to be some descent, and the concern about safety or about conditions in the City is real, but I really think that the heavy preponderance here favors proceeding with this. Thank you.

Councilmember Ajmera said I agree with what Ms. Anderson said and Mr. Bokhari said. They're absolutely right on point there. These are two separate issues, and just because of us approving the Social District, does not preclude us from making continued progress on addressing public defecation, public urination, and drinking in public. I know that committee work is ongoing, thanks to Councilmember Watlington and

her committee that's doing the work. I just want to ensure the public that we are going to continue to address that issue. We're not putting brakes on addressing that quality of life issue that is very important. Even public speaker, Ms. Henderson, raised that issue. That is not specific to a specific part of our City. I think that's an issue that you see across the City. I know, even in Charlotte East, we have seen that, especially in the shopping strip area where many neighborhood leaders have advocated against that behavior.

So, I think we need to address that issue throughout the City, and we'll continue to do that, but at the same time, Ms. Anderson is absolutely right. We do not need to operate out of fear, and we do not need to get fear in the way of progress of supporting small businesses, and Plaza Midwood is one of the most walkable neighborhoods in our City. I mean, I love going to the Plaza Midwood neighborhood. It is really the urban planners dream, because it's so walkable to restaurants, bars, shops, coffee shops. So, really this helps us get closer to our 2040 goal, where we want more people to walk, really create this 10-Minute Neighborhood community. I mean, I love going to the Undercurrent Coffee at least couples of times in a month, and just walking around. This really enables that type of culture that we want to see. Just because we are opening a Social District, doesn't mean that people will only be walking around with alcohol. Well, you'll see me and our family walking around with a cup of coffee from Undercurrent that we love.

So, I think this really gets us closer to this trend of enabling more modes of transportation where we see more people walking, biking, even riding a scooter. So, I'll be supporting this. I do want to also recognize that I had several residents from our community, these are neighborhood leaders, that are not sure how this is going to go. They are concerned about public drinking. They're concerned about crime going up. They're concerned about this not panning out well. Well, in that case, my response is, let's just try. If that doesn't work, Ms. Anderson said it really well, that we have no problem pausing, but we've got to give it a try. We cannot let fear in the way of progress. Thank you.

Councilmember Winston said I think with this issue, we have to understand that two things can be right at the same time. Just comparing, for instance, I've heard a lot of comparison Charlotte and different cities. Yes, we are definitely not the first ones, and there are over a dozen Social Districts around North Carolina right now. I've been traveling around the state, and I was in Lenoir a couple weeks ago, and I looked up and there was a sign that I was in a Social District. I can tell you that the situation in Lenoir is very different than the situation here in Charlotte. That is why the City Council has been very intentional about the process. Charlotte is a very unique town. There's never been a city like it in North Carolina, and nobody else has the context of how to deal with the good things and the potential detrimental issues that we have here. So, while it has been long coming, it has been designed and created to have longevity. So, if this is successful, it can last for a long time.

This can be something that is very innovative, perhaps, but is this necessarily something that is going to change the fabric of a neighborhood? Not necessarily. Social areas where people already go to enjoy the nightlife, there may or may not be an influx because of this. When you look at cities around the country where this does create destinations in places like Savannah, Las Vegas, New Orleans. There is a very intentional and defined culture that is created over long periods of time. So, what happens tomorrow hopefully will pale in comparison to what's going to be formed over decades in certain areas.

Laws versus what is allowed in these Social Districts. What is still illegal around the city is still illegal in Social Districts, in terms of certain behaviors, public drunkenness even, and things that result in that. However, the City Council is going to have to deal with the issues of equity. What we've talked about a lot at this dais, is two Charlottes, and you are going to literally have two different parts of Charlotte with different rules. While they are allowed under the law, there are currently situations like MSDs (Municipal Service District) that allows for different roles in different geographies, but when we are having

two conversations about criminalizing alcoholism and in some places making it more liberalized, the consumption of alcohol, and in fact encouraging it, I would say, City Council, you're going to have potentially people from all over the City that are going to feel that friction. This is something that you're going to have to deal with and approach on the head, not just kind of sidestep it and say, well, we're allowed to do this, so we're going to do it.

So, when the folks come into this dais feeling like they are treated differently based on where they are in the City, that is going to be a real thing, and that's something that you're going to have to deal with. So, two things can be correct at the same time, and I think this is a perfect example in many different situations where that's going to be the case. Thank you.

Ms. Mayfield said I need there to be very clear understanding. My questions are not from a place of fear or misunderstanding. Yes, we've all traveled at some level. We've gone to New Orleans. We've gone to New York. We've also seen some of the impacts. We also have Social Districts throughout this state. Greenville, North Carolina Socials Districts are from noon to 10:00 p.m. Greensboro is from 12:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Huntersville, theirs is from 11:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. We are proposing here a 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. There is a very big difference and a very clear difference between walking around with a coffee or a latte, and this note saying registration of the Social District with the North Carolina Alcohol Beverage Control Commission. So, let's not play that word game. The comments and the concerns that I have, are just that. To be perfectly honest, because we have some of our business leaders here, I'm glad that ya'll support it, but I'm also concerned about the residents who still live in the area, for those who are able to still maintain homeownership in the area that has quickly changed and gotten extremely expensive.

As an adult, go get your drink. I'm going to go out and have my drink if I choose to. That doesn't mean that I want to sit up and take it around with me from bar to bar to bar to bar. I'm asking for us to make sure on the front end, that we do have some very clear language saying we're going to fix it later if a challenge comes up. We have spent the last eight months hearing this so-called, well, that was an unintended consequence. If it is brought up at the beginning for us to at least have a real conversation about it. If we're saying that we've looked at other cities just in North Carolina, but we're still proposing a 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., we're still saying, yes, CMPD has told us that the numbers are down regarding indecent exposure, or whatever the issues is that is related to drinking, because they're been overwhelmed to the point that their not even responding to a majority of the calls based on the language that was presented to us. That is a very disingenuous statement to make it seem like, oh, this is going to be okay, because if this goes bad, we'll fix it.

We do not have a habit of addressing anything immediately when it comes, when it's been addressed. We've had people that have come down and spoken to us on numerous issues that have taken months to even address their issues. So, I don't want there to be this misunderstanding that, oh, this is a unanimous decision that we're just going to move forward. I would like to see some more parameters. It only takes six. They're going to vote for whoever they want to vote for, go for it down the line. We have challenges, go back, read the meeting minutes, and see who supported it. I'm asking for why it's back so soon, when I asked some questions last time that I didn't get an answer to. I mentioned the time periods for the Social Districts of some of our neighboring cities in North Carolina. Nothing was presented back. So, for it to come forward to me, I'm going to be a no vote, whether I'm the only no vote. When we go back in history and have to review this, like we've had to do on so many other occasions, on so many other issues, I need it to be on record the fact that I had some very clear concerns about it, but all it takes is six votes.

Mayor Lyles said I really appreciate your stance and your comments. I want to figure out how, when you say that you didn't get a response, because you mentioned something. I think sometimes when we say, I want something, and we're talking about a policy item, we're trying to get enough information from everyone, or at least to be able to act on

that, to have something that we know that we can do. So, sometimes I think when we say, give me this, and if we don't have a consensus, that that's what we want to try to do or figure out. So, I would really like it if we could kind of think through that again. So, Ms. Mayfield, thank you for your comments.

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

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Bokhari, Driggs, Graham, Mitchell, Molina, Watlington, and Winston

NAYS: Councilmembers Johnson and Mayfield

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 66, at Page(s) 399-410.

* * * * *

BUSINESS

ITEM NO. 12: URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY GRANT

Motion was made by Councilmember Winston, seconded by Councilmember Ajmera, and carried unanimously to (A) Accept grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service in the total amount of \$1,100,000 for the Tree Maintenance and Canopy Care programs, and (B) Adopt Budget Ordinance No. 647-X appropriating \$1,100,000 in grant funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service to the General Capital Investment Plan.

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 66, at Page(s) 411.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 13: MUNICIPAL AGREEMENT FOR THE ALBEMARLE ROAD PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND CONNECTIVITY PROJECT

Motion was made by Councilmember Molina, seconded by Councilmember Ajmera, and carried unanimously to (A) Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a Municipal Agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to accept Transportation Alternatives Program funds in the amount of \$1,756,000 for the Albemarle Road Pedestrian Safety and Connectivity project, and (B) Adopt Budget Ordinance No. 648-X appropriating \$1,756,000 in Transportation Alternatives Program funding from the North Carolina Department of Transportation to the General Capital Projects Fund.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 54, at Page(s) 654.

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 66, at Page(s) 412.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 5: CLOSED SESSION (AS NECESSARY)

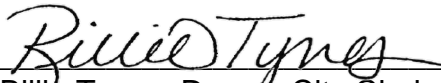
Motion was made by Councilmember Winston, seconded by Councilmember Driggs, and carried unanimously to go into closed session pursuant to NC General Statute § 143.318.11 (a) (4) to discuss matters relating to the location of industries or business in the City of Charlotte, including potential economic development incentives that may be offered in negotiations.

The meeting was recessed at 8:00 p.m. to move to CH-14 for a closed session.

* * * * *

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m. at the conclusion of the closed session.



Billie Tynes, Deputy City Clerk

Length of Meeting: 2 Hours, 42 Minutes
Minutes completed: August 27, 2024