

# Council Update – July and August

## Strategic Initiatives

---

### **Environmental Stewardship: Create a Community Climate Action Plan**



Staff is currently in the process of hiring a consultant and will be bringing a detailed update to Council on September 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Environmental Stewardship: Conduct energy efficiency upgrades in Town facilities**



**Streetlights:** Today, 11% of the Town’s streetlights are LEDs. Based on a recent meeting with Duke Energy, we are working with Duke Energy’s technical staff to determine how soon a full conversion of the remaining 3,200 streetlights can take place. Preliminary data suggests that this conversion could generate annual savings of over 800 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions – the same amount of carbon that 13,000 tree seedlings can store in 10 years.

### **Environmental Stewardship: Coal ash remediation**



As hurricane season begins, Public Works and the Town’s Environmental Engineer have worked to secure the existing silt fencing and remove the soil stockpile located along Bolin Creek Trail. We’ve also conducted a trail user survey to better inform our risk calculations. Parks and Recreation staff are coordinating with the trail construction contractor and hope to resume this work by October. Trail construction will coincide with the interim remedial measures approved by Council.

### **Environmental Stewardship: Sustainable Chapel Hill Website**



The Town has launched a new sustainability website with the goal of both telling our story and connecting with our community. In addition to information about the Town’s goals, commitments, policies and current activities, the site also features things that everyone can do to take action in their daily lives. It also features ways in which community partners are rising to the challenge to do more. As the Climate Action and Response Plan evolves, so too will this website and its content.

**Environmental Stewardship: Increase community and operational resilience**



Parks & Recreation was selected to receive a \$5,000 grant from Stonyfield Organic’s PlayFree Initiative which will allow the department to pilot an organic treatment plan at one of the Town’s ballfields and to receive resource information related to alternative treatment options. An event will be planned to celebrate the grant award.

**Economic & Financial Sustainability: Invest in Downtown infrastructure**



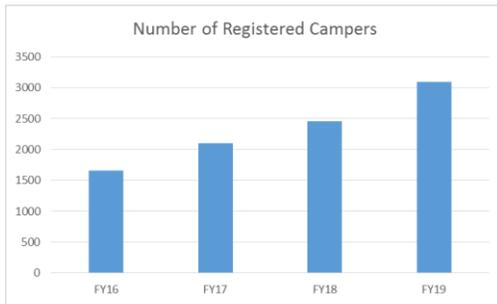
The work in Post Office Alley is almost complete and the alleyway is now open to pedestrian traffic. Completed renovations include repaving the sidewalk, lowering planters, and replacing the railing at the rear of the alley. The only remaining work is to install lighting and a wayfinding sign. Construction workers can safely complete this work without impeding pedestrian use of the alley.

**Connected Community: Chapel Hill Traffic Analysis**



Following the May 2019 traffic presentation to Council that focused on available traffic data, staff are collecting feedback and data about traffic from residents and Town staff. To date staff developed a [traffic survey](#) to gather high level data about the public’s experience and views on traffic in town. So far more than 800 people have participated, and the survey will remain open until the end of September. In addition, staff began holding focus groups. Focus group have been held with 20 residents, and will continue to hold sessions in September and early October.

**Vibrant and Inclusive Community: Increase after-school and recreation programming access**



As children have returned to school, Parks & Recreation’s successful summer camp season has concluded. This year, the 90 sessions of camp that were offered served 3,090 youth registrants, up from 73 sessions offered last summer which served 2,456 youth.

**Vibrant and Inclusive Community: Advance Charting our Future**



Following preliminary Council feedback and authorization to conduct community outreach, Project consultants prepared a draft FLUM, and staff began preparations for community outreach. These outreach efforts, to date, have included the construction of an [online mapping tool](#) to collect community comments, attendance at the Latin American Festival, and meetings with various stakeholders. Public meetings, Special Meetings with Town Boards/Commissions, Focus Groups, Drop-In Studio opportunities, and attendance at the Northside Neighborhood Picnic will occur in September.

### Vibrant and Inclusive Community: Short Term Rental



Staff developed a public engagement strategy over the summer that would meet Council’s interest in identifying goals and developing updated ordinance standards for Short-Term Rentals. A key staff recommendation is to form a Task Force that would make recommendations to Council on goals and ordinance standards. Staff anticipates a Council check-in on November 18, 2019 to share progress of the Task Force and other public engagement efforts.

### Vibrant and Inclusive Community: Eastowne Development Agreement



UNC Health Care representatives and Town staff held several negotiation sessions, a community meeting, and a Joint Advisory Board meeting. Town staff are working with Advisory Boards to add ideas and suggestions to the Negotiation Framework and matrix for Council consideration. Site tours of the Natural Heritage Site were conducted and UNC Health Care prepared 3 development scenarios for the Council Committee’s feedback. The next Council Committee negotiation session will be held on September 16<sup>th</sup>, and will share a report to the Town Council on September 25<sup>th</sup>.

### Vibrant and Inclusive Community: Implement Building Integrated Communities Action Plan



In late August, the Town was awarded a grant from [Duke Energy](#) to advance the language access strategy identified in our Building Integrated Communities Action Plan. The grant is focused on reducing language access barriers for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) immigrant/refugee residents and low-literacy residents during emergency events. Duke Energy awarded \$1.1 million in grants to 65 organizations across North Carolina. To learn more, see [here](#).

### Vibrant and Inclusive Community: Continue Peoples Academy



The Town received 68 applications for the Peoples Academy. All applicants were admitted into the 2019 Academy. The sessions will begin on October 3 and run through November 9.

### Vibrant and Inclusive Community: Racial Equity Work



As a benefit our the Town’s [Government Alliance on Race and Equity](#) (GARE) membership, Chapel Hill was invited to join a NC Learning Cohort, a year-long capacity building program for local government across the state interested in advancing racial equity by addressing institutional and structural racism. Fifteen staff members will begin the program later this fall, along with teams from eight other local government organizations. This opportunity will allow staff to respond to Council’s interest in racial equity and develop connections to NC municipalities doing the same work.

**Vibrant & Inclusive Community: Increase engagement with community history**



Government history is on the Town website. Visit [www.townofchapelhill.org/history](http://www.townofchapelhill.org/history) to view a history timeline, past mayors, historic districts, historic Town properties, and our local honoring of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. This new online resource, created over the summer, prepares for the 1819/2019 celebration that will be underway this fall. The Town will release a series of historical and local government factoids on Town communication channels throughout the celebration, as well as support promotion/documentation of the

special events.

**Vibrant & Inclusive Community: Increase engagement with community history**



Chapel Hill Transit celebrated its 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Town’s communication team created videos to commemorate the event including a long-format interview between Transit Director Brian Litchfield and former Mayor Howard Lee, an in-depth comprehensive interview with Mayor Lee, and documentation of the special anniversary event held at the Chapel Hill Library with Mayor Lee and special guests including Congressman David Price and local elected representatives.

**Collaborative and Innovative Organization: Attract and retain diverse and talented employees**



The Police Department has made changes to the hiring process to streamline the selection process and to make it more personal and welcoming. After introducing a new marketing campaign this spring, we’ve left our applications process open for several months and began recruiting both inexperienced and experienced police officers. As a result, we made 6 job offers to new hires over the summer and we continue to vet another round of applicants with the goal of bringing on several experienced officers this fall.

**Collaborative and Innovative Organization: Attract and retain diverse and talented employees**



The Housing Department is working on filling vacancies with enthusiastic, capable, and willing employees that work hard to meet the needs and interest of all Public Housing residents. The Department hired a new Office Assistant, Andrea Mebane, on August 26<sup>th</sup>. She will help increase our effectiveness and efficiency for responding to HUD deadlines, meeting tenant requests for information, and tracking our expenditures.

# Core Business

---

## Protect and Provide for a Safe Community: Millhouse Road Training Site



We began site preparation on the Millhouse Road Public Safety Training Site. Installation of the containerized training structure will occur during the month of September. The company will certify our Trainers to use the many features of the structure during the first week of October.

## Protect and Provide for a Safe Community: “Heel Print Pilot”



Employees from our Life Safety Division are piloting a voluntary program with the UNC-CH Off-Campus and Student Life Office. This program offers landlords an opportunity to request a free safety inspection of their off-campus student housing. A matrix has been developed to evaluate the property for compliance with safety standards, compliance with related codes and owner/manager accessibility. High scoring properties that meet specific standards will be placed on a public listing that notes participation in the program and the level of compliance.

## Residential Building Permits: Moratorium on residential plan review services



Due to the increased volume of applications for residential and commercial permits, we have implemented a temporary moratorium on detailed residential plan review. While the State of North Carolina requires detailed plan review for all commercial projects, **plan review for residential projects is optional**. The Town is evaluating the impact of the moratorium and will consider how to offer this service in the future. The moratorium does not affect zoning review and does not waive requirements for permits. Permits are still required per NCGS

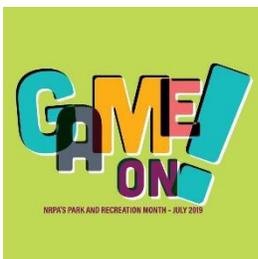
160A-417. See [memo](#) for additional information.

## Recreation Programming: Field reservations



Field reservations for the fall season were made utilizing the department’s new criteria and procedures which prioritize allocations for youth organizations based upon percentage of Orange County residents served through the program.

## Recreation Programming: Social Media



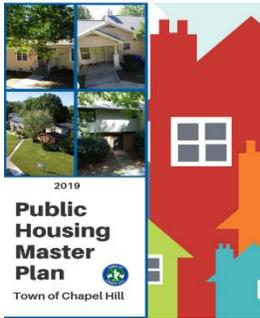
On July 23, Chapel Hill Parks & Recreation carried the NCRPA Social Media Baton, taking over the professional association’s Instagram page to showcase the unique programs and offerings of the department.

### **Records Management: Policy and Procedures, Retention and Disposition, Open Data**



Since early 2019, the Communication and Public Affairs office has received and responded to about 200 public records requests. These requests and status are being prepared to appear monthly on the Open Data platform. The Records Manager has been working with interns to bring order to Planning's records located at the TOC Warehouse, and Police and Public Works to help with Police Records storage in the Archives. A Records Management Procedures has been approved and becomes effective October 1, 2019. The Town's Imaging Procedures were also recently approved, and training will be underway in the coming months to begin imaging the Town's documents.

### **Public Housing: Assessment System Score**



The Housing Department is working on lowering the rental unit vacancy rate to improve the Town's assessment score that we receive from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Housing Officer has prepared applicants to be financially ready when they are close to the top of the waiting list. The Department averages three move-ins a month and expects that vacancies will decrease in the fall.

### **Development Review: Form District Permits for Tarheel Lodging and Park Apartments**



Issuance of Form District Permits for two projects in the Blue Hill District. Following the completion of staff review, the Town Manager determined the projects to be in full compliance with LUMO regulations and issued permits following the process laid out in the Blue Hill Form-Based Code. Tarheel Lodging will be a mixed-use redevelopment of the Quality Inn/Hong Kong Buffet site, comprised of a 98-room hotel, 42,500 square feet of office, and 234 apartment units. Park Apartments will be a multifamily redevelopment of the Park at Chapel Hill with 414 units. Both projects are now moving into the demolition and site work phases.

### **Incident Weather Response: Disaster Management Contracts**



Disaster Management Contracts: Public Works has secured contracts with a disaster management firm and two debris removal contractors to provide support during widespread disaster events that are likely to receive FEMA reimbursement (i.e. numerous downed trees, debris across the town). These contracts would be activated upon the Town's request in an emergency event, as needed. The Town is also participating with the County in a joint bid and selection process for a new debris removal contract. This will allow both agencies to contract with the same debris removal contractor in the future.

### Stormwater: Educational Outreach



On August 4, 2019 the Stormwater office teamed up with Studio 109 artist-in-residence Ayla Gizlice on an interactive water quality education workshop. In the Cyanotype workshop, participants learned about our local watersheds and captured some of the wonders of Pritchard Park in their own cyanotype prints.

## Capital Projects

---

### Economic & Financial Sustainability: Implement Capital Improvement Plan



Resurfacing of the pickleball courts at Ephesus Park has been completed. The new Mondo surface allows for a better, dryer playing surface at the site.

### Economic & Financial Sustainability: Implement Facility Maintenance Plan



The following are the high-priority building maintenance projects planned for FY20. Staff continue to evaluate facility conditions and reprioritize projects each year. Homestead Aquatic Center Soffit Repair; Post Office Roof and Cupola Evaluation Design; Post Office Exterior Wall Cleaning/Painting; Town Hall Roof Evaluation/Design; Historic Town Hall Exterior Evaluation/Repairs; Hargraves Vinyl Floor Tile Replacement; and Hargraves Upstairs Bathroom Refurbishments; Library Countertops, Sinks, Faucet Replacements. The funding plan may shift if other higher priority maintenance/repair needs arise. Staff will provide updates on our progress with these projects.