

2019-2020 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Adopted Unanimously

December 13, 2018

North Carolina Legislative Goals

- Protect Jordan Lake as a drinking water supply.
- Support riparian buffer rules consistent with local conditions.
- Support North Carolina efforts to address the opioid problem.

Federal Legislative Goals

- Protect the viability of municipal bonds by opposing any legislation that would limit tax exemption.
- Support adequate and reliable long-term funding for infrastructure reflecting local needs and priorities.

Advocacy Principles

Municipal Authority

Voters elect council members to decide significant municipal issues in the public interest. Every municipality has unique issues that need to be addressed in the context of that community. The maintenance of effective municipal authority and flexible, local control allow Cary's Town Council to make decisions that effectively and efficiently meet the unique needs of their citizens.

Revenue

Responsible and sound management of Town of Cary resources requires stability and certainty with regard to revenue sources and require a variety of revenue sources to reduce volatility. Approximately 25 percent of the Town's revenues are from sources outside its direct control. Local sales taxes, state sales taxes on utility services, beer and wine tax, and Powell Bill are all examples of important Town revenue sources that are outside of direct municipal control. These state-collected local revenues are important to the fiscal health of the organization and any changes should not decrease local revenue or keep it from growing over time. Regional revenues should be shared equitably.

Mandates

Burdensome and expensive legislative, regulatory, or administrative mandates to perform functions or activities should not be enacted without adequate local authority, flexibility, and financial resources for development, implementation, and maintenance.

Town Services

The Town of Cary provides its growing population with water, sewer, transportation, police and fire protection, solid waste, parks and recreation, cultural amenities, and other services, as articulated in the Imagine Cary Community Plan's SERVE Chapter. To continue providing the services that our residents expect, the Town must have the continued authority and flexibility to make management, human resource, financial, and operations decisions in ways that most efficiently and effectively meet the needs of the organization and the community.

Community Standards

As part of our citizens' long-term vision as articulated in the Imagine Cary Community Plan, Cary wants to help create and maintain strong neighborhoods – safe, desirable, interesting, attractive, adaptable to change, with strong community and social interactions. Assisting neighborhoods achieve their goals requires sufficient municipal authority to address issues of a maturing community such as minimum housing, parking, absentee landlords, and resident education.

Environmental Stewardship

The Town of Cary is committed to being good stewards of its finite natural resources by preserving and protecting the environment. Environmental laws and regulations should be evidence-based, feasible and equitable, and standards should be outcome-based, not process-driven. Cary should have the flexibility to meet environmental outcomes in the most effective way.

Community Planning

Ensuring that Cary remains an attractive, economically-viable community that continues to attract new business and maintain the quality of life expected by residents as it continues to grow over the next 25-35 years requires long-range infrastructure planning including water resources, wastewater facilities, transportation, and land use. To achieve these goals, it is necessary to maintain a measure of control over development in areas designated by the county for municipal services, typically through a county-granted extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). In areas where the Wake County Board of Commissioners has granted ETJ, the Town has the responsibility to establish zoning and enforce the Land Development Ordinance. The primary benefit of ETJ is to ensure that development occurs in a planned, orderly way and that the Town is prepared to provide services when they are needed. If the Town of Cary is not able to adequately plan for infrastructure needs and service provision, future roads, greenways, and utilities may never be constructed, yielding inefficient and incomplete systems that are not only inadequate to serve existing and future growth, but which are also costlier.

Transportation

High quality transportation infrastructure is critical for moving people and goods to keep the state and local economy strong and enhance our quality of life. As stated in the MOVE Chapter of the Imagine Cary Community Plan, "Cary will continue to provide an attractive network of streets and a wide range of functional and well-designed facilities for all mode choices – driving, walking, biking, and transit." The Town maintains close to 500 miles of local streets in Wake and Chatham Counties, providing transportation to our neighborhoods and connections to thoroughfares. Cary also maintains sidewalks, walking paths, bikeways, and a public transportation system. Transportation needs continue to grow across the state and investments necessary to achieve our vision are not sufficient. Funding for new construction and system expansion should be data-driven to address regional transportation needs including congestion mitigation, bike and pedestrian projects, and transit. Additional local flexibility with transportation revenues and provision of state funding for bicycle and pedestrian purposes should be provided to help meet our unique transportation needs. Thoroughfares through Cary that serve as transportation routes connecting communities across the region are maintained by NCDOT. Adequate state funding should be provided for maintenance of the state roadway network.