

CITY OF HIGH POINT

AGENDA ITEM



TITLE: One High Point Commission Implementation Update	
FROM: Jeron Hollis – Managing Director	MEETING DATE: October 7, 2024
PUBLIC HEARING: N/A	ADVERTISED DATE/BY: N/A
ATTACHMENTS: NIMED Report - One High Point Commission Policy Implementation	

PURPOSE: To provide City Council with an update on the One High Point Commission (OHPC) implementation plan and to get general guidance from Council on specific areas where they would like attention focused.

BACKGROUND: On April 1, 2024, the High Point City Council approved a 30-month contract with the National Institute of Minority Economic Development (NIMED) Research, Policy and Impact Center for an implementation plan of the OHPC restorative economic policy recommendations.

NIMED has conducted interviews with community stakeholders and city department heads. Combined with the results from additional research, an updated summary of current progress has been created. With guidance from City Council on areas of focus, the consultant will be able to produce more detailed information and more granular cost estimates for the designated areas.

BUDGET IMPACT: Funding for the project will be determined based on policy choices and outside funding availability.

RECOMMENDATION /ACTION REQUESTED: Staff requests that City Council prioritize specific implementation areas for which they would like more research conducted.



Report to the City of High Point on One High Point Commission Policy Implementation October 7, 2024

The National Institute of Minority Economic Development (the Institute) is truly humbled to have been tasked with assisting the City of High Point, North Carolina, in implementing policy recommendations from the One High Point Commission (OHPC). One cannot overestimate the historic and groundbreaking work that your community has accomplished to this point. The complex and sensitive work of restoring hope and expanding opportunities requires vision, courage, and resolve.

High Point is unique. You are one of the first cities in the country to attempt to document and address the long-term effects of slavery, Jim Crow, and systemic discrimination on African Americans. Though you are benefitting from observing the challenges encountered by other cities, High Point will have to make this process your own. There is no other city of similar size, demographics, local economy, or constellation of anchor institutions for High Point to emulate. The Institute can examine discrete policies and programs that have been implemented in other cities, but the way you will address, document, and evaluate them has the potential to break new ground. High Point will be the example for other cities to follow.

Today's session is important because the High Point City Council will prioritize the timing, work, and implementation of the OHPC's policy recommendations. This will not only guide the Institute's next steps but will indicate to potential funders and partners that the City is committed to this transformational work.

This progress report serves several purposes:

- To update City Council members on the foundational work completed by the Institute over the past several months,
- To discuss the purpose(s) and anticipated outcomes of the OHPC policy recommendations,
- To provide illustrative estimates of the fiscal impact of selected policy implementations,
- To provide a mechanism for Council members to indicate what policy areas seem most advantageous to address first, and
- To outline recommended next steps.

I. History and Background of the One High Point Commission

The OHPC's creation was approved in February of 2022. The appointed Commission members met in public meetings from the spring of 2022 through the summer of 2023. The Institute was engaged for project management in March of 2023. Academic subject-matter experts were also

engaged to conduct research at that time. Over the next six months, this research was conducted, analyzed, and synthesized into a report.

A final report was accepted by Council in September 2023. This report both grounds the reader in the realities of slavery in the United States and documents ways in which the City of High Point, as an institution, actively engaged in and supported discrimination against African Americans in the 20th century. While the report does not document every area of daily life in which discrimination took place, it lays the groundwork for further research.

In addition to research and documentation, the report makes twenty-three policy recommendations in six areas of civic and economic life. Building on the OHPC's deliberations and incorporating data on racially identifiable disparities in High Point gathered over the past decade, policy recommendations were created to address the documented racially discriminatory practices previously promulgated or supported by the High Point city government. While some of these policy areas are within the City's ability to address unilaterally, many of them will require partnerships with community-based organizations and anchor institutions.

In May, 2024, High Point City Council approved a contract with the Institute to advise Council and City Leadership through the development of an implementation strategy and the identification of additional resources to support this implementation. As well, the Institute will collaborate with City staff and partners to develop mechanisms that integrate ongoing efforts into the routine work of staff and community partners, understanding that measurable impacts may take years to materialize. High Point continues to establish itself as a leader in innovative urban development, setting a new standard for restorative justice, city planning, and revitalization.

At our October 7 Manager's Briefing presentation, we will be available to answer any questions that Councilmembers may have about this document. Afterward, Councilmembers will be asked to indicate via a real-time poll their preferred policy areas for the initial implementation. Even though every policy area in the OHPC report is important to the community and to this body, this polling process recognizes that human and financial resources are not unlimited. We recommend a staggered approach that will cover all policy areas and recommendations well before our engagement with the City ends.

II. Policy Areas

In this section, we will review the policy areas and why they are important to close racially identified disparities in the City of High Point. You will note that these policies are targeted toward low-to-moderate-income households and neighborhoods: these are not racially-targeted policies and activities. They are instead sound restorative community and economic development practices that will have an outsized positive effect on African Americans because

of historical disinvestment in both this segment of the city’s population and in the neighborhoods where they have historically resided.

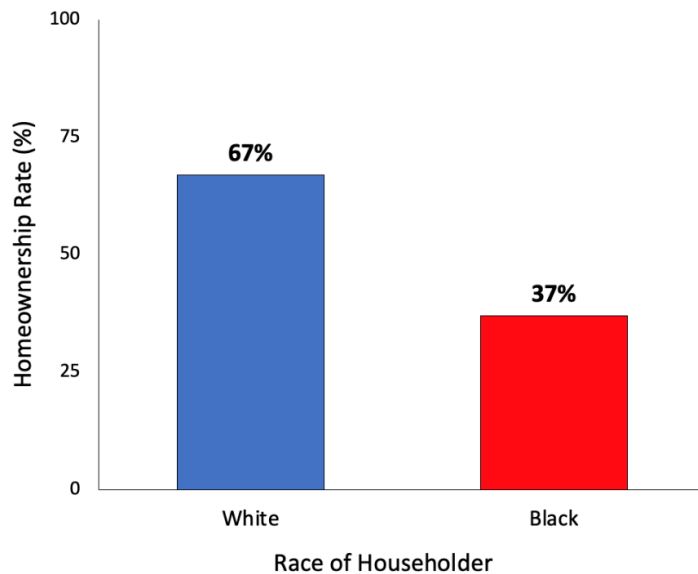
After we discuss the potential impacts of the recommended policies, we will provide samples of the potential fiscal impact of the policy implementation. These cost estimates are meant to guide informed decision-making by City Council and are not proscriptive in any way.

Review of the Issue Areas of the OHPC Report - How Will These Policy Recommendations Impact the Community?

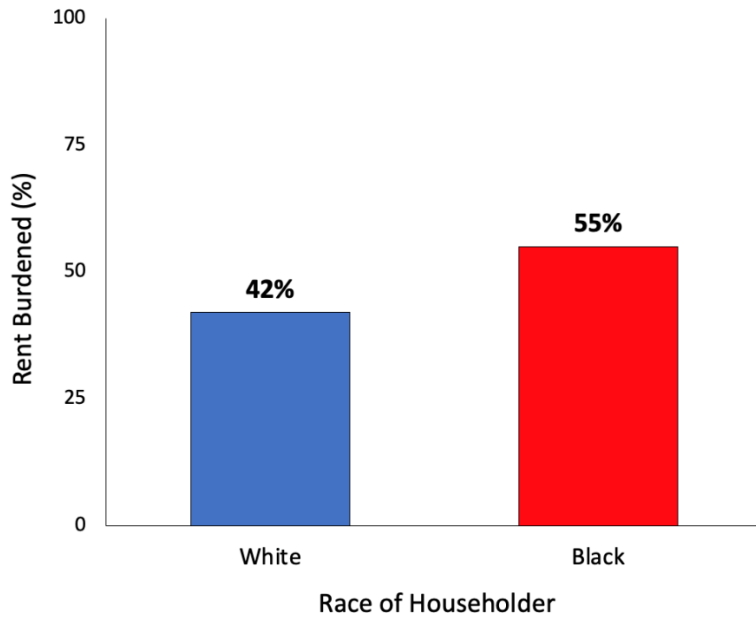
Housing Disparities:

- Providing targeted assistance to low-to-moderate-income home buyers and to buyers and developers in racially concentrated areas of poverty can close the Black-white homeownership gap and infuse quality housing in disinvested areas.
- Assisting existing low-to-moderate-income homeowners in targeted areas could protect existing homeownership and equity.
- Since home ownership is one of the main ways that families gain and pass on wealth, supporting sustainable home ownership has the potential to close the wealth gap over time.

Homeownership Rate of Black and White Residents



Rent Burdened Rate of Black and White Householders



Example of Policy Implementation:

The City could significantly increase downpayment assistance in both number of grants and in dollar amount. The current number of forgivable downpayment assistance grants given each year is not sufficient to impact the homeownership gap. The dollar amount may also need to be increased to reflect the realities of today's housing market.

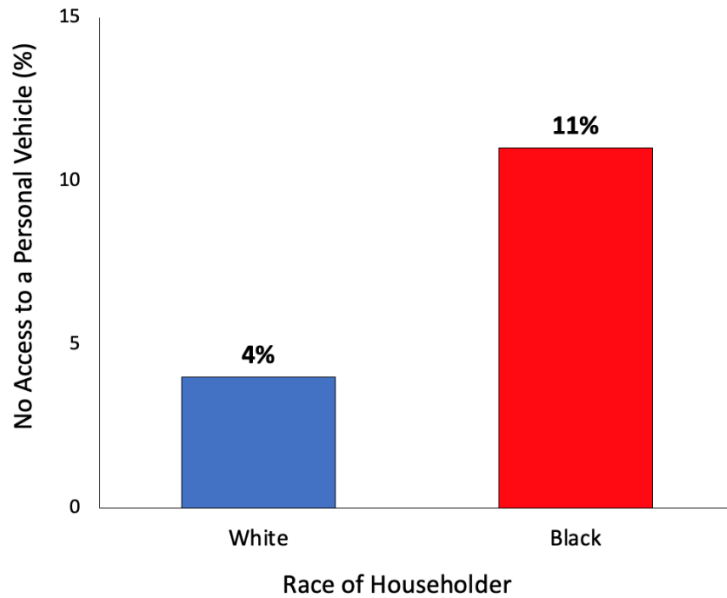
Potential Sources: HUD, NCHFA, General Funds, Corporate Donors, Philanthropy, Bond Financing

Potential Cost of All Housing Recommendations: \$83 Million

Access to Transportation:

- Providing expanded and innovative transportation options could facilitate increased employment opportunities for people who do not own cars.

Residents Without Access to a Personal Vehicle Among Black and White Households



Example of Policy Implementation:

The City could consider offering a fare-free public transit program. Several major cities across the country, including Raleigh, NC, have begun pilot programs for fare-free public transit. In addition to the federal government’s current subsidies to supplement local transit operation costs, Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley and Senator Edward Markey have proposed a \$25 billion grant program to support fare-free transit systems. Of note, the City is currently in the process of completing its multi-year, multi-modal transportation plan.

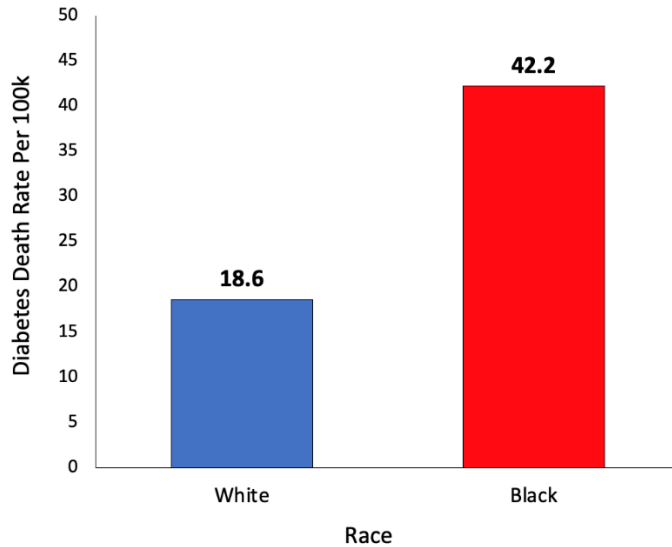
Potential Sources: DOT, General Funds, Corporate Donors, Philanthropy, Bond Financing

Potential Cost of All Transportation Recommendations: TBD

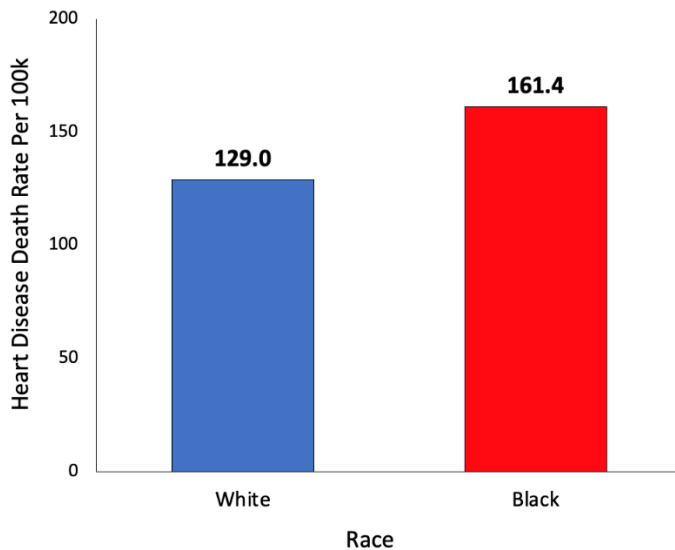
Health Disparities:

- Addressing health disparities through partnerships with providers and insurers could both increase regular and preventive care and also reduce the reliance on emergency rooms for care that can be provided in a doctor’s office. Over the long term, the desired outcomes would include lesser prevalence of certain diseases and conditions, and longer life expectancy for African Americans and low-to-moderate-income residents.

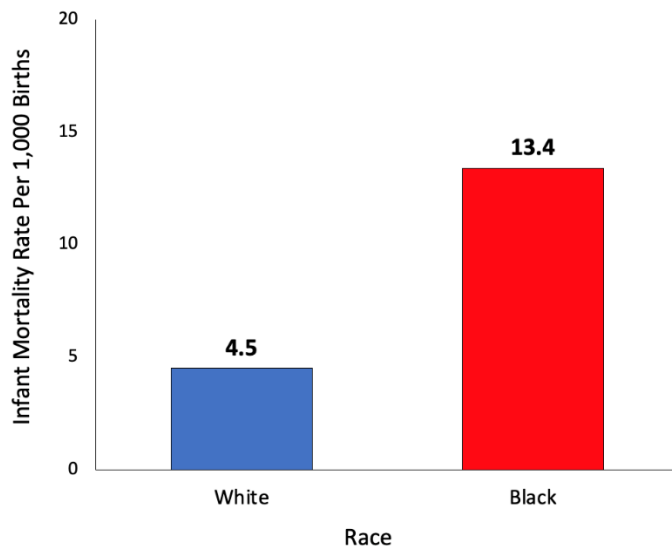
Death by Diabetes Rate Among Black and White Residents



Death by Heart Disease Rate Among Black and White Residents



Infant Mortality Rates Among Black and White Residents



Example of Policy Implementation:

The City could provide support for a healthcare provider to locate a facility in a disinvested neighborhood. This support could include providing City-owned land as an in-kind donation to a community partner or even providing funds for infrastructure, renovation, or construction of a facility.

Potential Sources: HUD, HHS, General Funds, Corporate Donors, Philanthropy, Bond Financing

Potential Cost of All Health Recommendations: \$20 million

Economic Opportunity:

- Providing economic opportunities to young residents and additional resources could increase small business development and expansion.
- Exposing young people from low-to-moderate-income households to career opportunities can create a pipeline of talent for employers in the area.
- Small businesses are often the economic and social drivers of a community. Expanding small business resources can create additional job opportunities in the community.

Example of Policy Implementation:

For targeted youth, the City could support paid summer employment opportunities that would provide them with valuable work experience, skill development, and financial stability. For example, the City could implement a policy that allocates funding to local businesses and nonprofit organizations who create internships and job placements for youth aged 16-24 from underrepresented communities. The program could offer a minimum-wage stipend and mentorship, focusing on industries with high-growth potential such as technology, healthcare,

and environmental sustainability, thereby ensuring participants gain relevant experience for future employment.

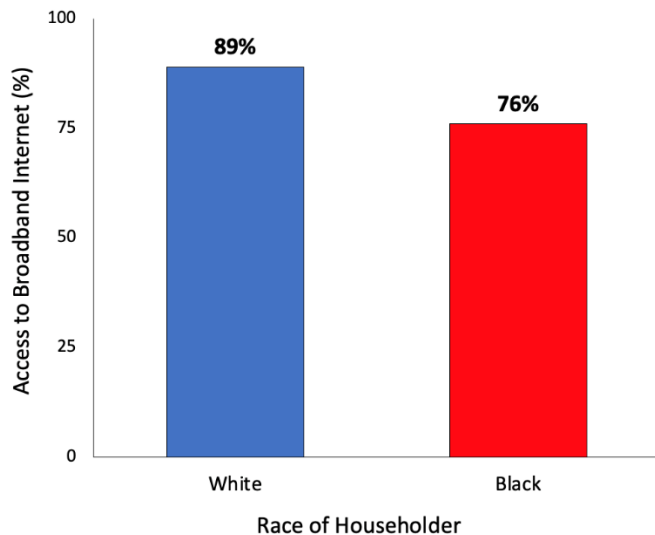
Potential Sources: Department of Labor, Department of Education, HUD, General Funds, Corporate Donors, Philanthropy

Potential Cost of All Economic Opportunity Recommendations: \$16 Million

Education Gap:

- Although the public education system is not controlled by the City of High Point, the City can have a positive impact on educational resources for the community. The COVID-19 Pandemic highlighted the inequities of broadband and high-speed internet availability. Expanding high-speed internet access will allow students from low-to-moderate-income households to successfully participate in their educational studies outside of classroom instruction.
- Working to maximize the benefits of the location of school facility investments in High Point neighborhoods has the potential to spur neighborhood revitalization.

Access to Broadband Internet Among Black and White Residents



Example of Policy Implementation:

The City could help expand access to high-speed internet and appropriate technology. The City can could facilitate partnerships among private internet service providers, nonprofits that focus on digital equity, and the public school system to identify students without devices and homes without a reliable, affordable means to access high-speed internet. The City is an important partner in this effort because of its status as an ElectricCity and the degree to which City-owned

utility infrastructure can be part of the connectivity solution. Estimates of cost can be developed through consultation with researchers and service providers.

Potential Sources: NTIA, Department of Education, NCDIT, HUD, General Funds, Corporate Donors, Philanthropy

Potential Cost of All Education Recommendations: \$20 Million

Municipal Practices:

- High Point’s historical governmental policies and practices have been documented as discriminatory against African Americans. Unfortunately, some policies and practices that seem neutral on their face may unintentionally disadvantage certain geographic areas and demographic groups. Moving forward, it is important that the City’s policies and practices are implemented equitably.

Example of Policy Implementation:

The City could offer a formal apology to the African American population of High Point. It is important that the City not only engage in this restoration process but also acknowledge and specifically apologize for past wrongdoings to African Americans in High Point. Doing so will signify that the City is willing and ready to move forward in an equitable fashion. An official apology also responds to the High Point NAACP’s initial request for this outcome.

Potential Sources: This recommendation does not have a fiscal impact.

III. Progress Update

Activity and Progress Since Contract Signing

Since May, 2024, our team has met with internal staff who have subject-area responsibilities or could provide valuable information on budget and management implications of recommended actions.

- We have reviewed the City’s other pertinent plans, such as the recently completed Comprehensive Plan, to identify synergies with current and planned activities.
- We have begun interviewing key community partners.
- We have identified relevant federal and state funding opportunities that have the potential to match well with the report recommendations.
- We are gathering real data on current and recent program expenditures to compare current and recent inputs and outputs with proposed increases.
- We are researching other municipalities throughout the state and country that are engaged in similar restorative projects to learn from their progress and challenges.

Internal Staff Interviews

Director	Department	Related Policy Recommendation Areas
Edith Brady	Museum Director	Community engagement, historical documentation
Peter Bishop	Economic Development Director	Economic development, small business development
Curtis Cheeks III	Chief of Police	Public safety, community engagement
Bobby Fitzjohn	Financial Services Director	Budget, financial oversight
Stephen Hawryluk	Budget and Performance Director	Budget, resource development, financial oversight
Jeron Hollis	Community and Public Engagement Managing Director	Fair housing
Meghan Maguire	City Attorney	Overview of language and policies
Sushil Nepal	Planning and Development Director	Planning, zoning, housing, transportation
Rase McCray	Human Relations Manager	Fair housing
Robby Stone	Public Services Director	Housing, health, water and materials support
Greg Venable	Transportation Director	Transportation
Thanena Wilson	Community Development and Housing Director	Housing, health, economic development, community development

IV. Prioritizing Policies for Implementation

To narrow down the initial areas of focus and determine the desired level of implementation, decision-makers need to ask themselves several questions: What do I want to see happen in my community? How fast do I want to see it happen? What am I willing to do or invest to accomplish the goal? And lastly, how will I know we've succeeded?

We propose several steps for identifying the priority policy areas and developing implementation plans. First, we recommend that City Council identify the policy areas that most align with the Council's priorities and the potential for near-term results. We propose accomplishing this before the end of calendar year 2024 as a foundation for developing an initial implementation strategy during the first two quarters of 2025.

You may ask why we want City Council to prioritize *policy areas* rather than *individual policy recommendations*. The answer is that we believe this approach will maximize the likelihood of realizing significant changes in the next few years because it allows for a comprehensive implementation strategy. For instance, to improve "Access to Transportation" for the populations that have the greatest transportation challenges to employment centers and health services, the City may need to ultimately consider multiple, related individual policy recommendations in order to achieve significant, measurable outcomes in the next few years.

Therefore, we ask that you indicate today, through a real time poll, the policy areas that you believe are most important and advantageous to address first. This process is not all-or-nothing, nor does it mean that other policy areas will not be addressed in the future. Rather, a phased approach allows the internal and external team to plan appropriately, align new work with ongoing work, pursue and acquire resources, and make course corrections as we evaluate both the process and the outcomes.

We are currently collecting data about ongoing and planned city activities, outputs, and outcomes across a wide spectrum of City functions and departments. Once City Council has chosen the initial priority policy areas, the Institute will provide firm numbers on current activities and their associated costs, as well as options for implementation and their projected associated costs.

Our goal is to identify the policy areas where we can then provide detailed implementation strategies, including timeframes, budgets, sources of funds, and human resource implications before the end of this calendar year. That schedule will allow time for the City to apply for and receive additional funds while also allowing relevant City departments to incorporate implementation into their budgets and workplans for the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2025.

V. Next Steps

- We will work with the relevant city departments to create work plans and budgets for the upcoming fiscal year that correspond with Council's desired level of activity.
- We will update City Council within 60 days on the work plans and potential budgetary and human resource implications of implementation.
- We will work with City staff to identify financial resources and assist their grant-writer in submitting applications to open grant cycles.
- Once initial activities are launched, we will come back to Council in summer 2025, or at an interval of Council's choosing, to determine the next set of priority areas to focus on.



National Institute of Minority Economic Development

October 7, 2024

Lea Henry, Vice President



Today we will cover:

- Progress To Date
- History and Background of the One High Point Commission (OHPC)
- Potential Funding Sources
- Policy Areas of the OHPC Recommendations
- Prioritizing Policies for Implementation
- Next Steps



Progress to Date

- Met with internal staff who have subject-area responsibilities or could provide valuable information on budget and management implications.
- Reviewed City's other pertinent plans, such as the Comprehensive Plan, to identify synergies with current and planned activities.
- Began interviewing key community partners.
- Identified relevant federal and state funding opportunities that potentially align with report recommendations.
- Began gathering data on current and recent program expenditures to enable comparisons of current and recent inputs and outputs with proposed increases.
- Researched other municipalities in the state and country that are engaged in a similar restorative projects to learn from their progress and challenges.



History and Background of the OHPC

- February 2022: Creation of the OHPC
- March 2023: NIMED begins project management of the OHPC
- September 2023: Final report with policy recommendations accepted by the High Point City Council
- May 2024: NIMED contracted to assist with policy implementation



Potential Funding Sources

- **Federal Funding Sources:**

- US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- US Department of Transportation (DOT)
- US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- US Department of Labor (DOL)
- US Department of Education (DOE)

- **State Funding Sources:**

- NC Department of Commerce
- NC department of Health and Human Services
- NC Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA)
- NC Department of Information Technology



Potential Funding Sources

- **Local Funding Sources** include general funds and bond financing.
 - Support documents describe how other North Carolina cities have increased their ability to finance affordable housing and small businesses.
- **Private Funding Sources** include corporate and foundation funds.
 - These funds are typically granted to nonprofit entities, but we will continue to explore these funding options as policy priorities are decided and lead partners are identified.



Potential Funding Sources

- Identifying the Council's priority policy areas will:
 - Signify the City's commitments to potential funders.
 - Establish which funding opportunities will be pursued first.
 - Alert current and potential community partners of collaboration opportunities for future funding applications.



Policy Recommendation Cost Estimates

- Cost estimates for the implementation categories are based on sample policies in other municipalities
- Additional feedback from Council will allow us to refine project scope and details to create more accurate cost estimates



Policy Recommendation Area: Housing Disparities

- Providing targeted assistance to low-to-moderate-income home buyers and buyers and developers in racially concentrated areas of poverty can close the Black-white homeownership gap and infuse quality housing in disinvested areas.
- Assisting existing low-to-moderate-income homeowners in targeted areas with necessary rehab and improvements could protect existing homeownership and equity. It could also provide increased opportunities for owners to pass homes to family members.
- Because home ownership is one of the main ways that families gain and pass on wealth, supporting sustainable home ownership has the potential to close the wealth gap over time.
- **Potential Cost of All Housing Recommendations: \$83 Million**



Policy Recommendation Area: Access to Transportation

- Providing expanded and innovative transportation options may facilitate increased employment opportunities for people who do not own cars. This could be especially helpful in retaining a population that wants to remain in High Point and access jobs that are being created in the region.
- Access to reliable public transportation could remove one of the largest costs for some low-income households and allow them to use their income for other necessities.
- **Potential Cost of All Transportation Recommendations: TBD**



Policy Recommendation Area: Education Disparities

- Creating policies that incentivize new construction and rehabilitation of schools in current and historically African American neighborhoods could (re)create thriving neighborhoods focused on educational assets.
- Facilitating the availability of convenient, affordable high speed internet access for all High Point residents may close educational achievement gaps, enable more people to access telemedicine, work remotely, and apply for resources and opportunities that are web based.
- **Potential Cost of All Education Recommendations: \$20 Million**



Policy Recommendation Area: Economic Opportunities

- Providing economic opportunities to social entrepreneurs could give some of your own residents the means to tackle the problems they encounter in their own neighborhoods.
- Exposing young people from low-to-moderate income households to career opportunities can create a pipeline of talent for employers in the area.
- Small businesses are oftentimes economic and social drivers of a community. Expanding small business resources can create additional job opportunities in the community.
- **Potential Cost of All Economic Recommendations: \$16 Million**



Policy Recommendation Area: Health Opportunities

- Facilitating the location of healthcare facilities in neighborhoods where residents have documented preventable and chronic diseases could result in residents accessing additional preventive care, reducing trips to the emergency room for non-emergencies, and improving life expectancy.
- **Potential Cost of All Health Recommendations: \$20 million**



Policy Recommendation Area: Municipal Practices

- Engage an experienced and qualified firm to analyze current municipal policies and practices. This will create shared understanding of the ways in which seemingly neutral policies and practices may have originated from discriminatory intent or may still have unintended inequitable outcomes.
- Institute an organizational program to correct systemic bias. This recommendation builds upon the outcomes of the previous recommendation: if municipal policies and practices are found to have unintended inequitable impacts, the City would create a mechanism to address these issues and document the beneficial outcomes.
- **Potential Cost of All Municipal Recommendations: \$ 1 Million**



Policy Recommendation Area: Additional Recommendation

- Issue an apology to African Americans on behalf of the City of High Point, apologizing for the City's previous discriminatory practices and policies. This action will communicate to your city residents that this work is of the utmost importance to city leadership. It also responds to a specific request from the community members and organizations that initially advocated for the creation of the One High Point Commission.
- **Potential Cost of Recommendation: No Monetary Cost**



Prioritizing Policies for Implementation

- We are at a decision point. What areas of implementation do Council members want to prioritize?
- Today, we will use a ‘text to poll’ method to determine the 3-4 policy recommendation areas you want to prioritize.
- We will come back to you with more detailed outcome options that will have budget implications and possible additional funding sources.
- You will decide on the outcomes you want to pursue.
- We will work with staff to develop implementation plans that align with 2025 plans.



Prioritizing Policy Areas for Implementation

- **ADDRESS HOUSING DISPARITIES**
- **ADDRESS HEALTH DISPARITIES**
- **ADDRESS THE EDUCATION GAP**
- **ADDRESS ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**
- **ADDRESS TRANSPORTATION ACCESS**
- **REVIEW AND REVISE MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS**
- **MUNICIPAL APOLOGY**



Prioritizing Policy Areas for Implementation

- [live results]



Next Steps

- Choosing priorities today does not minimize the others
- NIMED will work with relevant city departments to create work plans and budgets that correspond with Council's desired level of activity.
- NIMED will update City Council on the work plans and potential budgetary and human resource implications of implementation.
- NIMED will work with City staff to identify financial resources and help ensure submitted applications are competitive.
- Once initial activities are launched, NIMED will come back to Council next year to determine the next set of priority areas to focus on.



Questions