



MEETING SYNOPSIS | Advisory Council

August 28, 2019

The following is a summary of the second meeting of the Elevate Advisory Council. The meeting attendance sheet is attached to this summary. The agenda and presentation slides can be found separately on the Elevate Tuscaloosa website.

Committee members were provided an overview of the following items:

Overview of Elevate Tuscaloosa

Tuscaloosa Experiential Learning Center (Cultural Arts and Tourism)

Bama Theatre (Cultural Arts and Tourism)

Conference Center and Athletic and Events Center (Cultural Arts and Tourism)

Tuscaloosa National Airport (TCL) (Connectivity)

Western Riverwalk (Connectivity)

Northern Riverwalk (Connectivity)

Downtown, Riverfront, and Workforce Transit (Connectivity)

All-Inclusive Playground at Sokol Park (Parks and Recreation)

Harris-Nicol Water Recreation and Trails (Parks and Recreation)

Snow Hinton Park (Parks and Recreation)

McDonald Hughes Center (Parks and Recreation)

Parks Master Plan (Parks and Recreation)

Overview of Elevate Tuscaloosa

Mayor Walt Maddox reminded the Advisory Council of the commitment that Elevate offers the City of Tuscaloosa. He highlighted the importance of the Advisory Council and emphasized how their imaginations, perspectives and areas of expertise are essential to the process. Mayor Maddox also reviewed the savings that citizens will receive on their residential garbage fees in November.



Tuscaloosa Experiential Learning Center (Cultural Arts and Tourism)

Mayor Maddox reviewed the collaboration between the City of Tuscaloosa, the Tuscaloosa Public Library, and the Children's Hands-On Museum (CHOM) to explore the possibility of co-locating at 315 28th Avenue (the existing Tuscaloosa News location). He mentioned the 600,000 customers that used both facilities last year and the exciting opportunity to come together in a geographic gateway in Tuscaloosa. Mayor Maddox presented conceptual renderings from Ellis Architects showing what the facility could look like after renovations. This is a generational project that expands learning opportunities across our region. Mayor Maddox conveyed how this partnership is a prime example of the many viable partnerships that could arise in the future in connection with Elevate.

Discussion, Q & A, and Voting Results:

- The Advisory Council did not vote on this item.
- A member inquired about the future use of the current sites used by the Tuscaloosa Public Library and CHOM. There are currently no proposals for those sites.
- Updates will be provided to the Elevate Advisory Council Cultural Arts and Tourism Subcommittee members as the planning process develops.

Bama Theatre (Cultural Arts and Tourism)

Mayor Maddox provided a review of the Cultural Arts and Tourism Subcommittee discussion of the Bama Theatre, which included: existing theatre conditions, comparable historic venues, theatre schedule and construction timeline, and the consensus to modernize the theater while keeping the historic aesthetic. Mayor Maddox emphasized the importance of outside funding for the Bama Theatre, as well as other Elevate projects. Outside funding examples include (but are not limited to) private investors, grants, philanthropic groups and other government agencies.

Discussion, Q & A, and Voting Results:

- Chris England (Elevate Advisory Council Co-Chair) led the committee in a vote to recommend, recommend with conditions, or reject advancing the design work of the Bama Theatre by Ellis Architects.
- The Elevate Advisory Council voted to **recommend** that this item move forward to the Tuscaloosa City Council.



Conference Center and Athletic and Events Center (Cultural Arts and Tourism)

Mayor Maddox reviewed the Cultural Arts and Tourism Subcommittee discussion of the Conference Center and Athletic and Events Center, which included: a feasibility study timeline (submittals due by November 1) and the nomination of Heather Dill and Don Staley (both Cultural Arts and Tourism subcommittee members) to review the responses to the Request for Proposals (RFPs).

Discussion, Q & A, and Voting Results:

- The Advisory Council did not vote on this item.
- A member asked about the purpose of the Request for Proposal. The RFP was issued by the City to select a consultant to conduct a feasibility study that will provide insight on the ability of Tuscaloosa to support one or both venues and will recommend specifications about the venue(s) (examples include size, location, construction cost, operating cost, and others).

Tuscaloosa National Airport (TCL) (Connectivity)

Mayor Maddox reviewed the Connectivity Subcommittee discussion of the Tuscaloosa National Airport (TCL), which included: conditions of the runway, Tuscaloosa Police Department (TPD) hangar, and the terminal; updates about commercial air service efforts; options to renovate or rebuild the terminal; and the decision to prioritize runway improvements.

Discussion, Q & A, and Voting Results:

- Advisory Council members discussed the pros and cons of rebuilding the hangar. Tera Tubbs (City of Tuscaloosa) described FAA standards and requirements, and the need for police presence at the airport as it advances toward full commercial air services. The council expressed support for the importance of public safety, at the airport and generally.
- Subcommittee members expressed the importance of selecting the most qualified architect for each Elevate project, based on expertise and experience.
- Chris England led the council in a vote to recommend, recommend with conditions, or reject advancing the \$1,000,000 funding that was proposed for design work and construction of the Tuscaloosa Police Department (TPD) helicopter hangar.
- The Elevate Advisory Council voted to **recommend** that this item move forward to the Tuscaloosa City Council.
- David Pass (Connectivity Subcommittee member) emphasized that although the vote today was to move forward with the design and construction of the TPD



hangar, the subcommittee discussed and agreed that the priority for the Tuscaloosa National Airport is the improvement of the runway.

Western Riverwalk (Connectivity)

Mayor Maddox reviewed the Connectivity Subcommittee discussion of the Western Riverwalk, which included: project details, updates on grant funding, and the property acquisition form the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Mayor highlighted the visit by U.S. Senator Doug Jones that occurred on Friday, August 22, where they discussed the benefits of improving the railroad trestle along Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and Jack Warner Parkway. Mayor Maddox explained how widening the roadway under the trestle, along with expanding the Western Riverwalk, will benefit the future economic development of West Tuscaloosa.

Discussion, Q & A, and Voting Results:

- A discussion was held about the land owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the existing Tuscaloosa Country Club (TCC). Mayor Maddox discussed the potential re-development of the TCC site and addressed the council's concern about potential disruption of any Elevate investments made to the Western Riverwalk.
- Ms. Tubbs referred to the Tuscaloosa Riverwalk as an example of a long-term project that was built according to a master plan. The western expansion will be the final section on the southern bank of the Black Warrior River.
- Chris England led the council in a vote to recommend, recommend with conditions, or reject advancing the design work of the Western Riverwalk by TTL.
- The Elevate Advisory Council voted to **recommend** that this item move forward to the Tuscaloosa City Council.

Northern Riverwalk (Connectivity)

Mayor Maddox reviewed the Connectivity Subcommittee discussion of the Northern Riverwalk, which included: project details and the Randall family land donation for a park and trailhead.

Discussion, Q & A, and Voting Results:

- Chris England led the council in a vote to recommend, recommend with conditions, or reject advancing the design work of the Northern Riverwalk by McGiffert and Associates.
- The Elevate Advisory Council voted to **recommend** that this item move forward to the Tuscaloosa City Council.



Downtown, Riverfront, and Workforce Transit (Connectivity)

Mayor Maddox reviewed the Connectivity Subcommittee discussion of the Downtown, Riverfront, and Workforce Transit initiative, which included: an overview of Parking and Transit Authority (PATA), examples of transit branding in other cities, and the proposed concept of a transit study. Mayor Maddox expressed his excitement about this project and explained that extending evening and weekend routes will help with job mobility. He also noted that transit is a key component for having a vibrant city.

Discussion, Q & A, and Voting Results

- The council discussed the availability of ALDOT grant funding to pay for 80% of the cost of a transit study. ALDOT awarded \$72,000 for the study and the grant requires an \$18,000 match.
- Chris England led the council in a vote to recommend, recommend with conditions, or reject advancing the \$18,000 funding match for the transit study from Elevate funds.
- The Elevate Advisory Council voted to **recommend** that this item move forward to the Tuscaloosa City Council.

Sokol Park: All Inclusive-Playground (Parks and Recreation)

Mayor Maddox reviewed the Parks and Recreation Subcommittee discussion of the All-Inclusive Playground, which included: details and phasing of construction, public and private partnership opportunities, future fundraising opportunities, and the recommendation of a one-time \$500,000 donation to the PARA Foundation from Elevate funds.

Discussion, Q & A, and Voting Results

- Chris England led the council in a vote to recommend, recommend with conditions, or reject advancing the one-time \$500,000 donation to the PARA Foundation for the All-Inclusive Playground.
- The Elevate Advisory Council voted to **recommend** that this item move forward to the Tuscaloosa City Council.



Harris-Nicol Water Recreation and Trails (Parks and Recreation)

Mayor Maddox reviewed the Parks and Recreation Subcommittee discussion of Harris-Nicol Water Recreation and Trails, which included: an overview of Lake Harris and Lake Nicol and the process of creating and implementing a master plan for the area.

Discussion, Q & A, and Voting Results

- Chris England led the council in a vote to recommend, recommend with conditions, or reject advancing a professional master plan for the lakes by TTL.
- The Elevate Advisory Council voted to **recommend** that this item move forward to the Tuscaloosa City Council.

Snow Hinton Park (Parks and Recreation)

Mayor Maddox reviewed the Parks and Recreation Subcommittee discussion of Snow Hinton Park, which included: an overview of the park, an example of a Gwinnett County, Georgia park that was built in phases, and the importance of stakeholder engagement.

Discussion, Q & A, and Voting Results

- Mayor Maddox discussed the proposal to hire Barge Design Solutions to create a professional master plan for approximately \$60,000 in funding from Elevate Tuscaloosa.
- Chris England led the council in a vote to recommend, recommend with conditions, or reject advancing the \$60,000 master plan by Barge Design Solutions.
- The Elevate Advisory Council voted to **recommend** that this item move forward to the Tuscaloosa City Council.

McDonald Hughes Community Center (Parks and Recreation)

Mayor Maddox reviewed the Parks and Recreation Subcommittee discussion of the McDonald Hughes Center, which included: an overview of the facility, potential renovation costs, programming, and a vision for the future of the facility. The subcommittee recommended using Elevate Tuscaloosa funds to address the immediate needs for the facility. Following the renovations and upgrades, both the mayor and subcommittee recommend having a master plan for this facility.



Discussion, Q & A, and Voting Results

- The council compared the original proposed budget (\$2.051 million) with a revised recommended budget of \$1.281 million provided by Ward Scott Architecture.
- Chris England led the council in a vote to recommend, recommend with conditions, or reject advancing Ward Scott Architecture's \$1.281 million budget for upgrades and renovations of the McDonald Hughes Center.
- The Elevate Advisory Council voted to **recommend** that this item move forward to the Tuscaloosa City Council.

Parks Master Plan (Parks and Recreation):

Mayor Maddox reviewed the Parks and Recreation Subcommittee discussion of creating a master plan and long-term vision for the following facilities: McDonald Hughes Center, Sokol Park, Bowers Park, Phelps Center, McAbee Center, and Tuscaloosa Tennis Center.

Discussion, Q & A, and Voting Results

- Chris England led the council to select two subcommittee members to review the Request for Proposals (RFPs) for the parks once it is issued and responses have been received.
- Subcommittee members Gary Minor and Tripp Powell volunteered to review the RFP submissions.

Other Discussions

- David Pass (Connectivity Subcommittee member) discussed the idea of assembling philanthropic community members and stakeholders in order to gauge interest and possible outside funding or donations. He articulated the ability to leverage public investment with private support.
- Karen Brooks (Elevate Advisory Council Co-Chair) referred to her experience with a private fundraising foundation, and emphasized that taxpayers' dollars are not enough to fund the projects. She agreed that it is critical to get alternative funding for Elevate Tuscaloosa initiatives.
- Subcommittee members questioned how the projects within Elevate are prioritized. Mayor Maddox explained how feasibility studies, available funding, timelines, and community recommendations influence the progress of projects. He also explained how the Experiential Learning Center is an example of a project that will need immediate action based on an opportunity that arose unexpectedly. The process will need to be flexible.




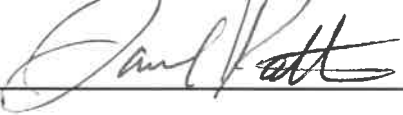
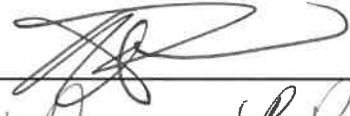




Next Steps

The recommendations made by the Elevate Advisory Council will be presented to City Council on September 10. The Elevate subcommittees will reconvene on the following dates:

- Connectivity: September 25
- Cultural Arts and Tourism: October 3
- Parks and Recreation: October 10

The Advisory Council will reconvene on October 24 at Stillman College.





Name		Signature
Linda	Parsons	
David	Pass	
Sarah	Patterson	
Gene	Poole	
Tripp	Powell	
Nicole	Prewitt	
Steven	Rumsey	
Don	Staley	
Jimmy	Warren	
Sandra	Wolfe	

Name		Signature
Chris	England	Chris England
Rick	Freemon	Rick W. Freemon
Tyshawn	Gardner	Tyl Gardner
David	Gay, Jr.	David Gay, Jr.
Shelley	Jones	Shelley Jones
Russell	Lawrence	Russell Lawrence
Gary	Minor	Gary Minor
Wilson	Moore	
Russell	Mumper	Russell J. Mumper
Jim	Page	Jim Page
Tim	Parker, III	Tim Parker



Name		Signature
Tamika	Alexander	
Bill	Ashley	
William	Blakeney	
Karen	Brooks	
Joseph	Brown	
Lesley	Bruinton	
Michele	Coley	
Blake	Corder	
Terrance	Dedrick	
Heather	Dill	
Amy	Echols	

Name	Signature
Bronda Randall	

Name	Signature
GEOFF HAMILTON	
John Earl	