

# Durham Property Records / Deeds / Plat Search: A How-To Guide

*This working document is a collaboration between local historians – including Jennifer Melton and Nicholas Levy – and staff at the Durham County Library’s North Carolina Collection. Since the nature and location of available sources is constantly evolving, it is necessarily a work in progress. If you have any feedback or suggestions for updates, please email them to [ncc@dconc.gov](mailto:ncc@dconc.gov)*

Want to know the history of your house? Helping a friend or family member reconstruct the story of their community? Trying to figure out who lived or what stood on a property that’s been recently developed? There are lots of reasons you could be doing property records research. And while the best approach will vary somewhat based on exactly what you want to find out, this guide is meant as an overview with suggestions for handling the most commonly encountered questions.

## The Basics

- **Work backwards** from the present day or work forwards from the earliest known document. Or do both! This can be a helpful way to move through dead ends.
- **Save your work!** Download deeds or plats, jot references on a notepad, or type them up as you go along. You never know what detail will prove pivotal...until it does!
- Keep an eye out for **changes and inconsistencies**, particularly variations in the description of property, changes in the spelling or abbreviation of names, alterations to the numbering system for records, and – of course – typos.
- **Think creatively** to get around apparent dead ends. We’ll include some tips along the way.
- **Ask for help!** Even the most experienced researchers get stuck, and sometimes just having a second set of eyes on the same documents can lead to a breakthrough.
- Deeds record sales or transfers of ownership. They’re recorded in books as the sale happens, so the “address” of any given deed is the **deed book and page**. That’s the information you’ll use to track down a deed. The information you can get from a deed is typically:
  - the **grantor** (the person selling or giving the property, or who the property is coming FROM)
  - the **grantee** (the person buying or receiving the property). You’ll also find the date of that transfer.
  - Deeds might also include: the book and page of the **previous sale**, the book and page of the **plat**, information about easements/covenants, adjacent properties, and more. The price of the property is not listed on a deed.
- Recorded separately are **plat maps**, and they’re also listed by: book and page! The plat map for your property may have been drawn recently, or you may find that the plat map is many decades older than your house. The plat maps can have lots of useful information included.

## 1. Getting started: find the most recent deed

- The best place to start is the most recent transaction – even if that’s you. If it’s a house, and you know the address or owner’s name, you can enter in the “**Real Property Records Search**” below. For pieces of land that don’t have an easily discernible address or you don’t know the address, find the property on the **Durham GIS Map** at [maps.durhamnc.gov](https://maps.durhamnc.gov) and zoom in until the property lines are visible. Click on the property you’re interested in. A sidebar will show you the most recent sale’s book and page. Write this down! Once you’ve got this, you can move on to step #3, Durham County Register of Deeds site. If there is no Book/Page number, you can try to find it below via the Tax Administration property record search.

300 N Roxboro

Mailing List Tool Zoom to

REID: 102963

102963 09/16/2017

PROPERTY RECORD ADVANCED REPORT RELATED RECORDS

**Owner Address**  
CITY OF DURHAM  
PROP AND FACILITY MGMT 101 CITY HALL PLZ  
DURHAM, NC 27701

**Parcel Information**  
REID: 102963  
PIN: 0821979539  
In City of Durham?: Yes  
Land Class: CMNTY SVC/ GOVT BLDG  
Property Description: DCBD/BLK#11/LT#02-03 DBA/DURHAM CITY HALL  
ZIP Code: 27701  
Area: 2.43 acres (105,834 ft<sup>2</sup>)

**Tax Appraisal Value**  
Building: \$20,672,173  
Land: \$3,017,016  
Total: \$23,689,189  
[Durham County Tax Data](#)

**Miscellaneous**  
[Google Earth / Streetview](#)  
[Deed Book: 281](#)  
[Deed Page: 229](#)  
[Plat Book:](#)  
[Plat Page:](#)

Addresses on Parcel

## 2. Durham County Tax Administration – Real Property Records Search

(<https://taxcama.dconc.gov/camapwa/>)

- Search by Owner, Address, Parcel ID Number to find information on the present owner and most recent sale. Remember this is a useful starting point *even if you are the current owner*.

Owner/Business Name	Location Address	REID
	<p>Street # <input type="text" value="201"/></p> <p>Street Name <input type="text" value="Main"/></p> <p>Do not include street type (e.g. Rd, Dr) or street directions (e.g. W, West)</p>	

- Note:** This search is very fickle. If your search results do not meet your expectations, try again! When searching by address, Do not include street type (e.g. Rd, Dr) or street directions (e.g. W, West). Try just a last name, or variants on the name if needed.

- Once you identify the property, click on the parcel number or owner’s name (one or the other will be a blue link to see the property page).
- On the page for the property, what you need most for your search will be in two places:
  - the “Administrative Data” section: “Plat Book & Page” entries
  - the “Transfer Information” section: “Deed Book & Page” (see highlighted portions of the screenshot below for 201 E Main St). Record both of these numbers; leading zeros are not necessary.

**Property Summary**

Data last updated on: 1/27/2025    Ownership current as of: 1/16/2025    Tax Year: 2025

REID 102795	PIN # 0821-96-9855	<a href="#">Print Property Info</a>	<a href="#">Search Results</a>	<a href="#">New Search</a>
<b>Location Address</b> 201 E MAIN ST	<b>Property Description</b> DCBD/REDEVELOPMENT COMM/N CR26/BLK:DD/LT#1/JUDICIA PL:000071-000038	<a href="#">Request Property Change</a>		
<b>Property Owner</b> COUNTY OF DURHAM	<b>Owner's Mailing Address</b> 200 E MAIN ST DURHAM NC 27701			

Value subject to change, property assessment under review

Parcel    Buildings    Misc Improvements    Land    Deeds    Notes    Sales    Photos    Map

Administrative Data		Transfer Information		Property Value	
<b>Plat Book &amp; Page</b>	000071-000038	<b>Deed Date</b>	01/01/1997	<b>Total Appraised Land Value</b>	
Old Map#		<b>Deed Book</b>	000414	<b>Total Appraised Building Value</b>	
Market Area	C821A	<b>Deed Page</b>	00746	<b>Total Appraised Misc Improvements Value</b>	
Township	NONE	<b>Revenue Stamps</b>	0.00	<b>Other Exemptions</b>	
<b>Planning Jurisdiction</b>	DURHAM CITY	<b>Package Sale Date</b>		<b>Exemption Desc</b>	0100
City	DURHAM	<b>Package Sale Price</b>		<b>Use Value Deferred</b>	
Fire District		<b>Land Sale Date</b>		<b>Historic Value Deferred</b>	
Spec District	CAPITAL FINANCE,DURHAM-BID	<b>Land Sale Price</b>		<b>Total Deferred Value</b>	
Land Class	CMNTY SVC/ GOVT BLDG	<b>Improvement Summary</b>		<b>Total Taxable Value</b>	
History REID 1		<b>Total Buildings</b>	1		
History REID 2		<b>Total Units</b>	0		
Acreage	1.48	<b>Total Living Area</b>	0		
Permit Date					
Permit #					

- **Note:** The numbers to the right of “Plat Book & Page” are actually an active link! Clicking here will take you to the next vital resource in your journey, the Durham County Register of Deeds site

### 3. Durham County Register of Deeds site

(<https://rodweb.dconc.gov/web/>)

- You may see an acknowledgement page or disclaimer; scroll to the bottom and click “I accept”.
- Once you accept, you’ll go the landing page for the register of deeds. “Real Estate Records Online Search and Copies”, highlighted in red, is where you’ll want to start. You may also use “Historical Index Search” (for more advanced research).

rodweb.dconnc.gov/web/

**Sharon A. Davis**  
Durham County Register of Deeds  
Self Service Web

Log In Language Home Cart

Please log in

**Home Instructions**

Welcome to Durham County  
Sharon A. Davis Register of Deeds

Please select one of the options to start your request.

Durham County Register of Deeds  
201 East Main Street  
Administration Bldg. II  
Durham, NC 27701

**Hours of Operation:**  
Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.;  
Excluding Holidays

**Vital Record Processing Hours:**  
Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:45 p.m.;  
Excluding Holidays

**Fraud Guard**  
Register for email notifications when documents are recorded in your name to avoid being the victim of property fraud.

**Real Estate Records Online Search and Copies**  
Search, view, and print uncertified copies of Real Estate records.

**Historical Index Search**  
Historical Indexes for Grantor and Grantee's prior to 1984.

**Marriage Application**  
Click here to fill out a Marriage Application

- Click on “Real Estate Records Online Search and Copies” You have now arrived at the search page for real estate records. Hurrah! This is what you should see:

Recorder Documents are verified from Jan 1, 1978 through Mar 7, 2023

Document Number  Book Page

Recording Date Start  Recording Date End

Both Names

Human  Last Name  First Name  Suffix  Role/Status

Grantor

Soundex

Human  Last Name  First Name  Suffix  Role/Status

Grantee

Soundex

Human  Last Name  First Name  Suffix  Role/Status

Legal

Subdivision  Lot

Block  Unit

Parcel  Legal Remarks

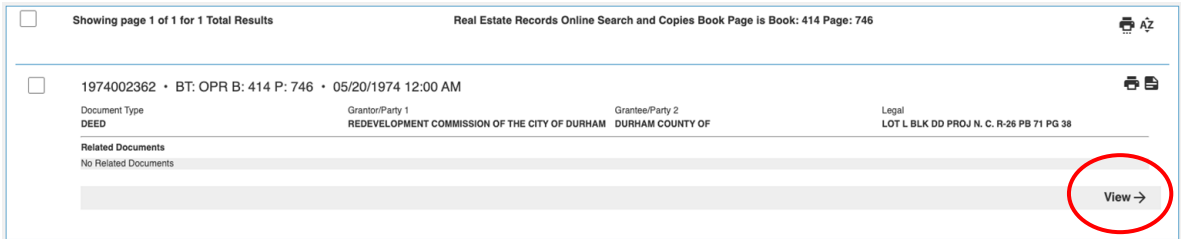
Document Types

- From here, you have multiple options for searching, including:
  - Book / Page

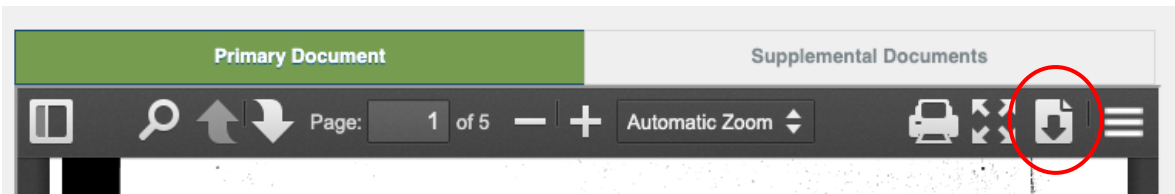




Or, click just about anywhere on the search results. For instance, on Document Type or Grantor/Party 1, etc. This will expand the result; on the lower right, click on “View.”



- **Recommended.** Save a copy of the deed. To download a copy, click on the download icon on the far right of the menu bar of the PDF viewer.



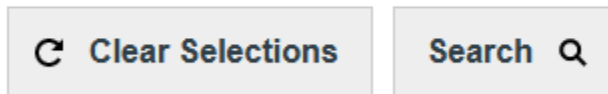
By default, the filename will match the Document Number for the deed. Perhaps this suits you. Perhaps a different naming convention would better serve your needs!

- For instance, you might note what document it is, who it's between and the dates. Such as: Deed\_CDavis\_to\_WBull\_1932
- **Read the deed!** In particular, note details related to the deed and plat books for the previous deed. We also recommend that you jot down any relevant names.
  - **To find the previous sale,** look for a sentence like “*The property herein described was acquired by Granto by instrument recorded in Book xxxx, Page xxx, Durham County Registry.*” Make a note of that book and page – that’s the prior sale.
  - You might also see the **plat information** – write that down! Look it up by using the book and page information – don’t select a book type, just enter the numbers and look for the plat in the search results.
  - Another useful tidbit can be the “**Legal**” field on the left when you’re viewing a deed. This might contain information about the subdivision or lot that you can use for further searching.

**Legal**

Subdivision OAKLAND HEIGHTS Lot 18 Block F Parcel: 231259 PB 205/367 PROP OF REVISION DEVELOPERS, INC. OPTION OF LOTS 17-19

- Tip: when you go back to the search results, use the “clear selections” button to make sure you haven’t left any information in the search boxes (it’s easy to leave a name in the first/last field but enter in new book/page information and not realize it).



- **Do this again and again, going back as far as you can!** With new deed book information and grantor/grantee names in hand, **repeat these steps** to go further back (or forward) in time! Alternatively, you can return to the search results to explore other deeds.
  - You might hit a dead end – no prior sale is noted in the deed you’re looking at. If that’s the case, try doing a search for the seller’s last name (or first and last name, including variants like initials, etc.) and narrowing it down to deeds using the filter on the right.

Description (28)

DECLARATION	3	^
✓ DEED	944	
DEED OF TRUST	507	
FORECLOSURE	5	
JUDGMENT	5	v

Name

We found more Names than the maximum allowed. It may be necessary to refine your search.

Apply Filter(s)

- Or you might choose to **search for the plat** at this point, using the book and page number gathered from the deed.

- Some early plat books were divided into A and B. If you enter the number in and nothing comes up, check to see if it needs an “A” or “B”. To search for plats in the following books, append A or B to the book number, as indicated below:

1: Book 1A starts with page 1 and ends with page 130; 1B starts with page 131 and ends with page 261  
 3: Book 3A starts with page 1 and ends with page 95; 3B starts with page 96 and ends with page 195  
 5: 5A starts with page 1 and ends with page 100; 5B starts with page 101 and ends with page 195  
 6: Book 6A starts with page 1 and ends with page 106; 6B starts with page 107, ends with page 208  
 18: All entries for this book are under 18A, there is no Book 18B  
 28: Book 28A starts with page 1 and ends with page 56; 28B starts with page 57, ends with page 111  
 31: Book 31A starts with page 1 and ends with page 56; 31B starts with page 57, ends with page 112

## Durham County Register of Deeds - Historical Index Search

([https://rodweb.dconc.gov/web/historicalIndex/HISTORICAL\\_INDEX8S1](https://rodweb.dconc.gov/web/historicalIndex/HISTORICAL_INDEX8S1))

The following indexes are available as PDFs at the link above. These are alphabetical lists by last name that point to what book and page a deed might be recorded on. They are not searchable by keyword, so require some scrolling and hunting.

### Grantee Index

- Before Jan 1 1962
- Jan 1 1962 to Dec 31 1974
- Jan 1 1975 to Dec 31 1977
- Jan 1 1978 to Dec 31 1983

### Grantor Index

- Before Jan 1 1962
- Jan 1 1962 to Dec 31 1974
- Jan 1 1975 to Dec 31 1977
- Jan 1 1978 to Dec 31 1983

### Index to Corporations A

- 1884-1968

### Index to Corporations B

- 1884-1968

### Index to Deed

- Grantee (alphabetical)

### Index to Deeds

- Grantee (1881-1961)
- Grantor (1881-1961)

### Index to Homesteads

- 1881-1939

### Index to Mortgages

- Grantee (1881-1961)
- Grantor (1881-1961)

### Index to Plats

- 1881-1968
- After 1968

### Record of Partnerships and Assumed Names

- (alphabetical)