



 **Winston-Salem**

2026 State Legislative Agenda

Welcome Forsyth County Delegation!

Legislative Request Summary

Primary Agenda: Short Session Requests

- 3 Funding Requests
- 4 Bills

Supplemental Agenda:

- Council-approved topics
- Provided for awareness and follow-up



Funding Requests

- Joint Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- First Responder Training Track
- Traffic Signal Pre-Emption Software



Joint Emergency Operations Center

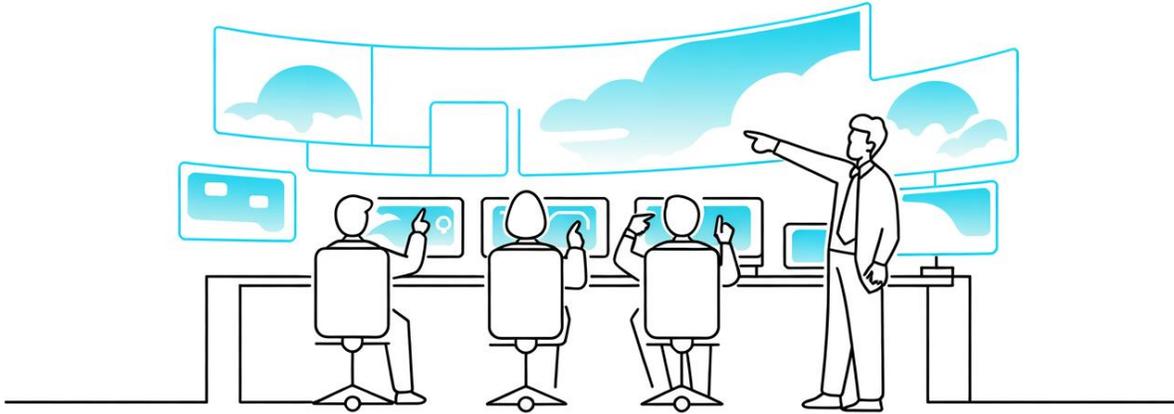
Partnered with Forsyth County

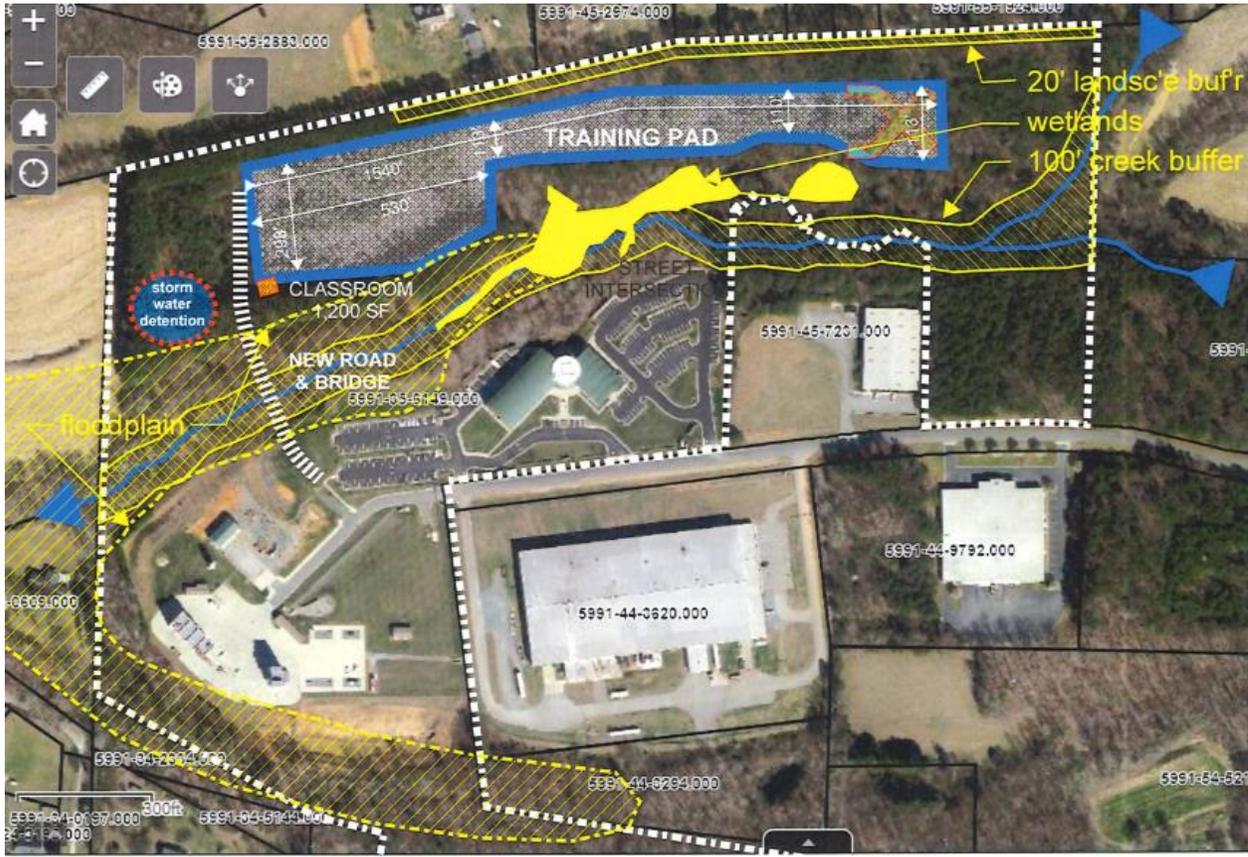
Request: \$1,000,000

Location: Housed in Forsyth County building; supports both County and City Operations

Impact: Faster coordination and response during major emergencies

Currently only major city in NC with “Cold” EOC





First Responder Training Track

Partnered with Forsyth Tech Community College

Phase 1 Request: \$6,100,000

Training track, building, and bridge

Full Scope: \$10,400,000

Adding classrooms and fire apparatus

Impact: Expand training capacity and improve first responder readiness and safety

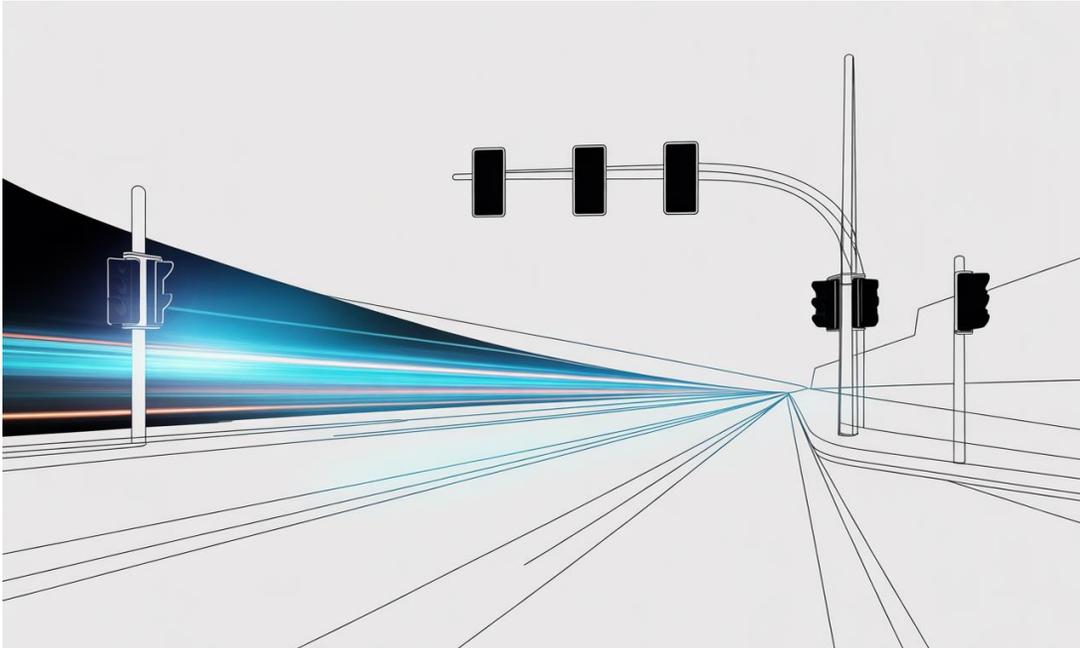
Traffic Signal Pre-Emption Software

Regional Impact on Multiple Emergency/First Responders

Request: \$2,700,000

Impact: Address growing traffic congestion, longer response times, and high risk of collisions that responders face when navigating busy intersections.

Only city of our size in NC without this technology.



Bill Requests

- Amendment to Prohibit Double Compensation for Nonconforming Signs
- Repeal of Downzoning Restriction in Nonresidential Areas
- An Act to Amend the Enabling Laws Relating to City-County Planning and Zoning in the City of Winston-Salem
- Exemption from System Development Fees for Affordable Housing

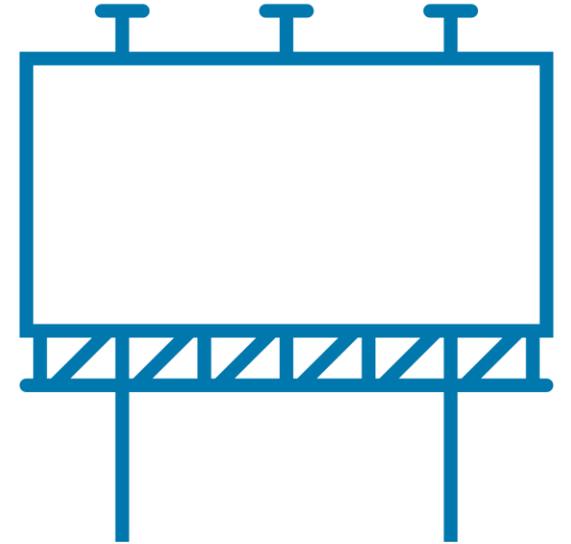


Amendment to Prohibit Double Compensation for Nonconforming Signs

Problem: G.S. 160D-912.1, enacted through Senate Bill 607, now requires cities to compensate property owners for removing certain on-premises signs, even when those owners were already given many years to recover their investment through a lawful amortization period.

Solution: Amend the statute to clarify that no compensation is required when a city already provided and completed a long amortization period of 10 years or more

Outcome: This protects taxpayers, avoids costly lawsuits, and still treats property owners fairly—a common-sense solution that keeps communities financially healthy while respecting property rights.

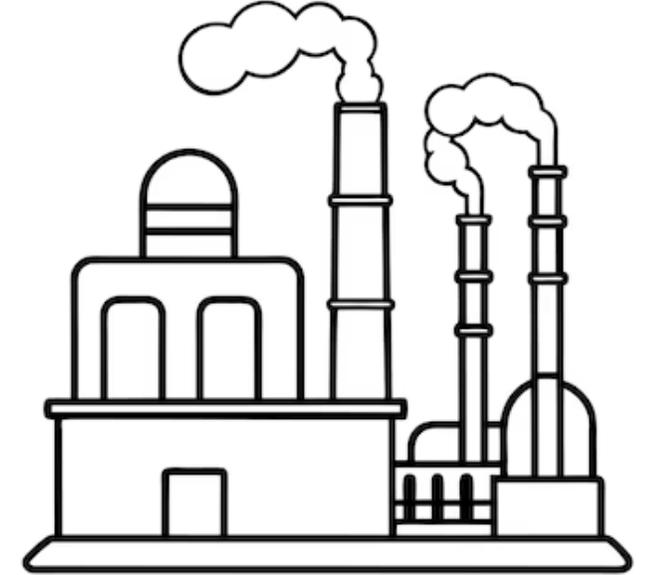


Repeal of Downzoning Restrictions in Nonresidential Areas

Problem: G.S. 160D-601 was recently amended by Senate Bill 382 to require local governments to obtain prior written consent from all affected landowners before adopting any zoning text or map amendment that (1) reduces allowable density, (2) narrows the range of permitted uses, or (3) changes development standards in a way that creates new nonconforming development on non-residentially zoned property.

Solution: Repeal of the of the amendment.

Outcome: Repealing this language would simply restore the ability for cities to make thoughtful zoning updates when communities change, protect nearby neighborhoods, and respond to new development trends while still respecting property rights.

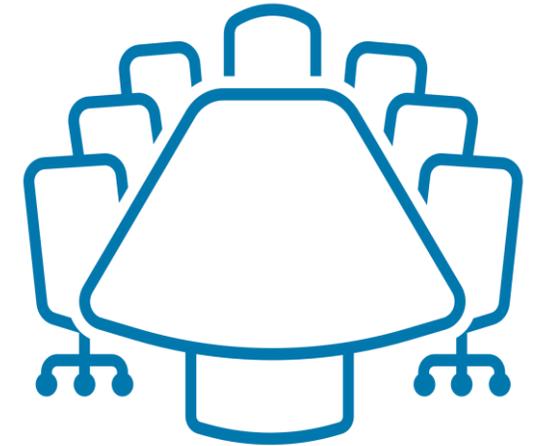


An Act to Amend the Enabling Laws Relating to City-County Planning & Zoning in the City of Winston-Salem

Problem: All rezoning matters must first go to the City-County Planning Board for a recommendation and then to Council for approval, sometimes leading to inefficiencies.

Solution: A local act that would allow the Winston-Salem City Council to authorize the Planning Board to make final decisions on certain straightforward, noncontroversial rezoning requests, when the Council determines it is appropriate.

Outcome: Faster and more predictable approvals for developers; well-planned projects for the community move forward more efficiently; allows City Council to focus its time on larger, more complex issues affecting neighborhoods and residents.



Exemption from System Development Fees for Affordable Housing Projects

Problem: System Development Fees (one-time charges on new development that fund water and sewer facility debt service or expansion) can add significant upfront costs to affordable housing projects, making some developments financially difficult or impossible to build.

Solution: A bill that authorizes cities to reduce or exempt System Development Fees for qualifying affordable housing projects as a local incentive tool.

Outcome: This added flexibility would help lower development costs, encourage more affordable housing construction, and support local governments' efforts to address housing needs.



Property Tax Limits

H BILL DRAFT 2025-MCfy-226

- City continues to face escalating costs for services from street resurfacing costs to vehicles to market-rate salaries
- Restricted property taxes lead to higher borrowing costs (and possible lower bond ratings)
- Restricted property tax limits cause an inability to respond to these increased costs
 - Restricts City from paying for key services residents expect, including public safety, fire, and roads which cover more than half of tax-supported services
 - Creates more difficulties in paying for needs after floods and other disasters



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