

Davidson Town Hall & Community Center Grand Opening
Town Manager Jamie Justice
March 25, 2023

Over 10 years ago, elected officials and town staff recognized a need for more space to serve our community. In 2017, the town hired Creech & Associates Architects to conduct a space needs analysis for town hall, the police department, and the fire department. These demonstrated needs, along with the clear need from community groups to have space in which to meet, led to the current public facilities project at 251 South Street and the town hall renovation at 216 South Main Street.

For many years the town has tried multiple times to acquire the 251 South Street property. It was an aspiration to be able to utilize the building and property for the community, and many ideas were discussed. Knowing the history of the building as the Davidson School and how popular it has been to the community, it felt right to get the property turned back over to Davidson.

In 2018 as we learned that the private school which was leasing the building from CMS was moving out, we reached out to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) to see if they would be amenable to the town acquiring the property. The CMS Board of Education was eager to work with us and approved the sale. Mecklenburg County had to approve the sale as well, so our partnership with the schools and county was key.

We also appreciate the outstanding engagement from our community in this process — the 251 South Street Steering Committee, the Historic Preservation Commission, and lots of public input along the way.

In 2019, voters approved \$14 million of General Obligation (GO) bonds to pay for public facilities Phases 1 and 2. We held the groundbreaking ceremony at 251 South Street on January 29, 2021 and then worked to renovate the historic building in a very thoughtful and intentional way to help us better serve our community.

The Davidson Town Hall and Community Center serves as office space for Administration, Affordable Housing & Equity, Communications, Budget & Finance, Economic Development, Human Resources, Project Management, Town Attorney, Parks & Recreation, and Planning Departments.

Davidson Board of Commissioners meetings will be here in the new board room on the 2nd floor as well as special programs for the community such Civics 101, Parks & Recreation programs, performances, and lectures. Community groups will also be able to reserve space for their own purposes for a small fee. We are pleased to now be able to offer spaces to meet these community needs.

As we look to the future, we celebrate this accomplishment and also turn our focus to renovating the previous town hall at 216 S. Main Street for our police and fire departments. Phase 2 is slated for completion by the end of this year.

We are also looking ahead to renovating the gymnasium at 251 South Street into the town's first indoor recreation center, and we are grateful for the financial support from the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners which will help us with this new project.

We are grateful to have been able to preserve the tremendous history of the 251 South Street building and property. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Landmarks Commission provided integral support to ensure that we preserved the building while also modernizing what we could to make it usable for town functions going forward.

We look forward to seeing you around the new building soon!