



**Date:** May 11, 2017

**To:** Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager  
**Through:** Wanda Page, Deputy City Manager  
**From:** Mattie Sue Stevens, Management Analyst  
**Subject:** Interlocal Agreement for City-County Youth Initiatives Manager

**Executive Summary**

The proposed five-year interlocal agreement with Durham County would authorize creation of a joint City-County Youth Initiatives Manager position housed in the City Manager’s Office. This position would work to better align, support and assess programs provided and supported by the City and County for youth ages 5 to 24. Staff believe a joint City-County position will promote better coordination among City and County youth programs and initiatives, stronger collaboration with external community partners, and more strategic allocation of City and County resources for youth. Costs for the position would be divided equally between the City and County. Funding for this position is currently included in the City and County Managers’ proposed budgets for FY 2017-2018.

**Recommendation**

Staff recommends City Council resolve to authorize the City Manager to execute the Durham City-County Interlocal Agreement Regarding the City-County Youth Initiatives Manager Position.

**Background**

At least fifteen City of Durham and Durham County departments provide programming for children and teens. City departments providing youth programs include Parks & Recreation, City Manager’s Office (Office on Youth), Fire, Office of Economic & Workforce Development, Police, and Water Management. Of particular note is the City’s Office on Youth, which operates the Durham Teen Center and manages the Durham Youth Commission (DYC). Each year, the DYC provides opportunities for 35 high school students from across Durham County to learn about civic processes, collaborate with other youth councils, and participate in service learning projects. In recent years, the DYC’s service learning work has been robust, but the DYC has been less engaged as a youth advocacy voice in City policy-making than was originally envisioned.

Outside local government, many other agencies provide services to youth. A 2012 report estimated that there are more than 2,000 service organizations in Durham, of which more than 400 focus on disconnected youth (ages 14-24). An even larger number serve Durham’s general population of children and teens. In this crowded nonprofit space, the County and City must prioritize among many resource requests and opportunities for collaboration.

In 2012, Durham received an IBM Smarter Cities Challenge Grant to engage IBM experts in developing recommendations for a better youth service delivery framework. After interviews with many young people, community leaders, and youth service providers, the consultants delivered a report with fourteen recommendations for Durham. The City of Durham, Durham County and Durham Public Schools eventually agreed to jointly fund a Youth Opportunity

Initiative (YOI) to lead implementation of the IBM report's recommendations. Each entity contributed \$66,000 per year to fund two positions at Alliance Behavioral Healthcare. Beginning in August 2014, YOI staff conducted a needs assessment and partner-building effort, meeting with many service providers and engaging directly with Durham youth. This work eventually led to a "5 Cluster Model" for youth services and a plan for a youth-focused web portal. Despite these efforts, the YOI ended in June 2016 without substantially improving Durham's youth services landscape.

As the YOI concluded, City and County management began developing other alternatives for carrying out this work. Staff eventually presented an initial concept for a joint City-County Office on Youth to the Joint City-County Committee in September 2016. After receiving positive feedback, staff refined the proposal. The current recommendation was presented to the Joint City-County Committee on May 9, 2017. The Committee requested that youth engagement be featured more prominently in the position's job description. This change has been incorporated into the proposed interlocal agreement. The Committee also asked staff to develop the attached detailed listings of existing City and County youth programs.

### **Issues and Analysis**

City and County staff propose the creation of a joint City-County Youth Initiatives Manager to promote alignment and youth engagement, provide support, and conduct assessment for programs provided and supported by the City and County of Durham for youth ages 5 to 24.

#### Alignment & Engagement

The Youth Opportunity Initiative struggled because of its distance from City and County leadership and its broad scope. By creating a joint position within the City Manager's Office, the City and County Managers could have a clear line of sight to the new effort and provide stronger executive championship. The position would also be provided a more manageable scope of work with clearer expectations. Concentration on the youth services provided or financially supported by the City and County would allow for deeper, more focused work. This position would directly supervise the City's Office on Youth and seek to promote collaborative partnerships between youth programs in both organizations.

In addition, this position would work with City and County departments to develop more robust opportunities for youth engagement and advocacy. Too often, youth engagement efforts result only in token inclusion. Authentic engagement of youth voices requires patience, trust-building, and creation of channels for two-way communication. The Durham Youth Commission represents one natural opportunity for more sustained, meaningful engagement between youth and local government. Under the leadership of the Youth Initiatives Manager, the DYC could become a launch pad for more ambitious outreach.

#### Support

The Youth Initiatives Manager would serve as the City and County Managers' key staff liaison to major community initiatives like My Brother's Keeper and Made in Durham. Designating a consistent staff liaison will help streamline the City and County's participation in these efforts and provide a clear point of contact for external partners. The Youth Initiatives Manager would also be well-positioned to advise City and County leaders on emerging youth issues. This perspective would be particularly helpful in evaluating new program ideas or requests for funding support.

### Assessment & Evaluation

Both the IBM Smarter Cities Challenge report and YOI staff noted significant “collaboration fatigue” among youth service providers who feel stretched to capacity. This fatigue is a barrier to sharing and evaluating performance data in a consistent, reliable way. Rather than attempting to develop a major community data sharing infrastructure all at once, the Youth Initiatives Manager would first focus on programs where City and County funding already creates leverage for data collection. These programs would be a good testing ground for realistic data sharing mechanisms. As these measures develop, they could eventually be used more broadly, potentially being integrated into the City-County Open Data portal or the Durham Children’s Data Center. At minimum, such a measure set would enable the City and County to better assess the return on each organization’s investment in youth programs.

### Feedback from Durham Youth Commission

City staff presented a preliminary Youth Initiatives Manager concept to the Durham Youth Commission (DYC) in February 2017. Commission members participated in an open discussion about the idea and also provided feedback through a survey. The DYC members agreed that it can be hard for teens to know how to access services available to them, so they see value in having these services better coordinated and advertised.

In general, DYC members were less interested in the specific organizational structure of this effort and more concerned with increasing opportunities for youth involvement and advocacy overall. They felt that youth should be involved in the hiring process for this position--for instance, including a teen representative on the interview panel (as is standard for Office on Youth positions). They also wanted to see youth engagement explicitly incorporated into the position’s job description. Staff incorporated this feedback into the final proposal for the Youth Initiatives Manager position.

### **Alternatives**

City Council could choose not to approve the proposed Interlocal Agreement.

### **Financial Impact**

The interlocal agreement stipulates a 50-50 split of total costs for the position (including associated operating costs) between the City and County. An allocation of \$70,000 is currently included in both the City and County Managers’ proposed FY 2017-2018 budgets. The proposed pay range for the new position is \$62,765 - \$100,423, with estimated benefits costs of approximately \$24,000. Initial operating costs may include upfit of office space, office furniture, technology, training, and funds for engagement activities. Operating costs for future years will be determined and approved during each annual budget process.

### **Attachments**

1. Interlocal Agreement for City-County Youth Initiatives Manager
2. Position Description for City-County Youth Initiatives Manager
3. Programs for Children, Youth and Teens Supported by the City of Durham (with funding amounts)
4. Partial Listing of Programs for Children, Youth and Teens Supported by Durham County