



# Legislative Bulletin

May 17, 2024 | [nclm.org](https://nclm.org)

## Budget Surplus May Help with Municipal Projects

Legislators capped off a quiet week in Raleigh with no-vote sessions in the House and Senate on Thursday. While the floor and committee hearing schedules were limited this week, behind the scenes budget writers continue work on the state budget. Last Friday, state budget officials revised the initial budget surplus down by \$430 million over the next two years. Even with the lower revision, lawmakers will have the ability to spend up to \$1 billion more than last year's budget. House and Senate leaders have already outlined a number of priorities that will compete for the projected surplus. They include Opportunity Scholarships, teacher pay, additional Medicaid spending and support for childcare facilities.

Lawmakers are also determining how much money will be set aside for member directed grants, also known as earmarks. Municipalities should immediately engage with their House and Senate delegations on shovel-ready projects that could be funded directly by the legislature. Last year's budget included over a \$1 billion in this type of directed funding, with money going to hundreds of water, sewer and economic development projects in cities across the state. Legislators also may have additional dollars available by reallocating unspent American Recovery Act dollars, although the exact amount is uncertain. It is too early to know the total amount of money that will be set aside for directed projects in this year's budget, but engaging legislators now about your priorities is imperative.

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## NC Among Leaders in Housing Growth

The latest data from the U.S. Census Bureau shows that eight North Carolina counties ranked among the top 100 in the country in percentage increases in housing unit growth in 2022-23, with Brunswick County seeing the largest increase. As a state, North Carolina saw the fourth largest gain in housing units, with 270,489 new housing units added during the period covered, according to information, compiled by the State Demographers Office from a [Census Bureau report](#) released on Thursday. That number ranked the state eighth in terms of percentage increase in new housing units, with a 5.7 percent increase over the previous year.

The new data also shows nine suburban cities in North Carolina as among the top 100 fastest growing in the country. They are, in order of percentage growth: Leland (12th, 30.8 percent); Fuquay-Varina (15th, 27.9 percent); Clayton (60th, 14.8 percent); Wake Forest (76th, 13.2 percent); Garner (81st, 13.0 percent); Apex (88th, 12.5 percent);

Waxhaw (90th, 12.3 percent); Holly Springs (92nd, 12.1 percent); and Kannapolis (97th, 11.7 percent). Charlotte's population estimate, at 911,000, makes it the 15th largest city in the country and saw the third largest numerical gain in residents.

#### MORE INFORMATION

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## Legislative Policy Committee Deadline Approaches

NCLM President Mark-Anthony Middleton seeks to appoint interested city officials as new members of the NCLM Legislative Policy Committee. Those interested in applying can [sign up now](#).

The Legislative Policy Committee is an internal group of city officials that helps form the League's policy positions in each legislative biennium. Committee members also serve as advocates on municipal legislation and are an integral part of the organization's advocacy efforts. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please fill out [this form](#) no later than **May 22**.

Please direct questions to Abbie Britt at [abritt@nclm.org](mailto:abritt@nclm.org).

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## Bill Tracking Tool

As the legislative Short Session continues, we hope you find [our new bill tracking tool](#) helpful in tracking legislation affecting cities and towns. This tool will be continually updated each week so that the information is pertinent to what is happening the North Carolina General Assembly as of now.

You will note that the tool places bills in three categories, with those designated as "Active" requiring the most attention. Users are able to scroll through each category, finding information about each bill, and links taking users to bill pages at the NCGA website. Not all categories may include legislation at all times, based on the General Assembly's schedule and activity, and the consideration of legislation.

Be sure to utilize [this resource](#) throughout the legislative session.

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