

# **Planning Systems Evaluation (PSE):**

Advancing Complete Communities through  
Development Review in Chapel Hill

**THE KEESMAAT GROUP**  
**November 30th**  
**Presentation to Town Council**

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# Laying the foundations: what we know

1. Development review is **not** delivering desired outcomes.
  2. Current processes are the primary **disincentive** to investment in Chapel Hill.
  3. **Efficiencies are required** to streamline processes and mitigate confusing iterations.
  4. **Role clarification is required.**
  5. An unclear process creates **an emotional toll** for everyone involved.
  6. The **time is right for change**: a key success factor for change is having a clear vision. The Complete Community Framework provides critical guidance.
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# The opportunity – what we heard

## 1. Eliminate Duplication

- i. Decisions are revisited by multiple parties
- ii. Expectations are not clear
- iii. Review is 'siloed'
- iv. Adjacent municipalities have better processes that are precedents (Asherville, Raleigh)

## 2. Better use staff expertise

- i. Staff are underutilized: facilitators vs experts
- ii. Generate responsibility for recommendations by defining their role more in keeping with professional expectations
- iii. Add clarity to where decisions are being made

## 3. Acknowledgement that there is no 'silver bullet'

- i. And yet the aspiration to do better exists
- ii. Find the low-hanging fruit: begin with process changes
- iii. Concern that even if 'processes' are fixed, people will still behave the same

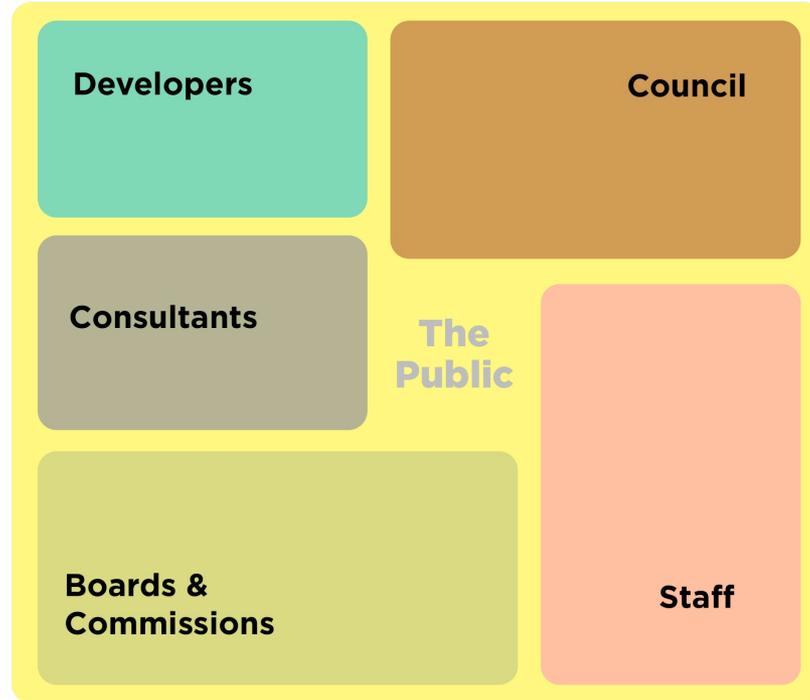
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# Project Principles

| PROJECT PRINCIPLES                            | Implications  |
|---|---|
| Build on existing work-to-date                | Review and consider the new expedited review process for affordable housing |
| Collect diverse perspectives and inputs       | Council, staff, developers, boards, consultants, public                     |
| Maintain momentum                             | Manage the PSE to key dates with clear outcomes                             |
| Build trust in Council's commitment to change | Implement a trial alternative review mechanism                              |
| Deliver tangible outcomes                     | Propose a revised development review process                                |
| Ensure deliverability                         | Work closely with Planning Staff to ensure alignment                        |

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# Key Inputs



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*Key Inputs of the Planning Systems Evaluation*

# Objectives

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## Planning Systems Evaluation Objectives

1. Re-establish planning culture expectations
2. Ensure future outcomes align with the vision of Chapel Hill
3. Focus on successful implementation
4. Align work underway with Complete Communities Strategy objectives
5. Position development for to deliver on city building outcomes versus a culture of regulation
6. Assess the Role of Boards and Commissions to find efficiencies
7. Create developer participation in the review to build confidence/trust
8. Assess/use information that Orion has collected to date

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# How will change take place?

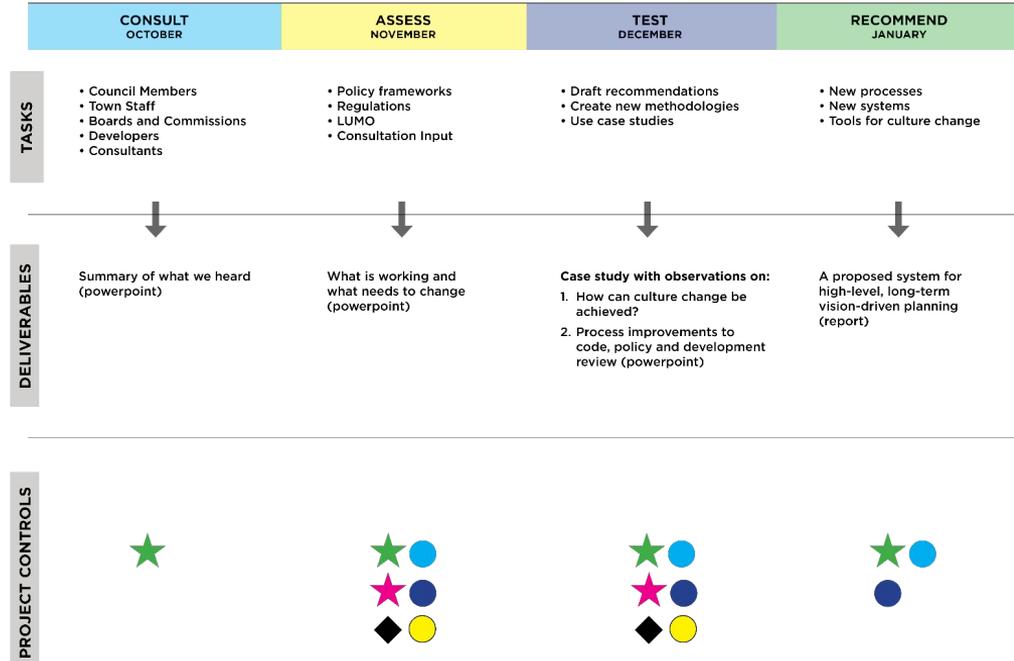
1. **Alignment with a vision is new: Complete Community Framework sets the stage for process change.**
  2. **Culture change requires clear roles – and for people to work within the bounds of their role.**
  3. **New Processes are a tool – but they will not deliver the outcome. People will.**
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# Approach

## Planning Systems Evaluation

Towards a city-building driven approach to planning systems in Chapel Hill 9/29/22



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### LEGEND

- ★ PSC
- Town Council
- ★ PSE Meetings
- Project Management Meetings
- ◆ Boards & Commissions
- The Public

# In and Out of Scope

| In Scope  | Out of Scope (follows approval)  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Evaluate Development Review                                   | Implement changes in the process |
| Assess Roles in the Review Process                            | Monitor implementation           |
| Review Role of Boards and Commissions                         | Build consensus on these roles   |
| Recommend a revised process to Council based on due diligence | Revise internal processes        |
| Understanding the level of detail in the LUMO                 | Rewriting the LUMO               |
| A summary deck of recommendations that is usable to staff     | A traditional report             |
| Re-establish planning culture expectations                    | Changing the culture             |

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# Critical Questions to be explored

| # | Question   | Focus  |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | How can we reduce the time it takes to approve new developments? | Consolidating processes                          |
| 2 | How can we deliver better outcomes?                              | Understanding what is working today, what is not |
| 3 | How can we ensure Boards and Commissions are appropriately used? | Ensuring clear roles                             |
| 4 | How should Council best participate in the review process?       | Ensuring appropriate roles                       |
| 5 | What Planning Systems will best deliver a complete community?    | Aligning Planning Systems with desired outcomes  |

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# Homework

1. Clear objectives of development review.
  2. Culture will change by changing roles.
  3. New Processes.
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# Appendices and Meeting Notes

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