



CITY OF DURHAM | DURHAM COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA



Date: June 20, 2016

To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager

Through: Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager

From: Steven L. Medlin, AICP, Planning Director

Subject: Proposed FY17 Planning Department Work Program

Executive Summary. The Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between the City and County for merged planning functions charges the Planning Director with preparing and submitting to the Joint City-County Planning Committee, the Planning Commission and both Managers a work program and annual budget that must be forwarded to both governing bodies for approval. The proposed work program is structured on the Department receiving sufficient resources for 38 full time employees, several professional consultant contracts, and operational overhead. Staff resources have been fully allocated for the tasks reflected in the proposed work program with no capacity to take on additional tasks without either revising the work program to modify tasks by deleting existing tasks or changing expected outcomes and/or timelines.

Recommendation. The staff recommends that the City Council approve the proposed FY17 Planning Department Work Program. At their April 12, 2016 meeting the Planning Commission recommended approval of the Work Program with two modifications (noted in the Issues section below).

Background. The Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between the City and County for merged planning functions charges the Planning Director with preparing and submitting a work program and annual budget. Attached please find the proposed FY17 Planning Department Work Program. The work program constitutes a catalogue of the various processes and projects that the Department will work on over the coming fiscal year.

They can be categorized as one of three types:

- Ongoing projects and processes that reflect legal requirements to respond to proposed site plans, zoning map changes, use permits, certificates of appropriateness, zoning enforcement actions, etc.
- Ongoing projects and processes that relate to City and County policies for providing timely public information support for boards and commissions, and Department management, etc.

- Projects and process that are somewhat discretionary, reflecting City and County desire to engage in long range planning activities, such as initiation of the Patterson Place, Erwin Road, and Alston Avenue Compact Design Districts implementation, a Comprehensive Plan Community Profile in anticipation of a new Comprehensive Plan, an Old West Durham Neighborhood Protection Overlay, the establishment of an Angier/Driver Commercial Infill district, and various Unified Development Ordinance text amendments.

The work program was developed based on funding being provided for the proposed 38 full time employee staff level for the department with staff resources being fully allocated.

Major Work Initiatives. The proposed work program includes a number of major work initiatives beyond those required by statutory requirements. These tasks have been designated as priority tasks by the elected boards and both administrations.

The most significant of these are as follows:

- UDO Text Amendments: Response to Local/State/Federal Mandates (4.1.1);
- UDO Text Amendment: Design District Update (4.1.5);
- UDO Text Amendment: Landscaping Update (4.1.6);
- UDO Text Amendment: Signs (4.1.7);
- UDO Text Amendment: Compact Design District Update for Suburban Stations (4.1.8);
- Station Area Strategic Infrastructure Plan (4.2.4);
- Patterson Place Compact Design District (4.2.5);
- Erwin Road Compact Design District (4.2.6);
- Alston Avenue Compact Design District (4.2.7);
- Holloway Street Historic District (4.3.1);
- Golden Belt Local Historic District (4.3.3);
- Urban Open Space Plan (4.4.1);
- Comprehensive Plan Community Profile (4.8);
- East End Connector Land Use Analysis (4.9);
- Angier/Driver Commercial Infill (4.10);
- Old West Durham Neighborhood Protection Overlay (4.11);
- Community Outreach (5.1); and
- Culture of Service Initiatives (6.6).

Issues. The Planning Commission reviewed the proposed Work Program at their April 12, 2016 meeting. The Commission unanimously recommended approval with two additions: 1) to include a City-initiated rezoning for the Erwin Road Compact Neighborhood North of the Durham Freeway to rezone that area to be consistent with the zoning category in the Ninth Street Compact Design District; and 2) to propose a City-initiated rezoning in East Durham to resolve an inconsistent zoning pattern. This would be outside of the proposed Alston Avenue Compact Neighborhood Tier.

The proposed FY17 Work Program item 4.2.6, Erwin Road Compact Design District includes designating the portion of that Compact Neighborhood area north of the Durham Freeway as part of the existing Ninth Street Compact Design District. This project scope has been clarified

in the proposed Work Program descriptions (Attachment B) to address the Planning Commission's first request. Their second request, regarding an expansive project to comprehensively analyze and rezone East Durham, is not included in the proposed Work Program due to the prioritization of other projects and programs and limitations on staff resources.

Lastly, the Coalition for Affordable Housing and Transit (CAHT) has raised concerns about missing potential affordable housing opportunities in the interim period until all remaining station areas are rezoned to Compact Design Districts. CAHT members highlighted this issue at the Planning Commission meeting, and at a later follow-up meeting with staff. As a result of further exploration of the proposal, staff has added a new Work Program item 4.1.9, Compact Neighborhood Affordable Housing Density Bonus to explore and develop a by-right density bonus option to capture value and incentivize the provision of affordable housing units in areas not yet designated as Compact Design Districts, with the additional caveat that any such option also include transit supportive design requirements. Staff believes that this item can be accommodated in the proposed Work Program as much of the background work is already underway or anticipated to be completed as part of the various Design District-related projects expected to begin next year.

Alternatives. The City Council can modify the work program by adding and/or removing work program items.

Attachments

Attachment 1, Proposed Work Program, FY17, Part A, Programs

Attachment 2, Proposed Work Program, FY17, Part B, Programs and Descriptions