

The City Council of the City of Charlotte, NC, convened for a Dinner Briefing on Monday, April 4, 2011, at 5:22 p.m. in Room 267 of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center with Mayor Anthony Foxx presiding. Present were Councilmembers Warren Cooksey, Patsy Kinsey, Edwin Peacock III, Warren Turner

ABSENT UNTIL NOTED: Councilmembers Jason Burgess, Nancy Carter, David Howard

ABSENT: Councilmembers Michael Barnes, Patrick Cannon, Andy Dulin, James Mitchell

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Mayor Foxx said we have some very exciting presentations tonight. We don't quite yet have a quorum of the Council, but because we receive information at our Workshops and generally don't take action, it's okay for us to go ahead and start the presentations, and people who come in later can come in later.

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HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT: SOUL OF THE NORTHWEST CORRIDOR

Curt Walton, City Manager, said the first item the Council voted at Councilmember Mitchell's request to add this presentation to a future agenda, and now it is the future. Sherrill Hampton from Johnson C. Smith University will be making the presentation. It was something that was presented in February about the soul of the Northwest Corridor, so we wanted you to have this same presentation.

Sherrill Hampton, Johnson C. Smith University, said began a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which is on file in the City Clerk's Office. She said I'm one of the special assistants to the president and the director of the Center for Applied Leadership and Community Development. We are pleased to be here this evening to present, and we are extremely excited about our presentation and the findings from the results of a survey that we undertook in December of the northwest corridor. I also have with me, since this is a research project, six of our Knight Fellows. They are participating in a public leadership development program, and they will be participating with me in this presentation to you.

Johnson C. Smith hails as Charlotte's premiere independent urban university. We have an extreme passion for civic engagement. It is at the heart of our mission. We believe in civic engagement, social action, and caring. We believe that the university can be no better than the community and neighborhoods that surround it, so we call Beatties Ford Road home. We are proud of that fact, and we are just delighted to be able to interact with the community and the neighborhoods. Our gates, as we say now, swing both ways, so it is evident, I think, by the work that we do.

Councilmember Carter arrived at 5:28 p.m.

To saddle our vision around civic engagement and to enhance our work and really join the neighborhood and the communities with the capacities of the institution, both our academic and our social capital, as you would call it, and our academic and research capacities. Dr. Carter, our 13th president, had a vision of the Center for Applied Leadership and Community Development. In 2009, I was called to head that center and came to Charlotte and have grown to extremely love this community, so I'm most passionate about the neighborhoods and the community, so if you see me in a uproar, Mayor and Council, it is because I love Charlotte, and, as you do, want the best for this great city. The Center undertakes a number of activities. We work with the 30 historic neighborhoods, but we have a really broad target area or service area in which we work not only in Charlotte but throughout Mecklenburg County as well as other parts of this great state.

Given our passion for civic engagement, Dr. Carter and other colleagues felt it was really his vision that felt that the University needed to be able to step up and participate as being one of the largest landowners, so working with my colleague, Mr. Malcolm Graham, they created a broad-based community collaboration, which you will hear more about, but all of our work creates a comprehensive continuum, so no piece stands alone, so it is by design that Malcolm and I are here this evening because the work that the Center does and what my colleague, Senator Graham, and the rest of the administrators and staff at JCSU are doing is along the corridor and particularly given the revitalization efforts, our public-private partnership, all of that fits together very well.

When we saw the soul of the community project as presented by the James S. and John L. Knight Foundation, we really thought that would make a good piece and enhance our work at the neighborhood level, so we wanted to pattern a similar project after the soul of the community, which was sponsored by the Knights, so we named our initiative the Soul of the Northwest Corridor. We believe in the spirit of place, we believe in the people that lend in or feed in to that spirit, so that is why we felt it was most important and wanted to use this research data as a way to help us and help the neighborhoods and the communities that make up the Beatties Ford Road corridor and the whole northwest community to be able to use the results of that. It is really leading edge, cutting edge, whatever you want to call it. Our application for it is one of the first in this country as we move forward and undertake this. So we are using it as a community planning model.

Let's talk about our survey methodology, and Ms. Shannel Campbell, who is a sophomore, will come up.

Shannel Campbell said survey methodology. The survey conducted by Gallop Poll, Inc. in the northwest corridor defined by JCSU as zip codes 28208 and 28216. Telephone interview with 1,004 randomly identified adults age 18 and over. Interviewing conducted in December 2010. The data was weighted to reflect the adult population by age, gender, race, and ethnicity.

Ms. Hampton said one thing to note here. We were able to do this very quickly in the month of December even though it was a holiday month. Why were we able to do that – because of the support of a lot of the folks that you see here and all of the neighborhoods along the corridor. Now, what is the Soul of the Community Project as well as the Soul of the Northwest Corridor? It is about community attachment and what we are talking about is as people are attached to where they live that irregardless of the economic climate that it will increase or enhance the local growth, the local GDP growth. You see the drivers. We have openness, social offerings, and aesthetics. These were the top three drivers for Charlotte when the Soul of the Community Project – Knight Foundation did that – as well as for those of the community for the northwest corridor.

Councilmember Howard arrived at 5:33 p.m.

Let's take a look at our rankings. They are very interesting. Ladies and gentlemen, you will see the comparison chart here between the findings from the northwest corridor, the findings from the Charlotte MSA as conducted by the Knight Foundation for their soul of the community project, and overall against the 26 communities that make up the Soul of the Community, so we had a three-way comparison. Some interesting things to note – you can see the top three drivers across the board for all three groups are openness, social offerings, and aesthetics. You are going to hear more about that. Safety – while feel safe in our neighborhoods, there are a number of nuances there that we are going to talk about in just a moment, and you see the rest of them: leadership, basic services, the economy, and education overall ranked very low, but you see the questions asked, and we'll talk about what that may mean as compared to Charlotte and the overall Soul of the Community cities – social capital and involvement. This chart shows you the percentages as attached and another comparison between the Northwest Corridor, the Charlotte SA, and the overall Knight communities.

Now, our strengths and weaknesses as identified, and let's talk about this chart. Where you see closer to the left-hand corner, that's the critical opportunity, which means those areas where people are attached and they are showing. Those are our challenged areas. We need to work or enhance based on the results of the survey what we found. These are areas that pose critical

opportunities for us to improve or enhance them. The strengths you can see, and you have a comparison on here between the northwest corridor and Charlotte. Some interesting findings, but we are going to get into that as to where the placement of various drivers, as they are called, is located on this chart. Openness will be done by Mr. Sean Moore, who is a junior criminology major.

Sean Moore said openness is the first driver to attaching people to place that this survey has found out, and openness basically is how welcoming is the community to different types of people. The top three are senior citizens, racial/ethnic minorities, and families with young children. Another thing I want to point out is what I will potentially be May 2012 as a young, talented college graduate which is not only in the northwest corridor but all over in Charlotte MSA as well as the other Knight cities. An example I want to mention is the Knight fellows were asked after we graduate would we like to stay in the northwest corridor, Charlotte, or go home or somewhere else. We had mixed reviews, but the majority of us wanted to go home because it just was not open to us as college students.

Ms. Hampton said some interesting findings. Again, what the survey found was that the three top groups – senior citizens, racial and ethnic minorities, and families with young children – were really welcomed or felt welcomed in the northwest corridor. As we go down the list with the other demographic populations, they felt a little less welcomed and received in the northwest corridor. Our next driver is social offerings, and we have Ms. Kiara Canty, who is a junior social work major.

Kiara Canty said social offerings speaks out the most to me because it's one of the most important things where I see to get attached to some place, and it's also one of the things that the northwest corridor showed to be struggling in. Because the young, talented college graduates are the least welcomed in the northwest corridor or in Charlotte it's these social offerings that can bring them in. Social offerings are what you have that bring your college students not only just to live in this area but also to stay once they graduate. Speaking from somebody who looks forward to staying in the northwest corridor once they graduate this is something that is in much need. We are in need of something that our young people can do, something that our older generation can be a part of, everybody can come together because we are this community where everybody loves each other. We are the one place where everybody cared about each other. This is where we need to come together and have fun. We don't have to travel outside of the northwest corridor to have fun. We can get a bowling alley, a movie theatre, but make sure that it fits within this area because once you have social offerings this will also be a domino effect leading to other things. Your crime rate could decrease, other things that you have jobs opportunities, so your unemployment rates would also decrease as well. Social offerings means more than just entertainment values.

Ms. Hampton said our next driver is aesthetics, and I have Ms. Felicia Trim and Mr. T. Perkins. Ms. Trim is a junior political science major, and Mr. Perkins is a junior business major.

Felicia Trim said the aesthetics of the neighborhood are defined as the physical beauty and availability to parks and green space.

Mr. Perkins said residents of the northwest corridor rate the beauty of physical setting of the area lower than the residents of the Charlotte MSA.

Ms. Trim said aesthetics is the third highest driver for a community. It attracts different types of people to a community such as families or active people who would like to work out or go to the parks in their neighborhood. However, because of the economic situation of the country, the parks and recreation departments across the country have been cut first.

Mr. Perkins said myself growing up in Maryland and going to school in Washington, DC, I grew up after leaving school, going to community centers, going to programs, Boys and Girls Clubs, playgrounds. I know that in cutting these playgrounds, schools, community centers, I didn't feel as though it was going to increase crime for kids because it gave me an opportunity to stay out of trouble. I know just being active and being involved in schools and community centers gave me opportunities to become the successful person that I am. I don't feel as though they should cut

any community services or playgrounds because it kept me out of trouble and it will keep kids and everybody else out of trouble and decrease crime also.

Ms. Hampton said a demographic profile of attachments, those population groups that are more likely or less likely to be attached. Chanel.

Chanel said demographic profile of attachment in the northwest corridor. Of course, African Americans are more likely to be attached. Those that are 65 years of age or older are more likely to be attached whereas those who are 18 to 34 years of age are less likely to be attached. Those who have a high school education or less are more likely to be attached, and college graduates are less likely to be attached. Divorced and widowed are more likely to be attached, but single and married are less likely to be attached. Retired residents are more likely to be attached, but new residents who have been living there for five years or less are less likely to be attached.

Ms. Hampton said I think one of the trends that carries out that is across the country is a difference of attachment between renters and the residents that have been there, particularly the long-term residents, so that is a trend that is in keeping across the country that affects our public policy and so many other things.

Now, we are going to compare, take a look at the data, and really compare that between the northwest corridor, the findings from the northwest corridor as well as the Charlotte MSA. We have Ms. Laura Ashley Taylor, who is a senior political science major graduating in May 2011.

Laura Ashley Taylor said when comparing the northwest corridor to the rest of Charlotte we found some very interesting things. Resident attachment is almost identical to the rest of Charlotte. Optimism and satisfaction is higher in the northwest corridor than all of Charlotte. The top three drivers of attachment in the northwest corridor are the same. When it comes to education and safety, a lot of research still needs to be done particularly because education systems are considered to be less important in attaching residents to the Charlotte MSA, but safety is much more important. There is a perception that the quality of education for higher and private schools are better than public schools K-12. In addition to that, when people talk about the optimism of their neighborhoods, they always say education is one of the things that is going to make them better, so it's really interesting that education isn't really ranked highly in attaching it. When dealing with the issue of safety, a lot of people in the northwest corridor speak to the fact that they feel the Police and Fire Department are doing their job, however, many of them don't feel safe enough to walk a mile within their own neighborhood. So, in the aspect of education and safety, a lot of research still needs to be done to get some continuity on the topics.

The northwest corridor openness is a strength, whereas in the Charlotte MSA it is challenged, as my colleagues were saying earlier, a lot of people feel welcome in the environment especially families, smaller children, however, not necessarily the college generation. The northwest corridor social offerings is a challenge as well as a strength, so there is some type of flip-flop amongst the northwest corridor and the Charlotte MSA. Although it's still a strength in the northwest corridor, aesthetics is rated much lower in the northwest corridor than the Charlotte MSA, although it is still a very historical background neighborhood. So within the compare and contrast, we do see a lot of continuity but we do see a lot of contradictions that we want to further research and get some more information on.

Ms. Hampton said she covered all of this, so I didn't need to do it. Here, again, we come down to those things why residents in the northwest corridor expect their future will be better, and you see all of them rate education higher here. That's what Laura was talking about – that contradiction. It could be from around the situation with our schools. We don't know, but we plan to do additional research around that as well as take a look at some of the solutions that the university or programs and activities that we can provide to the northwest corridor community. Why they expect it to be worse – again, usual thing – the economy, health declining, age. These are the reasons why they feel that their life will be worse in the future.

Now as to their neighborhoods very interesting finding. Improvements, development, positive change rated very highly ranked at 32% as the reason for why their neighborhoods would improve, but also let's look at why the residents expect the neighborhoods to be worse, and they rank development, again, at the top of that list. What does that call for – positive, sustainable

development and to take a look at how public policy and how we do that development within the northwest corridor, so there is a fine balance there. They want development, but they also want sustainable development, they want the public policies and the safeguards to be put in place. They don't want to be run out of their homes as some people feel when development comes they feel they will be gentrified or they would lose what they have. That gives us another mechanism for working with our neighborhoods, for working with developers and such.

Next steps – We have been presenting this. We presented to the neighborhoods. We had reactions around it. We still are seeking to do that. We will be making a request to the School Board and the Chamber of Commerce to present the findings from this. We are also working with our neighborhoods on how to apply this for local action, so one of the things we have asked the neighborhoods is to take a look at their action plans to see where they are with that, how much progress has been made on that, and to also take a look at new development or their future plans. So, we feel there is a win-win there. We feel we could certainly work with the City and provide a copy of the findings and the comments, so we have developed a worksheet for the neighborhoods that will allow them to list under each of the drivers, take a look at their projects, compare it, and including public policy and projects that are on the board or those that are coming up in the future.

In addition, we are doing some secondary research investigating around that. Basically, as you have heard, some of the findings were very interesting, so we want to delve a little deeper on that, but I think this was a really quick capsule or overview of what these findings are. I'm excited. I think Gallop did a good job. We had 1,004 respondents in two zip codes. We hope that if our resources prevail in two to three years we will do this again and be able to expand it, so we can then start as Knight to be able to compare it to see where we are in the future as opposed to where we are now. I'm going to stop now, Mayor and Council. She thanked the Council. I think this transfer very nicely into the next presentation by my colleague when you keep in mind social offerings, when you keep in mind the new developments that are coming, and how these add not only to the ambience, the economic base, but also mitigates some of the challenges brought to light by these findings.

Councilmember Carter said this is exciting information, and I hope you all will be able to share it at the Neighborhood Symposium on the 16th of April as well as get some questions answered and have some interaction about impact and implementing what you are suggesting. Ms. Hampton has just been a wonderful ally as Mr. Mitchell brought these Knight fellows to DC. I'm sorry I missed some of the presentation because talking about attachment the National League of Cities' board surely attached to these young people and Ms. Hampton. It was an amazing blend of inspiration and information and flow back and forth.

Ms. Hampton said thank you for your comments. Wanted you to know not only being Knight fellows but they are student researchers with the National League of Cities, and they are working in each of the seven areas, so they have been overlaying the findings from this comparing their home town and then comparing Charlotte and then also doing a comparative analysis with the northwest corridor. So they have some interesting findings and thoughts and precepts around that, so we hope to present to the National League of Cities in July when it's here. I thank you for that. My students have been working diligently, my young adults, because they love to tell me they are grown, and I think of them as young folks, but they are a joy to work with.

Again, thank you. I don't know if we will be presenting at the symposium, but the northwest corridor will certainly have an exhibit and Johnson C. Smith, but we welcome to do smaller group setting conversations and also to share with other neighborhoods because I think it is interesting that they can begin to think about what may be the findings coming out of their neighborhoods and how that can translate into a community planning model as they look at development particularly like Independence Boulevard and some others. I know we have been studied to death, but what I like about this is you can actually apply it. The northwest corridor respondents said is this another study; what are you going to do with it? So, we wanted to make sure we really applied these findings we have in an actionable way.

Councilmember Howard said this is actually my second time seeing this presentation, and the first time I was just as impressed, so thank you for bringing it to Council, and I also would like to

recognize Ms. Patterson with Knight Foundation. I don't know if she's here, but this was a great investment.

Ms. Hampton said she couldn't come this afternoon.

Councilmember Howard said one of the things I said when you presented this on campus was we have another community that is fast growing in this city, and that's the community of college-aged young people, young people – young adults, I'm sorry, in the inner city. Just not your school, but Johnson and Wales right around the corner from you as well as Wake Forest just announced they are moving uptown, UNCC. We have an opportunity to help with the part about not enough to do, and that's something I would hope that in combination with the schools coming together, and I have talked to Dr. Carter about this, as well as the community coming together to talk about what it is we can do to help that emerging community of young people in the Center City as well. We like to think that the NASCAR Hall of Fame and the art museums are what they have in mind, but I think they have more in mind, and we should have a conversation about that.

Ms. Hampton said what we will be asking our students to do, and each of them have already thrown out some examples of social offerings they would like to see, so we are asking them to compile that list, and that's the list we can share with our neighborhoods and other developers as other new development comes along. So they very much welcome the opportunity to have any generational conversations because they don't want the senior sector or more experienced population, members of that population to think they don't want to be inclusive, so they welcome those conversations.

Mayor Foxx said I do want to say a couple of things. Ms. Hampton, first of all, thank you for coming to us tonight. What Dr. Carter has envisioned and what you are actualizing is the resurgence of a northwest corridor that speaks to the interests of its residents. If you look across the country at communities like the northwest corridor, there is almost always a need for an institution that is in the community to be the convener of that conversation, and I think our entire community is grateful to Johnson C. Smith for stepping up into that role and doing what you are doing.

Secondly, I think there is a lot of energy in the northwest corridor already. This City Council had our retreat at Johnson C. Smith back a few months ago, and for the first time I can remember we suspended the retreat to go to an announcement for Project Lift, which will be a catalyst to help our public schools including West Charlotte High School, and I want to make sure I thank the Council again for being willing to do that, but that is one indication of the type of energy and the catalytic energy that is out there in the corridor.

I guess the question I would have for you is – I think I know the answer to this having talked to you before – but there are an enormous number of decisions that are looming in the public sector right now relative to resources in the corridors. Can you kind of give me very briefly your two minutes on what is working well, where do you think the City could be doing more to help, and where do you think there are some areas where we absolutely cannot as a public sector pull away?

Ms. Hampton said I think that is a very apropos question. First of all, the energy is great, and the momentum that I think we have achieved together with the neighborhoods, and when I say we, that's Johnson C. Smith University and the neighborhoods. The areas and the things that I see working well coming out of the center are the enhanced advocacy around public policy and how the City worked and City staff worked with neighborhoods around that. Of course, I congratulate Councilmember Kinsey and our staff and the City staff because I think they listened. It is a first start. We know there is still much work to be done, but I have seen just by testimony to them being out this evening that they have enhanced their advocacy. I think those things are working. I think in terms of creating a comprehensive continuum of services, and, therefore, to really take a look at the gap.

We don't want to reinvent the wheel, so when there is someone out there, another entity, we want to partner, and I think that's what we are doing because we are having conversation right now with CMS and Project Lift and activities that are ongoing. So, I hail your mentoring. All of

our K-12 have been getting our faculty and staff into the schools, into the neighborhoods. I have one lady that has to leave right now going to do a sustainable or energy conservation, and another one of our students working on green and sustainable development and sustainable neighborhoods. So I think there is a lot of synergy around several of the initiatives that the City has created particularly around sustainable communities and green building and energy conservation.

As it relates to public policy, I think that is a big one, and another one I think is truly economic development, small business development, and entrepreneurship. As you know, we have a women's entrepreneurship program that I'm trying to expand to take in men because they have beaten me up enough about not allowing them in the program, but I think there are a number of opportunities there, and we have started to market the activities that the City has so they can be present and accountable and be able to move to the next tier of business and continue to build assets and capital in this city and expand the tax base.

I think around economic development and small business and entrepreneurship, I think around sustainable communities and energy conservation, I think around public policy and advocacy as we look to the future and how we continue to build sustainable neighborhoods, I think those are some of the three or four areas that I really see the greatest synergy around. But then we are always open because there are opportunities that come, so I feel with the support of the neighborhoods we can really work with the City and the City staff. My young folks already want to use the greenway, so who do I talk about using the greenway. They want to have a northwest corridor day as I know some staff tried last year, but they want to get everybody out. They said it's a beautiful piece of property. They want to be on the greenway. So, it's a number of ideas that are swirling there, and that's why I'm very fortunate to work with an astute group of young people.

Mayor Foxx said thank you very much. This is Phase 1 of our conversation tonight. There is a Phase 2 to this conversation that gets to another level of how the city can be involved, and thank you very much, Ms. Hampton, and City Manager Walton.

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HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: HISTORIC WEST END REVITALIZATION

Curt Walton, City Manager, said you are right, that was Phase 1. Phase 2 there are a number of projects that are contemplated for the West Trade Street and Beatties Ford corridor that we were talking with Johnson C. Smith about. We wanted to give you an overview of those tonight. Some of those projects will include requests for public/private partnerships. So, Senator Malcolm Graham is here to give an overview of the major projects that are pending for that corridor.

Senator Malcolm Graham said it is indeed an honor as well as a privilege for me to be here tonight. I also wanted to compliment my colleague, Ms. Hampton, and the students at Johnson C. Smith University for that fine presentation, and I'm glad that they are here tonight as well. I came to Charlotte in 1981 on a tennis scholarship at Johnson C. Smith University, and if you were to take a picture of West Trade Street/Beatties Ford Road and uptown Charlotte then and compare it to today, it's like night and day in some quarters.

Uptown Charlotte on the Square was the Burger King, the Eckerd's Drug Store, and the pawn shop, and the Marriott Hotel was under construction, and today uptown Charlotte is one of the most progressive uptowns in the country – arenas and football stadiums and skyscrapers, etc. If you were to take that same picture in '81 and take it up to Beatties Ford Road/West Trade Street corridor and compare it to today not a lot has changed except the businesses that were open then are now closed – some of them – but the spirit of the people, as told by Ms. Hampton, is energized and ready for change, and we come here today talking about positive change for the community.

I have been involved in a number of public projects in this community along with former Councilmember Mumford and James Mitchell and Patrick Cannon, Nancy Carter. We built an arena when people said that we probably shouldn't have, but that arena today is an economic driver for our community. Last week it was reported that based on the arena being in Charlotte and the CIAA, in which Johnson C. Smith University is an affiliate member, well over \$37 million of economic impact to our community. If you do that times six, our presence in this community is felt. That's a project that I drive by every day, and I get goose bumps because I was there through the mud and the tears.

Another project was the Belmont Revitalization Project. We were trying to revitalize Piedmont Courts – drugs, crime, vagrants – and we worked with the City, again with former Councilmember Mumford and Councilmember Lassiter and others, and we rebuilt that community – now Seigle Point. But no project thus far has given me as much pride, excitement, enthusiasm as the project I'm about to introduce to you tonight, which is the West Trade Street/Beatties Ford Road Initiative. I am so passionate and excited about what we are about to do.

So tonight I stand in front of you not as a Senator but as a special assistant to the president at Johnson C. Smith University and chairman of the Beatties Ford Road Taskforce, a conglomerate of neighborhood leaders and civic leaders, property owners, City officials, private developers, specifically the Griffin family and the Smith family all wanting to create positive change in the northwest corridor community. We define that change by saying that we clearly understand and know that the Beatties Ford Road corridor is wide and extensive, but we want to do it in chewable bites. We wanted to do it in a way that we can see some accomplishments relatively quickly, so we identified our focus area from Highway 16, the Excelsior Club, the Vest Water Plant, to the Bojangle's restaurant near I-77. That's our narrowly tailored focus area in terms of the areas we want to change. We are definitely clear about the whole corridor, but we wanted to do it in chewable bites.

The objective of the Beatties Ford Road Taskforce is to get the University to move from an enclave to an anchor institution. We want it to anchor the northwest corridor. As Sherrill indicated, we have over 100 acres in the community, and we want to work in partnership with our neighborhood associations, the University, and the City. Let me pause at this point and say a commercial that I told the Mayor two weeks when I met with him that I really didn't miss the Council that much but I missed the people – the City staff – from Planning, Debra Campbell, and Transportation, Community Development, Economic Development, Jennifer Drew, our corridor liaison, all played a very important and vital role in getting us here today, so I want to thank the Manager for his staff and they continue to impress me.

But what we want to do with the taskforce is to extend the presence outside the gates of Johnson C. Smith University. We want to create a gateway university experience similar to the College of Charleston in my home town, Charleston, South Carolina, or in Georgetown and Washington, DC. We want to make the five-point corner our Trade and Tryon Street. We want that corner to pop with excitement, enthusiasm, and major buildings. The goal is simple. We want to connect to uptown Charlotte, we want to enhance mixed-use development that would reinforce the University presence in the area, we want to attract students and residents to the corridor by adding the type of social capital that the students talked about in terms of entertainment options, and restaurants, and a walkable, sustainable community. Again, we want to create that town center feeling that when you get to that five-point corner that you feel like you are some place of great importance and significance.

The Beatties Ford Road Taskforce has been working for 14 months, and we have a number of key accomplishments along the way, of course, the establishment of the taskforce itself. We have participated every year for the last two years with the football team, 100 strong, and our volleyball players, our cheerleaders in the annual cleanup campaign in conjunction with the City of Charlotte to NCDOT. We clearly understand and know that before we could even talk about developing an area that we had to make sure the community was clean. There was a sense of pride in reference to our neighborhood associations, the business owners along the corridor all working for the common good.

We also need to make sure that it was safe, and last year we executed an agreement with the City of Charlotte, a mutual use agreement, that allowed the University to patrol not only on campus but outside the campus walls in conjunction with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department and close working relationship with the Police Department and the substation on Beatties Ford Road. Community meetings – Sherrill Hampton and her staff have been out there, so she has got the University working with neighborhood associations making sure we get their input in terms of what it is that we are doing, working with them to establish this core relation of individuals and communities working for the common good of the area.

We invested in the West End Market. There will be a store on West Trade Street where during the summer months folks can come and get arts and crafts, and, again, trying to use this as a driver to get people to the West Charlotte corridor and Beatties Ford Road. We are proud about that. We are proud about our relationship with the City Council and staff and working to initiate transit, streetcar. Dr. Carver served as the chairman of the Streetcar Taskforce. We supported the Mayor and the Council request of getting federal funding to bring that streetcar down to the bus station in uptown Charlotte, and we continue to work with the Mayor and staff to identify other resources to bring transit and the streetcar to the West Trade Street/Beatties Ford Road corridor. Nancy wanted to go east as well. We are not selfish in this attempt. We want to go east as well as west because we believe that the streetcar is good for economic development for east Charlotte as well as west Charlotte, and we are committed to work with this Council and Mayor to make that objective possible.

The Council invested in the Vest Water Plant. I think you invested about \$4.5 million. The project was completed last year. It significantly enhances the aesthetics, and we talked a little bit about that earlier, of the community. It's a clean building. We still would like to work with this Council and Mayor to put some public art in conjunction with our neighborhood association and community leaders on that water tower. We believe it can be a beacon to brand that corridor and bring some snazzy and excitement to the area, so we stand ready to work with the Council and the Mayor to make that vision a reality.

We have worked with the 2020 Plan and with Center City Partners to ensure that we plan and we grow together. We are still working with them. The Center City Partners as well as the ULI study, and I need to pause and thank Councilmember Howard for his support in helping us get the funds necessary to do a ULI study in conjunction with Bank of America and Citizens in Partners, Johnson C. Smith University all came together and both the 2020 Plan and the ULI study confirmed something that me and Nancy Carter and Patsy Kinsey have been saying for years that Center City goes beyond the I-277 loop. It includes the Optimist Heights, Villa Heights, Belmont community, it includes outside of Central Avenue, and it definitely includes the Johnson C. Smith University area. Johnson C. Smith University is not in another world. It is a part of uptown Charlotte, and both plans confirm it, and what we would like to do is change it from just being something that is written on paper to something that is a reality.

The Gold Rush last year December stopped at Johnson and Wales University. It did not go under the bridge. February the University made the financial commitments that we have invested in ourselves. It's a free ride for the students and the public, but it costs the University about \$50,000 a year, but we think that investment is worth it. It connects our students to uptown Charlotte. It connects our students to where the jobs are. It connects our students to where the entertainment options are. It connects our students to Johnson and Wales and Central Piedmont Community College and the graduate programs at UNCC offered in uptown Charlotte.

During the week of the CIAA, the bus was rocking. Its hours extended until midnight. The student utilized it. Smith became a parking lot. Start with folks that parked on campus and take the Gold Rush, the Red Line to events uptown Charlotte. It's something that should have happened years ago. We made the initial investment ourselves to create this option, and, again, it connects what we are trying to do to uptown Charlotte. Lastly, the Art Factory, and the Council had the opportunity to have dinner there. We worked with the Griffin family, and they are here tonight to change this old building with a lot of pride and character and history, to sustain it to a new use, and it's now our teaching facility for the arts. Students go there to take classes in art and sculpturing. There is a black box theatre for acting classes. There is a dance studio there. It's the University's first major investment outside of the gates to create this University village

that we are trying to do. In addition with the Gold Rush, those are two very significant accomplishments that further serves to unite uptown Charlotte with Johnson C. Smith University.

So as you can see, Mr. Mayor and Council, we have done our work in terms of laying the ground work in terms of preparation and planning, and now we want to move and pivot from planning to implementation. This is where we need your help. This adventure is like a three-legged stool. It's the University and its neighbors, it's the developers, specifically the Griffin family and the Smith family, and it's the City of Charlotte, and if one of these legs disappear, it falls down. Thus far, everybody has been holding their own weight. The City has done what it should do. The Griffin and the Smith families have done thus far what they should be doing, and the University has stepped up to be that anchor institution along the corridor.

Mayor Foxx said I thought you were just going to say we were done.

Senator Graham said now we are coming to the fun part. This is the bridge. The University wants to do its fair share, too. It separates an artificial barrier between uptown Charlotte and West Trade and Beatties Ford Road. That is unacceptable to me and knowing the ladies and gentlemen around the table I think it's unacceptable to you as well. We have engaged in a project with the Arts and Science Council, and Jean Greer is here. Jean and the Arts and Science Council is leading this project for us, and we want to change this. We want to put some neon lights and brighten it up. Last year we took a year to wait for NCDOT to get the authorization to do a project underneath the bridge. Believe it or not, the State did not have a policy that governed public arts on bridges and underpasses, and we used some clout we had. It took a year, and Jean was up there working in conjunction with other communities across the state to get the policy necessary to do what we wanted to do, and this is what we want to do.

We want to brighten that bridge up. It's about a \$200,000 project. Johnson C. Smith University has committed \$75,000 towards it -- \$65,000 for the project itself, \$10,000 for the maintenance of the project once it's completed. We are making calls now to identify other community partners to invest in the maintenance fund, and I think we have one or maybe two on the hook - I can't announce it today -- to work with us. I told Jean that when we turn on the lights for Christmas this year, we want to turn on the lights underneath the bridge, so we expect to get this done by the end of the year. Right, Jean?

And, we need the City's help. We need authorization from the City to the NCDOT for us to move forward with the project. The balance of the project will come from the City's art fund, and at the end of the presentation if there are more specific questions then Jean can come closer to the mike to answer any specific questions that the Council may have in reference to the project. We want to get this thing done. We have been talking about it for about two years now. I have been holding the money in my budget for two years now, and all my other colleagues are looking at it and wanting it, but we believe this is still an appropriate investment for the corridor because it unites two separate parts of the City, which it should not -- the I-77 bridge project.

Councilmember Peacock said I had spoken with Jean the last time that this idea had begun to flourish, and you mentioned that you all had a very defined from the water tower to Excelsior to here, and my idea was why can't we do lights at the other end of the project as well, too, onto a City facility. I know the initial objections to public art on our CMUD facility had to do with the historic color of the grey that we used and some other factors related to that, but I would love if we could expand the vision to have a bookmark of lights on both ends.

Senator Graham said again I mentioned the water tower itself. We would love -- we being the University, our neighborhood associations -- to have that conversation with the City about anchoring it, and I think the appropriate anchor could be that water tower, but we are open for a wide variety of options and conversations, and certainly I think that makes sense.

Councilmember Peacock said my idea is simply light the tower up with similar colors.

Senator Graham said I'm all for it. No complaints from me. So that's the first project.

Mayor Foxx said we ought to have the conversation. I think maybe fold that idea into some of the thoughts, so do not lose that idea.

Senator Graham said the historic Davis House is a project that Johnson C. Smith is committed to doing. Our neighborhood said do something with the house – it's historic. It needs some repair, and I will go over this on the future by looking at the past, and what we want to do is bring it back to its old self – brand spanking new, and it's a historic property. There is a lot of initial investment that we need to make with it as well, so we are committed to work and have this project done next year as well and may need the City's support in reference to funding it.

This is the two-way site. When I was a student at Johnson C. Smith University, this is where I went for cookies and sodas and all other type of stuff. It was close to the University. It was only one of several retail options to us. This property has been in the Smith family – no relationship to Johnson C. Smith University – for years, and the Smith family is here. If they would stand so we can recognize them as well. They own this property, and they have agreed to work with the University. We said if they would build it, we would come, and what we envision there on that site is there is a new University bookstore, about 15,000 or so square feet, a bookstore and a print shop similar to Kinko's on that corner. We clearly understand and know that is a vital corner in the University. That is our five-point corner, and we want to make this five-point corner, again, our Trade and Tryon Street, and we believe that corner is significant to that.

We envision thus far, and we have signed a memorandum of understanding – we, the University, with the Smith family. We have completed a Phase 1 environmental study – looking at Phase 2 now. The Smith family is doing their due diligence, talking to banks in terms of financing the project. They are almost there yet; not quite, but they are doing all their due diligence, and they are ready for the Council to take a look at this project as well as we take a look at the entire efforts along Beatties Ford Road, but we envision that to be this – 15,000 square feet or so bookstore, print shop. Our goal and objective is to break ground for this project at Homecoming of this year, which is in October. We have been working with the family for at least a year now doing all the due diligence, asking all the tough questions, working with Planning and Transit to make sure that it fits, but we are extremely excited about this opportunity; and, again, our goal and objectives when we play homecoming and after the game is over and Smith has won that we would break open this facility. You know we love Broncos.

Mosaic Village, and you will hear more about this at the end of the presentation, but as you can see this is how it looks today. In the background is the Royster property, which is the old A&P shopping center. We had a very good conversation about two weeks ago with Mr. Royster. He clearly understands the importance of his property and how it connects to the corridor development. The Mosaic Village will be right across the street from him. He has cleaned it up, he has boarded it up, he has given the University as well as Ms. Adams the authorization to put some public art on the boards that you see in the back until he decides how the property is going to be reused. He is committed to what it is that we are doing.

The foreground shows the site for the Mosaic Village. It's owned by the Griffin family, and we have been working with them for the last year, again, doing the due diligence, asking the tough questions, trying to come up with a mutual use that benefits the family as well as the University. This is what we envision as we move forward. We will be breaking ground for this April 15th, which is this month, and I will not steal their thunder, but they will be coming up behind me talking specifically about the scale and the scope of the project and the help that they need from that third leg, the City, to make this project come to fruition. Apartments, parking deck, etc. We are really excited about what is about to happen, and, of course, everyone is invited to the groundbreaking. Mike said it's going to be a real good party.

Again, another side of the five-point corridor, and, again, this is a major intersection. It's probably the most major intersection between Trade and Tryon on that corridor, and we want it to pop. The University has been talking with property owners and Mechanics and Farmers Bank and other interested parties in the area about what if we do this, what if we do that? The University is engaging into a capital campaign that will be announced later, but we wanted to see what our future would look like, and this is how we think that corner could be popped. We call it Smith Square. It's working with Mechanics and Farmers Bank in reference to getting them a new building. The University would take some space in the top three floors for our metropolitan college. We would create a new University entrance into the University.

We would build another building as a part of our capital campaign – maybe a fine arts building and/or a convocation center. We are still working out the logistics of that. A convocation center would certainly be a small facility to replace our play boy gymnasium as well as allow the University to have a living room where we can entertain guests in terms of small meetings and small conventions and small trade expos, etc. That site may not be appropriate based on the size and the scale because every time we talk about the project it grows and grows, but I think you get an indication of where the University wants to go. We would relocate the Golden Bull to our football stadium. We have the largest bull in the world literally.

Mayor Foxx said I thought the City Council did.

Senator Graham said some days you do. We want to relocate it and put some public art, again, on the corridor near the University entrance, plaza area, water features, etc. So this is long term. We are not breaking ground for this yet, and we are not asking for the City's support for this project yet, but we just wanted to illustrate for you what our thinking is as we move forward for the future.

Councilmember Peacock said a constructive critique, and I hope that your vision for Smith Square will include something that I notice that Councilmember Carter, Burgess, and myself walked up the street from the Arts Factory from the dinner that we had that night on our Council Retreat, and I wasn't aware that you couldn't go through that gate there, and I hope at some point that gate can come down and that gate is no longer a part of our entrance into the University. I thought that separation between the pedestrian and the University forcing you to go to the security gate, it really felt like a barrier to which the University was as a part of that corner, so do you all have any plans for that? Is it a part of the plan to –

Senator Graham said, again, we are still working to make sure that security is safe for our students, safe for our residents, etc. Our goal is once the bookstore is open on that corner that the back gate will be open as well. We have talked about that because it makes sense not only for residents visiting the University but getting our students access to the bookstore from that gate as well, so all of that is a part of our discussion. We have been working with our internal chief of police, having conversations with Mr. Bellamy with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, so all of that is a part of this. Again, we want to come from outside the gate. We want to be an urban university. We want to have a walkable university, and all of that is a part of it.

So, in summation, I-277 bridge, we would like to have a mutual use agreement with the City to move forward with that project. I think it's already on your April 11th, Monday night, docket to be considered. The Gold Rush is coming to campus that connects us to uptown Charlotte. The Art Factory is open. Students are now attending class there. We will have the official grand opening on April 15th, and you see the bookstore. We are working in conjunction with the Smith family to get that deal done so we can present it to City Council in a more specific type of way, but we are just about there in terms of doing the due diligence necessary to give you guys a complete package for consideration. We will need City support to make that project happen as well. So, we are encouraged about where we are, and at this time would like to bring up Larry and Mike Griffin and the Griffin family to talk specifically about the request for Mosaic Village and where they stand in reference to that project. After it's over, I'll come back up and then collectively we answer questions. If Jean Greer is here and others, we will do that.

Mike Griffin, Griffin Brothers, said I'm representing my family. Actually, Senator Graham mentioned my brother. My brother is in attendance here, but Dale is going to be my partner today, so he's my other brother. I would like to recognize my father and my brother and my family that is here – Larry Griffin, Sr. and Jr. is here. This will make more significance later, but I also have my wife and my kids here. My family has a century old presence in this corridor, and I'm making sure they are here for the next century, so we had a motivation to keep them here plus he's in Scouts and he gets a badge for this, so this is good. Again, it's hard to follow Malcolm, who is a good friend, but he is a great speaker, but I do share his passion. I was born in '65, and my father started the business there in '61, so I grew up and have great passion for that corridor.

Councilmember Burgess arrived at 6:32 p.m.

As far as tonight, I just quickly want to touch on our history as far as in the corridor and outside the corridor and look forward to having Darryl come up and talk about the Mosaic Village and the plan and design and afterwards kind of the meat and potatoes of this. I will look forward to talking more about the project costs and the financing plan and a little bit of a gap related to that.

Family history – we have been blessed to grow up in Charlotte, and we have grown with Charlotte. Over the time, we started with that one tire store at 1545 West Trade, and now we have eight centers in the Charlotte market. We also own and operate a country club, Pine Island Country Club, in west Charlotte, and we have been quite fortunate. When it's time to develop, we have done a good bit of property development and manage a lot of property in the greater Charlotte area. Also, a little less known in our family is a business. We own and operate five construction, demolition, reclamation centers. That includes recycling, reprocessing, landfilling of construction and demolition debris. That's kind of the makeup of where we are, but our core was started on West Trade, and our core is still there, and we look forward to getting back involved.

Before I jump into West Trade history, I want to highlight the importance of our partners. Darryl Williams and Chris Ogeranday at Neighboring Concepts have been great partners of ours for several years, and I will touch on that a little bit. We are pleased to announce that Balfour Beatty and Shelco are doing the first joint venture partnership. They are a general contracting team that will help us get this project to the end. The all important leg of the stool is Johnson C. Smith, and I will touch on that, too, but they are great partners in this.

Our history – Business wise, my father, my brother, and I all cut our teeth at 1545 West Trade. In addition to that, the green line shows West Trade and Beatties Ford Road. My grandmother, my father's mother, was born on LaSalle and Beatties Ford and grew up there. My father grew up at Sunset and Beatties Ford. My brother and I had our first years at Mt. Holly-Huntersville and Beatties Ford. So the corridor definitely means a lot to our family. I did this last time we talked about this. In 1961, as I mentioned 50 years ago back in February of this year, my father started his business. He purchased of the business from his uncle, and it was called Honest Tire Service. It started kind of in the West Trade corridor where 77 is. One funny note, even back in the '90s when we were still on West Trade Working, our power bill still said Honest Tire Service. That's kind of a neat legacy of the family's business.

But my dad started in '61. My brother and I had the privilege of working there through the mid-'90s, and we started seeing a situation where we were having a hard time surviving. I maybe will talk about the bridge. The bridge was something that I'm all too familiar with in that conversation. My dad had great passion for his business, but we had to work to get our customers to go under that bridge. We had a lot of customers – political leaders, bank leaders, whoever, would come to get their work done at our store, but the first time they would come we had to really work because we would say where we were, and they would want a description, and the last few decades we used the Bojangle's and say we are past the Bojangle's, and they would question, are you past the Bojangle's, and I said come under the bridge. Once we got them there, we kept them there for the most part.

But, in the 2000s, we recognized that it had become more of a challenge, and frankly we had grown our operations and our customers started going to the other locations. In 2004, we knew at some point we had to consider closing that location, but we had a passion for the corridor, so we really started working closely with Darryl and his team at Neighboring Concepts, and, again, we are developers, and this was a time when Charlotte was really growing, so we saw that as an opportunity to take advantage of that growth, and quite frankly we did probably hundreds of plans and hundreds of ideas and did a lot of studies and did a lot of pro formas based on developing it in the spirit of the pedscape that is out there, which we fully embrace. It always came back it was unfeasible, and we basically in 2007, which was the peak of development, put it on the shelf and realized at some point this would happen.

But what we did conclude at that time is that we needed an anchor. I think Malcolm used that term "anchor". We needed, in essence, like what Hugh McColl and perhaps Bank of America did at the Gateway on the other part of West Trade. We had to have an anchor to work on our side of the street and work up. It didn't dawn on us that Johnson C. Smith could be that anchor. President Yancey, which I had met before, was a fine lady, but I think she was really focused on

keeping the gates, and it never dawned on us. I couldn't be more pleased about two years ago Malcolm contacted me on behalf of the University, and I had breakfast with Dr. Carter and immediately bought in to his vision. Ironically about that same time Jatonya Adams, who is with Historic West End Urban Market, called me within a two-day period of that, totally coincidence, but I heard her passion about the Seversville community and the other communities working together to revitalize through an urban market, and we were all in with that.

The Arts Factory, which is our first involvement with Johnson C. Smith, and Jatonya's efforts and the whole corridor's efforts with the urban market was reinvigorating for us. That's kind of the way we are today. The bottom two slides are a little bit off. Actually it was 2009 when we had that breakfast with Malcolm and Dr. Carter, and, of course, the first fruits of those conversations are the Art Factory. We are very proud of the visual performing arts center and look forward to seeing that school flourish at that site.

In parallel with that, we start talking about what can we do beyond that, and, of course, Mosaic Village is what I look forward to discussing. That is kind of where we are there. As far as the history, we knew we needed an anchor, and we know Johnson C. Smith is that anchor, and we are more excited as every week passes with our interaction with them. It's been two years, and we have worked hard, and we look forward to really talking more about what that's about. But I am convinced to this. There's three legs to the stool, and the City is definitely a key component, and Malcolm said it better, but if any one of those legs wobbles, it could be another 40 years before this corridor gets developed. It needs a catalyst, it needs a kick start, and our family is privileged to be a part of that, and I know the Smith family here, too, is engaging and looking forward to working with the University. That's our passion. I'm glad to bring up Darryl Williams to kind of talk a bit more specifics about Mosaic Village.

Darryl Williams, Neighboring Concepts, said when I got ready to come up when you all called Larry, Larry Sr. said I can be Larry, Jr. It's great to be here, and I have only seven slides. It will be real short. I just want to give an overview of the Mosaic Village, the project we have been talking about. I would be remiss not to share with you. Some of you may know that we started our firm 15 years ago on the Smith campus in the blue incubator building behind the campus, and our focus on working and the mission behind our firm was to help transform communities through architecture. I don't think there is any other project we have ever done that could exemplify what we are about as a firm than the project I am about to show you. It's been an exciting project, and I do want to emphasize that the drawings are very conceptual. We are still working through a lot of issues with City staff, County, along with Johnson C. Smith, the Griffin family, so it's a big team that is involved and really working this project including the construction and design team. He introduced his staff. They are the brains behind this project that I'm about to show you.

As you can see, this shows the corridor from the Center City. This line here is West Trade and I-77 runs here, and you can see it goes back toward Johnson C. Smith in this direction, so the project is located right here. You can see the proximity of this project to the Center City. Malcolm talked about the Arts Factory, which is here. He used the slide to illustrate his comments. The Ice House was located right here at the corner of Bruns Avenue and West Trade. The bookstore that Malcolm talked about that the Smith family owned is right at five points, and you can see Johnson C. Smith. This has become a very walkable, pedestrian friendly corridor with a great project to really be a catalyst to make this project happen.

This is a future classroom building that will come along in a future phase. This is the Arts Factory site, so this is adjacent to the Arts Factory Building. This is West Trade Street. We build about 6,500 square feet of retail right along Trade Street. This is the student housing complex that would start – the main entrance to the complex would be right here, so the security area of entry of the student housing complex would come through this entrance here. This is the parking deck that would actually be screened by the retail, and you will see on future slides where the housing above the retail will actually screen the parking deck from West Trade Street. It's about 300 housing units, about 350 to 400 parking spaces that will be in the vicinity along with some retail that will create a lot of energy for the corridor.

This slide shows some of the upper levels, the second and third level of the building, showing this housing located on top of the retail below, and then it wraps around Bruns Avenue and goes

around towards Duckworth. Again, there are 300 units. There are quite a few amenities associated with this project. We met with the students and staff at Johnson C. Smith – wireless Internet. There are kitchen units in every unit. There are also washers and dryers in every unit, and then we have this sustainable building. It will not be LEED certified, but it will have a lot of sustainable features associated with it, a lot of energy efficient components as well as recycling materials and some other things.

This is the fourth level on the upper level here, and you can see again the same building. Four levels of student housing, a four-level parking deck. The back around Duckworth because of the height restrictions we have to take off some rooms in the back, but you can see this building wraps the entire parking deck around the front where the future classroom building is going to cover this side of the façade in the future.

This slide shows the potential for a green roof on top of the parking deck, and you can see the beautiful view. It looks like today, and Malcolm talked about the building across the street, but once you get up high on top of the green roof, you might get a view of something like this. It shows the potential for a green roof and a wonderful amenity to a project that would be utilized by Johnson C. Smith students and by the entire community. Again, this shows some of the amenities associated with the project. This is a tremendous catalyst for future development along the corridor, and, again, we appreciate the opportunity to be a part of such an exciting project.

Mr. Mike Griffin said again we can't express how pleased we are with Darryl and his team -- I know some are here – with their vision. This vision is theirs. We just fully embraced it, and I don't know that we hardly made a change to the vision. The term mosaic, obviously multi-cultural, all those ingredients I think you can see it into the building, too. Of course, here is the most important part is the financial commitments and what it has taken to get to this point. We did sign a memorandum of understanding in March with Johnson C. Smith. We are working towards a master lease.

The leg of the stool that is Johnson C. Smith's responsibility frankly is one of the greatest ones. I can't emphasize enough one of the most important things we need from them is a long-term commitment to make sure the residential component is used, and they have committed to a 25-year master lease to utilize that. We look forward to getting that done in the coming month. Just on the left side is Johnson C. Smith's responsibility to that point subsidizing student residences and also related to the pro forma, they are really going to manage the operating expense, the repairs and maintenance, and the capital expenditures to maintain it. We know a good bit about property development, a lot about tires and other things, but frankly I don't think we know much about managing students.

This is a great city relating to cooperation. We had great conversation with UNCC and Johnson and Wales and learned a lot from them, which further confirmed we don't know how to manage students and look forward to Johnson C. Smith partnering with us to manage that component. Griffin's responsibility is to be the developer, financing the debt to get this built. One of the more important things. We plan to own it forever, so we are going to do it of top quality so it's easy for Johnson C. Smith to manage but also knowing it's going to be there forever, and this is not something that developers do when they build something to maybe a substandard in order to make a return. Our passion is to be there forever.

The parking garage was a bit of the challenge. We do embrace the pedscape plan, but the higher density you have to really build the parking now, and some of that parking will be used for the future, but the parking has to be in place now so we can build around it, which is a huge financial commitment. Of course, the retail space. We think this is just the beginning. This is about a third of our property, so we look forward to letting this be a catalyst and really focusing on the other two thirds of our property over time, and there will be a bit of retail space.

Very ambitious. I affectionately call my father and Dr. Carter Microwave. They are a cut of the same cloth as far as being impatient, and one of these – you see the bottom slide, the completion date is August 2012. We want to be open and ready for the students to start that semester. In order to do that, we have to do things typically a little bit backwards as far as the developer is concerned. As Malcolm mentioned, we will break ground real soon, which we look forward to.

We will kind of work backwards to execute a lease, and obviously we are working diligently with the financing component in order to make all these pieces fall together.

The construction period is anticipated to be 14 months, so we do have to really do some significant of earth come first of June and a lot of permitting and other things happening in April, but that's when really things have to start kicking in. Construction loan – we have worked great with the major financial institution we have in Charlotte, and it has been well received, and we look forward to continuing that. The City stool piece is an important piece, and I'll jump into that, but obviously long term we are looking for a permanent loan to match up to the 25-year master lease we have at the University, and that will be pursued through the various institutions that supply that financing.

There is another slide that breaks these notes down a little bit better, but the revenue of \$1.163 million entails the management and revenue coming from parking, obviously the revenue coming from the retail, and also the debt service basically coming from Johnson C. Smith. Just as a reminder, Johnson C. Smith is taking care of a lot of the operational affairs and maintenance, so the number is small because of that. The operating expense specific to the parking and retail is \$174,000, which brings the NOI down to a little less than a million. Working with the banks that we have, things have gotten more difficult needless to say, but a debt coverage ratio with the bank is typically 1.4, so if you apply that to the formula, the maximum debt service we could obtain annually would be \$700,000.

We kind of worked with some key assumptions. One is 25% equity invested, 75% loan with the banks, and we worked on a 6% interest rate, which I have been told by different companies that is close. I have told some it may be higher, but I have told some it could be lower, and a 25 year to match up the master lease. If you use those spreadsheets and drill those down, it basically says that the maximum construction cost we should spend is \$12 million, and obviously there is a "but for". The estimated pre-construction cost that we have got to date is \$16 million, so we do have a \$4 million gap, and I would like to break that down a little more, and again this talks about one of the legs to the stool and the residential component.

Johnson C. Smith has really stepped up and committed to a first class product, number one. Frankly, we have done the per student rates. It's a little bit on the higher end, so there is a very good chance that Johnson C. Smith will actually subsidize that. I think the give and take and the great relationship that we have with them we are working well below market and the numbers will show it as far as Griffin Brothers component as a developer, but they are committing well beyond what most anchors would commit as far as a 25-year master lease. So their column shows zero shortfall related to those moving parts.

The retail – we are making a couple of key assumptions that are very aggressive. Number one, we are assuming 100% occupied of approximately 6,500 square feet of retail. We are assuming an \$18 per square foot rate, which frankly we had a study done just a few years ago before the recession, and that was a good bit above that. We have confidence though we'll make those numbers work, and that is why there is a zero shortfall there.

The large one is the parking, close to 400 parking spaces. We did an assumption of utilizing 300 – some for students, perhaps some for commuter utilizing the commuting opportunity. With that revenue it kind of reaches the operating expense, so what really what happens is the construction cost is pretty much equal to our shortfall, and therein lies where we have summarized our shortfall for this project as \$4 million.

It has been well said. I think we in the corridor know there has to be a kick start, there has to be a catalyst. I would like to advocate that our project as well as the Smith families project can be the catalyst to let the rest happen through free enterprise and through the regular process that developers go through, so I'm passionate that we need to do this and I'm passionate that we hope the one ask to get this corridor going in the right direction. We will receive community benefits, as I mentioned, just a catalyst for future development, minimize future public investment by getting this started, grow the historic West End Market, which we are a big believer in the corridor, as I talked about, increase public transportation usage, the Gold Rush, our parking there, a parking space and green roof. We are so excited about the green roof, and if you look at the timing of it with the DNC coming in 2012 in September, I would love to see some great

functions at the top of that green roof with a great view of Center City, parking, Johnson C. Smith involved, the Arts Factory. That would bring no greater pride to me and I'm sure to many people here. Implementation of the ped overlay district – We are a big believer in that, but one of the challenges is the density and the extra cost to build that density. That's it. I really appreciate your time and look forward to any questions that anyone may have.

Councilmember Howard said, Senator, thank you for the presentation. My questions actually go back to your presentation, the first presentation. I was wondering on the water tower what has been the hold-up, if any, on that conversation at all?

Senator Graham said when we approached the City they were already in the process of doing renovations. So we came a little late with the request. Secondly, there were some discussions in reference to how to pay for it, so that was a question mark. We came to the conclusion that instead of painting it we can actually just wrap it so it can be taken off and put on, and Jean Greer is here, and she is a lot more articulate on this subject than I am, but the holdout was basically trying to do the things that were the priority. That slipped from being a top priority to something that we wanted to do that would be nice to do. We really focused on the I-77 bridge and the resources were dedicated to that, although we never did back away from the idea that the bridge project – the water tower itself could be a branding opportunity or a catalytic opportunity for that, so it's still on the table. We have to find a way to pay for it, and we have to make sure there is community support to doing it. We think there is, but I don't want to speak for the neighborhoods. We want to make sure it's a public process.

Councilmember Howard said part of the ULI study talked about looking at doing what we did on the Belk Freeway with the interchange around 77 and those ramps feed into 77 to Fifth Street, and I was wondering any conversations with NCDOT at all about that and how that would play into your overall planning?

Senator Graham said no specific conversations, but we clearly similar to the interchange near the NASCAR Hall of Fame – how we kind of utilized that excess land. I believe there is a lot of excess land around that interchange, and the idea would be reconfigured. It serves as a barrier, but, again, all these conversations are open. I think we are here today making the initial request but also saying that we are going to – these are major public policy decisions, and so we need the input from Council on a number of these issues that you are talking about. We are open. We believe that there is only one space for the growth to go in uptown Charlotte and that is west, so all these conversations that you are discussing – how do we deal with the interchange, how do we deal with some of the other property owners along the corridor, what should be the significant public investment along the corridor – all those things are on the table and, in fact, knowing the ULI study calls for a number of interesting opportunities but also the Center City Partners 2020 Plan also calls for a number of interesting opportunities, so it's open for how do we begin to plan the next phase of the City's development going west, and all those parts you talked about are significant.

Councilmember Howard said the last question is about Mosaic Village. I know that part of it was a gas station. Any brownfield concerns and how that plays into the whole thing?

Mr. Griffin said that's correct. When we purchased the old Shelco gas station, it still had underground storage tanks, which we worked closely with DENR and had those removed, and there are still groundwater wells on that site, and we are working with DENR now to where those wells, if needed – they have agreed to let us abandon those during construction. If needed, we will put those back around the buildings in order to future monitor, but the good news is that the primary task is that the UST, underground storage tanks, are removed and we are working through that process.

Councilmember Howard said any credits? Can you take advantage of the brownfield tax credits at all with your development?

Mr. Griffin said it is under a UST program where the state will refund us when there is appropriate funding. We will basically have to loan the money to the state and let them do it, and then we will get paid back somewhere over the years, and we have been told not to expect it more than five to ten years from now. That does talk about some of the technical challenges.

We have run into a few. The City has been a great partner. So, no concerns with City Planning, Debra and John. They have done a great job, and we are looking forward to continuing working with them. We have had technical challenges also with wetlands. There is – really I think it's a ditch, but there is a deemed wetland behind our property that is going to cost close to \$200,000 to remediate. So we have had quite a few obstacles that we look forward to working on.

Councilmember Howard said my reason for asking is the tax credits, which I know go to the property tax, that could be put – you could play that into the pro forma. That's what I was wondering, and then the City has brownfield money as well, I believe. I don't know if all of those have been taken into consideration with the pro forma.

Mr. Griffin said I would definitely love to work with the City or whatever governing body to pursue that. Some of the things that we could have gotten would have taken too long. They got a little behind our schedule.

Councilmember Peacock said, Mr. Griffin, I enjoyed learning about the history of your family on the corridor. I was curious whether Griffin operations as a retail employer return to the corridor. Do you all have plans of putting a corporate entity on the corridor?

Mr. Griffin said we would love to see that, and it could be a rebirth of a tire store. We do feel the Center City as a corridor and the corridor itself is a corridor we would love to get back involved with. I think our laser focus now is to get this project going. We still have some more land. Piggybacking a comment Malcolm made, my brother has done a wonderful job. He is more of the construction and the person that works that part of our business, and he has done a wonderful reaching out to all the stakeholders that are in the corridor. There was a previous slide that kind of showed a future development, which is basically from Johnson C. Smith out to I-77 including a lot of the land that those cloverleaves are kind of wasting.

If you look at it, really there are four key partners: Johnson C. Smith, by far number one; the Royster family – really five. The Smith family is a key part of this, too, but Charlotte Housing Authority has a significant land with Tarlton Hills, and our family. Outside of that, there are not that many more owners in that huge swath of land. So this is kind of our kick-off as far as a public stage. Our focus is to reintroduce ourselves to those stakeholders. We are planning to invite them out to our golf course to have a presentation similar to this and try to get the future, future phases going. We, of course, are very involved in the corridor.

Mayor Foxx said I have a couple of suggestions. I do want to say by the way of a comment – thank you, first of all, for coming; and, secondly, when we established the Business Corridor Revitalization Fund, the idea was to create capacity within the city to be able to help corridors that needed a little nudge to be in a position to make things happen. What you have described in terms of the mechanics of this deal is a deal that may have just fallen off the table if the City wasn't in a position to at least consider helping, and that's exactly what the corridor revitalization strategy is really about is to try to make things happen in places where the mechanics ordinarily wouldn't.

With that, I think the suggestion I have is to go ahead and refer this concept to the Economic Development Committee and allow them to kind of ferret through some of the mechanics of it, but it is an exciting proposal and something I think we ought to work on and see where it goes. Is there a motion to do that?

[Motion was made by Councilmember Howard, seconded by Councilmember Kinsey, and]
[carried unanimously to refer this item to the Economic Development Committee.]

Senator Graham said last two parting comments. One, we want to thank Councilmember Mitchell in his absence. He has been a great advocate and champion that has been working with us every step of the way. Obviously we couldn't be here without his support. Secondly, and we talked about this earlier, thank you for the referral to the Economic Development Committee. Microwave Dr. Carter, we are under a time crunch as well, and we clearly understand that the Council has to do its due diligence in terms of evaluating and crossing T's and dotting I's, but I just want to kind of relay that to you as well.

Mayor Foxx said is there sort of a window of time that we could maybe ask the ED Committee to come back to us that would meet –

City Manager Walton said I don't know if there are large items pending in ED.

Ron Kimble, Deputy City Manager, said we will have two meetings in April, two meetings in May, and we'll work through all the issues.

Mayor Foxx said do you need certainty on when we get back to you?

Senator Graham said it would be nice, if possible, before the Council goes on this arduous recess. I think you guys are out for the month of August.

Mayor Foxx said, so by June 30th; is that possible?

City Manager Walton said, yes, sir.

Mayor Foxx said without objection can we add a June 30th report back?

Mr. Griffin said I'm putting my banker hat on now. Our banks are super excited to be a part of this, and I think particularly Wells Fargo and the other – BB&T and others have really stepped up an interest, but it's kind of a chicken or egg. They know there is this shortfall, and I'm proud of my family's development, and I'm proud of what we have developed, but we don't have enough within our own portfolio to match that shortfall to make them happy, and we have already spent significant money. Frankly, we need significant money from the banks really the first part of June when there is major construction going on, and I know that's a challenge, but that would be the one thing I would say is that I appreciate everybody's efforts to work with us. If there is any way we can work through in the next 60 days that would be great. If it's the next 90 days, we'll have to work harder with the banks to keep them happy.

Mayor Foxx said that sounds like maybe asking the committee to use its best efforts to get the Council in a position to act by mid-May; is that feasible?

Councilmember Kinsey said I didn't understand exactly what you said. Council action by mid-May?

Mayor Foxx said the concept is to ask the ED Committee to use its best efforts to get a recommendation back to us so we can act by mid-May because what I'm hearing is June you need funding to actually hit June 1?

Mr. Griffin said, yes, sir. We love Shelco and Balfour Beatty, but I think they are looking forward to making sure we have significant financing established.

Mayor Foxx said it gives them two weeks from a potential Council decision to figure that out.

Councilmember Kinsey said when is our last meeting in May? I think that may push us just a little bit.

City Manager Walton said May 23rd.

Mayor Foxx said that's why I said best efforts. If it doesn't happen, at least they can be an ongoing conversation about when it could happen, so it gives them some flexibility, but it's not a mandate.

Councilmember Kinsey said so it's a little later than mid-May. That makes me feel a little more comfortable.

Senator Graham said the driving factor is trying to get occupancy by August of 2012, and that's in addition to the funding considerations that the Griffin family enters with their financial institutions. So, those, Councilmember Kinsey, are the two driving factors that kind of expedite

it as well as the Microwave has pitched the one-minute button, so that's the third one, which is probably less significant.

Mayor Foxx said we'll try and see what we can do.

Councilmember Howard said I did talk to Councilmember Mitchell on the way in. He is in full support. He is stuck in Houston. Isn't that a terrible place to be? He is actually on an airplane now.

Mayor Foxx said James Mitchell has been a critical partner in all this, and I was joking that when he is not here we assign work to his committee, but I know it is work he will accept and be happy about.

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NO HIGH SPEED RAIL MONEY FROM FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (HB 422-KILLIAN)

Mayor Foxx said you all know that there is a hearing tomorrow on this Bill to turn back the high speed money that came into North Carolina. It's more than half a billion dollars that will help accelerate not only travel times but freight transport times in our area. Dana, do you have a presentation to give on this?

Dana Fenton, Intergovernmental Relations Manager, said, Mr. Mayor, I don't have a formal presentation ready, but I would be glad to answer any questions.

Mayor Foxx said I want to say this. I passed a letter out last week during our meeting on Monday, a letter that we sent opposing this legislation. I'm actually going to wake up in the morning and take a train to Raleigh partly to make the point that this is an improvement we need in not only North Carolina but up and down the eastern seaboard. It's a huge economic development driver, and frankly, although it's been reputed to be a partisan issue, it's really not a partisan issue. There are people of both parties who support this investment including the U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and many, many others.

So I'm hoping tonight when I get up and go on this train that the Council will send me – and actually you all are all invited, too, by the way, and anybody in the audience, too. But I'm hoping you will send me with a resolution that says very clearly that we believe this investment is an important one for Charlotte.

[Motion was made by Councilmember Howard and seconded by Councilmember Kinsey to]
[approve a resolution expressing Council's opposition to HB 422 that would prohibit the North]
[Carolina Department of Transportation from applying for, accepting, or expending any federal]
[grants for high speed rail unless specifically authorized by the General Assembly.]

Councilmember Peacock said I am generally in support of everything high speed rail could bring, but I think – there is nothing wrong with asking questions, and the questions that have been raised here in the staff write-up I presented that to Dana before I knew he was going to come up. Representative Killian has declared that the operating costs may require subsidization from the Highway Trust Fund; true or false? If so, where is the supportive information to suggest what those operating costs would be? He also indicates that obviously it would negatively impact freight capacities; true or false? If so, where is the supporting data to that?

Generally I'm not a fan of resolutions primarily because it is simply that. I asked the Manager as well, too, to talk about why this one is unique. I think if there were to be one resolution that the City Council would agree is something that we all are in support of and I think has an even larger impact on this community would certainly be our comments and thoughts about annexation. While I realize there are a lot of different versions of that bill that are going to come around, and we don't have a specific resolution against that, but we are making a resolution here and we have a lot of other things that we take issue with as well, too. So, two-part question. The first one is for you, Dana, and the second for the Manager to speak to why this is unique.

Dana Fenton said this resolution is unique for a couple of reasons. One is it addresses an issue that is not in the Council's adopted legislative agenda. Annexation opposition to doing redoing the annexation laws in such a way that is detrimental to cities and towns is opposed in your adopted legislative agenda. High speed rail funding is not addressed in your agenda.

Councilmember Peacock said your answers to the questions on costs as far as – One of the things that we did not receive was what is the supporting data from Rep. Killian? None of us have heard from him that I know of. Email – okay.

Mr. Fenton said I would be glad to answer the question on the operating costs. Rep. Killian did say the cost would be approximately \$41 million per year by the FY2037. That was based on a set of projections that were provided by the NCDOT. We learned afterwards that there must have been some misunderstanding in that communication. NCDOT clarified that the operating costs for their high speed rail projects by the year 2037 would be approximately \$18.3 million per year. The differential, the delta between those two numbers is the cost to provide maintenance and operations for current track that NCDOT and NCRF have in the system. Can you repeat your second question?

Councilmember Peacock said my first question you have answered is it true or false will the operating costs require subsidization from the Highway Trust Fund. I didn't hear any comments about Highway Trust Fund in specific. This is in reference to that. And, I'm sorry. I didn't read the email. I apologize, Council. I was just asking, just on the record here, I wanted to have that, and my second question was just about negatively impacting freight capacities.

Mr. Fenton said the second part of the question of the operating costs has to do with whether putting more money into the rail will impact the Highway Trust Fund and how will it impact it. Right now, NCDOT can put money into a variety of projects with that money. Some could be roads, some could be public transportation, and others as well. Now, clearly, you are taking \$18 million out there will be something that will not make it into the mix, so certainly there would be some sort of impact there.

Will it impact freight capacities? My understanding is that the double tracking of the rail between Charlotte and Greensboro and the straightening out of the curves and the installation of grade separations at high vehicle count intersections, for example, Sugar Creek Road in this city. It carries about 31,000 cars a day over the North Carolina Railroad, and it truly needs to be grade separated and safety with some of those funds being used to grade separate that crossing. There will be other grade crossings as well. So, the thinking of NCDOT is this is going to improve freight capacity; again, straightening out curves and improving sight lines, higher speeds in the corridor itself, and then two tracks between Charlotte and Greensboro. It should be a net plus for freight and also passenger rail.

Councilmember Peacock said one of the more positive things that I read, Dana, in the write-up here was NCDOT will very shortly begin seeking bids for 24 construction projects along the corridor. Can you speak to that?

Mr. Fenton said I know the projects are in Charlotte. One would be the double track that I just referred to. The other would be the grade separation at Sugar Creek, and then, of course, the grade separation at the NSCSX main line in Center City. There is also a maintenance facility to be constructed in Charlotte for NCRF.

Councilmember Cooksey said my understanding we are talking about American Reinvestment and Recovery Act dollars here, right?

Mr. Fenton said I can explain the difference.

Councilmember Cooksey said is this because it is not a bill that is actually accepting or rejecting; it's simply a bill that says that the General Assembly has to decide rather NCDOT?

Mr. Fenton said I don't recall it refers to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It uses the term "high speed rail". The federal government does have a High Speed Inner City Rail

Program that is independent of that act, of the ARRA Act. It does authorize monies to be spent. The High Speed Inner City Rail Program has been funded by both ARRA funds and regular appropriations of the U.S. Congress.

Councilmember Cooksey said you said that NCDOT talks about the improvements that this would fund in terms of straightening and the like. Does Norfolk Southern share that view? I read in the paper saying – Norfolk Southern is quoted in *The Observer* today as saying that these improvements will not help them. Have you heard from them, or do we have any other statements from Norfolk Southern to counter that, or is that all that I have to go on?

Mr. Fenton said the article I saw this morning – I think it's the same article that you saw – was the first time I had seen that, and these issues always come up in negotiations between freight railroads and attitudes that are negotiating for more passenger rail service. The issue with the freight railroads is that they need to get their freight through and get it through fast, and so there are a lot of efforts made in these negotiations and agreements to ensure satisfaction for both sides. In terms of how NS's information was characterized in the article, I would have to leave that to NS to answer.

Councilmember Cooksey said that is again in a short time window. That's all I have. Basically I will vote no on the resolution because, A, the implication there are AARA funds involved, and, B, I'm going to go with elected official authority over unelected authority in terms of accepting dollars, and, C, it looks a bit like an unfunded mandate to me, so I'm a no there.

Mayor Foxx said that's very consistent with the position you have taken on other things. This investment, in my opinion, is an issue of competitive advantage for North Carolina and for Charlotte. We are talking in the short term 4,000 jobs and perhaps an economic impact in terms of job creation that is a multiple of that. In addition to that, we are talking about not doing some things that other states have done. I think some of the other states have shot themselves in the foot by not giving themselves a chance to be able to move not only passenger but freight quickly from one place to another, and, to me, that gives North Carolina and the corridor that our rail systems operate on an opportunity to not only take the dollars that are coming in now to support this investment but to take the economic development that is going to come with it.

Finally, I think if you look at your tables, there is a letter from our Congressional delegation that sort of reinforces the point I made before. Our entire Congressional delegation signed on to supporting this request for high speed rail funds. Republican, Democrat, it is a bipartisan issue to invest in the infrastructure of the country. I feel real strongly about that, and I know there are a number of local officials who represent areas that would be positively impacted by this development that are going to go to Raleigh tomorrow, and, again, I want to invite the Council members who wish to go.

Councilmember Howard said the only other thing I add is the safety components as well. There is not enough to be said about that as well, so, with that, that is the only point I hadn't heard.

Mayor Foxx said we have a motion and a second.

Councilmember Cooksey said a couple of other things with regard to that. What I appreciate about the Congressional delegation's consistent unanimity in supporting efforts of the state is that as the letter says unanimous support from the State of North Carolina is pursuit of a letter of intent from the federal government. I think the key question we can't overlook in this resolution is that he speaks for the State of North Carolina. Is it the elected representatives of the North Carolina General Assembly or is it the unelected members of the North Carolina Department of Transportation? I presume the application that the members of Congress were referring to is an application from the unelected members of the North Carolina Department of Transportation or perhaps the appointed Board of Transportation. But it is, I think, the elected representatives of the people of North Carolina through the General Assembly to truly speak for the state, and if they speak otherwise, I'm sure our members of Congress will allude to that as well.

A second item that I had neglected to mention but also ties into this I think is one of priority. It is well known when you have limited resources you can't do everything you want, and to me this is another example of our creeping away from what our transit priorities are or at least should be

which consistently have been the Blue Line Extension, Red Line, the 2030 Transit Plan that is currently being adopted, so we will have a new year for it.

I would suggest that if we were just told that there was \$500 million available period high speed rail from Charlotte to Raleigh isn't how we would first allocate it. We would push it towards the Blue Line, we would push it towards the Red Line, we would push it towards the street car, we would push it towards the southeast line. That is where our priorities are. The fact that we have to have this conversation because high speed rail is not part of our existing legislative agenda simply reinforces that. This wasn't on our radar screen. This is something extra, and any extra dollar spent for this, A, are dollars that the federal government doesn't have to begin with, but, secondly, even if they did, it's dollars that can't be spent for what we have established our local transit priorities to be. I continue in my opposition, but, thank you, Mayor.

Mayor Foxx said I know we have two others that wish to speak, but let me say in response to that that there is a much bigger issue at stake here, which is not only the speed with which we move people and goods but also the issue of how we are going to improve our economy overall. I mean the jobs that are created by the construction of this are jobs that don't exist today and won't exist without this investment. The jobs that will exist because we have the capacity to move goods and people faster are jobs we won't have without this investment.

I hear a lot of chatter at the federal level on both sides quite frankly that sound like talking points to me, but I think what people are really interested in isn't the government divesting itself of responsibilities that it has but of government making smart investments in things that will help advance the ball. Now, there can be reasonable debate about what those things are, and I think you are raising that question. I understand the other side of the argument, but I think we would be doing a great disservice not only to people who are around today but people who are four and five years old, like my children, for the next 20 years if we were to turn these funds away. With that, I will yield to Ms. Carter and then Mr. Howard.

Councilmember Carter said three points. Mr. Mayor, I'll be in Raleigh tomorrow with the Smart Start folks, so I will be leaving offices with the word about transit as well. We have seen the negative impact on states that have refused this funding. It does not extent just to this project. It extends to other transit projects. There is a black pall over those states in refusing this money. It's a pragmatic statement. It just happens that way. We have to be nimble in looking at what we are doing, and there are incredible benefits to our Blue Line, and I really appreciate it if Ms. Flowers could represent to us what those incremental advantages are to us on the Blue Line.

Mayor Foxx said from these investments?

Councilmember Carter said yes.

Mayor Foxx said that actually would be help to not only the Blue Line but to the Red Line.

Councilmember Carter said exactly.

Carolyn Flowers, Charlotte Area Transit System, said there is going to be an impact to the Blue Line project. The high speed rail funds were in a partnership with the state for the Sugar Creek grade separation. As Dana has indicated, the number of vehicles and the impact of having the light rail project as well as the freight projects there, that would probably cost us an additional \$21 to \$24 million because those funds were going to be covered in the high speed rail project. At 36th Street, the grade separation project there also had a component of high speed rail funding, and we are estimating that could cost us \$19 to \$21 million additional dollars without the state assistance. On the Red Line project, the grade separation at NSCSXT, we don't have that costed out, but that project will assist us in grade separation and safety on the Red Line project and would probably increase the cost somewhere maybe in the \$15 to \$25 million range on that project.

Councilmember Howard said one thing I want to point out that I don't think I heard said yet is the government is an elected official, and if I remember this right, this was them telling the department not to do something, so an elected official is involved in this, and as executive of the state, I think it's well within our purview. As far as this not being a part of legislative agenda, it

will be when we adopt it, so what we are doing is reacting to that would be my reply to at least a couple of your questions.

Councilmember Cooksey said I appreciate that. What that tells me is that the elected legislators with the power of the purse, and historically it is the legislature that has the power of the purse – not the executive, but that is who should be lobbying for these funds, but a bill that identifies that it is the elected general assembly with the power to make these decisions versus the executive branch, which historically in neither this country nor in Britain is the elected official you want with the power of the purse. I'm still in opposition of the resolution and in favor of the bill.

Mayor Foxx said I think we know where you stand.

Councilmember Cooksey said I appreciate the clarification that has come through this conversation.

Mayor Foxx said I'm sure there are lots of people out there who agree with you. I don't, but I understand.

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

AYES: Councilmembers Burgess, Carter, Howard, Kinsey, Peacock, Turner

NAYS: Councilmember Cooksey

Mayor Foxx said that passes 6-1. Thanks for the robust dialogue. I'm sure it won't be the last time that we have robust dialogue.

CITIZENS' FORUM

Mayor Foxx said we are in a bit of a conundrum here. Mr. City Manager, is your recommendation to have the Closed Session after?

Curt Walton, City Manager, said yes.

Mayor Foxx said actually we'll start the public hearing now if there are speakers. If there are not, we'll wait until 7:30, and we'll see where we go.

INDEPENDENCE BOULEVARD

Chris Bakis said I want to thank Council for giving us an extension. However, I do have to say that we have had seven meetings, including last Monday, about the Independence Boulevard Plan. I believe it is a violation of our civil rights for us not to have access to all the Minutes of all the meetings that have occurred. I'm sure nobody here wants our civil rights to be violated for us not to have access to this information to drink it all in – I'm sure Ms. Carter knows why I say our rights would be violated. We need more time. We need all those Minutes of all those meetings. We need all the information given out, and we need time to examine all of it and drink it all in, and come up with a good plan of our own. I ask that you not violate our civil rights. I ask that the public hearing be extended well beyond May so we can get all this time in. We need Minutes of the Metropolitan Transit Commission also as well as everything else I mentioned. Also, I did mention last week – I have heard that the Independence Boulevard corridor is no longer a rapid transit corridor. I would ask that question be answered and explained to me if it is or if it is not. Thank you very much. Please extend the public hearing to well beyond May.

FREEDOM RIDERS

Marguerite Arnold, 909 Houston Heights Rd., said I am here today representing Freedom Riders. We aspire to be Charlotte's first green disability taxi company that also serves the able-bodied. Our taxis, as you can see, are made by GM. They are the first ADA compliant vehicle ever factory assembled, and one of the reasons we wanted to call ourselves Freedom Riders obviously is the association with civil rights. We are here tonight, one, to just say hello to everybody; to present our cars and the idea, but also to ask you for a couple of things we are going to face going forward trying to do business here as a green business. We are going to try to create about 300 jobs. We are going to try also and give first clearing preference to people with disabilities. Charlotte as a city, as most of you probably are well aware, still has a rather high unemployment rate for the able-bodied – about 11.1% as of Q1 of this year. People with disabilities, which is about 20% of the country statistically have a 90% unemployment. A lot of that is directly tied not to the intentional discrimination but the inability to get to work in a timely manner. So, our taxis are going to do a couple of things. Our first service model, hopefully when we roll it out, is going to save the state and federal government about \$300 million a year statewide. I can explain to those of you who are interested off-line how we intend to do that. This is the car that you see. You can also see that it loads from the side, which is one of the first issues we want to discuss and bring up. The current Charlotte PVH regs mandate that accessibility vehicles have a rear-loading entrance. We respectfully ask that the Council considers amending this. This is a GM-made car. They make it in the Hummer plant. It is also 98% domestically sourced, so we think that is a pretty good impetus. We hope that it is. This second issue that we would like to bring up is access to the Airport. And, the third issue that we are going to ask for help with is rezoning the property, but we want to use is what we are calling a branded pit stop, which will become a green service dock area not only for our taxis but for anybody in the area, including City and County vehicles, those in Mecklenburg and in Cabarrus who want to refuel, and we are willing to do that as well. That is why we are here tonight. This is who we are and what we are doing. Thank you so much for your time. I suppose we can take questions off-line.

Mayor Foxx said a really interesting and innovative concept. Thank you for making us aware of it. One Council member said that's the most positive thing we have heard about taxis in a while.

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H.E.L.P. (Helping Empower Local People)

Mayor Foxx said I know we are subject to a three-minute limit on these presentations, but I'm not quite sure yet what the mix-up was, but if we could yield the five minutes for this presentation that these folks came here expecting to do something that was on the agenda, and I want to make sure we hear their entire presentation.

Gerald Taylor said we are representatives from Helping Empower Local People here in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. We are 30 congregations – black and white and interfaith. We have chapters in Huntersville, Davidson, Cornelius, and our largest chapter here in Charlotte. We are the oldest citizens' organization of its kind in the city. Tonight we are going to speak as quickly as we can to the question of foreclosure and the crisis of foreclosures in our city and in our county. We'll go ahead and start that presentation, and hopefully we'll have time for at least a few questions.

Barbara Dellinger said I'm from St. Peter's Catholic Church. It seems like we have been inundated with information about the foreclosure problem – newspapers, TV – but just in case you missed some of it, we wanted to give you a brief synopsis of some of the devastating statistics. Fourteen percent of households in our area are now under water, 25% of homeowners have 5% or less equity in their property. We had 10,000 foreclosures in 2010 across all incomes and neighborhoods. Mecklenburg County hit the highest number of foreclosures in North Carolina since the recession hit, and there has been a 5% drop in housing prices in Charlotte in 2010, and we were among the highest housing price drops in the USA in 2010. That's all the bad news I'm going to give you right now.

Emmanuel Richards said I am a member of Simpson Methodist Church, and I'm here to discuss in short the impact of foreclosure, the impact on families, households, and businesses in our community. It suffered substantial losses of value and non-foreclosed houses in the community. Loss of value drives many homeowners under water. Vacant properties must be maintained or may become eyesores and potential sites for criminal activity. It impacts negatively property tax revenue in our cities and our counties, potential reduction of services, and potential job loss in our communities. Last, but not least, the households that pay rent to landlords any property going into foreclosure have no rights.

Gerald Taylor said this is a study that had been done on a neighborhood here in Charlotte that became a national story and a case study. It was in the Windy Ridge community. The initial sales prices in that community were \$105,000 roughly. The average recent sales are \$57,639, almost a 50% drop in the value of these houses. Seventy three to 133 properties have experienced just one foreclosure, 24 have foreclosed twice, one has foreclosed three times. Fifty four properties have changed owners one to three times. Seventy seven properties have changed owners four to six times. Twelve properties changed almost seven to 11 times. The kind of response (inaudible), lending support for households who are underwater. They are paying more on the mortgage than the house is currently valued. Federal (inaudible) modification programs are failing and have failed. Inadequate counseling (inaudible) for the size of the problem. (Inaudible). Lawyers working on foreclosures issues in this county. Possible inadequate tax collections and title transfers from banks and services, which we'll come back to. What are we proposing? The size and scale of this question is so large and so significant that it requires a critical mass response. HELP is proposing the creation of a pool of volunteer inspectors to inspect and document the current condition of foreclosed properties in Charlotte. Second, development of other (inaudible) to establish serious escalated fines on (inaudible) of foreclosed properties. We need criminal penalties if the fine is not paid and the property not kept up to community standards. Other municipalities in other states have done this with incredible results from the banks responding to this. It is very different if you get a telephone call saying you have got a broken door rather than a call that says we are calling you in regard to a criminal matter. Establishment of maintenance standards for foreclosed and abandoned properties and Council support (inaudible) proposals for local maintenance agreements with the banks to hire local contractors (inaudible) to maintain foreclosed properties. All the banks have property divisions. Bank of America, for example, has one of the largest property divisions in the United States. We are beginning to negotiate with the bank to consider the idea of local hiring of small contractors and workers to handle the maintenance of their foreclosed properties that they are currently servicing in the state. A program to train and develop hundreds of HUD-certified counselors to work in neighborhoods, churches, and work places to assist household in financial and (inaudible) to get more modifications. There are programs to train people and the HUD-certified counselors, take an exam to become certified for up to two years. We are proposing that all of our churches and all of our folks in the community be allowed to take this training program so we can increase the number of counselors substantially. Presently most counselors are overwhelmed who are trying to help folks who are in potential of going into foreclosure. (Inaudible) We are proposing basically that those foreclosed properties that are presently out there be resold into what we call the community housing market. This is again something we have begun discussing with the banks to move foreclosed properties faster, to not get trapped as Windy Ridge and have these speculators constantly buying properties and then leaving them and reselling and more speculators come in and are doing the same thing. (Inaudible) mandatory universal loan modifications and refinancing of homeowners by financial institutions. We have made recommendations to the Attorney General's Office, and those recommendations have been accepted -- our organization is across the state -- to call for mandatory universal loan modifications, refinancing of all homeowners -- not people who are at risk payments only but anybody who is under water to be allowed to refinance. A recent study out of Massachusetts by an investment firm clearly indicated that this is the finest and the best way and also the internal staff at the banks have also told us that ideally this is the best way to address the problem. No one bank wants to do it by itself. (Inaudible) pay for the program. Increasing fines of unkept foreclosed properties, ensuring taxes are collected for property transfers. How many of you know how much we collect in taxes for the filing of deeds of trust in Mecklenburg County or how many times when a piece of property is sold that that tax is actually paid? Given the current system (inaudible) being made a number of times that these sales are made, the number of pieces of property that are being sold. There is a lot of tax money sitting out there that is not being collected by Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. We will meet on April 14th at the Park Center

on Independence. It is our hope that the members of the City Council and the Mayor and others will be supportive of what we are proposing going forward in this effort.

Mayor Foxx said, again, I apologize for the snafu. We'll get to the bottom of that. On these points, Mr. City Manager, would it be possible to have the staff kind of go over those and tell us if something is going on within those points, and, if not, whether there will be a recommendation coming back about sending it to a committee or whatever?

Curt Walton, City Manager, said, yes, sir, I think we also need to know whether we have the legal authority on a number of those points.

Mayor Foxx said we'll get a response back on those points.

Councilmember Carter said when will the meeting be at The Park?

Mr. Taylor said April 14th at 7:00 p.m. You all are invited, and we would like to have some response from the Council whether they believe this proposal, at least as it was given, makes some sense to you.

CLOSED SESSION

[Motion was made by Councilmember Peacock, seconded by Councilmember Howard,]
[and carried unanimously to go into Closed Session pursuant to: A) GS 143-318.11(a)(5)]
[to establish or to instruct staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken]
[by or on behalf of the City Council in negotiating the price and other material terms of]
[a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option,]
[exchange, or lease; and B) GS 143-318.11(a)(6) to consider the qualifications, compe-]
[tence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial]
[employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or]
[employee.]

The meeting was recessed at 7:47 p.m. for Council to go into Closed Session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was reconvened and then adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Stephanie C. Kelly, CMC, City Clerk

Length of Meeting: 3 Hours, 0 Minutes
Minutes Completed: June 7, 2011