



# Community Connections Strategy Implementation Update

## December 2020



Our Year One Progress in Implementing the Town's Strategy for Equitable Community Engagement

### OBJECTIVE 1

Increase the diversity of residents engaged in Town processes and programs to fully reflect the composition of the community, with particular focus on engaging populations that have been historically disengaged or disconnected from the Town.

#### Result 1

The Town creates effective pathways for residents to learn about and engage in Town processes and programs.

#### Strategies

#### Status

#### Notes

1	Conduct gaps analysis & engagement study		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff conducted initial internal analysis in winter 2020</li> <li>The external engagement component of study has been postponed due to COVID-19 impacts and budgetary constraints</li> </ul>
2	Assess engagement tools		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff assessed engagement tools used by Town departments in winter 2020</li> <li>Summary of engagement tools will be included in Engagement Study report, when completed</li> </ul>
3	Pilot new approaches		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff have piloted a variety of new engagement approaches, including:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing technology tools (computer, internet access, web-camera) to community members engaged on Town boards</li> <li>Providing interpretation for virtual Town meetings</li> <li>Providing one-on-one support to community members who are engaging with the Town for the first time</li> <li>Using new social media and communications tools</li> <li>Compensating low-income residents who participated in COVID-19 Family Check-Ins for their time with a grocery gift card or stipend</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

#### Result 2

Town communications are accessible to Chapel Hill's diverse community.

#### Strategies

#### Status

#### Notes

5	Create a Language Access Plan (LAP)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council approved Town-wide Language Access Plan in November 2019</li> <li>Staff is currently implementing the LAP</li> <li>Town LAP received state-wide recognition and serves as model to other local governments across North Carolina</li> </ul>
6	Train Town staff on Language Access Plan (LAP) and plain language guidelines		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff provided all departments with LAP Introductory Training and plain language training to targeted staff</li> <li>Tilde Language Justice Cooperative provided two-part training to key communications staff in fall 2020</li> </ul>
7	Explore implementation of new communications and marketing tools		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff have used a variety of new tools, including:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housing and Community newsletter</li> <li>Multi-lingual social media messages, sidewalk decals, bus ads, and video recordings</li> <li>Plain language, multi-lingual COVID-19 community resource guides and flyers</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
8	Develop and implement plain language guidelines		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff formed Plain Language Team</li> <li>Staff received Plain Language training and tested draft guidelines</li> <li>Additional staff will be trained in February 2021</li> </ul>

Legend: = completed = in progress = not yet started

For more information, visit:

[townofchapelhill.org/government/departments-services/housing-and-community/community-connections](https://townofchapelhill.org/government/departments-services/housing-and-community/community-connections)



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## OBJECTIVE 2

Deepen the Town's connections and engagement with organizations, groups, and populations that historically have been disengaged or disconnected from the Town.

### Result 3

The Town builds community partnerships and programs that prioritize the needs and interests of residents historically disengaged and disconnected from the Town.

#### Strategies

#### Status

#### Notes

9	Determine who the Town is currently serving		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff gathered available data from Town departments in initial phase of engagement study and developed prototype for demographic data to collect going forward</li> <li>Staff anticipate making more progress on this strategy when we resume the engagement study</li> </ul>
10	Increase Town investment in community organizations and organizing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Since March of 2020, the Town had invested over \$1.1 Million in community organizations and partnership to respond to human service needs that emerged through the COVID-19 pandemic, including: Neighborhood Support Circles, Emergency Housing Assistance, and food distribution</li> </ul>
11	Pilot new partnerships and programs		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff have piloted several new partnership and programs, including:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Family Check Ins</li> <li>2. Neighborhood Support Circles &amp; Scholastic Support Centers</li> <li>3. Neighborhood Library Circulator Programs</li> <li>4. Laptop and internet hotspot distribution</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

### Result 4

The Town strengthens internal capacity and coordination to implement the Community Connections Strategy.

#### Strategies

#### Status

#### Notes

12	Define roles and charter for Community Connections Team		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff formed CC Team, composed of engagement staff from across Town department</li> <li>Team meets quarterly and provides ongoing support to each other in engagement efforts</li> </ul>
13	Conduct internal analysis to identify gaps in Town capacity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff conducted initial internal analysis in winter 2020; external engagement postponed due to COVID-19 impacts and budgetary constraints</li> </ul>
14	Develop Community Engagement Toolkit		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CC team developed Tool Kit that includes resources, templates, prototypes, etc. to assist engagement staff with their efforts</li> <li>The Tool Kit is being used by staff from across the Town</li> <li>Staff will continue to develop the Tool Kit this fiscal year</li> </ul>
15	Build skills and shared understanding among employees of Strategy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff briefed leadership and key engagement staff from all departments on the CC Strategy</li> <li>Staff providing ongoing technical assistance to Planning, Public Housing, Transit, and other departments who frequently engage the community</li> <li>Staff plan to offer additional training/learning opportunities this fiscal year</li> </ul>
16	Further develop cohort of multilingual and multicultural employees		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi-lingual staff have assisted with translations of Town communications</li> <li>Staff is exploring strategies to increase workforce diversity</li> </ul>

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