

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for an Action Review on Monday, January 12, 2026, at 5:02 p.m. in Room 267 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Council members present were Dimple Ajmera, Danté Anderson, J.D. Mazuera Arias, Malcolm Graham, Lawana Mayfield, Joi Mayo, James Mitchell, Kimberly Owens, and Victoria Watlington.

ABSENT UNTIL NOTED: Councilmembers Ed Driggs and Renee Johnson

Mayor Lyles said okay, so, good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to our program that we have, and calling this meeting to order. It's basically where we will be having, what I call, our ability to have more conversation, more dialogue around what we've been doing and achieving over the last couple of days or weeks. So, I just want to start with that, and we will have our first Business Meeting this afternoon. I guess we'll be down in the chamber by that time, is that correct? We'll be moving down to the chamber. So, I want to say to everyone, I hope everyone had a really good holiday, and now it's time to get back on the grinding street. So, let's start with introductions.

* * * * *

ACTION REVIEW

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

Mayor Lyles said welcome to all, and we'll start off with our consent items, questions and answers are in consent. Our consent items start with Item No. 13, I believe, and we will start with that, and then there are some exceptions that we have for some of these items today. Would it be your preference to hear the items that will not be on the agenda? Okay, let's start with that. The first one that I have is deferred by staff, Item No. 34, Set a Public Hearing on the Charlotte Fire Station Historic Landmark Designation. So, that's deferred. Okay, and then on Item No. 36, Charlotte Water Property Transactions - Barrington LCR 77 Replacement for Sewer. Parcel #35 has been settled since we published the agenda. So, that's 36. Then, the next one is Item No. 40, Harrisburg Road Sidewalk and Shared-Use Path Ponderosa Pine to Colwick Hill, Parcel #7, settled again since we had the print of the agenda.

Marie Harris, Budget Director said and ma'am, that one was deferred, not settled.

Mayor Lyles said deferred, not settled, thank you. Do we have any further items to address?

Ms. Harris said yes, ma'am. So, we had a lot of questions for this evening, and I got to speak to several of you, but some of you, I didn't get around with the answers. So, if we have time, I'd like to go through the Q&A real quick and see if anybody has additional questions.

Mayor Lyles said absolutely, let's begin.

Ms. Harris said okay, thank you. First of all, Councilmember Mayfield pointed out about making sure we're conscious of putting bid tabs as an attachment, and we do that, and I'll follow up to see if there's any that we don't. There was one that we didn't this time, Item No. 24, Water and Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure Construction, but that only had one bid, and now we did add the bid tab even though it's one bid now, and we'll make a conscious effort to make sure those are always included going forward.

Then, for Item No. 14, Governor's Highway Safety Patrol Grant for Traffic Safety - Driving While Impaired. Ms. Johnson wanted a little bit more information, and we'll follow up with her as well, but she wanted to know like what schools they do and what proactive component. The staff that administers this program said if you have any different contacts for different schools, to please let them know, because they're definitely open to going to other schools as well, but they already go to Ardrey Kell, Butler, Myers Park, McClintock Middle, North Meck, and Charlotte Catholic, and they do

back-to-school events with different schools as well on drug education and to educate them about what the DUI (Driving Under the Influence) laws are and why we enforce them.

Mayor Lyles said alright, before we go any further, does anybody have a question about that?

Councilmember Mitchell said Marie, thank you. That was Councilmember Johnson I spoke to. She's running a little late, and she did say on that item what she was looking for is what is the City doing as it relates to DUIs? So, are we going to send something back to her or let her know that CMS (Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools) is doing some instruction?

Ms. Harris said no, sorry. She had asked me for what we do on the proactive part of it, besides enforcement? So, to your point, there is a team that's dedicated full time to this, and a lot of what they do is actually the checkpoints in the enforcement component, but they also have this proactive component as well.

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

Ms. Harris said okay, and then Ms. Johnson also had a question about the buildings and ground maintenance services, how it's determined that there's no subcontracting opportunities. What Steven Coker and his team do is, they work with the departments and look at the actual scope of services for contracts and determine how maybe the scopes could be divided out or not, and who's going to perform those, but for these specific contracts the vendor that's getting a contract is doing 100 percent. So, that was another item from Ms. Johnson.

So, Item No. 18, Fleet Towing Service. Ms. Johnson asked are there really no CBI (Charlotte Business INCLUSION) vendors? An important consideration is, for this specific contract you had to be able to do heavy towing. So, not all the vendors that we have in our database do heavy towing. There were two vendors that do both that were needed that were CBI, but it's a requirement to have at least three vendors to say it's competitive. So, that's why it was noted that there were no opportunities.

Then for Item No. 19, Norland Road Shared-Use Path. There's a bunch of details around this. This was a project that was allocated \$5.5 million, and when it was originally envisioned and they started working with the community, since then, we've had COVID and things happen. So, they had to re-engineer the project to meet within the budget, but it is still a viable project going forward with sidewalks, and it says it's delivered in four coordinated phases. This is to add sidewalk and 12-foot shared-use path on the south side, plus enhance two crossings. There's a Phase One, which you're considering tonight, and then there's going to be a Phase Two around Roanoke Avenue to Evergreen Cemetery Drive.

Councilmember Mazuera Arias said Marie, when was this originally proposed and voted on by voters through that bond?

Ms. Harris said through the actual bond, this was part of the multiple bond cycles to make this project, because it's part of the Central/Albemarle/Shamrock CNIP (Comprehensive Neighborhood Improvement Project), and it was multiple bonds. It was 2014, 2016, 2018, and 2020, and that was not for just this, this was for the overall projects, which this is a component of it.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said perfect, and a follow-up question to that is, if I'm reading correctly, because of construction costs escalating, as well as COVID, and all the time that has passed since then, approximately 12 years, the scope has changed, right, in limitation?

Ms. Harris said correct, yes.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said I would like to pull this item out of the agenda and defer it to our first Business meeting in February 2026, particularly because this conversation has been had with a lot of constituents over the past year or so, where they had originally seen this proposal back in 2014. We're expecting something different, the scope has changed, and I would like to see the entire scope incorporated again, and try to work with staff to find a creative way that we can use existing funding without going back to the voters and asking for it.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 19: NORLAND ROAD SHARED-USE PATH PHASE 1

Marcus Jones, City Manager said thank you, Madam Mayor, members of Council. One thing is important, and I appreciate the deferral, is that there's two ways of doing projects that cross this period of time. We think the way that we do it now is exceptional in terms of Advanced Planning, so we get something to 30 percent design before we even put it into a CIP (Capital Investment Plan). So, when you go back to 2014 cycle, that was well before Advanced Planning, so it was really chucking away pieces of money and pieces of money and pieces of money, and over time trying to make projects work. So, I appreciate the discussion. I just wanted to assure you that as we do projects now, it's a very different model.

Councilmember Mazuera Arias said thank you, Manager Jones, I appreciate that context, and I agree. I think now we do have a more expedited process that fulfills and respects the constituents' needs at the beginning.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mazuera Arias, and seconded by Councilmember Mayfield to defer action on a contract in the amount of \$1,250,258.35 to the lowest responsive bidder DOT Construction, Inc. (SBE) for the Norland Road Shared-Use Path Phase 1 component of the Central/Kilborne/Norland Intersection and Street Upgrades project to the first Business Meeting in February 2026.

Summary of Bids

DOT Construction, Inc. (SBE)	\$1,250,258.35
United of Carolinas, Inc.	\$1,618,426.70
Efficient Developments, LLC	\$1,630,332.25
Sealand Contractors Corp.	\$1,688,750.00
Hux Contracting	\$1,762,125.42

Councilmember Mayfield said Marie, just for context, we're looking at about 11½ years. How much of the projects have actually been completed up to this point? Because we're identifying COVID impact. Now, that's 2019 and 2020. This was initially approved 2014, as well as some money in 2016 and 2018, prior to COVID. So how much, if any, of this project has actually been implemented?

Marie Harris, Budget Director said thank you, and we'll bring that back to you either way. We don't have that detail tonight, but yes, we will.

Ms. Mayfield said okay, thank you.

Councilmember Ajmera said thank you, Mr. Jones, for highlighting the Advanced Planning that was implemented around 2018 timeframe, and that really helped us with more accurate estimates. So, knowing that this project was prior to that implementation of Advanced Planning, not just this, but there are other projects that have fallen in this category, and the scope was changed as a result of Advanced Planning that was done afterwards. I think keeping that in mind, I know that scope has changed significantly, because I have heard from constituents, specifically [INAUDIBLE] and her neighborhood, and just the frustration over the years. So, in that case, we changed the

scope, but knowing what we know now, especially with \$100 million that's coming in through transportation referendum, this gives us an opportunity to deliver based on the original scope, and I think that's what the community asked for. So, Mr. Jones, if you could look at that. There have been a number of projects that were, I would say, the scope was reduced, and if we can look at those, and see how we can leverage our \$100 million to deliver on original promises that were made to our constituents. That's all I have. Thank you.

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

Councilmember Driggs arrived at 5:16 p.m.

* * * * *

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

Marie Harris, Budget Director said okay, so 21 is from Ms. Mayfield, and she's concerned to make sure we're holding our contractor, or landscape contractors, accountable for not blowing debris and leaves into the roads and making them unsafe. I just want to assure her, with Charlotte Water, they do put provisions in their contracts to cover that.

Mayor Lyles said okay, I think we read those provisions this afternoon.

Ms. Harris said and then the next one was on the Lease of City-Owned Property at 501 West Trade Street to Pivot Parking, LLC. Ms. Mayfield asked if this was an opportunity for more affordable parking for workers? So, it's an opportunity, but it's not more affordable, it's market rate parking.

Councilmember Mayfield said colleagues, you all have the information, the specific question. As parking Uptown has become cost prohibitive for many workers, do we know what the parking fees will be for this lot? So, that was the initial question that I asked. What came back from staff is that it will be market rate. I say we have seen some challenges with a budget that we approved a little while ago that allowed for the changing of our parking meters in Uptown with not having the two hours and other things. Since this is our lot, we have the opportunity, when we know that our workers, whether they're working the restaurant, whether they're working at Spectrum or any of the immediate businesses in the area, their pay is around \$12 to \$15 an hour. The parking has become extremely cost-prohibitive for those workers, and we're seeing the impact from some of those businesses. I shared an email late last year, mid last year, based on just Spectrum and the security companies of some of the other small businesses, to try to coordinate a meeting, based on the fact that people were calling out because it was more expensive for them to try to go to work, so they were not. If we have an opportunity to help encourage, at least the affordability of the parking of the workers, which is simple, because that's a parking pass for that business. Spectrum used to do that years ago, where the employees that were on that shift, they have all that information for all of the partners, you put the pass in, they should be paying \$5. Because I'm not asking for us to necessarily change the whole model for people that are coming in to Uptown to benefit, but if our workers are underpaid based on what you should make for a decent quality of life in Charlotte right now, and a good bit of their pay is going towards parking, that's a hinderance and that's creating a challenge. I personally think that we should have continued conversation. At the time that I sent this, I wasn't necessarily going to ask for a deferral, but I think it would probably be best, and I am going to submit, and hopefully get support for a deferral, for us to get more time to discuss this, because this is our land. We don't have control over other land and private entities, but we do have an opportunity to do something that's going to benefit our workers in the City and for our residents.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mayfield, and seconded by Councilmember Mazuera Arias to defer Item No. 29, the Lease of City-Owned Property at 501 West Trade Street to Pivot Parking, LLC, for us to have additional conversation, to our next Business meeting.

Ms. Harris said and there's only one consideration. Sorry, it's my fault for not putting it in there. Since this is CATS (Charlotte Area Transit System), there's also federal regulations, but to your point, even if this one moves forward, that could be in the quality of life review as well.

Ms. Mayfield said so when you say federal considerations, that means what to this conversation?

Mayor Lyles said Ms. Mayfield, Mr. Cagle, is behind, and I think this is probably a good time for Mr. Cagle to step forward for us.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you.

Brent Cagle, Interim CATS CEO, said so as Ms. Harris stated, there are federal requirements for CATS when leasing property. The federal requirement is that we seek fair market value in our leases. Just to clarify, we seek fair market value for the lease of the property. This property has historically been used for public parking, and so it was time to renew that lease. We did a process, and we've recommended Pivot. Pivot is paying us fair market value. They set the rates of the daily parking, weekly parking. They set the parking rates based on market conditions and what they think the market can apply. So, when we look at it, we receive market value for lease of the total property, not what the market is for the daily rate for the parking rate that Pivot manages. We do have a requirement to seek market value in our leases, and that's true for all of our leases.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you for that clarification, but we also know, and this was information that was shared to me years ago, when we look at even the spaces along light rail that we have for ground floor, that when we submit it in order to have the parking decks, that that wasn't necessarily a revenue generator, and we had some flexibility and the opportunities of who had access to it.

Mr. Cagle said for transit parking, so CATS does own several parking garages, and there are Park and Rides, or they're utilized for employees, but in a Park and Ride for a transit facility we do not charge for parking. However, this is not designated as a Park and Ride facility, it's a lease for private parking.

Ms. Mayfield said so, you're saying based on federal language, we do not have the ability to identify a partner that's going to take into consideration our residents and the needs of our workforce, because a market analysis is an average of the whole, but the reality is that we have individuals in our community that are still earning under the market value, but we're saying, although, we have this space, because there's federal language in it for this lease, we're going to charge market value. So, therefore, they're able to charge whatever they deem as market value?

Mr. Cagle said so, we establish the market value to lease the entire property. We do not establish market value or market rate for parking fees. That is not the business we're in. So, we have established the fair market value for rent of this property. We then conducted an invitation to bid, and the highest proposer, because it's an ITB, an Invitation To Bid, you select the highest to get you to the market rate, and that's what we did, but we don't determine what the market rate for parking in the Uptown market is for renting or taking a parking spot on a per spot basis.

Ms. Mayfield said and we also don't identify, and just for clarification, opportunities to have discussion with any vendor to take into consideration who very well may be utilizing your parking deck, knowing that we have a financial challenge for some of the employees who are actually the service people that we need in order for these businesses to be successful, them having access. That is not something that we do. We're going for highest amount in the rental rate.

Mr. Cagle said, again, on this property for private parking we look at the fair market value, the highest and best value, for that lease of the entire property. The value of this

lease, I believe, is somewhere in the \$500,000 per year, goes back into supporting the transit system to provide affordable transit for the community. So, these dollars come back to CATS and then get reinvested in the system. Generally speaking, this lot is basically at the corner of Graham and Trade, is where this lot is, this lot will ultimately be developed as part of the Gateway Station property. At this point, until we have a clearer picture of that, this lot has been used for private parking, it was preferred parking before we made the recommendation for Pivot, and it has always been market rate or privately provided, and generally this lot sees its highest usage for special events, because it's generally in the same general area as Bank of America and the Knights Stadium.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you.

Councilmember Driggs said thank you. Ms Mayfield, you make a very good point. The cost of parking is squeezing people. However, subsidizing parking costs money, and that has to come from somewhere. Imposing that cost on the lessee is not a legal, or really the best, possible answer. If the City's goal is to make parking easier for people, we would need to find a way, either working with employers to help their employees, maybe that way, but that's a cost to them, or we would have to have a program to subsidize parking, because this problem exists everywhere, this is one instance. So, I think it is an issue, but I think what Mr. Cagle is trying to explain is, there is no legal basis for us trying to impose the burden of that subsidy on the party that is leasing the property from us. We need to find other policy actions to provide relief, would be my opinion.

Councilmember Ajmera said yes, I agree with what Mr. Driggs said.

Councilmember Johnson arrived at 5:27 p.m.

Certainly, the cost of parking is squeezing a lot of people who work Uptown, but I just want us to be very careful with our approach, because we ultimately would be taking money from our CATS operating budget, which is really Enterprise Fund, which should be used for improving our bus system, Better Bus program specifically, which many of us ran on, to ensure that we are providing efficient, reliable and effective services to those who depend on our public transportation. I don't think we should do that, specifically, we have responsibility with our Enterprise Fund here to support our light rail and our bus system. Thank you.

Ms. Mayfield said so, Mayor, my followup, for us to have a conversation that expands beyond the idea of imposing something onto this petitioner. We have land, and we have the opportunity to either approve or to deny certain contracts and proposals when we put up an RFP (Request For Proposal). Those workers that are at the gates at Knights Theater, as well as Spectrum, those workers that are cleaning up, that's making everything run inside of that facility, as well as all of our facilities in Uptown that don't have access to parking, it's a cute idea to say, okay, bus. Bus is not reliable for a lot of people. We have already looked at some studies last year that show that if that bus is five minutes late, that can, in turn, have an individual arrive 30 minutes to an hour late to wherever they need to be. Most of our events, the employees need to be there around 4:30ish, 5:00 p.m. in the afternoon, not to mention we do not have the current transportation system that really gets you from one side of town into Uptown.

Now, I'm going to retract my request for a deferral for tonight, based on the information Mr. Cagle had. I will not be voting for this, but what I don't want us to do is to keep having the conversation where, well, we'll approve it now and we'll try to address it later. The time that we have to address certain instances is when staff brings it before us, and that is the first time that we see it, because we don't have a system in place to say, okay, ahead of time, outside of Thursday and Friday, this is what's going to be on your packet for Monday to decide on. This is our property. Yes, we have some requirements in there, but those requirements do not negate us being proactive, us being the staff, being proactive in that proposal, to at least have the conversations to discuss for the employees. Parking rates are what they are. If I choose to go Uptown for an event, then

I'm going to pay whatever, but if we have employees that are out there, because we don't get to control what they pay, that are making \$11, \$12, \$13, \$14, \$15, and you're working six, eight plus hours, and you're paying whatever this parking fee is, that is a considerable of that pay for that day, and some have to make a decision of, is it going to cost me more to go in and try to do this job for however many hours, or can I offset that? Yes, businesses can offset it to an extent, but while we have this opportunity tonight, I don't want us to start off 2026 the way we have many other years with the idea that well, we'll identify it and talk about it later, when the petition is in front of us tonight.

So, my question, do we know what the parking fees will be for this? The answer to that is that the parking fees are based on market conditions and demand. Market conditions and demand has parking \$50, \$100 for events that we have in Uptown. Here's an opportunity for us to look at how our workers who make these buildings run successfully, keep the restrooms clean, make sure the space is clean, everything else they do from administrative on down, how are we helping them with the decisions that we're making?

Marcus Jones, City Manager said thank you, Mayor, members of Council, and thank you, Councilmember Mayfield. We've had this discussion for a while including red bags over parking meters. What I would like to do is get to Council some information, what Debbie Smith has been doing, with trying to work with Center City Partners as well as some of the private garages, private lots, to see what we can do in terms of having more capacity for the workers that Councilmember Mayfield has talked about. So, we've started a bit of a process. What I'd like to do is get Debbie to provide some information in your next packet.

Councilmember Watlington said this is an example I think of when we've got bid documents that go out, and then as we discuss the decision as a Council, then we start to get into what should the criteria really be, because what I hear from Councilmember Mayfield is that when we start to think about what's important to us, it needs to be reflected in those bid documents. Given that we don't necessarily see them, and by the time it's time to have a discussion, we're making decisions with what it is, as is, rather than being able to give input on the front end into what the criteria is. So, what I'd like us to do is spend some time looking at that procurement process on the front end as the bid documents are coming together. How do we make sure that Council's criteria and priorities are fed as input into the RFPs and the ITBs? Obviously, we're not going to get into every single specific document, but if there are particular areas that we want to make sure reflect the needs, I do think there is an opportunity to get a little bit more granular about what we actually expect on these contracts.

Councilmember Mayo said I actually would like to defer, based on the conversations that I've heard today. I think as we continue to talk about what we hold dear and the morals and the values that we as City Council hold, I do think this is kind of what we talked about earlier, being innovative. I understand what Mr. Cagle was saying, but I would champion staff to do a bit more exploring, and I think we should defer this item until we make better decisions. I also agree with Victoria, being more proactive instead of reactive. I mean, we just received this. I think we can do better.

Mayor Lyles said well, I hope so.

Councilmember Johnson said responding to Councilmember Mayo, I would agree with the deferral, especially since this is City-owned land. City-owned land, we should demand more than market rate. I just go back to just approving the rezoning for the mobile park. It wasn't our land. There wasn't anything that we could do about it. This is our land. This is when we can put action to our words. So, I agree with that deferral.

Another thing in my email, I talked about truck parking. I mean, there are options and there are solutions that we can provide with our land. So, I think that we should do more than just lease this to a vendor to rent for market rate. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said one of the things I want to ask our City Attorney, when we have something that comes from the federal government, and we're using this money as a part of it, I just want to make sure that we're in the right place. So, I'm going to ask our City Attorney, because I think all of the things that've been said are true and accurate, and that I think that we can do something about these things, but we can't do something if the federal government says, I'm going to take this money back from you. So, I just want to make sure, if you would just help me understand whether or not this is something that we ought to be thinking about for the retreat, but something that maybe would be difficult tonight, because it would be harmful to CATS. So, will you help me out on this?

Mr. Jones said so, I just wanted to confirm with Mr. Cagle. So, the land was purchased with the half cent sales tax, Article 43, which is for transit purposes, as well as federal grants. So, let's not think about this as something purchased by property tax, but for something dedicated for this purpose.

Ms. Ajmera said just to follow up on that, because it is a restricted use, I think that's where the difference is. There is City-owned land, but it's not from General Fund. This is specifically restricted specific use, and legally we cannot use it for other purposes, am I correct?

Mr. Jones said Article 43 is the sales tax, which is used for transit purposes.

Ms. Ajmera said right.

Ms. Mayfield said so for clarification, the transit purposes has not been challenged. I have not said that it should be used for anything other than transit purposes. The question, and where I think we have an opportunity, because it is City-owned land, that we have an opportunity to ensure, and maybe it could be, as we're getting ready to go into our retreat, for us to have a real conversation that highlights Dr. Watlington's point regarding our procurement process and the language that we have and that we utilize, because I'm not asking for this land to be used for anything other than parking. I want to know, are we being intentional regarding who's the target to access this parking? Because it's great to have all these amenities for the people that's coming in for the night or the weekend, but for the workers who are the ones to make all of our facilities and give the experiences that make people want to keep coming back, if they cannot afford to be able to park, and that's an easy tracking to identify how many workers, the businesses already have that. If we don't even take the time to have the conversation on the front end for land that we actually have control over, as my colleague just mentioned. It's not like this is just private property. This is our property. I'm not asking it to be used anyway else, and I don't want people trying to mislead the community to make it seem like it's being attempted to be used for anything else. It is clearly for parking. I'm just asking, can we do a better job to ensure that our workers that make these facilities what they are, and they help make our City what it is, that they have the opportunity to utilize this, not at a market rate.

Mayor Lyles said okay. I'm going to go back to the City Attorney, so that we can get this one way or the other explained in a way Mr. Graham also wants, as well as Ms. Anderson. I think honestly all of us want to do better for our people. All of us want to make sure that people can have an opportunity to thrive in this community. So, I don't know that that's what we're trying to debate now. It's really a debate on how do we use money that I think came to us from the federal government? So, alright. I'm sorry, can I have the Attorney please?

Ms. Johnson said we just need a second for the motion. Can you address that also, please?

Andrea Leslie-Fite, City Attorney said so, there is a motion on the floor from Councilmember Mayo, and there has not been a second yet.

ITEM NO. 29: LEASE OF CITY-OWNED PROPERTY AT 501 WEST TRADE STREET TO PIVOT PARKING, LLC

Motion was made by Councilmember Mayo, and seconded by Councilmember Mayfield to defer a resolution to approve a lease agreement with Pivot Parking, LLC for a 12-month term for surface parking at 501 West Trade Street (parcel identification number 073-15-110).

Andrea Leslie-Fite, City Attorney, said thank you. Mayor, members of Council, the Invitation to Bid process requires the City to consider the highest bid for the property. That's important for purposes of compliance with federal law related to getting the highest and best value for the property, and so when we talk about what is the City's obligation, with respect to leasing, Mr. Cagle outlined a moment ago the importance of getting the highest and best value for the property. Now, the company Pivot, how much they choose to charge for those who will be leasing or using the parking is another, but concurrent, conversation, but the City's obligation is to ensure that we're getting the highest and best value for the property, and that's how we comply with federal law.

Brent Cagle, Interim CATS CEO, said one other clarifying point on this. So, we talk about transit uses, and that is absolutely correct. I want to clarify, this property was assembled as part of a larger parcel or parcels of property for Gateway Station. The Gateway Station is a transit use, private parking is not, and so what this is, is a secondary use until we can then put it into use for transit. This lot has always been private parking. When we purchased it many years ago, it was a private parking lot, but the transit use is not private parking. If that had been CATS' long-term plan, let's go buy a private parking lot and lease it out to somebody to keep, that is not a transit use. This is a secondary use that is allowing us to generate revenue at this property until it is put into use for transit, which it will, and that's where the market value for the lease comes in. To be clear, this is not the transit use, the Gateway Station in its larger vision is. This is a temporary use that generates revenue for CATS to put back into the system until we execute the larger vision, which is the transit use.

Councilmember Anderson said I really appreciate the conversation. I think it's an incredibly thoughtful conversation. However, with this particular property, Mr. Cagle or Marie, please keep me honest here, but with the process being an ITB process, there are certain ramifications around that particular process, and I want to make sure that we're not deferring this particular item in light of a broader conversation that we're having, but it won't really impact this particular property. So, given that this is an ITB process that has specific ramifications around it, would we be able to even put any other requirements or restrictions on a lessee of this particular property?

Mr. Cagle said I do not believe so. I believe that if this recommendation is not acceptable to the Council, our next course of action will be to reject all, and then to determine what we would do next with the property. Quite frankly, if it's not able to be leased at fair market value, it would be likely that we would fence the property, so that we don't pay. So, if you're providing submarket, you have to pay someone to do that, there is a subsidy involved with that, and so what we're trying to do is generate revenue, but at a minimum, we would not want to lose revenue that goes into transit. Again, on this process, at a minimum, it is choose, pivot, or not, and that is the Council's discretion, but if not, then we would reject all, and have to look at future options.

Ms. Anderson said yes, and thank you for answering that, because I thought that that was where it was going with this particular property, just given the complexities around the federal involvement, etc. I love the consensus of our conversation here, but if we were to defer this particular item for this property, there's not much more that could really be done with this property that we would be actually breaking even or making money on. We would really be bleeding with any other particular options if they're not market rate. So, that's just another aspect to consider, but I absolutely support the conversation around looking at procurement practices that control some of our land that don't have these multi-level restrictions due to federal involvement. Thank you.

Councilmember Graham said and I'll be quick too as well. I really appreciate the tone of the conversation and the commitment to working with frontline workers. I just don't want the Manager's comment to go unheard. I think this is really an assignment that we can give to Charlotte Center City Partners. They have access to all their private garages in Uptown Charlotte, much more than we have land, and I think that's where the conversation, we should send it to, and ask them for the help and their support through the corporate community.

Then, secondly, we've got Park and Ride, and so is there a campaign or something that we can do to work with the frontline workers that are working Uptown, the employers, encouraging Park and Ride? I think those are free, right, to train into Uptown Charlotte, and be able to do the work that they have to do. Even visitors and those who are spectators, utilize that type of service as well, and so I think if we can kind of look at what we're trying to do, which I think is a very good idea, so it's not the what, it's the how. I think the how is working through our special district Uptown to assist with that.

Councilmember Watlington said I think that there's been some good conversation around the dais. I think there's a couple of different items, I think. I agree with Councilmember Graham in terms of working with Center City Partners as we think about how do we actually address the issue in terms of making sure there's parking available for folks that are working Uptown. Specific to this particular decision, I just want to make sure I've got all of the pieces that I need. Madam Attorney, when you say highest value, how is value defined, or let me ask you more specifically, are we as a Council able to define what that value looks like by the way of criteria?

Ms. Leslie-Fite said thank you, Dr. Watlington. The question of fair market value is based on the market analysis. Case law defines it as what is the most competitive price based on the marketplace, and so the Invitation to Bid is actually an exercise in that, because it is testing the market to determine what would a reasonable person pay for, whether it's a product or a piece of property on a given day, the highest and best value for that.

Ms. Watlington said and so when we talk about responsive or responsible, let me ask differently. If someone was willing to pay \$2 million, but they were going to build a gaming studio on top of it, they'll tear it down by the time we need to use it for transit, and they were to respond to this ITB, are there some parameters around which we would say, that doesn't really meet the intent?

Ms. Leslie-Fite said that's a great question. When you do an Invitation to Bid, it considers the zoning use for the property, and any other legal classifications that would be worthwhile, and not just worthwhile, but pertinent to the discussion. So, to your point, it's not just any use of the property, it has to be legally compliant.

Ms. Watlington said thank you. The reason I ask is because I just wonder if we chose not to go ahead and move forward with this, and to work with Center City Partners on other means to actually meet the need, I'm wondering if there's an opportunity to use this parcel for something else? For instance, popups, or some kind of temporary placemaking, or even going back to conversations from years ago, a place for some of our vendors to go, our street vendors, for example. I'm just curious, as I hear either we're going to approve this or we're going to fence the property, so it doesn't cost us money, I'm just wondering if it would be acceptable if we were to just decide to scratch the ITB, if there were other possible uses of the property that might meet some other community need, and if that is permissible given the parameters? Madam Attorney, I guess I will direct that question to you or the Manager.

Ms. Leslie-Fite said Dr. Watlington, it is both a legal question, but also a policy question. The legal question certainly is to say, if we are going to maintain the space of the Invitation to Bid, definitely get the highest fair market value, but if Council's pleasure is that there be an exploration of other uses of the property, and the potential revenue boost to CATS, as it relates to this sale, is outweighed by the policy consideration, and again that's Council's decision, then you would strike the ITB, and decide which use of

the property made the most sense, and that may be a situation where you say, you know what, the fair market value piece is not as important to us as the policy piece.

Ms. Watlington said I appreciate you. Thank you.

Mr. Cagle said so, I will also say, the reason that this was put forward as parking, so this was not a blue sky ITB, tell us how to make the most money on this property, that is not the ITB that came forward. The ITB was to tell us how much, as a parking provider, you the private sector are willing to pay us to use this property for parking. So, the reason it went out that way is, that is the grandfathered historic use of this property. Other uses of that property may not be conforming and may require other zoning types of decisions to be made, which we would not want to pursue, because again, this is a temporary short-term use of this property. The long-term use of this property is, build a transit facility known as the Charlotte Gateway Station. So, again, we were not seeking a blue-sky request of what could be put here, because what will be put there is Charlotte Gateway Station. This is a temporary use until that time, and the temporary use is limited by what it has historically been used for and is grandfathered under current zoning requirements to be used, and that's why it is only parking. It may be possible to make more money on this lot, but that's why it was limited.

Ms. Watlington said understood, totally clear that it's temporary, and that the long-term plan is for transit, I'm not taking away from that. I'm thinking about even Brookhill, for example, and we're talking about things that the property owners and the group that's working on the property want to do in the meantime that doesn't necessarily require a rezoning, or we hope it doesn't require a rezoning, to execute some of those activities, knowing that they'll be temporary in nature. I'm wondering if this is another opportunity to do that. I personally would be willing to explore that in the meantime, but certainly, zoning and this conversation is solvable around this dais, so I look forward to figuring out what we're going to do.

Councilmember Owens said yes, thank you. I appreciate that, Mayor. So, I am exceptionally sympathetic to the thoughts of my colleagues around the dais, I just am also very keenly focused on what the ITB actually was, and what it was, was for someone to be able to park and hire and retain the services of folks to lease this out for market rate, and that is not what I'm hearing that we want, but that's a different ITB. If we had put this out perhaps and said, you're going to be limited in the prices that you could actually charge for your parking, then perhaps that would be a totally different inquiry. I just feel like we've had a lot of time on this issue. That's not actually what's in front of us. What is in front of us is this contract right here, and this contract right here is limited by the federal government. It is limited in the uses that we can make, and so I would propose that we go forward with this one, but that we do have a thoughtful exchange of information about what our options are on other City property where we may put out a Request For Proposal or we may put out an ITB, and tell them that they're going to be limited in terms of the amount that they can charge.

Mayor Lyles said I think everybody loves this opportunity to speak about this issue.

Councilmember Driggs said just want to remind everybody we did adopt a policy about active management of the City's property, and Mr. Manager, maybe you'd like to remind us, but at that time we departed from a limited use of City-owned property highest and best, to a more comprehensive strategy around how we use our City assets. So, we've done that, and I just think maybe it'd be helpful if you reminded us what the outcome was then, not necessarily now, but I'm just saying let everybody know, some people weren't here then, but we've had the conversation about finding better uses of City property than just sell it.

Mayor Lyles said okay. So, I think everyone has had an opportunity to speak.

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

YEAS: Councilmembers J.D. Mazuera Arias, Renee Johnson, Lawana Mayfield, Joi Mayo, James Mitchell, and Victoria Watlington

NAYS: Councilmembers Dimple Ajmera, Danté Anderson, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, and Kimberly Owens

* * * * *

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

Marie Harris, Budget Director said the next one was a question from Councilmember Johnson on the Lease of City-Owned Property at University City Boulevard Parking Deck, and more broadly, this deck and also the J.W. Clay Deck, as far as what's our success rate for our tenants there and how are we helping the community as far as getting small businesses? Just to clarify, there's 12 storefronts in total, and of those 12 there's only been one eviction that's happened. CATS does work with tenants to put them on different payment plans as needed, but there has been one eviction. If this is approved tonight then all 12 storefronts would have tenants, and CATS does routinely work with the tenants directly on any concerns, and also with the Property Manager to get feedback and work on different considerations around any concerns raised.

Councilmember Johnson said thank you, Marie, for that information. When you say 12 storefronts, do you mean between the two garages?

Ms. Harris said yes, ma'am.

Ms. Johnson said okay, and there's been one eviction. I would also ask how many, I guess, early lease terminations that weren't actually evicted, maybe they settled and moved out early, because I think I know of more than one that had trouble with the lease. There were barriers from signage and other access, and so just being the representative for the University area, with the J.W. Clay and the University City Garage, I've heard small businesses have challenges.

Ms. Harris said okay, and we'll definitely follow up and get you more details around those and follow up with you.

Ms. Johnson said yes, I'd like more information, yes, and those barriers and how were those barriers addressed. I know Mr. Cagle you were part of those meetings with one tenant. So, if we could just have some information on how we're assisting these small businesses in this area. Also, I had asked about the MPTA (Metropolitan Public Transportation Authority) transfer.

Ms. Harris said yes, ma'am. There's a business item on for interlocal later tonight, and that's not this, but it's the baby step towards this, getting MPT up and running, but to your point, there's some properties that may have been leveraged for debt, so they might not transfer over day one, but there's contracts in place that'll start looking at that. So, there's Legal staff and CATS staff, and everybody that's going to be building plans around those, but there's not a concrete plan for this property yet. It will eventually go over to the MPTA.

Ms. Johnson said so, my question was, if we know that this is going to transfer, is it wise for us to enter into a five-year lease?

Ms. Harris said oh, yes, ma'am, I forgot you had brought up that point. Yes, ma'am, and it definitely is, because it helps the MPTA to have revenue, and it also very much helps the small businesses who put investment money to get these properties up to speed for what they need the use of, and it helps them have some stability over time.

Ms. Johnson said okay, thank you.

Ms. Harris said so, the next one is Airport Transit Buses, and this was from Councilmember Owens, about how this fits into SEAP (Strategic Energy Action Plan), and this definitely is aligned with SEAP. There is a problem with getting electric transit buses, there's a backlog of parts, and we're waiting [INAUDIBLE]. So, the plan for this coming up year is seven hybrids, but that's constantly assessed based on the availability of the electric buses and the hybrids.

Then Ms. Mayfield had another one, sorry, it's on the same item, and no, this is [INAUDIBLE], and this was last approved for transit buses in 2023. She was inquiring about the recent vendors that we have, but that was not one of the vendors we approved for 2024. Thank you.

Then one more. Ms. Johnson just wanted a little bit more detail around Item No. 38, Property Transaction on Kuykendall Road Improvements. Ms. Johnson, I don't think you've had a chance to see the response, but this is making a new sidewalk where there's currently not a sidewalk, and it's going from Kuykendall Road from Thorn Blade Drive to McKee Road, and there's also going to be a right turn lane installed from Kuykendall Road to McKee Road, as well as crosswalk and pedestrian signage.

Ms. Johnson said okay, thank you. My question wasn't regarding the project, it was regarding the condemnation, and that the property owner wanted to continue to mediate. I know we have a speaker tonight. I think it's the same issue we talked about.

Ms. Harris said no, ma'am, I'm sorry, you weren't here, but there was a speaker on a different one that's been pulled.

Ms. Johnson said okay, well, a different one, but I know that we're proceeding with the condemnation when we're still in negotiation with the owner, and I'm just not comfortable with that. So, can you tell us why we're not continuing mediate?

Ms. Harris said so, I don't know how many parcels with this specific property, but any time we build a sidewalk, it's got to go through somebody's property. We have a right-of-way, but it usually infringes some on the private property. We do it with utility right-of-ways, different things, and a lot of the homeowners work with us and come to agreement on an acquisition, but if we don't get all the parcels then the project can't move forward at all. So, that's a big phase of any of these capital projects. Like you were speaking earlier, about how long it takes for a capital project, this is a big piece of why it takes a long time, because we really do reach out and work with the homeowners and try to come to resolution, but if not, we're not going to stall and not provide the community with that sidewalk altogether just because of one property owner. That being said, even when you say yes on a condemnation, we still move back and forth with the homeowner and get another appraisal, do whatever. Depending on this, and I'm not speaking of this one specifically, but a lot of times we can adjust the project slightly to help them some, but it comes down to it, it's either we do the project or not, so the condemnations are necessary.

Ms. Johnson said I understand that, and I understand we want to proceed. Maybe if I just spend some more time with that department, because we also want to ensure that our residents feel treated fairly, and that we're not bulldozing our way towards progress where people are being left behind. So, I'd like some more information about that. Thank you.

Ms. Harris said thank you.

Councilmember Driggs said so, that particular project came about, because a large number of residents came to me and said, "Our children are walking on the edge of a very busy road next to a dangerous drop off, and we need a sidewalk," and they hounded me for a long time, and we finally got to the point where it was scheduled. So, right now, I hate to think what's going to happen if anything delays the project. The fact is that the whole eminent domain issue does come up, and there may be somebody, but I'm just telling you, if you have a concern for that resident you should know a whole

bunch of others are going to be really unhappy if they don't get this safety item for the benefit of their kids, because they then stand by the edge of the road. There isn't even a proper bus stop there, and that I think is the driving force. This is not just the City that decided, hey, why don't we put a sidewalk in here, that sidewalk was at the specific request of many residents.

Ms. Harris said so that's the last one I had a Q&A on, and just working with the clerk just to make sure we're aware of all the items before you entertain a motion. I believe it's all the consent items, but not 19, 34, 36, 40, and 29.

ITEM NO. 2: CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS 13 THROUGH 42 MAY BE CONSIDERED IN ONE MOTION EXCEPT FOR THOSE ITEMS REMOVED BY A COUNCIL MEMBER. ITEMS ARE REMOVED BY NOTIFYING THE CITY CLERK.

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Mitchell and carried unanimously to approve the Consent agenda as presented with the exception of Item No. 19, Item No. 29, and Item No. 40 which were deferred until the next Business meeting, Item No. 34 which was deferred, and Item No. 36 which was pulled by staff.

The following items were approved:

Item No. 13: Governor's Highway Safety Program Grant for Traffic Safety

Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager, or his designee, to apply for and accept a grant in the amount of \$50,000 from the North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program to conduct overtime projects focused on increased enforcement of traffic violations.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 177-178.

Item No. 14: Governor's Highway Safety Program Grant for Traffic Safety – Driving While Impaired Task Force

Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager, or his designee, to apply for and accept a grant in the amount of \$249,169 from the North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program for the Driving While Impaired Task Force.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 179-180.

Item No. 15: Governor's Highway Safety Program Grant for Traffic Safety – Law Enforcement Liaison

Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager, or his designee, to apply for and accept a grant in the amount of \$30,000 from the North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 181-182.

Item No. 16: Harrisburg Road and Robinson Church Road Intelligent Transportation System Project

Approve a contract in the amount of \$569,601.96 to the lowest responsive bidder Hyper Networks LLC for the Harrisburg Road and Robinson Church Road Intelligent Transportation Systems Project.

Summary of Bids

Hyper Networks LLC	\$ 569,601.96
STS Cable Services, Inc.	\$ 382,109.63
Lumin8 Transportation Technologies, LLC	\$1,257,660.24

Item No. 17: Building and Grounds Maintenance Services

(A) Approve contracts for building and grounds maintenance services for a term of three years with the following: Champion Landscapes, Inc., Pristine Properties of NC, Inc. (SBE), and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contracts for up to one, two-year term with possible price adjustments and to amend the contracts consistent with the purpose for which the contracts were approved.

Item No. 18: Fleet Towing Services

(A) Approve a contract with Hunter Auto and Wrecker Service, Inc. for fleet towing services for a term of three years, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contract for up to two, one-year terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

Summary of Bids*

* The complete Summary of Bids is available in the City Clerk's Office.

Item No. 20: Professional Engineering Services for Watershed Planning

(A) Approve a contract in an amount not to exceed \$1,250,000 with Geosyntec Consultants of NC PC for watershed planning services, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

Item No. 21: Charlotte Water Facilities Grounds Maintenance Services

(A) Approve unit price contracts for grounds maintenance services for a term of two years with the following: Carolina Commercial Landscaping LLC (SBE), Mark D. Leake dba Cutt'n Up Yards (MBE, SBE), Triple L Landscape (MBE, SBE), Truesdale Lawn Service Inc. (SBE), and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contracts for up to two, two-year terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contracts consistent with the purpose for which the contracts were approved.

Item No. 22: Leak Detection Services

(A) Approve a unit price contract with McKim & Creed, Inc. for leak detection services for a term of two years, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contract for up to three, one-year terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

Item No. 23: McAlpine Creek Wastewater Plant Storage Tank Upgrade

Approve a contract in the amount of \$19,595,000 to the lowest responsive bidder Harper General Contractors, Inc. for the McAlpine Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant Digested Sludge Storage Rehabilitation project.

Summary of Bids

The City issued an Invitation to Bid twice; only one bid was received both times from Harper General Contractors, Inc.

Item No. 24: Water and Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure Construction

Approve contracts with the following lowest responsive bidders for new water and sanitary sewer infrastructure construction: R.H. Price, Inc. in the amount of \$14,580,988.80 for Fiscal Year 2026 Water and Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure Construction Contract 1, and HG&L Development, LLC in the amount of \$6,759,446.10 for Fiscal Year 2026 Water and Sanitary Sewer Infrastructure Construction Contract 2.

Summary of Bids*

* The complete Summary of Bids is available in the City Clerk's Office.

Item No. 25: Collective Storm Drainage Improvement Project Series AE

(A) Approve a contract in the amount of \$1,850,777.50 to the lowest responsive bidder Hux Contracting, LLC (SBE) for the Collective Storm Drainage Improvement Project

Series AE, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

Summary of Bids

Hux Contracting, LLC (SBE)	\$1,850,777.50
United of Carolinas, Inc.	\$1,821,347.72
Onsite Development, LLC	\$1,867,641.00
GS Construction Services, Inc.	\$2,783,847.00

Item No. 26: Magnolia/Winthrop Storm Drainage Improvement Project

(A) Approve a contract in the amount of \$2,837,005.15 to the lowest responsive bidder GreenWater Development Inc. for the Magnolia/Winthrop Storm Drainage Improvement Project, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

Summary of Bids

GreenWater Development, Inc.	\$2,837,005.15
Efficient Developments, LLC	\$2,860,504.48
Hux Contracting, LLC	\$2,891,663.50
United of Carolinas, Inc.	\$2,957,112.30
Mountaineer Contractors, Inc.	\$3,025,727.05
Onsite Development, LLC	\$3,129,235.10
Sealand Contractors Corp.	\$3,485,000.00

Item No. 27: Project Management Information System

(A) Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a contract with Systemates, Inc. to provide, implement, and maintain a project management information system for a term of five years, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to purchase additional software licenses, services, hardware, maintenance, and support as required to maintain the system for as long as the city uses the system.

Item No. 28: Surface Water Quality Enhancement Services

(A) Approve a unit price contract with Freese and Nichols, Inc. for surface water quality enhancement services for a term of three years, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contract for up to two, one-year terms with possible price adjustments and to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

Item No. 30: Lease of City-Owned Property at University City Boulevard Parking Deck to Legacy Living Homes, LLC

(A) Adopt a resolution to approve a lease agreement with Legacy Living Homes, LLC dba University Health and Hydration Clinic for a 63-month term for retail space in the University City Boulevard Parking Deck, (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the lease for up to one, 60-month term, and (C) Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute all documents necessary to complete the transaction.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 183.

Item No. 31: Airport 18L-36R Runway and Taxiway Rehabilitation Design Services

(A) Approve a contract in the amount of \$13,013,000 with Delta Airport Consultants, Inc. for design services for the 18L-36R Runway and Taxiway Rehabilitation Project, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to amend the contract consistent with the purpose for which the contract was approved.

Item No. 32: Airport Transit Buses

(A) Approve the purchase of transit buses from a cooperative contract, (B) Approve a unit price contract with Gillig LLC for the purchase of transit buses for a term of one year under Washington State Department of Enterprise Services contract #06719, 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. 33: Sustainability Supportive Engineering Programming, Planning, and Studies

(A). Approve unit price contracts for sustainability supportive programming, planning, and studies for a term of three years with the following: AME Consulting Engineers (SBE), Kimley-Horn, Loring Consulting Engineers, Mead & Hunt, and (B) Authorize the City Manager to renew the contracts for up to one, two-year term with possible price adjustments and to amend the contracts consistent with the purpose for which the contracts were approved.

Item No. 35: Set a Public Hearing on the R. Kent and Gertrude N. Blair House Historic Landmark Designation

Adopt a resolution setting a public hearing for February 23, 2026, to consider historic landmark designation for the property known as the "R. Kent and Gertrude N. Blair House" (parcel identification number 078-036-16).

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 184-185.

PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

Item No. 37: Charlotte Water Property Transactions – Oakdale Road Buffer, Parcels # 17, 18, 19, 23, 24, and 25

Acquisition of 654,271 square feet (15.02 acres) at 507, 515, 519, and 531 Oakdale Road from Virginia L. Dunn, Sara D. Yarbrough, Scott Laughlin Stroup, and Constance Stroup for \$5,350,000 for Oakdale Road Buffer.

Item No. 38: Property Transactions – Kuykendall Road Improvements, Parcel # 2

Resolution of Condemnation for 921 square feet (0.021 acres) temporary construction Easement at 9600 Hampton Oaks Lane from Brian Patrick Redmond III and Devon Hartford Redmond for \$20,125 for Kuykendall Road Improvements.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 186.

Item No. 39: Property Transactions – Lawyers Road Sidewalk, Parcel # 10

Resolution of Condemnation for 690 square feet (0.02 acres) sidewalk/utility easement and 605 square feet (0.014 acres) temporary construction easement at 5336 Split Oak Drive from Shaneika Reames for \$2,875 for Lawyers Road Sidewalk.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 187.

Item No. 41: Property Transactions – Harrisburg Road Shared-Use Path Robinson Church Road to Timbertop Lane, Parcel # 1

Resolution of Condemnation for 12,497 square feet (0.29 acres) sidewalk/utility easement, 517 square feet (0.12 acres) in storm drainage easement, 155 square feet (0.04 acres) in permanent utility easement and 14,130 square feet (0.32 acres) in temporary construction easement at 9424 Harrisburg Road from Robinson Presbyterian Church for \$38,500 for Strategic Investment Area Harrisburg Road Shared-Use Path Robinson Church Road to Timbertop Lane.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 188.

Item No. 42: Property Transactions – Robinson Church Road at Harrisburg Road Sidewalk Gap, Parcel # 2

Resolution of Condemnation for 517 square feet (0.012 acres) sidewalk/utility easement and 714 square feet (0.016 acres) temporary construction easement at 10333 Robinson Church Road from Tarlton Land Holdings, LLC for \$2,475 for Strategic Investment Area Robinson Church Road at Harrisburg Road Sidewalk Gap.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 189.

ITEM NO. 3: ACTION PREVIEW OVERVIEW

Mayor Lyles said okay, we can move on to the next part of our agenda. It's a lot tonight, we're catching up with a lot of things, but a lot of good things that are happening with everyone.

Marcus Jones, City Manager said so, thank you, Mayor and members of Council. Going back a little bit to go forward, things were different in 2026. What we're attempting to do on the first Business Meeting of the month, is in this room have what we call Action Preview, so that any items that are coming up that we think you need some more information, so you're not caught off guard, would be discussed in 267, and then placed on the fourth Monday of the month. We start here at 5:00 p.m., end at 6:30 p.m., go downstairs and have the Business Meeting. The fourth Monday of the month, it would be different. We would start in the chamber, because all of the preview items would've been discussed two weeks beforehand, and we would have the public forum, followed by at the end the Council comments. Today's going to be a little bit of a hybrid, because we do not have the fourth Monday as a Business Meeting. We will have the retreat. So, what will occur today is, there's a report out from the committee, Housing and Neighborhood Services, which is the pollinator habitats and naturalistic landscapes. So, it's important that the whole body hears that before it comes back on what would've been, I guess, the fourth Monday.

Outside of that, that's kind of how we would have these structured, as well as some potential committee report outs. Last thing I'll say is that, before Mayor, I turn it back over to you to have the one preview item, there is a one closed session item. If we get through that in a timely fashion, we can have the closed session item before we go downstairs, or we would have it at the end. Again, a little bit of a hybrid this time, because we will have the public forum on the second Monday as opposed to the fourth, but once again, we're not going to be in the building on the fourth. Thanks.

Mayor Lyles said alright, thank you. I really want to say that if all of us conducted our work like we did, I think what we said as what we were doing, in terms of the Council member discussions and leadership, that was amazing. I mean, I think everyone would probably say this was something that was very, very much needed, and so thank you all. Out of one of these, we've got a pollinator habitats and naturalistic landscape recommendation, which we're all I'm sure going to be happy to do.

ITEM NO. 4: ACTION PREVIEW ITEMS

Councilmember Mayfield said Manager, just a quick question. We're only going over that, not the new models and strategies, that housing. So, thank you, colleagues. I want to first acknowledge my colleagues on Committee, Councilmember Arias, as well as Councilmember Johnson, Mayo, and Owens. So, I have the dream team with the new people, and Renee and I get to lead that. On January 6, 2026, we had our meeting. Our referral, based on the December 17, 2025, referral from the Mayor. She asked the Committee to explore how the City can further encourage the creation of pollinator habitats and naturalistic landscapes, while also maintaining safe and sanitary neighborhoods and communities. Staff did provide the overview of the current Health and Sanitation Ordinance regarding overgrown vegetation, reviewed the City's current registry program for pollinator gardens and naturalistic landscapes that exempts maintained habitats from code enforcement, and proposed an amendment to the current ordinance to codify the enforcement exemption when properties are registered and properly maintained. The Committee did express support for the enforcement exemption for maintained habitats, and emphasized the importance of training, education, clear communication, accessible registration options, including for individuals with limited digital access, as well as the opportunities for collaboration with our partners, such as Mecklenburg County and TreesCharlotte. Our action, the Committee did vote to recommend the proposed ordinance amendment to full Council, and our next steps would be that staff will present the topic and proposed ordinance to Council at the

future action preview, but that is the overview. If there are any specific questions, staff is here, but I think that pretty much covers. We are ready to move forward and ask for support from full Council.

Mayor Lyles said alright, are there any comments or questions? Hearing none, it will come back to the Council for a vote, and then we'll know whether to say yes or no in that case. So, I hope that all of us have enough mulch in the house and the garage, so that we can all say yes to it. So, thank you very much. Alright, we are now ready for a closed session.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 5: CLOSED SESSION (AS NECESSARY)

Motion was made by Councilmember Ajmera, seconded by Councilmember Mayfield, and carried unanimously to go into closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3), to preserve the attorney/client privilege, in the matter of David Guetta versus City of Charlotte, Claim No. W00452686.

The meeting was recessed at 6:14 p.m. for a closed session in Room 267. The closed session recessed at 6:35 p.m. to move to the Meeting Chamber for the regularly scheduled Business Meeting.

* * * * *

BUSINESS MEETING

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for a Business Meeting on Monday, January 12, 2026, 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, J.D. Mazuera Arias, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, Lawana Mayfield, Joi Mayo, James Mitchell, Kimberly Owens, and Victoria Watlington.

* * * * *

Mayor Lyles said I just wanted to recognize that we're going to begin our January 2026 meeting. I'm going to call it to order, and we'll start off with introductions. Good evening and thank you all for joining us here in person, especially those that are watching online. Also, I want you to know that this is our first Business Meeting of 2026.

* * * * *

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

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

* * * * *

PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Lyles said I would like to thank all of you for joining us, and on behalf of the entire City Council, I ask that the speakers and the audience members are civil, and that they are able to address the program, but do it in a way that helps all of us understand what we're doing. So, let's think about being civil, as well as being courteous with the use of language. Speakers are encouraged to address Council, and should refrain from responding to audience members. Likewise, audience members should be courteous to

each speaker and not yell out or interrupt them. We want to ensure that everyone has the chance to be heard.

Charlotte's Culture

Hannah Davis, 400 North Church Street said good evening, Mayor Lyles and Council members. My name is Hannah Davis. I live at 400 North Church Street here in Charlotte, and I'm a local arts organizer. Thank you for this opportunity. I'm here tonight to share a practical perspective from the field, and to request a meeting with City and tourism leadership to discuss how we better connect residents and visitors to the culture we're already investing in. Recent articles in The Charlotte Observer and Axios suggested Charlotte lacks a strong cultural identity. I disagree. Charlotte does not have a culture problem, it has a connection problem. We are not consistently connecting people to the culture that already exists. Socially that limits engagement. Economically it limits tourism growth. Tourism works in two simple steps. First is attraction. In 2025, the Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority had a record-breaking year bringing visitors to Charlotte. Second is conversion, turning visitors to spenders, repeat guests, and ambassadors, that's where Charlotte has real untapped potential.

About 55 percent of visitors come here to see friends and family. That means residents are our unofficial tour guides. If residents aren't connected to the City's cultural life, visitors won't be either. Here in Charlotte, City Pulse Lab is testing how to close this gap by asking one question, what makes people show up? One resident focused pilot has grown to over 4,300 members, hosted more than 350 programs, and maintains a 4.8 star satisfaction rating. Started in 2020, it's now the largest independent local arts group in the Country. What we've learned is clear. This isn't a city without culture, it's a city hungry for it. When locals are connected, they engage.

A visitor focused pilot started in 2023, Uptown Funk, The Story of Charlotte Walking Tour, has consistent five-star reviews on Google and Trip Advisor. When culture is easy to access and well told, people respond and share it, that's earned media, and it's one of the most efficient and effective ways to grow a destination.

The City has made meaningful investments in arts and culture, and that commitment matters, but investment alone doesn't create connection. What's missing is a coordinated way to link cultural investment to resident engagement and visitor experience, so we can measure what works and scale it.

Mayor Lyles said Ms. Davis, thank you for the opportunity. I believe, if you would look at Ms. Allen over here, and then have an opportunity to give her your remarks, or if there's further information that you'd like for us to have, please feel free to address Ms. Allen. So, thank you.

Ms. Davis said thank you for the opportunity.

Safety

James Barnett, 1315 Dean Street said good evening, Mayor and Council members. I came today with a nice speech, but my background didn't show up. So, I'm going to make it short and sweet. The murder rate in Charlotte decreased last year, and we're going to go all out this year to bring it down even more. We need your support. We have support of a few of you on the Council, but we need more people standing up with them. There are people in the community that are ready to move, but we seem to be so, I don't know what you call us, they don't seem to accept us, because you don't accept us, or seem to be. Nobody knows that the Mayor has given donation to the Crusade. We need you out there, Mayor. Dimple, we need you out there. Mayfield, we need you out there. All of you, we need you to stop and stand with the people. We're looking at Black History Month. We're going to go all out to decrease the murder rate in that month. We've invited [INAUDIBLE] and the might clouds of joy to meet us at the Park Church. We're going to have a knockdown, drag out gospel program there. We invite you to be out there with us. On February 4, 2026, we're going to be having a [INAUDIBLE] press

conference to announce the event called Black History Month, and we've said that Charlotte is a city fighting back. I haven't been active as I should've been, but I'm getting energized now, coming back, and we need you out there. We're going to win this. We're going to show some love in the City of Charlotte. Thank you, and I apologize for not having that speech that I had planned to bring to you, but God bless you, and keep on walking by faith, and thank you for your support you have given. We're going to win this battle. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said thank you so much. We need that kind of optimism from people like you, thank you.

Immigrant Community Resources

Lennin Caro, 11609 Clear Day Court said hello. Thank you for the opportunity. My name is Lennin Caro. I'm a resident of Charlotte living in District Four. I'm a community researcher out of a local nonprofit called Camino, and I also teach part-time at UNC (University of North Carolina) Charlotte. I'm also part of the Charlotte International Cabinet, which is as you know, a body that provides input and recommendations to the City Council on topics related to foreign affairs and immigration.

I wanted to come speak today to urge the City Council to consider the development of an office within the City dedicated to better help integrate immigrant communities to the mainstream population, like an Office of International Affairs, or something like that. This is something that we are exploring within Charlotte National Cabinet, the importance of having such an office for both the economic development and community integration of the City. Now why is such an office important and why do we need it? Well, when you look at the census data, you can see that Charlotte is becoming an increasingly global city. Back in 2015, around 15 percent of Charlotteans were immigrants, and now in 2024, which is the most recent census data available, 20 percent of Charlotteans are foreign-born immigrants. Within this decade, the number of foreign-born Charlotteans increased by 44 percent, while the number of Charlotteans born in the U.S. only grew by just under five percent.

So, immigrants are a significant part of the fabric that makes up Charlotte, and I think it is crucial that they have the support to better engage with all things that the City of Charlotte has to offer to promote upward mobility and access to resources to live better lives here. Through my research, when I ask immigrants why they come to Charlotte, they say that's a place where they can find work, sometimes start a business, and build their family. Something like an Office of International Affairs can boost Charlotte's immigrant population and increase Charlotte's global connections and economic profile. I urge the City Council to seriously explore and plan to develop such an office for the benefit, of not only immigrants, but all those who live in Charlotte for a better city. Thank you so much.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much. We have a retreat coming up, and perhaps that might be something that we ought to discuss.

Charlotte Growth and Congestion

Garland Greene, 7117 Broadford Court said good evening. Garland Greene, resident of South Charlotte. I've come today to talk to you about managing growth and congestion. Our city is experiencing tremendous growth. Growth is good, but uncontrolled growth is not. A recent hot topic of discussion is traffic congestion. I'm sure you're all familiar with the one percent sales tax. You can have a big impact on both growth and traffic congestion. Just because we have a new MPTA, I don't see you being off the hook. You still have a big impact.

Mayor Lyles said I think there's a [INAUDIBLE] over here, the Chair of the MTA (Metropolitan Transportation Authority), so yes.

Mr. Greene said I'm glad you're here. I'm sure you're saying Amen. Anyway, my concern is that we're not thinking deeply enough on these matters. I've been to many City Council Zoning Meetings, involved very much in a Zoning Meeting in my backyard in South Charlotte with Councilman Driggs. In my opinion, a lot of these building and zoning permits are being rubberstamped with little thought on the impact of congestion, particularly apartment buildings, and I'm going to give you an example of this right in my backyard. I'm sure you have an example too. Highway 521, the second busiest North Carolina highway in Mecklenburg County. South Charlotte Road, it runs between Ballantyne and North/South Carolina State Line, and they built down there something called the Elementary at Ballantyne, a 500-unit apartment complex approved adding over 1,000 cars on that road that is a parking lot every morning and every evening. This just doesn't make sense.

I'm asking you to pay more attention to the zoning and building petitions going forward and their impact on growth and congestion. We have a bunch of high-priced lawyers coming down here and they're very good talkers, but if it's in your District, I'm asking you to go look at it and consider it relative to congestion before you approve it or at least go look at it if you're an At-Large, same thing. Bring up some questions. It's very important. You're in a position to better manage growth and congestion. Your vigilance and action is needed to create a better Charlotte for us all. Please do something about this. The ball is in your court. Again, please go out there and look for yourself. Thank you.

POLICY

ITEM NO. 7: CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Marcus Jones, City Manager said thank you, Mayor and members of Council. Tonight, I just have one item, and it really came out of the Jobs and Economic Development Committee Meeting last Monday. Wanted some clarification and some discussions around two programs, well a program Skilled to Build, which has two components with it, workforce development, as well as small business growth. With that said, I'd like to have our Director from Economic Development, Sha, and our Director from the Office of Workforce Development, Danielle, come down and give the entire Council a little bit more information on where we are with that.

Shahid Rhana, ED Director said thank you, Manager Jones. Good evening, Mayor, Council, members of the public. Shahid Rana, Director of Economic Development, and I have with me.

Danielle Frazier, Special Assistant to the City Manager said Danielle Frazier with the Office of Workforce Development.

Mr. Rana said so, the City of Charlotte has been preparing for significant mobility and transportation investments that will not only impact our communities to help people move about to places of residents, employment, and also tourism, but this is also a substantial opportunity for contracting and employment. With that, we have what we call the Skilled to Build Initiative, that has small business readiness and also workforce readiness. As a part of this Initiative, as a collective unit between Economic Development, Workforce Development, and also Procurement and CBI (Charlotte Business INclusion), we've been strategizing on ways that we can get the local economy prepared for this opportunity that's ahead of us. Understanding that this is a 30-year commitment that will be a significant investment that would touch all aspects of our community, how can we prepare the local workforce, and also small business community, for these contracting opportunities?

So, with small business readiness, we broke this down into three phases. The first phase will be a curriculum development. One of the things that we've talked about internally, and also as a best practice, is to actually create a curriculum that prepares

small businesses in a few different core areas, that's business readiness, financial preparedness, certification and bonding, bid preparation, project management, and a few other skills. Phase Two would also include the facilitation of that curriculum by nonprofit, in which we will go out for a grant, and then Phase Three will also be the actual business engagement. With Phase One, we issued out an RFP. The RFP was issued out on Monday, December 8, 2025. The actual deadline is January 15, 2026, and we're planning to have vendor selection in the month of February 2026. To date, because the actual bid is not closed, we've had 107 people attend the nonmandatory preproposal meeting on December 18, 2025, and that did not include City staff. We have five proposal submissions already received to date, and we also have 25 proposals that are work-in-progress status between zero and 40 percent. So, a contract has the opportunity to upload their information. It actually shows the actual percentage of completion of their RFP. So, we have five completed to date, we have 25 already in the system, and the actual RFP submission date is January 15, 2026, so we are still receiving information. We had 109 vendor questions that were submitted, and there were two RFP Addendums that we're also giving information to the bid solicitors. In regards to communication, we've also promoted this actual RFP through the City Speaks Resident Newsletter. We've had over 4,700 people who received that actual newsletter. We've also promoted this on LinkedIn as well, with almost 2,400 engagements with that as well, and over 83 businesses that actually clicked the link to receive information and file information, and also through Facebook as well, where we had just under 2,000 people who engaged with that actual notification.

So, we're excited about this opportunity. We've also communicated with CBI as well to do a blast of the RFP to their distribution list, and we're excited about the outcomes that will come from this. So, for further context, we thought it was also very important to own that curriculum, so that way as the years go by, if there's legislation or changes in policy, then the City of Charlotte has a curriculum, and then we can engage with our nonprofit communities or training providers, and then we own the intellectual property where we have quality control and assurance. The last thing we want to do is have misinformation out there where we engage with several organizations, and people on the East Side are receiving different information from people on the West Side, or one particular provider is sharing something a little bit different from the other. Because this has to deal with procurement, we want to make sure that all of our t's are crossed and our i's are dotted, and then we own the intellectual property for 30 years to come. With that part, I'm going to hand this over to Danielle Frazier to give an update on the workforce readiness.

Ms. Frazier said thank you, Sha. Good evening, Mayor, Council, and Manager. Happy to be here to share an update on our Workforce Readiness Grants supporting our Skilled to Build program. As Sha mentioned, we released two grants, Workforce Development Grants, in December of last year, and I'm going to share a little bit of an overview of both of those, and then share where we are with next steps on both of those grants.

So, our first grant that we released was for talent development, and so our Talent Development Grant was to support education and training programs geared toward preparing talent for occupations and construction and skilled trades. So, a little bit of information about that grant. It was totalling \$1.2 million, and that's to support up to four to six organizations up to \$250,000 each. That grant was due January 9, 2026, which was last Friday. We received 21 questions that we answered through that process. We had two virtual information sessions in December 2025. We received 15 Letters Of Intent, and ultimately, we received 11 proposals.

The second grant that we put out was for business engagement and training, and that was focused on strengthening our business capacity through talent sourcing and workforce training grants that support hiring, employment, development, and upskilling new and existing employees. A little bit about that grant, that was a total grant funding of \$900,000, and that would be to one entity. The justification of issuing one grant is to help streamline our employer engagement participation by having one entity serve as a central organization to coordinate, be that business liaison with employers, to help

coordinate and align those talent development opportunities, reduce duplication of efforts, and simplify our relationships with our business partners. Those grants were released on December 8, 2025, both of those, and that was also the proposals were due on January 9, 2026. We received five Letters Of Intent, we also had two virtual sessions for those, and we received 27 questions that we answered, and ultimately, we received two proposals for that grant.

So, I'm going to share a little bit about next steps and how we're going to move forward. So, after the review of the number of proposals that we received, we've identified some next steps. So, due to the low number of proposals that we received to the Business Engagement and Training Grant, it has been determined that we are going to extend this grant to February 3, 2026, and while we're confident with the number of proposals that we received for the Talent Development Grant, we are going to extend it as well to February 3, 2026, just for consistency purposes, and so those two grants will be extended to February 3, 2026.

A little bit about what will happen next. Council, you will receive an email with the grant opportunities this week. We would love your participation and helping to share with your networks. We will also update you in this week's communication roundup, as well as you will receive it in your Council memo packets, and so please share with your networks. The Office of Workforce Development will still continue to work closely with the [INAUDIBLE] to extend our due dates on all of our digital communications, and we will repost on social media, and we'll also leverage additional outlets, such as the Nextdoor App. Although CBI is primarily focused on private sector entities, we will partner with CBI and ask that they share the grants with those applicable organizations that may be eligible to apply for our grants as well. We're going to also do another ecosystem survey. We've sent this to over 50, I believe 53 total, organizations across our County, but we're going to do another scan of that list to see if we've missed anyone, and that we will resend that information out through our distribution channels. We're also going to share with the County, so that they can share through their outlets as well. We're hoping that by extending the time, we will be able to get a little bit more grants, especially on the business engagement one, and have more to select from. So, with that, I will pause and will answer any questions. Thank you.

Mr. Jones said thank you, Mayor and members of Council, and thank you, Sha and Danielle. I'm not sure that you woke up this morning knowing that you'd do this presentation, so you did a great job. So, I'd like to do just a little bit of framing, which I think is extremely important. So, let's zoom out a bit and think about a \$25 billion, 30-year Mobility Plan, and that \$25 billion economic impact that happens to the City, the County, the biggest I would say economic development project in our history. It's great to have the Chair of the MPTA here also, because part of what we try to do as a city is to make sure that we did a gap analysis, because we're talking about jobs and ability to scale up businesses over a 30-year period. So, we did the gap analysis, and there are capacity issues over time, and so if we get this right, as we get it right, there's opportunities to make sure there are jobs for our residents, as well as opportunities for our small businesses to scale up. So, I zoomed out, because I think that's extremely important. Now we're getting to the point of making sure that we have the framework in place to deliver on that concept. So, over and over again, even at the Annual Strategy Meeting, you'll see them again, and we'll continue to talk about the opportunity that's here, and it's just not that the one percent sales tax got passed in November 2025 and we started from scratch, we've been working on this for a couple of years.

Councilmember Watlington said I've got a few questions. Thank you. I know that this has been, as you mentioned, some time in the making, and I know that I had some discussion with you all. So, I'm glad to see now that you're able to start socializing the work that you've been busy doing. I just had a couple of quick questions. The first one was, can you repeat, Sha, the components of each phase for the grants that you were discussing?

Mr. Rana said sure. The first phase is an RFP for curriculum development, and that deadline is January 15, 2026. Then, Phase Two will start this fall. So, once we actually

select a vendor, there's the curriculum development. We will run basically a staggered, not quite parallel, path, but as the curriculum is being developed, we will engage with an RFG (Research Fellowship Grant), a grant opportunity, for nonprofits and organizations in our community to facilitate the curriculum.

Ms. Watlington said and you said the curriculum included business readiness, bid preparation, financial. Can you hit those once more?

Mr. Rana said sure, business readiness, financial preparedness and access to capital, certification, bonding, and insurance, bid preparation, contract readiness and RFP response, bidding process, and what we call how to do business with the City, and then also project management. This will be basically a la carte, understanding that not every business needs to go through a course. Some people just need the information on where to apply. So, a part of the multi-phase approach is, Phase One, where we have the curriculum, businesses that want to ramp up or reskill or pivot or endeavor upon these mobility opportunities, can learn how to. Then, the last part, which is Phase Three and engagement, will be for the businesses who are already ready to bid on opportunities. They just need to know the information. That's where we'll partner with Danielle to have workforce dollars, so businesses who need to scale up in employees, there will be a little bit more of an a la carte opportunity for businesses to engage with the City of Charlotte.

Ms. Watlington said awesome. Then, you spoke a little bit about giving folks time to ramp up and scale up and hire employees and what not. Have we thought about what that timing specifically needs to look like after each one of these future RFPs goes out, and what that distribution of funds connected to the grants really looks like in terms of speed of delivery? So, once you receive a grant, to actually be able to receive the funds, to then mobilize to be ready for the RFPs in time, have we thought about what that cadence looks like?

Mr. Rana said yes, we thought about that. So, with the actual curriculum, we'll have done in the fall, and then towards the end of this calendar year we'll engage with an organization, and that should really T us up for when funds are out and when we're really prepared for transit projects, but we also understand, as the Manager mentioned, we've been gearing up for these types of opportunities, because Strategic Investment Areas are having projects that are happening today. So, that's where the engagement piece comes in for organizations that are already prepared to bid on projects. That's how we engage with CBI and become a registered small business. That's where Danielle comes into play as well with connecting those businesses with already existing ecosystem partners. So, it's not as linear. There's kind of several stages of this, and we're just trying to be as flexible as possible in building the infrastructure for 30 years, while also taking care of business today.

Ms. Watlington said for sure, for sure. Taking a look, and you mentioned today and the future, I'm curious just a quick look back in 2025, and this question is for Director Frazier. Can you speak at all to how many job placements we saw as a result of our training partner programs last year?

Ms. Frazier said I can, but I don't want to misquote. Actually, you all are due for an update, and so you should receive that within the next few weeks in one of your memos. So, yes, we have it, and you will have a lot of data to review. I just don't want to misquote, but yes.

Ms. Watlington said okay, well, can you give me directionally what worked or what was booming, and where we think there may be gaps as it relates to industries or skill sets?

Ms. Frazier said right. So, it ebbs and flows with training, meaning there will be points where training will be in demand, and then there will be times when just employment will be in demand. What I mean by that is, even with one of our partners and providers, we have had to shift, and they've said, "Hey, less training, can we add more OJTs (On-the-Job Trainees)," which is actual employment, and we support small businesses with

bringing on new employees, sometimes it's upskilling, and that does vary based on industry and based on demand. I can answer that question more with in-depth data based on our current service providers, but that's what we see a lot of where it ebbs and flows with training might be more in demand at times, and then it might just be, hey people need a job. I will say this too, is that training has a level of, I'm not going to say sacrifice, but commitment, and some job seekers and talent have to say, do I have the luxury to sacrifice the bills and time to go to training versus I need a job and I need a job now. So, that's when those On-The-Job Training Grants really support, because they and apprenticeships, because those are jobs now, and they support progressive wages as well as career advancement.

Ms. Watlington said and then my last question is just, what does the landscape look like in terms of employers signing up to partner with us, such that there are jobs on the other end of that, and what are we learning in terms of the jobs of the future, or the jobs of now, that people and employers need with updated skillset?

Ms. Frazier said right, would love to take a longer opportunity to provide the latter part of that, that answer. I'm sorry, the initial part of your question was, because I was stuck on the second part. What was the first part, because that's what I really want to answer?

Ms. Watlington said oh, so I want to understand what we're seeing in terms of employer's readiness and willingness to partner?

Ms. Frazier said right. One of the things that we were focused on, and will focus on I think moving forward is, starting with a job in hand and not job in mind. We want to make sure that the training providers that we're supporting, they have business relationships on the front end, and hence, why we chose to go in the direction of having an actual Business Engagement Grant, which is totally focused on job placement, and that's either job placement through direct talent placement, through On-The-Job Training Grants, through supporting our training providers when graduates graduate from the funded providers that we support, so that there is a job at the end. So, that's our purpose, is to make sure there is an actual job that these individuals can have when they graduate from training programs. I think that that's going vary from industry to industry and also need, and I would love to do a deeper dive with you on that, because we do have that data where we're starting right here and right now and a big piece of our support is around the Skilled to Build, which is the transportation infrastructure work.

Ms. Watlington said thank you so much, I appreciate your work. I'm very interested in doing a deep dive to further understand that, because we've got a ton of opportunity, as we know, and we know that our community is counting on us to meet the moment, and we thank you for positioning us to do just that.

Ms. Frazier said thank you.

Councilmember Ajmera said thank you, Mr. Rana, and thank you, Ms. Frazier, for a comprehensive update on the approach you are taking to ensure that our workforce and our businesses are ready for opportunities, not just for today, but for tomorrow. Manager Jones talked about the largest economic development, \$25 billion. I mean, this is transformational. So, we want to make sure that our businesses and our workforce is ready to adopt and implement and help us deliver on all the projects that will be lined up. I'm interested in seeing the gap analysis to see where the gaps are, and I'm looking forward to help distribute some of these opportunities to organizations who have expressed an interest. Are these limited to businesses, or are these open to nonprofits who have business relationship, can help with job placement?

Ms. Frazier said I'm sorry, your question was, has it been opened to nonprofits that have relationships with businesses? Yes, so one of those 53 entities that we shared, they were training providers, they were education providers, they were also nonprofits that do workforce development services, such as the business engagement piece, yes.

Ms. Ajmera said that's great. Well, I look forward to helping share the word about these opportunities. One program that specifically comes to mind is RENEW (Renewable Energy and Efficiency Workforce) Charlotte, which was implemented several years ago that helped individuals with direct placement after the training. So, in that program, we actually helped with providing, so when participants were taking trainings they were getting paid, because to your point, not everyone has flexibility to go through trainings while not getting paid. So, we also explored that option, because there are a lot of individuals who would be interested, it's just they can't sacrifice income to do so.

Ms. Frazier said yes, thank you for that, you hit it spot on. That is something that we incorporated in our Talent Development Training Grant as an option for them to submit stipends for individuals while they're enrolled in training. So, yes, we've made that available, and supportive services.

Ms. Ajmera said that's great to hear, because that is a direct pathway to upward mobility, folks who want to move from \$10, \$15 per hour to livable wage. Thank you.

Councilmember Johnson said thank you for the presentation. Thank you, Councilmember Ajmera, for that question. I remember the RENEW Grant, and that is so important if people are able to receive a stipend or pay while they're in training. Also, thank you for extending the time. I remember thinking, I wish we heard about this before January 9, 2026, so that was great that you extended it. I would like to ask, Mr. Jones, if we can post this tonight, make sure this is posted on our communications, Facebook, so that we can share it. Also, on the link for the meeting, since we've talked about it, if you can put the link in the comments or something, so that folks don't have to search for it, because when I heard the two proposals, there's an obvious problem, and the information's not getting out. So, I think this is a very intentional and equitable approach to making sure that people are aware.

Mr. Jones, thank you for your comments when you talk about the one percent and expanding the opportunities, the 46 percent of the voters that were opposed to the tax. One of the reasons, because there was no intentionality or commitment for small businesses. So, this is a great response. Also, I think this is important, because even earlier in our meeting there was a building and grounds maintenance services, and the towing services contract, where there weren't any minority responses, and we know that they're out there. Many times it's because the businesses don't have the capacity. So, I think this training is so important in us putting our action toward our goal. So, I appreciate the proposal and I look forward to seeing more about it. Thank you.

Councilmember Mazuera Arias said thank you both so much for your report last Monday and the callout back today. More so comments is, please do engage on the ground partners, and helping identify them and reaching out to them, such as the chambers, in ensuring that these RFPs and grants are distributed equitably to our community.

Additionally, just a slight concern about the curriculum piece, knowing that not all small businesses are the same, and this is something we spoke about in our last committee meeting, where sometimes this wholistic approach to small businesses do not fulfill all the demands that small businesses face, and the small businesses in East Charlotte, West Charlotte, North Charlotte, South Charlotte all look differently. So, I would just consider what that curriculum looks like and make sure that it's flexible when you're doing these trainings. Thank you.

Councilmember Driggs said I'm very happy that we're doing this. During the whole campaign for the sales tax I heard a lot of misgivings about it, and I think there was distrust just because there were things we weren't able to answer yet, and I was hopeful that as the situation as we went forward, some of those people that weren't there understand that this was actually a good thing to do. I think we have a responsibility to prove that to them, and this is a critical step.

My question is really more of a macroeconomic nature. We are talking about a huge infusion of public spending into the Charlotte economy, and if you go all the way back to FDR (Franklin Delano Roosevelt), you know that that's a stimulus. So, one thing that I would like for us to think about is kind of a macroeconomic analysis, like what kind of manpower does it take, what resources does it take, what constraints are we working against, and do we have input from employers and industry participants as to how they think they might meet the demand? They're going to have to get people to come here from somewhere else. We do not have the manpower in Charlotte right now, the Manager alluded to kind of constraints. As we look forward to the development of the plan, I think in fact during the time that we were talking about the plan, it became clear that some of the things that were proposed could not be done, because there wasn't the capacity. We just didn't have the capacity. So, the modeling had to then adjust for that.

So, as you consider what you're doing, what new manpower and what training, in other words, what's our target in terms of the labor force we need and how are we going about meeting it? I'd just be interested, not tonight, but in general, to have a conversation with you about that, and then try to think through implications, for example for housing. We have a big influx of labor in order to meet this, and that puts a tighter squeeze on our housing, and we're going to be in a position of having to reconcile priorities and make tough decisions. That's my only comment, I'd like to follow up with you at a later date to think about that, but in the meantime, I just wanted to assure people, as I did during our campaign for the sales tax, that those who were not convinced, and many of them weren't opposed to that cents. I think there was an understanding that we had to invest, but they weren't convinced about how it was going to be done, and about whether or not everybody would benefit, and I think our goal is to prove to them that it was the right thing to do. Thank you.

Mr. Jones said Councilmember Driggs, I totally agree with you. One of the things that we've discussed, and Ms. Frazier started this with our E2E (Education 2 Employment) program, where we have a pipeline from high school directly to coming to work for the City, so now that we know the jobs that are out there, project manager, engineers, you name it, we are going to work with CMS (Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools), and to make sure that these students understand what opportunities are out there. Another thing I think is extremely important is if this is actually building out a system. So, there's this added benefit when it comes to safety, when it comes to congestion, when it comes to connectivity, and so we shouldn't lose sight that we're also building something that's going to help the quality of life for our residents.

Mr. Driggs said absolutely, yes. Thanks.

Councilmember Mayfield said thank you for the presentation. I want us to take into consideration we already have some of these relationships. We have the relationship with White Label Management. Sha, I believe you had a chance, if not it's coming up soon, Monica Allen and I had a conversation with KPN (Keystone Purchasing Network). We have partners out there that's already on the ground doing the work. I appreciate us expanding what we already have through the Mayor's Youth Employment program. I do not want us forgetting our adults. There are a lot of people that have transitioned, because of the work that they were doing. We have had quite a few layoffs. We have had quite a few manufacturing layoffs that have impacted our area, as well as the region.

My colleagues know I'm not as interested about the new people coming in as I am those that are already here, and the number of people that we are losing that we're not tracking, because I have said more than once, if our City is not affordable for our workers, we will see a mass exodus of our workforce. We have great talent here. A lot of that talent has not had the opportunities that are presented. So, I would like for us to really be intentional with, we have the grant out. As you were speaking, I went online to just do a quick search to pull up the information to think about a couple of organizations to send to to say, hey, do you even know this? I want us to be intentional by starting internally. You've already had meetings with different businesses. I don't know if you had the chance to have it yet, but at some point, Danielle, you're going to be having the

meeting with O'Neal Academy. We have great organizations that aren't currently funded by the City, but are doing amazing work in, like the O'Neal Academy, for example, is the only one that actually has the certification for fiberoptics. We know that that is something that is going to be with us for a while.

So, I don't want us to put a lot of energy thinking that we need to go find something that's already right here within arm's reach if we just go back through our rolodex, for lack of a better word, and for you young people we actually used to have cards that we wrote things in before we got into the internet. So, go back through that for the conversations that you've have, even if you just do a two-year snapshot, because we have some opportunities locally, and I'm always going to say, what are we doing for our taxpayers right here to show them where their tax dollars are being invested properly? The others will come. You are not my priority. That's just my reality. My priority is the residents that are here that are facing challenges that need to face opportunities. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said okay. So, I had the opportunity over the weekend to meet with the people from Scout, the people that are building these fun cars. I don't how much fun they are, but they're expensive, I know that. One of the things that they did, and this is just something, as Ed and LaWana have mentioned, this is where we have to step up our game. So, when I was there, the first person that came up to me was the woman that's making possible their job opportunities and she was talking about high school kids, and how do you get there. They were saying they did not want people to build these trucks without having the opportunity for young people to participate in it. So, I would hope that we continue, as Ms. Mayfield said, that we work together with people, and especially when we get our new businesses in. I did get the car, I just didn't bring it in tonight, but Danielle, they were very serious about the number of people and how quickly, they've already got three plants. I mean, amazing like that for cars. So, let's just figure out how do we work with people, so that everybody can find some place that they want to be, and I think that's really one of the things that we have to do as a city, is to make sure that people understand that we are doing this, but more importantly, we are doing this with a lot of other people and there are choices to be made. So, thank you for what you're doing right now.

Councilmember Anderson said first of all, excellent work. I was at the event on December 9, 2025, and there was a lot of really good engagement in that room, and a lot of excitement around specifically the Strategic Investment Areas projects, if I said that the right way. The question I have is around the retention of the IP (intellectual property). I love that concept that we want to retain our IP in this process. Can you just talk a little bit about how you plan to do that, if this is something unique that other cities are not doing, or you've seen it occur at other cities. I'm very interested in the retention of this IP around this process and how we keep it and maintain it in a way that's easily accessible?

Mr. Rana said absolutely, well, thank you for your question. The idea of owning the intellectual property for a training curriculum just goes by experience. Oftentimes, municipalities are rebidding every year for grant solicitations, and with transportation and how it changes. I mean, we have self-driving cars now. So, what does our training look like, and what does [INAUDIBLE] look like with innovation that's happening, and to have stale data and training curriculum wouldn't set our businesses up for success, so that's number one. Number two, roughly 50 to 60 percent of the training curriculum can be applied to other aspects of procurement. So, part of the team of teams approach and horizontal approach that we have at the City, it's team Charlotte. So, if we have a curriculum that's being utilized primarily and first through mobility, that's something that procurement and CBI can also use for other aspects of our business. So, when it comes to becoming a registered business with the City, contracting and procurement, bidding opportunities, some of what I'll call evergreen content, that doesn't change depending on the regulation or the bid opportunity, we can use that intellectual property and that curriculum for other aspects of business with the City as well. So, we're looking to see how this could be a little bit of a Rosetta Stone for us, and how multiple departments

can use this training curriculum with some adaptations depending on whatever the opportunity is, but we're trying to be wise about how we share information.

Last, but not least, what we're doing here is more on the innovative side, and to one of the comments earlier, having a curriculum and us owning it, and then us bidding this out again to other training providers or community organizations, that's where you can get the local flare to it, that's when you engage with multiple organizations, but the main thing has to be the main thing first. We have to make sure that we have a little bit of quality control and assurance on what's being shared out there, because just through bidding opportunities, there's a lot of misinformation, and sometimes what we see in the business world when it comes to procurement, guess what's going to happen next year? You're going to have these business gurus on social media telling you how to obtain government contracting, sign up for their \$2,000 E-Course, and they're giving you the wrong information. So, part of us owning the intellectual property is protection for our small businesses as well.

Ms. Anderson said completely agree, and really, really like the concept. I'm not sure how you're going to go about the process, but I just would encourage you to think about the technology backbone that you're going to use to even jumpstart this process, because if you don't give the right amount of thought and preparation to that upfront, a little bit later down the runway it can become a hinderance, because technology is moving so fast. So, you want to make sure you're choosing the right platform with the right [INAUDIBLE] ons that you can scale as we move forward. So, really like that concept and I commend you for it.

The other piece about the talent planning and the pipeline is, absolutely CMS schools, 1,000 percent, but don't forget about our universities that we have here. We have so many wonderful students who are coming here to learn, and UNC Charlotte, just for an example, really about to become the largest university in the North Carolina university system. How can we tap those young people coming directly out of school into either internships, between junior and senior year, and then bringing them on directly out of graduation. So, just something to think about with our universities, four or five that we have here. Thank you.

Ms. Frazier said can I make a comment real quick to that?

Ms. Anderson said yes.

Ms. Frazier said just had a meeting actually last week with Chancellor Gaber to talk about how we can expand our internships and ultimately lead to employment. So, we're thinking about it from a higher ed, from a K through 12 standpoint, and again, this is not just us, it's a community. We have to partner with all of our partners. So, we're starting that work now, so thank you for that.

Ms. Anderson said thank you.

Councilmember Mitchell said for all members of Council, thank you for the great questions. Staff, thank you so much, because we had a great discussion in our ED (Economic Development) and Workforce Meeting, and City Manager, thank you for giving us an update, and looking forward to success and how we now will be engaged to make sure we can assist you with the February 3, 2026 deadline. So, thank you staff.

Councilmember Owens said so, I wanted to park a bit on the City Manager's report, and I don't think it's a huge departure from what we've been talking about, because I am hearing my colleagues talk about quality of life. I'm hearing my colleagues talk about priorities of our residents, and I'm hearing them talk about mobility. What I want to do is draw, for everyone's attention, we issued the Vision Zero report last week, and I think it circulated with us internally several months ago, but it was just issued, and it was picked up in the media, and it was picked up by a number of my constituents. I wanted to just present you with a few of their questions, and sort of see if we can have a dialogue around this perhaps for the retreat.

I'll be honest that I was a bit surprised since its release by what it showed. I'm pleased that I was able since then to elevate some chronic unsafe situations on Providence and Carmel Roads. I've elevated those to Chief Patterson this week, but according to this report, there were 81 traffic deaths and 111 serious injuries. So, while our number of accidents was down slightly, the seriousness of those accidents was actually up. I think it's important, when we focus, and we have been focusing, on public safety, and I've been constantly trying to shift the lens and not have it be uniquely on crime safety, but also on the safety of our streets. We've got a big responsibility now, particularly with our new transit mobility plan and a number of the things that we're doing, but I just want to again escalate this Vision Zero, and some of the accountability that we've already held ourselves to. Those numbers I gave, those aren't just numbers, those are people, those are families, and those are families living with grief, that shouldn't be part of their story. So, I don't want to take away focus from the violent crime numbers, but I do want to widen that lens. The Vision Zero report says that protecting human lives takes priority over all other objectives of our road system. What hit me hardest about the report was that speeding and improper vehicle operation are more than 60 percent of the fatal and serious car injuries, and that there is a known, it's called the high-injury network. The high-injury network is only 13 percent of our streets, but it is 80 percent of our fatal and serious injury crashes. Further, crashes involving people walking and biking are only 1.5 percent of crashes, but they're 29 percent of serious injuries and fatal crashes.

So, again, I have these questions for the City Manager. I would ask for you to direct C-DOT (Charlotte Department of Transportation) to treat these traffic fatalities and serious injuries as the safety emergencies that they are. I would ask if you can provide Council and the public a high-injury network action plan that lists these corridors, and specific changes planned for each corridor, and the dates those changes will be installed. Also, I would ask, and this is elevated from a constituent, if when a fatal crash occurs, can we have a rapid response protocol, so that the City can do something in the interim, while we await longer-term work. You and I have spoken, and I'm impressed with the planning that has gone into a number of the various corridors that we are looking to improve with the monies that we get from the PAVE (Projects for Advancing Vehicle-Infrastructure Enhancements) Act, but I just would ask that we all acknowledge a responsibility to the safety of our streets. I'm asking my fellow Council members to help me prioritize safety. Regardless of whose District a project is in, let's not all just stick our hands out for a little of the pot that's coming in, but let's help prioritize those things that are truly issues. So, with that, I do appreciate you, City Manager. I don't know if you have an opportunity to respond, but thank you.

Mayor Lyles said we've got a lot of people. I know we have people in the audience too as well, and so would you mind the idea of, let's do what people came for, and then we can continue that discussion, or even take the time to figure out when it might be possible.

Ms. Mayfield said so, Mayor, are you suggesting for the Manager's report, we pause it to go to this part, because I know mine is in alignment with my colleagues on the Manager's report, since we are getting ready to come into the retreat?

Mayor Lyles said okay, yes, that's what I was saying, do we want to have the group as the Manager's Report, that's correct, and then follow through with having our people that are here for the leased property? It's up to you guys really, what do you want to do?

Ms. Owens said maybe pause.

Ms. Johnson said I'd like to proceed with the Manager.

Ms. Ajmera said I was thinking if we can just quickly go around the dais, because this is definitely one of the high priority items we have received.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said I would suggest that we lead to capping maybe one-minute remarks, so we can respect our audience member's time as well, because it's been an hour.

Ms. Johnson said okay, thank you, Ms. Owens. I agree with the Manager's report. We've not talked about the Strategic Planning Session. I did watch the Committee meeting where you all talked about the agenda, but one of the things I've recommended was that we talk about strategic growth and growth, and I think that is in line with what Councilmember Owen said. When you talk about Providence Road, we've been hearing complaints about Providence Road and the overcrowding for years, and so when I asked for the infrastructure meeting it was to take a look at different areas. Maybe there are areas, such as Mallard Creek and Providence Road, and 160 and Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road, that we need to pause. So, I agree, 81 fatalities, we as a Council should find that unacceptable. I thought 21 accidents in 0.6 miles on Mallard Creek was unacceptable, in 0.6 miles, 21 accidents. People going 45 miles per hour is a death waiting to happen. So, we do need to take a look at growth. I would like, on our planning agenda, to take a look at growth and how are we growing responsibly. I thought Mr. Greene's comments were on point, and I think we need to really listen how we're growing in the City. Thank you.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said thank you, Councilwoman Owens for bringing this to our attention. I just want to applaud the Mayor for separating the committees, and making safety a priority this year. I would love, Manager Jones, to speak with staff at a greater length to update our Vision Zero dashboard. Currently, it's outdated, the data is hard to read, it doesn't seem very accessible to the average citizen. I would refer, and I think I've mentioned this to staff and colleagues everywhere, the Strategic Investment Area's dashboard is a great starting point. What Ed McKinney and staff did on that end was pretty impressive on how accessible that dashboard has been.

Additionally, I would encourage us to find different ways to identify these corridors with these high rates, and how do we incorporate and align Corridors of Opportunity and Strategic Investment Areas investment and funding, to kind of address these fatalities and how do we better improve those corridors with that existing funding to ensure that our residents are safe? Thank you.

Ms. Mayfield said Manager, still on this same line, looking at the overlay of our infill developments that we have approved and the fatality impacts, because some of this is also, we're looking at two-lane roads. We're looking at areas where there aren't sidewalks, but we have approved a large number of developments in those areas, and the crash impact of those. Here's an opportunity for us to look at our policy language when we're looking at the 2040 Plan, the UDO (Unified Development Ordinance), and the completion of the Community Area Plans.

Mr. Driggs said so, I'll spend the first five seconds of my 60 seconds thanking J.D. for that suggestion. We need to recognize that the report enumerates a lot of actions that were taken, and things like speed limits and so on, that's nice. The fact is that probably major impact involves money. So, as we go to deploy the resources that we have, we need to be very clear about that safety priority and how we're going to use the money. I know the work that Ed has done takes safety into account in his proposals, but he doesn't necessarily prioritize the proposals specifically on the grounds of safety. So, one thing we can do is just give precedence as we allocate the resources we have to areas where there are big safety concerns. Thank you.

Councilmember Graham said I agree with Councilwoman Owens with the request that she made to the Manager.

Ms. Anderson said I agree with the comments that were made. We were moving a bit fast earlier, but in our Consent agenda, items 13 through 15 that we approved, there are funds that come from the Governor's Highway Safety program, one of them, 13 specifically, addresses Vision Zero areas where there's excessive speeding, of course, these car takeovers, the streetcar takeovers, etc. So, there are some funds there for overtime, because we really need to have our officers there in those spaces. We do have, and staff has, a very good layout of the high-injury networks. I don't believe they're prioritized, but there is a really good snapshot. I'm sure they have to update it, but we have visited that over the last year or so.

I think, Mr. Manager, as we go into this budget cycle, I want to have conversations around things that we're not investing in, because sometimes when we look at the things that we're not investing in, that will shed some light on what's falling through the cracks, and there might be opportunities. In fact, I know there's opportunity for us to invest in safety in a more robust, expansive way outside of purely law enforcement. We can do more, but we do a really good of that, but other things around where we're not investing in, and how they have a derivative impact on public safety. So, that's what I'll be looking at as we go into the budget season. Thank you.

Councilmember Mayo said so this actually correlates with what Kimberly was saying as well, and I sent an email to C-DOT Friday about something similar with the SIA. For Strategic Investment Areas, are we using some type of equation? So, as a former math teacher, I'm thinking of that. Are we thinking of like constituent concerns or fatalities? Are we weighing somehow those things, so that those are a higher priority than the data? It'd be nice for us to do that improvement, but something else may be more pressing based on community concerns or proven data. So, that would be my question, do we have an equation that we're using so that we're having some kind of weighted based on the concerns of constituents and the data, because right now the SIA, when I look, is very broad. I saw TBD (to be determined), general stuff, it's all the same for each section, and that's something I've been talking to staff about, how are they actually deciding which ones to fund versus others? I haven't gotten that answer yet, and that's okay, I just sent it Friday, but I do hope to have that answer soon, because that's imperative for getting this money, and the community wants to know that we're doing right by them.

Mr. Jones said so, Councilmember Mayo, that's a great question. I had some of the conversation with Councilmember Owens last week, and I'll be real fast. If you start to think about this mobility plus plan, the purple book that we have, it started off with 2,004 projects, not the year, but those projects, from sidewalks to bike paths, you name it. It has Vision Zero in it, and it has all of our plans enrolled into one. So, now we're at the proper place at this retreat to talk about how do we prioritize, and we didn't because we don't have your input, and so this is the great conversation that we'll continue over the next couple of weeks about how do we prioritize this investment.

Ms. Owens said okay.

Ms. Watlington said the Manager began to speak a little bit about what I was going to share. In addition to that, there was criteria that identified the original Strategic Investment Areas in the first place. So, there is math, if you will, or at least rankings, that undergird the overall vision. There was a point in time where we started to inquire with the communities that these Strategic Investment Areas are actually in, as to what the project priorities were. I'm not sure if we finished those exercises or not. I'll be very interested in that from staff, but the idea was that we identified based on the metrics what these areas are, now let's consult with the community themselves to find out what the priority is to them, what would be most impactful. So, I'm also supportive of the investigation, or the desire for investigation, now that we've got additional funding. What is it really going to look like? For me, it has to include that community engagement, because as we heard earlier, as Mr. Greene mentioned before, we're seeing additional traffic, additional development in areas where the lived experience would say that it doesn't make sense. So, we've got to start with the community there. Looking forward to it.

Ms. Ajmera said I agree with Councilmember Owens. In fact, I had just reached out to Councilmember Johnson and Councilmember Arias just last week about Vision Zero, because I know we had allocated \$20 million last budget cycle towards Vision Zero, and still we were barely scratching the surface when it came to high-injury network. So, funding was clearly an issue, but now with \$100 million per year, it really opens up tools that we have to address the high-injury networks. So, I agree with some of the sentiments that were shared by my colleagues. I think certainly we need to prioritize immediate funding for high-injury networks, because we know majority of the fatalities, traffic accidents, are happening in those high-injury networks. We need to update the

list, because I do have a list from past two budget cycles, but there have been several more fatalities that have happened since then. So, we need to make sure that list continues to stay up to date, because Harris-Houston neighbors have been reaching out for past 30 years, way before my time on the Council, and still have not gotten their fair share of infrastructure improvements. I read that in The Observer and I flagged that, and I said, we need to do this. Same thing with Albermarle and Shamrock, a community member had reached out, but that's another corridor that we need to look at, along with Providence and others. Some of these corridors have waited for 20, 30 years to address traffic fatalities. I mean, this is a crisis. So, I'm glad Councilmember Owens brought this up, thank you, because this is something we need to address it, have a road map right away with the funding that we have now finally. So, that's all I have. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said alright. I just say that, you have an HOA (Homeowner Association), and boy when you go to the meetings and they start talking about traffic and the races that I think people believe that we're doing, I think that it's something that's really important to begin to think through. It's going to be important to lots of people.

* * * * *

BUSINESS

ITEM NO. 8: SUBLEASE OF CITY-LEASED PROPERTY AT 8115 EASTLAND YARDS BOULEVARD, SUITE 105

Greg Ascitutto, 11642 Calgary Drive said good evening, Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, City Manager and Council. I am Greg Ascitutto, the Executive Director of Charlotte East. I'm going to be very brief. Just wanted to say how excited we are for the next few agenda items that ya'll have coming up. This is a tremendous milestone for both this project and for our community, and we encourage each of you to vote in favor of each of the forthcoming agenda items on these subleases. You'll hear from them shortly, but each of these businesses provide a tremendous value to our community, filling some gaps that we do not have in our Greater Eastland small business ecosystem, and we feel that they complement each other incredibly well on the site. We'd also like to give a huge thanks to Todd DeLong and Tim Sitterma for their intentionality with selection of these tenants, and we look forward to supporting where we can as they fill the remaining commercial vacancies. Thank you so much.

Jennifer Geyer, 6715 Kemp Street said good evening. My name is Jennifer Geyer, and I'm a proud Charlotte native, co-owner, and co-founder of Rumbao Latin Dance Company. We have served the Charlotte area for the past 12 years. We provide classes, performances, events, and cultural programming for the City of Charlotte, serving thousands of students from all ages and backgrounds. We are really honored to be considered for this Eastland Yards leasing project, as we believe it will help us expand our services to kids programming and senior citizen programming as well. We believe we can activate the ground floor at Eastland Yards, as well as the park that's going to be there, and provide significant programming for this area and for the community. Some of the City goals that were stated were activating the ground floor, complement redevelopment, strengthen retail balance, increase pedestrian activity, and create a unique sense of place, and also ensure diverse tenant mix. We offer studio classes over four nights a week, weekend events, performances and recitals, drawing over 150 people each month. We provide cultural entertainment programming that serves both new residents and surrounding community, and we also provide culturally relevant Latin cultural programming that will distinguish Eastland Yards as a cultural destination, not just a residential development.

Over the past 12 years, we've had partnerships with the Mint Museum for the Mint 2 Move Cultural Dance Night, as well as worked with Carlotan Talents for the Latin American Festival Havana Nights, and community events, as well as Norsan Media for the Hola Festival Uptown providing cultural programming. We've also worked with different corporate clients, such as Bank of America, Wells Fargo, Truist, Ally Financial, Duke Energy, TIAA (Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America), Credit

Karma, to provide Hispanic Heritage Month programming, and I've done pro bono educational work with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools, including McClintock Middle School, Esperanza Global Academy, and Joseph W. Grier Academy.

In summary, we feel like we have been a proven Charlotte business with the past 12 years of continuous operation, we have been deeply rooted in the community, and have decade-long partnerships with Charlotte's cultural institutions, as well as serving some of Charlotte's largest employers, as well as the pro bono educational work with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools, evening and weekend programming to activate the ground floor retail as well as the park, and have created a cultural destination that creates a unique sense of place. We are a collaborative partner committed to working constructively with the City, and we respectfully request City Council to approve the sublease resolution.

Tim Sittema, 3824 Pomfret Lane said Madam Mayor, City Manager, and Council members, my name is Tim Sittema. I'm one of the owners of Crosland Southeast. It's an honor and privilege to be here. Happy New Year to each of you. As you well know, the Eastland Yards redevelopment has been a labor of love, which we've been working on since you selected our firm in 2018. Neither the City nor Crosland Southeast has really ever executed a master lease like the one that we're talking about here on the first floor. We call it the first-floor commercial space at Eastland. It's probably worth noting that we really wanted to have some commercial space under the multi-family at Eastland, because it sits across from the park that the County is building. We wanted to activate that street and just provide a lot more energy there. The private sector alone could not make the math work at all on that. So, absent the public/private partnership that we did, there would not be first-floor commercial space there. So, thank you for that, I want to start with that.

The work that we're doing with that first-floor commercial space, we're trying to thread a lot of needles here. Obviously, it's paramount that we have a diverse group of entrepreneurs that lead businesses that contribute to the community. We also want to provide the much-needed amenities that the East Charlotte residents deserve. We also have to meet the needs of the specific spaces, and what I mean by that is, we can only put restaurants, for example, in some of the spaces, because of grease trap locations and access to industrial disposal and things like that. Some of the spaces have dimensions that don't lend themselves well for some uses or others. So, we're managing all these disparate needs and constraints.

The staff and we have been working for a year with this group of tenants. I could not be more pleased and more proud of the three entrepreneurs that you're going to meet tonight. You just met Jennifer. She's amazing. What a treat it's been for me to get to know her, and Jayla, and of course, Manolo, who's a dear, dear friend of mine. I'm here to tell you that I have no hesitation or reservations at all about these three business owners. I would urge you to support them in their pursuit. I think they check all the boxes. These businesses represent about half of the first-floor commercial space. So, if there are any course corrections or adjustments that Council would like to make, please tell us and we can move forward in the next round to try to incorporate whatever thoughts or concerns that you have, but in the meantime, I wholeheartedly endorse these businesses and hope you guys will as well. Thank you.

Councilmember Mazuera Arias said what an exciting night.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mazuera Arias, and seconded by Councilmember Anderson to (A) Adopt a resolution approving a sublease of city-leased property located at 8115 Eastland Yards Boulevard, Suite 105 with Rumbao Latin Dance Company LLC, and (B) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute all documents necessary to complete the sublease of the property.
--

Councilmember Ajmera said thank you, Councilmember Arias, for your leadership and for making sure that East Charlotte is not left behind. You started working from day one, and I certainly appreciate that. For years, we watched empty land where that used to be active, connected, and there was life. Well, tonight we're finally turning that page, and this is not just about opening stores, it's about restoring dignity, opportunity and joy to the people who live on the East Side that have shown incredible patience and incredible resilience throughout last 10 years. So, tonight's decision is about giving East Side families, including mine, something we have waited for far too long, a neighborhood destination that we are proud to call home. So, with that, I'll be supporting all four tenants.

Councilmember Mayfield said we've only got one that we're voting on right now.

Ms. Ajmera said I understand. I'm just saying I'll be supporting all four recommendations that's been made by the staff, as well as the committee, and thanks to committee's work. That's all I have. Thank you.

Councilmember Graham said I too want to lean forward and to congratulate everyone for this day becoming a reality. It's been two years in the works for a wide variety of projects along the Eastland Yards, and I want to support all of them, because it's the right thing to do. It's where we're at in the moment of Eastland Yards. Mr. Manager, when we talked about deferring this to January 2026, we also talked about getting a more comprehensive report of the other entity, which is the sports and recreation facility and the soccer fields to kind of know where we are with that, and so I thought that was going to be a part of this presentation as well. So, maybe at the appropriate time, someone can kind of give us an update in terms of where we are with that, because that's like, this is great, but the other one is really the muscle, which is the recreation facility, the soccer fields. The County's already had their groundbreaking for their park. Tim has already been on ground with the senior housing, etc., and the soccer fields and the sports and recreation facility has been extremely quiet, and I just would like to know where we are with that.

Marcus Jones said okay.

Councilmember Anderson said I too echo the sentiments of my colleagues around the excitement around this day, and we had a conversation in our committee meeting. Mr. Sittema, you were there and you answered some really tough questions. I'm excited about this, because it is going to bring a sense of vitality back to a space that used to be an epicenter for the Queen City. I support these subleases tonight, of course as well, but I want to make sure as we move forward and we begin to fill out the other vacant parcels, or spots if you will, that we have that intentionality of a 10-minute neighborhood, and making sure that we're bringing the right resources to bear to this community. Mr. Sittema, you talked about restaurants, but just creating that third place for those residents to be able to come out and enjoy. It's great that we have the park right there, and that collaboration with the City and the County to bring that park forward to residents, but I just want us to make sure that we continue to have that intentionality about the full scope of this project. Having said that, incredibly excited, and look forward to supporting tonight. Thank you.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said I would just like to provide a little bit of context with this particular small business. Jennifer, thank you so much for coming, and if you all could stand up who's representing Rumbao Dance Studio right now. Thank you so much for being here. Thank you for withstanding two hours of a Council meeting and being here. I also want to recognize them right now, because this is a business that currently temporarily resides in District Five. They've been holding a temporary space and conducting classes off of Oakhurst on Monroe Road. So, it is a rare opportunity that we as a city are able to give these folks that have serviced our community and our members of the community for years and years, a permanent home that they can now activate and facilitate. So, thank you so much for being here, and thank you for your patience.

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

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 161-162.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 9: SUBLEASE OF CITY-LEASED PROPERTY AT 8115 EASTLAND YARDS BOULEVARD, SUITE 106

Jayla Alvaranga 9671 Mendenhall View Drive, said hello, everyone. My name is Jayla Alvaranga. I am a nail technician originally from Greensboro, North Carolina, where I have rented private suites from other salon suite owners. Being a tenant firsthand has given me the experience, insight, and vision to understand what it truly takes to be a successful salon suite owner. I also recognize the lack of salon suite ownership that reflects both my background and the Eastland Charlotte community. That gap is what inspired me to take this step forward. I have fully dedicated myself to this vision by relocating to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area, allowing me to have boots on the ground, and devote my full time and energy to Suites by Alvaranga Collection. I believe I am the ideal candidate to fulfill retail suite 106, creating a space that will provide Charlotte's small business owners with a true home for their business operations. This opportunity will foster an elevated environment within a growing community of beauty and wellness professionals, while supporting entrepreneurship, representation, and long-term success. Thank you.

Councilmember Watlington said first of all, congratulations to all the business owners. I love to see it, and thank you for sticking with us, and I look forward to supporting you in the community. I just have a couple of questions, really it's more so maybe at Mr. Sittima and to my colleagues. I love that these businesses are here. As I think future forward, we know that because we have an ownership stake that we're able to direct a little bit more in the future. I'm curious as to has there been any conversation in terms of like of a merchant association. I think about Historic West End or West Boulevard, and some of the other areas that have really wanted to rally around their small business owners and really galvanize formally through merchant associations, and I'm curious as to if there's going to be any interest or any willingness to support that?

Councilmember Ajmera said Charlotte East does that.

Ms. Watlington said Charlotte East will do it, okay, gotcha, thanks.

Ms. Ajmera said they've already been doing it.

Ms. Watlington said okay, so they'll just come under your umbrella, alright.

Councilmember Mazuera Arias said I just wanted to directly respond to that. This is something that also Mayor Pro Tem and other colleagues on, Councilmember Graham and Councilmember Mayo, we met with these merchant associations as well making sure that they stay involved.

Ms. Watlington said can you speak up? I'm sorry, something about that mic. When I used to sit there, no one could ever hear me.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said is this okay. So, essentially, we have been engaging merchant associations, and ensuring that they're activated within the community, and I know Charlotte East has been partnering and ensuring that we're uplifting these businesses and that they're plugged into it as well.

Ms. Watlington said okay, so the merchant association is separate from Charlotte East, but Charlotte East is supporting it?

Unknown said [INAUDIBLE] umbrella right now.

Ms. Watlington said okay, thank you.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mazuera Arias, and seconded by Councilmember Ajmera to (A) Adopt a resolution approving a sublease of city-leased property located at 8115 Eastland Yards Boulevard, Suite 106 with Alvaranga Realty LLC, and (B) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute all documents necessary to complete the sublease of the property.

Councilmember Mayfield said so I believe we all received a letter that was in our packet, and one, we have invested millions in the redevelopment of Eastland, and as Mr. Sittema mentioned, this is a seven-year conversation that has been happening. I am going to reiterate what I shared in committee, because I do have concern with, one, it being salon suites. I'm not saying that that's not something that could be beneficial for a business, but as this development is growing out, that's something that could come later. Initially, doing the research, they're headquartered out of Greensboro. I asked what has been our local outreach? Well, we have instituted language regarding our street vendors, one of them [INAUDIBLE] as a small vendor or business owner, or resident who is trying to survive and growing the City, not disrupted. For many of us, vending is not a hobby. It is not a nuance. It is the first rung of the ladder when traditional systems are closed to you. No credit, no investors, no safety net, just effort, consistency, and a hope that showing up every day will eventually turn into stability. When vendors are pushed out, what's really being removed isn't clutter, it's opportunity. Charlotte often speaks about supporting small businesses, equity, and entrepreneurship, but for many people, especially those from working class and marginalized backgrounds, vending is small business. It's where we learn customer service, inventory, branding, and responsibility. It's how we test ideas before we can afford storefronts or leases. It's how we stay off the streets, out of trouble, and focus on building something legal and positive. Banning vendors doesn't create order, it creates silence, it removes culture, creativity, and real human interaction from public spaces.

Now, when we look at this letter and the impact that we're having in both NoDa and South End, because we do need to have a real conversation of the impact of street vendors when you have brick and mortar. When we have an opportunity, and we are offering very low competitive rates regarding supporting Eastland, I have concerns that we have not pushed to create those opportunities that we already have relationships with locally. Salon suites as a model and as a franchise, I think it's a great idea for certain areas, I think it could be beneficial over in this area, because Councilmember Arias and I looked up and did a Google search of how many salons are already in there. For me, that could be something that could be beneficial as the development grows.

When we're talking about being intentional and creating opportunities for small businesses in an area that is extremely diverse. You have an Ethiopian grocery store no to far that has been a supporter and an investor in this community for many years, you have small business clothing stores that have been moved and shifted from South End, from Fourth Ward, from areas that we identified as Corridors of Opportunity that have been displaced and moved that also contribute to the diversity that we have in our City, and those who have already been paying taxes and contributing to the growth of our City that did not necessarily even know that this was an opportunity that was available. Not blaming anyone on the marketing on it, that's not the role of Tim Sittema and his team in partnership. The City has had a number of these conversations, because these businesses have reached out to us, so that could have been a different conversation. I personally have concerns with this particular product. I am not going to be voting for this, yet I recognize we all need to make a decision. When we're talking about we're going to make multiple millions of dollars of investment, and we tell the community this is to benefit you, and we're looking at creating something that's sustaining long term, on the front end we have one proposal for a dance studio, we have a proposal here for a coffee shop and for another type of service, is this the best way to move forward at this particular time, as this development is still being built out versus an opportunity later on down the road, is what I would like for us to consider. Again, when we think about the

businesses that have been transitioned from their current locations, the businesses along our light rail that had multiple challenges and did not have some of the opportunities that this development is providing, we have an opportunity to make sure that we're supporting growth in a way that's longstanding, not just short term, for me. Thank you.

Mr. Mazuera Arias said I would like to recognize that this is a conversation, Councilmember Mayfield and I have had for the past few days, and I'm in all agreement with her reasoning, and at the same time we both appreciate that we are going to build differently, but I definitely do agree. I think there is an opportunity moving forward to be more intentional in partnering with our partners. Councilmember Mayfield made it very clear during our Economic Development Committee meeting that we need to partner up internally with Charlotte Business INClusion, with our existing partners, with our business district organizations on the ground that already are doing this work and recognizing this. Earlier this afternoon, I spoke to Councilmember Mayfield about this Ethiopian market and restaurant that is right next to La Shish Kabob on Sharon Amity as a potential great tenant for this area.

At the same time, I also want to recognize the risk that you, Jayla, and the rest of the business owners are taking in committing and signing a lease in an unactivated space right now. I want my colleagues to recognize the risk that these business owners are taking in being part of something that we've never done before. So, something that Todd DeLong oftentimes says, is that we haven't done this, this is very new to us, and we're learning as we're growing and moving ahead. Again, I just wanted to take the time to appreciate Councilmember Mayfield's comment, and the validity and credibility those concerns have, as well as recognizing that this is what partnership looks like, that we can vote opposite from this issue, I'll be voting for it, but also recognizing the valid concerns that my colleagues and members of the Council might have on this. Thank you.

Councilmember Johnson said I want to piggyback off what both my colleagues are saying. I love what you said, Councilmember Mayfield. When we talk about City-owned property, we talked about this earlier, the parking lot, the City-owned property, and the City-owned subsidized space, we have to be intentional. There are people that are hurting, that are displaced due to gentrification that have been holding that area down when no one cared about the East Side, and so that happens a lot with the West Side and North Tryon. We have to be intentional and caring to those residents and those businesses who have been there. So, I do agree that they should have priority, and I'd like to see that moving forward. Let's make sure that we're intentional about that, Mr. Jones. I will be supporting this tonight, because I do also want to support the District Rep, who I know has spent a lot of time on this lease, but I do agree, and we talked about this before, as we're redeveloping these spaces we need to take a look at the businesses that have been there the entire time. So, thank you.

Ms. Ajmera said I just want to thank some of our unsung heros, specifically Carolyn Millen. Carolyn Millen, Diane Langevin, and so many East Side neighborhood leaders, they have been advocating for this for 10 years. I remember meeting with them, especially Diane Langevin. She had a folder this big. She's been to every single community outreach meeting. I personally believe that we need to listen to the community. They want us to approve this lease, and I certainly thank Charlotte East, Greg Ascutto, for providing support to small businesses, especially during border patrol when they were here, and there was disruption on the East Side, as well as Crosland Southeast for not giving up. I know you've been at this since 2018. I certainly appreciate your continued persistence. With that, I'm ready to move forward.

The following persons submitted written comments regarding this item pursuant to S.L. 2020-3, SB 704. To review comments in their entirety, contact the City Clerk's Office.

Auston Mixson, austontexas95@gmail.com

Mary Johnson, marykatherinejohnson18@gmail.com

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

YEAS: Councilmembers Ajmera, Anderson, Mazuera Arias, Driggs, Graham, Johnson, Mayo, Mitchell, Owens, and Watlington

NAYS: Councilmember Mayfield

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 163-164.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 10: SUBLEASE OF CITY-LEASED PROPERTY AT 5625 HOLLYFIELD DRIVE, SUITE 122

Manuel Betancur 1525 Marlwood Circle, said good evening, Madam Mayor, City Manager, and honorable City Council. Thank you so much for doing this. We are showing the nation that the City, private companies, and small business owners can work together. I want to make a clarification about the two businesses that I want to rent to this space, and why it's not just one. I have a Gelato business in Matthews and South Charlotte for [INAUDIBLE] more than welcome to visit us. We are the only place in the nation that our Gelato is 100 percent vegan. There's no eggs, no dairy, no gluten, and I promise you it taste good. So, we cannot have this in just one place, because of cross-contamination. So, that's why I'm asking you for one little space that's 1,000 square feet, and the other space is my coffee shop that I started a partnership with [INAUDIBLE] one year ago, and it's working so well, because we are the only coffee shop in town, and we are employing people who have been in trouble that need a second opportunity with the City, and [INAUDIBLE] from the Charlotte Culinary School is providing to some of these people, people with special abilities, people of minorities. One-hundred percent of everything that we buy in this coffee shop comes from small local businesses, and 100 percent of the profits go back to community. So, these are the two businesses that I'm bringing to this beautiful place. I want to bring you some numbers that I have on my bakery, that we have been in Charlotte and East Charlotte for 29 years, and last year in 2025, we spent almost \$100,000 with Cheney Bros. That is an American company in Statesville, North Carolina. SISCO almost \$8,000, [INAUDIBLE] as it should be [INAUDIBLE] small businesses, \$70,000. Next is a local farm, \$50,000, that's a lot of eggs, and we paid more than \$250,000 in taxes. So, [INAUDIBLE] can prove we are employing a lot of Americans, not just immigrants. That's a big number for a company that went from \$300,000 in sales to almost \$2 million just in East Charlotte. We went through hell just two months ago. Being an immigrant, it means to be brave, and I'm here in front of all of you and asking you to give me this opportunity, because we can create something big, and we can send a big message to the nation. So, thank you so much for doing this, and thank you so much for supporting us.

Motion was made by Councilmember Mazuera Arias, and seconded by Councilmember Mitchell to (A) Adopt a resolution approving a sublease of city-leased property located at 5625 Hollyfield Drive, Suite 122 with Artisen Gelato, and (B) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute all documents necessary to complete the sublease of the property.

Councilmember Ajmera said so when I see Manolo, it reminds me of my very first meeting with Manolo in 2016. I remember Manolo and I sat down outside of East Charlotte in a yogurt ice cream shop, and we were talking about why these kinds of amenities did not include, weren't available, in our District. I remember Manolo and I talking about how we need to make that vision into a reality. So, Manolo, it took only nine years, but thank you for believing in East Charlotte, and helping make this happen. You represent the very best of our local entrepreneurship. You represent the very best of our immigrant community, and you represent what hard work, resilience, and giving back means, and I'm very proud of you, brother. So, with that, I'm looking forward to

seeing both of your businesses, and I'll be a regular to your vegan ice cream shop. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said you've got a lot of fans down here, you know that, right, for what you do, it's been amazing.

Councilmember Mazuera Arias said I'm going to not try to get emotional with Manolo. Manolo has been, not only a friend, but a mentor and a father figure as well. I'll tell you two months ago, Manolo and I were out every single night at a friend of his bakery, protesting with the children of immigrants. Alongside, I see her, Reverend Corine Mack, who was there during the day. It was a beautiful demonstration of cross-racial, cross-ethnic, cross-religious solidarity for our immigrant brothers, because I oftentimes want people to know that immigrants are not just Latino. They come from different walks of life. They come from Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ukraine, different countries. The movement we built outside of that bakery is one that, not only the City recognized, but the entire Country did, and so I'm so proud of this moment of giving back to the community and finally bringing a local ice cream shop to East Charlotte, not the one in Plaza Midwood, Eastland area.

Additionally, Manolo spoke to this and alluded to this. There was some conversation during the previous Council that Manolo had two spaces and whatnot. I want to dispel that. His two spaces together make up less than the square footage of the other two tenants that we voted on previously. So, I want to make that very clear, and this is an opportunity to bring really that entrepreneurial spirit. If Manolo's Bakery on Central Avenue has become a cornerstone of community and solidarity and a place of gathering, imagine what this ice cream shop is going to bring to East siders. So, thank you.

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

Mayor Lyles said I think if everybody had other hands they'd be raised as well, so thank you very much for this.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 165-166.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 11: SUBLEASE OF CITY-LEASED PROPERTY AT 5625 HOLLYFIELD DRIVE, SUITE 123

leased property located at 5625 Hollyfield Drive, Suite 123 with HG Eastland, LLC dba Higher Grounds by Manolo, and (B) Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute all documents necessary to complete the sublease of the property.

Councilmember Driggs said so, as we wrap up these events, I want to just take a moment especially to acknowledge Tim Sittema, because going all the way back for years nobody wanted to touch this, and we looked and we looked, and then Mr. Sittema came forward with a vision. We partnered with him initially, where we made an investment and he did, in developing plans there, and it's been a long and bumpy road. So, Mr. Sittema, I just wanted to tell you I really appreciate what you have done to get us all here tonight. Thank you.

Councilmember Mazuera Arias said I just want to recognize all the small business owners that were here, Manolo, Jayla, Jennifer who just left, and thank you, Tim Sittema and Todd DeLong for working diligently with me on day one after I was sworn in to make sure that this was a transparent, communicative process to the community. Eastland Yards means so much to me. I grew up going to Eastland Mall. It was the only

movie theatre at the time that had Spanish subtitles, where my mom was able to sit down and watch an English-speaking movie with me. So, the fact that after decades of this space not being activated and it's now finally coming to fruition, is so incredible and so cool to see, it's a childhood dream come true, that we're bringing back an economic incubator to the East Side. So, thank you to all my colleagues [INAUDIBLE]. Thank you to my colleagues who expressed their concerns to make the process even better moving forward.

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

Mayor Lyles said as everyone knows, this has been a big, big leap and a very good one to be in.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 167-168.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 12: INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT TO SUPPORT THE ADMINISTRATIVE START-UP OF THE METROPOLITAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, and seconded by Councilmember Graham to (A) Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager, or his designee, to negotiate and execute an interlocal agreement with the Metropolitan Public Transportation Authority (MPTA) to support the administrative start-up of the MPTA, (B) Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute all documents and contracts necessary to complete the interlocal agreement and to provide administrative start-up support to the MPTA up to an amount of \$4,300,000, and (C) Adopt Budget Ordinance 1074-X appropriating \$4,300,000 in fund balance in the CATS Operating Fund for transfer to and appropriation in the CATS Capital Projects Fund.

Councilmember Anderson said I wanted to just give some perspective on this. I will be supporting this initiative, and I'm so happy to see two members of the Authority who have joined us, including the Chairman. As we are making this transition, this is a really big deal. Yes, we have the Authority, and I'm so happy that we were able to move swiftly over the last couple of years to get things in place, but in order for you all to take on assets and to stand up the way you conduct your business, you have a lot of heavy lifting to do, and you will need support in that process, and clearly the City is here to support from service level agreements, SLAs, to helping you navigate this space so you can be fully on board. This is one action, Mr. Manager, that I think is just one of many that we're going to have to do to support the establishment of the Authority, and in the actual agenda item, it alludes to that, that there will be other actions to be made as well. I just wanted to say, this is a matter of course as it relates to when you do acquisitions, and when you stand up new Greenfield businesses and new Greenfield authorities, there's a level of financial injection that you have to have, that's just part and parcel to conducting business. So, I'll be supporting this this evening, and look to your wisdom and guidance and leadership on the Authority as we navigate over the next several months. Thank you.

Councilmember Ajmera said I agree with remarks that've been made by my colleague, Councilmember Anderson, and Chairman, Mr. Howard, as well as Ms. Mack, thank you for being here all the way until the end. I just want to be very clear that the funding that we are approving today is completely separate from the recent transportation referendum. This is just from existing sales tax revenue that's already restricted for transit use, and with any organization when we're trying to build up an organization, there is a start-up cost involved, so just the basic foundation that's needed to continue to stand up the Authority. We are in great hands with your leadership, Mr. Chairman, as well as all 27 members of the Authority. I always tell people that when you look at strong transit, that doesn't start with rail or buses. It really starts with governance. It starts with financial controls, and it starts with systems that earn public trust. So, I look forward to

how this fund will help us continue to restore public trust in our transit system. That's all I have. Thank you.

Councilmember Graham said let me take this opportunity to congratulate Chairman Howard and Trustee Mack for their participation on the Metropolitan Public Transit Authority. I had the opportunity to be there when they were sworn in, and because I had nothing to do, I watched your January 2026 meeting, and I'm so excited about what this community is about to do in terms of really to do a regional transportation network, and being able to see it from the start. The Intergovernmental Relations Committee had the opportunity to hear the presentation at our first meeting, and if I can speak for the members of the committee, we're all extremely excited about establishing a relationship and a partnership with the Authority, as we do with State Government, our County Government. We understand that this will be the first of many interlocal agreements we have between the City and the Authority, and we look forward to being partners with you. We also understand that over the first 18 months it's going to be foundation building, building partnerships, building relationships, building trust, building up culture for the organization. Obviously, there's \$4.3 million, just as I said earlier last week, it's putting gas in the car so you can go, and we want you guys to go and go far and go steady and straight, and know that the subcommittee is here to support your work and support you both, Ms. Mack and Chairman Howard and your endeavors to create a system that reflects this community. Thank you very much for your support.

Councilmember Driggs said so having been the Chair of Transportation and Planning throughout the runup to the referendum, I'm thrilled tonight that we are at a point of seeing this actually get realized. It's a little bit like when Eastland progressed finally from being a problem to being a solution. I also saw the first meetings. Mr. Chair, I admired how you were appointed in the second meeting, leapt right into the chair, and then essentially heard those [INAUDIBLE]. It was quite an extraordinary session, and I will point out to all of us that we are in somewhat uncharted waters here. This is the first of a number of votes, many votes, that will come to us, and many of them will address issues that we haven't seen before. So, how do we move over the assets? What are they worth? How do we move over the personnel? How do we protect them and preserve whatever benefits they have from working for the City today? There are going to be issues of risk management. We're going to have to partner with this organization and provide various services as they build up their capacities, and I look forward to that partnership. I think it's important that we work at all times in a spirit of cooperation, because let's recognize the activity of the Authority must be aligned with what we are doing here. So, our road planning, our development planning, our housing planning, all of that is part and parcel with investments that are being made in mobility. So, I think this is a huge development, this first vote is a milestone, and I think it's pretty clear, we've got to get some money into this organization. At their first meeting, they kind of sat there, didn't even have a dime. They didn't have a bank account, and they need our help initially to transact and to gradually inflate this thing and build it up.

So, good night tonight. Thank you, Ms. Mack, and Mr. Howard, thank you especially. I think you're a great person to be in this role representing as you do through your history with the City and your background in transportation, kind of many dimensions of what it is we're going to be dealing with. So, I look forward to working with you. Thank you.

Mayor Lyles said alright, so I think that it's a really great opportunity for us. I know that between Ed and myself and the Manager, five, six years that we went through with all of this, We were audacious to say that the Manager would buy a train for \$90 million. If you only knew about Raleigh, and how many times we went there, and how much of an engagement it had to be to make this happen. I think it's probably one of the most momentous things that we would ever, ever do, but I also think that you will do those things as well as we did, and we're just glad to turn it over to you, and I say that with great support to you. This city is going to be some place that's going to be so great, and part of it will be because we did start taking care of our people. We started giving them a job. We started giving them a way to get around the work places, and all of these things that we committed to do, everything that I think the staff and everyone else, I

January 12, 2026
Business Meeting
Minute Book 161, Page 689

believe truly that that is going to be the beginning of what will make our City continue to be some place that people care about.

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

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 69, at Page(s) 167.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolution Book 55, at Page(s) 169-176.

* * * * *

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Councilmember Mitchell, seconded by Councilmember Watlington, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.


Stephanie C. Kelly, City Clerk, MMC/NCCMC

Length of Meeting: 2 Hours, 28 Minutes
Minutes completed: January 29, 2026