North Dakota League of Cities — 2026 ~~POLICY COMMITTEE DRAFT~~

Continuing Resolutions

A. Mandates on Local Governments

Whereas, Congress and the state legislature place mandates on local governments; and

Whereas, these mandates often place a financial burden on local governments, many times in the middle of a budget year; and

Whereas, the cost of mandated programs and services should be paid for by those developing the programs and services;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall strive to have state and federal mandates paid for by the state or federal government and to delay the effective date of mandates that are not paid for until the start of the next budget year.

B. Economic Development and Economic Diversity

Whereas, it is vital to the future of cities of all sizes in North Dakota that new economic growth be stimulated and economies be diversified throughout the state so that more jobs are available; and

Whereas, a stronger partnership between cities and the state needs to be promoted so North Dakota does not lose its most valuable resource - its people; and

Whereas, cities and the state need to cooperate to promote areas of job growth such as the development of more value-added products;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall support changes to promote new economic growth and diversification of economies, including changes to make the state more competitive with other states, to bring about speedier consideration of prospects for development, and to provide venture capital for economic development projects;

C. Regulatory Environment

Whereas, the collection and disposal of solid waste, water treatment and distribution, and wastewater and storm water treatment are important functions of city government; and

Whereas, state and federal governments place many regulations on these activities; and

Whereas, such regulations can place a heavy financial burden on city governments;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall ensure the perspectives of city officials are considered in setting fees and developing any regulations at the federal and state level.

D. Intergovernmental Cooperation

Whereas, cities and other levels of government are faced with the problem of meeting growing demands for services on limited budgets; and

Whereas, state law authorizes joint powers agreements and other tools to restructure local government for effectiveness and efficiency; and

Whereas, these tools can be used by cities and other levels of government to work together to provide needed services to their citizens in the most effective manner;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall support programs and activities that will promote and support intergovernmental cooperation.

E. Local Authority

Whereas, there has been an erosion of local governing authority because of actions taken at the state and federal government levels; and

Whereas, local governing board members are elected by the same citizens that elect the state and federal elected officials; and

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Whereas, local government is closest to the people and in the best position to act on many matters of importance to all citizens, including matters involving budgetary needs and property tax levies;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall work to ensure that local governing authority is preserved to the greatest extent possible.

F. Home Rule Authority
Whereas, state legislative actions and court decisions have limited home rule authority; and
Whereas, the authority of home rule cities has been approved by local voters in home rule charters; and
Whereas, the ability of local voters to determine local authority should be maintained;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports the ability of local voters to approve local authority and opposes legislative action that would limit home rule authority.

G. State Preemption
Whereas, state preemption can be used to nullify a local ordinance approved by the governing body or citizens of a North Dakota city; and
Whereas, state preemption negatively effects the ability of a city to govern itself; and
Whereas, state preemption disallows a city to govern itself; and
Whereas, state preemption does not allow local leaders to create policies and programs that help communities prosper;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities will work to defeat any attempts to control cities' self-governing rights through state preemption.

H. Organizational Goals
Whereas, the North Dakota League of Cities works to represent the interests of cities in North Dakota; and
Whereas, other levels of government are represented by their own membership organizations; and
Whereas, many of these organizations have goals that are shared by the North Dakota League of Cities;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall strive to work together with organizations representing other levels of government to meet the common goals of all members.

I. Work Force Development, Attraction, and Retention
Whereas, a well-trained workforce is vital to maintaining the health of North Dakota's economy; and
Whereas, education and training through school or on-the-job training beyond high school is necessary for a well-trained workforce; and
Whereas, cooperation between local government, educational institutions, and employers is integral to building, attracting and retaining a well-trained workforce;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities shall endeavor to build relationships with educational institutions and employers to build, attract and retain a strong, well-trained workforce in North Dakota.

J. Attainable~~Affordable~~ Housing
Whereas, having attainable~~affordable~~ housing available to all individuals is vital to a healthy community; and
Whereas, a shortage of attainable~~affordable~~ housing options exists in many North Dakota cities; and
Whereas, city participation is vital to increasing the availability of attainable~~affordable~~ housing in cities;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities will support existing programs to create attainable~~affordable~~ housing and seek creative solutions to increasing availability of attainable~~affordable~~ housing.

K. City Efficiency
Whereas, efficient cities are the best poised to serve their citizens;
Whereas, laws and policies exist that hinder cities from being able to do their work efficiently;

Whereas, laws and policies are sometimes proposed that block the efficient use of city resources;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities will support policies that enhance city efficiency.

L. Property and Sales Tax Exemptions
Whereas, property and sales tax are important sources of revenue for cities and other political subdivisions; and
Whereas, property and sales tax exemptions impair the amount of revenue available to local governments; and
Whereas, appropriate funding of cities and other political subdivisions is essential to providing the best service to citizens;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities opposes any effort to create additional property and sales tax exemptions that will not expand economic development opportunities in North Dakota and do not provide city governing boards the ability to decide whether to utilize the exemption in the city or do not have direct revenue replacement from other resources.

M. Extra Territorial Zoning Jurisdiction
Whereas, uniform planning in the area surrounding a city is vital to a city's continued growth; and
Whereas, the cost of providing city services to areas annexed into the city increases when development has not occurred in a pattern that matches city development; and
Whereas, city extra territorial zoning jurisdiction provides cities the ability to ensure orderly development near the city border;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports maintaining city extra territorial zoning jurisdiction in its current form.

N. Support for the North Dakota Insurance Reserve Fund (NDIRF)
Whereas, most cities in North Dakota utilize the NDIRF for their liability insurance coverage;
Whereas, the NDIRF Board of Directors is made up of political subdivision representatives including representatives from cities and from the North Dakota League of Cities;
Whereas, the NDIRF understands the unique coverage~~insurance~~ needs of cities;
Whereas, in 2019 the NDIRF began managing the North Dakota Fire and Tornado Fund (NDFT) and the State Bonding Fund;
Whereas, cities have seen a sharp increase in the level of service for the programs after the NDIRF began managing the NDFT and the State Bonding Fund; and
Whereas, the NDIRF provides integral support and programing for education services for city officials;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports continuing the strong partnership with the NDIRF.

Resolutions for Consideration - 2026~~5~~

2026~~5~~-1. Behavioral Health Issues
Whereas, North Dakota communities are being negatively affected by behavioral health issues, including addiction issues; and
Whereas, there is a shortage of behavioral health care providers across North Dakota, making access to behavioral health resources difficult; and
Whereas, cities need to be part of the solution in solving behavioral health issues;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports efforts to ensure all people across ~~of~~ the state of North Dakota have access to behavioral health professionals.

2026-2. Health Care Access
Whereas, North Dakota communities have a vested interest in the health and well-being of their residents; and

Whereas, access to quality health care services and facilities remains limited, most notably in rural areas; and
Whereas, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has made the Rural Health Transformation grant program available; and
Whereas, the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services has received CMS approval for its Rural Health Transformation Plan; and
Whereas, cities can be part of the solution in improving health care access across North Dakota; and
Whereas, funding will be needed to improve health care access across North Dakota;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports policies and programs that improve health care access across North Dakota.

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2026~~25~~-3~~2~~. Economic Development Tools
Whereas, the North Dakota Century Code provides several economic development tools for cities to use to stimulate economic development within the city; and
Whereas, those tools include Renaissance Zones, tax increment financing, and payments in lieu of property taxes; and
Whereas, maintaining the ability of cities to utilize these economic development tools is important to cities being able to promote economic development within cities;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports maintaining cities' ability to use these economic development tools and gathering the data to show the positive impact these economic development tools have within cities.

2026~~25~~-4~~3~~. Support of Policies Supporting Infill Development
Whereas, the state and cities can adopt incentives and policies that encourage infill development;
Whereas, infill development can leverage the use of cities' current infrastructure which can reduce the cost of local government; and
Whereas, infill development can mitigate the costs associated with providing services such as fire protection, police protection, and street maintenance to new development;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports policies and incentives that support infill development.

2026~~25~~-5~~4~~. Special Assessments
Whereas, special assessments are a vital tool for paying for infrastructure; and
Whereas, citizens count on cities to maintain existing infrastructure; and
Whereas, some developers need to have special assessments available in order to make new housing developments attainable~~affordable~~;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports maintaining cities' ability to use special assessments as the governing body determines best fits each individual city's need.

2026~~25~~-6~~5~~. Infrastructure Funding
Whereas, cities own and manage a significant amount of infrastructure including, roads, bridges, drinking water systems, industrial water supply, wastewater systems, sewer systems, storm sewer systems, ~~and~~ flood protection systems, and electrical systems;
Whereas, properly managed and maintained infrastructure is critical to a successful city;
Whereas, funding is necessary to maintain the critical infrastructure;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports initiatives that provide funding for city infrastructure projects.

2026~~25~~-7~~6~~. Veterans and Members of the United States Armed Forces
Whereas, our citizens enjoy many freedoms and opportunities; and

Whereas, these freedoms and opportunities are available because of the service and sacrifice of our veterans and members of the United States Armed Forces; and
Whereas, this service and sacrifice may often go unrecognized;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities expresses its gratitude, appreciation, and respect for the service and sacrifice of the veterans and members of the United States Armed Forces.

2026~~5~~-8~~7~~. North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System (NDPERS)
Whereas, many cities participate in the NDPERS;
Whereas, the 68th Legislative Assembly converted the NDPERS defined benefit retirement plan to a defined contribution plan for new employees, effective January 1, 2025;
Whereas, beginning in January 2024, cities participating in NDPERS retirement began contributing an additional 1% of employee wages to the NDPERS retirement plan to fund the unfunded liability;
Whereas, the NDPERS defined benefit retirement plan has traditionally been a good recruiting and retention tool for city employees;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports the State assuring that:
1. current city employees, in the defined benefit plan, maintain their benefits after the conversion,
2.the unfunded liability associated with the defined benefit plan is fully funded without additional contribution from participating cities,
3. the new defined contribution plan is robust enough to attract new employees,
4. a comprehensive educational program is available for cities and their employees about the conversion,
5. new employees participating in the defined contribution plan have access to high quality investment professionals, and
6. city participation in the new NDPERS defined contribution plan is optional.

2026~~5~~-9~~8~~. Partisan City Elections
Whereas, city elections are currently non-partisan;
Whereas, the decisions city leaders need to make do not relate to partisan politics;
Whereas, adding the option or requirement to select a political party as part of a city election would create unnecessary issues with the city election process;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities opposes any proposal to make city elections partisan.

2026~~5~~-10~~9~~. North Dakota Open Records and Open Meetings Laws
Whereas, North Dakota has some of the most transparent open records and open meetings laws in the United States;
Whereas, city leaders strive to be as open and transparent as possible in conducting city business;
Whereas, provisions in North Dakota open records and open meetings laws can make compliance with all the technical requirements difficult for cities;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports any policies that simplify city compliance with open records and open meeting laws without sacrificing transparency.

2026~~5~~-11~~0~~. Child Care
Whereas, there is a shortage of child care providers across the cities in North Dakota;
Whereas, the child care shortage is contributing to the workforce shortage in North Dakota and impacting the quality of life of some city residents;
Whereas, cities want to be part of the solution of providing high quality and affordable child care;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports initiatives to advance access to high quality and affordable child care.

2026~~5~~-12~~1~~. Traffic Safety

Whereas, too many people are injured and die on North Dakota's roads;
Whereas, cities control many roads in North Dakota;
Whereas, there are often things that can be done to make roads safer;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports initiatives to make roads safer.

2026~~5~~-13~~2~~. Property Tax
Whereas, property taxes are one of the revenue sources available to cities;
Whereas, city property taxes pay for core city services such as police, fire, and street maintenance;
Whereas, elected members of a city's governing board have the discretion to make decisions about the amount of property tax to levy based on the political subdivision's locally evaluated needs and limits set under state law; and
Whereas, this property tax levy authority is crucial to city officials being responsive to their constituents by having control over addressing matters involving the city;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities supports maintaining the ability of cities to levy property taxes.

2026~~5~~-14~~3~~. Resolution of Appreciation
Whereas, the city of Grand Forks~~Bismarck~~, through its officials and employees, have planned to help make this a successful annual conference; and
Whereas, the facilities provided at the Grand Forks Alerus~~Bismarck Event~~ Center, were excellent; and
Whereas, the people of Grand Forks~~Bismarck~~ have extended their hospitality to all city officials attending;
Now, therefore, be it resolved that the North Dakota League of Cities, meeting in a business session this 18~~9~~th day of September, 2026~~5~~, conveys its appreciation to the city of Grand Forks~~Bismarck~~, and all those involved for helping to make this an excellent annual conference.