



*A basic guide to navigating with the Durham Neighborhood Compass.  
[compass.durhamnc.gov](http://compass.durhamnc.gov)*



# Basic Functionality

## About

The Durham Neighborhood Compass is a quantitative indicators project with qualitative values, integrating data from local government, the Census Bureau and other state and federal agencies. Measurements are identified through local strategic planning, resident input, research and best practices for neighborhood indicators. The project objective is to provide data that allows all local stakeholders to track quality of life and provision of services throughout Durham.

## Browser Compatibility

The Compass does not require any additional software or hardware, but does work best in Firefox or Chrome web browsers. Users of Internet Explorer will need to use version 11 or later. These are all freely available at the following locations if you do not already use one of them:

Firefox - <http://www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/new/>

Chrome - <https://www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/browser/>

Internet Explorer 11 - <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/internet-explorer/download-ie>

The screenshot displays the Durham Neighborhood Compass web application. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Report, Data, Links, Feedback, and Help. A search bar is located on the right side of the header. The main content area features a map of Durham, NC, with a selected blockgroup highlighted in green. The map includes a legend for population density and a scale bar. To the right of the map, there is a panel titled "Total Population:" showing a bar chart with a value of 1,749. Below this, there is a "Blockgroup Measures" panel with a list of categories including Overview, Find My Location, Demographics, Infrastructure & Amenities, Education, Economy, Housing, Environment, and Safety. At the bottom of the page, there are two informational boxes: "Why is this important?" and "Additional Resources".

**Why is this important?**

Total population indicates the number of people living in a selected area. It is used to calculate density, and other per capita data. Trends of population increase or decrease can help the City, County and other service providers know where infrastructure and other services may be needed.

**About the Data**

Provides the population based on the 2010 Census using blockgroup geography. Census blockgroups are the second smallest unit of measure used in the decennial Census. Only the census block is smaller. A blockgroup is a cluster of census blocks within the same census tract.

U.S. Decennial Census, 2010

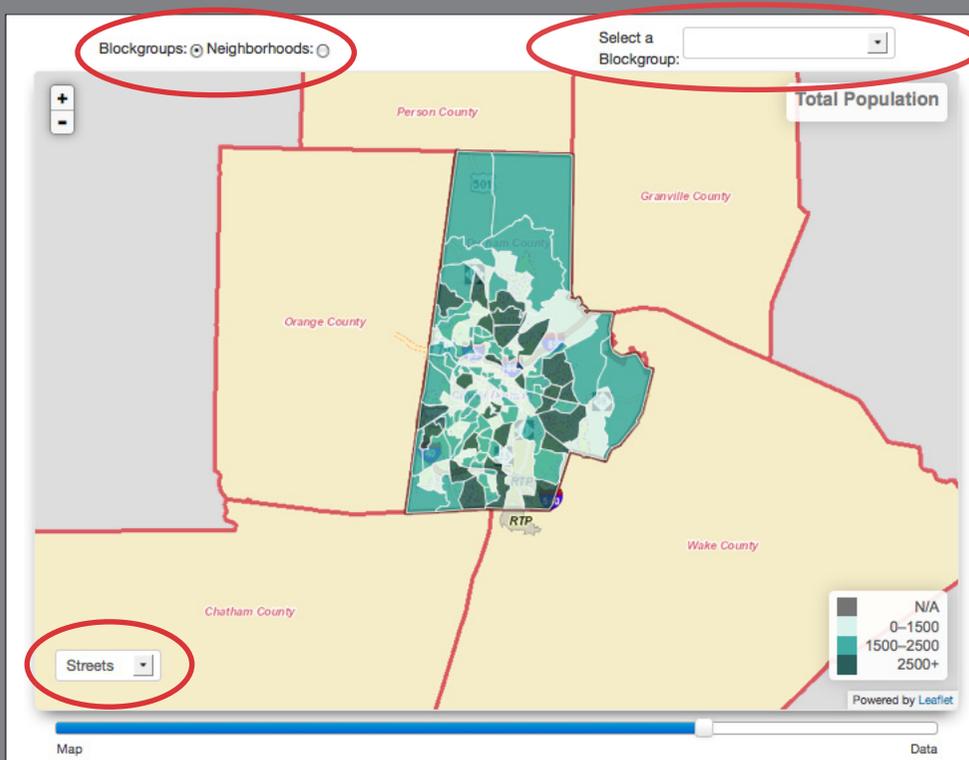
**Additional Resources**

- [Durham City/County Comprehensive Plan](#)
- [North Carolina Population Projections Decennial Census 2010](#)

# Basic Functionality

## The map and boundaries

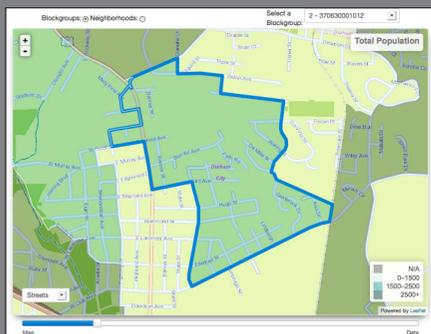
1. The map offers two types of boundary to review data for: blockgroups and neighborhoods. You can choose one or the other by selecting one of the buttons at the top left of the map. From there, you can click on any boundary within the map to zoom to it and explore measurements for it.



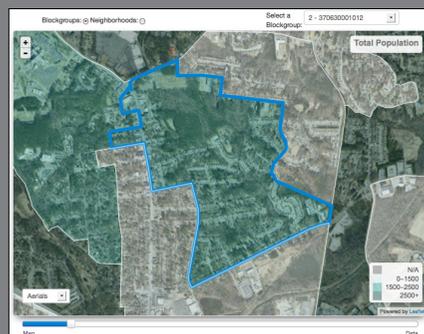
2. Specific blockgroups and neighborhoods can be selected by using the drop-down menu at the top-right of the map window. Selections from this window drive the map in the same way the clicking on boundaries within it will.

3. Specific areas of interest can also be located by viewing the base maps below the block-group and neighborhood layers. These can be seen more clearly by dragging the slider below the map to the left, making the data layers more transparent. Use the drop-down menu in the bottom-left corner to choose streets, aerial imagery, or zoning to identify an area of interest to you.

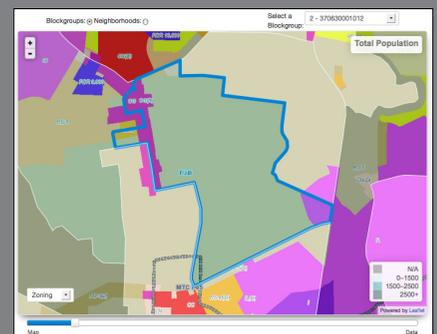
Streets



Aerial

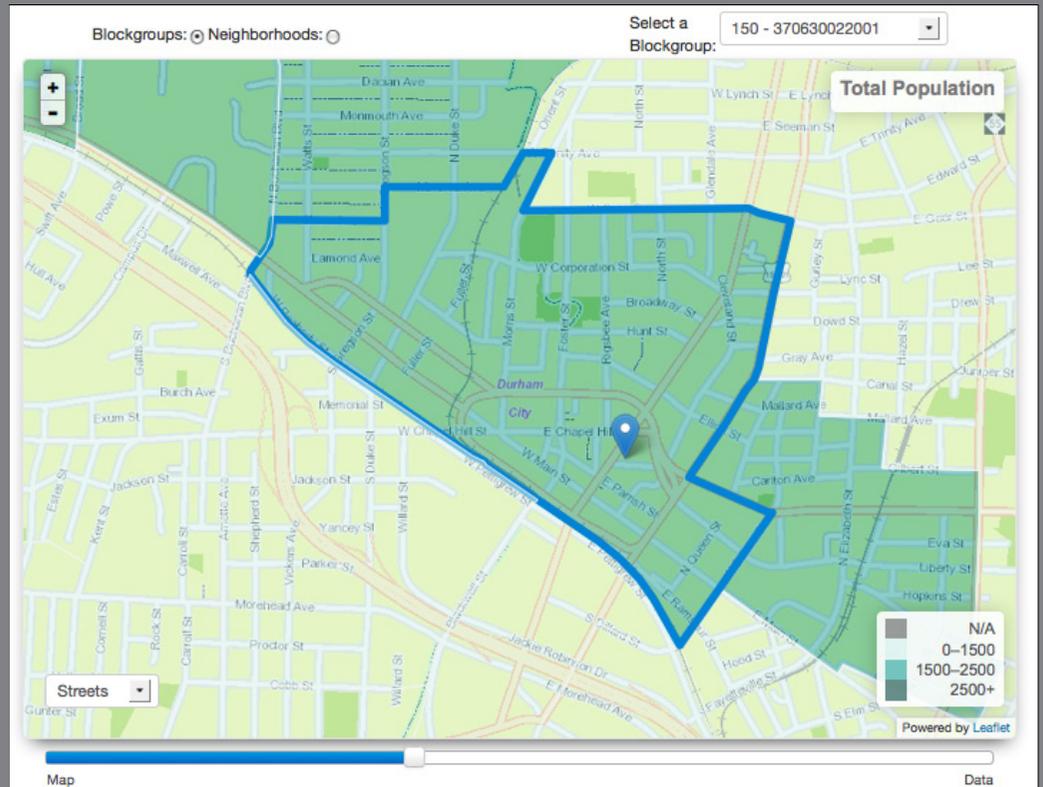


Zoning

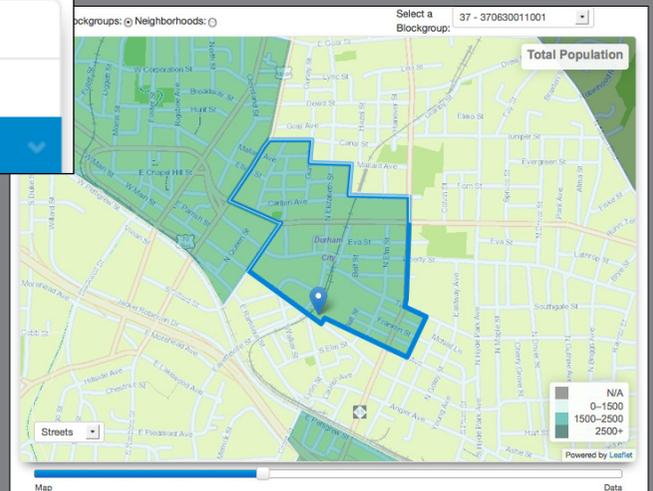
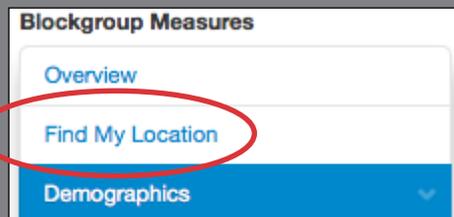


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4. The Neighborhood Compass also allows you to identify a location and the data relevant for it by typing an address in the address search tool located in the toolbar at the top of the page. Hit 'Search' or the enter key and the map will pinpoint the address and select the surrounding blockgroup or neighborhood boundary.



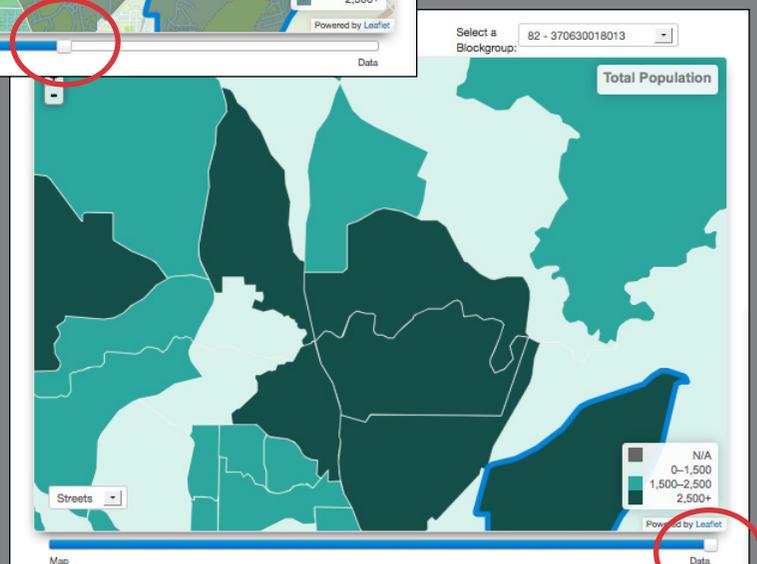
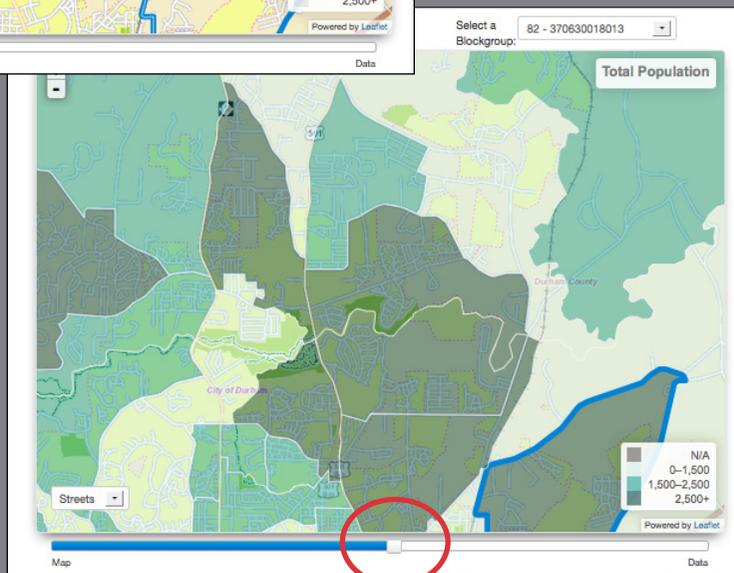
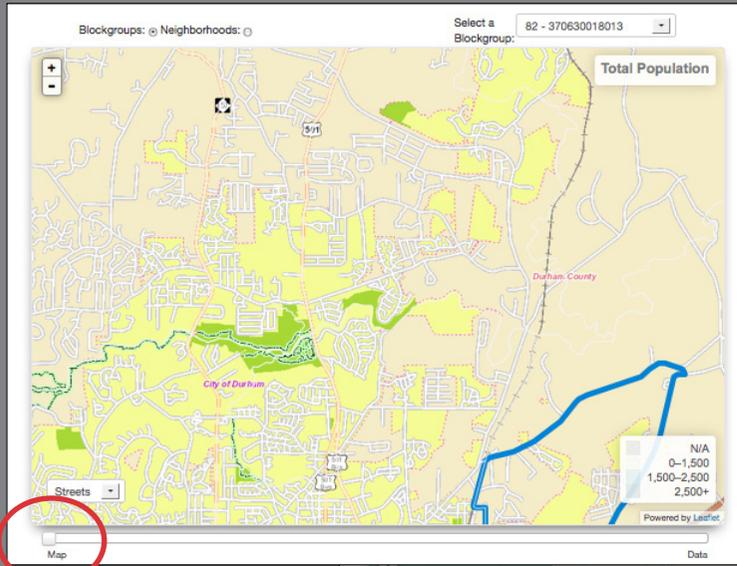
5. Another way to find an area of interest in the Compass is to simply "Find My Location". This feature can be found in the Measurements menu, just above Demographics. Though not as accurate as the address search, using this feature will pinpoint a location in the vicinity of your current location and select the corresponding blockgroup or neighborhood.



# Basic Functionality

## Transparency Slider

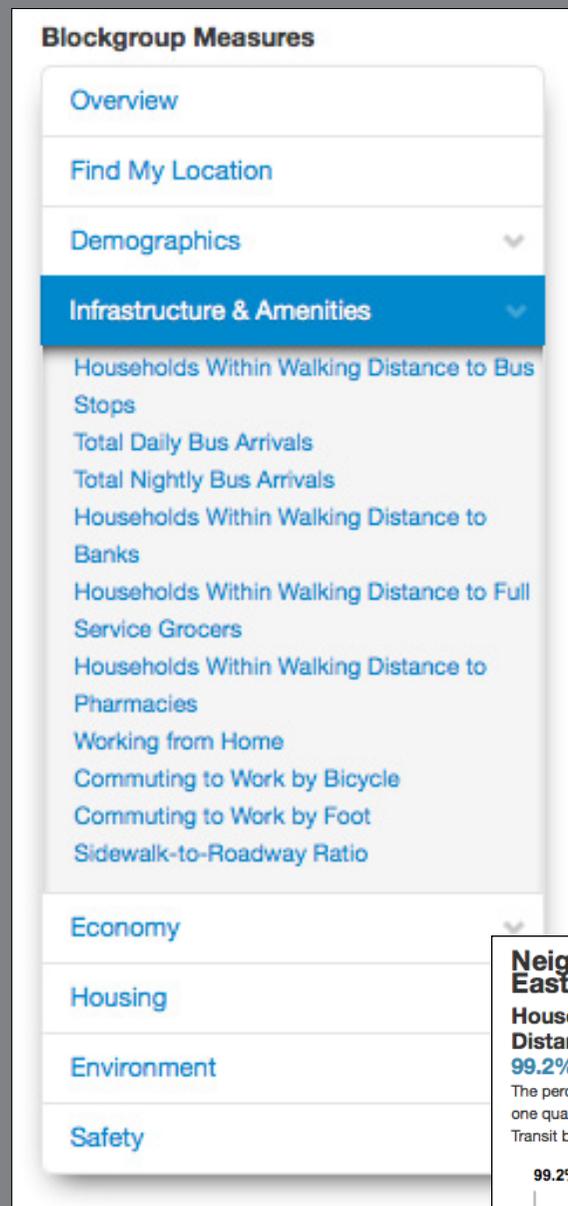
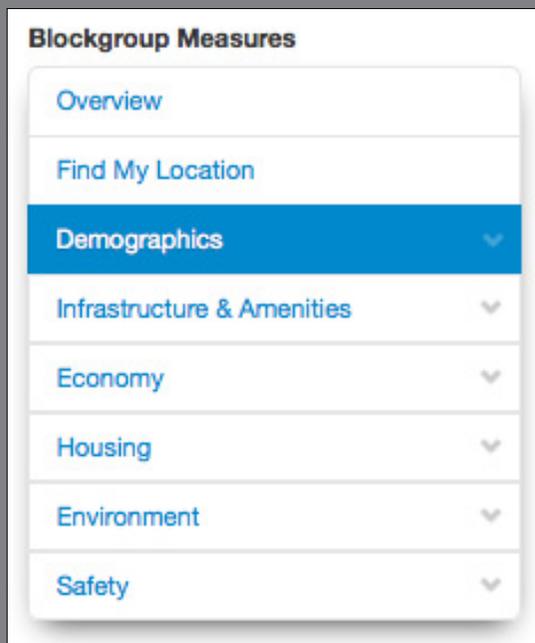
Users can click and drag the slider located directly below the map to make the data layer lighter or darker. All the way to the left makes the data layer completely transparent, and all the way to the right makes it fully opaque. This will enable browsing of the map without seeing the data layer. Once a location is identified by browsing the map, the transparency slider can be moved to the right to review measurements for the area identified.



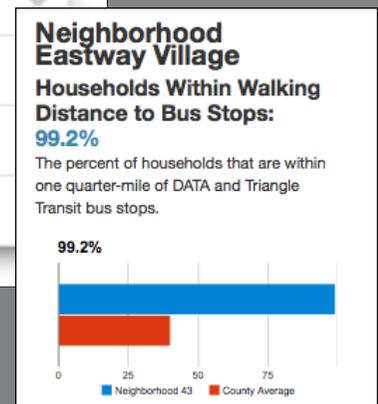
# Basic Functionality

## Measurements and Comparison

1. A menu containing all of the Compass measurements is found to the right of the map window. Measurements are couched in 'Dimensions' that reflect the thematic association of the data: **demographics** reflect population measurements; **infrastructure and amenities** houses measurements of quality of the built environment and household access to core needs and services; **economy** measurements reflect the economic impact of development, household income, and the diversity of economic activity in a location; **housing** measurements indicate the mix of renting and owning, the quality of housing and the relative expense of housing for each location; **environment** measurements include those related to the appearance of an area, as well as measurements that reflect the conditions of and our relationship with the natural environment around us; and **safety** measurements are related to criminal activity and environmental dangers.



2. Measures selected from this menu will then be illustrated on the map. Blockgroups or neighborhoods can be compared to adjacent areas by scrolling over them and reviewing the pop-up in the top right of the map. Comparisons to the County and to all neighborhoods are shown in the pop-up and in the bar chart.



## Basic Functionality

### Why is this important?

To provide some context or basic interpretation of measurements **Why is this important** briefly describes how a measurement impacts quality of life, as well as how the measurement may be used for reporting or tracking program efficacy.

#### Why is this important?

Travel time to work is an economic, environmental and quality of life metric. Economically, this reflects whether workers in a specific area are obligated to travel farther for work and that there are fewer work opportunities near their homes. Environmentally, it indicates whether a specific area contributes more vehicle miles traveled and thereby more polluting auto emissions. Finally, many commuters find longer daily trips burdensome, costly and stressful, leading to a negative impact on quality of life.

### About the Data

For each measurement you will also find a reference in About the Data that explains where the data came from, what time period it covers, and a brief explanation of how it is calculated.

#### About the Data

Bus routes used in this calculation are those active as of August 28, 2013 and do not serve all areas of Durham County. Click [here](#) for a map of the Triangle Transit service area and [here](#) for a map of DATA's service area.

DATA/Triangle Transit (2013)

### Additional Resources

For each measurement in the Compass, existing services, departments, research or supplemental information is provided in the Additional Resources window. These are intended to indicate who can be contacted about the issue, what organizations a volunteer might get involved with, or where to turn to continue to learn.

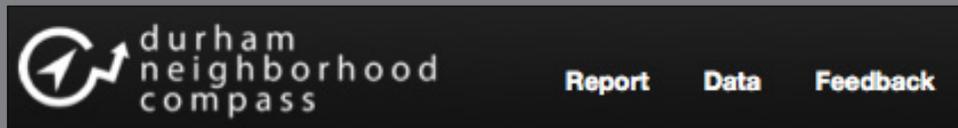
#### Additional Resources

[On the Map Commuting Analysis](#)  
[Durham City/County Comprehensive Plan](#)  
[Triangle Transit - Rideshare](#)  
[American Community Survey](#)  
[Census Bureau Data Dictionary](#)

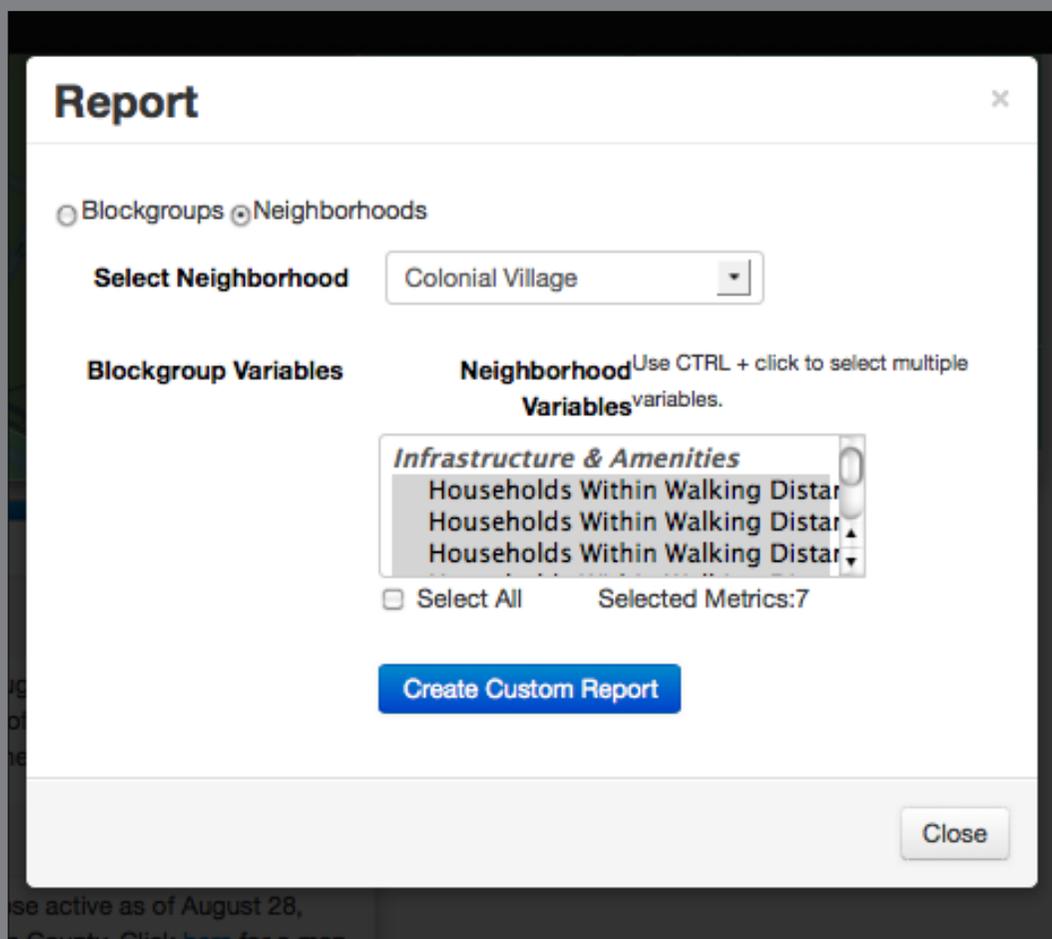
## Basic Functionality

### Creating Reports

All measurements, or just those you select, can be reported in PDF format using the Report tool found in the toolbar.



Reports are custom designed using the window shown below. If you already have a neighborhood or blockgroup of interest selected when you start the **Report** tool, that is the boundary that will be selected in the **Report** window by default. You can change that readily on this window, however, and even switch between blockgroups and neighborhoods. You can select a single measurement, a custom selection (by holding the control key down while you make multiple selections), or select all measurements by checking the box for **Select All**. (Here's a useful tip: Measurement titles in the resulting PDF will hyperlink back to the website, showing that measurement for the area reported on.)

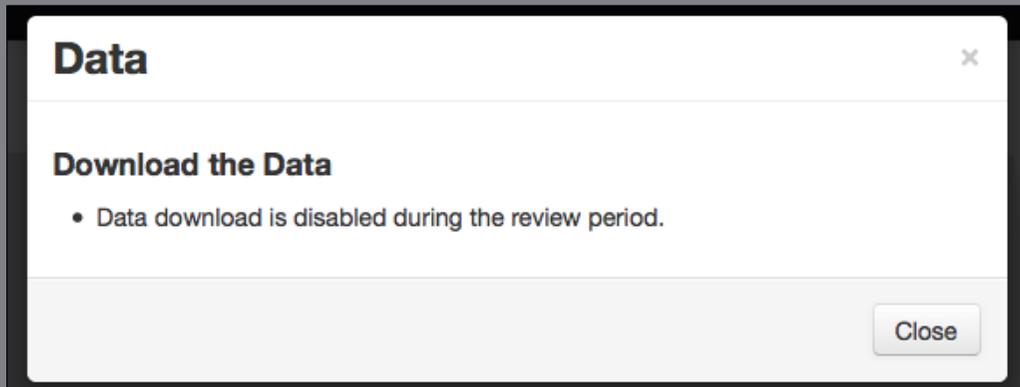


se active as of August 28,  
n County. Click [here](#) for a map

## Basic Functionality

### Downloading the Data

The Neighborhood Compass is driven by data from a variety of sources, reflecting considerable summarization and analysis in some cases. The Compass reports measurements by blockgroups and neighborhoods and the data that you can download from it is for these areas. Data can be downloaded as .xlsx, .shp, and .geojson.



## Contact

We want to hear from you! How are you using the Neighborhood Compass? Would you like to learn more about it or simply share your thoughts?

Contact John Killeen at: (919)560-1647 x: 34274 or [John.Killeen@durhamnc.gov](mailto:John.Killeen@durhamnc.gov)

Are you a web developer? Do you want to report a bug or learn more about the application's functionality?

Contact Tyler Waring at: (919)560-4122 x: 33218 or [Tyler.Waring@durhamnc.gov](mailto:Tyler.Waring@durhamnc.gov)