



# **DURHAM CITIZENS' NEWSLETTER**

News and Information from the City of Durham

FY 2011 - 2012 No. 1 - July - August - Office of Public Affairs

101 City Hall Plaza - Durham, NC 27701 - Phone (919) 560-4123 - Fax - (919) 560-4949

## **City of Durham Approves FY 2011-2012 Budget**

The Durham City Council has approved the Fiscal Year 2011-2012 budget, which includes a 0.56-cent property tax increase per \$100 of assessed value, increasing the total property tax rate to 55.75 cents per \$100 of assessed value. This tax rate on a house valued at \$150,000 increases the annual tax bill by \$8.40. The tax rate increase is for general fund debt service and is in addition to a small number of other increases in various rates and fees.

The total budget for the year is \$362.5 million, which is about \$9.1 million or 2.6 percent higher than last year's budget, including an 11 percent smaller general fund budget of \$182.8 million as compared to last year's budget for the City's core services.

The final budget also includes a 2 percent salary increase for general pay plan employees, reinstates police pay plans by between 3 and 5 percent, reinstates fire pay plans to 3 percent and restores 1 percent to general and fire employee 401(k) plans.

The City is continuing its focus on rejuvenating neighborhoods, allocating \$500,000 for commercial revitalization to enhance the tax base, create jobs, and reduce poverty and crime, and allocating \$255,000 toward downtown improvements with building improvement grants and Parrish Street preservation. To help improve neighborhoods, several programs, including enhanced code enforcement to identify the community's "worst condition" houses for a three-year remediation plan and other data-driven projects are funded to encourage redevelopment and revitalization.

The capital improvement budget includes \$50.5 million for new projects and to complete existing projects, including water and sewer infrastructure improvement projects which are funded at \$36 million.

A copy of the final budget is available on the City's website at [www.durhamnc.gov/departments/bms/](http://www.durhamnc.gov/departments/bms/) and at office of the City's Budget and Management Services Department, located on the first floor of City Hall, 101 City Hall Plaza.

## **Do Your Part To Save Water During The Hot Summer**

As temperatures have climbed and precipitation amounts have decreased, the average daily water demand in Durham over the last 30 days has risen sharply by an average of nearly 5 million gallons (MGD) per day.

Demand may continue to rise if temperatures remain high and there is little rain. The N.C. Drought Advisory Council has placed Durham County in the “moderate drought” category and advises all water users to reduce consumption.

To better manage the city’s water supply and in if drought conditions worsen, the Department of Water Management has stepped-up enforcement of the Year-Round Water Efficiency Ordinance by increasing the number of enforcement vehicles on patrol throughout the city.

Residents are reminded that Sec. 70-573(d1) of the Year-Round Water Efficiency Ordinance says that a civil penalty of \$100 or greater may be assessed for violations of the ordinance. Additionally, city code allows the City to discontinue water service for non-payment of civil penalties and/or continued willful disregard of the Year-Round Water Efficiency Ordinance.

## **Water and Sewer Rates Adopted for 2012 Fiscal Year**

In June, Durham’s City Council adopted modest water and sewer rate increases that will go into effect with bills generated in August for monthly customers and in September for bi-monthly customers.

The new rate structure will cost the average residential customer using 635 cubic feet per month about \$2.30 more per month or less than \$30 per year. There will be increases in the water consumption tiers, sewer volume charges and the service charges for both water and sewer. These increases are driven by the increasingly stringent wastewater discharge regulations that require upgrades at the water reclamation facilities to meet Falls and Jordan Lake Rules. In addition to these projects, there are a number of capital projects for water supply, treatment and distribution, including the Automated Meter Reading Project, that are driving rate increases.

Water rates were increased by one cent per tier to expand the current funding efforts for watershed protection through land conservation activities. The department will collaborate with local land conservation protection and water quality advocates to identify properties in the Neuse and Cape Fear River basins that are available for purchase.

For information on rates, visit [www.DurhamSavesWater.org](http://www.DurhamSavesWater.org) or e-mail [newwaterrates@durhamnc.gov](mailto:newwaterrates@durhamnc.gov). To determine the impact of the proposed rate increase on your water bill, go to [www.DurhamSavesWater.org](http://www.DurhamSavesWater.org) and click on the “Bill Calculator” button. Use the drop down menus for meter size, cubic feet (consumption) and billing cycle and click on calculate. To compare to previous years, select from the correct “Water and Sewer Rate Calculator” link at the top of the page.

## **DPR Third Friday Concert Series**

Durham Parks and Recreation hosts its award-winning Third Friday Concerts Series through October 21. All concerts will be held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. outdoors on top of the Durham Centre Plaza parking deck, 200 W. Morgan St. The plaza is located on the corner of Morgan and Morris Streets – across from the Carolina Theatre. The concerts are free and will be held rain or shine. There is a music style for everyone. Food vendors will be on hand. For information call (919) 560-4355 or visit [www.DPRPlayMore.org](http://www.DPRPlayMore.org).

## **Discovery High Ropes Course**

Looking for a fun team building or outdoor activity? Check out Durham Parks and Recreation's new Discovery High Ropes Course at Bethesda Park, 1814 Stage Rd. The course design is unique to the Triangle. The course allows for both individual and team development. It is ideal for team building, birthday parties, corporate events, family reunions, church or youth groups. For information, visit [www.durhamnc.gov/departments/parks/adventure.cfm](http://www.durhamnc.gov/departments/parks/adventure.cfm).

## **Bull City Connector Linking Downtown, Campus Connections**

Park your car and let the Bull City Connector take you where you want to go! It's a convenient, fare-free, and frequent bus service connecting visitors, business travelers, students, and downtown workers to key destinations in and around Durham, including Duke University, Durham's historic downtown, Ninth Street and Golden Belt. Whether you're looking for dining, entertainment or conducting business, this environment friendly bus service offers an alternative way to get to where you're going. For information and a route map, visit <http://www.bullcityconnector.org>.

## **Subscribe to the City Manager's Report**

Receive the latest information and important City news via e-mail with the City Manager's Report. The report from City Manager Thomas J. Bonfield highlights the latest happenings in Durham City Government. To subscribe, visit [www.durhamnc.gov/managersreport](http://www.durhamnc.gov/managersreport).

## **Durham Expands Toilet Rebate Program to Increase Water Savings**

Durham has expanded its toilet rebate program to help residents and businesses save water and stop flushing money down the toilet. The program is now available to rental, multifamily, commercial, industrial, and institutional customers and offers additional rebates to customers who have already participated in the program. The program, sponsored by the City's Water Management Department, offers rebates valued at \$100 for qualified water customers who replace their existing toilets valued at \$100 for qualified water customers who replace their existing toilets with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) WaterSense-labeled, high efficiency toilet models. For information and the rebate form, visit [www.DurhamSavesWater.org](http://www.DurhamSavesWater.org).

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## Durham ... Beyond the Headlines

It's that time of year, when organizations are looking for speakers. The City of Durham is available to talk to you on a wide variety of topics about your city. For us, it's simple. We want to build strong partnerships with our residents by providing presentations on topics ranging from where your tax dollars go, our water quality, code enforcement in neighborhoods, to parks and recreation and the list goes on... Frankly, we want to be your best resource for getting answers to important questions about Durham. Call us at 560-4123 or email us at [speakersbureau@durhamnc.gov](mailto:speakersbureau@durhamnc.gov). We're waiting ...

## Your City - Your Channel

DTV8 provides programming to keep Durham informed on the important issues and services involving citizens every day. City government produced programs include scheduled meetings of the Durham City Council and the Durham Planning Commission. The City also produces "City Hall This Week," a program dedicated to informing citizens on what is going on inside Durham's city hall, and "CityLife," a show featuring information on current City issues and upcoming events. For a programming schedule, or to watch DTV8 live on the Web, visit [www.durhamnc.gov/dtv8](http://www.durhamnc.gov/dtv8).

## Notice Under the Americans with Disabilities Act

Persons who require assistance should call (919) 560-4197, TTY (919) 560-1200, or e-mail [ADA@durhamnc.gov](mailto:ADA@durhamnc.gov) no later than 48 hours before the event.