



TOWN OF DURHAM
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2022-2023 Council Goals *
Approved by Town Council on 5-16-2022
- Rolling Goals Update 10/20/22 -

Mission

To provide ongoing stewardship for the Durham community including effective and efficient municipal services.

Core Values

- Transparency
- Integrity
- Respect
- Excellence
- Resilience
- Justice

Action Goals

(Note: These goals are intended to convey a 1- to 3-year time horizon and assume but do not list all baseline activities.)

Ensure smooth and, to the extent possible, transparent functioning of Town government.

- Update software/systems as needed including working toward providing municipal e-mail addresses for Town Councilors and board/commission Chairs.
 - ❖ Durham is taking steps to allow for external addresses to be added to the Microsoft tenant. Three things prevent us from moving forward: 1) We're still using our legacy exchange server in hybrid mode for send and receiving mail as well as management of users in the active directory (AD) and azure active directory; 2) Our mail records currently point to our Barracuda ESG, which does not natively handle mail signing, scanning, DKIM, DMARC, SPF or most modern mail technologies. It does, however, still serve as the main filter point for spam and phishing email protection. This needs to be removed and records repointed before mail will flow 100% through Microsoft 365; 3) Our AD environment is both legacy and splintered. We are working to combine domains within our forest to a single root and eliminate all sub-domains, which will make the move to a domain-less identity and authentication system all the easier. Domain management currently involves too many unknowns to pull in outside guests (councilor,

board/committee/commission chairs, etc.) and properly secure them against abuse. Once these three items are addressed, we should be able to offer everyone ci.durham.nh.us (or more likely durhamnh.gov, which we have earlier this year secured to facilitate the future transition) addresses on demand without having to slog through legacy infrastructure.

Continue monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic using information available from state and Federal agencies.

- Convey timely information to the community as appropriate.
 - ❖ **Complete.** We will revisit as necessary if Covid-19 trends change.
- Ensure the Town has an adequate supply of Personal Protection Equipment for its emergency services and Town staff.
 - ❖ **Complete.** We continue to have face masks and hand sanitizer available in all facilities for staff and the general public. Departments are equipped as needed.

Conduct planning necessary to protect public health and safety and provide ongoing service continuity given the anticipated impacts of climate change and other trends.

- Update Fire Department Strategic Plan and continue to plan for future fire department facility needs, including a new station on Water Works Road, and evaluate opportunities with surrounding communities regarding the potential for shared emergency services as appropriate.
 - ❖ Due to ongoing demands and minimal staffing the Fire Department Strategic Plan is moving forward at a slow pace.
 - ❖ A pad has been reserved for a future new public safety facility (Fire, UNH Police, McGregor Memorial EMS) on Water Works Road but at this time neither Durham nor UNH have the funding necessary to move ahead and we've been unable to locate/secure grant funding to offset this cost.
 - ❖ Durham and Madbury have had early conversations around greater collaboration/partnership for emergency fire service delivery and we hope to pursue further in the coming 12-months. The Board of Madbury Selectpersons have authorized the Chief in Madbury to engage consulting services to assist with evaluating collaborative possibilities and Durham has offered to partner in the effort.
 - ❖ We continue to work with Strafford County and UNH Re: the town's new LMR infrastructure. A portion of the system will be located on the WUNH Tower, which is a significant benefit for the combined community serviced by the node (An MOA has been developed to facilitate this relationship with UNH.)

- Move forward with the Land and Mobile Radio (LMR) emergency communications upgrade to municipal infrastructure.
 - ❖ Project is moving forward supported by a Congressionally Allocated Spending Request totaling \$900,000. Motorola & 2-Way Communications are the lead contractors. Hardware purchased, cabinets being readied for installation, hard work at tower sites still to come. Project likely at 67% completion.

- Move forward with emergency generator enhancements for critical infrastructure.
 - ❖ Secured a Congressionally Allocated Spending Request totaling \$535,000 to support emergency generator upgrades/ replacements at several Durham facilities to include our police, public works, and several municipal wells. Project in early stages.

- Continue to monitor and evaluate the reliability, capacity, and functionality of public water, wastewater, and stormwater services, and move ahead with associated capital initiatives as appropriate.
 - ❖ The Durham Public Works Department and subsurface exploration contractor, Miller Engineering and Testing, Inc. recently completed six (6) individual subsurface explorations on Bennett Road surrounding the LaRoche, Woodman, and Corsey Brook culverts. Previously the Town of Durham, working with Engineering consultant CMA Engineers, completed conceptual designs and cost estimates for the three culverts on Bennett Road, which include LaRoche, Woodman and Corsey Brooks. Each of these structures exhibited several substantial deficiencies including a preliminary finding that the existing roadway is below the mapped FEMA 100-year flood Elevation for the Corset and Woodman structures and highly susceptible to roadway flooding. In addition, the Woodman Brook crossing includes dry-laid stone retaining wall structures at the culvert and along the adjacent roadway approach which is in poor condition and requires attention prior to failure.

 - ❖ DPW has included a request for \$2.5 million dollars in funding within a Congressionally Directed Spending Request through United States Senator Shaheen’s office and we’re pleased to report that the project has been viewed favorably and has been submitted by Senator Shaheen for the FY2023 appropriations process, which will now be reviewed by the appropriations committee to determine if the project will be funded.

 - ❖ The Madbury Road project also addresses myriad water, wastewater, and stormwater deficiencies.

- Update land use and other regulations as necessary to ensure local resilience associated with climate change.
 - ❖ In process of updating 2017 Hazard Mitigation Plan through Strafford

Regional Planning Commission (SRPC). This will inform other potential local code/regulation changes and/or modifications in the future.

- Take steps as necessary to ensure Durham’s IT infrastructure remains secure from cybersecurity threats and other challenges.
 - ❖ Working to hire an additional full-time IT professional to supplement Durham resiliency in all areas. Two finalists are being considered.
 - ❖ IT Dept. is pursuing external grant funding to support additional training/evaluation as well for staff across departments.

Pursue long-term economic sustainability and resiliency, anticipating the community’s, the region’s, and the nation’s economic characteristics and opportunities.

- Task the Administrator with meeting the following: 1) Holding the municipal tax rate at the 2022 level or less. 2) Continue to make an effort to control spending, enhance revenues, broaden the tax base, and explore innovative ways to stabilize or reduce the municipal tax rate.
 - ❖ FY 2023 budget development process is ongoing. Despite our efforts to do so, we have not been able to find a way to responsibly bring the Council a proposed budget holding the local municipal tax rate constant (or reducing it) for 2023, while also meeting the many other Council goals. All things considered, potential avenues to accomplish the Town Council budgetary goal in this respect generally fall into one of several courses of action: **one-time decisions** (i.e., drawing down on a limited pot of undesignated fund balance, which we are endeavoring to supplement per Council policy), **short-sighted** (i.e., use of additional one-time state transportation dollars for one-time artificial budget relief), **increasing risk** (i.e., adjusting upward projected revenues beyond what might be prudent or under-estimating likely expenditures for 2023 given the current inflationary environment), have **negative long-term fiscal implications** (i.e., bonding the \$490,000 road program versus current policy of paying with cash), or would result in the **loss of services** valued by the community (i.e., eliminating curbside trash/recycling collection altogether). The working draft of our budget proposal endeavors to avoid such temptations. A more prudent fiscal strategy includes ensuring operational efficiencies (ongoing) and broadening the tax base over time through new desirable taxable development.
- Work to secure available external grant funding opportunities.
 - ❖ See grant highlights throughout this document.
- Support as appropriate the efforts of local businesses, the Durham Business Association, and Celebrate Durham as they plan and host events and activities intended to maintain and enhance a vibrant downtown Durham.
 - ❖ These organizations have not been particularly active in 2022. The Town largely through Parks & Rec., has organized Memorial Day, Durham Day, the Farmers’ Market, and the Halloween Trick-or-Treat event downtown. Frost Fest is planned downtown for December.

- Start to develop a plan for the re-development of 66 Main Street.
 - ❖ Business permit parking moved to top of parcel. Utilized by the Durham Farmers' Market this past summer on Mondays from Spring through the first week in October. The Urban Land Institute could host a charette for Durham regarding possibilities for the future of the parcel for around \$10,000. See more at <https://ulidigitalmarketing.blob.core.windows.net/ulidcnc/sites/41/2020/03/ULI-Boston-TAP-Application-FY21.pdf>. Otherwise, staff have been preoccupied with other matters and have not had an opportunity to devote resources again to this parcel.

- Continue to work toward defining and addressing downtown parking challenges to support local businesses, the diversification of downtown housing opportunities, and the expansion of the tax base.
 - ❖ Several minor modifications/enhancements to the downtown parking meter program have been undertaken in 2022 to support more efficient use of downtown parking. Post-pandemic, there is less demand for parking within the downtown area. It is unknown whether this trend will correct in the years to come.

 - ❖ The legacy parking kiosks downtown and throughout Durham will need to be replaced in the coming three years. 9 (out of 27) kiosks are targeted for 2023 while the DPD also explores App-based technology to integrate alongside (and to potentially replace in targeted areas) our kiosk system. The new kiosks will be amenable to “tap” based phone technology.

Pursue long-term environmental sustainability and resiliency taking into account existing and predicted impacts of climate change in multiple areas including drinking water, agriculture, food, society, transportation, ecology, and economy.

- Take steps that reflect Durham's commitment to the mission of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCOM), to include the development of a Climate Action Plan (CAP) to reduce Durham greenhouse gas emissions 68 million pounds (35.5%) by 2030, enabling Durham to be more resilient in the face of anticipated impacts associated with climate change.
 - ❖ Draft CAP developed by UNH Sustainability Fellows and Town working group approved by the Town Council on 10/17/22 - to be submitted to GCOM for feedback and finalization.

 - ❖ Energy Committee working to shepherd Durham's participation in the Community Power Coalition of NH with the goal of providing a cleaner/greener and no more expensive source of power to Durham residents/businesses.

- ❖ Energy Committee working to support Durham residents/businesses in various weatherization/efficiency/education measures designed to lower collective greenhouse gas emissions.
- ❖ Pursuit of external grant funding for additional EV charging stations to support electric vehicles. One grant submitted was not approved; seeking additional grant opportunities as they arise.
- ❖ Currently re-applying to UNH Sustainability Institute to continue as host of a UNH Sustainability Fellow for 2023/24.
- Support efforts of the Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee, Agricultural Commission, and Public Works to increase composting and reduce municipal solid waste landfill use and Durham’s carbon footprint.
 - ❖ Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee working with DPW to evaluate ways to decrease solid waste, enhance recycling, and offer expanded household/business composting programs.
- Adopt a solar ordinance updated to more effectively govern the placement of solar panels that supports a range of community priorities.
 - ❖ Following a public forum of its own, a revised ordinance draft was presented to the Town Council by Town Councilor Jim Lawson and referred by Council to Planning Board for review/comment – currently in process as of 10/22.
- Support ongoing improvement of pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and access to public transportation.
 - ❖ Madbury Road project is being designed with a Complete Streets philosophy. Complete Streets is an approach to planning, designing, building, operating, and maintaining streets that enables safe access for all people who need to use them, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Several public outreach efforts have been undertaken by DPW including a presentation to the Town Council in October.
- Work toward the removal of the Mill Pond Dam on the Oyster River, including engineering plans and pursuit of external funding, and through community input and outreach, plan for the use of the resulting public open space to incorporate opportunities for gathering and recreation as well as recognition of the location’s deep historical significance in the pre-Colonial, Colonial, and Modern eras.
 - ❖ DPW has been diligent in seeking grant opportunities to help offset the cost of the project, as well as working with VHB on early engineering/design work, and the start of the Section 106 historic mitigation process (first official meeting on 10/20/22) required by the Army Corps of Engineers to comply with state/federal permitting processes. Grant opportunities include a Critical Flood Risk Infrastructure (CFRING) totaling \$284,226 (formally awarded to Durham), Watershed Assistant Grant for \$125,000, National Fish

and Wildlife Federation (NFWF) Natural Coastal Resilience Grant (\$3+ million), and NOAA Habitat Restoration & Coastal Resilience – Fish Passage through Barrier Removal.

- Support local and regional efforts to promote and improve the long-term health of the Great Bay Watershed, including its tributaries and surrounding catchment areas.
 - ❖ DPW Dir. Rich Reine and Town Engineer April Talon are on the advisory committee for the Great Bay Eelgrass Resilience Project. Part of their role is to act as liaisons - sharing information about the project and gathering any input that could inform the research team.
 - ❖ Durham allocates \$18,600 for water quality monitoring and initiatives each year.
 - ❖ Durham continues to be an active participant with the Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership – Admin. Selig is on the Management Committee,
- Continue to support the proactive stewardship of Town-owned lands and other lands in Durham held in conservation or under easement with nonprofit organizations while improving appropriate and sustainable public access and use of those lands.
 - ❖ Land Stewardship Coordinator Tom Brightman and the Land Stewardship Subcommittee of the Conservation Commission have been undertaking yeoman’s work on a variety of initiatives intended to responsibly manage Town conservation lands. Tom has notified the Town that he will be stepping down at the end of the year -- so we’re working to develop a transition plan moving into 2023.

Pursue long-term social resiliency.

- Strengthen the community by supporting the needs of residents, families, and other identified stakeholders by offering a wide array of active and passive parks & recreation and library opportunities, programming, events, and facilities.
 - ❖ Great success in 2022 to date with a wide array of Parks & Rec. programming spanning age demographics and in partnership with ORCSD and other local organizations.
 - ❖ The new Assistant Director position at Parks & Rec. has really put the department in a solid position to be sustainable and fine tune/enhance programming/opportunities for the community, including getting citizens out into Durham’s open space lands.
- Continue to work to preserve the health and vitality of Durham’s neighborhoods.
 - ❖ Code Enforcement remains diligent in this area monitoring zoning issues to include trash, parking, over-occupancy in violation of Durham’s “No More than Three Unrelated” requirement.

- ❖ Durham Police remain proactive and vigilant with our Problem Oriented Police (POP) Officer program and across shift staffing in general.
- ❖ Durham Fire are focused on safety within apartments and neighborhoods.
- Explore regulatory strategies to buffer the transition from the downtown commercial core to adjacent residential neighborhoods.
 - ❖ No action to date.
- Support efforts to investigate opportunities, challenges, and options to ensure the availability of a full range of housing types in Durham.
 - ❖ The Housing Task Force has completed its first year of work and has developed variety of recommendations for consideration by the Planning Board. In early Oct. 2022, the Council extended the charge for the Task Force by another year.
- Continue developing plans for the rehabilitation of both the Old Town Hall/Courthouse and the Bickford-Chesley House at Wagon Hill Farm.
 - ❖ LCHIP grant applications & planning being pursued to support and move ahead with improvements within the WHF farmhouse. Unfortunately, a recent application for Moose Plate Grant funding for a new roof was not approved.
 - ❖ Incremental improvements being undertaken at the Old Town Hall/Courthouse to include new HVAC system, new gas-fired furnace, new flooring within the community room, painting, etc. Additional general maintenance improvements to be undertaken as part of 2023 proposed budget. Once the farmhouse at WHF is fully addressed, we will shift efforts to look at more significant improvements needed for Old Town Hall/Courthouse.
- Support initiatives that welcome diversity, equity, and inclusion within our community.
 - ❖ The Human Rights Commission has organized an Implicit Bias workshop for Town committee volunteers/staff in October 2022. Supported by a \$10,000 NHCF grant secured by HRC member Janet Perkins Howland.
 - ❖ Support for Indigenous Peoples' Day once again in 2022. An interesting program provided to Council in advance of the holiday by UNH researchers concerning Native American archeological explorations in Durham.
 - ❖ Development and ultimate adoption of Town Council resolution recognizing and increasing awareness of various civic, cultural, and religious holidays/occasions.

Continue cooperative and collaborative efforts with UNH to enhance mutual intellectual, cultural, environmental, social, and economic benefits associated with hosting New Hampshire’s flagship state university.

- ❖ Ongoing discussion taking place between Durham/UNH departments and key staff throughout the pandemic and as part of advance planning for major events/initiatives impacting both entities.
- ❖ UNH recently met with the Planning Board and HDC/HC in late-summer 2022 to obtain feedback regarding a planned addition to Huddleston Hall to house the Honors Program.
- ❖ Close collaboration with UNH Sustainability Institute to support mutual climate adaptation/mitigation goals.
- ❖ Our water and wastewater systems are operated collaboratively as a single entity. Stormwater collaboration is also taking place.
- ❖ Ongoing partnership in fire protection, roadway maintenance, policing issues.

Leverage town committees and subcommittees to develop tactical plans to align with the broader goals of the Council and encourage them to collaborate with each other and communicate as necessary with the community at large.

- ❖ The Town Council goals have been printed on large paper and hung in the Council chambers, distributed to Town boards, committees, commissions, departments, included in “Friday Updates,” are available on Durham’s web site, and we will be posting periodic progress reports for the community as part of the weekly “Friday Updates.”

** Note that the order of the goals does not imply priority.*