



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

Town Hall
405 Martin Luther King Jr.
Boulevard
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Legislation Text

File #: [22-0209], **Version:** 1

Update on Plans for Assessing the Town's Planning Functions and Systems.

March 6, 2022

Dear Members of the Chapel Hill Town Council,

In response to interest from the Town Council, we are writing to update you on plans for conducting an assessment of the Town's planning functions and systems for the purpose of improving efficiency and achieving better outcomes for our community.

Because this work will inform the next phase of the Town's Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO) rewrite process, we plan to move forward expeditiously, with the assessment beginning in the next two months and lasting for about four months.

To that end, we will be taking the following steps in the coming weeks:

- 1) Pausing work on the LUMO Rewrite process by SOM while allowing Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) planning to continue, as needed
- 2) Forming a Mayor's Steering Committee consisting of the Mayor, Town Manager, Planning Director, Economic Development Officer, and two to three council members
- 3) Hiring a consultant to work with the Town to identify ways that our planning processes can be more efficient and produce better outcomes

The Steering Committee will be responsible for outlining a project scope and desired outputs, choosing the consultant, monitoring progress, and facilitating communication with the entire Council.

An initial list of interests and goals for this work is attached.

We appreciate your support for this initiative and will keep you informed as we move forward with these steps.

Sincerely,

Pam Hemminger, Mayor
Maurice Jones, Town Manager



Attachments:

- Initial list of interests and goals

ATTACHMENT
Initial list of interests and goals

Before Chapel Hill continues next steps in our Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO) rewrite process, the members of the Chapel Hill Town Council have expressed an interest in engaging with our Town Manager, Planning Director and an outside consultant in undertaking a comprehensive assessment of the Town's current planning functions. The Council wants to be proactive and drive the way our town changes and grows. The purpose of this step is to improve the efficiency and outcomes in all aspects of land use planning and project review by learning lessons from our past and considering best practices being used in other communities.

The assessment must reflect a solid understanding of the limitations and challenges faced by North Carolina cities and towns due to the fact that we are a Dillon's Rule state and should address the following interests:

- Achieving a stronger long-term planning culture in our community, to realize town goals and create complete neighborhoods, with infrastructure to support them
- Creating a shared understanding across the organization and with Council of the goals and outcomes we want to achieve through the planning and review processes
- Determining ways in which our planning processes can arrive at these outcomes in more efficient and effective ways
- Ensuring that our processes create solid connections between town policies and outcomes and that they support our interest in maximizing community benefits from our land use decisions
- Identifying best practices for applying various lenses such as equity and environmental sustainability to our work
- Helping us think about how our planning processes can help us to balance our various interests as we grow, including:
 - Affordability and affordable housing
 - Environmental stewardship and stormwater mitigation
 - Multi-modal mobility and connectivity
 - Parks, greenspaces and public spaces
 - Economic vitality and resilience
 - Place-making, place-keeping, an urban design

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

By receiving the report, the Council acknowledges receipt of the update on plans for assessing the Town's planning functions and systems.