

# News Release

For Immediate Release: April 19, 2021

## **Durham to Better Engage Underrepresented Communities with New Partnerships**

*Community Organizations to Help Lead GoDurham Better Bus Project Engagement Efforts*

DURHAM, N.C. – Underrepresented communities most impacted by City of Durham projects will soon have more opportunities to give their input into local government decision-making thanks to new partnerships with four community organizations.

These organizations have been collectively awarded \$100,000 to help City staff implement the [Equitable Community Engagement Blueprint](#), which is a guide to address systemic barriers related to public engagement and emphasizes how the City should intentionally seek input from communities most adversely impacted by its projects.

The following organizations will begin their work by supporting engagement efforts for the recently announced [GoDurham Better Bus Project](#), which will design street, sidewalk, and bus stop improvements to provide safer access to bus stops, enhanced comfort at bus stops, and improved bus service on GoDurham routes.

- Luma Consulting, LLC will lead engagement in Spanish-speaking/Latino/a/x communities throughout Durham.
- Bragtown Community Association will lead engagement in the Bragtown neighborhood centered between North Roxboro Street and Old Oxford Highway.
- [Be Connected Durham](#) will lead engagement along the Fayetteville Street Transit Emphasis Corridor centered between Lakewood Avenue and Riddle Road.
- [Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People, Inc.](#) will lead engagement along the Holloway Street Transit Emphasis Corridor which will be focused on the Holloway Street and Wellons Village communities.

These engagement efforts will help City staff respond to the needs of residents and transit riders and will focus on communities historically excluded from transit and mobility decision-making processes. The City's Neighborhood Improvement Services Department, in partnership with the City's Transportation Department, will manage the community organization contracts for the GoDurham Better Bus Project engagement efforts.

These community organizations are under contract for eight months, and will work to broaden the reach of engagement on the GoDurham Better Bus Project as well as capitalize on established community relationships and build the capacity of these organizations to support future City initiatives around Transportation Department plans and projects.

Several of these community organizations also participated in the [Community Partner Development Course](#) in fall 2020, which was designed to educate community groups and organizations on the City's contracting processes and to inform these organizations on how to become a formal community partner.

For more details on the City's Equitable Community Engage Blueprint, visit the [webpage](#) or contact Equitable Community Engagement Strategist Laura Biediger with the City's Neighborhood Improvement Services Department by [email](#) or by calling (919) 560-1647, ext. 34259. For additional information about the [GoDurham Better Bus Project](#) contact Transportation Planner Brian Taylor by [email](#) or by calling (919) 560-4366, ext. 36423.

**About the City of Durham Neighborhood Improvement Services Department Community Engagement Division**

The [Neighborhood Improvement Services Department](#) works to preserve and improve quality of life conditions for Durham residents, and to encourage active participation in neighborhood redevelopment and public policy and decision-making dialogue. The department's [Community Engagement Division](#) strives to inform, engage, and partner with the Durham community through a people-focused process that increases the collective financial and human capacity of neighborhoods to improve the quality of life for the individuals who live, work and play there. Community building includes incremental and measurable projects, programs, and activities that lead to positive, long-term systemic change. For more information, follow the division's [Facebook page](#).

### **About the City of Durham Transportation Department**

The [Transportation Department](#) remains steadfast in its commitment to providing and maintaining quality, multimodal infrastructure to improve mobility, promote environmental sustainability, and enhance the quality of life for current and future Durham residents, businesses, and visitors. To learn more, follow the department on [Twitter](#).

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