

## **Race and Equity Pocket Questions**

**Title and purpose of this initiative:** Supporting Orange County Commissioners Contract with a Master Plan Design Services Consultant for the Greene Tract. The purpose of this initiative is for the Town Council to consider adoption of a resolution supporting the County Commissioners moving forward with contracting for design services that will utilize input from the work of the community engagement consultant.

**Department:** Planning

### **What are the racial impacts?**

The 164-acre tract is within Chapel Hill's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) and located eastern border of the Historic Rogers Road Neighborhood boundary, a historically Black community at the boundary of Carrboro and Chapel Hill. Roughly 60 acres of the land have been set aside for the Headwaters Preserve, with the layout of the remaining 104 acres to be refined by this upcoming process of community engagement. The request for proposals scores firms against criteria for engagement that collects inclusive, effective, and meaningful input from the community. The strategy shall encompass diversity, race, and equity components to engage historically underserved or disenfranchised communities and communities of color. Input from these engagement efforts will inform the work of the design services team.

Development on the tract could have racial impacts; the 2021 adopted resolution and the 2016 *Mapping Our Community's Future* report identify uses including the creation of new recreative and educational facilities and the provision of mixed-use development (with affordable housing stated as a primary interest). Future changes could also affect the property values in nearby neighborhoods; the engagement and subsequent design processes' purpose is to create a master plan that is compatible with the *Mapping Our Community's Future* report in conjunction with the Rogers Road Community.

### **Who is or will experience burden?**

Nearby community members may long-term face burden if development on the Greene Tract affects their neighborhood landscape and/or their properties. This process of community engagement aims to limit that burden through residents' input and by prioritizing historically marginalized and disenfranchised communities, including the Historic Rogers Road Neighborhood. Community engagement may burden residents and stakeholders in all three jurisdictions in the short-term that require them to attend meetings or workshops and bring attention to the Tract. Similarly, a prolonged community engagement period may delay potentially equitable outcomes of project build out.

### **Who is or will experience benefit?**

This process of community engagement prioritizes historically marginalized and disenfranchised communities, including the Historic Rogers Road Neighborhood. This prioritization will benefit current residents by continuing to identify them as key stakeholders and ensuring they have a

platform with which to shape the future of nearby development, as well as agency in the types of benefits they hope to see from future land uses. These could include resources such as pedestrian access to recreational and educational facilities, open space, and low intensity commercial and maker spaces that supplement the RENA Community Center.

**What are the root causes of inequity?**

Methods and strategies of public engagement that do not acknowledge known barriers for low-income stakeholders and/or historically marginalized stakeholders including scheduling opportunities to engage that preclude shift workers from participation, do not provide childcare, are too infrequent, or are promoted with resources that are relatively unused by such stakeholders. Lack of representation in government staff, volunteers, and elected officials is also a barrier to participation by historically marginalized community members. Economic inequities such as accumulation of generational wealth, accessibility of affordable housing and of recreative space, can be attributed to historical, discriminate lending practices and exclusionary development patterns at larger geographic scopes than that of the Greene Tract.

**What might be the unintended consequences of this action or strategy?**

An unintended consequence of the master planning process could be that some interests are not sufficiently captured during the public engagement and other design steps and factors that opportunities to fully realize the potential of this property to serve community interests are missed. Gaps in diversity of engagement events and methods or gaps in neighborhood demographic data or in other types of technical information could occur. An unintended consequence from long-term development might be changes to property values, affordability and/or character of nearby neighborhoods and properties. Another unintended consequence may be new stressors on ecologically sensitive lands like streams and riparian buffers from new development. Additional community engagement could also result in the original intentions of previous planning and engagement being altered.

**How is your department planning to mitigate any burdens, inequities, and unintended consequences?**

The work of the three local government partners, Orange County, Carrboro, and Chapel Hill has proceeded very intentionally to actualize the vision of the 2012 Task Force, which embraced a community first model to address longstanding commitments that had been overlooked in relation to development of the Eubanks Road landfill. Continued attention to these interests has informed the Environmental Assessment completed in 2020 of the Greene Tract identifying road, utility, and land use development layouts and the protection of sensitive ecological areas, including the 60-acre Headwaters Preserve. As with zoning changes Chapel Hill and Carrboro completed to implement the goals of the *Mapping Our Community's Future* community planning, this master planning for the Greene tract will be grounded in use of the tools of One Orange ([Town of Carrboro - File #: 22-37 \(legistar.com\)](#)) and focused on protecting the character of the existing lower-density areas in the Rogers Road community while allowing for new homes and related uses.