A map of Southeast Durham, North Carolina, showing various locations and engagement points. The map is overlaid with numerous circular icons representing different types of community input: thumbs up (positive feedback), thumbs down (negative feedback), walking figures (pedestrian concerns), trees (green space), lightbulbs (ideas), and question marks (uncertainty). Labeled locations include East Regional Library, Food Lion, Spring Valley Elementary School, Bethesda, Lumley Rd, Frankie's of Raleigh, Food Lion, Harris Teeter, and Carpenter. Major roads like 70, 145, and 195 are also visible.

Southeast Durham Focus Area Engagement Summary

Comprehensive Plan

Contents

1. *Introduction to the Southeast Durham Focus Area*
2. *How We Engaged*
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 - b. *Summary Statements & Quotes by Goal and Objective*

Introduction

This document summarizes the process for engaging the community on the Southeast Durham Focus Area for Durham's new Comprehensive Plan. Consistent with previous summaries, this document provides similar content about who we engaged, how we engaged, and what we heard.

The timeline below is a broad overview of the process so far for developing recommendations for the Southeast Durham Focus Area as part of Durham's new Comprehensive Plan.

March 2021- May 2021

*Online Southeast
Durham Focus Area
Engagement*



May 2021- July 2021

*Focused
Interviews*



July 2021- August 2021

*Draft
Recommendations*



September 2021- October 2021

*Presentations to Planning
Commission, Board of County
Commissioners, and City Council*

What is the Southeast Durham Focus Area? (1 of 2)

The Southeast Durham Focus Area is a part of Durham's new Comprehensive Plan. Durham City Council asked the Planning Department to focus on this area of Durham first to provide early guidance before the entire Comprehensive Plan is adopted.

The purpose of the focus area is to

- Apply the plan's [goals and objectives](#) to a specific area;
- Understand what residents see as existing needs and priorities for the area;
- Understand what land uses (types of housing, locations of new stores, environmental protections) residents want to see; and
- Recommend new future land uses to inform zoning and annexation requests

What is the Southeast Durham Focus Area? (2 of 2)

This area is bounded by Sherron Road, Highway 98, Carpenter Pond Rd, and U.S. Highway 70, and is primarily the area to be served by the city's new Southeast Regional Lift Station.

In recent years, there has been a lot of development interest for this part of Durham. There continues to be many requests before Planning Commission and City Council to change the zoning of property in this area and requests to annex property into the City limits. This development activity is in large part due to the city's construction of new water and sewer infrastructure that will serve this area.

Throughout Spring and Summer 2021, staff tried out virtual and remote engagement opportunities to build on the Listening and Learning and the Community Goals & Objectives engagement to hear from residents about key, priorities, and concerns about development in this small area.

Engagement on the Southeast Durham Focus Area

As we planned to engage on the Southeast Durham Focus Area, we focused on how to overcome challenges to prioritizing equity in engagement due to the pandemic. We focused resources on reaching those who we've excluded in the past and then on opportunities for broader engagement.

Our engagement efforts focused on:

- Making new connections with residents in the Southeast Durham Focus area, particularly with Hispanic/Latino residents and business owners;
- Through focused interviews, hearing residents' experiences, issues, and priorities for housing, transportation, and environment for the area; and
- Providing an online interactive map where residents added comments and took a survey sharing their ideas and concerns to inform future land use designations

Engagement Numbers Overview

Approximately 89 residents engaged on the Southeast Durham Focus Area

FOCUSED INTERVIEWS



3 residents interviewed

VIRTUAL COMMUNITY MEETING



18 residents attended

1.5 hours in length

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT



1,116 views

68 residents engaged

85 comments

38 surveys

Engagement Method: Online (Social Pinpoint)

In March of 2021, an online engagement site, in English and Spanish, was published for broad community engagement around the Southeast Durham Focus Area. On the website, Social Pinpoint, residents could learn about the study area, take a survey, and add and discuss ideas on an interactive map. Residents completed **38 surveys** and submitted **85 comments**. We asked residents to place pins on a map and provide more detailed responses in the survey covering key topics:

- **Like it!** - Things in this area that you like.
- **Needs Work!** - Things in this area that you think could use improvement.
- **New Ideas** - Identify areas where you'd like to see new development like schools, apartments, grocery stores, dentist offices, or parks.
- **Transportation Challenges**- Identify physical barriers that prevent you from walking and biking more around this area.
- **Environment Protection** - Identify any natural areas you would like to see protected.

Engagement Method: Focused Interviews

In May and June of 2021, we sought additional perspectives for the Southeast Durham Focus Area as part of the Comprehensive Plan's equitable engagement focus. We conducted 3 interviews in Spanish with Hispanic/Latino residents and asked the following questions:

- What do you need that you can't easily get to?
- Why can't you get to the things you need?
- What kinds of things are missing in this area? Grocery stores? Jobs? Housing?
- What do you want the future of this area to look like?
- Do you have environmental concerns for this area? Trees, farming, flooding?
- Share what we've heard so far and asked: What's missing? Are there things that don't reflect your experience?

Who We Engaged

We asked demographic questions in all of our engagement to see who we are hearing from and to ensure we're working towards input that represents the full diversity of Durham.

The next pages include a summary of the demographic information collected, both overall and based on engagement method. Responses to specific demographic questions by engagement type can be seen starting on [page 29](#).

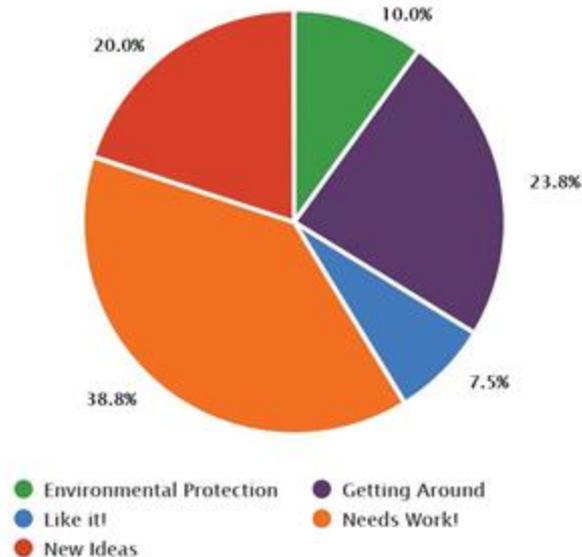
Engagement Demographics Summary

Similar to previous phases of engagement, we reached different audiences based on the engagement format, particularly regarding race/ethnicity, level of formal education, and household income.

Residents who participated in the online engagement platform, Social Pinpoint, tended to be white with more formal education, while those participating in the interview sessions tended to identify as Hispanic or Latino, with a greater variety of educational backgrounds and incomes.

What Residents Said (online 1 of 2)

Through the broad engagement opportunity on Social Pinpoint, residents shared their ideas and concerns about housing, transportation, land use, and the environment on an interactive map. The graph below is a breakdown of the kinds of comments we received. An archived map with residents' comments can be found [here](#).



What Residents Said (online 2 of 2)

Additionally, through the map and survey, there were specific issues and priorities that residents shared:

Transportation

- Lack of sidewalk, bike, and road connectivity
- Nonexistent bus service
- Poor pavement conditions worsened by large vehicles and construction activity
- Traffic congestion
- Speeding drivers
- Unsafe pedestrian crossings
- Difficult and unsafe turning movements for cars

Environment

- Mass grading and tree loss on new development sites
- New development encroaching on environmentally sensitive areas
- Concerns about stormwater runoff harming natural areas

Housing & Land Use

- Lack of affordable housing
- Desire for a mix of uses and higher densities
- Desire for walkable access to retail and grocery
- Interest in inclusive housing options rather than housing with age restrictions

What Residents Said (interviews)

Residents of the Focused Interviews shared the following issues and priorities:

Transportation

- No way to move around easily without a car
- Lack of sidewalk, bike, and road connectivity
- Bus Stops are far away, if there are any at all
- Even with a car, many daily needs are far away

Environment

- Trash and litter in the street - sites where trash is illegally dumped
- Roads that flood in heavy rain, like South Mineral Springs Rd
- Inadequate lighting near homes

Housing & Land Use

- Very little housing available at lower price points
- Desire for affordable housing that is close to jobs
- There are few attainable options for home ownership and many people can only afford to rent
- Desire for walkable access to retail and grocery options
- Desire for equitable access to recreational areas such as club houses and parks

Community Goals & Objectives Review

The Community Goals and Objectives were being finalized at the same time as this work was happening and were a useful framework for organizing and contextualizing the feedback we received. Staff worked to understand and summarize what we were hearing from this work in the context of the larger engagement for the Goals and Objectives.

Resident feedback in the Southeast Durham Focus Area largely fell within three general Goal areas from the Community Goals and Objectives: Housing, Transportation, and the Environment. Specifically, Objectives related to the need for a variety of housing solutions, intentional coordination between land use and transportation planning, and environmentally harmonious development were overarching themes. Resident input largely, but not always, matched what we heard from the larger community about how we want Durham to grow and develop. More details on this analysis can be found on [page 32](#).

Limitations of our Analysis and Process (1 of 2)

As with previous rounds of engagement, the creation of categories to organize input and the labeling of input is far from a perfect science. Both reflect the professional and personal experience of those doing the labeling - mainly white City/County staff with experience in urban design and planning.

Equitable engagement in the Southeast Durham Focus Area was challenging due to this area's unique mix of City and County limits. In previous phases of the Comprehensive Plan, Staff was able to work with formalized and pre-established groups with long histories in Durham. The division between City and County land meant that City-only departments had varying levels of pre-existing relationships and contacts in this area. Staff struggled to find these sort of existing and formalized groups of residents to do engage and largely had to start from scratch. The pace of this study also constrained Staff's ability to build and develop relationships with residents.

Limitations of our Analysis and Process (2 of 2)

Additionally, in contrast to previous rounds of engagement, which included all of Durham County, this work was focused on a geographically small portion of Durham. This constrained the total number of people we were seeking to give input. In particular, the small scale made it challenging to reach residents for whom equitable engagement is focused on: those with limited time, resources, and formal access to this process. Yet, as before, clear patterns and commonalities emerged between engagement types, showing the importance of designing engagement methods that reach different communities.

What's next?

The next step is to present the draft recommendations for the Southeast Durham Focus Area to Planning Commission, City Council, and Board of County Commissioners and seek their input before staff use this guidance to review new zoning and annexation applications for the area.

In the upcoming phases of the plan we'll be working with residents to create a new future land use plan and policies for the entirety of Durham that will act as a guide for how Durham grows and develops.

Appendices

1. *Demographics Details*
2. *Summary Statements & Quotes by Goal and Objective*

Engagement Demographics Details

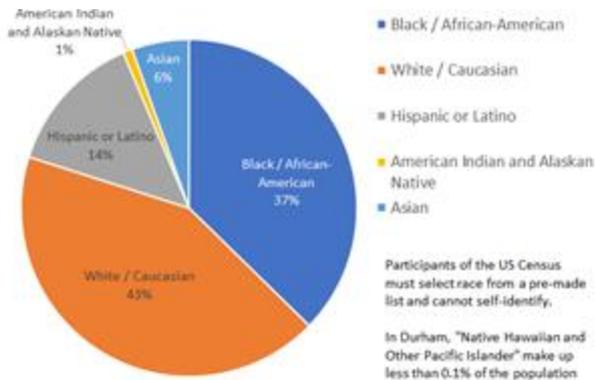
Responses for each of the following questions are shown on the following pages:

- How do you identify racially?
- Describe your gender.
- What is your age?
- What level of education or training have you completed?
- Do you identify as LGBTQIA+?
- Does anyone in your household have a disability?
- What zip code do you live in?
- How long have you lived in Durham?

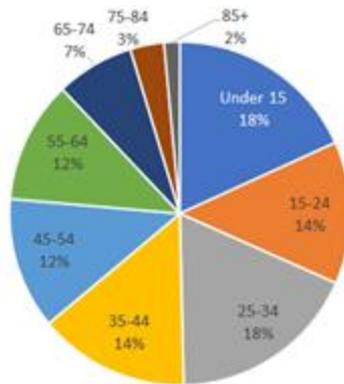
Durham County Demographics

As a baseline, here are some demographics for Durham County

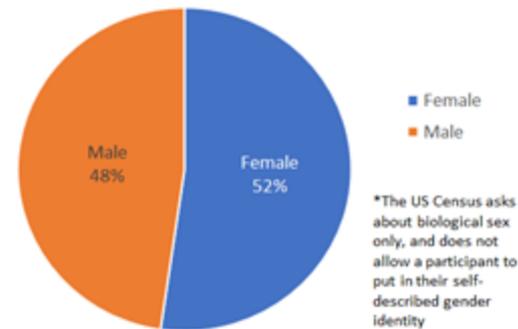
Race/Ethnicity



Age



Sex



ENGAGEDurham takes a different approach (allowing free responses) compared to the Census. Please see notes on each chart for more detail.

All data from US Census 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

Durham County Population is approximately 322,000

Interviewee demographics

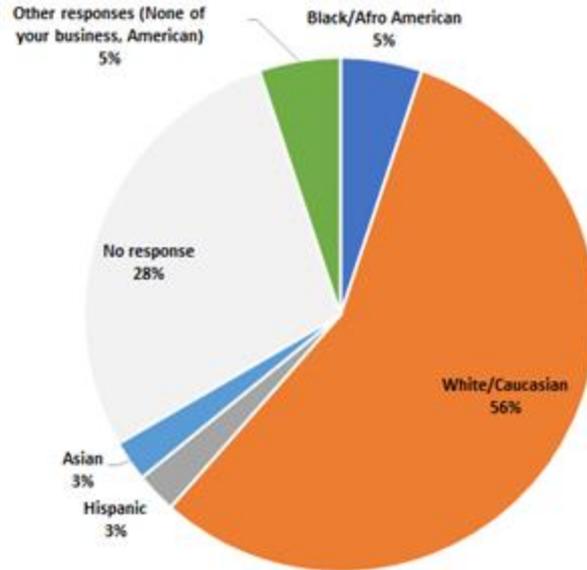
Because of the number of residents interviewed we want to de-identify the responses as much as possible. Residents who were interviewed shared their demographics and are summarized below:

- Interviewees identified
 - Hispanic or Latino with Spanish spoken primarily in the home
 - Female or Femenino
 - Under 50 years old
 - Less than High School Education
 - Zip code 27703 (primary zip code for the area)
 - Have lived in Durham between 10-20 years

Engagement Demographics: Racial/Ethnic Identity

How do you identify racially?

Online Engagement

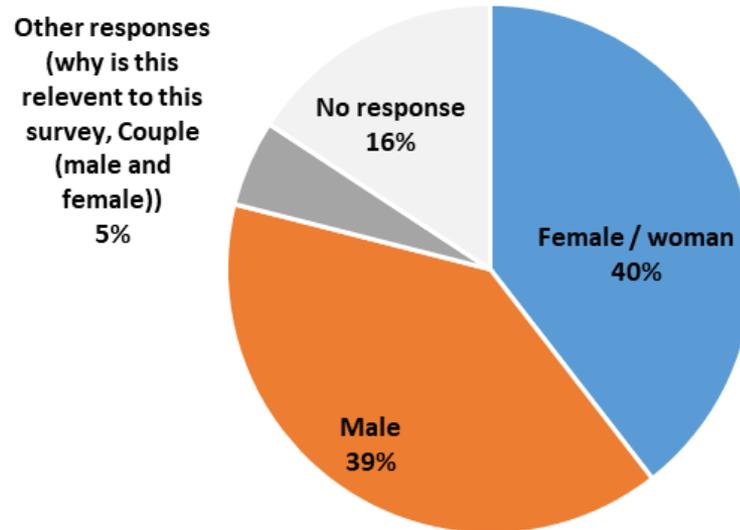


38 Responses

Engagement Demographics: Gender Identity

Describe your gender.

Online Engagement



38 Responses

Engagement Demographics: Age

What is your age?

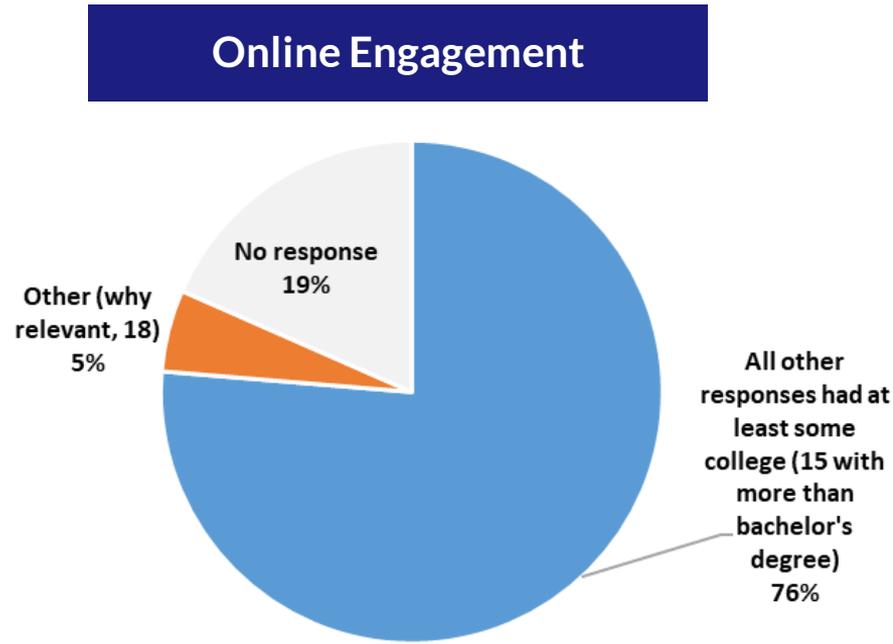
Online Engagement



38 Responses

Engagement Demographics: Level of Education

What level of education or training have you completed?

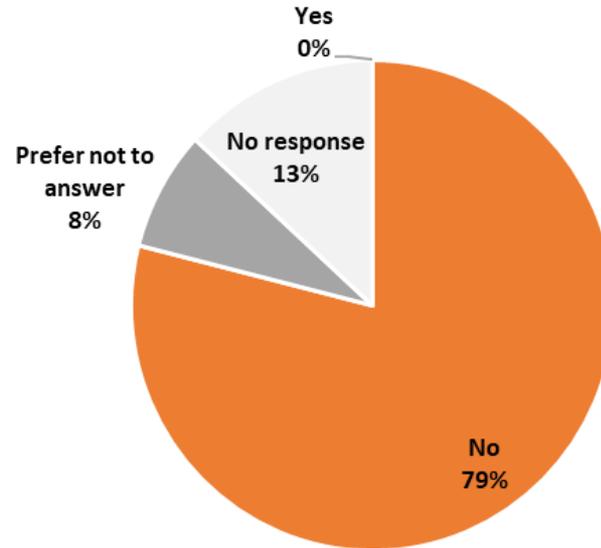


38 Responses

Engagement Demographics: Sexual Orientation

Do you identify as LGBTQIA+?

Online Engagement

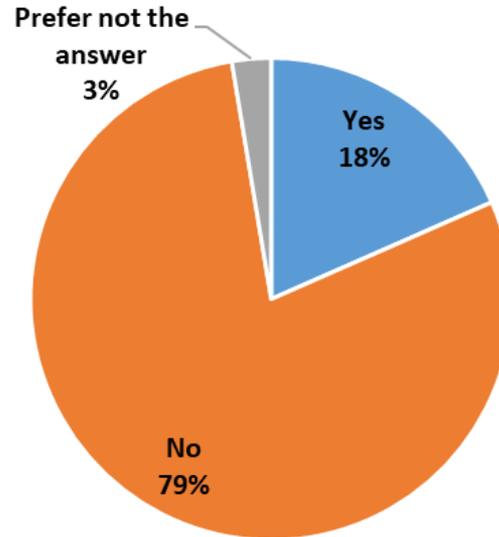


38 Responses

Engagement Demographics: Household with disabilities

Does anyone in your household have a disability?

Online Engagement



38 Responses

Engagement Demographics: Where participants live

What zip code do you live in?

Online Engagement

Zip Code	# of responses out of 86 people
27703	42
27572	6
27705	2
27617	2
27704	1
No response	33

Engagement Demographics: Length of time in Durham

How long have you lived in Durham?

Online Engagement

# of years	# of responses out of 38 people
Less than 5 years	18
5-10 years	10
10-20 years	1
20-30 years	4
Other responses (Raleigh)	1
No response	4

Summary Statements & Quotes by Goal and Objective

To understand what we heard in the context of the community-wide engagement done so far and how it fits in context with the Community Goals and Objectives, we started by organizing map comments, survey responses, and interview quotes under related Goal and Objective categories.

We wrote summary statements to understand common sentiments and discovered some comments with differing values.

Next pages show examples of key issues residents talked about, a summary statement next to relevant goal and objective, and supporting quotes.

Summary Statements & Quotes by Goal and Objective (1 of 3)

Related Goal & Objective

Housing and Neighborhoods Goal

By 2050, Durham residents will have access to safe, affordable, healthy, and physically accessible homes in neighborhoods that are connected to the resources they need to thrive.

Creative and Varied Housing Solutions

Objective: We need new and creative housing solutions to solve the housing affordability crisis. These solutions should serve a diversity of needs, income levels, family structures, and lifestyle choices, prioritizing residents with the greatest barriers to affordable housing. We need varied housing with a range of heights, units, and densities designed to respect and fit in to existing neighborhoods.

Summary of what we heard

We heard a need for new development to have a mix of housing types and price points, so no one is priced out of the area. We heard suggestions to increase the variety of housing options in the area through accessory dwellings, condominiums, or tiny homes.

Quotes:

- "Mixed types and price range housing to encourage broad diversity. There is already a concentration of 55+ housing in the Leesville Road area. Further development should look to family friendly communities in all price ranges to entice a wider range of residents more reflective of a growing community. Transportation infrastructure must be part of this."
- "Accessory dwelling units should be encouraged."
- "Condo development would be helpful to diversify the choices. This isn't an area for rentals except along routes 70 and 98"

Summary Statements & Quotes by Goal and Objective (2 of 3)

Related Goal & Objective

Transportation Goal

In 2050, Durham residents will have safe, affordable, dignified, sustainable, connected, and physically accessible transportation to move around Durham.

Intentional and Coordinated Transportation

and Land use Objective: We need housing, jobs, schools, community resources, and services intentionally planned in coordination with the transportation needed to easily reach them. We need a transportation system that allows all residents, especially Black and Hispanic/Latino, low-wealth, and houseless residents, youth, seniors, and people with disabilities, to safely, easily, and affordably access the resources they need to thrive.

Summary of what we heard

We heard interest in walkable access from homes to resources like a public library branch, parks, and grocery stores that are designed with the environment and a connected transportation system in mind.

Quotes:

- "We don't have a lot of commercial development in this area. We have had a lot of sprawling communities being developed in which transportation is difficult and there is a strong need to get to basic essentials"
- "Zone for higher density and affordable housing, with close access to walk to retail and grocery."
- "To find activities, I have to go 2 miles to get to a store—for me, I need a car. To fill my car with gas, it's at 2 miles; if I want to buy [things], I believe it's 2.5 miles. Wal-Mart is in Brier Creek, 2.3 miles from me."
- "There's a lot of development in this area, but there is Brier Creek. But—you have to have a car to get there; if you don't, you can't get there. There's no bus service nearby. I work about two miles from that area."

Summary Statements & Quotes by Goal and Objective (3 of 3)

Related Goal & Objective

Environment Goal

By 2050, Durham will be a carbon-neutral, biodiverse community that balances preservation and restoration of the natural environment with sustainable and harmonious development. Durham will prioritize the health and well-being of residents by correcting environmental racism, connecting people to nature, and ensuring access to healthy food and prioritize the health of the environment, as it has a direct impact on the health of residents.

Harmonious and Respectful Development

Objective: We need to build in harmony with the environment in a way that respects, protects, and regenerates the environment for the benefit of all living things. We need to design new development to protect our remaining natural areas, including wetlands, floodplains, lakes, rivers, streams, mature forests, and the native plants and animals that rely on them to live. We need to stop development practices that contribute to loss of biodiversity and to manage the landscape in ways that promote a healthy environment. We need to protect the plants, animals, and insects that are native to Durham and essential for all life and restore them when possible. 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 resources we already have, like existing buildings and infrastructure, so that we do not have to always create new things from scratch.

Summary of what we heard

We heard the need to preserve trees, wooded areas, and natural places and protect wildlife, air, and water resources. We heard that while higher density development is more energy and resource efficient, these developments should provide easy access to parks, natural places, and recreational areas.

Quotes:

- "High rises are more energy- and resource-efficient. But they should have parks and other recreation associated with them."
- "Sprawl is an abuse of land and natural resources. In a similar vein, tall and close buildings block out nature as well. An intermediate is the best. Connecting streets and plenty of green space is important. Also, the ability to safely commute across the area via foot or bike."

Thank you!

Thank you to all the residents who have participated and shared their voices in this process so far. And thank you to everyone who has helped make this engagement happen, including:

- The ENGAGEDurham Outreach Team
- Office of Performance and Innovation staff
- Neighborhood Improvement Services staff

