



# UDO Code Diagnosis Work Session



TOWN OF CARRBORO • NC

October 14, 2025

# WORK PROGRAM

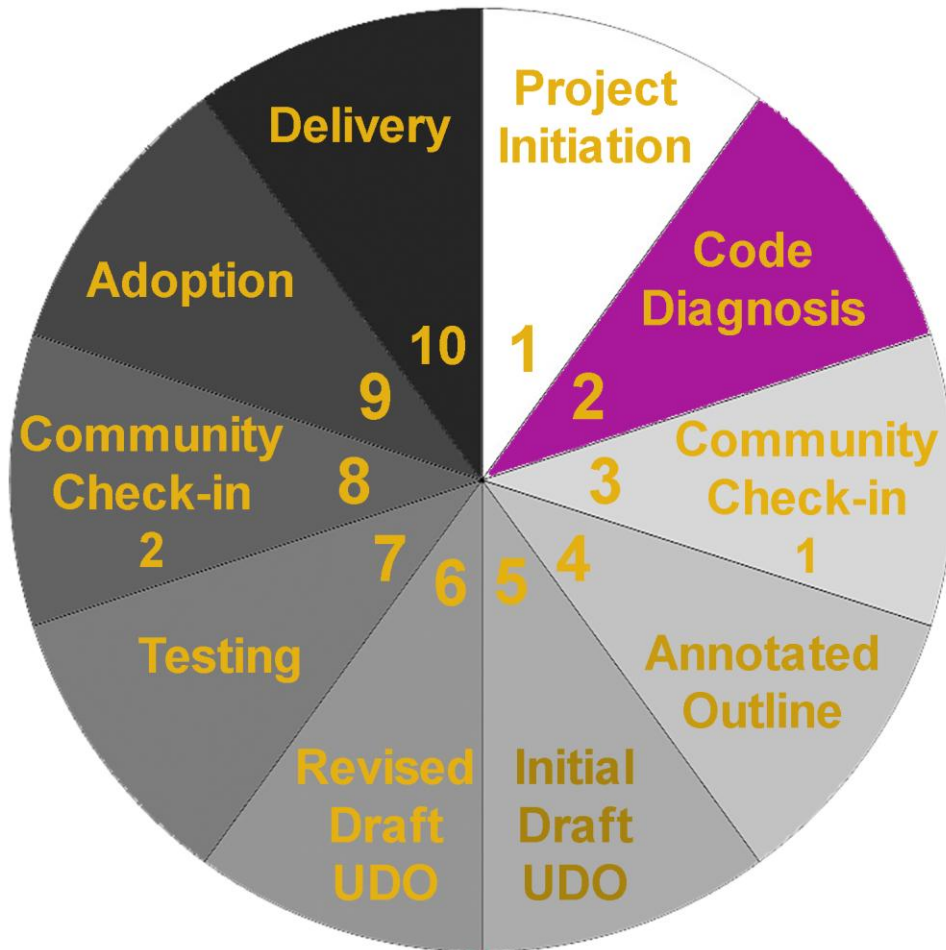


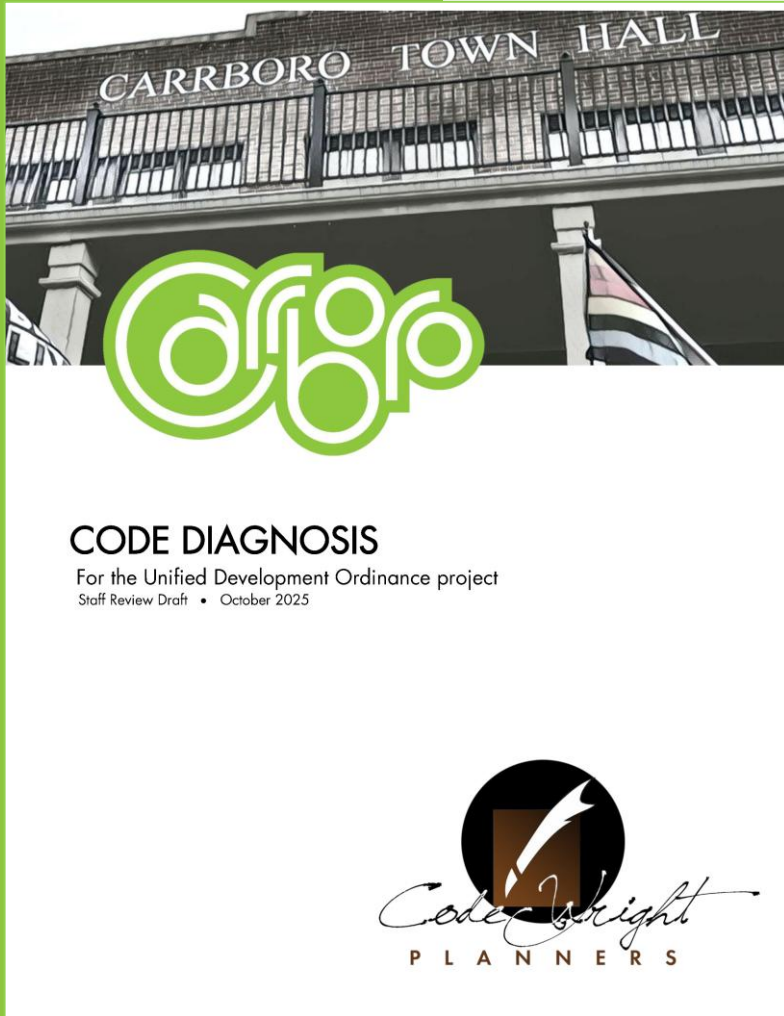
Image depicts the 10 project tasks

NEW UNIFIED  
DEVELOPMENT  
ORDINANCE



TOWN OF CARRBORO • NC 2

# CODE DIAGNOSIS



- ‘Road Map’ for the new UDO
- Framework for discussion about potential changes to the current UDO
- Explores gaps between policy guidance and development rules
- Recommendations for change

## SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES FOR IMPROVEMENT

1

### SIMPLIFY THE UDO

Restructure from 21 to 11 chapters; Use more-intuitive chapter names in alphabetical order; Place 'like' material together in the document; Update the page layout with more navigational aids for the reader; Use numbered statements instead of prose; Increase use of summary tables; Add more illustrations and flow charts; Replace 'legalese' with plain English; and Self-codify the UDO

2

### SAFEGUARD EQUITY

Where possible, reduce application review times & uncertainty to ease beneficial development; Explore differential AML ranges for rental (80%) versus ownership (60%); Add relevant definitions (diversity, equity, etc.) to the UDO; Strengthen standards on short-term rentals; Review and update contextual overlay district protections; Delegate a planning staff member as an ombudsman with respect to development rules; Ensure required notice is multi-lingual; Broaden range of districts where manufactured/mobile homes/moveable tiny homes are permitted; Soften limitations on home occupations, micro-retail, and "social service" uses; and Explore increased use of community benefit agreements for larger developments

3

### ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Replace cluster and 'AIS' subdivisions with conservation subdivisions; Limit plants to native species and add species diversity standards; Limit new stormwater infrastructure to "green" options; Ease review process for renewable energy structures; Prioritize passive/undisturbed open space over impervious recreation features; Prohibit new development (including fill) in the Special Flood Hazard Area; Require parking provided beyond minimums to be pervious; Disincentivize mass grading and mandate contour grading; prioritize greenways and multi-use trails over sidewalks; and Add voluntary sustainable development options and incentives

4

### ADDRESS HOUSING CHOICE

Refine SUP requirements for subdivisions meeting affordability targets; Add requirements for maintaining existing affordable units (NOAH); Exempt deed-restricted affordable housing and "micro" units from density counts; Allow "middle" housing by-right in most districts; Establish maximum dwelling unit sizes or minimum densities for detached dwelling developments; Simplify ADU requirements generally (especially integrated); Add more small-lot options (like courts and pocket neighborhoods); and Allow single-room occupancy developments



## SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES FOR IMPROVEMENT

5

### INTEGRATE POLICY GUIDANCE

Explore abolition of minimum off-street parking standards; Review and update fee-in-lieu provisions for pedestrian infrastructure; Reduce some standards for open space set-aside amounts when available to the public; Explore greater use of development agreements for expansion of rental housing; Consider converting non-residential districts to mixed-use districts; Rely on public participation for identifying preferred forms of development (as part of text amendments) and for consideration of applications that seek to deviate from codified standards

6

### INCREASE PREDICTABILITY

Add clarity on measurement rules; Increase definitions (to around 100 pages); Identify review criteria for all procedures and decisions; Reduce reliance on SUP in favor of codified standards and limit to one review authority; Use pre-application conferences for efficiency; Streamline/delegate advisory body reviews and re-purpose the Appearance Commission; Add administrative adjustment and determination procedures; Remove the ability to convert by-right applications to discretionary reviews; Ensure all districts list dimensional standards and reduce caveats; and Simplify the open space provisions

7

### ENSURE LEGAL SUFFICIENCY

Address new downzoning limitations; Remove criminal penalties; Remove content-based sign regulations; Clarify that unlisted uses are not prohibited and vested rights may not be withheld; Remove references to obsolete terms (special exceptions, conditional use permits, etc.); Remove advisory board review of quasi-judicial applications; Abolish the construction management plan process; Application review process or review criteria may not be revised after application submittal; Clarify authority for schools adequate public facility standards; and remove the COA procedure since the Town has no local historic districts

8

### INCORPORATE INCENTIVES

Exclude affordable housing units from density counts; Allow by-right reviews for developments meeting affordable housing or "middle" housing targets; Allow accelerated landscaping credit for retained trees; Exclude structured parking from building height calculation; Include a conservation subdivision option with smaller lots/setbacks for more open space; Add density bonuses for voluntary compliance with single-family design guidelines; Allow mixed-use development by right in non-residential districts; and Add incentives for sustainable development features



Copies of  
Executive  
Summary  
Pages  
from  
Code  
Diagnosis

# 1

## SIMPLIFY THE UDO

- Restructure
- New page layout
- More tables & illustrations
- Remove “legalese”

Navigational Aids

Illustrations

High Visibility  
Text

Simple Numbering

Dynamic  
Cross-References

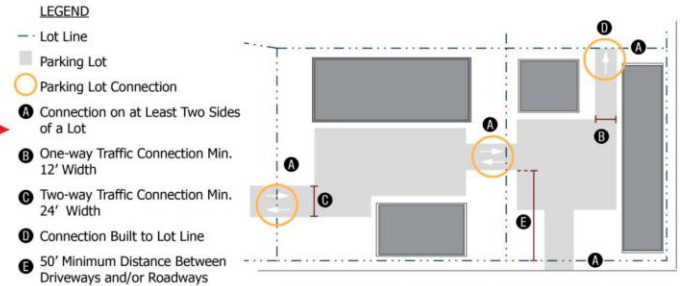
Summary Tables

Last Updated

### Chapter 6 Standards

Section 6.1 Access and Circulation  
Sub-section 6.1.7 Sight Distance Triangles

FIGURE 6.1.6: PARKING LOT CONNECTIONS



#### 6.1.7 SIGHT DISTANCE TRIANGLES

##### A. SIGHT DISTANCE TRIANGLES ESTABLISHED

Corner lots and lots with driveways, alleys, or other methods of ingress/egress to a street shall include sight distance triangles to ensure visibility for drivers and pedestrians moving through or in an intersection. Required sight distance triangles shall be configured in accordance with Table 6.1.7: Sight Distance Triangle Requirements. Land within a required sight distance triangle shall comply with the standards in Section 6.1.7C, Limitations on Obstructions within Required Sight Distance Triangles.

TABLE 6.1.7: SIGHT DISTANCE TRIANGLE REQUIREMENTS

| TYPE OF STREET, INTERSECTION, OR DRIVEWAY                   |                                                                           | MINIMUM SIGHT DISTANCE CONFIGURATION REQUIRED [1] [2] |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Intersections of street [3]                                 |                                                                           | 10/70                                                 |
| Driveways serving parking lots                              |                                                                           | 10/70                                                 |
| Driveways serving individual land uses without parking lots | Single-family detached, single-family attached, Duplex, Triplex, Quadplex | None                                                  |
|                                                             | All other uses of land                                                    | 10/70, wherever possible                              |

##### NOTES:

- [1] The NCDOT or the Town may require an alternative sight distance triangle configuration.  
 [2] AASHTO requirements shall be applied to curved or curvilinear streets.  
 [3] Includes all streets (State-maintained or Town-maintained).

Example page layout from a different code

- Reduce review time/uncertainty in development review process
- Add AMI targets (~60%) for ownership
- Enhance short-term rental regulations
- Review overlay protections
- Add a Citizen Ambassador
- Explore community benefit agreements

# SAFEGUARD EQUITY



## Race & Equity

- More housing and lot size options
- Multi-generation housing
- Density impacts in historically Black neighborhoods and to BIPOC residents
- Micro / affordable commercial uses
- Review Conditions, Covenants, & Restrictions (CCR) for affordability
- Process improvements, clear language, office hours



Slide from 2.11.25 Work Session –  
provided as a reminder of topics discussed



## ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE

- Conservation subdivisions (not cluster, AIS)
- Native species / species diversity requirements
- Mandatory green stormwater infrastructure
- Prioritize *passive* open space over active open space
- Limit development in the Special Flood Hazard Area

SHOULD WE  
PRIORITIZE  
GREENWAYS  
AND MULTI-  
PURPOSE TRAILS  
OVER  
SIDEWALKS?

# 4

## ADDRESS HOUSING CHOICE

### Attainable Housing

- Increase number of attainable units
- Increase densities, especially in infill areas
- Expand housing options
- Increase incentives for private sector supply of units
- Affordable Housing for whom?



- Refine SUP requirements if development meets housing targets
- Exempt affordable housing from density counts
- Allow “middle” housing by-right in most areas
- Establish max. sizes/min. densities for detached residential
- Simplify ADU standards

Slide from 2.11.25 Work Session – provided as a reminder of topics discussed

# INTEGRATE POLICY GUIDANCE



- Abolish required parking space requirements
- Utilize fee-in-lieu system for pedestrian features
- Convert some/most non-residential to mixed-use districts
- Increase public participation for
  - UDO text amendments
  - Applications seeking deviations from UDO standards

**ARE THERE  
ASPECTS OF THE  
DOWNTOWN  
MASTER PLAN  
THAT WE  
SHOULD  
ADDRESS?**



## INCREASE PREDICTABILITY

- Reduce reliance on SUP
- Delegate Council to decide SUP
- Identify review criteria
- Increase definitions
- Add rules of measurement
- Joint advisory board review during TRC consideration
- Maintain consistent review requirements for submitted applications (§15-52, 15-78)
- Simplify dimensional rules
- Simplify open space configuration rules



## ENSURE LEGAL SUFFICIENCY

- Address downzoning limits (HB382)
- Remove criminal penalties
- Remove content-based sign rules
- Unlisted use ≠ prohibited use
- Vested rights may not be withheld (§15-148)
- Remove advisory board review in quasi-judicial procedures
- No post-submittal changes to requirements (§15-49)
- Remove HPC & COA

# INCORPORATE INCENTIVES



- Exempt affordable housing from density counts
- By-right review for affordable and “middle” housing
- Sustainable development incentives
- Accelerated credit for tree retention



# WHAT COMES NEXT?

1. Task 3. Community Check-in One – series of community meetings over October & November
2. Webinar on Code Diagnosis (during Task 3)
3. Optional follow-up work session with Town Council
4. Task 4 Annotated Outline (December-January)

