

Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2025

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, September 9, 2025.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Chair Mark Jerrell, Vice-Chair Leigh Altman
and Commissioners Vilma D. Leake,
Laura J. Meier, Elaine Powell,
Susan Rodriguez-McDowell,
And Yvette Townsend-Ingram
County Manager Dena R. Diorio
County Attorney Tyrone C. Wade
Clerk to the Board Kristine M. Smith

Absent: Commissioners Arthur Griffin and George Dunlap
Deputy Clerk to the Board Arlissa Eason

CALL TO ORDER

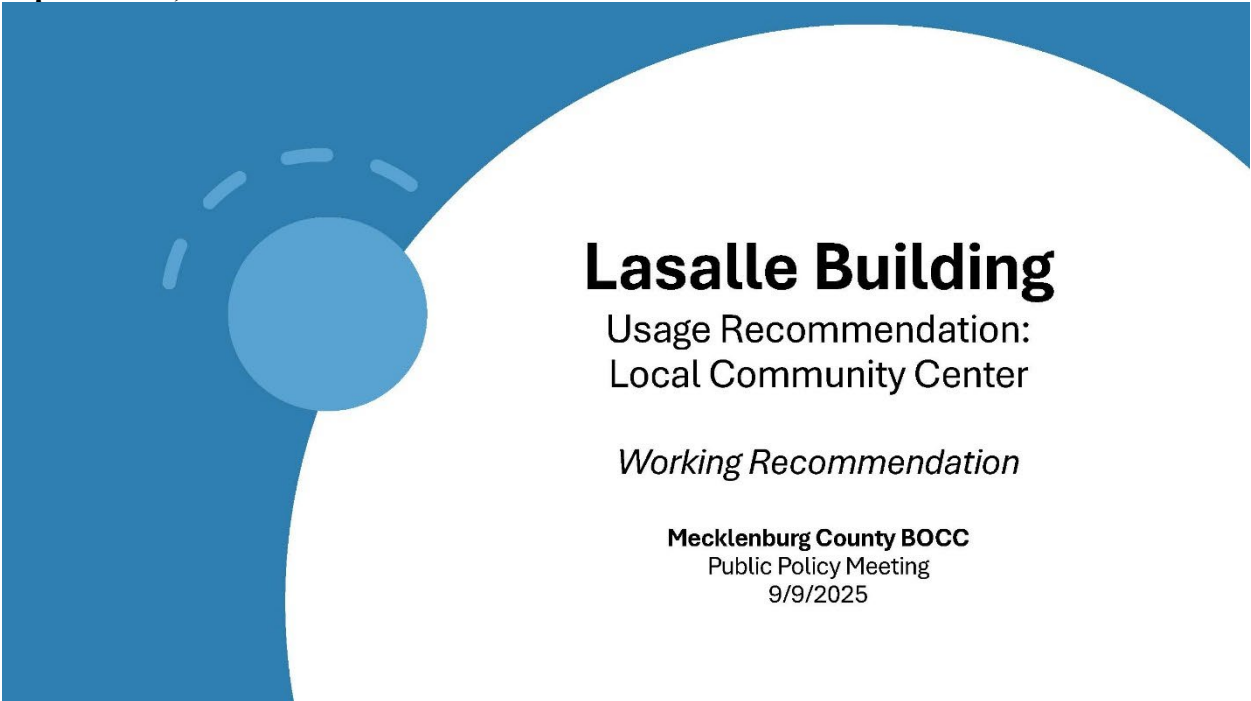
The meeting was called to order by Chair Mark Jerrell, which was followed by reading of the County's Mission and Vision and the FY2026 Board Budget Priorities, introductions, and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

25-0493 Ride The District Follow-Up Item - Vacant Lasalle Building Usage Proposal

The Commissioners provided feedback on a draft proposal for usage of the vacant county building located at 2324 Lasalle Street, Charlotte NC 28216.

Background: This item is a follow-up from multiple Commissioner Ride the Districts related to a potential usage of the vacant county building located at 2324 Lasalle Street. This presentation provides an overview of the facility and a working draft of proposed usage for the facility. The presentation seeks to solicit commissioner feedback on the draft proposal to incorporate into the proposal, as well as proposed next steps once the draft is finalized.

Sr. Assistant to the County Manager Zackary Lewis gave the presentation.



Purpose

The purpose of this presentation is as a follow-up item from multiple Commissioner-Ride-the-Districts with the County Manager regarding possible use of the vacant Lasalle Building for a community center or to house community programs for youth and families in the Lincoln Heights area.

This presentation provides a **working recommendation** for the facility based on staff research and seeks commissioner feedback before moving to next steps.

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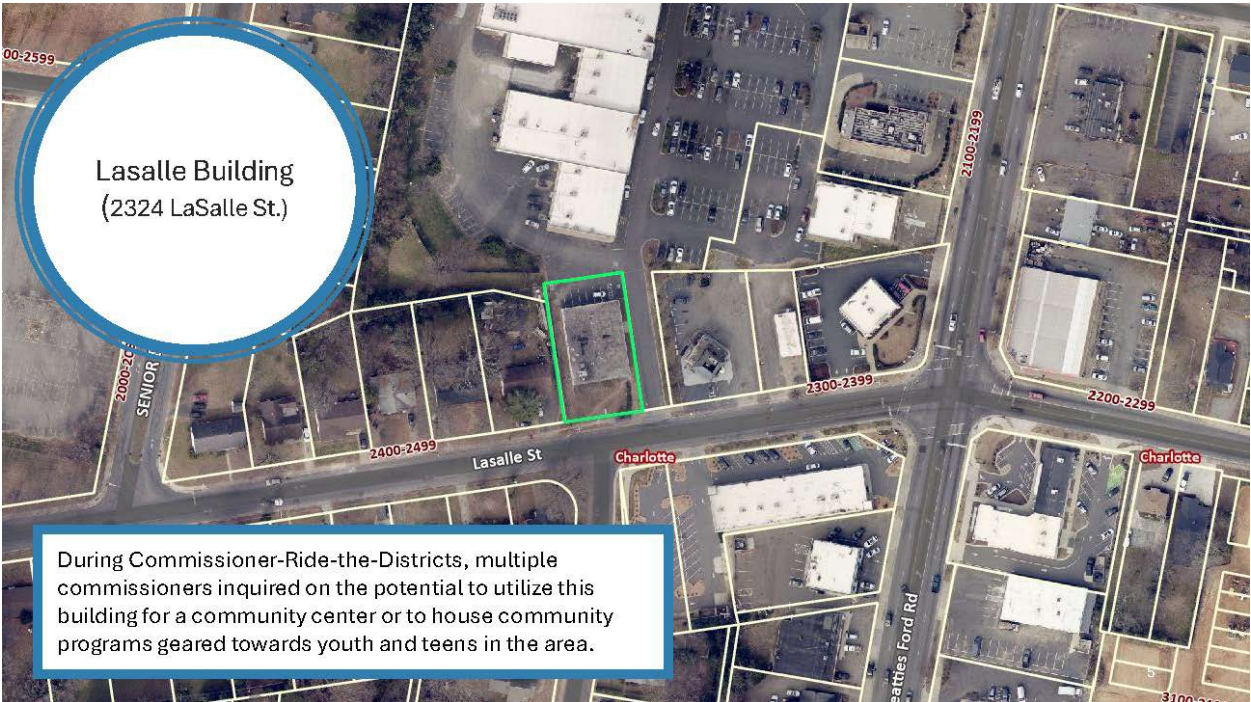
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Agenda

- 1) Lasalle Building Overview and History
- 2) Community Center Model & Program Frameworks
- 3) Example Centers and Programs
- 4) Draft Recommendation
- 5) Proposed Next Steps

Lasalle Building Overview and History

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Lasalle Building History

- **1956** – Charlotte Mecklenburg Library acquired property to build the North Branch Library.
- **1998** – Allegra Westbrooks Regional Library opens (formerly, Beatties Ford Rd. Branch), and the property deeded to the City of Charlotte as the library no longer needed it.
- **1998-2012** – The City of Charlotte utilized the building for the Neighborhood and Business Services Northwest Area team.
- **2012-2019** – City of Charlotte allowed Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to house Project L.I.F.T. in the building.
- **2019-2024** – Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools used the building for the Northwest Learning Community.
- **2024** – City of Charlotte deeded the property back to the Library, who determined no program needs for the property, and donated the property to Mecklenburg County.



Lasalle Building Characteristics

- Located near the intersection of Lasalle Street & Beatties Ford Road.
- Location borders the Lincoln Heights neighborhood (.3 miles away).
- W. Charlotte High School, NW School of the Arts, & University Park Creative Arts school nearby.
- CATS Bus Stop directly in front of the building.
- New retail centers directly across the street.
- 8 dedicated parking spaces and an adjoining parking lot attached to a Food Lion next door.
- Single Floor.
- 3,667 square feet.

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Community Center Model and Program Frameworks

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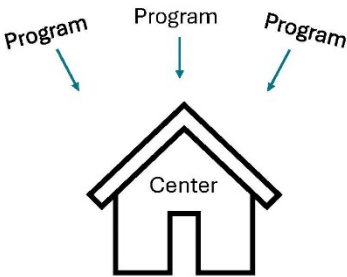
It’s important to understand the difference between a *community program* and a *community center*

Community Program = service designed to meet a specific community need and can be offered in many different locations or platforms (online, in-person, etc.).

Community Center = Physical space that houses one or many community programs based on the community need.

Community centers can offer both in-house services, but also referral-based services to additional partners.

*As additional needs are discovered or shift in the community being served, the mission and programs housed inside a community center can change.



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Staff researched “design frameworks” of community centers and programs, and existing centers/programs in both Mecklenburg County and other cities

- **Creative & Artistic Expression Model (pg. 30-31):** This model uses the arts, from music and visual arts to media production, as a primary vehicle for engagement, personal growth, and providing a safe, non-violent outlet for expression.
- **Recreation & Safe Haven Model (pg. 32-33):** This model's core purpose is to provide a safe, supervised space with a variety of recreational activities, offering a positive alternative to negative influences and simply providing a place for kids to be kids.
- **Crisis Intervention Model (pg. 34-35):** This is a specialized, 24/7 model that provides immediate on-site care, temporary shelter, and professional support for those facing acute crises, such as homelessness, family conflict, or mental health emergencies.
- **Services for Seniors Model (pg. 36-37):** This is also a specialized model, tailoring services specifically to Senior Citizens to support health, independence, and social well-being, through activities such as health, wellness, social, and recreation.
- **Skills & Career Development Model (pg. 11-13):** This model focuses on preparing teenagers for future employment by offering vocational training, job readiness workshops, and internship opportunities to build marketable skills.
- **Youth Leadership & Civic Engagement Model (pg. 14-16):** This model empowers teenagers to become active community leaders by teaching them about civic processes and giving them a voice in decisions that affect their neighborhood.
- **Comprehensive Support Model (pg. 17-18):** This model provides a wide range of services, including academic help, mentorship, health services, and life skills, to address all aspects of a teenager's well-being and promote holistic development.

*Detailed information and examples found in the Appendix – see pg. numbers by each model.

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Skills and Career Development Model

This model focuses on preparing teenagers for future employment and career paths, often with a specific emphasis on in-demand skills.

Typical Services:

- **Vocational Training:** Hands-on training in trades like coding, graphic design, culinary arts, or automotive repair.
- **Internship and Job Placement:** Connecting teens with local businesses for internships or part-time jobs.
- **Entrepreneurship Programs:** Workshops on how to start a small business, manage a budget, and market a product.
- **Digital Literacy:** Training on computer software, online safety, and digital media creation.

Example: A center might have a dedicated computer lab with industry-standard software, or a kitchen for culinary training. They would build strong partnerships with local employers or educational institutions to create a pipeline for their participants.

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Skills and Career Development Program Model

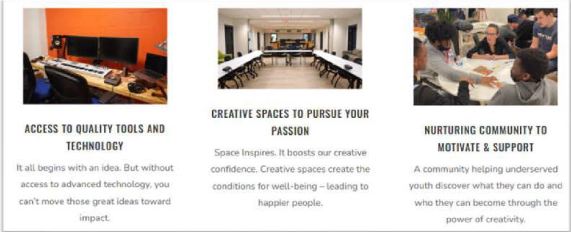
Organization building creative confidence in underserved and under-resourced communities through design, entrepreneurship and innovative technology. The foundation provides advanced technology tools, creative spaces and a nurturing community.

- Technical classes and trainings
- Summer camps
- Open studio and design spaces
- Real world work experience



Currently located in Shiloh Institutional Baptist church.

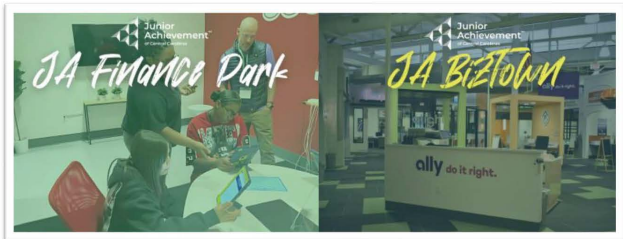
“Creative Lab” under construction in uptown.



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Skills and Career Development Program Model



Junior Achievement offers programs and classes to all grade levels focusing on:

- Financial Literacy
- Entrepreneurship
- Work Readiness

These programs are designed to connect real-world experiences to school curriculum.



What is Junior Achievement?

Junior Achievement of Central Carolinas helps students identify, navigate, and achieve a fulfilled future.

Alongside our many volunteer mentors, Junior Achievement provides hands-on curriculum programs surrounding preparation for the workforce, personal finance, and being entrepreneurial that help youth unleash their own boundless potential and achieve a fulfilled future.

Purpose

Junior Achievement's purpose is to inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy.

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Charlotte, NC [Website](#)

Youth Leadership and Civic Engagement Model

This model empowers teenagers to become active and positive change agents in their own community. It teaches them about civic processes and the power of their own voices.

Typical Services:

- **Youth Council:** A group of teens who help make decisions about the center's programming and rules.
- **Community Organizing:** Training on how to identify a community problem and organize a campaign to address it (e.g., a park cleanup, a petition for better streetlights).
- **Leadership Workshops:** Public speaking, conflict resolution, and team-building exercises.
- **Volunteer Opportunities:** Connecting teens with local non-profits and community events where they can volunteer.

Example: A center might host forums with local politicians or community leaders, allowing teens to ask questions and voice their concerns directly. The center's mission is to develop the next generation of leaders.

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Youth Leadership and Civic Engagement Program Model (and Skills and Career Development)

National program with local chapters (existing Charlotte chapter), dedicated to identifying, educating, and developing young Black leaders to have a positive impact in their community and beyond. YBLA focuses on helping our young people become leaders who are college and career ready and giving back to their community.



Ambassador Program: Provides leadership development, community service projects, networking opportunities with leaders, and travel experiences for high achieving, college bound students.

Black Talent Pipeline: Provides professional trainings and development opportunities to prepare students for internships and employment.

YoPro: Young Black Professionals program (35 & under), providing networking, learning, and social activities to build connections and foster community.

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Nationwide, HQ in Charlotte [Website](#)



Youth Leadership and Civic Engagement Model Program



YOU can be the next school board

STUDENT ADVISOR

Role

- Serve as the Student Advisor to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education (CMS school board)
- Actively prepare for and attend school board meetings twice a month
- Share student views in board discussions and policy-making
- Lead as an officer of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Youth Council (the CMS student advisory council)

Who can be a candidate?

- CMS students in grade 10 or 11
- Sign up to be a candidate before September 20

Timeline

- 8/25-9/20 Candidate application open
- 9/30 Finalists announced
- 10/20-11/4 Election (all CMS HS students can vote!)
- 11/5 Winner announced
- 11-12/31 Student Advisor term of office

Information and application

application opens 8/25 @cmsboard @generationnation

Provides children of all ages opportunities to build social capital, learn about civics, government, community, decision making, etc., leading to a career of leadership success.

- Youth Council
- YouthLead
- KidsLead
- CMS Board Advisor
- Kids Voting
- Civics704

Charlotte, NC [Website](#)

Comprehensive Support Model

This model is designed to address a wide range of a needs, often with the goal of holistic development and stability.

- Typical Services:**
- **Academic Support:** Tutoring, homework help, college application assistance, and SAT/ACT prep.
 - **Mentorship:** Pairing teens with adult mentors from the community to provide guidance and positive role models.
 - **Socializing:** Supervised “hang out” location.
 - **Mental and Physical Health:** On-site or referral-based counseling, health screenings, and wellness workshops (e.g., nutrition, stress management).
 - **Life Skills:** Workshops on financial literacy (budgeting, opening a bank account), job readiness (resume writing, interview skills), and healthy relationships.
 - **Recreational Activities:** Sports, video games, arts and crafts, and open-ended social time.
 - **Visual Arts:** Painting, drawing, sculpture, and graphic design classes.

Example: A center might partner with several external community partners to offer each specific service, housed in a dedicated location, or offer referrals to partners offering each service.



Comprehensive Support Model

Holistic support for youth of all needs, specifically geared towards LGBTQ+ youth in Charlotte and surrounding communities.



- “Drop In” Location
- Crisis Intervention
- Safe Space
- Recreational Activities
- Support Services
- Academic Support
- Social Activities
- Leadership Development
- Health and Wellness
- Mental Support
- Artistic Programming

In-house and referral-based services

Charlotte, NC [Website](#)

Recommendation

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There are several **key considerations** examined when drafting a recommendation.

Key considerations identified while reviewing models and programs:

- Target Population:** Who/where should the offerings be targeted towards?
- Community Needs:** What is needed for the target audience?
- Model:** Which model(s) best fit the needs of the community
- Adjacent Services:** What services currently exist in the area - Libraries, Park & Rec, Churches, etc.?
- Service Hours:** All day service offerings vs. After School/Summer?
- Service Offerings:** In-house vs. referral services?
- Participation:** “drop-in” services and programs vs. registration based?
- Program Administration:** County vs. Sole nonprofit administration vs. partnership based?
- Governance Structure:** Who/what entity directs center strategy and operations?
- Cost:** Most are no cost, but some have fees.

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Draft Recommendation:

Lasalle
Community
Center
Hybrid Model –
Partnership
Approach

This recommendation focuses on identifying a primary non-profit partner to manage and oversee the center and identify additional partners to facilitate programming and services across a variety of program areas.

Primary Target population: Youth-teens and Families in the Lincoln Heights neighborhood.

Goal: Providing convenient, accessible, and **safe** opportunities for the whole family to increase their **upwards economic mobility**.

Primary Center Model(s): Hybrid Model

- Skills & Career Development
- Youth Leadership & Civic Engagement
- Comprehensive Support

Service Offerings: Maximize facility usage, tailoring primary services to families and adults throughout the day, and youth-teens afterschool, and weekend/summer offerings.

Governance Structure: Sole non-profit operator, with partnership programming, governed by a community steering committee.

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By using a **“Hybrid”** approach that pulls service offerings from multiple frameworks, program offerings can address several community needs.

Bucket 1: Youth/Teen Academic & Life Skills	Bucket 2: Adult & Family Empowerment	Bucket 3: Upwards Mobility Pathways	Bucket 4: Community & Family Engagement
• After-school drop in hours • Academic support & enrichment • Creating a “Safe Place” • Mentorship & leadership development • Recreation & creative expression programs • Personal development • Mindfulness and mental health workshops	• Financial literacy • Career coaching • Parent & family support workshops • Legal workshops • Resource assistance	• Workforce readiness programs • Hard skills & certifications (technical & trade) • Entrepreneurship and business fundamentals • Apprentice academies • Personal finance	• Community projects • Service & volunteer initiatives • Parent-child activities • Youth & family events

*These are just general offerings, with each individual program having more specifics.
For example, “workforce readiness programs” can include job application help, interview preparation, etc.

**Offerings can include a mix of both partner programs by outside organizations, and county programs as well

Recommendation

Governance Structure

Role	Stakeholder	Responsibilities (generally)
Lead Entity	Mecklenburg County	• Provides facility • Provides funding and approves Lead Operator budget • Identifies activity scope • Manages RFP process for primary non-profit • Oversees performance • Assists in outreach and communications
Lead Operator	Primary Non-Profit	• Establishes and manages operations • Identifies and maintains partners • Develops program scheduling • Identifies additional funding streams • Establishes performance indicators and reports
Advisory Board	Neighborhood residents (teens & seniors), county representative, and nonprofit community, CMPD, MCSO, etc.	• Often established during planning stages • Direct activities and major decision points in operations • Provides recommendations on programmatic changes

County-Facility Partnership Agreements

Mecklenburg County has engaged in facility use agreements with entities. Agreements include:

- Lease Term
- Annual Lease Rate
- Maintenance and Upkeep
- Repairs/Replacements:

Location:	7805 Forest Point Blvd., Charlotte, NC
Property Details:	Approximately 2.854 acres with two buildings of approximately 96 total residential units
Lease Term:	Approximately Three (3) years. Lease shall begin on the effective date and expire on June 30, 2026 unless sooner terminated.
Base Lease Rate:	\$1 per year
Facility Maintenance:	Roof Above shall be responsible for all necessary routine/preventative facility and grounds maintenance.
Repairs/Replacements	Roof Above shall be responsible for all repairs/replacements when the cost of each event/item is \$5,000 or less. Mecklenburg County shall be responsible for all major repairs/replacements when the cost of each event/item exceeds \$5,000.

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Proposed Next Steps

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After incorporating feedback from the board, staff plan to take a **series of additional steps**

- 1) Pressure test the recommendations with additional community leaders in the Beatties Ford Rd./Lincoln Heights area.
- 2) Seek to identify any existing national models related to the finalized identified services.
- 3) Determine any facility improvements or remodels needed to the Lasalle building.
- 4) Issue a Request for Information (RFI) or Request for Proposals (RFP) to identify a non-profit as a Lead Operator based on identified scope.

Questions & Feedback?

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Appendix

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Creative and Artistic Expression Model

This model uses the arts as a primary vehicle for engagement, personal growth, and self-expression. It provides a non-violent outlet for emotions and creativity.

Typical Services:

- **Visual Arts:** Painting, drawing, sculpture, and graphic design classes.
- **Performing Arts:** Theater, dance, music lessons, and performance opportunities (e.g., open mic nights, talent shows).
- **Media Production:** Filmmaking, photography, podcasting, and creating a community newspaper or zine.
- **Creative Writing:** Poetry slams, short story workshops, and journaling.

Example: A center could have a dedicated art studio, a small performance stage, and recording equipment. The focus is less on academic achievement and more on building confidence and finding a voice through art.



Creative and Artistic Expression Model

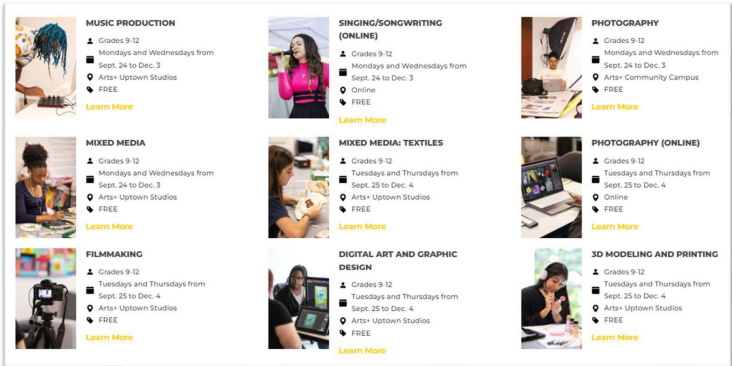
“Providing unique experiences for high school students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools, Studio 345 fosters a sense of belonging and interconnectedness and provides an avenue for students to build social capital. Taught and mentored by professional working artists who are part of the Charlotte artist community, students gain invaluable experiences enabling them to become creative risk-takers and craftspeople while growing emotionally, intellectually, and artistically.”



*Inspired by the Bill Strickland youth program model that “environment shapes behavior.”

**Located inside Ascend Nonprofit Solutions Center

***Free for CMS 9-12 grade students



Recreation and Safe Haven Model

This is often the most straightforward model, focusing on providing a safe, supervised space with a variety of recreational activities. Its primary goal is to offer an alternative to street violence and boredom.

Typical Services:

- **Organized Sports:** Basketball, volleyball, soccer leagues.
- **Game Room:** Pool tables, foosball, board games, video game consoles.
- **Open Social Space:** A lounge area with comfortable seating where teens can just hang out and talk with friends.
- **Supervised Free Time:** Adult supervision is a key component, but the activities are often less structured than in other models.

Example: A center could be a simple gymnasium with a few classrooms and a lounge. The emphasis is on keeping the doors open and providing a consistent, safe place for teens to simply be kids, away from negative influences.

*This model is often the foundation upon which more structured services are built.

two.fifty.four

Gahanna’s Teen Center

Recreation and Safe Haven Model

“Owned and operated by the ‘Gahanna Ages and Abilities Partnership,’ a local community nonprofit dedicated to relational needs in the community, including social, educational, recreational, cultural, vocational, and spiritual needs, with a special emphasis on the needs of particular age groups.”



“Hangout” space for teenagers in Gahanna, Ohio and surrounding communities that is free of charge.

- Safe Space
- Recreational Activities
- Academic Support
- Social Activities
- Artistic Programming

Crisis Intervention Model

This model is the most specialized, requiring a very specialized level of infrastructure and expertise to address crisis needs.

Typical Services:

- **24/7 Availability:** Often some form of 24/7 support, whether a hotline or intake center.
- **Immediate, On-Site Support:** Trained professionals of varying needs available or on-site at all times equipped to interact with individuals in crisis situations.
- **Short-Term Housing or Shelter:** A core component of this model, typically on-site and not a referral-based service due to immediacy.
- **Family Mediation & Reunification:** If safe, a primary goal is often helping resolve a crisis and reunifying a family back together.
- **Connecting to Long-Term Resources:** Crisis centers are often first-stops for long term needs.

Example: A center may offer 24/7 support for teenagers in need, providing temporary housing, a variety of social determinant of health services, and family intervention.

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Crisis Intervention Model

The relatives offers programs and services geared specifically towards young people aged 7-24 experiencing crisis needs.

- Safe space
- Crisis support
- Social Determinants of Health needs
- Emergency housing
- Education & Skills training
- Case Management
- Recreational Activities

The “On Ramp Resource Center” helps young people prepare and transition to adulthood.



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Charlotte, NC [Website](#)

Services for Seniors Model

This is also a specialized, tailoring services specifically to Senior Citizens to support health, independence, and social well-being, through activities such as health, wellness, social, and recreation.

Typical Services:

- **Recreation & Social Activities:** Card games, low-impact sports, puzzles, etc.
- **Technology Classes:** How to use smartphones, computers, etc.
- **Health & Wellness:** Screening classes and resources around nutrition, fitness, and disease prevention (ex. diabetes, high blood pressure, etc.).
- **Resources Assistance:** Help navigating resources and programs such as Social Security, etc.
- **Hobby Classes:** Learning how to paint, sew, knit, etc.
- **Field Trips:** Group outings to various destinations, either for learning and enrichment or activity.

Example: A center may provide recreational and wellness activities geared towards senior citizens, and also have space for classes, social activities, and even offer field trips.

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Comprehensive Support Model

Senior Support

Dedicated location for seniors to participate in a variety of activities daily, including:

- Health and Wellness screenings
- Recreation Activities
- Social Activities
- Technology classes
- Educational seminars
- Visual and Performing arts
- Field Trips



Matthews, NC [Website](#)

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Hybrid Model

Many successful communities use a **hybrid model**, blending elements of several model categories.

Typical Services:

- **Game Rooms:** Pool tables, foosball, board games, video game consoles.
- **Academic Support:** Tutoring, homework help, college application assistance, and SAT/ACT prep.
- **Visual Arts:** Painting, drawing, sculpture, and graphic design classes.
- **Mental Health:** : On-site or referral-based counseling and wellness resources

***Recreation and Safe Haven models** often offer a great starting point, immediately addressing the need for a “safe space,” and allows for gradual inclusion of other elements as needed as learning about the specific community needs.

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Afterschool program, geared more towards elementary school children, but does have a monthly program fee.



Hybrid Model Center

Recreation & Safe Haven / Skills & Career Development



- Recreational Activities
- Social Activities
- Educational Activities

Charlotte, NC [Website](#)

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Hybrid Support Program

Program administered inside of partner locations – **Albemarle Rd. Rec Center**

Programming focused in 3 primary areas:

- Mentorship
- Anti-Violence
- Educational

Programs delivered in partnership with other groups, such as CMPD



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Charlotte, NC [Website](#)



Formed through partnership with:



Hybrid Support Program

Excel Beyond the Bell Elementary is a comprehensive, high-quality after-school program that provides opportunities for academic and recreational enrichment, in an environment that stimulates learning and harnesses the power of play. This program has been designed to remove barriers to participation and promote pathways to student success.

Offerings

- Recreational Activities
- Academic Support
- Career Exploration
- Social/Emotional Learning
- Artistic Programming
- Health & Wellness

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Montgomery County, MD [Website](#)

Comments

Commissioner Leake thanked the presenter and said the information was thorough. She said it covered a large portion of the area's needs. She often visited the area, but the West Charlotte recreational center could offer the same things, but it did not. She said there were schools listed around West Charlotte that would benefit from it. She said she had been meeting with community members in that area, and the violence was bad, while the City had a responsibility to clean up the area, but failed to do so. She said the strip mall with the grocery store and other businesses was not kept clean. She said drugs and prostitution were major issues, and these were pockets in her district that were rough.

Commissioner Townsend-Ingram said she was one of the Commissioners who pointed out that place, and the recommendations were great. She said she felt they needed the emergency shelter, job, and food services. She said on the previous Wednesday, there was a community meeting called the Black Community Meeting, and she read they wanted the County to poll them and ask what they needed instead of being told what they needed. She said it wouldn't be hard to hold a poll in that area, give them options, and ask what they felt would be more beneficial. She said the parking lot for the Food Lion near the center was badly maintained and if they did that and polled the area, the community would be more apt to use the facility.

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Commissioner Powell said the presentation was thorough and asked what state the building was in. *Asset and Facility Management director Mark Hahn said the building was in decent shape with good bones. He said they would have to look at what they wanted it to be in order to know what needed to be done and what reconfiguration they would need. He said the inside workings would be the major costs.*

Commissioner Powell asked, if rent were a dollar, what sort of investment would be needed to make it work. *Mr. Hahn said they would have to know what programs they were planning with it, but overnight stays would require much different renovations that were expensive.*

Commissioner Powell asked if the West Recreation Center was registered as a safe place. *Mr. Lewis said organizations with big yellow safe place signs were nationally certified with assurances that their facility offered people they were safe there.*

Commissioner Powell said it was important to engage with the community, especially since they didn't hear from them much.

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell said she was asking community leaders what they believed was important because she wasn't familiar with the area, and the space was at a premium. She said nonprofits always needed space to serve people, and it was great that the County had the space to offer the community. She said mental health was something she would like to investigate as well, and having space at \$1 per year for counseling centers would let them provide their services at a lower cost. She asked if there were any free health clinics in the area.

Commissioner Meier said they needed to talk to the community leaders and said she often thought about out-of-school time and felt tutoring and mentoring was important. She said when she thought of emergency housing, she considered the risks of loitering and other issues like that, so she considered youth more.

Commissioner Altman said she was excited about the opportunity to use the space and liked the "all above" approach. She said she believed people's attendance would tell them what they wanted, but thought getting their opinions on the front end was important.

Commissioner Leake said she would like them to think about the total community and talking was great but doing was better. She said the community needed it and hoped they'd come up with a recommendation for the board and for the community to tell them what they wanted. She said she was concerned about the participation and hoped they could come up with a recommendation that would enhance the total community and not just that given area.

Chair Jerrell thanked the Manager and said it was important not to have assets just sitting. He said they needed to figure out all the assets that they had sitting because they had a lot of nonprofits that needed space, and they could identify what the community could use. He said outreach to the community was important, and he met with all committee chairs and said they were in the business of doing transformational change, and they wanted feedback from the community. He said he hoped they would consider having multiple different operators in the space, as it would add value. He said there had been issues with the outreach, and the Board would get calls from great operators, but there was a Request for Proposals (RFP) process they had to follow.

County Manager Bryant said if they knew anyone to let them know, and it was important they remember they had to follow the RFP.

Commissioner Townsend-Ingram said they needed to compile a list of partners within a certain mile radius of the spot, including the churches, schools, and businesses owners.

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25-0510 Intergovernmental Affairs Strategy

The Board received the first proposed Intergovernmental Affairs Strategy to the Board of County Commissioners.

Background: The Intergovernmental Affairs Strategy will guide the County’s government affairs practice and includes the associated goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics. This was previously presented to the Intergovernmental Relations Committee on September 4th.

Lisette Nimmons gave the presentation.

Mecklenburg County | mecklenburg.gov

Intergovernmental Affairs Strategy

Lisette Nimmons
Intergovernmental Affairs Manager

Budget/Public Policy Workshop

September 9, 2025

 **MECKLENBURG COUNTY**
North Carolina

Agenda

Congressional Update

→

NC General Assembly Update

→

Function of Intergovernmental Affairs

→

Purpose of Intergovernmental Affairs Strategy

↓

Goals

←

Objectives

←

Strategies

←

Focus Areas

2

Congressional Update

- Congress recessed through August and will return this week.
- House and Senate released draft appropriations bills.
- Likely no budget by September 30 resulting in a short-term Continuing Resolution (CR) or shut down.

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NC General Assembly Update

- Adjournment Resolution passed July 30, 2025
- Members will convene monthly through April 7, 2026
- Members will convene for the short session on April 21, 2026
- Governor signed HB125, titled Continuing Budget Operations, on August 6th

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Function of Intergovernmental Affairs

Current Language

The Mecklenburg County Intergovernmental and Legislative Affairs Program manages the federal and regional legislative affairs for Mecklenburg County. This includes the legislative agenda advocacy and stakeholder engagement.

<https://mgr.mecknc.gov/programs/legislative-affairs>

Proposed Language

The Mecklenburg County Intergovernmental Affairs Manager directs federal, state, regional and local government affairs on behalf of Mecklenburg County and the Board of County Commissioners. This includes staffing the Board of County Commissioner’s Intergovernmental Relations Committee, developing the legislative agenda, advocacy and stakeholder engagement.

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Purpose of Intergovernmental Affairs Strategy

Based on the legislative agenda adopted December 10, 2024.

<https://mecknc.widen.net/s/kh6tmrnskn/mecklenburg-county-state-and-federal-legislative-agenda>.

- 🎯 List goals which is what we intend to accomplish.
- 🔗 Identify objectives to measure how goals will be accomplished.
- ✓ Offer strategies which will be implemented to achieve the goals.
- 📋 Suggest actions to support each strategy.
- 🔍 Elevate focus areas based on current priorities.

Goals, objectives and strategies remain in place for the 2-year plan period
The focus areas that center our activities are subject to change quarterly.

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FY26	Goals	Objectives
1.	Mitigate Impact	Offer solutions to managing the impact of executive orders, federal and state law.
2.	Attain Priorities	Develop and advance County priorities to obtain desired results.
3.	Support Regional Efforts	Identify local and regional intergovernmental alignment and priorities.
4.	Establish Standard Operating Procedures	Improve infrastructure for developing legislative reports, impact assessments, advocacy material and year end reports.

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Strategies	
County Collaboration and Development	Seeking county feedback, input and approval from the BOCC, Executive Team and/or Departments.
Monitoring and Analysis	Tracking proposed agency rules, advocating for or against legislation and consulting with Departments on potential impact.
Stakeholder Engagement	Convening community partners for collaboration, engaging with neighboring counties, consulting with NACo and NCACC on policy positions, establishing a stronger presence with the NCACC, engaging with the Centralina Regional Council and discussing federal funding priorities with external partners.
Legislative Outreach and Education	Identifying committees to engage on policy priorities, relationship building with members of the delegation, identifying opportunities for BOCC to support delegation events, scheduling meetings with Republican members and members of the NC delegation in addition to scheduled events, attending annual events with the BOCC and ET, exploring opportunities to testify before committees, submitting comments on rulemaking, and joining or initiating sign on letters urging funding for priorities.
Community Engagement	Educating the community on the impact to these programs and elevating stories of impact.

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FY26 Focus Areas

Q2 (Oct – Dec 2025)

Q3 (Jan – March 2026)

Medicaid & SNAP

Budget

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

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Medicaid & SNAP	
Issue(s): work requirements, eligibility redeterminations, provider tax cuts, immigration-based restrictions, increased program cost share and increased administrative costs	
Strategy	Tactics
County Collaboration and Development	Continue discussions with Executive Team, HHS staff and the Budget Director on the impact of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act.
Monitoring and Analysis	- Track proposed federal rules from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) governing Medicaid. - Monitor federal Medicaid expansion updates and budget impact. - Prepare for negotiations and advocate for federal Farm Bill reauthorization.
Stakeholder Engagement	- Convene community partners for discussion on impact of federal legislation. - Engage with existing community partners on federal Farm Bill reauthorization. - Review action plans and engage with the Centralina Regional Council and neighboring counties. - Consult with NACo regarding advocacy activities related to federal Farm Bill reauthorization.
Legislative Outreach and Education	- Identify members of Congress to engage on the House Committee on Agriculture. - Brief the Mecklenburg state legislative delegation during the Annual Legislative Breakfast attended by the Board of Commissioners, Mecklenburg delegation and town leadership. - Request hearings and reports on Medicaid and SNAP disenrollment trends. - Comment on proposed rulemaking from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) on Medicaid. - Join or initiate sign on letters urging funding for health and nutrition.
Community Engagement	Consider developing a storytelling campaign with the Public Information Department (PID) to elevate stories of impact.
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Budget	
Issue(s): economic development and HUB, pending District Attorney positions, federal air quality funding	
Strategy	Tactics
County Collaboration and Development	Consult with county department directors on potential impact of proposed legislation.
Monitoring and Analysis	- Track state legislation as outlined in the Adjournment Resolution and advocate for or against. - Monitor NC SB257 which is the larger appropriations bill. - Track appropriations at the federal and state level. - Monitor provisions of Section 105 and 103 of the Clean Air Act.
Stakeholder Engagement	Consult with neighboring counties on their budget concerns.
Legislative Outreach and Education	- Send letter to federal delegation with appropriations and funding requests. - Develop a process for considering and selecting earmark requests from community organizations. - Attend NACo 2026 Legislative Conference with the Board of Commissioners and Executive Team. - Explore additional opportunities for engagement with the federal delegation in the district.
Community Engagement	Share how members of the federal delegation voted on FY25 appropriations bills.
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Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)	
Issue(s): federal grant renewals, proposed state ban, AG memo on federal funding	
Strategy	Tactics
County Collaboration and Development	- Continue discussions with Executive Team, Economic Development and the Office of Equity and Inclusion on the impact of proposed state legislation, federal Executive Orders and guidance from AG. - Consulting with Departments on existing grants and renewals.
Monitoring and Analysis	- Track state legislation as outlined in the Adjournment Resolution and advocate for or against. - Monitor status of litigation related to Executive Orders prohibiting DEI programs and practices.
Stakeholder Engagement	Support OEI in their continued conversations with the Partners for Racial Equity (PaRE) and the United Way Funder Collaborative.
Legislative Outreach and Education	Request changes to legislation at the state level to address specific issues of concern.
Community Engagement	Provide guidance to OEI as needed with the annual Mecklenburg County Community Survey, requests for community feedback and the Equity Action Plan.

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Next Steps

- Seek feedback from the Board of County Commissioners.
- Provide quarterly updates to the IGR Committee on the strategy and focus areas.

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Questions & Discussion



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Comments

Commissioner Meier said she wanted them to meet with people who didn't necessarily agree with them because they had more in common than it seemed.

Commissioner Altman thanked the Chair of Intergovernmental Relations, Commissioner Meier. She said they wanted to look for opportunities to improve the quality of life, where they did agree.

Commissioner Townsend-Ingram asked for cooperation with their delegation, the City, and the County, to align with work priorities.

Commissioner Powell said they should be committed to problem-solving, not looking to know who was republican and who was democrat.

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell said it felt like they were putting more energy into their place within the State, and they should all recall that the County Clerk gave them the booklet that included information pertaining to the State and a comparison between the counties. She said Mecklenburg County accounted for 21.7% of the GDP in North Carolina, and the next county was 15%. She said she believed they needed to provide more feedback and pushback, even at the federal and state levels.

Commissioner Rodriguez-McDowell said the State representatives needed to hear from them, and the County should be more engaged.

Commissioner Leake thanked them for getting involved with State and national government as well as discussing what they were doing to help make life better through their government procedures. She said she hoped there would be discussion from their part with other counties and to see what could be done to alleviate some of their problems, including housing and education. She said violence and mental health had always been a major issue and asked what they were doing to change the thought process.

Chair Jerrell requested Commissioner Meier to list the members of the committee.

Commissioner Meier said the committee members included herself, and Commissioners Rodriguez-McDowell, Townsend-Ingram, and Dunlap.

Chair Jerrell said Commissioner Townsend-Ingram was right about the magistrate in the north, and it was critical that they address that.

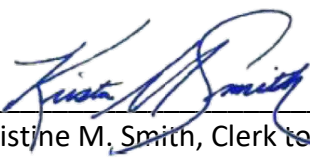
25-0511 **COMMISSIONER REPORTS**

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 3:58PM.

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Kristine M. Smith, Clerk to the Board



Mark Jerrell, Chair

Prepared by:



Brianna Benedict, Sr. Admin Support