

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina convened for a Legislative Briefing on Thursday, January 7, 2021, at 12:00 p.m. via WebEx with Mayor Vi Lyles presiding. Councilmembers present were Tariq Bokhari, Ed Driggs, Larken Egleston, Julie Eiselt, Malcolm Graham, Renee Johnson, Matt Newton, and Braxton Winston II.

**ABSENT:** Councilmembers Dimple Ajmera, James Mitchell, and Victoria Watlington.

**State Delegation Present:** Becky Carney, Brandon Lofton, Carla Cunningham, Carolyn Logan, DeAndrea Salvador, Jeff Jackson, John Autry, John Bradford, Joyce Waddell, Kelly Alexander, Mary Belk, Mujtaba A. Mohammed, Nasif Majeed, Natasha Marcus, Rachel Hunt, Terry Brown, and Wesley Harris

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## WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

**Mayor Lyles** said what a great group, this is really, really cool, thank you so much. It is 12:00 and I apologize, it has been one of those days and we all have them, so thank you very much for joining us for the City of Charlotte's opportunity to brief our local Delegation on our Legislative Agenda and to talk about a big project that you have probably read more about than you care to and hearing a lot about, but to talk our work on Charlotte Moves. I just want to say thank you as usual for your participation and the work that you do to make our City the kind of place that we have today and really appreciate the efforts that you've made in the past. Some of the things that we are doing I think many of you have actually had a finger in and some of you were around when they started, and you've seen the results of good governance and good work and we really appreciate that.

I'm going to recognize the Delegation's new Chair, Senator Natasha Marcus.

**Senator Natasha Marcus** said thank you Mayor and hello to everybody. I represent Senate District 41 in the North Carolina Senate and we have many members of the Mecklenburg Delegation here to meet with you today and to hear about what Charlotte needs from us when we go to Raleigh soon. We are getting ready to start our new biennium; we will be officially sworn in next week and then the session starts at the end of the month. We are here to listen, answer questions if you have them if we are able to answer on the spot, but I did want to take a minute to say that two of our members let me know that they have another meeting, but they will be joining in about 10 minutes. That is Representative Terry Brown and Senator Mujtaba Mohammed. They send their regrets that they have to be a little late, but we are double booked for this moment and then I think we should go through our members and let everyone introduce themselves. We have some new members; that is exciting. We do not have a set order Mayor Lyles, we don't do this as often as you all but let's go in District number order and I will start with Senate District No. 39 because that is the first number that applies that we have with us today.

DeAndrea Salvador, Senate District No. 39, Senator Marcus Waddel, District 40, I'm Senate District No. 41, House District 88, Mary Belk, Nasif Majeed, House District 99, John Autry, District 100, Becky Carney, District 102, Rachel Hunt, District 103, Wesley Harris, District 105.

Mayor Lyles said I see Representative Cunningham and Representative Lofton have joined us. I can see their names, I guess this is by phone versus the video. We've got two brief presentations for you. The first one is going to be our 2021 State Legislative Agenda with Dana Fenton. He will take questions after he finishes his and then we will go to Charlotte Moves.

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## CITY'S 2021 STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

**Dana Fenton, Inter-Governmental Relations Manager** said thank you to the Delegation for being with us today, an opportunity to provide a briefing on our 2021 State Legislative Agenda. Let me say first of all that I look forward to working with each and every one of you during the upcoming session and for the benefit of the general public and the media viewing today, my name is Dana Fenton and my title is Inter-Governmental Relations Manager.

The first issue that is before you today is mobility. This has been an important focus with City Council over the last year. About a year ago the City formed the Charlotte Moves Taskforce to take a look at mobility issues in the City whether that had to do with roadways, bus service, transit, greenways, bicycle, and pedestrian services. So the mobility language you see here in the Legislative Agenda is a place holder until the City Council is ready to act on the recommendations that were made by the Charlotte Moves Task Force and I think as Mayor Lyles alluded to earlier, my colleague Taiwo Jaiyeoba is going to brief you on the status of the Charlotte Moves Taskforce recommendations and the planned upcoming actions being considered by the City Council.

The North Carolina Airport Improvement Program; I want to begin by saying that on behalf of the Mayor and Council please accept our sincere appreciation and gratitude for your strong support of the Charlotte Douglas International Airport participation in the North Carolina Airport Improvement Program. This is a program that every member of the Delegation supported establishing and funding in 2019 and 2020 and this program provides funding to the 10 commercial service airports in the state for capital improvement and debt service. Again, it is a fairly new program and we are using the proceeds from that in this current fiscal year for debt service and that helps maintain the Airport's current rating and reduces the cost basis of the signatory airlines rate structure. In this time of the pandemic, it is a very important change that we made; once the pandemic came and we realized that had to be done, we did that with our FY 2020 revenues from the program and we are doing that again with the FY 2021 revenues. This again is most of the airlines that are serving our Airport. The Airport is receiving about \$29 million per year from this program. The total program is about \$75 billion so we get a very, very good chunk of change from that and that is because the formula has been written to reward the economic impact of the Airports.

The Charlotte Firefighter's Retirement System; periodically the City requests legislation to make amendments to the Charlotte Firefighter's Retirement System and that is because the Firefighters who work for the Charlotte Fire Department are members of this retirement system. They are not a part of the local government employee's retirement system and like a lot of other retirement systems around the country, the cost of the system is increasing because people are living longer and in payroll growth. At the same time systems are facing more investment return volatility with less return to the same level of risk and the Firefighter's Retirement System is not immune to the pressures, so as the sponsor of the system, the City is requesting that CFRS (Charlotte Firefighters' Retirement System) be amended to increase the city contribution rate over the next five years to ensure that the system is appropriately funded looking into the future.

The Digital Divide; is the issue that the General Assembly has been addressing in rural areas over the last few years. I think approximately \$80 million has been appropriated for rural broadband in the last two or three sessions. But, in the last year the pandemic has raised the profile of this issue, especially in urban areas because in order to participate in this economy into a large expansion, and also in virtual learning you need to have access to the internet and so what happens in urban areas like ours, we are crisscrossed with fiber in the ground and we are serviced by one or more providers. But many low-income families has affordability issues and the did City try to help out last year with some CARES ACT (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act funding to help give certain hot spots for children from low-income families to access virtual learning opportunities and we also established a pilot program in partnership with some others for public WIFI in several corridors of opportunity. But, still, none the less there is a need out there to help people who were not able to access those services to access the internet. I would also

say that some talented communication companies provide low-cost services for low-income families that some of the programs provide low-cost services for those who receive SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits or social security supplemental income or are participants in the national school lunch program. But even with all the help that the City provided, there is still a cohort of people who need help in getting connected.

The last issue in the Legislative Agenda is Subpoena Power for Citizen Review Boards. This issue is really about improving relationships between Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department and the community. The Council granting authority for the Citizen's Review Board failed, I think this testimony will lead to strong relationships between the Police Department and the community. The power subpoenaed would enable the Board to make affirmative terminations as to whether the Chief of Police was justified or erred in arriving at a disciplinary disposition and this power would apply equally to both law enforcement officers in matters of the general public. With that, I conclude my presentation and I'll be glad to take any questions.

Mayor Lyles said we are here to answer any questions as well as if there is any comment. If you have a sense of where things are and how they fit. We know that we have to rely on your ability to understand, but also to work with the remaining parts of the Legislature to get things done so we certainly would seek your advice on that.

**Senator Natasha Marcus** said I will get us started and this is probably a question for you. I visit the issue of subpoena power in Charlotte with the Chief of Police here is something that we all embrace. I'm not speaking for delegation, but I believe most of us would support that, but as you probably know, it is not something that I have supported yet. We are hoping that we can move the needle a little bit on that and I'm curious if you could tell me how many years has that been filed. I'm somewhat new, this is only my second term and if you could give us a little history on that I think that would be helpful for those of us on the call.

Mayor Lyles said Mr. Fenton would you be willing to do that? We also have the Chair and Vice-Chair of our Legislative Committee for this Council, Mr. Bokhari, and Mr. Winston.

Mr. Fenton said Senator Marcus, a very good question. The City first requested subpoena power in 2017 and that was followed up by legislation again in 2019.

**Councilmember Bokhari** said I will just add, I think the punch line is we are all pretty unified that it makes sense for here. I think there are several other places around the state where your colleagues also believe it makes sense. I think the big issue is there is no scenario as we've gone pretty deep into this where this has legs as a local bill only. Anytime someone brings it up as a local bill it will engage the rest of the state and some that support it, but in different flavors; others that oppose it, and I just think it brings forth a broader much more complex issue. We continue to include it in the Legislative Agenda to show you while there are pitfalls in it, we are pretty unified in our support of it for the most part here and we are arming you for those conversations, but within reason understanding that you have a larger political minefield to navigate with it if that makes sense.

**Councilmember Winston** said I will just add as you alluded to, especially in different urban areas around the state there is a life line so as we try to deal with some of the things, I think what we are asking is can you reach out to these delegations in places like Durham, Ashville so that we can start to think how do we approach this from a coalition standpoint up in Raleigh to bring some wins and successes here so it is not just an us versus them?

Mayor Lyles said Representative Brown, I see you have joined us and welcome. Thank you for taking part in this meeting. Senator Marcus, are there any other questions?

Senator Marcus said I will let my colleagues speak-up or use the raised if they want to be recognized.

Mayor Lyles said I think that is a good indicator that our work on Airport, the Firefighters, Digital Divide, and the Citizen's Review Board areas are pretty clear.

Mr. Winston said I would like to say something about our Legislative Agenda. I have to address this; this is a good Legislative Agenda just like most of them are, but we have to be honest with ourselves and with our constituents about how we approach this. We should look at what is not here, what we are [inaudible] on together. We only put things here that we believe maybe can get some wins on this year in any Legislative Session. But we know that there are things that need to change in this state if we are going to truly serve our constituents. There is no source of income discrimination here. There is no de-incarceration of Mecklenburg County here. There is no ending of the prohibition of marijuana; there is no attack on white supremacy that is embedded in the laws and the pillars of this state because we are afraid of what that can do to the things and the other goals that we have. We have to figure out a way that we can work together to bring the fight up to Raleigh and throughout North Carolina and we have the resistance to do that together over the past three years that I've been on this Council. We will not put ambitions on, we will not do that work. We have to change that or else what we saw yesterday is going to come down to Raleigh, it is going to come to Charlotte, what we saw this summer is going to continue to go on and we won't continue to be part of the problem. We have to own this that this Legislative Agenda year after year supports white supremacy in this state by not attacking it and not doing away with it as it exists within our laws and policies of this state, we've got to get past.

Mr. Bokhari said just to add on to that to say Braxton is my Co-Chair, we are Co-Chairs of this Inter-Governmental Relations Committee that has worked very hard. We have disagreements and agreements on many different things. One thing we agree is the approach that the City of Charlotte takes with Co-Chairs is the right approach because he feels very passionately about that which is one side of the coin, but on the other side of the coin, we also recognize you have a job to do in a broader general assembly where the challenges and headwinds are real. It is a mixture of us putting things on and recognizing the things that aren't on paired with understanding that we also need to help and be a tailwind at your backs to help you accomplish measurable outcomes up there. Neither one is the right answer, I think they are just two different perspectives but that is one of the things I respect about being Co-Chairs with Mr. Winston, and what I just want to leave you within that thought is we recognized that your job only begins when we show you things like this Legislative Agenda and we want you to know we are here to assist and we are here to show up in places on both sides of the aisle that may seem uncomfortable or irregular to help you guys and to help us all achieve what this community needs and I hope you take both of those messages away from this conversation.

**Representative Becky Carney** said if I may just make a comment, and I know that the big issue out of this agenda item today that we really need to get information on, and you have been keeping us in the loop on the Charlotte Moves initiative. That is going to be a big [inaudible] for us in Raleigh and I do want us to get to that. I want to point out that we have two members in our Delegation, Representative Cunningham and Representative Logan that there are two Committees working in Raleigh, two taskforces; the Governor has one and the Speaker has one. Representative Cunningham and Representative Logan serve on that where all of the issues you are bringing up around justice and injustice, are being addressed and there will be legislation coming forward and that's when we will need for you all to be a part of that as it moves forward. I think the main thing today that I think we need to hear from you is the Charlotte Moves initiative and what the lift is going to be for us in Raleigh and we are going to need that from you all too.

Mayor Lyles said I want to thank Representative Logan and Representative Cunningham and I want to recognize Representative Cunningham, but I've heard both of them and read about the work that they are doing and how much we appreciate that because you are addressing the disparities across our state. So, thank you.

**Representative Carla Cunningham** said thank you Representative Carney for bringing it up that we are serving on that Taskforce created by the Speaker of the House and there

have been some recommendations that came out of the Committee. None of them will totally address what Braxton is speaking of, but there is a whistleblower is included in it as well as the chokehold and there are several other recommendations, but it doesn't quite go that far. I think that we as Representative Logan and myself, spread to the Committee that it did not go far enough to work on community relations, it was more focused on law enforcement. That will have to be a continual push within the environment of our colleagues within Raleigh. I just wanted to let you know that there are recommendations already been presented, come out of the Committee, but they do not include enough that goes far enough for its community relations.

Mayor Lyles said thank you very much for the work that you are doing.

Senator Marcus said Representative Carney mentioned the two members of this Delegation from the House who serve on the Taskforce and since he is not here, I want to say it from the Senate side, we have Senator Mujtaba Mohammed who is also serving on the Taskforce on racial equity. He would want you to know that is important work and that is actually where he is right now. I just wanted to add that, and I know we need to move on so thank you.

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### CHARLOTTE MOVES UPDATE

**Mayor Lyles** said many of you know our Planning Director and Assistant City Manager Taiwo Jaiyeoba and I'm going to ask him to do a presentation. Taiwo, you are going to have eight minutes.

**Taiwo Jaiyeoba, Planning Director and Assistant City Manager** said thank you Mayor Lyles and it is good to see all of you and Happy New Year. The last time we presented this to you was just right after the election, but the Task Force had not completed their work and not all of you were participating at that time, so it is really good to see everyone. The Task Force is essentially is asking the Council to do three things. One is to invest in mobility. This mobility program will cost about \$8 billion to \$12 billion totally. One of the things you might have been hearing from the media is that is transit, it is not just transit. It is about transit, yes, but it is also about roadway improvements, it is about greenways, it is about bikeways, it is about sidewalks for pedestrians, it is really about how can we improve air quality, sustainability, continue to make our City and our region attractive for jobs. If you look at what Bloomberg issued this week it shows that Charlotte is number six in the country for people moving from both the northeast and the west coast as well to come here. That is going to continue for the foreseeable future, but not just Charlotte, but Mecklenburg County and the entire region. So, the recommendation is number one to make an investment in mobility, but also as we do that to align them with our initiatives. One of the initiatives we have is the Strategic Action Plan which really says that we want to be a carbon-neutral community over the next several years and how can we achieve that. The last recommendation is to commit the resources to make it happen, which means for that \$8 billion to \$12 billion programs, the local funding pieced will be about \$4 billion to \$6 billion and you can see that in the slides that I have in front of you. But then this thing called One Cent for Mobility, that should be countywide, and it is countywide that has implication for what we do with that in mobility countywide. It cannot be just about transit, it has to be about the other elements as well.

This is really what it is. It is about roadway improvements, it is about bus priority, it is about pedestrian activities, greenway connecting the North to the South and East and West and also about bicycle activity, connecting to this type of land uses that we have in our region. The County in September issued a resolution to support the City's work on anything that is multimodal and so this really aligns with the County's resolution. In other words, the Task Force's vision and what they are recommending aligns with the resolution that the County issued back in September of last year, but then how do we pay for this?

What we shared with you last time there were not enough details, but the Task Force is essentially recommending a local referendum to be placed on the ballot in November of

2021 that would fund 50% of this overall program but finance over a 30-year period and that could be viewed in about a 10-year timeframe. We know that 10-years may not necessarily be enough to build a light rail or commuter rail, hence the reason we say 10 plus years. There are other things that could be done in the time being that we could improve our bus system, we could improve our greenway system, we could improve roadway, congestion, we could improve bicycles, we could build sidewalks. Those things are low-hanging fruit that could be done within five to 10-years if this was to pass.

I will quickly say one of the things that also been out there is the timing of this and the fact that all we are trying to do is position ourselves for a future federal opportunity to be able to if we were to have a program of infrastructure. The last time we had a referendum in 1998, the revenue did not pass coming in until two years later. If we were to have a referendum this year it is likely we may not have the impact until a year or two beyond this year, but then we will be able to position ourselves to have a local match for potential federal dollars.

This slide just shows that over the last 20-years we've been really working on 0.5% of what we have in terms of our sales tax and that is really what we've been doing since 2001. We have been good stewards for using that for our transit system today. This slide just shows that when we compare ourselves with other cities in the country that we compete with, we are still at the bottom when it comes to sale tax that they invest strictly in their light rail, streetcar, commuter rail, and transportation projects. We are still there towards the bottom.

This compares us within the state. Even within the state when you look at all our fees, sales tax, property tax, and all kinds of fees Charlotte is 11 out of 11 top largest cities in this state. We are the largest City, we are the only City with light rail or streetcar, but when it comes to tax and fee comparison, we are the 11<sup>th</sup>. This is not just the City, this is actually countywide and so how do we move forward from here? I will go to the last slide which is this one; we know that we do need the support from Metropolitan Transit Commission, our County, from our Towns. I presented earlier today to the Regional Technical Coordination Committee and talking about how we need to bring all our transportation leaders together at the staff level to start working through what the projects will be like, transit and non-transit. We know we still have to work through the Legislative process hence one of the reasons we are having this conversation with you. We need to continually refine the program itself beyond just what you have seen on the maps that I showed you earlier and as we do that, we are also going to be refining that that funding strategy providing information about which project, how much will it costs, how much will go to rail, how much will go biking, how much will go to pedestrian and how much will go to the greenway. All of that, we are going to be spending time throughout the next several weeks working on them, but even before anything gets on to the ballot. We know coordination is very important and will continue to do that. As we are doing it today, I'm sure we are going to be talking to you again in a few weeks. That is really what I have, and I will be happy to take questions that you may have.

### **Discussion**

**Mayor Lyles** said I know we've talked about this once with the entire group, but I also know that we have continued to work on it. This is a work in progress, the multiple work streams that have to be accomplished to do this is quite a bit. Representative Kelly Alexander, thank you, good to see you. We know that his is a heavy lift for us and we know that it has to be done in a way that is collaborative, not just in our county, but the idea to build a regional transportation system is what we really need to do and Senator Mohammed, thank you for joining us and thank you for the work that you were doing before this meeting. I want to say that we have been having regular discussions with all of these surrounding six towns and I will say that this is going to be a tough issue because right now, it is not necessarily related to what we are trying to do, but the history of what we've done has made it very difficult for people to say well I'm going to embrace what we are going forward for. So, we acknowledge that there are challenges in fact we encourage and ask you for those challenges today because without knowing that we don't know how

we can do this work. We have to know what people see as both the best of what we can do as well as what you think the most challenging parts of it for us to do.

I would like to see us being this, but I also recognize across the country this is something that has been discussed and had other cities that have taken some time to do it and we are committed to I believe the idea of mobility planning. We think this is the right time and we can go through why that is, but we also know that we may have more of a background in it than most people would have. That is why the collaboration with MTC which is our governance board. It is so important because it includes all of the six towns and we also have attendance from our regional partners, our adjoining counties like Cabarrus and Gaston.

**Senator Natasha Marcus** said one of my concerns and it may apply to others on the call is what you referred to a little bit Mayor, the issue of the Towns. I represent three of the North Mecklenburg Towns and I know there is [inaudible] feeling like the transportation options up in North Meck [inaudible] plans that include rail up in the North Mecklenburg area and beyond. I would like to hear more if we could about the options, I know it is something that may or may not be able to happen, but I've heard talk about a carve-out so that if the sales tax is going to be imposed on everyone countywide that some of the smaller municipalities may have the ability to control some of that revenue to do things to help the Towns as well. So, I would like to hear some more about that if someone on the call is able to address that.

Mayor Lyles said I'm going to make a short brief comment. On one of our slides, if you saw the existing tax that we have which is raised over the 20-years, the \$107 million have been specifically allocated for buses and rapid transit. That is what built our transit lines and what we've done in terms of buses. This mobility tax is more inclusive, it would include how to address roadway congestion, bicycle lanes, paths, pedestrians, sidewalks, and our greenways and trails. The carveout has been suggested and when you look at this overall plan of 10-years some of those are very strong municipal guided decisions. We wouldn't know how to put the trails in Pineville or the sidewalks in Cornelius. So, the carveout idea from the Towns has been let's figure out a way to do those things that a municipal with the local municipality making those decisions and then adding those things that we would do for transit that we would all do under the governance structure of the MTC. The carveout is something that we are looking at and will be working with. Our next meeting with the MTC is on January 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Mr. Jaiyeoba said if I may add to that, we don't want to go back to the network, but what the network does is also to bring our 2030 Transit System Plan into the overall plan and that includes a commuter rail going to Cornelius [inaudible] but understanding the challenge that we have with Norfolk Southern, what we've also done on that network map is to say that on I-77 there will be a bus rapid transit that mirrors what a light rail will be like but is rally more of bus on wheels so that way we are working through whatever issues we have with Norfolk Southern we can actually implement a bus rapid transit system on I-77 faster than a commuter rail. But both of those are shown on the 2030 Plan and the Envision My Ride on this part of the Mobility Plan as well.

Mayor Lyles said Representative Cunningham has sent a question that says what is the projected economic impact of expanding rail to the Airport compared to other areas in the County?

Mr. Jaiyeoba said I can provide some numbers that the American Transportation Association has used in the past. That for every \$1 billion invested in public transportation it generates 50,000 jobs and for every \$1 that is invested in a pedestrian or in non-transit efforts it generates 12 jobs and that was actually issued by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. After 9/11 a federal aviation authority usually frowns on the light rail going directly into the Airport and is part of what has affected why we've done the Silver Line the way it is, but it does not take away from jobs creation. What it has actually done is to create an opportunity for transit to enter development outside the Airport, but close enough to the Airport that it can still benefits businesses and jobs. If we were to say \$4

billion to \$6 billion multiplied by 50,000 that is the number of jobs this projects that this could actually result in.

**Representative Mujtaba Majeed** said my question is about timeliness and I understand all the research was done for Charlotte Moves, but the barometer at this time with the COVID (mild to severe respiratory infection caused by the coronavirus) pandemic, have you gotten any kind of preliminary feedback for something like this if it were presented as a bond referendum?

Mr. Jaiyeoba said I was going to take a crack at that going by two polling that we've done, where one polling and one focus group. The first polling was during the summer when the coronavirus impact was really huge. We surveyed a four-county region of Mecklenburg, Union, Iredell, and Gaston and 84% of the residents of those counties felt that investing in mobility options was still very critical. The second one that we did was after the November 7<sup>th</sup> election which was really six focus groups in the four-county area and the response was about the same; almost 80% of the people said and at that time they were actually asked about the \$4 billion to \$6 billion and they felt that because they know that progress costs money, they believe our leaders should support investment in mobility. I will say two more things; the best example we can actually use is the last November ballot for the first time in 20-years, 92% of transportation initiatives that were on the ballot last year passed. For the first time in 20-years, it went to that level. It has always been around 79%, 81%, but this was 92% for the first time in 20-years. We are also conducting another polling that will include Cabarrus County next week and we will be happy to share the results of that with you. The summary of that is that there is still an appetite for investing in multi-model [inaudible] going forward.

Mr. Majeed said would it be one cent or one-half?

Mayor Lyles said the Task Force recommendation is one percent, but we also have to begin to think about this and calculate it towards a plan. We will continue to fine-tune how the financing will work so that we will be able to appropriately make the commitment. I'm just going to do this in the big picture; we are expecting hundreds of thousands of people to move to our area over the next 20-years and right now, besides this plan for the area we have to figure out how to move people around but it is also part of getting jobs and people have said well how are we going to do this? One of the matrix or values that I think we have been projecting is that we believe people should have a decent and safe place to live and that is why our affordable housing program is so robust right now. But we also know that we have to move people to work and without having the ability, and Mr. Newton, I'm going to go ahead and say, without having the ability to move people from the East side where there are more residential rooftops to where the jobs are we are failing those folks that have been helping us grow this City with all those bond referendums whether or not it was the bridge to Ballantyne, or the expansion on our corridors, all of these things are the possibilities but in order to continue to have the quality of life I believe we have to have housing and we have to have jobs. That means we have to move people between those two things. I think the quality of life is what is making that difference. All of the recruiters for new businesses and I think about Centene, thousands of jobs paying really good; they are going to have a daycare, they hire a lot of women, those people need to come from all over Charlotte, not just the ones that have the ability to have a car to get there. Right now, the only way to get to Centene is to have a car. We've got to build a bus system so in order for this to happen we need the municipal parts for what we are doing for bikes, sidewalks, and trails. We need to build a great bus system and if and when the federal government has an infrastructure bill then we build transit. So, there is a priority of choice and the improvements in the infrastructure to build on this. If we don't start now, I don't think we could be ready if that infrastructure bill happened because as you know with the federal government, if you don't have the local match nothing happens. They just move to the city that does have it.

**Councilmember Driggs** said hello everybody; I think it is worth noting that only two people on this call, as far as I can tell, are members of the party that is in the majority in Raleigh and we have our work cut out for us. I would say to this group that if you can help us to kind of navigate or give us really good guidance on some of the things that we are



talking about wanting to do, how to go about doing them, what is realistic, the response we are likely to get. I think many of you are aware of the history or relations between Charlotte and Raleigh; we don't want to kind of stub any toes or anything like that and understand that the way this thing is conceived right now, we are operating on the assumption that 10% of the cost of these projects will be funded by the state. So, the sort of pencil diagram we have as Taiwo Jaiyeoba pointed out is that half of it would be payable locally. That relies on the assumption that 10% would come from the state and 40% would come from the federal government. So, I think you appreciate them and just being the kind of claim here that there are a lot of people I believe in the Legislature for whom this is going to be difficult and if you are able to provide any guidance to us on people we should talk to, how we should go about it and things like that would be very valuable for us.

Mayor Lyles said I think Mr. Driggs is right; I don't want to let you walk away with the assumption that we can only do this if we got federal funding. The feds are going to require state funding as well then, the years that we build-up to this before we got to rapid transit for our bus system as well.

**Representative Becky Carney** said I appreciate your comments Mr. Driggs because that is the reality world we live in, people on the screen in Raleigh the vast majority. A couple of comments; I will let you know that we are facing and that is there are several entities that have been working over the last year addressing how we are going to fund transportation in the State of North Carolina, and we are greatly challenged. That is the [inaudible] First Commission is about to release their report. The NC Chamber has released their report and I know that the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance has been having several discussions online about transportation. The keyword here with the Regional Business Alliance is the word "regional" and for anything that we move forward from Charlotte, we are going to have to have our colleague within this region be on board and working with us. We are going to have the Towns working within the confines of Mecklenburg County. I have a couple of questions that you might want to address and that is from the regional perspective how is that incorporated into the Charlotte Moves Plan that is part of the plan to move it forward and sell it and when will you be looking at, or how quickly will you coming to the Legislature for the ask of the enabling legislation and what would that language look like?

I think we all need to start as Delegation members and our colleague that is not on the call, Representative Bradford who is in the controlling party. But I think those are important timing wise for us as we go back into Raleigh on the 27<sup>th</sup> for us to know exactly what it is that the City is going to be asking and when. We need to start now on networking within our own colleagues, but there is an issue within the state on funding and you all know right now, there is very little money set aside in the State Department of Transportation budget for transit. Very little. The biggest amount that came out of there in the last budget works for Durham and it is abysmal, but what we have focused on for transportation issues for transit from the state. We've got our work cut out for us just as State Legislatures funding transportation period. It is going to be a big topic this term I believe, but we need your help on giving us the timeline of what you are expecting from us.

Mayor Lyles said we will get that information to you.

**Representative Terry Brown** said I wanted to piggyback on what Representative Carney was alluding to; what discussions have you guys had? I think about the light rail coming down towards parts of my District going towards the Airport. What discussions have you all had with Gaston County and your counterparts there about their feelings towards this plan?

Mayor Lyles said when I became Mayor, and I Chaired the MTC, we invited the Mayors from adjoining communities to join us. They can't vote because they are not a part of our existing system, but we have had the Gastonia Mayor participate for two years now in the MTC deliberations and planning which this plan has been developed as a result of. We also have the Gaston Economic Development Council as well, so we've been working with Gaston County. We also work very closely with Cabarrus County. The Blue Line ends

six—miles from the Phillip Morris site in Cabarrus and Cabarrus County would like very much to make that an industrial park, breaking down that into job opportunities for people in the County and Mayor Dusch has been an active participant in our plan. While we are talking about Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, we are actually talking about a regional plan. When you get to those counties outside of Mecklenburg, several of them still have the ability to implement the quarter-cent and so the idea would be if we could build to where they could begin to plan for these networks for buses and trains then they would have the ability to have that referendum on their own as well. We are asking for more than the half-cent and we would have to have the additional to get to that place right now just because of what our economy and our projections would be. I hope that answers it, but we will make sure that if there is more information that Dana will follow-up and get a report to you, Representative Brown.

Representative Carney talked about the North Carolina Department of Transportation; Councilmember Eiselt represented Charlotte on that group NC-1 and she has asked to be recognized.

**Councilmember Eiselt** said it is a very interesting perspective if you look at what Representative Carney said. The whole Department of Transportation budget is \$5 billion; that really puts things into perspective. NC First is looking at ways to add \$2 billion to their budget and they are going to ask for half a penny. So, we've got to really coordinate especially to you all with colleagues throughout the state because this is going to be a really important discussion and hopefully it is not going to be a conflict. Going back to the Mayor's comment about Centene, I spoke with the head of their Centene Campus this week and he talked about economic development and the fact that we were so intent on building out a transit system and this was such a high priority to us was a big reason why they moved here to the Charlotte region. He wants his folks to be able to live wherever they want in the region. He and his family are looking at where they want to live; they don't yet, but they love that they the ability to get around and we heard this from Honeywell as well. So, when we talk about this at this time in this pandemic, this is about lowering the cost of living in our region and how we can do that. This is an investment and we really have to use that kind of language instead of a tax increase. Thank you all for your work, I appreciate it.

**Representative Wesley Harris** said just to respond to Councilmember Driggs's comment about how to navigate everything going on in Raleigh; I think the House has quite a bit of appetite for investing in infrastructure, particularly given that most of the leadership in the House comes from the Charlotte region. We've got Representative Bain in Lincoln County, Representative Torbett in Gaston County, and the Speaker of the House in Shelby and Kings Mountain. So, the big issue is going to be clearing the Senate hurdle. We passed a few bond packages in the House the past few years that have always stalled in the Senate and so one of the big things that Charlotte can do is really be aggressive in supporting investments around the rest of the state. One of the examples that come to mind was the school bond that the House passed the last term where Charlotte was very unhappy with that because they didn't get their fair share of the investment, but a statewide school bond will never benefit Charlotte more than other areas. So, if we want those investments to come to Charlotte, we have to also be champions of investments in rural areas. That is how we are going to get the Senate on board, that is how we are going to get these rural senators' leadership to be willing to invest in Charlotte because as we grow, we can help them grow. That is going to be the critical piece that we are going to need more help with.

Mayor Lyles said Senator Marcus; I know you said 1:00 and I just to be respectful.

Senator Marcus said I appreciate that Mayor; I'm sure everyone's meetings coming up in this zoom world that we all live in now. I don't have any big comments that I think need to be made, I don't see any of my members waving their hands or texting me to say that they have something that they are dying to say. So, I will just speak on behalf to say we appreciate you, we are grateful to have a good working relationship with each of you on City Council, proud to be from Charlotte and the Charlotte region and look forward to continuing, this is just one of many conversations that we will have. We see Dana Fenton

down in Raleigh regularly and so we all know how to communicate with you and plan to do that as we start our new term coming up later this month. Thank you so much for your time and your input and feel free to reach out to us anytime you need us.

Mayor Lyles said we will. Thank you very much to each of you, we really appreciate it. Have a great rest of your day. Dana has all of our numbers, but I think most of you know you can call any one of us on any topic and anything that we can do to help you help us we are there, but also, we want to help the state. We are not just about Charlotte, we are actually about economic development. I often tell people when Anson County has jobs, I'm going to feel like I've been a really good steward of public resources and we've got to get that done. Thank you very much and everybody has a good afternoon.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:04 p.m.



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Stephanie Bello, Deputy City Clerk,

Length of Meeting: 1 Hour, 4 Minutes  
Minutes Completed: January 27, 2021