



Legislative Bulletin

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Did You Know?

Public safety spending among North Carolina cities and towns generally equals or exceeds 40 percent of those municipalities' general fund budgets. According to budget data collected by NCLM from municipalities' public websites, public safety spending as a percentage of general fund expenditures is highest among the state's largest cities, those with a population of 100,000 or more. In those nine cities, an average of 47.24 percent of general fund budgets went toward public safety last year.

The Session That Wasn't: General Assembly Remains in Session While Declining Governor's Call for Special Session

Just days before lawmakers were set to return to Raleigh on November 17 for one of the monthly meetings since the General Assembly adjourned its regular session in July, Gov. Josh Stein called for a special session to address Medicaid funding.

After receiving the Governor's letter, both House Speaker Destin Hall and Senate President Pro Tempore Berger wrote their own letters back to the Governor declining to convene for any purpose, citing that the legislature

remains in session, returning for scheduled monthly meetings, thereby negating the need for a “special” session. There were no votes in either the House or the Senate, and no committee meetings were held in November.

Further, legislative leaders have indicated that there will be no floor votes in either the House or Senate this year. This means that the state will continue under prior-year funding levels, and there will likely be no state budget adopted this calendar year. With campaign season officially kicking off on Monday, with the opening of candidate filing, it seems unlikely that significant legislative activity will occur before the March 3 primary election day. While monthly legislative meetings remain scheduled through April 2026, the legislature plans to return to regular meetings, the “Short Session,” on April 21, 2026.

Mayors Association Gathers for Virtual Meeting

The North Carolina Mayors Association held its Virtual Winter Membership Meeting Tuesday, bringing together mayors from communities across the state for a morning full of learning, collaboration, and policy insight.

During the meeting, members received a comprehensive federal update from Jennifer Imo of The Ferguson Group, who outlined current and upcoming federal actions with potential impacts on North Carolina’s cities and towns. Her briefing highlighted key legislative priorities, grant opportunities, and regulatory developments that local governments should monitor as they plan for the year ahead.

The meeting continued with remarks from NCLM Legislative & Regulatory Affairs Counsel Patrick Buffkin, who provided a general overview of the current North Carolina General Assembly landscape.

Mayors also heard from Christopher Lloyd of McGuireWoods Consulting, who discussed trends shaping economic development at both the state and national levels. Lloyd shared insights on shifting market dynamics, project recruitment strategies, and policy considerations that may influence future growth across North Carolina communities.

In addition to the expert presentations, the virtual meeting provided a platform for mayors to exchange ideas, ask questions, and reflect on shared challenges and opportunities.

Data Center Webinar Next Week

As data centers become a cornerstone of the digital economy, North Carolina municipalities are increasingly facing proposals for these large-scale projects. What does this mean for your community?

Join the NCLM Legislative Policy Committee and ElectriCities of North Carolina on **Tuesday, December 9, from 9:00 to 10:00 AM** for a joint webinar designed to help municipal leaders and staff understand the fundamentals of data centers and the critical considerations that come with them. **Participants will receive 1 AML credit hour.**

Key Topics

- What is a data center, and why does it matter for your community
- Economic development opportunities and challenges
- Considerations for local water and electric utilities
- Development and zoning considerations
- Community impacts and strategies for informed decision-making

Featured Speakers

- Oak Ridge Council Member Anne Schneider and Raleigh Council Member Stormie Forte - Co-Chairs of the NCLM Legislative Policy Committee
- Rick Drescher, Corporate Managing Director, Technical Services, Savells
- Ron Smith, City Manager, City of Statesville
- Delaney Ridgley, Manager, Raftelis; co-Author "Navigating the New Demand: Pricing Water for Data Centers"
- Bill Bruton, City Manager, City of Marietta, GA

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