

**Durham Cultural Advisory Board  
& Public Art Committee  
2026 Joint Annual Retreat  
Meeting Minutes**

**Friday, February 27, 2026  
12:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Location: Museum of Life and Science Southlabs,  
433 West Murray Avenue, Durham, NC 27704**

**Durham Cultural Advisory Attendees**

Karim Baer	Barbara Lau
Curtis Berzofsky, Student Member	David Long
Pamela Bond	Joey G. Medrano
Emily Wynn Ensminger	Margaret McNab, Vice Chair
Santos Flores	Laura Ritchie
R. Scott Frawley	Vanessa Smart
Joseph Jordan, Chair	

**Durham Cultural Advisory Board Absenses**

Javiera Caballero, At-Large City Council Member	Andrew Nurkin
	Aya Shabu

**Public Art Committee Attendees**

Jaime Chaves	Anjali Mathew
Amanda Frystock-Ronan	Rachel Mutschler
Mark Iwinski, Co-Chair	Molly Trask-Price
Malinda Love	Heather Wilson, Co-Chair

**Public Art Committee Absences**

Eliza Redmann	Aya Shabu
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**City & County Staff in Attendance**

Jaci Field, City of Durham	Stephanie Minor, City of Durham
Brenda Hayes-Bright, Durham County	Jo Palazuelos-Krukowski, City of Durham
Rebecca Holmes, City of Durham	Annette Smith, City of Durham
Sarah Martin, Durham County	Robin Schultze, City of Durham
Stacey Poston, City of Durham	

**Members of the Public in Attendance**

Michael Gianakos, Durham Art Guild	Emilia Ismael, El Centro Hispano
Lindsay Hebert, Weird Productions	Cara Rousseau, Discover Durham
Mimi O'Brien, Mary Duke Biddle Foundation	Marylu Flowers-Schoen
Moses Ochola, Black August in the Park	Katie Wyatt, Durham Arts Council
Jesse Rosen, Durham Symphony Orchestra	

## I. Call to Order

- a. DCAB members, PAC members, staff members, and members of the public introduced themselves.
- b. How City & County Staff support DCAB & PAC
  - i. DCAB: How They Operate & What They Do (Rebecca Holmes, City of Durham)
    1. Holmes (City) reviewed how staff support the boards through administrative coordination, orientations, work with the [City Clerk](#) and [County Clerk](#), annual reports, program support, policy guidance, and assistance with procedural compliance.
    2. Holmes outlined the City reporting structure, noting that staff report through City administration to the City Manager, who reports to [City Council](#). She also described the comparable County structure in the [Durham County Public Art Program](#) and noted the County's investment and dedication to public art.
    3. Holmes explained that DCAB serves in an advisory role, providing recommendations to City and County leadership on arts and cultural policy and implementation. She noted that members are also positioned to advocate for arts and cultural organizations and initiatives.
    4. Holmes clarified that DCAB may provide funding recommendations, but final funding authority rests with the City Manager and/or City Council. She also noted that supporting public art is part of DCAB's charge under its bylaws, and that Minor would speak further on that role.
    5. Holmes provided a brief overview of DCAB's history, structure, and committee system, including its relationship to PAC, task forces, and the member appointment process.
    6. Holmes also shared examples of how public or board-supported initiatives, such as the [Poet Laureate Program](#) and [Special Events & Festivals funding](#), move through recommendation, staff support, and final City oversight.
    7. Holmes clarified that board members may advocate directly with elected officials, while staff may provide factual and procedural guidance but may not engage in political advocacy.
  - i. PAC: How They Operate & What They Do (Stephanie Minor, City of Durham)
    - i. Minor (City) explained that the Public Art Committee (PAC) serves as an advisory body to the City and County on public art matters. She noted that Durham's percent-for-art framework dedicates up to one percent of eligible capital project



budgets to public art, creating an ongoing pipeline of projects connected to construction, renovation, and infrastructure work.

- ii. Minor stated that PAC reviewed and recommended City and County public art projects for approval. She noted that recent projects included the [South Ellerbe Restoration Project](#), [Crest Street Park Public Art](#), [Acoustic Public Art for City Hall](#), the [Living Mural at City Hall](#), the [Board of Elections project](#), and public proposals for [E.K. Powe](#) and the [Bike Durham groundplane mural](#). She explained that PAC members review artist presentations and design proposals, ask questions, provide feedback, and support refinement of projects before recommendations move forward.
  - iii. Minor also reported that PAC had been working on several current initiatives, including refining the review criteria for submissions to City and County calls for artists, developing public art recommendations for the new [Unified Development Ordinance](#), and contributing recommendations to the Durham Cultural Roadmap.
  - iv. Finally, Minor noted that PAC had continued its collaboration with Duke Sanford students on policy research and related deliverables connected to public art.
- d. [Cultural Roadmap](#) Updates
- i. Holmes briefly highlighted some of the public art work the City is engaging in.
  - ii. Jo Palazuelos-Krukowski (City) described the [Beechwood Cemetery Living History Performance Project](#), which adapts the biographies of those buried at Beechwood Cemetery for educational performance. She noted that auditions would soon be held at City Hall and that the performance was planned for May 20, 2026 (May 27, 2026 as a rain date) at Beechwood Cemetery.
  - iii. Holmes also encouraged members to subscribe to the staff newsletter produced by Stephanie Minor (City) and follow [Creative Durham](#) on social media for updates on calls, programs, and opportunities.
  - iv. Holmes then explained the structure of the Durham Cultural Roadmap process. She stated that the [City Council](#) and [Board of County Commissioners](#) had worked together through an interlocal agreement to establish the planning framework. She noted that DCAB had appointed approximately 40 community members to serve in the [Cultural Roadmap Planning Group](#) and explained that this group reported to DCAB in a manner similar to PAC.
  - v. Holmes stated that City and County staff were managing the planning, coordination, and implementation process in collaboration with DCAB, PAC, and the Planning Group, while also keeping private funders informed. She noted that the process was then in Phase III and encouraged members to attend upcoming meetings or review recordings if they had missed prior sessions.
  - vi. Holmes explained that final adoption authority for the Durham Cultural Roadmap would rest with the Board of County Commissioners and City Council. She noted that, if adopted, staff would then be directed to implement the plan through appropriate funding, staffing, and administrative structures, with DCAB continuing to play an ongoing advisory role.



- vii. Holmes also provided a broader overview of the arts and cultural landscape. She referenced national, federal, regional, state, and local arts entities, including [Americans for the Arts](#), the [National Endowment for the Arts](#), the [National Endowment for the Humanities](#), [South Arts](#), the [North Carolina Arts Council](#), and [Arts North Carolina](#), and described their respective support and advocacy functions.
- viii. Finally, Holmes reviewed several key local partner organizations and structures, including [Discover Durham](#), [Durham Next](#), [Downtown Durham Inc.](#), and major arts and cultural institutions and facilities that the City and County support through contracts, land, or building maintenance. She stated that this overview was intended to give members a clearer understanding of the broader ecosystem, their role within it, and the range of entities involved in Durham's arts and cultural work.

## II. Adjustments to the Agenda

- a. No adjustments to the agenda were made.

## III. Listening Sessions

### a. Overview (Joseph Jordan, DCAB Chair)

- i. Jordan (Chair) explained that the retreat had been structured as a listening opportunity so that DCAB and PAC could hear directly from arts and cultural organizations about how they experienced the boards' work, what support they needed, and what the boards should prioritize going forward.
- ii. He noted that the retreat format was intended to help members better understand current conditions in the field, including organizational sustainability, future planning, and the outlook for the sector. He stated that the discussion was also meant to surface what board members should be watching for, whether new or different forms of collaboration were needed, and what approaches practitioners had found effective in their own work and experience.

### b. First Session: Eco-System (Moderated by Heather Wilson, PAC Co-Chair)

- i. Katie Wyatt, Executive Director of the Durham Arts Council, described the organization as a major cultural hub serving more than 400,000 people annually, supporting over 2,000 artists and more than 300 arts and cultural organizations each year. She emphasized the significance of the City-owned, 52,000-square-foot building, which the Arts Council stewards through its management contract with the City, and stated that one of her priorities was expanding its use as a community space for artists and arts organizations.
  - 1. Wyatt highlighted a new [Creative Spaces](#) initiative developed in response to needs identified through the Durham Cultural Roadmap, particularly the need for space. She explained that the initiative included short-term creative space access, longer-term residency opportunities, and showcase grants for presentation space, with the goal of making Arts Council facilities more accessible and useful to

artists and organizations. She also noted an interest in building stronger ongoing relationships with grantees through convenings, training, and peer learning rather than limiting contact to grant administration and final reporting.

2. Wyatt reviewed the Arts Council's major program areas, including grants, facility support, exhibitions, festivals, arts education, and artist services. She noted that the organization had awarded substantial cash and space grants, supported hundreds of artists and organizations, operated the DAC School and CAPS arts education programs, hosted exhibitions and major public events such as CenterFest and the Art Walk, and maintained the Durham Arts Network as a platform for artist visibility and connection.
  3. Wyatt also emphasized the Arts Council's broader leadership role in advocacy, research, and cultural planning, including economic impact data collection, support for the Cultural Roadmap process, and efforts to strengthen professional development and long-term sustainability within Durham's arts ecosystem.
- ii. Michael Gianakos, Executive Director of the Durham Art Guild, introduced himself as new to Durham and to the local arts community. He stated that the Guild had served Durham for 75 years and described its role as complementary to that of the Durham Arts Council, with a distinct artist-centered focus.
1. Gianakos explained that the Guild's work began with artists' needs, interests, and visions and then connected those to broader community goals. He emphasized that the Guild aimed to create space for artists, support their development, and help translate their work into broader community impact, including storytelling, civic identity, and economic vitality.
  2. He reviewed the Guild's core program areas, including gallery exhibitions, artist residencies, Art at Work, membership programming, and mentorship. He noted that the Guild curated exhibitions in the Truist Gallery at the Durham Arts Council building, maintained gallery and studio space at Golden Belt, and also developed community-based pop-up exhibitions. He emphasized that the Guild sought to compensate artists for their contributions and to provide both exhibition opportunities and developmental support.
  3. Gianakos described the Artist in Residence program as a stipend-supported opportunity for artists to focus on a project over six months, with staff support and a culminating exhibition. He also highlighted the Art at Work program, which placed local artists' work in business and corporate settings and was intended both to support artists and to strengthen connections between the arts and the broader business community.



4. He explained that the Guild’s membership structure supported networking, critique, professional development, and peer learning, and that the organization sought to help artists think more broadly about how to position and sustain their work. He also described the Guild’s mentorship efforts with young people and its interest in strengthening pathways between high school and careers in the creative sector.
  5. Gianakos identified several challenges facing the organization and the broader field, including threats to arts programming, reduced funding opportunities, pressure on earned income and art sales, and broader economic conditions affecting the arts. In response, he emphasized the need for collective impact, stronger collaboration across organizations, greater connection between nonprofit and for-profit sectors, and more coordinated advocacy efforts in support of the arts and creative freedom.
  6. Gianakos closed his presentation by recognizing the Guild’s small staff team, and emphasized that the organization’s work was being carried out with limited full-time capacity despite a consistently active exhibition and programming schedule.
- iii. Mimi O’Brien, Executive Director of the Mary Duke Biddle Foundation, provided an overview of the foundation’s history, scope, and current grantmaking approach. She explained that the foundation was established in 1956 by Mary Lillian Duke Biddle and remains a family foundation governed by a seven-member board, including three family members and four community members.
1. O’Brien stated that the foundation supports four principal areas: Duke University, arts, PreK–12 arts education, and PreK–12 student academic success. She noted that its funding extends across Chatham, Durham, Orange, and Wake counties and that, within the arts portfolio, it supports organizations rather than individual artists.
  2. She reported that the foundation’s endowment was approximately \$46 million and that its 2026 grant budget was about \$1.87 million. Of that total, \$852,000 was allocated to Duke University and \$1,025,000 to other grantmaking. She noted that the non-Duke portion included \$600,000 for multiyear capacity-building grants, \$50,000 for one-year capacity-building grants, \$175,000 for historical relationships, and \$100,000 for Weathering the Storm grants.
  3. O’Brien explained that the foundation had shifted from making many small, project-based restricted grants to offering fewer, larger grants focused on organizational capacity building and long-term sustainability. She stated that the current model emphasized flexible operating support, streamlined applications and reporting, and a lower organizational budget cap of \$2 million.
  4. She described the competitive grant structure, noting that multiyear grants were awarded for three years at \$20,000 to \$50,000 annually to

approximately five to seven organizations, while one-year grants of \$10,000 were intended for newer or reconnecting organizations. She added that the foundation had also begun reserving limited support for emerging organizations that were not yet ready for larger capacity-building grants.

5. O'Brien also noted that the foundation continued to support longstanding partners through a separate historical relationships category, including the Durham Arts Council, Hayti Heritage Center, American Dance Festival, Chamber Orchestra of the Triangle, and UNC School of the Arts. She emphasized that the foundation had also introduced Weathering the Storm grants to help organizations respond to mounting funding pressures.
  6. O'Brien stated that the foundation had sought to reduce the burden of grant seeking through pre-application advising, interview-based semifinalist review, and check-in meetings in place of traditional written reports, while also strengthening relationships with grantees and keeping trustees more directly engaged.
- iv. Lindsay Hebert, Founder of Weird Productions, described Weird Productions as an entrepreneurial, artist-centered effort that began as an experimental creative project and developed into a broader platform for community engagement through art.
1. Hebert noted that the organization's first event, Dollyweird, drew more than 100 artist applications and approximately 350 attendees, demonstrating strong public interest and market demand.
  2. Hebert explained that she approached the work from a for-profit and value-driven perspective, emphasizing that artists should be treated as creative and business partners and that arts programming should be evaluated based on the cultural meaning, psychological healing, and social value it creates for artists, audiences, businesses, and the broader community rather than solely viewed through an economic/financial lens.
  3. She highlighted projects such as Weird Windows and Parties on Parrish as examples of using art to activate underused spaces, increase public engagement, support artists through stipends and commissions, and create more welcoming, accessible experiences for people who might not typically participate in formal arts settings.
  4. Hebert also noted that Weird Productions had emerged as a related effort focused on identifying community needs and applying creative practice to help address them. She emphasized that arts organizations should be prepared to demonstrate measurable public value and community impact rather than assuming that the importance of the arts was self-evident.

5. Hebert encouraged clearer articulation of the community's most pressing needs so that artists and arts organizations could help address them, particularly in areas such as vacant space, affordability, and support for small businesses.
- v. Panel Discussion
1. **QUESTION:** Medrano (DCAB Member) asked O'Brien what the foundation typically covered in its grant check-in meetings and what information those conversations helped the foundation learn.
    - a. In response, O'Brien explained that the meetings focused on indicators of success established with the grantee at the outset of the grant, particularly for the first year of a multiyear capacity-building grant. She stated that the conversations reviewed progress against those indicators, examined what was working well, identified challenges or sticking points, and discussed when a planned approach had not worked as expected. She emphasized that the meetings were not intended as compliance monitoring, but rather as an opportunity to understand organizational progress and challenges in a way that could also inform the foundation's broader work with other nonprofits.
  2. **QUESTION:** Lau (DCAB Member) asked whether any person or organization maintains the most comprehensive list of local artists and arts organizations, and noted the importance of identifying a strategic steward or network hub to support future advocacy around the Cultural Roadmap.
    - a. Gianakos (Durham Art Guild) offered space to convene interested stakeholders and begin building a broader advocacy network beyond the current group.
    - b. Wyatt (Durham Arts Council) noted that a list does exist through the Americans for the Arts National Study, with Durham Arts Council having collected Durham County data on individual artists and arts organizations over multiple study cycles. She added that this data has helped inform the Cultural Roadmap and related planning efforts. Wyatt added that, while Durham Arts Council has distributed that standardized Americans for the Arts survey locally, there may be an opportunity to develop a more locally informed version that better reflects Durham's needs.
  3. **QUESTION:** Lau (DCAB Member) asked whether other families or funders in the area have approached the Mary Duke Biddle Foundation about starting similar philanthropic efforts, noting the foundation's



unique role and the limited way arts and cultural work are often defined.

- a. O'Brien (Mary Duke Biddle) said she has not seen much interest from other families in starting similar foundations, aside from one inquiry a few years ago. She added that many family foundations operate without staff, which makes them harder to identify and engage.
4. **QUESTION:** Baer (DCAB Member) asked the panelists how they thought arts funding and support can strengthen community without contributing to displacement, and how Durham can help longtime artists and historically rooted neighborhoods thrive amid growth, new wealth, and ongoing change.
  - a. Wyatt (Durham Arts Council) responded that partnerships with developers can create mutual benefit for both arts organizations and private projects, citing examples of investment in local music and cultural infrastructure. She suggested that identifying opportunities where arts support also aligns with development goals may be one practical approach.
  - b. Hebert (Weird Productions) added that art should not be treated as merely charitable, but as a core asset that adds unique value to the city. She emphasized the importance of connecting artists with people in positions of power so that art remains an essential part of Durham's growth rather than being displaced by it.
  - c. Gianakos (Durham Art Guild) stated that artists' work and vision have already contributed to Durham's economic growth, and emphasized the need for cultural preservation by prioritizing and supporting local artists within that development.
- c. **Second Session: City Funding** (Moderated by Margaret McNab, DCAB Vice Chair)
  - i. Emilia Ismael, Deputy Director of [El Centro](#), presented the organization's work as centered on a holistic, community-based model that prioritizes education, economic development, community health, civic participation, and social/community context. She emphasized that what is most important to the organization is building trust with community members, creating spaces where Latino residents feel seen and included, and supporting the full range of community needs rather than addressing issues in isolation. She also highlighted the importance of festivals and public events as spaces for cultural pride, belonging, and visibility for Latino-owned businesses. She noted key challenges including the wide geographic scope of the organization's work, the many barriers community members face in accessing resources, and the need to represent the full diversity of Latino communities rather than narrow or stereotypical definitions of Hispanic culture.
    1. **QUESTION:** Lau (DCAB Member) asked whether El Centro Hispano



provides support for artists and culture bearers seeking to develop entrepreneurial opportunities through their creative work, including music and material culture.

- a. Ismael responded that El Centro Hispano does not currently have arts-specific entrepreneurship programming, but does offer broader small-business support such as financial literacy, business development, and entrepreneurial training that could apply to artists and culture bearers. She shared an example of a women's embroidery group that began as a community-building space and later developed into an informal entrepreneurial effort, with participants receiving training, selling work at festivals and community events, and gaining experience with pricing, presentation, and payment systems.
- ii. Moses Ochola, Founder of Black Farmers Market and Black August in the Park, presented these organizations as Durham-based initiatives rooted in a desire to create spaces where Black residents, entrepreneurs, farmers, artists, and community members feel centered, visible, and connected amid the city's rapid change. He explained that Black Farmers Market grew out of needs identified by vendors and farmers themselves and has since expanded into a significant economic and community platform, generating substantial vendor revenue and distributing free produce boxes. He noted that one of its main challenges is long-term financial sustainability, particularly after being built largely through grant support. In response, the organization is pursuing strategies to diversify revenue, including a membership-based cultivation club and new health-focused programming that could be offered to larger institutions and employers.
  1. For Black August in the Park, he described the festival as a labor of love intentionally built to preserve its community-centered identity, but noted that its rapid growth has created new pressures around staffing, scale, and sustainability. He explained that the organizers have historically avoided over-commercializing the event in order to protect its energy and values, but now face the challenge of turning a successful festival into a more durable and financially viable operation. Strategies under consideration include expanding into a multi-day event to increase economic impact, exploring pay-what-you-can admission, and building more intentional partnerships and sponsorships. He also urged DCAB and PAC to think beyond a narrow funding role by improving transparency in grantmaking, supporting stronger connections among organizations, and helping create broader ecosystems of advocacy, collaboration, and corporate partnership.
- iii. Jesse Rosen of Durham Symphony Orchestra described the organization as a professional orchestra of about 65 paid musicians that produces a range of performances across Durham and the region. He noted several organizational strengths and achievements, including a balanced budget of roughly \$200,000, no accumulated debt, a cash reserve, competitive musician compensation, and a programming model that intentionally centers living composers, women

composers, composers of color, and collaborations with local partners. He highlighted projects such as *Voices for the Unarmed* and *Letters to America* as examples of the symphony's strategy of linking artistic programming with issues that matter to Durham, using music as a starting point for civic dialogue, partnership-building, education, and public engagement. He also noted that this approach has helped the organization broaden its visibility, attract audiences, generate media attention, and strengthen its community relevance.

1. At the same time, he described significant challenges around long-term sustainability, particularly the lack of permanent staff and the difficulty of maintaining administrative capacity with a small budget. He explained that the board functions as a working board and is carrying much of the operational burden, including management, communications, and organizational support, which is not sustainable indefinitely. As a strategy for the future, he suggested that shared services or fractional staffing models across arts organizations could help address common administrative needs such as leadership, bookkeeping, marketing, and communications, especially for mid-sized and smaller groups that are not large enough to support full-time staff on their own.

iv. Panel Discussion

1. **QUESTION:** Ismael was asked about how others could support El Centro Hispano's work. she emphasized the importance of continued partnership in creating welcoming public spaces where Latino community members feel they truly belong. She noted that, in the current climate, safety is a major concern, and said that visible partnership with local government helps provide an added layer of protection, legitimacy, and reassurance for both community members and staff. She explained that the presence and support of city partners can make events and programs feel less isolated and more firmly backed by the broader civic infrastructure, which is especially important as the organization navigates uncertainty and risk. She also echoed concerns about transparency and process in public funding, noting that nonprofits often must quickly shift capacity to respond to funding calls without having had input into how those opportunities are designed. She suggested that earlier involvement from community organizations in shaping funding processes could help identify barriers, better reflect different organizational capacities, and make opportunities more accessible and effective.
2. **QUESTION:** Flowers-Schoen (Nominated DCAB Member) asked how Moses and his organizations assess the impact of growth and gentrification on local residents, including whether community members feel they still have a meaningful voice in Durham.
  - a. Ochola responded that the organizations have not yet formally surveyed that specific impact, but said that their growing attendance suggests they are meeting a real community need.

He added that, as the events become more structured, there may be greater opportunity to build in feedback mechanisms and gather more direct community input about impact and areas for improvement.

3. **QUESTION:** Wyatt (Durham Arts Council) asked about Durham Symphony's upcoming *Letters to America* concert series.
  - a. Rosen shared that the project grew out of composer Brittany Green's original concept, which invited people to write letters in response to prompts drawn from the Declaration of Independence. He explained that, in Durham, the project expanded through collaboration with North Carolina Poet Laureate Jackie Shelton Green, who developed a new set of prompts centered on Black womanhood and related themes. He noted that the submitted letters will be incorporated into the concert experience through display and a dance component, with the goal of creating a lasting local legacy beyond the performance itself. He also encouraged broad community participation and clarified that contributions are open to people across the Durham area.
4. **QUESTION:** Jordan (DCAB Chair) asked panelists with experience in multiple DCAB Festivals and Special Events grant cycles to reflect on that process and share how it could be improved.
  - a. Rosen (Durham Symphony) responded that, while the public funding process is necessarily lengthy and administratively demanding, he sees that as part of working with government rather than as a criticism of the City. He expressed appreciation for the staff supporting the process, noting that their understanding of the realities arts organizations face makes the system much more workable. He added that the helpfulness of City staff has been a key factor in making a complex process manageable and constructive.
5. **QUESTION:** McNab (Vice Chair) asked the panelists to identify some of their strongest community partners and collaborators, noting the importance of partnership in extending resources, amplifying impact, and strengthening grant-supported work.
  - a. Rosen (Durham Symphony) highlighted Durham Public Schools, the Pauli Murray Center, Hayti Heritage Center, and Emily K Center as strong community partners, and also praised the Mary Duke Biddle Foundation as a model of trust-based philanthropy that responds to organizations' own goals and needs rather than imposing rigid measures.
  - b. Ochola (Black Farmers Market/Black August in the Park) said that, while his organizations have not always prioritized broad outreach, Discover Durham has been a particularly helpful partner in connecting people, sharing information, and creating opportunities for dialogue.

- c. Ismael highlighted local Spanish-language media, especially *Enlace Latino NC*, as an important partner in helping share information and strengthen community communication. She also emphasized the value of several foundations that have supported El Centro Hispano not only through funding, but by helping build the organization’s long-term capacity through training, connections, and other forms of infrastructure support. She noted that this kind of partnership is especially helpful when funders simplify application and reporting processes and ask what organizations need beyond grant dollars.

d. **Third Session: Public Art Committee**

i. Unified Development Ordinance Presentation

1. Robin Schultze of the City of Durham’s Planning Department presented a detailed update on the effort to embed public art into the draft Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), explaining that the Public Art Committee and Planning Department have spent roughly two years developing recommendations, supported in part by research from Duke Sanford students, to create stronger pathways for private development to contribute to public art. He explained that the UDO governs land development citywide—from fences to apartment buildings—and that public art has historically appeared only minimally in the ordinance, making it difficult for developers to meaningfully use it. A key strategy in the draft revision is to make public art a clearer and more practical development incentive by explicitly allowing it to count toward open space requirements in certain districts, including at a 1% credit level, without requiring the art to function like literal open space in size or form.
  - a. He highlighted several important proposed mechanisms. First, projects that include public art and receive a recommendation for approval through the Public Art Committee could receive open-space-related development credit, including in some downtown contexts where required open space could be reduced. Second, developers pursuing qualifying public art could receive expedited site plan review, which he noted is a significant incentive because time saved in the approval process can translate into meaningful cost savings for development projects. Third, developers could have the option to contribute funds in lieu of installing on-site public art, creating a potential funding stream that the Public Art Committee could direct toward broader public art goals. He noted that staff are still working through how such a contribution process would function administratively.

- b. Schultze also stressed that the recommendations were shaped to balance clarity with flexibility. The UDO language is intended to establish the legal framework, while more detailed guidance, such as how public art is defined, what values it should reflect, how local and regional artists are prioritized, and how projects should be evaluated, would be addressed through related Public Art Committee best-practices documents. He noted that the draft language frames public art as work that responds to the social and physical context of its location and reflects the city's cultural history, community values, and diverse identities. He further explained that the committee has been developing additional guidance on budgeting, eligibility, and implementation, including definitions of local and regional artists. He emphasized that the public art provisions remain in the frozen draft UDO and that, despite the broader ordinance process being paused, this represents a significant advancement in creating tools to direct private development toward public art investment.
- c. Schultze clarified that any in-lieu public art contribution would go into the City's existing public art fund, which is used for capital public art projects and maintenance, rather than into the broader arts and culture program budget. He noted that this structure is tied to the capital nature of the funding, though broader definitions of cultural investment are being explored through the Cultural Roadmap. He also said the public art provisions in the draft UDO appear relatively secure, given prior support from the Joint City-County Planning Committee, though the overall UDO process remains paused pending further direction.

#### IV. **Adjournment**

- a. Jordan (DCAB Chair) and McNab (Vice Chair) thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the retreat at 5:07 p.m.

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 Tasks Forces, Committees, and Groups
- DCAB’s 2025 Goals
- FY25 Festival & Special Event Contracting Status Report

**2026 Calendar - Upcoming DCAB Monthly Meetings**

April 15, 2026  
City Hall, 101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC 27701

May 20, 2026  
City Hall, 101 City Hall Plaza, Durham, NC 27701

June 17, 2026  
Virtual

**2026 Calendar – Upcoming PAC Monthly Meetings**

April 14, 2026  
Location TBD

May 12, 2026  
Location TBD

June 9, 2026  
Location TBD

**Durham Cultural Advisory Boards Standing Committees, Task Forces, and Groups**

**Festivals & Special Events  
Standing Committee**

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

**Advocacy Committee**

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

**Student Recruitment Task Force**

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

## **2025 DCAB Goals**

As of 2023, DCAB adopted priorities to shape and inform the year ahead, with specific focus on the Durham Cultural Roadmap. Based on inputs from board members, staff, and elected officials, DCAB established the following priorities:

- Advocate for more city and county funding and support for arts and culture in Durham
- Support the implementation of a new Cultural Roadmap
- Strengthen and improve relationships with artists, arts and cultural organizations, communities, neighborhoods, and people of Durham.
- Support and strengthen the work of the Public Art Committee

DCAB also adopted the following as core values to guide their work:

- DCAB will act as stewards of the Durham Poet Laureate program.
- DCAB defines historically excluded communities as any group of people (by gender, ability, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or other identity) who have been or are currently underrepresented either numerically, systemically, in ways of power, in positions of authority, or in adequacy of resources in Durham's arts and cultural social structures.

## **DCAB's Identified Future Needs**

- Continued engagement by City and County leadership, residents, and community leaders throughout the planning process to robustly inform the Durham Cultural Roadmap.
- Budgeted investment in FY25 to support the Durham Cultural Roadmap's identified goals, initiatives and strategies, throughout plan's initial implementation.
- Partnerships and alignment with all City and County departments working in the arts & cultural sector.
- Poet Laureate honorarium increases to align with a living wage and to match similar peer cities' poet laureate programs.
- Increasing staff to implement adopted Durham Cultural Roadmap's goals.
- With assistance from the Public Art Committee, define best practices for public art & private development in the updated Unified Development Ordinance

**FY25 RFP for Festival & Special Event Contracting Status Updates.**

Total Economic Impact: \$8,559,527

Total Tax Revenue: \$683,892

Total Audience: 136,657

Local Tax: \$238,101

# of Artists/Performers: 1,633

State Tax: \$444,791

Estimated amount organizations spent on services, goods, and full-time employees, in addition to audience members' spending while attending the events. Estimated with the assistance of Discover Durham, or through the Arts & Economic Prosperity calculator available through the Americans for the Arts. Data reported reflects 20 of the 22 events funded.

**Outstanding Deliverable Reports**

Organization	Festival	FY25 Final	Due
St Joseph's Historic Foundation, Inc.	Hayti Heritage Film Festival	\$17,596.40	2/3/2026
St Joseph's Historic Foundation, Inc.	CELEBRATE HAYTI!	\$18,568.40	2/3/2026

**Contracts Closed**

American Dance Festival Inc., FY25 American Dance Festival

Association for the Preservation of the Eno River Valley, Inc., FY2025 Festival for the Eno

Be Connected Durham & Beyond, Inc., Hayti Legacy Kwanzaa

Be Connected Durham & Beyond, Inc., Annual Durham Juneteenth Week: Unified by Our Pride

Book Harvest, 2025 Dream Big Book Drive and Community Celebration / 2025 Summer Block Party

Boston Urban Music Project, Inc, Slingshot

Duke University, Full Frame Documentary Film Festival

Durham Arts Council, Inc., Centerfest

Durham Central Park, Inc., PLAYlist Concert Series

Durham Public Schools Foundation, 13th Annual Durham School of Arts Fall Art Festival: Dia de los Muertos

Durham Symphony, Inc., Voices of the Unarmed: Justice, Love, Resilience

Get Happy, Beats n Bars Festival

Liberty Arts Inc., Iron Pour

North Carolina Folklife Institute, Fandango de Durham

Pauli Murray Center for History and Social Justice, Grand Opening

The Carolina Theatre of Durham, Inc., OUTSOUTH Queer Film Festival

The LGBTQ Center of Durham, Inc., Pride: Durham, NC

Triangle Cultural Awareness Foundation, 20th Annual NC Juneteenth Celebration

Unmanageable, Biscuits & Banjos Festival

Unmanageable, Missy Lane's Block Party