

## City Council – Action Request Form

**Date:** January 10, 2022

**To:** Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

**From:** Johnnie Taylor, Assistant City Manager

**Council Action Requested:**

Resolution Authorizing a 10-Month Extension for the Driver Restoration Initiative and Vocational Expansion (DRIVE) Program in Forsyth County, North Carolina

**Strategic Focus Area:** Economic Vitality and Diversity

**Strategic Objective:** No

**Strategic Plan Action Item:** No

**Key Work Item:** No



**Summary of Information:**

In February 2020, the Mayor and City Council allocated \$275,000 in funding to support the expansion of the Forsyth County Driver Restoration Initiative and Vocational Expansion (DRIVE) Program. The year-around restorative justice program is a license restoration program that affords financially challenged citizens an opportunity to re-establish their suspended North Carolina Driver’s License that can create an increased opportunity for employment. The money allocated from the City of Winston-Salem supports operating expenses, a Legal Assistant, Assistant District Attorney (ADA) in the District Attorney’s office, and an Administrative Clerk in the Clerk of Court Office.

The initial 18-month contract period for the DRIVE Program, finalized and executed in August of 2020, will end on January 31, 2022. The District Attorney’s Office is requesting an additional contract term extension of 10-months for the non-utilization of funds appropriated for the (3) salaries and operating expenses.

**Committee Action:**

<b>Committee</b>	Public Safety 1/10/22	<b>Action</b>	Approval
<b>For</b>	Unanimous	<b>Against</b>	

**Remarks:**

Job posting requirements, interviewing processes, effects from courthouse closures during the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the program. The ADA position was filled on December 29, 2020, the Clerk position was filled on December 31, 2020, and the Legal Assistant position was filled on January 19, 2021. The District Attorney’s office has had difficulty keeping the ADA position filled, as most candidates apply for the position to prosecute criminal cases. Since prosecution is not part of the DRIVE program, retaining suitable attorneys is challenging.

Notwithstanding the above adversities, the DRIVE program is still thriving, waiving fees totaling \$83,683 on 587 criminal charges, thereby providing relief to 124 Forsyth County residents. Currently, there are 373 pending applications, and the program receives an average of 10 applications per day.

The DRIVE Program fund has \$154,025.78 remaining of the initial \$275,000 contribution by the City of Winston-Salem. Staff is seeking approval from the Mayor and City Council to authorize an additional ten-month contract period.

**DRIVE Project Expenses**

1-yr Fully Funded Staff and Operating Expenses  <b>\$179,605.42</b>	Invoices Paid to Date FY 2020-2021 <b>\$68,550.74</b>
	Invoices Paid to Date FY 2021-2022 <b>\$52,423.48</b>
	<b>Total Funds Paid \$120,974.22</b>
	<b>Remaining Balance \$154,025.78</b>