

**Responses to Questions from Safe Communities Committee Presentation  
2.2.2021**

The following documentation was prepared by a subcommittee of the Family Justice Center Steering Committee. Please direct any questions or requests for additional information to [karen.parker@safealliance.org](mailto:karen.parker@safealliance.org) or 704-367-2760.

**Council Members on committee:** Larken Egleston (LE) (Chair), Victoria Watlington (VW), Renee Johnson (RJ) and Dimple Ajmera (DA)

**Additional Council Members present:** Braxton Winston and Malcom Graham

**City staff:** Asst. City Manager Victoria Johnson

**CMPD:** Chief Jennings

**Presenters on behalf of FJC:** Spencer Merriweather, Andrew Oliver, Sherill Carrington & Karen Parker

**Policy Question:** How would partnering in the establishment of a Family Justice Center (FJC) in Mecklenburg County advance the city's violent prevention efforts?

**Committee Charge:**

1. Review the proposal submitted by FJC to determine the potential partnership options.
2. Assess participation options in conjunction with current violence prevention efforts and city focuses to determine potential impacts on advancing the city's violence prevention efforts.
3. Propose a recommendation for consideration by full council.

**Real Estate, Location, Building (includes COVID questions):**

1. **LE:** On the actual 100,000 sq ft building, is that something that someone has taken another look at given the changing landscape of work now in the age of Covid? Have you considered how it might have to be adapted to meet—places like this—places where people gather or people come together for services how it might need to look going forward?

*Early in our process we engaged JLL (Jones Lang LaSalle) commercial real estate firm to support our property search. To date, they report they are not seeing a uniform reduction in space, but rather re-allocation of space types to ensure flexibility in uses for health and safety reasons, as well as adaptability as businesses evolve their client, user and patient experiences. We have also consulted with other Family Justice Centers across the nation and, at the current time, none are reporting a move away from the in-person primary service delivery model or the need for less space to conduct business. As described in response #12 below, we believe that the most trauma informed and effective response for the vast majority of clients will be provided through in person services.*

2. **VW:** We have the Valerie Woodard Center and we just approved zoning on another co-location space. We know there is value in co-location—I wonder what the options are in terms of an existing building? *See response under Question #5.*
3. **VW:** Impact of Covid—there is a lot of space out there right now that folks are in need of filling. Is there an opportunity to cut costs with an existing building or renovation? *See response under Question #5.*
4. **VW:** I think about Valerie Woodard and surrounding neighborhood of Ashley Park and Freedom Drive—what were the drivers of that investment in the other FJCs? What we have seen so far, is Valerie Woodard hasn't sparked market/commercial investment. I would be hesitant to concentrate services without ensuring investing in areas. *See response under Question #5.*
5. **LE:** Ms. Watlington made this point, and I will underscore it around the building piece of this investment. When you are looking for \$11 million for acquisition \$9 million for renovation--\$5 million for furnishings—70% of budget is in the facility itself. I appreciate you making the point, there is not extra people being employed for this effort—I assume in the budget it is factoring in a savings—departure from current leases or building ownerships. Given the amount of vacant space due to Covid, obviously we want this to be near transit and uptown fits the bill but is that the best return on investment if we are hyper focused on the 277 loop? Is there something along the blue line in a non-uptown section of the blue line that we could also access a building on transit line, it would be easy to access, could that be an impact of dollars needed to make this come to fruition? Hope we are casting a wide net as we look at this real estate piece. Because it does seem to be overwhelming majority of budget. Location and it creating a comfortable space to come to in a very trying moment in their lives is important but it is the people there that is going to help the victims/people—and not the building itself. Hope we don't let that be an impediment of getting it done that we are focused on it being on a high profile building on corner of uptown.

***The following addresses Questions 2-5 in terms of real estate & building options:***

*The vision for the location, size and estimated cost of the proposed Umbrella Center comes after a thorough analysis of many significant factors over the past three years.*

***Location***

*The Umbrella Center is proposed to be located within 3 miles of Center City (for accessibility by the greatest number of victims) and would include an initial 75,000 square feet, with future expansion for an additional 25,000 square feet. A site has yet to be chosen for The Umbrella Center, and we have invited the City to join the FJC Location and Building Committee. However, given the City, County, community partners and prospective donors recognition of our mutual goals of addressing economic mobility, social justice, racial equity and violence reduction, it is desired that The Umbrella Center will be located in an area and in a manner, which contributes to the economic and social revitalization of the corridor upon which it is located and the neighborhoods which surround it. It is highly possible for The Umbrella Center to fit within the framework of the City's Corridors of Opportunity initiative. We have also continuously asked the City and the County if they know of properties that they own or that they can identify for The Umbrella Center. There is no available space at the Valerie Woodard Center but we would appreciate the opportunity to be near County and/or City service sites.*

## **Size**

*Site visits were made to family justice centers in Nashville, Milwaukee, Ft. Worth, San Diego and Greensboro to bring back best practices, learnings and observations in order to make the family justice center in Charlotte Mecklenburg the best in the country. The Umbrella Center is proposed to be one of the most comprehensive service delivery models in the country, encompassing domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, elder abuse and human trafficking intervention and prevention services. It envisions that both forensic health services and clinical health services will also be provided within the facility for victims and their families. It is a victim centric, trauma informed, evidence-based model. Twelve or more core partner agencies and many visiting agencies will eventually be housed under one roof. That is a major reason why the initial size of 75,000 square feet with growth to 100,000 square feet is desired. All family justice centers that we visited have outgrown their space within 2 to 3 years and we have taken that into consideration in our modeling.*

## **Estimated Cost**

*Originally, the construction of a new facility on a greenfield site was contemplated. The original, all-in new construction budget was \$40M, with an additional \$5M endowment to backstop operations. Given the budgetary pressures of COVID-19, together with the fact that COVID has created numerous vacant properties, we have amended our thinking to reduce the capital budget to \$30M which is modeled on the purchase and renovation of an existing vacant building yet to be identified. JLL, a major brokerage company in Charlotte, is assisting in the search for available properties and advising us on capital and operating cost estimates. The chosen location must also accommodate current parking requirements and higher development standards triggered by redevelopment. All of those standards have an impact on cost.*

## **Impact/Outcomes:**

6. **LE:** This is at least a reactive approach to some of the violence in the community, make the case to how this is—how you believe this could be a preventative approach to addressing violence in our community?

*The development of a family justice center is a proactive approach to address the 60,000 cases of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, and human trafficking reported locally each year. When established, The Umbrella Center will serve as a first line of defense, coordinating case response and service provision so that victims of the violence and abuse can more easily access all the services they need during the time of crisis and beyond. By centralizing all the services and support victims need, their options for safety are undoubtedly improved.*

*We expect to see increased requests for services in the years following the opening of The Umbrella Center as the public becomes aware of this resource and accesses available services. Since opening the Nashville Family Safety Center in 2019, officials have documented a steady increase in client visits. In its first year of operations, the FSC experienced a 33% average monthly client visit growth rate and an increase in multiple client victimization categories, particularly in elder abuse (667% increase), child sexual abuse (114% increase), child physical abuse (104% increase), adult sexual assault (83% increase), sex trafficking (71% increase), and stalking (30% increase).*

*However, as we more effectively address the thousands of cases of violence and abuse in our community, we expect to see more victims ultimately break the cycle of violence. This will, in turn, reduce rates of revictimization and we may begin to see reports of domestic violence and child abuse decrease in our community.*

7. **VW:** Is the intention of this center to reduce the number of cases of domestic violence and if so can you help me understand how co-locating can help reduce the number of cases? How can this particular solution address prevention?

*The primary aim of The Umbrella Center is to centralize services for victims to more effectively address the 60,000 cases of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse and human trafficking experienced in our community each year.*

*In Mecklenburg County, nearly half of all domestic violence victims report that they are unable to access all the help they need because the system is complex and difficult to navigate. Clients with the greatest difficulties are all too often already marginalized and under resourced. They lack transportation, childcare or family support, and cannot afford to take time off from work to begin navigating their path to healing. As a result, they do not obtain final protective orders, receive needed medical attention, and trauma counseling to heal emotionally. They are unable to access the resources needed to apply for economic support, housing, or find other concrete resources that promote safety and healing. By centralizing services in one location, victims can obtain all the help they need at one time, improving their prospects for healing so that they can establish a life free from violence.*

*The secret to the success of FJCs across the country is rooted in the model of co-location between mission-aligned, service providers. Partners include law enforcement, social services, health/mental healthcare, communities of faith, and established and grassroots nonprofit organizations.*

*Child Advocacy Centers and Family Justice Centers have long demonstrated that co-location improves communication between partner agencies. When a detective can walk down the hall to coordinate with the DSS social worker, child forensic interviewer, child abuse pediatrician, and district attorney handling that case, mistakes are minimized, and partner relationships are improved. This connectedness increases communication, improves information sharing, and ensures we get the best from all organizations. Co-location streamlines and improves investigative and treatment outcomes because all cases are viewed through the lens of collaboration from the outset. It consolidates our execution and understanding of best practices, improves collaboration, and ultimately results in better outcomes for victims and those tasked with bringing healing and justice.*

*Consider the community of Alameda County (CA), which reports significant improvements and positive outcomes attributed to the development of their FJC and co-location model:*

- Increased reporting of domestic violence cases, indicating increased victim confidence in the system, which has been gained in part through colocation of advocates, services, and law enforcement/prosecution.*
- Improvements in the quality of law enforcement investigations, which law enforcement and prosecution representatives directly attribute to their co-location.*
- Improvements in prosecution outcomes including increases in felony filings, felony convictions, misdemeanor convictions, and reductions in case dismissals following filing.*

*Dismissals in felony cases of violence/abuse dropped 40% from 2006 to 2009 (from 31% of cases to 18.68%), and dismissals for misdemeanor cases declined 65% during the same period (from 55% to 19%).*

8. **VW:** I want to understand a little bit more about the numbers because they are compelling. Can you talk about the theory or the mechanism that actually drove the numbers down? Can we tie these numbers down to specific actions rather than possibly external factors?

*The most tragic consequence of domestic violence is undoubtedly the death of one or both intimate partners, and in some cases, their children or family and friends of the victim. Since 2010, 12-24% of all homicides investigated by CMPD were deemed “domestic related” and intimate partner violence was a contributing factor in 47.1% of female homicides in Mecklenburg County from 2009-2018 (NC Injury and Violence Prevention Branch, 2020).*

*An abundance of research shows that domestic and intimate partner homicides can be prevented when victims and their children are wrapped in support and can access the services that move them to a life free from violence and abuse. The victim-centered approach – like the help victims will find at the family justice center – is an essential component of an effective, coordinated community response.*

*FJCs across the country have documented their success in reducing DV-related and intimate partner homicides:*

- Officials in San Diego demonstrated a reduction of nearly 95% in domestic violence homicides over a 15-year period.*
- Alameda County (CA) saw a dramatic drop in domestic violence homicides (17 cases in 2002 to 3 in 2011), a decrease concurrent with the opening and the first six-years of FJC operations, and with the establishment of effective Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Response Teams.*
- After opening the Guilford County (NC) FJC in 2016, officials reported only one (1) domestic violence homicide after leading the state with the highest number of homicides the year prior (11 in FY15). In the following years, domestic violence homicide numbers have remained lower with three in FY17, five in FY18 and four in FY19. None of the domestic violence related homicide victims from FY16 - FY19 sought assistance from the FJC.*

*It is important to note, however, that we will not measure the success of the project against the reduced domestic homicide statistic nor are we boldly predicting those reductions locally. Our hope is that Charlotte follows the trend lines that have been established in other cities across the country following the opening of The Umbrella Center.*

*Success for The Umbrella Center will be defined by moving families to a place of safety and a life free from violence and abuse. Success will be measured by examining the increased numbers of adult victims obtaining protective orders, increased numbers of victims obtaining safety services in one location, and increased numbers of DV victims accessing medical care and law enforcement services in one safe location. We will measure and track the increased successful prosecution rates for DV, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, and human trafficking. We also expect to measure increased numbers of victims reporting that they were able to access all the services they needed and qualitative measures including that victims felt safe and respected within the center and received the help they needed.*

9. **DA**—This is a great model to have under one roof where we are focusing also on the prevention and the safety being one of our key priority areas, it helps us tackle really the root cause of the issue which is the prevention here. I'm trying to understand, as some of my colleagues mentioned earlier, if we can get an assessment from our city manager as to how this fits into our overall safety model, in terms of ongoing commitment from CMPD, our capital commitment, how does that fit into our overall plan? I'm very familiar with what Andrew had proposed but not familiar with what our model looks like now in terms of our services and what CMPD provides. Think that is a piece we need to understand. Hope we get an update from City Manager on how this is going to fit and we can take next steps as necessary.

*Violence and abuse are community issues that affect our public safety, schools, economy, health care, and criminal justice system. According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the economic impact is real. Victims of intimate partner violence lose a total of 8,000,000 million days of paid work each year. Intimate partner violence is estimated to cost the US economy between \$5.8 billion and \$12.6 billion annually.*

*CMPD currently has detectives assigned to special victim criminal investigation units for Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Crimes Against Children, and Human Trafficking. The establishment of The Umbrella Center would co-locate these detectives alongside existing partners in criminal justice and health and human services. The City's philosophical commitment to the FJC would enhance and further the work of these existing units. Co-location will surround law enforcement with nonprofit partners equipped to treat trauma and abuse, allowing detectives to return to the important work of investigating criminal cases of violence throughout the city.*

#### **Survivor Resource Center (SRC):**

10. **VW**: I know we are working thru the Pilot SRC, don't know who could speak to that, it will be interesting to see what data is to see what comes out of that so we can right size that work.

*The Survivor Resource Center is a precursor to the larger Family Justice Center effort. This small-scale operation builds upon the proven principals of the family justice center model to ensure that victims in the most lethal situations are served. The intended goal of bringing together five critical victim serving organizations is two-pronged:*

- To increase victim and community safety for those in the most lethal situation and referred into the Center from one of the onsite partners.*
- To develop unified practices that are victim-centered, trauma-informed and focus on limiting the number of times a client needs to re-tell their story.*

*The purpose of co-locating disciplines is to increase service accessibility for victims and collaboration between providers. The Survivor Resource Center is not simply a coworking space; it is a collaboration catalyst designed to build a coordinated community response that will be expanded upon in the comprehensive Umbrella Center.*

11. **VW:** There was a slide that you showed that had the breakdown between SRC and The Umbrella Center, you had various things and types of services around who would be serviced and the number of people. Can you help me understand what drives the difference between the two? I know the building itself does not drive the process. What changes in process that will allow you to scale up?

*The Survivor Resource Center anticipates providing services to 1,000 victims annually by referral-only. We will serve those in the highest risk situations utilizing the nationally-recognized lethality assessment protocol to prioritize the most lethal/violent cases. Services include:*

- *System navigation (helping victims learn about and connect to services)*
- *Safety planning*
- *Crisis counseling*
- *Law enforcement and DA interviews with victims and witnesses to investigate abuse related crimes; gather information for serving protective orders; and discuss the prosecution process and preparation of cases for court proceedings.*
- *Assistance with 50B/50C protective orders and pressing criminal charges.*
- *Services for children including forensic interviews, trauma assessments, parent education and/or referral and linkage to medical, therapeutic, and other services.*
- *Supportive services for families involved in child and adult protective services matters as well as economic support services.*

*The Umbrella Center will be a walk-in facility for anyone who self identifies as an abuse victim anticipating serving over 10,000 victims annually. It will continue to offer all of the services in Survivor Resource Center and will add the following:*

- *Clinical assessment, individual therapy, and group therapy*
- *Medical exam and evidence collection/documentation for victims of child abuse, sexual assault and domestic violence.*
- *Healthcare services to address non-forensic medical issues.*
- *Workshops and community outreach events that raise awareness and prevent interpersonal violence.*

*Additionally, The Umbrella Center will provide spaces for visiting organizations to provide services such as the following:*

- *Family Support Services*
- *Education Support*
- *Legal Support*
- *Basic Needs Assistance*
- *Financial Assistance*
- *Housing Assistance*
- *Spiritual Support*

## Technology:

12. **VW:** In this age, how we need to leverage technology to drive a better experience? As I think about option analysis, I think the work and process is one thing and infrastructure is another. You got brick & mortar building, technology, and process improvement: I think there is a component in all of those that could include outcomes for victims of this kind of violence, so I would like more information about the options you have already looked at. For instance, how could we leverage technology? Could we leverage a database across organizations or improve an existing database?

*Partner agencies located at The Umbrella Center will utilize technology and lessons learned during the COVID-19 health pandemic to inform future service provision. The Phase I Survivor Resource Center will utilize a shared intake process as well as a database used by other FICs to enhance collaboration and information sharing. Other technology enhancements are already being incorporated to improve every victim's experience and contribute to better quality of care. It is expected that the use of technology will be an efficient and safe way for victims to secure protective orders remotely, as well as access tele therapy for the provision of mental health services.*

*While technology will undoubtedly help streamline our processes, data collection, and even services, so many of the vital services victims need require in person contact. We cannot lose sight of the individual victim's experience.*

*It is important to remember that each victim who arrives at The Umbrella Center will do so after experiencing the trauma of violence and abuse. Many victims (and their children) are understandably concerned about their safety when seeking help, having been threatened or stalked by an abusive partner. Simply taking that first, brave step is a frightening experience.*

*But when victims walk through the doors of The Umbrella Center, they will be welcomed immediately and greeted warmly by an individual who will help them. They will not be asked to make an appointment or return on another day. They will feel at ease, knowing that The Umbrella Center exists for the thousands of adults and children in our community who have experienced the same trauma. They will speak confidentially with a staff member who will help them navigate the system, opening doors to all the on-site partners who can help them find healing and peace.*

*Victims of trauma need and deserve our best efforts because we are seeing them on what may be the worst day of their life. They deserve the opportunity to meet face-to-face with the individuals working their case because their experience of trauma is their deepest, darkest secret – one that they have kept from everyone until this moment. During this pivotal time in their journey of healing, there can be no substitute for human contact and connection.*

## Programmatic:

13. **RJ:** According to stats, 75% that are victims of DV do have brain injury. I am an advocate for help/services for people who have brain injuries. I would ask if resources can be at the center for that service, or at least part of an assessment. That is a huge unmet need in our county and our nation. I think if you are really looking at trauma informed care and addressing the root problem, that this (brain injuries) needs to be addressed.

*This is an excellent point! In a recent study in Arizona, an estimated 20 million women each year could be victims of a domestic-violence related Traumatic Brain Injury. A study conducted by the New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence examining women in three domestic violence*



*shelters, demonstrates the prevalence of TBI among domestic violence survivors. According to the study:*

- *92 percent of the women questioned had been hit in the head by their partners more than once.*
- *83 percent were hit in the head and shaken severely.*
- *8 percent were hit in the head over 20 times in the preceding year.*

*This is one of the reasons we have invited Atrium Health as well as Novant Health to be onsite partners at The Umbrella Center. Our vision is to offer forensic as well as general healthcare services. By being based on site where the focus is on conditions and injuries experienced by abuse victims, health care practitioners will better be able to identify and treat issues that are commonly faced by abuse victims such as TBI's, PTSD, strangulation-related injuries, and others.*

14. **RJ:** I'm a human-services professional and have gone into Safe Alliance with a client. It is important: trauma informed approach, breaking the cycle, ACE—and breaking those cycles and preventing violence. Just a few questions and comments from me: We talked about the real estate perspective, we have a building at 601 East 5<sup>th</sup> street that seems to be collaborative services and also the Valerie Woodard Center. I could envision in Covid utilizing one of those and have victims sitting with a case manager and have virtual visits with the various providers. Is that a way to reduce the investment? Reduce the size? Has that been considered?

If we took \$10 million and put into housing vouchers to provide permanent solutions so they did not have to go back into that environment, is there a more efficient return without the requirement of acquiring new space? We can operate virtually—has that been considered? What I was thinking, they would come to facility and maybe be in a conference room maybe with a case manager—someone walking them thru and supporting them—with the protection order and any other resource that might not be onsite that they could do virtually—housing providers, victims of crime, etc.

*We agree with the importance of providing trauma informed care and making the most impactful yet cost conscious investment. The collocation of nonprofit partners creates a streamlined process for victims as well as organizational efficiencies without the duplication of services.*

*Virtual services can be helpful for a number of victims. During the pandemic, we've utilized virtual services to help people apply for protective orders and offered varying levels of virtual advocacy and counseling. One advantage to having the Survivor Resource Center is that we can continue testing these virtual tools and then utilize virtual services in the Umbrella Center when it provides the highest standard of care.*

*For other victims, particularly those dealing with more immediate or higher levels of trauma, the in-person services are typically preferred. Medical care, forensic injury documentation and other crisis services will be provided first. Next, we will address basic needs (food, clothing), crisis counseling and any other urgent issues.*

*Victims will also have an opportunity to work with a navigator to create a comprehensive safety plan. This can be done remotely but most victims express that they prefer in person engagement particularly*

*upon making their initial request for assistance. Often when victims arrive on site, they are experiencing high levels of trauma. By providing all services on site the victim will have a more authentic opportunity to meet with various service providers and begin to form relationships in a warmer setting than is possible in a virtual environment. As relationships are formed and trust is developed, the victim is able to build a network of support, which may allow for utilization of virtual communication tools at a later point. Our goal is to help victims feel safer utilizing resources that are available to them such as*

- *Seeking shelter*
- *Filing for a protective order*
- *Filing a police report*
- *Participating in investigations*
- *Relocating (if necessary and desired)*
- *Accessing civil legal assistance (custody, divorce, u-visa etc.)*
- *Accessing non-emergency medical services*
- *Accessing longer term advocacy and counseling services*

*Another important feature of the FJC model is that partner agency employees are working side-by-side designing ways to improve processes for victims. They develop much deeper relationships when seeing each other daily and FJC's report an increase in innovative problem solving and agency accountability as a result of these enhanced relationships. For these reasons we prefer that partners work together in the same facility as much as possible.*

15. **RJ:** Wonderful for the prevention and the safety and breaking the cycle for victims—is there this type of collaborative service for the perpetrator? Such as trauma informed care for the perpetrator? Are we looking at anger management, brain injury services, etc? Are you all also looking at this type of model in order to break that cycle as well?

*Services for domestic violence offenders are provided by Mecklenburg County NOVA (New Options for Violent Actions) as well as Impact, a private provider. The Umbrella Center will not offer offender services on site but is exploring ways to work together with these providers since we share a common goal – ending interpersonal violence in the community. We also advocate for increased funding, particularly at the federal and state level as offender services are underfunded across our country.*

*To break the cycle, the Jamie Kimble Foundation for Courage is focused on primary prevention through their partnerships with middle and high school curriculum development and high school courage clubs and annual summits that focus and education, awareness, and advocacy.*

16. **RJ:** What do you think about the housing focus? Has that been talked about? You mentioned resources like shelters—but if they can get away from perpetrator & get away from the situation and have wrap around services and help them be self-sustaining—would it be a better investment if the city could invest in that way? Instead of increasing the building side?

*Mecklenburg County Community Support Services (CSS) administers three domestic violence rapid rehousing programs that will serve a total of 65 households by December 2022:*

- 1) Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) grant-funded program (1 grant)
- 2) Mecklenburg County-funded "Housing for Good" program
- 3) Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) grant-funded program (1 grant)

*These programs empower survivors to build a foundation of safety, independence, and stability as they work toward maintaining housing without rental and/or utility subsidies after program support ends. The programs offer clients a combination of housing counseling, rent and utility subsidies, intensive case management, safety planning, and victim advocacy services. Clients can receive services for up to 24 months depending on fund availability. Program outcomes include number of exits to permanent housing, increase in household income, and increase in personal safety at program exit.*

*Mecklenburg County's investment in domestic violence rapid rehousing began in 2016 when CSS received a grant from OVW and supplemented the grant with County funds. At the time, survivors' demand for affordable housing exceeded supply, and the Safe Alliance Domestic Violence Shelter was frequently over capacity. The need for survivor-centric rapid rehousing continues to increase. OVW renewed the original grant that ended in 2019. Mecklenburg County prioritized expanding domestic violence rapid rehousing opportunities by applying for additional funding through HUD's CoC program and by investing County dollars in the new Housing for Good program that launched in August 2020.*

*Mecklenburg County chose to invest resources in these programs because domestic violence is a significant contributor to homelessness, and survivors benefit from programs that provide specific and expert domestic violence support. Nationwide studies have shown that as many as 57% of women who are homeless identify domestic violence as the immediate cause of homelessness (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Housing & Homelessness Dashboard, 2018). Results from the 2020 Mecklenburg County Point in Time Count survey indicated 9% of households identified domestic violence as housing barrier.*

*The chart below outlines the three domestic violence rapid rehousing programs administered by Mecklenburg County Community Support Services and partner agencies. The investment totals more than \$2.1 million across funding sources. Altogether, the programs will serve at least 65 households by the end of 2022.*

*Table: Domestic Violence Rapid Rehousing Programs in Mecklenburg County*

	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>Services Included in Budget</b>	<b>Number of Households to be Served</b>	<b>Program Partners</b>
<b>DV RRH Program #1</b>	OVW Meck County	Oct. 2016 – Sept. 2022	\$994,996	* Rental subsidy * Utility subsidy * Housing counseling * Moving/relocation assistance * Childcare * Bus passes, taxi * Case management, victim advocacy	At least 35 households over 6-year period	Meck County Community Support Services  Community Link  Safe Alliance
<b>DV RRH Program #2 (Housing for Good)</b>	Meck County	Aug. 2020 – June 2022	\$657,948	* Rental subsidy * Utility subsidy * Housing counseling * Case management, victim advocacy	At least 15 households over 2-year period	Meck County Community Support Services  Community Link
<b>DV RRH Program #3</b>	HUD	Jan. 2021 – Dec. 2022	\$475,215	* Rental subsidy * Utility subsidy * Housing counseling * Moving/relocation assistance * Childcare voucher * Education services * Employment assistance * Food * Bus passes * Case management, victim advocacy	At least 15 households over 2-year period	Meck County Community Support Services  Community Link  Safe Alliance

*Domestic violence rapid rehousing programs provide wraparound supports for individuals and families. Case managers assist survivors with navigating the complex systems often involved in domestic violence cases including healthcare, mental healthcare, law enforcement, courts, public benefits, employment, and/or child protective services.*

*Participating in a domestic violence rapid rehousing program may ease the burden of navigating systems alone; however, a domestic violence rapid rehousing intervention does not change the fact that systems are fragmented. Survivors and case managers invest extraordinary time and energy in completing a multitude of forms, traveling to numerous service sites, answering the same questions repeatedly, and having a host of meetings with various entities.*

*The family justice center model envisioned by The Umbrella Center will address this fragmentation of services. By co-locating the supports a survivor of domestic violence may require, The Umbrella Center will allow survivors in rapid rehousing programs to spend less time navigating between systems and more time on achieving their goals. Domestic violence rapid rehousing programs and the family justice center model complement each other by supporting survivors on both an individual and a systems level.*

## Partners:

17. **RJ**: You talked about space; I saw some of the large nonprofits but wonder if there will be space for some of the grassroots organizations? Maybe some sort of co-working facility where nonprofits can come in and help support victims.

*This is correct. The Umbrella Center will offer drop in and visiting space to service providers throughout the community including grassroots organizations. We recognize that grassroots organizations often hold the deepest trust of community members but can also lack resources and capacity. The Umbrella Center will offer important space for grassroots organizations to provide services, connect to other community resources and ensure a strong voice in community conversations and activities to address and end abuse in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. The partnership with grassroots organizations has been a top priority as we've initiated planning for the Family Justice Center.*

## Miscellaneous:

18. **VW**: From a financial perspective, I want to understand—you mention the \$10 million—is there an “ask” to be made today to the city? What I have seen so far is health & human services heavy and want to understand what our role would be beyond providing a CMPD Officer(s)?

*The project is requesting a \$10 million capital investment as part of the City's violence reduction strategy. We request that CMPD Officers maintain their involvement in the multi-disciplinary center. The Umbrella Center model is designed to **strengthen protective factors, mitigate risk factors, intervene in current violence, and prevent future violence**. Documented outcomes correlated with family justice centers nationally include **reduced domestic violence-related homicides, increased victim safety, interrupted generational cycles of violence, increased efficiency of collaborative services, and increased offender prosecution**.*

19. **VW**: Glad that you talked about the survivors because that is what we are here for and what we are here to serve. How do we make sure we are investing that we are going to see the highest level of return on investment? How it fits in our overall preventable plan and our level of commitment that is commensurate with the roles we are providing.

*The Umbrella Center is rooted in the nationally proven family justice center model that has been replicated over 140 times across the country and internationally. Since 2018, the multi-disciplinary Steering Committee has identified the documented best practices as well as incorporated input from over 400 community members and service providers locally for a local concept rooted in data and evaluation. The Umbrella Center aligns with the comprehensive violence prevention strategies underway in three important ways: Shared Foundations, Parallel Objectives, and Complementary Responses.*

### **Shared Foundations**

*The Family Justice Center (FJC) model and the public health approach to violence prevention share numerous theoretical foundations:*

<b>Multi-disciplinary Support and Collaboration</b>	<p>-The FJC model <b>co-locates partners from multiple disciplines under one roof</b> to serve individuals and families impacted by one or more form of interpersonal violence including <b>domestic violence, sexual violence, human trafficking, child abuse, and elder abuse</b>.</p> <p>-Disciplines represented thus far in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg FJC planning efforts include victim advocacy, child advocacy, healthcare, mental health, substance use, social services, law enforcement, legal services, and violence prevention.</p> <p>-The purpose of co-locating disciplines is to <b>increase service accessibility and collaboration</b> between providers.</p> <p>-The FJC is <b>not simply a coworking space</b>; it is a <b>collaboration catalyst</b> designed to build a <b>coordinated community response</b>.</p>
<b>Socio-ecological Framework</b>	<p>-The FJC model embraces the socio-ecological framework by going well beyond an individual's presenting needs to <b>address contributing factors and root causes</b>.</p> <p>-The Umbrella Center's multi-disciplinary support and collaboration will include <b>not only victim services</b>, but also an <b>expansive menu of partnerships</b> to address education, employment, childcare, spiritual care, and other needs.</p> <p>-The FJC model is designed to <b>strengthen protective factors, mitigate risk factors, intervene in current violence, and prevent future violence</b>.</p>
<b>Use of Data and Evidence</b>	<p>-The use of data and evidence to shape and monitor the FJC is integral to its role in violence <b>intervention and prevention</b>.</p> <p>-Documented outcomes correlated with FJCs include <b>reduced domestic violence-related homicides, increased victim safety, interrupted generational cycles of violence, increased efficiency of collaborative services, and increased offender prosecution</b>.</p>

### **Parallel Objectives**

*The Family Justice Center model and the violence prevention strategies taking shape in Charlotte-Mecklenburg have parallel objectives. The Umbrella Center will enhance violence prevention objectives in the following ways:*

<b>Create a Fuller Picture of Community Violence and Prevention Possibilities</b>	<p>-Providing <b>additional information</b> about multiple forms of violence for the Community Violence Data Dashboard, thereby creating a <b>fuller picture of community violence, contributing factors, root causes, and prevention possibilities</b></p>
<b>Advance Intergovernmental Collaboration and Align City and County Resources for Community Impact</b>	<p>-Advancing the intergovernmental collaboration required for an <b>effective community-wide comprehensive violence reduction strategy</b>, as local elected government bodies develop relationships to share resources and improve service delivery through the FJC</p> <p>-<b>Aligning City and County resources to increase community impact and reduce duplicative efforts</b></p>
<b>Serve as a Resource for Cure Violence and Hospital-based Interruption Programs</b>	<p>-Serving as a <b>resource</b> for eligible individuals coming through the <b>Cure Violence</b> and <b>hospital-based violence interruption programs</b>, as interrupters <b>connect</b> those who present the <b>highest risk</b> for committing or becoming victims of violent crime to <b>resources, services and opportunities</b></p>
<b>Facilitate Ease of Access to Service Resulting in Immediate and Long Term Impact</b>	<p>-Facilitating ease of access to <b>coordinated, co-located services</b> for survivors of various forms of violence through <b>holistic supports</b> designed to address immediate needs, underlying issues, root causes, and contributing factors to <b>generational patterns</b> of violence</p>

**Complementary Response**

*The Family Justice Center model and is uniquely designed to complement violence interruption programs while effectively addressing service fragmentation. The Umbrella Center will work alongside and together with violence interruption initiatives to maximize their impact.*

<p><b>Addresses an Unmet Yet Related Need Interrupting Interpersonal Violence</b></p>	<p>-The Family Justice Center (FJC) model and the violence prevention strategies that the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County Public Health are leading address unmet needs that are <b>related yet distinct</b>.</p> <p>-Interpersonal violence requires a <b>nuanced, expert response</b> often characterized by confidentiality, safety planning, and trauma-awareness.</p> <p>-The FJC model is specifically designed to support individuals and families impacted by <b>one or more</b> forms of interpersonal violence such as domestic violence, sexual violence, human trafficking, child abuse, and/or elder abuse.</p> <p>-Violence interruption programs are a critical component of a comprehensive community violence prevention strategy. However, these programs are typically designed to address drug-related violence, gang-related violence, and/or community gun violence more so than interpersonal violence. <b>The FJC model fills the gap.</b></p>
<p><b>Addresses Service Fragmentation</b></p>	<p>-In Charlotte-Mecklenburg service mapping indicates interpersonal violence victims may currently travel to <b>9</b> different locations, tell their story <b>27</b> times, complete <b>37</b> different types of paperwork, navigate <b>50</b> referrals and spend over <b>36</b> hours in order to receive assistance.</p> <p>-The comprehensive violence prevention strategies can benefit from the FJC's <b>mitigation of service fragmentation</b>.</p> <p>-The CDC's Connecting the Dots research suggests a high probability that individuals reached through violence interruption programs will have a history of one or more forms of interpersonal violence as well. Therefore, the FJC model can complement violence interruption as a potential <b>pathway</b> for addressing <b>underlying issues</b> and <b>root causes</b> of community violence.</p>

*No one-size-fits-all strategy applies to all forms of violence. The comprehensive community violence prevention strategy does not eliminate the need for The Umbrella Center, and The Umbrella Center does not eliminate the need for a comprehensive violence prevention strategy. By pairing both approaches together, Charlotte can achieve the greatest impact for the greatest number of people, building a safer and healthier community.*

20. **VW**: Also, curious to know where the other towns play in this space.

*The Umbrella Center plans include satellite centers and/or mobile advocacy options located in the northern and southern parts of the county to ensure a client centered approach for all residents. Services will include advocacy, filing of DVPO's, counseling, local law enforcement services, and assistance with victim and witness coordination and interviewing. Teams will work to provide services at a time and location convenient to all parties and will coordinate access to the full range of services offered at The Umbrella Center.*

*Safe Alliance has seen a 30% increase in demand for domestic violence and sexual assault services in their Lake Norman Office in FY20 over FY19. Additionally, the organization is working to locate a Safe Alliance advocate in the southern part of the county as a first step in the satellite center model. The Umbrella Center planning process has had representation from both the northern and southern Towns since it began. Davidson County Chief of Police Penny Dunn and Matthews Chief of Police Clark Pennington are members of the Family Justice Steering Committee. They have been indispensable in keeping the needs of our entire county at the forefront. From the onset of the family justice center project, the Steering Committee has recognized that services are needed throughout the County and has been intentional in ensuring geography does not limit a victims' access to services.*