



3

**ATTACHMENT 1**

## **COUNTY OF DURHAM**

**MICHAEL M. RUFFIN**  
*COUNTY MANAGER*

August 14, 2003

Mr. Cal Horton  
Manager of Chapel Hill  
306 N. Columbia St.  
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

Dear Mr. Horton:

The first-ever statewide assessment of youth and adult civic education and engagement—the North Carolina Civic Index—was conducted earlier this year by the NC Civic Education Consortium; there were many surprising results.

Community leaders in the Triangle J Council of Governments region have the opportunity to discuss these results in a dialogue on civic education & engagement. A regional planning committee in partnership with the Consortium is hosting the Greater Triangle Area Civic Index Community Forum on November 6, 2003. The forum will provide an opportunity for citizens, young people, grassroots organizations, and local leaders to discuss the implications of the findings, both statewide and in their own communities. Participants will receive a copy of the Civic Index as well as a resource guide detailing existing youth civic engagement programs. The desired outcome of the forum is the development of community-specific strategies to improve civic education and participation.

The event, which will be free and open to the public, will include dinner and a post-forum dessert reception. The NC Civic Education Consortium has funds to pay for a portion of the costs associated with the forum; however, supplementary funds are necessary to cover a full dinner and dessert reception. Durham County Government has shown its support for this important endeavor by contributing \$500 to cover the costs. I would like to challenge each of you to show your support by providing a similar contribution. If donations exceed the cost of the event itself, the Consortium will distribute the balance to the community specific strategies developed at the Forum event.

As managers, we have a vested interest in the civic engagement of our young people, as they are the predictors of our communities' future levels of citizen participation. It is extremely important that we begin a dialogue on the state of civic engagement among our young people and work to

4

Page 2  
August 14, 2003

develop simple proactive strategies to address low citizen participation. Please join Durham County Government in support of the civic education of our young people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Ruffin", written in a cursive style.

Michael M. Ruffin  
County Manager