

DURHAM BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Resolution

25 YEARS OF DURHAM COUNTY’S COMMITMENT TO FARMALND PRESERVATION

- WHEREAS,** Durham County recognizes farmland as essential for local food production, water quality, wildlife habitat, and the rural landscapes that define the community; and
- WHEREAS,** preserving farmland supports a resilient food system, sound agricultural practices, and access to healthy, locally grown food for future generations; and
- WHEREAS,** the County’s farmland preservation efforts began in 2001 with the Herndon family’s first conservation easement, establishing a model of voluntary conservation; and
- WHEREAS,** 2026 marks the 25th anniversary of this work, during which the County has completed 30 easements protecting 2,491 acres and ensuring the viability of 20 family farms; and
- WHEREAS,** these efforts strengthen the agricultural economy, support farmers, and enhance environmental resilience by maintaining open space and protecting natural resources; and
- WHEREAS,** strong fiscal partnerships, especially with the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resource Conservation Service, have enabled the County to secure \$6.28 million in grants, \$5.14 million in landowner donations, and invest \$3.58 million to protect easements valued at \$15 million; and
- WHEREAS,** the program continues to grow, with five additional farms totaling 137 acres and \$706,000 in secured funding scheduled to close soon; and
- WHEREAS,** Durham County remains committed to advancing farmland preservation through strategic partnerships, innovative policies, and voluntary conservation programs.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Durham County Board of Commissioners:

- Celebrates 25 years of farmland preservation leadership;
- Expresses gratitude to landowners, partners, and fiscal supporters;
- Reaffirms its commitment to protecting farmland as a foundation of the County’s economy, environment, and heritage; and
- Commits to expanding preservation efforts and supporting the next generation of farmers.

This the 23rd day of March 2026.

Dr. Mike Lee, Chair

Nida Allam, Vice Chair

Michelle Burton, Commissioner

Wendy Jacobs, Commissioner

Stephen Valentine, Commissioner

