



JOINT CITY-COUNTY COMMITTEE MEETING DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

**Hosted by the City of Durham - 9:30
a.m.**

Agenda

Presiding – Mayor Leonardo Williams

Present: Board of County Commissioners Committee Members –Chair Mike Lee, and Commissioners Michelle Burton, Wendy Jacobs, and Stephen J. Valentine

City Council Members: Mayor Leonardo Williams, Mayor Pro Tempore Javiera Caballero, and Council Members Nate Baker and Carl Rist

Durham Public Schools Board Members: Natalie Beyer, Jessica Carda-Auten, Emily Chavez, and Joy Harrell Goff

Others – County: County Manager Claudia Hager; County Attorney Larissa Williamson and Clerk to the Board Monica Wallace

Others – City: City Manager Bo Ferguson; City Attorney Kimberly Rehberg and Deputy City Clerk Paola Roland

Call to Order/Welcome

Mayor Williams called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance to the Tuesday, February 10, 2026, Joint City-County and Durham Public Schools Meeting.

Approval of the Minutes

Council Member Rist moved, seconded by Commissioner Jacobs to approve the October 16, 2025 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

The following members of the public made public comment:

- Tiffany Solomon
- Anne Osal
- Tasha Melvin
- Sheldon Mitchell

- Tia House

**SUBJECT: HOMELESSNESS STRATEGIC PLAN PHASE ONE
RECOMMENDATIONS – PRESENTATION – RYAN SMITH, DIRECTOR
OF COMMUNITY SAFETY (ITEM 2)**

City of Durham Community Safety Director Ryan Smith introduced the item and invited Ian Lee Brown, Chief Community Health and Social Impact Officer for Duke University Health System, to provide opening remarks.

Mr. Brown expressed appreciation to the City of Durham, Durham County, the A.J. Fletcher Foundation, and Duke University for supporting the development of the strategic framework. He stated that more than 200 individuals representing over 40 organizations participated in the planning process, including individuals with lived experience of homelessness.

Mr. Brown emphasized that homelessness is a systems issue requiring coordinated cross-sector response and affirmed Duke Health's commitment to aligning housing, healthcare, and behavioral health efforts in support of the framework's goals.

Russell Pierce, Executive Director of Housing for New Hope, stated that while Durham has many committed partners and programs addressing homelessness, the absence of a shared roadmap has limited system-wide alignment. He explained that the framework establishes defined reduction targets and clarifies implementation roles, with a goal of making homelessness rare and brief by June 2031. Mr. Pierce emphasized the importance of sustained public investment to leverage broader community funding.

Beth Sandor, Chief Program Officer at Community Solutions, presented the strategic framework. She stated that the goal is to build a coordinated and resilient system that prevents homelessness and reduces the number of individuals experiencing it. Ms. Sandor explained that progress will be measured through real-time, person-specific data tracking inflow, outflow, housing placement timelines, and stabilization outcomes.

Ms. Sandor outlined five primary drivers of the framework:

- Establishing system foundations, including data quality and governance structures
- Creating effective cross-sector working processes
- Aligning policy, communications, and resource strategies
- Implementing targeted reduction strategies
- Strengthening backbone operations and accountability

Immediate priorities over the next 12 to 18 months include conducting a comprehensive housing and resource analysis, expanding interim housing options, restructuring the unsheltered homelessness response to focus on housing placements, strengthening case conferencing practices, establishing a flexible housing assistance fund, and implementing a coordinated communications strategy.

Ms. Sandor recommended that the City of Durham Community Safety Department continue serving as the Continuum of Care lead entity and assume the role of system backbone in partnership with Durham County. She further recommended restructuring the Homeless

Services Advisory Committee to focus on governance and federal compliance functions, with implementation occurring through improvement teams and cross-sector working groups. A Champions Table consisting of public and private sector partners was proposed to support accountability and resource mobilization.

Director Smith concluded the presentation by outlining the proposed FY27 investment request of approximately \$13 million to support Year One reduction targets. He stated that the largest portion, approximately \$9 million, would establish a public-private flexible housing assistance fund. Additional proposed investments include expanded case management, City and County staffing capacity, technical assistance, and landlord engagement efforts.

Director Smith noted that City and County funding would account for approximately 40 to 50 percent of the total investment, with remaining funds anticipated from private and philanthropic partners. He stated that achieving the outlined reduction targets will require broad community participation.

Commissioner Valentine requested clarification regarding the proposed public-private funding model and asked how reduction targets would be affected if anticipated private investment is not secured. Director Smith stated that achieving the outlined targets will require broad community participation.

Council Member Rist raised questions regarding housing supply and the relationship between the framework and broader land use and affordable housing strategies. He emphasized the importance of aligning homelessness reduction efforts with ongoing development and zoning initiatives.

Commissioner Burton expressed concern regarding additional staffing requests and emphasized the need for clear deliverables, measurable outcomes, and visible progress to ensure public confidence.

Commissioner Jacobs highlighted recent data showing increased inflow into homelessness and stressed the urgency of upstream prevention strategies, cross-departmental coordination, and improved data sharing.

Committee Members also discussed partnerships with Durham Public Schools, healthcare providers, and community-based organizations, particularly in addressing vulnerable populations and ensuring coordinated case management.

Chair Lee underscored the importance of performance metrics, accountability, and the ability to adjust strategies based on data.

Mayor Williams emphasized the shared responsibility of public and private partners in implementing the framework and encouraged collaborative investment to achieve the outlined goals.

Director Smith and Ms. Sandor responded to Council's inquiries by emphasizing that the framework is designed to align homelessness reduction efforts with broader housing supply strategies and cross-departmental coordination. They stated that measurable outcomes,

including real-time data tracking and public reporting, will guide implementation and ensure accountability.

Director Smith noted that achieving the proposed reduction targets will require sustained public and private investment and that funding levels will directly impact the pace and scale of implementation.

SUBJECT: DURHAM HOUSING INITIATIVE TASKFORCE SUBSIDY GAP FINANCING SUBCOMMITTEE – ELIZA MATTHEW, CO-CHAIR, POLICY PLANNING (HSAC) AND CHAIR, PRE-HOUSING SHELTER COMMITTEE; DAVE CRISPELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JUBILEE HOME AND CO-CHAIR, SUPPORTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE; KAREN LADO, DURHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY; TED HEILBRON, CO-CHAIR, ZONING/LAND USE COMMITTEE (ITEM 3)

Mayor Pro Tempore Caballero recognized the Housing Initiative Task Force subcommittee chairs for their work and noted that the recommendations were developed through volunteer efforts by Durham residents and professionals. She invited each subcommittee chair to provide brief remarks and opened the floor for questions following the presentations.

Eliza Matthew, Co-Chair of Policy Planning for the Homeless Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) and Chair of the Pre-Housing Shelter Committee, introduced herself and acknowledged Captain Helen Tripp as Co-Chair. Ms. Matthew thanked Christina Barrow, a Duke University student, for supporting the development of the Task Force report. Ms. Matthew stated that the recommendations discussed earlier were aligned with the Pre-Housing Shelter Committee's work and noted that the County has already moved forward with a day shelter initiative.

Dave Crispell, Executive Director of Jubilee Home and Co-Chair of the Supportive Services Committee, thanked elected and professional leadership and stated that the Supportive Services Subcommittee focused on actionable goals. Mr. Crispell reported that the committee's short-term goals were either completed or currently in progress, and that several medium-term goals had also begun. He expressed appreciation for the City's follow-through and coordination.

Karen Lado, representing the Durham Housing Authority, provided an overview of the Subsidy Gap Financing Subcommittee. Ms. Lado explained that the subcommittee focused on identifying ways to close the subsidy gap needed for development and preservation of housing serving households at or below 80% of area median income. She described the impacts of rising land and construction costs and lengthy development review timelines on affordable housing production.

Ms. Lado stated that the subcommittee reviewed strategies to generate subsidy through process improvements, non-monetary support such as public land availability, and monetary tools including loan funds and other financing mechanisms. She emphasized the importance of streamlining and prioritizing affordable housing projects and recommended improving affordable housing navigation and coordination at both the City and County level. Ms. Lado also highlighted the importance of long-term advocacy for

expanded state support and improvements to programs such as the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program.

Ted Heilbron, Co-Chair of the Zoning and Land Use Committee, presented key findings from zoning and workforce housing discussions. Mr. Heilbron noted the significant affordable housing shortage projected for Durham and stated that the level of subsidy needed to meet demand exceeds what local government can provide alone. He emphasized the need to expand housing supply through zoning and development reforms, including increasing opportunities for by-right development.

Mr. Heilbron stated that local government's greatest influence on housing affordability is through land use policy and development approval processes. He emphasized the need to accelerate development review timelines and remove barriers that delay entitled projects. Mr. Heilbron also highlighted workforce housing strategies, including expanding developable land, supporting accessory dwelling units, and strengthening workforce development programs to increase access to trade careers.

Councilmember Rist thanked the presenters and expressed support for continued work on by-right development strategies through the upcoming Unified Development Ordinance process. He also asked what level of investment would be needed to establish a housing trust fund.

Mr. Heilbron responded that the question should be evaluated through the City's housing planning work currently underway and noted that determining an appropriate funding level would depend on staffing, scope, and compliance requirements.

Commissioner Burton asked how the federal government continues to support affordable housing development. Ms. Lado stated that federal support continues through HUD block grants, tax credit programs such as LIHTC, and public housing operating and capital funding, though those resources have not kept pace with inflation.

Board Member Beyer raised concerns regarding limited local revenue tools and the challenge of funding multiple community priorities through property tax revenue. Members discussed the importance of aligning City, County, and Durham Public Schools efforts to address housing needs.

Mayor Williams emphasized the need to increase local revenue generation through economic development and sales tax activity to support long-term community investments.

Commissioner Jacobs asked how the Task Force recommendations will be incorporated into ongoing efforts including the City's housing plan, the Unified Development Ordinance process, and the strategic framework to end homelessness. She also highlighted the importance of land trust models and private sector participation.

Board Member Harrell asked for clarification on how affordable housing is defined and requested additional public-facing guidance on the meaning of affordability across different income levels. Ms. Lado explained that affordable housing is generally defined using HUD area median income standards, noting that affordability represents a range

and that housing affordable to one income group may not be affordable to lower-income residents.

Director Ryan Smith provided additional clarification regarding interim housing, describing it as a short-term, non-congregate housing option designed to serve as a transition between unsheltered homelessness and permanent housing. Director Smith noted that an interim housing work group has been established to explore models and costs and will return with recommendations.

City Manager Bo Ferguson provided a brief update regarding the City's housing strategic planning process. City Manager Ferguson stated that Housing and Neighborhood Services Director Sarah Vinas has developed a proposal to move forward with a housing planning effort informed by Forever Home Durham, the Task Force report, and community lived experience. He noted that funding is available in the current budget year and stated that recommendations are expected later in the fall to inform City Council planning and budget considerations.

SUBJECT: DUKE TEACHHOUSE – PRESENTATION - JAN RIGGSBEE, FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR, DUKE TEACHHOUSE; BRIANNA KLINKSCALES, TEACHHOUSE FELLOW AND CHEMISTRY/PHYSICAL SCIENCE TEACHER, CHARLES E. JORDAN HIGH SCHOOL (ITEM 4)

Jan Riggsbee, Founder and Director of Duke TeachHouse, presented an overview of Duke TeachHouse as a model supporting teacher recruitment, retention, and housing stability for early-career educators. Ms. Riggsbee stated that housing is the central component of the model and is intended to enable teachers to live in the communities where they work.

Ms. Riggsbee invited Brianna Klinkscapes, a TeachHouse Fellow and first-year teacher at Charles E. Jordan High School, to share her experience. Ms. Klinkscapes stated that TeachHouse made it financially possible for her to teach in Durham while affording local housing. She emphasized the importance of living in the same community as her students and noted ongoing concerns about long-term housing affordability after the fellowship period.

Ms. Riggsbee explained that TeachHouse properties are leased through private management companies and supported by grant-funded housing subsidies. In addition to housing support, the program provides mentorship and professional development. She reported that TeachHouse is in its 10th year, has expanded to three Durham locations, and now includes both residential and non-residential fellowship options for early-career Durham Public Schools teachers.

Ms. Riggsbee highlighted teacher attrition trends, particularly among educators in their first five years, and stated that TeachHouse seeks to reduce turnover by removing housing as a barrier. She reported that survey data indicates most Fellows remain in teaching or in the broader education field.

Mayor Williams expressed appreciation for the program and noted the financial challenges facing early-career teachers.

Commissioner Burton raised questions regarding teacher certification and retention and asked about partnerships with local universities.

Commissioner Jacobs emphasized the importance of developing a sustainable funding model and exploring how TeachHouse could align with broader housing and workforce initiatives in Durham.

Chair Lee asked how the program tracks long-term retention outcomes, specifically how many TeachHouse Fellows remain teaching in Durham after completing the fellowship period. He also raised questions about how the model could be structured or strengthened to encourage longer-term local retention beyond the initial housing support period.

Mayor Williams requested additional data regarding how many TeachHouse Fellows remain teaching in Durham after completing the fellowship period. Ms. Riggsbee stated she would provide follow-up information.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no additional comments, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

**Next Meeting Date: April 8, 2025 – 9:30 am, Hosted by Durham Board of
County Commissioners – Board of the Durham County Commissioners’
Chamber, 200 East Main Street, Second Floor Durham**