The Weekly Recap

WHAT HAPPENED: Another relatively quiet week at the General Assembly. Gov. Roy Cooper vetoed SB 747 Elections Law Changes, setting up another potential veto override from the Republican supermajority. Otherwise, the still-delayed budget remains the key piece of outstanding legislation, and we expect that status quo to remain for at least a few more weeks.

WHAT IT MEANS: Closed-door budget negotiations are ongoing, and leadership has hinted that a budget could be ready by mid-September. As always, we will provide updates here when news is available.

IN THIS BULLETIN: With little legislative news to share, we again focus on two issues of importance to cities and towns: utility costs and affordable housing. Additionally, we share a recently published profile of NCLM board member and Clayton Mayor Jody McLeod.

Transition to Clean Energy Sparks Electricity Rate Adjustments in North Carolina

Beyond North Carolina municipalities, Duke Energy residential customers are poised to encounter electricity rate hikes. Initially, residential customers could see over a $25 per month increase, with potential future doubling. Duke Energy has presented multiple rate increase proposals to the North Carolina Utilities Commission, attributing them partly to a move toward clean energy ("Duke says 'clean energy' transition jacking up planned rates," Center Square).

Statewide legislative action prompted some of this move. In October 2021, legislators passed HB 951 Energy Solutions for North Carolina, compelling the Utilities Commission to take all feasible steps to attain a 70% carbon dioxide reduction by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050. Duke Energy formulated the Carolinas Resource Plan to fulfill these goals, outlining investments in solar, battery, hydrogen-capable natural gas, wind, and advanced nuclear technologies. In its recent rate proposals, the company pointed to this plan as one reason for the need for higher rates.

In response to the rate proposals, the League submitted intervention petitions and testimony to mitigate cost impacts in Duke Energy's rate increase cases. While the Utilities Commission has sanctioned increases for all customer categories, the full ramifications for cities will be determined in the coming weeks, once further

calculations are available. Like residential customers, the proposed city adjustments will span a three-year multi-rate period.

Institutional Investors and the Housing Crisis

Yet another state is the subject of findings showing that institutional investors are a primary cause of unaffordable housing. A new report from the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana found that more than 10 percent of homes purchased in Marion County, home to Indianapolis, are now owned by corporate investors, with roughly half that number owned by out-of-state investors. The group found that in one of Indianapolis' fastest growing areas, more than half of residential sales between 2018 and 2022 were all-cash transactions. Housing experts note that all-cash sales, typically by institutional investors, drive costs up for families in traditional home purchases.

This report follows similar findings in other states, including an investigation by The News & Observer of Raleigh examining corporate purchases of housing in growing areas of North Carolina.

For more information on the housing crisis and how NC local governments are responding, read our article and accompanying report on the issue, found here.

Profile: Mayor Jody McLeod Designs Local Leadership

Read now in NCLM's Southern City Magazine

Mayor Jody McLeod isn't your typical local leader, and he'll be the first to tell you. "I'm not the usual," he said. "I'm the unusual."

His unique skillset, however, is working. And with a focus on balance and all parts working together, Mayor McLeod has leveraged those talents to take

the Town of Clayton to the next level.

Read more about Mayor McLeod in Southern City, NCLM's quarterly magazine.

Read More

NCLM
NC LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES

WORKING AS ONE. ADVANCING ALL.

CONTACT US