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Economic Recovery Special Committee September 21, 2022
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WAYNE: We're going to go ahead and try to get started, be respectful of everybody's time. Yes, I know this is a big facility, but if you can, just-- if you can't hear in the back or something, just wave and I'll tell people to speak louder. But welcome to the Economic Rec-- wait, I don't have my jacket on. All right. I don't have my jacket on. Welcome to the Economic Recovery Special Committee's joint hearing and public information session. My name is Justin Wayne and I represent District 13, which is north Omaha and northeast Douglas County. I serve as the Chair of this committee. We'll start off by having committee members do self-introductions, starting with my right, Senator McDonnell.

McDONNELL: Mike McDonnell, LD5, south Omaha.

VARGAS: Tony Vargas, District 7, downtown and the other side of south Omaha.

LINDSTROM: Senator Brett Lindstrom, District 18, northwest Omaha.

McKINNEY: Terrell McKinney, District 11, north Omaha.

TREVOR FITZGERALD: Trevor Fitzgerald, committee legal counsel.

WAYNE: And Angenita is our committee clerk. I want to recognize any other elected officials. I see Senator McCollister and I saw Commissioner Chris Rodgers. I don't know.

_____ : Formers?

WAYNE: All right. OK. Thank you all for being here. First, I want to also recognize the staff who are in the building from Olsson Consulting Group. They will be assisting us both in this room and in outside. So, staff members from Olsson, would you raise your hand so they know who you are? I want to point out that outside, to the left, we have an architect, engineer, and somebody from the city planning that, if you have an idea on a project or a program or any idea in general, they are out there throughout the duration of this meeting and they'll stay a little afterwards to help you flesh out your idea of what you might actually need. So basically, during these times today and tomorrow, we will be getting free architectural/engineering services to help figure out what you need from a program. And even if you think from a project standpoint or a program standpoint, it still has to be housed somewhere. So we're trying to figure out if-- we don't want to limit anybody's ideas just because they can't afford to

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buy a architect or hire an architect or hire a engineer. So throughout these public hearings, we will be helping you flesh out those ideas. So if you have any ideas that you just need help being fleshed out, you can go to the back and to the left and they'll-- they'll consult with you. This aft-- this evening, this committee will be taking input, public testimony on the potential uses for the Recovery Act, LB1024. Before I begin, I just want to provide a little bit of background on how we got here. LB1024 required that we hire an outside group to objectively evaluate projects that come before this committee and the economic impact. They also are to look at the potential uses for ARPA for those type of projects. Now, throughout the night, many of us might say "projects." That is interchangeable with "program" or "ideas." It's just easier for my background in linguistics to talk-- say "projects," so don't say I'm trying to limit it to non-capital construction projects because it's open to everything. We have been working with Olsson to conduct a study and been working for the past-- past few months to develop this process and proce-- procedures for public engagement, reviewing and scoring of the potential projects, and that report is-- hopefully will be done by December 1. The committee is the one who sets the criteria. The committee will be the one who ultimately decides what projects we are going to put forth, or programs we are going to put forth, to receive funding. At that time, we will go back to the Legislature and we'll have a series of debate, like any other bill, and then hopefully those projects-- well, not hopefully. They will be funded at some point. Now, in order to facilitate a-- really, an objective procedure, we have opened up an online portal. That online portal is omahaeconomicrecovery.com; again, it is omahaeconomicrecovery.com. That is the official portal where we will submit-- where we will-- you will receive your ideas. So what that means is we are looking at the library and a couple other places here in the next week to find some more locations in the community that if you need to have Internet access to go submit your idea, that will be available. If there is somebody who you don't know how to put it together, there's a help section or an information, "contact us" section, we will help organize them. Make-- just make sure you can put the bare bones together and get it in front of our committee. You will also find additional materials on this website, including project evaluation framework guidelines for federal ARPA funds and materials from the stakeholder meetings that we had last month. As it relates to the stakeholder meetings, it was not that this committee thought that public engagement was second to community stakeholders, foundations and business community. It was a mere timing issue. When we know that we have to have something ready to go by December, and in August when

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the contracts and everything were signed, school started, not just in Omaha Public Schools but also at Metro Community College, so finding a location, even this one, was very hard to open it up for public and have a big enough room and space. So rather than wait and not do anything, we thought we can engage with stakeholders at that point. But it's strictly just a timing issue with school starting and having available places to hold these type of public hearings, because this is a public hearing that is required by the Legislature, so there are just certain things, like recording and everything that has to be transcribed, that we had to do. Speaking of that, on the tables in front, when you come up, and outside in the room when you're walking in, is a pink testifier sheet. If you are planning on testifying, you have to complete one of those so we can keep our records accurate. When you come up to the podium over there, please state and spell your first and last name for the record to make sure that the transcribers can understand who is speaking. That pink testifier sheet will be handed to the individual from Olsson and it will be given to Angenita in a-- in the right order to make sure we have all of our records accurate. Also, if you don't want to testify, but you want to let the record be known that you were here, there's a green sheet up in the front. You can just record your presence. Now, unlike a regular bill, there isn't proponents and opponents. It's just testifiers. We are trying to get as many ideas as we can from the community. But just because if you testify today, that does not mean your idea has been taken by the committee. You have to go through the online portal to complete it. That way, there's no-- part of it is we just don't want a staff member from either of our offices to misplace it. That's why we're trying to have one central location to make sure we-- we get every idea in. I would also note that it's the Legislature's policy that if you want to submit a letter for the record, it has to be done by 5:00 p.m. from the previous day. So if you want to submit a letter for the record tomorrow, you had to do it by 5:00 p.m. today. But this hearing already started, so if you have something tonight, I'll take it. If you come up, we ask that you provide ten copies of any handwritten material. If you don't have ten copies, please email it to Angenita or myself and we'll distribute it to the rest of the committee members. Again, there are some committee members who are not here, but all of this is being recorded and transcribed and they will review this. We will start this hearing today with brief remarks from Olsson, who will kind of lay out where we're at and where we're going, and then we'll start having testifiers come up and tell us your ideas. We will be using a three-minute light system. We use three minute in the Legislature to make sure that everybody's got equal opportunity to

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testify. So with that, at the one-minute mark, one minute left, you'll have a yellow light up here, and then you'll have a red light and we ask you to wrap it up. I'm trying to be pretty firm about wrapping up in 3 minutes. If there's anybody on the committee who will ask you follow-up questions, we will do so, but we have to make sure that we're consistent for everybody's purposes. I would like to remind everyone, including senators, to please turn off your cell phones and put them on vibrate. With that, we will begin with Mike Piernicky from Olsson to do a quick overview.

MICHAEL PIERNICKY: Hello. Good evening. My name is Mike Piernicky, M-i-c-h-a-e-l P-i-e-r-n-i-c-k-y. I'm the project manager for Olsson for the overall LB1024 coordination plan. The Legislature hired us in July to pull together the overall process, the program management, the engagement that you're here for tonight. And then we will take all of the proposals in. We'll go through a screening process and ultimately, in December, provide the special committee a coordination plan that goes through the entire process, documents it, and makes recommendations on those projects which will provide the highest return for the public investment of the dollars into the community. And so a brief summary of the project process where we're at, how we got to today, and then where we're headed: They hired us in July. In August, we held community visioning sessions with over 200 invited stakeholders from North and South Omaha. We took those stakeholders through a process to engage them, get input from them. We talked about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that the community is seeing, both in north and south Omaha. We held four separate meetings, two in north and two in south. And then we also asked those groups what big ideas or what improvements and needs do you see in the community? And so we took all that information in, as well as doing a bunch of technical analysis of the community, demographics, infrastructure, that we see as professionals. And so as we moved those two things together, that also helped us develop the selections for screening criteria that we developed and that went to the special committee for review and approval. And then certainly that brings us here to today. While we came up with all of that information and screening criteria, we also developed the website, the submission process, the questions that you'll go through to basically provide us details about proposals. And then we'll go through a process to evaluate everything that's submitted, and then we'll make recommendations as part of the final coordination plan to document the overall process, all of the information that is submitted for every project, and then obviously recommendations to the committee for those

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projects that would provide the highest return to the communities. We'll work through the process of evaluating proposals in October and early November, a draft coordination plan to the special committee in November, and then obviously after any comments the committee may have, any questions that they have, we'll answer those, and we'll finally prepare that final coordination document for them in December. The one thing that I'll highlight for folks-- Senator Wayne said it already-- omahaeconomicrecovery.com is the one-stop place for all information that we've done up to date. It is where you will submit any proposals or ideas that you have. And then when we're done, that's where we'll post the final coordination plan after it's approved by the committee as well. So all the information that we've seen that can be used to help support proposals, and then documentation of the overall process, that is at omahaeconomicrecovery.com. If you have any questions in the community, you talk to your friends, please drive them to that site. We also have a "contact us" page. If you have questions as you go through an application process, we're doing everything we can to respond within about 24 to 48 hours to get questions answered as quickly as we can and keep process moving. Beyond that, I would encourage everybody, if you have an idea, a proposal, a project, certainly we ask a bunch of different information, but don't think that you have to have all of the information to make a submission. We're looking for all ideas. We want to make sure it's inclusive and we want to be sure to have everybody have a chance to get their idea forward and in front of the committee. So when you see the list of questions, we certainly have assistance to help you through it. But if you don't have a piece of information or two or three, please don't even hesitate about submitting. Please continue through the process. We want all great ideas. With regards to how we have this evening set up, obviously, the public hearing portion of this evening is here in this room, in the auditorium. Out in the entryway, or the lobby, we have stations set up and staff available to answer questions about the visioning workshop, what we heard from the community as far as needs, data and information on the qualified census tracts, as well as the selection criteria and the ability to answer specific questions as to the submission process, deadlines, and-- and things that we can try and help you with to answer those questions. Senator Wayne also highlighted if you walk out the doors and you take a left, we have three separate stations set up with engineers, architects and city staff representatives that are here to provide engineering architecture support, the ability to help basically provide as much information as we can to flesh out ideas and to bring them the most information possible to improve the submissions

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that we see before it goes to the committee. Certainly anybody is eligible to go to that. We just ask that as you go out, identify one of our staff, let them know that you'd like to have a sit-down, and we'll be sure to accommodate you as quickly as possible. We want to see as many of those roll through as possible. Now this is also important. I'm going to say it twice, because whatever you repeat, people remember. Submission deadline: Sunday night, October 9, 11:59 p.m. The submission deadline is Sunday night, October 9, 11:59 p.m. That's about three weeks that we're having for this overall process to get submissions in. And certainly we understand that that is a quick timeline, but what we have to do is take all of that information from every project that's submitted. We have to be able to pull it through into our process, go through evaluations, be able to map it. But then also we have to go through and document all of that for the coordination plan. And we've got about four-and-a-half to five weeks to be able to pull all of that information together after it's submitted from you folks in the community. So with that, I'll wrap up my comments. Certainly I want to thank you for taking time out of your schedule tonight to be engaged in this process. Please engage myself or staff. I'm Mike Piernicky. I'm with Olsson. I'm a project manager. We'd like to answer any question that you have and provide as much information to you about the process and your submissions as we move forward. So thank you for being here. And, Senator Wayne, I'll turn it back over to you.

WAYNE: Thank you. So again, omahaeconomicrecovery.com, October 9 at 11:59 p.m. is the deadline. You do not have to have a complete, shiny proposal. We are looking for any ideas, proposed budgets, even if you don't have that fleshed out. Part of the process is we try to get as many ideas as we can to also follow up with individuals to help flesh out things. We are trying to create a strategic plan for east Omaha, both north and south, from a state's perspective, a needs analysis perspective, and an inventory of potential transformational, fundamental changes in our community. So just because you don't have it all fleshed out, don't feel like you shouldn't submit. We are still asking you to submit and have that conversation. So with that, the first, up here on the right fir-- front row, our right, your left, front row, will be the testifiers on deck. And we will ask for you to come sit up here so we can get through the testifiers and then go back to your-- your regular seats so we always can keep people moving. So with that, we'll have the first testifier come on up. Microphone is down.

_____ : Mic's down there.

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WAYNE: There's a little-bitty button on the side. Yep.

_____ : There we go.

REBECCA NOBLE: Rebecca Noble, R-e-b-e-c-c-a N-o-b-l-e. Am I good to go? OK.

WAYNE: Go ahead.

REBECCA NOBLE: Good evening. My name is Rebecca Noble and I have worked at South High for 15 years as the curriculum specialist for visual and performing arts. It was the best job I ever had. I will admit, I retired in May and I'm liking this too. But I love South High and it gave me a lot of opportunities to work with students. I worked with amazing students who passionately love the arts. Some of those examples are the fact that in 2006 we started a dance program with 30 students. Within a few short years, we had over 400 students involved in dance. Our piano program of 15 grew to 275 within a matter of a couple of years. We cannot add any more to that program because we're out of space. Our pottery program turns away about 100 students or more every single year. Our students love the arts, and many of them continue their studies in college, becoming teachers or choreographers or studio artists or stage managers, and many become architects or engineers or electricians or welders. Whatever their next step, they are unified in saying that the arts programs gave them the tools they needed for success, responsibility, commitment, teamwork, the ability to speak to an audience, all qualities needed in the workplace and in our community. The enthusiasm of our students and our visual and performing arts staff led us to Art in the Heart of South Omaha, a capital campaign for a new arts addition. Mike Yanney and Thompson Rogers agreed to serve as co-chairs. They both send their apologies. Mike is recovering from pneumonia and Tom is awaiting COVID results, so they could not be here. As we planned our new addition, one thing became clear. It must serve both students and the south Omaha community. As the concept of a community center grew, I spoke with leaders of several of Omaha's arts organizations. They enthusiastically have stated that they would love to be involved, partner with us on projects, bring workshops and classes and events to this new community center. We are-- [RECORDER MALFUNCTION] We are also working with Canopy South in south Omaha, and as they have conducted surveys of residents of the area, one common theme has emerged. Students get some athletic opportunities, but they really need more opportunities in the arts. The concept of such a center connected to a public school is not a new one. We have seen several throughout the

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Omaha metro community. These public-private partnerships have expanded community opportunities and strengthened connections in our schools. Our goal is to bring that partnership to south Omaha, an area that has been underserved for years. It will provide the equity so needed. Imagine a pottery studio that serves South students during the day and offers classes to the community after school, piano lessons for younger siblings, voice lessons. The list goes on and on. A beautiful new commons area will provide needed space for those coming to basketball games, as those who want to visit the art galleries. An artist space will be available for our students, as well as local and regional and perhaps national artists. A recital hall and dance studios will allow for expanded performances by students and community organizations.

WAYNE: I need you to-- I need you to wrap up.

REBECCA NOBLE: OK. The Omaha Public Schools, under the leadership of Dr. Cheryl Logan, has committed \$7 million to this project. We received \$500,000 from the Omaha Public Schools Foundation. We think that we're a perfect fit for the Recovery Act funds--

WAYNE: Thank you.

REBECCA NOBLE: --as the city strengthens the 24th Street corridor. Thank you.

WAYNE: Thank you for your time. Thank you. Sorry, guys. I just gotta keep this to three minutes.

REBECCA NOBLE: No, I understand.

WAYNE: That's what we've been doing. The other hearings are three minutes. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you for being here.

REBECCA NOBLE: Thanks.

WAYNE: Next testifier. Welcome to your. Economic Recovery Committee.

STEPHEN B. JACKSON: Good evening, committee members for the Nebraska Economic Recovery Special Committee. My name is Stephen B. Jackson, S-t-e-p-h-e-n J-a-c-k-s-o-n, and I am the chief operating officer for the North Omaha Area Health Clinic, better known as NOAH. I am here today to acknowledge that our organization, NOAH, will be submitting a proposal for the North Omaha Economic Recovery Plan. The mission of

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NOAH is to be a beacon of light and hope in the community by providing no-cost or low-cost health services, personal health screenings, health classes, and support groups. Our primary value is the needs of the patient comes first. It is our attempt to fill those needs for which we are here to-- to prepare to submit a proposal. The North Omaha Health will be seeking \$25 million as a part of the North Omaha Recovery Act. This proposal includes a request of \$25 million for an economic development program-- project that focuses on health service delivery, with an emphasis on mental health and social determinants, i.e., those conditions and the environment for which we work, we were born, live, learn, work, play, worship and, unfortunately, age. The \$25 million can be broken down this way: \$5 million for land acquisition and auxiliary support; \$10 million for the new facility, the new building, which will have four corridors. One will house the NOAH Clinic. The other will House the Center for Holistic Development, as well as a corridor that will house a new institute to oversee education and training as we work to reduce and to eliminate the social determinants that impact our health. You should think of the new institute as kind of this collaborative or conglomerate entity that looks like the Chamber of Commerce, United Way, Nonprofit Association of the Midlands, DHHS, as well as our old OOIC, the ultimate public-private partnership, as well as we also would like to house within this facility community-based organizations and provide office space for them. Another key element will be a large multipurpose area that will host health fairs and banquets and things of that nature for the north Omaha community. The last piece of the economic development plan is \$10 million for workforce development, and that money will be used to scale up staff for the NOAH Clinic, as well as the Center for Holistic Development and--

WAYNE: Wrap up. Will you please wrap up?

STEPHEN B. JACKSON: --and the few staff that'll be for the institute.

WAYNE: Thank you. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you for being here. Next testifier. Welcome to your Economic Recovery Committee.

PORTIA CAVITT: Thank you for this opportunity to speak before you. I'm Reverend Portia Cavitt, P-o-r-t-i-a C-a-v-i-t-t-. I pastor Clair Memorial United Methodist Church at 56th and Ames, and I come to support the project that was just mentioned to you for the North Omaha Area Health, the NOAH free clinic which is located at 5620 Ames Avenue. As we look at what is happening, and even in the midst of

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coming through this pandemic, we recognize that those that live in north Omaha and in that far region between 56th and 72nd and Ames, that this is something that we need. And as you talked about, the community-based organizations, just want to lift up those organizations that we're working with now. There's My Sister's Keeper, which is a breast cancer support group; Black Family Health and Wellness; North Omaha Community Care Council; Serenity Counseling; Center for Holistic Development; and Clair Memorial United Methodist Church. Because the NOAH Clinic does not have enough space, the church has opened its doors to allow them to utilize our space for large events that they have. And right now we are a vaccination clinic for Douglas County Health Department, holding vaccine and booster clinics. And so we want to see this become a reality so that we will have a space or a location in north Omaha on that far end so that people can come and share. In the multipurpose room, we can also hold town hall meetings and forums, along with banquets and health fairs. We can also make sure that there are other entities that need to take place in our community to empower our people to make a difference. And so we would ask that you would remember the North Omaha Area Health/Wellness Center in your deliberations. Thank you.

WAYNE: Thank you. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you for being here. Next testifier. Go ahead.

TAMIKA MEASE: Good evening, everyone. My name is Tamika Mease. I am the executive director of North Omaha Community Partnership. First off, I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to hear from the people that actually live in the north Omaha community. I know it's for north and south, but I do represent north Omaha, and so I thank you for this opportunity to allow us to have a voice in the decision making. So with North Omaha Community Partnership, we will be presenting a proposal to the committee by October 9, and our proposal will include a funding request for new construction for a community and multipurpose center to serve our youth in a recreational capacity. If you look around north Omaha, there-- there is no community center and there hasn't been for quite some time. So that is one of our main goals, to have that, that place, that social place, that recreational place for our youth to go, to get away from the streets and everything that the streets offer. Within that, we will also have a multipurpose center that will serve as a hub, a community hub that will offer community resources, workshops, job training, and youth job training. We have also collaborated with other community-based organizations, and that affirmation will be included in our proposal. It sounds like a few of us have some of the same ideas, and hopefully we can build on

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that foundation and we will be more than willing to work with other entities that have some of the same goals for our community in mind. And that's all I have. Thank you for your time.

WAYNE: Thank you. Any-- oh, can you spell your first and last name for the record?

TAMIKA MEASE: Sorry. Tamika, T-a-m-i-k-a, Mease, M-e-a-s-e.

WAYNE: Thank you.

TAMIKA MEASE: Thank you.

WAYNE: Again, I want to remind everybody omahaeconomicrecovery.com is the website that you'll have information and be able to submit, the official portal for submissions. Next testifier. Welcome.

LUIS JIMENEZ: Thank you. Luis Jimenez, L-u-i-s J-i-m-e-n-e-z. I'm advocating for two projects, Culxr House, on 24th Street, and Omaha Arts Council. The president of the Omaha Art Council, he's right over there. He joined us today, which is great, and anticipate more comment from Culxr House. With the Omaha Arts Council, we are a nonprofit and the pandemic interrupted our nonprofit activity, so we are looking for assistance to activate the space over on 1723 North 33rd Street, right up the street from here, north of Hamilton. We-- we are asking for-- we will be asking for funds for the Omaha Arts Council to rehabilitate the building after a recent fire, and that would provide temporary construction jobs. And once occupancy is available at that location, there would-- there would be permanent jobs, such as a executive director and staff. I'm wanting-- I want to submit a good application, even though you guys are only being flexible. However, I am having difficulty understanding the ARPA funds. I understand you have some ARPA and some state dollars, so I'm looking at compliance and there is a question about if we're willing to submit or to follow up process. We, the Omaha Arts Council, we like any arrangement that allows occupancy for the Omaha Arts Council at that location. That that would be our goal and the-- I spoke about Culxr House yesterday and we are going to submit a proposal so that the art director of this nonprofit be permitted to purchase the premises at 3014 North 24th Street and improvements to the location. Thank you for your time.

WAYNE: Thank you. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you for being here. Next testifier. Welcome to your Urban-- welcome to

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your Economic Recovery Committee. For those who don't know, I chair Urban Affairs, so I keep saying Urban Affairs.

SHANE HANKINS: Welcome. my name is Shane Hankins, S-h-a-n-e H-a-n-k-i-n-s, really just come-- came here to talk about really the opportunity that this could provide a lot of us that actually come from this community. Really didn't plan to be here. I was actually driving home. Was talking to somebody. They said it was here, so, you know, I showed up.

WAYNE: Can you keep the mic close to your-- yeah.

SHANE HANKINS: Absolutely. Absolutely. Sorry. So my biggest thing is that wherever the funds go to that it be for ownership. Right? The biggest thing that a lot of us lack is ownership. I'm somebody who, you know, is fortunate to actually own property and own land within the north Omaha community, and I know what that has done for me financially and what that can do for other people financially. So wherever the funds go to, my only thing is that it goes toward ownership of things that we can utilize as far as if we're talking about just say if something happens, say like a accident happened and your kids go to the emergency room, right? Now you have an \$18,000 bill that a lot of people don't really have the money in the bank. So when you have ownership of something, you can use that equity in that property to be able to take care of certain things. So really wasn't a plan to come here and speak, but, you know, I have very strong feelings about ownership. So a lot of times, like the money that is given to our community is developed by out-of-state, let's call it entities, corporations, right? So that ownership will go to somebody that's outside of our community and then say we rent-- can rent to somebody that actually do not live here. That money is not recirculated back within the community. Sorry for the microphones. So it's really about the ownership that is within our community and how that money is being circulated. And as you can see, like, there's a lot of lots, there's a lot of, you know, buildings that are ran down because a lot of that money is siphoned out. It's not like by accident. Right? I just-- it's just not by accident because it's what I do every day. I actually had a hand in building Olsson's building Ols-- building Oscar 2.0 in Lincoln, Nebraska. There's Brinshore doing the building off of 30th and, you know, Burdette, so a lot of these, you know, outside of Olsson, I'm talking about that, but a lot of the corporations, entities that come and start to develop within our community, the money is siphoned off. So I don't care where the money goes as long as it goes within the community and that it is done

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within the community and it's ownership, not just passive ownership that that money's going to go to somebody else.

WAYNE: Thank you for your comments. Any questions? Thank you for being here. Next testifier.

LASHA GOODWIN: Good evening, Senators. My name is Lasha Goodwin, L-a-s-h-a G-o-o-d-w-i-n. I'm an urban planner and a real estate agent, and my idea is about remediation of existing site conditions. And when I'm talking about existing site conditions, I mean on vacant land specifically, old basements, foundations, and vacated sewer infrastructure. They impede new development in the urban core by increasing preconstruction costs, as well as requiring additional engineering features onto project sites and/or the buildings in order to comply with impervious coverage ratings and [INAUDIBLE] ratings. The idea is to have a contribution of ARPA dollars to a pre-construction fund to eliminate the barriers created by benign neglect and arbitrary regulations that will increase the viability of the various housing and commercial development projects. Thank you.

WAYNE: Thank you. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you for being here. Next testifier. Welcome to your Committee on Economic Recovery.

LaVONYA GOODWIN: Thank you for the opportunity. Good evening, Senators and Committee. LaVonya Goodwin, L-a-V-o-n-y-a G-o-o-d-w-i-n. I'm a resident and a business owner and the board president of the North 24th Street Business Improvement District. The area serves over 505 properties, the BID does, from coming to Ames from Meredith Avenue or 25th to the west and 20th to the east. As you may know, BIDs are established by state statute (19-)4026 through (19-)4029 that give BIDs special jurisdiction over physical infrastructure and improvements. Essentially, the North 24th Street BID has several infrastructural projects. One includes the North 24th Street streetscape master plan. It's a \$41 million plan to address the walkability, multimodal transportation, lights, signage, pedestrian safety, and amenities within the BID area from Cuming to Meredith Avenue. It should be noted that although the ridership in the area for transit is top three in the city, there are no bus shelters in the area. So this plan would help to provide transit amenities and also improve these streets for modal-- multimodal transportation, which includes bike lanes, busses, cars and parking, as well as pedestrians. This project has currently already received dollars from the federal earmark, so we're looking to leverage that \$3 million to-- to complete

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the entire plan. We also want to improve infrastructure by way of lighting and beautification, to deter crime. Last year, 24th Street sustained over 25 percent of Omaha's homicides. We believe that we can support small businesses with security support of about \$500,000. We also would like to see facade improvement for small businesses, gap financing for local and community-based infill development, essentially to make North 24th Street a destination, to increase tourism, and take advantage of our position, which is about 5 minutes from the downtown area.

WAYNE: Thank you. And thank you for keeping it under three minutes. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you for being here today. Next testifier.

BLANCA MEJIA: Hello, everybody. My name is Blanca Mejia. I am the secretary director of Generation Diamond, a reentry program in south Omaha.

WAYNE: Can you spell your name for the record?

BLANCA MEJIA: Sure. Blanca, B-l-a-n-c-a, Mejia, M-e-j-i-a. As I was telling you, I work within a reentry program organization in South Omaha. We provide many services to people in the reentry program, people that they don't have a place to live, and sometimes, people, they don't want to give them a second chance. So what happens, we provide hot meals, thanks to our many, many good people that they believe in what we do. We provide hot meals, showers, coffee, assistance with employment. Also, we help them to get ID, Social Security, I mean, to try to make sure that they can stay in the community. What we are doing, we are growing tremendously. We-- right now we are serving between 1,000 to 1-- 1,000 to 1,500 people every month, every month. If you come-- I would like to invite you to come to our center. I mean, it's not enough, the state that we have and the problem that we have. People need the reentry program. They have criminal records. Right? Nobody wants to rent to them and it's so hard to find housing. They don't have that the deposits; they don't have nobody to help them; they don't have a job. Some people, they don't want to give them the chance, second chance. And it is so easy to judge and say, well, they are in trouble because, you know what, they deserve it, or whatever you want to say, but, believe me, your life can change in just one day. I have people who are, really, they were very successful, successful people and they lost everything. So I really-- I would like to see if you can help us. We have a location. We have a building that we can be a transitional center or we can be

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an emergency shelter that we [INAUDIBLE] and I can see many people, believe me, many people that they are on the streets begging me, just let me stay here, please. And it is very easy for you. Just go home and say, OK, time to go home. But for them, we have people, if we don't help them, we want to have more crime. And, you know, people complain, but we don't do anything about it, so I would like to see what we can do for that. The reentry program, they need us; people, they need us. And sometimes what happens with people who are in this situation, it's very easy for them to say, just call my probation officer, and you know what, I'd rather to go to prison. So please, I really-- I do-- I appreciate if you help us to have a transitional center in south Omaha.

WAYNE: Thank you. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you for being here today. Next testifier, please. Welcome.

ANDREW WHEALY: Thank you, Senator Wayne and the rest of the committee. My name is Andrew Whealy, A-n-d-r-e-w W-h-e-a-l-y, and I'm here as the affordable housing project manager for InCommon Community Development. The nonprofit mission of InCommon is to alleviate poverty at a root level by uniting and strengthening vulnerable neighborhoods. Since 2008, InCommon has primarily focused on uniting and strengthening the Park Avenue area. Since 2017, InCommon has also had a presence in the Walnut Hill area, which was recently jumpstarted by the opening of its second community center at the corner 40th and Hamilton, just up the street from this building. When InCommon first began working with Park Avenue residents in 2008, the area was defined by its challenges, disinvestment, crime and disorder. Today, our neighbors have achieved significant outcomes, including a 20 percent reduction in crime, a 15 percent increase in graduation rates, and a 25 percent reduction in teen births. While we celebrate these successes, our neighbors continue to face challenges as a consequence of decades of disinvestment with still over a third of residents and 40% of children in both Walnut Hill and Park Avenue are living in poverty. Further exacerbating the problem, which I know is not new to anyone here, the rise of housing costs and the lack of-- lack of commercial and job opportunities, specifically along the Park Avenue corridor, have displaced residents from their homes, jobs, and access to transportation support systems. Therefore, InCommon will be putting an application in for ARPA funds to be used as part of the development of an important part of the corridor along Park Avenue at the corner of Park and Poppleton, what we're calling the Poppleton. InCommon is under construct-- contract for the property on which we look to create 100 affordable units, as well as 6,000 square feet of commercial

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space. By providing not just a place to live but also a place to work, the Poppleton is strategically designed to make a multi-generational impact on economic development for the area. The ARPA funds will be an integral part of an entire estimated \$25 million development budget, which will look to utilize different tax credit incentives, as well, to make up that gap. Specifically, a portion of the ARPA funds would be set aside to provide reduced rent for up to two years for women and BIPOC-owned businesses, encouraging local entrepreneurship and neighborhood investment. We estimate that, in addition to the approximately 100 construction jobs created to build the Poppleton, that up to 50 full-time jobs will be created from the commercial activities at the location, which, to the gentleman's point earlier, would provide economic benefit to the neighborhood, keep the economic funds in the neighborhood and for the neighbors. Today's residents-- to overcome poverty for increased self-determination and civic leadership, while future generations evade poverty by growing up in a safe, thriving and economically equitable environment. The Poppleton and other projects in Park Avenue and future projects that we hope to replicate in the Walnut Hill area are important pieces to this future, and we look forward to partnership with other developers and nonprofits toward these ends. Thank you for your time.

WAYNE: Thank you for being here. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thanks. Next testifier.

MAGDALENA GARCIA: Good evening. Thank you, Senators and committee, for this opportunity to talk to you about El Museo Latino. My name is Magdalena Garcia, M-a-g-d-a-l-e-n-a, last name Garcia, G-a-r-c-i-a. I'm the founder and executive director of El Museo Latino. We opened the museum in 1993 as the first Latino art and history museum in Nebraska. At that time, there were only four Latino museums in the whole United States. Today there are 16, and we're still the only Latino museum in Nebraska, actually, the region, within a 500-mile radius. We have been dedicated to presenting exhibitions, educational programs, outreach, special events, and community programming for most of this time, and I say "most" because during COVID we did end up closing in March and reopened in August. We have had this building since 1997 when we shared it with-- with the Polish community. We purchased the building in 1998 and we have been paying the loan off. And over the-- probably the 2016 to 2019, we were working with-- we started working with Alley Poyner and Lund-Ross to develop this renovation of the project. We placed on the National Register of Historic Buildings, and it was the first site of South High. We have always been very passionate and adamant to be in South Omaha as

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representing our own community and be able to share the arts, Latino arts and the visual and performing arts, with the greater community. We have-- the project barely started in 2019 when COVID struck and everything came to a screeching halt. Our project at that time of \$3.5 (million) and within-- by the summer of 2020, we had already more than doubled. And right now we're looking at a \$10 million project, that same project that we started in 2019. It would provide more classrooms and would bring some positions, new jobs to the area, because we would be increasing mostly-- almost doubling our space by renovating and finishing up classroom space, performance space, and more exhibitions. And we have worked with-- throughout the city with schools and groups that are interested in art and bringing Latino arts to the young people. We have afterschool classes and workshops throughout the year, and we currently have reconfirmed our commitment with working with South High and bringing-- being able to share and collaborate on art projects. So I would ask you to consider our proposal. We are ready to start construction. We actually submitted our project to the shovel-ready and we are ready to start. Thank you so much for your support. And if you have any questions, I'll be glad to try to answer.

McKINNEY: Thank-- thank you.

MAGDALENA GARCIA: Thank you.

McKINNEY: Any questions from the committee? No? Thank you.

MAHAMED JIMALE: My name is Mahamed Jimale, M-a-h-a-m-e-d, last name J-i-m-- J-i-m-a-l-e. I'm the executive director of EADAN; it's East African Development Association of Nebraska. I will-- I'm thankful for all the senators and all the people who are attending today. We have-- we are immigrants who have come from East Africa. Based-- we live in south Omaha and north Omaha. Our mission is [INAUDIBLE] our mission is to provide services and support to refugees and immigrants from East Africa, advocate it and promote it and making a good space they can live, Omaha. So basically, we have 40-- 451 families under this program. We have two different projects. One is focused in housing. So we are a member of this community or we emigrated. One percent of our community own a house. Due of their belief or their religion, some of this community are not taking interest. That's why they remain in public housing and Section 8. So we have a meeting like last year, so we contribute some money. We're going to buy land so we can keep our community space in north Omaha. So we are looking at funding. We have 300-- 247 families who are ready to get that space. So our project, we went to someone who are in engineering and they said this project will

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cost \$10 million. So we are asking, as we are immigrant, as we are vulnerable, we are not involved, we don't have any-- someone [INAUDIBLE]. This [INAUDIBLE] silences. As-- as you see-- you don't see all of them, these [INAUDIBLE] official [INAUDIBLE] because they don't [INAUDIBLE] language, they are not good background for social status. So I will ask for support for these vulnerable. They are silences. They are very good people. They are very-- they support economically; 97% of these people, they are full-time employees and they work in big companies, Walmart, Walgreens; they're working for First Data, every other job. So I would like the committee to see these people. Also, we have a of different projects. We have a center that's located 4735 Northwest Radial Highway. It's about Benson High School area. That space owned by the community, we bought it, \$450,000, and we pay for mortgage and it is-- is already gone, the mortgage. So that space, we need some repairing. We are going to do mentoring, afterschool programming, some potential programs, and that will bring us close to \$20-- \$290,000. We have some real different projects, different addresses in the Omaha area. Those who have the funding, everybody was rejected for many reasons that I'm not going to explain for here. So I'm asking if you can support that project that costs \$20-- \$290,000, and we'll develop for this community, as we can, Omaha, with enough space, that we can keep our traditional, our [INAUDIBLE] our community so they can be safe. They are-- we are always advocated with these kids to be safe and to be successful community. Thank you so much and I hope you support this project. Thank you.

McKINNEY: Thank you. Any-- any questions from a committee? No. All right, thank you.

MAHAMED MAHAMED: Hello, Senator and the committee. Also my name is Mahamed, but my last name is also Mahamed, so Mahamed Mahamed. Good evening, everybody. I would like to come in support of the gentleman that was just here, just because I've been here a little longer and I've seen the trouble that my community is going through. And one other thing that I want to say is that, you know, we don't want to take the government resources and eat up every day, especially-- I don't know if you guys are familiar with this, actually a few buildings over here about-- just across from where we at, at [INAUDIBLE] Street, and we have about 58 families. I [INAUDIBLE] around 50 of them are Somalis. But we are a community that like to kind of stick together and at least support so that we can kind of watch for our children because, as an African, it takes a village to raise a child. But furthermore, one thing that I really want to tell

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you guys is that, as more of my people have come to the States, we have taken over a lot of the jobs. Most of some of my people, as Mahamed have stated, they are refugees and they do take the low-income jobs. But at the same token, they have to also be in the low-income housing. And for example, the [INAUDIBLE] low income, my people might pay 30 percent; government might pay 70 percent. But at the end of the day, after ten years, none of my people are self-sufficient. The government has wasted their money. My people are wasting money. One thing I'll really say is, to support the gentleman before me, if we could have money that is put on one time, at least, my people can become a taxpayer and support the state and build so we can all be one family. Thank you very much.

McKINNEY: Thank you. Can you spell your name, first and last?

MAHAMED MAHAMED: My first name is Mahamed, M-a-h-a-m-e-d; my last name is also Mahamed, M-a-h-a-m-e-d.

McKINNEY: Thank you.

MAHAMED MAHAMED: Thank you all.

McKINNEY: Any questions from the committee? No. All right.

VICKIE REED: Hi. My name is Vickie Reed, V-i-c-k-i-e ; last name is Reed, R-e-e-d. My company is Victory Psalms LLC. I've been working for the last couple years to try to secure properties that would serve our minority aging community and keep them from having to live in, whether it's outside of north Omaha, where they are not comfortable and not familiar with the surroundings. In addition to that, my company is somewhat multifactorial in that my additional-- my goal, additional goal, is to serve female veterans. So I have been unable to acquire one property. But as most of you probably know, it's very difficult to obtain properties in the area because they are purchased from folks outside of the community, which would be fine if they were personally interested in the community. So I just want to make sure that my company name, Victory Psalms, is known, what my purpose is. I will be submitting a proposal to acquire the properties and the purpose of the properties will be to serve the people of the community. I do want to just leave this at I-- I feel that our veterans of color are often misrepresented, likely do not have places to go to because they often have been discharged from the military dishonorably, so I would like to be able to provide some sort of veterans' services for those who served regardless of their discharge papers. Thank you.

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McKINNEY: Thank you. Any questions from the committee? No.

S. BOATMAN: Hi. My name is-- my name is Sheila [PHONETIC] Boatman and I go by S. Boatman, B-o-a-t-m-a-n. And I'm born and raised here in Omaha, Nebraska. I was here when the north freeway went through. I know I look kind of young, but I was here back then. So I have a very diverse background in Omaha history. I'm very concerned about my community. I was everything from a Brownie to a Girl Scout to safety patrol, so I love my community. What I'm bringing to you today is something that's rather a beast. We are National Community of the Disadvantaged Enrichment. We have a program that is going to be launched from Omaha, Nebraska, and people will be calling our center from across the United States. We're going to start first in 14 states. This opportunity will bring jobs. But more than anything, it's going to be-- bring opportunities for people to gain skills, to transition, and I-- I'm speaking about the people that can't transition, people that are between the age of 30 to 70, before they retire. We have a lot of people in those populations that cannot transition; they can't go backwards industrial warehouse work, and they can't go forward into computer work because they don't have the skills, so they can't transition. In this center, and it is called National Community Disadvantage Enrichment, it is also a poverty and solution center, poverty social solution center. There's nothing like it in the country. We developed this. It took us five years. We studied poverty, tried to figure out where are we going wrong for people in poverty. Well, we started out of the back of a van in North Carolina serving food, our old rusty Ford van, and we kept feeding people and feeding people. People kept coming. The same kept coming. Then we were going from one county to another feeding-- then we brought truckloads in of food, but that still didn't resolve the problem. So we went-- our board went to the back, try to figure out what is wrong, and we figured it out there's too much duplication of services, too many charities doing the same thing. So this Poverty Solution Center is going to address people in Omaha for those that need jobs, those that need skills, they want to transition, including youth that have no experience. But the people that are calling in, it's going to help them as well. So we are looking for a building to put our Poverty Solution Center, and this is going to help Omaha, Nebraska; it's going to put north Omaha on the map. We have a vision of having a building to put it in. It's ready to go.

McKINNEY: Can you start wrapping up, please?

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S. BOATMAN: Sure. We have-- we have Microsoft, Google, Amazon. Everyone's donated. This beast is in my basement because I have nowhere to put it. We need a building. It's ready to go; it's ready to serve people and to give them that hope that they need. So I'm hoping that you guys would consider our proposal when it comes through. You'll know about it because it's-- nothing like it in the country. Thank you.

McKINNEY: Thank you. Any questions from the committee? No.

PRESTON LOVE, JR.: Good evening, Senators. It's my pleasure to come before you at this time. I uniquely have been a witness to the economic--

McKINNEY: Can you spell your name, please?

PRESTON LOVE, JR.: Yes, I can. I'm sorry. My name is Preston Love, P-r-e-s-t-o-n L-o-v-e. Is there something else?

McKINNEY: No, we just--

PRESTON LOVE, JR.: OK.

McKINNEY: --need your name for the record.

PRESTON LOVE, JR.: I understand. My point was that I have been a witness for 40 or 50 years of the economic devastation in north Omaha, so I come with a light heart and with enthusiasm about the potential that finally, after all this time, we have the-- maybe the ability to recover and develop our beloved community. So I affirm all of the projects that you can fund so that we can get started. I'm here, however, to represent my company, which is the North Omaha Legacy Tours, and I'm hoping that the committee will understand and see the value and the impact of tourism coming to north Omaha, especially as we begin to develop north Omaha and expand north Omaha. We are already giving tours. Since January, we have given over 100 tours. And may I say that the economic impact that we've tracked is already over \$50,000 just since January, the point being tourism has economic impact. And so if we grow and we recover, we will have tremendous additional impact. I'm coming-- as I see the yellow light-- I'm coming to ask for funds to increase my capacity. My touring fleet is very limited. I'm looking to significantly increase it, and all the things that go with it would include space and would also-- which I probably would collaborate with-- and also mechanics and so many other jobs. There is great value. And as we bring tourism into Omaha, north Omaha,

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we will then impact both our retail, our nonprofits, our for-profits and our organization as people come to our community. The-- the-- looks like the Grim Reaper is here and I will sit down.

McKINNEY: Thank you. Any questions from the committee? No.

PRESTON LOVE, JR.: Thank you. Thank you very much.

BROOKE BOSTON: Good evening, everyone. Thank you for this opportunity. My name is Brooke Boston, Brooke, B-r-o-o-k-e, Boston, B-o-s-t-o-n. I am the proud owner of Boston School of Cosmetology. A few of the things that Boston School of Cosmetology is going to bring forth is professionalism. We also want to develop professional-- professionals that are literally-- literate in their finances. We deal in a profession that takes on cash, so we have to learn how to use our funds and to develop in a way that is going to have economic impact on the community versus staying under the guidelines of not wanting to file our taxes, filing our taxes so that we can show up in a way that is going to help to support the community and going to help us as a community to be able to get housing and develop ourselves in a way that we're impactful and showing what our abilities and our skills actually are. We also at Boston School of Cosmetology want to create a cosmetologist that is aware of what they actually have to offer, and we also want to be able to determine our futures. Our curriculum definitely includes the financial processes that I'm talking about as being able to provide for our families and do the things that we need to do. But we're not showing up in the community that way because we're not filing our taxes, because we're scared to file our taxes, because we are-- once we file our taxes and show up in that way, then we have to pay. But if we learn how to do that correctly in the first place, then we won't have to worry about that. We also want to add on to what we have available so far. I have six students right now and the problem that I'm having is they can't be supported financially in coming to school because I'm going through the accreditation process. With me being under the Department of Education as a postsecondary school, I am having to charge a lower rate so that they could pay out of pocket to be able to go to school. So at \$8,500, compared to the \$20,000 and \$30,000 that the other schools are charging because they are already accredited, I have to go through a process of two years before I can even go before and get accredited, to apply for accreditation, which leads me to those funds. So Boston School of Cosmetology will be submitting something stating that \$1.5 million to sustain for these next three years while we're going through the accreditation process and allow us to--

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WAYNE: I need you to wrap up.

BROOKE BOSTON: --I'm sorry-- and allows students to come in and go to the school. And this will definitely bring jobs and education. Thank you.

WAYNE: Thank you for being here. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you. Next testifier.

ARLAN PEAK: Hey. Good evening. Hello, Senators. How y'all doing today? I want to say thank you, guys, for this opportunity. Hi. My name is Arlan Peake. My first name is spelled A-r-l-a-n; last name is P-e-a-k, and I own the barbershop at Midtown Crossing. I've been there 11 years. I was the first minority business owner. I ran against Aimee Melton as a write-in in District 7, and she won, of course, but I ain't done. Two, I'm asking right now, y'all, for \$2 million for a building. I've been in Midtown, as I said before, for 11 years. It costs a lot of money. I know what I know now. I should have bought the building. What I'm trying to do is-- not what I'm trying to do. What I am going to do is I started an organization called Universal Soldiers over 15 years ago. Bud Crawford was one of my first children and as you can see, he's very successful. What I want to do is I want to do something that's a little different. I'm trying to go after-- well, I'm going to be helping the kids with PTSD. No one is trying to address that. I want to address the sadness, the fear, the anger, the attachments from the family, along with mental disorders. No one's addressing that. I also am looking toward-- to help some of the kids, I've been going into prisons cutting 30 heads a month. Some of my money that I do out of my own pocket is I help a lot of the kids with cell phone bills. Some of them keep their cell phones because that's the only thing that they have for communication at night. I'm also trying to help these kids run for political office because that's what we need. We need to make change. We need to show some different faces. We need to also be able to come together, not on one side or the other, but make changes with ideas. And we can make ideas work. I've done it. Like I said, I've been there for 11 years and I'm not done. I'm going to keep going. So once again, I'm asking for \$2 million to buy the building so we can show the kids how to be self-sufficient entrepreneurs and also address, like I said, again, the PTSD. I'm former [INAUDIBLE] Nebraska body building. The community center helped me a great deal. We got a lot of gang violence on the street. The gang violence is only because they have no one to talk to, some of their mental illness, so once again, again, their stress, their fears, their dis- attachment, They have no one to talk to. Some of the guys, it's

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my age, and some of the people that even you guys up there, they-- they say that we don't understand them. We do understand them. But we need to be able to come together and stop some of this because they do have it. I am someone that has it and I'm not afraid of it, but I work out constantly and I keep myself busy. I've been coming to a lot of the politicians for a long time, from-- from Hal to, may he rest in peace, Mr. Brad Ashford, so a lot of them. So I'm just here today to say thank you once again. I'm going to wrap it up. But once again, my whole focus is PTSD, stopping some of these shootings, and how we're gonna do that is coming together and once again allow them to run the office, because we can't keep having the same faces. And we got young folks with new ideas. We need to--

WAYNE: I need you to wrap up now.

ARLAN PEAK: Yes, I will. We need to listen to them and be a part of their lives. So once again, I'll be submitting mine. And once again, thank you, gentlemen. And y'all are gonna see me. I ain't done. Ain't [INAUDIBLE] them gotta deal with me. I was the first minority to run in District 7. I'm gonna keep running. I'm still in Midtown. God bless you all.

WAYNE: Thank you. Next testifier. Again, I want to remind everybody, the official portal is omahaeconomicrecovery.com, omahaeconomicrecovery.com. How many testifiers do we have left? OK. Thank you. Go ahead and go, sir.

ALVIN HARPER: Hello. My name is Alvin Harper. I work with the Omaha Arts Council and we're--

WAYNE: Please spell your-- please spell your name for the record.

ALVIN HARPER: A-l-v-i-n H-a-r-p-e-r. I work with the Omaha Arts Council on North 33rd Street. I've been there in the neighborhood for like 10, 15 years. I've noticed how the neighborhood has changed quite a bit as we've brought in refugees from every part of the world. I pretty much came in as a refugee myself, as a Native American from Mississippi, Louisiana, so I feel like a refugee in my own land. I've seen Vietnamese, Bhutanese, Cambodians, and now Afghan and Ukraine. I've seen a lot of these different refugees come to our neighborhoods and just be dropped off without a lot of the type of help somebody needs to survive after coming right on the battlefield as a child. There are a lot of Sudanese child soldiers in my neighborhood and they are acting out worse than any Vietnam vet I ever seen. You've got a

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powder keg waiting to go off right there by putting so many different kind of refugees together that don't like each other, that don't know each other. They're just jammed in this one little neighborhood together. It's a bad situation that's gonna get worse. You can't have that many child soldiers just thrown in. We'd like to [INAUDIBLE] These children are raising theirselves and coming together in little gangs, and it's going to turn into something really ugly if something isn't done about it really soon. So I'd like to develop an international food court on the corner of 31st and Parker in that old building that was a grocery store that became a church called the Freedom Worship Center. That building is just sitting there, abandoned, doing nothing. If we put an international food court in there, then all of these different kind of refugees from all over the place can come together and eat, drink, and be merry together, and avoid something that could be really bad happening in their neighborhood. Children soldiers are very dangerous and you've got a lot of them there, Somalians, Afghans, Ethiopians, and some Native Americans like myself, Mexican, Puerto Ricans, Hondurans. My neighborhood has become an international nation for refugees that have PTSD, straight-up, real-live battlefield [INAUDIBLE]

WAYNE: I need you to wrap up.

ALVIN HARPER: That's all I got to say. Thank you.

WAYNE: Thank you. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you for being here. Next testifier.

JEWEL RODGERS: Hello. My name is Jewel Rodgers, spelled J-e-w-e-l R-o-d-g-e-r-s. I am a young and emerging real estate developer currently employed at Noddle Companies. I wanted to express interest in applying for the funds specifically for a piece of a capital stack for a mixed-income project in the north Omaha area. I also want to take the opportunity now to endorse a couple of projects that I particularly am supportive of. There's a long list on my paper, but I felt like listing them all was rather unprofessional, so I condensed it down to a few, particularly the 24th Street BID, Lasha Goodwin's idea about remediation, InCommon's-- the Poppleton development and the North Omaha Legacy Tours. Thank you.

WAYNE: Thank you for being here. Next testifier. Again, the official portal is omahaeconomicrecovery.com. Welcome to your Economic Recovery Committee.

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JAMES OVERTON: My name is James Overton--

WAYNE: Spell--

JAMES OVERTON: O-v, as in "victor," -e-r-t-o-n. I represent what north Omaha, once upon a time, would have come from. And I'm going to say, we came to Omaha, I want to say, in the late '80s. We owned gym [INAUDIBLE]. I opened up Reign, which didn't go as [INAUDIBLE] as I wanted or planned, but I actually have plans of creating an entertainment district in north Omaha. North Omaha is actually kind of like a child that's ready to grow up, and nobody actually really took the time to actually reach in their own back pockets and now just say, you know, what would it could be. You've got a lot of abandoned buildings. You've got a lot of people squatting on properties that could really be doing something for these kids. These kids are running around here right now doing what they're doing because they don't have any jobs or any opportunities to actually grow or do anything. They want money. So what they do? They're gonna go with their homeboy, they sell dope, then they get into a conflict and then there's shootings. There's no education behind that. What happened to all the programs, the 4-H programs and all the other programs that were actually job-oriented programs that give these kids something to do to keep them off of the streets? We own properties on North 30th. We own properties all over north Omaha, me and my family do. We're looking to actually go ahead to get seed money to actually go ahead, one, to actually build mixed-unit development units, and to also create actual small businesses and show people how to run their own businesses in these neighborhoods, to allow people to have jobs that provide jobs for these kids and ways for them to actually do different things. Right now, like I said, there's actually a lot of different properties and different things that we could actually go ahead and address, dilapidated buildings and things. I'm looking at the old OHA building on North 30th right now. It's sitting empty. They approached me and told me they wanted \$250,000 for it. They won't actually go ahead and come off of it right now. They're just sitting on it. It's squatting; it's sitting there. It makes no sense. All this property, you guys have the funds here and the means now to actually go ahead and make a difference, Start putting the money to work. The people that are trying to improve it, let them show you history. We've reached in our pockets over the past 25 to 30 years and spent millions of dollars in north Omaha. Every dollar that we've made, we've invested. I've got single-family homes. I can show you a list of actual houses that we own, properties, Section 8, everything that we do. The whole thing about it is about reinvesting in the community and actually going

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ahead and educating these people on how to maintain their credit and how to educate their children on how to actually go ahead and actually live accordingly. That's it, so.

WAYNE: Thank you for being here. Next testifier.

KYNDRA BARING-GELLY: Good evening, everyone. My name is Kyndra Baring-Gelly, and that's K-y-n--

WAYNE: Can you hold the microphone a little closer? Thank you.

KYNDRA BARING-GELLY: OK. Can you hear me better?

WAYNE: Yeah.

KYNDRA BARING-GELLY: OK. Kyndra Baring-Gelly, and that's K-y-n-d-r-a; the last is B-a-r-i-n-g, hyphen, G-e-l-l-e-y, and I'm speaking in support of Boston School of Cosmetology. I'd like to first start off and say that Ms. Boston has been pro-- been providing services in the community for over 25 years, so she's well established and well seated to provide education. So Boston School of Cosmetology speaks to the need for professionals, well-educated persons in the field of cosmetology to serve those with multicultural, multitextural hair and skin-care needs. Boston School of Cosmetology is the only such school training students to serve the black and brown community. They also incorporate, or we also incorporate financial, educational, entrepreneurship, business development in the course curriculum. Requests for ARPA funds in the amount of \$1.5 million will be submitted to expand current training spaces, provide loans for training for 180 students at 60 students for three years, whilst preparing for NACCAS accreditation. We would also use the funds to secure salon seats to provide an incubator to-- for one year to graduates in order to assist in their economic stability. The nonprofit leg of the organization, Grow-Develop-Flourish, will assist or submit a proposal to address student barriers to education, and those barriers include lack of transportation, childcare costs, license and tool costs, and acquisition, as well as stable housing assistance. Thank you.

WAYNE: Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you for being here. Seeing if there is any follow-up, last testifiers. Any other testifiers? The team from Olsson is still out there. When I stepped out to use the restroom, there were a lot of people engaging in conversations and helping build out program ideas and building

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ideas and any idea. So they'll still be out there a little bit after this if you want to run some ideas by them, if you haven't thought of how to put something together. Moving forward, again, I appreciate everybody coming out. We will continue to get an inventory of ideas and continue to just take more engagement as we can in community engagement. Remember, omahaeconomicrecovery.com. Put that on your Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. Make sure we get out every idea that we can get. Thank you. Have a great-- this officially closes the LB1024 Special Committee hearing.