



June 11, 2018

The Honorable Viola Lyles
Mayor of the City of Charlotte
600 E 4th Street, 15th floor
Charlotte NC 28202

RE: Support for a Jobs4CLT Challenge

Dear Mayor Lyles,

I'm launching a nonprofit, Jobs4CLT, and I'd like your support. I am proposing a public-nonprofit partnership leveraging current local incentives to create a development catalyst in a job desert.

Can Charlotteans help current residents outperform the private sector meeting City job-creation goals using existing economic development incentives?

As you rethink economic development in the context of our current Upward Mobility and housing crises, I'd like to test our assumptions regarding economic development outcomes. Let us compete like an out-of-state company for current incentives.

- ❖ **What: Catalyst**
 - a small business incubator with a professional kitchen and space for childcare to be used by people who live in the adjacent community
- ❖ **Where: Job desert**
 - in a targeted investment zone with no announced transit stop ("job desert")
- ❖ **How: Lease-purchase**
 - Nonprofit Jobs4CLT will solicit donations leveraged with ED incentives to buy/build/lease the site
 - **Minority-owned businesses receive priority** for all contracts with majority-owned firms as mentors if needed
 - **Target adjacent neighbors** for all hiring (2 mile radius)
 - Secure traditional small business loans for neighbors who rent if they contribute sweat equity to their neighbors (separate donor-funded LOC)
- ❖ **Who: Charlotteans and Charlotte**
 - Jobs4CLT will build and own the facility with scope dependent on fundraising
 - Advocates and activists ante up!
 - Neighbors: New nonprofit of neighbor-pioneers will meet job-creation goals
 - City: economic development incentives will leverage our investment
- ❖ **Why: Test the assumptions**
 - Can we outperform the private sector meeting City job-creation benchmarks?



- How well can a nonprofit meet multiple city goals at once (targeted investments, Minority-owned business participation, cost of job creation, etc)?
 - Can a nonprofit provide access to capital to help current residents prevent their own residential displacement now? Can they curb commercial displacement of the neighborhood start-ups once outside development follows?
 - People who study economic disparity and upward mobility can test their assertions especially “Strategy O in the Opportunity Task Force report “Leading on Opportunity”
- ❖ **When: Now**
- **June 25: Launch the Summer Challenge**
 - By Labor Day: Economic development committee presentation
 - ED presentation: secure lease for temp space for neighbors to organize if/when ED agenda is confirmed
 - Oct 1 incentive award: target amount and date dependent on fundraising
 - Jan 1 2019 move in
 - Apr 1 2019 first performance report due from tenant (the neighbor-pioneer group)
- ❖ **The Ask**
- Please add us to the economic development committee agenda before Labor Day with a target incentive award by end of September (FY2018 or FY2019 budget)

I am currently scheduled to speak at the City Council Citizens’ Forum on Monday June 25, and would appreciate the opportunity to speak with you personally prior to the public presentation. So far, I’ve been met with the support of community organizers, racial justice advocates, and fiscally conservative friends. On a personal note, I am so grateful to you for your leadership as Assistant City Manager and now for agreeing to be our Mayor in your “retirement.” It’s the perfect storm.

Plus my money’s on Charlotte.

Respectfully,

Leslie Dwyer, MPA
Founder, Jobs4CLT
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cc: Charlotte City Council