

**Meeting Minutes**  
**October 22, 2024**

**MINUTES OF MECKLENBURG COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA**  
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

The Board of Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met in Budget/Public Policy Session in Conference Center Room 267 on the 2nd floor of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center located at 600 East Fourth Street, Charlotte, North Carolina at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 22, 2024.

**ATTENDANCE**

**Present:** Chair George Dunlap, Vice-Chair Mark Jerrell  
and Commissioners Leigh Altman,  
Vilma D. Leake, Laura J Meier,  
and Susan Rodriguez-McDowell  
County Manager Dena R. Diorio  
County Attorney Tyrone C. Wade  
Clerk to the Board Kristine M. Smith  
Deputy Clerk to the Board Arlissa Eason

**Absent:** Commissioner Patricia "Pat" Cotham  
Commissioner Elaine Powell  
Commissioner Arthur Griffin

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dunlap, followed by introductions and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**24-0609 A HOME FOR ALL UPDATE**

The Board received an update on A Home for All.

Kathryn Firmin-Sellers of the United Way of Greater Charlotte presented.

*Background: The United Way of Greater Charlotte will update the Board on "A Home for All."*



# THE NEW WAY

United Way  
OF GREATER CHARLOTTE

## A Home For All

Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners  
October 22, 2024

A Home For All is taking a proven coordinated, prevention – focused approach to reduce homelessness

	 <b>A Way Home</b> Houston	 <b>All in Mile High</b> Denver	 <b>Built for Zero</b> Minneapolis	 <b>A Home For All</b> Charlotte - Mecklenburg
	Houston takes a <b>coordinated, housing first</b> approach with focus on increasing access to permanent supportive housing	Denver takes a <b>holistic housing approach</b> to coordinate, prevent, house and stabilize people experiencing homelessness	Minneapolis takes a <b>person-centered approach</b> enabled through coordinated data to end chronic homelessness	Charlotte will take a <b>coordinated, prevention-centered approach</b> to address all aspects of homelessness and housing insecurity
 <b>Lead Agency</b>	Coalition For The Homeless of Houston/ Harris County	City and County of Denver	Community Solutions	United Way
 <b>Central Fund Mgmt</b>	✓	✓	✗	✓
 <b>Prevention Focused</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓
 <b>Navigation Support</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓
 <b>Coordinated Approach</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓
 <b>Funding Source</b>	Public and Private Funding	Public and Private Funding	Public and Private Funding	Public and Private Funding
 <b>Outcome</b>	Since 2012, <b>32,000 people</b> experiencing homelessness were housed with a ~90% success rate in housing programs	From 2023 – 2024, <b>1,673 people</b> were moved indoors from unsheltered homelessness and 583 people moved to permanent housing	From 2021 – 2024, <b>1,628 people</b> previously experiencing chronic homelessness gained access to stable housing, with more than 90% remaining housed	Potential to help up to <b>915</b> cost burdened households avoid homelessness and provide <b>800</b> more households with affordable housing in a year

2 Source: "How Houston Cut Its Homeless Population by Nearly Two-Thirds", Governing, Denver The Mile High City, denvergov.org; "This major US county is on the way to ending chronic homelessness", a Home for All

## Our current homelessness/ housing instability support ecosystem does not yield optimal outcomes

Existing challenges in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg homelessness/ housing instability support service ecosystem

- 

**Complex ecosystem**  
Creating navigation challenges for individuals and households needing help
- 

**Under-investment in prevention**  
Efforts concentrated in emergency and downstream response with opportunity for stronger prevention upfront
- 

**Limited infrastructure for agency collaboration across sectors**  
Lack of common ways of working and data infrastructure for agencies to share information, collaborate and coordinate hand-offs
- 

**Limited line of sight into critical areas needing the most attention and help**  
Funding may not be directed to where it is needed most without a holistic view of the ecosystem
- 

**Siloed, inconsistent tracking of progress**  
Inconsistent use and contribution of data to any single system by the agencies to capture progress
- 

**Inadequate integration and support for smaller agencies/ grassroots efforts**  
Limited opportunities to showcase and collaborate with innovative and nimble smaller agencies/ grassroots efforts

3

## A Home For All works to drive systemic change

A Home For All addresses homelessness / housing instability through:

 <p><b>Prevention</b></p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>Focus on <b>proactive preventative measures</b> that tackle the underlying issues leading to homelessness, <b>reducing the number of individuals entering the cycle</b> and need for downstream mitigation efforts and costs</p>	 <p><b>Navigation</b></p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>Focus on helping individuals and households navigate the complex ecosystem to get <b>the right care at the right time, simplify the journey, improve the experience and reduce dropouts</b></p>	 <p><b>Connectivity</b></p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>Focus on building and sustaining a <b>strong community of providers</b> supported by <b>common infrastructure and ways of working</b> to enable seamless hand-offs, less duplication, and improved system-level effectiveness</p>	 <p><b>Partnership</b></p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/> <p>Focus on empowering agencies with grants that braid <b>public and private funding</b> to enable greater <b>agility, innovation, and scope of impact</b></p>
--	---	---	--

4

## A Home For All aims to make tangible impact through 12 priority initiatives across 4 pillars

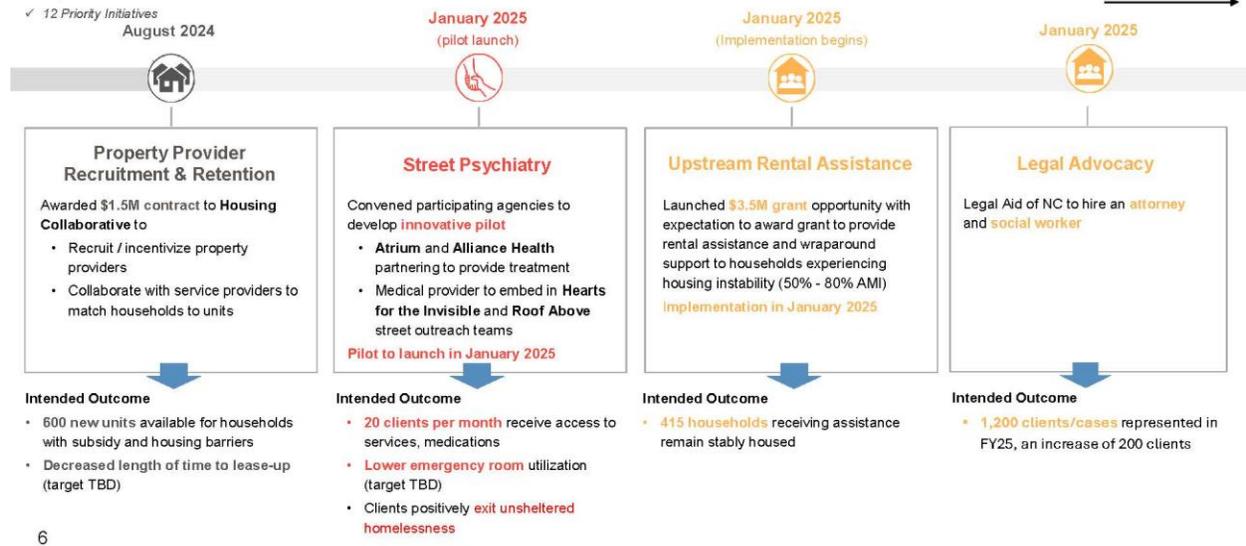
<p>EMERGENCY RESPONSE</p>  <div style="background-color: #e91e63; color: white; padding: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p><b>UNSHELTERED</b> <i>Provide robust, holistic support to those experiencing unsheltered homelessness</i></p> </div> <div style="background-color: #f8bbd0; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>Street Outreach</b> Engage individuals and connect to resources</p> <p><b>Health and Human Services</b> Provide health, mental health and substance use treatment through street medicine program</p> <p><b>Emergency Shelter &amp; Housing</b> Low-barrier, non-congregate emergency shelter with onsite mental health services; expand permanent supportive housing</p> </div>	<p>PEOPLE</p>  <div style="background-color: #0070c0; color: white; padding: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p><b>PEOPLE</b> <i>Re-imagine how we support households on the path to housing stability</i></p> </div> <div style="background-color: #b3d9ff; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>System Navigation</b> Provide consistent care coordination for those experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity</p> <p><b>Flexible Funds</b> Provide funding for wraparound support tailored to each individual's unique needs</p> <p><b>Shared Database</b> Identify platform for system navigators to make and receive referrals and remain connected to those experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity</p> </div>	<p>UPSTREAM PRIORITIES</p>  <div style="background-color: #ffcc00; color: white; padding: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p><b>PREVENTION</b> <i>Invest in strategies to keep people housed</i></p> </div> <div style="background-color: #fff9c4; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>Critical Home Repair</b> Strengthen and expand the critical home repair network</p> <p><b>Legal Advocacy</b> Expand access to legal advocacy for those facing eviction</p> <p><b>Upstream Rental Assistance</b> Provide rental assistance and care coordination to individuals behind rents</p> <p><b>Strike Fund</b> Create funding to finance preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing</p> </div>	<p>PRODUCTION</p>  <div style="background-color: #555; color: white; padding: 10px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p><b>PRODUCTION</b> <i>Grow production of shelter and all forms of affordable housing</i></p> </div> <div style="background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>Housing Trust Fund</b> Expand the housing trust fund with support from the city of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County</p> <p><b>Property Provider Recruitment and Retention</b> Increase the number of property providers that accept households with subsidies and housing barriers through centralized recruitment and incentives</p> </div>
--	--	--	---

5

## Implementation achievements to date

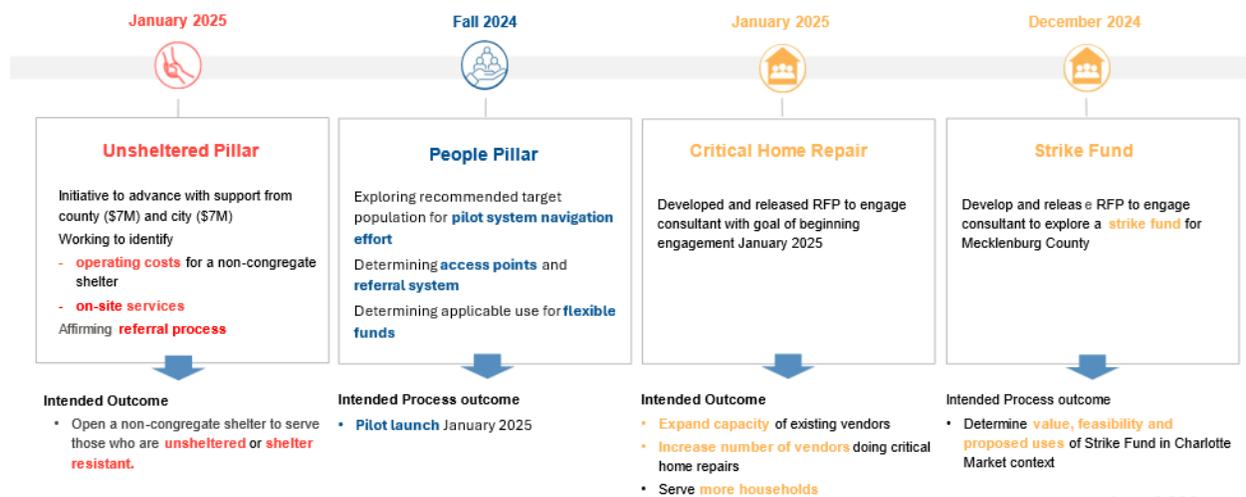
- ✓ Strategic Framework
- ✓ Implementation Plan
- ✓ 12 Priority Initiatives

Continued initiative implementation →



6

## Design efforts underway



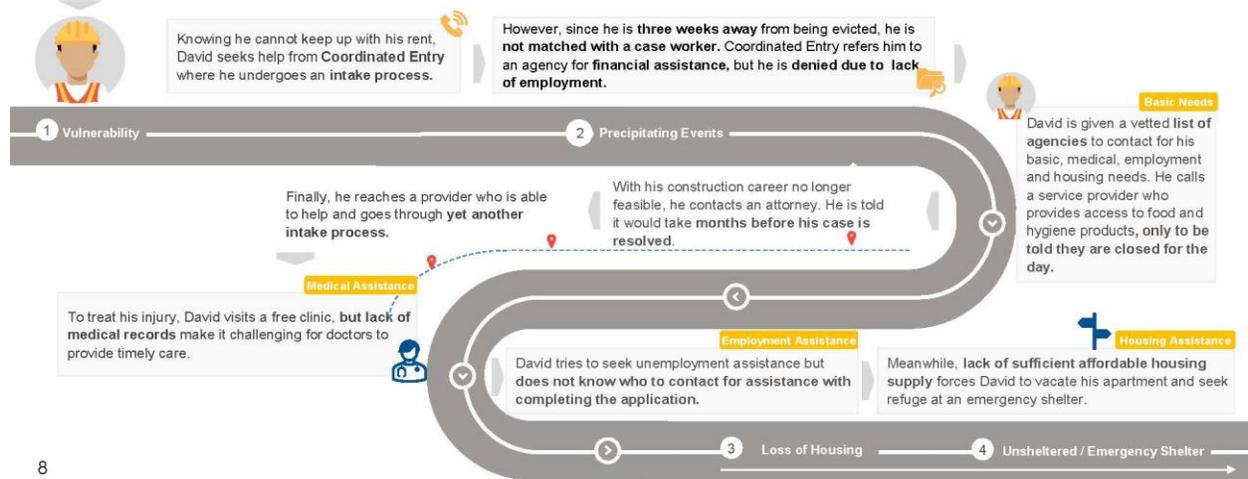
7

## Illustrating system navigation

### Meet David

Illustrative Scenario

David is a 36-year-old construction worker that has always been physically active and relied on his job to support himself. However, he recently suffered from a severe spinal injury while at work. Unable to continue working and unable to claim workers compensation since he was paid in cash, David can no longer afford his rent. With little savings or family support, and limited access to medical care, he finds himself in a distressing situation and in desperate need of assistance.



## Illustrating system navigation



The appropriate navigation support could have spared David multiple wasted trips and time in an effort to seek assistance

With a well-established navigation support infrastructure...



David would have a designated contact who understands his needs and eligibility to match him with suitable programs, including grassroots services he might not be aware of

 System Navigation



David's System Navigator would have access to a flexible services spending account that could help bridge David's immediate needs, including timely treatment for his spinal injury and access to basic needs

 Flexible Funds



Record of David's situation and journey would be maintained in an integrated data management system used across sectors, sparing David the need to reshare his story and relieve his challenges each time he seeks assistance

 Shared Database

Also relates to Connectivity

At the system level, better coordination and visibility into providers across the ecosystem makes it easier to match individuals with the right programs, enabling Charlotte-Mecklenburg to unlock the full value of its already robust service provider population.

9

# THANK YOU!

United Way  
OF GREATER CHARLOTTE

### GET INVOLVED

unitedwaygreaterclt.org  
704.372.7170

### CONNECT

 @unitedwaygreaterclt  
 unitedwaygreaterclt

## Meeting Minutes October 22, 2024

### Comments

Commissioner Altman asked if she could provide what the budget was, and how much was coming from the County. *Ms. Firmin-Sellers said it was \$14 million from the County, which she believed a portion was the United Ways operating dollars. She said there was \$1 million from the City, which was a carryover from the previous year. She said \$7 million of the budget was of the non-congregate shelter.*

Commissioner Altman asked what non-congregate shelter meant. Ms. Firmin-Sellers said they were individual rooms versus group rooms. She added that they had also secured \$425,000 in private funding that had to come to the United Way. She said there was also about \$2 million that did not go through the *United Way but were used towards the effort.*

Commissioner Altman asked of the 3,000 homeless people that came through the County, what percentage did she think wanted to go through the shelter but couldn't due to no space. *Stacy Lowry, Director of Community Support Services said the 3,000 included sheltered and unsheltered, with unsheltered being a lot lower, between 600 and 800 at any given time. She said they would have their Point in Time count in January, in which they would be able to provide a more accurate account. She said she believed people's conditions prevented them from being able to function in shelters safely.*

Commissioner Altman asked if they were having to turn away people for lack of capacity. *Ms. Lowry said they had to turn away some on a daily basis since they were at capacity but didn't have a number at the time.*

Commissioner Altman asked if in addition to the \$200,000 in Legal Aid that was going to the organization, were they funding further Legal Aid to other domains. *County Manager Diorio said they funded Legal Aid specifically for that purpose, and said the total allocation was much higher than the \$200,000.*

*Ms. Lowry added that their total allocation was about \$900,000 regarding eviction prevention, but they also had funding for other advocacies within the community.*

*Adrian Cox, Budget Director, added that funding for Legal Aid was \$1.2 million.*

Commissioner Altman asked if 86% avoided eviction because of Legal Aid support, what was their primary reason for success. Ms. Firmin-Sellers said without Legal Aid, they wouldn't have any knowledge or scope of their rights of what a landlord couldn't do.

Vice Chair Jerrell thanked her. He asked concerning the 3,000 unhoused, with that strategy, how much would they reduce it by and by what timeframe. *Ms. Firmin-Sellers said they were still in a pilot phase. She said if they had the 600 units, half of them would go to those currently in shelter, but they would need a subsidy source. She said many of them did. She said much of the effort was to be prevention-focused.*

Vice Chair Jerrell said there were severe challenges and asked what that meant for the budget over time. *Ms. Firmin-Sellers said it was a complicated question, but when recruiting new businesses, they were creating opportunities for all.*

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell asked how many dedicated case managers there would be. *Ms. Firmin-Sellers said they had \$3.5 million set aside for that pilot.*

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell asked if it would be employees or grassroots providers. *Ms. Firmin-Sellers said it was still an open question.*

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **October 22, 2024**

Commissioner Meier thanked her. She said she was excited about street psychiatry and asked if it would happen in 2025. *Ms. Firmin-Sellers said she was about 90% definite that it would happen in 2025.*

Commissioner Leake said her concern was with senior citizens and the handicapped. She asked how they were moving forward through the process. *Ms. Firmin-Sellers said the priorities for those seeking rental assistance would be if there was a senior in the home. She said around the critical home repair efforts a lot went to seniors, and if they couldn't preserve their home for the next generation then they would use another unit. She said they realized there was a rise in seniors experiencing homelessness.*

Commissioner Leake asked if they looked at zip codes to see where the greatest need was. *Ms. Firmin-Sellers said yes, for housing insecurity. She mentioned how the Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing Rental Subsidy Program (NOAH) was in targeted zip codes.*

Commissioner Leake asked how they would disseminate the information. *Ms. Firmin-Sellers said she wouldn't have an answer until they determined the provider that would administer the program.*

Chair Dunlap said he wanted to see the intersection between the United Way, Goodwill, and Roof Above. He asked if the need was imminent or if something was needed down the road. *Ms. Firmin-Sellers said they needed additional shelter beds. She said the type of shelter they were hoping for would be designed for the shelter-resistant or unsheltered. She said she was hoping to get County and City funding for this.*

#### **24-0610 "FOR EVERYONE HOME" UPDATE**

The Board received an update on "For Everyone Home".

Colby Sledge, Local Policy Principal of the Grounded Solutions Network, presented.

*Background: Grounded Solutions Network will provide the Board with an update on "For Everyone Home".*



**GROUND  
ED  
SOLUTIONS  
NETWORK**  
strong communities  
from the ground up

## ForEveryoneHome Mecklenburg County Board October 22, 2024

### Grounded Solutions Network



#### Who We Are

- ▶ Grounded Solutions Network was formed in 2016 through the merger of the National Community Land Trust Network and Cornerstone Partnership.
- ▶ We work nationally, connecting local experts with the networks, knowledge, and support they need.
- ▶ We help promote housing solutions that will stay affordable for generations.
- ▶ We believe all people should have safe places to live and should be empowered to shape their neighborhoods into thriving places.

## Grounded Solutions Network



### Our “Main Thing”

- ▶ Through its member network and partnerships, GSN exponentially transforms the lasting affordability housing sector in the United States. It does this by preserving, producing and sustaining housing with a specific focus on BIPOC, under-invested in and marginalized communities.

3

## Grounded Solutions Network



### About Me

- ▶ Nashville, Tenn.-based
- ▶ Local Policy Principal since April 2023
- ▶ Elected official for eight years
- ▶ Experience with comprehensive land use plans
- ▶ Served on housing trust fund for six years
- ▶ Vice Chair of Metropolitan (Nashville) Housing and Development Agency



4

# ForEveryoneHome

## Overview

- 16-month technical assistance, peer learning, and community engagement program to help localities chart a path to inclusive housing production and preservation through lasting affordability.

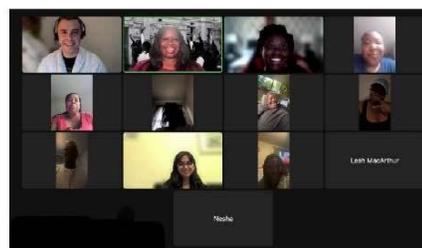
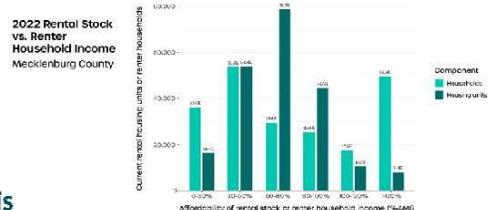


# ForEveryoneHome

## Where We've Been

- ▶ **Phase I (Sept.-Nov. 2023): Launch**
  - Introduce local teams
  - Determine technical assistance deliverables
  - Conduct e-learning
  - Plan site visits
- ▶ **Phase II (Dec. 2023-Feb. 2024): Underproduction Analysis**
  - Gather and synthesize prior work
  - Analyze and map available data
  - Conduct site visits
  - Seek community input
  - Draft and revise underproduction analysis
- ▶ **Phase III (March-June): Craft A Housing Action Plan**
  - Identify key policy changes or additions responsive to underproduction analysis
  - Meet with key stakeholders
  - Conduct community outreach
  - Draft and revise policy agenda

Need for Rental Units Greatest at Lowest Incomes

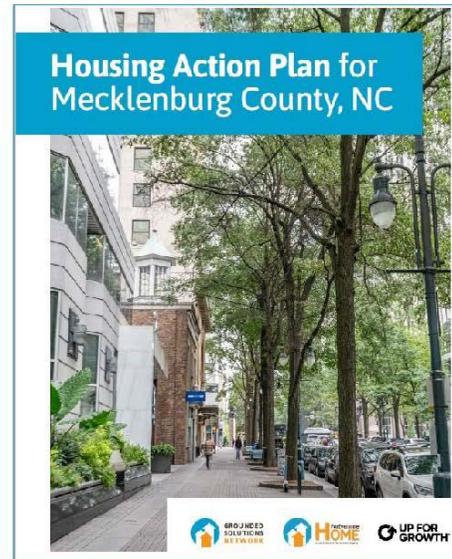


## ForEveryoneHome



### Where We Are

- ▶ Phase IV (Aug.-Oct.): Moving From Plan to Action
  - Select a policy or program for rapid implementation
  - **Analyze relevant data**
  - **Interview key stakeholders**
  - Workshop policy changes
  - Draft and revise proposed policy
- ▶ Phase V (Oct.-Dec.) : Final Reporting, Guidance & Debrief



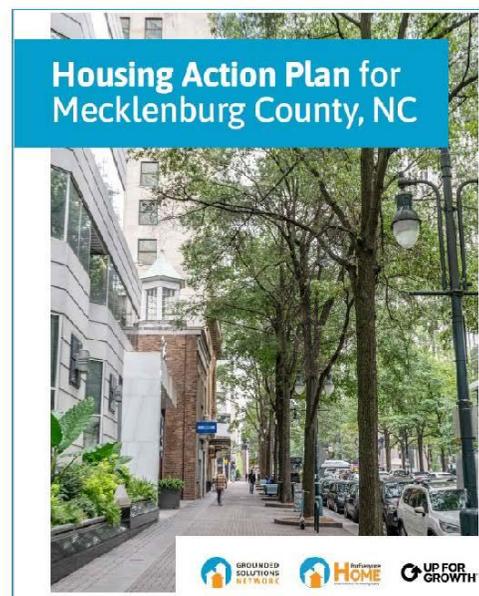
7

## ForEveryoneHome



### Three Greatest Needs

- ▶ More affordable homeownership opportunities
- ▶ More deeply affordable rental opportunities
- ▶ More renter protections



8

## ForEveryoneHome



### Desired Policy Outcomes

- ▶ Make it easier to build
- ▶ Enable more types of homes, in more places
- ▶ Reduce rental barriers



9

## ForEveryoneHome



### Make It Easier To Build

- ▶ Strike fund that encourages more permanently affordable homes
- ▶ Voluntary, incentive-based housing policies aimed at 80% AMI and below



- Legislative
- Demand-side
- Long-term

10

## ForEveryoneHome



### Enable More Types of Homes

- ▶ Incentivize municipalities to allow ADUs and SROs
- ▶ Expand existing land inventory; create clear process for land acquisition
- ▶ Reduce minimum lot sizes
- ▶ Parking reform



- Legislative and Administrative
- Supply-side
- Short-term/Medium-term

11

## ForEveryoneHome



### Reduce Rent Barriers

- ▶ Study Application Fees
- ▶ Increase Access to Record Expungement
- ▶ Provide Renter Education



*Administrative; Demand-side; Short-term*

12

ForEveryoneHome



## Housing Action Plan Selections

- ▶ Strike Fund Development
- ▶ Land Acquisition (possible TOD)
- ▶ Renter Education

13

ForEveryoneHome



## Housing Action Plan Selections

- ▶ Strike Fund Development
- ▶ Land Acquisition (possible TOD)
- ▶ *Renter Education\**

14

# ForEveryoneHome

## Implementation Phase



FUND OVERVIEW  
SEPTEMBER 2024



**Meeting Minutes**  
**October 22, 2024**

**2021**

The Affordable Housing Task Force identifies the need for a strike fund as 1 of 9 high-priority recommendations.

Council approved \$20M as seed funding for the Catalyst Fund to create a sustainable financing source that could move at the pace of the market.

**2022**

RFP released in April to select a best-in-class vendor with a proven track record of successfully creating customized products in other markets. Forsyth Street Advisors was unanimously selected.

**2023**

Forsyth Street begins contract in February, conducts market studies and options analysis. Recommendation is to establish independent fund, sponsored by CFMT.

Council approves CFMT grant agreement in August.

**2024**

Creation of Fund legal structure, formation of Investment Committee, implementation of fund operating infrastructure.

NASHVILLE CATALYST FUND



HOUSING  
ACCELERATOR  
FUND

**SF Bay Area**

- Preliminary focus was on bridge loans for City permanent loans for affordable housing projects
- Founded in 2017 with \$10mm in public capital
- As of June 2023, 2,208 units across 48 projects – average 47% AMI
- \$216mm capitalization, \$445mm invested to date



**New York City**

- Provides acquisition & pre-development capital to non-profits and M/WBE developers creating and preserving affordable housing.
- Founded in 2006 with \$8mm in public capital
- 15,200 affordable units across 95 projects
- \$173mm capitalization, \$618mm invested to date



NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT  
INVESTMENT FUND

**Baltimore**

- Works in alignment with the City using flexible capital to accelerate community development and affordable housing projects in majority Black neighborhoods.
- Founded in 2019 – invested in 38 projects, with 1,708 units of affordable housing at project completion
- \$60mm capitalization, \$46mm committed

All three funds have public representation in their governance with private fund management supported by Forsyth. Lifetime net write off rate of <0.25% across all three funds.



NASHVILLE CATALYST FUND

## ForEveryoneHome



### Current Work

- ▶ Strike Fund RFP Research
- ▶ Identify Possible Applicants
- ▶ Interview Community Stakeholders
- ▶ Questions to Address
  - ▶ Allocation(s)/Seed funding
  - ▶ Town involvement

19



**GROUNDED  
SOLUTIONS  
NETWORK**

strong communities  
from the ground up

Colby Sledge, Local Policy Principal  
(615) 812-2157  
[csledge@groundedsolutions.org](mailto:csledge@groundedsolutions.org)

The below documents are on file at the Clerk's Office.

For Everyone Home 2024-08-23\_Final\_Mecklenburg-HAP

For Everyone Home\_Final\_Mecklenburg Housing Underproduction Report

**Meeting Minutes**  
**October 22, 2024**

**Comments**

Commissioner Altman asked where they expected the \$20 million to come from for the model. *Mr. Sledge said the \$20 million was an example. He provided further examples of other jurisdictions and how they structured their funding.*

Commissioner Altman asked where the high strike funds would come from. *County Manager Diorio said it would come from the County, along with housing trust fund dollars, and private dollars. She said there would be a revolving loan fund to fund the projects long-term.*

Commissioner Altman asked why they needed an RFP. *County Manager Diorio said they needed a vendor to run the program on the County's behalf.*

Chair Dunlap said they historically funded their housing with County dollars. He asked if there was a specific need to set aside those dollars in a different need or category. *County Manager Diorio said once they determined what the funding source would have been, theoretically, the fund balance would be given to the third-party vendor to hold the funds and use it to advance the loans.*

Chair Dunlap asked if they were considering putting land aside for that purpose. *County Manager Diorio said it would be the Board's decision.*

Vice Chair Jerrell asked for clarification of what the strike fund was used for. *County Manager Diorio provided clarification. Vice Chair Jerrell asked what the relationship would have been with the third party. County Manager Diorio said they would be a committee of individuals who had been involved in affordable housing, that made decisions. Mr. Sledge added that there would be a representative from the County, the national committee, a local developer, and other national and local finance and housing experience.*

Commissioner Leake asked what they would do with Brooklyn Village. *County Manager Diorio said Brooklyn Village was mainly rental units and that the project had been delayed for two years. She explained how that was separate from the current presentation.*

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell asked for clarification about having money ready when projects are presented. *County Manager Diorio said the strike fund was for them to be able to "strike" to preserve affordable housing, and the land banking was a separate initiative to invest dollars in property around transit lines to preserve it for affordable housing. She said they focused on policy initiatives they could execute in the County.*

**24-0611      "CHANGING OPPORTUNITY – CHETTY'S NEW STUDY: WHAT IT MEANS FOR CHARLOTTE AND WHAT'S NEXT"**

The Board received an update on "Changing Opportunity – Chetty's new study: What it Means for Charlotte and What's Next".

Tonya Jameson, Leading on Opportunity and AJ Calhoun, Leading on Opportunity

*Background: Leading on Opportunity will provide the Board with an update on "Changing Opportunity" after Chetty's new study on Charlotte economic mobility.*



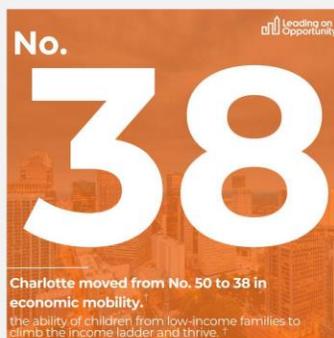
## Agenda

An overview of Chetty's new study and what it means for Charlotte

- The headlines you need to know
- New data and Chetty's findings
- Where does Charlotte-Mecklenburg stack up?
- What's driving these changes?
- What does this mean for programs and policy?

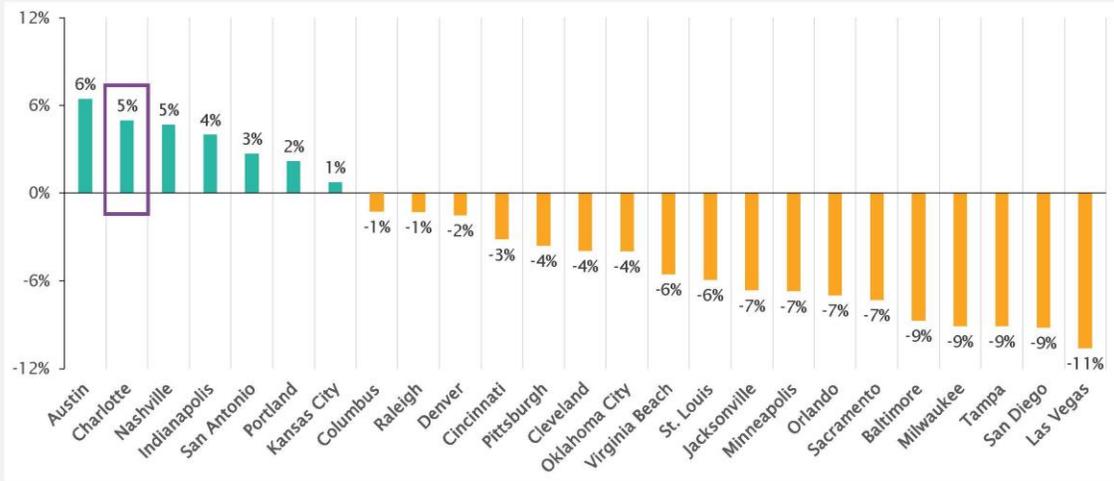


## We're no longer in last place



### Changes in Upward Mobility in the United States

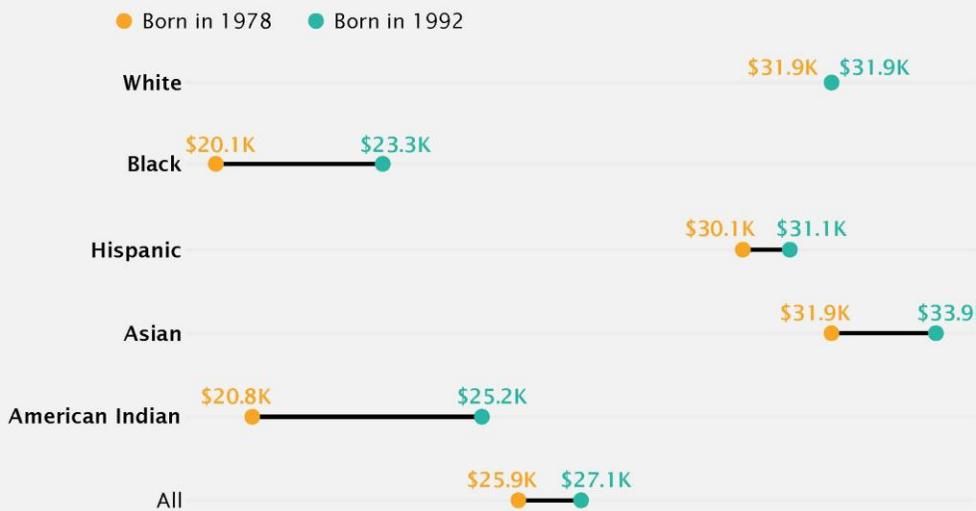
Average Change in Household Income at Age 27 for Children born in 1978 vs. 1992 to Low-Income Parents



Credit: Raj Chetty/Opportunity Insights

### Trends in Economic Mobility by Group in Charlotte

Average Change in Household Income at Age 27 for Children born in 1978 vs. 1992 to Low-Income Parents



Credit: Raj Chetty/Opportunity Insights

## Why have we improved?



## Why Does Growing Up in a Community With Higher Parental Employment Improve Outcomes?

### Social Interaction



Higher parental employment improves children's outcomes via social interactions (job referrals, aspirations)

### Economic Resources



Higher parental employment increases financial resources at community level (schools, local programs)

Chetty tests between these explanations by exploiting differences in **friendship patterns** across groups to find **social interaction** is the primary driver of outcomes.

Credit: Raj Chetty/Opportunity Insights



## Implications for Increasing Opportunity Going Forward

### Focus on Childhood Environment



Provide opportunity-rich environments from birth to adulthood

### Social Communities as Unit of Change



Target communities that have historically lacked opportunity

### Invest in Social Capital



Connect those who don't have opportunity to those who do

Credit: Raj Chetty/Opportunity Insights



# Policy



## Chetty's recommendations for local policy

**Rec #1**

**Increase connections between communities.**

*Promote policies to reduce segregation or foster cross-class and race interaction in schools & neighborhoods.*

- **Mecklenburg County:** Brooklyn Village development
- **City of Charlotte:** 2040 Plan & Unified Development Ordinance
- **Support MWBE's**

Brooklyn Village  
Workforce Housing  
Incorporate a park

2040 Plan  
Inclusive and Diverse  
Livable and Connected

**Prosperous and Innovative**  
(support small biz)  
Support small and local businesses  
and help all businesses thrive in a  
way that also increases upward  
mobility.



Leading on Opportunity 10

## Chetty's recommendations for local policy (cont'd)

**Rec #2**

**Prioritize two-generational approaches to workforce development for communities.**

- **Mecklenburg County:** MeckSuccess
  - Provides case management
  - Coordination services to assist families in achieving greater levels of economic mobility, family stability, and overall wellness.
  - Pilot program embedded at an Inlivan property

**Rec #3**

**Combine financial resources with social support and connections.**

*Eg: Provide housing navigators, connections to employers or college counselors*

- **Freedom Communities**
- **Circle de Luz**
- **Communities in Schools**



Leading on Opportunity 11

## Chetty's recommendations for local policy (cont'd)

**Rec #4**

**Invest to turn high-poverty housing projects into mixed income communities change children's lives**

- Meck County Community Resource Centers
- Microprocurement/Unbundle contracts to help MWBE firms

**Rec #5**

**Sectoral job training programs**

- Target disadvantaged communities
- Combine technical skills with connections to
- Provide pathways to opportunity for those already in the workforce.



Leading on Opportunity 12



## Social capital is a key driver of economic mobility

- Chetty (2022, 2024) has highlighted social capital as the **most important factor** in increasing economic mobility.
- His definition focuses on three aspects of social capital
- **Residents of the region prioritized social capital in the Opportunity Compass before Chetty!**

### 1. Economic Connectedness

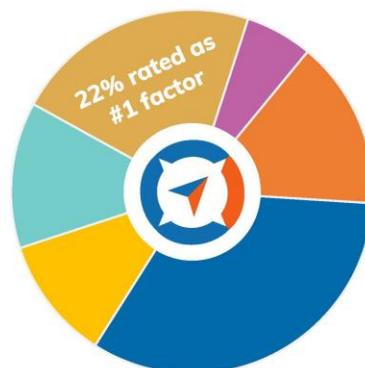
*Degree of high socioeconomic friends among low socioeconomic individuals (think of cross-class connections)*

### 2. Cohesiveness

*Measures how "cliquey" or open one's networks and friend circles are (think of your own friend-circles)*

### 3. Civic Engagement

*Measurement of participation in civic organizations*



## Social capital is all about relationships

At Leading on Opportunity, we define social capital as...

- **A person's ability to access information resources, support, or opportunity through their social network.**
- Contributing to a person's Social Capital might involve efforts to...
  - Build more tightly-knit communities
  - Increase knowledge and resource sharing within neighborhoods
  - Offer opportunities to learn about culture, art, and economics
- In the context of economic mobility, **an intervention or program that strengthens bonds between members of different socio-economic groups is especially powerful.**
  - These bonds need to be meaningful enough to translate into resources, support, or opportunity
    - *Think... could this relationship translate into an introduction to a friend? Referral to a job in my company? Help with a flat tire? ... has it?*

## Meeting Minutes October 22, 2024

### Social Capital and Work Force Development

#### Workforce Force Development programs:

- Focus on soft and hard skills required to attain and retain employment.
- Do not prepare **employers** to effectively serve these individuals once they begin work.
- Do not increase cross class or cultural connections.

#### What if employers provided navigation/wrap-around support to employees who face obstacles?

##### *Navigation Is a Proxy for Social Capital*

- Ex: Raydal Hospitality (Sabor's restaurant group), Mecklenburg County and Red Ventures have committed to supporting employees to improve retention and employee wellness and are seeing *positive results*.
- Support includes: food stability, housing assistance, child care assistance, healthcare, transportation assistance, family counseling services, career coaching, financial stipend during training, high school completion classes, language support, financial literacy, tuition reimbursement, and mental health.



---

### Employers can be leaders in social capital

**Key Question:** How might employers be market leaders in creating effective and innovative social capital policies at work? Here are a few workforce development examples:

- *What would it look like to remove requirements for cost-prohibitive signaling credentials (e.g., college degrees) in hiring?*
- *Could our companies provide navigators for employees experiencing barriers to work? What about training managers in trauma-informed practices?*
- *What would it look like to foster cross-class connections between city departments?*



## Next steps

### How can you get engaged in the work from here?

- Partnership to pass city bonds: LOO serves on campaign committee
- Opportunity Compass 2.0: The next version of the Compass launches in 2025.
- Other stakeholders: Where else can we share the new Chetty data?



### Comments

Commissioner Altman said the presentation was very valuable and thanked them. With child and family instability, she asked what some of the recommendations were to tackle this, centered around the Chetty study. *Ms. Jameson said the County was right in the middle of working on the issue. She mentioned that the County was innovative and moving ahead. She mentioned Meck Pre-K as an example.*

Commissioner Leake thanked them and asked them to help them get past where they were at the time. *Ms. Jameson agreed with Commissioner Leake's sentiments.*

Commissioner Meier said parks needed to be incorporated everywhere and that it was ironic that they were removing one.

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell said the growth came before the 2018 Board. She gave a shoutout for the work they had done towards economic development.

**Meeting Minutes**  
**October 22, 2024**

Vice Chair Jerrell said they had stakeholders they worked with (private and faith communities) and said the government couldn't work alone. He said that without buy-in and stakeholders, it was impossible. He said economic development was critical. He said it should be added to their board priorities during the retreat. He said he appreciated their trying to move everyone out of poverty. He said he didn't love to see the disparity that the gap was so huge and said they had to be serious about how they applied equity.

Chair Dunlap asked for clarification on the "Trends in Economic Mobility by Group in Charlotte" slide. *Mr. Calhoun provided clarification.*

Chair Dunlap said it was interesting that no recommendations were made when the first survey was conducted. He said that too often, they would implement something and change things before they saw how what they implemented would play out. He cautioned them against making too many changes. He said he learned over the past 16 years that they couldn't do too much, as everything couldn't be a priority.

**24-0603**

**COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

Commissioners shared information of their choosing within the guidelines as established by the Board, which included, but not limited to, past and/or upcoming events.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Board, Chair Dunlap declared the meeting adjourned at 4:49 p.m.

---

Arlissa Eason, Deputy Clerk to the Board

---

George Dunlap, Chairman