

# CHAPEL HILL

*Charting Our Future*  
A Land Use Initiative



**DRAFT Future Land Use Map - Update to Chapel Hill 2020 (Phase 1)**  
**Town of Chapel Hill**  
**October 2020**



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Charting Our Future – Phase I – Update to Chapel Hill 2020

In April of 2017, the Town Council of the Town of Chapel Hill, North Carolina started a journey to update its Comprehensive Plan, Chapel Hill 2020 that was adopted in 2012, in order to serve as the foundation for rewriting its land development regulations, the Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO). At that time, Council concentrated this update on six areas of Town, called Focus Areas, originally identified in Chapel Hill 2020 and refined during this update process.

As this update was approaching adoption, the nation was struck by COVID-19, which dramatically altered community members' every day lives and how they experienced their Town. As a result, serious considerations were given to both the validity of this update and postponing adoption. After carefully reviewing both the text and maps included in this update, continuing on the path to adoption made sense largely because this update embodies the priorities and flexibility necessary to:

- Effectively manage any long-term societal changes from COVID-19 that may impact future housing, office, and retail development;
- Create and/or redesign development review processes that can nimbly respond to future shocks, such as the one we are currently experiencing with COVID-19;
- Incorporate multi-modal transportation options into future development that both serve to provide an alternative to vehicle dependency and create outdoor recreational opportunities; and,
- Stress the importance of the public realm to both add life to our Town streets and as a refuge during times of crisis.

While it is too soon to truly know how COVID-19 will impact the Town and our Town's residents in the long term, the flexibility built into this update will serve the Town well as we move into what we all hope will be a post-COVID-19 world.

### About this Plan Update

This update and Chapel Hill 2020 outline strategies and goals for future land use and development and will serve as the foundation for decision-making so that the Town's land use tools are predictable, functional, and intentional. This update and Chapel Hill 2020, as amended, comprise the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The individual Focus Area Maps and the Future Land Use Map 2050 in this update replace the Land Use Plan in Chapel Hill 2020.

*The Town's Comprehensive Plan expresses the vision of Chapel Hill's future and serves as a road map that guides future decisions about how the Town should evolve over time.*

### Plan Update Process

This update to Chapel Hill 2020 is the result of a multi-phased planning process that engaged residents, business and property owners, local officials, Town staff, and many other community stakeholders. During this update process, public engagement included approximately eighty-four in person opportunities for community members to learn about the project and/or provide input as well as two separate, online engagement efforts which involved 1600 unique, digital participants. The scope of this update expanded as community engagement dictated additional elements be added to this update and included the following phases:



**Phase 1: Project Initiation.** Consisted of coordination meetings with Town staff as well as key stakeholders to scope the update and develop update goals as well as early opportunities for coordination with the Town Council and the Planning Commission.

**Phase 2: Scenario Testing.** Included a launch event to publicize and raise awareness within the community of the Charting Our Future project, a multi-day community engagement event, and other drop-in events designed to solicit from the community concerns and opportunities as well as the community goals and hopes for future development within the Town. Following these engagement events and an existing conditions analysis, scenarios were developed and tested through an online engagement survey designed to hone the community's vision for the future of these Focus Areas.

**Phase 3: Draft Map.** Consisted of several iterations of draft maps for each Focus Area which community members evaluated at community meetings and numerous drop-in events held all over Town. During this phase, community input resulted in the development of the Guiding Statements and the Map Book.

**Phase 4. Adoption.** Included the development of a final set of Focus Area Maps and refinement of the other update elements for community review, which included a digital community workshop, a virtual meeting, and robust submissions of feedback utilizing electronic communications. This phase concluded with a presentation to the Planning Commission, a recommendation from the Commission to the Town Council and subsequent adoption by the Town Council.





## Elements of this Plan Update

This update to Chapel Hill 2020 includes Guiding Statements, a Future Land Use Map (FLUM) for those areas of Town outside of the Focus Areas, individual Focus Area Maps & Principles, and a Map Book that all serve to expand upon the themes and goals found in Chapel Hill 2020. While the elements of this update are introduced below, greater detail is provided in the complete document.

## Guiding Statements

These statements form the policy foundation for both this update and the future overhaul of the Town's land development regulations.

1. Demonstrate the Town's commitment to effectively respond to the threats associated with climate change as well as environmental stewardship and resiliency.
2. Ensure equitable planning and development.
3. Encourage a diversity of housing types.
4. Promote distinctive, safe, and attractive neighborhoods.
5. Cultivate a vibrant and inclusive community.
6. Direct investment along key transportation corridors and promote construction of transit and multimodal transportation options in concert with the Town's regional transportation partners.
7. Support and facilitate economic development, including the development of varied types of retail and office spaces; job creation; innovation; and entrepreneurship, through redevelopment and infill development, in order to expand and diversify the Town's tax base to enable the Town's fiscal resiliency.
8. Provide appropriate transitions between land uses and buildings of different scales.
9. Preserve and maintain Chapel Hill's appearance and create the quality of design and development the Town desires.
10. Cooperate and collaborate with all of the Town's regional partners especially the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and UNC Health.



## Focus Area Maps and Principles

The Focus Areas reflect six areas of opportunity and represent the portions of Chapel Hill most likely to change in the future due to the existence of vacant land; underdeveloped sites; and their locations along transportation and transit corridors. Each Focus Area is mapped separately and includes a vision for the area, a matrix of the preferred and discouraged land uses (described as Character Types) and desirable building heights, a broad description of the desired, future form of development, and a set of Focus Area Principles tailored to the unique circumstances of the area. The Focus Areas are:

- North Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard
- South Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard
- North 15-501 Corridor
- Downtown
- NC 54 Corridor
- South Columbia Gateway

Each Focus Area is broken down into Sub-Areas with the primary, secondary, and discouraged Character Types for each Sub-Area provided in a Character Types and Height matrix.

## Map Book

This update includes a series of maps that reflect some of the Town's concerns regarding flooding and extreme heat. These maps will provide guidance as land use decisions are made, development applications are evaluated, and the Land Use Management Ordinance is rewritten.

## Acknowledgements

Many Town staff members, board and commission members, and community stakeholders worked to complete this update, but special acknowledgement goes to the Town Council who worked tirelessly over 2.5 years to Chart Chapel Hill's Future.

Town Council:

- Pam Hemminger, Mayor
- Michael Parker, Mayor Pro Tem
- Jessica Anderson
- Allen Buansi
- Hongbin Gu
- Tai Huynh

## Future Land Use Map (2050)

This overall map depicts the desired land use for all parcels in Town outside of the Focus Areas. Each parcel is designated with a land use that indicates its desired future land use. The designated land uses include residential, commercial/office, mixed-use, university, and parks/open spaces. In most cases, land use designations shown on the Future Land Use Map (2050) are similar to those shown on the Land Use Plan in Chapel Hill 2020.

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# 1 | INTRODUCTION

## What is Charting Our Future?

Charting Our Future is a two-phased process designed to chart the next course for the Town of Chapel Hill to the year 2050 and to make the Town's Land Use Tools more predictable, functional, and intentional.

The first phase, revising the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and amending *Chapel Hill 2020*, focuses on the Town's key gateways, corridors, and activity nodes. The future land use for most of the Town, including much of the Town's single-family neighborhoods, remains unchanged. The second phase of the Project is rewriting the Town's Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO), which is the Town's "rule book" that specifies where uses, be they commercial; residential; mixed-use; open space etc., are allowed in Town. The LUMO also regulates where a building may be placed on a lot, the height of buildings, and a myriad of other details.

Making the LUMO more predictable, functional, and intentional is one of the primary reasons the Town Council decided to Chart Chapel Hill's Future.

## Charting Our Future by Looking to the Past

As part of the Charting Our Future Project, staff and consultants undertook a thorough review of previous planning efforts. A common theme in these plans is the community's understanding that the physical environment of Chapel Hill—its neighborhoods, streets, utilities, and natural resources—deeply affect how people experience life in their Town. These past planning efforts include the creation of the Rural Buffer and the Urban Services Boundary. These forward thinking efforts sought to limit the Town's ability to sprawl and to maintain the semi-rural landscape that surrounded the Town at the time. Thirty years later, maintaining these sprawl control efforts, which help to create a more sustainable and climate resilient future for the Town, translates into an opportunity for the Town to mature within its existing boundaries thereby taking advantage of existing infrastructure, transit investments, the benefits of being the home of UNC-Chapel Hill, and the cultural enrichment that accompanies diverse communities living in close proximity to each other.

## Why does Chapel Hill need to Chart Its Future?

In 2012, the Town adopted its current Comprehensive Plan entitled "*Chapel Hill 2020*." *Chapel Hill 2020* established this Vision for the Town:

*"Chapel Hill will be a multicultural university town where each day celebrates connections and choice; where a dynamic downtown and networked community inspire connections among people, ideas, the region, and the world; where innovation, technology, discovery, learning, and the arts continually animate a town alive with choices, options, and opportunities to live, work, play, and prosper."*

This Vision and *Chapel Hill 2020* continue to guide the Town. Nonetheless, the Town has changed since 2012 and responding to forces of change, many outside the control of the Town, make it necessary to amend *Chapel Hill 2020* to include this Future Land Use Map and all of its components. These forces include climate change, population growth in both Chapel Hill and the Triangle Region, increasing urbanization, an aging population, the increasing cost of living and housing which may decrease socioeconomic diversity, an increasingly diverse

population, aging housing stock, a global pandemic, continued growth of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), and technology changes. Because it is anticipated that change will continue to be a constant in Chapel Hill's future, reviewing and potentially updating this FLUM and *Chapel Hill 2020* may be necessary periodically.

## Explanation of the Future Land Use Map & Its Components

### Future Land Use Map Considerations

#### *Purpose*

The Town's FLUM is a tool to generally and flexibly direct future growth, implement the community vision, and create a sense of place and community for those who live, work, and visit Chapel Hill. The FLUM provides strategies and approaches for land use and development in Chapel Hill and will serve as a foundation for decision-making for elected and appointed officials as well as a guide for all community members be they businesses, property owners, developers or other concerned stakeholders to better understand the community's vision for Chapel Hill's future. The following considerations highlight the Chapel Hill FLUM.

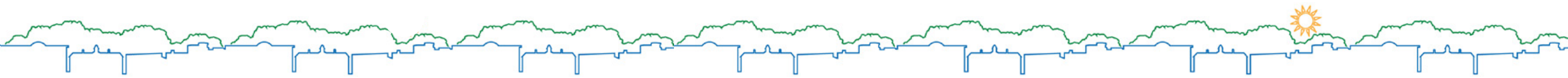
#### *Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan*

*Chapel Hill 2020* is the community's comprehensive plan that sets a vision and a path for Chapel Hill's future. On June 25, 2012, the Town Council unanimously adopted the *Chapel Hill 2020* comprehensive plan. The *Chapel Hill 2020* comprehensive plan reflects the values, aspirations, and ideas of the community. The participants in the *Chapel Hill 2020* process envisioned a town that is accessible, affordable, and sustainable; asserted the importance of protecting the community's natural resources; and emphasized the importance of a vibrant downtown and active neighborhoods. Typically, FLUMs are components of comprehensive plans, and *Chapel Hill 2020* includes a Land Use Plan. This revised FLUM replaces the Land Use Plan and will help to implement the vision of *Chapel Hill 2020* including all subsequent amendments to *Chapel Hill 2020*, which includes various small area plans and plans related to, among other things, mobility and connectivity.

#### *Relationship to the Land Use Management Ordinance and Zoning Atlas*

The Future Land Use Map depicts a snapshot into the future of the Town's preferred future mix of land uses. In other words, the Future Land Use Map will generally guide the Town as to where shopping, houses, apartments, townhomes, offices, and parks should be located to the year 2050. The Zoning Atlas is a regulatory map showing what the Town has already decided to allow today. The Zoning Atlas implements the Land Use Management Ordinance. The FLUM and the Zoning Atlas are like a leader and a follower. The FLUM is the leading document that recommends and advises, while the Zoning Atlas is the follower map that authorizes and entitles.

The Focus Area Maps and Principles in Section 4 portray a vision for the Town in the year 2050. In many instances, changes to the Town's development ordinances, standards, policies, and regulations as well as potential construction of additional facilities and infrastructure may be required to implement this vision. Given the future-oriented nature of the Focus Area Maps and Principles, such changes may not happen in the near term. Instead, this Future Land Use Map will provide guidance only and help to clarify expectations for future development. As the Town works to update its land use tools, such as the Land Use Management Ordinance, near term priorities that implement this FLUM may be specified. However, the Focus Area Maps and Principles are not intended to depict that the Town is ready, in every instance, to approve applications and/or change existing zoning to support the vision depicted in the FLUM. Instead, individual development applications will be evaluated based on applicable development regulations, context, and circumstances with the understanding that



the Town is looking for creative solutions to move toward 2050. The FLUM provides general guidance on how land can be used within the Town, but it is the Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO) and the Zoning Atlas that legally establishes those permitted land uses and regulations for development.

### Future Land Use Map Components

#### Guiding Statements

The Guiding Statements provide broad direction for the future of Chapel Hill as a whole and provide guidance for both the revisions to the Future Land Use Map as well as the Land Use Management Ordinance Rewrite.

#### Future Land Use Map

The FLUM is organized into two interconnected components:

1. An overall map, the Future Land Use Map (2050), that includes Land Use Categories for most areas of Town; and,
2. Individual Focus Area Maps for designated Focus Areas with accompanying Focus Area Principles. (Please see below for more information on the Land Use Categories, Focus Areas, and Focus Area Principles.)

#### Map Book

The FLUM is supported by a series of maps that reflect some of the Town’s concerns that may influence land use decisions and regulations in the LUMO. The Town Council adopted some of these maps as components of other long range planning efforts. Others were created as part of the FLUM refinement effort to provide additional insight and guidance as land use decisions are considered and as the LUMO is rewritten. Maps included as part of the Book are as follows:

- Resiliency Assessments and supporting maps for Extreme Heat and Flooding
- Existing Habitat & Potential Connections Map
- Long Term Network Facilities Map (Chapel Hill Mobility & Connectivity Plan adopted 2017 and amended in 2020)

### Land Use Categories

For most areas of Town, the FLUM reflects a broad range of land uses, including residential; commercial; mixed use; industrial; and open space. These uses are depicted as a set of Land Use Categories. The Land Use Categories are adapted from the *Chapel Hill 2020* Land Use Plan. These Land Use Categories are as follows:

Land Use Categories		
Residential	Non-Residential	Mixed-Use
Rural Residential, 1 unit/5 acres Rural Residential, 1 unit/acre Very Low Residential, 1 unit/acre Low Residential, generally 1 to 4 units/acre Medium Residential, generally 4 to 8 units/acre High Residential, generally 8 to 15+ units/acre	Commercial/Office Institutional University Parks/Open Space	Mixed Use Village Center

### Focus Areas

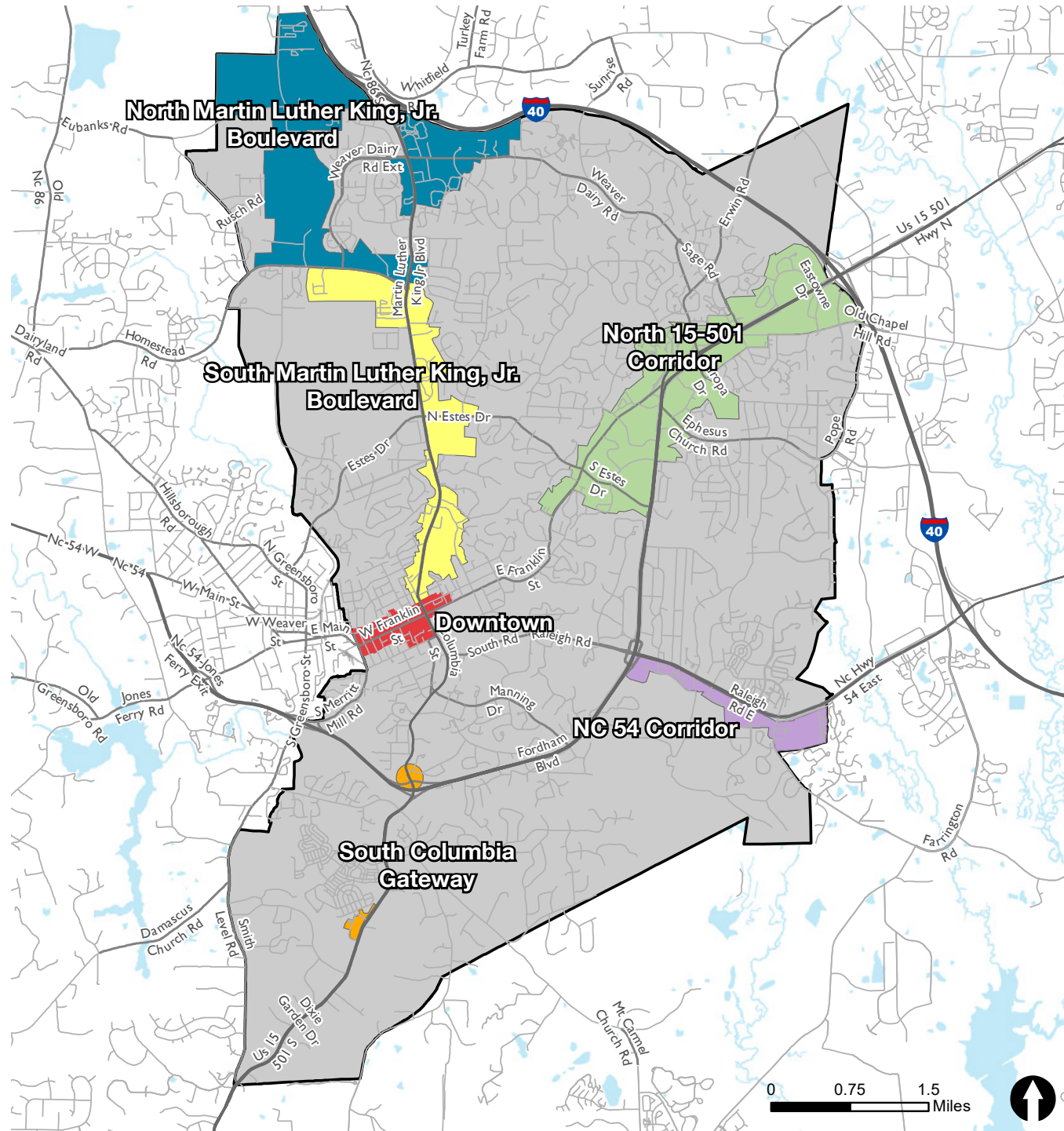
The Focus Areas reflect six areas of opportunity selected based on areas identified in *Chapel Hill 2020*. These areas needed more detailed recommendations and guidance in order to properly plan for the year 2050. The Focus Areas represent the portions of Chapel Hill most likely to change in the future due to the existence of vacant land; underdeveloped sites; and their locations along transportation and transit corridors. Each Focus Area is mapped separately and includes a vision for the area, a matrix of the preferred and discouraged land uses (described as Character Types) and desirable building heights, a description of the desired form of development, and a set of Focus Area Principles tailored to the unique circumstances of the area. To give additional guidance about the desired character of each Focus Area, images are provided to reflect preferred design concepts. The Focus Areas are:

- North Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard
- South Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard
- North 15-501 Corridor
- Downtown
- NC 54 Corridor
- South Columbia Gateway

Each Focus Area is broken down into Sub-Areas, and the primary, secondary, and discouraged Character Types for each Sub-Area are provided in a Character Types and Height matrix. The heights listed in this matrix are for guidance only and are not meant as an absolute prohibition against buildings of greater height. In particular, the Typical, Activated Street Frontage and Transitional Area Heights are contextual. Meaning that while the listed heights provide high level guidance on the height that may be appropriate in each sub-area, the surrounding built and natural environment as well as the Town’s vision for the future must be taken into consideration when designing individual buildings and sites.



Focus Area Map



Character Types

For the Focus Areas only, the FLUM makes use of “character types” that broadly describe the shape, character, intensity, and form of future development intended for each Focus Area. The character types do not apply in locations outside of these Focus Areas. The Land Use Categories, discussed above, delineate the future land uses for the other areas of Town.

Character Types		
Residential	Non-Residential	Mixed-Use
Multi-family Residential Townhomes & Residences	Commercial/Office Light Industrial Parks & Green/Gathering Spaces Institutional/Civic	Multi-family, Shops, and Offices

Future Land Use Map Interpretation

The Future Land Use Map, including both the overall map and the individual maps for each Focus Area, the Land Use Categories, and the Character Types were developed to provide guidance for specific areas throughout the Town. Special care was taken to ensure that the FLUM is generally accurate in interpreting the vision for the Town. However, the Future Land Use Map is not intended to provide site level guidance with precision. For sites located on the boundaries between Land Use Categories or Sub-Areas on the Future Land Use Map, the mapped edges are not intended to be interpreted as a rigid boundary but should be interpreted in light of *Chapel Hill 2020*, Town policies relevant to the site, and the particular site circumstances.

Map Amendments

The Future Land Use Map was constructed to provide flexibility and to reduce the need for FLUM amendments. However, there may be instances in the future that will require amendments to the FLUM. Such FLUM amendments should take place only in situations when the proposed amendment is:

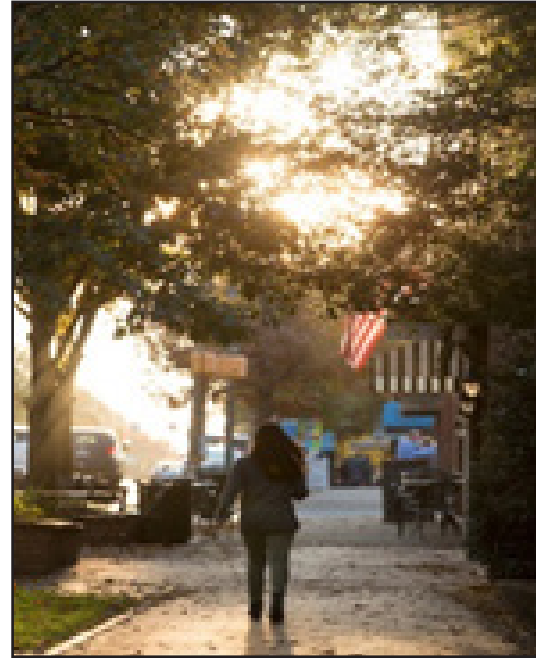
1. Consistent with the goals and policies in the Chapel Hill 2020 comprehensive plan; and,
2. Addresses significantly changed conditions since the Future Land Use Map was adopted and/or amended.

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## 2 | Guiding Statements

### Purpose of the Guiding Statements

While updating the Town's Future Land Use Map focuses only on a small portion of the Town, rewriting the Town's LUMO could potentially impact all portions; therefore, it is imperative to define a set of Guiding Statements, which taken together, provide direction for both phases of this Project, the future of Chapel Hill and the rationale for making the changes necessary to:



- Effectively address, adapt, and mitigate the challenges of climate change;
- Foster land use decisions that recognize, integrate, and sustain the Town's unique natural environment;
- Support the Town's economic development strategies, including job creation;
- Ensure the Town's fiscal well-being by diversifying and increasing its tax base;
- Sustain and create a sense of place that is distinctive to Chapel Hill;
- Balance development/redevelopment while protecting and preserving the Town's natural environment and resources;
- Collaborate with the Town's regional partners, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the UNC Health Care System on lifelong learning, innovation, and entrepreneurship;
- Invest in the infrastructure necessary to create a vibrant, equitable, economically sustainable, resilient future for Chapel Hill;
- Create, in strategic locations, compact, well-designed mixed use communities focused on transit and multimodal transportation systems that effectively respond to the need to reduce vehicular traffic and the Town's carbon footprint given the desirability of such locations for both households and employers that prefer sites that are walkable and located within vibrant, connected communities and the desire for an equitable community where all community members have access to jobs, transit, and places to reside.

Chapel Hill 2020 including all of its amendments, these Guiding Statements, and the revised Future Land Use Map and all of its components constitute a long-range land use and public infrastructure plan to guide future growth, to identify areas and resources to be preserved, and to shape the Town's physical development. This guidance is necessary as land use decisions, proposed developments, and capital improvements are considered. (A land use decision is one that has a substantial impact on present or future land uses, such as zoning decisions.) The Guiding Statements include a wide variety of topics, but they are all for the purpose of informing and guiding decision making.

When applying these Guiding Statements to particular situations, such as specific development proposals, some of these Guiding Statements may compete or conflict. While the goal is to be consistent with every Guiding Statement to the extent possible, each proposal must attempt to satisfy these Guiding Statements on balance to achieve the overall intent given the context and constraint specific to that proposal. This approach recognizes that there are tradeoffs and compromises, and allows flexibility while still guiding land use and capital decisions. These Guiding Statements provide an anchor or reference point to consider when making tradeoffs and compromises.

### The Guiding Statements are as follows:

**1. Demonstrate the Town's commitment to effectively respond to the threats associated with climate change as well as environmental stewardship and resiliency.** The Town should emphasize sustainable urban design principles that minimize impacts to Chapel Hill's sensitive natural areas and respond to the threat of climate change by:

- A. Creating compact walkable, mixed-use communities, in targeted locations, where activities are located closer to one another requiring less time and energy to access the daily needs of life including work, school, commerce, and recreation rather than permitting low-density, auto-dominated developments and corridors;
- B. Densifying at strategic locations and mixing land uses. By building up, the Town can absorb development in a more compact manner, support a lively mix of activities, protect open spaces, integrate public spaces into developments, conserve landscaped areas, preserve tree canopy, and create nodes that make transit more viable. Permitting a mix of activities along streets shortens trips, reduces car dependency, enlivens the public realm, and makes possible the day and night usage of shared parking;

**The Public Realm belongs to everyone. It includes the streets, squares, parks, green spaces and other outdoor places that require no key to access and are available to everyone.**





C. Creating a meaningful Climate Action Plan and foster patterns and styles of development that are climate responsive, including energy efficient buildings and sites that utilize existing infrastructure and support local, renewable energy production like rooftop solar. Climate responsive design helps to mitigate stormwater and flooding problems. It also supports habitat corridors and often includes green infrastructure and living landscapes that provide for tree canopy and other vegetative surfaces which mitigate the urban heat island effect and create more shaded and walkable streets throughout the Town. This style of development accommodates alternative and low carbon forms of transportation, such as biking, walking, transit and the increased adoption of electric vehicles. Reduced parking requirements, when accompanied by the necessary supportive infrastructure, help to support these alternative forms of transportation and encourages the development of sustainable communities;



D. Continuing to support transit, transit connections and integrated transit options. Such connections can integrate and knit together all parts of the Town, reduce vehicle miles traveled, and support additional housing units and more intense land uses, like office and retail uses, so that community members may shop and work in their community thereby potentially reducing the carbon footprint attributable to the Town. Transit supports the establishment of a prosperous and equitable community that is easily accessible by all;

E. Establishing a “Connected Community” that includes a tight network of streets and multi-modal paths that are convenient everyday choices. Creating highly integrated multi-modal connections allows for a variety of mobility options that make trips more direct and reduces vehicular trips. To that end, the Town should continue to promote an active and interconnected community that supports initiatives like Vision Zero and provides safe routes to work and school, walkable neighborhoods, complete bicycle networks, and other multi-modal transportation alternatives such as greenways and sidewalks; and,

F. Establishing resiliency measures to mitigate flooding concerns within the Town including utilizing “Green Stormwater Infrastructure” techniques that utilize natural and constructed landscape features that capture, absorb, and store rainwater; preserving existing open space; and where possible, developing new open space; improving tree canopy; daylighting creeks and other covered waterways; and creating “Green Infrastructure” connections such as habitat corridors between the natural areas of the Town.

**Resilience, according to Triangle Regional Resilience Partnership Resilience Assessment, is the capacity of a community, business, or natural system to prevent, withstand, respond to, and recover from a disruption.**

**2. Ensure equitable planning and development.** Equitable planning and development is a strategy that ensures all current and future community members participate in and benefit from development and economic growth and activity in the Town – especially low-income residents, communities of color, immigrants, and others who have been historically excluded and are at risk of future marginalization. Equitable planning and development entails an intentional focus on eliminating inequities and barriers and making accountable and meaningful investments to assure that community members:

- Live in healthy, safe, and opportunity-rich neighborhoods;
- Connect to economic and ownership opportunities; and,
- Have voice and influence in the decisions that shape their neighborhoods.

Equitable Development is achievable by:

- A. Advancing economic opportunity. Promote local economic development and entrepreneurial opportunities, enhance community-serving establishments, and increase quality living wage jobs for all community members;
- B. Mitigating displacement. Develop plans, policies, and programs that mitigate residential displacement as development and redevelopment occurs in the Town and discourage the displacement of viable small businesses that serve community needs;
- C. Providing affordable housing options. Create healthy, safe, readily available, and affordable housing for all family sizes and incomes in all neighborhoods;
- D. Understanding and responding to local context. Respect local community character, small, local businesses, cultural diversity, and values. Preserve and strengthen intact neighborhoods, building upon their local assets and resources;
- E. Promoting broader mobility and connectivity. Prioritize an effective and affordable public transportation and multi-modal network that supports transit-dependent communities and provides equitable access to core services and amenities, including employment, education, and health and social services;
- F. Practicing meaningful community engagement. Ensure local community participation and leadership in decision-making reflects a diversity of voices, including targeted strategies to engage historically marginalized communities. Structure planning processes to be clear, accessible, and engaging;
- G. Developing healthy and safe communities. Create built environments that enhance community health through public amenities (schools, parks, open spaces, walkable neighborhoods, multi-modal paths, health care, and other services), access to affordable healthy food, improved air quality, and safe and inviting environments;
- H. Promoting environmental justice. Eliminate disproportionate environmental burdens and ensure an equitable share of environmental benefits for existing communities; and,
- I. Creating full accessibility. Ensure that the built environment is accessible and welcoming to people of all ages, physical conditions, and languages.



**3. Encourage a diversity of housing types.** The Town will encourage additional housing options that are both affordable and desirable for households and individuals with a range of income levels. Accordingly, the Town seeks to facilitate both the development of traditional single-family homes as well as to address the “Missing Middle” of housing units, which includes a variety of housing types between single-family homes and large apartment buildings. In addition, this diversity of housing types should include provisions for student housing. Creation of these diverse housing types is constrained by the Town’s limited ability to annex property outside of its borders and its desire to create housing units without contributing to sprawl. The intent of this statement is to enable:

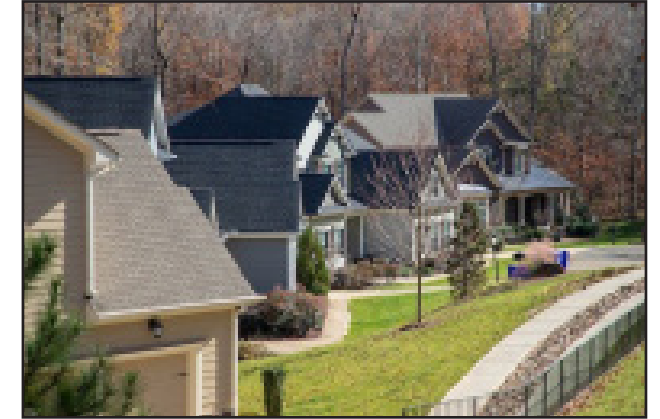


- A. The development of duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and accessory dwelling units with an approval process and requirements similar to that of single-family detached dwellings. These small scale multi-family uses could fit within the fabric of some existing single family neighborhoods, as long as they are carefully integrated into the existing neighborhoods and provide additional housing units for the Town;
- B. The development of townhouses, at the edge of established neighborhoods, to act as a transitional use and provide for additional housing options;
- C. The continued construction of single-family detached dwelling units;
- D. Small lot single-family subdivisions, where appropriate, that utilize the principles of traditional residential neighborhood design to create compact, livable, and accessible neighborhoods; and,
- E. Purposefully built off-campus student housing in appropriate locations within proximity to alternative transportation such as transit and pedestrian/bike facilities as well as access to shopping and convenience to campus.

**Placemaking is the process of creating quality places that people want to live, work, play, and learn in. They are interesting, visually attractive, and often encourage a wide variety of activities.**

**4. Promote distinctive, safe, and attractive neighborhoods.**

The Town should preserve and enhance established neighborhoods by directing dense growth to multimodal and key transportation corridors facilitating connections to those corridors in order to promote a multi-modal network thereby potentially reducing vehicular trips and increasing mobility options. Such connections should be done with care to minimize through traffic on residential streets.



The intent of this guiding statement is also to:

- A. Protect and preserve the Town’s historic neighborhoods as well as its Neighborhood Conservation Districts;
- B. Preserve and enhance the varied and distinct residential character of existing residential neighborhoods;
- C. Protect neighborhoods from potential adverse impacts associated with adjacent non-residential uses by proper mitigation measures that address scale, massing, traffic, noise, appearance, lighting, drainage, and stormwater; and,
- D. Safeguard existing neighborhoods as students move into established neighborhoods.

**5. Cultivate a vibrant and inclusive community.** The Town should encourage new opportunities, through the built environment, that promote a sense of place and community for those who live, work, and visit Chapel Hill. This encouragement includes the creation of “third places,” meaning those places close to home or work where unintentional social connections happen routinely. These unintentional connections may happen on the sidewalk, in pocket parks, and at plazas. To facilitate these opportunities for unintentional connections, the Town will consider:



- A. Intentionally designing the public spaces of the Town including the interface between private properties and the public environment, which most often is the street;
- B. Methods to weave public space, including plazas and pocket parks, into private projects through public-private partnerships, regulatory incentives, and other creative means;
- C. Requiring a mixture of land uses, residential; retail; office; civic, adjacent to each other or stacked vertically in certain strategic locations to invigorate certain streets;
- D. Enabling the creation of publicly accessible spaces that contain seating, access to food, Internet connectivity and landscape elements, particularly near transit locations; and,
- E. Proactively planning for the location of publicly accessible spaces in each Focus Area.



**6. Direct investment along key transportation corridors and promote construction of transit and multi-modal transportation options in concert with the Town's regional transportation partners.** The Town will encourage density and intensity in a mixture of uses along key transportation corridors and at established activity nodes or centers with particular emphasis at future transit stations and areas with multi-modal and alternative forms of transportation including bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The intent of this guiding statement is to concentrate the siting of higher-density housing, mid-rise office, and more intense mixed use development at targeted locations in order to achieve highly functional, walkable destinations that are not car dependent. This type of development supports a more sustainable, low-carbon lifestyle for residents.

**7. Support and facilitate economic development, including the development of flexible and varied types of retail and office spaces; job creation; innovation; and entrepreneurship, through redevelopment and infill development, in order to expand and diversify the Town's tax base to enable the Town's fiscal resiliency.** To support economic development policies, Chapel Hill will support and facilitate redevelopment and infill development, and where necessary, investigate the usage of public/private partnerships. The intent of this policy is to proactively address the fact that future economic development will need to occur, most often, on infill and/or redevelopment sites. Accordingly, this policy is intimately tied to Chapel Hill's future economic health and the Town's ability to accommodate employment centers.



Any redevelopment or infill projects should be designed in a manner to complement surrounding properties and to efficiently utilize and capitalize on existing public infrastructure, such as roads, water, sewer, and transit and when necessary, supplement such infrastructure.

**8. Provide appropriate transitions between land uses and buildings of different scales.** Support the provision of appropriate transitions between sites and/or uses having significantly different types or intensities of land uses as well as built forms.

The intent of this guiding statement is to provide for harmonious transitions between different types and intensities of land uses as well as built form in order to help mitigate any negative impacts that a development might have on an adjacent site or use. Providing for appropriate transitions is especially important between the campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and surrounding areas.

Appropriate transitions between developments and adjacent uses can be achieved by many different techniques, utilized either singly or in combination. Determining the most appropriate design approach for managing transitions between developments and/or uses will depend on the objectives for the transitional space, which will vary by location. The most appropriate transition between sites and/or uses may also depend on the topography of the affected sites, such as differences in elevations, which must be considered whenever transitions are necessary.

Techniques for achieving transitions include, but are not limited to the following:

- A. Form Transitions – Varying the form of a building to provide for a change in building bulk, height, scale as well as the orientation of exterior spaces away from adjacent residential neighborhoods. This change in form could include “stepping back or down” in bulk or height in order to prevent negative impacts on adjacent neighborhoods or streets.
- B. Use Transitions – Designating a transitional use between uses or developments of different intensities, such as:
  - i. Multi-family residential or townhouses, between an office or retail use and a single family neighborhood,
  - ii. Permitting homes on the edge of an established neighborhood to be used for small-scale non-residential uses, such as small offices
- C. Architectural Transitions – Utilizing the architectural elements of a new or renovated development to ensure compatibility with the adjacent neighborhood in terms of building materials and architectural design elements.
- D. Landscape Transitions – Preserving and/or installing vegetative landscape material of varying width, plant selections, and density to provide for the appropriate level of transition between uses.

**9. Preserve and maintain Chapel Hill's appearance and create the quality of design and development the Town desires.**

The Town should preserve and maintain Chapel Hill's unique appearance and create the quality of design and development the Town desires, with particular attention to the Town's gateways and the appearance of – and views from – the public realm, including streets; parks; multi-modal paths, and plazas, while also encouraging high quality development, understanding that different areas of Town will have different characters and defining characteristics. To this end, views from the public streets and public spaces should not be defined by parking facilities, and the public-facing front of buildings should be designed for people, not cars.



The intent of this guiding statement is to create and maintain the pleasing qualities of our community because activated, desirable, comfortable, and appealing public streets and spaces help to create vibrant civic areas where community members want to walk, shop, bike, and spend time.

This guiding statement encourages high-quality development that embraces exceptional site design, architecture, and construction. This statement is concerned with the appearance of two different aspects of the community:

- A. Public Areas (owned, designed, and maintained by the public sector). Accordingly, this guiding statement emphasizes the design and appearance of roadways and gateways; public landscaping and streetscape design elements along roadways; public parks and greenways; and public buildings and properties, such as parks and recreation facilities, Town Hall, schools, and libraries; and,



- B. Public Views (refers to the appearance and views of private development as seen from public areas). Accordingly, this guiding statement emphasizes high-quality appearance and design for private development, particularly at gateways into the Town— including buildings, landscaping, signage, and art features – that can be seen from public roadways, or from other public spaces such as greenways, multi-use paths, parks, etc.

Implementation of this guiding statement may require:

- A. The development of design guidelines or regulations as well as streetscape plans and improvements tailored to each Focus Area or to particular portions of a Focus Area in order to create a unique sense of place within each Focus Area as well as a visual continuity of streetscapes. These design guidelines and/or regulations should include guidance on building massing, scale, shape, and orientation; transparency; fenestration; and facade details as well as stress the importance of building and site context and the relationship of buildings to the street, sidewalk, and other public rights-of-way; and,
- B. The establishment of Pedestrian-Oriented Districts, which include site and design elements necessary to create the type and quality of development that the Town desires including specifications regarding the preferred location and scale of parking facilities.

**10. Cooperate and collaborate with all of the Town’s regional partners especially the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and UNC Health.** Pursue a harmonious relationship where there is a strong emphasis on the pursuit of mutually beneficial goals with respect for the sometimes differing objectives of these partners and the Town.

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As it states in *Chapel Hill 2020*, “The richness of the University—its history; its physical beauty; its intellectual, entrepreneurial and artistic capital; its world class health care enterprise; the dynamic idealism of students and faculty—is part of the [Town’s] vision.” The Town of Chapel Hill’s identity is based, in large part, on the presence of UNC. Chapel Hill is a college town. However, the relationship between the two institutions is much deeper than identity. The destinies of the Town and the University are inextricably linked, and strengthening the strategic alignment on issues of economic development; transportation; housing; student housing; recreational, open space, and cultural amenities; and other quality of life issues are essential to the Town and UNC’s sustainability and resiliency. To that end, the Town should continue to:

- “Aspire to use the intellectual and financial capital of the University and the UNC Health Care System to help the Town flourish,” as stated in *Chapel Hill 2020*;
- Work with UNC to develop economic strategies, including strategies related to research and development as well as entrepreneurship;
- Enhance the relationship between students and permanent residents;
- Coordinate transportation initiatives;
- Recognize the importance of UNC’s cultural and natural resources including Carolina North, Ackland Art Museum, and Morehead Planetarium and Science Center and work with the UNC to utilize these resources to the benefit of both the Town and the University;
- Work with UNC to help mitigate the impact of student rental housing in established single-family neighborhoods and to provide safe and sanitary off-campus housing for students; and,
- Proactively collaborate and work with UNC regarding policies concerning both on and off-campus housing for University students.

# 3 | Future Land Use Map

## Introduction

The Town's Future Land Use Map is a tool that serves as a guide to help ensure the future reflects the community's vision (as established in the *Chapel Hill 2020 Comprehensive Plan* and other town planning initiatives.)

The Future Land Use Map section is organized into two parts:

- **Land Use Categories** - The section begins by describing 12 types of land uses that exist in or are envisioned for Chapel Hill. As described in the introduction, the Land Use Categories are adapted from the *Chapel Hill 2020 Land Use Plan* and include a range of uses that include residential, commercial, mixed use, industrial, and open space.
- **Future Land Use Map** - The town-wide vision for future land use is shown as a map that builds on the *Chapel Hill 2020 Land Use Plan*. The map describes the vision using the Land Use Categories. It defers the detail on the six focus areas to the Focus Area exhibits that follow. Areas of the Town currently subject to development agreements and potential school sites also are shown.

## Land Use Categories

### Residential Categories

#### Rural Residential

Rural residential areas are located in the Town's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)\* and will continue to primarily contain single-family homes on large lots. Many of these areas are outside of the Town's Urban Services Boundary, which limits the extension of Town water and sewer service to these areas. Most of these areas rely on septic systems for wastewater treatment. The intent of this designation is to preserve and enhance the rural character of these areas by encouraging rural development designs, such as conservation/cluster residential subdivisions, which could result in clustered housing on large tracts to preserve open space and environmentally sensitive areas such as steep slopes; quality woodlands; wetlands; and stream corridors, provided gross densities are maintained.

\*Extraterritorial jurisdiction is portions Orange County where the Town of Chapel Hill applies its planning and zoning authority outside of the Town's corporate limits.

Gross Densities of:

- 1 unit/acre
- 1 unit/5 acres

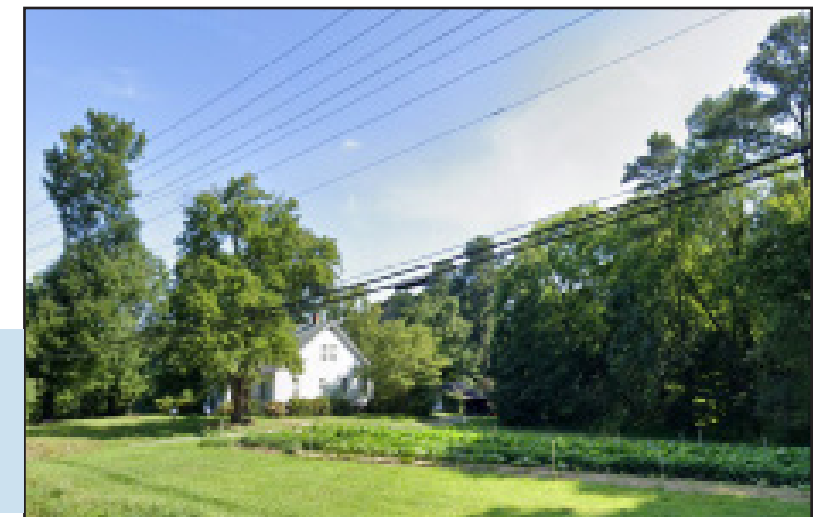


#### Very Low Residential

Very low residential areas are intended to remain predominantly rural or semi-rural in character and will continue to primarily contain single-family homes on large lots. Most of these areas are located within the Town limits, and all areas are inside the Urban Services Boundary, which enables water and sewer service where available. Conservation/clustered residential subdivisions would be permissible to preserve open space and environmentally sensitive areas provided the gross densities are maintained.

Gross Densities of:

- 1 unit/acre





### Low Residential

Low residential areas encompass most of the Town's single-family detached neighborhoods and are intended to provide for traditional detached single-family housing as well as accessory dwelling units and attached housing choices including duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes, where appropriate based on infrastructure; parcelization; and proximity to transit service, multi-modal paths, downtown, and other mixed use areas.

Infill development should continue the existing visual pattern, rhythm, and orientation of the surrounding dwelling units. These areas are within the Town's corporate limits and are served by both water and sewer service.



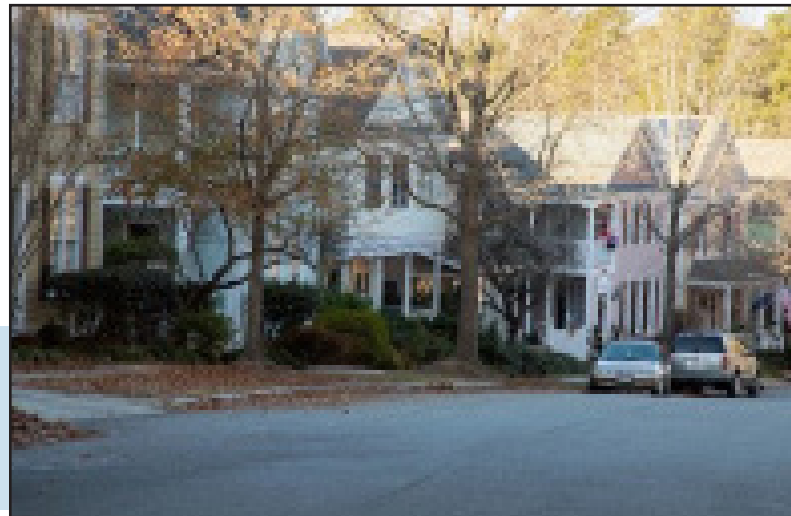
Gross Densities of:

- Generally 1-4 units/acre

### Medium Residential

Medium residential areas include a fairly wide spectrum of housing types including small lot single-family homes, attached dwelling units like triplexes and townhouses, and small scale multi-family housing developments.

The development pattern within this Category should be compact and well-connected, and infill development should continue the existing visual pattern, rhythm, and orientation of the surrounding dwelling units. Proximity to small scale, neighborhood serving businesses, within walking distance, would be ideal. These areas are within the Town's corporate limits and are served by both water and sewer service.



Gross Densities of:

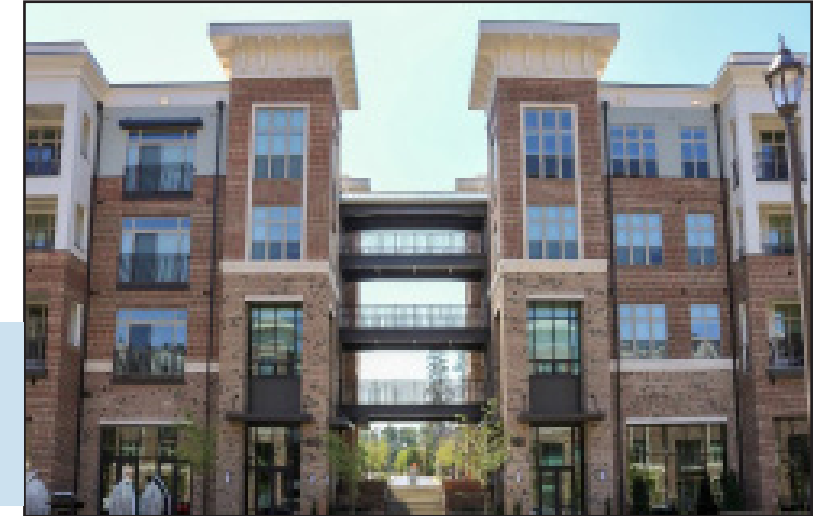
- Generally 4-8 units/acre

### High Residential

High residential areas provide for a range of multi-family options encompassing a great variety of building types. High residential areas are most appropriate in close proximity to transit services, the Town's major transportation/multi-modal corridors, existing commercial areas, village centers, and downtown. Ideally, these areas will be dense and walkable with publicly-accessible pedestrian connections provided through large developments and intimate scale open spaces, such as courtyards. When adjacent to public streets, these dense residential developments should activate the street and sidewalk with prominent entries and public or semi-public spaces.

Gross Densities of:

- Generally 8-15+ units/acre



### Non-Residential Land Use Categories

#### Commercial/Office

These small scale commercial/office areas provide for a wide range of businesses, retail/restaurant establishments, institutions, services, medical/health services, and offices. They are generally located near concentrations of existing or planned residences with access to major transportation/multi-modal corridors. Where possible, sidewalks and other pedestrian spaces should be activated as places to gather or otherwise spend time, such as sidewalk cafes and plazas. Off-street parking should be behind buildings.





### University

Those properties utilized by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill including, but not limited to, academic buildings, residence halls, administrative offices, conference facilities, recreational facilities, retail establishments, parking, medical/health services, hospitals, athletic facilities, research facilities, and any other land uses that support the University's mission.



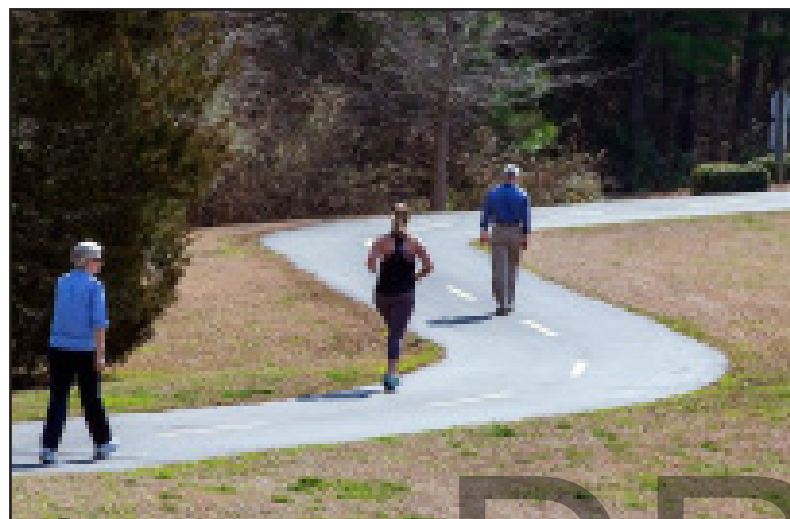
### Institutional

Institutional areas include land utilized primarily for governmental purposes, schools, places of worship and other civic/non-profit uses. Built forms vary by specific use and location, but should be developed/redeveloped utilizing sustainable practices.



### Parks/Open Space

Parks/Open space includes public recreational areas, resource conservation/protection areas and green ways as well as dedicated private open space. Uses include active and passive recreation, environmental restoration/mitigation/preservation, community gardens, and other park-like uses. Structures and activities that support or are associated with the intended uses are permissible.



### Mixed Use Land Use Categories

#### Mixed Use

These mixed use areas contain a mix (horizontal and vertical) of uses spanning some combination of the retail, office, service, residential, and hospitality land uses. Densities may vary, but most buildings will be multi-story. All or most residential space would be in multi-family buildings, many of which would have other uses at ground level and perhaps on other levels as well. Creation of walkable activity nodes through land-use diversity and proximity of destinations supports non-motorized modes of transportation as well as transit ridership. In most cases, more intense mixed uses development should be located within half-mile of high volume/high frequency transit stations/stops.



#### Village Center

These village center areas are characterized by a wide variety of businesses/offices housed in traditional storefronts, a range of housing types, and public facilities in a compact walkable area with off-street parking located at the rear of buildings or in parking garages. Businesses and offices serve the adjacent neighborhoods, and to a lesser extent, the wider community. Buildings have functional entrances and large windows facing the street. Where possible, sidewalks and other pedestrian spaces should be activated as places to gather or otherwise spend time, such as sidewalk cafes and plazas. Uses should be mixed within the Village Center, either vertically in the same building or throughout the village center. To contribute to the walkable nature of these areas, these areas should utilize pedestrian-scale amenities, such as lighting; street trees; and sidewalk furniture.





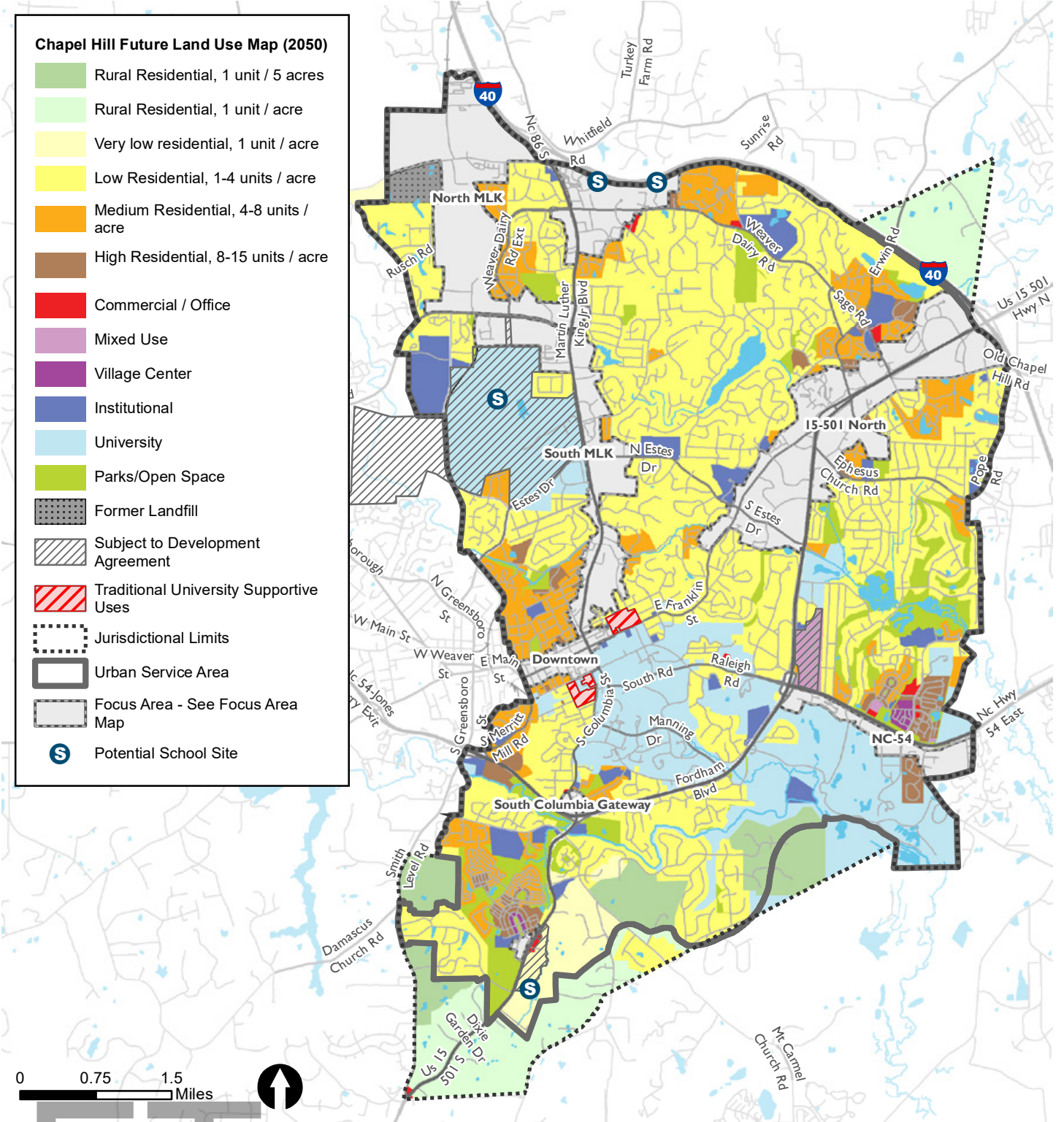
### Traditional University Supportive Uses (TUSU)

The TUSU areas are located surrounding the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and serve as transitional areas between the campus and surrounding predominantly residential areas. These areas contain a variety of uses, buildings, and services, such as traditional single family residences; student-oriented residential; fraternities and sororities; student organizations; and historical buildings. The TUSU recognizes the diverse and varied needs of these unique university-supportive uses, many of which cannot be wholly accommodated on campus, while maintaining the traditional scale and historical character of the residential neighborhoods. Characteristics of the TUSU include:



- Preservation and retention of existing historical single family detached dwellings preferably as single family homes, but such dwellings may be reused for nonresidential purposes provided the existing character of the dwelling and its front yard are largely retained
- Continued mixture of institutional and residential uses that exist to serve the needs of students, faculty, staff, and others connected with the University
- Small-scale institutional or semi-public uses (e.g. community centers, religious institutions) associated with the University
- Existing commercial/office uses provided such uses remain small in scale
- New commercial uses usually when associated with institutional uses (e.g. small coffee shop within an existing community center or university religious center)
- Encouragement for single-family or multifamily residential that is in keeping with the existing historic character and scale of the neighborhoods

### Future Land Use Map (2050)



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# 4 | FOCUS AREAS

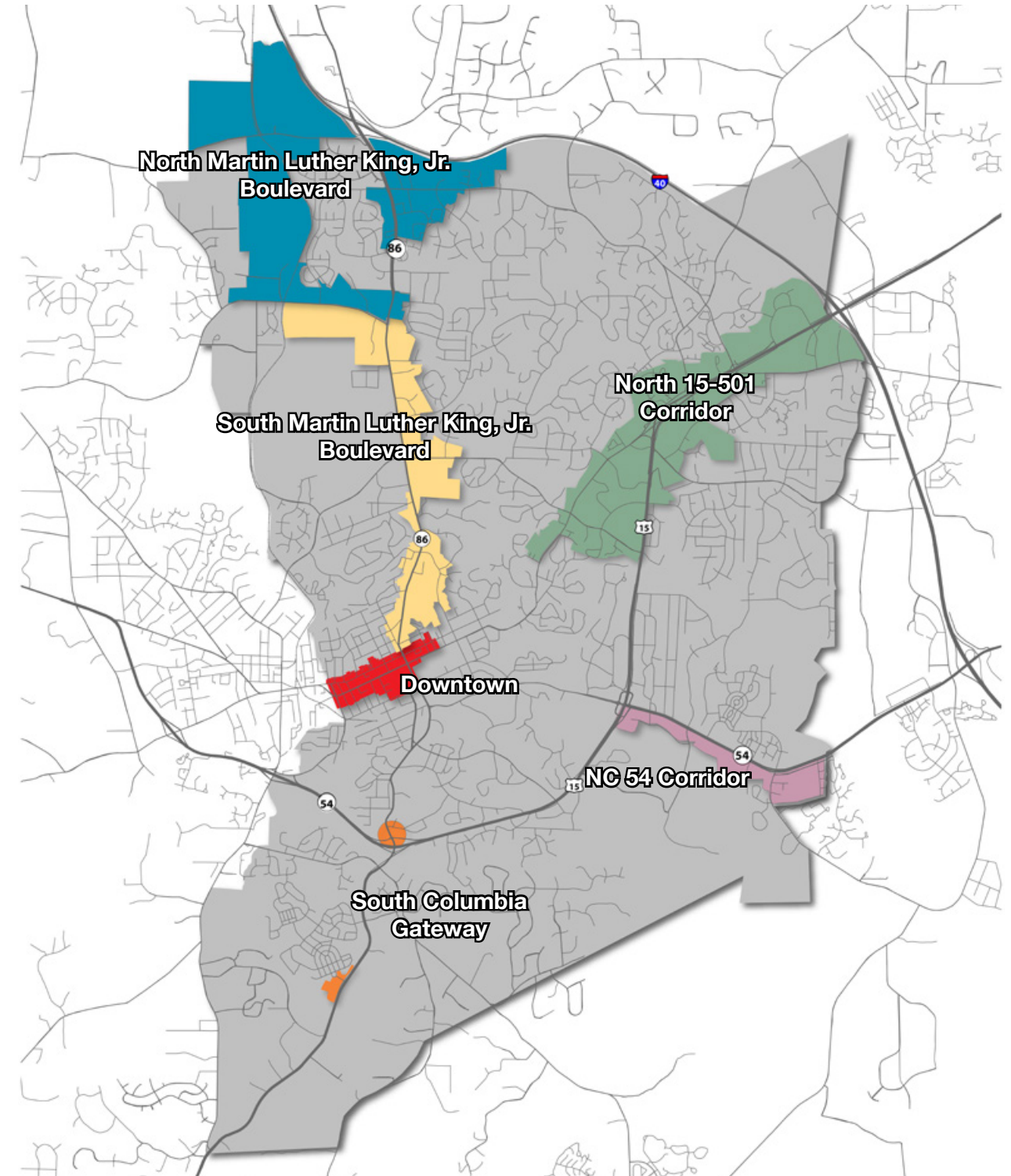
## Introduction

Charting Our Future is designed to chart the next course and think about the future of Chapel Hill with an emphasis on six key Focus Areas of town. The process gives the Town the opportunity to unite previous planning efforts, examine gateways into Chapel Hill, and create cohesion among existing areas of development within these six Focus Areas. The defined Focus Areas are shown on the map on the following page.

- North Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
- South Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
- North 15-501 Corridor
- Downtown
- NC 54 Corridor
- South Columbia Gateway

The Focus Area section is organized in the following sections

- **Character Types** - The Focus Areas are described using “character types” that describe the look and feel of future development within each of the Focus Areas. The Character Types only apply to the Focus Areas. The vision and intent of the remaining portions of the Town are described using the Land Use Categories presented in Section 3. Precedent images for the Character Types accompany the descriptive text.
- **Universal Principles** - The Focus Area exhibits are supported with a variety of principles to help guide decisions. While some principles are specific to individual Focus Areas, other principles can be universally applied to each of the six locations.
- **Focus Area Details** - Each Focus Area is introduced with a vision, overview of current conditions, and set of principles that speak to connectivity, land use, placemaking, density, and environmental considerations. A map is displayed that divides the organization of the Focus Area into sub-areas, which is geography for which the character types and height guidance is provided. The Focus Areas also include detail on street frontages and transitional areas.



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## Character Types

For the Focus Areas only, the FLUM makes use of “character types” that broadly describe the shape, character, intensity, and form of future development intended for each Focus Area. The character types do not apply in locations outside of these Focus Areas.

### Character Types & Precedent Images

#### *Multi-family, Shops & Offices*

This Character Type contains a mix (horizontal and vertical) of uses spanning some combination of the retail, office, service, residential, and hospitality land uses. Densities may vary, but most buildings will be multi-story. All or most residential space would be in multi-family buildings, many of which would have other uses at ground level and perhaps on other levels as well. Creation of walkable activity nodes through land-use diversity and proximity of destinations supports non-motorized modes of transportation as well as transit ridership. In most cases, more intense mixed-use development should be located with a half-mile of high volume/high frequency transit stations/stops.

#### Character Type Principles:

- May be single use or vertically integrated mixed-use buildings
- Avoids long, uninterrupted and monotonous building facades to add visual interest to the street
- Street level facades should include prominent entrances for each business, defined window bays, and windows/glazing that allows views into the ground level spaces
- Accentuates the building corner on corner sites
- Emphasizes pedestrian activity including wide sidewalks, street tree plantings, coordinated site furnishings, bike facilities, small-scale urban plazas, and the creation of great public spaces
- Integrates ground-floor neighborhood commercial with residential and office uses
- Parking integrated within the building or behind buildings and accessed from side or rear fronting streets/alleys or in public decks
- Shared parking agreements maximize use of parking by tenants and the public based upon demand
- Opportunities for public art
- After the third or fourth story, consider stepping back the building in order to frame the public space rather than overwhelm it
- Define the building base by slight changes in building materials, colors, or textures





### Multi-family Residential

This Character Type includes small and large scale apartment/condominium buildings. Smaller multi-family buildings are appropriate near predominantly residential frontages and where parcel sizes support smaller multi-family buildings. Apartment/condominium buildings, particularly larger ones, should be located near mixed-use and commercial areas to allow for walkable activity nodes since land-use diversity and proximity of destinations support non-motorized modes of transportation. In most instances, higher density residential uses should be strategically located within a half mile of high volume/high frequency transit stations/stops to support transit ridership and may include some commercial uses utilized by residents, neighborhood residents, and transit riders.

#### Character Type Principles:

- May be completely residential or include a limited amount of supportive non-residential uses on the ground floor at primary property corners and other appropriate locations.
- Avoids long, uninterrupted, and monotonous building facades to add visual interest to the street
- Setbacks from the street create small private garden spaces and separation from public side-walks for ground-floor residential units
- Adequate and convenient bike facilities near primary entrances and/or integrated within the buildings
- Lighting and landscaping design address security and public safety issues for residents
- Parking integrated within or behind buildings and accessed from side or rear streets/alleys
- Emphasizes the primary building entrance
- After the third or fourth story, consider stepping back the building in order to frame the public space rather than overwhelm it
- Elevate living space above sidewalks to create a separation between living space and public space
- Includes balconies, french windows, bay windows, etc. to articulate the front facade and provide visual interest
- Define the building base by slight changes in building materials, colors, or textures
- Include a wide pedestrian zone and ample street tree plantings along the ground floor street frontage





### Commercial/Office

This Character Type includes small and large scale commercial and office buildings that includes commercial, retail, service, hospitality, medica/health services, hospitals, and office uses. Small scale commercial/office buildings will provide commercial nodes along transportation/transit corridors and may, in some instances, function as a transition between higher density uses and single family neighborhoods while also providing neighborhood shops and services for residential neighborhoods within a half mile radius. Less intense laboratory facilities and maker spaces are also appropriate in this Character Type. Larger scale commercial and office buildings near future/existing transit and I-40 may be appropriate for larger employment focused development and may not have a strong relationship to or serve nearby residential neighborhoods.



#### Character Type Principles:

- Typically located at primary commercial intersections and along major transportation corridors providing retail space, offices, and other services
- Provides a logical transition in scale and character between residential uses and major thoroughfares
- Includes wide pedestrian zone, appropriate bike facilities, ample street tree plantings, and coordinated site furnishings
- Building entrances front primary streets to activate the pedestrian experience
- Parking integrated within or behind buildings and accessed from side/rear streets or alleys
- Avoids long, uninterrupted, and monotonous building facades to add visual interest to the street
- Street level facades should include prominent entrances, defined window bays, and windows/glazing that allows views into the ground level spaces
- After the third or fourth story, consider stepping back the building in order to frame the public space rather than overwhelm it
- Define the building base by slight changes in building materials, colors, or textures

### Parks and Green/Gathering Spaces

This Character Type accounts for natural features and gathering places within the Focus Areas, protects current open spaces while enhancing the connectivity of natural places, provides open space in proximity to residential uses, increases the tree canopy in Town, and provides places for community members to interact and connect. In some Focus Areas, there are areas designated as parks and green space that have existing development. The intent is for those areas to transition back to natural areas over time. Green space also contributes to a more natural treatment of stormwater, when appropriate, within Focus Areas. [Note: Green/gathering spaces, integrated within other Character Types, is appropriate, highly encouraged, and anticipated.]



#### Character Type Principles:

- Helps preserve and enhance existing community amenities and provides options for new amenities such as community gardens
- Includes connectivity where possible to existing or planned linear green infrastructure, including bike and pedestrian paths and greenways
- Planned as part of an overall system of transportation, stormwater management, environmental restoration, and/or preservation of sensitive areas
- Accessible to neighborhoods of all income levels with accessibility provisions for disabled populations
- Creates diminutive gathering places that are designed to provide places for unintentional connections. These spaces may be plazas or green spaces, but should provide respite and/or activities appropriate to the neighborhood and the surrounding context.



### Townhouses & Residences

This Character Type provides a medium-intensity residential opportunity that diversifies housing options within the Town by filling a gap between large-lot single-family homes and multi-unit residential buildings. This Character type allows for sensitive infill and is appropriate within proximity to mixed-use and commercial areas, transit, and parks and open space. The Character Type includes townhomes, triplexes, duplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts, and small lot single family.



#### Character Type Principles:

- Residential building options include townhomes, triplexes, duplexes, fourplexes, and small single-family detached lots
- Emphasizes connectivity to planned mixed-use, commercial areas, and parks and open space
- Building placement, scale, and design promote good transitions to single-family neighborhoods
- Avoids long, uninterrupted, and monotonous building facades to add visual interest to the street
- Private stoops, porches, and gardens activate the street
- Lighting and landscape design address security and public safety concerns. Locate living spaces in proximity to the street to provide “eyes on the street”
- Parking integrated within or behind buildings and accessed from rear streets or alleys
- For duplexes and triplexes, each unit should have a distinct and visible entrance.

### Institutional/Civic

This Character Type includes land utilized primarily for governmental, educational, and university-related purposes as well as places of worship. Consequently, built forms vary by specific use and location. [Note: Some institutional uses may be appropriate within other Character Types.]



#### Character Type Principles:

- Downtown and Urban Frontages:
  - Includes wide pedestrian zone, appropriate bike facilities, ample street tree plantings, and coordinated site furnishings
  - Public entrances, forecourts, and plazas create active, vibrant pedestrian zones and soften separation between the pedestrian zone and front of buildings
  - Emphasizes transparent façades
  - Avoids long, uninterrupted, and monotonous building facades to add visual interest to the street
  - Provides opportunities for public art
  - Facades should include prominent entrances
  - No parking between buildings and streets, multi-modal paths, or other public ways
- Suburban / Business Park Locations:
  - Provides good connectivity to transit, public streets, and greenways to help reduce commuter trips, and includes green infrastructure, where appropriate



### Light Industrial

This Character Type is predominantly in the North Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard Focus Area. Built forms will vary by specific use and location.



#### Character Type Principles:

- Provides good connectivity to transit, public streets, and greenways to help reduce commuter trips, and includes green infrastructure, where appropriate
- Provides outdoor amenities or public spaces for employees where appropriate
- Provides a logical transition in building scale and character between residential, commercial, and institutional uses
- Entrances should be visually prominent

### Universal Principles

The Focus Area Maps and Principles are presented as a map for each Focus Area with supporting narrative. The map and supporting narrative for each Focus Area describe a long-term view of each area's use, form, and function in general terms appropriate for a Future Land Use Map. The supporting narrative includes a brief description of the Focus Area vision, an overview of current conditions, and a set of Focus Area principles. These Focus Area Maps and Principles will help inform and guide future long-term development decisions by the Town.

The Focus Area Maps and Principles portray a vision for the Town in the year 2050. In many instances, changes to the Town's development ordinances, standards, and regulations will be required to implement this vision. Given the future-oriented nature of these Focus Area Maps and Principles, such changes may not happen in the near term. Instead, this Future Land Use Map will provide guidance only and help to clarify expectations for future development.

Some Focus Area Principles apply across all Focus Areas and are listed below:

- In general, building height and massing, at the front setback line, as well as the streetscape should be roughly the same on both sides of the street in order to properly frame the street. In some instances, the core heights may differ from one side of the street to the other due to site constraints and surrounding land uses.
- As large parcels redevelop, regulating plans, which include a street/multi-modal grid, should be provided in order to address overall connectivity as well as walkability/bikeability and activation.
- In order to ensure a human-scaled built environment, as building height increases at the front setback line, sizable street trees, breaks in street walls, and wider sidewalks should be utilized, as appropriate to the surrounding context.
- Utilize climate responsive design including green infrastructure, green stormwater infrastructure (including within Town rights of way), living landscapes, tree planting and other vegetative solutions to mitigate the urban heat island effect and create more shaded and walkable streets throughout the Town as well as to mitigate flooding and stormwater concerns.
- Sustainable site development using best management practices that minimize or reduce the impact of impervious cover should be encouraged, such as use of pervious pavements, solar shade structures, and water efficient landscape palettes.
- Green building concepts—such as sustainable siting, renewable energy, energy efficiency, water efficiency, and sustainable construction materials—is encouraged.
- As the Town strives to create wonderful, distinct places in each of the Focus Areas, the Town's streets will truly be places for people to experience community, not just thoroughfares. To that end, the Town seeks to reduce auto dependency and prioritize pedestrians as well as other forms of connectivity.

## North Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard

### A gateway corridor with mixed-use nodes.

The North Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard area is envisioned as a gateway to the Town from points north that includes mixed-use nodes that fully leverage future proposed bus rapid transit (BRT) service. While improvements will include wide sidewalks, buildings, and tree canopies that frame the corridor, east-to-west multimodal connectivity will also be emphasized. Implementing bus rapid transit along the corridor will significantly influence future mobility, land use, placemaking, and urban form.

In order to create a cohesive corridor from I-40 to Hillsborough Street, as the corridor redevelops in concert with the BRT, at larger bus rapid transit Stations, buildings (development) should be located closer to the street in order to create highly functional, walkable destinations for both transit riders and adjacent neighborhoods. Between these BRT stations, buildings may be pushed back with significant front yard landscaping.

### Overview of Current Conditions

Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard is a major north-south arterial, a gateway to Chapel Hill from the north, and soon to be the Town's premium transit corridor. The Focus Area generally follows Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard from I-40 to Homestead Road and includes portions of Eubanks Road, Weaver Dairy Road, and the north side of Homestead Road.

The area has seen strong development interest in recent years, in part due to its proximity to I-40 and availability of undeveloped land. Nearly 30% of the area is currently undeveloped, though planned mixed-use developments (including construction underway on Eubanks Road) and a planned bus rapid transit line will impact the character of this area in the future. Previous planning efforts include the Rogers Road Neighborhood Plan, the Greene Tract agreement, the Northern Area Task Force Report, and various townwide plans.

### Focus Area Principles

#### Connectivity & Mobility

- Connectivity between commercial destinations and residential areas east of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard should be a priority.
- Bicycle, pedestrian, and multimodal links from existing development and new development/redevelopment should be emphasized to fully leverage transit service.
- New developments near Rogers Road should open to and connect with the existing Rogers Road community.
- Parking strategies should encourage people to park once and walk from one destination to another within in mixed-use activity nodes. Likewise, property owners who have different peak hours of parking demand should share their parking spaces with one another.
- Surface parking between buildings and primary streets should be avoided.
- While conversion of the existing railroad is a possibility, until such time, it will remain a barrier to east/west connectivity and ways to lessen its impact should be considered.

#### Land Use

- New growth should be focused along transit corridors in mixed-use neighborhoods.
- Diverse and accessible housing options with a range of product types and affordability for people of all incomes and life stages should be promoted, particularly in proximity to existing and proposed transit

service.

- Displacement mitigation strategies will be necessary should existing manufactured home parks in the Focus Area be redeveloped.
- The Greene Tract provides protection and habitat for various wildlife populations, and as such, development on the edges of Sub-Areas B and C should provide a buffer between the Tract and developed land uses.
- Residential uses that are likely to attract students are appropriate in locations within proximity to transit and prioritize access to shopping and convenience to campus.

#### Placemaking, Street Character, and Urban Form

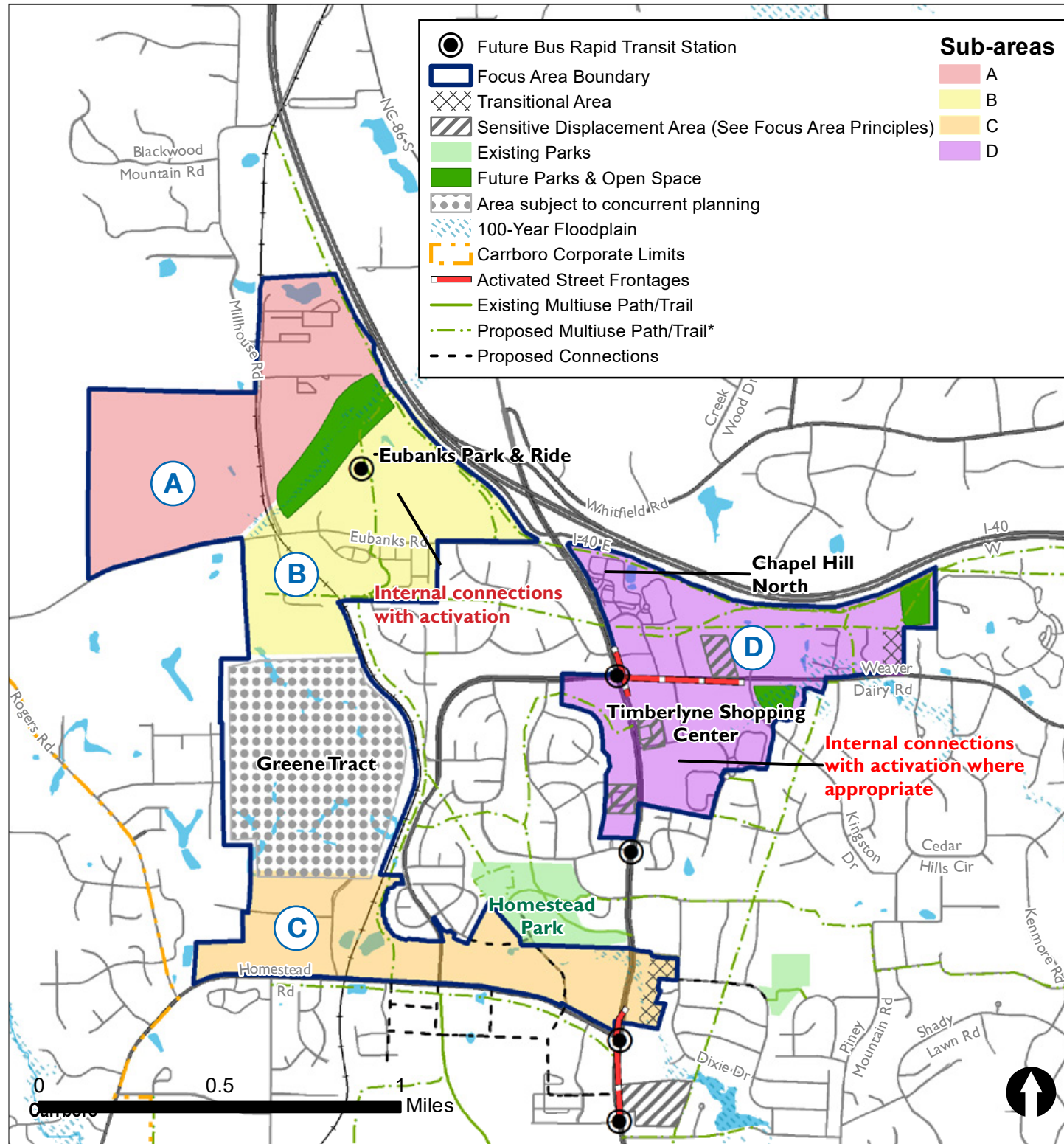
- A cohesive street design along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard—from I-40 to downtown—should be achieved through improvements in the right-of-way including street trees and design standards.
- Additional and connected public and green spaces should be provided as existing retail centers such as Chapel Hill North and Timberlyne Shopping Centers are redeveloped into multi-story developments.
- Buildings should be located closer to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard at proposed bus rapid transit stations with wide, shaded and continuous multimodal paths to enhance walkability and frame the gateway corridor.
- Active frontages are encouraged to create vibrancy and ensure pedestrian activity over time. These frontages should consider the placement of buildings on the site, the location of primary building entrances, streetscapes, and pedestrian-scaled amenities. In some cases, active frontages may mean that retail and services should be allowed on the first floor within the Multi-family Character Type.
- The Focus Area is characterized by its inviting streetscapes that blend the aesthetics of the built environment with mature tree canopies within the public right-of-way and as part of private development. Maintain this quality by preserving key vegetative areas and implementing new street tree plantings to support this character, shade sidewalks, and help frame the public realm.
- Because the Town is designated as a Tree City USA, significant tree stands at Town entrances, as appropriate to the location, should be maintained and/or enhanced. For example, when entering Town from the Rural Buffer, density should build from the edge of the Rural Buffer toward the more developed portions of Town. In all instances, the entrances to Town should demonstrate the Town's uniqueness

#### Density & Intensity

- Leverage proposed transit service by increasing density and intensity within new developments near planned transit stations.
- Higher density mixed-use centers should have appropriate building height, landscape, connectivity, and transitions to residential neighborhoods.
- Concentration of density and intensity should be encouraged in proximity to transit stops to leverage transit service and to preserve and protect other areas

#### Environmental

- Old Field Creek, which is located between Sub-Areas A and B, should be positioned as a protected natural amenity adjacent to shops, offices, and multifamily properties. The creek should be incorporated into site design, where appropriate, with riparian green infrastructure to provide for flood mitigation, habitat, and community space.
- Development in this Focus Area must be cognizant of the existing, significant watersheds.



\* See Mobility Plan for more information about proposed multi-modal improvements

### Character Types and Height in 2050: North MLK

● Primary (predominant land uses) ● Secondary (appropriate, but not predominant) ⊖ Discouraged

	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B	Sub-Area C	Sub-Area D
Multifamily, Shops & Offices	⊖	●	●	●
Multifamily Residential	⊖	●	●	●
Commercial/Office	⊖	●	⊖	●
Parks and Green/Gathering Spaces	●	●	●	●
Townhouses & Residences	⊖	●	●	●
Institutional/Civic	●	●	●	●
Light Industrial	●	●	⊖	⊖
Typical Height	4-6 stories	6 stories	4-6 stories	4-6 stories
Transitional Area Height	N/A	Up to 4 stories	2-4 stories	Up to 4 stories
Activated Street Frontage Height	N/A	N/A	6 stories	6 stories

Note: Each story is approximately 12 feet tall, but height may vary based on many factors. While suggested heights are noted above, determining the appropriate height for each site will require careful examination of the site and its surrounding context.

### Definitions

#### Activated Street Frontages

Activated street frontages are frontages where there is an active visual engagement between those in the street and those on the ground floors of buildings or in civic spaces, with no off-street parking between the street frontage and the building/civic space, and lively internal uses visible and accessible from the activated space. In some cases, active street frontages may mean that retail and services should be allowed on the first floor within residential character types.

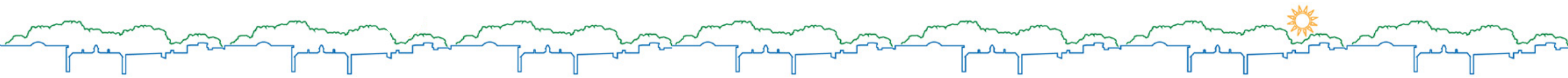
Active frontages may also be encouraged along future connections including multi-modal ones, which includes pedestrian/bicycle facilities as well as greenways. When creating active frontages, it must be recognized that appropriate activation will differ by place and circumstance.

#### Transitional Area

This Focus Area strives for harmonious transitions between different types and intensities of land uses as well as built form to help mitigate undesirable impacts that a development might have on an adjacent site or use. The Transitional Area is intended to identify areas where lower-intensity land uses or development patterns may be appropriate between higher-intensity development and single-family neighborhoods. Appropriate transitional techniques may include landscaping, changing land uses, and altering architectural and building forms. For additional direction, see the Guiding Statements.

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## South Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard

### A gateway corridor with transit-focused development and a mixture of housing types.

The South Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard Focus Area extends the gateway treatment south to the edge of Downtown. This portion of the corridor is envisioned to include a mixture of uses, including a diversity of housing types, that make the best use of future proposed transit service while protecting natural features such as Bolin Creek. The South Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard area also serves to reinforce the Town's urban core with an extension of downtown north along the corridor, including an active commercial node at Hillsborough Street. The mix of uses, with an emphasis of offices, will help infuse a year-round customer base for downtown Chapel Hill.

In order to create a cohesive corridor from I-40 to Hillsborough Street, as the corridor redevelops in concert with the BRT, at larger bus rapid transit Stations, buildings (development) should be located closer to the street in order to create highly functional, walkable destinations for both transit riders and adjacent neighborhoods. Between these BRT stations, buildings may be pushed back with significant front yard landscaping.

### Overview of Current Conditions

Like the North Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard Focus Area, the southern portion of the corridor serves as a major arterial and a gateway to Town. The Focus Area follows Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard from Homestead Road to East Rosemary Street and includes portions of Estes Drive and Hillsborough Street.

While proximity to downtown is a defining feature of this area, the corridor is also a barrier to east-west bicycle and pedestrian mobility, and the terrain that rises toward downtown makes it difficult for some non-motorized users. High-density housing mainly serving students is situated along the corridor, and established single-family neighborhoods surround these developments. Little undeveloped land remains in this area, meaning most change will come in the form of redevelopment. Previous planning efforts include the Central West Small Area Plan, Estes Drive Bicycle & Pedestrian Improvements, and various townwide plans.

### Focus Area Principles

#### Connectivity & Mobility

- Street design should calm traffic using a variety of means including landscaping and high visibility crosswalks, especially south of Bolin Creek as you approach the core downtown area.
- New roadway and multimodal connections should be designed to accommodate pedestrians, bicycles, and transit vehicles where appropriate, particularly in proximity to the corridor's future proposed bus rapid transit stops.
- Parking strategies, such as consolidating parking in strategic locations, should encourage people to park once and walk from one destination to another within mixed-use activity nodes. Likewise, property owners who have different peak hours of parking demand should share their parking spaces with one another.

#### Land Use

- This area should encourage mixed-income housing near transit stations and within mixed-use centers while encouraging locally-based businesses, through economic development initiatives, that provide services to the surrounding community.
- Planning controls should establish gradual height and density transitions between new development and existing residential and institutional uses.

- Commercial infill and redevelopment should be bicycle and pedestrian-friendly and connected to the larger multimodal network.
- Displacement mitigation strategies will be necessary should existing manufactured home parks in the Focus Area be redeveloped.
- Residential uses that are likely to attract students are appropriate in locations within proximity to transit and prioritize access to shopping and convenience to campus. These locations include near the intersections with Homestead Road and Estes Drive and south of Hillsborough Street.
- The Carolina North Forest is identified as a habitat patch. To protect this patch, buffering between any new development and the forest may be necessary.

#### Placemaking, Street Character, and Urban Form

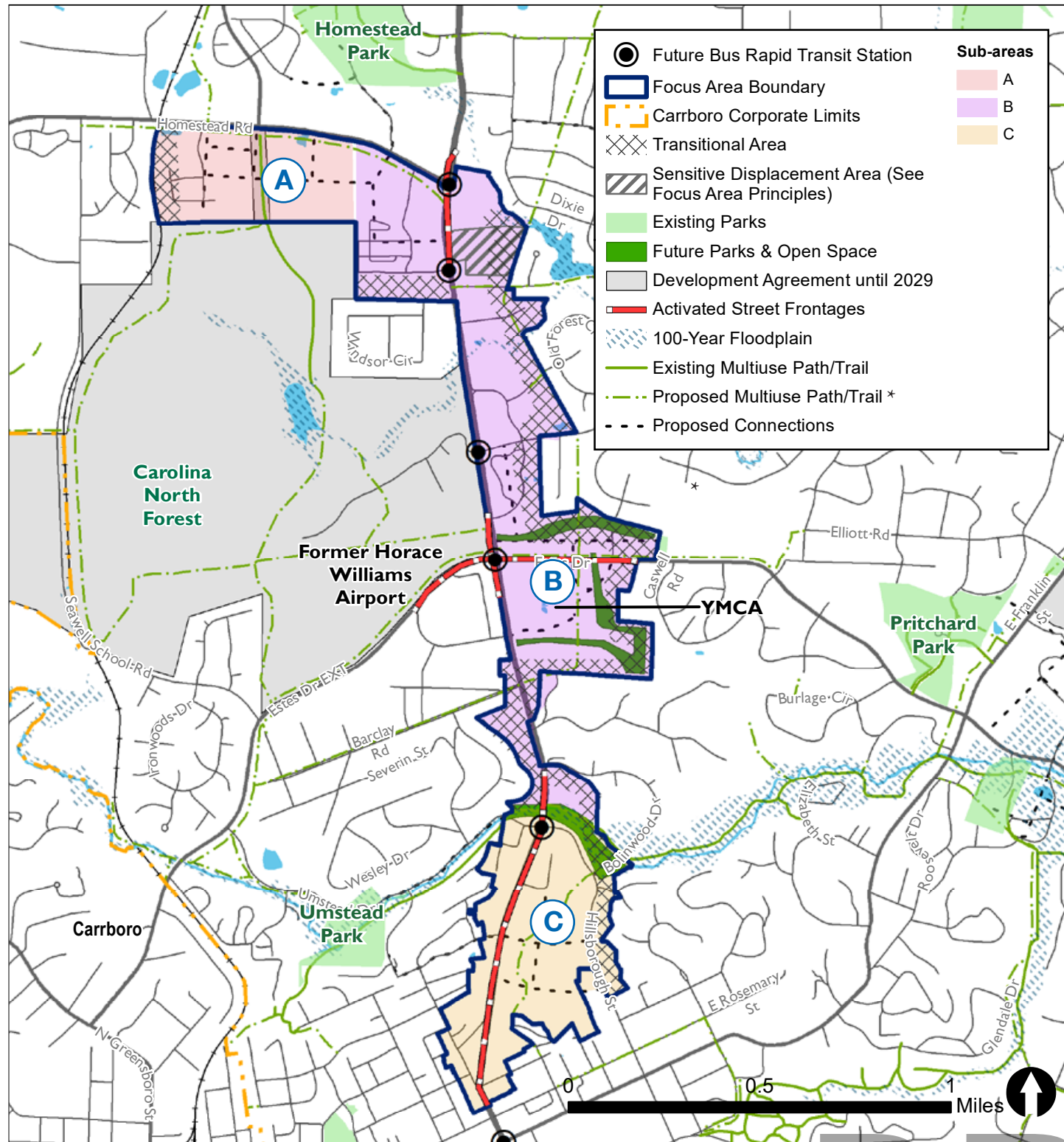
- A cohesive street design along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, from I-40 to downtown, should be achieved through landscaping, building placement, and design guidelines.
- Building, site, and landscape design should be integrated with bus rapid transit stops.
- The character of the surrounding neighborhoods should be preserved while providing multimodal connections to new destinations, amenities, and public spaces.
- Buildings should be located closer to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard with wide, shaded and continuous multimodal paths to enhance walkability and frame the gateway corridor.
- Building placement for the portion of the corridor south of Hillsborough Street should reinforce an extension of the urban character found in Downtown Chapel Hill.
- Active frontages are encouraged to create vibrancy and ensure pedestrian activity over time. These frontages should consider the placement of buildings on the site, the location of primary building entrances, streetscapes, and pedestrian-scaled amenities. In some cases, active frontages may mean that retail and services should be allowed on the first floor within the Multi-family character type.
- The Focus Area is characterized by its inviting streetscapes that blend the aesthetics of the built environment with mature tree canopies within the public right-of-way and as part of private development. Maintain this quality by preserving key vegetative areas and implementing new street tree plantings to support this character, shade sidewalks, and help frame the public realm.
- When core heights are utilized, large step backs from the front façade are desirable to create a more human-scaled public realm.

#### Density & Intensity

- Leverage future proposed transit service by increasing density and intensity within new developments near planned transit stations.
- New developments should include variable heights and densities in response to existing land uses and natural features such as site-specific terrain, tree height, and tree stands.
- Higher density and intensity should be encouraged along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard extending from downtown to Hillsborough Street.

#### Environmental

- Future decisions should minimize disruption to the natural features such as Bolin Creek while making connected open spaces available for people's use and enjoyment. The creek should be incorporated into site design where appropriate.
- Some developed properties along Bolin Creek should transition to open space.



\* See Mobility Plan for more information about proposed multi-modal improvements

### Character Types and Height in 2050: South MLK

● Primary (predominant land uses) ○ Secondary (appropriate, but not predominant) ⊖ Discouraged

	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B	Sub-Area C
Multifamily, Shops & Offices	○	●	●
Multifamily Residential	●	●	●
Commercial/Office	⊖	○	●
Parks and Green/Gathering Spaces	●	●	○
Townhouses & Residences	●	○	○
Institutional/Civic	●	○	○
Typical Height	4-6 stories	4-6 stories	4-6 stories
Transitional Area Height	2-4 stories	2-4 stories	2-4 stories (Adjacent to lower scale residential uses, step backs or other transitional methods are necessary to ensure harmonious transitions)
Activated Street Frontage Height	N/A	6 stories	8 stories, 4 stories at the front setback line

Note: Each story is approximately 12 feet tall, but height may vary based on many factors. While suggested heights are noted above, determining the appropriate height for each site will require careful examination of the site and its surrounding context.

### Definitions

#### Activated Street Frontages

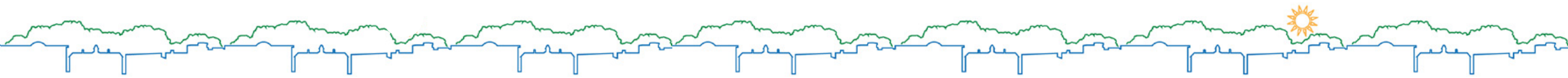
Activated street frontages are frontages where there is an active visual engagement between those in the street and those on the ground floors of buildings or in civic spaces, with no off-street parking between the street frontage and the building/civic space, and lively internal uses visible and accessible from the activated space. In some cases, active street frontages may mean that retail and services should be allowed on the first floor within residential character types.

Active frontages may also be encouraged along future connections including multi-modal ones, which includes pedestrian/bicycle facilities as well as greenways. When creating active frontages, it must be recognized that appropriate activation will differ by place and circumstance.

#### Transitional Area

This Focus Area strives for harmonious transitions between different types and intensities of land uses as well as built form to help mitigate undesirable impacts that a development might have on an adjacent site or use. The Transitional Area is intended to identify areas where lower-intensity land uses or development patterns may be appropriate between higher-intensity development and single-family neighborhoods. Appropriate transitional techniques may include landscaping, changing land uses, and altering architectural and building forms. For additional direction, see the Guiding Statements.





## North 15-501 Corridor

### A destination with a mix of higher intensity uses.

The North 15-501 area is envisioned as a dynamic mix of higher-intensity uses, including places to shop and reside. The vision for this area balances its role as a gateway to Town from points east and a destination that draws residents, employees, shoppers, and visitors from elsewhere. The Focus Area promotes active street life that blends the built environment with mature tree canopies and offers wide sidewalks and other multimodal features. Portions of the Focus Area that are currently developed may transition over time to open space.

### Overview of Current Conditions

North 15-501 is one of the town's major retail and commercial centers as well as an important gateway from I-40. The Focus Area follows North 15-501 and runs from I-40 to Estes Drive and includes portions of East Franklin Street and Erwin Road.

Higher density housing, commercial, and mixed-use developments dominate the corridor, which is surrounded by established single-family neighborhoods. Significant flood and stormwater concerns impact a major portion of this area. In 2014, Chapel Hill adopted a form-based code for the Blue Hill District to establish and maintain a consistent and cohesive design aesthetic. Previous planning efforts include Ephesus Church Road/Fordham Boulevard Small Area Planning and Traffic Analysis, Blue Hill District Design Guidelines, and various townwide plans. Planning strategies should reference the concurrent planning process for the UNC Healthcare Eastowne campus.

### Focus Area Principles

#### Connectivity & Mobility

- Parking strategies—such as consolidating parking in strategic locations—should encourage people to park once and walk from one destination to another within in mixed-use activity nodes. Likewise, property owners who have different peak hours of parking demand should share their parking spaces with one another.
- Given the higher density envisioned for this corridor, bicycle and pedestrian mobility within and to the Focus Area should be prioritized.
- The North 15-501 Focus Area should be studied for potential high-frequency transit options.

#### Land Use

- Existing single-use shopping areas should be encouraged to transition over time to mixed-use areas with clear connections to adjacent neighborhoods and developments.
- Special consideration should be given to the transition from higher density and intensity uses along the corridor and near larger proposed transit stops to single-family neighborhoods.
- Housing of various price points should be integrated into mixed-use nodes or located near employment centers.
- Townhomes should be encouraged to provide a transition between higher densities in the Focus Area and the single-family residential neighborhoods on the periphery.
- This Focus Area should include employment centers, whether single user or in a mixed office setting, within proximity to future transit stops.

#### Placemaking, Street Character, and Urban Form

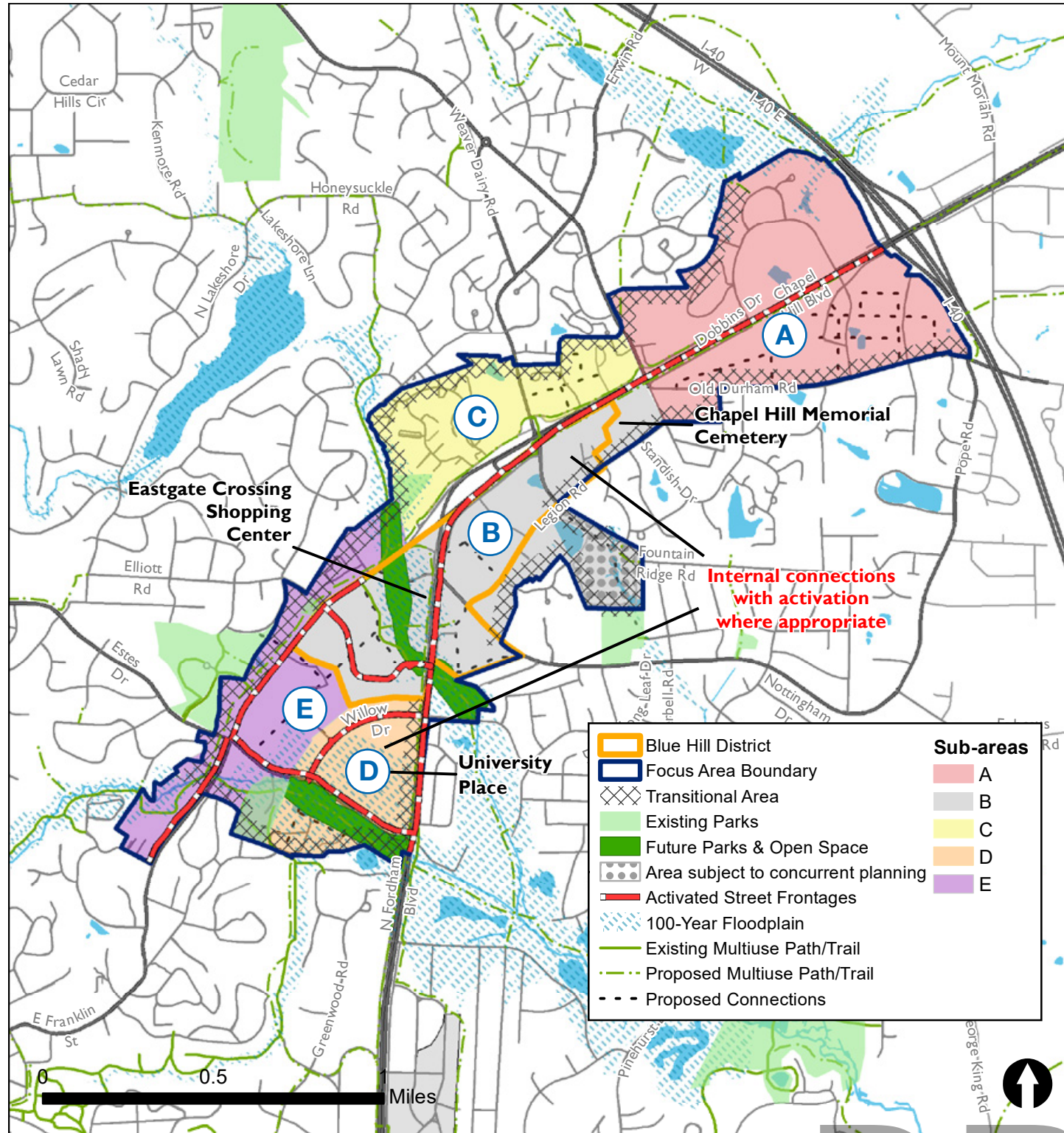
- As a gateway from the northeast, additional attention should be given to the form and function of the corridor. Because the Town is designated as a Tree City USA, significant tree stands at Town entrances, as appropriate to the location, should be maintained and/or enhanced. In all instances, the entrances to Town should demonstrate the Town's uniqueness.
- As single-story retail centers such as University Place and Eastgate are redeveloped into multistory, mixed-use developments, the provision of additional, connected public spaces and green spaces should be emphasized.
- The Focus Area is characterized by its inviting streetscapes that blend the aesthetics of the built environment with mature tree canopies within the public right-of-way and as part of private development. Maintain this quality by preserving key vegetative areas and implementing new street tree plantings to support this character, shade sidewalks, and help frame the public realm.
- Redevelopment should feature a more compact and connected urban framework by limiting block lengths, thus ensuring a higher number of intersections per square mile.
- Site buildings closer to the street to enhance the walkability within the Focus Area.
- Active frontages are encouraged to create vibrancy and ensure pedestrian activity over time. These frontages should consider the placement of buildings on the site, the location of primary building entrances, streetscapes, and pedestrian-scaled amenities. In some cases, active frontages may mean that retail and services should be allowed on the first floor within the Multi-family Character Type.

#### Density & Intensity

- The mix of uses should vary in scale and intensity based on the different context of the Focus Area.
- Density and intensity should be the highest near larger proposed future transit stops with transitions to adjacent areas. The density and intensity of these areas may be reconsidered if transit is not constructed.

#### Environmental

- The Town should leverage redevelopment as an opportunity to reduce overflows into the Focus Area's historically flood prone locations.
- Redevelopment and new development should enhance how people are connected to and experience the area's natural resources, including Little Creek and Booker Creek. The creeks should be incorporated into site design as well as daylighted and/or developed into green infrastructure and green spaces, where appropriate.
- The North 15-501 Focus Area should have a greater contribution to the Town's overall urban tree canopy.
- Some developed properties should partially transition to open space, where possible, which may require intensifying development away from restored open space on these properties.



### Character Types and Height in 2045: North 15-501

● Primary (predominant land uses) ○ Secondary (appropriate, but not predominant) ⊖ Discouraged

	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B	Sub-Area C	Sub-Area D	Sub-Area E
Multifamily, Shops & Offices	●	●	○	●	●
Multifamily Residential	●	○	○	○	○
Commercial/Office	●	●	○	●	●
Parks and Green/Gathering Spaces	●	●	○	●	●
Townhouses & Residences	○	○	●	○	○
Institutional/Civic	○	○	○	○	○
Typical Height	4-6 stories	4 stories	4 stories	4-6 stories	4-6 stories
Transitional Area Height	Up to 4 stories	Up to 4 stories	Up to 4 stories	Up to 4 stories	Up to 4 stories
Activated Street Frontage Height	6 stories	6 stories	6 stories	6 stories	6 stories

Note: Each story is approximately 12 feet tall, but height may vary based on many factors. While suggested heights are noted above, determining the appropriate height for each site will require careful examination of the site and its surrounding context.

### Definitions

#### Activated Street Frontages

Activated street frontages are frontages where there is an active visual engagement between those in the street and those on the ground floors of buildings or in civic spaces, with no off-street parking between the street frontage and the building/civic space, and lively internal uses visible and accessible from the activated space. In some cases, active street frontages may mean that retail and services should be allowed on the first floor within residential character types.

Active frontages may also be encouraged along future connections including multi-modal ones, which includes pedestrian/bicycle facilities as well as greenways. When creating active frontages, it must be recognized that appropriate activation will differ by place and circumstance.

#### Transitional Area

This Focus Area strives for harmonious transitions between different types and intensities of land uses as well as built form to help mitigate undesirable impacts that a development might have on an adjacent site or use. The Transitional Area is intended to identify areas where lower-intensity land uses or development patterns may be appropriate between higher-intensity development and single-family neighborhoods. Appropriate transitional techniques may include landscaping, changing land uses, and altering architectural and building forms. For additional direction, see the Guiding Statements.

\* See Mobility Plan for more information about proposed multi-modal improvements

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## Downtown

### Preserving and enhancing the heart of Chapel Hill.

The Downtown Focus Area maintains, enhances, and promotes downtown as the social and cultural center of Chapel Hill through infill development, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse (i.e., the reuse of an existing building for a purpose other than what it was originally intended). Special consideration is given to previous Town planning efforts while encouraging sufficient density to absorb growth and limit impacts to other areas of Chapel Hill.

Preserving and enhancing the heart of Chapel Hill while attracting year-round residents and additional office and commercial uses are core components of this Focus Area. While the Focus Area Maps and Principles express an overall vision for Downtown, refinement of that vision will take place during the next phase of the Charting Our Future Project.

### Overview of Current Conditions

The Downtown Focus Area stretches from the Town boundary with Carrboro in the west to Spring Lane in the east and includes East/West Rosemary and East/West Franklin Streets. This Focus Area covers the traditional core of the Town and is home to a variety of restaurants, offices, and other services typical of a central business district. The area includes part of the Franklin-Rosemary Historic District, Chapel Hill National Register District, and University of North Carolina campus. The student population is a major influence. Though no undeveloped land remains within this area, redevelopment will likely occur over time. Opportunities to enhance the urban design and functionality of Franklin and Rosemary Streets will occur as part of this redevelopment. Proactive planning will be necessary to absorb growth over time while preserving the unique character of downtown and protecting established neighborhoods to the north, east, and south. Numerous previous plans are on the books, including the West Rosemary Development Guide and various townwide plans.

### Focus Area Principles

#### Connectivity & Mobility

- Encourage safe and attractive multimodal transportation options that leverage the street grid and urban intensity.
- Connect and widen sidewalks to encourage walkability, where possible.
- Implement the multimodal network within the downtown area as determined in the Chapel Hill Mobility and Connectivity Plan, particularly with respect to connections to existing trails and on-street bicycle facilities.
- Encourage appropriate redevelopment of surface parking and parking decks to provide more structured parking solutions for private and public use and further infill development goals that support better streetscape character, scale, and connectivity.
- Parking strategies should encourage people to park once and walk from one destination to another within in mixed-use activity nodes. Likewise, property owners who have different peak hours of parking demand should share their parking spaces with one another.
- Surface parking between buildings and primary streets should be avoided.
- Mid-block pass-throughs for vehicles and pedestrians are encouraged to promote connectivity between Franklin and Rosemary Streets.

#### Land Use

- Redevelop parking facilities to knit together the urban fabric and enhance the streetscape character and

public realm.

- Allow increased heights within the Focus Area in locations where such height may be necessary to support or encourage stated redevelopment initiatives.
- Encourage higher density compatible housing through infill, redevelopment, and adaptive reuse (i.e., the reuse of an existing building for a purpose other than what it was originally built for).
- To provide a substantial residential population to support downtown businesses throughout the year, housing for year-round residents is desirable in Downtown.

#### Placemaking, Street Character, and Urban Form

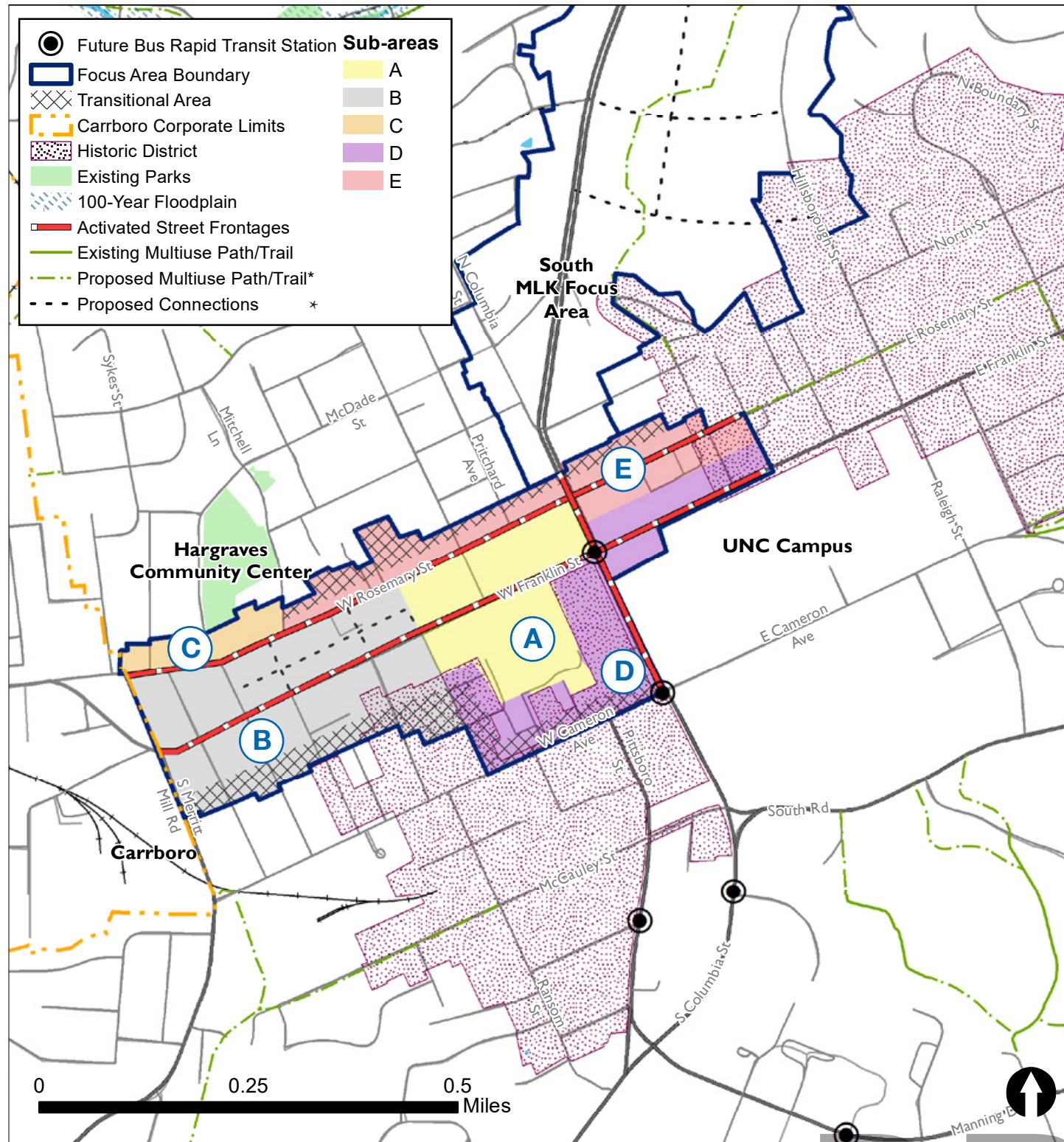
- Design alleys to serve as places as well as functional welcoming pathways and wayfinding.
- Enhance the visual character of the Franklin and Rosemary Streets with additional plantings and consistent street design elements.
- Increase tree canopy coverage within and outside the public rights-of-way as well as encourage the use of green roofs and walls.
- Establish design guidelines and controls so that new and renovated buildings are compatible in form and proportion with desired character.
- When new developments are proposed along West Rosemary Street, ensure that the proposals are in keeping with the spirit of the West Rosemary Development Guide.
- Active frontages are encouraged to create vibrancy and ensure pedestrian activity over time. These frontages should consider the placement of buildings on the site, the location of primary building entrances, streetscapes, and pedestrian-scaled amenities. In some cases, active frontages may mean that retail and services should be allowed on the first floor within the Multi-family Character Type.
- Improvements to street facades that promote good design and preserve the Town's unique architectural character should be encouraged.
- When core heights are utilized, large step backs from the front façade are desirable to create a more human-scaled public realm.
- The street level of a building should be designed to engage, charm, and attract pedestrians. Facades adjacent to the sidewalk should appear inviting, safe, and welcoming.
- Design architectural features, fenestration patterns, and material choices and arrangements to indicate the activities contained within. Building facades should be composed of elements scaled to promote and support pedestrian comfort, safety, and orientation. The building facade should create a "human scale" not only at the street/sidewalk level, but also as viewed from farther away.
- Use materials at street/sidewalk level that create a sense of permanence and bring life and warmth to Downtown.
- Provide unique elements on building facades, within/adjacent to public open spaces, and/or on the sidewalk to create a distinctive, attractive, and memorable sense of place associated with the building.

#### Density & Intensity

- Redevelop at a scale and intensity that strengthens Downtown's capacity to absorb growth and limit impacts to other areas of Town.
- Appropriate transitions should be incorporated between downtown and the Northside neighborhood. As noted in the West Rosemary Development Guide, when new structures are built along Rosemary Street, incorporate setbacks and stepbacks that respect the adjacent residences.

#### Environmental

- Create urban pocket parks adjacent to the sidewalk zones, specifically in areas prime for public events and festivals.



### Character Types and Height in 2050: Downtown

● Primary (predominant land uses) ○ Secondary (appropriate, but not predominant) ⊖ Discouraged

	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B	Sub-Area C	Sub-Area D	Sub-Area E
Multifamily, Shops & Offices	●	●	●	○	●
Multifamily Residential	○	○	●	○	●
Commercial/Office	●	●	○	●	●
Parks and Green/Gathering Spaces	●	●	●	●	●
Townhouses & Residences	⊖	⊖	⊖	○	⊖
Institutional/Civic	○	○	○	○	○
<b>Typical Height:</b> (Adjacent to lower scale residential uses, step backs or other transitional methods are necessary to ensure harmonious transitions.)	Setback height of to 4 stories, with a core height of up to 8 stories allowed	Setback height of up to 3 stories with a core height of up to 8 stories allowed. No more than approximately 4 stories allowed in the transitional area	No more than 4 stories	Core height of up to 6 stories, with a setback height of 3 stories No more than 4 stories allowed in the transitional area	Up to 4 stories at the front setback. Core height of 8 stories allowed on the south side of E Rosemary and 6 stories on the north side of E Rosemary and along West Rosemary. No more than approximately 4 stories allowed in the transitional area.

Note: Each story is approximately 12 feet tall, but height may vary based on many factors. While suggested heights are noted above, determining the appropriate height for each site will require careful examination of the site and its surrounding context.

### Definitions

#### Activated Street Frontages

Activated street frontages are frontages where there is an active visual engagement between those in the street and those on the ground floors of buildings or in civic spaces, with no off-street parking between the street frontage and the building/civic space, and lively internal uses visible and accessible from the activated space. In some cases, active street frontages may mean that retail and services should be allowed on the first floor within residential character types.

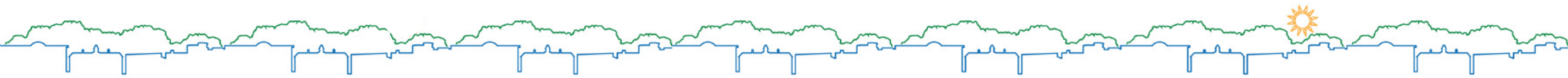
Active frontages may also be encouraged along future connections including multi-modal ones, which includes pedestrian/bicycle facilities as well as greenways. When creating active frontages, it must be recognized that appropriate activation will differ by place and circumstance.

#### Transitional Area

This Focus Area strives for harmonious transitions between different types and intensities of land uses as well as built form to help mitigate undesirable impacts that a development might have on an adjacent site or use. The Transitional Area is intended to identify areas where lower-intensity land uses or development patterns may be appropriate between higher-intensity development and single-family neighborhoods. Appropriate transitional techniques may include landscaping, changing land uses, and altering architectural and building forms. For additional direction, see the Guiding Statements.

\* See Mobility Plan for more information about proposed multi-modal improvements

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## NC 54 Corridor

### Employment centers with a green gateway to Chapel Hill.

The NC 54 Focus Area blends established and anticipated employment centers and considers the likely benefits of future transit service by encouraging compact, mixed-use development highlighted by diverse and affordable housing options. While linear greenspace will continue to be a defining feature, the tree buffer that exists from Barbee Chapel Road to Findley Golf Course Road may transition over time to a more urban streetscape that includes wide sidewalks with an abundance of street trees

### Overview of Current Conditions

The NC 54 corridor is a major gateway to the Town from the east and includes several office and commercial centers. The Focus Area includes the south side of NC 54 from Littlejohn Road to Fordham Boulevard.

Glen Lennox and Meadowmont draw patrons from throughout the community and beyond with dining, entertainment, retail, and services. The corridor has the potential to expand as an employment destination, offering many opportunities for mixed-use developments to take advantage of captive demand from weekday employees. The NC 54 corridor is positioned to become an even more important link in the Town's transit system, which is reflected in the land use and development vision expressed in the Focus Area. Most opportunities to reshape the corridor toward a transit-oriented pattern are likely to come from redevelopment and intensification of the existing uses, rather than the new development of currently vacant land.

### Focus Area Principles

#### Connectivity & Mobility

- The NC 54 corridor should become more bicycle and pedestrian friendly by closing gaps in the multimodal network and making it easier to traverse NC 54.
- The future design should yield an attractive, tree-lined, boulevard with a median, where the pedestrian and cyclist realms are protected by the natural landscape and physical barriers.
- New roadway and multimodal connections, including bicycle and pedestrian facilities, should be created to reduce local trips on NC 54 and enhance circulation within new development.

#### Land Use

- Diverse and affordable housing options should be located in areas that connect to existing and future transit service.
- Compact, mixed-use development should occur near transit and supported by a multimodal transportation system.

#### Placemaking, Street Character, and Urban Form

- Visual assets such as landscaped medians, tree-lined streets, and building facades should be integrated into a coordinated corridor design.
- Near Fordham Boulevard, the physical character of NC 54 and adjacent development should coordinate with the redevelopment vision of Glen Lennox as established in the Glen Lennox Area Neighborhood Conservation District Plan.
- Mixed-use centers should include public spaces and promote a more holistic corridor design.
- Because the Town is designated as a Tree City USA, significant tree stands at Town entrances, as

appropriate to the location, should be maintained and/or enhanced. For example, when entering Town from the Rural Buffer, density should build from the edge of the Rural Buffer toward the more developed portions of Town. In all instances, the entrances to Town should demonstrate the Town's uniqueness

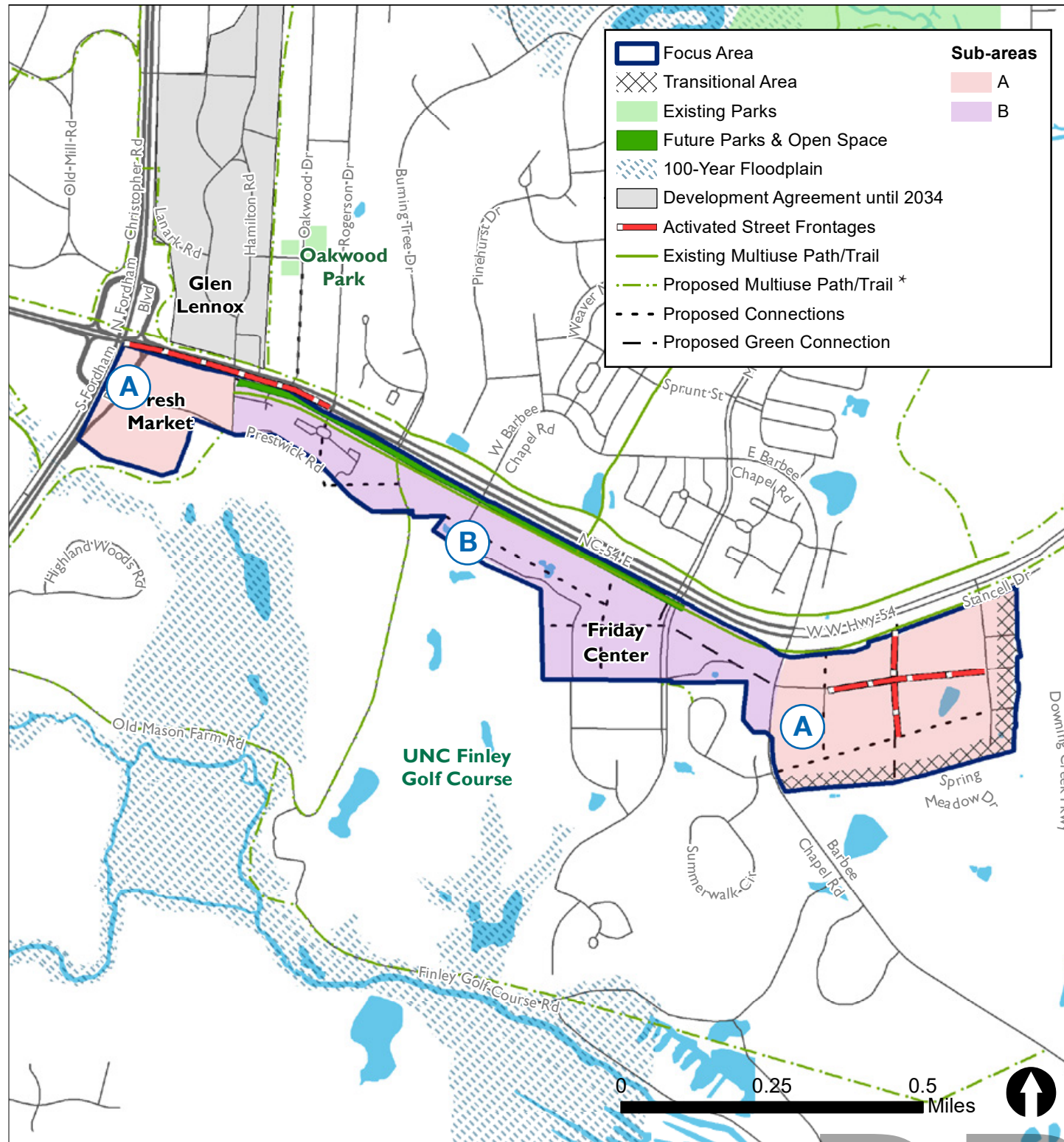
- Active frontages are encouraged to create vibrancy and ensure pedestrian activity over time. These frontages should consider the placement of buildings on the site, the location of primary building entrances, streetscapes, and pedestrian-scaled amenities. In some cases, active frontages may mean that retail and services should be allowed on the first floor within the Multi-family Character Type.
- The Focus Area is characterized by its inviting streetscapes that blend the aesthetics of the built environment with mature tree canopies within the public right-of-way and as part of private development. Maintain this quality by preserving key vegetative areas and implementing new street tree plantings to support this character, shade sidewalks, and help frame the public realm.

#### Density & Intensity

- Develop at a height and scale appropriate to future transit, existing development, and surrounding areas.
- Density and intensity should be the highest near larger proposed future transit stops with transitions to adjacent areas. The density and intensity of this areas should be reconsidered if transit is not constructed.

#### Environmental

- Preserve and expand the linear greenspace so NC 54 offers a greater contribution to the Town's urban tree canopy goals. This treed greenspace assists with filtering mobile sources of air pollution and protects adjacent land uses.



### Character Types and Height in 2050: NC 54

● Primary (predominant land uses) ○ Secondary (appropriate, but not predominant) ⊖ Discouraged

	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B
Multifamily, Shops & Offices	●	●
Multifamily Residential	●	○
Commercial/Office	●	●
Parks and Green/Gathering Spaces	○	●
Townhouses & Residences	○	○
Institutional/Civic	○	○
Typical Height	6 stories	6 stories
Transitional Area Height	Up to 4 stories	N/A
Activated Street Frontage Height	6 stories	N/A

Note: Each story is approximately 12 feet tall, but height may vary based on many factors. While suggested heights are noted above, determining the appropriate height for each site will require careful examination of the site and its surrounding context.

### Definitions

#### Activated Street Frontages

Activated street frontages are frontages where there is an active visual engagement between those in the street and those on the ground floors of buildings or in civic spaces, with no off-street parking between the street frontage and the building/civic space, and lively internal uses visible and accessible from the activated space. In some cases, active street frontages may mean that retail and services should be allowed on the first floor within residential character types.

Active frontages may also be encouraged along future connections including multi-modal ones, which includes pedestrian/bicycle facilities as well as greenways. When creating active frontages, it must be recognized that appropriate activation will differ by place and circumstance.

#### Transitional Area

This Focus Area strives for harmonious transitions between different types and intensities of land uses as well as built form to help mitigate undesirable impacts that a development might have on an adjacent site or use. The Transitional Area is intended to identify areas where lower-intensity land uses or development patterns may be appropriate between higher-intensity development and single-family neighborhoods. Appropriate transitional techniques may include landscaping, changing land uses, and altering architectural and building forms. For additional direction, see the Guiding Statements.

\* See Mobility Plan for more information about proposed multi-modal improvements

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## South Columbia Gateway

### Gateway nodes providing a mixture of uses and housing types.

As two gateway nodes on the south side of Chapel Hill, this Focus Area includes a mixture of uses, housing types, and open spaces that respect the differences of the South 15-501 Gateway and the Southern Village Park and Ride. These areas are envisioned to improve connectivity within and to the Focus Areas as well as to future proposed transit service.

### Overview of Current Conditions

This Focus Area includes two redevelopment areas in the southern portion of the Town. The first area includes a gateway node on South Columbia Street just north of NC 54. This area was selected for additional study due to the broad interest in taking a proactive approach to planning the town's major gateways. The second portion of the Focus Area includes parcels centered on Town-owned land near Southern Village as well as the entrance to Southern Village. One Town-owned parcel is currently used as a park and ride lot and is slated to become the terminal station of the Chapel Hill Bus Rapid Transit system. The second parcel is open space. Future Proposed premium transit has the potential to change the development context in the surrounding area, necessitating a proactive planning effort to determine the best use of this small Focus Area. This area also has been identified as the possible future home of Kidzu Children's Museum, which will occupy a small part of the Town-owned land and will serve as an economic driver for the node.

### Focus Area Principles

#### Connectivity & Mobility

- Bicycle and pedestrian connections should link complimentary uses and users to the multimodal network, including existing bike lanes on South Columbia Street and the Morgan Creek Trails and Merritt's Pasture.
- The location and visibility of these nodes, including access to existing and future transit service, and proximity to major roadways should be enhanced with improved access to adjacent neighborhoods, employment, or amenities.
- The development should provide pedestrian and vehicular connections within the nodes and to adjacent areas.
- Connectivity and mobility improvements should make it easier to traverse South Columbia Street.

#### Land Use

- Changes to the area should be complementary to existing residential uses. Areas outside the Focus Area with a low density residential land use designation will remain, including those on the west side of South Columbia Street.
- New housing should be incorporated into the gateway node due to its proximity to future proposed transit service.

#### Placemaking, Street Character, and Urban Form

- Reinforce the southern gateway role of these areas with unique and coordinated design elements such as landscaping, signage and branding, and streetscape development.
- The form, use, and design of the nodes should include transitions to align with the character and fabric of the existing community.
- The form and pattern for future development should reflect the 2015 scenario planning process for

the park-and-ride location, which includes shops and offices that front internal and external streets, structured parking wrapped with buildings, and on-street parking where appropriate.

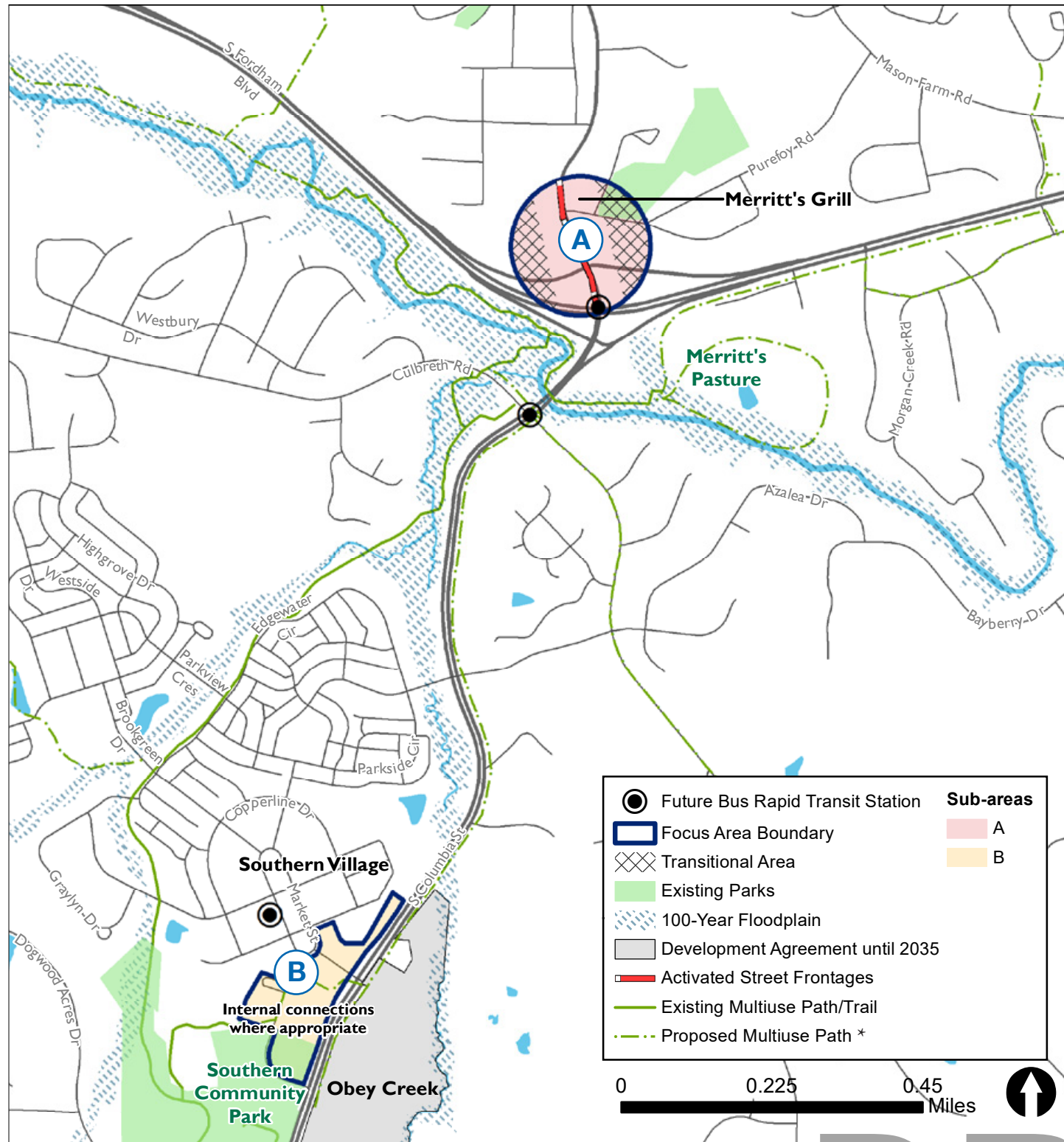
- Because the Town is designated as a Tree City USA, significant tree stands at Town entrances, as appropriate to the location, should be maintained and/or enhanced. For example, when entering Town from the Rural Buffer, density should build from the edge of the Rural Buffer toward the more developed portions of Town. In all instances, the entrances to Town should demonstrate the Town's uniqueness
- Active frontages are encouraged to create vibrancy and ensure pedestrian activity over time. These frontages should consider the placement of buildings on the site, the location of primary building entrances, streetscapes, and pedestrian-scaled amenities. In some cases, active frontages may mean that retail and services should be allowed on the first floor within the Apartment Multi-family character type. Active frontages in this Focus Area should include South Columbia Street within the South 15-501 Gateway node and streets internal to the Southern Village Park and Ride site. (See Activated Street Frontage Map.)

#### Density & Intensity

- Promote development at a scale that complements the surrounding area.
- As the terminal station for the bus rapid transit system, transit-oriented development should be encouraged with apartments and a mix of uses.

#### Environmental

- Stormwater management strategies shall be coordinated and applied within the two nodes.



\* See Mobility Plan for more information about proposed multi-modal improvements

### Character Types and Height in 2050: South Columbia Gateway

● Primary (predominant land uses) ● Secondary (appropriate, but not predominant) ⊖ Discouraged

	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B
Multifamily, Shops & Offices	●	●
Multifamily Residential	●	●
Commercial/Office	●	●
Parks and Green/Gathering Spaces	●	●
Townhouses & Residences	●	●
Institutional/Civic	●	●
Typical Height	4-6 stories	6 stories fronting South Columbia Street; 4 stories elsewhere.
Transitional Area Height	Up to 3 stories	N/A
Activated Street Frontage Height	6 stories	N/A

Note: Each story is approximately 12 feet tall, but height may vary based on many factors. While suggested heights are noted above, determining the appropriate height for each site will require careful examination of the site and its surrounding context.

### Definitions

#### Activated Street Frontages

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#### Transitional Area

This Focus Area strives for harmonious transitions between different types and intensities of land uses as well as built form to help mitigate undesirable impacts that a development might have on an adjacent site or use. The Transitional Area is intended to identify areas where lower-intensity land uses or development patterns may be appropriate between higher-intensity development and single-family neighborhoods. Appropriate transitional techniques may include landscaping, changing land uses, and altering architectural and building forms. For additional direction, see the Guiding Statements.

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# 5 | MAP BOOK

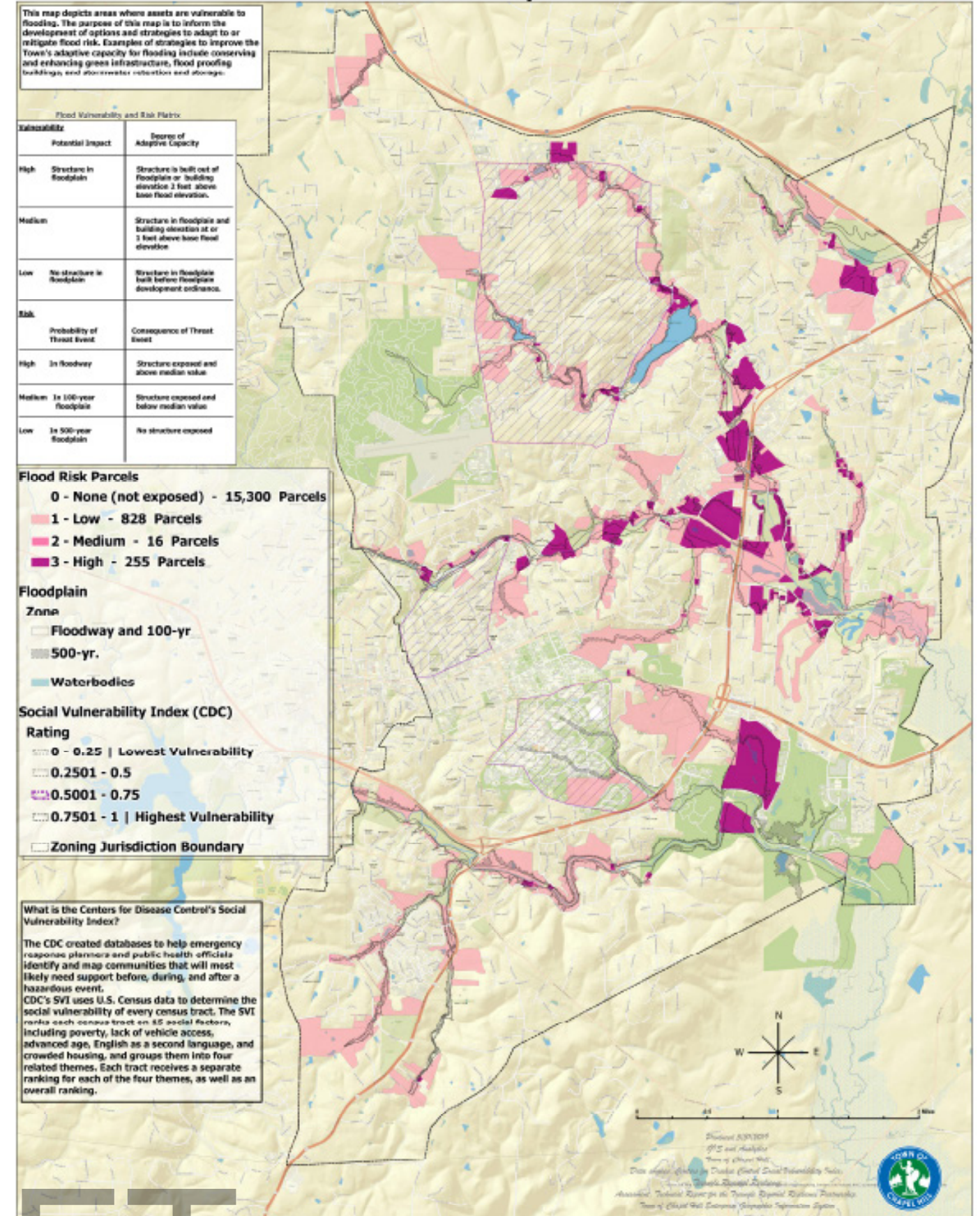
The Future Land Use Map and detailed information for each Focus Area is supplemented with a series of maps. These maps reflect some of the Town's concerns that may influence land use decisions and regulations in the Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO). These maps include efforts associated with other long range planning initiatives and maps created as part of the Charting Our Future process. The intent of the Map Book is to provide additional insight and guidance as land use decisions are considered and as the LUMO is rewritten. The Map Book includes:

- Flood Resiliency Assessment, which is supported by the following maps:
  - Residential and Non-Residential Flood Resiliency Assessments
  - Buildings Relative to Base Flood Elevation
- Extreme Heat Resiliency Assessment, which is supported by the following maps:
  - Adaptive Capacity: Tree Canopy Density
  - Impervious Surfaces
- Existing Habitat and Potential Connections
- Long Term Network Facilities Map (Chapel Hill Mobility & Connectivity Plan, adopted 2017)

During the rewrite of the Town's Land Use Management Ordinance, the Resiliency Assessment Maps will be the basis for developing standards and regulations tailored to making the Town more resilient, to the extent possible using zoning regulations, in the areas of extreme heat and flooding. As a result, zoning regulations may be tailored to specific areas of Town in order to begin addressing the resiliency issues depicted on these Resiliency Maps. As the baseline data for these maps change over time, the maps will be updated.

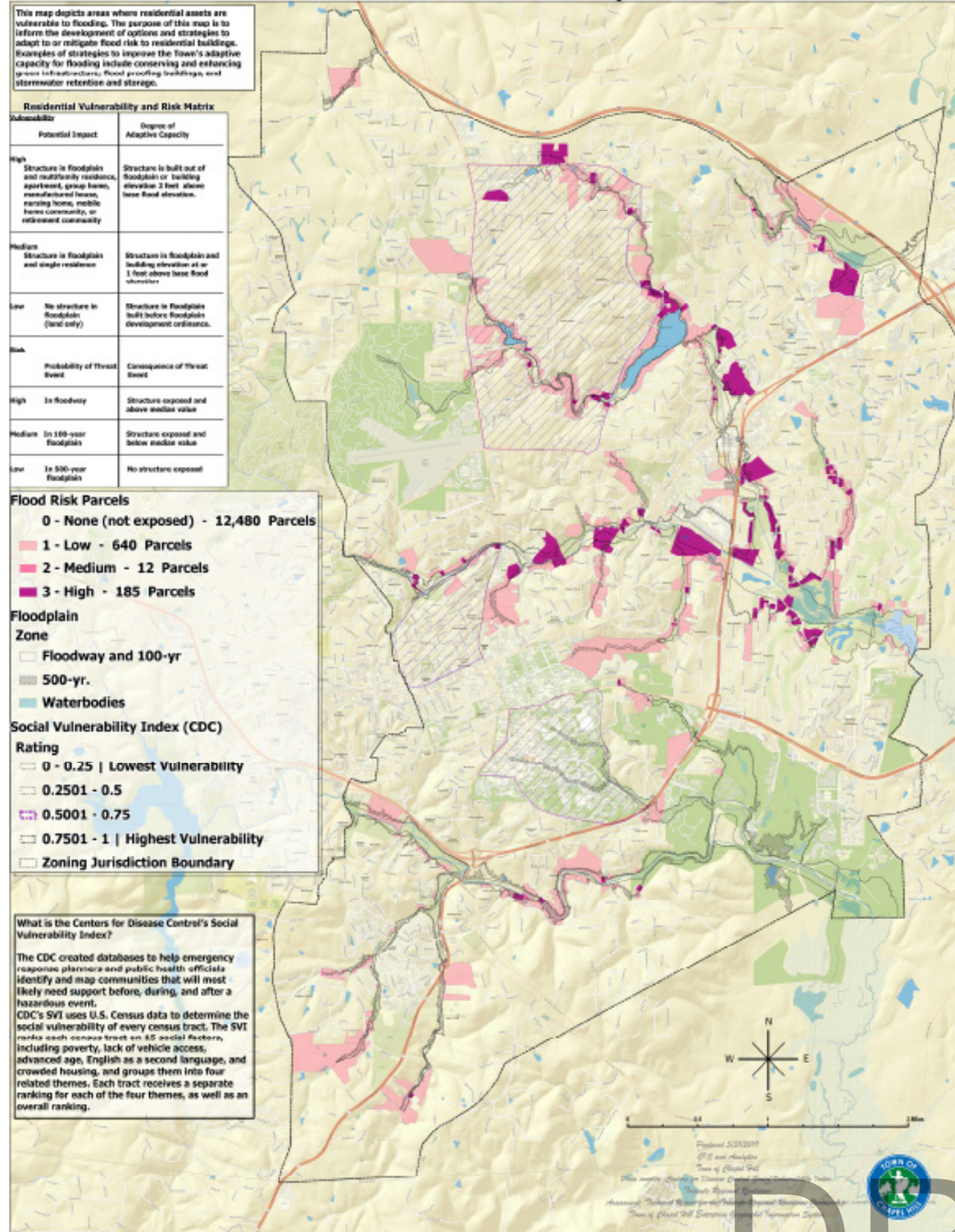
*Note: These large-format maps are available under separate cover. Please see the Town of Chapel Hill for copies of the maps or additional questions.*

## Draft Flood Resiliency Assessment

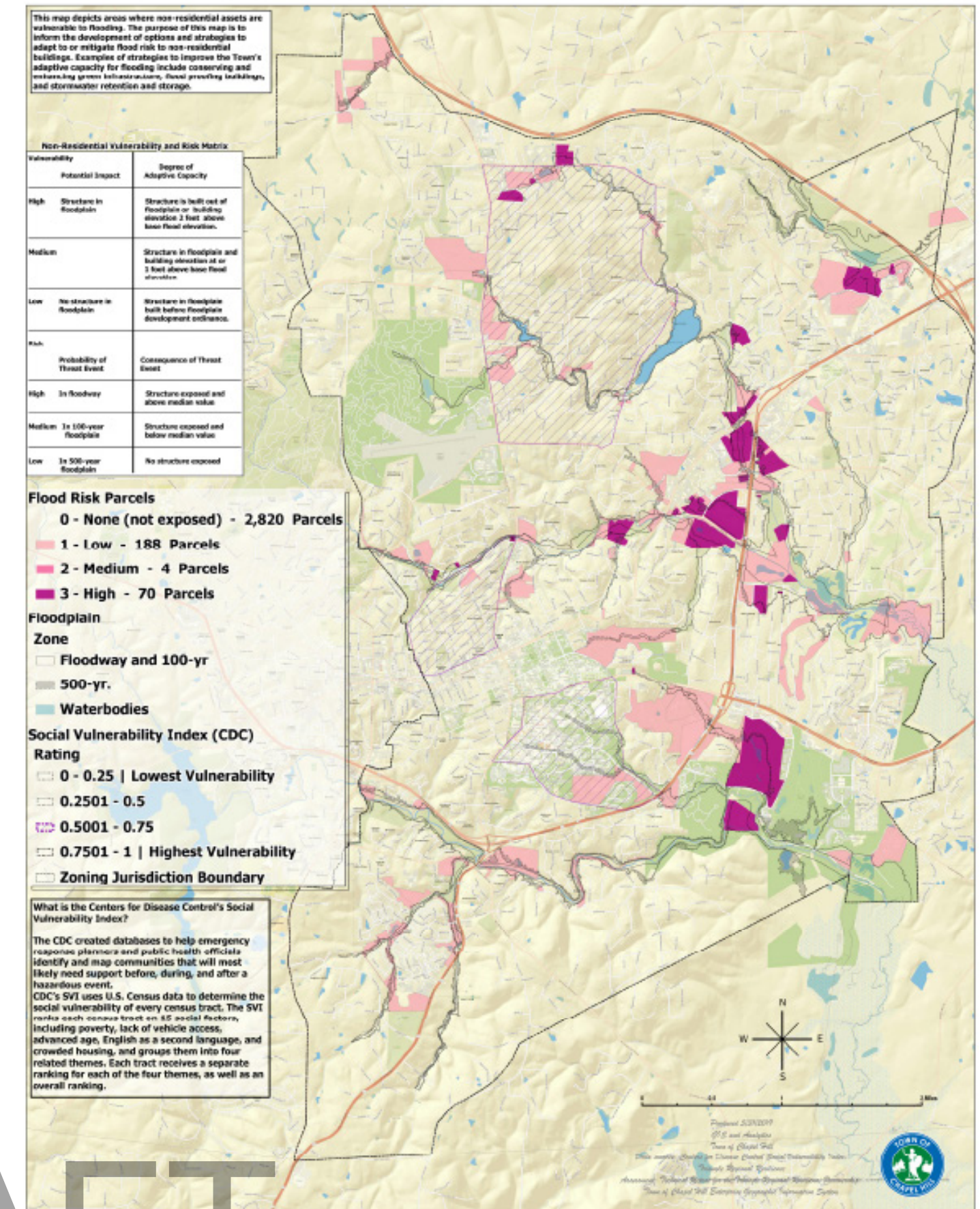


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# Draft Residential Flood Resiliency Assessment

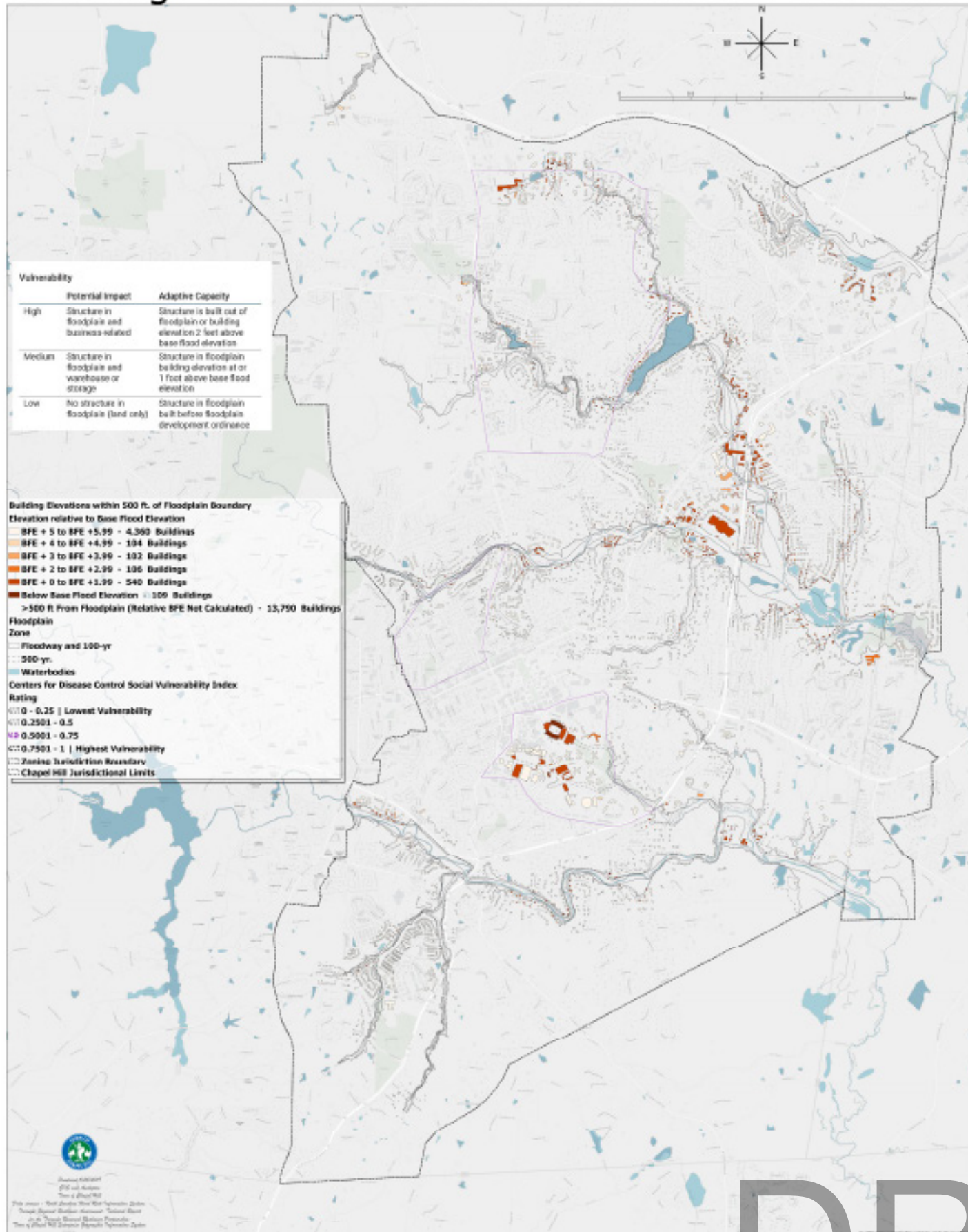


# Draft Non-Residential Flood Resiliency Assessment

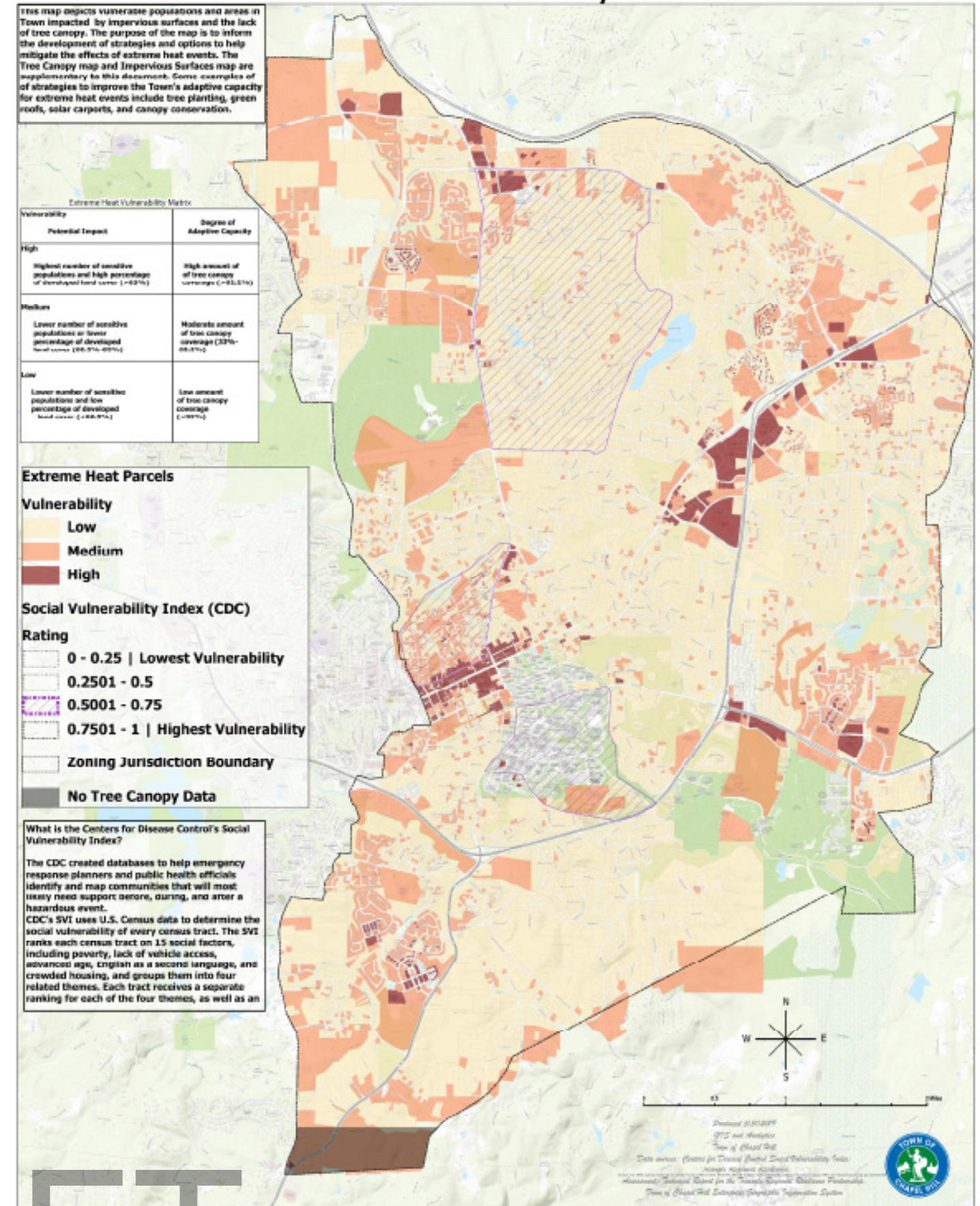


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# Buildings Elevation Relative to Base Flood Elevation

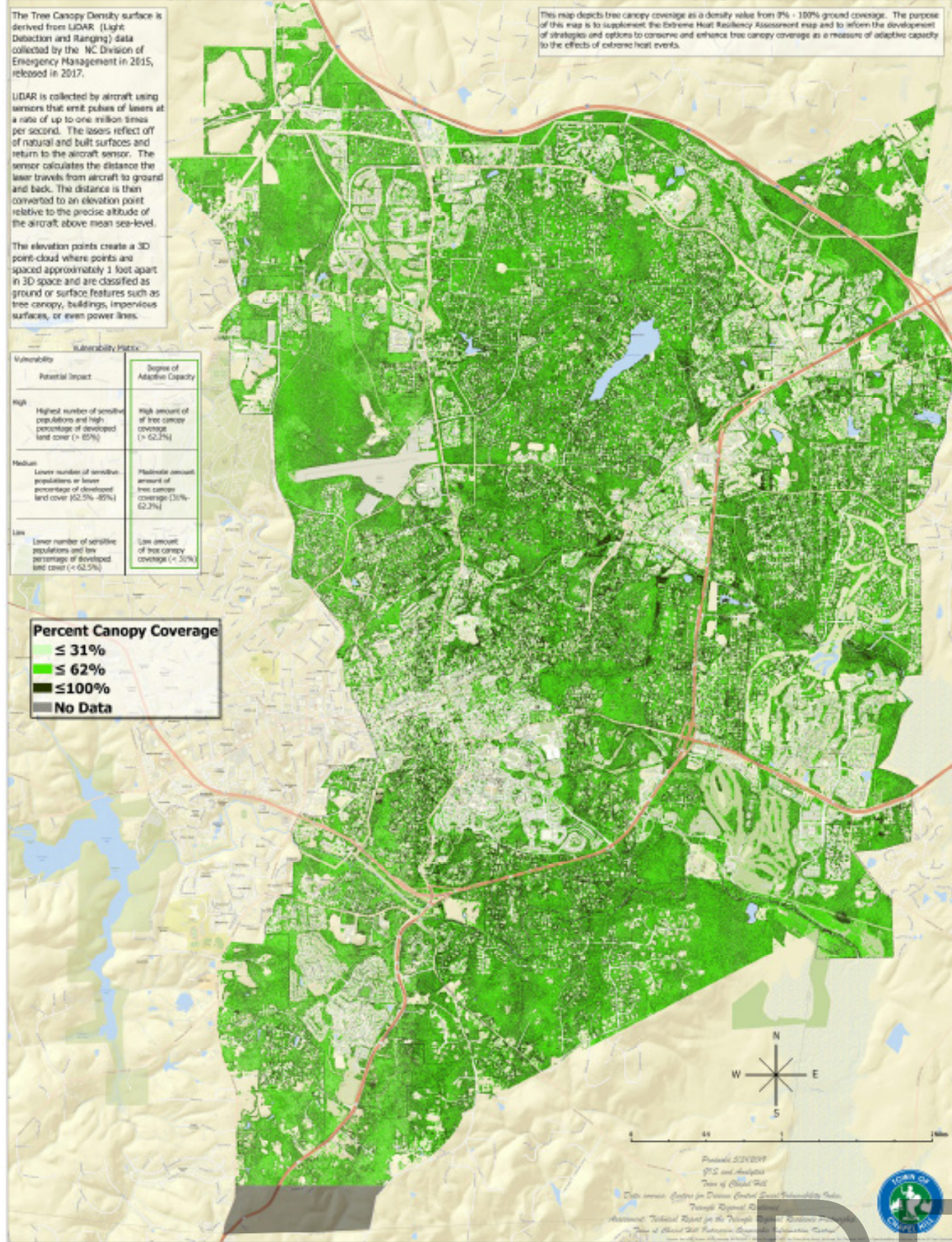


# Draft Extreme Heat Resiliency Assessment

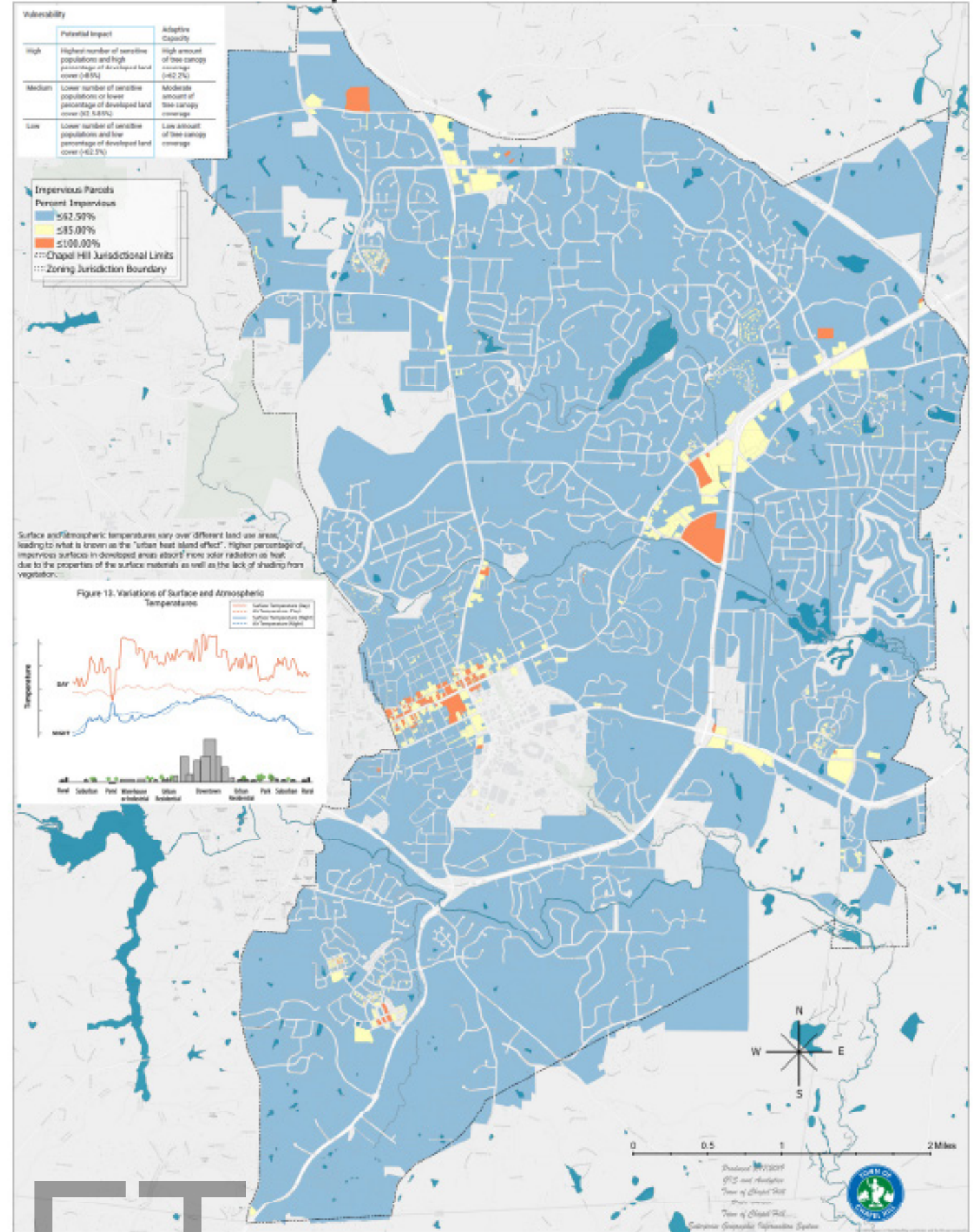


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# Draft Adaptive Capacity: Tree Canopy Density



# Impervious Surfaces



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## 6 | CONCLUSION

Previous planning efforts in Chapel Hill reflect the community’s understanding that the physical environment of the Town—its neighborhoods, streets, utilities, and natural resources—deeply affect how people experience life here. The creation of a Rural Buffer and Urban Services Boundary years ago have presented today’s opportunity to ensure the Town matures within its existing boundary in ways that leverage existing infrastructure, maximize transit investments, and enriches the things that are uniquely Chapel Hill.

Charting Our Future is a two-phased process designed to set expectations for Chapel Hill through the year 2050. These expectations have been established in accordance with the Town’s vision described in previous processes and the Guiding Statements that were outlined in Section 2 of this document. The intent is to make the Town’s land use tools more predictable, functional, and intentional.

As described in this Update to *Chapel Hill 2020*, Charting Our Future begins by refining the Town’s Future Land Use Map with an emphasis its key gateways, corridors, and activity nodes. In this way, the future land use designation for most of the Town remains unchanged, including much of the Town’s single-family neighborhoods. The next phase of Charting Our Future will focus on rewriting the Town’s Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO), which is the Town’s “rule book” that specifies where and at what scale specific land uses should occur. Together, the two phases of Charting Our Future will make growth and development processes more predictable, functional, and intentional.