



Charlotte City Council  
Jobs & Economic Development Committee  
Summary  
September 5, 2023

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**COMMITTEE AGENDA TOPICS**

- I. Small Business Update
- II. Corridors of Opportunity Update
- III. HIRE

**COMMITTEE INFORMATION**

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**Committee Members Present:** Malcolm Graham (Virtual), Ed Driggs (CMGC), Dimple Ajmera (Virtual), Marjorie Molina (Virtual), and Victoria Watlington (CMGC)

**Other Council Members Present:** LaWana Mayfield (CMGC) and Renee Askew (Virtual), Danté Anderson (Virtual)

**Staff Resources:** Tracy Dodson, City Manager's Office  
Holly Eskridge, Economic Development  
Anika Ellis, Economic Development  
Christi Floyd, Economic Development  
Juan Garzon, Economic Development  
Monica Holmes, Design and Preservation  
Danielle Frazier, City Manager's Office

**Meeting Duration:** 2:00p.m.-3:45p.m.

**MEETING MATERIALS**

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All meeting materials are available online at <https://charlottenc.legistar.com> or viewed online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zoJ5S0StKh0>

- 1) September 5, 2023 Agenda
- 2) Presentation: Small Business
- 3) Presentation: Corridors of Opportunity Update
- 4) Presentation: HIRE

**DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS**

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Council member Driggs called the meeting to order, asked everyone to introduce themselves, and provided an overview of the agenda.

### **Small Business Update:**

Staff introduced themselves and gave an overview of how Small Business and Business Innovation supports small businesses in Charlotte along with the different programs, projects, and initiatives that they have to offer the community.

Ms. Floyd spoke about:

- Small Business Ecosystem strategy initiative that was approved by City Council back in the spring and how they are working through the RFP process to select a vendor to conduct this study. The goal is to be able to identify the gaps and challenges that small business face, especially our ethnic minority small businesses and come up with a pathway that may support them.
- The City's partnership with Operation Hope and their national initiative to start, grow, and scale 1 million black-owned businesses by 2030. The City has committed to signing up 1,000 businesses for the program.
- Barriers for Hispanic business owners and by working with the Corridors team came up with a solution to work with Prospera, a national nonprofit that serve Hispanic business owners in Spanish. She also touched on Small Business month and all the events held during that month.

Mr. Garzon spoke about:

- Innovation led startup accelerator where a national partner with access to a capital network and a track record on DEI focused initiatives was approved for funding and they are in the procurement process and will be opened as an RFP.
- Charlotte Innovation week where they focused on the innovation led entrepreneurial ecosystem. That week included 18 events such as Talent Jam Pitch, Free Coworking Days, and Investor Education Sessions to name a few. He also spoke about City's partnership with Global Entrepreneurship Week, which was held November 13-19, 2023.

Ms. Ellis spoke about:

- Small Business Programing Pathway which includes AMP Up Charlotte along with additional outside programming for minority business owners such as The Boost Pad, Aspire, NXT CLT, and Scale Up CLT.

Questions from Council Members:

Ms. Ajmera:

- Asked if there were plans to help other ethnic business owners who have similar language barrier challenges? Ms. Floyd explained that the original program to help the language challenges for Hispanic business owners was a pilot program and recognize the need to expand this program for other ethnic business owners.
- Referring to the Small Business Programing Pathway, have we considered expanding some of these eligibility requirements to other groups needing access to capital? Ms. Eskridge explained that the Small Business team supports MWSBE's because that is what the CBI policies are

processed around but they also recognize and support the underrepresented founders with challenges.

Ms. Watlington:

- What types of businesses are people naturally leaning to when starting a business and if we could tailor our programs specific to what's thriving in our community? Ms. Eskridge responded that Charlotte has an array of different types of industry clusters in our small business ecosystem and once the Small Business Ecosystem Strategy is complete, the hope would be that they could better answer that question.
- Wanted clarity about the RFP process with the Innovation-led Startup Accelerator, are we looking for someone to connect the companies to the national firm? Mr. Garzon explained that the idea is to bring in an accelerator organization partner such as Tech Stars or Generator, to set up shop and work with local businesses.
- Looking at the Small Business Programing Pathway slide, wanted to know the City's connection to the Boost Pad? Ms. Ellis explained that it is a separate organization and the City has provided funding from the MWSBE budget in the past.
- On the Small Business Programing Pathway continuum, where do entrepreneurs who are looking for startup capital fit? Ms. Ellis pointed out that because the Boost Pad provides access to startup currency, entrepreneurs in the beginning stage would start with them. Ms. Eskridge added that the C3 fund that was recently approved would be a good resource as well.
- Have we been able to quantify the revenue generation of the AMP Up graduates? Ms. Ellis explained that the revenue is not reported from AMP Up but they do report financing secured as far as new capital.

Mr. Driggs:

- What is the screening process for those wanting to become an entrepreneur? The City has different partners such as SCORE, CPCC Small Business Center, UNC Charlotte Small Business Center that will help council those entrepreneurs who do not know where to get started.
- Wanted clarity about the Small Business Programing Pathway, are they all outside entities? Ms. Ellis explained that AMP Up is the only program housed within the City and the City is a partner with Scale Up CLT, all others are outside entities.
- Do any of the entrepreneurs pay for the services provided through the Pathway programming? Ms. Ellis responded that AMP Up is free but Scale Up CLT does offer partial scholarships.
- Does the City have any partnerships with the banks to help bridge the gap with entrepreneurs and getting startup funding? Ms. Floyd responded that they are building relationships with the bank to let them know if an entrepreneur cannot receive financing through them, there are other resources that can refer them to.

Ms. Molina:

- Wanted to make sure that we keep the growth of small businesses as a permanent part of our mission.

### **Corridors of Opportunity Update:**

Staff will provide an update on multiple Corridors of Opportunity projects including Opportunity Hubs grant program, RFPs for three city-owned properties, an upcoming Developers of Color program, and the upcoming Corridors Connect events.

Ms. Holmes spoke about:

- The goal of the corridors program is to foster thriving communities for existing residents and business owners and to build legacy and opportunity equitably across the six corridors.
- She also spoke about the goals and key priorities of 2023 and how the corridors work is framed within the Comprehensive Charlotte Future 2040 plan.
- Topics spoke about included housing goals, Spanish language Small Business support program, small business and commercial growth on West Blvd. She also spoke about the Opportunity Hubs, which they are in selection for. She touched on Safe Biz piloted in Sugar Creek and that expansion and the upcoming Corridors Connect event.
- The North Tryon/North Graham Playbook was completed in early 2023 and the Freedom/Wilkinson Corridor Playbook process kicked off on August 24<sup>th</sup> with 65-70 attendees.
- Had 3 RFP's close on some strategic acquisitions, three parcels in three different corridors.
- Emerging Developer Training Program and the goal to train and support diverse professionals over three years to accelerate the number of credit-ready M/WBE developers ready to utilize capital and advance their projects.

### **HIRE:**

Staff introduced Danielle Frazier to the team and give updates on the ARPA funding allocated to HIRE Charlotte initiatives.

Ms. Frazier spoke about:

- The ARPA Funding objectives and recommendations that was approved by council back in April. She explained that how they have consolidated and bundled some the line items may look a little different. The recommendations included Workforce Development Services, Target Industry Training, Talent Connector, Essential Skill Curriculum, RENEW Skilled Trades & Energy Training, and BankWork\$ Financial Services Training.
- Summary of next steps: (1) complete scopes of work and release RFP's for Essential Skills Curriculum Development, Talent Connector, and Workforce Development Services (2) Return to J&ED committee in Winter 2024 with awarded vendors and providers.

Questions form Council Members:

Ms. Watlington:

- What are the parameters around who's eligible for participation with the programs mentioned? Staff responded that all city of Charlotte residents are eligible for participation. Staff also explained that there are 3 levels of participation: entry level, mid-level, and senior level. Staff further explained how dollars are spent working with our trusted partners to push marketing to let the residents know of the programs we have to offer to help transition into the workforce.

Ms. Anderson:

- Wanted to know for the RFP that will be developing the curriculum, will there be a journey mapping process for these different career pathways developed as part of this process or does that collateral already exist? Staff responded that yes, there will be a process of industry engagement.
- Are we working with CMS and thinking about reskilling and upskilling students who might choose a nontraditional route other than a four year or two-year degree? Staff responded yes, that will be a part of the workforce development framework that will be built out.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for October 2, 2023.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:45pm.

# Small Business Update

**JOBS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

SEPTEMBER 5, 2023

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## Business Innovation Team



Anika Ellis



Holly Eskridge



Christi Floyd



Juan Garzón

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## Business Innovation Initiatives

### Minority Small Businesses Support

- Innovation-led Startup Accelerator
- Small Business Programming Pathway
- 1 Million Black Businesses
- Financial Business Academy (Albemarle Rd Corridor)

### General Small Business Support

- Small Business Assessment
- Small Business Month
- Charlotte Innovation Week
- Global Entrepreneurship Week

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## Approved Initiatives

### Small Business Ecosystem Strategy

- ▶ Complete comprehensive assessment of small business ecosystem to help increase equitable opportunities
- ▶ Develop and implement strategies to increase business opportunities for ethnic minority small businesses
- ▶ Focus on promoting inclusivity and developing equitable solutions for all city small business support programming

### Innovation-led Startup Accelerator

- ▶ Pilot an early-stage startup accelerator with a focus on local, diverse founders
- ▶ Partner with a national firm with capital access and a track record in DEI-focused programming in like cities
- ▶ RFP process will be used to select the firm which must support 25+ companies per year

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# Small Business Programing Pathway



## The Boost Pad

### Incubator Program Components

- Structured Curriculum
- Guidance from Experts & Mentors
- Access to Startup Currency
- A Marketplace for services

[www.theboostpad.org](http://www.theboostpad.org)



## ASPIRE Community Capital

### Access to Capital

- Micro-loans up to \$25,000 for small business owners

### Programs

- Community Business Academy
- Business Accelerator Services
- Business Readiness Program

[www.aspirecommunitycapital.org](http://www.aspirecommunitycapital.org)



## AMP Up Charlotte

### Program Components

- Interise Assessment & Streetwise MBA Curriculum
- 3-Year Growth Plan
- Targeting training & coaching
- Access to large anchor institutions

### Eligibility Requirements

- Ethnic minority
- 51% ownership
- \$175,000 in revenues
- One additional employee
- In business 2+ years

[Cltgov.me/ampclt](http://Cltgov.me/ampclt)



## NXT|CLT

### Program Components

- Business Assessment
- Monthly training/coaching
- Quarterly networking
- \$15,000 in capital

### Eligibility Requirements

- Ethnic minority
- 51% ownership
- \$250,000 revenues
- One additional employee
- In business 3+ years

[www.nxtclt.org](http://www.nxtclt.org)



## Scale Up CLT

### Program Components

- Partial Scholarship for Entrepreneurs Organization (EO) Accelerator
- Charlotte Regional Business Alliance Ally benefits

### Eligibility Requirements

- 51% ethnic minority and/or women-owned
- Revenue between \$250,000-\$999,999

[ScaleUpClt.com](http://ScaleUpClt.com)

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## 1 Million Black Businesses

- ▶ Announcement attended by 100 + business owners/partner organizations
- ▶ National initiative to start, grow, & scale 1 million black-owned businesses by 2030
- ▶ Partnership with Operation Hope and local Resource Partner organizations
- ▶ Charlotte committed to connecting 1,000 businesses





## Financial Business Academy



- ▶ Prospera is offering 3 financial literacy workshops to Hispanic-owned businesses in summer/fall 2023
  - Conducted entirely in Spanish
  - Hosted at the Simmons YMCA
  - Funded by CoO
- ▶ This program satisfies one of the priority recommendations from the *Albemarle Rd Corridor Playbook* to lower barriers to accessing resources for Hispanic-owned businesses in the corridors
- ▶ First cohort targeted Albemarle Rd corridor businesses and was attended by about 25 Hispanic business owners
- ▶ Topics include understanding financial statements, ratio analysis, and budgeting & forecasting

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## Small Business Month

- ▶ Annual kickoff event attended by 170+ small businesses
- ▶ #31DaysofBiz spotlights were all AMP Up Alumni
- ▶ Other events like MICA and Crowns of Enterprise Awards (CBI) celebrated small businesses



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# Charlotte Innovation Week

- ▶ **3<sup>rd</sup> Charlotte Innovation Week**
- ▶ **550+ attendees over 18 events**
- ▶ **Events included:**
  - Resource Workshops
  - Talent Jam Pitch Event
  - Investor Education Sessions
  - Accelerator Showcase
  - Happy Hours and Mixers



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## Global Entrepreneurship Week

**November 13 – 19**

- ▶ Part of a global celebration of entrepreneurship
- ▶ Charlotte's 3<sup>rd</sup> year participating
- ▶ Hundreds of participants at 20 events last year



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## Discussion & Questions

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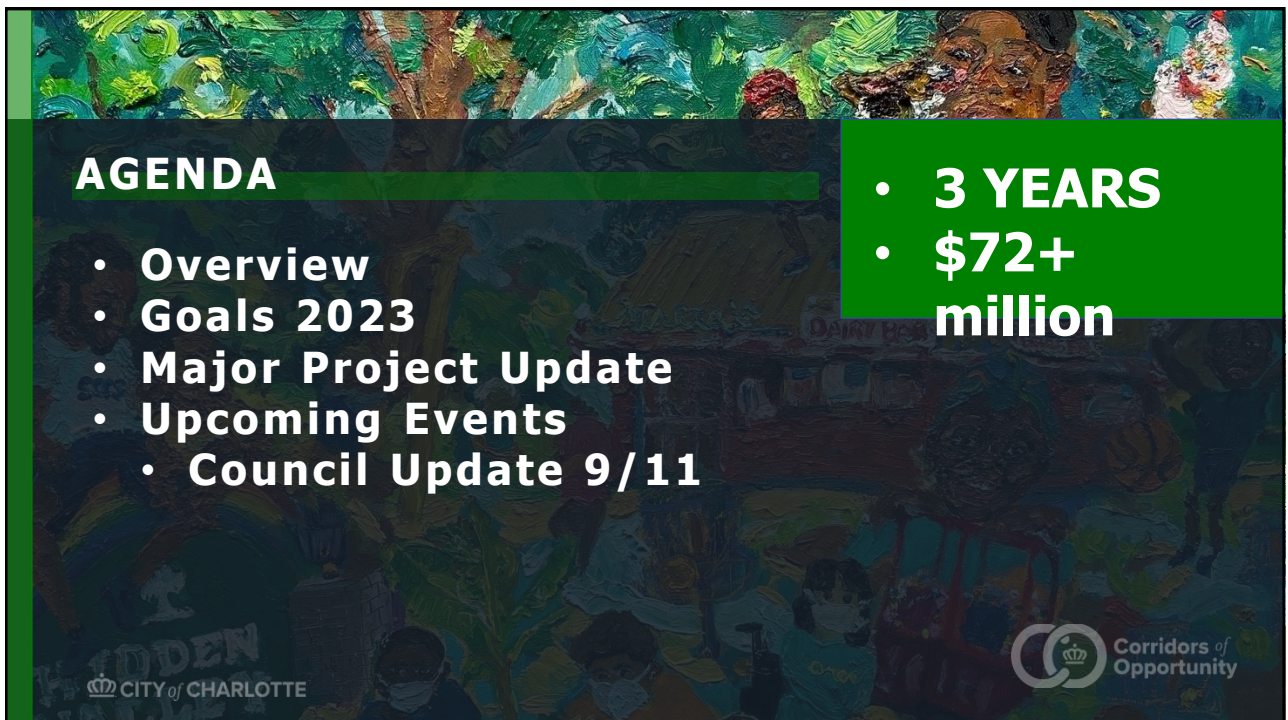


## CORRIDORS OF OPPORTUNITY September 5, 2023

 CITY of CHARLOTTE




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### AGENDA

- Overview
- Goals 2023
- Major Project Update
- Upcoming Events
  - Council Update 9/11

- **3 YEARS**
- **\$72+ million**

 CITY of CHARLOTTE

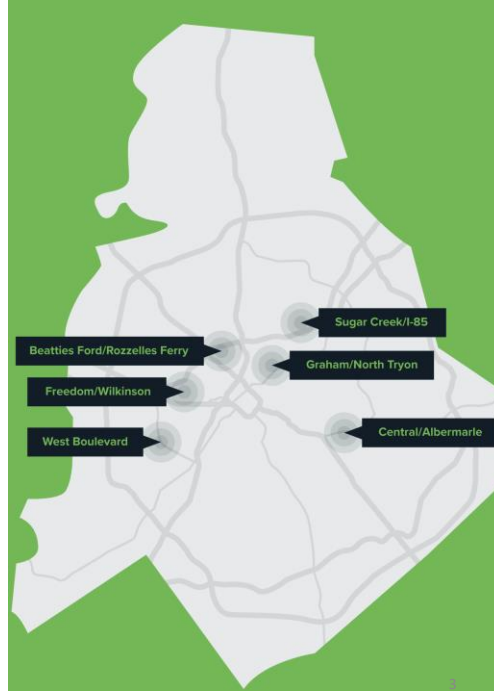


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## CORRIDORS OF OPPORTUNITY supports six underinvested areas in Charlotte to:

- Foster thriving **communities** for residents and businesses.
- Build lasting **legacies**.
- Grow communities **equitably**.

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## 2023 Goals

The below represent our stated broad goals at the end of 2022.

### Key Priorities

- Continue to build Partnerships
- Focus implementation in Sugar Creek and Albemarle
- Prioritize projects in North Graham/North Tryon and Wilkinson/Freedom
- Build community engagement and communications efforts throughout Corridors



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LOOKING FORWARD 2023

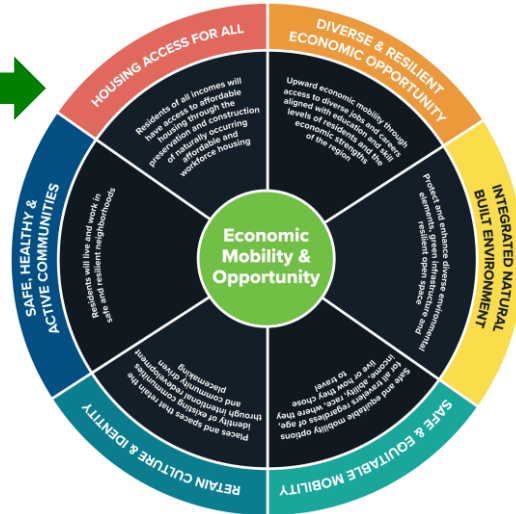
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# Corridors Framework

Corridors of Opportunity projects, programs, and partnerships work is organized within the goals of the Charlotte Future 2040 Plan.

**CHARLOTTE  
FUTURE**

**2040  
COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN**



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# 2023 Corridors

**Housing Access for All**  
Strategic Acquisition – Economy Inn + Double Oaks

**Diverse and Resilient Economic Opportunity**  
Spanish Language Small Business Support  
Strategic Acquisition – West Boulevard  
Opportunity Hubs

**Safe, Active and Healthy Communities**  
Safe Biz  
Corridors Connect

**Safe and Equitable Mobility**  
15 Transportation Projects in Design/Development

**Integrated Natural and Built Environment**  
Grant coordination  
Trees Charlotte coordination

**Retain Culture and Identity**  
West Boulevard and Beatties Ford  
Placemaking Projects  
Character Overlay Pilot

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# North Tryon/ North Graham

The North Tryon/North Graham Playbook, completed in early 2023, identified priorities for investment in the corridor.

## Retaining the history and assets of the neighborhoods while building and connecting to an emerging employment hub

- **Mobility:** Build mobility hubs, improve key intersections and install N Graham St shared use path to connect the Blue Line to the jobs and housing in the Corridor
- **Preservation:** Investigate creating a neighborhood character overlay district for established neighborhoods like Druid Hills
- **Community:** Invest in job and career readiness training so that residents can benefit from employment opportunities nearby
- **Partnerships:** Invest in high-speed internet access and other digital divide initiatives for career readiness
- **Housing:** Reimagine the former Dillehay Courts housing community into a mixed income, mixed use development

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# Freedom/Wilkinson Playbook

The Freedom/Wilkinson Corridor Playbook process kicked off on August 24 with 65+ attendees

## Engage the community, business owners, and stakeholders in a concise process to identify priorities.

- Integrate previous and on-going efforts with Community Quarterback, ETOD and CLT Airport
- Timeline:
  - August 24<sup>th</sup> playbook kickoff
  - September 18-30<sup>th</sup> facilitated stakeholder workshops
  - October 22<sup>nd</sup> project and goals identification
  - November 16<sup>th</sup> project prioritization and recommendations
  - January draft playbook complete
- Creative engagement led by QC Family Tree, a corridor-based community organization

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# Strategic Acquisitions

North Tryon/North Graham  
Sugar Creek  
West Boulevard

## Three Corridors of Opportunity city-owned properties = a coordinated RFP Process

- Double Oaks School, 1326 Woodward Avenue
    - Mixed residential with community input and mixed use option
  - West Blvd/Remount property, 1527-41 West Blvd
    - Commercial or redevelopment
  - Economy Inn, 5342 Reagan Drive
    - For-sale residential with community option
  - **ALL** RFPs were due August 31
  - 10 applications received, multiple per site
  - Currently under review
- Economy Inn redevelopment
- Relocation is complete
  - Demolition and asbestos remediation is underway
  - City's investment is already catalyzing other redevelopment

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# Opportunity Hubs

Supporting all SIX corridors with workforce development and entrepreneur training.

**Goal: Open a one-stop shop in all SIX corridors to provide resources for small businesses, jobs and entrepreneurs. Partner with trusted organizations to host/locate the physical space. Connect to additional resources.**

- Grant application window closed August 9
- 21 applications received
  - Application review is underway
- Hubs should be open by 2024 and remain open through 2026
- Physical hubs are part of larger workforce development framework
- Hubs may host and partner with other community driven city/county/partner initiatives



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DIVERSE AND RESILIENT ECONOMY

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# Emerging Developer Training Program

In Charlotte there is a lack of diversity in the development industry. This program will build capacity, credit and training.

**Goal: train and support diverse professionals over three years to accelerate the number of credit-ready M/WBE developers ready to utilize capital and advance their projects.**

Using a cohort model, the program will help diversify the development industry:

- Enhance their local network
- Gain access to capital opportunities
- Build their capacity to expand their existing portfolio of business and contracts

Partnership with LISC Charlotte + Private sector

- LISC has successfully implemented the program in other cities
- Potential partnership with local universities for pipeline
- LISC would manage spring and fall cohorts each year

Outcome: pipeline of projects for prospective funders and/or investors seeking minority developer projects

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DIVERSE AND RESILIENT ECONOMY

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# Corridors Connect

Connect to Services  
Meet Neighbors  
Celebrate the progress

**Programmed streets closed to cars and open to community on back-to-back Sunday afternoons in October**

Encourages community-wide opportunities for connection, health and wellness, celebrator of community and equitable investment

**Sunday, October 8**

Sugar Creek/I-85  
Central/Albemarle

**Sunday, October 15**

Beatties Ford/Rozzelles Ferry  
Graham Street/North Tryon

**Sunday, October 22**

West Boulevard  
Freedom Drive/Wilkinson

Grants available now for community activation  
\$500 to corridor-based organizations or associations

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a day of car(e)  
free streets

**CORRIDORS CONNECT**



SAFE, ACTIVE, AND HEALTHY  
COMMUNITIES

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## Corridors Connect Partnerships



MECKLENBURG COUNTY  
North Carolina  
Public Health



CITY OF  
CHARLOTTE



PARTNERS  
for PARKS



[www.openstreets704.com](http://www.openstreets704.com)



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# 2023/2024 Goals

The below represent our stated broad goals at the end of 2022.

## Key Priorities

- Continue to build Partnerships and grow private investment
- Focus implementation across all SIX corridors
- Grow capacity of Corridors based, community organizations to lead and implement work
- Prioritize projects in Wilkinson/Freedom
- Continue community engagement and communications efforts throughout Corridors

### BEATTIES FORD ROAD & LASALLE STREET CROSSWALK ART KICKOFF

Join us on September 21st at Alpha Westside's  
Neighborhood Meeting to discuss the art and design  
kickoff for the intersection of Beatties Ford  
Road and Lasalle Street.

When: September 21st, 2023  
Meeting Time: 5:45 PM - 7:00 PM  
Location: Alpha Westside's Meeting Room



LOOKING FORWARD 2023-2024

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## Sugar Creek: Projects/Programs/Partnerships

Housing  
Access  
for All

Healthy, Safe  
and Active  
Communities

Safe and  
Equitable  
Mobility

Diverse and  
Resilient  
Economic  
Opportunity

Integrated  
Natural  
and Built  
Environment

Retain Culture  
and Identity

Staying in  
Place Pilot

Economy Inn  
Redevelopmen

Community  
Partnerships

SafeBiz CLT

Raise Grant  
Sidewalk Gaps



Business  
Association

Opportunity Hub

Streetlight  
Upgrades



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# Sugar Creek Success Story

The Playbook process wrapped up in Spring 2022 in the Sugar Creek Corridor with a renewed focus on the intersection of I-85 and West Sugar Creek Road.

## Stabilizing the intersection to create opportunity for the residents

- SafeBiz Camera Pilot
- Reduced Hotel Rooms by approximately 450 hotel rooms (a potential reduction of 38%) with 2/3 led by the private sector
- A strong Sugar Creek Business Association taking shape (the board is actively working in the community)
- RAISE grant to fund multi-modal transportation improvements
- Strong partnerships with organizations actively working in the Corridor (Parks and Recreation, Non-profits, etc.)

Over \$22 million dollars of private/federal investment in the Corridor

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# HIRE ARPA Funding Update

**JOBS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

September 5, 2023

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## Agenda Overview

ARPA FUNDING OBJECTIVES

ARPA FUNDING UPDATE

NEXT STEPS

2

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## ARPA Funding Objectives

Improve Awareness of  
Career Paths & Access  
to Workforce  
Development Services

Build and Strengthen  
Current & Future Talent  
Pipelines

Connect More Talent to  
Job Opportunities


Build Capacity &  
Alignment of Workforce  
Development System

## ARPA Funding Recommendations\*

Project/Program	Target Audiences	Amount Allocated	Project Status	Target Status
<b>Workforce Development Services</b> - Career Navigators - Job Readiness - Technical Skills Training Tuition Assistance** - On-the-Job Training - Apprenticeships - Upskilling Incumbent Workforce - Supportive Services	I.e. Corridors residents, Underemployed, Unemployed	4,940,000	<b>Status:</b> - Developing RFP for release	
<b>Target Industry Training (Talent Alignment Study)</b>	Businesses	1,500,000	<b>Status:</b> - Validating job data with local businesses to determine required training needs	
<b>Talent Connector</b> - Career Pathways - Education/Training Programs - Workforce Development Service Providers - Jobs	Job seekers & Workforce Development Partners	1,000,000	<b>Status:</b> - Developing RFP for release	
<b>Essential Skills Curriculum</b>	Job Seekers, Businesses	1,000,000	<b>Status:</b> - Developing RFP for release	
<b>RENEW Skilled Trades &amp; Energy Training</b>	Job seekers with interest in Skilled Trades and Energy Related Careers	500,000	<b>Status:</b> - Continue RENEW program to train residents in Skilled Trades and Energy related fields	
<b>BankWork\$ Financial Services Training</b>	Job seekers with interest in Finance Industry	160,000	<b>Status:</b> - Launch BankWork\$ program in partnership with Goodwill Industries.	
		<b>9,100,000</b>		

### Status Key

 **In Progress**

 **Under Development**

 **Not Initiated**

\* \$9.1M approved on 4.24.23 pending implementation plan

\*\*Tuition assistance will focus on identified industries in demand: Business, Construction, Health Sciences, Management and Administration, Manufacturing Technology, Transportation and Warehousing

Summary of Next Steps

- Complete Scopes of Work and release RFPs for:
  - Essential Skills Curriculum Development
  - Talent Connector
  - Workforce Development Services
- Return to Jobs & ED committee in Winter 2024 with awarded vendors and providers

Estimated Timeline

