

# THE *Town* Mess@ge

LATE SUMMER 2020

## COVID-19 UPDATE

The last several months have been so challenging for our community. Despite the fact that we are a relatively small town, Davidson and its residents have not been spared the harsh reality of the coronavirus and its devastating impacts. Many of us know individuals who have contracted this virus, and community spread is real. However, the Davidson community has also come together to spread hope by displaying rainbows in neighborhood windows and going on socially distanced “bear hunts” throughout town. We’ve collected multi-colored hearts to brighten the windows at Main Street Books. We’ve continually supported local businesses, allowing for nearly all to keep their doors open and for us even to welcome a couple more into the mix. This kind of strength of community is what we need to keep moving forward in the coming months.

The town board and town staff have been working hard to stay on top of the latest COVID-19 data, health department recommendations, and mandates from county, state, and federal governments. They have worked to advocate for our local businesses and provide free face coverings for anyone in our community who needs one. They have added more amenities around town that support a safe and healthy environment for our businesses and our residents, including additional outdoor tables and bench seating around restaurants to allow for more social distancing, and adding more than a dozen hand sanitizer stations throughout town for residents and visitors alike.

**“WE KNOW WE’RE NOT EXPERTS ON THE HEALTH AND SCIENCE SIDE OF THIS, BUT WE’RE DOING EVERYTHING WE CAN TO MAKE SURE WE’RE TAKING CARE OF OUR COMMUNITY.”**

“The commissioners and I care so deeply about the town and want to see us return to business as usual, too, but we know that’s just not in the cards for us right now,” said Davidson’s Mayor Rusty Knox.

He continued, “we have to encourage everyone to follow the three W’s – wear a face covering, wait six feet apart when you can’t socially distance, and wash your hands. We have to ask everyone to be patient and stay the course so we can all be a part of the solution.”

For local, county, and state information about COVID-19, visit

[townofdavidson.org/covid19](http://townofdavidson.org/covid19)

IF YOU LEAVE HOME,  
**KNOW YOUR 3 W’S**



**WEAR**

a cloth mask over  
your nose and mouth



**WAIT**

6 feet apart. Avoid  
close contact.



**WASH**

your hands or use  
hand sanitizer.

# EQUITY, INCLUSION, AFFORDABLE HOUSING, AND POLICING: THE PATH FORWARD FOR DAVIDSON

In February 2020, the Davidson Board of Commissioners and management team held their annual strategic retreat. Coming out of that session was a draft strategic plan that included a new emphasis on Equity and Inclusion, including the creation of a new Housing and Equity Director position to manage the town's affordable housing program as well as create a racial equity action plan for the town. In addition to racial equity action planning, the town board also prioritized the development of a new affordable housing strategy.

In the wake of the death of George Floyd, the town board directed staff to further accelerate the program as well as conduct a review of the Davidson Police Department's use of force policies through the lens of the 8 Can't Wait and the 21st Century Task Force on Community Policing.

At the July 14 town board meeting, Chief Dunn reported to the town board about the department's use of force policies and has also asked for feedback from the

community. To do that, we are working to make the previous "No Agenda" public meetings with the chief possible through a virtual platform. Residents may view Chief Dunn's presentation and view the PowerPoint and offer their input through SpeakUp on the town's website at [townofdavidson.org/speakup](http://townofdavidson.org/speakup). Residents may also provide feedback by emailing [policeinfo@townofdavidson.org](mailto:policeinfo@townofdavidson.org).

By the end of July, the town had posted the new Housing and Equity Director position and hopes to have someone hired by mid-fall. Work is also underway with a small group to develop a scope and issue a request for proposals for a consultant. The consultant will partner with the town and community to develop an updated affordable housing strategy to complement the programs the town already implements – new affordable units for purchase, down payment assistance, and critical repairs.

Additionally, staff is working to create an intensive racial equity education program in partnership with the Racial Equity



Institute for all town board members, appointed advisory boards, and all town staff. This curriculum will work to educate everyone connected with the town

in an institutional capacity on the role implicit bias plays in our current decision-making, the history of our government and economic systems from a racial equity perspective. We will learn how applying a racial equity tool to the town's programs, policies and procedures can help begin the long-term work to dismantle racism.

Town board and staff members are very excited about the new strategic direction and the future work. Please reach out to Assistant Town Manager Karen Whichard with any questions or ideas. Her email is [kwhichard@townofdavidson.org](mailto:kwhichard@townofdavidson.org) and her phone number is 704-940-9602.

## #8CANTWAIT

<b>BAN CHOKEHOLDS &amp; STRANGLEHOLDS</b> 	<b>REQUIRE DE-ESCALATION</b> 	<b>REQUIRE WARNING BEFORE SHOOTING</b> 	<b>EXHAUST ALL OTHER MEANS BEFORE SHOOTING</b> 
<b>DUTY TO INTERVENE</b> 	<b>BAN SHOOTING AT MOVING VEHICLES</b> 	<b>REQUIRE USE OF FORCE CONTINUUM</b> 	<b>REQUIRE COMPREHENSIVE REPORTING</b> 

## TOWN-SPONSORED EVENT UPDATE

We all missed this season of Concerts on the Green as a chance to come together as a community and enjoy good music while patronizing our businesses. We are hard at work trying to reimagine our annual events in a way that allows people to participate safely and observe the restrictions necessitated by the coronavirus. This will most likely mean that events will be held outside and spread throughout town so that people can maintain a safe distance while enjoying the event.

Stay tuned for details about the Fall Art Crawl and Christmas in Davidson. We know that many businesses, non-profit organizations, schools, and individuals participate in Christmas in Davidson. We are working through the logistics of this event and will have information posted by September 1 on our website at [www.christmasindavidson.com](http://www.christmasindavidson.com).

## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS APPROVE FY2021 BUDGET

Town staff began the FY2021 budget development process in Fall 2019. Town Manager Jamie Justice presented his Manager's Recommended Budget to the board on May 12, 2020, and a virtual public hearing was conducted on May 26, 2020. Finance Director Piet Swart provided one final presentation to the board on June 9, 2020. The Davidson Board of Commissioners approved the budget ordinance on June 9th as well, and then amended it on June 23rd.

### THE APPROVED BUDGET INCLUDES:

- GENERAL FUND BUDGET OF \$12.5 MILLION, A 1.6% REDUCTION FROM LAST YEAR
- STABLE TAX RATE AT \$.29 PER \$100 VALUATION
- APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC
- PLAN FOR POTENTIAL BUDGET ADJUSTMENT MID-YEAR
- NEW CAPITAL FUNDING STRATEGY
- FUNDING FOR EQUITY AND INCLUSION PROGRAM INCLUDING A HOUSING AND EQUITY DIRECTOR

The five-year Capital Investment Program provides a timeline for prioritized projects and related funding streams. Projects to be funded by the 2017 voter-approved GO Bond projects for parks, mobility and greenways are included.

All budget presentations are available on our website at [www.townofdavidson.org/agendas](http://www.townofdavidson.org/agendas). All budget documents are also available on our website at [www.townofdavidson.org/budget](http://www.townofdavidson.org/budget).

## TOWN OF DAVIDSON ADVISORY BOARDS

### GET INVOLVED!

Are you interested in getting involved? The Town of Davidson is now accepting applications for 2021 appointments to its advisory boards. Consider serving on the following: Affordable Housing & Equity Board, Design Review Board/Historic Preservation Commission, Planning Board, Livability Board, and the Davidson Public Art Commission. New members will serve a three-year term from January 2021 to December 2023, with a possibility of a second term.

A nominating committee will review all applications and nominate citizens for each available position. The Davidson Board of Commissioners will vote on nominees, and appointees will be seated on their respective boards in January 2021.

Information on advisory boards is available at [www.townofdavidson.org/advisoryboards](http://www.townofdavidson.org/advisoryboards) and the application is at [www.townofdavidson.org/advisoryboardapplication](http://www.townofdavidson.org/advisoryboardapplication). Applications are also available at town hall. All applications are due by September 30.

For more information, please contact Town Clerk Betsy Shores at [bshores@townofdavidson.org](mailto:bshores@townofdavidson.org) or 704-940-9610.

## LOCAL BUSINESSES

Please continue to support all of our amazing businesses in Davidson as both owners and employees work hard at implementing safety procedures related to the coronavirus. You'll also notice additional hand sanitizing stations, picnic tables, umbrellas, benches, and trash cans around town to help facilitate social distancing while you're moving throughout Davidson.



It's important to buy local whenever you can and continue to support Davidson businesses! Many have come up with creative solutions to get their products to you, including online purchasing, curbside pick-up, delivery, and personal shopping. For updates on town businesses and restaurants, visit the Local Business Update page on our website at [www.townofdavidson.org/localbusiness](http://www.townofdavidson.org/localbusiness).

**PLEASE WELCOME THESE NEW BUSINESSES TO DAVIDSON:**

### THE CRAZY PIG

402 S. Main Street  
(704)997-2320  
[thecrazypigbbq.com](http://thecrazypigbbq.com)

### SANGAM INDIAN STREET FOOD

107 N. Main Street

### 77 GROUNDS COFFEE

605 Jetton Street, Suite B  
[77groundscoffee.com](http://77groundscoffee.com)

## PARKS & RECREATION CONTINUING TO OFFER PROGRAMMING

Your Davidson Parks & Recreation Department is diligently working to find engaging programming that will provide a safe environment for all to enjoy. In the coming months we will be offering guided kayak tours, forest bathing (Shinrin-yoku) and boot camp classes outside. We're working on some fun classes and study groups for school-age children this fall. We are moving to a bi-monthly electronic newsletter to keep you informed and up-to-date on happenings in our department. If you would like to subscribe, sign up for our eCrier at [www.townofdavidson.org/eCrier](http://www.townofdavidson.org/eCrier). We hope this will be a valuable tool for you to stay informed.

Each programming season, we like to offer a variety of classes. If you have ideas or are interested in instructing a class for us, please give us a call (704-576-4882) or send us an email. Please check our website for regular updates as well [www.townofdavidson.org/parksandrecreation](http://www.townofdavidson.org/parksandrecreation). We love to hear from our community members! Please send us your feedback and suggestions by emailing us at [dpr@townofdavidson.org](mailto:dpr@townofdavidson.org).

Who we buy  
from now will  
decide who's  
standing later.

LET'S MAKE SURE  
ALL THE SMALL  
BUSINESSES WE  
LOVE ARE ON  
THAT LIST.



## FIRE DEPARTMENT EARNS NEW PROTECTION RATINGS

In April, the Davidson Fire Department was inspected by the North Carolina Department of Insurance to determine a new Public Protection Classification (PPC) rating. Known by many as an "ISO rating," the PPC rating is basically a grade on a community's fire service capabilities and is used by insurance companies to determine fire insurance premiums for property owners. The rating is based on several factors including available water supply, fire department staffing and equipment, fire station location, fire department training, fire prevention programs and emergency communications. The PPC rates departments on a scale of 1 – 10 with "1" being the best and "10" the worst. Typically, residential properties will see decreases in insurance premiums for every incremental improvement in the PPC rating between "6" and "10." However, the rating generally has little to no impact on premiums for properties in communities rated "5" or below.

The Davidson Fire Department technically serves two different fire districts – Davidson and North Star. The Davidson Fire District encompasses any properties within the town's corporate limits, while the North Star Fire District represents the areas in our extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) not within 1000 feet of a fire hydrant. Therefore, the department currently carries a split PPC rating of "5 / 9E" (or 9-Extended), with properties in the Davidson district rated at a "5", and properties in the North Star district rated as a "9E." Why the difference? The answer is simple – water supply. While a rating of "9" sounds high, it is typical of rural areas which have no municipal water supply, and therefore no fire hydrants.

Over the past ten years, the Town of Davidson has made public safety one of its priorities. With significant enhancements to our staffing and equipment, as well as the construction of Fire Station 2 on Davidson-Concord Road, an improvement in the Davidson PPC rating was expected. Additionally, we also hoped to take advantage of an opportunity to improve the rating for the North Star district. As you may recall from a previous

newsletter, our department recently purchased a new tanker truck capable of hauling 2000 gallons of water. This purchase greatly increased our capacity to move water from one location to another for fire suppression purposes. During the April PPC inspection, members from the Davidson Fire Department conducted several "water shuttle" tests in an effort to demonstrate this increased ability and to hopefully lower the rating for the North Star area. Tankers from the Huntersville and Mount Mourne Fire Departments (both mutual aid partners) also assisted in the exercise.

In May, the Town of Davidson and the Davidson Fire Department received formal notification that the PPC rating for the Davidson Fire District would improve from a "5" to a "2." Although the impact on residential insurance premiums will be minimal, this new rating reflects a significant improvement in the level of fire protection for this community. Further, we received notification that the rating for the North Star Fire District would improve from a "9E" to a "4/9E" (the split 9E rating would apply for any properties outside of five road miles from the nearest

fire station if any existed). This is a tremendous improvement that will have a significant effect on insurance premiums for properties in the North Star area. Both new ratings will take effect in September 2020.

**OUR NEW AND IMPROVED PPC RATING IS THE RESULT OF A GREAT DEAL OF WORK BY MANY PEOPLE!**

The Davidson Fire Department Command Staff would like to thank all of the members and town leaders – both past and present – who worked so diligently to make this possible. And thanks are also in order for our outside partners, including our mutual aid fire departments and the Mecklenburg County Fire Marshal's Office for their support during this process.

For more information about the state's PPC program, visit the North Carolina Office of State Fire Marshal website (<https://ncdoi.com/OSFM>). As always, if you have questions or concerns regarding the Davidson Fire Department or the services that we provide, please do not hesitate to contact Chief Fitzgerald at [bfitzgerald@townofdavidson.org](mailto:bfitzgerald@townofdavidson.org).

# DAVIDSON EXPLORES TARGETED CONDITIONAL ZONING

## TEXT AMENDMENTS POSSIBLE FOR VILLAGE INFILL, LAKESHORE, NEIGHBORHOOD EDGE, AND RURAL PLANNING AREAS

The Davidson Board of Commissioners directed staff to explore strategies to better control the pace of development – specifically targeted conditional zoning. The intent of targeted conditional zoning is to guide development in the most culturally, environmentally and aesthetically sensitive parts of town to best match up with Davidson’s planning principles. Staff has presented various options and development threshold metrics to the board of commissioners at several work session meetings beginning mid-2019. After a several-months pause due to the health pandemic, staff revisited targeted conditional with the board at their July work session meeting to share draft ordinance text amendments developed based upon the direction given in November. New feedback was given which considered a more conservative threshold approach. As the text amendments are currently proposed, development proposals that hit specific thresholds described below would require conditional approval from the board of commissioners.

Village Infill Planning Area:	Eight dwelling units
Lakeshore Planning Area:	Eight dwelling units
Neighborhood Edge Planning Area:	36 dwelling units OR 35 acres
Rural Planning Area:	36 dwelling units OR 15 acres

Please visit [www.townofdavidson.org/textamendments](http://www.townofdavidson.org/textamendments) (and click on “Text Amendments” menu tab) for specific details including background information, presentations, public input sessions, draft text amendment language, and analysis of the proposed amendments.

A virtual Public Input Session (PIS) was held in August to solicit additional feedback from residents. Another PIS is planned for September 15. Tentatively, the Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing in September and the Planning Board will make a recommendation at their meeting later that month. The earliest the Board could take action would be October.

# NEW FACES IN TOWN

## ANDREW VENTRESCA, SENIOR PLANNER, PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Andrew has almost 15 years of professional planning experience including work in all aspects of the planning field. He came to us from Statesville where he was a Senior Planner. Andrew will be focusing on transportation and GIS in his work at Davidson.

## BRIAN RODMAN, FIREFIGHTER, FIRE DEPARTMENT

Brian is a full-time firefighter for the City of Charlotte and has over 20 years of experience.

## KRISTOPHER O'BRIEN, FIREFIGHTER, FIRE DEPARTMENT

Kris works for the Charlotte Fire Department and enjoys his job immensely. He has a large family with four kids and

another on the way! His wife works for Davidson Elementary and all his kids go to school there as well. In his spare time, he loves to work with his hands, play golf, and spend time on the lake.

## OCTAVIUS HOUGH, FIREFIGHTER, FIRE DEPARTMENT

A Charlotte, NC native, Octavius attended East Mecklenburg High School and then went on to graduate from Catawba College. He is a six-year career firefighter for the City of Charlotte. Octavius is engaged, and his hobbies include fishing, community service, and classic car restoration.

## PETE GRISEWOOD, TOWN ARBORIST, PUBLIC WORKS

Pete Grisewood currently serves as the first Town Arborist. He comes to us most recently from the City of Charlotte, where

he has served as Urban Forestry Supervisor since 2016. Previously, Peter worked as an arborist, engineering technician, and tree climber mainly in the Charlotte region. He is currently pursuing a Master’s in Public Administration at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Learn more about Pete’s work in the Arborist Feature on Page 8.

## RUSSELL MCQUILLAN, MAINTENANCE TECHNICIAN PUBLIC WORKS

Russell worked most recently as a Grounds Technician at UNCC for two years and comes to us with valuable landscape knowledge and experience. Originally from Long Island, Russell has lived in North Carolina for four years and has always enjoyed working with landscapes.

# ASBESTOS UPDATE

As a result of feedback from the community earlier this year, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are returning to Davidson to offer expanded testing in the neighborhood surrounding the former Carolina Asbestos Company. The no-cost soil sampling is for properties not sampled by the EPA in 2017 that are located within the expanded sampling area.

## BACKGROUND

From the 1930s until the 1960s, Carolina Asbestos Company operated at 301 Depot Street. It was reported that asbestos-containing material had been removed from the manufacturing location and used as fill at neighboring properties. Inspection by the EPA identified asbestos-containing material at neighboring properties. Between November 1, 2016 and May 16, 2017, the EPA’s Emergency Response, Removal, Prevention and Preparedness Branch conducted soil sampling at those properties. At properties that met federal site-specific criteria and tested above the EPA’s health-based exposure limit, the EPA removed the top one-to-two feet of asbestos-contaminated soil, marked the end of excavation and installed clean fill and sod. From May 15 through August 22, 2017, the EPA removed approximately 6,204 tons of asbestos-contaminated waste and disposed of it at an EPA-approved landfill. On January 25, 2018, the EPA sent letters to property owners stating that the removal work was complete and that “No Further Action” was planned for their properties.

On January 13, 2020, the DEQ presented a plan to manage the asbestos issue and

promote awareness in the community, proposing an “Asbestos Watch Area” to monitor and manage soil disturbances in the neighborhood. During that meeting, residents asked for more sampling over a larger area and sampling of properties that were not tested in 2017. The current expanded sampling effort is in response to those requests.

On July 30, 2020, the DEQ and EPA, along with the Town of Davidson, offered a Virtual Public Meeting for residents to be able to hear an overview of the plans for the expanded sampling, see what progress had been made, and ask any questions they may have. Video of this meeting and the presentation itself is available at the Town of Davidson’s asbestos webpage at [www.townofdavidson.org/asbestos](http://www.townofdavidson.org/asbestos).

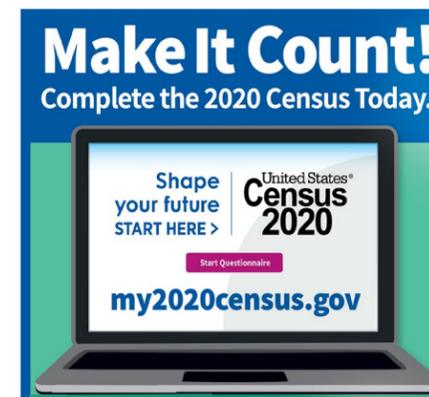
## NEXT STEPS

The EPA will continue to sample properties for which they have received permission in August. Moving forward, they will also continue in their efforts to offer free soil sampling to more folks in the expanded sampling area and answer questions from all Davidson residents. It is likely all three organizations will be able to offer another virtual information session to provide further updates on the project.

## THE FOLLOWING TOPICS WILL ALSO BE ADDRESSED MOVING FORWARD:

- **REVISITING** the plan to manage the asbestos issue and promote awareness in the community with a proposal for an “Asbestos Watch Area” to monitor and manage soil disturbances in the neighborhood.
- **CONTINUING TO MANAGE RISKS** of several ongoing public works projects in the area, including an NCDOT road construction project, a Charlotte Water project, and a town sidewalk construction and park improvement project. The town park improvement project remains on hold, as the Community Development Block Grant Funded was rescinded in light of COVID-19 and the need to remediate asbestos-containing material at the site in Roosevelt Wilson Park. More information will be shared as we can move forward with the project.
- **NEXT STEPS** in the Brownfields Agreement for the adaptive use of the Metrolina Warehouse site to provide a long-term solution for the environmental challenges at the site.

More details on all of the topics above and each agency’s contact information is available on the town’s asbestos webpage at [www.townofdavidson.org/asbestos](http://www.townofdavidson.org/asbestos).



## COMPLETE THE 2020 CENSUS TODAY!

The census is really important for the Town of Davidson and Mecklenburg County. The census count helps bring valuable resources to our community, such as federal funding for things like healthcare, education and transportation. It also impacts our representation in government and our ability to plan for the future. We need everyone in the Town of Davidson and Mecklenburg County to “Make it Count” by completing the census. The census is convenient, safe, required and important. It’s not too late -- complete it today at [my2020census.gov](http://my2020census.gov).

# WHAT'S THE LATEST ON THAT PROJECT?

**RECTANGULAR RAPID FLASHING BEACONS (RRFBs):** We have completed designs for RRFBs for six unsignalized intersections in town: Beaty Street at Delburg Street, Griffith Street at Watson Street, Griffith Street at Jackson Street, Main Street at Walnut Street, Concord Road at Faculty Drive, and Concord Road at Thompson Street. These devices include a pushbutton that activates a LED flashing light which alerts motorists that a pedestrian is ready to cross. Davidson has successfully installed RRFBs at multiple crosswalks in town, and we have always experienced improved motorist yielding behavior.

**RESURFACING PROJECT:** On August 3, 2020, the town started a resurfacing project in the easternmost portion of our jurisdiction. The project is in the River Run neighborhood and has a planned duration of 45 days. This project concludes year five of a five-year plan. We are currently working on the next five-year plan that will guide our street resurfacing program moving forward. During resurfacing work, we ask residents to avoid on-street parking and to make sure lawn irrigation is not directed onto streets. We will work with residents on all impacted streets to minimize disruption and maintain traffic flow during the project.

**GREY ROAD SIDEWALK:** In August 2019, the town accepted bids for the sidewalk project on Grey Road. We received bids ranging from \$1M - \$1.5M, which unfortunately came in \$500,000 over the planned budget. We have redesigned the project and are negotiating with property owners for the additional property required.

## TREE QUESTION? ASK THE ARBORIST!

The Town of Davidson welcomed Pete Grisewood as its first-ever town arborist earlier this year. Pete serves as the expert for all of the town's municipal tree efforts, arboriculture (the cultivation of trees and shrubs), public tree planting and management, tree removal, and urban forest management, including development and interpretation of the town's tree ordinance regulations. Pete works closely with the Planning Department and all developers to make sure they are preserving as many trees as possible with new construction in the area. He is also charged with leading community outreach efforts, building partnerships, and coordinating public education.

Is a tree on your property looking a little drab? Ask the arborist! Pete works with individual residents in the Town of Davidson and does site visits to your property to check out your plant life and help you figure out the best path forward. This service is free for all Davidson residents, but you do need to fill out a form to contact Pete and set up an appointment. You may do so at [www.townofdavidson.org/arborist](http://www.townofdavidson.org/arborist). You'll find some other good stuff there, too, including links to helpful resources, testimonials from residents who have already worked with Pete, and more!



The Town of  
Davidson

216 South Main Street  
Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm  
704-892-7591  
[www.townofdavidson.org](http://www.townofdavidson.org)

### CONNECT WITH US

-  /Town of Davidson - Town Hall
-  @Town of Davidson
-  @Town of Davidson

### The Town Of Davidson

P.O. Box 579 • Davidson, NC 28036

PRSR STD  
ECRWSS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
EDDM RETAIL

LOCAL  
POSTAL CUSTOMER