

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

WAYNE: --Recovery Special Committee's joint hearing and public information session. My name is Senator Justin Wayne and I represent Legislative District 13, which is north Omaha and northeast Douglas County. I serve as Chair of this committee. We'll start off having committee members and staff do self-introductions, starting to my right with Senator Vargas.

VARGAS: Hi, everybody. My name is Tony Vargas. I represent District 7 in downtown and south Omaha.

McKINNEY: Hi, everybody. My name is Terrell McKinney. I represent District 11, which is north Omaha.

TREVOR FITZGERALD: Trevor Fitzgerald, committee legal counsel.

WAYNE: Angenita is our committee clerk. And so I also want to recognize Olsson members who are here. So if you have questions, I want-- if you guys can raise your hand so people from the public can-- or most of them.

TREVOR FITZGERALD: They're bringing chairs.

WAYNE: Oh, they're bringing chairs in so we'll, we'll-- you'll recognize them. Again, I want to make sure that people understand that next door, we have architects, engineers for those who maybe don't know what they-- they have an idea, but I have haven't fleshed anything out. This will help you flesh it out. It's free architectural engineering services by Olsson and them to-- Olsson and Olsson's team to just make sure that we're providing as much as we can to not have any barriers to the community of submitting ideas. This morning, this committee will receive public testimony on potential uses of funds for the Economic Recovery Act, which is LB1024. Before we begin, I want to provide some background information on the process and timeline. LB1024 of required that the Legislature contract out potential-- with outside firm for potential uses. We did an RFP process in May and June. Olsson was selected and Olsson's team is to conduct the study, a needs analysis of north Omaha and south Omaha and the potential uses and evaluate projects that the committee has set-- based on the criteria that the committee has set. We also are helping-- they're also helping us develop the scoring system that the committee will set and they're slated to complete this analysis and projects overview or program overview by December. In order to facilitate a fair and more equitable, in our opinion, process, we have created an online portal

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

that is omahaeconomicrecovery.com. That will be the official portal submission. Part of it is we've-- our staff and the legis-- and the senators have been running around and we just don't want to get something emailed to us and we forget to put something into the-- submit to the portal. So the only way you will be able to officially submit anything is through www.omahaeconomicrecovery.com. That way, we just make sure that as we're drafting bills in December and getting things going-- and even we're doing things right now with interim studies-- that it's not lost in the shuffle, that there's just one way to do it and it's consistent throughout, throughout, you know, everywhere, I guess. So there's also additional information on omahaeconomicrecovery.com about the process, the stakeholder meetings that we had, uses of funds. I would tell you, please read the uses of funds. There has to be a compliance with federal, federal dollars and then the entire online portal and, and Mike will tell you a little bit more about that when he comes up. I want to talk a little bit about the stakeholder meetings that were held in this room and next room last month. It was not that we felt the public was less important. It was strictly a timing issue. And what I mean by that is we started putting together things in August. By the time the committee started getting things approved and getting things moving, it was mid to late August. And if you think about that, that's also when school starts. So finding an open space like this when you have Metro, OPS both starting at the same time, just couldn't find adequate space for a public hearing. Because this is a public hearing with the Legislature, we have to have microphones, things have to be transcribed, and so it was just a necessity of space. There wasn't enough space and time to do everything. And so rather than delay the process, because we want to get this going as fast as we can, we started with the visioning sessions from community stakeholders, business leaders, philanthropic community just to get the process going and not delaying it. So it wasn't that the public was second. It was literally-- you see how people turned out. We have to have a public space that meets all the requirements of the Legislature so that's all that was. Again, on the tables in the back of the room are pink testifier sheets. If you are planning on testifying, you have to complete one of those. When you come up and testify, please state your name and spell your name for the record. Angenita will take the pink sheet and make sure we keep everything in the right order. This front row to the left, your right will be the on-deck row. And we'll just have people sit there, come up and testify and keep moving. If you testify, I want to be clear, that does not mean your idea is submitted. It is an opportunity for us to hear from you, to see things. And maybe the committee will have

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

questions to interact with you, but your official submission has to be on omahaeconomicrecovery.com. As all-- with any Legislature public hearings, letters can be submitted for the record. They are due typically the day before by 5 p.m. we will take them till today at 5 p.m. of any letters of support or any letters in general regarding this hearing. If you have handouts, please hand them to Angenita. If you do not have ten handouts, I would recommend that you email me for the public hearing so I can-- or Trevor and we'll disburse it to the, to the committee. Again, if you email me or email anybody from the committee, that is not an official submission. The only way to submit is through the online portal at omahaeconomicrecovery.com. How this meeting will happen is Olsson will first give an update of kind of where we are-- in the process we are then we'll have, we will-- this is not a bill hearing. It's an-- almost like an interim study hearing so then we'll just have testifiers. So there's not a proponent or a opponent. It's just testifiers coming up and giving us their thoughts. There will be a three-minute light system. When the light's green, keep talking. When it's yellow, start thinking about wrapping it up, you have a minute. And at red, we will ask you to please, please stop. That's just how it works. And we, we do that because we weren't sure of the turnout. And if you ever been to the Legislature, sometimes we're there for 7 hours, even with the three-minute light system. So that's why we have three minutes, just to make sure everybody can get through and everybody can talk. With that, I ask everybody to silence or turn your phones on vibrate and we'll have Mike Piernicky from Olsson come up and give an opening. I will just tell you there-- I know there's not some senators here. Every-- every one, we've had different senators kind of in the committee. The reason why we have microphones and everything is that we'll transcribe all this and everybody will review this before we put out any recommendations. So again, please silent or put on vibrate your cell phone. Thanks.

MICHAEL PIERNICKY: Thank you, Justin. Thank you for the introduction. My name is Michael Piernicky, M-i-c-h-a-e-l P-i-e-r-n-i-c-k-y. I'm the project manager for Olsson. I'm going to give you a brief overview of the overall process for the coordination plan that we've been asked to put together for the special committee of the Legislature. And then I'll also give an overview of the different information and opportunities that you have here before you today to learn more about the process submissions and, and where we're going from here. So with that, allow me to welcome you. I certainly appreciate people taking time out of their day to learn more about this overall process and to gain more information as you look at potential proposals moving

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

forward. We were hired by the Legislature in July of this year and then in July, we did a lot of background information and data gathering from a technical standpoint to look at the qualified census tracts in north and south Omaha and identify, from a professional or technical perspective, you know, needs, opportunities and really starting to frame up that data side of trying to support this overall process. The next step in the process was the visioning workshops that Senator Wayne discussed earlier. Those were held in August. There were over 200 invited community leaders from north and south Omaha and we engaged them to, to hear not just from a technical or professional standpoint what the needs were in each of the communities, but to hear from people in the communities what they see, what they see as needs. And then in addition to that, we also took them through an exercise where we wanted to hear ideas, how we can work together and collaborate to find paths forward and proposals and projects that could be put out into the community to hopefully move the needle forward on a lot of the things that the senator talked about. So that was held in August. We then took the outcomes of that workshop and the visiting-- visioning session and one of the things that was identified is those needs. In that interim time between then and now, we developed screening criteria, a scoring rubric, say, of how we're going to do the evaluation of all the proposals that come in. We looked at that and, you know, it's, it's tied to the needs that we heard from the community. We also ran that all the way through the legislative special committee for their review, comments and ultimately approval. While we were doing that, we also set up this week-long set of public meetings. The important part of this is, is to continue to engage the public, roll out the overall process, the scoring criteria, and how do you do submissions for review by the committee. That is what we're here to talk about today and so I want to pause the overall process discussion and let you know what we're looking at through today. Clearly here in this room, we'll have the actual formal public hearings, legislative public hearing, which Senator Wayne described. In the two rooms next to us, however, there is opportunity to learn more about the process. The room in the front, which is kind of furthest from me over here, we have breakout stations where there's engineers and architects available to meet with community members to talk about their proposals, their projects, and to make sure we're providing technical assistance so that the proposals we see are supported as much as they can, we get better information and we can help people who don't have normally have access to those types of resources. In the second room, which is here-- just straight to my left or to your right, there is a set of boards and

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

staff available. We have information on the visioning workshops and the needs we heard from the community, as well as more detailed information on the submission process and the screening criteria that will be used to evaluate the proposals when they come in. It's an open house-style format. So certainly while people are testifying in here and talking about their proposals or projects, folks are available over there to be able to answer questions and start to work through those processes. So feel free to move between both of the rooms over there and here interchangeably and we'll certainly move forward and try to answer as many questions as we can through overall process. Today is Thursday and our final public meeting of the four we held this week. Monday and Tuesday, we were in south Omaha at Metro Community College's South Campus, and then we held the first north Omaha meeting last night at the OPS TAC Building from 5:00 to about 7:30. We've had good turnout this week. We're definitely hearing a lot of ideas and projects and proposals. And one of the things that I want to recommend to folks is as you go through the entire process, even if you don't have a-- all the answers to the questions, please submit. Just because we don't have all of the answers for every question, we want to hear every idea because we're trying to pull all the ideas together, get them mapped, and find spots where they can work together or collaboratively make a larger impact on the community. And so we want to be inclusive of everybody and make sure that we're taking into consideration every good idea that's out there. OK, so I'm going to go back to the timeline. Once we get through today's meeting, the submission portal opened Sunday night, Monday this week. The submission portal is open until October 9, Sunday, October 9, 11:59 p.m. If you have any questions, talk to people in the community. Please tell them the one-stop location for all the information is omahaeconomicrecovery.com. You'll see QR codes on the boards next door. If you have any questions, start there first. We also have a contact us page there. We're doing the best we can. We're getting tons of questions right now. We're trying the best we can to return responses within 24 to 48 hours and so that's the best way to get a hold of us. I have a number of staff that we take that every day and we process those questions as quickly as we can. Once again, I'll remind you the submission portal closes Sunday, October 9, 11:59 p.m. Once we get all the submissions in from the community, we'll take all of that in, we'll go through our overall evaluation process, and then we'll also go ahead and we have to deliver to the special committee a coordination plan. That coordination plan will document the overall process, the public visioning sessions, all of the meetings that we've held this week, and it will have a listing of every submitted proposal

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

or project that came from the public. We'll go through our screening criteria and we'll make recommendations to the committee as part of that process for projects that provide the highest return on the investment, and then probably a second tier projects as well for their consideration. Once we turn in the final report, the coordination plan in December, the senators will then work to actually have to craft a legislative bill that will go to the legislature in January, where they'll actually identify specific projects and award amounts that needs to go through the legislative process next spring. Ultimately, when that bill makes it through the Legislature, is approved, funding will be available probably sometime around the middle of next year once it makes it through the entire legislative process. So with that, a couple reminders. One, if you have any questions, the best spot to go is omahaeconomicrecovery.com. The submission portal is open. I would tell you it closes October, that's a Sunday at 11:59 p.m. And then if you have any questions, there's a contact us page. Certainly, there's Olsson staff here. I do want to recognize we have a large team of consultants put together: Lamp Rynearson; APMA Architecture; B2 Lab Architecture; and ICONIC Consulting Group, an engineering group. We're all here to answer your questions. I want to recognize all the effort they've put out as part of our team. But with that, thank you for coming today. Welcome and certainly we look forward to answering your questions as we go through the process. So with that, Senator Wayne, back to you.

WAYNE: Thank you. So we will start by having, again, the first row on the left to-- my left, your right will be the on deck and we'll start with our first testifier.

ERIC L. EWING: Guess, I'll sit in the hot seat there. My name is Eric L. Ewing, E-r-i-c L, middle initial, E-w-i-n-g. I am the executive director at the Great Plains Black History Museum. We're currently located in the historic Jewell Building at 2221 North 24th Street. And we are at capacity and we need a bigger, larger space to better serve the community and to be a better resource for tourism. We have the Durham, we have Joslyn and those, those museums have the space to be of service to the community. And we, we feel that we should be able to have a larger space or we're seeking to have a larger space so that in that way, we can be a better resource for the local community as well as for visitors to, to the city. We are open to collaborating with the other-- any of the other entities that may be in the north Omaha area that share similar things in which we do. And we know that one of the key things is bringing in and providing jobs. We know that we'll be able to increase our staff and help employ people, more people from

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

the community, and be a bigger resource for the community. And we're looking to potentially build from the ground up and we're going to be seeking anywhere from \$9-10 million. Thank you.

WAYNE: Any, any questions? Any questions from the committee? I just want-- you said, \$9-10 million?

ERIC L. EWING: Yes, sir.

WAYNE: OK. Thank you. Next testifier. See, we're already starting to have people collaborate. Welcome to your committee.

DORIS MOORE: Thank you. Good morning to everyone and I would like to thank the senators and the committee members for the Nebraska Economic Recovery Plan. My name is Doris Moore, spelled D-o-r-i-s M-o-o-r-e, and I am the founder and chief executive officer for the Center for Holistic Development, which was founded in June 2001 based on my passion for people, places and culture of north Omaha. As a product of north Omaha, I recognize the need for culturally responsive behavioral health services and education programs that reflected the hopes and dreams of those living in the north Omaha community. I am here to offer my support for a transformative proposal that will establish a co-located facility with the infrastructure and capacity to disrupt the mental and physical health disparities that affect a true economic recovery. Lack of mental and physical healthcare resources in a community with providers who look like the individuals served have shown a positive impact on a person's ability to benefit from positive health outcomes and allows them to maintain educational pursuits, create appropriate family structure, fulfilling employment and fulfilling employment satisfaction, and in essence, a better quality of life. Significant investment in culturally appropriate strategies for north Omaha residents is long overdue, and this collaboration between North Omaha Area Health at the Center for Holistic Development is a much-needed solution for health transformation. Both organizations have poured into the community for over 21 years because of a passion and love for the people to become their best selves in spite of current circumstances that will create a better community for all. Those of you who were in attendance at the public hearing last night were provided a more detailed account of the intended proposal. But just as a quick wrap-up of that proposal, we are requesting \$25 million, which will be broken down into the following ways: \$5 million for land acquisition, \$10 million for a new building that would be anchored by NOAH and the Center for Holistic Development, and \$10 million for workforce development. I would like to thank you for your

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

time, attention and support of this worthwhile project that will transform the behavioral and physical health of individuals in the north Omaha community. Thank you very much.

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

DORIS MOORE: Thanks.

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

MASON MILLIKEN: My name is Mason Milliken, M-a-s-o-n M-i-l-l-i-k-e-n. I'm here representing several different companies: first of all, Bison Equities, which is a strategic investment firm, has ownership in Nebraska Scientific, which is a nationwide manufacturing company; as well as EverSeal Roofing, which I'm the founder of, which is a nationwide roofing company. What we do is we permanently seal flattop roofs with a liquid-applied roof sealant system. It's guaranteed for 50 years, it's thousands of dollars less, and it eliminates the need to replace the roof. We've grown substantially since being founded in Omaha in 2016. We have the unique opportunity now with our different partnerships to be able to begin manufacturing our own material, which we have currently been buying from a third party. So together with our manufacturing houses, which is actually just right across the borderline from where I think you guys had drawn the boundaries, we're looking to, to build a manufacturing facility where from day one, we will already have millions of dollars worth of orders ready to be made from the roofing company, which is currently doing that distribution across the country. In addition to that, I'm also the owner and founder of a technology company and that technology company is developing breakthrough technologies for companies like Pinterest and Home Depot. And we are looking at setting up a tech center that would involve additional research and development, innovation, employment, call center and customer service opportunities. We do not have estimates at this point for how much we are requesting, but those will be included in our proposals.

WAYNE: Thank you. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you for being here today. Did you spell your name for the record? OK, sorry. Next testifier. Welcome.

MARY CHASE: Chairman Wayne and members of the Economic Recovery Committee, my name is Mary Chase, M-a-r-y C-h-a-s-e, and I'm the vice provost for enrollment at Creighton University. First, thank you for

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

the service and your work on evaluating the needs of the pandemic recovery in north and south Omaha. With Creighton University's footprint entirely in the qualified census tract, we can be a unique partner for the economic recovery of north and south Omaha. We have evaluated four areas of support where the committee and the state of Nebraska could partner with Creighton University. First, Creighton could leverage our expertise in the law school and Heider College of Business to provide entrepreneurs with the necessary fundamentals to launch business and promote innovation. We propose establishing the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Service Center. The center would provide new individual entrepreneurs, small businesses, not-for-profit organizations and community organizations with the opportunities to gain expertise and develop a better understanding in fundamental business and technology practices and transactional assistance. The center would be a perfect complement to the innovation hub to encourage business growth in north and south Omaha. Second, we suggest a partnership in the investment of our accelerated nursing and education workforce program. This proposal can leverage students coming from qualified census tracts to help with the-- to serve nursing shortage in Nebraska. In Nebraska, 73 of 93 counties have lower than the national average ratio of registered nurses, nurses to patients of 66 Nebraska counties have been deemed as medically underserved. Creighton College of Nursing has a robust relationship across the strait. In fact, we have a three-plus-one program with four other Nebraska colleges, including Hastings, York, Concordia and Wayne State. This proposal would use ARPA funds to educate new nurses and lessen the statewide nursing shortage. Third, Creighton University is embarking on a feasibility study to determine the viability of converting over 335,000 square feet of campus building into affordable housing, workforce, and childcare project. A mixed-income, multifamily unit community would be transformed among the Boyne Building, Bio-Information Center and the Cardiac Center. The proposal would include a child development center with a playground accessible for all residents. Additionally, Creighton's Financial Hope Collaborative would be relocated to the development to offer free financial education program. Lastly, Creighton proposes to establish an emergency student fund. We know that the pandemic will increase the statistics of students who are unable to complete their degrees in the qualified census tract and have a greater challenge of finishing the undergraduate degree. Creighton proposes an emergency fund with specified criteria to assist these students in completing their education. Please find the data and additional detail and the proposal in the packets provided. I'm happy to answer any questions.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

WAYNE: Thank you. Any questions from the committee? So the area you're-- just so making sure is the-- we'll say third-- not 30th in Cuming, but right next to 30th and Cuming, to the south of it?

MARY CHASE: Right, where the Boyne Building, the Bio-Information Center and the Cardiac Center, where they're located right there.

WAYNE: OK. Thank you.

MARY CHASE: Thank you.

WAYNE: Any other questions? Nope, seeing none. Next testifier. Welcome to your committee.

SHOMARI HUGGINS: Thank you. Good afternoon or almost afternoon, committee. My name is Shomari Huggins, S-h-o-m-a-r-i H-u-g-g-i-n-s. I'm here representing myself as a 31-year resident of north Omaha, graduate of Omaha North High School, and active community member. So what if I told you that there was a local, national and even international tourist destination right in the middle of north Omaha? A multi-use community center, somewhere small businesses can partner with to increase their economic viability and visibility. A place where youth can visit to gain cultural enrichment through a transformative curriculum. A frequent destination for community concerts, festivals, workshops, seminars, town halls and on and on that sits on about 18 acres of land. The organization I'm talking about is none other than the birth site of soon-to-be Nebraska Hall of Fame inductee Malcolm X. I just came here this almost afternoon to say that I fully support the Malcolm X Memorial Foundation's proposal for the Economic Recovery Act funds. Thank you.

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

DEPREE SEAVERS: Thank you. Glad to be here. My name is Depree Seavers, D-e-p-r-e-e, last name, Seavers, S-e-a-v-e-r-s, born and raised in Omaha, Nebraska, 29 years old, graduated from Benson High School. My proposal today is to speak on my business, Black Power Redevelopers. Exactly as its name, we're here to redevelop the community in a bunch of different ways by giving job opportunities, hiring electricians, creating the ability to learn the trades and just giving more-- [INAUDIBLE] turn this off-- but hiring, hiring more kids, and giving them the ability. Right now, we got five kids working as electricians and basically just want to install that into our community with our

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

youth, being able to give them the opportunity to learn the trades, whether that be plumbing, HVAC, electrical. Our main focus is electrical and just looking for funding to keep guys employed and to give more youth the opportunity to learn the trades in our community. This year, we had the Step-Up kids, which had about five to six high schoolers, teaching them electrical, had them working in residential buildings and commercial buildings. So giving them the opportunity to learn that hands on and be able to critical think and solve problems and things like that. Currently, we have three vehicles, trucks running just out of my mom's house. But finding a place, an establishment will be nice on the north side of Omaha so that we have somewhere to park our trucks and do office work and things like that. As far as that, just start from the bottom. I think this year we're looking at \$200,000 of profit and just looking for some ARPA funding to keep it going and build a million-dollar company. I also have my electrical contractors license so I'm able to pull permits and do a good job as far as UNMC and things like that. But right now we're just focusing on service calls and remodels and connecting with other investors and Habitat for Humanity and big companies like that. Any questions?

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

DEPREE SEAVERS: Thanks.

WAYNE: Welcome to your Economic Recovery Committee.

KENNY McMORRIS: All right, good afternoon. I am Kenny Morris, M-c-M-o-r-r-i-s, Kenny, K-e-n-n-y, and have the pleasure of serving as the CEO of Charles Drew Health Center, located here in north Omaha. For nearly 40 years, Charles Drew Health Center has been a cornerstone and beacon of hope for our--

WAYNE: Can you move that mike a little closer?

KENNY McMORRIS: Can you hear me?

WAYNE: Yep.

KENNY McMORRIS: For nearly 40 years, Charles Drew Health Center has served as a cornerstone and beacon of hope for our community, offering comprehensive medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy and enabling support for all people regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay. We also partner with our community to address the

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

social factors that impacts individuals' overall health and wellness, such as accessing safe, affordable housing and addressing food insecurity. Last year, Charles Drew served over 13,000 unduplicated patients, 77 percent of them whose income were below 100 percent of the federal poverty level. We also are an economic driver in the community, employing over 200 individuals, creating over \$35 million in net overall economic impact annually. But we can and we need to do more. Charles Drew's campus is located at six-- in zip code 68111. In this zip code alone, an estimated at 9,000 lower-income individuals are not currently seeking healthcare services. In the adjacent zip code, 68104, there's an additional 9,000 individuals that are not getting services at a health center. And if you look at the entire city of Omaha, there's over 107,000 lower-income individuals that are, that are not currently accessing healthcare services. So if they're not getting services from Charles Drew, our sister organization, OneWorld, in that case, it is highly likely that they are seeking the emergency room as their primary source of care. We all know that's not a sustainable model, nor does it promote health and wellness. Charles Drew Health Center is an excellent investment in long-term economic and well-being of this community, both in terms of the population health and the community's economic well-being. Charles Drew provides services to individuals who other health systems do not, allow them to be healthier, with the potential to contribute meaningfully to the stability of the community and the families in which we serve. We do this by partnering with a number of schools in the area to make sure children have the care they need to learn and flourish. We also work with small businesses and community partners to provide seamless access to resources that far too often go underutilized. We have a tremendous opportunity here to swing for the fences and what we're proposing is a project between \$20-25 million to expand health access, health equity and workforce, creating a pipeline for careers to ensure that individuals within our community have the ability to practice and receive services within their community as part of training. We all have dealt with the COVID pandemic and I will-- I'm here to say, I'm proud to say that our health center served a significant role in addressing COVID-19 with testing, access to vaccines and the work that we continue to do. So I want to say thank you to the Economic Recovery Committee and the work that you all are doing. Please continue to keep community first and the services in how we go through this process and know that Charles Drew here to work with everyone to advance health equity and access to care in our community. I'll answer any questions that you have.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

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

MARCEY YATES: What's going on, fellas? My name is Marcey Yates, M-a-r-c-e-y Y-a-t-e-s. I represent the Culxr House. We are an arts and culture organization, but also focus on civic and social engagement as well too. We'll be seeking funds to purchase the two properties that we currently lease right now; one we're operating out of and then the next property, we have plans to develop a pizza shop. So with that being said, we hope to tackle food insecurities and continue to further program what we do at the Culxr House. We would like to keep the ownership within the community. There's been several other entities that are interested in our properties so that's what we feel like it's urgent now to secure these fund so we can purchase these properties and consider what they work that we do in the community. Any questions?

WAYNE: Seeing no questions from the community, thank you for be- do you have a range right now in mind or are you still only developing that?

MARCEY YATES: Yeah, we'll be looking for \$850,000 to \$1 million.

WAYNE: Thank you.

MARCEY YATES: Thank you.

WAYNE: Next testifier.

TRACIE MCPHERSON: Good afternoon. My name is Tracie McPherson, Tracie, T-r-a-c-i-e, McPherson, M-c-P-h-e-r-s-o-n, and I'm here representing affordable housing, although my employer is Habitat for Humanity of Omaha. The need for affordable housing in our community has never been more apparent. A housing unit is affordable in quotes, if a household with low-to-moderate income spends less than 30 percent of their combined income on rent or mortgage payments. Right now, through our program, we're seeing families coming in paying 60 percent of their income on housing needs. These households are considered housing cost burdens, such as burdens that forces individuals to make difficult and often unhealthy choices. Many are forced to choose between paying rent, putting food on the table, keeping utilities turned on, paying for healthcare, or pursuing higher education or professional development. The bottom line is it's hard to think about anything else when your family doesn't have a stable place to call home. As an

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

organization, we are all about affordable rentals. After all, healthy and stable renters are the pipeline to homeownership, and we want to keep that pipeline flowing. However, homeownership is the key to wealth building for families living in a cycle of poverty. Decent, affordable housing provides families with a place to gather and grow. Working with organizations like Habitat Omaha to achieve affordable homeownership, families can actually transform their lives. Now, we have a homeowner who's-- I'm only going to use her first name. Her name is Ashley [PHONETIC]. She came into our program probably three years ago. When she came into our program, she had about \$30,000 worth of individual debt. We built a plan for Ashley. She put in the work. She cleaned up the debt. She closed on her house a year ago. And when I ran into Ashley shortly after closing on her house, I asked her how she was doing and she says, yeah, I just quit my job. I said, what? You have a house no-- now. Well, she quit her job to start her own business. She started her own business in her home. And she told me within two years, I'll be ready to move this business outside of my home. I thought, that's great. I gave her words of encouragement. We parted ways. I recently had a meeting with Julian Young, who told me she's in his program and getting ready to scale up and to do that business outside of her home. Affordable homeownership helps create the conditions that free families from instability. And our goal at Habitat Omaha is to make more Ashleys and one of the ways we're looking to do that is through our new development, Bluestem Prairie. Right now, we're on track to build 85 new single-family homes on an almost 19-acre site. We're also innovating to meet the community's needs with empty-nester villas, as well as houses with small apartment attached for families living with multiple generations. We're making plans to acquire an additional 22 acres right next door to Bluestem Prairie. This new site can hold up to 200 housing units and we're imagining right now what that will look like. That's a lot more Ashleys in our community. We can help establish their life dreams and impact our community at the same time. We see you. We see the work that you do. We appreciate you. I know the legislation session was tough last year, but--

WAYNE: I'm gonna ask you to wrap up.

TRACIE McPHERSON: OK. We want to do our part and help build a holistic community through homeownership.

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

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

TRACIE McPHERSON: Yep.

WAYNE: Again, the official portal is omahaeconomicrecovery.com. The official portal for submissions is omahaeconomicrecovery.com. Welcome.

LYNN HINDERAKER: Welcome. This introduction is going to be a lot different than the individual applications and the background pieces you've heard up to this point. I'm going to try to be succinct. All these individual requests are excellent. They're outstanding.

WAYNE: I need your name and spelling of your name for the record.

LYNN HINDERAKER: I apologize. I'm Lynn Hinderaker. That's L-y-n-n H-i-n-d-e-r-a-k-e-r. I'm the principal of NEWbraska, N-E-W-b-r-a-s-k-a, newbraska.com. It's a management consulting firm focused on civic revitalization, talent, attraction, innovation.

WAYNE: Go ahead.

LYNN HINDERAKER: You ready?

WAYNE: Yep.

LYNN HINDERAKER: So excellent individual ideas, very important. I know many of them are going to be fulfilled, but there needs to be a strategic overview of what are we doing and how are we going to impact the single biggest problem in the state of Nebraska, which is population and the loss of high-end, top-tier professionals in this state? I came in front of your group several weeks ago and listened to the basics and so on, but the representative from Olsson threw up a slide that changed everything. He said the objective of this project, according to Olsson, is to attract high-wage workers. So workforce is the key driver of all of this so we have to think in different categories entirely so as to contribute to that. Tony Goins in Lincoln and so on is going to call us up and say, how is this making a difference in this state? And I know the three senators here have all-- very familiar with this idea. So the gist of the-- of what I have to suggest right here is that we need to attract people from outside the north Omaha community so there's more money, more commerce flowing into the community. That isn't going to happen unless we can get people who are driving east and west on Cuming Street to look to their left or their right and see visible new buildings, retail, apartments, business to business, a business park, whatever it is, and say, we've got a little time before the plane flies. Let's head up here. It looks like there's something going on over here. Now, I'm

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

talking about the area two to three blocks north of Cuming, north of the CHI Center. That real estate is now owned by an older man in Texas. He's been sitting on them for over 35 years. That land he wants to cash out. We need to buy that real estate and begin to create a hub, great looking, trendy, contemporary that will appeal to these high-wage workers that Olsson alluded to.

WAYNE: I need you to wrap up.

LYNN HINDERAKER: The name of that group, the name of the community and the name of those people is UrbaNatural. That's a very powerful word. It's a word that we own, UrbaNatural. Thanks for having me. Hope I visit with each of you again.

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

LYNN HINDERAKER: Thank you, Justin.

WAYNE: Next testifier.

SCOTT YAHNKE: Good afternoon to the committee. Senator Wayne, Senator McKinney, thank you for your work to get LB1024 enacted. I really appreciate it. My name is Scott Yahnke, S-c-o-t-t Y-a-h-n-k-e. I'm a realtor with Nebraska Realty. I've held my salesperson's license since 1990. I was an educator with Omaha Public Schools for 33 years, from '73 to '06 at Beveridge Magnet School. When we started, "p-seg" bussing in '75. Our school went from two black students to 220 and a lot of them came from the projects, the former projects. And I'm proud to say I greatly enjoyed working with all of my students from north, south Omaha and all points east and west. I'm also aware of Omaha's basically de facto segregation going on entrenched in north Omaha and south Omaha as well. I'm here to represent a concept, 3D printed housing. Senator Wayne may recall the email I sent to him earlier this summer and I'm grateful for your-- directing me to your aide who helped me with some information on that. I gave a presentation to the North Platte Chamber of Commerce and Development Corporation August 2nd that had over 30 individuals in attendance, including Gering-- Scottsbluff/Gering and so on. Regional rep for the Nebraska Department of Economic Development was there as well. North Platte-area state senator was there. Very popular topic, housing is desperately needed all over the state, including north and south Omaha. And I'm a, I'm a technology proponent of 3D printed housing, which has not yet come to Nebraska. I held the first symposium of its kind about 3D printed

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

housing, including groups like Habitat for Humanity, NIFA, Seventy Five North, Boyd Jones Construction, private developers at my Nebraska realty office in February and went from there to develop this idea and promote it and continue promoting it. I'm not really officially attached to Black Buffalo 3D that provides the gantry system, which costs \$800,000 or can be leased for \$30,000 a month for a three-month minimum, with half of that applicable to purchase price. But I believe 3D printed housing has a real, valid and exciting potential to address housing in faster, sustainable, more affordable manner in north and south Omaha and that's why I'm here today. And I want to thank you for your time and I want to wish Senator Vargas the best. Watch out for those dodge balls, OK? Thank you.

WAYNE: Any questions from committee? Seeing none, thank you. Next testifier. There will be no applause. I'm just lightening the mood a little bit.

JoANNA LeFLORE-EJIKE: Thanks for lightening a little, thank you.

WAYNE: Only if you have theme music when you come up and you applaud-- no, I'm joking.

JoANNA LeFLORE-EJIKE: Clapping is [INAUDIBLE] so I appreciate it. Greetings to the legislative committee and thank you for providing space for the community to speak to you all today. My name is JoAnna LeFlore-Ejike, J-o-A-n-n-a, last name, LeFlore-Ejike, L-e-F-l-o-r-e-E-j-i-k-e. I am the executive director of the Malcolm X Memorial Foundation and we are happily here presenting today. And we want to let people know especially that we are in the business of prioritizing the teaching of the legacy of Malcolm X, born as Malcolm Little, right here in Omaha, Nebraska. In light of recent celebrated-- celebration of the induction of Malcolm X into the Nebraska Hall of Fame-- applause is welcome there-- I feel it is my duty to promote the importance and significance of future investment into the memorial birth site of Malcolm X in the heart of north Omaha. We reside at 3448 Evans Street, 68111-- excuse me-- and we are prioritizing a few projects. First of all, people should know that this organization was founded by Rowena Moore in 1971, and the organization has been working diligently since then on building culturally relevant programming for the community. However, in small strides, we have only been able to improve our efforts, but I am hopeful that in the next three years, we can maximize and leverage this opportunity through collaborative partnerships that aid in increasing our impact to remain a beacon for this community. We find it a worthy cause for us to position this

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

organization, we find it a worthy cause to position this organization to be a leading international destination, as it was mentioned earlier before. Our aim is to provide true communal space for the entire city, as well as attract beneficial economic growth. Our estimated project cost is around \$21 million for an outdoor amphitheater, cultural center and event space. Last year, we attracted a total of 3,400 visitors just from walk-up tours alone. But that-- but as was mentioned earlier, what if we could keep those visitors here in Omaha longer and they are visiting the Malcolm X birth site, but in addition, we can collaborate with other organizations that have similar, similar goals? And so we want to attract even more people. That is the summary. I just wanted to make sure I spoke today. Any questions?

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

JULIE KALKOWSKI: Good morning. My name is Julie Kalkowski, J-u-l-i-e K-a-l-k-o-w-s-k-i. I'm the executive director of the Financial Hope Collaborative. We are housed at Creighton University. When I started doing financial education, financial coaching in 2006, I had no idea it would lead to poverty alleviation by increasing income, by fostering economic mobility, and by promoting economic stability. And it also, we found, after doing the first clinical trial in the whole country to look at what impacted a financial education, financial coaching model of low-income single mothers, it also improves their health. So we are seeing that the people that go through this program have significant reductions in overdrafts, late fees and shut-off notices for the utilities so they don't have to move as often. We're also seeing people increasing their income by an average of 20 percent. They're moving up. They're being sent back to school by their employers. It really helps employers by building an internal workforce. In terms of their health outcomes, people stop avoiding medical care due to healthcare costs. People's smoking was reduced and poverty-- the guy from Harvard called me and said, How did you get into smoking with a financial vacation program? And I said, well, when a single mother looks at how much you spent on smoking and how much her kids were a little hungry last week, it's motivating to stop smoking. So it's a, a program. We're involved in two projects right now, one we hope will lead to sustainable funding. We're doing a project with Medicaid and core-- Medicaid recipients only and we're also doing a project with people with type two diabetics. We're operating out of their-- it's called the Cure Project. We also, for the financial success program, we offer the forum in both Spanish and

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

English. And I never thought when I started this all those years ago, it would lead to such a behavior change, to promotions, to increase in income, going back to school. Their kids are doing better, we also found out with the, the clinical trial. And we found that the kids were missing less school because mom wasn't stressed over money so much and the kids had, had more doctor visits, but that's because they were getting regular healthcare as opposed to going to the E.R. or urgent care. So, yeah, I don't think lit cures the common cold, but this one program addresses a lot of problems that exist here in north and south Omaha. I have time for two, two questions, I think, or maybe one and a half.

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

JULIE KALKOWSKI: Can I say I know the legislation says we could have up to \$1 million so we would take that to do the-- at least the sustainable funding. We'd take that too--

WAYNE: It's in the, it's in the current-- yeah.

_____ : Got it all laid out.

WAYNE: Welcome to your Economic Recovery Committee.

VARGAS: Gotta go.

MERIDITH DILLON: Hello. Thank you. Meridith Dillon, M-e-r-i-d-i-t-h D-i-l-l-o-n, 1120 South 101st Street, Omaha, Nebraska. I am the executive director of Front Porch Investments. I'm here today to bring your attention to Treasury released guidance on July 27th of 2021 that updated the state and local fiscal recovery funds eligibility to include flexibilities and requirements for long-term loans for affordable housing as a part of eligible expenses in the ARPA funding. And I think it's really important that we highlight this because it means these are dollars that can stay in our community in perpetuity if used for affordable housing. So long-term loans are now an eligible expense through ARPA, which means that we could use it to create things like low-interest mortgages at a time where we see mortgage rates increasing. Just to highlight the issue of a mortgage for a \$300,000 home in 2021 at 2.6 percent is making the same monthly payment today of a person that would purchase a \$200,000 home at a 6.2 percent mortgage. So it's a significant increase in a monthly payment for a family and it's making housing that was already difficult to

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

obtain even more unaffordable. So low-interest mortgages and low-interest loans for the development of affordable housing and long-term investments are eligible expenses for ARPA funding. Front Porch Investments is a nonprofit that was created to leverage public-private partnership prior to the pandemic. And we do have funding sources and funds that are able to handle long-term loans, both in mortgages to increase homebuyers' opportunities in north and south Omaha. We have a Greenlining fund that was meant for that purpose. We know that neighborhoods that have higher rates of homeownership are actually more likely to attract economic development and especially employers because they're looking for housing stability in employees. And so it's really important, I think, that we consider these long-term investments and these-- when we talk about things like wanting this investment to make an impact in the long term, this is one of the only routes to sustainable investment with ARPA funding; long-term loans for mortgages and also long-term loans for affordable housing development. It's possible to do it. We'd love to partner. We don't have to be the only organization to do it. We'd love to show others how and we're here to support you in again being able to make long-term, sustainable investments in affordable housing and economic development through homeownership. Any questions?

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

MERIDITH DILLON: Thank you.

WAYNE: Next testifier.

AARON BOWEN: Good morning.

WAYNE: Morning.

AARON BOWEN: My name is Aaron Bowen, A-a-r-o-n B-o-w-e-n, and I'm the executive director of Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership. ENCAP has been serving Douglas and Sarpy County since 1965 and our main office has been in north Omaha since that date. We currently reside at 2406 Fowler Avenue. As a community action agency, our responsibility is to assess community needs and devise solutions to poverty while avoiding duplication of services and programs, help families build and maintain economic security, build new community resources, and listen to the people who receive our services and support in order to help them where they need it most. Last year, we provided 22,000 services and touching 11,000 individuals. Much of our

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

work is with households located in the qualified census tracts in north Omaha and we will seek funding through this opportunity to expand our existing transportation program so that individuals and families are able to maximize the employment and career opportunities that this economic recovery plan will produce. Consistent employment is essential to households to build economic security and hope for the future. If you can't get to work, your opportunities are exponentially prohibited. Too many jobs, especially those that pay a livable wage, are inaccessible without reliable transportation tailored to the community and the challenges that households living in poverty face. Mass transit or ride services do not and cannot fit the needs of families in our community. Transportation to and from employment must include the ability to get children to and from childcare safely, must be timely when a car breaks down or a ride from friends or family falls through, must be able to pivot quickly in response to changes in our community or environment and must be responsive to both employers and their workers. ENCAP seeks to expand its transportation fleet, create driver and driver-support jobs and make needed infrastructure improvements at our location in order to launch a subsidiary business that provides employer-sponsored transportation for businesses while also continuing to help other nonprofits get their clients to and from work. And I would add to that the excellent proposals put forth by NOAH, Charles Drew, the Financial Help Collaborative. We have great programs and services in north Omaha, but if people cannot get there in the evenings, on the weekends, those things are for naught when people can access those great services. We've operated a transportation program for the past decade and are poised for this growth. We would utilize this funding. We invite collaboration and secure contracts to leverage other local, state and federal funding, some of which is our own, to sustain this program beyond the expiration of recovery support. For business owners, offering a mobility solution for its workforce can be less expensive than the cost of employee turnover and the associated costs of constant rehiring and training. A more stable workforce generates productivity, more profit and long-term economic growth. The pandemic further increased isolation of people able and ready to work from job opportunities and that will continue unless we find a solution to transportation. North Omaha needs rides that work now and ENCAP will use these funds to produce fundamental change that the community needs and deserves and it's long overdue.

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

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

MONIKA PHILP: Thank you for having me. Monika Philp, M-o-n-i-k-a P-h-i-l-p, and I'm here to represent the AIM Institute. I'm a director of leadership and member development at the AIM Institute. As you-- our nonprofit has fostered the growth of Omaha's tech sector for more than 30 years. AIM's vision is to create a thriving community where anyone can pursue a rewarding tech career. Our programs promote diversity and inclusion in tech sector by making educational opportunities and career training available to all, from elementary school through adulthood. I was born in Poland. My family and I came to the U.S. through a Diversity Visa Lottery Program. As an immigrant from Poland, we were on the edge of poverty and homelessness. Going through challenges and adversity as a child, I understand what it feels like when someone helps you along the way. That's why I made my mission to give back to those in need. I'm grateful that I get to make this difference through my work with the AIM Institute. AIM's mission is to grow a strong and diverse tech talent community through career development, educational programs and outreach. Our mission is more relevant now than ever before. Technology is changing-- technology is leading the way and changing everything. It's also planting opportunities everywhere. Unfortunately, those opportunities are not available to all. AIM's mission is to provide those opportunities to everyone, regardless of their age or economic background. AIM is connecting leaders and communities to inspire positive change. We're connecting opportunities and resources to the underrepresented, underserved and underemployed. What makes AIM unique is that we have over 30 years of experience growing a tech talent community. We know that there is a tech gap. There's also the diversity gap. There is also the human skills gap and there's also the first job in tech challenge. This is why today, with the forthcoming funding from LB1024, AIM would like to ask for \$500,000 towards a proposed training program. Our approach will include the following steps. Our IT Leadership Academy will address the soft-skills gap. During the program, participants will learn new communication skills, relationship-building skills, as well as hear from some of today's IT leaders about what their data is all about. Technical training will be provided-- will provide the skills needed to enter the tech workforce. The tech career coaching is our one-on-one guiding-- guidance provided by an experienced AIM career coach that will support participants along the way to help them get into their first tech job. Help us connect the untapped talent in north Omaha to the life-changing opportunities. Together, let's build the community we need for the future we want. Thank you.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

WAYNE: Thank you. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you.

MONIKA PHILP: Thank you.

WAYNE: Next testifier.

JOE HIGGINS: Good afternoon. Can you hear me?

WAYNE: Yes.

JOE HIGGINS: I'm Joe Higgins, J-o-e H-i-g-g-i-n-s, and I represent the Levi Carter Sherman Neighborhood. That's bounded by-- the border is basically the airport and the Nebraska-Iowa border, extending up to about 16th Street, roughly. I'm here mainly to thank you for the opportunity that you're providing the community, that you took the time to get the bill and go forward and to address what some of the needs are in the neighborhood. I don't have a proposal as of yet, but I know there's a great deal of effort put into this and I appreciate the transparency that you have for the public of what's going on. My neighborhood is a little unique. I don't know how much you know about it, but it's traditionally considered a poor neighborhood and a lot of the residents there are long-term residents. There's quite a high percentage of incarcerated, former incarcerated. Metro Tech addressed a lot of issues in that neighborhood. There's development opportunity. I'll give you a-- for instance, about two weeks ago, a house was listed two blocks from my house. Eight years ago, it sold for \$16,000. It's now listed on the market for \$211,000. They just dropped it down below \$200,000. My house was assessed at \$40,000. I bought a complete, dilapidated, you know, junker, total rehab, and it recently was reappraised at \$102,000. So I'm aware of a lot of the issues. I'm here in support of any community development, especially in that neighborhood. We have a lot of small lots. Typically the lots are only 50 foot wide. And within that community, the residents aren't very good about coming before public hearings or voicing things. They have a mistrust of government for some reason. I'm not sure why. I've heard rumors, oh, they're going to tear all our houses down and redevelop and we don't have a choice so I'm not going to go. I won't belong to a neighborhood association because all you guys are going to do is make me do things, you know, like change the color of my house, blah, blah, blah. They don't even understand the difference between a homeowner association and a neighborhood. When I work with the city planning with-- about the neighborhood, they say, well, if you're having problems, you know, call code enforcement. I don't consider that

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

neighborly. My idea of a cleanup is to offer services, you know, like the spring and fall cleanups and that's what we're focused on-- and engagement with our neighborhood. We welcome any ideas that would be good for development in our neighborhood and I welcome any input and help with providing a plan. But we have a 355-acre park that's been owned for the city for a long time that is way underutilized and served. I think that, along with the proximity of the Omaha airport, you have to drive Abbott Drive or--

WAYNE: Please wrap up.

JOE HIGGINS: Pardon me?

WAYNE: Please wrap up. You're out of time.

JOE HIGGINS: OK. I think it could be a cornerstone. We could do a lot of development. It's going to take a joint effort between the government, planning, etcetera and I welcome any input into that. If you have any questions, you can reach me. We have a Facebook page, Levi Carter Sherman Neighborhood.

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

JOE HIGGINS: All right, thank you.

WAYNE: Next testifier.

NICK JULIANO: Good afternoon, members of the committee. My name is Nick Juliano, N-i-c-k J-u-l-i-a-n-o. I'm president and CEO of RADIUS and I appreciate the opportunity to talk with you today. RADIUS is a new nonprofit agency located at 5040 Grand Avenue, and we will be providing trauma-informed residential care, education, in-home family services and behavioral health treatment to young people and their families involved in the juvenile justice system. We're slated to open in July of 2023. RADIUS will primarily serve young people who are not able to be served in our community. So currently they're sent away from Omaha. Many are sent out of state, away from their families. RADIUS will create approximately 45 FTEs with competitive benefits to serve these young people and their families and they are primarily from four zip codes in north and south Omaha, which are within the census tracts of interest. Our goal is to develop a workforce with folks from those same census tracts. We want to have staff who share experiences and geography with the youth and families we serve. So RADIUS will be requesting \$900,000 for workforce development

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

activities, including recruiting and hiring of employees from the identified census tracts, a paid internship program, specialized training and career development for direct care entry-level positions and development of a one-of-a-kind certificate endorsement for education staff. So our goal is to create a pipeline of employees from the communities where the young people and families live that we serve. One of the ways we will do that is through a paid internship program with local universities for those of our staff who are on a pathway to a degree. We anticipate we will hire many of those interns. But for those we don't, they will have gained valuable experience to work in other agencies in this community. The bulk of the staff we hire will work directly with our youth and families, and they will not be required to have a degree. And with training and career development resources, these frontline staff will have great potential to fill other positions in our organization. And our funding requests would enhance those opportunities for 40 percent of our entry-level workforce, prepare them for advanced positions with higher salaries in the future. This would include leadership development, additional education/training opportunities. So equally important is the development of our teachers. We'll have an education program. Youth at RADIUS will attend our school. Currently, there is no certificate for endorsement for teachers working in juvenile justice programs. So we have an opportunity to create one and close a gap in our workforce. This would be portable, allowing staff to take it with them to other employment opportunities in the field. So developing a skilled and thriving workforce at RADIUS has a multidimensional impact on our communities in north and south Omaha: new jobs and gainful employment opportunities for community members while we help underserved youth and families who themselves are striving to meet their full potential. I'll take any questions at this time.

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

NICK JULIANO: Thank you.

WAYNE: Next testifier.

CHRIS TONNIGES: Good afternoon. My name is Chris Tonniges, C-h-r-i-s T-o-n-n-i-g-e-s. I'm the president and CEO of Lutheran Family Services. Roughly one year ago, I joined Lutheran Family Services, or LFS, as president and CEO. Very early on in my tenure, we were tasked with tackling the global humanitarian crisis coming out of Afghanistan, which hits very close to home, as many of those

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

individuals served closely with our military personnel here locally. Also, most recently, we've started seeing a larger population of refugees from, from Ukraine arrive at our doors and expect many more in the year as the year progresses. This work focused on people from Afghanistan and Ukraine was additive to our already-busy resettlement program. As LFS has attempted to house these families that start-- to start their new life in the United States, I was struck by the incredible lack of affordable housing in Nebraska. It made me realize that there is a misalignment of goals and a lack of capital going into larger, more affordable housing units that are so desperately needed across our state. This misalignment has forced LFS to think of housing in a different light. What if nonprofits controlled or developed housing targeting marginalized populations with profit margin being a secondary goal? Nonprofits bring two much-needed assets to multifamily housing development, a low cost of capital through fundraising grants, etcetera and population to solve for occupancy. As Bryan Slone, president of the Nebraska Chamber, shared last December, Nebraska has 50,000 to 80,000 jobs it cannot fill across the state. In the next decade, Nebraska needs to attract 100,000 to 200,000, 18-24-year-olds. And Nebraska has a lot of open jobs, yet our labor force participation rate is at nearly 7 percent higher than the national average, which means nearly all available workers are already in jobs across the state. Earlier this year, LFS received a generous gift to begin solving for this equation for statewide housing, allowing us to work and partner with developers to change how housing development is funded. We believe that with this gift, subsequent fundraising, corporate partners and additional ARPA funding, we can leverage these funds to bring over 1,600 new or refurbished units, including those in the, in the targeted market, over a five-year window. Our proposal is that we will recycle roughly \$5 million investment through this fund we receive from ARPA track funds or ARPA funds back into east Omaha. In the long term, we plan to take any profits generated from these units to generate additional units or even create pathways to homeownership for marginalized populations through down payment grants or matching funds. By creating a new affordable model, combining household solutions with-- or housing solutions with supportive services, LFS intends to make an outsized impact for individuals and communities statewide. Once an affordable home is secured, people have the physical and mental space to learn, excel on their path to self-sufficiency and self-reliance. As this program is implemented, it will provide affordable place to live while building community that provides information and referral to much-needed sources, access to health and behavioral health services, care coordination services and

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

provide a warm handoff to other service providers already-- that have already testified here today.

WAYNE: Need you to wrap up.

CHRIS TONNIGES: Yep. We thank you for the opportunity to be able to present and look forward to all of the projects being funded.

WAYNE: Thank you. Thank you for being here today. Next testifier. Welcome.

TODD STUBBENDIECK: Thank you. My name is Todd Stubbendieck. That's T-o-d-d S-t-u-b-b-e-n-d-i-e-c-k, and I'm the state director of AARP Nebraska. AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that helps empower people to choose how they live as they age. What we know is that as people age, what they want to be able to do is stay in their homes and their communities as long as possible. To do this, they need a range of age-friendly housing options that accommodates their needs. For older people, too often there seems to be no option between the single-family home where they raised their family and assisted living. As this committee begins to consider funding for housing solutions, I hope they'll keep in mind the need to create affordable, age-friendly housing choices. AARP Nebraska supports the development of missing middle housing as one solution to providing affordable housing options that are beneficial to people of all ages. Missing middle housing refers to a class of mid-sized, modestly priced homes like duplexes, triplexes and townhomes that at one time were widely available but now are often zoomed out of existence in our communities. Senator Wayne, I've heard you speak eloquently about the need for low-income housing, but also the need for affordable market-rate housing to help drive development in places like north and south Omaha. We at AARP believe missing middle housing needs to be a part of the affordable housing solution. As we discuss middle-- missing middle housing, there's a lack of understanding or fear that this type of housing would be out of place in our existing neighborhoods. To help visualize what missing rental housing is and what it would look like in existing neighborhoods, AARP Nebraska worked with Opticos Design to develop the missing middle housing lot test fit study. I provided the members of the committee with a copy of the study. Study shows what a duplex, four-plex and single-family home would look like side by side on an existing lot in north Omaha. Each house fits with the existing aesthetics of the community and occupies nearly an identical footprint on the lot while increasing density and providing more flex-- more affordable housing options. This resource is designed to demonstrate

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

the role missing middle housing could play in addressing Omaha's housing needs. Hopefully, it can be used to spark conversations amongst this committee, housing developers and funders about what is possible while showing members of the community that this housing option can fit seamlessly into our existing neighborhoods. AARP Nebraska encourages the committee to ensure housing funds are directed, at least in part, to projects that will develop age-friendly, affordable housing. Thank you.

WAYNE: Thank you for, thank you for being here. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thanks. There's a lot of noise next door, so hopefully they're getting a lot of projects or ideas fleshed out-- [INAUDIBLE] I might have to-- you go over the monitor them in case something breaks out over there. Welcome.

KALISHA REED: Thank you. Thank you for having me. My name is Kalisha Reed. I'm the executive director of Youth Emergency Services. That is K-a-l--

WAYNE: I'm gonna-- I hate to do this to you. Technically, there's-- in the Legislature, you can't use props.

KALISHA REED: OK.

WAYNE: And we're at a legislative hearing, so.

KALISHA REED: OK.

WAYNE: We'll figure it out afterwards, though. If I got to take some pictures on my phone to send it to the committee, I will.

KALISHA REED: Thank you. K-a-l-i-s-h-a, last name is Reed, R-e-e-d, and again, I'm the executive director of Youth Emergency Services. So Youth Emergency Services has been in the Omaha community for nearly 50 years, serving youth who are experiencing homelessness or near homelessness. Our agency has currently five scattered-site houses located in north and south Omaha that have our independent living program, as well as a maternity group home in south Omaha and an emergency shelter in north Omaha. At this time, we are-- we have a building and land under contract at near 27th and Saint Mary. It is the vacant OHA building. That building has been vacant for the last eight years and we are seeking to revitalize that community. Our planning-- or excuse me, our project has gone through planning, pre-planning. We've done our community meetings, zoning, replat. We've been through the city council, all completed as of April of 2022. Our

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

project is shovel ready and ready to go to provide 56 bed units in, in the-- at 27th and Saint Marys. The 27-- or excuse me, the 56 bed units would include 16 shelter beds, 12 two-bedroom apartments, and 28 one-bedroom apartments. Attached to that housing unit, we would also have our street outreach center. And within our street outreach center is our basic needs center, where we would be able to provide clothing, pantry, food-- excuse me, food, clothing, pantry, as well as community mental health and collaborating with other community-- excuse me, community organizations to bring their programs and services within Youth Emergency Services to be able to provide to our youth. Again, with our project, we have also received conditional NIFA funding. Our NIFA funding is set to be released to us in November of 2022. We are seeking \$25 million. Our NIFA-- our conditional NIFA funding is for \$8.5 million. We are working in conjunction with OHA to be able to provide, provide low-income base housing vouchers to our tenants as well.

WAYNE: Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, afterwards, I'll snap a photo and send it to the--

KALISHA REED: Thank you.

WAYNE: OK. Next testifier.

LINDA WILLIAMS: Hello. My name is Linda Williams, L-i-n-d-a W-i-l-l-i-a-m-s. I am the self-proclaimed north Omaha architectural historian. I protected and won some battles and lost some battles about protecting old buildings in north Omaha and I believe I would want a community-based design center. There are a lot of architectural projects from the south Omaha meeting I was at and this one and there's not enough minority architects in the state of Nebraska. And so with my school, Boston Architectural College, I hope to create a pipeline to get more minority architects licensed and all this work could give them hours towards their license at a community-based design center. Thank you.

WAYNE: Thank you. Any questions? Seeing none, thank you for being here. I want to remind everybody just if you testify, still not a submission. The official submission is omahaeconomicrecovery.com. That is where the portal will be. Next testifier, please. How many more people are testifying? Thank you.

DALE CHRISTENSON: Hi. My name is Dale Christenson, D-a-l-e C-h-r-i-s-t-e-n-s-o-n. I'm currently the president of the B&B Sports

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

Academy Foundation. That is the foundation of Brian McIntyre and Bud Crawford. We have a facility at 34th and Sprague and I know a couple of you guys have been down there. We have a-- we are at full or exceeding capacity right now with regard to the wrestling side as well as the boxing side. It's one of Bud's dreams to create a large multi-use facility in north Omaha, including both young women and young men, include basketball, include volleyball, include other types of sports that right now, particularly in the competitive area, the kids are not available to participate in quite fully. A lot of the facilities are in west Omaha, Elkhorn or Gretna and transportation and, and to go to those facilities sometimes is expensive and hard and at the same time, attracting coaches to come into our facility is nearly impossible because of the-- we don't have the facilities for them to coach in. We generally attract at-- at-risk youth is what we've, we've dealt with and in the facility, besides increasing the programs, we would also like to add an indoor track for walking or running, particularly in the winter. At the last meeting, there was a number of things that were picked as needs-- to the needs analysis. One of them was a vacant lot. The building where we believe would fulfill this could be as big as 100,000 square feet. Job opportunities could be up as high as 17 full- or part-time jobs. We could tackle-- it was-- we talked about obesity and healthcare, diabetes, unemployment rate and a number of commercial opportunities with weekend tournaments and different types of competitions that we could draw into that area. And two blocks south of where we are is the Spaulding Park, which is pretty much vacant. So we're looking for the neighborhood-- I've have to get together with Olsson on this, but between \$25-40 million.

WAYNE: Any questions from the committee?

DALE CHRISTENSON: Thank you.

WAYNE: Thank you. Welcome.

DOROTHY JOHNSON: All right.

WAYNE: Go ahead.

DOROTHY JOHNSON: I start?

WAYNE: Yep.

DOROTHY JOHNSON: Good afternoon. My name is Dorothy Johnson and I'll spell that. That's D-o-r-o-t-h-y, Johnson, J-o-h-n-s-o-n. And I didn't

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

plan to speak today, but I will because my ambition just really called me to speak up. Above all, I'm a proud single mom of two. I'm also a proud north Omaha native. In my free time, I'm the founder of an emerging social club for traditionally marginalized groups, students that graduated from HBCUs and folks that participate in Greek organizations. Professionally, I was recently promoted to be a vice president at the most diverse venture capital firm in the nation, working on behalf of NMotion and the Generator. And with that, we invest in business entrepreneurship and our goal is to get folks that are focused on high-growth startups, right? So we want people to take investment and then upskill that quickly so we can drive economic development. You all traditionally work with Scott Henderson, but he's out of town today so they sent me. We need business entrepreneurship in this community. We need nonprofits. We need housing, but we need business entrepreneurship to really drive economic development in this community. And a part of that, we need talent acquisition, we need talent retention and we need talent development. So our national company has been very successful in other cities with a skills program. Traditionally, our students, our families only encounter support after a traumatic experience. This program gives them case managers, resources and support prior to a traumatic experience. So we work with people who have traditionally dropped out, high school students, just people who feel like they have been overlooked and underutilized. So I will be working with some of my team members to write a proposal for a skills development program that has been successful around this nation. So we have data to prove our success, we have traction to prove our success, but young emerging talent needs development. We need mentorship and we need support. But I also want to just add in my little 2 cents about arts and culture is important as well when it comes to economic development. So I also sit on the board for the Great Plains Black History Museum. I spend a lot of time with the Malcolm X Birthsite. So in my opinion, I just wanted to make sure my voice is heard as I advocate for business entrepreneurship, talent development and arts and culture and how those things can drive economic development in north and south Omaha. Do you all have any questions for me?

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

DOROTHY JOHNSON: Thank you. It was my first time, so thank you.

WAYNE: Next testifier. Welcome.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

LEO LOUIS: Thank you. Good day. My name is Leo Louis. I am a human before any other title. I serve as the board president of Malcolm X--

WAYNE: Spell your name.

LEO LOUIS: Sorry, Leo Louis, L-e-o L-o-u-i-s. I serve as the board president of the Malcolm X Memorial Foundation and we will submit our proposal for our \$18-plus project. But what I'd like to highlight in my testimony today is the fact that I think we forget that we're humans sometime and we forget that this bill, LB1024, was passed for north and south Omaha. And when you look out these windows in three years, if these windows don't represent a change in the landscape, a change in the demographics, a change in the growth of individuals, then we did not do our job. So we're here to change what's out this window. So when I'm doing tours at the Malcolm X Memorial Foundation and individuals come and visit the center, they say, are there black people in north Omaha? I say, yes, you're in north Omaha. You're where the black people are. Because they don't think black people are in Omaha at all and so then they ask after that, well, what's the importance of Malcolm X? And I start a conversation about culture, which is far more important than any other conversation because we look at other parts of our city and we say, why is west Omaha developed? And we go to other cities in America and we say, why are there urban centers full of black people, but their centers are not developed? Oftentimes, it's due to culture. We can talk about mental health. We can talk about jobs. We can talk about housing. But at the end of the day, when a group of people speak the same language, they identify with one another, they are able to develop things for themselves that represent them. And the Malcolm X Memorial Foundation does that and we intend to continue to be a cultural spearhead and hub for individuals in the Afro-American community and to spread our wings to open doors to others. But we want to make sure that the cultural hub of the Malcolm X Memorial Foundation is developed in a way that it can receive the amount of people that want to come to this international destination. We receive thousands of visitors every year. However, we are a 51-year-old organization and have not seen very much development on our 18 acres of land that we own. So what we'd like to see is what other communities have; a cultural center where our language, our heritage, our culture, our history is acknowledged, valued and can continue to spread development by inspiring individuals to love themselves and love the community they come from. I'm Leo. I appreciate the opportunity.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

WAYNE: Any questions from the community-- I said community-- committee?

LEO LOUIS: Right on.

WAYNE: Seeing none, thank you for being here.

LEO LOUIS: Thank you.

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

DONNA VAUGHN: Thank you. Thank you, gentlemen. My name is Donna Vaughn, CEO of Vaughn and Associates. We do community events. Most--

WAYNE: Can you spell your name?

DONNA VAUGHN: Donna, D-o-n-n-a, Vaughn, V-a-u-g-h-n.

WAYNE: Thank you. Go ahead.

DONNA VAUGHN: Most known for doing community events. We've been doing the Nebraska Black History Art Contest for the last ten years and this past year, we added on the Juneteenth art contest and the cakewalk, which started during slavery. But I'm here today to give you a heads-up on three proposals that you'll be seeing my name tied to. One is affordable housing. We need it badly. I live between here and Denver, and if we don't do something about it, we're going to be looking like Denver, Colorado, and it's not a pretty sight. I've been going to a lot of community meetings this year, which has opened my eyes to how bad it is. Landlords are not taking HUD vouchers. HUD is not raising what they're allotting. Mom and children are becoming homeless and we can't let this happen. And the research says that one way we can combat this is with 3D printing and so I've talked to a few people who have the same idea as I do; one gentleman you just heard from today, Scott Yahnke. So you'll be getting a proposal from us on how we can maybe combat that-- not maybe, how we can combat that problem with, with 3D housing. The next is you want to create jobs and you want people to come to Omaha. And we have a group of females who would love to do promotion, bring concerts and seminars to our area, but we're finding it very difficult to get the thousands and thousands of bucks that you-- that the guys seem to get. So you'll be seeing a proposal on how we can create jobs and bring people into Omaha by some of the events that we want to have. And then finally, we need a holistic center between here and south Omaha. Our people of color, we live in depression and we don't even know it. And this is a time in

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

our history that people are trying to break generational curses and build generational wealth. And before you can do that, you've got to tackle self, you've got to heal. And in the center, we would offer everything from meditation to acupuncture to exercise to diet classes to cafe--

WAYNE: I'm gonna need you to wrap up.

DONNA VAUGHN: So a crystal store, a garden attached to it. So anyway, those are three proposals that you'll be seeing from us and just let your heart be your guide. Thank you.

WAYNE: Thank you.

DONNA VAUGHN: Any questions?

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

DONNA VAUGHN: Appreciate you guys and thank you for offering this opportunity to our community.

WAYNE: Thank you. Next testifier. Welcome.

ALVIN HARPER: Hello. My name is Alvin Harper, A-l-v-i-n H-a-r-p-e-r. I'm-- a little over five years ago, I started to Omaha Arts Council because Omaha did not have an arts council. Before then, I went on a walkabout across the country to visit different cities to find out why talented people in Nebraska left Nebraska to seek success, why they didn't stay here. Because there was no support system for artists in Omaha. There was more support system for artists in Council Bluffs or Fremont, but not in Omaha. Omaha had went without having an art council for over 23 years, and the one they had before the end was called the Council for the Performing Arts and it only did, like, ballet and high-end stuff like that, but not nothing for common artists, average artists. There's never been a support system for artists in Nebraska. We have a lot of art schools, a lot of art galleries, but no support system for artists. If you want to be successful as an artist in Omaha, Nebraska, first thing you should do is leave Omaha. So I started the Omaha Arts Council to turn that around so that people that are talented and skilled in music or in art would come to Omaha to be discovered rather than leaving Omaha. So what we have here in Omaha is Berkshire Hathaway and we have a group of the best art teachers on earth working at Creighton, UNO. And for graphic arts and computer-related art, we got Bellevue College. We got

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

the best art professors on the planet in those three places and we got a large group of rich people, got a philanthropist that would like to support art. So I created the Omaha Arts Council as economic development for the arts. I kind of like-- followed up what Mr. Maroney did with economic development, period. So I copied a lot of Mike Maroney. He's really, really smart. He's really smart, OK? And so-- and I copied a lot off of Warren Buffett, OK? So if you want to be the best, you imitate the best, right? So now we have a program called Art Tank. Art Tank is where fine arts and corporate finance overlap. With help from the chamber of commerce, especially Winsley Durand, we've created the Omaha Arts Council and now we have-- on the website for the Omaha Arts Council, we got a little thing that drops down menu, says Art Tank.

WAYNE: Need you to wrap up, please.

ALVIN HARPER: OK. So I need money to put Art Tank on. I need to rebuild my building at 1723 North 33rd Street that had two fires in it before they gave it to me. I got it from the Compass center from a buy, but the building is fire damaged. So whatever I could get from you, I'd appreciate it. So there's no minimum to what you guys can give me, OK? Whatever is enough, OK? I'm a starving artist.

WAYNE: I'm going to need you to wrap up, though.

ALVIN HARPER: I'm a starving artist, right? So whatever little bone you could go throw this dog, I'd appreciate it.

WAYNE: I appreciate it.

ALVIN HARPER: And if you don't throw me no bones, that's all right. There's plenty of rich people out there and I love rich people and they seem to like me.

WAYNE: All right, you have a good day, sir.

ALVIN HARPER: OK, thank you.

WAYNE: Thank you.

ALVIN HARPER: Remember Omaha Arts Council Arts Tank. Look at the website.

WAYNE: I got it down, sir.

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

ALVIN HARPER: OK?

WAYNE: Yes, sir.

ALVIN HARPER: I love billionaires.

WAYNE: Thank you.

ALVIN HARPER: We need more billionaires.

WAYNE: Next testifier. Any other-- oh.

STEVE WESTON: Hello. My name is Steve Weston, S-t--

WAYNE: Speak up a little bit.

STEVE WESTON: I'm sorry about that. Can you hear me now?

WAYNE: Yeah.

STEVE WESTON: Steve Weston, S-t-e-v-e W-e-s-t-o-n. I currently represent Red Berry Innovations. I am the IT man over there. I do-- control all IT and security. We also are partners with the DOD and we have a skillbridge program, an intern program that we are training people that come out of the military to get more acclimated into the civilian workforce for offensive and defensive security and IT. And the end-term goal is to try to find a security operations center that would present a lot of jobs for people and the long-- very long-term goal is to actually help more people coming out of school and either high school or college to get more experience with the IT field. And that's pretty much it. I, I could talk all day about it if you wanted to, but [INAUDIBLE].

WAYNE: No, I appreciate it. Any questions from the committee? Seeing none, thank you for being here.

STEVE WESTON: Have a great day, guys.

WAYNE: Welcome.

JOANNE FERGUSON CAVANAUGH: Thank you. Hi, I'm Joanne Ferguson Cavanaugh and I've been a member of the Great Plains Black History-- oh, I need to spell my name. J-o-a-n-n-e F-e-r-g-u-s-o-n C-a-v-a-n-a-u-g-h. So I'm Joanne Ferguson Cavanaugh. I've been a member of the Great Plains Black History Museum for ten years, and I currently serve as the secretary to the board. I'm a retired Omaha

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

public librarian for over 25 years and spent nine years at the Charles B. Washington branch in north Omaha. And I'm testifying in support of funding to provide new and adequate home for the museum. We're currently located at 24th and Grant in the lower level of the historic Jewell Building for the last five years and making the most of the small space. We really need a new facility. It would allow for space for our collections, which are currently stored in several storage units here and there, the hiring of an archivist and support staff to organize and interpret our collections and make, make them findable for the public who's always looking for information and we have a hard time trying to provide that at this point. We would have adequate space for research and for exhibit space, and we would be able to attract traveling exhibits from the Smithsonian and other institutions because we would have the space and the security to provide that. We would be able to hire youth to help with tours in the neighborhood and in house. And there's a hunger nationally to learn more and we would be able to help provide new insights and hopefully change hearts and minds with, with our exhibits and our programming. So far this year, we've attracted over 4,100 people and this is in-person and online through programs, and this is with limited open hours. We're only open Tuesday-- or Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 1 to 5. And we've attracted people from Kentucky, Virginia, Texas, Maryland, Alabama, California, Georgia, and the UK. So with tourism as the number three industry in Nebraska, we don't want to miss this opportunity to draw people into the north Omaha community and to support the people that are already living there with jobs and opportunity and hope. We're willing to collaborate with other organizations with similar, similar goals. Thank you. Questions?

WAYNE: Seeing none, thank you for being here.

JOANNE FERGUSON CAVANAUGH: Thank you very much.

WAYNE: Any other testifiers? Welcome.

WILLIE BARNEY: Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone. Willie Barney, W-i-l-l-i-e, Barney, B-a-r-n-e-y. I had not initially planned to testify, but after thinking about it and hearing from the community last night, first of all, I want to thank you for the approval, all the work you did to get us to this point to be able to have funds to allocate to north and south Omaha and other communities across the state. I wanted to just support a couple of different things. One, one of the reasons I did want to testify on the record-- provided that information for you-- the transformation plan. This is 15 years of

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

work, over 8,000 people, 500-plus organizations plus 40 neighborhoods, 100-plus community pastors, 300 black-owned businesses that provided input into the plan. So I know we've talked about it individually over the years, but wanted to formally submit it. And the categories that this funding-- and I totally support your focus on increasing wages in north and south Omaha, the business ownership, home ownership, tourism through arts and culture. And specifically one of the things I wanted to request-- and I know you're looking at it hopefully as a, as the council, is no matter where you place the dollars, the grant dollars, is that there be some type of requirement for those businesses that are doing contracting to have a percent targeted to black businesses, to Latino businesses and people of color, and also that they contract with people and businesses in north and south Omaha. Can you make that a part of the requirement? My understanding is that a lot of the dollars are federal dollars so you do have the ability to target the dollars that are contracted to make sure that black, Latino and other people of color are involved in the business side. Also want to emphasize that we are available for anything that you need as far as information research. We've conducted meetings, door-to-door outreach, summits, conferences. Again, we're-- over 8,000 people have provided us input. After the pandemic hit, we continued to do additional research. We did a survey of over 300-plus people, 200-plus leaders also provided input on the plans. So specifically, those areas that you have emphasized in the plan around business ownership, homeownership, contracting, tourism, there's a lot of input. There's a lot of crosstabs that can be done of residents that live in north Omaha that what specifically they said, what organizations have indicated as far as priorities. So just wanted to make ourselves available for anything, any support that we can give as you go through the process. But thank you for bringing this to the community, providing these opportunities. It's been really great to hear from the community and I hope we'll hear from even more people with more specific projects to move north and south Omaha forward. So thank you for your time. Thank you for your dedication to this.

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

WILLIE BARNEY: Thank you.

WAYNE: Is there any other testifiers? Seeing none, I just want remind everybody that omahaeconomicrecovery.com will be the official place to submit ideas or projects or programs, and that portal will stay open

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Economic Recovery Special Committee September 22, 2022
Rough Draft

until August-- August-- till October 9 at 11:59 p.m. And with that,
that concludes the hearing on LB1024. Thank you.