



CITY OF DURHAM DIGEST

Durham Digest en español:
bit.ly/espanol-july2020

JULY 2020

Quarterly Updates from the City of Durham ★ durhamnc.gov

Durham's FY20-21 Approved Budget Reflects Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

On June 15, the Durham City Council approved the FY2020-2021 budget that contained no property tax rate increase and creates a special COVID-19 response and recovery fund. The final budget is \$502.6 million, compared to \$477.8 million for FY2019-2020, an increase of \$24.8 million, about \$24 million of which is due to the anticipated refinancing of debt.

The City's property tax rate will remain at 53.17 cents per \$100 of assessed value, which is the same tax rate from the previous fiscal year. The tax rate generates a tax bill of about \$1,229 per year, or about \$102 per month on a house valued at the median house value of \$231,176, the median house value for the City of Durham according to the Durham County Office of Tax Administration.



The final budget draws \$8.7 million from the City's Fund Balance for one-time expenses of \$100,000 and covers revenue losses related to COVID-19, which is currently approximately \$8.6 million.

Some of the budget specifics include:

- Continuation of the affordable housing tax rate at 2 cents.
- \$5 million for a COVID-19 response and recovery fund for use in the coming fiscal year.
- Reduces funding for street paving from \$10 million to \$6 million.
- Other reductions include travel, training, fuel, and deferred maintenance.
- \$62.5 million is budgeted for water and sewer improvements, with a 2.1% water and sewer rate increase to support ongoing capital, operating, and sustainability efforts.

LEARN MORE: Visit bit.ly/budget-services to view the full budget document.

City of Durham COVID-19 Updates & Reopening

As the City gradually and carefully reopens facilities and continues services, our top priority is to maintain essential services for our community while protecting the health and safety of our residents and employees.

As City facilities reopen throughout the summer, when interacting with our staff or visiting our facilities, we ask the public to do your part and follow the social distancing and sanitation guidelines. This includes wearing a face covering, leaving six feet between yourself and others, and washing hands often.

LEARN MORE: For COVID-19 updates and resources, visit durhamnc.gov/covid19.



Check Your Watering Habits During Smart Irrigation Month

July is Smart Irrigation Month, and a great time to inspect your sprinkler and review your lawn and garden watering habits. Remember these four steps to improve outdoor watering efficiency:

- 1) Inspect:** Regularly check your irrigation system for worn, damaged, and missing parts. Make sure your rain sensor is working properly.
- 2) Connect:** Do sprinkler heads connect securely to hoses, and hoses to pipes? Keep an eye out for drips, leaks, and pooling water at these connections.
- 3) Direct:** Make sure sprinklers actually water your landscape, not the sidewalk, driveway, street, or neighbor's yard!
- 4) Select:** Update your irrigation system or watering schedule based on the weather and season.

It's also important to follow the City's mandatory odd-even watering schedule. Odd-numbered addresses may water on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays; even-numbered addresses on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays. No customers are permitted to water on Mondays.

LEARN MORE:

- Find the water schedule and additional tips at www.DurhamSavesWater.org.
- Follow @DurhamWater on Twitter and Facebook.

This newsletter provides a quarterly snapshot—visit durhamnc.gov for the latest news.

CITY HOLIDAYS: The City's non-emergency offices will close to observe Independence Day on July 3 and Labor Day on Sept. 7
★ **DURHAM ONE CALL:** For info about water bills, garbage collection, or other City services, call 919-560-1200 or visit durhamnc.gov/onecall ★ **FIND US ONLINE:** Visit durhamnc.gov and follow @CityofDurhamNC on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

CITY BRIEFS



EngageDurham needs you!

Want a better Durham? We need your help to make it happen! Join us as we create two new plans for Durham, which will shape the way Durham grows and moves for the next 30 years. Check out our recently released EngageDurham summary, which includes high-level information about the first phase of engagement for Durham's Transit Plan & Comprehensive Plan. In the coming weeks and months, we'll be talking about our goals as a community—and we need to hear your voice. Please tell a friend, and help us spread the word!

LEARN MORE: View the summary report and get involved at EngageDurham.com.

Help Keep Our Water Safe - Report Water Violations

Help our Water Management Department keep your water safe for drinking by reporting illegal water connection violations. This includes improper lawn watering systems or fire hydrant connections.

LEARN MORE: Find examples, learn about the requirements, and how to report by visiting durhamnc.gov/3945 and selecting the violation you would like to report.



Consider Becoming a Foster Parent

Do you have a safe & nurturing home? Can you collaborate with others? Help change the life of a child. Learn more about becoming a foster parent with Durham County Department of Social Services.

LEARN MORE: Call 919-560-8092 or email fosterdreams@dconc.gov.

Celebrate Parks and Recreation Month with DPR

July is Parks and Recreation month! The theme this year is "We Are Parks and Recreation." While it has been a challenge to offer regular Durham Parks and Recreation (DPR) programs and activities due to the pandemic, we are constantly working on ways to provide recreational opportunities to residents. Throughout the month of July, visit us on social media (@DPRPlayMore) to learn what we are doing to connect the community to wellness, the outdoors, and lifelong learning.

During these challenging times, the health and safety of our residents and staff are one of DPR's top priorities. For up-to-date information about DPR's openings, closings, cancellations, postponements, and virtual programming, visit DPRPlayMore.org.

LEARN MORE: Visit DPRPlayMore.org and follow @DPRPlayMore on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Water Bill Payments During COVID-19

We know that many in our community have lost their jobs, businesses, and healthcare coverage. To provide support during this pandemic, we decided in early March to stop disconnecting residential water customers for nonpayment. But as the City moves toward a full reopening, we will return to regular billing practices. That will include cutoffs for nonpayment.

We don't want anyone to go without water. If you are behind on your water bill we can work with you to develop a monthly payment plan or provide a list of community resources that may give some financial support.

LEARN MORE: Please contact us at 919-560-1200 or durhamnc.gov/2996.

City of Durham Launches Updated Website

When you visit the City of Durham's website, durhamnc.gov, you may notice it has a new look and improvements to make it easier to use. The updated site has a cleaner design incorporating the City's brand colors, updated navigation options at the top of the site, and the use of icons to highlight popular information throughout the site.

LEARN MORE: Find the latest news and information on City programs and services at durhamnc.gov.

