



Listening and Learning Engagement Summary

Comprehensive Plan and Transit Plan



Comprehensive Plan
Transit Plan

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Introduction

Listening and Learning

The first phase of community engagement for a new Comprehensive Plan and new Transit Plan happened between November 2019 and February 2020. Called *Listening and Learning*, this was the first of two phases that will make up the development of Community Goals.



Engagement Summary

This interim summary includes high level information about the first phase of engagement. It includes what that engagement looked like, who we heard from, and some of the most discussed topics so far.



Community Goals

When the Community Goals are complete a full summary of engagement and development will be shared.

Engagement Philosophy

As Planning staff began working on the Comprehensive Plan, the City's *Equitable Community Engagement Blueprint* was being developed through the Neighborhood Improvement Services Department.

The *Blueprint* recognizes that “In order to create strategies for equity to achieve the City’s vision of an excellent and sustainable quality of life for all residents, the City must engage the community in an equitable way.”

Through the community engagement effort for the Comprehensive Plan and Transit Plan, staff are working to incorporate the key components of equitable engagement in the *Blueprint*. This is a new undertaking and a learning process. Lessons learned from this first phase of engagement will inform the next phase of engagement and this iterative process will continue throughout the development of these plans.

Listening and Learning Engagement

The Listening and Learning engagement phase was the first community input opportunity on the new Comprehensive Plan and Transit Plan.

This phase focused on two questions:

“What does an ideal Durham look like to you?”

and

“What else is on your mind about Durham?”

These two questions were designed to encourage a two-way dialogue between residents and staff - not just staff trying to get information from the community. We also wanted to make sure residents had opportunities to share their concerns, ideas, and questions about Durham - even if they were outside of the scope of these two specific plans.

How We Engaged

The first engagement opportunities in *Listening and Learning* were community **workshops**. Attendees were asked to fill out an exit questionnaire that included a series of demographic questions to better understand who we had heard from and to determine who we still needed to reach. (more detail on [page 8](#))

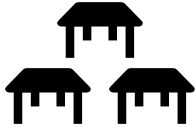
Directly after the final workshop, an **online survey** was published with the same content from the workshops. (more detail on [page 9](#))

Following the workshops, staff worked to recruit and train **Engagement Ambassadors**. The work of the Ambassadors was focused on reaching those who had not been able to participate in the workshops. (more detail on [page 10](#))

Engagement Numbers Overview

Over 1,000 residents participated in the Listening and Learning phase of engagement!

WORKSHOPS



400 residents attended one of
5 community workshops
held in November 2019
generating
3459 comments

ENGAGEMENT AMBASSADORS



600 residents engaged in one of
70 small group sessions held by
40 Engagement Ambassadors
generating
2137 comments

ONLINE SURVEY



169 residents filled out
the survey over
3 months generating
509 comments

Engagement Method: Workshops

Five community workshops were held in November of 2019 on different days, at different times of day, and in different parts of the County. Each workshop included simultaneous interpretation, childcare, food, and were accessible by public transit.

Before and after the workshop, residents could do a background activity that was intended to share information on existing conditions of our community that can be influenced by the Comprehensive Plan and the Transit Plan.

The workshops started with staff sharing general information on the two plans and then focused on small group discussions. Each group shared out highlights from their discussion with the overall group at the end.

Engagement Method: Online Survey

Directly after the final community workshop, an online survey was published as an opportunity to provide input for those who were unable to attend a workshop. The survey included the discussion questions and the demographic questions used in the workshops. It was made available in both English and Spanish. A press release and social media posts were used to share the survey with residents.

The demographics of participants in the Online Survey were very similar to those who participated in the Workshops.

Engagement Method: Engagement Ambassadors

A new Engagement Ambassadors program began just after the workshops. This program provided stipends to community members to engage with residents who are traditionally underrepresented in City/County engagement efforts.

Based on the demographic information from the workshops, more white, high-income, and highly-educated residents participated compared to the overall demographics of Durham. Neighborhood Improvement Services staff and Planning staff used this information to recruit and train approximately 40 Engagement Ambassadors with connections to residents that were underrepresented or not represented in the workshops.

The input from more than 70 Ambassadors' sessions has some distinct differences in focus from the input received through the Workshops and Online Survey. The analysis within this summary helps to highlight where similarities and differences in topics discussed are focused.

Who We Engaged

In working towards equitable engagement, our hope is to have the perspective of everyone in the Durham community. We asked demographic questions to ensure we're working towards input that represents the full diversity of Durham. We used the results of the demographic questions to see who we're missing in the conversation and then to develop strategies to reach out to communities and groups that were not well represented in the process. All demographic questions were optional and anonymous. While all participants were asked to complete the form, not everyone did so. For those who did fill out the form, not all questions were answered.

The next pages include a summary of the demographic information collected. Responses to specific demographic questions by engagement type can be seen starting on pages 20-27 below.

Engagement Demographics Summary

- We reached different audiences depending on the engagement format, particularly with regard to race, level of formal education, and home address.
- Compared to overall demographics of Durham, attendees of the Workshops and Online were much more likely to identify as white and reported having more formal education.
- The vast majority of Engagement Ambassador participants identified themselves as black or African-American. Participants in these sessions reported having less formal education compared to those in the Workshops and taking the Online Survey.
- Engagement Ambassador participants had the highest percentage of youth (less than 25 years old). Participants in these sessions also reported about twice as many instances of living in a household with someone with a disability.

Engagement Demographics Summary

- Hispanic/Latino participation in all three methods of engagement was much lower compared to the percent of residents identifying as Hispanic/Latino in Durham.
- Geographically, Engagement Ambassadors' participants tended to live in central or east Durham, and Workshop and Online participants tended to live in west Durham.
- Folks identifying as LGBTQIA+ represented about 10% of the responses for all three engagement methods.
- **Additional outreach to engage Hispanic/Latino residents, Youth residents, and rural Durham County residents (particularly North Durham) is needed in future engagement efforts.**

What Residents Said:

After all of the community input from the three engagement methods was digitized and organized, staff reviewed all results and identified 70 different topics to use as broad categories for sorting through comments.

HOUSING was the most discussed topic for both the *Workshops* and the *Engagement Ambassadors*. **TRANSIT** was the most discussed topic and **HOUSING** was the second in the *Online Survey*.

The 20 most frequently discussed topics in each of the three forms of engagement accounted for **over 70% of all the comments**. Many other topics were related to one of these 20 topics, such as specific forms of transit, or were strongly linked to these frequently mentioned topics. For example: Affordability was often linked to topics of Housing, Wages or Gentrification.

The following pages highlight similarities and differences in the most discussed topics by engagement type. The full list can be seen on pages 28-32.

*Limitations of our Analysis

The creation of the categories themselves and the labeling of the comments is far from a perfect science. Both reflect the professional and personal experiences of those doing the labeling--mainly white City staff with experience in urban design and planning. Multiple people were involved in the effort, which leads to different interpretations and ways of understanding comments that prevents full standardization of how these responses are labeled.

Engagement will never provide exact and standardized results; instead it is built upon the diversity and individuality of human perspectives. Yet clear patterns and commonalities are evident from the multiple communities that share the experience of living in and caring for Durham.

Top Shared Topics

These 10 issues were identified within the top twenty most frequently discussed topics in all three forms of engagement.

- Housing
- Schools & Education
- Public Spaces, Activities & Recreation
- Transit/Bus Transit*
- Engagement Process & Government Accountability
- Infrastructure
- Safety
- Gentrification & Displacement
- Growth & development
- Walkability

* Comments about transit were categorized according to the kind of transit being discussed. However, a general category of “transit” also existed which most often referred to bus transit. Due to multiple people categorizing the comments, these two tags were not fully standardized. While not an exact representation, merging these two categories best represents the content of these comments.

Topics shared across two forms of engagement

Topics in the top 20 in the *Engagement Ambassadors* and *Workshops*:

- Equity
- Community Building
- Food Access
- Durham's Identity

Topics in the top 20 in the *Engagement Ambassadors* and *Online Survey*:

- Crime & Policing
- Inclusivity & Representation

Topics in the top 20 in the *Workshops* and the *Online Survey*:

- Sustainability & Climate Change
- Green Spaces
- Business & Entrepreneurship
- Neighborhood Character

Topics not shared across Engagement types

Topics that only appeared in the top 20 of the *Engagement Ambassadors*:

- Workforce & Wages
- Youth Spaces & Policies
- Health & Wellness
- Homelessness

Topics that only appeared in the top 20 of the *Workshops*:

- Natural Environment

Topics that only appeared in the top 20 of the *Online Survey*:

- History
- Transit - Car, Rideshare
- Density

What's included in each Topic?

Each broad topic used by staff to organize input included a variety of comments.

As one example, the topic ***Public Spaces, Activities, & Recreation*** included requests for more parks, more even distribution of parks across Durham, more community, cultural, and family-friendly events, and more libraries. A few quotes from this topic include:

“Libraries as localized transit hubs so they get highest transit level of service and other services”

“How can we make opportunities for low-wealth people to enjoy the cultural offerings in Durham: American Underground, DPAC, and Durham Bulls?”

“Safe spaces for our children to play and engage with one another. Outdoor space and parks that also accessible to children with disabilities.”

What's Next?

Both the overlap and the diversity of priorities highlight the importance of conducting multiple forms of engagement with different populations. This offers a greater richness in understanding the perspectives and priorities of all our residents, and not just those who have the time and means to come to public meetings or the subject matter interest to seek out an online survey.

The next round of engagement will build on these past engagement sessions while also incorporating new perspectives and priorities that reflect the changing realities our community now faces in the light of COVID-19. In this phase of engagement, we will work to collaboratively write community goals for how we want to grow as a community in a way that nurtures and supports all residents.

We look forward to working together to envision the kind of Durham we want to build for ourselves, our children and our community.

Appendices

- 01. Engagement Demographics Details
- 02. Topics
 - a. List of Top 20 Topics for each Engagement Type
 - b. List of all Topics

Engagement Demographics Details

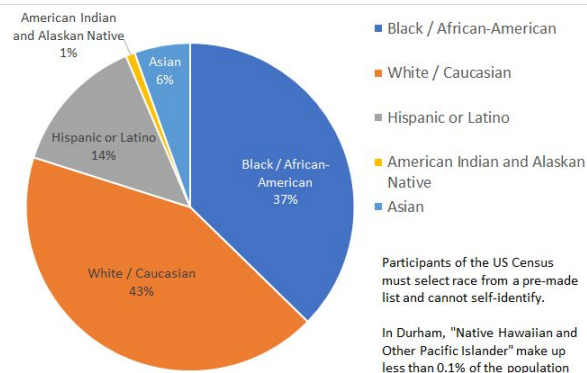
Responses for each of the following questions from each engagement type are shown on the following pages:

- How do you identify your race/ethnicity?
- How do you identify your gender identity?
- What is your age?
- What level of education or training have you completed?
- Do you identify as LGBTQIA+?
- Does anyone in your household have a disability?

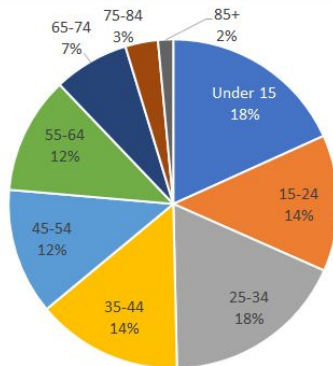
Durham County Demographics

As a baseline, here are some demographics for Durham County

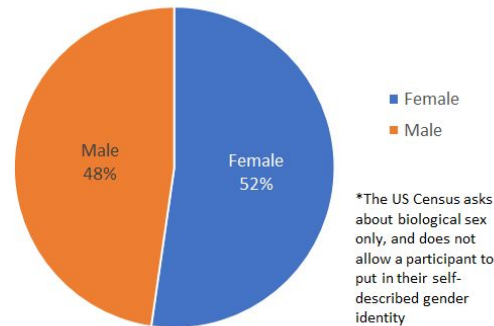
Race/Ethnicity



Age



Sex



ENGAGEDurham takes a different approach (allowing free responses) compared to the Census. Please see notes on each chart for more detail.

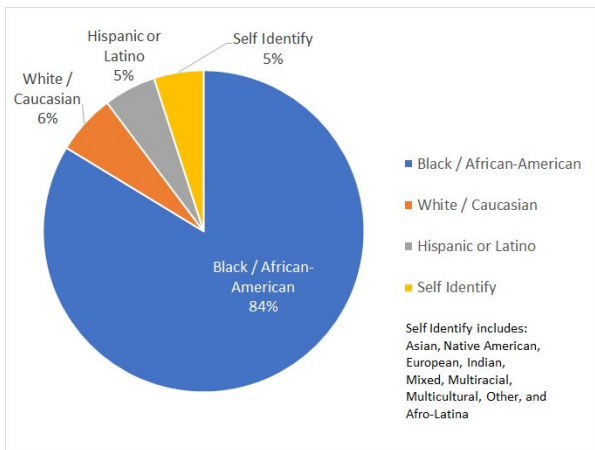
All data from US Census 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate

Durham County Population is approximately 322,000

Engagement Demographics: Racial/Ethnic Identity

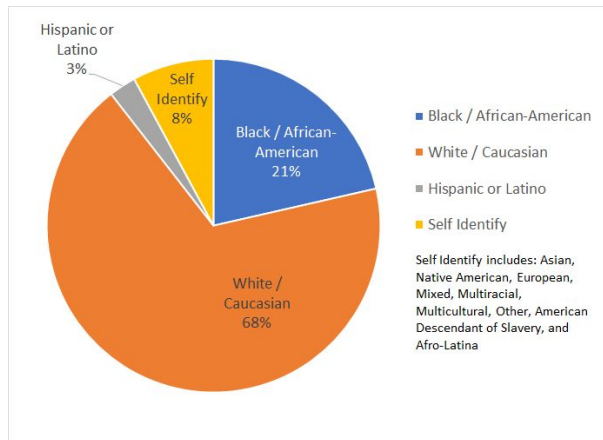
How do you identify your race/ethnicity?

Engagement Ambassadors



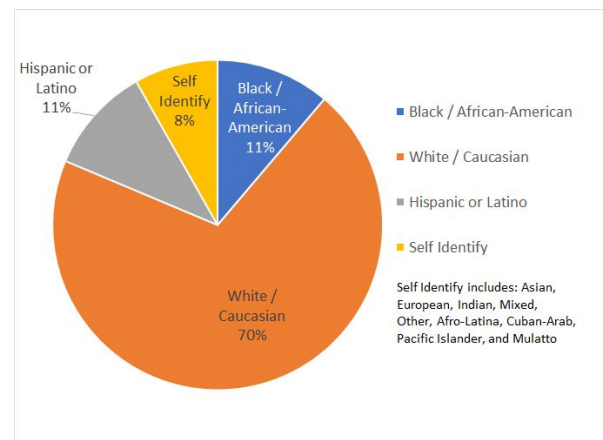
*showing 380 responses out of 600 people

Workshops



*showing 266 responses out of 400 people

Online Survey

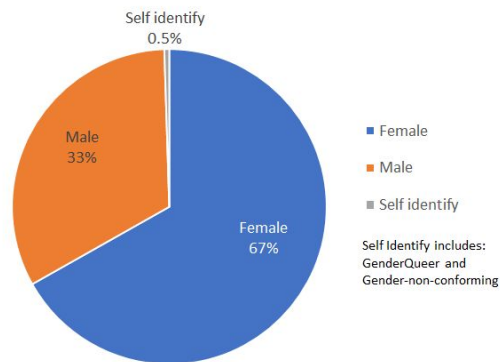


*showing 134 responses out of 169 people

Engagement Demographics: Gender Identity

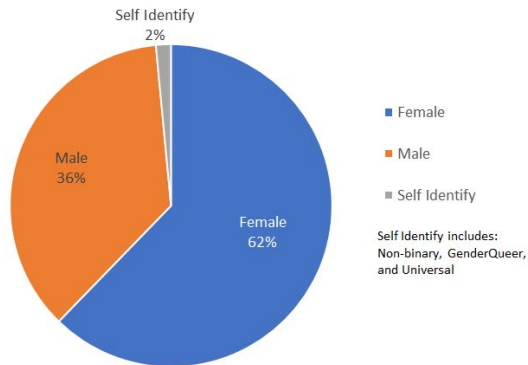
How do you identify your gender identity?

Engagement Ambassadors



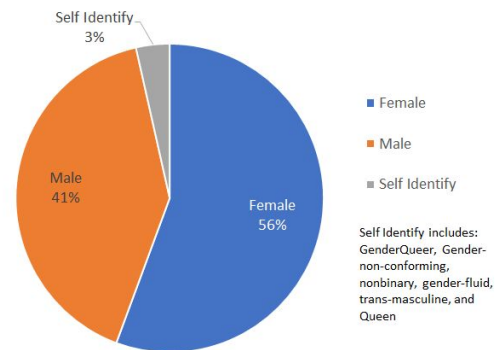
*showing 395 responses out of 600 people

Workshops



*showing 265 responses out of 400 people

Online Survey

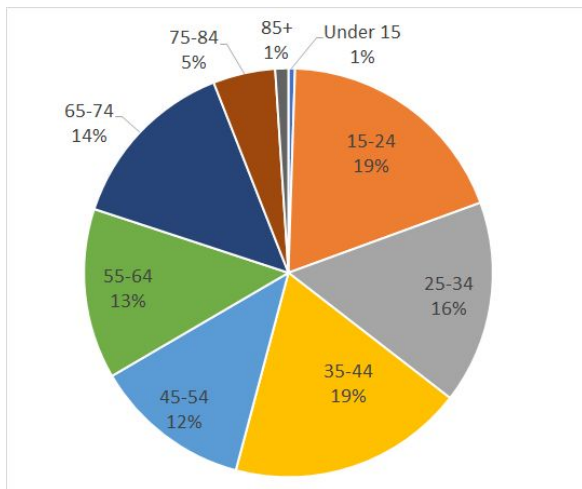


*showing 142 responses out of 169 people

Engagement Demographics: Age

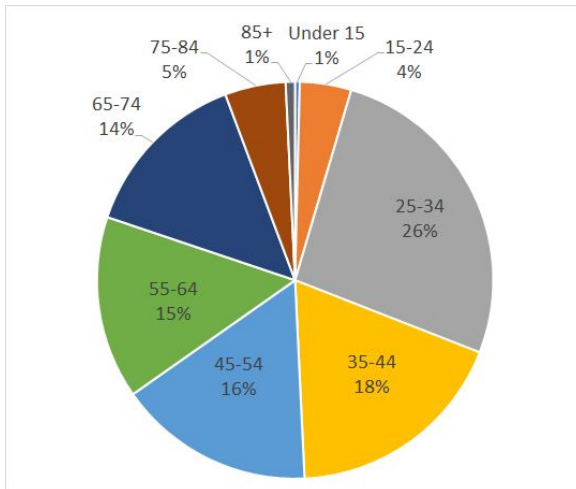
What is your age?

Engagement Ambassadors



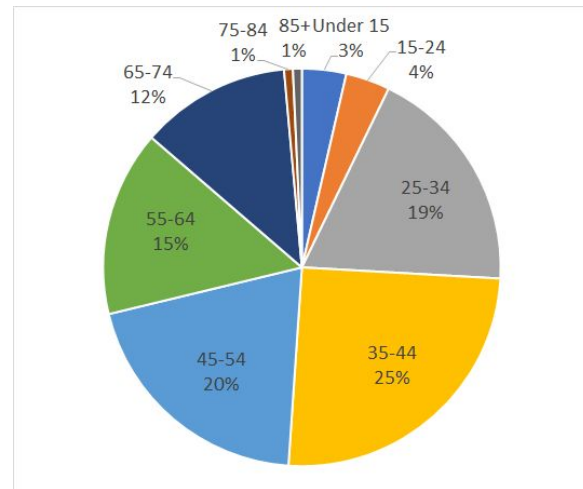
*showing 386 responses out of 600 people

Workshops



*showing 262 responses out of 400 people

Online Survey

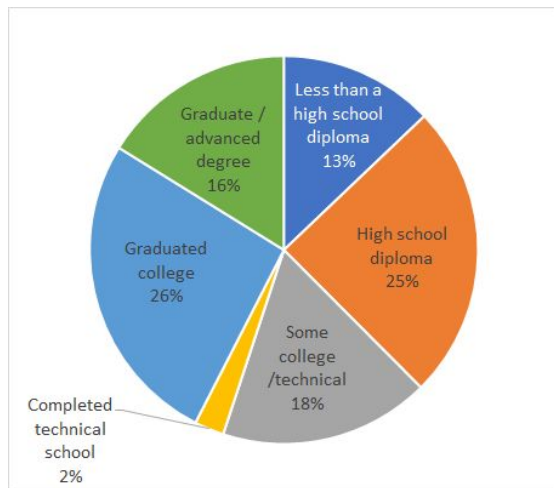


*showing 139 responses out of 169 people

Engagement Demographics: Level of Education

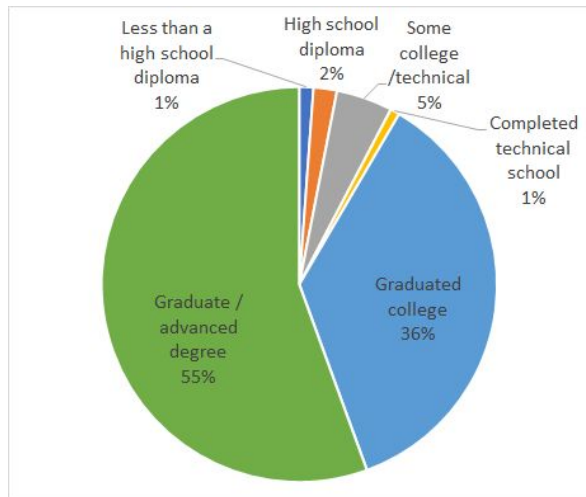
What level of education or training have you completed?

Engagement Ambassadors



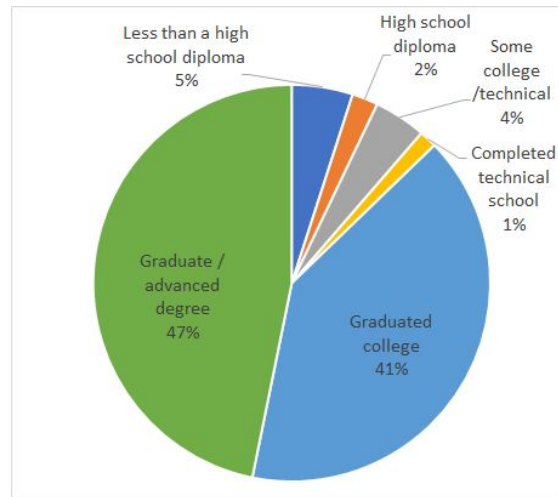
*showing 365 responses out of 600 people

Workshops



*showing 261 responses out of 400 people

Online Survey

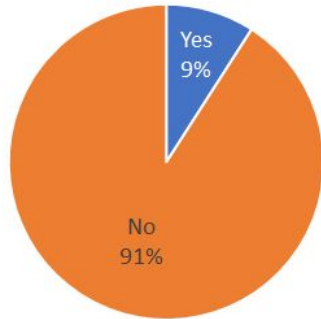


*showing 141 responses out of 169 people

Engagement Demographics: Sexual Orientation

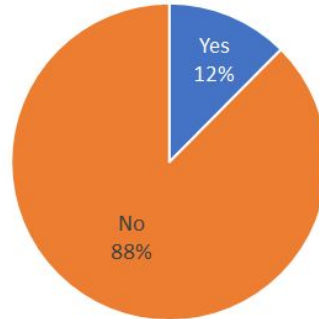
Do you identify as LGBTQIA+?

Engagement Ambassadors



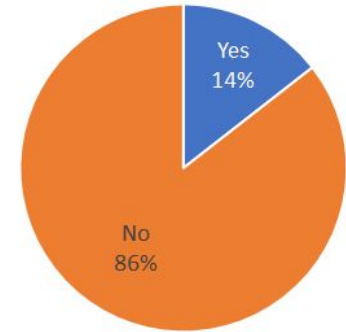
*showing 374 responses out of 600 people

Workshops



*showing 265 responses out of 400 people

Online Survey

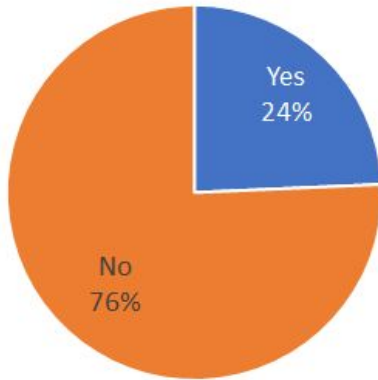


*showing 152 responses out of 169 people

Engagement Demographics: Household with disabilities

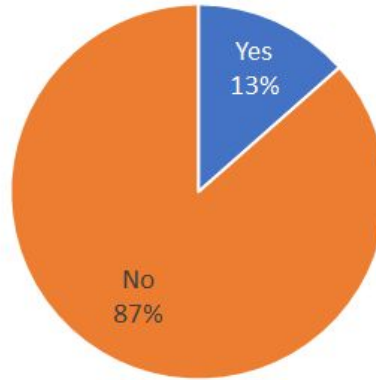
Does anyone in your household have a disability?

Engagement Ambassadors



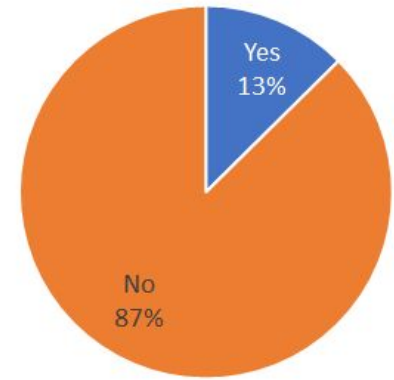
*showing 391 responses out of 600 people

Workshops



*showing 267 responses out of 400 people

Online Survey

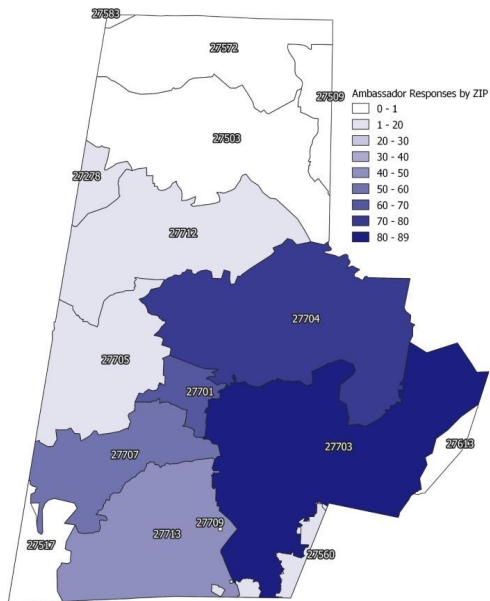


*showing 151 responses out of 169 people

Engagement Demographics: Where participants live

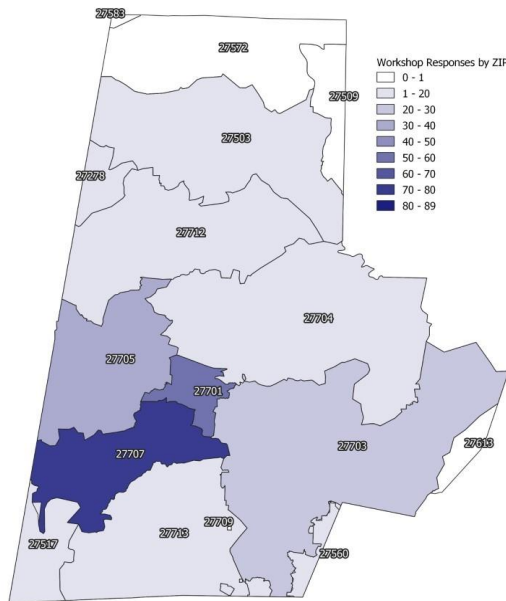
What zip code do you live in?

Engagement Ambassadors



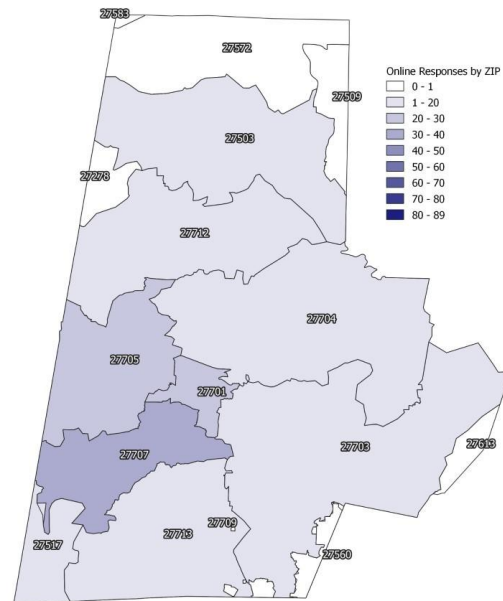
*showing 367 responses out of 600 people

Workshops



*showing 261 responses out of 400 people

Online Survey



*showing 130 responses out of 167 people

List of Top 20 Topics for each Engagement Type

Rank	Engagement Ambassadors	Workshops	Online Survey
1	Housing (202)	Housing (277)	Transit (43)
2	Schools & Education (141)	Engagement Process & Government Accountability (211)	Housing (35)
3	Public Spaces, Activities, & Recreation (126)	Transit (199)	Crime & Policing (33)
4	Transit - Bus (126)	Transit - Bus (195)	Safety (31)
5	Engagement Process & Government Accountability (97)	Growth & Development (170)	Green Spaces (28)
6	Workforce & Wages (96)	Public Spaces, Activities, & Recreation (143)	Diversity (20)
7	Infrastructure (92)	Schools & Education (131)	Inclusivity & Representation (20)

(x) is the number of comments for each topic

List of Top 20 Topics for each Engagement Type

Rank	Engagement Ambassadors	Workshops	Online Survey
8	Crime & Policing (88)	Infrastructure (124)	Sustainability & Climate Changes (19)
9	Safety (78)	Sustainability & Climate Change (115)	Engagement Process & Government Accountability (17)
10	Youth Spaces & Policies (72)	Walkability (112)	Public Spaces, Activities, & Safety (14)
11	Gentrification & Displacement (70)	Green Spaces (86)	Growth & Development (12)
12	Growth & Development (63)	Safety (79)	Neighborhood Character (12)
13	Health & Wellness (56)	Gentrification & Displacement (71)	Walkability (12)

(x) is the number of comments for each topic

List of Top 20 Topics for each Engagement Type

Rank	Engagement Ambassadors	Workshops	Online Survey
14	Inclusivity & Representation (40)	Equity (64)	Gentrification & Displacement (11)
15	Community Building (36)	Business & Entrepreneurship (63)	Schools & Education (11)
16	Durham's Identity (36)	Natural Environment (62)	Business & Entrepreneurship (10)
17	Equity (36)	Community Building (60)	Density (10)
18	Food Access (35)	Food Access (60)	Infrastructure (10)
19	Transit (32)	Durham's Identity (57)	History (9)
20	Homelessness (31)	Neighborhood Character (56)	Transit - Car, Rideshare (9)

List of all Topics

This is the list of all topics used to categorize input so far:

- Access to Information
- Accessibility - people with disabilities
- Affordability
- Arts
- Belonging
- Business & Entrepreneurship
- Community Building
- Community Trauma
- Cooperative Planning
- Crime & Policing
- Criminal Justice
- Cultural Identity
- Demographics - Black people
- Demographics - Latinx people
- Demographics - White people
- Density
- Diversity
- Downtown
- Duke
- Durham's Identity
- Engagement Process & Developer Accountability
- Engagement Process & Government Accountability
- Equity
- Food Access
- Food & Beverage
- Funding & Taxes
- Gentrification & Displacement
- Green Spaces
- Growth & Development
- Health & Wellness
- Highway 147 / Redlining / Urban Renewal
- History
- Homelessness
- Housing

List of all Topics

This is the list of all topics used to categorize input so far (continued):

- Inclusivity & Representation
- Infrastructure
- Investment
- Lack of Trust
- Left Out
- Locals vs. Newcomers
- McDougald Terrace
- Middle Class
- Minority-owned Business
- Mixed-income Neighborhoods
- Mixed Use
- Natural Environment
- Neighborhood Character
- Nuisance
- Poverty
- Public Spaces, Activities, & Recreation
- Racism
- Regionalism
- Resources
- Safety
- Schools & Education
- Senior Spaces & Policies
- Social Services
- Sustainability & Climate Change
- Taxes
- Transit
- Transit - Bike
- Transit - Bus
- Transit - Car, Rideshare
- Transit - Light or Commuter Rail
- Transit - Public
- Two Durhams
- Walkability
- Water
- Workforce & Wages
- Youth Spaces & Policies
- Zoning & Regulation

Thank you!

Thank you to all the residents who have participated and shared their voices in this process so far. And thank you to everyone who has helped make this engagement happen, including:

- the ENGAGEDurham Outreach Team
- the Engagement ambassadors
- Neighborhood Improvement Services staff and
- the City, County, GoTriangle, and Durham Public Schools staff that assisted with workshops, data entry, theming, etc.



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