

Durham County Capital Improvement Plan Guiding Principles

The Durham County guiding principles for capital improvement projects include transparency in decision-making, prioritizing community needs, conducting thorough cost-benefit analyses, adhering to ethical and legal standards, promoting sustainable and resilient infrastructure, fostering public-private partnerships where applicable, and maintaining long-term maintenance plans. Additionally, ensuring effective stakeholder engagement and incorporating feedback throughout the project lifecycle is crucial for successful outcomes. These principles help ensure that the capital improvement plan is well-designed, efficient, and beneficial for the community we serve.

- **Transparency:** Publishing project information, budgets, and progress reports to keep the public informed.
- **Community Needs:** Prioritizing projects that address critical infrastructure gaps and serve the community's long-term interests.
- **Cost-Benefit Analysis:** Conducting comprehensive assessments to ensure optimal allocation of resources and maximal societal benefits.
- **Ethical and Legal Compliance:** Upholding legal regulations and ethical standards in all stages of the project, including procurement and construction.
- **Sustainability:** Integrating environmentally friendly and energy-efficient practices to minimize the project's environmental impact and ensure long-term sustainability.
- **Resilience:** Designing infrastructure that can withstand natural disasters and unexpected challenges to ensure long-term functionality and safety.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Collaborating with private entities to leverage expertise, resources, and funding for more efficient and innovative project delivery.
- **Long-Term Maintenance:** Planning for regular maintenance and upkeep to guarantee the sustainability and longevity of the infrastructure for the community's benefit.

Project Prioritization Framework

The “Project Prioritization Framework” outlines a potential strategy for capital project evaluation and prioritization. Capital projects are categorized as projects totaling \$1,000,000 or more and are funded with “Pay As You Go” dollars or supported through debt financing. The draft document will be vetted over the next several months with the goal of finalizing guidelines and scoring rubric by Winter 2024.

1. Legal Compliance and Risk to Health, Safety and Environment

- a. Project avoids or minimizes the risk to health, safety, and the environment associated with the infrastructure based on a condition assessment of the asset, or the lack of an asset, which may include the age, size, material,
- b. The urgency of the project to reduce the potential hazards to the public, property, and environment.
- c. The extent to which the project minimizes liability for failure to comply with state or federal law.
- d. Projects that are required from a Legislative mandate or statutory requirement should have a higher priority i.e., the recent Medicaid expansion will initiate projects required to house staff and serve the citizens that are impacted.

2. Asset Condition and Level of Service

- a. Project improves the overall reliability of the capital asset and infrastructure system and extends the useful life of the asset.
- b. Project addresses an infrastructure or facility deficiency identified in the facility master plan and/or other updates.
- c. Project reduces maintenance expenditures and delay will result in significant future costs.
- d. Project serves areas with higher population densities and areas experiencing the most growth.

3. Supports Equity and Inclusion Goals

- a. Project addresses disparities in *structurally excluded communities* that enhance neglected assets, services, and response time in public safety areas.
- b. Project improves access for people of all ages and abilities.

4. Environmental Impact and Sustainability

- a. Project advances the Renewal Energy Plan Resolution.
- b. Project promotes climate resiliency by increasing natural habitat, increasing trees and green spaces, improving water quality, or increasing independence for local energy or water resources.
- c. Project improves the health of the community and natural environment by using sustainable designs.

5. **Funding Availability**

- a. Projects with a high probability of receiving significant funding from outside sources shall receive a higher score.
- b. Projects that require funding to complete an ongoing phase will be scored higher than those that need funding for the next phase of the project.

6. **Project Readiness**

- a. “Shovel Ready” projects will result in higher scores.
- b. Projects that can be delivered most expeditiously will be scored higher than projects that have unresolved complex environmental issues or legal challenges.

7. **Project Leverages Additional Projects**

- a. Project reduces construction costs by potentially bundling with adjacent projects of other asset types. The Fire/EMS co-locations at Kemp Road (Far East) and Martin Luther King Drive (Southern area) are further examples.
- b. Project provides for partnering or bundling opportunities with other local, state, federal agencies, and Private stakeholders.

References

- [Scottsdale Arizona, Capital Project Prioritization Guiding Principles, 2022](#)
- [City of San Diego, Capital Project Policies, 2022](#)
- [City of Baltimore, CIP Evaluation Criteria | Department of Planning \(baltimorecity.gov\)](#)
- [City of Baltimore - FY23 Evaluation Criteria & Scoring Guide.docx \(baltimorecity.gov\)](#)

DRAFT