



STAFF REPORT: PETITION FOR LONG-RANGE PLANNING – FUTURE GROWTH CONSISTENT WITH TOWN VALUES

Data System Update

The petition calls for a functional data system that meets the Town’s analytical and tracking needs for understanding development that is approved, in the pipeline, and completed in a way that supports future decisions for the community. The Planning Department has the building blocks of this data system and is undertaking the following actions to expand and improve the system.

- The [Development Activity Report](#) has been revamped to provide higher-quality and consistent information on projects under review.
- A new plan and permit intake system that captures consistent project data is getting ready to launch. A goal is to connect this system with the Development Activity Report for automatic updates of project data.
- Quarterly development updates are presented at Council Committee on Economic Sustainability (CCES) meetings, most recently on [January 7, 2022](#). Staff will be expanding the data reported as the two above projects come online.
- Upcoming CCES updates will begin featuring data that can support policy decisions
 - *Summary Statistics*: Total square footages and unit counts by land use, over time, and by general sector of town
 - *Development Trends*: Highlighting changes over time and projective forward to anticipate community needs that result from growth
- Longer-term, staff could provide data snapshots during Council reviews of development applications, allowing individual projects to be considered in the context of the larger development activity pipeline.

The screenshot shows the 'Development Activity Report' interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a 'Go to Interactive Project Map' button. Below this is a search bar and a table titled 'Current Development Projects'. The table has columns for Project Name, Project Type, and Street Address. Two rows are visible: 'Bridgepoint' (Residential Development, 2312 Homestead) and 'South Creek' (Mixed-Use Development, 1119 US 15-501). Below the table is a blue banner with the text 'TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE January 2022' and a graphic of a triangle.



Efforts for Directing Growth Consistent with Town Values

Staff have identified Town projects, both programmed and underway, that intersect with the long-range planning interests outlined in the petition. These interests include:


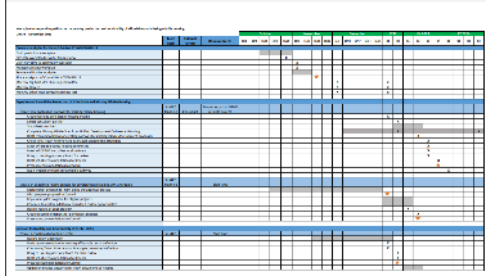
- A range of housing options for people at different stages of life and incomes, with an emphasis on first-time homebuyers, families with young children, seniors, and owner-occupied multifamily
- Desirable, walkable neighborhoods with a variety of amenities for residents that promote recreation and multimodal transit
- Diverse commercial growth to support our tax base and create working, entertainment, and shopping places for visitors and residents
- Greenways, parks, and open spaces for recreation and their environmental benefits

Following a review of projects’ scopes, staff provides the following itemization of how individual projects respond to petition interests, along with status and next steps of each project.

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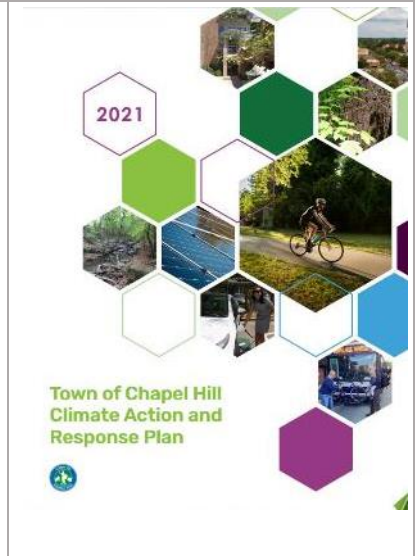
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Plan to Plan' / Housing Strategy effort with Business Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow-on effort to Housing Study (Chapel Hill Housing Needs Analysis 2020-2040, shared at November 5, 2021 CCES meeting) - Business Street under contract to deliver a scope for community dialogues by March 1, 2022 - Opportunity to bring a more specific focus to values around desirable neighborhoods - <i>Petition Interests:</i> All - <i>Project Next Steps:</i> Update on timeline and community engagement at the February 23, 2022 Council meeting 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Land Use Map (Phase I of Charting Our Future) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adopted by Council in December 2020 - Under implementation through visioning for a new Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), Council consideration of development decisions, and informing related projects - Guiding Principles align well with Town values, including those listed in this petition - <i>Petition Interests:</i> All - <i>Project Next Steps:</i> UDO Visioning 	 <p>The logo features the text 'CHAPEL HILL' in large white letters on a blue background, with 'Charting Our Future' and 'A Land Use Initiative' in smaller white text below. At the bottom, there is a white silhouette of a city skyline against a blue sky with a sun and clouds.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UDO Visioning (Phase II of Charting Our Future) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Initiated at January 5, 2022 Council Work Session - Town values and FLUM Guiding Principles serve as the starting point for the subsequent LUMO Rewrite - Council will engage in discussion during spring and summer 2022 around values to prioritize (in conjunction with Plan to Plan) - Deliverables, including those listed below, will operationalize values town-wide through development regulations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus Area Specific Plans will establish a physical vision for desirable neighborhoods and commercial growth along transportation corridors ▪ Missing Middle Scan and other technical analysis will assess opportunities to improve established neighborhoods through more housing options and more access to green space - <i>Petition Interests:</i> All - <i>Project Next Steps:</i> Update on timeline and community engagement at the February 23, 2022 Council meeting 	 <p>The logo shows a colorful mural with the text 'WE ARE COMMUNITY' and various figures. Below the mural, it reads 'Transit-Oriented Development Planning and Unified Development Ordinance Visioning' and 'Public Engagement Plan DRAFT'. The Town of Chapel Hill logo is at the bottom left, and 'DRAFT January 28, 2022' is at the bottom right.</p>

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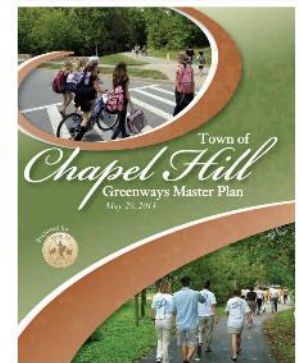
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiated at January 5, 2022 Council Work Session Integrated with UDO Visioning/LUMO Rewrite to allow unified community engagement and planning along the North-South Bus Rapid Transit corridor Station Area Plans will support commercial growth, housing options, desirable, walkable neighborhoods, and green space access all in proximity to frequent transit service <i>Petition Interests:</i> All <i>Project Next Steps:</i> Update on timeline and community engagement at the February 23, 2022 Council meeting 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Together Initiative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update on Draft Vision and Strategy provided at February 4, 2022 CCES meeting Partnership on downtown development strategy and viability of a Downtown Innovation District Town, UNC, and Downtown Partnership will serve on the Task Force <i>Petition Interests:</i> Housing Options, Commercial Growth, Greenways/Parks/Open Space <i>Project Next Steps:</i> Final proposal coming soon 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work Plan to address Council Petition on Housing Production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Affordable Housing & Community Connections has work plan under development with multiple components in partnership with the Planning Department Most recent update provided at November 17, 2021 Council Meeting Expedited review pathways for affordable housing and missing middle housing, including an ongoing pilot process for four projects Strategies to increase availability and affordability of rental units <i>Petition Interests:</i> Housing Options, Desirable Neighborhoods <i>Project Next Steps:</i> Update on Work Plan at the March 9, 2022 Council meeting 	

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- [Climate Action and Response Plan](#)
 - Adopted by Council in April 2021
 - FY22 & 23 Implementation Plan presented at the [September 22, 2021](#) Council meeting
 - Focuses on high-impact carbon reduction actions in buildings and transportation, the Town's biggest carbon sectors
 - Actions include:
 - Use LUMO Rewrite to incentivize net-zero buildings and to create walkable, transit-served neighborhoods
 - Use TOD Planning and BRT construction to expand transit service
 - Fully implement the Mobility & Connectivity Plan by 2035 to increase walking, biking, and transit use
 - *Petition Interests:* All
 - *Project Next Steps:* Update on plan implementation at the February 23, 2022 Council meeting



- Plans for greenways, parks, and open spaces
 - Adopted components of Comprehensive Plan provide guidance:
 - [Comprehensive Parks Plan](#): 2013
 - [Greenways Master Plan](#): 2013
 - [Mobility & Connectivity Plan](#): 2017, updated 2020
 - Opportunity to revisit implementation and consider prioritization of investments, following completion of 'Plan to Plan'
 - Opportunity to transfer applicable policies to zoning regulations as part of LUMO Rewrite
 - *Petition Interests:* Desirable Neighborhoods, Greenways/Parks/Open Space
 - *Project Next Steps:* Capital projects; coordinating facilities through private development



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SUMMARY: Alignment of Town Efforts with Petition Interests

Key:



Indicates overlap between the project scope and the petition interest



Indicates a petition interest that is a central theme/focus of the project scope

Project Name	Range of housing options	Desirable, walkable neighborhoods	Diverse commercial growth	Greenways, parks, and open spaces
Plan to Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Future Land Use Map implementation	✓	✓	✓	✓
UDO Visioning (LUMO Rewrite)	✓	✓	✓	✓
TOD Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓
Downtown Together	✓		✓	✓
Affordable Housing Work Plan	✓	✓		
Climate Action Plan implementation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Comprehensive Parks Plan, Greenways Master Plan, and Mobility & Connectivity Plan implementation		✓		✓

Staff Evaluation

The chart above indicates that the Town’s ongoing planning and implementation efforts are well-aligned with the interests stated in the Council’s Petition on Long-Range Planning. The four interests are consistent with values that the Town has stated in the past, which have been used to shape many of the projects in this chart. Staff makes the following specific observations:

- Some projects intersect with housing options, desirable neighborhoods, commercial growth, and green space, but in general terms and with a more granular focus on topics like land use, transit, and climate action.
- The ‘Plan to Plan’ community dialogues being scoped by Business Street provide opportunity for a project that delves into greater detail on desirable, walkable neighborhoods.
- Other existing projects have a central focus on the other three long-range planning interests. Staff finds this portfolio of projects to be responsive to the direction in the Council members’ petition. Staff will continue to identify future work plan opportunities that respond to the petition.

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Next Steps

Staff plans to take the following actions around ongoing and future efforts:

1. Highlight and center *foundational policy documents* as other projects move forward.
 - A. The following documents should provide a shared understanding of Town values and the Town's vision around growth:
 - ❖ Comprehensive Plan (Chapel Hill 2020)
 - ❖ Future Land Use Map and its Guiding Principles
 - ❖ Plan to Plan (Business Street) – an opportunity to update values for 2022 with a more specific focus on desirable neighborhoods
 - B. Allow Plan to Plan to proceed ahead of or in conjunction with other projects. Delay making policy recommendations from other projects, to the extent practical, until policies can be aligned with the findings that come out of Plan to Plan.
 - C. Set the expectation that UDO Visioning/TOD Planning, Downtown Together, Climate Action Plan implementation, and the Housing Production Work Plan will each report on connections they are making to the *foundational policy documents*. Continue this practice as the Town initiates new efforts.
2. Elevate planning as a cross-cutting, *cross-departmental practice*. Staff of the Long-Range Division will seek to become more coordinated and integrated with planning efforts managed by other departments. Town staff will build on a track record of collaboration to ensure consistency across the organization with Town values and the Town's vision around growth.
3. Include or enhance *implementation reporting* as a standard practice. Staff will use the Climate Action Implementation Plan and similar reporting tools as a model for building on any adopted plan or completed major initiative. The goal will be to improve the Town's ability to put values into action. Features of this approach include:
 - A. Providing regular updates on implementation to Council, on a quarterly basis or similar.
 - B. Monitoring for any gaps – for example, identifying needs for additional funding, refined planning, or addressing outdated information.