# City Council Check Ins

Shining light on an opaque process

# What are Council Check Ins?

- Process to prepare for formal Council meetings
- Other models exist: public worksessions
- Asheville Council conducts Check Ins prior to every Council meeting
- The City does NOT proactively publish information regarding Check Ins
- Public records requests have revealed more about this process

# Check In Agendas

- Meet in 3 groups:
  Mayor + 2 Council Members
- Groups contain quorums of 3 member Council Committees
- Meetings have **Agendas** and **Supporting Materials**
- Includes **Agenda Review**, **Confidential / Legal Issues**, **Other Issues / Concerns**

THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE
NORTH CAROLINA

**Council Check In | Conference Call/Google Hangout**

**November 4, 2021**
9:00 - 10:30 Manheimer, Kiglore, Wisler
11:00 - 12:30 Manheimer, Smith, Turner
1:30 - 3:00 Manheimer, Mosley, Roney

**AGENDA**

30 min Agenda Review
1. Follow Up Items - Peggy
2. November 9 Council Agenda - Peggy
3. Committee Meetings
   a. Planning and Economic Development - November 8
   b. Boards and Commissions - November 9
   c. Housing and Community Development - November 16
   d. Public Safety - November 17

30 min Confidential/Legal Issues
1. ACSF lawsuit Update - Brad
2. STVR Platform Negotiations - Brad

30 min Other Issues/Concerns
1. Organizational updates
   a. Community and Economic Development Director
   b. Equity and Inclusion Director
   c. City Engineer Designee
   d. Parks and Recreation Director
   e. Assistant City Manager

**Source:**
- City of Asheville Public Records Request #22-31
- Check-In Agenda 11_04_21.pdf

# December 2021 Check In

**Follow up items from November 4, 2021 Council Check Ins**

| **Council Follow - up** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Item** | **Question/Request** | **ACM/Staff Assigned** | **Status** |
| Park/General Safety | Continue to discuss plans on how we can enforce against downtown violations/homelessness situations (Panhandling, selling products, etc.). Potential future managers report. | Debra/Brad/ Etc. | Review of legal tools will be discussed in the Check-In Agenda.<br>Staff is creating a communication piece that identifies strategies and efforts we have or will be undertaking that will go out Friday 12/10. |

**Source:**

- City of Asheville Public Records Request #22-31
- 12/09/2021 Check In **Follow Up Items**

# Results of Council Check In Process

- Lack of transparency regarding work of Council + Staff
- Materials contradict public statements
- Wasted resources: **hundreds** of hours of staff time
- Damages public trust in City of Asheville

# Build a Brighter Future

**Replace Council Check Ins with public worksessions**

- Allow the public to follow the work of Council and Staff

**Proactively publish public records pertaining to City decision-making**

- Make agendas, Staff updates, minutes, and other documents **public by default**

**Make a real commitment to participatory government**

- Allow a presentation of the Open Meetings Policy at the **Governance Committee**