

**Meeting Minutes  
February 10, 2026**

**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 2:31 p.m. on Tuesday, February 10, 2026.

**ATTENDANCE**

**Present:** Chair Mark Jerrell, Vice-Chair Leigh Altman  
and Commissioners George Dunlap, Arthur Griffin,  
Laura J. Meier, Elaine Powell, Vilma D. Leake  
Susan Rodriguez-McDowell, Yvette Townsend-Ingram  
County Manager Michael Bryant  
County Attorney Tyrone C. Wade  
Clerk to the Board Kristine M. Smith  
Deputy Clerk to the Board Arlissa Eason

**Absent:**

**CALL TO ORDER**

*The meeting was called to order by Chair Mark Jerrell, which was followed by reading of the County's Mission and Vision and the FY2026 Board Budget Priorities, introductions, and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.*

**26-0069 Domestic Violence Advisory Board Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Priorities**

The Board received budget priorities for Fiscal Year 2027 from the Domestic Violence Advisory Board.

*Background: Each year as part of the County's budget process, advisory boards are provided the opportunity to present their budget priorities to the Board of County Commissioners. The Domestic Violence Advisory Board will summarize their FY2027 budget priorities.*

Christine S. Hart, Co-Chair of the Domestic Violence Advisory Board, gave the presentation.

***Commissioner Townsend-Ingram entered the meeting at 2:35 p.m.***



## Domestic Violence Advisory Board FY27 Budget Priorities

Presented to the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners  
February 10, 2026

### Recommended FY27 Budget Priorities

Sheltering and Housing

Mental Health

Youth and Teen Supports

Communications and Awareness of Existing Resources



### Sheltering and Housing

#### The need

- In FY25 there were 2,262 households experiencing homelessness in Mecklenburg County that reported a history of domestic violence at some time in their lives (754 of these included children)
- Safe Alliance provided short-term emergency shelter or hoteling to 775 adults and children fleeing intimate partner violence during FY25 (average 43 nights stay per person)
- Overall, demand for sheltering and housing solutions by domestic violence survivors continues to exceed the supply of resources
- Salvation Army Center of Hope often becomes the overflow location for survivors who exhaust their time at Safe Alliance



## Sheltering and Housing

### What's being done

- Mecklenburg County invests in dedicated resources for domestic violence survivors who are seeking sheltering and housing:
  - Housing for Good Program (FY26 investment \$336,806)
    - 12-24 months of rapid rehousing assistance and supportive services for families fleeing intimate partner violence
    - Program originally served up to 15 families
    - Currently serves up to 12 families due to increased housing costs causing funds not to stretch as far
    - Program is accessed through Coordinated Entry



## Sheltering and Housing

### What's being done:

- Additional funding for domestic violence housing passes through Mecklenburg County:
  - HUD Domestic Violence Rapid Rehousing funds via Continuum of Care (\$440,540 in 2026)
    - Supports approximately 15 households with rapid rehousing (actual number of households served depends on housing costs)
  - HUD funds also support a dedicated Coordinated Entry social worker who assesses households experiencing homelessness due to DV
  - Federal Block Grant funds via DSS (\$104,000 in FY26)
    - Supports approximately 50 households via the Domestic Violence Fund - one-time financial assistance related to housing stability



## Sheltering and Housing

### Recommendations

- Continue investing in the Housing for Good program and allocating Block Grant funds for the Domestic Violence Fund
  - Consider increasing investment in these resources because current funding is fully utilized and increased housing costs have reduced how many households can benefit
- Support investments in emergency shelter bed space and solutions that add capacity for emergency sheltering while keeping families together (e.g. domestic violence hoteling partnerships, pet-friendly sheltering programs)
- Support the efforts of the Continuum of Care to fully utilize available HUD dollars for domestic violence housing



## Mental Health

### The need

- Although mental health and domestic violence do not share a causal relationship, they are frequently co-occurring issues
- The high prevalence of domestic violence and intimate partner violence in Mecklenburg County suggests there is also high need for related mental health services and supports:
  - Between January 2022 and December 2024, CMPD – the largest law enforcement agency in Mecklenburg County – received on average 37,582 domestic violence citizen-initiated patrol calls for service each year
  - Between FY23 and FY25, Mecklenburg County Civil District Court saw an average of 3,761 ex-parte restraining orders filed each year
  - Between FY23 and FY25, the Greater Charlotte Hope Line received an average of 8,733 calls each year from survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and individuals in need of parenting support



## Mental Health

### What's being done

- Mecklenburg County invests in clinical mental health counseling for child observers and adult or teen victims/survivors of intimate partner violence
  - Community Support Services served 697 adults in FY25 and 220 children/teens
  - Often no more than 2 weeks wait for adult counseling
  - Wait for children's counseling is currently at about 2 months
- Mecklenburg County invests in non-clinical psychoeducation for abusive partners through NOVA (New Options for Violent Actions) as well as one licensed clinician for NOVA clients who need additional support
  - CSS NOVA program served 713 abusive partners in FY25
  - In FY25, evaluation of 179 NOVA clients who graduated from the program the year before found 172 with no record of recidivism since graduation (4% recidivism rate)



## Mental Health

### What's being done

- Mecklenburg County is a leading partner in the creation of The Umbrella Center
  - Family Justice Center model of services for people impacted by intimate partner violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, child maltreatment, elder abuse
  - Coming late 2026/early 2027 off Albemarle Road
  - Public-private partnership initiative
  - Goals include increased victim/survivor safety and well-being, greater offender accountability
  - Mental health components envisioned include:
    - On-site counseling and clinical mental health services provided by Pat's Place Child Advocacy Center, Safe Alliance Sexual Trauma Resource Center, and Mecklenburg County Community Support Services
    - Off-site partnerships to assist with medication management, higher levels of care, psychiatric services



## Mental Health

### Recommendations

- Continue existing County investments in mental health services related to intimate partner violence
- Continue to support creation of The Umbrella Center (TUC). Consider leveraging TUC as an opportunity to expand investment in mental health services and supports for survivors.
- Support solutions to mitigate wait times for children’s clinical mental health services
  - Subsidies to provide additional counseling sessions through contracted external providers
  - Strengthening of university-to-workplace pipeline to recruit qualified mental health clinicians, especially children’s clinicians



## Youth and Teen Supports

### The need

- Providing support for youth and teens is critical for lowering the risk of relationship violence continuing into adulthood
- Reaching children and youth with health-related education has become more difficult in recent years:
  - Local interpretation of the state’s Parents Bill of Rights legislation (SB-49) passed in fall 2023 has impacted ability to reach youth and teens through CMS schools
  - Local interpretation requires that parent/guardian explicitly “opt in” their child for certain health-related classes



## Youth and Teen Supports

### What’s being done

- Mecklenburg County and federal grant partners (FVPSA, PSN) invest in teen dating violence prevention and healthy relationships education for youth:
  - During FY25, Community Support Services’ LoveSpeaksOut program reached 3,356 youth in schools and communities
    - 96% of participating youth survey respondents said they can more easily recognize warning signs of dating abuse as a result of the LoveSpeaksOut class
    - 42% of survey respondents said because of the class, they realized they have experienced or are currently experiencing an unhealthy relationship



## Youth and Teen Supports

### Recommendations

- Continue County investment in teen dating violence prevention and education programming. Consider increasing investment to expand the capacity and reach of current programming.
- Monitor ongoing impact of local interpretation of SB-49 legislation (Parents Bill of Rights) on youth access to programming in schools. Partner with CMS School Board and/or Intergovernmental Committee to share data and solutions.
- Support investments in programming for parents of youth and teens, such as adult counseling and parenting education to support development of healthy youth relationships



## Communications and Awareness of Existing Resources

### Findings

- Mecklenburg County and community nonprofits offer a wide array of services and assistance related to intimate partner violence and domestic violence
- Overall community awareness of existing resources seems to be low



## Communications and Awareness of Existing Resources

### What's being done

- Mecklenburg County engages in domestic violence awareness, education, and outreach activities:
  - Community Support Services' Prevention Team
    - Fulfills resident requests for presentations, resources tables, and educational materials distribution
    - Coordinates the Domestic Violence Speakers Bureau to expand community outreach and build survivor leadership
    - Partnerships with local survivors to host events such as Domestic Violence Awareness Empowerment Walk
    - Public Information Office produces materials such as YouTube videos, digital billboards, social media posts



## Communications and Awareness of Existing Resources

### Recommendations

- Support development of intentional communications strategy to raise awareness of existing community resources and new initiatives (such as the upcoming Umbrella Center)
- Consider periodic targeted campaigns aligned with national awareness months, paired with consistent regular marketing activities
- Diversify communication channels and formats to reach various populations
- Support development of population-specific outreach materials (e.g. youth-focused QR Codes, posters, and resource guides)



Thank you!

**Christine S. Hart, Co-Chair**



Domestic Violence Advisory Board



### Comments

Commissioner Townsend-Ingram thanked Ms. Hart for the work they had done and asked whether there were any tangible ways the County could support them that did not involve financing. She asked if there was a list of partners to provide information to the public, and whether, financially, there were any other State or Federal funding cliffs due to the current administration that they could partner with for additional support. *Ms. Hart said communication channels could be diversified and made more attainable to youth, in addition to constant communication with CMS. She said their advisory board maintained a working list and continued to invite their community partners to assist with these initiatives and to provide information about their services. Stacy Lowry, Director of Community Support Services, said they had not had reductions in grants, but funding from the State had been released very slowly.*

Commissioner Powell asked if there were concerns about threats to grant funding. She said they went from funding 15 families to 12, and a top priority for her was how they could find rapid rehousing for victims of domestic violence. She said this was not something the average person could solve on their own. *Ms. Lowry said they were concerned. She said the Federal*

**Meeting Minutes**  
**February 10, 2026**

*administration had removed substance abuse grants and then rescinded them within 24 hours.*

Commissioner Griffin said one of the slides mentioned the need for more marketing communication. He asked if the survey gave a sense of the demographics as to whether they were seniors, youth, or just across the board, so that a marketing campaign could be targeted to whatever the gap happened to be. *Ms. Harper said she would look into that question further.*

Commissioner Leake thanked Ms. Hart for her information. She asked how they intended to get the information to schools, families, people confined to prisons, and non-verbal people. She inquired about the size of the staff. *Ms. Lowry said Community Support Services had approximately 159, with about 40 temps. She said she could not recall how many were staffed with Prevention and Intervention Services, but she would find out.*

Commissioner Altman said on page 9 that the Umbrella Center was referenced, and she was excited that it would be completed and open to the public at the end of the year, so victims would not have to travel throughout the City and County and repeat their stories. *Ms. Lowry said CMPD was one of the other key partners.* Commissioner Altman said page 11 referred to the parents' Bill of Rights. She asked if they could explore with their CMS partners when the law had been passed and what level of domestic violence had been recorded in the community. She said she wanted them to engage in lobbying efforts with partners in the General Assembly. *Ms. Lowry said they could look at their data regarding restraining orders and police reports and could put something together.*

Commissioner Dunlap thanked Ms. Hart for her presentation and said the Umbrella Center had been a concern of his, and he looked forward to it being opened as well. Commissioner Dunlap said his question was regarding page 3 and whether the number of households experiencing homelessness was different from those who experienced domestic violence. He said he also wanted to know more about NOVA (New Options for Violent Actions). *Elyse Hamilton-Childers, Community Support Services Prevention & Intervention Director, said the statistics about households experiencing homelessness were from the Homeless Management Information System. She said they were individuals who had contacted a coordinated entry during FY2025 and had indicated that at some time in their lives they had experienced domestic violence. She said NOVA was the state-certified domestic intervention program. She said state-certified meant that Mecklenburg County courts could refer defendants to that program for intervention, and all participants had to complete a 26-week program to graduate and receive credit through the Court. She said it was state-certified, not state-mandated.*

Commissioner Meier thanked the Committee for their work and for focusing on mental health. She said page 10 referred to support solutions to mitigate wait times, and she asked about the wait times and what counseling sessions were provided. She asked regarding slide 16, whether it was part of the CSS budget or PI. *Ms. Hamilton-Childers said subsidies for counseling services were not being provided at present, but it was an additional idea to expand accessibility to therapeutic services. She said waiting times for services depended on staff capacity and client demand. She said at one point wait time for children was 9 months, but it was now 2 months. She said that, as for awareness, their public information office was working with them to advance awareness through social media and other resources, and that they had been a strong partner.*

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell said affordable housing initiatives were where she felt the County should be, and she wanted to signal her support, but was disappointed that \$336,806.00 only served 12 families, down from 15. She said the 'Love Speaks Out' program was fantastic and asked whether there were numbers showing how many people they reached with the program before and after the Bill. She said she supported subsidizing children's counseling. *Ms. Lowry said they had numbers and would get them to her.*

Chair Jerrell thanked Ms. Hart for her presentation and recommendations. He said it was critical

**Meeting Minutes  
February 10, 2026**

that, as they moved forward, everyone understood they were tracking those recommendations. He said he liked the entire comprehensive affordable housing package. He said they should maintain what they were doing and added there would be additional conversation.

County Manager Bryant said the recommendations brought before the Board by the Advisory Councils carried significant weight in shaping the budget, even though they could not fund everything.

Chair Jerrell said perhaps there could be a mechanism in place so that when they came back to report to the Board, they could highlight what was recommended in the previous year and what the outcomes were.

**26-0070 Park and Recreation Commission Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Priorities**

The Board received budget priorities for Fiscal Year 2027 from the Park and Recreation Commission.

*Background: Each year as part of the County's budget process, advisory boards are provided the opportunity to present their budget priorities to the Board of County Commissioners. The Park and Recreation Commission will summarize their FY2027 budget priorities.*

Peter Cook, Deputy Director of Park and Recreation, and Adrian Cox, Budget Director, Kip Kiser, Chair, Cowden Rayburn, Executive Secretary, Ann Harrison, Vice Chair, Brad Chambers of the North Region, gave the presentation.



**PRC BUDGET ADJUSTMENT  
RECOMMENDATION**

**FY2027 Increase by \$6.0 Million/year Annual Reinvestment (Projects <\$250,000)  
Total \$10 Million Annually**

**Increase by \$5.0 Million/year Expanded Reinvestment  
Projects (Projects \$250,000 to \$1.3 million)  
Total \$5.0 Million Annually**

**Increase by \$20.0 Million/year Land Acquisition  
From \$30.0 Million to \$50.0 Million**

**Decrease by \$31.0 Million/year CIP Five Year Funding and  
Institute Changes in the Rolling CIP**

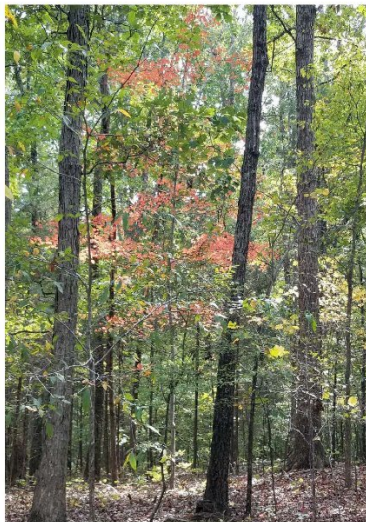
2

**Reinvestment Maintenance  
Priority #1**

The PRC places Reinvestment Maintenance requirement as our highest priority.



3



**Land Acquisition - \$50 Million  
Priority #2**

The PRC continues to unanimously recommend a total budget of \$50 Million annually. This represents a resumption of prior years' budgets to \$50 Million annually.

They are not making any more dirt.

4



### Expanded Reinvestment Projects - \$5 Million Priority #3

The PRC recommended in its 2025 Annual Report to the BOCC the establishment of an Expanded Reinvestment Project Account.

5

## EQUITY FUNDED PROJECTS

EI21	2021 Park Equity Investments	ENDP	Enderly Park	PAYG	700,000.00
EI21	2021 Park Equity Investments	LCCO	L.C. Coleman Park	PAYG	900,000.00
EI21	2021 Park Equity Investments	TRYH	Tryon Hills Park	PAYG	400,000.00
EI21					2,000,000.00
EI22	2022 Park Equity Investments	AJRC	AMAY JAMES RECREATION CENTER/ANNEX	PAYG	850,000.00
EI22	2022 Park Equity Investments	ARPK	ALBEMARLE ROAD PARK	PAYG	850,000.00
EI22	2022 Park Equity Investments	DEVP	DEVONSHIRE PARK	PAYG	250,000.00
EI22	2022 Park Equity Investments	FAPK	FRED ALEXANDER PARK	PAYG	350,000.00
EI22	2022 Park Equity Investments	GRPK	GRAYSON PARK	PAYG	750,000.00
EI22	2022 Park Equity Investments	HBPK	HARRISBURG PARK	PAYG	850,000.00
EI22	2022 Park Equity Investments	PRDP	PRESSLEY ROAD PARK	PAYG	250,000.00
EI22	2022 Park Equity Investments	VMPK	VIEWMONT PARK	PAYG	850,000.00
EI22					5,000,000.00

6

### New Programming Initiative Priority #4

The PRC stands 100% behind the programming initiatives by Director Nick Walker.



7

# Meeting Minutes February 10, 2026

## Safety and Security Priority #5

6 additional Park Rangers + \$300,000  
annual increase for more hired security



8

## PRC BUDGET ADJUSTMENT RECOMMENDATION FY2027

Increase by \$6.0 Million/year Annual Reinvestment  
(Projects <\$250,000)

Total \$10 Million Annually

Increase by \$5.0 Million/year Expanded Reinvestment  
Projects

(Projects \$250,000 to \$1.3 million)

Total \$5.0 Million Annually

Increase by \$20.0 Million/year Land Acquisition  
From \$30.0 Million to \$50.0 Million

Decrease by \$31.0 Million/year CIP Five Year Funding and  
Institute Changes in the Rolling CIP

9

## Thank you



10

## Comments

Commissioner Dunlap said he hoped the staff would give serious consideration to Mr. Kiser's recommendations, but there had to be some reductions. He said the notion of driving people to the park to increase safety was a programmatic issue, and he looked forward to that happening and was excited for what was to come. He said, regarding the recommendations, he was hesitant about having so much land with nothing on it, and he asked how they felt about acquiring land that may not see development for 10-15 years. *Ms. Harrison said allowing it to sit for 10-15 years may be what is meant to be for land preservation. She said having recreation on the land did not necessarily mean it had to be developed. Mr. Kiser said due to budget issues, they had to cut back on what they were building, but developers were not.*

## Meeting Minutes February 10, 2026

Commissioner Meier commended the staff for showing up and for their dedication and hard work. She said she supported them because they needed the land. She said she liked their recommendations because they gave them a way to find the money. She asked County Manager Bryant if this was on the table and whether it could be changed. *County Manager Bryant said everything was on the table this year, and they would take a look at it.*

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell said she appreciated how the Committee created the proposal. She mentioned their recommendation called for an increase to 10 million annually, and that they did not agree with the decrease from seven to four million dollars. She asked what had happened. *Mr. Kiser said that traditionally, they put in \$ 4 million, and in FY2025, \$3 million was added in a straw vote. He said this year, FY2026, it was back to 4 million dollars.* Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell said the equity funding showed \$2 million for 2021 and \$5 million for 2022, and asked whether there was equity in the subsequent years. She said she also supported more space for children and asked what had transpired regarding their request for additional security. *Mr. Rayburn said they had switched funding models in subsequent years. Peter Cook, Deputy Director of Park and Recreation, said they had \$4 million in their capital reinvestment funding. He said that over several years, they had ARPA funding, CIP, and one-time funding. Mr. Kiser said he did not know how the equity funding was categorized, but the CIP started about then, and things went into the CIP that might have gone into equity-type accounts. He said the CIPs were bigger projects, and sometimes a 2-million-dollar project would be included in a CIP, but that would typically be a design, not a project. He said those were symbols of the kinds of projects they would like to do.*

Commissioner Townsend-Ingram asked once the maintenance jobs were done what happened to the actual costs and whether any savings could be applied to the next project. She asked whether anyone was looking at private partnerships that could fill in the gaps and do what the County could not. She said it would help with equity to fund children and senior programs as mentioned in the plan, and asked what programs were being funded for children and seniors, and where they were located. She also asked whether they could renegotiate contracts for the land the Whitewater Center was using. *Mr. Rayburn said he did not know the answer regarding the maintenance costs, but there was an internal mechanism in place for that, and he could get that information. He said there were no shortages of partnerships and named several private partners. He said they were not just using space but were committing capital dollars to make them better. He said he could get more information on what those dollars looked like. Mr. Rayburn said they also wanted to explore a partnership with CMS, because the kids could not get time to practice and have their games without CMS to help. He said there was a real need to push an agreement, and he hoped to get it across the finish line.*

Commissioner Powell thanked the Committee and expressed appreciation for their work. She said the Park and Recreation Commission represented the public and touched on everything from homelessness, mental health, and suicidal people in the community. Commissioner Powell said while the dollar amounts may seem big, she did not think they were. She said she appreciated that they had made their budget recommendations as reasonable as they could and she supported them. She said she had noticed much incivility towards park and rec and solid waste staff and asked how the Board could address it. She said regarding programming, she hoped there would be more camp programming because she had heard that within 3 minutes, the parks were full.

Commissioner Griffin said that, as he understood the reinvestment piece, it was not deferred maintenance but referred to functional minor wear and tear. He said it appeared the listing was of items not fully usable, damaged, unsafe, or hazardous. He said that if parks fit the latter three descriptions and these facilities could not be used as intended, that would be a priority for him. He said about five years ago, a committee in southwest Mecklenburg County had been working to build a YMCA in Steele Creek near South Tryon, but it fell through, and there were now

**Meeting Minutes**  
**February 10, 2026**

approximately 200-300 homes in that space. He said there should be some sense of putting land on layaway as a regional rec center in that area. He said southwest Mecklenburg County was on our gap map because it had large gaps identified in the Meck Playbook, and they needed to address them before they became untenable.

Commissioner Leake asked how they arrived at their request for increases and where the increases and decreases would occur. *Mr. Kiser said the increase came from the 6 million dollars they added to reinvestments. He said they had recommended an increase from the traditional 4 million to 10 million. He said the five million dollars added to that came from the expanded reinvestment account for small projects, bringing them to 11 million dollars. He said they had asked for land to be funded at 20 million, which got them back to where they started, and that came to 31 million. He said they then asked the County to cut 31 million from CIP programs or use the rolling CIP to adjust.* Commissioner Leake asked if that would take care of the land and the number of people in Mecklenburg County. *Mr. Kiser said it took care of the delta between the 30 they had been hearing about and 50 million. He said this was the 20 that would get them back to 50 million.* Commissioner Leake said she hoped what they were asking for would make it equitable across the County. *Mr. Rayburn said the dollars would be deployed according to the Meck Playbook, which focused on gap areas and priority communities that, by current metrics, were underserved. He said the dollars would be spent equitably to address areas with service gaps.*

Commissioner Altman expressed her gratitude to the Committee for its work. She said the County Manager had been charged with building the budget from the ground up, that everything was on the table, and that she agreed. She said she was open to maximizing the plans for the community's benefit without raising the tax rate. She asked the staff to address the land acquisition plan because it was still not fully staffed and asked whether a third-party broker was needed to effectively compete for land. She said that, around the equity-funded projects, she wanted to know whether it referred to parts of the County that had been historically disinvested, because reducing racial disparities was one of their top priorities. *Dr. Leslie Johnson said that, regarding staffing and land acquisition, she had a different perspective. She said they were moving at a rapid pace with land acquisition, and each year they had spent their allotted dollar allocations entirely. She said they may have lacked one or two staff persons, but the work was getting done. Dr. Johnson said they had refined their processes to expedite matters and that she had no data that demonstrated problems acquiring land. She said many times, purchases for greenways were easements that had to be acquired from homeowners, and negotiations took time. She said sometimes they acquired things on the market, and sometimes they were not on the market, so it may not close as expediently as they wanted.*

Chair Jerrell thanked Mr. Kiser for his leadership and for how they approached things that year. He said it appeared everyone's heart was in the right place. He said it appeared they wanted to fund a lot with very limited resources. *Mr. Kiser said that they had been meeting with a company called Agency about a Playbook refresh and invited the Commissioners to attend. He said hundreds of people came to talk about the things they wanted, but it could be frustrating knowing they could only afford so much.*

County Manager Bryant said they would be hearing from other Advisory Councils, so he wanted to remind the Board that these were their Advisory Boards in different areas. He said in the past, they solely allowed the Advisory Boards to present their recommendations. He said, while they allowed staff to respond, they tended to stay away from staff prospects to allow the opportunity to engage with the Boards.

**26- 0067      Construction Manager At-Risk and Architect Selection: Minority Business Enterprise Participation Report**

**Meeting Minutes  
February 10, 2026**

The Board received as information a presentation on the construction manager at-risk and architect selection process, including a report on the participation of minority business enterprises at the prime contract level.

*Background: The former County Manager, in coordination with the Board of County Commissioners, directed the Asset and Facility Management Department to begin tracking the participation of Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) at the prime contract level for the selection of both Architects and Construction Managers At-Risk. Subsequently, County Manager Michael Bryant requested that a report be presented to the Board which would include information regarding the criteria used for the short-listing and selection of firms, as well as data on the participation of MBE firms at the prime contract level for fiscal years 2024-2026.*

*Mark Hahn, Director of Asset and Facility Management, gave the presentation.*



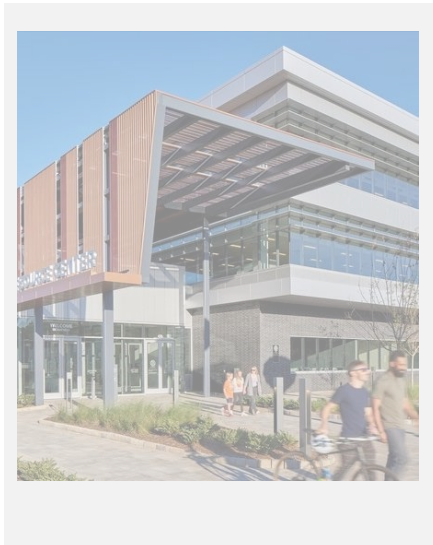
**Construction  
Manager At-Risk and  
Architect Selection:  
Minority Business  
Enterprise  
Participation Report**

**Mecklenburg Board of  
County Commissioners**

February 10, 2026



1



**Agenda**

- Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Selection Process, Short-listing, and Criteria
- Construction Manager at-Risk (CMaR) Selection Data
- Architect Selection Data
- Office of Equity & Inclusion Observations
- Asset & Facility Management Department (AFM) and Office of Equity & Inclusion (OEI) Recommendations



1

# Request for Qualifications (RFQ) Selection Process, Short-listing, and Criteria



1

## Selection Process

### Short-Listing Process

- NC General Statutes require teams to be selected based on their demonstrated competence and qualifications for the services rendered (NC G.S. 143-64.31)
- For all projects, consistent criteria is used to determine if a firm should be short-listed for interviews by a short-list selection committee composed of County staff (Asset & Facility Management [AFM] & Business Diversity & Inclusion [BDI])
- For most projects, 2-3 teams are short-listed for interviews

### Staff Short-Listing Committee Composition

- AFM Director or designee
- BDI Representative (minimum of 1)
- AFM Division Director of Design and Construction Project Management (Optional)
- AFM Senior Project Manager
- AFM Project Manager

### Selection Committee Composition for Interviews (per BOCC Policy)

- BOCC Members (at least one member by Policy with two members typically invited)
- County Manager or Designee
- General Contractor (appointed by BOCC)
- Head of Agency/User Group Representative
- AFM Director or Designee

1

## Selection Criteria

Primary  
(Short-listing)

### Experience with the Project Type

Can the team demonstrate that they have worked on the specific project type (e.g., office building, recreation center, detention facility, parking deck, etc.)? Are the projects submitted similar to the County's proposed project?

### Key Team Member Experience

Have the proposed key team members (designer, project manager, superintendent, etc.) worked on the similar projects submitted? How extensive is their experience? The County wants the subject matter experts familiar with the project type to be on the team.

### BDI Compliance

Has the submitting team committed to meeting the MWBE goals and provided an adequate Inclusion Plan? (Additional consideration may be given to MBE Led teams or Non-MBE Led teams with an MBE partner.)

### Management/Technical Expertise

Does the team demonstrate technical knowledge for the type of project and their work product in general?

### Past CMaR Delivery Method Experience

Have the architects designed and the contractors constructed projects under the Construction Manager at-Risk project delivery method?

### Past Performance on County Projects

Including Mecklenburg County projects and other clients, how successful was the team's past performance?

Secondary  
(Selection)

### Local Knowledge and Experience

Does the team have experience working in the local area and with local regulatory agencies? Do the projects and proposed team members demonstrate local experience and relationships with local subcontractors?

### History of Contract Awards

Has a team ever had a Mecklenburg County contract? Has a team had a disproportionate share of Mecklenburg County contracts compared to competing teams?

### Current Workload with the County

Is the team currently working on County Projects? If so, how many?

1

**Meeting Minutes  
February 10, 2026**

**Selection Criteria Example**

**Experience with Project Type**

Example Project: Recreation Center with Aquatics

**Submitting Team 1 (Not Short-listed)**

Similar Projects Submitted:

- Recreation Centers **without** aquatics
- Government Office Buildings
- Public Safety Facilities

**Submitting Team 2 (Short-listed)**

Similar Projects Submitted:

- Recreation Centers **with** Aquatics
- YMCA with aquatics
- University athletics facility with aquatics

1

**Selection Criteria Example**

**Key Team Member Experience**

Example Project: Recreation Center with Aquatics

**Submitting Team 1 (Not Short-listed)**

The submission included recreation centers with aquatics

- No proposed key team members worked on any of the submitted recreation centers
- Key team member experience with aquatics was not demonstrated

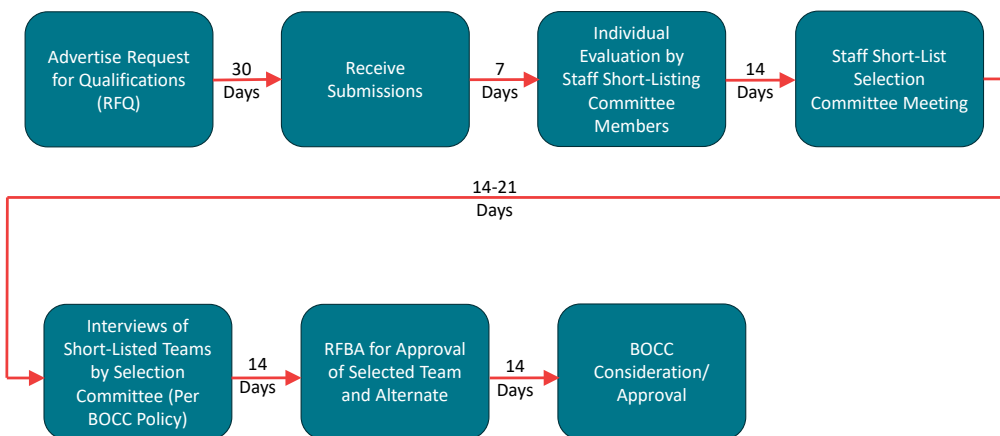
**Submitting Team 2 (Short-listed)**

The submission included recreation centers with aquatics

- Proposed Key Team Members (Project Manager, Superintendent, Pre-Construction Manager, etc.) had significant roles on the similar projects submitted
- Key team member experience with aquatics was demonstrated

1

**Qualifications-Based Selection Process**



1

# Construction Manager at-Risk (CMaR) Selection Data



1

## FY24-26 Construction Manager At-Risk Selection Data (8 Projects)

Team Type	Submittal Phase		Short-Listing Phase		Selection Phase			Cost Information	
	Total Number of Submittals by Team Type	% of Total Submittals by Team Type	Total Number of Teams Short-listed by Team Type	% of Total Short-listed Teams by Team Type	Total Number of teams Selected by Team Type	% of Selected Teams by Team Type	% of Short-listed Teams Selected by Team Type	Total \$ Awarded to Teams by Selected Team Type	% of Total Awarded by Selected Team Type
MBE Led Team	7	14%	2	10%	1	13%	50% (1 of 2)	\$50,832,926	24%
Non-MBE Led Team with MBE Partner	19	39%	9	43%	4	50%	44% (4 of 9)	\$123,559,590	59%
Non-MBE Led Team with no MBE Partner	23	47%	10	47%	3	38%	30% (3 of 10)	\$33,625,000	16%
Total Number of Teams	49	100%	21	100%	8	100%		\$208,017,516	100%

1

## FY24-26 Construction Manager At-Risk Selection Summary

### Submittal vs. Selection

- Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Led Teams comprised 14% of all applicants, and were selected in 13% of all projects
- Non-MBE Led Teams with MBE Partners comprised 39% of all applicants, and were selected in 50% of all projects
- Non-MBE Led Teams with no MBE Partners comprised 47% of all applicants, and were selected in 38% of all projects

### Short-listed Teams vs. Selected Teams

- 50% of short-listed MBE Led teams were selected for projects
- 44% of short-listed Non-MBE Led teams with MBE Partners were selected for projects
- 30% of short-listed Non-MBE Led Teams with no MBE Partners were selected for projects

### Total MBE Involvement

- MBE Led Teams and Non-MBE Led Teams with MBE Partners comprised 63% of all selected teams and accounted for 83% of the awarded construction contract dollar value

1

# Architect Selection Data



1

## FY24-26 Architect Selection Data (11 Projects)

Team Type	Submittal Phase		Short-Listing Phase		Selection Phase			Cost Information	
	Total Number of Submittals by Team Type	% of Total Submittals by Team Type	Total Number of Teams Short-listed by Team Type	% of Total Short-listed Teams by Team Type	Total Number of Teams Selected by Team Type	% of Selected Teams by Team Type	% of Short-listed Teams Selected by Team Type	Total \$ Awarded to Teams by Selected Team Type	% of Total Awarded by Selected Team Type
MBE Led Team	10	15%	5	18%	2	18%	40% (2 of 5)	\$1,243,217	6%
Non-MBE Led Team with MBE Partner	5	7%	1	4%	1	9%	100% (1 of 1)	\$7,647,431	40%
Non-MBE Led Team with no MBE Partner	53	78%	22	79%	8	73%	36% (8 of 22)	\$10,370,198	54%
<b>Total Number of Teams</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>\$19,260,846</b>	

1

## FY24-26 Architect Selection Summary

### Submission vs. Selection

- MBE-led Teams comprised 15% of all applicants, and were selected in 18% of all projects
- Non-MBE Led Teams with MBE Partners comprised 7% of all applicants, and were selected in 9% of all projects
- Non-MBE led Teams with no MBE Partners comprised 78% of all applicants, and were selected in 73% of all projects

### Short-listed Teams vs. Selected Teams

- 40% of short-listed MBE-Led teams were selected for projects
- 100% of short-listed Non-MBE led teams with MBE Partner firms were selected for projects
- 36% of short-listed Non-MBE Led Teams with no MBE Partner were selected for projects

### Total MBE Involvement

- MBE Led Teams and Non-MBE Led Teams with MBE Partners comprised 22% of all selected teams and accounted for 46% of the awarded design fee dollar value

1

## Top three reasons MBE-Led Teams did not make the short-list

- 1 Experience with the Project Type**  
MBE-Led Teams that did not make the short-list lacked similar project experience.
- 2 Experience of Key Team Members**  
If the MBE-Led Team had similar project experience, there was minimal involvement of the key team members on those similar projects. That is, the County would not be hiring the people with the subject matter expertise.
- 3 Past Performance**  
MBE-Led Teams with performance concerns on recent projects did not make the short-list.

1

## Top three reasons Non-MBE-Led Teams with an MBE partner did not make the short-list

- 1 Experience of Key Team Members**  
Non-MWBE Led Teams with an MBE Partner that did not make the short-list lacked relevant project experience of the key team members.
- 2 Experience with the Project Type**  
Non-MWBE Led Teams with an MBE Partner that did not make the short-list lacked relevant project experience.
- 3 Current Workload with Mecklenburg County**  
Non-MWBE Led Teams with an MBE Partner that currently had a disproportionate share of projects with Mecklenburg County did not make the short-list.

1

## Office of Equity & Inclusion Observations

1



## Review Process Overview

Over the course of six weeks, the Office of Equity and Inclusion participated in several solicitation efforts, including proposal reviews and shortlisting, candidate interviews, and debriefs with AFM leadership and DCM Ramos.



1

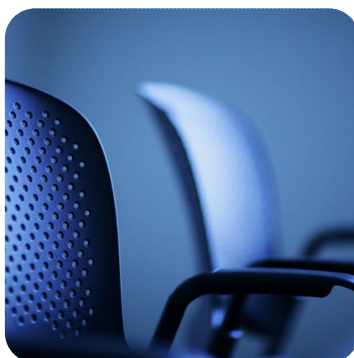


## Solicitation and Evaluation Meeting

- Meeting format varied by facilitator.
- Meetings followed a relaxed agenda rather than a structured format.
- All tools and matrices were available, but were utilized to varying degrees.
- Fair participation was upheld by individuals in the room.



1



## Summary of Observations

The OEI review found the RFQ process to be generally fair and well-reasoned, with teams making thoughtful selections. At the same time, differences in facilitation styles, tools, and evaluation approaches may create inconsistencies that could lead to misunderstandings or uneven experiences. Strengthening consistency would help ensure the process feels predictable, transparent, and aligned with county priorities.



1

# Asset & Facility Management Department (AFM) and Office of Equity & Inclusion (OEI) Recommendations



1

## AFM & OEI Recommendations

### Revise RFQ To Ensure Submitters Clearly Understand County Selection Criteria

#### Inquire about MWBE track record

- Request information from submitting teams on past and proposed MWBE partnerships at the prime level

#### Ensure submitters clearly understand County selection criteria

- Include a “Best Practices” appendix in RFQ to address:
  - MWBE Participation: Emphasize mentorship and capacity building for MWBE firms at the prime level
  - Similar Project Experience: Describe importance of project type similarity and relevance of built work versus planned work
  - Key Team Members: Describe importance of key team members being submitted for the project and their alignment to the similar projects submitted

#### Debriefing

- Offer debriefing for teams not short-listed or not selected

1

## AFM & OEI Recommendations

### Short-listing Process Revisions To Ensure Consistency from Project-to-Project

#### Evaluation Data Consistency

- Provide a standard agenda and protocol to be used for all short-listing meetings
- Provide a standard evaluation matrix showing each submitting team's qualifications and team members and have Project Manager objectively present information to committee members prior to group discussion

#### Short-list Selection Committee Protocol for Evaluation

- AFM to share any special project considerations with short-list selection committee members prior to the short-listing meeting
- BDI to share their evaluation of each submitting team's MWBE Inclusion Plan
- Each committee member to share their individual evaluation and state their preferred selection prior to open group discussion

1

Questions?



1

APPENDIX



1

Meeting Minutes  
February 10, 2026

**Board Policy for the Selection of Architects and Construction Managers at-Risk**

**Selection of Architects and CMAr's**

The Board hereby establishes a Selection Committee to screen architects for Board appointment for County Projects. This Architectural Selection policy shall be followed except for contracts in which the estimated fee is less than \$50,000 as stipulated in G.S. 143-64-32.

The Asset and Facility Management Director will recommend approval for Architectural Professional Services contracts as exempted under G.S.S. 143-64-32.

In no event will the final interview of architects take place unless at least one member of the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners is sitting on the Selection Committee.

**The Committee will be composed of the following:**

- Mecklenburg County Manager or her/his designee
- Two Mecklenburg County Commissioners, alphabetically on a rotating basis for all nine members and then repeat the cycle:
- Director of Asset and Facility Management (AFM) or her/his designee;
- Head of the agency which will occupy the facility or head of the agency which will maintain and operate the structure
- General Contractor for a term of three years who will sign a statement not to bid on any project under consideration during her/his three-year term. In the event the Board appointed representative is unable to serve on a particular selection, the Director of AFM may appoint an alternate General Contractor who will sign a statement not to bid on any project under consideration during her/his temporary term and for a 1-year period after serving.

1

**Comments**

County Manager Bryant said that, in response to conversations and meetings he had with other companies and members of the Board, one of his takeaways was that, for example, Company A might bid on project # 1 and assemble a team to complete it. He said that the same company might bid on the exact same project in a different location of the community, but if the company's team did not have the relevant experience, it could eliminate them from consideration. He said the team agreed they should do a better job communicating that information, but it answered many of the concerns companies had expressed about the existing process.

***Motion was made by Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell, seconded by Commissioner Dunlap, and unanimously carried to forgo the Commissioner Reports and extend the meeting to 5:15 pm.***

Commissioner Altman asked what the totality of County contracts was annually. *Mr. Hahn said it could easily be hundreds of millions of dollars a year.* Commissioner Altman said they wanted to be part of the solution for building intergenerational wealth, bringing small businesses and businesses of color into the process. She asked how the City of Charlotte was doing, whether their metrics were better, and whether other organizations had greater success.

Commissioner Griffin thanked Mr. Hahn and his team for supporting his motion over a year ago to create an MBE policy. He said the disparity study concluded that the Board needed a current policy so the administration would provide an annual report on the process and its results. He asked whether there was a standard range for being considered a minority partner or if you could be a partner at 5% or 49%. He asked, with reference to Page 11, for a breakdown of the percentage of contracts awarded that were MBE-led and the portion that were non-MBE. *Mr. Hahn said that on slide 10, 24% of the dollar value went to MBE-led teams, and the next row showed that 59% went to non-MBE-led teams with MBE partners. He said regarding partners, it was completely dependent on who that partner was and the capabilities and size of the construction company, and he presented examples to compare.*

Commissioner Powell said they had to make sure smaller businesses had the opportunity, and she was thankful to see that reducing racial disparities had been a priority. She said they had made differences and were expanding capacities and opportunities for everyone.

## Meeting Minutes February 10, 2026

Commissioner Townsend-Ingram thanked them for their information. She asked when giving feedback, whether there were opportunities for technical assistance, and whether companies were given enough specifics to understand how they could improve and become prime. She also asked whether a score was given to set goals for improvement, and whether the minority was disaggregated by race in addition to women. *Mr. Hahn said he would clarify that they were not speaking of women-owned businesses. He said they had goals for women, but the previous disparity study showed that the County was doing well with women-owned businesses in construction contracting, so it was less of a concern. He said in terms of their ability to control, he could only tell people what they wanted to see, but it would be difficult to set a goal or to control what they brought to the table. Mr. Hahn said that, regarding technical assistance, when teams came in to debrief, they were told what successful teams needed to do to get selected. He said they discussed what the Commissioners had said, so they understood their teams needed to be diverse, but that the key was whether they listened. Lashaun Carter, Equity and Inclusion Director, said it was hard to break through if they could not get the experience, so they provided specific feedback and technical assistance to applicants who were ruled out of the process because they did not have similar experience. Mr. Hahn clarified that when they looked at qualification statements, they were looking at the lead team. He said if someone failed to get shortlisted, it likely had nothing to do with the MBE partner. He said the lead partner set the qualifications, so either they or their team did not have similar experience.*

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell thanked them for their presentation, their work, and the progress they had made.

Commissioner Meier thanked them for their work and said she was impressed with their focus on hiring MBE firms. She asked if there was ever resistance on either side with the mentoring program from the mentees or the mentors in the program, and whether he felt it was working. She also asked when the program started, what the percentage was of the mentored firms submitting proposals, and whether he was seeing progress there. *Mr. Hahn said it was working, and they were seeing progress. He said it was rare to see projects without MBE partners. He said architects did not debrief, so they did not have a way to tell them about best-practice ideas. He said anytime an architect came in for business, they discussed MBE involvement.*

Commissioner Dunlap thanked the team and said he wanted to see the recommendations implemented in both areas. He said regarding page 15, point #2, 'current workload with Mecklenburg County,' that one of the reasons the MBE did not make the shortlist was that they were teamed with someone who already had a lot of work with the County, and they may not have known that, and subsequently was disqualified. Commissioner Dunlap asked how they could address that. He said page 13 showed a disparity in funding between MBE-led and non-MBE-led teams. He said there was a 9-million-dollar difference, and that was what created generational wealth. He said the percentages were misleading because, for example, on page 10, there was one MBE-led team, 7 submittals, 2 were shortlisted, and 1 was awarded (or 50 %). He said that 50% looked better than the 30% or 44% number, but not when you look at where the money was. Commissioner Dunlap said implementing the recommendations in those areas would make all the difference. He said everyone with a lot of experience started in the same place as the person with no experience. *Mr. Hahn said that as to how the MBE partner would know whether the lead firm had a lot of jobs, that typically did not come into play until the interview. He said if everything else was indistinguishable and it was close, and the company had not had a job with the County before, they may have wanted to consider them. He said the MBE partner would have gotten all the way to the end of the interview, and if the team was qualified across the board, they would make the short list. Commissioner Dunlap said that if there were a way to tell an MBE their likelihood of winning was slim, they may want to reconsider. Mr. Carter said sometimes the MBE firm showed up as the partner on multiple proposals, so if someone had 10 contracts and their likelihood of winning was diminished because of that, it was important to understand they were partnering with multiple entities and not boxed in with one vendor. Commissioner Dunlap said that with multiple partners, they were hedging their bets because the*

**Meeting Minutes  
February 10, 2026**

same players were not involved in every project.

***Motion was made by Commissioner Dunlap, seconded by Commissioner Griffin, and unanimously carried to forgo the Commissioner Reports and extend the meeting an additional 10 minutes.***

Commissioner Leake asked if this information could be used in any setting to get contracts. *Mr. Hahn said they could use these recommendations to enhance their process, which would help individuals interviewing to get jobs. He said they were already implementing them and hoped it would help increase MBE participation at the prime level. Tyrone Wade, County Attorney, said it applied only to certain types of contracts, not all. Mr. Hahn said it was for the CM at-Risk and architectural contracts being discussed.*

**Commissioner Townsend-Ingram left at 5:15 p.m.**

Chair Jerrell noted page 25 and asked if it was an ask for the Board to act. *Mr. Hahn said this policy was only about the makeup of the selection committee. He said the policy needed updating.*

Commissioner Dunlap said he had never seen the policy, because if he had, he would have been obligated to follow it. He asked when the policy was adopted. *Mr. Hahn said it had been in place for 30+ years and had been revised a few times, the last time being in 2017.*

Commissioner Griffin said the BOCC needed a policy and said the last official policy was in 2005. He said there was \$4.3 billion in construction going on in Mecklenburg County over the next 16 months, with only about 50 million going to MBE firms. He said they needed to do better and wanted to work on getting a policy.


Chair Jerrell said this was not an endpoint but a start. He said they needed the data first to move toward the policy components. He said he wanted to see the distribution breakdown of the \$123 million, and what went to the minority partner and the majority firm. He said if 100 million of those funds went to the majority firm, they were not doing great. *Mr. Hahn said to go back to what he said about opportunity, the larger MBE-partnered firms could do more work, but smaller firms could not because of their capabilities, so they needed to be careful.* Chair Jerrell said he was interested in getting data showing distribution because the current data (83%) was not telling him enough. He said he felt one problem was that the same people were being awarded, and he wanted to look at a more tiered process. He asked how they could get Board policy on what they were trying to capture. *Mr. Carter said they would go to their executive team and work with the County Manager to develop policy language and move it forward.* Manager Bryant said this was the first step in addressing these concerns, and there was more to come.

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 Jerrell declared the meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

**Meeting Minutes**  
**February 10, 2026**

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "A. Eason". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "A".

---

Arlissa Eason, Deputy Clerk to the Board

---

Mark Jerrell, Chair