Meeting the Need:

A Strategy for Where and How to Build Complete Communities

TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL
Special Council Meeting on Economic Development

August 18th, 2022

The Keesmaat Group.

BUSINESS STREET

HFA HURLEY FRANKS ASSOCIATES

COMPLETE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

Meeting Chapel Hill's Housing Needs

Transformative change is possible in Chapel Hill.

The Town of Chapel Hill is beginning the process of building consensus around a new approach to housing that clarifies where and how to build to inclusive, sustainable, complete communities and an economically competitive town.

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Overview

1. Review: How we got here
2. Project Objectives
3. Review: Defining Complete Communities
4. Work Plan Update
5. What we heard: Emerging Directions

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1. How we got here

Project Principles

| PROJECT PRINCIPLES	STATUS
A Conversation About Growth	Underway. Stakeholder interviews, Council member Interviews.
Realistic Targets	Underway.
Complete Neighborhoods	A proposed framework is being developed for evaluating development.
Everything on the Map	Assessment includes all land areas and a variety of development scenarios.
Money Matters	Development viability is considered in the capacity analysis.
A Stake in the Ground Decision	Process is building to the recommended pilot project.

HARD TRUTHS

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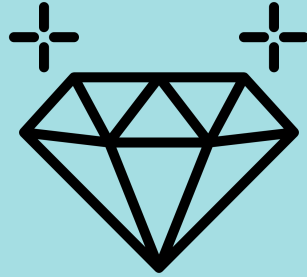
Chapel Hill is already an exclusive place.

It won't be easy, but you can be the council
that puts a stake in the ground and resets
the trajectory for the future.
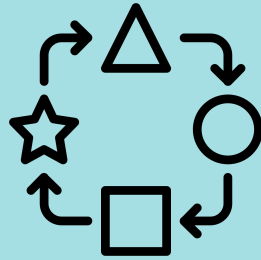
No one is happy with the planning process, or planning outcomes.

A lose/lose dynamic is driving
the best developers - who you need - away.

Chapel Hill has a difficult urban form to remediate.

If the goal is to create an inclusive and walkable Town, where and how to grow will need to focus on a multi-centered approach.

2. Project Objectives

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Project Objectives

To begin the process of building consensus about where and how to build

To determine where complete communities can be advanced, exploring trade-offs and opportunities

To identify a viable pilot project

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3. Defining A Complete Community for Chapel Hill

A framework

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TYPICAL SUBURBAN DESIGN

COMPLETE COMMUNITIES

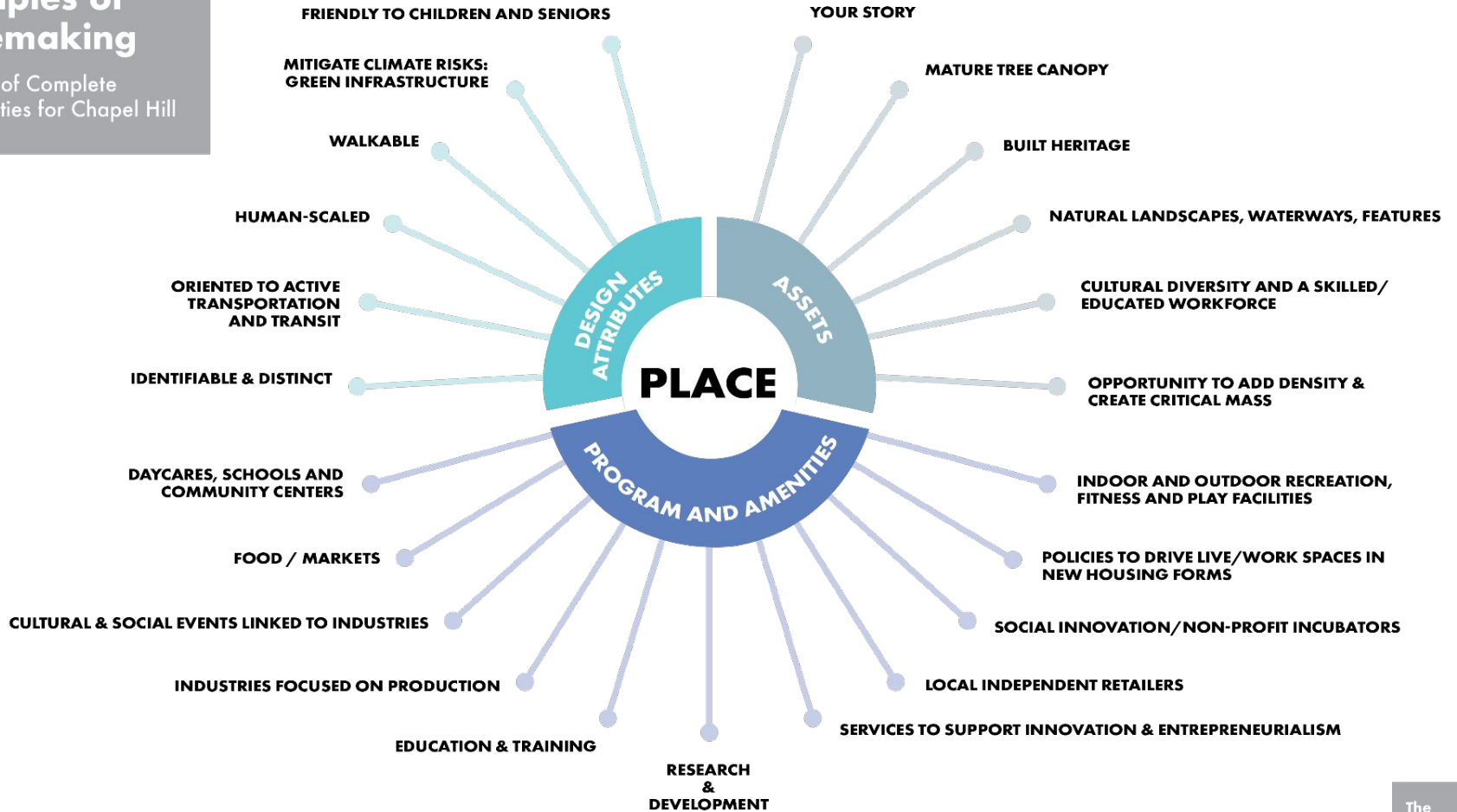| TYPICAL SUBURBAN DESIGN	COMPLETE COMMUNITIES
Only single family homes, and low density.	Diversity of housing types, including missing middle density.
Precincts divvy up academic, social, sport, administrative, and housing uses into separate areas of the city.	Living, working, learning, and playing occur in the same walkshed.
Designed for driving to destinations and walking or driving upon arrival: high carbon footprint; leads to traffic congestion.	Designed for walking and cycling, first: 'green' mobility.
Precincts experience an intensity of use, and 'dead' times/zones. This compromises safety.	"Eyes on the street" in all areas of the community.
Single uses within buildings.	Buildings are used for multiple interests - corporate, university + community assets are co-located.
High transit infrastructure subsidy on a per capita basis due to underutilization of land and buildings.	Lower costs for infrastructure and buildings due to higher density, higher use, and lessened need for driving/parking.

Complete Communities
Prerequisites

Prerequisites	STATUS in Chapel Hill
Sufficient and appropriately designed density.	Poor
Connections between communities that can mitigate the need to drive everywhere.	Poor
Viable models for the delivery of a mix of housing types, and affordable housing.	Undeveloped
Strategic infrastructure investments that deliver a broad range of public benefits.	Poor

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Principles of Placemaking

Elements of Complete Communities for Chapel Hill

PLACE

DESIGN ATTRIBUTES
- FRIENDLY TO CHILDREN AND SENIORS
- MITIGATE CLIMATE RISKS: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
- WALKABLE
- HUMAN-SCALED
- ORIENTED TO ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT
- IDENTIFIABLE & DISTINCT

ASSETS
- YOUR STORY
- MATURE TREE CANOPY
- BUILT HERITAGE
- NATURAL LANDSCAPES, WATERWAYS, FEATURES
- CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND A SKILLED/ EDUCATED WORKFORCE
- OPPORTUNITY TO ADD DENSITY & CREATE CRITICAL MASS

PROGRAM AND AMENITIES
- DAYCARES, SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY CENTERS
- FOOD / MARKETS
- CULTURAL & SOCIAL EVENTS LINKED TO INDUSTRIES
- INDUSTRIES FOCUSED ON PRODUCTION
- EDUCATION & TRAINING
- RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
- SERVICES TO SUPPORT INNOVATION & ENTREPRENEURIALISM
- LOCAL INDEPENDENT RETAILERS
- SOCIAL INNOVATION/NON-PROFIT INCUBATORS
- POLICIES TO DRIVE LIVE/WORK SPACES IN NEW HOUSING FORMS
- INDOOR AND OUTDOOR RECREATION, FITNESS AND PLAY FACILITIES

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4. Work Plan Update

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Six Phases over Five Months

PHASE 1
Project
Initiation
→

PHASE 2
Laying the
Foundation
→

PHASE 3
Technical
Analysis and
Testing
→

PHASE 4
Evaluating and
Defining Housing
Priorities
→

PHASE 5
Building
Capacity for
Change
→

PHASE 6
Advancing a
Pilot Project

| JUNE | JULY | JULY-AUGUST | SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER | OCTOBER |
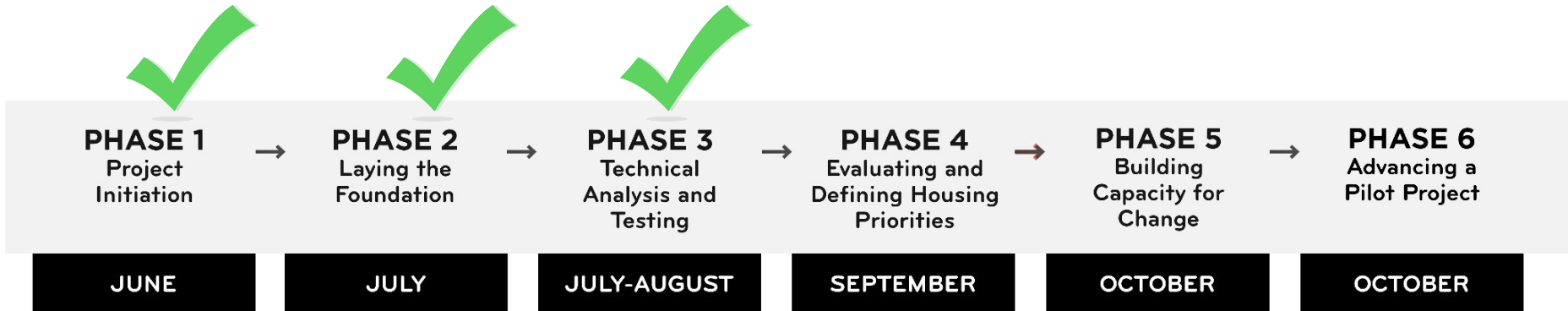
Additions to the process

Additional stakeholder interviews; Council member interviews; Public Open House; Pop-ups in September to test directions.

Stakeholder Interviews – update from Jen Hurley

Various interests and advocates will provide input into advancing a strategy for meeting Chapel Hill's housing needs

PEDESTRIANS, TRANSIT, CYCLING, GREENWAYS AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTERESTS

BUSINESS AND INSTITUTIONAL INTERESTS

HOUSING AND QUALITY OF LIFE ADVOCATES

Complete Communities in Chapel Hill: Where and How to Grow

DEVELOPERS

EQUITY ADVOCATES

5. What we Heard: Emerging Directions

Summary of Directions

1. **Plan for the Future Strategically and Comprehensively**
2. **Be Green** as you build 500 homes per year to meet your housing needs
3. **Plan for Excellence in the Public Realm, everywhere**
4. **Design and Expand Greenways for Everyday Life**
5. **Crank Up the Urgency**
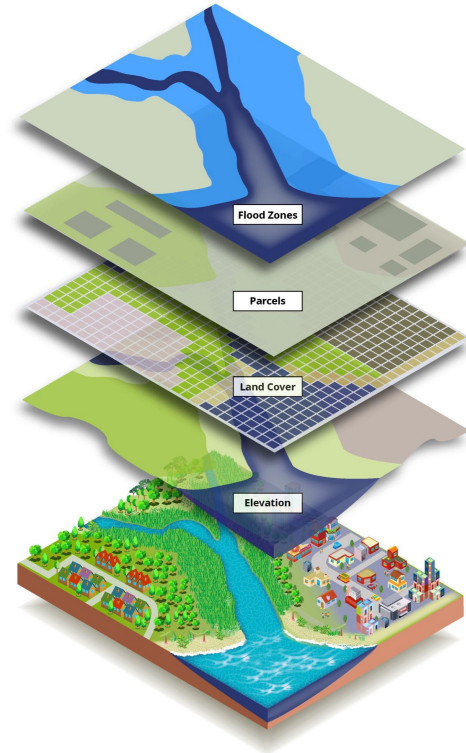6. **Risks Associated with this Approach**

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Plan for the Future Strategically

What we Heard

Project by project planning lacks coherence and predictability.

Everyone wants to know what to expect.

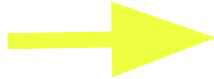This is the first step towards building trust.

Be Green
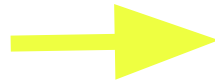## as you build 500 homes per year to meet your housing needs

What we heard:

Clearly protected natural areas

Clearly identified and protected Stormwater areas

'Transportation' Greenways could link together neighborhoods and public spaces

Greening through landscape design is a key opportunity of development project design

Prioritizing Public Parks within walking distance of every neighborhood, with amenities for all ages including splash pads and skateboard parks should be a priority

Plan for Excellence in the Public Realm, everywhere

WHAT WE HEARD

Every new development delivered within a Complete Communities framework could be a new opportunity to deliver a world class project that brings benefit to both new and existing residents:

- Embracing a higher aspiration for development than just adding new housing or commercial

- Recognizing that bringing new density without delivering core aspects of a Complete Community is not "green" – density has to be accompanied with a plan to mitigate its effects and plan for the future

- Acknowledging that encouraging sprawl in one place here results in deforestation elsewhere

- Recruiting developers who have a high aspiration for Chapel Hill is an integral part of delivering on the promise of Complete Communities, but the Town also has a role to play in delivering supportive community infrastructure

Design and Expand Greenways for Everyday Life

What we Heard:

There is a need to **broaden transportation choice and affordability**, and the mix of uses on offer in each area.

Transportation is a significant cost for Chapel Hill residents: 21% of income, on average per household. The yearly cost of owning and operating a car is $9,666 per car (nearly a $100,000 expense for the average one car family over a 10-year period).

- **Goal:** to enable every resident in Chapel Hill the opportunity to live most of their daily lives without having to rely on a car
- Link new and existing communities to one another to capitalize on the existing elements of a Complete Community
- Identify current system and gaps that need to be filled to deliver on the promise

Crank up the Urgency

- **Today, new developments are not fully contributing to the creation of complete communities**

- **There is an inherent lag in housing and commercial development** – if you establish new principles or frameworks today, you don't see most of the impacts for years
    a. What are the quick wins in terms of other types of community infrastructure that can begin to show residents the promise of a Complete Communities future?

- **New development - framed in a new way - can deliver on a more sustainable future that all Chapel Hill residents can enjoy**

- **Housing affordability and equity issues facing the town will worsen without targeted intervention**

Risks Associated with this Approach

- Be clear and honest about what is and is not "green"
  - **Not all new density is inherently green**
  - **Not densifying within existing growth boundaries is 'anti-green'**

- Focusing new development exclusively on housing and commercial will not itself make Chapel Hill affordable and inclusive for all – a sustainable future for Chapel Hill is one in which everyone has easy access to the elements of a Complete Community

- Specific strategies and investments related to Affordable Housing will be required

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