



Trinity Park news



SPRING 2026

March Membership Madness

**JOIN OR RENEW YOUR
TPNA MEMBERSHIP**



**WIN TICKETS TO FULL FRAME
(APRIL 16-19)**

Join or renew* your TPNA membership in March for a chance to win a pair of free tickets to the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival in downtown Durham.

There will be 1 prize for first-time members and 1 prize for all other current members.

Check your membership status (send a note to tpnamembership@gmail.com) and renew now if needed. Whether you are new or renewing, get your membership dues in by March 31 to be entered into the drawing.

**If you renewed recently or are a lifetime member, you will automatically be entered to win.*

Do you love living in Trinity Park? Do you want to help keep Trinity Park a vibrant community?

MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

Trinity Park Neighborhood Association (TPNA) is one of the oldest and most active neighborhood associations in Durham.

Our purpose:

- To encourage and promote community pride in the neighborhood
- To preserve and enhance the physical character of the neighborhood
- To be a voice for common neighborhood interests
- To encourage and facilitate vigorous citizen participation in governmental processes
- To encourage participation in activities affecting quality of life in the neighborhood and in Durham

Questions? Contact tpnamembership@gmail.com

GET INVOLVED

Our meetings (1st Wednesday each month) are open to all. Meeting and committee participation is encouraged so that issues important to you can be voiced.

JOIN or RENEW

Our urban neighborhood is a diverse mix of approximately 40% homeowners and 60% renters. We encourage all residents to contribute to our vibrant community by joining TPNA.

To join: trinitypark.org/membership
Pay online or via check to:
TPNA PO Box 725 Durham, NC 27702

There are 4 membership options:

- 1 year = \$15
- 2 years = \$25
- 5 years = \$50
- Lifetime = \$200

Get Active in TPNA

2026 Home Tour: Call for Volunteers



Since the mid-1970's, the Trinity Park Home Tour has been a beloved tradition, opening up unique homes for everyone to enjoy and visit. During the 2024 Home Tour - with the theme "If These Houses Could Talk" - about 600 neighbors and visitors bought tickets, another 50 served as volunteers, and all enjoyed meeting new people, reconnecting with friends, and sharing stories. The 2024 Home Tour raised about \$18,000. The money sustains the activities of the Trinity Park Foundation, maintaining and improving our neighborhood's shared public spaces. It also enabled TPNA to make significant donations to help people in need of stable housing, here in Durham as well as in western NC, where folks were (and still are) reeling from the devastation caused by Hurricane Helene.

It's now time to begin planning the 2026 Home Tour, which will likely be held this October. Want to be part of the fun? **Contact Karalyn Colopy at karalyn@colopy.com to find out how you can help.**

Trinity Park Merch

Show Trinity Park Pride!

New swag available for purchase! T-shirts, stickers, mugs, and more, in a variety of logo options.

Check it out and buy a gift for yourself, your family, or your neighbor.

To access our shop, go to

www.cafepress.com/shop/tpna, then

click on your desired logo. You will see a range of products from which to choose. (This is not a fundraiser. All proceeds go to CaféPress but all pride goes to the neighborhood!)



Spring Egg Hunt to be held at George Watts School

Spring is in the air, and Easter is just around the corner! Get ready for a day filled with fun, laughter, and adventure at our Annual Spring Egg Hunt on Saturday April 4 at the George Watts School playground at 10:00 am

We encourage everyone to bring your baskets and your best egg-hunting skills as we scatter colorful eggs throughout the playground, each filled with sweet treats and special surprises.

This is a free community event. We can't wait to see everyone there for an egg-s-tra special day!

Annual Report

TPNA Annual Report for 2025 Presented January 7, 2026 By Scott Doron

The TPNA board stretched in 2025. As shown below, it was a year of action, with a mix of old favorites and new initiatives. Activities included policy advocacy, partnerships, awareness of key issues, and communications. Stay tuned for an even more dynamic 2026.

Board Meetings

- January: membership meeting.
- February : board retreat.
- March: five years of TP crime stats by District 2 police. Also, helping refugees.
- April : political/election policies for the TPNA Listserv.
- May: Partnership for a Healthy Durham.
- June: El Centro Hispano.
- July: no meeting.
- August : Durham Police and HEART concerning safety on Ellerbe Creek Trail.
- September: Nicole J. Thompson, President & CEO, Downtown Durham Inc.
- October: John Hodges-Copple for the facts and analysis of traffic on Duke and Gregson.
- November: Clint Blackburn, Sr Eng Manager, City of Durham on paving TP streets
- December : Lauren Shor on Halloween traffic shutdown.

Advocacy

- Durham School of the Arts
TPNA resolved to be part of the planning process for the future of DSA. The TPNA board sent a letter to school board members. Later, in conjunction with Durham CAN, the TPNA board presented a resolution of public participation in planning for the site's future at the School Board meeting and later sent the resolution to County Commissioners. The future of DSA will remain an advocacy focus.
- Duke/Gregson Streets
The traffic committee provided slow down signs for both streets. The board also planned an early morning coffee along Gregson to highlight the speeding commuter traffic for candidates for Durham City Council, although this meeting did not take place. TP board members wrote letters to Council members encouraging the adoption of two-way street patterns. Traffic and pedestrian safety will remain an advocacy focus.

Join us at our TPNA Board Meetings

First Wednesday of the month
7pm

April 1, May 6, June 3, (July break), August 5, September 2, October 7, November 4, December 2
Watch listserv for location or Zoom link

- Duke-Durham Neighborhood Partnership
Board members participated in many planning meetings for projects, including a joint project with Reality Ministries

Events

- MLK day
- PORCH food drive and Book Harvest book drive
- Egg Hunt
- Partner, Full Frame Documentary Film Festival
- Ellerbe Creek clean-up day
- Neighborhood Social Pub Crawl
- Duke Arts, Weekly Summer Concert Series
- Rock in the Park
- National Night Out cookout
- Halloween festivities at Trinity Park
- Luminaria night

Communications

- TPNA newsletter distributed on time, four times per year
- Website updated and maintained
- Listserv monitoring
- Monthly meetings at Trinity Avenue Presbyterian Church, Fleishman House Chabad, Duke Catholic Center, Watts Street Baptist Church

Current Membership

- 98 lifetime members
- 143 yearly members
- 241 total

Financials

- Total Revenue \$11,344
- Total Expenses \$12,221
- Gross Cash Flow -\$876

Martin Luther King Holiday Chalk Drawing Gathering



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Trinity Park Trees

New Trees: What They Are and How to Help

Residents of Trinity Park have seen city crews planting new trees along the right-of-way on many of our streets. We asked City Urban Forestry staff to tell us what they are planting.

From Craig Reed, Urban Forestry Program Manager: “We are planting throughout the city. Trinity Park’s plantings are focused on planting understory trees and replacing trees that died and canopy was lost.

The City will be planting over the next three years approximately 8,500 trees throughout the entire city, focusing on areas with historically low canopy cover. In addition to tree planting, we are also currently completing a new Canopy Assessment which will identify canopy loss over the past decade, as well as a full Tree Inventory for trees located in the right-of-way. After these are complete, this information will be used to complete an Urban Forestry Management Plan to help guide us through the next decade in our management practices and risk assessments.”

From Alex Johnson, Urban Forestry Operations Manager: “The City of Durham’s General Services Department plants thousands of new street trees each year as part of its Urban Forest Management Plan. This past year the UF team planted more than 30 different species to increase diversity and enhance resilience.

The UF team considers several factors when selecting a tree for a particular site. How much space will the tree have? Are there overhead wires? How deep is the soil? How much sun vs shade?

Native flowering trees are very beautiful, but can be the most sensitive to site conditions, requiring shade and good soil to thrive. Non-natives and ornamental/shade trees without showy flowers are often selected for their ability to tolerate poor or difficult site conditions. As for size, two-thirds of the spots available for planting are tight or have overhead wires, so small trees must be selected. Small trees tend to reach a max height/spread of 15-20 feet. The remaining one-third of the spots are less restricted, so larger species can be planted. Medium-sized species often max out at 30-35 feet, while the largest species - selected for the spaces with few or no restrictions - can reach up to 50 feet.



City workers planting a new tree on Minerva Ave. Photo by Steve Unruhe

Here’s what was planted this past year in Durham:

Small native flowering: Red buckeye, Serviceberry, Redbud, Pigmy fringetree
Small native ornamental/shade: Hornbeam
Small non-native flowering: Winter-flowering cherry, Chinese fringetree
Small non-native ornamental/shade: Persian parrotia, Chinese parrotia, Paperbark maple, Trident maple, Chinese pistache

Medium native flowering: Sweetbay magnolia, Yellowwood
Medium native ornamental/shade: Honeylocust, Kentucky coffeetree, Overcup oak, Blackgum, River birch
Medium non-native ornamental/shade: Ginkgo, Japanese zelkova, Dwarf Dawn redwood

Large native flowering: American linden, Tulip poplar
Large native shade: Chinkapin oak, Nuttall oak, Shumard oak, Willow oak, Swamp white oak, Compton oak, Hackberry, Bald cypress
Large non-native shade: London Plane-tree

If you’d like to help out, consider watering the young trees in front of your home this summer. Young trees are at their most vulnerable during the first year after transplant. Supplemental water in times of drought and excessive heat can make a real difference! A quick google search of best watering practices can be very informative.”

Ellerbe Creek Clean-up



By Carol Anderson

Friends of Ellerbe Creek is a new nonprofit founded just last year and is focused on the health and well-being of Ellerbe Creek waterways.

FEC organizes work events to clear trash from the creek bed (up to the high water mark of the Ellerbe) as well as its multiple tributaries. FEC welcomes (with open arms!) all volunteers as well as financial donations to continue this critically important work. Ellerbe Creek and its tributaries run through Trinity Park, as well as a number of other Durham neighborhoods, providing a welcome respite of green space and natural areas in the midst of our city.

Currently the board consists of Steve Hiltner, Ian Pond, Clayton Rugh, Mike

Shifflett and Carol Anderson, whose names may be familiar from many other Durham organizations and all of whom are available to answer questions.

To join the mailing list for regular updates or to sign up for ongoing cleanup events please email Ian Pond at iandavid33@hotmail.com or follow Friends of Ellerbe Creek on Facebook

Your help and participation is so important in preserving and maintaining Ellerbe Creek, a natural jewel and important resource in the midst of so many of our urban neighborhoods.

Pictured above from the retention pond clean-up: **Tolly Boatwright, Clayton Rugh, Carol Anderson, Kelly Witter, Lois Wright, Pam Watkins, Steve Cohn. Ian Pond** is the photographer

FIBER CONSTRUCTION CONCERNS?

For questions or concerns about the Google fiber construction in Trinity Park, call the number on the vehicle, door hanger or the below numbers for assistance.

- AT&T / ANSCO: 877-245-6660
- Duke University: 919-385-3427
- Google Support/Construction Line: 877-454-6959
- Spectrum: 855-366-7132

If you're not sure which company is responsible for the work or if you're not satisfied with the company's response, call Durham One Call at 919-560-1200 weekdays 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Progress on Planning for Future of DSA

By Marcie Porter

At a meeting on January 15, the DPS Board of Education discussed a proposal for an assessment of a former school site, Lowe's Grove, and the potential to expand the project to include the Durham School of the Arts (DSA) and former Northern H.S. campuses.

The proposal from UNC Chapel Hill's Development Finance Initiative was developed in response to a request from Durham County and DPS. The project would conduct a feasibility analysis and evaluate options for redevelopment of the Lowe's Grove property. It would include public input sessions and collaboration with County, DPS, and other stakeholders to establish strategic priorities, as well as analysis of community and market data, housing needs, and financial assessments related to private investment feasibility.

TPNA President, Scott Doron, reiterated the need for the school board to get moving on a planning process for the DSA campus. Preservation Durham also spoke in support of the community input model.

After the DFI presentation, school board member Natalie Beyer urged the County and DPS to use the DFI approach for Lowe's Grove, DSA, and Northern. Jessica Carda-Auten said she strongly believed they should use the DFI approach sooner rather than later for DSA and Northern. She asked the consultants if there might be a price break for doing all three. The answer was yes. The school board agreed to support the DFI consulting proposal and to move forward with requesting a proposal to cover all three properties. Durham County will contract with DFI.

DFI was formed in 2011 by the UNC Chapel Hill School of Government to help local governments and communities achieve their economic development goals by providing expertise in finance and real estate development.

The TPNA board presented a request for action to the school board in September. In an email, school board chair Bettina Umstead stated, "I certainly want to see a robust community engagement process to dream about what's possible."



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Meet Your Neighbor

The Gereffi Family

Name and family members

Pela and Gary GEREFFI
Daughter – Emily Gereffi & Steve Webb (spouse); granddaughter – Maya, 7 years old
Daughter – Karen Gereffi Goodman & Nigel Goodman (spouse); grandson – Kendrick, 4 years old

Street Address

Monmouth Avenue

Occupations

Gary – sociologist and Emeritus Professor, Duke University
Pela – sociologist / National University of Mexico (UNAM)

Why did you move to Trinity Park?

We rented a home in Trinity Park (1018 Monmouth) when Gary got his job at Duke in 1980. Within 3 months, we bought our home on the same street (1008 Monmouth).

What surprised you about Trinity Park?

Coming from a big city (Pela is from Mexico City; we moved to Durham from Boston), everything was very close. We were able to go to different activities and classes for our children in a few minutes. Being so close to Duke's East Campus was a fantastic advantage.



The Gereffi family in front of their family home of 46 years: Pela and Gary are in the center. On the right are daughter Emily with her husband Syeve Webb and daughter Maya. On the left are daughter Karen with her husband Nigel Goodman, their son Kendrick, and Nigel's parents. Photo courtesy of Pela Gereffi.

The one thing I like best about Trinity Park

The friendliness and camaraderie of the people; the beautiful trees in the neighborhood.

If I could improve one thing about Trinity Park, it would be...

Keep traffic and housing density limited, and have neighborhood parties more often.

Ellerbe Wetlands Update

By Steve Unruhe

Durham has begun work on the long-awaited South Ellerbe stream and wetlands project just north of Trinity Ave.

According to Dave Milkereit with the City, Durham entered into a contract with Mid-Atlantic Infrastructure Systems, Inc. (MIS) for Phase 3A of the South Ellerbe Restoration on January 30, 2026. A Notice to Proceed was issued on February 10, 2026. Phase 3A will consist primarily of sanitary sewer, water, and stormwater infrastructure realignments.

This work will lay the groundwork for Phase 3B which is expected to begin early 2027. Phase 3B will include the wetland and stream restoration, and construction of facility amenities such as plantings, public art, and a paved perimeter trail. Phase 3B is expected to take 12 months to complete.



Foundation Report

Gazebo Repair

By Shelley Dekker



Anyone visiting the park during the coldest days of late January into early February may have noticed two vigorous souls hard at work replacing the rotting rafter tails in the gazebo's lower level with new boards. These carpenters, Jeff Bergman, assisted by Sam Gurley, made the new rafter tails in their shop and then spent several days installing them on site at the park. Phase II of the job will involve replacing the rotting boards in upper portion of the gazebo, but scaffolding and/or harnessing will need to be used for that part of the job. When the new boards are all in place, painting contractor Jeff Scott will have his crew treat the finished carpentry to seal it against the weather. Phase III will be determining the best method of ridding the gazebo of nesting house sparrows and cutting out and replacing portions of the vertical boards they have damaged.

Photo by Shelley Dekker of Sam Gurley at work.

Park Lawn Re-seeding

By Karalyn Colopy



The lawns at The Trinity Park have been brown and bare for several seasons now. In an effort to bring back some grass, the Trinity Park Foundation recently hired a landscaping company to aerate and re-seed the lawns at the Park, using funds raised by the 2024 Home Tour.

Pleasant Green Grass finished seeding on February 20. As if on cue, right after the seeding was complete it began to rain! The lawns are roped off while the seed gets established. Look for green growth next time you walk by the park. We will remove the rope fencing once the grass is established.

Thanks for your patience!

Photo by Karalyn Colopy

Meet Your New Board Members



Lindsay Carbonell

Lindsay has lived in Durham for five years and the Triangle area since middle school. She lives on Watts Street with her partner, Pablo, and their cat, Finley.

Lindsay works at a recycling nonprofit but in her free time, her passion is creative writing. She is currently working on a fantasy novel. Lindsay is the kind of person who always has multiple side projects in the works. Over the years, she's fostered kittens, created a vintage home goods shop, taught a class at UNC-Chapel Hill (her alma mater), and hosted many potlucks and pool parties.

Lindsay loves to tell a good story — if you ever run into her, ask her about how she adopted her cat, Finley (spoiler alert: it involves a feral cat living in her shower). You might run into Lindsay on any given day at the Scrap Exchange, Recess Yoga, Night School Bar, Arcana, or talking a walk down the street to Cloche Coffee. She loves Durham more than more than any other place she's ever lived.

In 2023, Lindsay moved into Trinity Park as a tenant, not realizing that her best friend from middle school bought a house at exactly the same time just around the corner! Now she is excited to be able to give back to the neighborhood and the city she loves through community engagement and emergency preparedness projects as a member of the TPNA Board.

Marcelo Levy

Marcelo has been living in his Trinity Park home since 2007.

Marcelo was 8 months old when his family immigrated to the USA from Argentina in 1963. He grew up in Chicagoland (Skokie). Upon graduating from high school, he moved to Florida to attend university where he received his bachelor's degree in finance. In 1984, he moved to Miami where he worked in various professional HR positions for Miami-Dade County.

In 2000, Marcelo had to leave his job due to health complications from HIV (diagnosed HIV+ 1985). He regularly spoke at area high schools and universities about HIV/AIDS prevention. He continues sharing his story about being a long-term HIV survivor to give hope to anyone diagnosed with a life threatening illness.

In April of 2006, Marcelo and his partner relocated to Asheville, NC. Sadly, his partner of 22 years passed away of a heart attack in October of that year. Marcelo then moved to Durham to be closer to his family living here.

Marcelo has grown to love Durham and his home in TP. He and his current partner Kevin can often be seen around the neighborhood walking their golden retriever, 'Mensch'.

Marcelo enjoys spending time with his family, cooking, gardening and traveling.



Emilie Morgan

Emilie Morgan was born and raised in Durham. She grew up on Watts street and remembers celebrating birthdays at Trinity Park, scootering around East Campus and down to Northgate, and celebrating Luminaria and Halloween at the Tot Lot.

Emilie moved back to the neighborhood in 2024 after a 'brief' ten year stint traveling the world with her husband as he served in the United States Marine Corps as a Pilot. Emilie agreed to those shenanigans on the condition that they end up back in Trinity Park!

Emilie now has two kiddos at George Watts and she is the current secretary for the PTA. In her spare time, Emilie works as a realtor for her family business (Marie Austin Realty), chairs the Backpack Buddies Program at George Watts, and takes classes at Claymakers. She is excited to get more involved in the TPNA and continue serving her community

Please recycle this
newsletter
by passing it
to a neighbor

Duke/Gregson Improvements Need City Budget Support

By Mollie Flowe

It's city budget season again! The final city budget reflects Durham's values and priorities, so TPNA urges you to pay attention and provide feedback to your City Council members.

Last year, the traffic committee advocated, together with Bike Durham, for funds to move ahead with the process for redesigning traffic flow on the Roxboro/Mangum and Duke/Gregson corridors. This year, we understand from City staff and from neighbor/Council member Carl Rist that the next steps of the process for Roxboro/Mangum are adequately funded and it is not necessary to make further funding requests for FY27. That is not the case for Duke and Gregson, however.

Roxboro/Mangum is in the final design stage, with construction anticipated for 2027-28. The process for Duke/Gregson is a step or two behind R/M, with the project still in the initial Engagement and Study phase. (You may remember the open house with city staff in the fall of 2025.) The next step is initial design, and that will require more funding in the new budget.

If we want to see safety and traffic flow improvements on Duke and Gregson, this process must keep moving! Please consider contacting City Council members to let them know what you think. They can be emailed at citycouncilonly@durhamnc.gov. Remember that two members, Matt Kopac and Shanetta Burris, are recent additions. There are also formal opportunities to engage in the budget process:

Budget Public Hearings (regular City Council meetings)

- Public Hearing, Monday, March 16, 2026
- Public Hearing, Monday, June 1, 2026

Council Work Sessions on the budget (Committee Room)

- Wednesday, May 27, 2026 (9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)
- Thursday, May 28, 2026 (9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)
- Thursday, June 4, 2026 (9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.) (if needed)

Other Budget Milestones at City Council Meetings

- City Council adopts Budget Development Guidelines: Monday, April 6, 2026
- City Manager presents the budget to City Council: Monday, May 18, 2026
- Council adopts budget, CIP, and related fee schedules and ordinances: Monday, June 15, 2026

The City has webpages on the progress of projects like the work on the Roxboro/Mangum and Duke/Gregson corridors. You can find the webpages with a google search. (There is also a webpage for the South Ellerbe Restoration Project at Duke and Trinity.)

In other traffic news, you may have noticed handmade, unfinished benches at some bus stops around town, including one on Duke Street. Bike Durham volunteers built and placed these benches to make waiting easier for bus riders, and to draw attention to the need for basic accommodations at city bus stops. Please remember bus riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians as you drive around the neighborhood!



New bus bench on Duke Street built by Bike Durham volunteers. Bike Durham is adding benches to many stops around town.

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Know Your Real Estate

Real Estate Tidbits with Matt Lawing

What are those offers you get in the mail? Are they legit?

If you are like me, you get offers for your house almost daily via text, phone call, and mail. You may be wondering what they are and if they are legitimate. Although some may be people who would buy your house for the same price it would sell for on the market, the vast majority fall into four categories: lowball offers, wholesalers, "subject to," and seller financing.

There are usually tradeoffs to each of their approaches.

For a lowball offer, the sales pitch goes like this: "You can sell your home directly to us without any of the headache of putting it on the market. You don't have to let strangers into your home and you don't have to do any repairs. We'll buy it direct."

In most cases, these people are going to

offer you around 60% of what the home would appraise for. They make their living by doing some minor work and putting it on the market to sell for full price. The tradeoff is convenience for bottom line. You will not make as much selling your home this way.

Wholesalers range from legitimate to complete scams. The more legitimate ones will do something like this: Make you a lowball offer, and then put your house on the market with them as the seller. They will only complete the transaction with you if they find a buyer. You read that correctly: They put your house on the market with them as the seller. The benefit to them is they don't ever have any carrying costs for the house because they never own it. It passes through them and they keep the profit. Unlike the traditional lowball offer, there isn't a guarantee of a closing with a wholesaler.

Now, the scammy ones. Some of these companies will get you to sign paperwork that puts a 30-year lien on your home. Although it still happens, the NC Attorney General's office has been working to outlaw this particular part of the practice. If you are thinking about working with a wholesaler, make sure to do some research about deals they have done and ask them for references of people whose homes they have bought.

"Subject to" has become more popular lately. The idea is that someone takes over your mortgage payment. The loan doesn't go into their name; it stays in yours. For some, this is enough reason not to sell your

home to a buyer wanting to do subject to. My advice for this is to talk to your bank and make sure everything is above board. Also, there is a lot of trust involved in handing someone else the keys to your credit.

The last option is called seller financing and it usually only works if you don't have a mortgage on your home. A buyer will buy the home from you and instead of using a traditional lender, you let them buy it from you in installments and they pay you instead of the bank. It's not rent, and they own the house on closing day, but you become the bank and they pay you. This means you aren't responsible for maintenance, taxes, or anything else to do with the house.

Like a bank, you have a lien on the property and can repossess it if you don't get paid, and like a bank, you charge interest to the buyer.

If you trust the person, or have vetted them, seller financing can be a win win. You will generally make more money because of the interest and the upfront costs for the buyer are way less than a traditional bank. You can set up seller financing to be any number of years you like, from 1 to 2 years where they owe you the balance of the house after or the full 30 years of a traditional mortgage. Important to keep in mind with this approach are the tax implications. Talk to a CPA about capital gains and other taxes to make sure it will make sense for you.

There are other approaches that some of these mail and text buyers will use, but these are the main four that you will be approached with.

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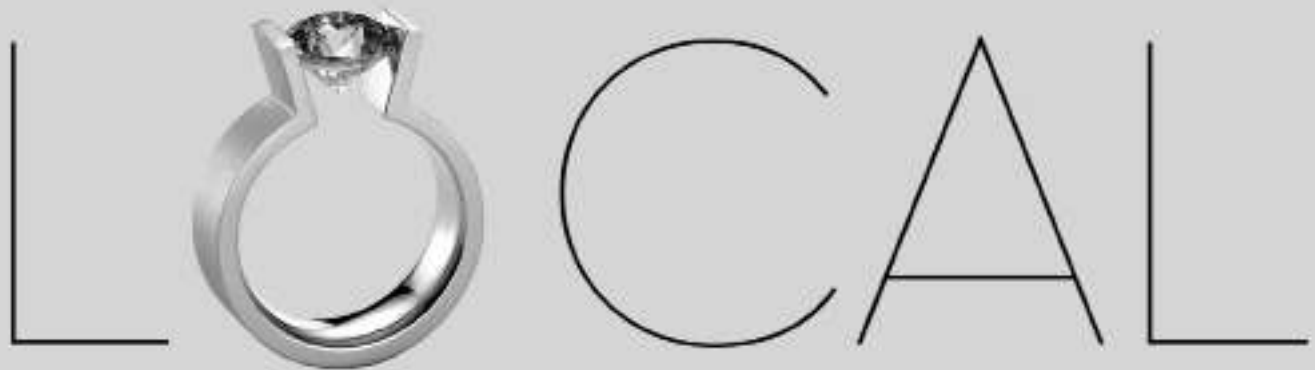
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