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[Proposal to Earmark Special Tax to Improve Image](#)

Half Shouldered by Visitors and Non-Residents Working in Durham



Special 1% prepared food tax would be earmarked as a revenue stream to address image, appearance, cultural facilities, workforce training, support services, and visitor marketing and promotion.

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[RTP Rolls Out New Logo and Tagline](#)

Regional Namesake Has Key Durham Connections

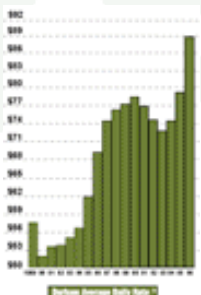


New RTP tagline dovetails perfectly with the overarching Durham brand tagline "Where great things happen."

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More Visitor Traffic Spurs New Development



In visitor-related economic development, new or expanded facilities follow Durham's success in attracting more visitors.

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[100,000 Visit Nasher in First Year](#)

43.5% Are Visitors to Durham



When the Nasher Museum of Art opened it instantly became a Durham architectural and cultural landmark, joining other major Durham art centers like the NCCU Art Museum, Durham Arts Council, and the Hayti Heritage Center and filling a gap in Durham's visitor product.

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Durham newcomers and visitors are often bombarded with imbalanced or distorted information before they even set foot in Durham.

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Proposal to Earmark Special Tax to Improve Image

Half Shouldered by Visitors and Non-Residents Working in Durham

Durham has an image problem, and if we don't do something more, it's going to get much bigger.

A lot has to do with stronger communication and marketing, but just as much has to do with curb appeal/appearance, visitor amenities, and invigorating Durham's rapidly eroding cultural landscape.

Visitor and cultural officials, elected officials, business leaders, and others have proposed a special 1% tax on prepared food/meals. It is similar to those already levied in Mecklenburg/Charlotte, Wake/Raleigh, Cumberland/Fayetteville, Dare/Outer Banks, and the Town of Hillsborough.

Public opinion polls show residents support the idea by 3 to 1 (2 to 1 counting roughly offsetting numbers that strongly agree or strongly agree).

If authorized by the General Assembly, it would be earmarked as a revenue stream to address:

- Sustainable funding for cultural groups, new facilities like a Durham History Museum, and upkeep of cultural facilities.
- Sustainable funding for civic, sports, and other visitor amenities.
- Amplified funding for appearance and curb appeal, including clean up and beautification.
- Amplified tourism marketing and promotion to counter negative word of mouth, promote the Durham brand, attract more diners to shoulder the tax, and grow and protect this revenue source.

Because the tax is targeted, a portion of the tax proceeds will go to offset the burden on businesses shouldering the tax and the average \$9 per year (75 cents per month) that will be shouldered by the low income resident households by:

- Targeted workforce training for hospitality business and other emerging areas.
- Health & Social Service Support for low income households to offset the burden of the tax.

While the Board of County Commissioners, City Council, Tourism Development Authority (DCVB), Chamber of Commerce, and Cultural Plan Implementation Steering Committee have endorsed the proposal, and there is general support among Durham's Delegation to the General Assembly, it is opposed by a powerful Representative who supports alternatives like higher resident property taxes.

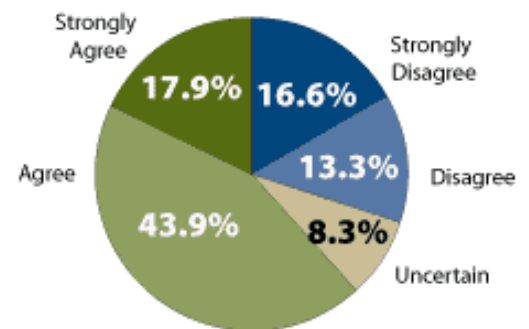
Under a self-imposed informal agreement, all members of the Durham Delegation must support a bill before it moves forward. Even if the lone Representative's concerns are satisfied by the new proposal, it is likely to face resistance on principle by both the NC Restaurant and Lodging Association and the NC Travel & Tourism Coalition. Those entities would consider supporting such a tax if it all went to tourism promotion, but oppose targeted taxes in general because, unlike the Durham proposal, many local governments have pursued these as general revenue sources, rather than using general taxes shared by all.

RELATED ARTICLES:

[City, County Officials Consider 1% Prepared Food Tax](#) [Nov. 28, 2006]

[Several Communities Use Tax for Tourism Purposes](#)

I would pay a 1% tax when I eat out (a penny for every dollar) if the proceeds were used to build or improve cultural facilities including sports facilities, concert theaters, historic sites, and museums, and as a means for non-residents to help pay for public services.





RTP Rolls Out New Logo and Tagline

Regional Namesake Has Key Durham Connections

The Research Triangle Foundation, trustee, owner, developer, and administrator of Durham-based Research Triangle Park, has launched a new brand signature for the 7,000-acre park, including the tagline "The future of great ideas," dovetailing perfectly with the [overarching Durham brand](#) tagline "Where great things happen."

Not only is RTP based in and still predominantly located in Durham, it has strong Durham connections:

- Durhamite William B. Umstead was Governor of North Carolina in the early '50s when Dr. Howard W. Odum of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill first floated the idea of a multi-university "research park" to state officials.
- Governor Umstead, an alumnus of UNC-CH and what became Duke Law School, launched a program called "A New Tomorrow for North Carolina," calling for progress and advancement in industrial development as well as public education.
- Governor Umstead appointed Harriet Laura Herring, Odum's long time associate at UNC's Institute for Research in Social Science to reorganize state government including economic and social factors. On leave 7 years earlier, Herring had produced a section-by-section study for the State entitled "Industrial Development In North Carolina."
- When Governor Umstead passed away while still in office, he was succeeded by Luther Hodges who furthered Odum's idea and had worked with Herring when she worked in human resources and conducted research in the textile industry.
- Durhamite George Watts Hill of Central Carolina Bank put on overalls and walked the pinelands of southeast Durham to assemble options on land for Pinelands Inc., a precursor to what became Research Triangle Park.
- RTP became sustainable when in 1965 another Durhamite, Governor Terry Sanford, persuaded federal agencies to place major facilities in RTP. He also laid the groundwork for IBM to do likewise later that year.
- Durham County established a special research and production district for the Park.
- Just four miles from Downtown Durham, the City and County of Durham ran indispensable water and sewer to Research Triangle Park and made it viable.
- In the 1970s, then Duke University president Terry Sanford and the head of the UNC System, William Friday, formalized the relationship and involvement of the universities with RTP.
- In the 1980s, the State required citizens of Durham to forego the customary tax base benefits from RTP that would come from normal annexation for services.
- Contracted by Durham County, former Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce executives Bob Booth, Jim Camp, and Tom White teamed with the Research Triangle Foundation officials to land many of the Park's tenants and owners.
- Southeast Durham is now home to nearly 90,000 jobs—39,000 inside RTP and another 40,000 in parts of the City that encompass the park.



An early Research Triangle Park official wrote to civic and business leaders, "Durham's citizens have moved the Park forward with vision, leadership, and support. One cannot talk of the Park's early days without recognizing Durham business leader, George Watts Hill. Other partners have been important... But the relationship with the City of Durham has always been special."

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Julian Harrison with an honorable mention for spot news.

- [Durham](#) added almost 4,800 jobs in 2006, the county's best year on record for employment growth, according to the [Employment Security Commission of North Carolina](#).
- [Shepard Middle School](#) and [Carrington Middle School](#) have been chosen as "Schools to Watch" by the [National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform](#).

Events & Happenings

- The Bethesda Ruritan Club, 1714 S. Miami Boulevard, hosts free Monday Music Nights, featuring bluegrass, country, and gospel music, the second and fourth Mondays of every month beginning at 6:30.
- "[The Spirit of Freedom: Drawings and Narratives by Nelson Mandela](#)," is on display in the [Strickland Building Lobby](#) at the [American Tobacco Campus](#) February 1-April 27.
- The [Ronald McDonald House's](#) Annual Wine and Beer Fest will be held at the [Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club](#) February 2, 6 p.m.- 12 a.m.
- Former [Duke Basketball](#) Standout [J.J. Redick](#) will have his #4 jersey retired at a ceremony during the [Florida State](#) game at [Cameron Indoor Stadium](#), February 4 at 2 p.m.
- The annual [Native American Powwow](#) will take place at the [N.C. School of Science and Mathematics](#) February 17.
- The [Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce](#) will hold its annual meeting at the [Durham Civic Center](#), with [Dow Jones Executive Vice President L. Gordon Crovitz](#) as keynote speaker. February 5, 11:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
- [Mayor William V. "Bill" Bell](#) will deliver the State of the City address at [City Hall](#), 101 City Hall Plz., February 5, 6:30 p.m.
- For a complete list of events and happenings in Durham, visit www.durhameventcalendar.com. [Click here](#) to have weekly eCalendar updates delivered to your email.

Promotions, Staff & Board Changes

- Gabriella Cruze has been promoted to director of medical education at [Scienta Healthcare Education](#).
- [Mose Rison](#) has been named interim coach of the [2006 CCAA-champion N.C. Central University Eagles Football Team](#).
- Kim Saunders has been named president and chief executive officer of [Mechanics & Farmers Bank](#). Longtime employee and board member Walter Tucker will serve as [M&F's](#) interim president until Saunders starts on February 26.
- David D. King has been appointed interim manager of the [Triangle Transit Authority](#).
- Attorney [Drew Marsh](#) has been appointed to a judgeship on [Durham County's District Court](#) by [Governor Mike Easley](#).
- Carl Forsythe has been named principal and managing director of [Voyager Academy](#).
- [William P. Janzen](#) has been appointed president and chief operating officer at [Amphora Discovery Corporation](#).
- Michael Brown has been named mid-Atlantic regional director at [Spherion](#).
- Susin Seow has been hired as development officer for corporate outreach at the [Triangle Community Foundation](#).
- Susan E. Ferguson has been named director of meeting planning solutions at [The Solution Center](#).
- [Stephanie Powell](#) has been hired as special counsel at [Kennedy Covington](#).
- [Claude Hughes](#) has joined [RTI International](#) as vice president for the Partnership for Genomics and Molecular Epidemiology and chief medical officer.
- [Flywheel Design](#) has hired Amy Cochran for the position of graphic designer.
- [Kelsie Kirkland](#) and [Dario Craddock](#) have joined [Coldwell Banker Howard Perry and Walston](#).
- [Family Fare](#) has promoted [Steve Nelson](#) to account executive.
- [Former U.S. Senator and 2004 Vice Presidential Nominee John Edwards](#) has chosen Former [N.C. Central University](#) Chancellor [Julius Chambers](#) to serve as treasurer for his 2008 presidential campaign.
- Toby Barfield has been appointed chapter executive by the [Central North Carolina Chapter of the American Red Cross](#).
- Chuck Catotti has been named is interim director of [Parking and Transportation Services](#) at [Duke University](#).
- [Blair Sheppard](#) has been named dean of the [Fuqua School of Business](#) at [Duke University](#).
- Eric Pink has been hired as an associate producer, and Matthew Stevens as a senior designer, at MindWorks Multimedia.

Durham/DCVB Visitor-Related Performance Indicators Scorecard
December 31, 2006

Even though recovery has begun for Durham's visitor-related businesses, a full recovery to levels achieved in 2000 is not expected before 2006. Because visitor promotion is funded by a portion of visitor-related occupancy taxes, DCVB has been forced to cut promotional resources by more than 20% since 2001, resulting in marketing energy that will stay basically flat from '01 through '05. The impact can be seen in several indicators below, which are down over previous years.

<u>Visitation</u> (CY as of November)	4.8% up
<u>Guest Rooms Available</u> (CY as of November)	.8% up
<u>Lodging Occupancy/Community-wide</u> (CY as of November)	3.3% up
<u>Lodging Average Daily Rate</u> (CY as of November)	12.2% up
<u>Lodging Revenue Per Room/Community-wide</u> (CY as of November)	16.6% up
<u>Visitor Tax Revenues/Community-wide</u>	18.3% up
Visitor Literature Distributed/DCVB	11.6% up
Media/Publicity/Stories Assisted/DCVB	14.9% dn
Visitor Inquiries Fulfilled/DCVB	22.7% up
Traditional Inquiries (phone, mail, etc.)	14.2% dn
Website User Sessions	23.9% up
<u>Visitor Information Center Parties Serviced/DCVB</u>	15.0% dn
<u>Conventions & Groups Serviced/DCVB</u>	21.2% up
Conventions & Groups Occurring/Community-Wide (FY as of November)	
By Groups	5.5% dn
By Attendance	12.2% dn
By Room Nights	12.2% dn
New Leads Distributed to Hotels/DCVB	26.8% dn
New Convention & Group Bookings/DCVB	
By Groups	40.2% dn
By Attendance	38.4% dn
By Room Nights	26.2% dn
New Convention & Group Bookings/Community-Wide (FY as of November)	
By Groups	4.2% dn
By Attendance	36.5% up
By Room Nights	36.5% up
 <u>Durham Visitor Enplanements</u> (FY as of November)	 1.2% up
Visitor Feature Attendance	.5% dn