

Petition for Long-Range Planning in Chapel Hill

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Our region and town are experiencing significant growth pressures. Rod Stevens, a town planning and economic development consultant, recently presented Council with a call to action to engage in a planning process that will help us direct future growth in a way that is consistent with our town values of diversity, sustainability, and vibrancy and will benefit the town by creating:

- Complete and accurate data on what we have approved, in the pipeline, and completed so we can accurately track and use those data to make future decisions to address the level of housing, retail and office need in our community
- 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 multi-family
- Desirable, walkable neighborhoods with a variety of amenities for residents that promote recreation and multi-modal 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

Mr. Stevens pointed out that this is the most important work Council can do to plan for excellence and equity into the future. To answer this call to action, we are petitioning The Town Manager and Staff to begin a process that will chart our path forward. This should include:

- Creating a functional data system that meets our analytical and tracking needs
- Consulting with Rod Stevens on what form the process should take, what the scope of work should be and who should be hired
- Determining necessary funding and its source
- Aligning the process with the current LUMO process, perhaps as the “second phase” approved by Council in early 2019, which will be informed by our Climate Action Plan as well as other existing planning documents.

We would ask that the Manager begin the work on this process as soon as possible, with a goal of the consultant beginning work in early 2022. In addition, we request an update on this initiative at the November 17, 2021, Council meeting to give us information on progress to date and any actions needed in order to meet our goal of work commencing in early 2022.