



# Project background

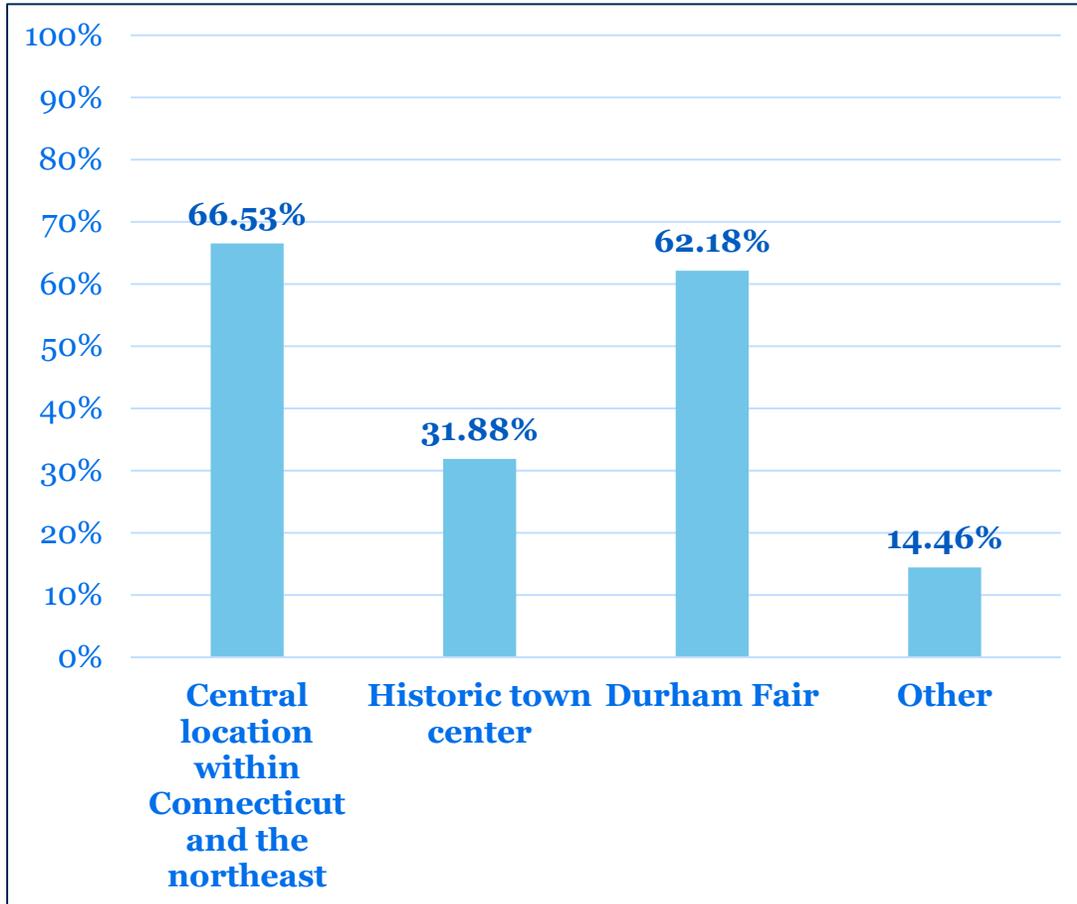
- AdvanceCT hired in February 2020
- Original project
  - Economic development outreach
  - Business visitations
- Project changes because of COVID-19
  - Community survey
  - Roadmap for economic development implementation work

# Survey methodology

- Attend public meeting to determine information to be collected
- Additional discussions with town officials to supplement key economic development issues in Durham
- Work with AdvanceCT Research Team to create questions based on desired information
- Finalize survey with Town feedback
- Survey in the field from early April through mid-May
- Analyze results and categorize open-ended responses (511 total responses)
- Results help guide implementation roadmap
- Raw survey data is available on the Economic Development Commission page on the Town's website

# Survey Results

# What are Durham's economic strengths?



## Common responses in “Other” were...

Small town charm

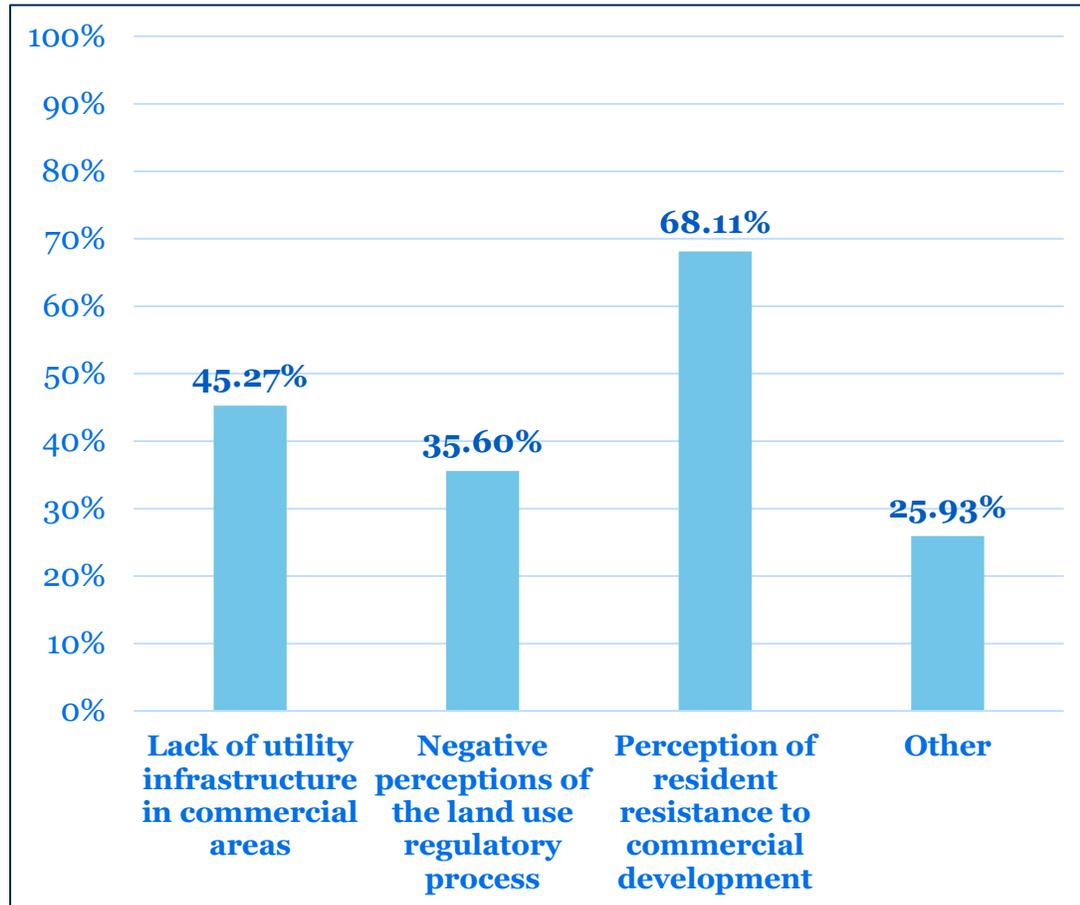
Agricultural base

Quaint, unique, and welcoming shops

Attractive for commuters

Engaged community

# What are Durham's economic weaknesses?



## Common responses in “Other” were...

General lack of commercial development

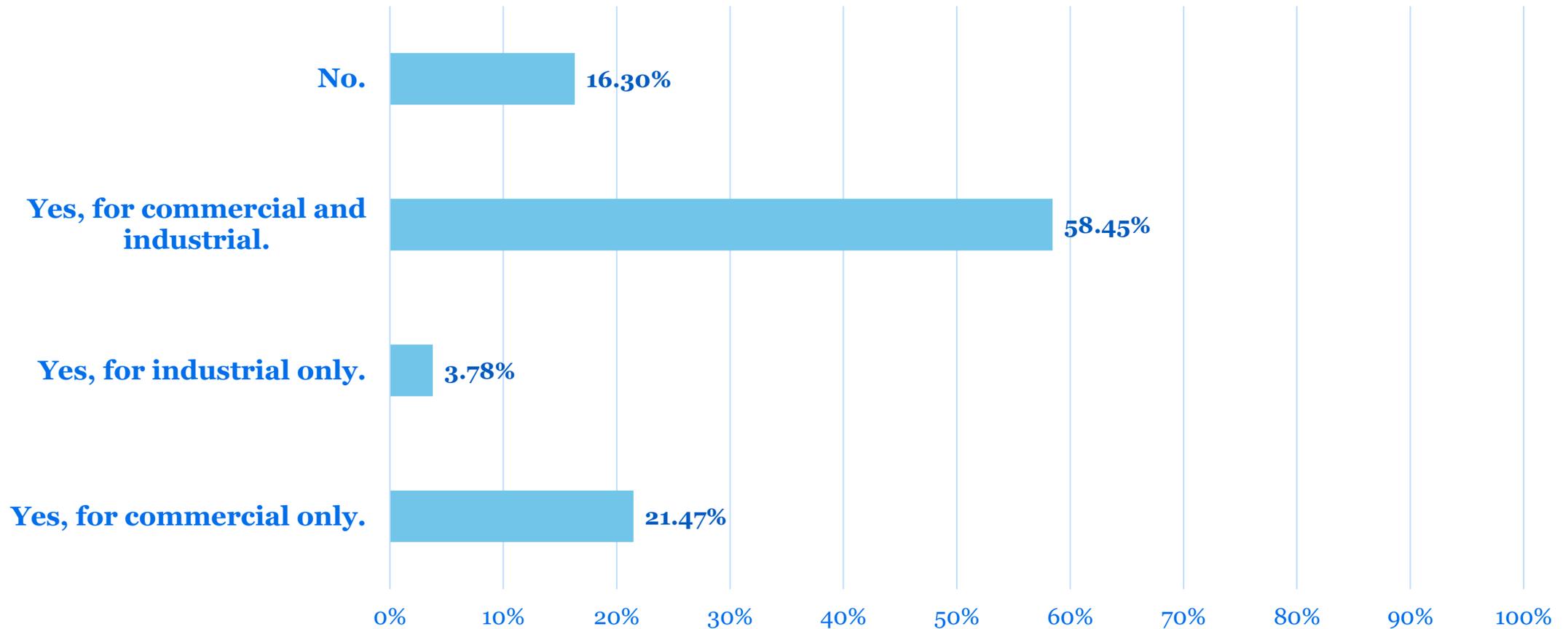
Lack of a “critical mass” of businesses downtown

High taxes

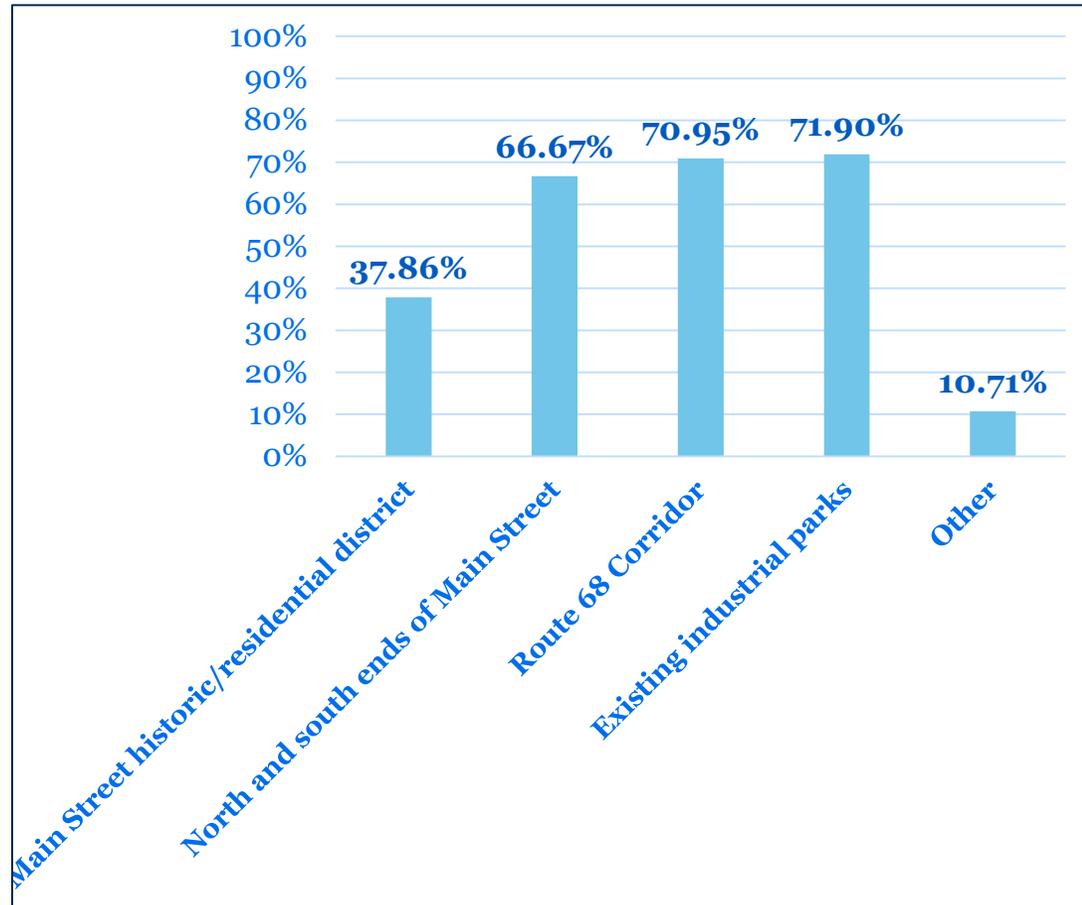
Struggle with the balance between development and open space

Lack of sizable grocery store

# Would you be supportive of additional land being zoned for commercial and/or industrial activity?



# Where in town would you be interested in seeing additional land zoned for commercial and/or industrial use?



## Common responses in “Other” were...

Route 17

Anywhere – maintain flexibility

Open space on outskirts of town

Route 79

What type of business would you like to see in Durham? (top 10 in order)

1. Grocery store

2. Full-service restaurant

3. Café/bakery/coffee shop

4. Boutique retail

5. Winery/brewery

6. Manufacturing

7. Hardware store

8. Agricultural business

9. Professional office

10. Pub/bar

# Other business uses to consider

- Home occupations
- Coworking
- Near-shoring
- Capitalize on cultural and/or recreational aspects of Durham's economy
- Build off of existing strengths – we don't want or need to change Durham's image

# Is there anything else you would like us to know about your opinion on economic development in Durham?

“We live in such a wonderful town. Let’s work to create a more dynamic and walkable downtown where citizens can come together and feel great about supporting each other and small businesses.”

“There is room to grow business development without compromising the town’s historic feel.”

“I don’t think we need to develop any more land, seeing as how the current zones are not exactly bustling with activity.”

“I bought my house in this town because I liked that it was small and not focused on commercial development. I would like to see the town stay that way.”

“Strong community opposition and fear of change makes even discussions about our current condition and state of Main Street frustrating.”

“Many people only drive through Durham to get to their work/home/beach. We need to have businesses that will make them want to stop en route.”

“Absolutely in favor of more economic development so that existing businesses step up their game and compete ... More commerce would help our tax base and attract more young families to town.”

“Local government, commissions, and committees don’t seem to share the same vision and need to realize that one can’t succeed without the other. Everyone spins their wheels, but nothing gets done. Everyone needs to work in tandem, not in a silo. Durham has so much to offer, but you can’t see it through all the red tape.”

“We spend too much effort looking for the perfect idea and not enough effort in building a culture of openness to development.”

# Creating a roadmap for economic development efforts in Durham

- Essential activities
- Stakeholder engagement
- Local programs and policies
- Promotional activities
- Business recruitment