



OPEN A PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE COMPLETE COMMUNITY STRATEGY – UPDATE TO CHAPEL HILL 2020

SUMMARY REPORT

TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL
Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Deputy Town Manager
Britany Waddell, Planning Director
Judy Johnson, Assistant Planning Director

MEETING DATE April 19, 2023	APPLICANT Town of Chapel Hill
---------------------------------------	---

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the Council open the hearing to update the Town’s Comprehensive Plan with the Complete Community Strategy and its components, receive public comments, and continue the hearing to May 10, 2023.

PROJECT VISION

The Complete Community Strategy has several objectives including:

- To build consensus about where and how to build.
- To determine where complete communities can be advanced, exploring trade-offs and opportunities.
- To identify strategic projects to implement the Town’s vision for a connected and sustainable future.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

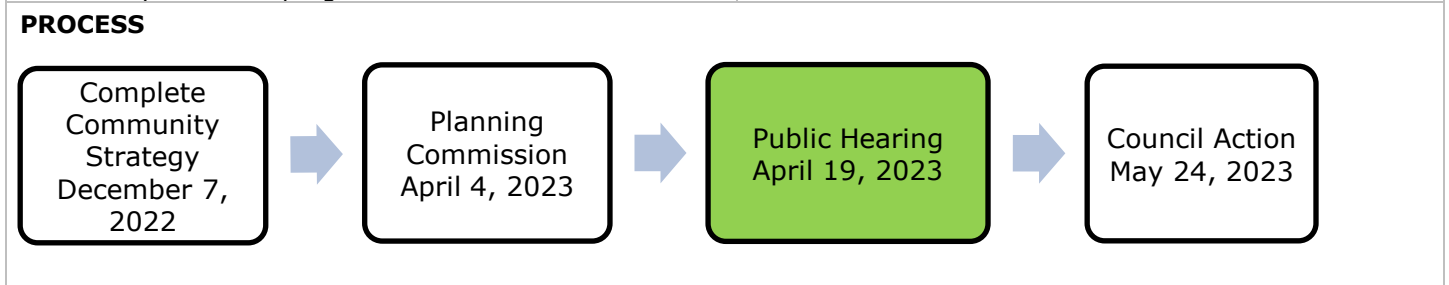
The Complete Community Strategy was a Council-led initiative to determine a new approach toward housing creation in Chapel Hill. The strategy details how Chapel Hill can purposefully grow to meet the projected housing needs. The Council adopted a resolution endorsing the Complete Community Strategy on [December 7, 2022](#)¹ acknowledging that an amendment to the Town’s Comprehensive Plan, Chapel Hill 2020, would need to occur to incorporate the Strategy into the Plan.

Staff has initiated the Everywhere to Everywhere Greenway pilot project by submitting grant applications for federal funding and staff has provided updates to the Council on resource needs for implementation through the 5-year budget strategy and annual budget processes. Staff has also taken initial steps to initiate the Midtown (short-term) Pilot Project and the Parkline (long-term) Pilot Project. Staff will develop a process to regularly report on all implementation steps so the Council and community can track progress.

DECISION POINTS

Does the Council agree with the following steps:

- Update the Town’s Comprehensive Plan with the Complete Community Strategy as the guiding vision.
- Support updating the Town’s Comprehensive Plan to include the Everywhere to Everywhere Greenways Plan (Public Hearing scheduled for May 10, 2023)
- Provide guidance on the creation of the Natural Areas Map and next steps.



- ATTACHMENTS**
1. Technical Report
 2. Draft Staff Presentation
 3. Resolution A
 4. Planning Commission Recommendation
 5. Draft Complete Community Strategy, Amendment to Chapel Hill 2020

¹ <https://chapelhill.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5955330&GUID=C74831CF-A66F-46CC-BC7D-762C09193961>



TECHNICAL REPORT

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

1. Planning Commission: At the April 4, 2023 Planning Commission meeting, the Commission recommended adoption of the Complete Community Framework.

ELEMENTS

The Chapel Hill 2020 Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2012 as a framework for the community and for the Town in managing Chapel Hill's future. Since 2012, many new components to the Town's Comprehensive Plan have been adopted. The Complete Community Framework would add an important, guiding vision to the various comprehensive plan elements.

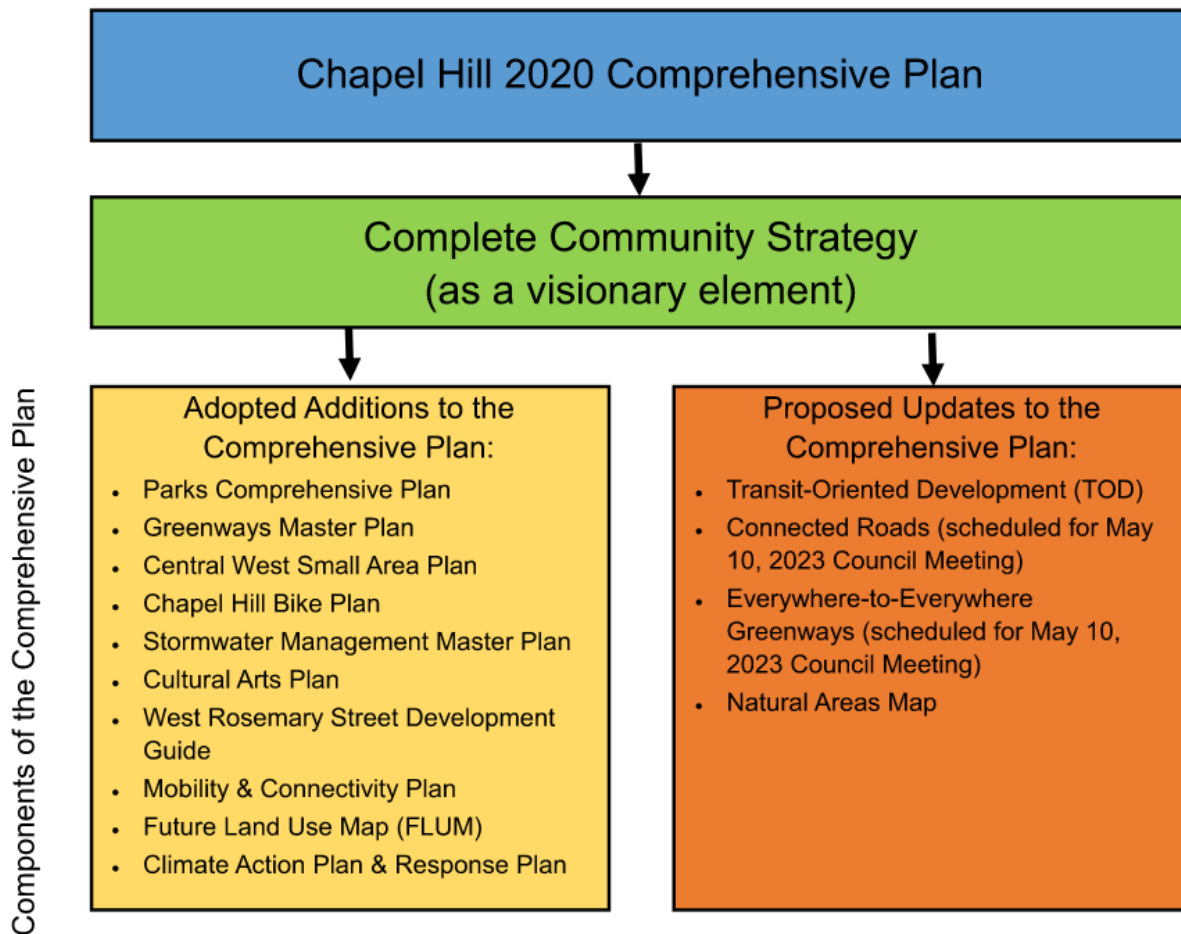


IMAGE A

The relationship between the 2020 Comprehensive Plan and its components is shown in Image A. The Comprehensive Plan is a series of visionary documents where the Council details its policies and

visions. Town staff implements the Council’s vision through the Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO) and other regulating documents like the Engineering Design Manual.

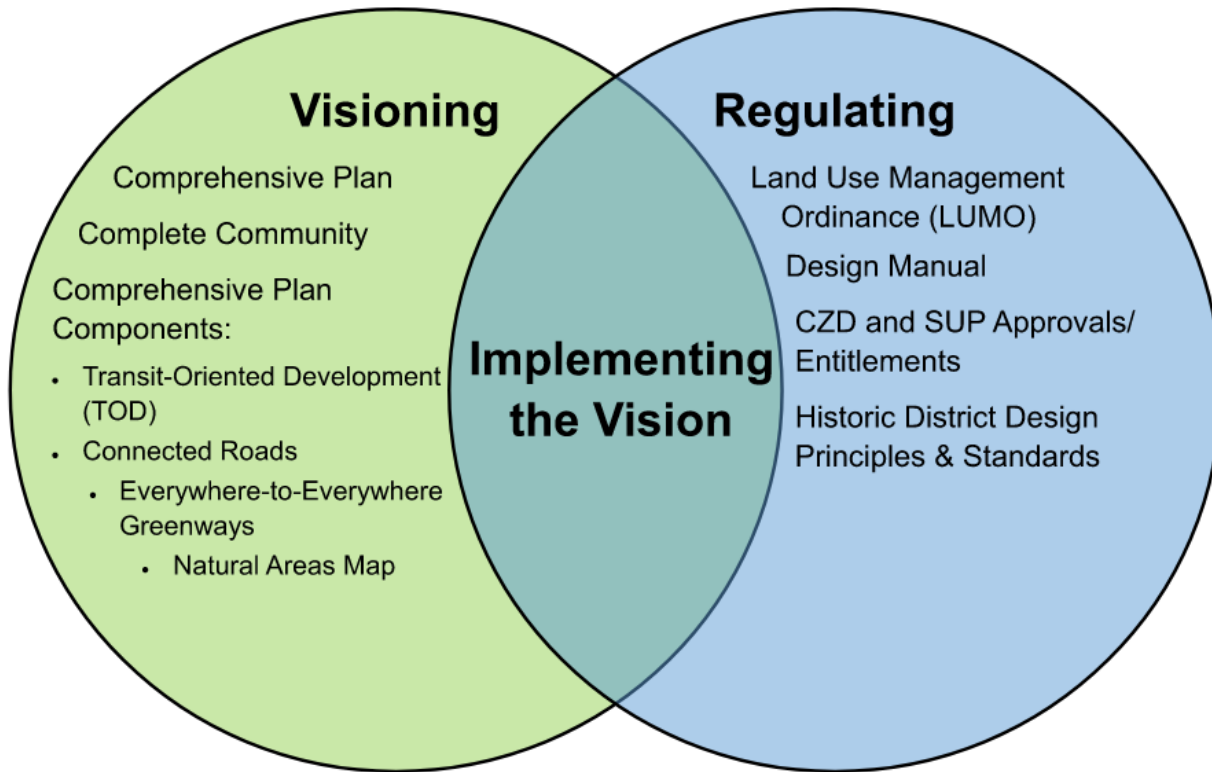


IMAGE B

Tonight, we bring forward the following new elements:

1. Complete Community Strategy: The Complete Community Strategy expands the vision of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan and weaves together the various plan elements that have amended the 2020 Comprehensive Plan since its adoption in 2012. The Complete Community Strategy document details the vision of the Town’s Comprehensive Plan and provides a road map that guides future decisions about how the Town should evolve over time.

The key tenets of the Complete Community Strategy include:

Assets: Qualities of Chapel Hill that make it a unique and desirable place. Decisions about the future should be made to protect and enhance these elements.

Design Attributes: Qualities of the physical environment that Chapel Hill has and desires to provide more of to the people who live, work, and visit the community. Creating connected, attractive, human-scaled places supports climate goals and a more inclusive community.

Programs & Amenities: Strategies to attract, support, and provide the programs and amenities that people in the community need and desire on an everyday basis supports an active, complete, and vibrant place.

Social Equity Drivers: Qualities of a place for everyone that provides equitable access to the necessities and amenities that support a healthy, safe, and fulfilling community.

A Complete Community includes:

- Diversity of housing types (both rental and ownership opportunities)
- Live/work/learn/play in the same walkshed
- Abundant active transportation and transit connections
- Designed for walking and cycling
- Pedestrian-oriented design
- Mixed-use buildings including housing, community, office, and retail uses

As the Town reviews new development applications for compliance with the Town's Comprehensive Plan, the tenets of the strategy (social equity drivers, assets, programs and amenities, and design attributes) provide a strategic approach to growth.

2. Natural Areas Map: Town staff has initiated efforts to create a Natural Area Suitability Analysis as attempts to identify areas within the Town's Jurisdictional Limits that exhibit characteristics consistent with criteria defining natural habitat. The initial criteria has used three sub-models: Natural Habitat, Hydrology and Land Use/Land Cover.

The Town staff developed the draft Natural Areas Map to balance the competing goals of development with environmental protection. This draft map identifies the existing environmental resources in Chapel Hill. The objectives of the map will include:

- Balance development with conservation
- Preserve and enhance the ecology, natural resources, and habitats
- Encourage forest and mature tree protection
- Habitat corridors

The draft map is being shared for input and guidance on the development of the process. The Natural Areas Map, once completed, will be shared with Advisory Boards and stakeholders as well as Town Council for consideration as an element of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. We anticipate bringing this map forward in the next couple of months.

3. Everywhere to Everywhere Greenways Map:
The Everywhere to Everywhere Map in Appendix A is based on corridors identified by the Keesmaat Group to support the Complete Community Framework. Town staff reviewed the corridors, compared them to the facilities proposed in the Mobility and Connectivity Plan, and looked at the technical feasibility of the recommendations.

Staff recommends adding 14 new segments of greenway (in pink) and one additional at-grade crossing (red cross) to the Mobility Plan. These additions represent 6.5 miles of future greenways and bike lanes to support the Council's vision of a connected community.

Staff is bringing this forward along with Complete Community updates to the Comprehensive Plan.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR COUNCIL

Town staff have been working to address necessary changes to the Town's Engineering Design Manual.

Design Manual: Town staff has been working to update the Engineering Design Manual, last approved in 2005, to reflect the changing conditions. We anticipate the updated Design Manual to be approved by the Town Manager shortly. Once approved, additional information will be shared with the Town Council