

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for a Strategy Session on Monday, September 7, 2021 at 5:04 p.m. in Room 267 of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Councilmembers present were Dimple Ajmera, Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Julie Eiselt, Larken Egleston, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, Matt Newton, Greg Phipps, and Braxton Winston II.

AUN: Councilmember Victoria Watlington

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Mayor Pro-Tem Julie Eiselt welcomed everyone to September 7, 2021, City Council Strategy Session. This session is the time that we learn about issues that are coming up to us for decisions. It is the opportunity for the Councilmembers to discuss and question each other and to spend some time to just get an idea of where we stand before we move to a more formal vote on any issue.

This meeting is being held as a virtual meeting in accordance with all of the laws that we have to follow, especially around an electronic meeting. The requirements also include notices and access that are being met electronically as well. You can view this on our Government Channel, the City's Facebook Page, or the City's YouTube Page.

Before we proceed to the business of the agenda, tonight I have some sad news to share about the death of a member of our City of Charlotte team. Over Labor Day weekend, Katie Sparral Hedrick passed away following a brief battle with cancer. Katie came to the City's Housing and Neighborhood Services Department in 2013, where she served as a Division Manager as a long-time media contact person for Neighborhood Services. She was well known with local reporters and always did a great job for our community especially in her role.

She leaves behind her husband and their twin one-year-old daughters. Please keep Katie's family in your thoughts and prayers. We know that this is a tough time for them as it is a difficult time for her colleague at the City that she worked with. It's very tough.

I do also want to recognize someone who is being honored to be here with us for 100 years. I'd like to say to Marvin Siegal that we recognize your birthday, your 100th birthday on September 12th. I know that you moved to Charlotte just recently six years ago and you've really adopted our city as your new home. I really appreciate the idea that you say Charlotte is a beautiful place and every day is a beautiful day in Charlotte. I understand that you were a cantankerous dad to Marcy Shealy, but that's okay because she is pretty cantankerous herself.

I know that it took Marcy and your wife Joyce, who passed away last year, to teach you the lessons of becoming a democrat and that you finally made the open admission after years of voting democratic just because you could. We know that you served us in the 550-field artillery battle and saw extensive action in Europe during World War II and that you are a part of the greatest generation. You'd be pleased to know that the London School of Economics is someplace that he attended, Mr. Driggs and a few of the other economists that watch us and serve us now have another colleague to rely upon. So, to Marvin Siegal, we wish you a happy 100th birthday.

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ITEM NO. 2: CONNECT BEYOND UPDATE

Marcus Jones, City Manager said tonight we will have a presentation on Connect Beyond and I believe we will have a tag-team presentation with John Lewis, who is the CEO of CATS, and Geraldine Gardner, who is the Executive Director of the Centralina Regional Council.

John Lewis, Chief Executive Officer of Charlotte Areal Transit System said It's a pleasure to be here with you this evening to discuss what has been quite of an effort over

the last several years in launching Project Connect Beyond. CATS and the Centralina Council of Government led a two-year community engagement process designed to better understand our region's greatest transportation challenges and opportunities. Elected Officials, Planners, Medical and educational institutions, transportation agencies, economic developers, employers, and workforce leaders were asked what mobility needs and transit-focused outcomes could be enhancing through regional cooperation and coordination? That effort culminated in a 2018 summit at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte where the regions supported the development of a regional transit plan through a CATS and Centralina partnership.

In March of 2020 CATS, Centralina, and six transportation planning organizations, and 17 transit providers kicked off Connect Beyond, a regional transit plan for a two-state, 12 county region. Since then, the team has conducted a technical analysis and collaborated with elected officials, government staff, and community stakeholders to develop a comprehensive set of recommendations. Tonight, I will be highlighting key elements of this study and the recommendations and then turn the microphone over to my counterpart and colleague at Centralina, Geraldine Gardener to discuss the next steps.

As our regions continue to grow, access to reliable, efficient, and well-connected transportation options is one of the most important factors to ensure everyone can benefit. We need to find solutions to promote and harness economic growth while helping our neighbors and visitors easily get where they want and need to go. This will require collaboration, insight, creativity, and a bold vision. We want to through this effort increase economic competitiveness, improve transportation choices, enhance public transit, promote sustainable regional growth, advance social equity, and encourage environmental stewardship.

The CATS 2030 Plan started as a regional conversation in the 1990s that led to a successful 1998 Mecklenburg County Transit Sale Tax. Core to the Connect Beyond effort now is the incorporation of the 2030 Transit System Plan and the Transformational Mobility Network (TMN).

The implementation of the TMN provides a foundation for the Connect Beyond recommendations as we work to build out the 2030 Plan, providing more frequent bus service and develop mobility hubs that better serve our neighborhoods and communities. Key to all of the Connect Beyond recommendations are strategies to move mobility forward in a region growing as fast as ours a mobility plan must be bold and ready to meet the future need.

To improve mobility in our region, we need to develop a seamless multimodal transportation plan that is built upon a foundation of land use, supporting mobility options from (inaudible) transit to bus service to high-capacity transit such as commuter rail, light rail, and bus rapid transit. We will accomplish this through the following steps. To implement the Connect Beyond recommendations the region will need to advance the following mobility moves. Create mobility-friendly places, expand mobility choices, strengthen rural to urban connections, building a better bus network, and investing in strategic mobility corridors.

We've developed strategies to support vibrant pedestrian-friendly communities that have convenient access to public transit services. Examples of the key recommendations include, adopting transit-supportive development policies that are unique to each community, involve transit agencies in local land-use development processes, and concentrating growth along high-capacity transit corridors.

Expanding mobility choices. The technologies of moving people are changing rapidly. Our plans and approach should be nimble and future-ready for what's to come. Under this move, the study recommends a regional commuter choice program led by Centralina. Implementation of a regional network of mobility hubs where all transportation modes can connect with each other. Then training the workforce of tomorrow for the electrification efforts and on-demand services that have continued to flourish over the last several years.

Strengthening rural to urban connections. What makes Connect Beyond region so unique and special is the diversity of its geography. The Connect Beyond region is made up of rural counties, suburban areas, and a major metropolitan city. We've developed strategies to improve mobility and transportation choices for those who chose to live and work in rural communities. Therefore, improving coordination and leveraging percurrent operation opportunities between larger transit providers with transit and human service providers. Also developing joint scheduling and joint funding models to enhance cross-country trips, especially medical trips.

Building a better bus network. The backbone of any successful regional transit system is a well-coordinated frequent and reliable bus network to achieve the city's SEAP (Strategic Energy Action Plan) goals and to move residence that are here today and those who will relocate here in the future. The team recommends a transit mobility education campaign, joint procurement amongst agencies to increase our buying power, and creating, exploring the creation of a regional fare structure.

Our region has 17 providers. They range from fix root providers such as CATS and ICATS, operating regular routing and timetable and regional connectors which provide service to rural areas of the region connecting to urban areas. The study also recommends that each provider come together to plan and schedule services comprehensively.

Building off the 2030 Transit System Plan and the Transformational Mobility Network, the team recommends an expanded network of high capacity and strategic mobility corridors. Corridors such as I-77 South and North, Highway-29, Highway-521 into Lancaster county, and Highway-74 into Gaston and Union counties are recommended as high-capacity corridors. Think light rail, commuter rail, or bus rapid transit. Each county is recommended to conduct studies determining the appropriate rapid transit mode as well as implement near-term improved transit services to improve ridership. Strategic mobility corridors have been identified as key corridors connecting communities that need improved bus service. Also providing linkages to high-capacity corridors.

Councilmember Watlington arrived at 5:11 p.m.

Critical to building a better bus network and high-capacity transit recommendations is the implementation of mobility hubs across the region. This map represents and illustrates locations where existing and future services connect and would serve as ideal locations for transfers between lines, modes, and technologies.

In order for any plan to become a reality, momentum must be maintained. Here to talk about the critical next steps is Geraldine Gardener, Executive Director of Centralina Regional Council.

Geraldine Gardener, Executive Director of Centralina Regional Council said I appreciate the opportunity to be with all of you this evening. As you've heard and seen from Johns' portion of the presentation, there are important and bold ideas within Connect Beyond that will transform how people across our region move and our ability to be a globally competitive region. The vision won't mean much without a solid plan for how we collectively approach implementation. Centralina is committed to moving from ideas to action to support our partners across the region as they take important steps to implement this plan and to continue to serve as the regional convener that we've been for the last 50 years and we are so energized by the alignment between Connect Beyond, the TMN (Transformational Mobility Network), and a host of other county or MPO's specific mobility plans.

Together we can continue to partner for regional mobility by focusing on generating priorities to carry out our mobility vision, supporting unified public education efforts to promote mobility benefits for all regardless if someone ever takes public transport. Finally pursuing a two-prong approach to formalizing regional collaboration. In the near term we can work together building on existing agreements to implement recommendations and in parallel we can convene and expand the work of Connect Beyond's funding and partnerships working group to evaluate future regional partnership structures. Moving our

momentum forward also intel's creating a realistic approach for how we will pay for these recommendations. Our partnerships in funding working group identified these four recommendations building on existing collaboration and the commitment to implement our shared mobility vision. First is flexibility. We need to build a regional coalition while also allowing each jurisdiction to develop a funding approach at their own pace. In order to do that we must engage in a sustain and coordinated funding effort, advocate with a unified regional voice, and develop clarity on funding sources potentially yield, and steps to implement new funding streams. Funding is a common theme around the region when discussing improving mobility options and it's vital. We have heard from our regional stakeholders that this is an issue that the region needs to work together on to get where we need to be.

So, how do we get there? The good news is that we have the platform for regional collaboration and leadership already built through the Connect Beyond planning process. Looking at the near term or next three years we believe there should be a focus on leveraging existing stakeholder capacities, working agreements, and coordination touchpoints. The chart you see here is a working concept for how we coordinate, ensure accountability, and have each implementing partner played our strengths. Most importantly all of this work would be done in coordination and alignment with our partners who play major roles in transportation and mobility initiatives happening throughout the region. Their leadership and support will be critical to our region's success tied to near-term implementation and achieving our long-term vision for mobility. Before we get there, we are really focused on ensuring this plan is released on time. You will note here a slight change in schedule. We are going to be releasing this plan fully to the public on Monday, September 13th. We are also focusing on ensuring that our region and their leaders are energized around the transformational potential of the five mobility moves.

So, this list here gives you a flavor of the briefings we have been holding with Charlotte area stakeholders, but similar efforts are taking place across the region. As we ramp up releasing the plan and stewarding its adoption, it's critical that we are taking the time to walk stakeholders through the five big moves and its associated recommendations.

Finally, I want to recognize the staff and elected officials who have participated in the various committees and then in our Centralina board throughout the process. These individuals have met regularly over a year and a half to review technical inputs, provide feedback and stay engaged in every step in the process. So, on behalf of John and our teams, we want to thank everyone for their time and effort on this process.

Then the last slide. I just want to close out with some dates. Our full plan as I mentioned will be released for public view on September 13th. The recommendations are available now on our website. Very detailed recommendations including a really interesting important tool that we didn't have time to talk about today, but it is our equity index. A GIS mapping service that allows people across the region to zoom in to a particular community and look at lots of different equity indicators for transit access in their community. So, this site also outlines the endorsement process, we are also working to outline some key implementation next steps that we will share at our final Advisory Committee meeting on September 29th.

So, thank you for the opportunity to contribute tonight. That concludes our presentation and John and I will be happy to take questions.

Mr. Jones said one of the reasons that we came tonight, I know that this presentation was previously presented to the TAP (Transportation and Planning) committee, is to make sure that the Council at a Strategy Session and an opportunity to see what we are doing with the TMN. So, as John and Geraldine had expressed earlier, this is something that not only the City of Charlotte, but other jurisdictions pitched in a while ago for this study and it should help inform decision making for the bigger picture as it relates to transportation and transit.

Mayor Lyles said as I said at the beginning of the meeting this session is really to have a deep dive discussion does not just for understanding but for points of view that the Councilmembers may have so that everyone can hear from each other.

Councilmember Eiselt said John and Geraldine thank you for the presentation. A couple of questions for you. This is probably more for Geraldine, but in your organization how many counties are in your organization do you have coverage for?

Ms. Gardner said so we serve all nine counties in and around Charlotte, but eight of our nine counties are official members of the organization. So, all of them except for Rowan County. We have 16 municipalities.

Ms. Eiselt said so I'm interested to know how it works functionally when you are talking about two states and 12 counties and getting those others that aren't in the nine-county group to the table. I guess what is behind that a little bit is that we know it is so critical to get everybody on board but moving at the same time on all of this. So, I wondered if you could speak to that a little bit in particular. Then my second part of that is how do you do that in a way that really gives our small towns and rural counties the ability to highlight what's important to them, right because they're not talking about light rail. They are talking about bus stops and sidewalks sometimes. It is critically important to them in their region, for their economies, but it might be different than what we are prioritizing. So, I wondered if you could just speak to that a little bit.

Ms. Gardener said absolutely. That is a really important question. So, one of the ways that we are engaging the counties and the stakeholders outside of the Centralina core and nine-county footprint is through a kind of active engagement and partnership with our Metropolitan Planning Organization across the region. So, Cleveland County is part of the Gaston, Cleveland, Lincoln, MPO. So, we are engaging through that body and those stakeholders in the Connect Beyond process. Same thing on the South Carolina side. In addition, we are also an active partnership and collaboration with our sister COG the Catawba Regional Council that represents a portion of the study area on the South Carolina side. So, using the existing organizations that we have that specialize and have the technical expertise in transportation is really one of the main ways that we are engaging outside of Centralina's footprint.

With regard to your question on the needs of small communities and rural communities, we have had such a robust engagement process over the years to identify what mobility concerns people have. Connect Beyond started all the way back in Connect our Future, which was seven-plus years ago where our region came together to identify mobility as being one of the things that was holding us back. So, we have had our finger on the pulse of needs but needs change over time. We look to our Board of delegates that all have representatives on our Board to help us understand those needs. We look to our MPOs to help us understand those needs. I think that's one of the main focuses of Connect Beyond is that we want to find through the recommendations a way to meet everybody where they are. Building a better bus network might be a transformational investment in Anson County. We had a briefing with our Anson County Delegate just today and he was talking about how important it was to connect his community members to enable them to see specialize medical appointments in Charlotte. So, it is a range of different tools, but I think that this plan provides something for everyone. It's just important that we allow those different perspectives to come to the table.

Ms. Eiselt said thank you and just to that point I'll just finish by saying, I appreciate you saying that about their comments about our bus system because that is the most critical piece of all this for so many of them. Even if it's the bus system connecting to the light rail so they can get into Charlotte for jobs, but we have to make sure that we've got that investment in our existing system to make it as robust as possible before we really look at new projects. So, thank you both for that.

Councilmember Driggs said I'm inspired by Ms. Eiselt's passion for the bus system which I have shared. So, thank you for that Julie. I'm pleased to see that we are finally moving to a regional intergovernmental level with this plan and we pursued it by ourselves

for so long. So, that is a positive development. One question I have is does this process fully incorporate what was our Mobility Plan? The one that was considered by the Mobility Taskforce. Is this where we are going with the things that we have been talking about for the last couple of years?

Mr. Lewis said I'm sorry Councilmember Driggs. There were parts of your question that I missed. Would you mind restating that again, please?

Mr. Driggs said I'm referring to the process that we have had for a couple of years. The last couple of years, with the Mobility Taskforce and the whole plan that we developed and considered. I'm asking whether that plan is now subsumed into the activity that is described to us tonight?

Mr. Lewis said yes, thank you, I think as we stated earlier this really began with a conversation, not just regionally, but how we build out our core transit services here in Mecklenburg County. So, the 2030 Plan has evolved into a discussion around the Transformational Mobility Network, which also serves as the core foundation for Connect Beyond. We can't talk about high-capacity corridors in Gaston, Iredell, and other counties without first building out the core infrastructure here in the center of the region. So, these plans work together and I think the conversations surrounding the CATS 2030 Plan, the Transformational Mobility Network, just logically fall into the subsequent discussion on a regional basis.

Mr. Driggs said I think I have questions along frankly, the same lens as Ms. Eiselt's. I'm curious to see in practice how the governance and the coordination here work. At some point, we get down to the level where we need firm commitments from people. We need to talk about how we share the cost. This is where we kind of got stalled frankly before. For example, we talked about a referendum on a sales tax, which I guess would have been a Mecklenburg County one. When will the public have a change and what members of the public will have a chance to weigh in on the principle funding mechanism for this plan?

Ms. Gardener said you raised some very important points and we are frankly not there yet. I think we have the purpose of this planning effort was to create the vision. What can we rally around as a region? What are those core components, which are represented in the five mobility moves and the map that John showed with the mobility have and the strategic mobility corridors? There's a lot more work that we need to do to dig down into each of these moves and to develop the type of specific funding proposals and governing structures that need to guide its implementation. So, one of our recommendations is to take the partnerships and funding working group that we had withing Connect Beyond that started to take steps in that direction, but as we looked at regional transit authorities, and we looked at governing structures across the country there was a lot more to research that what we had time to take about through this process. So, that's one of the major things that we have to do next. Is to parallel track implementation in some areas where we can make progress for the people who are taking transit and want to move differently today, while we are working on these very important, very complex, very sensitive conversations around governance and funding.

Mr. Driggs said well great. I think it's a constructive new direction and I look forward to hearing more as you progress with those departments.

Councilmember Ajmera said I'm encouraged by the region mobility conversation here. It's Centralina the meeting agency until we figure the governance model here?

Ms. Gardener said I think we are playing the role that we have played in the region, which is to set a table and invite people into that conversation to have these discussions, yes. Whether or not we are the ultimate agency to house such an entity, there is a lot more discussion to be had on that.

Ms. Ajmera said thank you. My question around two states and how that would all work was addressed earlier, so thank you for answering that question. So, I understand our

transportation mobility network and this Connect Beyond will work hand-in-hand because I can idealize that one is not possible without the other and vice versa. So, does that mean that we have the regional support and endorsement for our Transportation Mobility Network?

Ms. Gardener said that is a good question. I think all of our regional stakeholders understand that we need successful mobility in Charlotte in order for the rest of the region to thrive. So, I think as we are going through our conversations with the Counties over the next two weeks and talking to our delegate we can certainly ask them how they would answer that question because they ultimately need to weigh in. But from where I sit and representing my organization I can say that we need the TMN to be successful so that Connect Beyond can be successful.

Ms. Ajmera said I am interested in hearing stakeholders' feedback in terms of our Transportation Mobility Network and how that is critical for us to build Connect Beyond and moving forward. Other questions I have around funding and timeline, I think it's too premature at this point. So, I'm sure I'll have more questions later for you, Geraldine. Thank you so much for your presentation.

Councilmember Winston said I just have a couple of comments, really just building on Ms. Gardeners' comments, Mr. Lewis' comments, and my colleague's comments. I agree with Mr. Driggs that any work that we do around regional transportation is not going to be as successful as it can be if we from a City Council perspective and staff perspective are having large gaps in time and work. It's not going to work if we have a slide presentation one day and don't really kind of dive into the work after it. Then come back to it a couple of months later and then we are all kind of left asking how did things sneak up on us. As this kind of goes through the next steps of plan endorsement, I think we should think about how our Transportation and Planning Committee and Council might work with our staff to kind of direct them to work within this plan. A couple of slides back there was a lot of different steps and a lot of work that needs to be done and I was hearing time periods of two, three years. Not decades in the future. So, I think if Council and senior staff really think about how do we think about future workflow as this plan gets adopted it could be really helpful in making sure that we are pushing the work forward and not being kind of the hurdle stop and progress in the region. So, thank you for this work and I look forward to diving into it.

Mr. Jones said we gave you a pre-read last week and I think I would summarize it this way. If you think about Charlotte Moves, it was specific to Charlotte. If you think about the Transformation Mobility Network, it encompasses Mecklenburg County and all of the Counties, Cities, and Towns. Connect Beyond goes into the two states and 12 counties. So, for us, we thought it was important to have this conversation with the Council at a Strategy Session so that you could see how all of this work together. Now that we have this that's before you as well as the alliance's economic impact study a couple of weeks ago, we believe that we are able to provide you with more information much to Mr. Winston's point is that stop and go, stop, and go, we needed to get all of this information out to feel more comfortable to continue the conversation.

ITEM NO. 2: AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT UPDATE

Marcus Jones, City Manager said what we are attempting to do tonight, Shawn Heath will come back and give you a bit of an update from where we are with the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds and I will do a little bit of a spoiler alert. One of the things that we have learned is that because the City Council had a very good experience I believe with getting the CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) funds out, and because we were limited to a number of cities across the country that had the CARE funds, there was a process that was already in place. We are finding that as more jurisdictions have these ARPA funds, they are really starting from scratch and one of the things that we want to make sure that we don't do is to get too far out in front of some of our other municipalities. Especially this county and the CMS (Charlotte Mecklenburg

Schools), where we have an opportunity for us to work together. So, Shawn is going to talk a bit about some of the issues that are present with us, but one of the things that we would like to do as we talk about things such as the Fall Strategy Planning Session or other words for this Retreat as well as other Council Business Meetings, to set the stage for these discussions as we move forward, but to give you a bit of an update today and also talk with you about to areas we would like to focus on.

Shawn Heath, Special Assistant to the City Manager said this is a very brief update. The heavy lifting will be on September 27th, when I return with the full set of recommendations for the first installment of the American Rescue Plan funds. Tonight, we would like to share three things quickly. One is an update on the Rental Relief Programming that we have had in place since last year. Second, provide a bit of perspective on the community engagement that the staff has been doing over the last year, which is in the form I think around the use of stimulus funding. Then finally just quickly close out on the next step over the remaining weeks of September.

Rental Relief has obviously been in the news a lot over the last couple of weeks in light of the Supreme Courts' decision to overturn the CDC (Centers for Disease) eviction moratorium. So, we wanted to give you a quick snapshot of what we have done and importantly what we have staged going forward. So, this slide is combining a number of different stimulus plans. The CARES ACT from March of 2020, the December 2020 Stimulus ACT, then also more recently the American Rescue Plan. So, the green bars on this slide show the money that we have already put in the community with stimulus funds to provide either mortgage relief, rental relief, or utility relief. I know there have been accounts from across the country with certain jurisdiction that for various reasons have had a hard time getting money into the hands of those that needed the most quickly. We have not had that challenge here and kudos to Pam Wideman and her team and our partner Dream Key who is helping us administer this funding. You can see that we have over \$40 million over the last year that's been put into rental utility and mortgage relief.

On the go-forward basis with the yellow bars, we have a little bit of just a tiny sliver of \$1.6 million of the rental assistance from the December program remaining, which I am certain we will spend this month. You have staged in your August 9th Business Meeting an appropriation of \$28.8 million in American Rescue Plan funding is designated for rental relief, which we are in the process of finalizing our contract with Dream Key Partners in order to be put in a position to put that money into the hands of those who need it the most as quickly as we can. I should also mention that in addition to the things that we are doing, Mecklenburg County obviously has an intentional focus on this area as well, they have coincidentally around \$30 million of their own stimulus funding that is in various stages of being deployed on a go-forward basis to support members of the county.

I would also just to close out on this slide bring forth that there are a number of things that are happening with City staff, County staff, agency partners, Crisis Assistance, Dream Key as I had mentioned before, behind the scenes to ensure we are not flat-footed as a community given what we expect could happen in the months ahead as it relates to the eviction moratorium having been taken off of the books.

So, moving away from rental and utility type support, there isn't really new information on this slide but, we want to keep these topics in the back of your mind thinking ahead to the September 27th conversation on the American Rescue Plan. So, just a quick reminder on the community-facing investments that Council will be deciding on in the weeks and months ahead. As I have mentioned before one branch of the American Rescue Plan is the ARPA Home HUD program, which was \$11.6 million allocated to the City of Charlotte. As I have said before there is a fair amount of flexibility associated with that funding, tenant-based rental assistance, creating or preservation of affordable housing, a hotel/motel acquisition strategy in converting those assets into permanent supportive housing or emergency shelters. All of those things are eligible opportunities with that funding. Housing Director, Wideman and I were talking earlier today. There are a lot of opportunities swirling around the community. So, we will be putting our heads together in identifying a suite of recommendations that we can carry forward for the Council to weigh in on in the near future.

On the Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, which is the larger branch underneath the American Rescue Plan for the City of Charlotte, as we have said before it is \$142 million in total. Half of which was received in May of 2021. The other half will be received in May of 2022. In terms of the big picture allocation for that funding as I had shared with the Council on July 19th, we believe that we can really focus on community support with the American Rescue Plan. However, there is \$11 million that's been earmarked for City operations. There are a couple of specific things in play in that area. One relates to the presentation you receive not that long ago related to COVID (mild to severe respiratory infection caused by the coronavirus) incentives and premium pay for example. Which are eligible for ARPA funding and then also some IT (Information Technology) network infrastructure, upgrades, which are also eligible for ARPA funding, the types of things that will allow us to sustain and enhance the teleworking environment that's become so important to us in the COVID environment. So, for all intensive purposes, you could consider that \$11 million to have a good home as it relates to allowable uses for ARPA funding. With the community support as I've mentioned before the only element of the \$ 60 million where there is a firm earmark relates to the arts and culture strategy, which you have endorse through the FY2022 budget. Two million of that \$60 million will be devoted to supporting that strategy in the first year, along with \$4 million from the general fund. The remaining balance will be up for conversation when we return for report-out on September 27th.

As I had mentioned before on community engagement we nibbled on this topic a little bit on July 19th, but I wanted to reinforce that the staff is very aware of Council expectations that argue of stimulus funding be heavily informed by community input. So, we took a moment to reflect on the last year and just wanted to quickly share with you various things that have been done or are in flight that demonstrating that we're taking the voice of the community into account as we cultivate these opportunities.

So, looking back to the May, June, July timeframe of last year, of course with the COVID Community Recovery Taskforce. It was set up with three work groups focused on housing, small business, and the airport. On one hand, you might say we'll that feels stale at this point, quite some time has passed. But looking back at the recommendations that came through those work groups, it was interesting to see a lot of reoccurring themes that are just as relevant today. Business and Workforce resiliency was a big theme, housing stability, homelessness prevention, obviously big themes. That's continuing to inform the thinking of Tracy Dodson as she contemplating ideas with stimulus funding, Pam Wideman for Housing and Neighborhood services as she's contemplating ideas around stimulus funding. So, that work continues to bear fruit today for us.

On the annual budget process, of course, that includes public input and Budget Director Bergman had the foresight to include a very specific question in this year's survey and the question was what do members of the community think the City of Charlotte should invest in with its stimulus funds? There were close to 700 individuals that answered that question and the three items that rose to the top in their mind related to rental support, small business support, and digital inclusion. So, hundreds of members of the community weighed in and that was back in the February, March timeframe.

On the Corridors of Opportunity with the workforce study and the analysis that's been done in partnership with Ernst & Young, it's a very community-driven input process. There have been dozens of interviews that have been done with the employer in corridors and workforce service providers. There was a survey that was done. I believe there were roughly 300 members of the community primarily from the corridors that responded to the survey. One key area of emphasis was asking these individuals what are some of the things that are impediments for you to get a job or keep a job? So, all of that work is obviously focused on what are the workforce capabilities and gaps and opportunities in corridors? Tracy has talked at the committee level and with Council before about all of this really folds underneath of the job strategy around higher Charlotte. So, a lot of exciting opportunities in that space and very much driven by community input.

In terms of some current and ongoing things that are in place today, I'll just cherry-pick a few things here on the slide. With the Charlotte Mecklenburg 2025 Housing and Homeless strategy, you'll hear more about that next week. There is a progress report that Gene

Woods from Atrium and Kathy Bessant from Bank of American will provide for Council next Monday night. There in the process of providing a similar report to the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners this week. So, I'll be interested to see that. So, you will hear more about the progress, but I would mention to you that it's a very stakeholder-driven approach. There are dozens of organizations from across the community. A very diverse set of organizations that are actively involved in the work streams. We've held I believe five or six community input forums where hundreds of members of the community have had an opportunity to weigh in on the various strategies and initiatives that could support this community and the things we are trying to accomplish associated with housing and homelessness.

The last thing that I would mention here of course is things that you have put in place and that are around the band, including the Neighborhood Equity and Stabilization Commission. Which will serve as yet another forum for the community to weigh in on things of relevance to your priorities which are of relevance to how the City of Charlotte will invest stimulus funding in the community. So, I just wanted to give you a 30,000-foot view of what I believe is a good balance set of things that we've done that don't necessarily fall under an ARPA or stimulus plan feedback strategy par say, but when you start piecing them together I think it demonstrates that a lot of work has been done to gain input from the Community.

Finally, just to close out with the next steps as I mentioned at the end of the month we will be back with a follow-up conversation where we left off on July 19th, which was roughly a dozen very specific investment opportunities just to get that conversation going and we'll be back with our refined thinking. As the Manager had mentioned we've had a number of conversations. We continue to have conversations with our counterparts at the county and also Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools. Frankly, it's too soon to say exactly where those will land, but I think the energy in those conversations is good. The level of commitment to finding opportunities for us to do things together is in my view very high, but it takes work and it takes time to settle in on what are those specific areas where we collectively two of us at a time or three of us in certain instances see something that we are mutually excited about and want to tackle together. So, on the housing and homelessness front, I think there is early opportunities that we're in conversation with on the county as it relates to the 2025 strategy that I just mentioned, and hopefully, all of that will bear fruit. With the school system and with the County I'm still hopeful. There are a number of exciting things that we're contemplating around the digital inclusion space as an extension of what we did in the Access Charlotte Program with the CARES funding. So, public Wi-Fi for example. I'm still hopeful and optimistic that we'll find an opportunity for all three of us to find a way to really come together and do something collectively in that space. So, the next few weeks will give us time to continue those conversations, firm up our plans, and then we will be back in front of you and look forward to that opportunity to present. That concludes the formal presentation. So, I will be glad to take any comments or questions.

Mayor Lyles said thank you, Shawn. I want to say that I think maybe a week ago we received an eviction report and status update. I'd like to ask when we started out, we were working really hard with Community Relations and I believe we were working with Crisis and I can't remember the other organization, but we were trying to figure out how to do this. Would that be \$28 million, have we been able to address any of the urgency of this problem, or have we had to change any of our processes? What improvements or responses because I understand landlords are really getting behind? Evictions are starting. What have we done to kind of adjust to the new normal for landlords as well as the tenants?

Mr. Heath said two things briefly. One on the process side. So, we received feedback early on that the process itself was a little cumbersome and it was just challenging to navigate, right and we wanted to create the path of least resistance for individuals that were eligible to access the funding. So, to Dream Key's credit, we had a number of conversations with them. I feel confident that where we are at today is we have a process that's very efficient and it's customer-friendly. Having said that there are certain documentation requirements that we have no choice but to abide by. So, with the stimulus

funding, for example, there needs to be a demonstration essentially of certification that the individual has experienced some sort of COVID hardship. It's more of a self-attestation, but it is not as simple as making a phone call and providing your name and receiving the stimulus funding. Pam and I have been involved in a number of conversations and we are comfortable that where we've ended up now is a process that is as streamlined as it can be. On the strategic side, a number of things that have been done really over the last 30 to 60 days is just an evaluation of how to continue to prioritize the funding. So, for example, what you will find now different than three, four, or five months ago is individuals that have been served an eviction notice and have a hearing scheduled within 90 days will be the number one priority category. Then moving on from there it's really based on AMI (Area Median Income). So, individuals that are at the lowest income level become the second priority level and so and so forth. So, these resources are tremendous at our disposal, but they are scarce. So, from a strategy process perspective, we're doing everything we can to ensure that those individuals that are most in need have an opportunity to be prioritized in the process.

Mayor Lyles said I also remember we had a really great collaboration with the Clerk of Court as well as the Sheriff's Office. Are we continuing to see that kind of collaboration? Is there anything that they would suggest that would help us get this funding out that's possible?

Mr. Heath said I will take that as a homework assignment. I don't have an answer for you immediately. I do know that there was a backlog of I believe 2500 or 2600 eviction cases that was reported a few weeks ago. So, clearly, COVID had an impact on the capacity of the court system to move through these cases. So, I will follow up with you on that.

Mayor Lyles said I really would love to be able to see that at the first moment that they have the interaction with the court system, that they also have all of the paperwork and all of the things that you have to have. I recall the Clerk's Office and the Sheriff being very cooperative in that. So, let's just ask them again. Is there anything that we can do to help move this so that we can give both our tenants and landlords the ability to have those relationships in keeping people housed? So, thank you for that. Sorry, I jumped in but after I got that report I remember writing down what else can we do? So, thank you very much Shawn for looking for what else we can do.

Councilmember Phipps said I was interested in that second bullet under the next steps. Aside from any introductory meeting we've had with the County and CMS, have we actually met with them subsequent to that to discuss any kind of plans, or is this still something that's in the works?

Mr. Heath said Mr. Phipps if I captured your question, we are very much in active conversation with both the County and the School System. I'm meeting with them on about every other week basis. We had discussions as a collective last week and then I've had a one-off conversation here or there since then. So, they are each working through a deliberate process as are we, the County I believe in early July presented seven pillars, which will really drive their investment strategy. They're embarking on an effort to taking those pillars and converting those into a strategic plan. So, we can only really move as fast as our respective processes allow us to. Just as I've been sensitive and careful not to get ahead of City Council's headlights, each of my counterparts have done the same. So, at some point we get to that stage where all three of us are far enough along where we can look each other in the eye and say, you know what we see tremendous overlap in these two or three areas, we see mutual benefit. Let's go for it.

Mr. Phipps said my next question in yesterday's Sunday Observer they had a story in there about evictions that were occurring in the middle of the moratorium. They specifically talked about a couple of apartment complexes on the East side. They said that they did an analysis. Of course, it disproportionately affected the black and brown residence of those complexes. I was wondering as a City were we aware that those evictions were occurring or did we try to put any resources toward those areas to prevent those evictions?

Mr. Heath said I think two things I would mention. One is we haven't refreshed the heat map, but during the CARES Act, there was a slide. It's imprinted in my memory from a few months ago both on the Small Business Support Programs and on the Rental Relief Programs that showed exactly where across the Charlotte community these investments were being made. In both instances, I think what you saw was there a tremendous clustering of these investments around the crescent. So, when I read that same article over the weekend I couldn't help but think I need to reach out to the team, and just out of curiosity I wanted to see to what extent do our investment overlays with those particular zip codes. My suspicion is that we have a heavy investment in those zip codes, but I'll need to confirm that. Then on your second point, a related point, it's interesting because the eviction moratorium was targeted. So, it was not a moratorium on all evictions. So, evictions unrelated to individuals that were having a difficult time paying their rent due to a COVID hardship, those was very long-winded, but there are a lot of other scenarios where someone could have violated a lease term and they still could have been subject to an eviction during this entire period of time. There are also individuals who for whatever reason could not adequately demonstrate that their financial challenges were due to a COVID hardship. In those scenarios, they also could have been subject to an eviction during this entire time. So, there has been eviction that has been occurring and that have been advancing. Now, of course with the CDC moratorium not in place, everything has opened up. Did that answer your question, Mr. Phipps?

Mr. Phipps said partially, but the article did go on to talk about the amount of, I guess, disinvestment in some of the maintenance of some of these facilities. They even talked about rental homes engaging in evictions. I wanted to know in as much as we have a lot of activity now with rental single-family homes, inspections and such of that, is that subject to the City's jurisdiction to see if the quality of those homes are suitable for rental in the same way as apartments are or is that something outside of the scope of the City's influence?

Mr. Heath said I'm going to ask Housing Director Wideman to provide some perspective on that.

Pam Wideman, Director of Housing & Neighborhood Services said to Mr. Phipps there are two things to add. We saw the same article that you referenced. One of the things that we discussed with our colleague in CRC (Community Relations Committee) is doubling down if you will or targeting our eviction prevention education towards those zip codes as a part of our anti-displacement work that we're kicking off. So, I do want you all to know that in terms of if there are code compliances there, while we don't proactively inspect each apartment complex or rental housing unit in any particular area if we have reason to believe either through our proactive field work or our reactive if we get complaints we are happy to go out and to inspect those properties. The other thing I would say to you is that what's really important about this rental education is really helping people understand the value of having a long-term lease versus a month-to-month lease. So, those are some of the things that we are trying to do to address the article that you saw.

Councilmember Eiselt said Shawn, I think point number two is really important. When we talk about that engagement with the County and CMS, I know in any other circumstance that's a lot of work to try to get those bodies together, but the expediency is something that is on my mind. So, when you look at the groups that have applied to help with certain programming I hope that we can really recognize the organizations that have been partners with us before, that we know have the systems in place. I'm all for letting anyone apply for these things especially when we are talking about students, you're talking about having to choose amongst thousands of students to help. So, the scale of infrastructure with the organizations that apply I think is really important and their ability to ramp up fast and get the work done. So, I hope my colleagues will support that notion.

Mr. Heath said the point was well taken. I hope is on September 27th we will be able to bring as many investment opportunities as possible that are implementation ready. So, my aspirational goal is that everything will be put in front of you and ready a vote. For some reason that's not the case I think at a minimum we'd be at the point where we could

segregate the opportunities and hear the ones that are implementation ready. We know enough about it to hopefully answer the questions that you would have and provide some perspective on where we see the value and let you make your decisions. Whereas there may be other ones reasonably and realistically we need to say we are excited about the opportunity, but we are going to need more time to work on it in the months ahead and maybe it's more suitable for some future committee conversations, but we know we can't hold on to everything for too long.

Councilmember Johnson said that was a great presentation. I just have a few questions. So, part of the process for the evictions in the County was to involve the Community Relations Committee, deviate between the landlords and the tenant. Do we have any numbers on the cases that we recurred have since the beginning and how much assistance we provided in that process because that was a really good tool to avoid evictions? That was one of the strategies we developed. Do we have a report on that Ms. Wideman or Shawn?

Mr. Heath said I am looking for my partner again for some help.

Ms. Wideman said we do not. I cannot share a number with you off of the top of my head, but we will take that as a homework assignment and share with you the information in terms of when we started this up until this point how many mediations we've provided around eviction.

Ms. Johnson said okay, cause if Council will recall part of the process is when evictions were filed we were going to send information out to the tenants that the City had a program where we would mediate and hopefully avoid the eviction.

Ms. Wideman said that is correct and I will also recall to you that we also worked directly with the courts to make sure that information was directly in the court system as well. So, we will provide you with a more thorough response on kind of all of our efforts around that.

Ms. Johnson said okay and is that still an option?

Ms. Wideman said yes, ma'am.

Ms. Johnson said so I think there really needs to be education and promotion and marketing surrounding that is an option to avoid that eviction because not just going in the paperwork, but I mean do people know that?

One of the things that I heard and thought was so profound, that eviction is for black women, what a criminal record is for black men. That's a barrier to housing. So, it affects the black population an inequitable amount. So, if we can try to avoid evictions on peoples' records, we want to do as much as we can. Many of the folks who live in the hotels and the motels are paying more than typical rent. It's just that they have this record. So, I would like to see some type of program where we can help, first of all, avoid the eviction, but if it does happen, we can kind of help individuals expunge the eviction from their record. Helping them to pay off those balances if it was COVID-related primarily, but we really need to take a look at how we can remove that barrier. So, I would like to see that CRC report if we are helping as many people as we can because that was great, that was an exciting option. If people aren't getting the message we have to do more because it's cyclical. If they are getting evicted they can't get future housing.

Also, to piggyback off of what Mr. Phipps said as far as landlords, and I have said this before we need some type of landlord oversight database or something. That's another barrier for housing. I don't know if you all know, but a person can have an application fee of about \$50 per person and if there is four adults in the home that's \$200 per application, and if they are denied this is happening over, and over, and over again. So, if there is some type of something in the COVID funding or the ARP dollars that we can take a look at tracking these landlords, some of those landlords that filed the evictions could have

done them incorrectly or illegally actually. I would love to see if we are tracking this type of information or these type of practices by these landlords.

Councilmember Graham said one I think Councilmember Phipps asked a question that I was going to ask and you did a very good job yourself in terms of kind of setting the table in terms of collaboration where we were. So, I will save everybody time and just go into the next questionnaire.

Councilmember Ajmera said some of my questions were already addressed. A couple that have not been addressed are around the Rent Relief Program. So, Shawn thank you so much in providing an overview of the process that has been streamlined. Could you tell us what is the turnaround time once the application has been submitted now with this new process?

Mr. Heath said right now it is set up where applications are accepted during the first 15 days of each month and then the remainder of the month is a review period. In terms of a specific number of days on average from when an application is submitted, I don't have a number in my head. Pam do you know?

Ms. Wideman said while we don't have an actual number of days Ms. Ajmera, some of it also depends on if there is additional information discovered that is needed during the review period. So, as quickly as we can get them turned around the goal is to get everything that we get in out within the next 15 days. One of the things we want to encourage people is really to follow up if there is additional or outstanding information required to process the application.

Ms. Ajmera said thank you, Ms. Wideman. So, our goal is currently 15 days as long as the documentation has been submitted along with the application. I know other municipalities have started a process where the application is being initiated by the housing provider and later the tenant can actually provide some sort of approval. Has that been something that we have considered where the housing provider could initiate an application to expedite the process?

Mr. Heath said yes under Ramp CLT and I can keep glancing at Pam for confirmation, but there is a reference to landlords can initiate this process and move it forward. Of course, there is a requirement and I don't know exactly when the tenant fits into the equation, but they do have the ability to get the ball rolling. I will say one of the important Metrix that we are tracking is simply how quickly are we getting the money out the door. When I was in front of you on July 19th at that point we had about \$10 million remaining in the relief plan from December of 2020 and what I shared earlier today showed that we have \$1.6 million. So, we are definitely seeing the money moving to the community fairly quickly.

Ms. Ajmera said I think that's great to see that money is moving into the community. I'm just interested in seeing what's the turnaround time and if there is anything that we can do. I am also interested in hearing the process where it's actually housing providers started. I know we have had several housing providers who have reached out where they had one hundred plus thousand dollars in past due to balance. There were some concerns around the process. So even this was back in 2020, I am interested in hearing how the new process would have suddenly changed or at least expedited the whole timeline.

Mr. Heath said understood.

Councilmember Winston said thank you for all of the information. I thank my colleagues for pointing out all of the good points. I'm particularly interested in the collaboration between us, Mecklenburg County, CMS schools around the digital divide. I know we did a lot of work on this in the past about this time last year, but I just want us to be clear that right now we are in our third school year dealing with this pandemic. So many of our kids are having to rely on digital things and digital training. So, I'm wondering as you are trying to, as you said optimistic about the next steps, is there anything that the Council can do

to keep that conversation pushing forward to give you any type of guidance so you don't feel like you are getting out in front of our headlights as you said? What we didn't necessarily do last year was the City Council didn't really engage County Commission or the School Board directly to these ends. Are there any kind of conversations or things that we could do to get us on the same page? I've talked to some folks, some citizen groups that are working in this space, and I think their certain urgencies about opportunities that are presenting themselves. So, I definitely want us to be able to pivot and maneuver swiftly around those opportunities. So, again is there anything we could do to help to that end right now as we continue to go down into this third school year?

Mr. Jones said Councilmember Winston, thank you for that. I will say there are two areas and it's been abundantly clear tonight the discussion around housing and homelessness, and you bring up the digital divide just now. Two areas that we really believe that there are opportunities to really collaborate with the County and the school system, as a matter of fact, I had a conversation with Superintendent Winston this morning and we talked specifically about the digital divide. So, if your question is there an opportunity for Council, for electives to talk to electives, absolutely. That would be great. I do want to make sure that everybody understands that staff to staff, there have been very good conversations especially around these two key areas, the digital divide and housing, and homelessness. Any help would be appreciated.

Ms. Eiselt said Shawn thank you very much for the presentation. I know we all look forward to hearing more with regards to the next steps and to engaging our colleagues at the county and CMS levels. So, thank you.

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ITEM NO. 3: EXOTIC ANIMALS ORDINANCE REVIEW

Marcus Jones, City Manager said we do have Marie Harris and I believe she will get some assistance from the City Attorney, Patrick Baker. There have been a number of emails that have come in asking where were we with the exotic animal ordinance review. So, just to put this back into perspective there was a series of conversations and analyses as it dealt with, what we called back then I guess circus animals. In terms of the actual ordinance, it's really an amendment to the exotic animal's ordinance. So, we believe we had input not only from the Council but the community. There was an ordinance that we were working on and then COVID came. What I believe Marie is going to do tonight is just bring you back up to speed with what conclusion you had gotten to at that point and see if this is ready to move forward at some point for a Council vote. Did I get that right, Marie?

Marie Harris, Strategy and Budget said yes sir. Thank you so much and again I'm Marie Harris with Strategy and Budget. If you will bear with me, we are going to pre-COVID days for a minute just to refresh you because I know it's been a year and a half since we've spoken on this topic. As the Manager said, tonight we just giving an overview of where we have gone before as far as discussions around this topic and then a proposal for moving forward.

Back in November of 2019 the City Manager based on feedback from the Mayor and the Council there was a lot of feedback in the community around circus animals and the treatment of circus animals. So, he committed to giving a report to Council on, okay what do we currently have in place as far as provisions for protection around circus animals and benchmarks around that? Then he had the staff prepare a report that was presented to you in January 2020. Then in February 2020 we came before you and presented that information. Then based on your discussions at that meeting we moved forward into February 24th with a draft ordinance for your consideration. We also had feedback from the community at that meeting. There was additional discussions among the Council at that meeting and there was a few future revisions proposed. You voted to refer it to the next council meeting. Then in the meantime, we got hit with COVID and consideration. So, our priorities shifted and we were trying to allow time to have this where we could have a lot more in-person public engagement, but it's been a year and a half now. We had no way of knowing at the time that we would still be under this kind of restriction and

precautions. Again, we are still in the review part. When we say wild exotic animals, we are speaking of animals that are typically found in a zoo or in the wilderness. They are not indigenous to the United States or North America that somebody might fear property damage or bodily harm from. They do not include animals customarily thought of as pets or domestic farm animals, fish, birds, or insects even though you may get bodily harm from a spider, but that's not a wild exotic animal in our case. This is as defined from our ordinance.

Again, just to review our current provisions, at the federal level we have the Animal Welfare Act that provides for minimum standards. We pull just a couple that are relevant to our topic tonight. Handling of animals could not cause stress, physical harm, or unnecessary discomfort and physical abuse should not be used to train, work, or otherwise handle animals. At the state level, the state of North Carolina defines what animal cruelty is and it also goes further, and it grants the City the authority to further regulate, define, and prohibit the abuse of animals. Since we've discussed this as a full Council when I was before you last time there is pending legislation, House Bill 594, which was introduced in April 2021 to ban to use of wild and exotic animals in traveling shows. It would be made past its first reading in a zoom committee. We don't know if that will continue to move forward or not, but that is just the development from the last meeting. Again, for the City, we have specific to wild and exotic animals, we have restraints what are required, and that is more so to protect the public. We have what constitutes wild and exotic animals. That's why I kind of review the definition with you a minute ago. Then also who can keep, maintain, or process these types of animals.

Now moving forward to tonight, back in February 2020 we discussed with you adding these definitions of the bull hook, electric prod, and whip just to the definition section, but more so this page is the meat of the changes that were being proposed. If you look I will draw your attention to the yellow, with the red strip through. Those are changed since 2020. So, this shows everything that was there in February 2020, and then it is updated with the changes that were recommended for you tonight. So, basically, what it says in addition to the state and federal minimum standards, we're proposing that no permanent or transient animal exhibition or circus shall induce or encourage animals to perform through the use of chemical, mechanical, electrical, or manual devices in a manner that is likely to cause physical injury or suffering. Further, the use of bull hooks, electric prods, or whips to handle, train, or otherwise interact with elephants, felines, and primates when they are on display, performing, or being trained as prohibited. All equipment used on performing animals shall fit properly and be in good working condition.

So, there's two components here. One, that you cannot use any device to cause injury or suffering. Then the second piece of this is that you can't at all use bull hooks, electric prods, or whips. While you're thinking through that we will go ahead and go to the next. So, tonight we would like to get your feedback on the proposed ordinance changes. We are looking to publish the language for public review when we publish the agenda for our upcoming Business Meeting. It's at your pleasure which meetings would be appropriate. Then we can receive public comments on the language and vote on ordinance changes. Whatever changes if you do choose to make any changes we'd like to have at least six months to give notice to businesses that use exotic traveling animals and also allow for animal care and control staff to be trained on these types of inspections. With that, I will go back to the main page to get your feedback for tonight.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much. Is there any question or feedback? I think that this was moving along and so unless there is some objection I would say that the staff should go ahead and place it on the first available agenda, but I also want to open it up.

Councilmember Newton said I want to thank you, Marie. I want to thank the staff for bringing this back in front of us. It does feel like it's been a very long time since we've had this conversation and I'm trying (inaudible) myself. I do appreciate this, nonetheless. We've gotten countless emails pertaining to this and I think it's certainly the time to be talking about this again. It's a trend across the country is to adopt these ordinances and even here in the state of North Carolina with the General Assembly considering the potential House Bill. I think now is definitely the time. My hope is that we do proceed

forward with this given the fact that I think many of us are getting back up to speed on it. I feel like there are many folks that might have been taken by surprise that this is on our agenda tonight. I would be in favor of, I think the options were on the 13th or the 27th, I believe you said, Marie, right. So, I would be in favor of the 27th just to make sure that we are able to fully flush this out and make the right decision, get that engagement input from the community interim as well.

I do have a question and I look at the language and I do wonder just right off the top of my head, I wonder why we are talking about elephants, felines, primates within the language that's literally right in front of us here on the screen and excluding other and potential wild or exotic animals. To be clear it's my understanding that the ordinance doesn't prevent exotic or wild animals within traveling acts. I feel like would be the request of many folks that provision would be included here, but nevertheless, it seems like it kind of twiddles down into a kind of specific types of animals as opposed to just talking about wild and exotic animals altogether. I look at this and I think we are excluding the possibilities of mistreatment and harm being done to bears, being done to say zebras. There is a list of other animals that could be included here. So, why not just talk about wild and exotic animals altogether? I wanted to ask, so bull hooks, prods, whips, with looking at the potential of eliminating (inaudible) other devices and it's my understanding too that across the country there have been ordinances and laws passed that are much broader than that, that would include things like steel bars, golf clubs, shovels, pitch forks, canes, etcetera. So, I was wondering why exactly do we have that red line. I mean this is the draft ordinance. Now we have a draft ordinance that is red lined and at the same time, it's redlined a little bit later. Can you comment? I don't know if that would be you Marie or if that would be Patrick but comment on why those are redlines.

Ms. Harris said to your point we could name basically anything that could be used to injure an animal or cause suffering, right. So, that's why the top portion says basically no mechanical, electrical, manual, nothing shall be used to cause physical injury or suffering. So, the other pieces that you're calling out would fall more so under that, but then we are taking it even a step further and saying but we feel like bull hooks, electric prods, or whips have no place to be used. To be honest that's where when we did benchmark, those were the main ones that are called out by other places. A lot of places just said bull hooks. We added the electric prods or whips as some other communities do also have that. To redline, other devices was more or so based on some of the other feedback that we got from continuants or some professionals that use animals at the February 24th, 2020 meeting. You might need to use some type of device to train an animal because these are not natural performances so they might have to have some device, but we are saying, well okay if it doesn't cause physical injury or suffering.

Mr. Newton said I read that sentence in a manner that is likely to cause physical injury or suffering and maybe I'll need to read it a few more times to fully grasp it, but I do kind of look at that and I feel like it's a bit of an alphabet soup as opposed to just a prohibition all together with chemical and electrical or manual, I do question and feel more comfortable if there were assurance that that would extend to items such as steel bars, golf clubs. As I have mentioned there are other types of items. I feel like we're going to have more time to talk about this, but my hope is that we don't rush this. It is Tuesday and we are talking about coming back next Monday. That might literally only give us three business days if even that to discuss this further and really hammer out something that I think is more conducive to what we are hearing from the community and certainly more consistent with the trends that we are seeing locally and across the country. Once again, I would be more supportive of a September 27th date just so that we could as a Council discuss this more thoroughly. I think there may have been some Councilmembers who either were just coming in on this or maybe weren't even on the Council at the time that we were discussing all of this. So, just to get us all up to speed and make sure that we do have that full-fledged community engagement like we normally do when we pass an ordinance.

Councilmember Ajmera said first as Mr. Newton had said and thank you for putting this back on our agenda. I think this language addresses all of the concerns that were raised about the public forum. I have to go back and review all of the notes because I think this was over a year ago when we had discussed this. I am comfortable with the language

here and I do look forward to our public forum and see if there is anything that we have missed. I think from looking at it, from my memory I think we covered everything that was asked from our public forum. So, I do look forward to supporting this.

Councilmember Phipps said I had a question about the House Bill that is in committee. Does that essentially mean that we as a City Council can not expressly prohibit exotic animal shows without the expressed authority by the North Carolina Legislator?

Ms. Harris said no sir. There's another city such as Ashville that currently do expressly ban exotic animal performances and the state gives the cities authority to act on that. This Bill within the state is to ban wild and exotic animal performances statewide. So, if that passes then we will not have the authority to allow it, but at this time we do have the authority to further regulate it. We have no way of knowing if this Bill at the state level was going to move forward and get traction or not.

Mr. Phipps said okay because I guess I misinterpreted it because I thought that we said that we had the authority to disallow harmful practices to animals, but I didn't know that it went so far as to give us the authority to outright ban their participation within our city limits or whatever. The emails that I have been getting I don't think they are really satisfied with lessening the potential impact of harm to animals as much as they want to ban their use in any activity within the City. So, that's what I found to be interesting.

Mayor Lyles said as a result of the comments Mr. Jones I'm assuming that we will continue with the language and review with the City Attorney's Office again and Ms. Harris was looking at it for the 27th. So, that is the direction that the Council is going to proceed in. So, thank you very much.

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ITEM NO. 4: COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT OUTS

Mayor Lyles said I think everybody has a copy of the Committee reports and again, many of us attend lots of Committee meetings. So, I don't think you have to go through everything. What I would ask you to do is think about what challenges you and your discussion in the Committee as a Chair that you really feel like you need feedback and some direction for how other Councilmembers who are not participating in your Committee would feel about the direction that you are taking for the recommendation. I also wanted to do a couple of things about Committees. Two years ago, we had in all of our Committee assignments a deadline of 30, 60, or 90 days. I am going to reinstitute that as an idea of how we can actually get things out of Committee because I know that a lot of things have been in Committee for a very long time and if it even requires more than 90 days it would be the ability to come back and why it takes more than 90 days because there is something going on.

The second thing that I wanted to say is that in the past we've talked about our Council Retreat and I want to send a referral to the Budget and Effective Governance Committee to help arrange an earlier Retreat this year as we begin to prepare for some of the major issues that we have that we've actually talked about, Transportation and Connect Today, but there are other major issues as we have plans for how we conduct business during this pandemic as it continues or even if it is something that we are coming out of. This would go to the Budget and Effectiveness Committee for working with the Manager for that.

The next thing I wanted to say is that Mr. Egleston and the Manager and I have been talking about the idea of how do we use technology for Vision Zero. That will be discussed by the staff in October and then we will have a referral to the Safe Communities Committee for that one as well. I just wanted to give you a heads up on some of the things that are coming forward in that regard. So, with that why don't we start with our Workforce and Business Development Committee and see if we can model the behavior that helps us get Council reactions to the work that's being done or the questions that remain unanswered.

Councilmember Bokhari said can I also make a side ask? Are we going to also be able to get an Ad Hoc Committee update from the Redistricting Committee in this session?

Mayor Lyles said yes, we will have that tonight as well.

Workforce and Business Development

Mr. Bokhari said in light of what the Mayor has asked there I do want to mention one thing from the Committee that we had today. Then a bit of a call-to-action that I think that's in the spirit of not just repeating what we've heard. The first update is we heard from Steve and all of the great workaround MWSBE (Minority, Women, Small Business Enterprise) and CBI (Charlotte Business INclusion) that's happening and that they have been doing for the last year. We've got our annual report today. Just a couple of numbers, 1,207 certified MWSBE firms. Up 15% from 2019. Ninety-five new certified African American vendors in 2020. Twenty-six million dollars is the increased spending with certified businesses, that's up 19%. Twenty-one percent increased spending with MWSBE prime contractors, which we know is a big goal area of ours, and 15% increased spending with prime MBE firms. So, that was I know a status update, but I think it was one that is important to relay to make sure that everyone knows that work continues and is evolving.

Two, we got an update from the Business Alliance today that is on the front end of some analysis their going to do on incentivization and recruiting companies and retaining companies looking both internally at our tool kit, at everything we have, but also at peer cities as we look to really formalized our path forward and our future there. The first point of action is we don't always get told things upfront and engaged in things upfront. I think this was a good opportunity and a partnership between the City and the Business Alliance. So, I think the first call to action of everyone who wasn't in that Committee meeting today is to think about the things you care about because we will try to make touchpoints with them giving our input as well as getting feedback from them as they go along. So, we can be active participants at least to some extent in something that we are really going to be big stakeholders of the output. I think this is the challenge that I would relay and the Mayor's kind of prompting is I feel like everything has changed in the last two years and the deck has been reshuffled. All of the things that we have been doing for decades or maybe even a couple of years leading into that as it relates to programs and funding pools really has had the world ripped out underneath it in the COVID timeline.

So, we now have all of these new groups and parties that have completely different challenges than they had before and we really need to be thinking about okay, where are we learning from what we've done in the CBI front. What are we learning with MWSBE programs that we have mature that now might apply to a whole bunch of other groups, small businesses workforce that have all been challenged? So, this is a call to action from all of you to start soliciting feedback beyond just the committee, where we need to know what is it that you seeing at district levels or at large on the macro level? What other programs do we do that now need to have lens turned over to small businesses that are struggling everywhere, but also in certain geographic areas like uptown? Other places where we haven't had these programs because we cannot go into another round of funding where we just give grants. We have to retool our business for this new session of what's happening. We have to do the same with our workforce. Again, I think the best way we can do this is to not make this a Committee thing. To not even just leave this in the staff, but we start to compile ideas and lists, and things, and I'm going to reach out to all of you individually in the coming weeks to start gathering that.

So, my ask is to start thinking about you're here and you see emails, you get calls, where are there themes and trends of similar problems that we can create retooling programs. Something more than just grants or loans that we give away to really start to prepare this City for a new normal that is going to keep happening year over year. We need to get ahead of that. In that theme that's the challenge that a lot of great work is happening with the staff right now, but they can't do this on their own. There's no better tool than 11 Councilmembers and a Mayor who literally have their finger on different parts of the pulse of this community. So, we've got to do our part in that. That would be my call to action amongst all of us, which is to start thinking about things you're seeing that don't have

programs of support or retooling, and let's gather those up for the staff so that they can start analyzing them a little bit and bringing back to us viable options.

Mayor Lyles said thank you, Mr. Bokhari, especially the individual outreach. I do think that helps with the production of ideas and more information.

Budget and Effectiveness

Councilmember Driggs said in case anybody on Council hasn't read all of the fine print about our Committee meeting discussing the administration and enforcement of the NDO (Non-Discrimination Ordinance) with wider MPO we adopted on August 9th. I wanted just to give you a high-level kind of synopsis. As we approached this subject we recognized that there were two different parts to this. One of them was places of public accommodation and the other one was employment. We got a really excellent presentation from Community Relations Director Willie Ratchford about the working of the Community Relations Committee and his staff and how they have dealt with issues coming before the NDO we already had. Complaints related to protective classes that were already in existence. Mr. Ratchford recommended in connection with public accommodation that the new classes be treated the same way as the old classes that we basically go through a process to which a complaint is submitted, it's considered as to its proper jurisdiction that effectiveness, there is mediation. If that doesn't work out there is an investigation, there is further remediation. Then ultimately something can be referred to the City Attorney. Mr. Ratchford said that this procedure has worked well for us since 1968. In fact, there has never been a case that had to be referred to the City Attorney in all of that time. He feels that just continuing those procedures for the new protective classes makes sense.

On the employment side, Mr. Ratchford pointed out that we actually have an excellent process as it relates to housing complaints that could be a model for how we deal with discrimination complaints in the area of employment, which as you know is (inaudible) right. So, we did have an NDO before as it related to places of public accommodation but not for employment. He pointed out to us the steps and in detail of procedures, you can see it on our Committee webpage how that works and explain how you basically would proceed the same way if you were trying to investigate and mediate in cases of employment. We did talk about the idea of having fines for some other enforcement mechanisms. Mr. Ratchford pointed out that fines for example would probably not be helpful because they could undermine the voluntary process that has worked so well in resolving disputes like this. Also, if you have a fine the City could impose a fine and at that point whoever the defendant is, is kind of off the hook as far as we are concerned. It might create a situation where they can pay \$500 and then not be answerable to us anymore.

So, Mr. Ratchford recommended, which I agree that we do not proceed with enforceable mechanisms like fines and in the end, the Committee voted, there were three of us present, we voted unanimously to basically pursue public places of accommodation the same way for the new classes and the old classes and to use the model of housing complaints for employment situations. That was subject to the proviso and this is perhaps to set the topic for further to discuss by the Council that we consider in the next few months how that is working, whether or not we need to revisit the question of fines, and in particular whether we need to allocate more resources in our upcoming budget to the enforcement process. Mr. Ratchford said that at present he feels that we have the resources we would need to process any complaints and we will be able to identify any shortages there might be in time for our next budget process to consider adding additional funding. I think those were the main point. So, our recommendation to the full Council would be that we follow those existing procedures in the implementation of our expanded NDO.

Councilmember Johnson said I'm a part of the Committee. So, I just wanted to kind of clarify when we voted to proceed with the existing process it left room available for fines. It was not according to my understanding not to discuss fines and I subsequently heard from the City Attorney that fines are a part of our current process. So, I don't know if Mr. Baker is available to talk about the fines and our current process because that was a

discussion in the committee that fines were important to the community. So, we didn't want to take that off of the table.

Mayor Lyles said did you want to ask Mr. Baker to do that?

Ms. Johnson said yes if he is available. Then I have a question also on something you said earlier.

Mayor Lyles said alright so would you like me to answer the question or would you like to hear from Mr. Baker first?

Ms. Johnson said Mr. Baker can you give it the legal opinion publicly that we discussed?

Patrick Baker, City Attorney said yes and I think Mr. Ratchford is here as well. Already in your ordinance is a provision that allows for fines for violation of the ordinance up to \$500. That's already in your ordinance and what we have been discussing at Budget and Effectiveness is what is the process and what is the best way to encourage in those situations where we see problems, encourage compliance with the ordinance, and as Mr. Ratchford has said in his time here with the City the focus has always been on conciliation and not on fines or referrals to the Attorney's office, but the fines are actually available in your ordinance right now. Mr. Ratchford if I have misstated anything please let me know or need to clarify anything.

Ms. Johnson said are you waiting on Mr. Ratchford?

Mr. Bokhari said he shook his head no. There was nothing to correct.

Ms. Johnson said alright yes because after the meeting I heard from Patrick that fines were part of our current process. I don't know that information was available during the Committee meeting. So, I again, and Mr. Driggs will agree that that was an important topic in the meeting. So, the unanimous vote was given the fact that we still had the option to invoke the fines for the employers. Then also Mayor before we started the Committee reports you said that you want to reinstate the 30, 60, 90-day rule for committee reports.

Mayor Lyles said yes.

Ms. Johnson said I was just wondering when that stopped because it is a part of our Charter. I just wanted clarification.

Mayor Lyles said it isn't in the Charter. It was something that the Council did two years ago. We've had a committee framework and we've put it together. It was just to encourage us to continue to get things done in a way that would be able to vote on. So, I can send you a copy of the memo that went out for you to see it. It was just something basic to help us keep the trains running.

Ms. Johnson said excuse me not a charter. Our Rules of Procedure.

Mayor Lyles said it is not in the Rules of Procedure. It was in a memo that we talked about how do we do committee work and making sure that there is a referral, that the referral was clear. It was kind of just that format and it just got dropped somehow with the timeframe on it. So, that's what I was saying was being reinstated. So, it's not in the Charter or the Rules of Procedure. It was just a way that we were working with Committees.

Ms. Johnson said oh I'm sorry and maybe Patrick could give an update because there is a procedural, number 14 procedural motion of the Rules of Procedure in 2019. So, if something came out after that then I wasn't aware.

Mayor Lyles said well I'll send you a copy of what we said that we were going to do and if you have any concerns about it just bring it up, if you don't feel that it adds value. That would be fine.

Ms. Johnson said thank you. Then where are we Patrick, as far as the fine if the Charter does allow that? If we are proposing and maybe Mr. Driggs you could follow up if we proposing the status quo or are we following the same rules that fines are included according to my understanding?

Mr. Driggs said I just want to clarify the vote we took as reported in the detailed overview says that we agreed to go with the model of the existing process provided that the issue of fines and budget impact will be discussed at a later date. So, I think we left the topic open but based on advice from Mr. Ratchford we didn't take any immediate action to specify how fines would be imposed. So, we do have the authority as is now been established to impose them. We also have the advice that we do not do so from our leading practitioner on this space. I would suggest that we would want to see from our experience with these new protected classes whether that was a situation that was not resolved in a satisfactory way and might have been through the use of fines. I think that leaves all of our options open. The point was that we did not want to actually legislate the administration of fines yet.

Mayor, if I may also point out there are situations as Mr. Ratchford noted where settlements are agreed upon. So, if you have an employment situation, for example where somebody was wrongfully dismissed they could obtain back pay in substantial amounts as a result of the conflict resolution process that we have. So, it is not as if there are no money implications for the parties, but the question of penalties and trying to devise a penalty that is big enough to detour Bank of America and not so big as to bankrupt smaller companies is complicated trying to come up with a fine structure. So again, I hope we can keep this open as we voted to do and that we can consider whether we encounter situations where a fine might have been necessary or made a difference before going through the procedure of deciding exactly when to impose it and how.

Transportation Planning and the Environment

Councilmember Eiselt said the Committee met on August 23rd and I apologize, I don't have all of the Committee members who were in attendance. However, we had a very full agenda. We had three topics on the agenda. An update on the 2040 Plan Policy Map, the Unified Development Ordinance, and the Center City 2040 Plan. Mr. Smith came and gave us a presentation on that. So, on the 2040 Plan Policy Map, just to remind everybody that we are in that process now and there are three specific phases of community engagement throughout the project. Phase one, which is going on now is educating the public about the efforts and seeking their feedback on the place types. The community fines most are least desirable. I know some of the communities have already begun to address that and respond to the Planning Department. The input will be in the form of a survey, which is currently live and open until October 1st. Also, all Charlotte residents will be receiving postcards in their mailboxes in the next few days and there is a QR code that will also lead to the survey in addition to the website. So, that's phase one.

Phase two is a release of the draft 2040 Policy Map that will reflect the vision that was started in the Comprehensive Plan and then phase three, the community will have input after the release of that draft to again update the map and a second draft Policy Map will be released at the end of the year.

The first draft is expected of the mapped planned October 2021. The second draft is expected at the end of 2021 and a review of adoption will go before the TAPE (Transportation, Planning and Environment Committee) in early 2022. So, this is a message for all of my colleagues to make sure to read the 2040 policy-map briefing book that the staff would send to us every week. It answers our various questions and tracks the engagement activity. So, that is an ongoing, very dynamic process and it would be really great if everybody could keep up with that. I know it is a lot.

The second item that we talked about was the Unified Development Ordinance update. Again, the UDO Ordinance work has been going on through the Ordinance Advisory Committee that had been meeting since 2016, I believe. Since the pandemic started those meetings have all been recorded and you can go back on Facebook Live and look at

them. For instance, in last week's meeting, they talked about neighborhood one place type and the application of that. So, it's really some great information you can see in there what the topic was. So, if you're interested in sidewalks you can listen in on that meeting and I really encourage everybody to do that.

Starting October 21, there will be four drafts of the UDO that will be released and between each of those releases comments will be taken and changes made with a goal of a July 2022 decision. One of the major roles of the UDO again is to provide regulations that implement the vision established by the Comp Plan. There also will be an economic analysis for the UDO to take a look at the financial impact of both the cost and savings of the regulatory changes and that will be completed by early 2022. People can still engage in the UDO process even if they are not on those Advisory Committee through Charlotteudo.org.

The third area was the Center City 2040 Plan, which Michael Smith gave us a presentation on. Basically, that is a plan that is being developed in partnership with the City and the County that Center City Partners is taking the lead on it and working with a consultant. The draft plan was released in July of 2021 and basically, the project study area includes uptown and the adjacent neighborhoods and it's basically a two-mile radius around Trade and Tryon. It was meant to be a big picture vision for the growth of the urban core and the places that we want the Center City to become over the next two decades. Their presentation, although we didn't get all of these included 350 recommendations on different policies, projects, and programs over the short and long term. Again, it was a very holistic visionary strategy to guide growth and change, support opportunity for the community, and support intentional purposeful, equitable growth. I say that however, we had a two-hour meeting and we didn't get through all of this material. We had a lot of questions about the UDO and the Center City Plan that didn't get addressed and drilled down a little bit deeper. On the Center City Plan there is a lot of concern about how it is going to mesh with our Transformational Mobility Plan, our Transit Plan, parking, what are the specifics on how there will be a plan for parking, and how does that match up with our goals for people using transit and public transportation. So, we have another opportunity to ask those questions because we planned another meeting on September 22nd to go a little bit deeper. So, I know a number of colleagues joined us in that Committee meeting and I would really strongly encourage everybody who can participate on September 22nd to join us again. In advance, you can share your questions or comments about those two plans, the UDO, and Center City 2040 Plan to Lynn Alexander and we'll get all of those questions in there in advance hopefully. Then we will address it in that meeting on September 22nd.

Mr. Bokhari said I would just add cause I want to make this comment every time we hear it, that economic impact analysis must contain some effort to help us quantify the impacts to affordability with some of the decisions that were made.

Ms. Eiselt said thank you.

Great Neighborhoods

Councilmember Graham said the Great Neighborhoods Committee met on August 18th and we had three or four really good discussion points. One is the work that the Legacy Commission is doing. They're doing some outstanding work in reference to the community engagement aspect of the street names. They have already changed two names. One is in Druid Hills, which is now Druid Hills Way. The other is on Phifer Avenue has been changed to Montford Point Street. The thing that was most impressive about both of those is just the process that the staff went through to engage the public, to make sure that there was community feedback, make sure that folks understood what they were doing, why they were doing it, as well as providing the resources necessary to make the name change especially in the Druid Hills a lot easier and user friendly. Phifer Avenue didn't have any home or business. So, that was basically a no-brainer. The Druid Hills Way change was very involved. It gave the staff an opportunity to really test run the community engagement process and they came through with flying colors. The official street sign

change will occur on September 25th and I'm pretty sure that everyone will receive an invitation to come out to attend that.

Community Outreach is currently underway for Aycock Lane, Jackson Avenue, and Zebulon Avenue. Replacing of those names will occur in September and October with an attempt of approval in November. So, the Legacy Commission is up and running and doing a great job.

Secondly, the Council made a motion to move forward (NOAH) Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing Rental Subsidy Program to full Council for consideration. The committee discussed this program to create new rental subsidies for households earning 30 percent or less of area median income. That is going to Council for your consideration in addition to the Rental Subsidy Requirements for City-supported housing. It's also coming to full Council for your consideration as well. So those are basically the highlights from the Great Neighborhood Committee. I won't go into any more detail. You have the report in front of you. Our next meeting is coming up next week, September 15th and currently there is no outstanding referrals towards the Great Neighborhood Committee. So, we are caught up. Our staff is doing a great job under the direction of Housing Director Ms. Wideman. So, we are officially moving forward per the request of the Council.

Ms. Johnson said Mr. Graham could you give some details about the rental subsidies for the City-supported housing?

Mr. Graham said if Ms. Widman's in the building she might, other than I'm just going to be able to outline what you've already been presented. So, if there is a specific question Ms. Wideman I think is there to answer that question for you.

Ms. Johnson said okay, thank you. So, my question then is are we proposing that any project that receives city funding will accept rental subsidies, Ms. Wideman?

Mayor Lyles said hold on. I don't know that Ms. Wideman is in the room. I'm sorry she is no longer in the building. So, can we just a report back to you and have it sent out? Mr. Jones, will that be appropriate?

Marcus Jones, City Manager said yes.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Jones will get an answer to your question and get it sent out.

Ms. Johnson said let me just put on record what my concern would be to make sure I'm on track with what's going on. So, initially, we talked about any developer that accepted TIG (Tax Increment Grants) or any type of subsidy from the City to develop housing would accept rental subsidy and Housing Choice Vouchers or any type of subsidies. It's my understanding the direction that the committee might be going is if those developers will accept the Housing Choice Vouchers of a rental subsidy in housing that they deem affordable. So, I want to make sure that we as Council are at least discussing and that I will support that those developers be required to accept those vouchers on all of the units that they develop with public dollars. That's affordable or market rate. So, that is a bid distinction that I want to make sure doesn't get lost on Council. We're not asking that they accept the subsidies just on their affordable housing. We're asking for public dollars not to be used for discriminatory practices in not accepting rental subsidies.

Mr. Graham said we did discuss that in the Committee meeting and that will be a point of discussion when it comes before the full Council. If you read the write-up in the report it talks about the affordable housing component, but not all projects. So, that is a point of distinction that we did talk about at the Committee meeting that I'm pretty sure that you will have more questions to ask around that when it comes to full Council.

SAFE Communities

Councilmember Egleston said you touched on half of this report at the outset.

Mayor Lyles said sorry.

Mr. Egleston said that's alright. We'll just make it even shorter. We did discuss and have discussed now over the last month or two an issue that I know is top of mind for everyone on Council. We hear from constituents all the time around the unsafe driving that's going on in our City and how unsafe our streets can be, and I think COVID have exacerbated that and actually one of our own colleagues has experienced the danger that we can encounter on our streets in the last week with members of his family. So, that is something that's top of mind for all of us. We quantified the problem, the conversation with CMPD (Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department). We talked and outlined the ways that they are constantly working on that problem, but also discussed potential new solutions, technology-based solutions, new ways to try to rain in the reckless behavior we see on our streets, and things like speeding, red-light running, and the like. As Mayor Lyles stated we will as a full Council at this Strategy Session in October take that up and determine what specific items we want to refer back to the SAFE Communities Committee for consideration and so that's where we left that for now. We will come back to it at our next Strategy Session.

Violence Interrupter Program was the other primary topic of our last Committee meeting. Federico Rios gave us an update on the alternative to violence initiatives which many of you are aware of. We are working collaboratively with the county, Wells Fargo, and Green Light Fund partner to provide us with \$1.2 million in support of the Violence Interrupter Program. Belton Platt who many of you know and we had a press conference to announce this, I guess about a month ago was selected as a supervisor for this program along with Beatties Ford, which is where we are piloting the program. Four other were hired as violence interrupters and outreach workers that are currently working in a space in the church off of West Boulevard, but they have located office space along Beatties Ford Road, which they will move into November or December adjacent to the Northwest School of the Arts at 1401 Beatties Ford Road. So, progress is being made there. We will circle back on the street safety conversation in October and that concludes my report.

Intergovernmental Relations

Mr. Bokhari said I'll just take the first cut. Mr. Winston, you can add anything, but we don't have a whole lot to report. The General Assembly has been bogged down completely in the budget negotiations and process. We've obviously been watching that very closely. We are hoping that things will start moving again very shortly on that front. We have recently started communicating again about starting to think about our next Legislative Agenda around which we've had discussions in committees today as well as other things got some noble causes that could be on there, but Mr. Winston feels free to add anything. I think we're in a bit of a low period for where we are right now.

Councilmember Winston said well to that end I think everybody should continue to pay attention to those Friday Legislative round-ups that Mr. Fenton sends to us. I think to Mr. Bokhari's point when we do have to work and give guidance it's kind of off of those updates that we're getting. So, it's kind of a fluid work that we are doing in that Committee right now, but to that Legislative Agenda point it is the natural time for us to start thinking about this and to the Mayor's point earlier I think it would be very helpful on the next 30 days if Councilmembers got any type of issue on particular legislation that you would like for us to consider putting on that Legislative Agenda to get that to me or Mr. Bokhari, or Mr. Fenton in the next 30 days so the staff and the Committee can do some work and some research in the next 60 days and then hopefully we can get a Legislative Agenda adopted in a 90 day period. So, that's what we have. Happy to answer any questions or take any conversation offline.

Mayor Lyles said I have a request, \$12 billion for Transportation and a bus system and all of the things that we want so just get that on the list and you guys get to working on it. I would appreciate that very much.

Mr. Winston said I think you bring up an excellent point Mayor.

Mayor Lyles said seriously are there any questions for Mr. Winston and Mr. Bokhari? Okay, it's now time to circle back to Mr. Graham. He had his first meeting of the Ad Hoc Redistricting Committee today and he'd like to give a report as well as ask for when can we get to some of those recommendations.

Mr. Graham said actually it was our second meeting of the Redistricting Committee. We had our first meeting in late August. Our second meeting today. Today is when we really begin to dive into the work of the Redistricting Committee. Many of you have received an email from me kind of outlining the charge that the Mayor gave to us as well as the preliminary data that we received when the Census Department of Commerce actually released the first data dump. I sent an email relating, to that as well. So, today's meeting really revolved around a couple of things. One, the Committee established our ground rules. We reviewed the law and the criteria for selecting the Districts and we will talk a little bit more about that in a second. We talked about the Census data. The official data from the Department of Commerce should be in by the end of September. The staff has been able to work to get the numbers now. It's a lot harder than waiting for the Commerce Department that our brilliant staff has been able to work through the systems and giving us numbers now. So, we're really getting an earlier start on putting things in place.

We also talked about map drawing 101, which is an opportunity for some of the new Councilmembers who have not been familiar with the redistricting process to kind of get like a little kit that should be in your packages this week. We also talked more importantly about the schedule. The Mayor outlined in her charge that she wanted us to bring back to Council for a decision on November 8th and the Committee has accepted that challenge from her. So, what we did was outline a very aggressive schedule to meet that deadline starting with the Committee meeting today and working backward. So, there are a number of items that we will be working towards in terms of coming up on our calendar. One is meeting with all of the Councilmembers individually Monday or Tuesday of next week and that has already been sent out to everyone to schedule an appointment time to meet with the City Attorney, the Charmain, as well as the consultant that we hired to help us along the way from Parker Poe as well as City staff from Planning. So, we will be meeting with every Councilmember individually to talk specifically about what we are doing, why we are doing it, and more importantly for the District Reps, getting a better understanding of your District before we make any changes to them.

The Committee dates again are September 13th and 14th for the meeting with the District Councilmembers. We all have another meeting on September 20th as well as an October 5th, in which we will receive public comments based on the maps that we have outlined. Then we will also have a public hearing, which is different from the public comments, which will be October 18th leading up to a Council vote on November 8th. We did make an action item today regarding the criteria for putting the Districts together, right. Every District has to have a plus or minus, 125,000 voters in them. Some Districts are out of whack. For example, District 3 is plus 16,000. District 2 is probably about plus 7,000. District 7 is right on the keel, 125,000. But all of the Districts will have to be kind of looked at. Part of what we talked about today is to make this work again, 125,000 plus or minus per District. We will probably have to move residence from Districts 3, 2, and 4 to Districts 1, 6 and 5 to create something closer to 125,000 plus or minus. Now that we kind of know the direction that we're heading to we made an adjustment to the criteria based on what we already know.

Two adjustments that we made was the Committee by a 3/0 vote. Councilmember Driggs was not present at the time of the vote. We did inform him in terms of the vote that we took, which was to delete this quote. When possible, Districts should have a relatively even partisan balance. We struck that from the criteria and secondly, District boundaries may not be drawn to create/maintain a balance between major political parties. That also passed 3/0. So, both of those statements have been struck from our District criteria because what we wanted not to do was to set an unrealistic expectation for the public as well as Councilmembers.

Lastly, one of the things that I am as Chairman as well as Committee members have said is that we want to be as transparent as possible. That's why you are getting e-mails from

me. We've talked about public education, an engagement process that we are working with City Communication so that we make sure that we communicate what we are doing, why are we doing it, to what extent we are doing it, through all of the City communication channels. Which is Facebook, Twitter, whatever. We want to be intentional about communicating to the public in terms of educating them as well as engaging them for feedback, i.e., the public comments on October 5th and the public hearing on October 18th. In addition, there has been a webpage established for the Redistricting Committee where all of our maps, all of our committee notes, and meetings will be placed there, and we are establishing an e-mail address if citizens want to e-mail us questions, comments, or recommendations. They can do that as well.

So, today really kind of kicked off the process. There is a lot of work that we have to do in a short period of time. We are committed to making the schedule that has been outlined by the committee and the challenge by the Mayor to get it done by November 8th. It's not just an obituary deadline that we are trying to meet. We have to get the information to the Board of Elections so that they can go ahead and begin the process of establishing new maps, getting ready for the election, filing it in December, etcetera. So, if we make a decision by November 8th, we buy ourselves for about two weeks. We got some fluff built into that but based on the way we outlined it today I'm cautiously optimistic without any unforeseen hurdles along the way that we could do the job, do it right, be transparent, and be available to the public to answer any question they may have as we move along the way.

Mr. Bokhari said I have a really, really big concern about that action taken in the Committee today. I understand the first of the two items. The first one a bit, when possible Districts should have relatively even partisan balance and you guys striking that. I don't know that was necessary because it says when possible and kind of leaves it in there, but geographically speaking I could understand Charlotte kind of being in a position where that is nearly impossible, if not impossible. So, that's not where my issue is. The second one was deleted, and again these are the criteria for selecting the Districts. This is beyond concerning to me and I'll read it again for the public. It says District boundaries may be drawn to create or maintain a balance between major political parties. So, the deleting of that just doesn't make a lot of sense to me. That doesn't mean in spirit that it needs to be 50/50 because Charlotte is not 50/50. However, Charlotte is just about 20% Republican. It's about 46 or so Democrat. It's about 34% Independent and that will change as we get the new numbers, but not dramatically from that point. So, when you think of an 11-person Council, in spirit what that means is that there are five Districts, or five seats that are pretty strongly Democrat, two seats that are strongly Republican, and another four-seats that are tossups that again from the unaffiliated perspective that could go either way. Now, that is in a perfect world where geographies and other things like that don't come into play, but for me, that is where the map makers, the consultants, the people we come in, go in and see how good they can do in getting to that point. For us to delete that as a criterion for selecting Districts, essentially a principal that we hand them to say do your best at this, to me that's voter suppression. That's literally the definition of that and it's up to us to protect Charlotteans right to vote. So, I can't fathom how that became an item that was acceptable to delete in that Committee and I certainly hope there's a way where the full Council in front of this entire community has the chance to weigh in on this before it gets handed back to our consultants and map makers because this is just quite frankly, unacceptable.

Mr. Winston said one thing I think we should really look at when we are redistricting is not just a balance now, but the balance that will be in eight to 10 years from now. I really hope that especially being that we have so much data around growth patterns, growth strategies, and such that we can draw lines with the anticipation of future growth, especially as we think about future development around transportation corridors. I would like to know-how, obviously, we can't answer that right now, but how we are building that into the map-making for Districts.

Mr. Graham said that's a very good question Councilmember Winston and we talked about that. Notice I said plus or minus. The goal is for, I will use Council District 3 for example, that's a high growth area for the City, right. So, for the average of 125,000 we

may draw a map that's less than 125,000 to allow for growth in that District. District 2 has a similar type of growth pattern. District 4 has a similar type of growth pattern. So, it may be below 125k number to allow for growth as we draw the maps. So, your point is well taken.

Mr. Driggs said I share Mr. Bokhari's concern. The wording that was taken out is a little tricky to interpret. So, it's obvious that with the numbers the way they are we can't try to have a kind of equal representation of the two parties on the body. So, I'm kind of watching and waiting. As the Chair pointed out, I wasn't there for these votes. So, I'm watching and waiting, because the other information we got was that the draft maps would be developed for us to look at that either just plain minimized the number of Precincts that had to be moved to different Districts or best responded to some of our other priorities. So, we are going to be in a mode of looking at different maps and Councilmembers will be able to consider as they look at those maps how the Precincts kind of relate to their adjacent Precincts, where you might have a group of Precincts that belong to a larger sub-community. In the course of those conversations, I'm hoping that we can respect the concept that preserving some representation by both of the parties is a goal that we should aspire to. I don't think a single-party government is healthy regardless of which party it is and without wordsmithing that to a particular provision that was taken out I think there ought to be an understanding that we will look at map favorably that has the effect of preserving some representation by both parties.

The difficulty is when you get into that equal concept, but we are 9/2 right now, which is already not really representative of the mix of people in Charlotte. It's kind of a probably 8/3 or even a 7/4 would be more representative of the actual mix of the community. I hope this doesn't turn out to be an opportunity to create Districts in which no one from the minority party has any real prospect of winning. So, that is a conversation that will have to continue and I don't know that the wording that was taken out would have really protected us against that. I see us discussing that in the future.

Councilmember Phipps said with respect to having a reduced number of residences less than the 125,000 in Districts 2, 3 and 4 I think some of the thinking was that those areas, those particular Districts are adjacent to areas that are in ETJ (Extraterritorial Jurisdiction) and that it's quite possible that during some time in the next 10 years or so that some of those will be becoming into being annexed voluntarily into some of those Districts. That cushion would give space to be able to absorb those residences without arbitrarily kicking that number back up. So, I think that was part of the reason for having a reduced number of residents in those three Districts.

Ms. Eiselt said I just want to point out also that we had an opportunity when the Citizens Gouvernantes Committee met. They made a recommendation that we consider adding another District. Personally, I think that was an opportunity that we sort of didn't vet well enough. When you talk about redrawing these lines and concerns about the balance and whatnot. Now, you're talking about adding population from the ETJ. I hope that it's not going to be 10 years before that conversation is revisited because as it is we're supposed to get it to 125,000 per district. Is that right?

Mr. Graham said ballpark, yes.

Ms. Eiselt said that's bigger than most Carolina cities. One District. So, I want to put that out there for Council to keep in the back of their mind. At some point, we might need to add another District to our Council.

Ms. Watlington said I just wanted to lift up that I agree with Ms. Eiselt. Think this is an excellent time to have that conversation. I think it was one of the larger items that came out of the Governance Committee and so, I just want to go on record that I agree with her that we should not take that option off of the table at this point and I'd love to hear from my colleagues where folks kind of stand on considering that additional District.

Mr. Graham said I'll say one, it was not the charge that the Redistricting Committee was given. So, we did not take that into consideration at all because it was not in our charging

documents. Secondly, in reference to the comment from Mr. Driggs, the spirit of the Committee is to be transparent and fair, and balanced given the numbers that we have. Mr. Bokhari is right. We are only really dealing with seven-seats, right, because four are At-Large. The voters are going to have to say either way, but the numbers are the numbers, are the numbers, right. We can't create numbers that don't exist. What we can do is do our best with the consultants, the individuals from Planning, and deal with the numbers that we have to make the best decisions based on the criteria that we have. So, there was no sleight of hand in reference to (inaudible), right. It was just making sure that as we enter this process that we enter it with open eyes and realistic expectations.

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ITEM NO.5: CLOSED SESSION

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

The meeting was recessed at 7:41 p.m. for a five-minute break before going into closed session.

The Council went into Closed Session at 7:46 p.m. and returned to open session at 9:00 p.m. and immediately adjourned the meeting.

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ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m.



Billie Tynes, Interim Deputy City Clerk

Length of Meeting: 3 Hours, 51 Minutes
Minutes Completed: October 14, 2021