



Agenda Action Form Overview

The Board is requested to approve Durham County’s support for and participation in Triangle Land Conservancy’s purchase and protection of 145 acres of farmland at 4209 and 4310 Hall Road, including a \$750,000 County contribution, and the conveyance of a conservation easement to Durham County for permanent land protection. The County’s \$750,000 contribution represents 33% of the total \$2.285 million cost of purchasing and protecting these 145 acres and allows TLC to leverage local and federal funding partners to make the purchase and protect the land.

Background/Justification

Since the early 1990s, Durham County’s Open Space Program has worked to protect farmland, forests, habitats, water resources, and provide land for nature-based recreation. To date, Durham County has protected 4,300 acres: 1,450 acres are owned and 2,851 acres protected with County-held conservation easements. Of these easements, 90%, or 2,563 acres, protect farmland, most of which is in north Durham County. County Open Space currently has funding in place to protect an additional 241 acres of land, including 66 acres of farmland on three farm properties.

Durham County has a long history of partnering with Triangle Land Conservancy, including supporting land acquisitions at Little River Regional Park and Hollow Rock Nature Park. More recently, the County’s Open Space Program has worked with TLC to permanently protect land near Camp Butner and along the Little River. We are currently partnering with TLC to expand protected land in east Durham by conserving an additional 77 acres along Southview Road.

This 145-acre farm property on Hall Road was listed for sale several months ago. TLC has worked with the Seller’s agent and is under contract to purchase the land. It is anticipated that the City of Raleigh’s Watershed Protection Program will approve up to \$815,000 to support TLC’s purchase and protection of the property. Triangle Land Conservancy has a cooperative agreement—similar to Durham County’s—to protect land within one mile of Camp Butner through the Army National Guard’s REPI program. Conversations with National Guard staff indicate that up to \$720,000 in REPI funds will be available through TLC’s agreement to support this project.

Durham County’s \$750,000 contribution represents 33% of the \$2.285 million project cost. County funds will support TLC’s land acquisition and survey costs. These funds enable TLC to leverage outside funding sources that require a local match and ensure permanent protection of the land.

The farmland contains state- and nationally significant agricultural soils, and its protection will allow TLC to sell the County-protected land to farmers, supporting agricultural use in northern Durham County. When the protected land is conveyed to a third party, Durham County and TLC will co-hold the conservation easement, with the County retaining enforcement rights. This approach, known as Buy-Protect-Sell, enables conservation groups to act quickly to secure at-risk properties, reduce long-term ownership costs, support working landscapes, and encourage responsible land stewardship.

Durham County’s Farmland Protection Advisory Board enthusiastically supported this project at its May 21, 2026, meeting.

Policy Impact

The acquisition and protection of land for permanent open space and farmland aligns with Strategic Plan Goal 4: Environment - Protect natural resources and support and promote community and economic viability for all residents of Durham County, through the Natural Resource Stewardship and Protection Objective to protect and steward natural resources.



The Comprehensive Plan includes policies to protect farmland and working lands (Policy 89), conserve significant natural areas, ecosystems, habitats, and wildlife corridors (Policies 78, 79, 83, 98), and safeguard drinking water sources for Durham and nearby communities (Policy 86). This land protection also advances the Comprehensive Plan’s goal of placing 30% of Durham County’s land area in permanent conservation by 2050 (Policy 78).

Fiscal Impact

This 145-acre project area was appraised at \$15,000 per acre. Including survey, due diligence, and transaction costs, the total land protection cost is \$2,285,000. With three funding sources and Triangle Land Conservancy’s support and project administration, Durham County’s share is 33% (\$750,000). County funds will go toward TLC’s purchase and survey costs with Durham County holding a permanent conservation easement. County funds will be wired directly to the closing attorney. These County funds are currently available in the Open Space & Farmland Protection Capital Project (4730DC083), and closer to closing we will return to the Board with a budget amendment to transfer these funds from the capital account to operating, allowing the County to encumber them in the fiscal year of closing, FY26-27.

Funding Partner	Contribution	Percent of Project Value
Raleigh's Watershed Protection Program	\$815,000	36%
US Army National Guard (Camp Butner)	\$720,000	32%
Durham County	\$750,000	33%
	\$2,285,000	100%

County Manager’s Recommendation:

The County Manager recommends that the Board approve Durham County’s support for and participation in Triangle Land Conservancy’s purchase and protection of 145 acres of farmland at 4209 and 4310 Hall Road, including a \$750,000 County contribution, and the conveyance of a conservation easement to Durham County for permanent land protection.