

Research Summary: Municipal Approaches to Celebratory Legislation Requests

Prepared for Gahanna City Council – June 2025

Overview:

This report summarizes findings from four Ohio jurisdictions—Dublin, Reynoldsburg, Shaker Heights, and Westerville—regarding their policies and practices for issuing celebratory legislation, including proclamations, certificates, and recognition letters. The purpose is to inform the Gahanna City Council on best practices and options for standardizing Council-led recognition efforts.

Key Findings:

1. Clear Policy Frameworks Exist

- **Dublin** and **Reynoldsburg** maintain formal written policies outlining criteria, eligibility, and procedures for proclamation requests.
- **Shaker Heights** utilizes a more streamlined approach, with proclamations issued solely at mayoral discretion and not voted on publicly.
- **Westerville** appears to rely on internal leadership discretion and a DEI-informed lens, highlighting the role of elected leadership in championing cultural and community recognitions.

2. Defined Criteria and Exclusions

- Both Dublin and Reynoldsburg outline clear limitations, excluding politically controversial or religious matters, personal celebrations (birthdays, weddings), and events outside city boundaries.
- Proclamations are generally reserved for public awareness, civic achievements, and cultural milestones that benefit or represent the broader community.

3. Process Standardization

- Submission timelines range from 10–14 days in advance.
- Both Dublin and Reynoldsburg encourage draft language to expedite processing.
- Proclamations may be mailed, presented in person, or read during Council meetings, pending approval from the Mayor or Council President.

4. Tiered Recognition Options

- Dublin offers a graduated structure:
 - **Proclamations** for broader civic or cultural recognition
 - **Certificates** for outstanding achievements by students, residents, and teams
 - **Letters from Council** for acknowledgments not rising to proclamation level

5. Role of Leadership & Discretion

- Final approval and discretion typically lie with the **Mayor, Chair, or Council President**, ensuring alignment with city values and public interest.