

## Charting Our Future – Provide Feedback on the Revised Focus Area Maps

**Staff:**

Maurice Jones, Town Manager  
Alisa Duffey Rogers, LUMO Project Manager

**Department:**

Manager's Office

**Background:**

- On [April 5, 2017](#)<sup>1</sup>, the Council initiated a project to Rewrite the Town's Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO). The Town Council requested that the ordinance rewrite process begin with an effort to refine the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), called the Land Use Plan in *Chapel Hill 2020*, to affirm what is not expected to change and to provide an opportunity to have conversations about future planning that would inform the LUMO Rewrite process.
- Since the beginning of 2019, the Council has reviewed the various components of the refined Future Land Use Map. This review included the [Guiding Statements on March 13, 2019](#)<sup>2</sup> and the [Blueprint](#)<sup>3</sup> or "rough draft" of the Focus Area Maps and Principles on May 1, 2019. The Council Committee on Economic Sustainability also reviewed drafts of this Blueprint on [April 5, 2019](#)<sup>4</sup> and June 7, 2019.
- On [June 26, 2019](#)<sup>5</sup>, the Council authorized staff to engage with the community on the draft Future Land Use Map.
- At a work session on [November 18, 2019](#)<sup>6</sup>, the Council discussed substantive changes to the Focus Area Maps in order to make the maps less prescriptive, and generalized findings from the engagement activities on the DRAFT Focus Area Maps and Principles on [November 20, 2019](#)<sup>7</sup>.
- On [December 13, 2019](#)<sup>8</sup>, the Council Committee of Economic Sustainability, reviewed a "test" Focus Area Map to determine if this revised approach made the Focus Area Maps less prescriptive while also meeting the Project goals of predictability, functionality, and intentionality.
- On [January 8, 2020](#)<sup>9</sup>, the Council formally endorsed the revised approach for the Focus Area Maps.

---

<sup>1</sup> [http://chapelhill.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view\\_id=7&clip\\_id=3077&meta\\_id=156700](http://chapelhill.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=7&clip_id=3077&meta_id=156700)

<sup>2</sup> <https://chapelhill.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3881199&GUID=00667D70-C56A-4704-BF59-DD4EB508470A&Options=&Search=>

<sup>3</sup> <https://chapelhill.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=3931189&GUID=BF305E95-EA99-4343-B43C-32279777CBB5&Options=&Search=>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/businesses/council-economic-sustainability-committee>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/15075/15?curm=6&cury=2019>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/17071/15?curm=11&cury=2019>

<sup>7</sup> <https://chapelhill.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4244231&GUID=F49AEFE9-F8FF-4D5D-A5EC-A357EEE7729A>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/businesses/council-economic-sustainability-committee>

<sup>9</sup> <https://chapelhill.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4293231&GUID=105D7FAC-088E-4065-B7D0-BF40D1CB901E&Options=&Search=>

## **Overview of Revised Focus Area Maps:**

After Council endorsed a revised approach to the Focus Area Maps that lessened the prescriptive nature of the maps, staff and the Project consultant developed revised maps for each Focus Area. Features of these revised maps include:

1. **Sub-Areas** – Each Focus Area is broken into sub-areas. The sub-areas were determined by considering existing land uses, desired character, topography, and desired future land uses;
2. **Character Types** – Within each sub-area, appropriate Character Types are listed. In order to provide additional detail, a matrix for each Focus Area defines which Character Types should be primary, secondary, and discouraged. Definitions for the Character Types are included in your agenda materials;
3. **Transition Area** - In order to visually recognize the importance of making meaningful transitions between developments of different intensities, a transition area is shown on the Focus Area Maps. To determine the location of transition areas, we evaluated adjacent land uses/buildings; right-of-way placement; location of Town owned parcels; and topography;
4. **Heights** – The matrix accompanying each Focus Area includes preferred heights. These heights are further broken down by typical heights, heights along activated frontages, and heights within transition areas; and,
5. **Activated Street Frontages** – On each Focus Area Map, activated street frontages are shown, and activated street frontages are defined to provide additional direction.

In addition to the above features, the Focus Area Maps depict existing and proposed (from the Mobility Plan adopted in 2017) multi-use paths and trails as well as desirable future connections.

## **Downtown Focus Area:**

In an effort to be more granular in the Downtown Focus Area, this Focus Area is broken into five sub-areas that are defined based on adjacent existing development, such as the Northside neighborhood and the Town's historic districts, and the desired intensity and character of future development. These determinations show respect to this surrounding existing development while permitting the creation of some unified building elements, specifically building height, within the public realm. For example, in both the "C" and "E" sub-areas, the building height at the front setback line is four stories. In the "C" sub-area, the building height is capped at four stories while the "E" sub-area contemplates a core height of up to eight stories. Therefore, from the sidewalk along Rosemary Street, a pedestrian would perceive a four-story building even with the permitted height disparities in these two sub-areas. Given the complex nature of Downtown, it is appropriate to provide this level of specificity.

## **Considerations:**

As you review the revised Focus Area Maps, please consider the following:

1. Are the Focus Areas divided appropriately into sub-areas?
2. Are the primary, secondary, and discouraged Character Types, within each Focus Area, properly delineated?
3. Have the transition areas been placed in the correct locations?
4. Are the building heights correctly identified? Specifically, are the typical, activated, and transition heights reasonable within each sub-area?

## **Community Comments:**

For the most part, the community comments received regarding the revised approach to the Focus Area Maps has been positive. Community members have expressed support for the less prescriptive nature of the “test” Focus Area Map that Council reviewed on January 8, 2020. We have received communication from one community member expressing concern that the revised Focus Area Maps are too general and requesting that parcel based mapping of future land uses be restored.

## **Next Steps for the FLUM:**

On either March 25 or April 1, 2020, Council will consider all FLUM elements including:

1. Explanation of the FLUM
2. Guiding Statements
3. Map Book
  - a. Overall Future Land Use Map for those areas outside of the Focus Areas;
  - b. Resiliency Maps
  - c. Long Term Network Facilities Map from the Mobility and Connectivity Plan (Adopted October 2017)
4. Focus Area Maps and Principles

If Council is generally comfortable with these FLUM elements, staff will make any needed revisions and initiate the adoption process for the FLUM with the goal of having the FLUM adopted by the end of June 2020.

## **Engagement on the Final Phase of the FLUM:**

Because of the extensive engagement undertaken in previous FLUM phases, an abridged engagement campaign is proposed for this final phase of the FLUM. Staff intends to:

1. Place all FLUM elements on the Charting Our Future website and advertise through directed emails and boosted social media channels the availability of the FLUM and the opportunities to comment on the FLUM;
2. Hold a public meeting on April 23, 2020 at the Library;

3. Attend the following Town Boards/Commission meetings:
  - a. Planning Commission (Attendance at two meetings are planned)
  - b. Community Design Commission
  - c. Transportation and Connectivity Advisory Board
  - d. Parks, Greenway, & Recreation Commission
  - e. Housing Advisory Board
  - f. Environmental Stewardship Advisory Board

After these engagement efforts, staff will provide an update to Council ahead of any public hearing for FLUM adoption.