



PLANNING  
BUSINESS PLAN

2023



JULY 1, 2022 – JUNE 30, 2023  
TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL



# Letter from the Director

The Planning Department had a busy and successful year in 2021. I am excited to share the team's achievements, our priorities for 2022, and goals for next year and beyond.

From pedestrian safety initiatives to a new entitlement process for affordable housing projects, the Planning Department has much to celebrate, including the following key successes:

- The **newly adopted Vision Zero** efforts have made great strides to evaluate the community's current and future needs to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all.
- The **Estes Drive Connectivity Project** will add non-motorized-vehicle infrastructure to a major corridor to make it easier for people to travel in our community without the need of a car.
- NCDOT-owned **Franklin Street** has a new look and feel. In coordination with the Town, NCDOT removed one travel lane in each direction to make space for protected bike lanes while preserving room for parked cars and supporting downtown businesses.
- A protected mid-block crosswalk near Town Hall and a few key intersections in Northside Neighborhood launched a **safety pilot program** to discourage drivers from changing lanes at the crosswalk and slow traffic around turns.
- A successful pilot to **expedite the review process for Affordable Housing** development proposals now gives the Town a chance to bring more affordable housing online quicker and support funding assistance that will make projects more viable.
- The second phase of **Charting Our Future**, the zoning ordinance rewrite, was launched. **Shaping Our Future** began a successful **equity dialogue** with community members to better understand how land use and zoning impact everyday lives.

The upcoming fiscal year will see the Planning Department delivering a **Complete Community Strategy**, a **Transit Oriented Development Plan** to assist with funding the Bus Rapid Transit system along MLK Blvd, **two Focus Area Plans for 15-501 and NC-54**, a text amendment for **Housing Choices for a Complete Community** that would permit more housing types in more residential zones, a **Public Life Study for Downtown to Hargraves**, a **Connected Roads Plan**, a **Wayfinding Strategy**, and, if funded, a **Greenways Design**.

Looking ahead, the Planning Department will continue building a practice that delivers a Complete Community for Chapel Hill.

- Colleen Willger, AICP  
Director of Planning

The Planning Department provides:

- Long-Range Planning

Translate values and planning best practices into land use management policy for the town, and work to improve that policy over time through monitoring and evaluating development trends.

- Transportation Planning

Oversee long range transportation plans and manage projects related to pedestrians, bicycles, and road traffic in Chapel Hill.

- Current Development Planning

Implement land use management provisions in accordance with policies established in the Comprehensive Plan. Evaluate land use applications and oversee the development review process.

## Our Mission

The Chapel Hill Planning Department is charged with providing collaborative leadership to create and implement policies, plans, and programs that reflect Chapel Hill values as an equitable, livable, and sustainable town today and in the future. We help Chapel Hill guide equitable growth through publishing various planning documents, including the Comprehensive Plan, evaluating land development, moving people around town, and serving as the steward of our historic resources.

## Our Vision

**Planning together for a Complete Community.** We are professional city planners, landscape architects, architects, historic preservationists, engagement specialists, and community builders. We work together with community stakeholders to facilitate change that enhances existing community assets and improves the quality of life in Chapel Hill. We aspire for everyone to benefit from an inclusive, sustainable, and economically competitive community.

## Strategic Alignment

In spring 2022, the Town Council began a town-wide visioning initiative for a Complete Community Strategy to determine where and how to build the needed 500 units per year to keep pace with current housing needs, improve affordability, and provide access to housing. The Complete Community Strategy is the beginning of a culture change in Chapel Hill to think more strategically and wholistically around growth and development than previously. Four Emerging Directions have been identified from that work, which the Planning Department is embracing through the strategic alignment of our Business Plan and Work Plan.

### **The Planning Department Business Plan and Work Plan are organized around the following Complete Community Emerging Directions:**

- **Plan for the Future Strategically**
  - The Long-Range Planning Division's work program will predominantly be resourced to deliver legislative and regulatory updates at the town and neighborhood levels to implement a Complete Community Strategy.
- **Expand and Deliver Greenways for Everyday Life**
  - The Transportation Planning Division's work program will be aligned to promote active transportation, connectivity, and multi-modal choice for enhanced mobility options.
- **Be Green**
  - All three Planning functions will be partnering with the Town's Community Resilience Officer and sustainability practice, and Stormwater Division to deliver environmentally sustainable outcomes.
- **Plan for Excellence in the Public Realm Everywhere**
  - All three Planning functions will be producing work that impacts the public realm, as well as furthering our partnership with the Town Urban Designer to positively influence design excellence in the public realm.

# Our Department

Administration

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Director  
Assistant Director  
Administrative Coordinator

## Long-Range Planning

Principal Planner – Historic  
Preservation\*

Principal Planner – Design + Urban  
Forestry\*

Principal Planner – Land Use +  
Equity

## Transportation Planning

Planning Manager

Transportation Demand  
Management Community  
Coordinator

Planner I\*

Complete Streets / GIS Specialist

Interns (2)

## Current Development

Planning Manager

Senior Planner\*

Planner II\*

Planner II

Senior Planner/Planner II/Planner I

Planning Technician

\*Staff work on both Long-Range Planning and Current Development projects

**Departmental Performance Measures Overview** (mark 'X' if performance from the most recent data collection period is at or above target)

Mission-level Measures		At or above target
1.	Agendas for Advisory Boards posted at least one week in advance of meeting dates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.	Progress made across all special projects, as a percentage of the work targeted for FY21	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Program-level Measures		
Program	Performance Measure	At or above target
All Programs	Number of Public Information and Community Planning Meetings held.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
All Programs	Progress made across all special projects managed by Planning and Development Services, as a percentage of the work targeted for FY21	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
All Programs	Agendas for Advisory Boards posted at least one week in advance of meeting dates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
All Programs	Community meetings – measure for successful engagement? Participant satisfaction / feeling informed?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Current Development	Completion and distribution of staff comment letters for all development applications within 30 days of submittal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Current Development	Completion of required notifications – mailed, published, and on-site – for all development applications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Long-Range Planning	Completion of staff evaluation memos for all rezoning cases	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Transportation Planning	Quarterly updates to Council and on website for Connected Community strategic goal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Transportation Planning	Number of Mobility and Connectivity Plan projects/recommendations advanced	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Departmental Equity Measures Overview** (mark 'X' if performance from the most recent data collection period is at or above target)

Mission-level Measures		At or above target
1.	Contracting with women and minority businesses to broaden perspectives and expertise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.	Using Orange County Racial Equity Score Card to Scope Work	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Program-level Measures		
Program	Performance Measure	At or above target
All Programs	Equity Index for Project Prioritization: Rank sidewalk gaps, proximity to transit, schools, etc.; locating infrastructure investments	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
All Programs	Community Engagement Demographics: Goal to capture demographics of the stakeholders reached to equitably invest engagement resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

DEPARTMENTAL  
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



## Plan for the Future Strategically: Complete Community Strategy and Planning Systems Evaluation

Project Manager(s): Diedra Whittenburg-McEntyre, Principal Planner

### Business Alignment

**Deliverables** provide a summary of deliverables and outcomes that are expected to be achieved during the fiscal year.

Deliverable	Complete Community Framework to update the Comprehensive Plan	Anticipated delivery Fall 2022
Deliverable	List of Recommended Pilot Projects and Guidelines	Anticipated delivery Fall 2022
Deliverable	Presentation of What is Working and What Needs to Change to Establish New Planning System across Town Government at all levels	Anticipated delivery Fall 2022
Deliverable	Recommend New Processes, New Systems, Tools for Culture change, Report a Proposed System for high-level, long-term, vision-driven planning	Anticipated delivery January 2023

## Plan for the Future Strategically: Shaping Our Future a Transportation and Land Use Initiative

Project Manager(s): Diedra Whittenburg-McEntyre, Principal Planner

### Business Alignment

**Deliverables** provide a summary of deliverables and outcomes that are expected to be achieved during the fiscal year.

Deliverable	BRT/TOD integration	Ongoing, Fall 2022
Deliverable	Code Diagnosis Report	Ongoing, Spring 2023
Deliverable	UDO Rewrite Roadmap	Ongoing, June 2023
Deliverable	Parkline East Village Sub Area Plan	Ongoing, June 2023

## Plan for the Future Strategically: Actively Participate in Regional Transportation Planning

Project Manager(s): Bergen Watterson, Transportation Planning Manager

### Business Alignment

**Deliverables** provide a summary of deliverables and outcomes that are expected to be achieved during the fiscal year.

Deliverable	Orange County Transit Plan update reflecting Chapel Hill interests	Anticipated delivery Fall 2022
Deliverable	US 15-501 Corridor Study for an integrated multi-modal transportation network connecting Chapel Hill and Durham	Ongoing

## Plan for the Future Strategically: Actively Participate in Regional Transportation Planning

Project Manager(s): Bergen Watterson, Transportation Planning Manager

### Business Alignment

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Deliverable	Orange County Transit Plan update reflecting Chapel Hill interests	Anticipated delivery Fall 2022
Deliverable	US 15-501 Corridor Study for an integrated multi-modal transportation network connecting Chapel Hill and Durham	Ongoing

## Expand and Deliver New Greenways for Everyday Life: Encourage Active Transportation and Multimodal Choice

Project Manager(s): Bergen Watterson, Transportation Planning Manager

### Business Alignment

**Deliverables** provide a summary of deliverables and outcomes that are expected to be achieved during the fiscal year.

Deliverable	Construction of Estes Drive Connectivity project	Ongoing, anticipated completion 2023
Deliverable	Old Durham Road Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements	Completion 2022
Deliverable	Fordham Sidepath	Completion 2023
Deliverable	County Club Road climbing bike lane	Completion 2022
Deliverable	Cameron Ave Bike Lanes	Ongoing, anticipated completion 2023
Deliverable	Estes Drive Extension Bike-Ped Improvements	Ongoing, anticipated completion 2024
Deliverable	Merritt Mill Lane Reallocation	Ongoing, anticipated completion 2023
Deliverable	Mason Farm Lane Reallocation	Ongoing, anticipated completion 2023
Deliverable	Complete Community Greenway Design (ARPA Funding Dependent)	Ongoing, anticipated completion 2023
Deliverable	Wayfinding Strategy Implementation	Ongoing, anticipated completion 2023
Deliverable	Connected Roads Plan and Policy	Ongoing, anticipated completion 2023
Deliverable	Accessibility Audit	Delivered



## Be Green: Encourage Environmental Sustainability in Built Environment

Project Manager(s): Adam Nicholson, Principal Planner; Anya Grahn, Principal Planner; Bergen Watterson, Transportation Planning Manager; Diedra Whittenburg-McEntyre, Principal Planner; Tasmaya Lagoo, Senior Planner

### Business Alignment

**Deliverables** provide a summary of deliverables and outcomes that are expected to be achieved during the fiscal year.

Deliverable	Stormwater Regulations	Ongoing, anticipated Spring 2023
Deliverable	Landscape Standards Update to Design Manual	Ongoing, anticipated February 2023
Deliverable	Housing Choices for a Complete Community	Ongoing, anticipated Fall 2022/Winter 2023
Deliverable	E-Bikeshare Program Delivery	Ongoing, anticipated Spring 2023

## Plan for Excellence in the Public Realm Everywhere: Encourage Principles of Placemaking

Project Manager(s): Adam Nicholson, Principal Planner; Bergen Watterson, Transportation Planning Manager; Diedra Whittenburg-McEntyre, Principal Planner; Tasmaya Lagoo, Senior Planner

### Business Alignment

**Deliverables** provide a summary of deliverables and outcomes that are expected to be achieved during the fiscal year.

Deliverable	Downtown to Hargraves Public Life Study	Ongoing, anticipated Spring 2023
Deliverable	Reimagining Franklin Street	Ongoing
Deliverable	Retail Strategy for Franklin Street	Pre-planning Fall 2022, Launch 2023

### Planning Work Plan FY 2023

COMPLETE COMMUNITY EMERGING DIRECTION	FY 2023												FY 2024													
	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4										
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun		
<b>PLAN FOR THE FUTURE STRATEGICALLY</b>	Complete Community Strategy	★				X																				
	Transit Oriented Development Planning	★			★	★	★	★	★		★															
	Land Use Management Ordinance Evaluation																									
	Planning Systems Evaluation				★			★			★															
	Unified Development Ordinance Scoping and Rewrite										★															
	Parkline East Village Sub Area Plan			★																						
	<b>EXPAND &amp; DELIVER GREENWAYS FOR EVERYDAY LIFE</b>																									
	Cameron Ave. Bike Lanes																									
	Estes Drive Bike-Ped Improvements																X									
	Estes Drive Extension Bike-Ped Improvements																X									
	Fordham Sidewalk Extensions (start in FY24)																									
	Merritt Mill Lane Reallocation																									
	Mason Farm Lane Reallocation																									
<b>PLAN FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE PUBLIC REALM EVERYWHERE</b>																										
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<b>BE GREEN</b>																										
Stormwater Regulations																										
Landscape Standards Update to Design Manual										★	★															
Housing Choices for a Complete Community										★																
E-Bikeshare Program Delivery																										
<b>PLAN FOR EXCELLENCE IN THE PUBLIC REALM EVERYWHERE</b>																										
Downtown to Hargraves Public Life Study																										
Reimagining Franklin Street Downtown																										
Retail Strategy for Franklin Street																										

- Legend**
- X Milestone To Be Completed By End of Quarter
  - ✓ Completed Milestone
  - ★ Council Item Scheduled
  - ★ Council Item Heard and/or Action Taken