

Durham is a result of the needs of the 19th century railroad industry. The wood-burning

steam locomotives of the time had to stop frequently for wood and water and the new North Carolina Railroad needed a depot between the settled towns of Raleigh and Hillsborough. The residents of what is now downtown Durham thought their businesses catering to livestock drivers had a better future than a new-fangled nonsense like a railroad and refused to sell or lease land for a depot.

Eventually a railway depot was established on land donated by [Bartlett S. Durham](#) in 1849. As Durham Station's population rapidly increased, the station became a town and was incorporated by act of the [North Carolina General Assembly](#), on April 10, 1869. It was named for the man who provided the land on which the station was built, Dr. Bartlett Durham. Durham is a city in the [U.S. state of North Carolina](#). It is the [county seat](#) of [Durham County](#),^[6] though portions also extend into [Wake County](#) in the east and [Orange County](#) in the west.^[2]

It is the fourth-largest city in the state, and the 85th-largest in the United States by population, with 287,252 residents as of the 2011 United States census.^[2] It is the home of [Duke University](#) and [North Carolina Central University](#), and is also one of the vertices of the [Research Triangle](#) area (home of the [Research Triangle Park](#)).^[7]

Durham is the core of the four-county [Durham-Chapel Hill Metropolitan Area](#), which has a population of 534,578 as of U.S. Census 2013 Population Estimates. The US Office

of Management and Budget also includes Durham as a part of the [Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill Combined Statistical Area](#), which has a population of 2,037,430 as of U.S. Census 2013 Population Estimates.^[8]



Clockwise from top: Durham skyline, North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, Five Points, Carolina Theater, Durham Performing Arts Center, Duke Chapel



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Nickname(s): Bull City; City of Medicine^[1]