



CITY OF DURHAM | NORTH CAROLINA

Date: December 8, 2014

To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager
From: Karmisha R. Wallace, Senior Assistant to the City Manager
Subject: 2015 Long Session Legislative Agenda

Executive Summary

In an effort to ensure that key issues impacting the City of Durham remain at the forefront of the N.C. General Assembly; the City Administration, in collaboration with the Durham City Council, develops a Legislative Agenda. In preparation for the January 14, 2015 convening of the N.C. General Assembly, the City is developing a Legislative Agenda for the upcoming "Long Session." In doing so, the City Administration met with the City Council Legislative Subcommittee on Thursday, December 4, 2014 to review and discuss legislative requests. Subcommittee members unanimously approved the two legislative requests from the City Administration and asked that advocacy items be added to the agenda as well. The proposed Legislative Agenda is being presented to the City Council for consideration and approval.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the 2015 Long Session Legislative Agenda.

Background

Each year, the City Administration reviews a variety of legislative matters that could impact the citizens and/or businesses in Durham. These items are vetted among relevant City departments and stakeholders and are presented to the City Manager for further review and consideration; after which, proposals are presented to the City Council Legislative Subcommittee. Staff met with the Subcommittee on Thursday, December 4, 2014 and presented the following local bill requests submitted by the City/County Planning Department:

- 1) Amend the City Charter to give notice and hold public hearings on applications for initial zoning of property subject to a voluntary annexation petition prior to the passage of an annexation ordinance.
- 2) Amend the City charter to allow City Council to annex adjacent streets and street rights-of-way directly adjacent to a property subject to a voluntary annexation petition in voluntary annexation ordinance.

The following advocacy requests have also been submitted by various stakeholders for consideration:

- 1) Increase the penalty for stealing firearms (*submitted by Durham County Sheriff and Durham County Manager*)

- 2) Amend General Statute to change brake light requirements (*submitted by Durham County Sheriff*)
- 3) Amend the General Statute to shorten the amount of time to hold and advertise unclaimed livestock (*submitted by Durham County Sheriff and Durham County Manager*)
- 4) Require State Medicaid program to use Federal rules for determination of medical necessity for ambulance transport (*submitted by Durham County Manager on behalf of EMS Director*)
- 5) Restoration or Historic Preservation Rehabilitation Tax Credits (*submitted by Durham County Manager on behalf of Durham County Commissioners*)
- 6) Fully fund the Justice Reinvestment Act (*submitted by Durham County Manager on behalf of Durham County Commissioners*)
- 7) Seek authority to install speed cameras near parks, schools and hospitals to improve traffic safety (*submitted by Philip Azar on behalf of the Durham InterNeighborhood Council*)
- 8) Ask the Durham delegation to inquire with NCDOT about increasing the number of bike and pedestrian questions on state driving license tests and related study materials (*submitted by Philip Azar on behalf of the Durham InterNeighborhood Council*)

Issues/Analysis

The aforementioned local bill requests were submitted to the Durham Delegation in previous legislative sessions and they were supportive the requests. City staff would continue to work with delegation members to re-introduce legislation to affect the changes being requested. The advocacy requests were submitted by community stakeholders and addresses broader community issues or concerns. Most advocacy requests are submitted to other groups or associations, in addition to the City, and the respective stakeholder is seeking support. Historically, the City has included the N.C. League of Municipalities Legislative Goals and the Metro Mayors Legislative Agenda in its Advocacy Agenda. Those documents are have not been finalized at this time.

In addition to the items included in the Legislative Agenda, City staff will continue to monitor legislation that might negatively impact the following:

- City's Proactive Rental Inspection Program (PRIP)
- Privilege license and/or property tax revenues
- Local tree ordinances
- Protest petitions

Alternatives

City Council could disapprove the proposed 2015 Long Session Legislative Agenda or modify it to include or eliminate specific items of concern.

Financial Impact

There are no ongoing costs associated with the approval of the 2015 Long Session Legislative Agenda.

SDBE Summary

There are no SDBE requirements for the adoption of the Legislative Agenda.