



Proposal for Durham's Sustainable Decision- making Framework



Environmental Affairs Board Mission Statement

The EAB collaborates with community members, businesses, and organizations **to provide guidance to Durham's elected officials and staff** on actions and policies that create a **sustainable and safe environment** for all residents and preserve natural ecosystems and resources.

Project Background

EAB Background

The EAB is an advisory board of appointed residents to provide the City and County with expert and comprehensive advice on various environmental matters.

Membership comprises experience and expertise in areas including but not limited to: Public Health, Equity and Environmental Justice, Law, Public Policy, Engineering, Land Resources, Water Resources, Air Resources, Energy, Climate, Transportation, Biological Sciences, Education and/or Communications, and Solid Waste.

Researcher Background

Barrett Dollar

Education

Duke University

Nicholas School of the Environment

2025 Master of Environmental Management

Candidate

Concentrations:

- Environmental Economics & Policy

- Terrestrial & Freshwater Environments

Experience

Legislative Intern, U.S Senator Whitehouse

Duke Environmental Law and Policy Clinic

Purpose of the Sustainable Decision-Making Framework

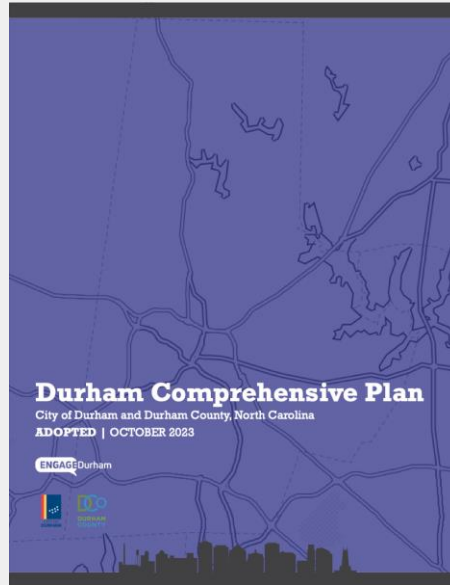
01

To support Durham elected officials in evaluating the environmental implications of a proposed action, policy, or project.

02

To ensure the decisions align with and help progress the city's sustainability goals

Helping Durham to Achieve Its Goals



Scope

- EAB would provide environmental review using a 4-question tool using existing information and our own additional expertise & interpretation
 - Not for City or County facilities and infrastructure
 - Private development decisions would be key priority
 - Rezoning and annexations
 - Would ideally be a required step to send annexations and rezonings to EAB for review
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Question 1: Does this action decrease or increase greenhouse gas emissions now or in the future?

Comprehensive Plan Reference: Policy 74, Page 93

Question 2: Who benefits from this action and who is disproportionately impacted? Will this action further entrench any existing unjust environmental issues or systems?

Comprehensive Plan Reference: Environmental Justice, Page 94

Question 3: How will this action influence:

- a) water quality
- b) air quality
- c) heat islands or their effects
- d) flooding
- e) habitat fragmentation
- f) biodiversity
- g) Include a summary of the environmental impacts.

Comprehensive Plan References: Policy 84, 86, 87, 96, 111

Question 4: Will this action impact ecologically sensitive or valuable natural areas or land adjacent to those areas?

Comprehensive Plan Reference: Policy 79, Page 93

Methodology

City	Population Size	Full or Part Time City Councilmembers
Lake Oswego, Oregon	40k	Unknown
Kirkland, Washington	92k	Part-time ⁶
Charleston, South Carolina	153k	Part-time ⁷
Providence, Rhode Island	190k	Part-time ⁸
Durham County	337k	Part-time
Sacramento, California	530k	Part-time ⁹
Portland, Oregon	635k	Full-time ¹⁰
Boston, Massachusetts	654k	Full-time ¹¹
Nashville, Tennessee	683k	Part-time ¹²
Austin, Texas	964k	Full-time ¹³
King County, Washington	2.3 million	Part-time (city) ¹⁴
Chicago, Illinois	2.7 million	Part-time ¹⁵

See Page 2 of Justification for Durham's Framework

Types of Tools

Sustainable or Equity Checklist

Example:
Kirkland, Washington

Sustainable Decision Making Worksheet

Describe the proposed action in one sentence:

The sustainable decision making worksheet will be used to evaluate City actions by how they align with the goals of the Sustainability Master Plan.

Criteria 1: Greenhouse Gas Reduction

How much will taking this action reduce green house gas emissions in Kirkland?

- 0 Not applicable
- 1 Will not reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- 2 Will marginally reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- 3 Will moderately reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- 4 Will significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- 5 Will extremely reduce greenhouse gas emissions

How could this action be adjusted to further reduce emissions?

Greenhouse Gas Weighted Score

Multiply the rating by 5:

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} \times 5 = \square$$

Types of Tools

Land Use Criteria

Example:
Chicago, Illinois

Compliance Options	Points Required									
	Starting Points	Number of Optional Points Required <small>New Construction / Substantial Rehab / Moderate Rehab</small>	Health	Energy						
Compliance Paths			1.1 Achieve WELL Building Standard	2.1 Designed to earn the Energy Star	2.2 Exceed Energy Code (5%)	2.3 Exceed Energy Code (10%)	2.4 Exceed Energy Code (25%)	2.5 Exceed Energy Code (40%)	2.6 Onsite Renewable Energy (3%)	2.7 Onsite Renewable Energy (5%)
Options Without Certification										
All Options Available	0	100 / 50 / 25	40	30	20	30	40	50	10	20
Options With Certification										
LEED Platinum	95	5 / 0 / 0	40	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
LEED Gold	90	10 / 0 / 0	40	NA	NA	NA	NA	50	10	20
LEED Silver	80	20 / 0 / 0	40	NA	NA	NA	40	50	10	20
Green Globes 4-Globes	90	10 / 0 / 0	40	NA	NA	NA	NA	50	10	20

See Page 8 of Justification for Durham’s Framework

Types of Tools

Sustainable Plan Addendum

Example:
King County, Washington

- Will the project avoid impacts to land at and adjacent to the development site that are physically unsuitable for development, such as slopes greater than 25%, wetlands, and aquifer recharge areas?
- Will the project: (1) set aside at least 10% of total acreage as public green space, or (2) if within the urban services boundary, be located within ¼ mile of a dedicated public green space?
- Will the project meet any established sustainable design criteria (e.g., LEED, Enterprise Green Communities Criteria)?

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