Good Evening, I want to begin this meeting with a statement about upward mobility and restorative justice.

I acknowledge the history and complexities of systemic racism and our city government’s role in perpetuating those systems.

I also acknowledge this Council’s commitment to equity, social justice and our city’s role to address our own systemic racism.

As Mayor, with the support of the Charlotte City Council, I want to thank the Greenspon Center, from my own alma mater, Queens University, for their research and statement on upward mobility and restorative justice as well as the request for an apology owed the African-American residents of Charlotte for the actions taken under the urban renewal laws of this Country displacing hundreds of African-Americans on this land that we sit on today as the center of government and other actions furthering the inequities of race in our city.

And I appreciate Rev. Wille Keaton, Rabbi Judy Schindler and former Mayor Roberts for their unflagging energy to this effort. Now, Mayor Roberts knows from her time in office that resolutions are important statements that must be grounded with data, plans and accountability.

Again, we acknowledge the history and complexities of systemic racism and our city government’s role in perpetuating those systems.

We also acknowledge this Council’s commitment to equity, social justice and our role to address our own systemic racism. We ask our residents, businesses and corporations, our philanthropic and faith communities to commit to a city that is diverse and inclusive requiring all of us to examine those actions and seek out remedies for bringing all races and ethnicities to the opportunity denied to us and afforded to others.

And that is why I make this statement that we apologize to the African-Americans who came before us and to those living in our city today:

Our apology is grounded in the fact that Charlotte:

- **Is a tale of two cities with great prosperity and great poverty**
• That Africa-Americans in our city did not achieve upward mobility due to our history of slavery; reconstruction; Jim Crow; segregation and systemic racial discrimination of redlining; restrictive covenants and urban renewal
• That Charlotte lives with the continued impact of those laws, policies and social determinants resulting in health disparity; food insecurity; negative environmental impacts and the resulting trauma;
• That Charlotte’s statistics show the result of deeply rooted structural barriers to upward mobility such as education; housing; criminal justice; transportation and employment;
• That Charlotte City’s government, between 1960 and 1967, razed the Brooklyn neighborhood displacing 1007 families and nearly 10,000 residents, 216 black owned businesses and 11 black houses of worship;

The city of Charlotte atones for the past actions of our City government that impeded the stability; the well-being and progress of our African-American residents.

And we ask the entire city to work tirelessly in this moment and this time to change the course of our city to move forward on social justice and equity.

As a city we will these beginning steps to:

• Reduce trauma in our city with violence interruption programs in out neighborhoods;
• Fund black businesses in our opportunity corridors to achieve economic advancement; support black entrepreneurs and build public infrastructure on Beatties Ford Road; West Boulevard; Albemarle Road and North Tryon and Sugar Creek Roads;
• Commit to creating opportunity for jobs with working wages; diversity in hires and promotions; to pay all city employees a working wage and to ask our supply chain vendors to commit to the same;
• And to develop partnerships with corporations; businesses large and small; philanthropic, faith and other government agencies to act to address racism with collective and collaborated action;
• And to measure the results of change with transparency to our community.
Thank you to all the people of Charlotte and each of the member of the Charlotte City Council for understanding the past and moving forward for the future.