Northeast Central Durham Livability Initiative—A Partnership for Sustainable Communities

Neighborhood Schemes

- Workforce and Economic Development
- Safe and Healthy Living Environment
- Multi-Functional Open Spaces
- Coordinated Public Transportation
Economic and Workforce Development Scheme

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Scheme Leaders:
- Marion Lamberth

Existing Projects
- Northeast Central Durham Marketing Plan
- Angier/Driver Streetscape
- Alston Avenue Streetscape
- Brownfields Site Development & Property Acquisition
- Green Job Creation

Upcoming Projects
- Establish Urban Market
- Northeast Central Durham Development Plan
- Vacant Property Inventory
- Small Business Tours

This community scheme focuses on entrepreneurial education, attracting the creative class, attracting industry, brownfield development, providing access to quality-locally-owned affordable foods, local investment, and streetscapes. The citizens in this group want to increase the quality of life for citizens in NECD through employment training, stabilizing tax base, job creation, and redevelopment.

*The Associated livability principles:*
- Enhance economic competitiveness
- Coordinate policies and leverage investments
- Support existing communities

Partners
NC Department of Commerce, Department of Economic and Workforce Development, City/County Durham Planning Department, Durham Public Schools, Builders of Hope, Habitat for Humanity, UNC-Chapel Hill
Workforce and Economic Development Scheme

Northeast Central Durham Livability initiative

Northeast Central Durham — “Where Access meets Opportunity”

The primary goal of Economic and Workforce Development scheme is to create and attract innovative small business to NECD. The scheme team selected as its first economic development project, the adoption of the Angier/Driver corridor. Business owners on this corridor have become organized and are committed to working in partnership with the scheme team to increase fresh healthy food options and draw other amenities to the corridor so residents can circulate dollars in their community.

Current scheme team projects

- Development of marketing strategy
- Inventory of commercial property
- Inventory analysis of commercial property — land and building value, square footage, zoning, usage, etc.
- Redevelopment of Brownfield sites
Safe and Healthy Communities Scheme

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Scheme Leaders:
- Lenora Smith

Existing Projects
- Northeast Central Durham Walking Club
- Heart 360 Program in Northeast Central Durham
- Energy Retrofit Program
- Bull City Safe Streets
- Uplift East Durham Home Tour
- Hope VI Revitalization Program

Upcoming Projects
- Exterior Homes Retrofit
- Energy Savings Reduction Program

‘Politics of happiness’ This community scheme focuses on housing, social services, community mobilization, and safety. The citizens in this group want to increase homeownership, financial literacy, access to quality education, decrease crime, and promote better health.

Associated livability principles:
- Promote Equitable, Affordable Housing
- Support Existing Communities
- Value Communities and Neighborhoods

Partners
EPA, HUD, City/County Sustainability Office, City of Durham Parks and Recreation, Durham Open Space and Trails Committee, City/County Durham Planning Department, Durham Public Schools, Durham Police Department, Duke University Medical System
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Durham is using $1.5 million for a new neighborhood Energy Retrofit Program (NERP)

Durham is using $1.5 million in grant funding for a new Neighborhood Energy Retrofit Program (NERP) that is subsidizing specific energy retrofits in approximately 700 homes in targeted neighborhoods. Volunteers are mobilizing neighborhoods throughout the city, including Northeast Central Durham (NECD), educating neighborhoods and enrolling households in the innovative program. Rather than spend money on energy audits, program managers selected five retrofits that almost all homes need, are relatively low-cost, and have relatively high return on investment. These improvements are air sealing, duct sealing, attic insulation, programmable thermostats, water saving showerheads, and carbon monoxide detectors. The households pay $200-$300 and the City pays up to $1,800 for the retrofits. In addition, participants attend energy awareness and do-it-yourself workshops. The program is expected to reduce energy use by at least 20% in the participating households, which can have a significant effect on households with low to moderate or fixed incomes.

Residential Energy Reduction Program

The Residential Energy Reduction program is a partnership between Clean Energy Durham and the Safe and Healthy Environment Scheme.

Clean Energy Durham hired two NECD residents who conducted outreach and recruited NECD residents to host in-home workshops and to serve as volunteer trainers to teach other residents easy no cost and low cost energy saving tips.

Clean Energy Durham teaches hands-on, do-it-yourself, in-home workshops for groups of neighbors who learn together various energy-saving techniques such as weatherstripping a door, installing outlet insulators, caulking plumbing penetrations and insulating water heaters.

Clean Energy Durham also teaches a one-hour workshop called Basic Energy Education, Cost energy saving tips and how to get the most bang for the buck when hiring a professional to do home energy upgrades.

During the six month partnership, eight workshops were held which resulted in 86 people being trained. Clean Energy Durham staff and NECD volunteers taught a first generation of 29 people. These 29 people went on to teach another 52 second generation people who went on to teach 5 third generation people.
Multi-Functional Open Spaces Scheme

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Scheme Leaders:
- Thomas Poole

Existing Projects
- Northeast Central Durham Green Necklace
- Establish New Pedestrian Trails with Signage
- Goose Creek Cleanup
- Eastway Elementary Outdoor Urban Classroom
- Neighborhood Urban Edible Garden Program
- Eastway Elementary Edible Garden

Upcoming Projects
- Garden-to-School Lunch Program
- Establish New Parks
- Establish Rail-to-Trail Program
- Establish Adopt-A-Park Program
- Community Wetland Workshops

This community scheme focuses on green spaces, healthy living, and education. The citizens in this group want to encourage local food enterprise, improve the environment, improve health, and educate the community.

Associated livability principles:
- Coordinate policies and leverage investment
- Value Communities and Neighborhoods

Partners
EPA, City of Durham Parks and Recreation, Durham Open Space and Trails Committee, City/County Durham Planning Department, Durham Public Schools, NC DENR, North Carolina Central University
Multi-Functional Open Spaces Scheme
Northeast Central Durham Livability Initiative

The Multi-Functional Open Spaces Scheme members built strong partnerships in the community to undertake and completed a number of aggressive projects.

**Goose Creek Cleanup**, a half-day environmental initiative, brought the Environmental Protection Agency, North Carolina Central University, Feed My Sheep, the City’s Neighborhood Improvement Services Department, and community leaders to the sections of the creek that run behind Eastway Elementary School and the Long Meadow Park. Keep Durham Beautiful provided litter grabbers, bags, and safety vests.

EPA’s Peter Shubert shared a wealth of knowledge about the creek with the volunteers: how the underlying fabric maintains the creek’s ecological system, how to identify various types of leaves, and how plants reproduce when birds eat their seeds and eliminate the seeds elsewhere.

The second part of the creek’s cleanup is planned for the fall and will pick up on the north side at Holloway Street. The biggest pollution is from cigarette butts. Team members are planning a series of workshops to educate the community on such contaminates harm our waterways.

**Eastway Elementary Outdoor Urban Classroom** is a fundamental component of the Open Spaces Scheme. On January 12, Eastway students planted 12 trees to line the walkway leading to the school’s north entrance. They returned to the outdoors on March 4 to plant flower bulbs around the flagpole at the school’s main entrance. Each of the hands-on project was accompanied by classroom materials designed by grade level to enhance students understanding of the ecological system and thereby heighten the learning experience.

**Neighborhood Urban Edible Garden Program** and the **Eastway Elementary Edible Gardens** were funded in part by a $500 contribution from the Feed My Sheep Ministry that operates from Asbury Temple United Methodist Church. On April 28, the partners (EPA, NCCU, parents, community leaders, Keep Durham Beautiful, and the city’s Neighborhood Improvement Services Department) planted 18 raised bed gardens at Eastway Elementary School. The gardens provide food to students when school is in session and continue to provide food to residents in the surrounding neighborhood during the summer months.
Coordinated Public Transportation Scheme

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Scheme Leaders:
- Dawn Hill-Alston

Existing Projects
- Alston Avenue Widening Project
- Establish a Complete Streets Policy
- Driver/Driver Streetscape Project
- New Bus Shelters
- Public Transportation Community Surveys
- Establish Urban Market

Upcoming Projects
- Alston Avenue Station Area Plan - Regional Rail Connectivity
- Bike-to-School Safety Program
- Bull City Connector Expansion
- East Durham Trolley
- Sidewalk Improvements
- East Durham Bicycle & Pedestrian Route Maps

This community scheme focuses on streetscape design, transportation alternatives, pedestrian safety, housing, streetscape enhancement, existing transit improvements, transit expansion, and regional connectivity. The citizens in this group want to reflect what the community wants and provide a blueprint as to how to get there.

Assisted Livability Principles:
- To provide more transportation choices
- Support existing communities

Partners
FHWA, NCDOT, City of Durham Transportation, Triangle Transit Authority, Triangle J Council of Governments