

Comprehensive Plan scope – DRAFTv.2

For Board of Aldermen reference – May 21, 2019

Introduction

Carrboro was first settled in 1882 around a University of North Carolina railroad spur. It was originally known as West End, due to its geographic location directly west of Chapel Hill. In 1911, the town was incorporated under the name Venable, for chemistry professor and University of North Carolina president Francis Preston Venable. It wasn't until 1913 that the town made its final name change in honor of Julian Shakespeare Carr, owner of the local textile mill, after Carr expanded the mill and provided electricity to the community.

For the first fifty years after its incorporation, Carrboro remained a small mill town with a slow, steady pace of growth. In 1960, approximately 2,000 people lived in the town. In the late 1960s the town's population began to increase stemming from the growth occurring at UNC-Chapel Hill and area businesses.

Also during the late 1960s, Carrboro began to become more progressive in its thinking. The development of housing in the latter part of the decade coincided with expansion at UNC-Chapel Hill. Today the town has a reputation as one of the most progressive communities in the South. Growth has continued through the 1980s, 90s, and 2000s. This has resulted in the creation of a vibrant and diverse community. Carrboro Farmer's Market, two venues that host national music acts (the ArtsCenter and Cat's Cradle), and the DSI Community Theatre all call Carrboro home. Carrboro was the first municipality in North Carolina to elect an openly gay Mayor in 1995, and was also the first in the state to grant domestic-partner benefits to same-sex couples. A Truth Plaque Task Force was established in 2018 to gather input for the possible installation of a "truth plaque" that would detail the ugly truth of the racist history of Julian Carr, the Town's namesake. The Town joined the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) in November 2018 as a focus of its efforts to advance equity in the Town's governance structure. The first Truth Plaque was approved on February 5, 2019 and installed on April 16, 2019, reading as follows:

Carrboro's roots began in the late 19th century when a branch of the North Carolina Railroad extended south to the edge of Chapel Hill, and the first local textile mill opened nearby. Informally known as West End and Lloydville, the community incorporated as a town named Venable in 1911.

Two years later, the state legislature renamed the town Carrboro at the request of Julian S. Carr, a post-Civil War business leader. He was also an active and influential participant in Jim Crow era efforts to create a system of racial segregation. Although the town continues to bear his name, the values and actions of Carr do not represent Carrboro today.

In the 1970s a group of Carrboro residents joined together to change the town's power structure and advocate for a community that fully included all residents. Thanks to their commitment, today

Carrboro honors its working-class roots while reaching toward the goals of social equity, environmental harmony, and fiscal responsibility.

The town also hosts annual events like the Carrboro Music Festival, Carrboro Film Festival, and the North Carolina Comedy Arts Festival. Today, over 20,000 people are able to call Carrboro home.

More information about the Town is available at <http://www.townofcarrboro.org/860/ABOUT-CARRBORO>, a page on the Town website where results of the most recent citizen survey, links to US Census demographic data and other resources are available.

Project Purpose

The goal of this project is to inspire extensive community involvement in a process that, while recognizing both harmony and discord, will result in a product that expresses and establishes a framework for achieving the community's vision, expectations and guidance for growth and development/redevelopment, and town services. Plan policies will address land use regulations and decisions, which serve as the foundation for economic development/fiscal stability, as well as the Town's ability to provide direct services and support other initiatives. A planning horizon of 20 years is anticipated, with regular reviews of progress and continued relevance/update every five years. This comprehensive planning process is intended as a framework for the incorporation of regular goal-setting, project identification and evaluation into the process of work planning and budget prioritization.

Overview of planning process

To date, comprehensive planning in Carrboro has been completed though primarily land use planning, capital improvement planning, and annual budgeting. Focused planning efforts have also been completed for Affordable Housing, Climate Action, Economic Sustainability Plan, Recreation and Parks, Economic Development, Bicycle Transportation, Greenways, Stormwater Management, Safe Routes to Schools, Downtown Parking, Emergency Operations, and in conjunction with other entities, Hazard Mitigation. This planning process is envisioned as one that will include technical updates to existing conditions and projections of future conditions so as to inform policy choices. Existing planning documents adopted within five years of the comprehensive planning process can be incorporated directly into the comprehensive plan; ones completed earlier are to be updated and incorporated. Ongoing work related to the implementation of adopted plans (e.g. Economic Sustainability Plan and Community Climate Action Plan) is not to be suspended, but is expected to be incorporated and evaluated during this planning process, as is beneficial to the community. The GARE strategies for advancing racial equity and transforming government are considered foundational to this effort. The process will seek to utilize best practices identified by GARE

communities and other leaders in these efforts. A policy linkage map that makes clear the interrelationships between town, county, regional, and state plans and policies will be prepared. Consultant services are anticipated for technical planning assistance including primary responsibility for preparation of most of the comprehensive plan elements. Support is also anticipated in the identification of implementation and measurement components, public outreach and engagement, and interaction with community organizations, officials, a comprehensive plan stakeholders board, and staff. A comprehensive plan task force structure, with the Planning Board chair and vice chairs serving as lead on the overall effort, is envisioned. Specific consultant tasks to be provided as the draft project scope is refined.

Expected project milestones

- Phase I – Project preparation (4-6 months; July 2019 launch)
 - Plan proposal (scope, elements, background)
 - Steering/advisory structure
 - Staff resources/assignments
 - Consultant selection
- Phase II – Plan development (12 months; January 2020-January 2021)
 - Public outreach/engagement
 - Visioning, issues, values
 - Plan/policy review and development
 - Public review
 - Plan drafting and revisions
- Phase III- Plan recommendation/adoption (4-5 months; February – June 2021)
 - Comprehensive plan components and matrix integrating new and existing
 - Implementation/strategic plan and update schedule
 - Public review
 - Advisory board review
 - Board of Aldermen review

Major themes

- Climate Action/Extreme Weather Preparedness Mitigation Mitigation and Resilience
- Racial Equity
- Economic/Fiscal Sustainability (evaluating costs and benefits of policies/plans)
- Decline in Commercial and Residential Affordability

Plan principles

1. Creativity – process and products are rooted in accessible vision and execution, rather than mechanical completion of identified steps.
2. Inclusivity - incorporates needs and opinions of the population, especially those that may have been underrepresented in planning processes.
3. Community – rooted in the interests of people that live, learn, earn, and play in Carrboro.
4. Consensus – relies on an agreed-upon vision and associated values.
5. Clarity – the process and the plan and its impacts are open and clear.
6. Accountable- all parties recognize their roles and responsibilities and commit to doing their best in the preparation and implementation of the plan. A system for assessing progress and redirecting/reprioritizing plan strategies will be key.
7. Accessible – written and presented in ways that make the plan a clear, useful, and interesting roadmap for Carrboro’s future.
8. Strategic – action-oriented, the plan will focus on steps and measures to achieve its goals and values.
9. Systems-based – plans formulated with the explicit recognition of the complexities of climate and social conditions and the interconnectedness of governmental responsibilities and functions are necessary, appropriate, and effective in prioritizing and effectuating action.

Geographic scope

The Town’s entire jurisdiction – Municipal limits, extra-territorial jurisdiction, and Transition Areas/joint planning jurisdiction – will be the focus of this planning effort.

Recent questions/key trends

1. Infrastructure needs in relation to changing climate conditions
2. Downtown development/redevelopment and revitalization
3. Redevelopment opportunities, especially Jones Ferry Road and NC HWY 54 development corridors/nodes
4. Income inequality and erosion of the middle class
5. Transit-oriented development opportunities
6. Street connectivity and completeness (e.g. facilities for all modes and appropriate speeds)
7. Public engagement and participation/demographic trends
8. Historic Preservation – residential and commercial areas
9. Temporary and accessory housing (e.g. short-term rentals, accessory dwelling units)

Community Engagement

Recent experience and feedback from the community survey makes it clear that in order to maximize participation by community members, a variety of engagement strategies are needed, with those listed below expected:

- Focus groups with civic/community/religious/neighborhood groups
- Community information sessions (e.g. digging into the plan details)
- Town events (e.g. Carrboro Day, July 4th, Farmers' Markets)
- Community events and meetings (e.g., Holiday Parade, Carrboro Business Alliance)
- Citizens Academy
- Web-based portal for education and input
- Social media campaign
- Coffee hours/face-to-face conversations
- Public meetings and hearings

Comprehensive Plan Task Force Structure (25 total)

Representative staff from each Town Department (9 in total) is expected as support to this planning and policy initiative and are not included in the total number for members of the task force. Staff from neighboring local governments (varying departments, based on subject matter) and institutions (e.g. Orange County, UNC-Chapel Hillsborough) would also be invited to participate and serve as resources to this effort.

1. Planning Board (Chair, vice-chairs and 2 other members – 5 total)
2. Economic Sustainability Commission (2 members)
3. Transportation Advisory Board (1 member)
4. Recreation and Parks Commission (1 member)
5. Affordable Housing Advisory Commission (1 member)
6. Environmental Advisory Board (1 member)
7. Northern Transition Area Advisory Committee (1 member)
8. Greenways Commission (1 member)
9. Stormwater Advisory Commission (1 member)
10. Arts Commission (1 member)
11. Human Services Advisory Commission (1 member)
12. Youth Advisory Board (1 member)
13. Carrboro Business Alliance (2 members)
14. At-large, community members (7 members)

Plan Components

The descriptions below are not expected to preclude a different organization in the final product, especially related to systems analysis and prioritization/fiscal capacity to be developed in the planning process.

Component	New/Update	Lead Staff/author(s)
Executive Summary	New- highlights of overall plan with summary of vision, goals, and elements	Consultant, staff (Planning)
Who, What, How and Why of the Comprehensive Plan	Description of the background, process, data, and decisions that lead to the final plan.	Consultant, staff (Planning)
Framing Element – Major Topics	New – Description of the major topics that form the basis for community goals, strategies, budgetary decision-making, including cost-benefit analysis, and operations	Consultant, Departmental staff involved with plan development (expected to be all)
Action Element	New – Plan strategies in a go-to format, with operational and fiscal performance measures, including time frames and prioritization	Consultant, Departmental staff involved with plan development (expected to be all)
Land Use and Design	Assessment and recommended updates to Land Use Ordinance and Vision 2020	Consultant, staff (Planning with assistance from Public Works, Fire, Police, Recreation and Parks)
Economic Sustainability	Incorporation of 2017 ESP	Consultant, staff (Economic and Community Development)
Housing Affordability	Component of Land Use and Design assessment; Update of 2015 Affordable Housing Goals and Strategies	Consultant, staff (Planning, Manager's Office)
Recreation, Parks, and Open Space; Arts and Culture	Update of 2004 Comprehensive Recreation and Parks Master Plan; assessment and update of relevant Carrboro Vision2020 policies. Update and inclusion of	Consultant, staff (Recreation and Parks, Planning, Economic and Community Development)

Component	New/Update	Lead Staff/author(s)
	Physical Activity and/or Healthy Community planning perspective.	
Infrastructure		
-Transportation	Integration of recently updated Bicycle Plan, update of Greenways Plans, Sidewalk Policy, and Residential Traffic Management Plan. Recognition of interrelationships with Chapel Hill (including Chapel Hill Transit, Orange County, Go Triangle, and DCHC MPO/Comprehensive and Metropolitan Transportation Plans. Incorporation of street conditions analysis, repaving schedules, Powell Bill funds	Consultant, staff (Planning, Public Works)
-Water and Wastewater	Recognition of interrelationship with OWASA, Climate Action Plan/GHG reductions associated with water conservation.	Consultant, staff (Planning)
-Energy (electricity, natural gas, solar)	Energy supply, with info on local and non-local sources, quantities and climate impacts	Consultant, energy providers, staff (Planning)
-Conduit, fiber optic, wireless	Anticipate inclusion of pending Fiber optic Plan and incorporation info policy matrix and action element	Consultant, (Planning, Information Technology)
Environmental Systems and Resilience, including Stormwater Management	Expansion on 1999 Northern Study Area Plan and miscellaneous studies and reports	Consultant, staff (Planning, Public Works)
Human Capital, Engagement and Governance	New Communications Plan (build on Citizens' Bill of Rights), Human Services, Technology, and Innovation	Consultant, staff (Human Resources, Finance Department, Manager's Office, Economic and Community Development, Information Technology)

Component	New/Update	Lead Staff/author(s)
Public Services	New chapter on fire, police, public works services, publicly owned buildings, accessibility, public safety, future needs (interrelatedness to Capital Improvement Programming, Strategic Energy and Climate Action, specifically Solid Waste initiatives, waste reduction, fuel usage, building renovations and retrofits); incorporation of Eno-Haw Hazard Mitigation Plan, Town Emergency Operations Plan, and possible Continuity of Operations Plan	Consultant, Noted departments staff

Detailed Consultant Services

1. Initial meeting with the staff to review and refine the project scope and schedule, as well as schedule initial meetings and begin the process of data compilation.
2. Obtain and review existing plans, maps and other documents relevant to the project. Meet with the Comprehensive Plan Task Force for regular updates.
3. Conduct meetings with key elected officials and stakeholders. The purpose of these meetings will be to obtain input and guidance as it relates to the process to obtain opinions on the future of the Town from a wide cross-section of individuals and to complete a consensus building process on this future and the Town's goals in all areas of growth and development and the provision of services.
4. Conduct periodic review meetings with staff on process.
5. Plan and coordinate extensive and diverse public participation process program, including, but not limited to: public meetings, drop-in meetings, pop-up engagement in a variety of locations, surveys, directed engagement with community groups, HOAs, informational brochures, website materials, and other outreach mechanisms.
6. Work with staff on elements of a robust outreach campaign that includes traditional print and broadcast communication as well as social media and digital communication.
7. Conduct public meetings and topic-specific focus groups as necessary.
8. Create material for the public meetings and media venues to inform and educate the public on the plan components.

9. Staff will be responsible for the production of the bulk of the GIS maps and materials; however, the selected consultant may be required to provide supporting information.
10. Develop goals, objectives, implementation strategies, as well as benchmarks to measure implementation progress
11. Analyze the consistency of current ordinances and policies in relationship to the goals and objectives developed through this process and create an implementation program.
12. Draft elements are to be completed and submitted to the Town for review, comment, and approval individually based upon a schedule developed at the beginning of the planning process.
13. Make periodic reports to the Task Force, the Board of Aldermen and other groups (e.g. advisory boards).
14. Work with the town to determine the final product(s) that best fit the interests and needs of Carrboro.
15. Prepare a "Public Draft" of the identified final products and present drafts to the community.
16. Prepare a "Final Draft" of the identified final products and make a final presentation at a public hearing and all associated meetings to secure adoption of the Plan.