



Legislation Text

File #: [23-0558], Version: 1

Receive Update on the Building Integrated Communities Initiative.

Staff:

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Department:

Affordable Housing and Community
Connections

Overview: The purpose of this item is to share an update to the [Building Integrated Communities](https://www.townofchapelhill.org/government/departments-services/housing-and-community/community-connections/immigrants-and-refugees/building-integrated-communities) <<https://www.townofchapelhill.org/government/departments-services/housing-and-community/community-connections/immigrants-and-refugees/building-integrated-communities>> (BIC) Initiative. BIC is a collaboration with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill dedicated to strengthening the Town's engagement of immigrant and refugee residents in Town programs, services, and decision-making processes. BIC implementation is currently funded primarily by a three-year grant from the BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina Foundation.

☆ **Recommendation(s):**

That the Council receive this update on the BIC initiative implementation progress.

Overview of the Building Integrated Communities (BIC) Project: The BIC initiative helps North Carolina local governments successfully engage to improve relationships, enhance communication, and promote civic participation and leadership among immigrant and refugee residents. Chapel Hill was selected to participate as a BIC partner in 2017 and subsequently completed a community assessment and developed a BIC Action Plan. The [BIC Action Plan](https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showpublisheddocument/41909/636861163749570000) <<https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showpublisheddocument/41909/636861163749570000>> is organized around five key issue areas: public transportation, housing, public safety and law enforcement, leadership, and government communication.

Implementation Progress: Since Council approved the [BIC Action Plan](https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showpublisheddocument/41909/636861163749570000) <<https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showpublisheddocument/41909/636861163749570000>> in 2019, Affordable Housing and Community Connections, in collaboration with departments across the Town and community partners, have made substantial progress on implementation. For highlights of our implementation progress see below. Additional details are included in the attached Summary.

- Unanimous adoption of a Town-wide [Language Access Plan \(LAP\)](https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showpublisheddocument/41909/636861163749570000) <[chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showpublisheddocument/41909/636861163749570000](https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showpublisheddocument/41909/636861163749570000)> in 2019. Since adoption, we have rapidly expanded the Town's language services - translating hundreds of Town communications and providing interpretation for over 100 Town meetings.
- Receiving national recognition for our language access efforts by the [Migration Policy Institute](https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showpublisheddocument/41909/636861163749570000) <[chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showpublisheddocument/41909/636861163749570000](https://www.townofchapelhill.org/home/showpublisheddocument/41909/636861163749570000)> policy organization.
- Established contracts with language service organizations and purchased interpretation equipment for Town and community use.
- Holding trainings for Town employees on Language Access and Justice. To date approximately 42% of Town employees have participated in language access trainings, and by the end of FY24, staff

- anticipate reaching 100% of Town employees participating in at least one training.
- Collaborating with housing providers to amend eligibility criteria to serve residents without citizenship status.
- Initiating innovative partnerships with community organizations through the pandemic, such as the Neighborhood Support Circles, Interpreter Bank Pilot, and *Promotora* Health Outreach.
- Receiving a \$375,000 accelerator grant award from the BlueCross BlueShield of NC Foundation to support implementation of the Action Plan.
- Hiring our first bilingual Community Connections Coordinator, Katelyn Robalino, to coordinate BIC implementation.
- Creating new pathways for participation by hosting the Town's first bilingual and hybrid Peoples Academy that included 10 Spanish speaking and 41 BIPOC participants and recruiting immigrant and refugee residents to serve on Town advisory boards.
- Offering paid engagement opportunities to compensate immigrant and refugee residents for participating in Town projects, such as the Engagement Study.

Fiscal Impact/Resources: The BIC initiative is funded primarily through a \$375,000 grant award from the BlueCross BlueShield of North Carolina Foundation, which is dispersed in \$125,000 increments between FY23-25. Additional resources from the General Fund support BIC implementation, including \$80,000, which Council approved in the recently adopted FY24 Budget, for the employee language pay incentive.



Attachments:

- Building Integrated Communities Implementation Update June 2023

The Agenda will reflect the text below and/or the motion text will be used during the meeting.

By accepting this report, the Council receives the Building Integrated Communities Action Plan implementation update.