



### **Agenda Action Form Overview**

The Board is requested to receive an update about the City-County Strategic Youth Initiative.

### **Background/Justification**

In 2017, the City of Durham and Durham County jointly created a new Youth Initiatives Manager (YIM) position to promote alignment among youth serving programs, facilitate youth engagement, and provide support for and conduct assessment of programs supported by the City and County of Durham for youth ages 5 to 24. The position was filled in December 2017 and is based in the City's Office on Youth (OOY). Over the last 16 months, the YIM has worked to position the OOY to carry out the work of the strategic youth initiative and to build a foundation for success. Activities have included: connecting with 100s of stakeholders; mapping/examining relationships in the youth services ecosystem; engaging a consultant to help shape office priorities around youth engagement and develop measures of success; initiating a strategic planning process for the office; creating a large (and growing) youth engagement network of service providers; repositioning the Durham Youth Commission to support the youth engagement priorities of the office; integrating into numerous Durham-wide collective efforts to support youth success; conducting best practices research on related work; onboarding one new staff and youth interns; and developing a vision for a youth listening project and soliciting community expertise to support implementation.

The purpose of the youth listening project is to understand: how local government can better engage and communicate with youth and their families; the barriers/facilitators for participating in youth services; and how to eliminate barriers and tailor opportunities. Priorities that emerge from the youth- and adult-led project will inform next steps, which will involve aligning stakeholders and resources around those priorities via collective processes.

### **Policy Impact**

Historically, Durham has identified several challenges to youth success—such as youth services not being coordinated, youth not connecting to services, youth voices being absent in local government, and a need for centralized support to address these challenges—and has invested many resources to solve these complex challenges. The impact of the strategic youth initiative thus far has primarily been foundational, in connecting and convening stakeholders, centering youth voices, and building youth capacity. Eventually the OOY intends to affect changes in policy, structure, and systems that can lead to better outcomes for all of Durham's youth. With one FTE fully dedicated to this charge, additional organizational development will be required to determine the resources needed to sustain the desired long term policy and system impacts.

### **Fiscal Impact**

A five-year City-County interlocal agreement was initiated in August 2017 to fund the strategic youth initiative. The annual Durham County allocation is \$70,000. The agreement terminates in June 2022.

### **Recommendation**

The Board is requested to receive an update about the City-County Strategic Youth Initiative.