

## InterNeighborhood Council (INC) Comments on 2021 Comprehensive Plan Update Draft Goals and Objectives

Approved 2/23/2021; finalized 3/4/2021.

These comments are based on discussions of the draft objectives for the comprehensive plan for Durham by a subcommittee of the InterNeighborhood Council (INC). This is the final version, incorporating changes requested by INC at the 2/26/2021 meeting, when the document was approved. The neighborhoods represented were Bragtown, Merrick Moore, Watts Hospital - Hillandale, Forest Hills, Tuscaloosa-Lakewood, Cross Counties, Morehead Hill, Old West Durham, Trappers Creek-Greymoss, and Falconbridge.

INC applauds the focus on equity in the draft objectives. We need to invest more equally across Durham in sidewalks, safe and comfortable bus stops, trees, and parks, and promote equity in amenities such as grocery stores and other vital services. More importantly, Durham needs to do a better job of listening to the wisdom and experience of residents about their area, in ways from letting residents say what kinds of trees they want where to helping all neighborhoods articulate their visions for their area.

At the same time, we have a number of concerns about how the objectives might become policy:

- How does a revised comprehensive plan solve Durham's growth issues better than the current comprehensive plan? There needs to be an understanding of why the identified problems grew under the old comprehensive plan so as to avoid repeating history.
- Planning tools can only accomplish a portion of these objectives; some objectives can be achieved in concert with other agencies (budget choices and schools, for example). Other objectives need leadership/innovation by non-profits or new products from the private sector.
- In Durham, workers such as nurses, teachers, and sanitation employees should have the opportunity to build family wealth through the purchase of a small home as first-time homebuyers. Our policies and rules should ensure a steady supply of such housing.
- We should prioritize public investments that lower-wealth residents have been asking for for years.
- In several places the objectives mention that rules should be relaxed, but in some situations, rules need to be enhanced, for example, when it is necessary to protect neighborhoods, especially underserved neighborhoods, combat gentrification and displacement, and to preserve naturally occurring affordable housing.
- Durham should actively build and support community capacity by supporting communities in organizing neighborhood associations, connecting with other communities to share resources and information, leadership training, promoting ongoing and meaningful stakeholder engagement, encouraging neighborhood-building institutions such as small area planning, community ambassadors.

These notes are in 9 sections, one in general and one for each section of the draft objectives. Each section is a table, with one entry for general comments and then entries for each objective in the draft document. The details represent the opinions of members of the subcommittee and have not been approved by the INC as a whole.

## General Comments

We feel some objectives were missing from the draft.

Objective	Comments or Details
Overall focus of goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We applaud the fact that the goals have not just an equity lens but in fact an equity focus</li> </ul>
General notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The objectives are generally in “planner speak” and need a translator</li> <li>• There is no guidance on how to decide among conflicting goals</li> <li>• There are factual errors (for example, the barriers to farmers’ markets are not regulations as much as finding sites) and wishful thinking (paying a living wage to farmers generally makes local food unlikely to be cheap food)</li> <li>• We need to sharpen regulations (make them do what we want, maybe even get to defining what is “good design”) rather than relaxing them</li> <li>• Should say what we will do rather than what we want</li> <li>• Do we need concrete measures that we will stick to achieving</li> </ul>
<p><b>Missing Objective 1: Planning infrastructure</b> -- We need to improve how we guide and regulate development in Durham</p>	<p>Specific improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We want to involve the community in creating alternatives, not relying only on experts</li> <li>• Under-served areas need to receive planning resources now, not 2/ 5/ or 10 years from now. These communities have asked for investment into the communities for decades but have never received anything (See Missing Objective 5).</li> <li>• We need mechanisms to help neighborhoods with fewer planning resources achieve their wants and needs. Planning resources include money, experience with development issues, access to professional expertise, and a history of working for common ends.</li> <li>• We need to analyze and replicate cases that have been win-win for everyone.</li> <li>• Implementation often fails. The Comprehensive Plan and UDO permit multiple interpretations and outcomes, or lack needed detail. For example, “mixed use” has included a residential block across a highway from the commercial area, as opposed to being really intermixed. The rules need consistency or at least a hierarchy of what is the most important consideration; to the extent that the rules are inconsistent, those making decisions need to be informed about how the inconsistencies are resolved.</li> <li>• Could Planning be required to do an annual report on how we are doing and within the rezoning report, what is the service infrastructure / plan for what is being proposed (sort of like they report on schools, water, etc.)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There needs to be continuing engagement</li> </ul>
<p><b>Missing Objective 2: Social Incubators</b> -- In many areas, the market isn't producing the solutions we need in Durham, and isn't likely to without intervention. We need to be intentional in supporting creative entrepreneurs (with training, mentorship, physical spaces, access to funds, etc.), especially for wealth-creation in communities which have had less opportunity in the past</p>	<p>Specific areas which incubators might address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminating food insecurity/deserts, and providing healthy food for all</li> <li>• Clean energy solutions (e.g. energy efficiency) for all</li> <li>• Rebuilding child care after the pandemic (we may have lost 1/3 of our facilities?)</li> <li>• Alternatives to policing</li> <li>• Affordable housing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Missing Objective 3: Creating a Living Document:</b> We need ways amend the plan as needed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We want to continue community communication, review gaps and achievements, etc. Some kind of annual "gap map" would help, showing gaps between actual service such as grocery stores and recreation space versus needed services with the planned or anticipated development. Also in 3-5 years, we need to evaluate long-term consequences of the pandemic disruption. However, guard against amending the plan for every proposed development that conflicts with it.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Missing Objective 4: Continuity:</b> The goals emphasize what we want to change, with no indication of continuity with planning rules and past investments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve affordability where we have it now</li> <li>• No indication of what is working with current plan and should be continued</li> <li>• Preserve sense of place based on family, school, church and other networks</li> </ul>
<p><b>Missing Objective 5: Community Planning:</b> City and county government needs to engage in Community Planning – a process where residential and community stakeholders, especially those who have been historically alienated and under-represented, have on-going engagement with the governmental planning apparatus.</p> <p>Today, Durham residential and community stakeholders -- meaning people whose primary interest in planning and development regulation is in their homes, communities, neighborhoods, and the quality of life of the general public -- are alienated from planning</p>	<p>The focus of Durham's planning resources should be shifted away from its primarily development services orientation. The rules and procedures are complex. Residential and community stakeholders are without resources. They are over-matched by the development industry. Residential and community stakeholders are the last to be consulted. Their intersection with planning and zoning comes only in cases on short notice. Their input is ritualized in ten-minutes-a-side public hearings at the end of a case process that began without them months before. They have no official support. Residential and community stakeholders dread zoning and planning and cases like bad weather. It is something that happens to them, not with them or for them.</p> <p>Community Planning should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Planning should include:</li> <li>• Standing, ongoing, community-based, but government-supported, resident advisory committees. These should be based on logical geographic areas of reasonably shared interests. They should meet regularly with a cadre of officials from city departments like</li> </ul>

<p>and zoning, their processes, and the city officials who manage them.</p>	<p>planning, transportation, parks, and law enforcement. The strong priority for such committees should be in parts of the city and county where the need is the greatest and equity interests are manifest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Periodic development of stakeholder driven small area plans as needed.</li> <li>● Better-regulated and city staff-led developer-neighborhood meetings.</li> <li>● Support and assistance in neighborhood organizing on a broad range of models designed to fit a given neighborhood best. Maintenance of neighborhood maps and a directory of neighborhood and community representatives.</li> <li>● Regular training for community leaders not in the development industry to create a cadre of public interest planners.</li> <li>● An official but independent mediator/ombudsman's office in city hall that can advocate for the interests of residential and community stakeholders and neighborhood groups.</li> <li>● Simple, not-too-costly, easy-to-follow procedures for residents and neighborhood groups to petition the city and county for city/county-initiated changes to zoning districts, zoning rules, and the comprehensive plan – rights all residents once enjoyed but are now denied them without city intervention.</li> <li>● Regular participation in and support for neighborhood-oriented organizations such as PACs, SW Central Durham Quality of Life, and the InterNeighborhood Council. (why should this be a part of the observations)</li> <li>●</li> </ul>
<p><b>Missing Objective 6: Role of Appropriate Regulation:</b> In some cases, rules need to be relaxed, but sometimes they need to be stronger.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Protect neighborhoods, especially those that have been neglected or underserved</li> <li>● Curb gentrification and reduce displacement</li> <li>● Preserve naturally occurring affordable housing</li> </ul>

# Housing and Neighborhoods

Objective	Comments or Details
<p>General notes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The thrust for equity is a good thing.</li> <li>● What does it take to protect neighborhoods, or at least create win-win solutions? What rezonings are good and what are less good? How can neighborhoods that haven't been organized be equally good at being able to achieve compatible development?</li> <li>● Concern with destabilization due to commercialization or higher property values near existing affordable areas; bringing in higher cost housing raises property values but can drive up taxes nearby.</li> <li>● Developers are not building houses for people in Durham</li> <li>● When constrained by dwelling units per acre, developers increase the size of units to unaffordable levels. Provide greater density options for smaller affordable units.</li> <li>● Bragtown, Merrick Moore and Walltown have been doing a lot of creative thinking and writing about visions for their neighborhoods which we should look at</li> <li>● We recognize that there are tensions in objectives -- for example, between having services and commercial pressures on neighborhoods. There can be win-win solutions, with appropriate buffering and connection.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 1: Intentional Housing:</b> We need rules for development that allow for new and creative housing options that serve a diversity of needs, income levels, family structures, and lifestyle choices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We don't want innovation just for innovation -- tie the innovation to specific objectives</li> <li>● Regulations should benefit the entire community, not just for wealthy developers and people of power; getting rid of regulations can create more opportunities for exploitation. Small housing and co-housing are not bad ideas, but we need to do regulations to control them, not to throw the door open. Cost of housing is high not because regulations are in the way, but the incentive is to build whatever someone will pay the most for. We don't have anything in zoning to build to meet the needs of people who live in Durham; we need to find ways to do this within state law.</li> <li>● We can mandate some smaller houses in every new residential development; these houses must be appropriate for 4-person families,, no less than 900 square feet and not more than 1500 square feet. We don't want "cheap" = flimsy or low-quality materials, but also don't need fancy-smancy kitchens everywhere. We thank elected officials for efforts to change the state law on affordable housing and hope they will continue.</li> <li>● Although we recognize that some regulations and arguments about stability have had a history in racist policy and exclusion, and we definitely want to heal the effects of past racism, this history is not a reason for wholesale pitching of regulation. We also support</li> </ul>

	<p>the stability of affordability and quality of life for all residents, and believe that reasonable regulations need to be in place to support these ends.</p>
<p><b>Objective 2: Integrated Housing:</b> We need integrated communities where people of different races, backgrounds, ages and incomes live together. Integrated communities offer opportunities to share resources, care for neighbors, and learn from one another's life experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We support this objective. Communities should include people of different socioeconomic backgrounds</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 3: Design for Everyone:</b> We need housing that is physically accessible for Durham residents regardless of ability or age.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We support this objective.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 4: Thriving Lives:</b> We need housing where we are able to access the resources we need to thrive within our neighborhoods. We need mixed use development that places housing and destinations like stores close together, making it easier for people to conveniently access.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We agree with the idea, but how are we doing on it? Thoughtful placement of commercial nodes, parks and open spaces, and other services and amenities, especially in the undeveloped parts of the county, is needed so they serve and are compatible with the area. People want to preserve their community that was connected by family, churches and schools. We want to bring back the concept of <i>place</i>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 5: Affordable Housing:</b> We need options for renting and owning homes that are accessible, stable, maintained, and consistently affordable to a variety of income levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you create a pathway for people getting their first foot into the housing market -- a critical part of closing the wealth gap, getting a path out of poverty?</li> <li>• We have not had the political will to make progress on our long-held desire for this kind of housing.</li> <li>• How do we keep lower-cost housing from becoming rental property, which does not provide the wealth-building ladder that home-owning does?</li> <li>• "Affordable housing" is overused, and working-class/essential-worker residents want a term specific to the entry-level kind of homes they need.</li> <li>• The entry-level and affordable homes should not be concentrated in low-wealth areas.</li> <li>• Housing that essential workers can afford should be allowable in every community.</li> <li>• We need to bring back the idea of bungalow homes, perhaps as a duplex or other form.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 6: Good Housing:</b> We need healthy, dignified, and welcoming housing that promotes the mental and physical wellbeing for all residents, particularly our elders, our</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There still seems to be no definition of "good residential design" that actually guides good residential design.</li> <li>• A good residential design for Bragtown and Merrick Moore could be a model for Black communities like they were before Urban Renewal. Those residential areas had</li> </ul>

<p>youth, residents of color, those in public housing, those with low-incomes, and those with different physical and mental abilities. We need homes that are safe and clean inside, with surroundings that are cared for, maintained, pleasant, beautiful and bring us joy.</p>	<p>everything we needed, i.e. stores (grocery and retail) restaurants, doctors offices, lawyers, hospitals, schools, recreation centers, movie theaters, etc. That to me is a good residential design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well-designed homes and well-designed developments do not need to be expensive.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 7: Safe Housing:</b> We need all Durham residents to feel safe and protected in their communities and free from violence, particularly residents who are Black and Hispanic/Latino, low-income, youth, seniors, LGBTQIA+, justice-involved, homeless, or living in public housing. We need to prioritize building community trust and relationships in our systems of community safety and mental health support. We need to build physical infrastructure that creates safer environments like speed bumps or traffic circles, street lights, and sidewalks, without displacing residents, in communities that have not had this investment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In neighborhoods where there is a huge amount of shootings, residents need to be consulted about the safety measures they want, such as having cameras installed on light poles throughout underserved communities, and those measures should be implemented</li> <li>• Policing needs to be sincerely community-engaged, where the police work with the community, not against it. They need to build human-scale interactions in order to see each other as individuals. The community needs to feel the police truly are there to serve and protect.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Missing Objective: Mixed Use:</b> See Intentional Development Objective in the Equity, Culture and Community Engagement Section</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is not enough to look at residential development in isolation; it needs thoughtful complements of infrastructure, shopping, and services.</li> </ul>

# Equity, Culture and Community Engagement

Objective	Comments or Details
<p><b>Objective 1: Intentional Development:</b> We need a long-term plan and development process that promotes wellbeing for all residents, values and creates space for community members' involvement in the process, and is transparent about how development occurs and the plans that exist for the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● There are tools like small area plans that are better at engaging the community.</li> <li>● It will always be human nature for planners to pay more attention to the developers who are in the office all the time. Community connections and meaningful conversation with developers should be facilitated by planning commissioners or staff.</li> <li>● Electronic communications save paper and money, but many members of the community do not have internet access to join zoom meetings or receive notifications over email.</li> <li>● Our mixed-use category does not require integration of uses. Developers use the category as a fig-leaf for primarily commercial development.</li> <li>● We support more thoughtful regulation and placement of commercial nodes, especially in the undeveloped parts of the county, so they serve and support new suburban development in the area.</li> <li>● We acknowledge there is some tension between the concern about commercial pressures on neighborhoods and the desire to provide goods and services where people live. This tension can be resolved with better planning tools: rules that clearly specify how competing objectives mesh, perhaps a pattern book that shows good and bad resolutions of this tension, and real engagement of the public in the process.</li> <li>● We need to examine who is building in Durham and why? Are Speculators and investors building luxury homes that sit on the market? Development needs to be for the people of Durham, not investors.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 2: Community Engagement:</b> We need communication and engagement processes that are accessible, transparent, equitable, convenient, and representative of community input. Engagement efforts need to be prioritized and be designed specifically to address the needs and concerns of those who are most likely to be adversely impacted by public or private initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Obviously, we need to use NIS's community engagement process more broadly across the city, as revealed by what has happened with Hoover Road Park and LED lights; the community needs to be asked for input upfront, not just feedback, and to share ownership in decision-making. Engagement needs to be a priority.</li> <li>● Encourage members of the community to dialogue among themselves</li> <li>● Innovative support for communities that may not have the experience in formulating what they want would require simpler words, taking time to make connections and understanding where people come from, and avoiding "I know better"</li> <li>● In some communities, those with the longest-term investment are now older and do not have the technology to get Planning Notices (in teeny-tiny type) or participate in the zoom-based neighborhood meetings required by the UDO.</li> <li>● Some major proposals, such as the sports park, have not required adequate notification of those in the area.</li> </ul>



<p><b>Objective 3: Connected Communities:</b> We need to protect our communities from displacement so that people can remain rooted in and engaged with their current neighborhoods, connected to one another and to resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We agree with this objective.</li> <li>● People want to preserve their community with its connections by family, churches and schools. We want to bring back the concept of <i>place</i>, and develop social capacity in all neighborhoods.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 4: Celebrating Communities and Culture:</b> We need to acknowledge and tell the full story of Durham's rich culture, history, and the strength of Black communities. We need to make that history physically evident in our community so that Durham's residents, particularly Black residents, can see their past, present and future reflected in this place. We need to empower residents to tell the stories of their own cultures and history.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We like the objective of honoring and celebrating culture and community, past and present; it shouldn't just be celebrating what has already been lost. Quit pushing out and erasing the Black community / sense of place. The history of Black Americans in Durham is being systematically erased by development that is targeting these communities.</li> <li>● Needs to include Historic Preservation -- Use the language of the Racial Equity Task Force -- identify and preserve historic places everywhere.</li> <li>● The history of black communities in Durham is being erased. Being anti-racist means actively working to preserve and restore the contributions of Durhams black residents and ancestors.</li> <li>● Planning for historic preservation is important, but equity requires that we preserve the whole public history of Durham. Our present historic districts are driven by local community resources and thus do not reflect all of Durham. Public resources must be used to make sure preservation tools are applied equitably.</li> </ul>

# Transportation

Objective	Comments or Details
<p>General notes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The emphasis on car-free options is good.</li> <li>● We like the fact that we are integrating where things are and how to get there, but want to reinforce that we need thoughtful placement, transitions, sizing, and components of nodes. Endless townhouse projects without grocery and other services and on inadequate roads just won't work for us).</li> <li>● Reducing parking to make housing affordable implies a need to make sure that you have transit and services you can walk to. Affordability calculations need to combine various costs, including housing, transportation, and utilities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 1: Equitable Investment:</b> We need to intentionally and equitably invest in sidewalks, roads, and public transit infrastructure in Black and Hispanic/Latino communities, low-wealth communities, rural communities, and communities that do not primarily depend upon cars. Residents in these communities need transparency and meaningful opportunities to be part of the process of deciding how and where this money is invested.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We need transit amenities (benches, sidewalks, shelters, protected bus pull-outs, etc) in all neighborhoods -- but be wary that investments can increase gentrification. Engage the community on what they want. Some areas, such as Cheek Road, have so little in spite of all the tax dollars paid over years by nearby residents and justly deserve to be better served now.</li> <li>● Don't want "investment" in low-wealth areas to be used to justify punching roads through existing communities or creating avenues to increase gentrification -- maybe intentional development is supposed to cover this concern.</li> <li>● Everyone needs to be able to get where they need to go without getting killed, and be able to carry groceries, children, and whatever else needs transporting. We need to plan for and implement sidewalks.</li> <li>● Get buses to where they are needed. As we develop further out, we need to make the new development accessible to those who need transit to live there, and flexibility to get where you need to go rather than all going downtown.</li> <li>● A grid system of buses would serve riders more flexibly; if a rider misses one bus, they can get a different one.</li> <li>● In general, we need to explore new ideas in ways to extend transit service to outlying areas.</li> <li>● Some needs are really clear, but smart investment probably means building in a mechanism for updates as we see how covid has changed our habits.</li> <li>● Not clear what the "no requirement for development" means -- that we aren't getting sidewalks outside the immediate area of the development??</li> </ul>

<p><b>Objective 2: Good Transportation:</b> We need to be able to walk, ride and drive throughout our community safely and with dignity, prioritizing the needs of those not driving and designing solutions to meet their needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How “incidents” are coded can get in the way of correcting the infrastructure -- a woman was killed on Junction Road that was not recognized as being an issue with a lack of sidewalks because she fell into the road</li> <li>• We want to make it pleasant to walk where we want people to walk, using street-scapes and destinations, beyond simply putting in sidewalks. For example, front porches make community and parking decks as the ground floor of apartment buildings is hostile to pedestrians. We also need street trees for shade.</li> <li>• We have a lot of good ideas on improving bicycle connectivity, such as the bike boulevards. We support these ideas.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 3: Accessibility:</b> We need options for moving around the community that are physically accessible for Durham residents regardless of ability or age. The physical infrastructure needs to be designed for residents of all abilities and ages to comfortably, safely, and conveniently move around Durham.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A requirement for booking accessible transit trips two weeks prior is terrible.</li> <li>• More attention needs to be placed on providing better resources for people with disabilities, especially those that live alone.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 4: Thriving Lives:</b> We need transportation options, particularly for those without cars, that allow residents to access the resources they need to thrive safely, easily, affordably and conveniently. The location of housing, jobs, schools, and services should be intentionally planned in coordination with the transportation options needed to easily reach them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roads/streets are not just conduits but also places to be -- a streetscape -- plus we need to protect the surrounding places since what’s next to the road matters. We need to make sure everyone can safely get across a street. The Alston widening should be last time we do it that way.</li> <li>• Safety for school kids getting on buses is important; with more kids and more traffic we already have too many dangerous areas.</li> <li>• Require shorter block lengths in new residential developments to promote walkability and connectivity.</li> <li>• On country roads that don’t support much more traffic, we build lower density with no services so residents need to travel a lot to do anything; this will never support transit efficiently so we just dig ourselves deeper into the hole. We don’t have a long-term view of the big picture.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 5: Connectivity:</b> We need better, continuous, more interconnected transportation options that let people walk, ride, and drive to where they want and need to go. Improved street connectivity will reduce traffic congestion, pollution, and unsafe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep in mind transportation connection throughout the entire region.</li> <li>• Need more collaboration among different plans, both to external entities like state and Durham entities like libraries.</li> <li>• We like the “interconnected options” and improved street connectivity but need to know more about how they will be implemented. Currently we have rules in UDO, but the</li> </ul>

streets for all Durham residents, particularly those without access to a car.

new connections aren't always popular with those the traffic will go past. Stubs out to a drop-off to 40' are ridiculous.

- We need to look at projects in a larger context, whether or not a developer needs to do something, but planning needs to show how the project does or doesn't create issues / impacts / future investments required for the public at large to help making a decision about whether to approve re-zoning. We can require some nearby left-hand turn lanes, but can't ask for more.

# Jobs

Objective	Comments or Details
<p><b>Objective 1: Sustainable, Supported and Dignified Jobs:</b> We need to create a diversity of job options with wages that allow residents to afford and sustain life in Durham and are focused on employing, training and investing in Durham residents. Jobs need to be created specifically to be attainable for people in the community who have traditionally been excluded from the job market - youth, seniors, those with physical or mental disabilities, those who are justice-involved, single parents who have to balance childcare with job responsibilities, and those without formal degrees or education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We support the Objective but it isn't clear how we can make the jobs happen.</li> <li>● We support requirements to pay a living wage (where we can).</li> <li>● We can remove some barriers (training to level up).</li> <li>● Good planning needs to consider all kinds of workers; if someone needs to work 2 jobs, they need to have good transportation and nearby jobs (not to mention child-care drop-off), which affects land-use and transportation planning.</li> <li>● Goodwill used to provide work for people with physical and mental disabilities How do we replace that?</li> <li>● Getting job skills into trades, community college programs .</li> <li>● Training incubators might create jobs that provide training to go onto better jobs or entrepreneurship. For example, in Baltimore, young people get jobs with ice cream trucks that help them transition to owning their own truck.</li> <li>● It is helpful for people to have work opportunities near where they live. Durham's unreliable transit system makes it difficult for people to get/keep their jobs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 2: Accessible and Innovative Jobs:</b> We need to be able to create jobs that fit our skills, interests, and needs--near where we live--free from unnecessary barriers to opportunity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The companies brought in with \$100K salaries just increase the demand for expensive housing; what about working class jobs and mentoring to get into those jobs?</li> <li>● Evictions will be a huge fall-out from covid (and long-term black mark on credit, impacting job prospects); we need to deal with that now. Also we must be fair about security deposits. We need programs to help people out in these areas since it is important to lift people into home ownership.</li> <li>● Increase local training in the trades. The city and county governments should work with small business owners in creating a mentorship/internship program to provide an on the job training program.</li> <li>● NonProfits as well could create programs that work with youth that live in public housing, that will train on life skills such as money management.</li> <li>● Extend co-op programs where high school students get credits and wages while building skills and a resume</li> </ul>

# Environment

Objective	Comments or Details
General notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We generally like the objectives but wonder about the implementation.</li> <li>● We need to do Integrated Assessment to think about co-benefits for human well-being via the environment as well as the ecological impacts, rather than putting spending on different kinds of infrastructure against one another.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 1: Food Security:</b> We need healthy, nutritious, and local food options located equitably throughout our community that are easily accessible, so that all residents have food security. Residents need access to small-scale affordable grocery options located in or near their neighborhoods, particularly in Black and Hispanic/Latino communities. We need regulations that preserve farmland to protect our future food needs. We need to intentionally and equitably invest in sidewalks, roads, and public transit infrastructure in Black and Hispanic/Latino communities, low-wealth communities, rural communities, and communities that do not primarily depend upon cars. Residents in these communities need transparency and meaningful opportunities to be part of the process of deciding how and where this money is invested.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● We generally support this Objective but are concerned about actual steps to achieve it</li> <li>● Not a lot of food options in the developing areas in eastern portion of the county, and not just for grocery shopping. We want to see the plan that includes all the community needs, overall community planning</li> <li>● As noted in the general comments, some of this is wishful thinking in that paying a living wage makes local food unlikely to be affordable food; small-scale retail is really hard to do because of the extra steps in the supply chain</li> <li>● How do we encourage a return to “conjoint development” like Woodcroft -- that is, phased development that builds in the services and job opportunities to go with the developed housing? We can’t look to development community to do leadership on getting services where needed as it can be too much risk if they have too much debt with too much land</li> <li>● The limits on farmers markets are mostly around what the shopping centers allow. Local food is expensive because small farming is expensive. Land being expensive limits doing creative low-cost stuff.</li> <li>● There’s no new grocery stores on east side of town because at least Publix goes where the existing stores are.</li> <li>● Small owner-operated regional markets are what is needed. Larger corporately-owned grocery stores / big boxes are not needed in these spaces.</li> <li>● Again we need to identify appropriately planned and placed commercial nodes in suburban areas that are yet to be developed.</li> <li>● We should strongly favor redeveloping abandoned shopping centers instead of making yet more nodes.</li> </ul>

**Objective 2: Green Space:** We need safely accessible green spaces, continuously woven throughout our community, without putting residents of color at risk of displacement as this investment is made. Street trees, pocket parks and public park facilities need to be equitably distributed to provide residents with relief from pavement and buildings. Whether at a park, on a trail, or just looking out the window and seeing trees, everyone should be able to enjoy the physical, emotional, and nurturing benefits from being close to nature.

- Green space within new developments should not just be the required stream buffer and stormwater ponds.
- There is an overlap of recreation green space and open space.
- Open spaces need to be in the heart of new development.
- Affordable / working-class housing needs trees as much as higher-wealth areas. We need to protect / re-plant appropriate trees that provide the greatest benefits; city environments differ from what native species may be evolved to live in. Making tree coverage more equitable across the city is tied to cleaner air, lower AC bills, and general peacefulness. Trees can feel like a luxury, but are necessary.
- We need to be more thoughtful, generous, and specific with respect to tree-save areas and open-space placement within new residential developments so that the green spaces are better integrated with the homes.
- We need to think about mass-grading and increase the amount of tree-save percentage; the same area should not count as open space, stormwater and buffer.
- We acknowledge that the desire for open space contradicts the drive for more density. We don't want a plan in which developers can argue whichever objective they want at the time; we need rules and models to help to figure out if/when trees outweigh density.
- Community input and equity into the trees should be added. The input would include consultation on what kind of tree is planted and exactly where it should go, so it is right for the space and community needs and not in the path that people are walking or doing other activities the community enjoys.
- Equitable investment means increasing tree coverage in areas that have fewer trees.
- Trails should be placed where they are wanted. Some residents do not have fencing, and trails, in neighborhoods without fences, walking trails could cause people to become uncomfortable in their homes.

**Objective 3: Pollution:** We need clean air to breathe, water to drink, and land that sustains a healthy life for all residents. We need to trust and feel confident the City and County are protecting critical drinking water sources, regulating air pollution and hazardous or solid waste, and cleaning up existing polluted areas. The environmental harms of pollution from industries and infrastructure disproportionately placed in historically Black neighborhoods must be corrected.

- How this relates to Objective 4 is unclear, but we assume this one is about pollution and the other about development rules like stormwater
- There are lots of things we are doing already about pollution, but there are some new programs we could look at, such as reducing idling of cars in school driveways
- We want more granular zoning districts so highly-polluting industrial can't go near housing. Historically, one way to get cheap housing is to put it on cheap land, and land is cheap where the nearby uses are nasty.
- Having an objective for clean air and water (and land) is great for the many health-fragile people in the community.
- The current rate of development is not aligned with the city's goal to reduce its carbon footprint since trees are being removed and more cars are added to the roads. We shouldn't forget the 3+ years of dust being generated by construction.
- We need efforts to abate lead and asbestos.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Given their stormwater harms, we need an analysis of underutilized parking lots with a goal of enhancing their use.</li> <li>• Increased efforts to remediate and redevelop brownfields.</li> <li>• Durham has a growing population of lung transplant patients who have large concerns about water and air quality. These concerns need to be addressed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 4: Environment-related Regulation:</b> We need to build in harmony with the environment in a way that respects and protects the environment for the benefit of all living things. We need development regulations that protect our remaining natural areas including wetlands, floodplains, lakes, rivers, streams, old-growth forests, and the plants and animals that rely on them to live. We need green infrastructure to protect residents and the environment from the effects of pollution and flooding. Whenever possible we need to make use of the things we already have, like buildings and infrastructure, so that we don't have to always create new things from scratch.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clustering was supposed to save the green space, but we never get around to protecting the green space that was saved, so it gets used in the next development.</li> <li>• Re-use and re-development of tired shopping centers make economic sense; let's have incentives for reuse of space.</li> <li>• We need to do better at honoring watershed improvement and other environmental plans in approving site plans; we need to give them teeth by putting a requirement into the zoning code.</li> </ul>



**Objective 5: Climate Change:** We need a resilient and future-oriented community that is carbon-neutral and prepared to weather the irreversible impacts of climate change. Durham urgently needs to significantly reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases (GHG) that contribute to climate change. We need to retrofit and prepare our communities to be more resilient to natural disasters generated by climate change. Low-income and communities of color in Durham will be most impacted by climate change due to inequitable development decisions of the past. Durham needs to prioritize reducing impacts on these communities as we plan for a sustainable future.

- It is not clear what specific measures should be done about climate change; this Objective should contain specific solutions.
- There should be significantly more existing mature tree-save in new developments.
- Should help (not minimally impact) low-wealth, through things like energy efficiency for customers delinquent on power bills.
- There is tension between the commitment to reduce greenhouse gases and our current form of development. This comprehensive plan needs to specify what “sprawl” is and identify what future residential development should look like.
- Encourage the use of low impact building materials, especially alternatives to standard concrete.
- More buried utilities in older areas would be resilient.
- Community-building is part of resiliency; after one of the Japanese earthquakes, the parts of the city with the most effective community networks recovered the fastest.
- Climate change may force us to recalculate plans for water supply.

## Public Spaces, Recreation and Activities

Objective	Comments or Details
General notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All of our public spaces and parks need to be maintained, but prioritized funding needs to go into areas where there has been under-investment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 1: Public Spaces:</b>We need publicly available parks, community centers, libraries, and outdoor recreation facilities that feel safe to use and travel to, are well-maintained, designed for everyone in mind, and are equitably located throughout Durham’s neighborhoods and rural communities. We need to make the most of existing public spaces and provide innovative and creative spaces for play. Everyone in Durham needs to be able to use and have convenient access to these community resources, particularly youth, seniors, people with disabilities, people who don’t use a car, rural residents and Black and Hispanic/Latino residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reserving land for parks, community centers and other public goods should be treated as seriously as reserving roadway is done. Most parks created since 1950 can’t be walked to; when public parks and other community resources are being planned, non-automobile access (sidewalks, the public transit network) should be included. Places to meet are important; a Bragtown Center at the old school would be great.</li> <li>More community-ownership and share of control would mean developing and supporting community experts/leaders to plan events and classes and to make decisions.</li> <li>Are smaller facilities economic? Does sharing functions help make smaller facilities affordable? Can we use the spaces, such as schools, that we have better, either for one-time events such as celebrations or on an on-going basis such as for community playgrounds? We should look at the conversion of old playing fields into spaces that meet current needs.</li> <li>Mobile facilities like library buses?</li> <li>More spaces for commemoration of people we want to honor; for example, Sandy Creek Park has talked about a grove of trees honoring environmental leaders. These would help define a neighborhood and enhance it, but need to be well planned.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 2: Activities and Events:</b> We need cultural and recreational opportunities, events, and activities that are affordable to all Durham residents, particularly low income residents, families, children and young people, seniors and Black and Hispanic/Latino residents. We need to intentionally invest our taxes in recreation opportunities that prioritize and benefit those in the community who would otherwise be unable to participate. Free or reduced recreational and cultural resources need to be</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We haven’t been good at doing fun events in the public plazas we have. When we create them, we need to think more about how to use them. Adding a few amenities can make the space much more useful to the event; for example, adding some benches that would be nice for walkers and also provide a setting for entertainment.</li> <li>We used to have better programming in our community spaces in order to do more at keeping the minds out of the “devil’s workshop”. More community centers could offer more diffuse programs that residents are able to get to without driving.</li> <li>Events like these are important as they provide a window into understanding different cultures.</li> </ul>

<p>widely advertised, clearly communicated, and easy to access.</p>	
<p><b>Objective 3: Good Spaces and Events:</b> We need to welcome and celebrate the diverse identities and cultures of Durham’s residents through our recreation centers and activities, cultural events, and public and cultural spaces. We need spaces and opportunities that are in alignment with the needs and desires of residents, starting with engaging residents in planning. We need spaces that are welcoming to, reflective of, and relevant to residents, particularly our youth, seniors, Black and Hispanic/Latino residents, LGBTQIA+ residents, and those with disabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Possibly utilize the Durham County stadium, instead of a downtown event. Or use the sporting fields at local schools.</li></ul>

## Education and Training

Objective	Comments or Details
<p><b>Objective 1: Innovative and Accessible Schools:</b> We need accessible and innovative school properties that are located and designed to bring community members together and connect residents to resources within their communities. We need to creatively and effectively use publicly-owned school land to integrate resources such as community gardens, recreation or community centers, training and job preparation opportunities, mental and physical health care, and affordable housing for teachers and staff. We especially need this resource in low income and Black and Hispanic/Latino neighborhoods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Supportive of the Objective, but curious how this might clash with the school board.</li> <li>● Neighborhood schools used to provide night educational courses for adults. They could also be used as meeting spaces for the community.</li> <li>● Joint use of school property by Parks and DPS was discussed in the 1990's Comprehensive Plan process</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 2: Good Schools:</b> We need all students to feel safe, supported, and nurtured by community centered solutions to conflict resolution, mental health counseling, healthy food access, and family support in our schools. We need innovative alternatives to existing security procedures, focusing on restorative justice and community centered counseling rather than processes that funnel students into the criminal justice system. We need to equitably support teachers across Durham schools, focusing on hiring and retaining diverse teachers and staff so that students can see themselves reflected in school leaders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support divestment/reinvestment in counseling, rather than police presence.</li> <li>● Why is there no explicit mention of kids with special needs?</li> <li>● End the school to prison pipeline.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Objective 3: Equity Investment:</b> We need equitable investment in the quality of our schools throughout Durham – from the physical facilities to the resources made available to students, their families, and teachers – to ensure we are investing in the future of Durham. We need to prioritize funding and resources that serve English Language Learners, students with disabilities, students of color, low-income students, and school communities that have been historically disinvested from.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Acknowledgement of the impact of charter schools on resegregation.</li> <li>● Publically funded equity investment should be reserved for the public school system.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 4: Training Opportunities:</b> We need accessible and affordable opportunities for Durham residents to gain life skills and job training to improve their quality of life and build generational wealth. We need to ensure local residents receive the job training needed to get hired in jobs being created in our community. We need innovative partnerships with Durham Public Schools, Durham Tech, NCCU, and Duke to create community programs that connect residents to needed training opportunities. Durham needs equitable training and employment opportunities, prioritizing young people, justice-involved persons, non-native English speakers, and those without formal education, recovering from addiction, or with disabilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Schools no longer provide the ability to learn trades from schools; there should be those training opportunities.</li> <li>● Avoid putting kids into tracks based on race and/or income, or based on parameters that merely obscure tracking by race and/or income.</li> <li>● Create evening or night class programs taught at schools, open to both students and adults.</li> </ul>

## Youth, Seniors, Health and Wellness

Objective	Comments or Details
<p><b>Objective 1: Youth:</b> We need to invest in, empower, value, and support young people in Durham to ensure they play an integral role in shaping Durham's future. We need young people to have the power to design and determine the use of resources that are intended to benefit them. We need to implement innovative ideas that support youth voting and political leadership opportunities. We need to prioritize equitable access to leadership, social, and work opportunities among youth, ensuring that Black and Hispanic/Latino, LGBTQIA+, low-income, and unhoused young people can participate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentorship and intern programs should be created to connect Durham's youth, trades workers, and small businesses.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 2: Seniors:</b> We need to value, design for, support, and include senior residents in shaping Durham, particularly seniors who are Black, Hispanic/Latino, homeless, living in public housing, without digital access, or who have physical or mental disabilities. We need to ensure that seniors, in particular, are able to stay in the homes and communities they have helped build. We need to create intentional intergenerational spaces where older adults can live their full lives within communities and communities can benefit from the wisdom of elders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We support this objective, especially making sure seniors are able to stay in the homes and communities they helped build.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objective 3: Equity in Health and Wellness:</b> We need equitable, easily accessible, and affordable options for residents to access health services like primary care, dental and vision care, mental</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish health clinics within lower income communities.</li> <li>• Mobile medical unit that provides primary care services in lower income communities.</li> </ul>

health counseling, rehabilitation centers, childcare, senior care homes, and pharmacies. We need innovative ways to provide these services, such as mobile and remote clinics, that can be accessed from convenient community spaces like schools, parks, and places of worship. We need all residents to be healthy and well cared for, particularly people of color, seniors, youth, and those who are unhoused or with low-incomes.