

Meeting the Need:

A Strategy for Where and How to Build Complete Communities

TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL
Council Workshop

November 30th, 2022

Draft

**The
Keesmaat
Group.**

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Project Objectives

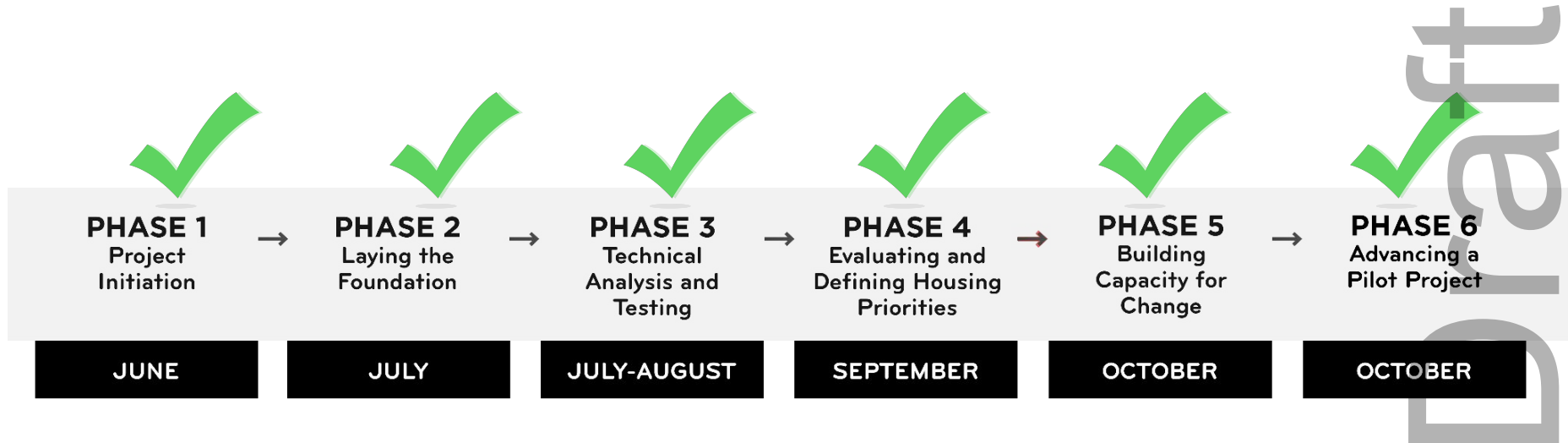
To begin the process of building consensus about where and how to build

To determine where complete communities can be advanced, exploring trade-offs and opportunities

To identify a viable pilot project

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Six Phases over Five Months



Complete Community Framework

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TYPICAL SUBURBAN DESIGN

Housing: mostly single family; usually low rise. When buildings are taller, they are still not dense due to surface parking.

Precincts divvy up non-housing, and housing uses into separate areas.

Housing prioritizes traditional market ownership, often to the exclusion of other models

Designed for driving to destinations and walking or driving upon arrival: high carbon footprint; leads to traffic congestion.

Precincts experience an intensity of use, and 'dead' times/zones. This compromises safety.

Single uses within buildings.

High transit infrastructure subsidy on a per capita basis due to underutilization of land.

COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

Diversity of housing types, including missing middle density. Both rental and ownership tenures.

Living, working, learning, and playing occur in the same walkshed. Active transportation and transit connections are abundant.

Diversity of tenures for a diversity of households: both units and secondary suites add gentle density.

Designed for walking and cycling, first: 'green' mobility. Parking lots are secondary, rather than prominent, since pedestrian infrastructure is prioritized.

'Eyes on the street' in all areas of the community, as a result of 'sufficient' density. Pedestrian-oriented design.

Buildings are used for multiple uses: housing, community, office, and retail uses can be mixed.

Lower costs for infrastructure and buildings due to higher density, higher use, and lessened need for driving/parking.

CAPACITY ANALYSIS

Under-supply is a continued risk. Currently, low density design or higher density design that continues to have suburban characteristics.

Project by project planning limits 'completeness'. Missed opportunities for synergies related to infrastructure delivery.

A better balance of housing types is needed. Multi-family condos (ownership) and affordable rental need to be added to the housing mix.

'Everywhere-to-everywhere' Greenways present the opportunity to add people without adding more cars, and can serve to link communities to deliver 'completeness' a short bike or e-bike ride away.

Current densities under utilize serviced land, missing the opportunity to address the housing need.

New partnership capacity needs to be developed to deliver partnerships based on shared interests.

Strategic investments that deliver real returns in keeping with a well-articulated vision are needed, such as investment in greenways that drive growth in higher-density walkable neighborhoods.

Chapel Hill Complete Community Framework



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Where to Grow

Chapel Hill will direct growth to:

Greenways

to enable walkable communities and minimize cars and parking

Transit corridors

to generate sufficient density for higher order transit

Large infill sites with existing infrastructure

to better use land and remediate the mistakes of the past

Smaller infill sites

to add housing diversity and create more inclusive neighbourhoods

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COMPLETE
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STRATEGY

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1. Plan for the Future Strategically

The Challenge: Project by Project planning does not deliver a complete community. Opportunities are missed to deliver infrastructure that connects communities – such greenways along riverbeds – when a site by site approach is taken. In addition, a more comprehensive approach can assist in lowering key infrastructure costs. For example, a shared approach to stormwater management on an area wide scale can reduce costs.

The Opportunity: Move towards an approach that is led by an overarching strategic vision to ensure all of Chapel Hill is a complete community. By assessing new development through the lens of broader shared objectives, collaborations will emerge for delivering in broader public benefits – including for existing neighborhoods that are underserved by specific amenities.



2. Expand and Deliver new Greenways for Everyday Life

The Challenge: Adding more people in a traditional way would mean adding new housing along arterials, which is not the current pattern of development in Chapel Hill. Designing Chapel Hill with personal vehicles at the center of mobility has social equity, household and environmental costs inconsistent with the Town's stated values.

The Opportunity: Alongside developing cycling infrastructure throughout Chapel Hill, build a complete network of greenways that give residents the option to travel from everywhere to everywhere on foot, on a bike or an electric bike, instead of having to rely primarily on cars. In this way, more people and more housing density can be added without adding more cars. Connecting the gaps within the existing greenway system – particularly in neighborhoods adjacent to equity-seeking groups, is fundamental to enabling this transformation from greenways as recreation to Greenways for transportation.



3. Be Green

The Challenge: Being a green town requires density, and a changed approach to the environment. Topography has often been forgotten in conversations of development. A new approach is needed that respects natural landscapes, plans for flooding, embraces the magnitude of the opportunity of the greenways, and adds more recreational amenities.

The Opportunity: Plan a Town that is green and sustainable, alongside a plan to build 485 new homes per year to meet housing needs. To do so, the dialogue in Chapel Hill must change. Forward looking objectives related to meeting the housing need, adding density, and becoming *more* sustainable must be linked, rather than severed.



4. Plan for Excellence in the Public Realm, Everywhere

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Greenways are key to accommodating future growth.

Why does Active Transportation matter?

There has been a fear that Chapel Hill has no room to grow.

But currently, Chapel Hill has a 'land-intensive' approach to growth.

- Low densities that are costly to service and require significant road right-of-way per capita.
- Lots of room is given to cars and parking...that could be better used for housing.
- This is wildly expensive and therefore inequitable.

To accommodate growth, you need to plan differently.

Better uses of land requires more density.

More dense housing requires alternative approaches to transportation.

Walking and biking require an inter-connected network, but Chapel Hill's road network does not provide this. As a result, Greenways become critical to Active Transportation.

Greenways enable denser forms of housing in Chapel Hill.

Why?

- **Less parking is required**
- **More people and uses are in close proximity**

Greenways are a critical 'hook' for a denser, more sustainable future Chapel Hill.

Complete Communities to Project end

Overview of Key Dates

- Oct 14 PSC direction on Pilot Projects
- Oct 27 PSC: Review Proposed Pilot Projects
- **Nov 1st: Community Leaders Workshop**
- **Nov 1st and 2nd: UNC and UNC Health Focus Groups**
- Nov 2 Council Meeting: Key Decisions Overview to Council, Pilot Project Approach
- Nov 21st: PSC refinement of Development-focused pilot projects
- Nov 30th: Council Workshop: Proposed Pilot Project **TODAY**
- December 7th: Resolution, Final Recommendation

TODAY

- Discuss Pilot Projects
 - Recap Approach
 - Recap Evaluation Criteria
 - Affirm Active Transportation Pilot
 - **Refine** the Long List of Pilot Projects

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What have we accomplished?

Consensus on a Complete Community Framework

- Confirms a Strategic Approach to growth
- Provides a mechanism for identifying the Elements of a Complete Community for Chapel Hill (pinwheel)
- This approach is already integrated into Town planning initiatives
- A draft of a Greenway Plan that identifies the gaps in the current network
- Five key initiatives to deliver Active Transportation outcomes as identified in this process by stakeholders are being advanced by Staff
- One Active Transportation Pilot, Everywhere to Everywhere Greenways Federal Funding
 - Identified 8 Funding Sources to be advanced by Town Grant Writer
- Agreed on Evaluative Criteria for the Pilot Projects
- Identified partners who would like to collaborate with the Town in advancing Complete Communities, including UNC and UNC Health (two key partners)

Pilot Project Approach



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Pilot Project objectives

To **demonstrate** that transformative change is possible in Chapel Hill

To **build trust** in Council's capacity to advance change

To **lay the foundation** for a Council decision

To **show** how improvements in a specific place begin to deliver on the promise of Complete Communities

Pilot Project Framework

Two Categories of Pilot Projects

1. New active transportation strategies/connections

- e.g. protected bike lanes, greenway implementation strategy, Greenway wayfinding
- PSE has proposed an approach to these potential projects

2. New Development Approaches

- e.g. Expedited approvals, new collaborations on specific sites
- Seven specific sites/projects have been identified and evaluated; now reduced to five

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Evaluation Considerations



You can change the outcomes by changing the criteria.



This is a **tool** to help with decision making; it does not give you a decision.

Approach:

- You will see a variety of scales and timelines
- We eliminated early possibilities that became clearly impossible
- Some are challenging; some are straightforward
- Goal: to choose a pilot(s) that demonstrates Council's appetite for advancing Complete Communities by making a stake in the ground decision

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Pilot Project Evaluative Criteria

#	Criteria (weighted equally)	Description
1	Speed of Implementation	How quickly can the project be implemented? What are the barriers to implementation, and are they easily overcomable? Does the Town have jurisdiction over implementation?
2	Financial Viability	There a reasonable expectation that it can be funded in the near-term? Does it require other partnerships or stakeholders to provide financial support?
3	Magnitude of Impact	What is the scale of the impact the project will deliver? Is it located on one site or multiple sites?
4	Contribution towards the Creation of Complete Communities	To what degree does the project demonstrate complete communities?
5	Scalability	Is the project (or concept) scalable across the Town, or does it deliver change at a significant scale?
6	Social Equity Considerations	How does the pilot address the needs of historically marginalized communities? Does it present the opportunity to address the needs of historically marginalized communities? Does it add housing diversity or enhance equitable housing?

Pilot Project Secondary Filter

#	Pilot Description	Is consensus on council achievable?	Is the scale manageable?	Willing Partner
1	North Chapel Hill Redevelopment	<p>YES</p> <p>The affordable housing component for the mobile homes is sensitive. Opportunity to plan for this and address this head-on.</p>	<p>Large; given land owner, it is manageable. Opportunity would be to 'remediate' sprawl into a Complete Community</p>	Yes
2	The Legion Redevelopment	Unlikely	Large	n/a
3	S Estes Drive Redevelopment	Yes	Medium	<p>UNC could conceive of contributing land to a development to deliver a pre-determined unit mix; the structure and approach would need to be resolved once the Housing Needs Study underway by UNC is complete.</p>
	UNC Adjacent to			

Long List of Potential Pilot Project – Active Transportation

#	Name of Project	Description	Timeline to Delivery	Impact	Next Steps
1	Everywhere to Everywhere Greenways Federal Funding	Pursue Federal funding to build out Everywhere to Everywhere Greenways as transportation infrastructure, to transform mobility in Chapel Hill. Greenway-Oriented Development.	9-18 months	✓✓✓✓✓	Advance
2	Everywhere to Everywhere Greenways: Phase 1	Build out a strategic series of links in the Greenways network to increase transportation access, particularly for historically marginalized neighborhoods. Project could be phased, with the pilot project focusing on the completion of the first phase, funded from existing budget.	6 months	✓✓✓	Direct to Staff
3	New Bike Protected Lane (Details TBC)	Route to be determined by Transportation Planning	6 - 12 months	✓✓	Direct to Staff
4	Better signs highlighting current greenway connections	Goal is to generate awareness about the existing Greenway network and the role that it can provide in providing transportation choice. New signage throughout Chapel Hill, and an advertising campaign by the Town, could build better awareness around the existing infrastructure.	3 months	✓✓	Direct to Staff
5	Elevating the role of e-bikes	Programs to introduce people to the use of e-bikes, provide introductory rides. Subsidies for e-bikes.	2 months	✓✓	Direct to Staff
6	Greatly expanding bike share	Making bikeshare a true transportation choice in Chapel Hill, with station locations that specifically prioritize access for low income groups. Programming and funding for low income households.	One year, minimum	✓✓	Direct to Staff

Pilot Project **Everywhere to Everywhere Greenways** Federal Funding

#	Criteria (weighted equally)	Score (out of 10)	Description
1	Speed of Implementation	9	It will be possible to implement Everywhere to Everywhere greenways quicker with Federal funding, but some level of effort will be required over the next six months to secure this funding. Staff grant writer to lead. Federal funding enables speedy implementation.
2	Financial Viability	10	Enables a state-of-the-art best practice in active transportation in North America. Multiple funding sources existing, including RAISE (formerly TIGER) and DOT \$ 7 Billion Active Transportation Fund.
3	Magnitude of Impact	10	Could redefine Chapel Hill's future in terms of inclusion, sustainability, and Greenway Oriented Development.
4	Contribution towards the Creation of Complete Communities	10	Greenways are the foundation to better using land, reducing parking, and adding density without adding cars.
5	Scalability	10	Uniquely, at the scale of the entire Town.
6	Social Equity Considerations	8	In Chapel Hill, residents spend 21% of their household income on transportation. This cost will be greatly reduced with more transportation choice. Must be combined with a bike share program for e-bikes and a subsidy for low-income households. Adding comprehensive lighting and wayfinding in the Greenway Network is essential for women and children.
Total		57	

Everywhere to Everywhere Greenways Federal Funding

Consultation Outcomes

- Broad support for **Everywhere to Everywhere Greenways** but concern that the funding is the real issue that will trip the Town up, not the planning of the Greenways
- Concern that Everywhere to Everywhere Greenways is supportable by many but that Council might not follow through with the added density needed to make “**Greenway Oriented Development**” viable to meet the housing needs of Chapel Hill
- A strong belief that Everywhere to Everywhere Greenways, combined with focused growth that prioritizes Active Transportation, could transform life in Chapel Hill

Implications

- Recommendation of a “Development” Pilot to ensure the Town is delivering on the density requirements for a Complete Community consistent with the “Greenway Oriented Development” vision
- Focus the Pilot not on the planning of the Greenways (the easier part) but on the *funding* of the Everywhere to Everywhere Greenway system (the hard part)
- Technical and Planning Town Staff have the expertise and inputs from previous consultations to articulate, in collaboration with the staff grant writer, the breadth of the investment required to undertake detailed planning, development, construction and maintenance of the Everywhere to Everywhere Greenway system.

Everywhere to Everywhere Greenways Federal Funding

Scope of the Pilot

*Everywhere to Everywhere Federal Funding is an initiative to transform **both** mobility and growth in Chapel Hill, ensuring future housing needs can be accommodated based on responsible land use planning and sustainable development objectives.*

Today, Chapel Hill is already defined by its Greenway system. This mobility and growth strategy builds upon that existing condition, but is fundamentally different from it. The Everywhere to Everywhere Greenway strategy is rooted in developing a safe, comprehensive and connected system of Greenways that are well maintained, lit, and easy to navigate by all ability levels. This does not exist today - but it will in the future!

By creating a state-of-the-art Active Transportation system that will enable the choice of living and moving without a car, combined with directing growth to Focus Areas that connect into the Everywhere to Everywhere Greenway System, both mobility patterns and growth patterns will shift to become more sustainable over time. A comprehensive e-bike share program with subsidies for low-income households combined with a lighting and signage system will be foundational to social equity objectives. These components should be integrated into grant applications, depending on the program.

This Greenway System must be comprehensively planned and strategically executed. It's success as a true transportation choice for 8 - 80 year olds will be determined by its connectedness across Chapel Hill. As such, this pilot is partly about infrastructure delivery (new greenways) and partly about programs (e-bike access, wayfinding, building a culture of support for cycling as mobility).

And it starts with Federal funding.

Green Way Funding

8 different programs

TWO HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Transportation Alternatives Program** \$7 billion
2. **RAISE** \$2.2 billion for 2022, \$7.5 billion over five years

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Scope of Development Pilots and Next Steps

Each potential development partner pilot is at a different stage of development, and therefore the scope of the pilot will vary depending on which one is chosen.

A series of next steps are recommended for the chosen Development Pilot:

1. Convene all of the Key Partners
2. Determine Objectives of the Pilot, Timeline, Costs, Constraints and Opportunities
3. Where relevant, establish an MOU between partners to commit to work together towards shared objectives
4. Determine the role that the Town of Chapel Hill will play

Examples:

- a. Convening and facilitating progress towards shared objectives
- b. Assigning a Strategic Development Advisor to Lead the process
- c. Committing to Infrastructure Investments
- d. Outlining and executing an Expedited Approvals Process
- e. Providing technical input

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Pilot Project – Development

Name of Project	Description	Rank
N Estes Drive Extension Redevelopment	Model for a town and gown partnership, that includes infrastructure investments from the Town and a partnership with UNC. 14 acres of UNC Land; known as the Triangle. West side of MLK, north of the Elkin Hills neighbourhood (past Airport Dr). Willing Partners.	1
UNC Adjacent to Midtown Plaza and Root Cellar Redevelopment	Master planning and public investment for future redevelopment adjacent to Midtown Plaza and Root Cellar. Two tear-down office buildings on the South side of the Root centre that are on the market. Key bus stop. Willing partners.	2
North Chapel Hill Redevelopment	Master planning and public investment to for future redevelopment, that includes Timberlyne Shopping Center and an affordable housing plan to replace the mobile home area. Willing Partners.	3
Parkline Redevelopment	Master planning and public investment for future redevelopment at The Parkline office building (36 acres) and adjacent developments, could be combined with UNC Heath's acres across the street. Willing Partners.	4
The Legion Redevelopment	Master planning and public investment to create a demonstration community that embodies: public/private partnerships, use of new revenue generating tools (such as a land lease community), sustainable development, inclusion (through the integration of affordable housing).	Not Ranked
Town Police Station (929 MLK) Redevelopment	Brownfield remediation with redevelopment, and the development of a critical trail connection.	



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Supporting Analysis that is Required To Implement the Complete Communities Framework

#	Requirement	Opportunity/Implications	
1	Protected Natural Areas Plan (including waterways and flood plains)	Development applications will be required to confirm to an existing, known, council approved Natural Areas Plan	Public Works
2	Everywhere to Everywhere Greenway Plan	Need to either update the Mobility Plan or create a Greenways Plan that supersedes the existing Greenway Plan	Long range transportation planning/Parks Master Plan
3	Integrate Complete Communities Framework into the LUMO	Review is currently underway by Orion; integrate implications of the CCS into the LUMO	Planning/Orion
4	Integrate Complete Communities Framework into the FLUM	Generate alignment between the capacity analysis recommendations and the FLUM	Planning
	Advance now		