

ANNUAL STRATEGY MEETING, DAY 3 - WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2024

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina reconvened on Wednesday, January 24, 2024, at 9:08 a.m. with Mayor Lyles presiding. Councilmembers present were Danté Anderson, Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Malcolm Graham, Lawana Mayfield and James Mitchell.

ABSENT: Councilmember Dimple Ajmera, Renee Johnson, and Victoria Watlington.

ABSENT UNTIL NOTED: Councilmembers Tiawana Brown and Marjorie Molina.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 1: WELCOME AND OVERVIEW

DeAlva Wilson, Facilitator said good morning. Thank you for showing up again today. You guys have really done some great work. So, I just want to give you a round of applause. Applause for yourself because as I said yesterday, you got your hands dirty yesterday or over the last two days and really leaned in and worked. You had some working sessions, and you completed some deliverables and goals. So, we really appreciate that. Today's the day we finish strong. If we continue with the baseball analogy, only home runs today.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 2: WRAP UP & NEXT STEPS

Mayor Lyles said it has been exceptional, the level of conversation we've had about mobility. Most of us have been wrestling with this topic for years. I think I heard two things. That we need to act for the people that live in our City, that they deserve better roads, better infrastructure and we need to figure out how to do that. The long run, if we're talking about generational change and continuing to grow, I love the idea of continuing to grow at the rate that we are or even when it's not that strong. We need to be thinking about the next generation of change and that means you can do two things at one time. I believe that we have the value and the structure and actually the economics to be able to do that. So, let's figure out how we do it and what is the what, but we know that we have to perform and commit to the people that live in our City as well as those that are going to come to our City. So, let's figure out mobility, which is our first topic this morning, but I don't know who's next on the list. Thank you.

Ms. Wilson said so, really great mobility discussion on yesterday. Great questions, great ideas, great insight from our panelists and we have a goal in which we need to have some alignment from the Council on marching orders for Marcus and Ed and the team around what do we now go do. So, the end goal is to have a plan and a strategy and a package to elevate for funding. So, there needs to be some alignment among the group around what we move forward with. First is agreement that we will approach the business community with collaboration and also other key partners. Collaborating with government and other key partners. We've talked about that a lot, but I think it's time to say raise hands yes, because literally they're leading with action. So, clarity is needed. Then the other is obviously the framework that Ed laid out that you have in your books that we need to bless if you will or edit if appropriate. If so, what are those at this time so that we can finalize a plan. They can leave and finalize a plan to circle back to you with to elevate for some of those funding discussions. So, Mayor and Marcus, I'll ask if there's anything else in terms of the call to action for, or direction for the Council.

Mayor Lyles said I want to do a check in because while we had the presentation from Ed and we talked about 16 districts, I'm not quite sure that I understand. In my history of what we've done, we've always had plans for neighborhood plans. We had plans for zoning, and now I think if we are having 16 districts for infrastructure and capital investment and transportation investment, I'm not quite sure that I understand it well enough to say what do we do to put in a plan like that, or what is the plan going to

accomplish and does it align with the timeframe that we are talking about. We have a budget coming up. We've had the question about our infrastructure and our mobility. There's a lot of pieces. So, can we put the puzzle together so that we can see how it fits if we have something that we're missing a piece of the puzzle that we have to find, or are we ready for the puzzle. I do believe it starts with our own people first to be able to take the work that we talk about and implement some things, some action items in that puzzle.

Ms. Wilson said very good, thank you. I've recorded that as a point of discussion today. I do have some things that I want to ground you on but before that, Marcus I just want to be really clear about what the goal of this discussion is today. It's alignment on the approach that you're going to take when you leave here and any edits on the key points that Ed made in the actual framework itself. Is that accurate? Okay, very good.

So, I want to call your attention to the sheet that Elise just handed out. There were some things that we captured yesterday. They're not necessarily the technical components of what he talked about. So, we didn't talk specifically. I didn't capture things. We talked about the fact that you liked the way the intersection was constructed here. So, those nuances I think you do want to hear today, right? Okay, very good. So, mobility things from yesterday. Obviously, agreement that there are funding options that are needed. We talked about the importance of alignment on Council with and through collaboration with other key partners, the need for a broad value proposition to get buy in and to cast a wide net for support, that mobility should be a community and business led strategy not a government led strategy. I think our community has had great examples of that in the past. The arts and culture work that was done, that was community and business led and many others. Leveraging past performances is a great way to gain credibility and trust from the community and our partners. Speaking to the great work that's been done before in all the deliverables that we deliver. Creative approaches are needed to build trust. We had some examples of that on yesterday. A holistic approach is needed to position the Mobility Plan as a catalyst for economic development and an improved quality of life for all. I think that also speaks to the what's in it for me as you talk about the marketing and the talking points and the communication and the engagement that you had helping people understand where they fit in the big picture, and mobility is much broader than getting people to A to B. What are the tangential effects to all people, the impact to the entire community for riders and nonriders?

The framework that Ed laid out in his presentation was confirmed through commentary from our experts in the room yesterday that we're headed in the right direction. I think we all agree that we got kind of an unofficial nod from them, and certainly they added other great points to it as well. So, as you think about these things, is there general agreement on these things, because there are some things that the staff can use these to create some next steps around these themes? Is there anything to add here?

Councilmember Anderson said I'm not sure if it's anything to add but I just wanted to clarify. Great panel, great subject matter experts who've gone through it and lived it, but in Ed's presentation here, he ended by talking about bundling projects and how these bundles may come together in the future. Then we talked a little bit about some caveats around bundling certain projects from the subject matter experts. I would just like to get some understanding of next steps as it relates to will those projects be bundled together and then we have a view of those? What's the timing of that? Are we open to other ways of doing it? Given the subject matter expert information and input yesterday, I wanted to know what tangible next steps are.

Ms. Wilson said very good. I've just recorded that as a key point to talk in discussion. I do want to just put a pin on the themes here just to close out on that, if there are other things to be added here if you're in agreement with all of these.

Mayor Lyles said I just want to connect the 16 plans that we have with the community engagement that we need to incorporate, and I think that if we're going to do 16 plans across the footprint of our City, then I think there needs to be some structure because

the needs are going to be different but the process to determine the needs need to be the same. That's kind of the way I see it.

Ms. Wilson said very good. There's general consensus there, I think we can add that to one of our things in terms of takeaways for the staff.

Councilmember Brown arrived at 9:19 a.m.

Councilmember Driggs said so, I think Marcus knows that I have a feeling that we're not putting enough resources behind this. This is not just going to happen, and we don't have any people that we haven't had all along. An enterprise like this is going to involve people like those and some staff and a lot of man hours. So, we heard two years lead time. We're already late to be starting our public information campaign. I think in fact we are way ahead of ourselves in terms of having refined the projects, the things we want to do. We've gotten into a level of detail about that, but meanwhile we don't have the alignment with other communities, we don't have the alignment with the legislature. So, I would like us to step back and take a big picture look and not stress too much about the finer points of the plan and let's tackle, massively let's tackle the issue of getting the governance in alignment. Working with the legislature, we haven't had any outreach to the legislature on a regular basis. I've been a few times, I've talked to them, I have an idea of what they're thinking, I'm sure Tariq does, but they said to me, "We haven't seen anybody. We haven't seen the Mayor or the Manager for two years," Berger said. It needs to be more of a dialogue than a moment in time when we show up and say, "Hey, we want you guys to pass this." So, I don't disagree with anything that's been said, all great, but what's missing for me is that big push. It involves budget. It involves people.

Ms. Wilson said makes sense, yes. I do want you to see this exercise as a part of that process though because at some point they have to have something in a glossy that says this is our plan because when they go to Raleigh, they need to be concrete. Not that conversations have a start.

Mr. Driggs said it's a question of sequence. Let's picture a critical path analysis. What's going to happen when, who's going to do what? So, we've waited for a long time to answer the Red Line question because there was no doubt that there was a barrier there in terms of the northern towns, but we could've been doing other things while that was going on. We need to be doing those things now. We're not going to get there in 2025. Unless we answer the money question, the rest of what we're talking about is academic. So, I just really want to bang the table and say let's staff this thing up. Let's get people with relevant resumes working on it. Let's put more pressure on leaders. We've had a couple of conversations with leaders and they've kind of said, "Yea, okay, I guess, whatever," or "Tell me what it looks like." So, I have been a bit frustrated because I see things like this and yes, they're great, but that's not what's going to make it happen. If you talk to a lot of the guys in Raleigh, they hear 80 percent rail and they shut down and Tim Moore said so publicly. So, okay you don't like that. What could we do? So, let's get something. We have the necessary stuff, but let's just get with them and find out what would help them get across the line. That may involve first getting business leaders to take a little more interest in this. What we've also heard and what I've seen repeatedly is there is a collaboration between the business community and government in making these things happen. We haven't been able to create that yet. We've had some outreach to leaders, but unless it's a whole lot going on that I'm not aware of, nobody in the business community has taken upon themselves to help make this thing come true. So, I think we're sort of poking at it and we need to slug it.

Mayor Lyles said Ed, I hear you and I agree that we have had difficulty but let me say the difficulty in creating this critical path. We talked about how Charlotte is a Democratic City and a Republican government structure and how we're seen and viewed. So, the strategies that we need to do is to build foundational leadership and we've spent a lot of time around the region to get that buy in. So, I think we ought to give ourselves some credit for the ideas that we've done and accomplished. When I became Mayor, I didn't know any of the other Mayors and now we're talking. Connect Beyond has been a part of this initiative, but it hasn't been shaped towards action as you say, what is our critical

path for that? So, I believe that your suggestion about a critical path has to ask the question what is our strategy for doing this? Is it really with working with people that have more power at the state level than we do? I appreciate what Tariq and doing and how you represent us in that forum, but we've also been trying and getting the business community, and I agree with you, some of them are coming in, some are waiting to see. I also see where we have people that we have not asked the direct question, "Will you do this now?" I think that's what you're saying. We have a lot of relationships that we've built, but none of them have been consistent to say, "Will you support this effort," and get them to solidify their support for doing this.

Mr. Driggs said I think we would be a lot more critical if we had somebody like one of them, a real ball buster who has done it and is a career specialist in the field. We don't have that person.

Mayor Lyles said I agree.

Mr. Driggs said we heard some stuff like two-year lead time for public information and that's been a pet peeve of mind as you know. What are we doing about putting that marketing, that branding effort in place? So, I just think nothing wrong with what we've got, but in the larger scheme of things I think a bigger commitment of resources and a demonstration of real intent on our part because you two have got jobs that aren't just this. We need somebody who's doing this and whose resume says that is what I do. I have done it. I know it. I've headed these departments in other places. I've led bonds in other places. They know. They have a very practical sense of what they need, and they will get the message across to some of the people we need to talk to better than we can. Frankly all of us, me included for sure, are in this space dilettantes. So, I just hope that we will put some resources to work here, invest in this thing and scale it up because it's not going to happen the way we're doing it.

Councilmember Molina arrived at 9:26 a.m.

Mayor Lyles said so, how does Council feel about that? I think it's a valid point. I think the question is have we considered ourselves enough in this conversation to support that effort because it can't just be the transportation leadership in our Council, in the Committee. It is a very massive job. Before I came up here, I called every Mayor in our surrounding towns to say, "We're going to be talking about mobility. I don't want you to be surprised," and those kinds of relationships matter but they don't necessarily move the ball. So, they matter but don't move the ball. So, what does Council think about it?

Marcus Jones, City Manager said just one thing I want to put in the room to try to give the Council credit for what you've done. I think the alignment isn't necessarily amongst the Council members. I think the alignment amongst the county, the towns and the City is the issue because the priorities for the City may be very different than the priorities for Mint Hill or for Pineville. So, I think that's been part of the issue of moving this along. It's just general agreement about mobility and what it is and what you get out of this. I think that that's a bigger problem than alignment within this room.

Councilmember Graham said I agree with that. I think you're spot on for sure. As I said earlier, it seems like we're just running in place. We're not going forward, we're not going backward, we're just kind of pawing the ground that we're on and I think the Manager is right. How do we get this regional buy in? Notwithstanding that Charlotte has to kind of do what Charlotte has to do, but how do we get people in the region to have one vision for what we're trying to do and answer a very basic question, which is a selfish question for everybody, what's in it for me? Then thirdly, how do we pay for it? I think it's a theme that I hope that we're hearing, whether it's talking about transportation, mobility which I think it's my top priority other than public safety because it's going to take some much time to get it done. We're talking three or four years. Not going to happen in the short session. If it does it will be a miracle and even in the long session, in 2025 it's problematic, and then getting it on the ballot to educate the public to vote for it. Most of these cities that we visited over the last year or two, it fails the first time around. So, we're talking a marathon here, another [inaudible]. Then making sure that

the region and the cities feel that they've been heard, and we give them something that's of value to them. A road that's stopped at the Charlotte City line doesn't do anybody good. Transit that stops at Charlotte City line doesn't do anything good. So, it's how do we get this regional buy in and how do we sell it to the public whether it's sports and entertainment, whether it's transportation mobility, whether it's a strategy for homelessness in our community. How do we begin to involve the public in this thing where they understand what it is that we're trying to accomplish? How do we utilize our business community to help be advocates for us? How do we begin to have this conversation with Raleigh in a way that they feel that they're in it with us? I think that's the thing. That they're a part of the strategy, that they're a part of the planning and that their investment is a win for them as well.

Mayor Lyles said you know, I agree with you Malcolm that we need to do this, but I also want to remind you we couldn't do anything until we got the Red Line going and that's been less than a year in a way. So, I say we had no choice except to wait. I know that Bradford said, "Well you know, you didn't call me," well I didn't call him because he told me, "Don't call me unless you couldn't do the Red Line." So, it takes some time. So, the fits and starts are important, but I think that we're in a new environment with the Red Line and that discussion has to take place first because it's just the thing that held this together. Now, I think Marcus is being very generous in terms of when you talk about a countywide sales tax referendum, the deals are discussed. The question is we all know that we run every two years. We started in Huntersville with a Mayor that said no. So, you can't do this without. Now we have a new set and I think the question for me is now that we know that we have the Red Line, it's on the table.

Mr. Graham said do we know that we have the Red Line?

Mayor Lyles said it's on the table. We know that we have the Red Line on our table. That's what I'm saying. We do not know whether or not we'll still get there, but I think the other part about it is that we have new leadership in Huntersville and that has always been one of the tougher things that we've had to do because it was really hard, but we also had a crisis in our own CATS (Charlotte Area Transit System) system, and nobody was believing us. Everybody came to those meetings and voted every day unanimously. I think somebody told me that the only no vote was they can't even find one. So, we've got a lot of organizational work to do. The critical path that Ed is talking about, the resources to put behind it, and the agreement to get it done isn't going to be a short term, and I'm okay with that because I think that we're building a City for the future not what we're doing right now except we do need to take care of our people in a lot of ways with real change and projects that are necessary. If we don't do stuff for our people then how do you do it for someone else?

Mr. Driggs said so, my feeling was that it doesn't have to be sequential. So, failure is not an option. We have to do something big. So, we can kind of be putting the infrastructure in place to do something big. I think that buys us more credibility in our conversations. Your relationships, and I've been with you a couple of times, and they're absolutely essential, necessary, but if we go in and we have a conversation and we say, "Well this is our idea for a regional plan," and then they say, as a number of them have, "Okay, I need a local piece. I need something for me. I can't just be part of a network." Okay, good, that's information, that's good to hear, but if they see that now professional planners are starting to put this together. People who know about the authority are laying out the options for governance, it becomes much more immediate, and our commitment is more apparent. I think the conversation is substantive. So, it's not my purpose to criticize at all, this is just a call to action. If you want to achieve this or anything, we were talking about getting a referendum done the first time, 2022 at the Transportation Summit. I went back and looked and the first time we were talking about it, we thought we were going to have a referendum in 2022. So, I just think we need to step up the urgency, that's all, and that in my mind means putting resources behind this and demonstrating to others that there is something real there that they can get onboard with.

Mayor Lyles said I think Ed and I have done so much of this, Malcolm's experience, but I haven't heard from Danté and Marjorie and LaWana and James, Tia as well.

Councilmember Mitchell said let me first thank Ed for what I call showing a strong leadership this morning because I do know this Mobility Plan has been a passion for this Council. I think my frustration has been, Mayor you touched on it earlier, we don't even know the 16 strategies and I always thought the Mobility Plan needed to be concise. It needs to be a plan this whole Council can articulate to the citizens to get that buy in. Marcus, part of me then agrees with you because a lot of hard work has gone into this and Ed and his staff have done a tremendous job of trying their best to get us to a point. So, Ed's right, I don't think we should say we're failing. I think we ought to look at this just as a reboot. We have two committees. I think if we just spend some time talking about the Mobility Plan. You have TAP (Transportation Action Plan), the ED (Economic Development) Chairs and we have the BGIR (Budget Governance and Intergovernmental Relations Committee) with Dimple. I think this needs to be a parallel track. If we're really going to be committed, we have to have this in front of us and check some boxes that would give people confidence, but more importantly I think it would send the right message to Raleigh that we clearly know now what we would like to do, what vision we're trying to create. Mayor, you said it best, we ought to stop thinking this is a sprint to 2024, 2025. I don't want to call it a marathon because that's too long but I want to say we just need to reboot, get a real strategy on all fronts and here's the big test for all of us on Council. I'm used to the old model that we had a strong business community that really got behind big initiatives in our community and they were our voice and they advocated for us. I think there's a vacuum right now. What business entity is out there that we're looking to champion and to partner with us on this? So, I think we have to have some conversations. Mayor [inaudible].

Mayor Lyles said CELC (Charlotte Executive Leadership Council).

Mr. Mitchell said I don't know if it's the CELC or is it a group of business leaders that we know have cachet in Raleigh that can partner with us. So, I just think internally let's look at this as a reboot, but let's do some internal work right now to put us in a better position as we implement our Mobility Plan. Thank you.

Councilmember Anderson said I'm just listening to all the commentary. I think this has to be a both/and because yesterday we discussed, we know what our objective is overall. We have a Mobility Plan, but as we mentioned yesterday and you just mentioned Ed, it's a two-year window from a communications plan with the community. There's certain things we can't put on the ballot this year, conversely, the City Manager said, "We're not going to wait two years to do something about mobility, we have to find money to actually begin investment." So, we have to do both/and. We need some energy like Ed mentioned. Someone who can interface with the General Assembly who has that level of pedigree like we've heard from our subject matter experts. That's the power of bringing in outside voices because then we can see we're very much focused on what we're doing, but we can see and understand and grow from their lived experience. So, we need that, I agree, but we also need to continue down adding some dimension to the strategy to these projects, understanding priority because between now and two years from now, we need to make traction in some way on some of these projects. So, I firmly believe it's a both/and, and I think we have to manage it that way. We will have to manage the work that way.

Councilmember Mayfield said we have the opportunity, I believe, to start the conversations in community. As was mentioned, we heard from the panel first time around it failed. Well, it failed because we have to go to our voters, our residents, and get their support. We've created a space where we've done a lot of work with little to no communication with the residents that we're going to ask to vote for this. So, when we think of that "and" as we're working on the regional. We used to have a relationship on the CEDC, for the Centrolina Economic Development Commission. I was the former Chair. George Dunlap was former Chair when we were on the Board together. We were in constant communication around a number of things. We have the opportunity with our regional relationships where we have Council members that sit on different committees

and boards. I don't want us getting much further down the road without these community conversations. Mr. Manager, you used to have the Meet and Eats out in the community. Council members are planning their upcoming town halls. We need to have someone to at least start dropping the seeds of the conversation so that the community doesn't feel like, "Oh, here's another thing the City is doing without us." That to me falls in the line of seeing progress and movement because if we haven't even talked to our residents about it, why should Raleigh believe that we're moving forward and not just doing our own thing again. That way, simultaneously, when we're having these regional conversations, it's going to go a lot further. It will not be a good look for us to put this energy out there to try to get Pineville, Gastonia, others to come in with their financial ask because we don't even know what that is because we're just not saying, "Hey, Charlotte's tax is going to pay for all this but y'all get the benefit." We need to know what the financial ask for them is as well. We need to start right here at home, start having those conversations with our own residents and our community leaders.

Mr. Jones said because this came up a few times, I want to make sure that Council is aware of the engagement process that is happening. So, the strategic investment areas, 16 of them, I guess we could've put a bunch of them up there and we do have them. So, I apologize. I was trying to slim down the presentation. There's a lot of data that goes into that, but you also have right now the Community Area Planning Process. So, they are having these discussions about these projects, these areas, these bundles. So, it's actually working well, the timing is good. So, it's not that this is happening in a vacuum.

Councilmember Molina said good morning. So, first of all I don't want to belabor any point that's already been said. I agree with much of what many of my colleagues have already said. I think first of all I'm happy and very proud that we've taken the initiative to create a blueprint. This represents, in my mind, Charlotte's commitment to doing what we can do before there is any initiative to look at the regional plan. I think the what we can do and the bigger picture have to happen concurrently. There's no such thing as wait until. So, I'm very excited about what I saw here even though we didn't see a comprehensive view. The idea that we are looking to meet some of those needs within the capacity that we're able to. I don't want to belabor a point and I really don't want to sound pessimistic, but the truth is a lot of what Councilmember Driggs says about your budget and the deficiencies, and our needs is something that we really don't demonstrate effectively across the board because people are like, we need sidewalks. We need roads fixed, and dah, dah, dah, dah, dah, and we really don't in my opinion always do a good job of demonstrating to the public what we actually for that, and how extensive those needs are. So, like I said I'm glad that we're doing what we're able to do within the budget constraints that we have available to us within the City of Charlotte and expanding that scope and thinking about the bigger picture. I've heard that the conversation around our counterparts in Raleigh is difficult because of the region, but Madam Mayor I'm actually excited to lean into that process and be a part of the solution as much as I can and leverage the relationships that you've built in the community and that Councilmember Ed Driggs has been working on well before I came to Council to at least work towards the solutions. To say that this blueprint couldn't be successful based on what we have, I think I'm overconfident because of the Mayor's Racial Equity Initiative. To get to \$245 million in one year with our private sector, I cannot tell you. I talked to a number of cities at the last National League of Cities Conference, and when I said that number and how quickly we got to that with the partnership of our private sector, people were astounded. For them to come in with over \$120 million, \$130 million in a year's time was just heartening.

So, I look forward to those continued partnerships because those are how we make things happen. I think that's also something that our public doesn't understand. For example, the municipal bond that we leveraged for affordable housing, that \$50 million bond, people hear \$50 million not realizing that that's a debt leverage that we've asked the taxpayer to partner with us for so that we can create the subsidy, but the only reason it works is because of the private sector. We provide these but/for dollars that are the result of their trusting us to make the right decision and then we're able to provide affordable units, but being demonstrative of how that process works is one of the reasons why I know for sure that our public feels as though they can't confide in us,

I guess I wouldn't say confide, but I guess they hear that number. They don't understand how it all comes together. They don't understand that there's this inextricable nature with what we do and the private sector and the construction and building community and the development community to provide affordable housing. It's inextricable. There's an inextricable nature to what we do to that.

So, like I said I'm really excited about getting into the work. I wish there was more of a way to demonstrate what we actually do and the semantics of it to the public so that they understand all that was involved. Like I said I'm excited to continue to work and every person that I get in my grasp, I really try to give them a big picture of how we make it all come together so that they understand, because a lot of the time our partners in the development community or in the private sector, they take a lot of beatings from what is perceived to be buying into the process when there's an inextricable nature to their participation in the process.

Councilmember Bokhari said so, I want to say this next thing in a very non-threatening way. I start back where we all agree, which is we absolutely need a transformational investment in transportation. We need to achieve it. I think where the frustrations I see in the conversation, which I think my perceptions are the same that several people I regularly talk to view it when we have these conversations, and they are the roadblocks to this being achieved. So, I'm going to come to you from that perspective and the frustration is while we need it to happen, I just feel like we are on an impossible mission doing it this way and we should be focusing on public safety instead. If there was even a 50 percent chance of success in this path, I would not have said that, but I really believe it and here's why. We had some really good conversations over the last two days. Some real conversations about what it would take to do this, what it would really take, and it disheartens me now. Again, this is just how I'm interpreting it, maybe I'm wrong, but I think this is how others hear it as well. We jumped over that work of transforming an 80 percent rail plan in allocated dollars to a road first plan which is much deeper in its meaning than just the simple tagline and jump straight over to we need a credible person in here that can have credibility with others so that they can negotiate around the edges of the same 80/20 plan so that other people get onboard. Or, negotiate around the edges of a governance model so that people are happy with the 80/20 plan or go to Raleigh and be seen in a credible way so they convince people for the 80/20 plan or start a two year marketing pitch to the people so they'll vote for an 80/20 plan and we skipped right over the is the 80/20 same plan, maybe we call it 90/10 before that, but it was essentially the exact same plan, the thing we're going to get serious and take another look at that in my opinion actually is the body of work in getting this done. Or do you go the other route, which I'm not going to say it has zero percent chance of success, but it's a complete political problem. It's not an expert redesigning the actual guts of the program, and maybe there's a five percent chance of success there over a very long period of time.

So, again I'm oversimplifying the answer, but sometimes in these settings we have to oversimplify so the message is heard. I think there's one political route which is everything that was just said and it's largely, if we're going to call a spade a spade, a marketing exercise and a consensus building exercise on something we already had, or do we do two basic things? Table the Silver Line for a dollar-based reason only. It is mathematically impossible to have what we're calling a roads first plan and the Silver Line together. There's just not enough money. Table the Silver Line and spend a fraction of the effort of staff and expert time that has been spent over the last decade on designing rail and the Silver Line to design what truly roads first means, which isn't just, "Let's build more roads and expand them," it's about the smart technologies at intersections, it's about deep diving into bus rapid transit, it's about all the other things that go along with reducing congestion and things with four and multiple wheels on the road get around better, more effectively and in innovative ways. So, I really want this to happen, but I know the folks that are in the same head winds that have been the head winds for a long time. There's no expert that can be hired. There's no marketing budget that can be set upon it. There's no slight tweaks around the edges that they'll be tricked into liking the same old plan as before. Maybe we wait them out, maybe that's a strategy and they'll be gone and someone else will be there, but I'd rather us be working

on public safety if that was the strategy. So, I say that in good faith. I've said it a lot, but I hope someone hears it, I hope someone figures out, maybe we tweak the plan, but if not, I really encourage us to really get serious about public safety because that is something we can make a difference in.

Ms. Wilson said if I may just really quickly. I think what you all have demonstrated is actually what I tried to start with at the beginning of the conversation which is I look around this room and all of you have done strategic plans. You have the experience. You're not aligned on the what. So, you have to start there and that's been in this conversation and that's what I'd like to bring out today even if it's in themes. I don't think it's going to be solved today, but you do have to start with the big picture on what you're going to ask the community to do and what you're committing to deliver for the community. This the time and this is the purpose of this conversation. That level of alignment because you're talking about projects and how you're going to do it. I agree you can have some conversations at the appropriate time to say, "This is what we're thinking about doing," but at some point, you have to stand as a united front and say, "This is what we've committed to do as a City." You kind of need to do that because if not, Marcus and Ed are going to be on this framework. Do you like it or don't you like it? Those are very basic questions that need to be answered so all of these people working on these projects can know what to do.

So, we appreciate the perspective on all the nuances, but at a minimum, is it roads or is rails? Like, can we start there? There's some higher-level conversations that you guys need to get in alignment on because it's just confusion as I'm sitting here, and I'm just going to call you all back to your own experience. You know how to do strategies, right? I look around at the background and your experience. It's the same process. We're strategy. So, you can't get to implementation or anything. Like, when you're talking to people what are you really talking about? Is LaWana talking about something different in the community than the Mayor is or that Tariq is or that Danté or Ed is? That's not good. That's not good for the City. So, can you just get on the same page around what you want to deliver. You can talk about prioritization and how you're going to deliver it because there is a place that says you do it all. You can have it all. You just can't have it all at the same time. So, what are your top-of-mind thoughts around what we should ask the staff to work on to deliver initially for the City? That's where we need to go.

Mr. Driggs said so, I just want to make it clear, and I think I did make it clear that it wasn't my intention to suggest that we leapfrog and carry on. I agree, what I've heard in Raleigh as well is the rail component of this thing is not what they liked [inaudible]. In order to know what we do instead, we need to engage and not just sort of come up with something else and see if that works. I'm just saying our energy around this is not big enough. Yes, it's going to have to be different, I think. I don't think there is enough money for the Silver Line. So, we do have work to do, but what bothers me is this concept of let's do one thing at a time, sequentially. So, let's just energize this effort. Let's put more resources behind it. Answer these questions. Figure it out, but it's going to have to be a dialogue. What I said to the guys when I went to Raleigh was, "I understand that you don't like our plan. We would like to collaborate with you in figuring out what the plan is instead of having this sort of unilateral process where we just deliver it," and that involves them. Berger said to me, "I get it. You need to do something. You need to do something big." So, my point was "Okay, you don't like this? Then let's talk," but we have to have the flexibility then to adapt to that, but I think in my mind for example a penny is a lot. We heard that one of the cities, Miami I think, scaled back to a half cent after a couple of false starts and didn't build rail for 20 years. That's the kind of sort of on the ground experience that you don't get by just sort of mulling over in the abstract, what kind of a plan you like. There's a reality there in terms of the people you need, how it proceeds, what happens. We've been to Austin, we went to Tampa, Denver and we've heard about the experience in these cities, and I just got the feeling from those visits that the way we're going about this is not sufficiently informed by the reality of what has happened in other places. I think the way to achieve that alignment is to have someone who's done it, who's been there, a veteran.

Councilmember Brown said good morning wonderful people, how y'all doing? I know I'm always positive. I was born and raised that way, I'm sorry. I'm not going to apologize for being the person that I am, but truly sitting here listening to everything that has been said, all of the big language that some of it I understand, and I don't understand. The one thing that set with me is we're 11 individuals. We all had our own strategic plan as we went out on the campaign trail trying to get people to support us and follow us. The one thing that remains true and holds true to this point is that we've got to work together and we're not there. I see it, I've been in office. I've contemplated leaving several times, I'm being honest. It's a disaster. It's a disaster for me, for the community, it has to be for the staff that's support us and it should be for each one of us. You know, it's there's some things you just cannot change, and I realize that. People are set in their ways. I'm 52 years old, there's some things I'm not going to change, but one thing that has to change is if we're going to work together, if we're going to change, we're going to have to work together. You might not like everything that I say or do and vice versa. You might not like the Mayor's agenda, but we have Committees, and we have to work together, and we have to respect each other and it's a lot of disrespect going on and it has been going on for quite some time. For me to come in as a Council representative of District Three, I've seen it. It's disappointing and it's disheartening.

So, as far as this blueprint for the Charlotte Mobility Investment, it took a lot of hard work for the people, Ed, the staff, whoever. I don't everything, I don't know everybody, but the problem is we have everybody in here that thinks they do and nobody wants to follow. Everybody wants to lead. So, when you have a bunch of leaders that's great, but somebody has to follow. So, we're headed for self-destruction. I said it and I meant it and I know, it's public record, but we're going to have to fix this before we can move forward and have the community to follow us, to really trust us and believe in us. We've got to go back to the starting point and the foundation of what it takes to work together when everybody is strong, everybody is smart in their own way, intelligent, everybody has everybody that supports them in their own perspective ways, but we have got to really go back to the basics. I don't know what that looks like, I don't have all the answers. One thing about me, I don't pretend to have them, but we are definitely not aligned with anything to be able to move forward to have community conversations in the community, to go out into the community to talk about public safety, whatever. Yes, public safety is important, but this is as well. We've got to make sure that we have a big agenda for the Council. We have a lot to put under that budget and to work and make things work. I don't know how we're going to do it. I don't have all the answers, but that's what I had to say this morning. That's my opportunity. So, y'all can continue to talk strategy, strategic plan, Blue Line, Red Line, the government, legislation in Raleigh, people haven't seen, whoever. Let's get together and see what it takes to get things done, all of the things that we need to get done. That's what I would like to see.

Mr. Jones said thank you Councilmember Brown. Just a couple of things I want to say mainly because the Mayor has to attend an MTC (Metropolitan Transit Commission) meeting tonight. I want to make sure that there aren't soundbites that go out that would suggest that this City Council is doing something that is inconsistent with the region. So, I'm very visual. So, Ed's slide yesterday in that middle stack was the 2030 Plan from the MTC and in the 2030 Plan, which has been approved over and over again, there's the Red Line, the Silver Line East and the Silver Line West, there's the Blue Line extension into Ballantyne as well as having the Gold Line East and West. That policy making board at some point over the course of this year is going to update something that's called the MTP (Metropolitan Transportation Plan) and that's something that CRTPO (Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization) actually approves but there's an element of that that's related to rail that comes from the MTC. Some of the issues why the plan is so big is because you try to keep everybody together. So, when you eliminate the Silver Line East which impacts Matthews, then how do you all come together? So, I totally understand that this is big and there is a lot of thought behind eliminating some of this stuff, but I don't want the conversation to be tonight that the City Council wanted to pull the Silver Line out of this plan and then lose some of the relationships that have been built. So, in terms of process there is going to be a public conversation about not only updating that plan but prioritizing what comes first, second, third, fourth, fifth. So, that's just one of the reasons why. I know Mr. Driggs you're

frustrated. That's one of the reasons why this thing is slow moving because approval processes and plans and who gets to prioritize those things.

Ms. Wilson said so, I think about everything that I've heard here and if we were to put a project plan together or a program together, I think there would be five tracks. The collaboration, important conversation pieces, the actual strategy and plan, putting teeth to that and you have to put a button on it at some point although that may be edited, but I think you need something concrete enough that you could actually begin to provide something that's aligned with the staff to move forward with.

Mayor Lyles said DeAlva, I know this. You can't go out on the diving board without the support that's necessary to dive in. So, we as a Council have never taken a vote on a number of things, these initiatives that we've talked about and if we are going to invest in this, I think we need to ask the Manager to come back to us, and it can be a number of options for review, but in the month of February 2024, we have to take a vote on what are we trying to accomplish and do. If we can do that, then perhaps the things that Ms. Brown was saying, we could have some roles [inaudible]. So, I've heard, "How do we get the business community support? What is our community conversation? Do we need dedicated staff? How do we tell our story? How do we make sure our plans are consistent with what is available in our future?" I also think that we have to remember we're just one piece of this pie. The federal government's money that would make this all possible, because we could do a one cent sales tax and yes, we will have a match that's required, and we will not have that match if we don't start today to go to get that federal money. We've been up there. We have great relationships, and this is the thing about it. Some of us can go to Raleigh and talk to Berger and more and the Republicans, others of us can go to the White House, we can go to DOT (Department of Transportation) and we can talk about these things, but we have to have some kind of unified what are we saying and what are we doing. So, I'd like to actually ask you today to say that you would ask the Manager to come back with a summary of what we've talked about and what's possible to be done. If we have to hire someone to do a critical path exercise because there's information overload on this thing. This was way too much information, but if we know what's most important to do and someone that can do this in a way that communicates it easily, I would say let's take the month of February 2024, CRTPO is going to be having to approve what the MTC does and all of these layers. I think that government can sometimes make it harder to participate and educate than you can ever imagine, and we get stuck in that cycle of that. So, let's try to figure out what we can do and a timeline. I'd like to ask for you to vote to support the Manager to come back, whether it goes through both of the committees or not. We can do a referral for both, but we really have to do something because otherwise we could do this half cent or a penny, we could do a nickel and we wouldn't have the federal money to help us finish it.

Mr. Bokhari said Vi, I think that's a great idea. I support it wholeheartedly. I'd add one asterisk next to it so it's successful. I think how you do it will dictate if it's successful or not. It can't be an exercise of what the 11 of us like, because if we had a magic wand, we'd like everything. It has to be what are you willing to sacrifice to go from nothing to something transformational. The first question and priority which your point was well-taken about us not getting out ahead of the MTC, but the Vi's point as well was we've never really voted on any of this. It's been presented, we've talked about it. So, at some point the local to sub regional groups, whatever order it needs to be, need to see if there's a nonstarter or if they're willing to raise their hands and say, "We're willing to table the Silver Line," because I'm not making a judgment on the Silver Line one way or another, I'm saying it's mathematically impossible with the other roadblocks that exist to do a roads first plan with that. So, I think that what we've got to do is say can we agree on the bare minimums that make this move forward and unstuck it or are we waiting for the lightning strike of somehow the other thing works. That's going to be one, a really tough decision because it isn't passing judgment on the Silver Line, it's saying, "Can we do it?" So, again my point is, it can't be what do you guys like, it has to be a binary thing of we've interpreted these routes and if you say this and want to stick by it, no problem, that's your prerogative, but it shuts this door and then you've got to go find another one somewhere.

Mr. Driggs said Mr. Manager, I want to say for the record, we're discussing Charlotte's position here. There's no suggestion that we would take a unilateral action without the engagement that you're describing. So, I want to be perfectly clear about that. I'm a member or CRTPO, I understand the MTC process, but we need to have the ability to talk amongst ourselves about what we're seeing and what we heard, and we would take the conclusions from that to the other bodies.

Mayor Lyles said okay. So, I guess what I'm saying is raise your hand if you're okay with the next step being a discussion and give ourselves some leeway for the month of February 2024. When does the short session start?

Ms. Brown said April [inaudible].

Mayor Lyles said April? We'll have some time.

Mr. Driggs said yes, we've got [inaudible].

Mayor Lyles said okay. Alright, everybody okay with it that's here? Okay. Thank you very much. I want to say thank you because I feel the need for us to actually get something that we can all write down and understand and decide if that's where we're going. It's not okay really to leave the generation without the infrastructure that's necessary, but I think we now understand the complexity of getting it done. So, thank you guys for the conversation.

Ms. Wilson said very good, thank you. We have another agenda item. It should be a quick one and it is to just confirm the objectives for Safe Communities and Great Neighborhoods.

Ms. Mayfield said thank you everyone. I'll try to make this real quick so that we can keep it moving. Victoria and I, of course, we had a lot between here. So, we narrowed it down to five here in Great Neighborhoods in no particular order. When we look at the neighborhood diversity, what we identified is to increase the number of accessory dwelling units, ADUs in existing and new neighborhoods with the caveat of identifying, which Victoria went over this the other day, identify the right location for the right project because in this box, everything was just about increasing without putting the caveats in place of what does that increase do to a neighborhood. We also identify under Housing Access For All, increase the number of homeownership opportunities for low to moderate income households, especially in areas with low access to housing opportunities scores as identified by the equitable growth framework with a caveat of targeting Charlotte employees. We have a lot of people that unfortunately work in our City but cannot afford to live in our City even within the City of Charlotte, over 8,000 employees, a lot of our fire, a lot of our police, a lot of our drivers cannot afford to live here. So, with a target specifically for Charlotte employees. For integrated natural and built environments, increase the number of developments utilizing green building practices or receiving green building certifications that keeps us in line with our SEAP (Strategic Energy Action Plan) plans. We have a number of our corporate partners that are receiving lead silver, lead gold. We also have a habitat home that was built, a number of opportunities we can focus on that and tie that in to our SEAP and help with our environmental goals all around in community. For retain our identity and charm. Improve job skills match in and near areas with residents who may be vulnerable to displacement. Let's try to create these job opportunities to where people live. Tiawana, remember when we were talking yesterday about the District Three airport job fair. That created a lot of opportunities for our residents that gave them easy access along public transportation and other things. So, our goal with improving that job skills match which we talked about yesterday, that's one to help retain our identity and support local.

Mr. Brown said so, that job fair you were so successful with Councilmember LaWana, what's going to happen with that?

Ms. Mayfield said we can parking lot it and I will give you all my contacts if that's something that you're interested in reengaging.

Mr. Brown said it was very successful.

Ms. Mayfield said the pandemic happened. So, once the pandemic happened, for new Council that came in 2019, a lot of things changed.

Mr. Brown said okay.

Ms. Mayfield said I would gladly do whatever I can to help reinstitute it because that was one of those ways where that was an easy win for the City and for residents.

Mr. Brown said alright, thanks.

Ms. Mayfield said our fifth under Strategic Mobility Plan is build and maintain community relationships in all areas. So, it was a combination of strengthen meaningful engagement and communication and providing high quality customer service. We believe under the Strategic Mobility Plan, all of that falls under one umbrella, just making sure we hit all the areas. So, that's in District Seven, that's in District Six. A lot of our areas literally are blended with one street. You cross the street, you're in a different district. We have an opportunity to create some better relationships. Some Council members already did it last year. We're having joint town halls and community meetings. We have the opportunity to do more of that and that's what falls under that umbrella. Any questions? I tried to give that to you really quick. Thank you.

Ms. Brown said I like when you said joint town halls. That's amazing.

Ms. Wilson said thank you. That concludes our agenda items for today. Another closed session?

Mayor Lyles said yes.

Ms. Wilson said yes, okay. Very good, very good. I do want to just put a button on the three days before you move into closed session.

Mayor Lyles said okay, thank you. It's nice to have someone summarize what we've accomplished.

Ms. Wilson said I was going exactly where you were going. So, perfect. We have a parking lot that the staff has recorded, some actions there. There are three things there for Council discussion, four things there for the Manager's office and I may have a couple in my notes that I still need to put over there and I'll do that before I leave. I do want to remind you of your [inaudible] as you move forward with your engagement. I think you all have demonstrated great ability to collaborate, to demonstrate passion and commitment to your respective areas, agendas, perspectives, etc., but also do it professionally. You have some additional information to help you understand each other better going forward. I've also put an offer out there to do a free session, go deeper, I really want to do that with you all to do the actual session. Tariq talked me down to a half day. We'll get it done in a half day. So, that offer stands there because there is more work to do in terms of the understanding and those types of things in going to the other style. So, I do recommend that, but more importantly there is an opportunity to start something new. So, don't lose what you started here over the last three days. It goes without saying that I'm still standing today and it's much better than it was last year.

so, thank you for those of you who agreed to let me get my hands dirty early before we got in the room this year to get some things aligned. I appreciated that. I think it showed in the results and this is who you are. So, as you're standing here today keep this, don't lose it. You have a lot of things to do, you've got budget conversations, those have got to be ugly, right? You're going to be on some different pages, but you have a strong foundation, and the relationships are already there. Don't lose those things because you're wasting time in doing that. People are watching you. They want to see leaders who can stand up responsibly and work with anybody. That's where you get confidence in your people and get your support that's needed for the things that you'll need to be

talking about in the community. So, just stand up as the person that you are, remember your [inaudible], remember that there are other people that are different than you, that you need to make the adjustment. Be a responsible leader of yourself and then I want to offer one last thing to you. Elise, if you could get the books please, *The Four Agreements*. Are you guys familiar with *The Four Agreements*?

Wonderful. Life changing. Four simple things. Four simple things and I'm going to give you the book. Be impeccable with your word. Always do your best. Don't make assumptions. Do not take anything personally. Being offended is a choice. It just is. So, as you go into these conversations and on different pages, which you should be, right? You shouldn't be a one note as I say. I always tell my son, "Don't be a one note." You want to have diversity in thought. That's beautiful and that's what the community needs. You're representing 2.9 million people around the region. Charlotte is a nucleus. So, you have a City, but it affects a lot of people. So, we need diversity of thought, but you've got to do it differently going forward and I highly recommend these. If you don't do anything else, adopt those. Be impeccable with your word. Be responsible for the words that you choose to share with each other. Always do your best. Don't make assumptions. Probing questions and clarifying questions are really important and people often appreciate those. Do not take anything personally. Nothing is personal really if you think about it. You can't be responsible for another person. So, I offer those to you. I also want to thank you for allowing me to be here with you again this year. This is purpose work for me. I've been in this City for a very long time. So, I feel like it's my small contribution and I thank you for allowing me to a part.

Ms. Wilson said oh, you're very welcome.

Mayor Lyles said tell me how you want [inaudible].

Unknown said [inaudible].

Mayor Lyles said you want to go last?

Unknown said yes.

Mayor Lyles said okay.

* * * * *

ITEM NO. 3: CLOSED SESSION


Motion was made by Councilmember Driggs, seconded by Councilmember Anderson, and carried unanimously to go into closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute § 143-318.11 (a) (6) to consider qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public official or employee.
--

The meeting was recessed at 10:22 a.m. for a closed session.

* * * * *

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at the end of the closed session.


Billie Tynes, Deputy City Clerk

Length of Meeting: 1 Hour, 14 Minutes
Minutes completed: October 7, 2024