

# AFFORDABLE HOUSING & COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



**Fiscal Year 22**  
July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

# Annual Report

## MISSION

Creating Partnership  
Catalyzing Affordable Housing  
Building Community

## VISION

A vibrant and inclusive community where all residents have access to affordable housing and opportunities to thrive.

To learn more about our work, visit:

[www.townofchapelhill.org/housingandcommunity](http://www.townofchapelhill.org/housingandcommunity) | [www.chapelhillaffordablehousing.org](http://www.chapelhillaffordablehousing.org)

# Letter From Our Director



An ongoing pandemic, a continued call for racial equity, and skyrocketing housing prices have made for an exceptionally challenging time for our community, country, and world. In the face of these challenges, the Town's Affordable Housing and Community Connections team, in collaboration with community partners, residents, and other Town departments, has made further strides toward the Town Council's vision of a vibrant and inclusive community where all Chapel Hill residents have access to affordable housing and opportunities to thrive. Highlights from last fiscal year include:

- Deploying \$3.5 million in funding to community partners to support vital programs and projects.
- Hitting major milestones for two of our Town-initiated development projects, seeing Council approval of Jay Street and Trinity Court projects, which combined will add 100 units of affordable housing.
- Enhancing our Employee Housing Program to increase incentive awards and allow more employees to access the program. This resulted in our first homebuyer assistance award and increased interest from employees.
- Partnering with the other local governments in Orange County to create a County-wide Manufactured Home Action Plan to address the preservation needs and displacement threats to manufactured home residents.
- Creating and presenting options to the Council to expedite our review process for affordable housing development. If approved, an expedited review process could drastically change our ability to create more affordable housing more quickly in Chapel Hill.
- Completing renovations at several of our Transitional Housing and affordable rental units.
- Making progress in continuing to center equity and reduce barriers to participation in Town processes by piloting paid engagement opportunities for residents with lived experiences, creating a peer mentorship program for new advisory board members, and enhancing our language access offerings.
- Completing our Fourth Annual Peoples Academy, where graduates learned about Town services, connected with each other, and gained knowledge to lead in the community.
- Continuing our focus on engaging youth and students, jointly hosting another Good Neighbor Initiative, the Summer Youth Employment Program, and establishing a new partnership with UNC for a students' Peoples Academy launching this fall.
- Coordinating COVID-19 response and recovery efforts by funding the weekly food distribution coordinator position that served an estimated 11,000 households last year, distributing thousands of masks to residents, and supporting Neighborhood Support Circles, emergency housing assistance programs, health education outreach workers, vaccination efforts, and more.

I am grateful for the incredible staff team and partners who continue to rise together to face these community challenges. I look forward with anticipation and hope to what we will do together going forward to create more affordable housing opportunities and build a more equitable and inclusive community in Chapel Hill.

In service,

Sarah Viñas, Director of Affordable Housing and Community Connections

## Awards



### \$375,000

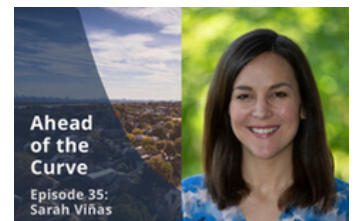
from the BlueCross BlueShield NC Foundation for Building Integrated Communities implementation.



### \$2 million

in Community Project Funding from the Federal Government to support Homestead Gardens.

## National Media





# Our Successes

# Affordable Housing



**\$5.7 million**

Town budget for affordable housing strategies



**123**

affordable housing units approved by Council



**\$2.5 million**

deployed to community partners for projects



**72%**

of funding available allocated to projects



**105**

new development units awarded funding from the Town



**516**

preservation units awarded funding from the Town



## **Transitional Housing Program**

The **Taylor family** joined the **Transitional Housing Program** in 2018, hoping to work towards homeownership. While in the program, they attended a variety of homeownership and financial counseling classes and received support from the Town's Transitional Housing Program Coordinator. **After five years, the Taylor family purchased a home from Habitat for Humanity.** "Being a homeowner will bring many benefits, such as, a permanent home that I can call my own, financial stability, and a sense of belonging in my community. Homeownership may seem like a daunting task, but the payoff is highly rewarding," says Ms. Taylor.

## **EmPOWERment House Move**

When the Town purchased property on North Street almost two years ago as part of the Rosemary Street Parking Garage project, an existing house on the property provided an opportunity. The Town needed the lot cleared, and EmPOWERment had an empty lot that needed a house that would be part of their inventory of permanently affordable rental housing serving low-income families. Now, through a collaboration with EmPOWERment and with the support of the many Town departments needed to make the move happen, a beautifully renovated house sits on the new site in the Northside community, ready to welcome home a family. The mother of the family moving in works at a nearby public school and is excited for the opportunity to raise her son in the neighborhood where she grew up and now serves. We are proud to be a partner in this true story of homecoming.



# Our Successes Community Connections



**\$923K**

Town budget for Community Connections Strategies



**39**

nonprofits funded by our Human Services Program



**61**

public meetings included interpretation services in language other than English



**15**

residents graduated from our Peoples Academy



**7,649**

readership of the Tar Heel Citizen Times, our newsletter to UNC students living off-campus



**69**

community engagement meetings facilitated

## Summer Youth Employment Program

**Jacob**, a rising senior at Chapel Hill High School, spent the summer working at the **Chapel Hill Police Department** as part of the **Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)**. The SYEP enabled Jacob to shadow a variety of different staff positions within the Police Department. He also enjoyed a range of experiences, including **ride-alongs, learning to read and lift fingerprints, and working with individuals in times of crisis**. "I would highly recommend the Summer Youth Employment Program for all teens looking for a great opportunity to learn the inner workings of our local government, and to learn about careers that can spark one's interest looking towards the future," says Jacob.



Stay Connected!  
[www.townofchapelhill.org](http://www.townofchapelhill.org)



@chapelhillgov



@TownOfChapelHill