



Charlotte City Council  
Workforce & Business Development Committee  
Summary  
June 7, 2021

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**COMMITTEE AGENDA TOPICS**

HIRE Charlotte  
Discuss Change to Summer Schedule  
Chair's Report

**COMMITTEE INFORMATION**

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**Committee Members Present:** Tariq Bokhari (Chair), Malcolm Graham (Vice-Chair), Dimple Ajmera, Renee Johnson and Greg Phipps

**Others:** Councilmember Braxton Winston  
Denada Jackson, Office of Constituent Services

**Staff Resources:** Tracy Dodson, City Manager's Office  
Christina Thigpen, Economic Development Department  
Fran West, Economic Development Department  
Emily Cantrell, Economic Development Department

**Meeting Duration:** 12:00pm-1:00pm

**Video Available Online:** [City of Charlotte Government - Workforce and Business Development Committee - June 7, 2021 | Facebook](#)

**ATTACHMENTS**

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1. Agenda – June 7, 2021
2. Presentation – HIRE Charlotte

**DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS**

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Chairman Bokhari called the virtual meeting to order and asked committee members, City staff and guests to introduce themselves.

**HIRE Charlotte**

Councilmember Bokhari introduced the item and shared his comments on the key elements of the strategic employment plan to increase upward mobility and sustainability, and to help inform other City

plans around infrastructure, transportation, water, housing, zoning and workforce programs as well as investment in the Corridors of Opportunity initiative.

Since the last update to the committee in January, Tracy Dodson shared additional information on the City's efforts to be strategic and build an ecosystem to align with other initiatives in our community, common goals and a shared vision to be more proactive to grow jobs in our community and to shape where potential investments are made.

Christina Thigpen provided an update on HIRE Charlotte initiative, a new model that will define how all partners within our employment ecosystem can work together to fill jobs and create career opportunities to drive economic prosperity for all residents and businesses. A team approach will be used to build the framework and will include staff from the City Manager's Office Executive Team, Economic Development staff, civic partners, municipalities, educational institutions, the business community and workforce development partners. The structure will evolve around a project management team, steering committee, work stream committees and project champions. A project website will also be created for citizens to share their feedback.

Ms. Thigpen also highlighted the key outcomes of what success would look like:

- To unite the entire employment ecosystem around a shared vision
- Help us to better identify and leverage connections among employment ecosystem partners
- Determine Charlotte's current ability to create and fill jobs and identify significant gaps and opportunities
- Ensure Charlotte is proactive in aligning future business recruitment, retention and expansion efforts with its long-range talent development pipeline
- Discover forces shaping the future of Charlotte's employment ecosystem
- Identify optimal future state and clear pathways to move Charlotte's employment ecosystem toward this purpose
- Inform ARP funding priorities for programming with proven results
- Meet metrics that will be established during the framework development process to monitor progress

### ***Committee Discussion***

Winston: What are we doing to shine the blind spots on those things we're not doing for the small businesses?

Dodson: We're trying to make sure we're all-encompassing and thinking about how we support small businesses as an ecosystem so they can sustain and thrive and how that will fit into the HIRE Charlotte concept.

West: We're also looking at expanding beyond the traditional sectors.

Johnson: As far as the timeline, when do you plan to engage the community and different industries to be a part of the conversation in the HIRE Charlotte Plan? For example, representatives from the reentry, immigrant and disabled communities as well as major populations. Can you give an overview of the American Recovery Plan and how that will impact the City?

Thigpen: We want to make the Plan as inclusive as possible and will reengage with our core employment ecosystem partners in the coming weeks to make sure those perspectives are a part of this work. Once we have the initial stakeholder meeting, our targeted outreach will be sometime in Q3 to inform the framework.

Dodson: We're also having one-on-one conversations in the community with our ecosystem partners from education to workforce providers as well as City departments to make sure we're aligned as we engage the community. In regard to the American Recovery Plan, Shawn Heath in the City Manager's Office will be reporting out later in June to Council on what we're doing across the City as a whole. For Economic Development, we want to focus on workforce and jobs.

Phipps: Have we identified any employment sectors that we consider undesirable from a strategic focus standpoint? For example, call centers, distributions centers, etc.?

Dodson: We're thinking about jobs that can create pathways and the right job opportunities.

West: We also need to get clarity on what our targets should be with our partners around parameters.

Cantrell: This is an area where there is going to be opportunities to collaborate with ongoing engagement around family sustaining wages. That initiative is being led by Goodwill Industries in partnership with Federal Reserve. There have been several community dialogues about good jobs, career pathways and understanding entry level wages. We will seek engagement from the Task Force to advance that work for the Charlotte region.

Phipps: How do we factor State-sponsored industry recruitment efforts to our own objectives when the goals may not align? What is our approach?

Dodson: When we have projects that come through the State, we talk with them about whether they are a good fit for Charlotte as well as the Alliance as it relates to the region. We're also in constant contact with the N.C. Department of Commerce, the Economic Development Partnership of N.C. and the Alliance on all prospects that come through.

West: When the City is in on these deals, we want the companies to be successful, so we are very strategic on who we partner with.

#### Next Steps on Key Work & Timeline

- June – organize project and build infrastructure
- June/July – mine existing relevant resources; establish/inspire work streams
- Q3'2021 – conduct work stream committees' task
- September 2021 – integrate work streams into draft approach
- Q4'2021 – finalize framework/pathways
- Q1'2022 and beyond – collaborate on implementation

Staff will continue their work on the HIRE Charlotte initiative and provide updates at future committee meetings.

#### Chair's Report

Councilmember Bokhari encouraged the community and media to spread the word on companies that have moved to Charlotte to promote their job openings and hire local.

Fran West also shared the link to the Jobs Connector, the City's one stop tool that connects job seekers and residents in the Charlotte area to career opportunities announced through economic development projects (<https://www.charlotteopenforbusiness.com/jobs-connector/>).

The meeting adjourned at 1:30p.m.