

KEY FINDINGS: CONCLUDING SUMMARY & EMERGING RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this long and lively workshop, we emerge with the following conclusions and recommendations:

- ◆ The energy and commitment so evident around our table should be harnessed and tapped by the City as a significant resource in the Charlotte area redevelopment effort. This is clearly a group who has cared about their neighborhood and its well being for many years, a group vested in seeing Charlotte redeveloped successfully. There appears to be, within this group, a healthy cross-section of different perspectives, but enough compatibility to be pulling in many of the same directions.
- ◆ The vision these visioning workshop participants have collectively articulated for Charlotte, as a theme underscoring its redevelopment, and positioning the community to its visitors, is ***“a unique historical Great Lakes maritime village”***. This vision, we’re told, remains their core concept as a community whether or not a fast ferry to Toronto ever materializes. It is a vision they believe can and should be reflected in the community’s redeveloped ambiance, its architectural implants, its signage, its banners and flags, and the way it treats both its visitors and its residents.
- ◆ Without a fast ferry, community priorities include:
 - [a] commercial in-fill development in all three target areas
 - [b] additional non-obtrusive parking throughout the community
 - [c] more transient boat slips
 - [d] a trolley shuttle in support of priorities [a], [b], and [c] above
 - [e] using the Conrail bridge as a community focal point along Lake Ave
 - [f] better signage tying the community together and making things easier for visitors to find
 - [g] redevelopment support for the lighthouse, the North Warehouse and the old railroad station
 - [h] increased public safety for both visitors and residents
 - [i] more positive media coverage for the Charlotte community

- ◆ With a fast ferry, community priorities include:
 - [a] a jump start on the commercial in-fill development
 - [b] significantly more parking
 - [c] some effective means of dealing with the movement of cars, trucks and people throughout the area
 - [d] more transient boat slips
 - [e] a trolley shuttle in support of priorities [a], [b], [c], and [d] above
 - [f] even better signage throughout the area
 - [g] redevelopment support for the lighthouse, the North Warehouse and the old railroad station
 - [h] even stronger and more visible public safety for both visitors and residents
 - [i] active linkages between Charlotte and the City's other attractions (museums, stadium, etc.) the Finger Lakes area, Bristol Mountain, regional golf courses
 - [j] more positive media coverage for the Charlotte community

- ◆ Without the fast ferry, the core challenge for this community and its redevelopment is one of convincing people to come to Charlotte throughout the year, and while here, to stay awhile and wander around. With the fast ferry, the core challenge becomes one of convincing people to stay in Charlotte on their way on and off the ferry, and to experience the community as more than a mere portal. The two challenges are strikingly similar, and shares several common denominators, as reflected in the overlap between the two lists of priorities noted above.

- ◆ There was around our table a strong participant-initiated sentiment in favor of the fast ferry's being awarded to a private developer who:
 - [1] is willing and able to bring in their own private capital and not rely on public money;
 - [2] is willing to not only put boats in the water but also invest in developing the 20-acre parcel now designated for the fast ferry port area, representing a much more solid and long term commitment to the project and the community;
 - [3] is willing and able to undertake the entire development process at once, rather than a piecemeal development effort over several years
 - [4] is a local resident rather than someone from outside, and therefore more personally vested in "his own backyard";

- ◆ With or without a fast ferry, those around our table stressed their vision for a redevelopment effort which makes Charlotte a better community not only for its visitors but at the same time for its residents.
- ◆ This visioning workshop has provided the Economic Development Department with a solid set of ideas and opinions to move forward with, and has given this clearly committed set of participants a sense of the City's commitment on Charlotte's behalf.