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February 24, 2016

Dear Mayor and Members of the Charlotte City Council,

Serving as the Charlotte City Manager for the past three years has been an extraordinary experience. After considerable deliberation, I have decided not to seek an extension of my contract. The work that I came to help the Council achieve has largely been accomplished, as I outline below. It has been an intense and challenging three years and it has been a great honor to be part of this team. I am very proud of what we have been able to achieve together. A City Manager can only accomplish that which is in support of the policies and direction of the Mayor and Council.

Charlotte has shown a consistent commitment to equality and social justice. During a time of turmoil and conflict in many cities between its residents and their police, Charlotte came together to enhance community and police relations. Charlotte's values were further demonstrated by the Council's revisions to the Citizens' Review Board in 2013 and the adoption of a civil liberties resolution in 2015. I am especially proud of the Council's action this week to amend the City's non-discrimination ordinance to provide protections for the LGBT community.

When I arrived in Charlotte in April 2013, the city was beginning to emerge out of the recession and, like all cities, was challenged in many ways. The year before, the City Council was unable to agree on revisions to the capital program and, in 2012, missed a bond cycle. The Council was deadlocked over the streetcar plan, the airport was about to be taken from the city, and there was conflict with US Airways, one of our most important business partners. Charlotte is in a much different position today as the Mayor and Council have come together over the past three years – even in difficult times – to advance the overall best interests of the City.

In late spring 2013, the deadlock over the capital plan was broken and the City Council adopted a new community investment plan as well as a revised streetcar plan and funding for Bank of America Stadium. In 2014, voters approved community investment bonds by overwhelming margins. In 2015, phase one of the streetcar opened and the Council created a new transit fund with dedicated, non-property tax revenues to support streetcar operations for phase one and phase two. Design work was completed for phase two and \$75 million in federal funding was included in the budget recently signed by President Obama. Construction of the Blue Line Extension began in 2013 and is on time and within budget, and Charlotte recently received \$26 million for the Gateway project.

The airport has transitioned to new management and has addressed every concern raised by the General Assembly. The City now has a strong and positive partnership with our critical business partner, the new American Airlines. Airport investments have continued uninterrupted, creating an airport that is sustainable both physically and administratively.

Last year the city faced a budget crisis that exceeded any experienced during the great recession, yet the Council was able to adopt a sustainable budget that avoided employee lay-offs and lowered costs for most homeowners. The Council also paid attention to the lowest paid employees, raising the minimum starting salary to 60% of area median income, keeping healthcare premiums down, and opening new free health clinics for employees.

Other critical incidents over the past three years included multiple severe weather events and the dumping of PCBs into the sanitary sewer system. The City went through four mayoral transitions, including one that put the city's reputation at risk. Together, the City consistently demonstrated stability in crisis and preserved its underlying integrity. More enjoyable have been the numerous special events hosted by the City, including being awarded the NBA All-Star game for 2017.

Over the past three years, Charlotte has consistently moved forward. I thank all of the Mayors and City Council Members with whom I have had the privilege to work. I learned something from each of you and deeply respect your commitment to public service. I especially admire your courage in taking stands that clearly represent the people of Charlotte, but are at risk of being challenged by the North Carolina General Assembly.

The outstanding professionalism and dedication of City staff is second to none. Every major and minor accomplishment has involved a team of hard working and creative public administrators. They will provide stable leadership to continue moving Charlotte forward.

Most important is the outstanding day-to-day service delivery by City staff across every department. They care deeply about public service and are always willing to go the extra mile. Dedicated city workers are the reason we have a safe, clean, and fun City.

What makes Charlotte special is the collaboration between the City and the rest of the community: business, non-profits, philanthropy, and faith communities, and especially direct engagement with residents themselves. Collaboration and professionalism create the winning combination for Charlotte and will take the city to the next level. Charlotte is well positioned to continue to be a thriving, global city and to achieve its most critical goal of ensuring economic opportunity for all people.

As I said at the outset of this letter, it has truly been an honor to be part of this team and to share its many successes. I look forward to working with you on a smooth transition and to supporting your efforts in the future.

Most Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ron Carlee', written in a cursive style.

Ron Carlee

cc: Executive Cabinet

