



CITY OF DURHAM

Office of the Mayor

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December 30, 2009

David Agnew
Deputy Director
White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs
The White House 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Agnew:

DAVID

It was our pleasure on December 9, 2009 to host a Community Jobs Forum in Durham, North Carolina in concert with the President's Jobs Forum held on December 3rd. As Mayor of the City of Durham, I conducted a Town Hall style meeting that involved local small business persons, community advocates and other citizens who desired to participate in this important information gathering event.

Attached is a summary of the information that was culled from the Forum held in Durham. It is prepared and submitted in accordance with the format that was provided by your office.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I and the staff of the City of Durham can be of further assistance to you on this matter.

Sincerely,

William V. "Bill" Bell
Mayor

Attachment (s)

Durham, NC Community Jobs Forums

Discussion Questions

On December 3rd, the President hosted a discussion to explore every possible avenue for job creation, and the White House is also asking for input from across the country to identify opportunities and obstacles on the ground. Thank you for volunteering to host a Community Jobs Forum to help in that effort. Now that your forum has concluded, we look forward to your feedback based on the various ideas and perspectives from the participants. Brevity and plain language are encouraged. As stated on the questions form, the final report can be submitted via [WhiteHouse.gov/Community Job Feedback](http://WhiteHouse.gov/CommunityJobFeedback). Please do not submit anyone else's personal information such as names, email addresses or phone numbers.

1. From what you have seen, or seen reported about the President's Jobs Forum on December 3rd, what seems relevant to your community? In the Durham community the most relevant concerns were:
 - The creation of employment opportunities for youth & young adults.
 - Providing assistance to "Green businesses" that will help to create employment opportunities.
 - Providing financial assistance to small businesses and making more attempts to get input and buy-in from small businesses on public sector job creations and economic growth initiatives.

2. What parts of your local economy are working or thriving? What businesses and sectors are expanding and hiring?
 - The healthcare & pharmaceutical industries are thriving and hiring. These two industries have plans to continuously hire people from the community through connections with the community colleges & local colleges & universities.

3. What parts of your local economy are not working or thriving? What businesses and sectors have been hit the hardest? What are people struggling with the most?

Recently the businesses/industries that we have seen hit the hardest are:

- Manufacturing (excluding bio-manufacturing)
- Construction related businesses

People in the community are struggling most with the following:

- Finding & maintaining employment that pays above the livable wage of \$11.40
- Small businesses cannot get funding to expand their business
- Youth are finding it difficult to get employment (this is due to the number of unemployed adults seeking employment).

4. What are the opportunities for growth in your community? What businesses and sectors seem poised to rebound? What do you see as the “jobs of the future”?
 - We have seen growth in the finance, healthcare and green industries. The businesses in these sectors have seen a steady increase throughout the past year. Most of the “jobs for the future” will be created by small businesses and the green businesses.
5. What are the obstacles to job creation in your community? What could make local businesses more likely to start hiring? Some of the obstacles that we see are:
 - Funding for small businesses through banking and related institutions and government stimulus efforts
 - Government “red tape” that sometimes prevents businesses from bidding on job opportunities.

What can get businesses to start hiring are:

- Access to working capital to expand
 - Opportunities for small businesses to bid on and receive more work in the public sector at all levels
6. What other issues and ideas should the President consider? The President should look at providing additional funds to :
 - Provide more funds for green jobs training
 - More direct funding to Local Governments instead of funding to the states. Local Governments best know the needs and how to get funding to those areas that will help jump start their economies. Process structures such as community block grant funding are in place to receive, handle and monitor the use of such funds.