

Durham Cultural Advisory Board

Advocacy Subcommittee

SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual

For meeting link or information, please email dcab@durhamnc.gov at least one day prior to the meeting date. To learn more about how to join the meeting, visit: <https://durhamnc.gov/452/Durham-Cultural-Advisory-Board>.

Durham Cultural Advisory Board Members Present

Karim Baer
Joseph Jordan, Chair
Emily Ensminger

Barbara Lau
Margaret McNab, Vice Chair
Laura Ritchie

City of Durham & Durham County Staff Present

Rebecca Holmes, City of Durham

Jo Palazuelos-Krukowski, City of Durham

Members of the Public in Attendance

E'Vonne Coleman, Member of the Public

Katie Wyatt, Durham Arts Council

I. Cultural Roadmap Funding Discussion

- i. The Advocacy Subcommittee discussed the Cultural Roadmap and its current funding status. Holmes (City) explained that due to broader fiscal constraints, General Services will not include a funding request for Cultural Roadmap implementation in the upcoming City budget. However, the subcommittee clarified that DCAB, through this advocacy group, may independently submit a budget request to City officials.
- ii. The committee discussed advocating for a \$50,000 allocation (\$25,000 from the City and \$25,000 from the County) to support first-year implementation of the Cultural Roadmap. Members emphasized the importance of clarifying how these funds would be used and requested additional detail from the Cultural Roadmap Planning Group and consultants.
- iii. The group also noted that the County has already contributed \$200,000 in ARPA funding toward artist training initiatives.
- iv. Next steps discussed included:

1. Aligning advocacy efforts with City staff
2. Securing buy-in from the full DCAB
3. Clarifying the proposed use of the \$50,000 funding request
4. Coordinating outreach to elected officials, including Council Members Michelle Burton, Shanetta Burris, and Javiera Caballero

II. Cultural Roadmap Initiatives Update

- a. The group discussed updates to Cultural Roadmap initiatives, including ARPA-funded training programs, potential artist residencies in City and County spaces, and opportunities for collaboration across agencies.
- b. The subcommittee also reviewed proposed updates to the Festival & Special Events Grant Program, noting that the group can play an advocacy role in supporting implementation of these changes. Members emphasized the importance of framing these updates as aligned with Cultural Roadmap recommendations.
- c. Strategies discussed included:
 - i. Direct outreach to festival applicants, venues, and stakeholders to communicate upcoming changes
 - ii. Positioning program updates as improvements informed by broader cultural planning efforts
- d. The group confirmed that the previously discussed \$400,000 festival funding request remains in place.

III. Cultural Roadmap Advocacy Strategy

- a. The subcommittee discussed its role in advancing both adoption and implementation of the Cultural Roadmap. Members agreed that their advocacy efforts should proceed in parallel, rather than sequentially.
- b. Key priorities identified:
 - i. Advocate for inclusion of \$50,000 in the FY budget to support initial implementation
 - ii. Advocate for formal adoption of the Cultural Roadmap
- c. The group discussed the importance of building stakeholder support and coordinating closely with the Cultural Roadmap Planning Group (CRPG). Baer (DCAB) suggested strengthening connections between the subcommittee and CRPG to ensure alignment.
- d. Coleman (Public) emphasized the importance of broad community buy-in and cross-sector relationships, including engagement with Parks and Recreation and other partners.

IV. Approaches to Communication Strategy

- a. The group discussed the formation and role of a communications-focused effort to support Cultural Roadmap advocacy. Members emphasized the need to clearly define the subcommittee's role and responsibilities.
- b. Discussion points included:

- i. Confirming awareness of the subcommittee among CRPG leadership (Holmes (City) to verify)
 - ii. Developing a timeline and identifying key stakeholders for engagement
 - iii. Prioritizing relationship-building with CRPG before expanding broader communications efforts
 - c. Ensminger (DCAB) highlighted the importance of clearly defining the group's stewardship role in advancing the Roadmap.

V. Cultural Plan Adoption Timeline

- a. Holmes (City) outlined the timeline for Cultural Roadmap completion and adoption:
 - i. April 2026: Draft plan shared with City and County Managers
 - ii. May 2026: Public engagement (Phase 3)
 - iii. June 2026: Stakeholder engagement and refinement of final draft
 - iv. Early August 2026: Presentations and anticipated adoption by elected officials
- b. The group noted that plan adoption and budget allocation are separate processes, though both are critical to successful implementation.
- c.

VI. Cultural Roadmap Advocacy Action Steps

- a. The subcommittee agreed on the following immediate actions:
 - i. Advocate for \$50,000 in FY budget funding (\$25K City / \$25K County)
 - ii. Advocate for formal adoption of the Cultural Roadmap
- b. Additional action steps include:
 - i. Aligning messaging and strategy with City staff
 - ii. Clarifying funding use with consultants and CRPG
 - iii. Building support among DCAB members
 - iv. Conducting targeted outreach to elected officials and stakeholders
- c. The group noted that its specific priorities may evolve annually.
- d. Coleman (Member of the Public) was tasked to reach out to Steve Schewel and Zena Howard (Co-Chairs of the Cultural Roadmap Planning Group). T

VII. Next Advocacy Standing Committee Meeting

- a. Date: Wednesday, April 1, 2026
- b. Time: 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.
- c. Location: Virtual

Submitted respectfully by,
Jo Palazuelos Krukowski, City of Durham

For updates on City of Durham's Cultural & Public Art Program, visit:
<https://www.durhamnc.gov/450/Cultural-Public-Art-Development>

For updates on Durham County's Public Art Program, visit:

<https://www.dconc.gov/county-departments/departments-a-e/engineering-and-environmental-services/dco-public-art>

Documents

- DCAB's 2026 Calendar
- DCAB Acting Task Forces, Committees, and Groups
- DCAB's 2025 Goals
- FY25 Festival & Special Event Contracting Status Report

FY2026 Calendar - Upcoming DCAB's Monthly Meetings for 2025-2026 Term

April 15, 2026 (3:00 – 4:30 p.m.)
City Hall, 101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC 27701

May 20, 2026 (3:00 – 4:30 p.m.)
City Hall, 101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC 27701

June 17, 2026 (3:00 – 4:30 p.m.)
Virtual

Durham Cultural Advisory Board's Standing Committees, Task Forces, and Groups

Festivals & Special Events Standing Committee

1. Joseph Jordan
2. Margaret McNab
3. Andrew Nurkin
4. Laura Ritchie

Student Recruitment Task Force

1. Pamela Bond
2. David Long
3. Aya Shabu

Advocacy Group

1. Barbara Lau
2. Karim Baer
3. Laura Ritchie
4. Margaret McNab
5. Joseph Jordan

