

Statement of Compliance with the Town's 2020 Comprehensive Plan and Design Guidelines

The Town of Chapel Hill's 2020 Comprehensive Plan establishes group principals and area specific principals to guide future growth within the Town's ETJ and Urban Services Boundary and more specifically within the 15/501 South Area. Obey Creek is envisioned to embrace all of these principals and in doing so provide for future growth in a sustainable footprint in close proximity to existing infrastructure. The integration of these principals into the design and the preservation of two-thirds of the site as open space honors the spirit of the Southern Small Area Plan developed in the early 1990's.

Meet the community needs through a commercial rather than a residential focus. Plan for increased use of transit . Sustainability - The driving principal behind the vision for Obey Creek is 'long term sustainability'. Long term sustainability is the balance of economic, social, environmental and cultural concerns in a manner that enables uses to adapt over time to meet changing demands. The principal systems that provide for a sustainable and resilient community revolve around interconnected pedestrian and multi-modal vehicular circulation patterns, stormwater management systems, energy management systems, civic spaces and parks, and open space areas. The Concept Plan for Obey Creek illustrates a proposed interconnected pattern for development. Of key importance is the interconnectivity within an urban streetscape along with connections to adjacent Southern Village, Southern Park, Town Park and Ride and the proposed Town Park. This pattern of clustered uses enables the preservation of a significant natural area that helps to balance urban lifestyle. The development proposed focuses on a vibrant main street of commercial, hotel, civic and entertainment uses. Supportive workplace offices, and residential uses are proposed to be located predominately above the commercial main street. Small pocket parks located strategically throughout the community will supplement the 82 acre Town park. In this form Obey Creek is designed to meet the community needs through a commercial rather than a residential focus. This serves to increase the Town's commercial tax base while minimizing the impact on surrounding schools.

Encourage clustered retail development including any new development toward the county line . Maintain the Urban Services/Rural Buffer Boundary - Obey Creek proposes to cluster development within a smaller area (30% of the site) and preserve the balance of the site in open space (70% of the site). This development strategy maximizes the efficiency of Town services and minimizes unnecessary sprawl. This strategy of cluster development recognizes and honors the spirit the Southern Small Area Plan by dedicating large amounts of open space in perpetuity. Densities that encourage transit use are key to the success and resiliency of the proposed development. This clustering of uses is aligned along a main street extending parallel to 15/501 towards the county line.

Plan collaboratively for the 15-501 corridor with Orange County and Chatham County (including transit planning) . Participate in the Regional Planning Process - Regional planning efforts promote the development of mixed-use areas of high-medium density within close proximity of existing and proposed mass transit routes. Chapel Hill Transit is currently serving the 15/501 corridor and has recently extended its service to Pittsboro to the south. Densities that are needed to encourage ridership and at the same time discourage automobile use are key to the long term sustainability. A diverse mixture of uses including housing, civic, and employment are proposed along the 15/501 corridor along with transit loading stations at key central locations throughout Obey Creek.

Minimize the traffic impact on adjacent neighborhoods . Provide corridor buffer along 15-501, allowing for visibility and access to retail or commercial development . Conserve and Protect Existing Neighborhoods - The mixture of uses is designed to create a pedestrian-friendly public realm that serves as a focus for the proposed community and adjacent neighborhoods. The careful balance of this mixture of uses, combined with human-scale architecture, characteristic of urban forms, will ensure that Obey Creek enhances the "livability" of the entire 15/501 Corridor. The compact form and extensive pedestrian walkways within the development will encourage transit use and minimize the traffic impact on adjacent neighborhoods. A grade separated pedestrian and bicycle crossing is proposed to link Obey Creek with Southern Park, Mary Scroggs Elementary School, and Southern Village neighborhood across 15/501.

Maximize permanent preservation of open space . Preserve and enhance the "Green Gateway" . Conserve and Protect the Town's Existing Natural Setting - Preservation and dedication of the large (82+ ac) park to the east of Wilson Creek will enhance the livability of the entire Southern Area of Chapel Hill. This area is characterized by steep slopes, predominately hardwood vegetation and pristine streams. Easy access for all Town residents via numerous access points and greenway linkages is an essential part of the Obey Creek open space system. Another component of the open space system is the streetyard along 15/501. It is proposed to have varied setbacks and building height envelopes allowing for numerous tree re-plantings and accessible pedestrian friendly open areas. This control will insure that the character of the Town's "Green Gateway" respects this principal and encourages pedestrian and bicycle activity along this new urban streetscape.

Identify Areas Where There Are Creative Development Opportunities - Few development sites exist within the Urban Services boundary that offer the level of existing infrastructure that is available to Obey Creek. The close proximity to the Town and UNC Campus and Hospitals makes Obey Creek a responsible choice for the site of future growth. Through careful and sensitive design solutions, the benefits of clustering development in the manner proposed can serve to balance any environmental and social impacts.

Promote possibility of workforce housing or accommodations for other identified community needs, such as senior citizen housing. Minimize the impact of development on schools . Encourage Desirable Forms of Non-Residential Development; Create and Preserve Affordable Housing Opportunities - Obey Creek is planned with shops, offices, a hotel and residences oriented along a lively and pedestrian-friendly main street. The retail shops are designed with offices and residential housing fronting on walkways with outdoor dining and gathering areas. Only a limited amount of convenience parking will be provided at street level. Additional structured parking will be provided below grade, beneath the buildings and commons areas. Affordable housing offering both for-rent and for-sale opportunities will help to ensure the vibrancy and long term resiliency of Obey Creek. The design concept proposed maintains the flexibility needed to accommodate community needs such as senior citizen housing and workforce housing in a sustainable urban context. By providing for and targeting workforce and senior citizen housing the impact of the development on local schools is minimized.

Work Toward A Balanced Transportation System - Obey Creek is planned around a comprehensive pedestrian system which links the main street sidewalks and plazas with the greenway park along the eastern boundary. Pedestrian plaza areas and access points will ensure that all residents and visitors enjoy equal and unimpeded access. A Town bikeway, separate from vehicular traffic, is planned to meander along the 15/501 frontage. These facilities, along with existing bus routes along 15/501, combine to make Obey Creek a critical link in balancing alternative transportation modes with convenient living opportunities. Facilities and programs will be provided that encourage bicycle and "alternative fuel vehicles use over that of private automobiles. These programs will help to disseminate information related to "alternative transportation modes" to residents and visitors.

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Promote greenways, particularly along and near creeks . Improve connectivity of bike/ped among neighborhoods, schools, community facilities, and parks . Complete the Bikeway/Greenway/Sidewalk Systems - A complete system of greenways, bikeways and sidewalks provides the principal framework for Obey Creek. The connectivity of these pedestrian systems will be given priority over vehicular traffic in order to create a community that is pleasurable and promotes walkability. The scale of streets, interconnectivity and crosswalk design and spacing will combine to enhance the resiliency of the neighborhood over time and instantly improve connectivity of bike/ped among neighborhoods, schools, community facilities, and parks. A linear greenway park is proposed along the west side of Wilson Creek, extend the length of the property and providing critical access into the proposed Town Park. Direct access to Obey Creek and the proposed Town Park will be provided to the Southern Park, Town Park and Ride Lot and Southern Village via a grade separated crossing across 15/501.

Provide Quality Facilities and Services - Facilities for employment and daily shopping needs by the residents of Obey Creek and adjacent neighborhoods will be given priority when designing and leasing the retail and office space. This will help to insure that residents will have the opportunity of obtaining the daily essentials without having to rely on unnecessary automobile trips as is the case for much of the Southern Area today.

Zoning - It is anticipated that a rezoning to Mixed-Use Village (MU-V) will provide the framework necessary to enable Obey Creek to develop as envisioned. Except for any specific conditions that arise from the Special Use Permit process Obey Creek will comply with all applicable Town zoning regulations and design standards. These include standards and regulations relative to streams, Resource Conservation District, steep slopes, tree preservation, erosion and sedimentation control, rainwater management, solid waste management, parking, and utilities.

Architecture and the Natural Grades - The architectural character, creation of activity centers, views and visual impact will develop from the concepts and ideals expressed during this process. Of particular concern is the design and use of architecture to work with the grades of the site. By stepping buildings up the slope to create a main-street corridor the change in elevation (east to west) helps to create a change in character between the two principal corridors. The main-street corridor, rising gently from north to south, will become the primary avenue for retail sidewalk activity, vehicular traffic, and transit circulation patterns. The residential/service lane along the eastern boundary will combine with the adjacent greenway park to create a more relaxed space. The greenway park will be designed to transition from this residential streetscape to the natural Town Park. Residential entryway stoops, a tree-lined narrow street with some parallel on-street parking and pathway for strolling will invite residents of the Town to stroll along this linear park.

Promote architectural diversity and quality with design guidelines . Emulate design principles of market area of Southern Village, including building height restrictions . Utilize clustered, compact development to maximize open space preservation - The building height envelopes have been carefully set to maintain a 3-story (or less) streetscape along 15/501 while increasing density as one enters the site and approaches the main street. This increase in building height and density allows for a sustainable level of compactness that supports and encourages transit use and enables greater preservation of openspace. It should be noted that as one moves further away from 15/501, the increased building height envelopes combine with a drop in the grade to effectively diminish the overall impact from 15/501 and provide a scale that will compliment the character of Southern Village. Architectural diversity will be achieved through an emphasis on varied building facades and materials and at intersection focal points and at the terminus of views.

Preserve and enhance natural resources (make public) including water quality and stormwater - The preservation and dedication of an 82 acre Town Park including the Wilson Creek Stream Corridor embodies the commitment to preserving and enhancing the sites natural resources.

Stormwater Management During and After Construction - Another key concern is the control of stormwater and sediment both during the construction phase and after completion. Systems design to capture stormwater which now extends across the site from ditches along 15/501 will be integral to the design of Obey Creek. These systems will provide for some limited irrigation and will detain and treat existing run-off. A more detailed explanation of the stormwater design strategies follows:

During Construction

The critical component of controlling the impact of construction on adjacent stream buffers and stream channels is to control both the increased run-off created by a denuded site and the sediment carried in the run-off. Several jurisdictions have recently increased their requirements for the sizing of erosion control. These changes address both the design storm event that must be controlled by the device as well as the size of the device in relationship to the disturbed area.

The Orange County Erosion Control Division has long been on the forefront of the design and inspection requirements for sedimentation and erosion control. Along with the Faircloth skimmer device that has been highly successful in Orange County and beyond, attention to sedimentation device sizing, placement, outlet structures and armoring of temporary swales and ditches have all improved the control of run-off from construction.

On this site, we would also employ the best practices we have seen applied in other jurisdictions. The States design for super-critical areas by incorporating the high efficiency sediment basin design that are designed based on the settling efficiency of particulates during the passage through the device. Where typical designs are based on ratios to drainage areas and disturbed areas, the high efficiency sediment basin considers the topography of the basin and the flow path through the basin to insure the proper settling performance is achieved. Also, the installation of double rows of silt fence between specific devices where appropriate will be used to insure extra protection is provided.

Post-Construction

The Town of Chapel Hill's requirements for control of stormwater run-off from a development are the strictest in the area. Stormwater detention and treatment devices will be constructed to control the 2-year post-development run-off volume to the pre-development level. Further, the post-development run-off rate for the 1-year, 2-year and 25-year storm events will not exceed the pre-development rates. Current Town requirements call for removal of 85% of the Total Suspended Solids. But, pending Jordan Lake rules will also require the reduction of the nitrogen and phosphorus production from the proposed impervious surfaces. All of the Town's regulations and the pending Jordan Lake rules will be met with the stormwater facility designs on this project. Furthermore, an ongoing maintenance and operation agreement will be recorded with the Town and continual inspections will be completed to insure the facilities continue to operate in accordance with the designed purpose and efficiency.