



TOWN OF CARRBORO

Planning Board

301 West Main Street, Carrboro, North Carolina 27510

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N

NOVEMBER 6, 2025

Adoption of the Carrboro Downtown Area Plan

Motion was made by Foushee and seconded by Gaylord-Miles that the Planning Board of the Town of Carrboro recommends that the Town Council adopt the Carrboro Downtown Area Plan.

VOTE:

AYES: (6) Foushee, Gaylord-Miles, Kirkpatrick, Scales, Scott, Sinclair

NOES: (1) Buckner

ABSTENTIONS: (1) Poulton

ABSENT/EXCUSED: (3) Carney, Peretin, Reilly

Associated Findings

By a unanimous show of hands, the Planning Board membership indicated that no members have any financial interests that would pose a conflict of interest to the adoption of the Carrboro Downtown Area Plan.

Motion was made by Foushee and seconded by Sinclair that the Planning Board of the Town of Carrboro finds the draft plan is consistent with the following provisions and strategies of the *Carrboro Connects* Comprehensive Plan:

- Land Use Strategy 2.1 – Pursue concerted land use planning/small area plans for high priority/high potential areas
- Economic Sustainability Strategy 2.1 – Support well-planned and designed, higher density and mixed-use development in the downtown.

Furthermore, the Planning Board of the Town of Carrboro finds the draft plan is reasonable and in the public interest because of the Town's deliberate commitment to developing plans and policies through extensive engagement and public input.

VOTE:

AYES: (6) Foushee, Gaylord-Miles, Kirkpatrick, Scales, Scott, Sinclair

NOES: (1) Buckner

ABSTENTIONS: (1) Poulton

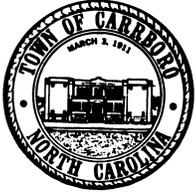
ABSENT/EXCUSED: (3) Carney, Peretin, Reilly

Rachel Gaylord-Miles

(Chair)

11/7/25

(Date)



TOWN OF CARRBORO

Planning Board

301 West Main Street, Carrboro, North Carolina 27510

C O M M E N T S

OCTOBER 15, 2025

Consideration of the Planning Board for the Carrboro Downtown Area Plan

Motion was made by Buckner and seconded by Foushee that the Planning Board of the Town of Carrboro recommends that the Town Council receive the comments as written below for the Carrboro Downtown Area Plan.

- Suggest rephrasing the second bullet in the “Intersection” box under “Core Primary” to “Consider intersection improvements that prioritize the safe movement of pedestrians and bicyclists, which may include improvements like “No Turn on Red” signage at intersections.
 - The Planning Board had discussions on what the potential conversion of Weaver Street to a bike/pedestrian street would mean for traffic flow and bike/pedestrian safety in Downtown Carrboro.
- Would like to see more specificity on how the decision is made between sidewalks and bicycle facilities when space is limited.
- Would like to see more references to the inclusion of accessible infrastructure.
- Consider adding more emphasis to commercial uses in Downtown Carrboro; how do we bring in jobs that support living within Town?
 - The Planning Board referenced Chapel Hill Mixed Use Districts that outline a certain percentage of commercial, residential, etc.
- Encourage the Town to consider a separate study or deep dive into the current market data that impacts the commercial economy in downtown Carrboro and how to encourage a more diversified and sustainable economy (i.e. mix of commercial, office, etc.)
- Encourage the Town to further publicize alternative engagement activities to all areas of Town with the intent to include all neighborhoods in the discussion about the Plan.
- Encourage the discussion of affordable housing to include a range of AMIs, such as including a percentage of each AMI bracket.

VOTE:

AYES: (6) Buckner, Fitzpatrick, Foushee, Gaylord-Miles, Scales, Sinclair

NOES: (0)

ABSTENTIONS: (0)

ABSENT/EXCUSED: (5) Carney, Peretin, Poulton, Scott, Reilly

Rachel Gaylord-Miles

(Chair)

10/15/25

(Date)



TOWN OF CARRBORO

Stormwater Advisory Commission

301 West Main Street, Carrboro, North Carolina 27510

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N

OCTOBER 9, 2025

Adoption of the Carrboro Downtown Area Plan

Motion was made by Randy Dodd and seconded by John Cox that the Stormwater Advisory Commission of the Town of Carrboro recommends that the Town Council adopt the Carrboro Downtown Area Plan.

VOTE:

AYES: (4)

NOES: (0)

ABSTENTIONS: (0)

ABSENT/EXCUSED: (3)

Associated Findings

By a unanimous show of hands, the Stormwater Advisory Commission (SWAC) membership indicated that no members have any financial interests that would pose a conflict of interest to the adoption of the Carrboro Downtown Area Plan.

Motion was made by John Cox and seconded by Margaret Kurz that the SWAC of the Town of Carrboro finds the draft plan is consistent with the following provisions and strategies of the *Carrboro Connects* Comprehensive Plan:

- Increase use of native plants
- Improve tree canopy downtown
- Coordinate transportation/public infrastructure improvements with GSI
- Establish and protect native vegetation in riparian projects
- Implement structural & non-structural management measures for redevelopment/infill; add retrofits in dense locations to increase stormwater volume control
- Incentivize Low impact Development practices that reduce impervious surfaces and mimic natural hydrology
- Encourage infill and density in the downtown area, especially when doing so provides stormwater management for impervious surfaces currently without management

The SWAC recommends that the Town devote the resources necessary, including staffing, to pursue plan implementation. (For example, having staff capacity to pursue the tree canopy and urban forestry would be beneficial.)

Furthermore, the SWAC of the Town of Carrboro finds the draft plan is reasonable and in the public interest because of the Town's deliberate commitment to developing plans and policies through extensive engagement and public input.

VOTE:

AYES: (4)

NOES: (0)

ABSTENTIONS: (0)

ABSENT/EXCUSED: (3)



(Chair)

10/9/25

(Date)



TOWN OF CARRBORO

Climate and Environmental Advisory Commission
301 West Main Street, Carrboro, North Carolina 27510

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N

OCTOBER 9, 2025

Adoption of the Carrboro Downtown Area Plan

Motion was made by Scott Muir and seconded by Greg Randolph that the CEAC of the Town of Carrboro recommends that the Town Council adopt with modifications the Carrboro Downtown Area Plan.

VOTE:

AYES: (6)

NOES: (0)

ABSTENTIONS: (0)

ABSENT/EXCUSED: (3)

Associated Findings

By a unanimous show of hands, the CEAC membership indicated that no members have any financial interests that would pose a conflict of interest to the adoption of the Carrboro Downtown Area Plan.

Motion was made by Scott Muir and seconded by Greg Randolph that the CEAC of the Town of Carrboro finds the draft plan is consistent with modifications with the following provisions and strategies of the *Carrboro Connects* Comprehensive Plan:

- Land Use Strategy 2.1 – Pursue concerted land use planning/small area plans for high priority/high potential areas
- Economic Sustainability Strategy 2.1 – Support well-planned and designed, higher density and mixed-use development in the downtown.

VOTE:

AYES: (6)

NOES: (0)

ABSTENTIONS: (0)

ABSENT/EXCUSED: (3)

Jane Parulez

(Chair)

10/13/2025

(Date)

DATE: 10/15/2025

TO: Christina Moon, Town Planner
Duncan Dodson, Planner

FROM: Jane Danielewicz, CEAC chair

RE: Carrboro Downtown Area Plan

The Climate and Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC) recommends that the Town Council approve the Carrboro Downtown Area Plan with modifications.

Due to the length and complexity of the Downtown Area Plan, we request more than one week to consider the full plan to enable us to develop our recommendations.

So far, in the short time allotted, the commission requests these initial modifications. However, this is a partial list. We request moving this item to the November 18, 2026 council meeting to allow CEAC time to provide a full list of modifications.

Furthermore, we found public engagement to be insufficient, particularly in neighborhoods outside of downtown. We request extending the engagement period.

The following modifications are overarching and apply to the whole conceptual model of the Downtown Area Plan.

REQUESTED MODIFICATIONS

1. Topography – This plan ignores a major element of climate resilience (Goal #1 p. 16). We recommend reevaluating the entire Downtown Area Plan post-Chantal based on topography as a foundation that determines other design elements. The Downtown Area sits at the highest elevation and water flows downhill. We request superimposing a topo map onto the Carrboro map (p. 17). This new map would visualize how stormwater would flow within and from the Downtown area. The flat map (p. 17) gives no information about how water moves. This re-assessment, using the topo map overlay, will show how increased development in the Downtown Area will impact flooding in all neighborhoods, within and outside of downtown.
2. Design Elements – The first goal (p. 16) is to build climate resilience and this topic is missing from the design elements. We request including and prioritizing a “Green Infrastructure” design element to replace and enhance the existing “Plants and Landscaping,” which is a subset of green infrastructure. As an overarching category, “Green Infrastructure” matches the other design elements (i.e. Bicycle Infrastructure,

Pedestrian Infrastructure). All design-element tables (e.g. p. 44) as well as concept plans, should be revised to reflect this change.

3. Green infrastructure -- Green infrastructure is a strategically planned network of natural, semi-natural, and engineered areas that integrate stormwater management, mitigation of urban heat island effects, improved air quality, enhanced biodiversity, and carbon storage. These benefits accrue from coordinated, advance planning. We request this type of planned network.
 - a. Enhanced stormwater practices include bioswales, rain gardens, green streets and alleys, and rainwater harvesting.
 - b. Enhanced heat mitigation, carbon storage, etc. includes urban forests, urban trees, diverse landscapes, pollinator gardens (not lawns). For example, public trees planted in the ROWs are a priority, not in residents' yards (p 52). Also, the DAP's cross-sections must be reevaluated to give more priority to the planting strip. For example, on p. 44, the planting strip is 0 ft. The recommended planting strip for urban trees is 5-8 ft. Urban trees are essential to reducing the urban heat island effect. Adding trees (green infrastructure) should be prioritized over additional paving.

4. Traffic – In Appendix C, Public Engagement (p. 12), reduced car traffic was the first major theme. More development, according to the plan, will inevitably create more traffic, compounding the existing traffic congestion for people traveling through and into downtown. We request an additional metric (p. 85), regular studies of traffic congestion, to assess how all development will impact main thoroughfares and side streets. Traffic studies can determine the appropriate infrastructure to reduce and manage additional traffic and congestion.

DATE: 11/10/2025

TO: Christina Moon, Town Planner
Duncan Dodson, Planner

CC: Patrice Toney, Town Manager

FROM: Jane Danielewicz, CEAC chair

RE: Carrboro Downtown Area Plan

In this second memo, the Climate and Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC) reiterates their recommendation that the Town Council approve the Carrboro Downtown Area Plan with additional modifications. We submitted a first memo on 10/15/25 with modifications.

We recognize the need for a downtown visioning plan and fully support the goals of the DAP. We are grateful to the Town Council for the additional time allowed for CEAC to submit further modifications. We deeply appreciate the time and efforts that town staff has made to create additional, successful, outreach events these past two weeks. Thank you.

Our modifications are intended to clarify and strengthen the DAP in order to make it translate directly into the UDOs.

A previous memo on **10/15/25** from (CEAC) also recommended approval of DAP with these modifications: (1) using topography to predict stormwater; (2) substituting Green Infrastructure for Trees and Landscaping as a design element; (3) applying a Green Infrastructure approach (a strategically planned network of natural, semi-natural, and engineered areas) to design the DAP; (4) adding a metric to study ongoing traffic congestion.

Besides the new modifications below, we have also provided further details to illustrate one previous modifications from the 10/15/25 memo.

- 1) **Modification: Use “Green infrastructure” to plan for Climate Resilience.**_(modification from memo 10/15/25, attached). In the chapter “Streetscape Typologies,” we recommend substituting the term “Green Infrastructure” for the design element “trees and landscaping” in the charts p. 40, 46, 50, for the following reasons:
 - a. Green infrastructure is a conceptual umbrella that unifies and consolidates critical design elements of Climate Resilience (Goal #1 p.58) only one of which is “Trees and Landscaping.”

- b. The first goal of DAP is Climate Resilience (p. 12; p. 58), as described in DAP, is achieved by Green Infrastructure. Green infrastructure serves multiple purposes simultaneously and has multi-functional benefits: Carbon Sequestration; Air Pollution Reduction; Stormwater Management and Water Quality improvement; Temperature Moderation—all factors contributing to Climate Resilience.
- c. Green Infrastructure is the appropriate, parallel term that is consistent with the other elements (Pedestrian Infrastructure; Bicycle Infrastructure) in the charts on pages 40, 46, 50. Types of infrastructure is the principle.
- d. Green infrastructure is a **network** of spaces. It's not just about individual green areas but an **integrated network** that connects **natural** and **engineered** elements in the Downtown Area.
- e. Below are some examples (direct quotations) from DAP that can be united under Green Infrastructure. In fact, that term is already being used (p82). Elevate the term to be the major organizing category.
 - p. 80 UDO Update - Increase Tree Canopy and Native Plantings As part of the ongoing UDO project, the Town should include provisions that require robust tree planting and preservation requirements, as well as limit plantings to native and beneficial species for trees, shrubs and ground covers.
 - p. 81 UDO Update - Reduce Stormwater Runoff As part of the ongoing UDO project, the Town should include provisions to reduce stormwater runoff through the use of high-quality and robust stormwater control measures and reduce impervious surface coverage for all private developments.
 - p. 82 UDO Update - Support **Green Infrastructure** As part of the ongoing UDO project, the Town should include provisions to require the incorporation of green infrastructure as part of all private development, including rain gardens, native plantings, LID techniques and robust stormwater control measures. Page References: p. 26-35, 146, 154-155

2) **Modification: Increase building height in order to maximize greenspace allotment.**

For all new building sites, we want to maximize space for green infrastructure such as trees, layered plantings, bio swales, raingardens etc. The DAP could encourage high rise, dense development while retaining robust climate and environmental features.

Build taller buildings with maximum setbacks (less impervious surface but taller building) rather than building out the entire lot, with minimum setbacks (more impervious surface, less space for green infrastructure).

Building heights in DAP range from 2-5 stories. More than 5 stories could be allowed for developers IF higher building height is a trade-off to increase trees and other green Infrastructure features. Building height should be the incentive for a higher percentage of greenspace, tree canopy, etc.

Ample setbacks of buildings from street fronts should allow for large street trees as well as a greater number of trees and other stormwater features on the newly developed property.

3) Modification. Trees, ROWS, and planting strips. We request prioritizing trees over additional pavement wherever possible. Urban trees are essential to reducing the urban heat island effect, absorbing pollution, and storing carbon.

3.1 Reduce paving width to ensure room to plant trees. There are many places in DAP where paving (sidewalk etc.) is given priority over trees, or where planter strips are ineffective: p. 40, 47, 50. We ask for revisions.

- “Sidewalks on both sides (6 to 8 feet wide.....)”
- Street trees in planter strips, tree wells, or encouraged on private property.
- Planter strips (with native species) between sidewalk and curb where space allows, ***but not at the cost of sidewalk width.***”

3.2. In the streetscape typologies, we recommend increasing the size of planting strips to accommodate shade trees in the ROWs. The Following are examples of inadequate size planter strips. Street trees require 5-8 ft planting strips or wells.

Examples of “too small” planting strips are in bold below.

Core Primary - N Greensboro St. (page 42)

- Some trees between sidewalk and buildings.

Existing cross-section: Planting strip – 2-8 ft (Native Vegetation)

Proposed cross-section: 2-5 ft (Native Vegetation)

- Additional shade trees in tree wells on sidewalk.
 - **Diagram of shows a very thin planting strip on one side of the street. One tree is planted beside bikelane and a second tree is planted in a thinner planting strip beside a wide 8ft sidewalk.**
 - No trees in the amenity zone on the other side of the street

Core Primary – Jones Ferry Rd. (page 44)

Existing cross-section: **Planting strip – 0 ft**

Proposed cross-section: 2 ft (Native vegetation)

- Shade trees in tree wells along street side of sidewalk
 - **Diagram shows very thin planting strip on both sides**

Non-Core Primary – W Main St South of Poplar Ave (page 48)

Existing cross-section: **Planting strip – 1.5 ft**

Sidewalk – 3-10 ft.

Proposed cross-section – **Option 1: Planting strip/Utilities - 1.5-3 ft**

- Additional shade trees where space allows.

Sidewalk – 6 ft

Proposed cross-section – **Option 2: Planting strip/Utilities – 2-5 ft.**

- Shade trees in tree wells along street side of sidewalk

Sidewalk – 6-8 ft

Secondary Brewer Lane (page 31)

Existing cross-section: **Planting strip – 3 ft**

Proposed cross-section: 3 ft

Sidewalk – unchanged (5 ft)

3.3. We suggest eliminating images of trees in the illustrations of streetscapes where the planting strips are 0-4 ft. since they are misleading. Trees cannot survive in a planting strip less than 5 ft. See examples above.

3.4 We recommend establishing a funded program to purchase and plant trees for homeowners. “Encourage tree planting” on private property is a rarely successful strategy. Planting Trees in the ROWs is the main priority, augmented by trees in residents’ yards (p 50, 52).

4) Modification. Traffic congestion and parking; Roberson St.

We request an additional metric (p. 85), for regular studies of traffic congestion to assess how all development will impact main thoroughfares and side streets. Traffic studies can determine the appropriate infrastructure to reduce and manage additional traffic and congestion.

We request removing the idea in DAP about using Roberson St (pg. 54) as a festival St. It is a highly congested area now.

Further restricting or closing this street (even for a few hours) is impractical since it is a small street that serves as the only exit for the neighborhood on Sweet Bay Place, plus the entrance

and exit for the Drakeford library is on Roberson St., and a fire station and the Arts Center are all on Roberson St. Businesses have small parking lots along the street. There are no sidewalks along most of Roberson St.

In Appendix C, Public Engagement (p. 12), reduced car traffic was the first major theme. More development, according to the plan, will inevitably create more traffic, compounding the existing traffic congestion for people traveling through and into downtown.

#5. One final idea, not a modification. Develop Carrboro Town Commons, town-owned land, according to the rendering design, as Downtown Greenspace, pictured on p 36.

The DAP report mentions the lack of downtown land area. DAP includes a photo of Town Commons and the popular Libba Cotton Music series on page 26.

Update the current space of Town Commons with a stage pavilion (sound proofing behind it for the adjacent neighbors), include a multipurpose open air pavilion on the west side to provide more shade for summer events. Add more rooftop solar power for the pavilion fans. Renovate the grassy compacted, rain soaked, poorly drained, sod area in the inner center with more native plantings around the entryway. Upgrade electrical power connections-- instead of gas powered noisy generators. Install underground electric for the stage area, for food trucks, or other event needs. The space could be designed to accommodate the Farmer's Market.