

Resolution in Support of the Combined \$125 Million Orange County Bond Referenda

Included on the November 8, 2016 General Election Ballot

WHEREAS the Orange County Commissioners voted affirmatively to place two bond referenda on the November 8, 2016 general election ballot: one worth \$120 million to support school repair and improvement across Chapel-Hill Carrboro City Schools and Orange County Schools, and one worth \$5 million to create new affordable housing opportunities within the County;

WHEREAS the proposed \$120 million school improvement bond will be invested in a range of capital projects that are designed to increase capacity and that will positively affect the quality, safety, security and durability of the learning environment for Carrboro students who are enrolled in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, including most significantly those who attend or will attend Chapel Hill High School, Culbreth Middle School, and Carrboro Elementary School, all three among the oldest schools within the system;

WHEREAS the projects included in the school improvement bond are aligned with and would leverage the Town of Carrboro's own programmatic and infrastructure investments to support access to learning and improved educational outcomes for young people, including investments in the Safe Routes to School initiative, public transportation, recreation and parks programs, youth leadership development, and a diversity of tutoring, mentoring and social service programs delivered by the Town's human service grantees;

WHEREAS the link between housing and student success has been well-documented through such efforts as the John C. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's *How Housing Matters to Families and Communities* initiative, which found that "...stable, quality housing is an essential platform that promotes positive outcomes in education, employment, and physical and mental health, among other areas."

WHEREAS market rate housing throughout the county is increasingly out-of-reach for modest-income individuals, families and seniors, so much so that teachers, public safety officers, nurses and other skilled and essential members of the workforce are spending far more than the HUD-recommended 30% of their income for housing, if they live in the County at all;

WHEREAS given the median Orange County renter income is \$34,800 and 50% of these renters, including fixed-income senior citizens, cannot afford a Fair Market Rent two-bedroom apartment on their income;

WHEREAS the proposed \$5 million affordable housing bond is aligned with and would leverage the Town of Carrboro's own investments its Affordable Housing Strategy and Affordable Housing Fund by helping to create up to 1,000 affordable housing units for low-income households, including residents with disabilities, older adults/seniors, residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness and victims of domestic violence;

WHEREAS the Federal funding for affordable housing in Orange County has declined by 50% in the past decade;

WHEREAS the current Governor and a majority of the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina, excepting Orange County's fine legislative delegation, have sought to systematically and deliberately erode core funding for both public schools and affordable housing, an erosion that disproportionately affects the quality of life and access to opportunity for low-income children and children of color, even in relatively wealthy counties like Orange;

WHEREAS the burden of Federal and state disinvestment unfortunately is now born by local taxpayers and their families;

WHEREAS the last Orange County General Bond Referenda, approved in 2001, was fully-deployed to the promised benefit of County residents generally and Carrboro residents specifically, a testament to our community's ability to rise to the occasion;

NOW BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Carrboro Board of Aldermen:

- 1) Endorses both 2016 Orange County General Obligation Bond referenda and affirms its confidence in Orange County government to do right by all of its residents, most especially its children, in deploying these funds for the promised purposes of school improvements and affordable housing;
- 2) Encourages all residents of voting age and eligibility within the Town of Carrboro to ensure their voter registration is up-to-date by the October 14, 2016 deadline;
- 3) Urges all registered voters in the Town of Carrboro to vote in the affirmative for both 2016 Orange County General Obligation Bond referenda on November 8, 2016, or during the Early Voting period, a schedule for which is attached to this resolution.