

Rotary
Club of
Charlotte



THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM

November 2, 2021

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Fulton Meachem, CEO of Inlivian

By Kim McMillan

Kim Brattain, CEO of Kim Brattain Media, introduced Fulton Meachem, president and CEO of Inlivian, formerly the Charlotte Housing Authority.

In her introduction, Brattain described Meachem as an out of the box thinker having started two 501c3 organizations to generate private dollars for public causes, such as funds for post-secondary education and affordable housing. In addition to his role at Inlivian, he serves on a number of boards including Charlotte Works, Moving Forward Collaborative and Childress Klein Center for Real Estate Advisory Board.

Meachem began his presentation by explaining what Inlivian does. "Since 1939, we have been part of this community -- marking 82 years of serving residents. We're a quasi-governmental entity, which is a corporation with a public purpose with the charge of ensuring and providing affordable housing in the community." Inlivian's mission is to create innovative housing solutions in desirable communities for residents of diverse incomes and facilitate access to services to help them succeed.

In 2019, Inlivian did a survey throughout the city and county to find out what people knew about the Charlotte Housing Authority and to address misconceptions about the people we serve. As a result of the survey, the name was changed from the Charlotte Housing Authority to Inlivian. The name was chosen because Inlivian means to restore and that's what we do every day by building inclusive housing and restoring hope to people who have been priced out of the housing market.

When they transitioned our name, they also started talking to the community about how they have re-engineered housing. As such, they no longer use the platform of public housing, which was a failed model where individuals had been warehoused in low-income communities. They now provide mixed income housing, which is individuals of all income levels living, working and playing together.

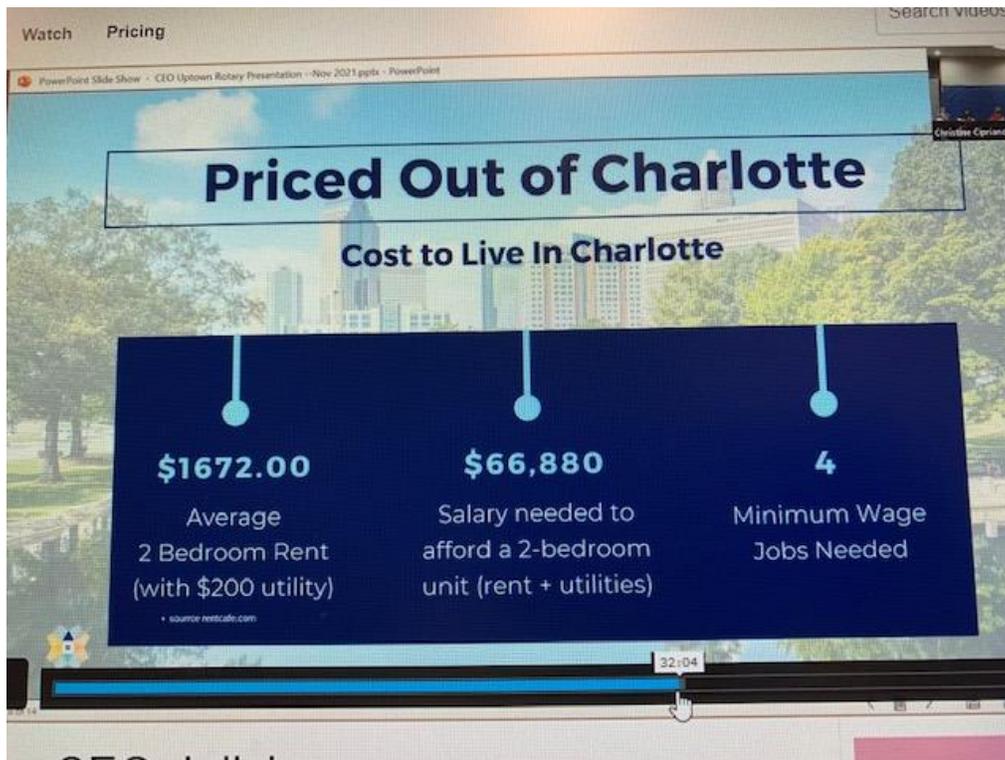
This change was needed because they are fully funded by the federal government (HUD) and do not receive any city funding. Additionally, HUD has not been funding at the level needed and which is why they are now into real estate development services, developing properties, managing for fee for service as well as providing supportive services to move people up and out of poverty. These fees come back to Inlivian to support our work with 26,000 residents.

While the vision is to empower families and individuals to live more stable lives by delivering diverse, inclusive housing for those priced out of the market, Meachem stressed that they try to help the community understand who they serve by putting a face on those individuals, such as custodians, teachers, nurses, veterans, seniors and the disabled.

Meachem shared that most people don't realize Inlivian serves the population all the way up to market rate. While the 30% is the group served the most, it is not the only group. He explained that they do that because we're trying to serve communities of mixed-income.

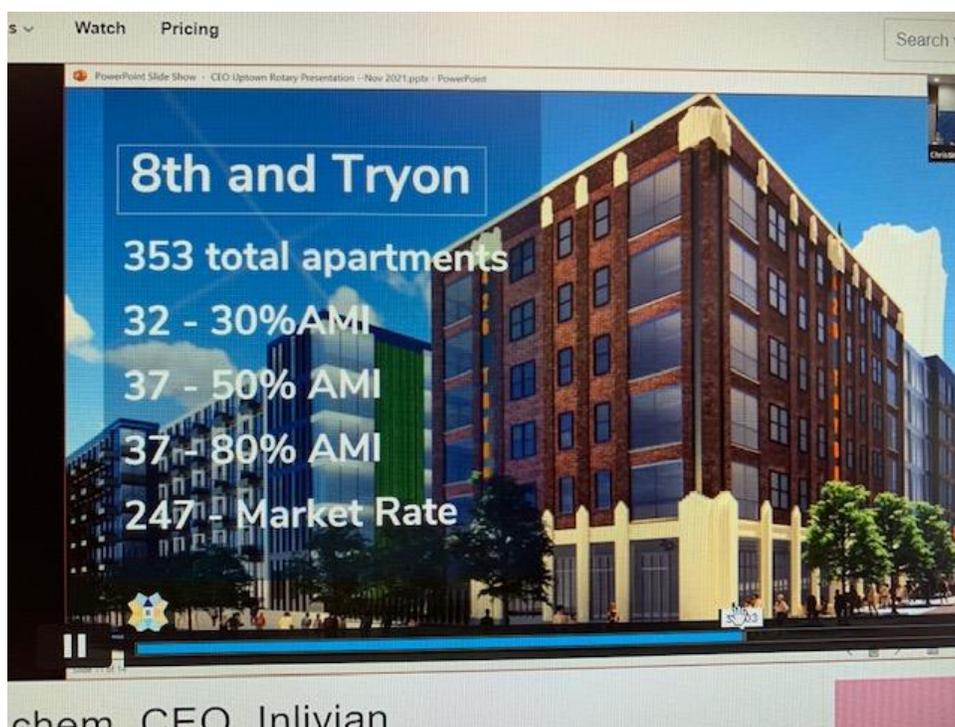


People are priced out of the market, according to Meachem, because a person would need to make \$66,880 to afford rent on an average two-bedroom apartment with a modest utility bill.



Meachem then shared how Inlivan is addressing these challenges by:

- Creating more housing that is affordable
- Working in partnership with others to address economic mobility
- Developing residencies such as the 8th and Tryon project (demolition of Hall House) with construction is estimated to start first quarter of 2022
 - Through supportive services, that provide residents life coaches, education and child care to better position them for success



Meachem wrapped up by stating people should care because the work being done is making it possible for their residents to have a place to live, be in close proximity to transportation and giving them support services, which will position them well to be hired by local businesses.

*A recording of the program is available here: <https://vimeo.com/641647614>

Mr. Meachem introduction begins at 21:25 minutes.