

02-22-2023 Town Council Meeting Responses to Council Questions

ITEM #14: Consider a Resolution Endorsing Shaping Our Future: A Transportation and Land Use Initiative and Call a Legislative Hearing to Consider Updating the Town's Comprehensive Plan to Include Shaping Our Future: A Transportation and Land Use Initiative on April 19, 2023

Council Question:

The report calls for development of vibrant mixed use along the BRT line. In the past, we've tried to plan for such development (Blue Hill), but the market has been reluctant to bring us office and retail. What can we do to get the mixed use we want?

Staff Response:

In summary, a sustained, collaborative, and integrated approach is needed to attract the type of vibrant mixed use envisioned for the Martin Luther King, Jr. BRT corridor; the TOD plan is just the first step. And updating the LUMO to support our TOD vision is the most important next step, but it's not the last step. But neither of these two initiatives are capable on their own of transforming development in Chapel Hill.

Communities often take a "zone it, and they will come" approach to promoting desired land uses in specific locations. Appropriate zoning is a critical component, and it is often the Town's most visible and easily implemented tool in the development management toolbox. But catalyzing the high caliber, mixed use development the Town wants to see requires a multifaceted approach, making it easier and more cost effective for developers to bring the types of development we want to see. Implementing the full package of incentives, programs, and policies and supportive programs and policies is equally important to updating zoning, to fully realize the plan's vision. We must also disincentivize and/or prohibit the types of development we don't want to see. And we must actively establish relationships and open lines of communication with regional and national developers who are delivering the types of projects we want in Chapel Hill and learn what we need to do to attract these kinds of projects in Chapel Hill. The Transit team will continue working closely with Planning, Economic Development, Transportation, and other Town Divisions to continue moving towards the community's TOD vision.

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Council Question:

On p. 148, you refer to the “Comprehensive Plan update.” Is that Chapel Hill 2020? The updated FLUM?

Staff Response:

This is referencing the FLUM and amending the comprehensive plan to integrate Complete Community. We will edit this section to clarify this language.

Council Question:

On p. 144, you talk about an anti-displacement platform. Your outline talks about adding diverse housing types, affordable housing incentives, etc. for improving overall access and equity, but are there specific plans for addressing displacement threats to current residents as redevelopment proceeds?

Staff Response:

Yes. This is an important concern for both staff and the greater community. The best time to prevent potential displacement is before it starts happening. Like the development approach described in our first response, a meaningful anti-displacement strategy requires a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach. Many of Shaping Our Future’s Implementation Recommendations help proactively mitigate potential displacement. These fall into several primary categories:

- *Increasing overall housing supply (publicly and privately)*
- *New sources of sustainable funding for developing and preserving affordable housing (ex. revolving loan fund supporting, repairs, rent, down payment assistance, etc.; synthetic TIF; direct impact investment; increasing Town budget reserves)*
- *Programs, plans, and policies (expanded community land trust, tenant right of first refusal)*
- *Partnerships*

Transit staff are happy to discuss any of these strategies in detail, if desired.