



February 2, 2024 | nclm.org

The Recap

It is pretty clear by now that, when it comes to relationship-building between municipal officials and state legislators, nothing resonates quite like our Town & State Dinner. At last year's event, NCLM President and Fuquay-Varina Commissioner William Harris noted the common purpose, "As you look across the room tonight, our legislators represent large cities and small towns, and all those in between. I can assure that the elected officials from our cities and towns here also represent that rich and diverse patchwork of North Carolina." President Harris' remarks captured how important it is to have the voice of cities and towns heard as our state legislators navigate the myriad of issues at the General Assembly.

This year, we continue the work of building those relationships, but will be refreshing things a bit in this legislative short session. With five regionally based dinners, Town & State Dinner: From Jones St. to Main St., provides the same opportunity to break bread with your legislators, but with a focus on your community and those close by. From the mountains to the coast, we will celebrate the historic amounts of funding for infrastructure in the state budget and highlight the work of municipalities as the economic engines of the state.

League staff have strategically located, divided, and invited municipal and state officials to each event. Click on the button below to find the location to which your legislators have been invited. No matter where you are in the state, there is a dinner location for you. Keep an eye out for emailed invitations and reminders over the next few weeks, and be sure to personally invite your legislators to attend. If you have questions, please reach out to TSD@nclm.org.

Town & State Dinner: From Jones St. to Main St. – Locations

Concord - March 6
Winston-Salem - March 20
Pinehurst - March 27
Hickory - April 3
Goldsboro - April 10

LEGISLATOR INVITES

Derrick Applewhite



Government Affairs Associate

Employer Pension Contribution Rates Approved for FY24-25

Local government employers' pension system contribution rates will rise for FY24-25, in keeping with [a policy](#) intended to provide for predictable budgeting year after year. [The Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System Board](#) voted to approve the rates at its meeting last week (background document [here](#)). The rates that employers must pay differ for law enforcement officers (LEOs) and all other "general" employees. Therefore, for FY24-25, the Board-approved general employee rate is 13.6 percent, and the LEO rate is 15.1 percent. Please note that both rates can vary from unit to unit due to adjustments for the death benefit contribution made for both groups of employees, and due to the "court cost offset" provided for the LEO rate.

This year's approved rates come at levels set under [a rate stabilization policy](#) adopted in 2021. The policy began in FY22-23 and runs for five years. The policy was developed using actuarial data, and it dictates that the rates rise each of those years. However, those predictable increases shield the rates from potentially large swings that would otherwise occur due to investment gains and losses experienced from year to year.

City Perspective Featured in Housing Discussion

Clayton Mayor Jody McLeod and NCLM Director of Government Affairs Erin Wynia were recently featured on an episode of State Lines, broadcast on North Carolina PBS stations, in an examination of the housing affordability crisis. The episode looked at a range of issues causing the dramatic increases in housing prices, from higher interest rates to the fast-growing population in the state's metropolitan areas. But it also examined a key and often difficult issue for local officials: land-use planning and the conflicting desire of existing residents to maintain the character of their communities verses the need for denser development to accommodate new residents.

McLeod, a member of the NCLM Board of Directors, and Wynia discussed how cities and towns, including Clayton, are changing their zoning rules and unified development ordinances to allow for more density in more areas, leading to more construction of duplexes, townhomes and apartments. Tim Minton, executive vice president of the NC Home Builders Association, acknowledged those changes, as well as the difficulties facing local officials as they weigh the wants and needs of existing residents while trying to accommodate growth. But he also focused on policy changes allowing more housing density as a key solution. In addition to Minton, the episode also featured state Sen. Paul Newton of Cabarrus County, state Rep. Vernetta Alston of Durham and Triangle area real estate agent Michael Jobe. You can watch the State Lines episode [here](#).

Municipal Finance: Comprehensive Fiscal Training for Local Government

Free training from NCLM!

This training is meant for all local government leaders -- elected officials, managers, finance directors, and more -- and is designed to be a one-stop shop for municipal financial education. Plus, you will meet the six-hour requirement to earn NCLM's Financial Management Certificate through this single, full-day offering. Managers will also meet their mandated six-hour training requirement.

Whether you are new to your role or a seasoned veteran of local government, this course will provide you with the foundational tools and best practices to make an immediate difference in your town. Take advantage of this free offering!

Learn more and register using the links below

- [March 5 – Winston Salem](#)
- [March 14 – Rocky Mount](#)
- [May 8 – Lumberton](#)
- [May 21 – Morganton](#)
- [June 4 – Goldsboro](#)



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