Minutes for September 24, 2026, City Council - Visioning Workshop: Revitalizing Asheville's Flooded Commercial Corridors

Present

Mayor Esther E. Manheimer, Presiding; Vice-Mayor S. Antanette Mosley; Councilman Bo Hess; Councilwoman Kim Roney; Councilwoman Sheneika Smith; Councilwoman Sage Turner; Councilwoman Maggie Ullman; City Manager DK Wesley; City Attorney Brad Branham; and City Clerk Magdalen Burleson

At 9:00 a.m., City Manager Wesley opened the workshop.

Summary

Director of Housing & Economic Development Nikki Reid said that the objective of the workshop was to have a better understanding of Council's vision for the Revitalization of Flooded Commercial Districts program and what that vision is expected to achieve. She said the input from Council will help staff develop the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), and ultimately recommend projects aligned with your priorities and federal CDBG-DR requirements. She noted that we will not leave here today with project or funding recommendations. Council's input will be used directly to refine the program and shape the future NOFO using Council's direction to conduct stakeholder engagement by following up on specific topics, assessing feasibility, and asking additional questions; and incorporating Council's vision as well as findings from stakeholder engagement, data, and best practices to develop and refine the draft NOFO(s).

Council then broke out into three breakout sessions and discussed key visioning topic and priorities on the following: (1) commercial redevelopment (focus on priorities for supporting commercial recovery, floodproofing, and redevelopment in commercial corridors); (2) economic vitality and corridor enhancement (focus on strategies for commercial corridor vitality and supporting small business recovery); and (3) infrastructure and public realm investments (focus on priorities for public realm enhancements, open space, and resilient infrastructure investments.) .

After Council rotated across the breakout sessions, key takeaways and themes were shared from the breakout discussions.

Staff will come back to Council with results of the stakeholder engagement, confirm recommendations based on established vision and priorities, and then staff will be able to publish the program manual and issue NOFO(s).

At 12:00 p.m., Mayor Manheimer adjourned the special Council meeting.

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Esther E. Manheimer, Mayor

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Magdalen Burleson, City Clerk