



# Newsletter

## July 2023

### New Look, Same Commitment

**Durham Choice** is the new name for Durham's Choice Neighborhoods program, which is managed by the Durham Housing Authority (DHA) in partnership with the City of Durham. The program is funded by a \$40 million Choice Neighborhoods Implementation (CNI) grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Durham Choice is focused on the redevelopment of the 519 E. Main and Liberty Street site. Grant funds will be used to build new housing for DHA residents and to provide a range of supportive services for current residents. Grant funds will also be used to make investments in businesses and community institutions in the surrounding neighborhood.

### Eric's Resident Update



The **People Partner**, which is the organization that will provide case management support and help residents connect to services, has been selected. DHA is currently in discussions to finalize the deal. Keep an eye out for the announcement in the second half of August 2023.

Just a friendly reminder to attend the **monthly listening sessions** held on the last Tuesday of every month. The next session is **August 29, 2023, at 10 am** in the Community Room of 519 E. Main.

**Did you request a voucher?** There will be two training sessions on the voucher process and voucher requirements in August. One will take place at the August listening session on August 29<sup>th</sup> and the second at a date to be announced. Stay tuned for more information!

Discover your story with **Durham Choice's Summer Camp 2023**, "Artifacts of Our Lives." Join us for two weeks, August 14-18 and August 21-24, 2023, from 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM daily. Through different art forms, you can express your journey in a safe and stimulating environment. We have limited seats, so secure your spot today! The camp welcomes 4th to 12th-grade students. To register, please email Eric O. Smith at [esmith@dha-nc.org](mailto:esmith@dha-nc.org) or call/text him at (919) 698-8006.

## Meet Kim Graham, Your Relocation Coordinator



Kim Graham has joined the Housing to Home team in June as the Relocation Coordinator for the 519 E. Main and Liberty redevelopment – and she has hit the ground running! As Relocation Coordinator, Kim is responsible for helping with all aspects of the move process, including helping to identify relocation options, providing packing materials and organizing moves. Most importantly, she’s there to answer residents’ questions every step of the way.

Kim is excited to be at 519 E. Main and Liberty Street. When she was growing up, her father would remind her that “everybody needs help at some point in their lives.” Kim knows that all the uncertainty associated with relocation can be really challenging, and she is glad to be able to support residents during this stressful time. “It’s a partnership,” she says. “Residents have to do their part, and I will do my best help them.”

This isn’t Kim’s first time working with residents. She previously worked with Habitat for Humanity of Wake County, coaching homeowners through the home buying process. She has also worked as a personal banker at local banks. Kim is the proud mother of a 25-year old son and a 17-year old daughter. Fun fact: she loves hedgehogs and has all sorts of hedgehog-themed items in her home.



## Relocation Update

Relocations are underway! Fourteen households who were part of Phase 2 (Commerce Street) have moved to other DHA properties over the past three months. DHA’s relocation contractor, Housing to Home, has contacted all of the remaining households on the 519 E. Main+ Liberty site by phone or in person to ask about their relocation needs. This includes the size of apartment that each household needs, location preferences and whether the household wants a Tenant Protection Voucher to rent a unit on the private market.

Housing to Home will begin following up with households to discuss temporary housing options in August. These temporary housing options might include a similar unit in another DHA-owned property, a voucher to rent apartment owned by a private landlord, or a combination of a similar unit in another DHA-owned property followed by voucher to rent apartment on private market. Once residents have accepted a temporary housing option, Housing to Home will assist with the move by providing packing materials and scheduling movers to transport belongings to the new home. Moving costs are paid for by DHA.



## Calling All Kids – It's Time for Summer Camp!

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We have limited seats, so secure your spot today! The camp welcomes 4th to 12th-grade students. To register, please email Eric O. Smith at [esmith@dha-nc.org](mailto:esmith@dha-nc.org) or call/text him at (919) 698-8006. The camp will be held at T.A. Grady Recreation Center located at 531 Lakeland Street in Durham. The camp is free and transportation assistance is available.

## Understanding Tenant Protection Vouchers

Households who are being relocated due to construction at 519 E. Main and Liberty Street have the option to request Tenant Protection Vouchers. Like Housing Choice Vouchers (also called Section 8 vouchers), these vouchers allow you to rent an apartment from a private landlord. You pay a portion of the rent, based on 30% of your household income, and the voucher pays the rest, up to maximum established by HUD.

There are some differences, though, to be aware of:

- You are expected to find your own unit to rent. The unit must pass a Housing Quality Standards inspection. DHA's relocation contractor, Housing to Home, will be available to assist you in identifying potential landlords and properties.
- You are responsible for setting up and paying your own utilities. DHA will factor the cost of utilities into the calculation of your portion of the rent. DHA will calculate a 'utility allowance,' which is the estimated monthly utility cost for your unit. Your share of the rent will be reduced by the amount of the utility allowance. This means you'll pay less rent and more in utilities, with the goal of keeping the total to no more than 30% of your household income. However, you are responsible for paying all utilities even if they are higher than your utility allowance.

### Coming Up: Voucher Training Sessions!

There will be two training sessions on the voucher process and voucher requirements in August. One will take place at the Listening Session on August 29<sup>th</sup> at 10 am and the second at a date and time to be announced soon. If you are interested in receiving a Tenant Protection Voucher, please plan to attend one of these sessions!

## Know Your Rights: Your Right to Return

Residents who are temporarily relocated as part of the 519 E. Main/Liberty Street redevelopment have the right to return to the site when new units become available. Residents won't be required to undergo any additional screening and won't be asked to pay more in rent.

To be eligible to return, residents must remain compliant with their leases while living in DHA properties. This includes paying rent on time, completing annual recertification and following rules about conduct in DHA properties. Residents who are relocated using a Tenant Protection Voucher are also expected to stay current on their portion of the rent and follow their landlord's rules of conduct in order to be eligible to return.

Since redevelopment of 519 E. Main + Liberty Street is being completed in phases, replacement units will be available in phases as well, not all at once. As replacement units become available, DHA will reach out to relocated residents to inquire if they wish to come back to the new units. Residents will be contacted in the following order:

1. Residents relocated in Phase 2 of Demolition/Relocation (Commerce Street)
2. Residents relocated in Phase 3 of Demolition/Relocation (Dillard Street)
3. Residents relocated in Phase 4 of Demolition/Relocation (E. Main Street)
4. Residents who voluntarily moved offsite prior to the start of relocation

All original residents will have the opportunity to return to redeveloped site if they choose to do so. Residents can also choose to stay in their temporary housing, which will then become permanent. This includes both residents relocated to other DHA properties and residents using Tenant Protection Vouchers.

## Wondering Who to Contact?

*For general questions about CNI and the redevelopment of 519 E. Main + Liberty Street*  
DHA CNI Hotline, (919) 695-9058 (leave a message) or [CNIquestions@dha-nc.org](mailto:CNIquestions@dha-nc.org)

*For questions about relocation:*  
Kim Graham, Relocation Manager, Housing to Home, (919) 321-9372, [kim@housingtohome.com](mailto:kim@housingtohome.com)

*For problems with relocation or to request CNI services:*  
Eric Smith, CNI People Lead, (919) 698-8006, [esmith@dha-nc.org](mailto:esmith@dha-nc.org)

*For maintenance requests:*  
24/7 Maintenance Call Center 1.844.RING.DHA (746.4342)

*For other property management concerns at 519 E. Main/Liberty Street:*  
Chris Moore, Property Manager, (919) 972-0250, [cmoore@dha-nc.org](mailto:cmoore@dha-nc.org)

**The Durham Choice Office is located in the 519 E. Main Street building, in Apartment 106.**