



Amended: November 6, 2017

Please note that policies which have been fully implemented are shown in gray.

Durham Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 5 Historic Preservation Element

Durham City-County Planning Department

The Durham Comprehensive Plan

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Chapter 5, Historic Preservation Element

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Historic Preservation Element



Durham is a community rich in history. Its heritage of tobacco processing is displayed in the progression of historic industrial buildings in the American Tobacco campus in downtown and the Duke Homestead State Historic Site. Durham’s antebellum history is presented in its older historic homes and the Stagville Preservation Center, another State Historic Site. The Indian Trading Path that traverses the County represents its colonial and pre-colonial history. Excellent examples of preserved downtown commercial buildings and homes in historic neighborhoods testify to Durham’s appreciation of its vernacular architecture.

In the late 1970s through the early 1990’s, the City and County undertook historic architectural inventories throughout their jurisdictions. As a result of the City inventory, *The Durham Architectural and Historic Inventory* was published, and the City initiated nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for thirteen districts and eighteen individual properties.

There are numerous historically significant properties identified in the Durham County Architectural Inventory and many of these are potentially eligible National Register properties. The County also has two potential National Register Historic Districts, Bahama and Rougemont. Aside from historic architectural amenities, the State Historic Preservation Office has documented hundreds of archaeological sites in Durham’s jurisdiction; many of these relate to the Indian Trading Path that traverses through Durham from the northeast and Granville County to Orange County in the west.

Summary of Issues

- 1. Preservation of Rural Historic Resources.** Durham has a wealth of historic resources in its rural areas. Many historic properties are in particular jeopardy of being overtaken and significantly altered or destroyed by the impacts of new development. Durham should protect the most vulnerable of its historic

resources and marshal the fiscal resources necessary to initiate effective protection actions.

- 2. Urban Density and Historic Neighborhoods.** Triangle Transit is planning its Regional Rail transit services through the heart of Durham. Several of its rail stations are located adjacent to historic Durham neighborhoods. Regional transit stations, especially the station in Downtown Durham, will be a major draw for new large-scale development, and can help Durham attract valuable new higher density transit-oriented development. However, these transit-oriented developments must be appropriately and contextually designed so that they do not adversely affect the historic integrity of nearby neighborhoods.
- 3. Preservation of Archaeological Sites.** Each year across the State, hundreds of archaeological sites are lost due to rural development, construction projects and unscrupulous collectors. While State law protects cemetery sites, other types of archaeological sites are not as protected, especially those on private lands. Durham should implement policies to appropriately integrate important archaeological resources into Durham's processes for reviewing new development.
- 4. Protecting Historic Travel Corridors.** Remnants of the Indian Trading Path in north Durham and other roadways represent pieces of the historic heritage of Native Americans and early settlers in North Carolina. Durham should highlight the Path and other historic travel corridors, their importance to the County's heritage, and protect these travel corridors from the impacts of development and unauthorized disturbance.
- 5. Local Historic Landmarks.** The local historic landmark program is intended to identify, protect, and preserve the most noteworthy historic properties within Durham. Durham should identify and protect those resources that are important to the community as a whole and represent the most significant aspects of our history, culture, architecture, and persons.
- 6. New Local Historic Districts.** Durham has a wealth of historic resources, many of which have been identified and designated on the National Register of Historic Places, but does not have any local protection in place to assist in the preservation of these properties. Durham should systematically identify and designate those resources in greatest need of the protection.

Goal 5.1, Historic Preservation

Provide for the identification, protection and promotion of historic resources as an integral component of quality growth in Durham.

Objective 5.1.1. Protection of Historic Resources

Identify, record and protect the historically significant sites and areas of Durham County.

Policy 5.1.1a. Historic Resource Inventories. Continue to maintain and update inventories of Durham’s historic resources, including the Durham Architectural and Historic Inventory.

Policy 5.1.1b. Historic Resources and Compatible Development. Promote new development that is compatible with significant historic resources by addressing impacts through the development review process.

Policy 5.1.1c. Creative Partnerships for Historic Preservation. The City-County Planning Department, the City Office of Economic and Workforce Development and other departments as appropriate shall develop and use creative partnerships with private, public and nonprofit partners to preserve and protect historically significant properties.

Policy 5.1.1d. Historic Property Assistance Programs. Establish financial assistance programs through various City departments to aid in the restoration of locally protected historic properties, particularly properties that could qualify as demolition by neglect. (See Policy 5.1.5b, Financial Tools for Historic Preservation).

Policy 5.1.1e. Historic Value of Surplus City and County Property. The City Department of General Services and the County Engineering and Environmental Services Department shall review their inventories of surplus publicly owned properties to identify those with historic values and shall determine appropriate preservation strategies.

Policy 5.1.1f. Interdepartmental Coordination on Historic Structures. The City Department of Neighborhood Improvement Services shall consult the City-County Planning Department regarding any potential Minimum Housing Code enforcement actions where the subject property is located within a designated Local Historic District, National Register Historic District, and/or is designated as a Local Historic Landmark. (See Policy 3.6.1g, Interdepartmental Coordination on Historic Structures).

Policy 5.1.1g. Preventing Demolition of Historic Resources. Through the Unified Development Ordinance and/or local legislation, the City-County Planning Department, in conjunction

with the Historic Preservation Commission and local preservation stakeholders, shall establish a mechanism to discourage and/or prohibit demolition of significant historic resources in Durham.

Objective 5.1.2. Historic Districts

Identify and designate Historic Districts, and allow physical alterations that are consistent with the District's historic significance.

Policy 5.1.2a. Local Historic Districts. Maintain the designation of and continue to implement preservation plans for Durham's historic districts. Regularly review and update preservation plans to ensure that property designations accurately reflect changes over time.

Policy 5.1.2b. Potential Historic Districts. The City-County Planning Department shall continue to identify potential local and/or national historic districts in Durham that are:

- i. Of special significance in terms of their prehistorical, historical, architectural or cultural importance; and
- ii. Possess integrity of design, setting, materials, feeling and association.

Policy 5.1.2c. Historic District Land Use Analysis. The City-County Planning Department shall prepare detailed land use plan updates for all Local Historic Districts to ensure that land use policy and regulations for the district are consistent with historic patterns and district goals. (See Policy 2.5.3b, Historic District Land Use Analysis.)

Policy 5.1.2d. Historic Rural Villages. Investigate the feasibility of the establishment of a local and/or National Register Historic Districts in the village of Bahama. (See Policies 2.5.3c, Rural Village Plans and 4.3.1a, Rural Village Design Guidelines.)

Policy 5.1.2e. Historic District Tree Canopy Preservation. The City-County Planning Department shall Identify street segments within and between existing Historic Districts with a current or pre-existing canopy of large trees and develop a plan, in conjunction with the Urban Forestry Division of the City Department of General Services, for the systematic replacement of lost or declining trees with appropriately-scaled and urban tolerant tree species.

Objective 5.1.3. Historic Landmarks

Identify and designate Historic Landmarks, and review alterations to ensure consistency with their historic significance.

Policy 5.1.3a. Local Historic Landmarks. Continue to maintain Historic Landmark designations for existing Local Historic Landmarks, identify potential historic landmark properties, and designate new Local Historic Landmarks.

Policy 5.1.3b. Tax Deferral for Historic Landmarks. The Governing Bodies shall continue to provide a tax incentive for designation of Historic Landmarks by applying the deferral of a portion of the property taxes in accordance with State statutes.

Objective 5.1.4. Community Awareness

Increase community awareness of, interest in and support for Durham's historic preservation efforts.

Policy 5.1.4a. Historic Preservation Outreach and Education. Increase the proactive role of the Durham Historic Preservation Commission and the City-County Planning Department to reach out and educate the general public, developers, and government officials about the importance of preservation of historical sites and architecture. The City-County Planning Department shall seek and promote new ways to inform and educate the community about the preservation efforts in Durham, such as creating and updating a historic preservation web page and other publicity opportunities.

Policy 5.1.4b. Financial Tools for Historic Preservation. The City-County Planning Department, in consultation with the City Community Development Department and the City Department of Neighborhood Improvement Services shall investigate financial tools available for the rehabilitation of historic residential properties.

Objective 5.1.5. Incentives and Funding

Identify and utilize funding sources and financial incentives to promote historic preservation in Durham.

Policy 5.1.5a. Certified Local Government Status. The City-County Planning Department will continue to maintain the City and County status as Certified Local Governments.

Policy 5.1.5b. Financial Assistance Sources. The City-County Planning Department shall identify sources of financial assistance, including grants, and apply for financial assistance to assist in preserving and promoting Durham's historic resources. (See Policy 5.1.1d, Historic Property Assistance Programs.)

Policy 5.1.5c. Historic Preservation Commission and Funding. The Historic Preservation Commission shall exercise its authority and expertise to raise funds for historic preservation activities.

Objective 5.1.6. Protection of Archaeological Resources

Identify, record and protect Durham's identified archaeological resources and cemeteries.

Policy 5.1.6a. Archaeological Inventory. The City-County Planning Department and the Historic Preservation Commission

shall prepare and maintain an inventory of archeological resources that identifies sites of archeological significance with the assistance of the State Historic Preservation Office and other sources.

Policy 5.1.6b. Preserving Archaeological Resources. The City-County Planning Department and the Historic Preservation Commission shall assess the significance of archaeological resources and shall develop criteria and regulations for the protection of the significant archaeological resources. When new development is proposed that affects significant archeological resources, the Unified Development Ordinance shall require that the resources be protected and preserved.

Policy 5.1.6c. Cemetery Protection. The City-County Planning Department shall develop and maintain an inventory of cemetery sites in Durham. The City-County Planning Department, through the development review process, shall identify the potential impact of new development proposals on cemetery sites. Working with the Historic Preservation Commission, the City-County Planning Department shall identify appropriate mitigation strategies.

Policy 5.1.6d. Archeological Resource Education. The Historic Preservation Commission and City-County Planning Department shall educate public officials, staff and the general public about the importance of archeological sites and cemeteries in Durham, as well as laws regarding them.

Objective 5.1.7. Historic Travel Corridors

Identify, assess and, if appropriate, protect historic travel corridors in Durham, including the Indian Trading Path and Fish Dam Road that traverse north Durham County.

Policy 5.1.7a. Travel Corridors Resource Inventory and Assessment. The City-County Planning Department shall conduct an inventory of segments of the Indian Trading Path, Fish Dam Road and other historic travel corridors in Durham to identify historic and archeological resources and assess their historic significance and integrity. As part of this inventory, the City-County Planning Department shall propose actions to protect and, if appropriate, interpret the most important corridors and sites.

Policy 5.1.7b. Preserving Historic Travel Corridors. When new development is proposed that affects significant resources in historic travel corridors, the Unified Development Ordinance shall require that the resources be protected and preserved.

Amendment History

Amended – June 26, 2006

Policy 5.1.3a. Existing Historic Landmarks [Add the following to the list of approved historic landmarks.]

- xlii. J. S. Manning House
- xlili. William and Margaret Lynch House
- xliv. Dr. Hickman and Ethel Ray House
- xlv. Mable and G. Frank Warner House
- xlvi. Temple Building
- xlvii. First National Bank Building
- xlviii. Brightleaf Square, Watts and Yuille Warehouses
- xlix. Former Wright’s Machinery Building
- l. J. S. Bassett House
- li. Evans House
- lii. Bullington Warehouse
- liii. S. Parks Alexander House
- liv. Sessoms–Markham House
- lv. Oren Belvin House
- lvi. Former Liggett and Meyers Tobacco Company Complex – West Village Expansion

Amended – May 14, 2012 – See Appendix X

Amended – June 10, 2013

Policy 5.1.1c. Creative Partnerships for Historic Preservation. The City-County Planning Department, and the City Office of Economic and Workforce Development and other departments as appropriate shall develop and use creative partnerships with private, public and nonprofit partners to preserve and protect historically significant properties.

Amended – June 2, 2014

Policy 5.1.1a. Historic Resource Inventories. Continue to maintain and update inventories of Durham’s historic resources, including the Durham Architectural and Historic Inventory.

Policy 5.1.2a. Local Historic Districts. Maintain the designation of and continue to implement preservation plans for Durham’s historic districts. Regularly review and update preservation plans to ensure that property designations accurately reflect changes over time.

Policy 5.1.2d. Historic Rural Villages. Investigate the feasibility of the establishment of a local and/or National Register Historic District in the villages of Bahama ~~and Rougemont~~. (See Policies 2.2.1e, Rural Villages, Policy 2.5.3c, Rural Village Plans, and 4.3.1a, Rural Village Design Guidelines.)

Policy 5.1.4a. Historic Preservation Outreach and Education. Increase the proactive role of the Durham Historic Preservation Commission and the City-County Planning Department to reach out and educate the general public, developers, and government officials about the importance of preservation of historical sites and architecture ~~by developing ordinances and regulations to protect historic resources.~~ The City-County Planning Department shall seek and promote new ways to inform and educate the

community about the preservation efforts in Durham, such as creating and updating a historic preservation web page and other publicity opportunities.

Amended – August 17, 2015

Policy 5.1.1e. Historic Value of Surplus City and County Property. The City Department of General Services and the County Engineering and Environmental Services Department shall review their inventories of surplus publicly owned properties to identify those with historic values and shall determine appropriate preservation strategies.

Policy 5.1.4b. Financial Tools for Historic Preservation. The ~~Office of Economic and Workforce Development~~ City-County Planning Department, in consultation with the City Community Development Department and the City Department of Neighborhood Improvement Services, shall ~~investigate create a database of~~ financial tools available for the rehabilitation of historic preservation residential properties.

Fully Implemented Policies

Policy	Implementation Tool
5.1.1g. Preventing Demolition of Historic Properties	UDO, section 3.18