



Date: May 11, 2026

To: Claudia Hager, County Manager
Through: Maurice Jones, Deputy County Manager
From: Sara M. Young, AICP, Planning & Development Director
Subject: Proposed Planning & Development Department FY27 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 (JCCPC), the Planning Commission, and both Managers a work program and annual budget that must be forwarded to both governing bodies for approval. The JCCPC recommended approval of the work program unanimously at their April 1, 2026 meeting and the Planning Commission recommended approval of the work program unanimously at their April 14, 2026 meeting.

Motion

To approve the proposed Planning & Development Department FY27 Work Program.

Background

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.

Attached is a draft of the proposed FY27 Planning & Development 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 processes that are somewhat discretionary reflecting City and County desire to engage in long range planning activities, such as plans, studies, and ordinance text amendments.

Issues

Since a large portion of the Planning & Development Department's work is dictated by state or local law, the main area of variability in the work program is in the Community Planning and Strategic Initiatives areas. For the coming fiscal year, the main policy planning emphasis and resource allocation will be focused on small area planning priorities and continued work on completion of Comprehensive Plan action items. A number of projects will remain on the work program as multi-year projects. In addition, the following new work items have been added for next year:

- 1.4.3, Walltown Small Area Plan Paper Street Closings (pending funding)
- 1.5.3, Natural Resource Protection Overlays Research
- 1.5.4, Tree Canopy Assessment Analysis and Recommendations
- 1.5.5, Biophillic Cities Metrics
- 1.8, Urban Design Studios
- 8.9, Clariti Implementation

The proposed work program is structured on the Department receiving sufficient resources including funding for consultants to work on the two projects noted above. Staff resources have been fully allocated for the tasks reflected in the proposed work program with no capacity to take on additional tasks without revising the work program to modify tasks by deleting existing tasks or changing expected outcomes and/or timelines or securing additional resources.

Staff Contact

Sara Young, Sara.Young@DurhamNC.gov, 919-560-4137, ext. 28256

Attachments

Attachment A - Draft Work Program, FY27