



CHAPEL HILL TOWNtalk

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2020
VOLUME 16 ISSUE 4



Town Manager Maurice Jones

It's critically important for organizations to take a moment every once and awhile to celebrate successes. The Town of Chapel Hill is no exception. 2019 proved to be another year of achievement for our Town. Each of you were valuable contributors to our accomplishments.

We are including a special insert Celebrating Our Successes in this issue

of TOWNtalk. If you are interested in learning more about the Town Council's goals and priorities – and all the ways we are achieving them together, you can read about them at this link –

www.townofchapelhill.org/councilgoals

Residents value highly the quality of Town services that we provide. We know this from the Chapel Hill Community Survey, the results of which were released in February. The ratings of quality of life, satisfaction with services and local government are impressive!

Chapel Hill ranks as a "high performing city" on this consumer report card. Some 93% of residents surveyed rated Chapel Hill as an "excellent" or "good" place to live. The survey was conducted between November and December 2019 by ETC institute, a national firm



Celebrating Successes! View a long-format video at <https://youtu.be/D5Gp-f5AOUk> and take a bow. This video was prepared for the Council Retreat and received a round of applause!

that has administered surveys in more than 700 cities. Access survey results at www.townofchapelhill.org/survey

As always, thank you for your outstanding work on behalf of the people of Chapel Hill. We are blessed to have such a dedicated and talented workforce.

Coming Up

Monday, March 16
2020 Census Launch Party, 11:30 a.m., Chapel Hill Public Library

Friday, April 3
Lunch and Learn: Foot Pain, noon, Homestead Aquatic Center (see p. 6)

Friday, April 10
Spring Holiday. Most Town offices will be closed.

Thursday, April 16
Lunch and Learn: Food Allergies (see p. 6)

Thursday, April 30
Deadline for Cal Horton Service Award nominations (see p. 3)

WHAT YOU WILL RECEIVE IN THE MAIL

ON OR BETWEEN	YOU'LL RECEIVE
MARCH 12-20	An invitation to respond online to the 2020 Census.
MARCH 16-24	Reminder letter.
IF YOU HAVEN'T RESPONDED YET:	
MARCH 26-APRIL 3	Reminder postcard.
APRIL 8-16	Reminder letter and paper questionnaire.
APRIL 20-27	Final reminder postcard before in-person visits from census takers.

EVERYONE COUNTS! IN ORANGE COUNTY CENSUS 2020 2020Census.gov United States Census 2020

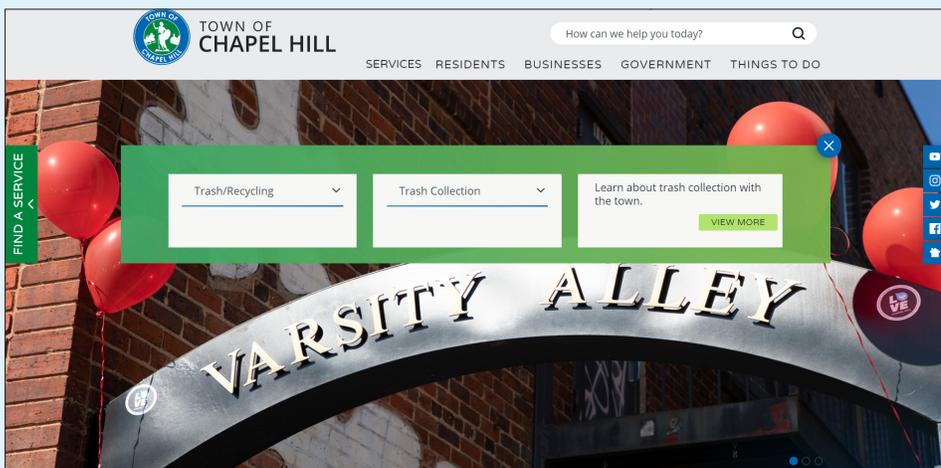
The 2020 Census is coming! Help us ensure that **Everyone Counts**, including you! Learn more at www.townofchapelhill.org/census

JUST LOOK AT OUR NEW WEBSITE!

Our new website launched on Feb. 19. It has been redesigned to be clean, uncluttered, and easy to use. The new Service Finder makes it simple for website visitors to find the information they need on Town services.

Thanks to the Website Core Admin Team: Sabrina Oliver, Melanie Miller, Ran Northam, Janelle Bailey, Amy Harvey and Catherine Lazorko. Janelle Bailey was the primary liaison from Technology Solutions and was critical in working with the web site developers.

We also appreciate the representatives from Town departments who have spent time on the project over the past year. The Website Advisory Team includes Nate Broman-Fulks, Anya Grahn, Charnika Harrell, Brandon Howell, Kiera Huiel, John Richardson, Laura Selmer, Melissa Bartoletta, Jeffrey Sullivan, Nicholas Palmer, Len Cone, Daniel Siler, Wes Tilghman, Bergen Watterson, Angie Turner, Steve Wright, Alisha Cordell, Matthew DeBellis, Christina Strauch, Bonnie Guo and Jomar Pastorelle.



NEW FIRE CHIEF

Vence Harris (Fire) has been appointed Fire Chief. Serving as the Town's emergency management coordinator, Harris began his career more than 25 years ago at the Town of Chapel Hill. He has served in nearly every capacity at the Chapel Hill Fire Department since 1994.



As emergency management coordinator, Harris led response efforts for major emergencies such as structure fires, snow and ice storms, flooding events, recovery efforts involving FEMA, large crowd demonstrations, and complex development projects that require coordination oversight. He managed state and federal requirements for prevention, response, mitigation and recovery efforts for man-made and natural disasters.

G.E.M.S.

Celisa Lehw, Meg McGurk, and Johnnie Britt, (all Police), created and led G.E.M.S. (Girls. Empowered. Motivated. Spectacular.) this past fall. The eight-week series introduced 11 young women, ages 15–17, to community-oriented careers in public safety and local government. The next session (starting March 17) will focus on career opportunities in even more Town departments and divisions! Learn more at an Open House from 6 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 10, in Meeting Room A at Chapel Hill Public Library. To RSVP for the Open House or for more information, contact Anggie Thompson at 969-2000 or athompson@townofchapelhill.org.



BUILDING LEADERSHIP THROUGH IMPROV GAMES

In November, 14 employees spent two hours playing **Improvisation Games** to build team leadership and collaboration tools. Led by Ali Farahnakian of the PIT Chapel Hill, the group complained about different topics as if they were performing in a symphony and passed a word around a circle at lightning speed. Confidence was built. Relationships made. Fun had.

– Brought to you by the Alliance for Innovation Ambassadors



Briefs

Kelly Drayton (Fire) is our new Emergency Management Coordinator. Kelly will be taking lead on the Town's preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery planning efforts.

John French (Parks and Recreation) has been selected to serve as the Recreation Supervisor for Hargraves Community Center. John has served the Town for over 15 years and currently serves as Community Safety Coordinator for the Police Department.

Mike Wright (Public Works) has been promoted to Streets and Construction Services Superintendent. Mike has more than 16 years of experience in local government engineering, including project and construction management and supervising and leading teams.



Who will you nominate for the **Cal Horton Award**? Get your forms at townofchapelhill.org/calhortonaward on March 20. Deadline: April 30

You're invited to join the LGBTQ+ Resource Group! This safe space is open to ALL employees: LGBTQ+ and Allies. Share wins and challenges in a supportive setting as well as advise and shape policies for the Town to create an environment where LGBTQ employees can bring their authentic selves to work. The group meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month. Contact **Matt DeBellis** (CaPA/Technology Solutions) at mdebellis@townofchapelhill.org or 969-5016 for more information.

March 15-21, 2020 is Sunshine Week, a week celebrating open data, public access to government records, and freedom of information. We will be sending out tips to employees on effective records management, on ways that the Town celebrates open data, and on Sunshine Week-related events happening throughout the Triangle.



Prevent the Spread of COVID-19! One of the best ways to prevent the spread of germs is to stay home if you are sick. If you're well, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says "common sense hygiene" is the best way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other viruses (like the cold and flu).

For tips and more information from local, state, and national health officials, visit The Hive via your desktop icon or thehive.townofchapelhill.org.

Questions about your health? Contact the Wellness Clinic at 968-2796 or visit chapelhillwellnessatwork.org. The Wellness Clinic does not have the capability to test for coronavirus. Staff can recommend whether you should seek additional medical guidance.

Your Blue Cross Blue Shield health plan provides video diagnosis options: <http://bit.ly/2TBR7j8>.

TRANSIT SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR

"I enjoy what I do, not that it's not a challenge," **Shanika Nickerson** (Transit) said as she accepted the 2019 Garrett-Alston Supervisor of the Year Award. "Working at Transit 11 years, you never know how your day is going to go. Each one is different."

During a holiday potluck/awards ceremony on Dec. 20, Nickerson (pictured right) and **Stephen Deberry** (pictured far right) were honored by their co-workers for their dedication to the job and their commitment to helping operators. More than 50 fixed route transit



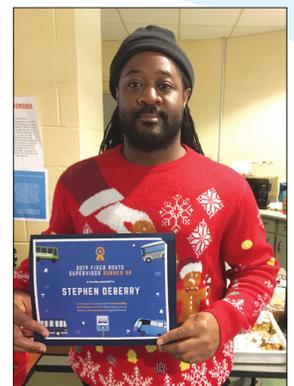
operators voted to name Nickerson Chapel Hill Transit's Supervisor of the Year.

The Ernestine Garrett award, now the Garrett-Alston Supervisor of the Year Award, was created to honor supervisors who go above and beyond.

Nickerson was selected via a vote by around 85 transit operators because "she is always there for operators, providing what they need during the days and offering support as operators make tough calls during the year."

This year, the operators also honored runner-

up Stephen Deberry, who has served as a supervisor since 2016. Deberry says his job as a supervisor is to "offer knowledge every day to help make my co-workers' jobs easier and more comfortable." Deberry also coordinates Tar Heel Express service to UNC-Chapel Hill football and basketball games, helps to train new operators and helps trainees obtain their full commercial drivers' licenses.



NEW LANGUAGE TOOLS

The Town Council unanimously approved the Town's first Language Access Plan in November. The plan establishes policies that support the right of all residents to communicate with the Town in the language which they prefer and gives Town staff the tools they need to more effectively support residents who speak languages other than English.

What does this mean for you? Housing and Community staff are partnering with departments to start implementing the following key policies:

- You will have access to interpreters and translators for interactions with residents who speak languages other than English; contact mpeters@townofchapelhill.org or 919-968-2756 for assistance with scheduling.
- Emergency communications and vital documents will now be translated into languages other than English
- Training opportunities will be offered for staff on how to best serve residents speaking languages other than English
- Training for bilingual Town staff as interpreters and translators

Did you know?

- 21 percent of Chapel Hill residents speak a language other than English at home
- Six percent of our residents have a limited ability to speak, understand, read, or write in English
- The most common languages in Chapel Hill are Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Korean, Burmese, and Karen.

If you have questions or comments contact **Megan Peters** (Housing and Community) at 919-968-2756 or mpeters@townofchapelhill.org.



INTRODUCING TOWN MEETING FACILITATORS!

A new resource is available to Town departments and teams: a cohort of 17 specially trained meeting facilitators! This group of Town employees uses RESPECT and mutual learning values to make your meetings a success.

Facilitators excel at facilitating staff meetings, employee forums, project kickoffs, Town partner conversations, and conducting mini retreats for established teams. Contact Sarah Poulton (spoulton@townofchapelhill.org) or check us out at thehive.townofchapelhill.org/buzz/facilitators/ for more information or to request a facilitator.



THRIVING

The Town's Mission Statement is:

"Learning, serving, and working together to build a community where people thrive." Here is what employees have told the Ombuds office that "thriving" looks like to them:

- "I feel like a valued, even essential, member of my work team"
- "I am included in regular, real time communications, necessary to do my job"
- "My opinion is sought when changes that directly impact me are made and new equipment is purchased in my work area"
- "I am trusted and given the opportunity to perform my work without interference, conflict or micromanagement"
- "My supervisor annually meets with me to jointly design a plan to for my professional development, and we meet regularly to ensure growth toward that plan"
- "I have a fair and equitable chance for advancement within my work area; it is clear on what I need to do to advance; and I have the opportunities, supports and resources to advance"
- "Town policies, procedures, and



processes are clear, consistent, equitable and fair"

- "I understand how what I do helps achieve our Mission; I believe that I can influence my work and how it is done; I know that will be respected for whom I am; and if I ever do not feel respected or valued I know the resources the Town offers to address these concerns"
- "I believe that when I speak to power in a respectful, 'Mutual Learning' manner, I will be listened to and not be retaliated against; further, I believe that what I have to share may help us become a better place to work and serve"

These are just some of the things that have been shared with the Ombuds Office by you. In order for all people – employees, residents, businesses – to thrive requires US—you and me—"Learning, serving, and working together"

—Jim Huegerich (Ombuds)

Compliments

Alan McKoy (Police) was thanked by Sonia Katchian for being compassionate and patient while helping her find her car.

Tish Wells (Police) was commended by Sharon Jassy for being helpful and informative when she had trouble using an online system.

Jun Gim (Police) was commended by Thomas Simon (Fire) for going above and beyond in an emergency situation.

Sharon Fisher (Technology Solutions) was thanked by Angie Steele (Transit) for getting the lost and found telephone line fixed.

Tommy Hall, Stephen Deberry, and **Joe McMiller** (all Transit) were thanked by Cheryl Malkin for helping her get back to her car when a family emergency happened while she was at a basketball game.

Jun Gim (Police), **Fire Station 4 - A Shift Crew** and **Halle Bispo** (Transit) were thanked by the Seawell Elementary PTA for bringing their vehicles to the Big Fall Play Day at the school.

Sarah Fritz (Police) was thanked by Marcus Prieto at Emerson Waldorf School for assisting them with a park & ride option for a school event.

Thomas Baldwin (Transit) was thanked by Mary Jane Nirdlinger (Manager's Office) for excellent driving during the Council Orientation Tour. "We had traffic, traffic cones, unexpected route changes, construction on both sides, etc., and he was calm and professional AND made it through all that mess like a champ."

Ashley Badstein (Police) was thanked by Patrick Mulkey (Parking Services) for providing excellent customer service to a community member. Ashley stayed long after office hours to coordinate communications and services between patrol officers and parking services staff.

Ross Morrison (Transit) was complimented by an A bus rider: "He makes an effort to remember every single one of his regular bus riders and he makes everyone feel welcome."

Tammy Price (Transit) was complimented by one of her riders on the J bus for being friendly and helpful. "She always looks out for me so if I'm running to catch the bus she waits for me."



Tommy Gregory, Paul Moss, Pat Spencer, Cliff Brooks and Devan McKenna (all Fire) were thanked by Scott Banks (Parking Services) for assisting with removing a pay station that was destroyed when a driver hit it with a car.

Van Bennett (Building and Development Services) was complimented by Marci Boxler for being helpful and a delight to talk to.

Ron Telfair (Police) was thanked by Linda Maitland for being compassionate when providing assistance to a homeless person.

The Police Department was thanked by Sheila Kerrigan for keeping marchers safe during a demonstration on Franklin Street.

TRANSIT TEAM MEMBERS OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to these Transit Team members on their significant accomplishments and commitment to our values of Safety, Responsibility and Ethics. Thank you for your dedication to safety and the excellent service you provide to Chapel Hill Transit customers!

- **George Coutinho** (Demand Response Team), **John Muller** (Fixed Route Team),



Raul Roldan (Maintenance Team)

- Distinguished Operators – Fixed Route Team: **Hallie Bispo, Michael Chandler, Barry Raines, Jermaine Ray**

- Distinguished Operators – Demand Response Team: **William Barnett, Gerhard Konig**

- Safety Awards: 121 Team Members

received safety awards for having no preventable accidents over 12 months, including 15 with more than 20 years of safe driving – led by **Amy Edwards** with 30 years of safe driving!





Melissa Bartolleta (Community Arts & Culture), leads employees in a Yoga Class as part of Wellness@Work's Manage Stress Challenge.

Two Lunch and Learns in April!

Do your feet hurt? Do you have arthritis, tendonitis, bunions or flat feet? Learn about common causes of foot pain and advances in treatment at noon Friday, April 3, at Homestead Aquatic Center. RSVP to Liska Lackey by 5 p.m. Wednesday, April 1, at llackey@email.unc.edu or 968-2796.

Learn about food allergies and sensitivities at noon Thursday, April 16, in Meeting Room A at Chapel Hill Public Library. What's the difference between food allergies and sensitivities? How are they diagnosed and treated? RSVP to Liska Lackey by 5 p.m. Tuesday, April 14, at llackey@email.unc.edu or 968-2796. Lunch will be provided!

Tommy Hawkins (Transit) had quit smoking for a month when he contacted the Wellness@Work Tobacco Cessation program. Like many people, he started to smoke at a young age, quit, started again, quit again, and so on.

One month earlier, he was diagnosed with heart problems. In the emergency room, the doctor gave him a nicotine patch and strongly advised him to quit smoking. The lesson stuck and he remained quit. Tommy contacted Tobacco Treatment Specialist Barbara Silver for support and motivation. Barbara advised Tommy to keep using nicotine patches.

Tommy liked the one-on-one in-person interaction with Barbara. The patches and keeping busy at work reduced cravings and prevented relapse, especially in stressful situations. He has

saved money (and received \$100 for quitting for six months). He is sleeping better, and his house and clothes don't smell from smoke anymore. Tommy recommends the Wellness@Work program to anyone thinking about quitting tobacco.

If you want to quit smoking, vaping or using smokeless tobacco, contact Barbara Silver at 919-904-4848 (phone or text) or barbara_silver@med.unc.edu. The free program includes support and free medication. If you quit using tobacco for six months, you receive \$100 gift card. Quit for another six months and receive another \$100!



DO THE HRA!

The Health Risk Assessment (HRA) is fast, easy, and confidential. HRA Clinics have begun. Walk in or schedule an appointment at chapelhillwellnessatwork.org

You'll need to complete a health survey, give a small blood sample, and get your weight and blood pressure checked. When you complete the HRA, your cost-sharing contribution for health insurance will be waived. You'll get a personalized plan for follow-up based on your health needs and goals and an Insulated lunch bag with the Wellness@Work logo. You'll also have an opportunity to win a \$100 gift card by completing a short survey.

Questions? Call the Wellness Clinic at 919-968-2796 or visit chapelhillwellnessatwork.org/hra.

GREEN TIPS



Employees at Town Hall and Fire Station #1 have diverted more than 800 pounds of food waste from the landfill. This has reduced carbon emissions by more than 2,000 pounds and created more than 200 pounds of soil.

Our next big push is to compost more paper towels. If you work on the second or third floor of Town Hall, taking just a few extra steps to the nearest compost bin will help reduce waste.

Hosting an event and need help to find a green vendor and to compost the waste? Contact **Kathryn Kelly** (Mayor's Office) at kkelly@townofchapelhill.org.



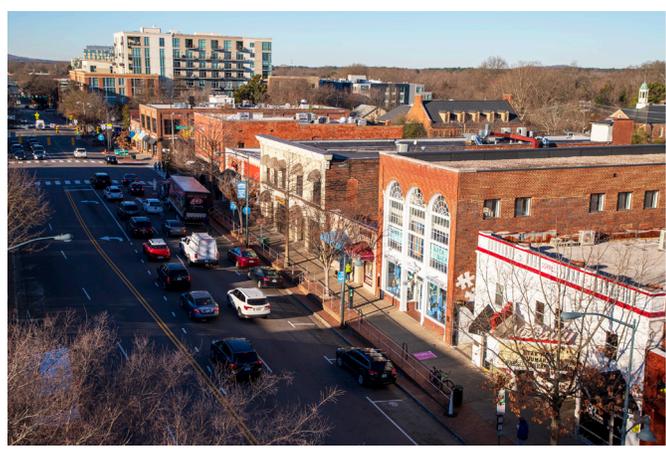


Celebrating Our Successes

Find more Council Updates

on strategic initiatives, core business and capital projects at www.townofchapelhill.org/councilgoals

View the video at youtu.be/D5Gp-f5AOUk.



Environmental Stewardship

Organized for development of a Climate Action and Response Plan. The Town is committed to ensuring that all community members are engaged in efforts to reduce the potential effects of climate change and to adapt to anticipated changes. Staff will present a draft plan to Council by June 2020.

Created the Community Tree Program. This kicked off the Mayor's Tree of the Year contest to highlight the importance and meaning of trees in our community. More than 100 trees were planted in fall, and the Town received a \$20,000 grant from the Duke Energy Foundation to plant more trees in 2020.

Planned for the Town's largest investment in stormwater management. The Elliott Flood Storage Project will manage runoff near Eastgate Crossing and East Franklin Street. The \$2.6 million project is funded from stormwater bonds approved by voters in 2015.

Addressed coal ash remediation at a site north of Bolin Creek. The Council approved \$246,000 for remediation in June 2019 and directed several measures be undertaken. The Town is working closely with the NC Department of Environmental Quality and environmental engineers.

Initiated plans to convert about 2,000 public street lights to LED fixtures. Each light that is replaced will cut energy usage in half and lower greenhouse emissions.

Saved water and had some fun in the Mayors Save Water Challenge with Chapel Hill Mayor Pam Hemminger and Carrboro Mayor Lydia Lavelle. This coincided with OWASA's roll-out of Agua Vista – a new online tool that helps customers monitor water usage.



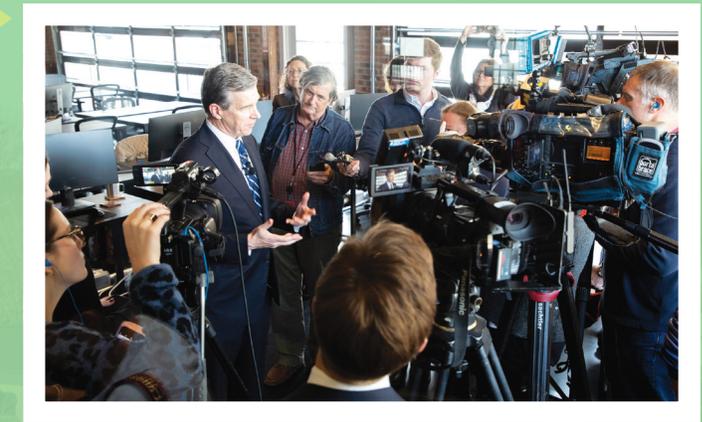
Diverted over 800 pounds of food waste from the landfill through a compost program at Town Hall and Fire Station No. 1. This effort has reduced our carbon emissions by more than 2,000 pounds. We've also created over 200 pounds of soil that is being returned to gardens in Chapel Hill. Pictured here, Town staff conducted a trash audit to find out how much waste could be diverted from the landfill.

Economic & Financial Sustainability

Successfully recruited Well Dot Inc. for its health-technology center at 419 W. Franklin St. in downtown, a move that will bring 400 jobs and economic investment. Gov. Roy Cooper delivered an announcement from Chapel Hill that the state will provide nearly \$4.4 million in incentives, with the Town adding \$900,000.

Adopted a \$116 million budget for fiscal year 2019–20, representing no changes in core services. The budget invests in strategic goal areas from affordable housing to climate action.

Attracted Carolina Donor Services, the state's largest organ and tissue donation organization. "The Town Council created this new zone on Millhouse Road to attract growing companies here, and we are thrilled to see our strategic vision becoming a reality," Mayor Pam Hemminger said.



Saved \$836,531 from the refunding of taxable general obligation public improvement bonds. A recent drop in tax-exempt bond rates provided the opportunity.

Completed improvements in downtown Chapel Hill at Post Office Alley and Varsity Alley between E. Franklin St. and E. Rosemary St. parking areas. The improvements address safety, functionality, and wayfinding.

Affordable Housing

Celebrated the addition of a newly renovated quadraplex in the Northside neighborhood to the Town's permanently affordable housing stock. The new four-unit affordable housing property is now part of the Town's Transitional Housing Program, which serves families transitioning out of public housing. The new quadraplex was created through a partnership between the Town of Chapel Hill and the Northside Neighborhood Initiative.

Certified the Affordable Housing Bond Referendum, which approved \$10 million in general obligation bonds to help the Town develop 400 new affordable housing units and preserve 300 existing affordable units over the next five years.

Deployed \$1.2 Million to community partners for affordable housing development and preservation projects in the community through the affordable housing funding programs. We supported the development of 82 new affordable housing units. The Town also supported the preservation of 147 units of affordable housing in the community, surpassing our annual target by 18%.

Created innovative programs to respond to community needs, including the **Housing Displacement Assistance Program** and **Employee Housing Program**.

Moved forward plans for developing **affordable housing on Town-owned properties** at 2200 Homestead Road and the Town's prioritized sites.



Connected Community

Took an all-staff bike ride to experience streets with an eye toward new design ideas as well as areas that might be unsafe and need repair. Public Works Director Lance Norris pictured above.

Developed Pedestrian Safety Action Plan advancing efforts to make Chapel Hill a place with zero pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries.

Held community meetings on the North-South Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), which will allow more buses to run more often along several of the busiest roads in the town.

Increased safety for pedestrians by prohibiting right turn on a red signal at 16 intersections.

Installed buffered bike lanes at Weaver Dairy Extension and completed bike lanes on Rosemary Street between Church Street and Pritchard Avenue.

Awarded a contract for three new electric buses for Chapel Hill Transit, as part of a pilot project funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Renewable Energy Special Projects Committee at UNC Chapel Hill and the Chapel Hill Transit funding partners.



Planned for improvements at Franklin Street at Merritt Mill Road. The NC Department of Transportation project added a new sidewalk and curb ramps, a median, stamped crosswalks, a signal upgrade and high visibility crosswalk.

Awarded the Excellence in TDM Planning Award by the Association for Commuter Transportation (ACT) to Go Chapel Hill, which recognizes and honors outstanding achievements in TDM.

Installed art installations at three bus shelters commemorating the local civil rights movement. The community's new arts experiences include six community-driven pop up galleries and four artists-in-residence at 109 East Franklin Street, a collaboration with Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership and UNC Arts Everywhere.

Vibrant and Inclusive Community

Adopted a Town-wide Language Access Plan to offer interpretation and translation services for Town services and programs. The plan responds to the highest priority issue of immigrant and refugee residents. Chapel Hill becomes a leader among NC local governments in language access.

Graduated 37 residents from the Peoples Academy where graduates learned about Town services, connected with each other, and gained knowledge and understanding to lead in the Chapel Hill community.

Supported the Good Neighbor Initiative, in collaboration with UNC. We organized a successful Block Party and Door-to-Door effort, and continued to distribute the Tar Heel Citizen Times, the electronic newsletter for UNC students living off campus. The readership of the newsletter is now over 3,000.

Engaged residents in Charting Our Future, the journey to chart the next course and to think about the future of Chapel Hill. Residents reviewed and commented on draft maps and descriptions indicating how the Town may grow and develop to the year 2049.

Opened new turf fields at Homestead Park, thanks to a \$1.4 million joint project among the Town, Triangle United Soccer and Rainbow Soccer. The park now has two new artificial turf fields, accessible walkways and fencing. The artificial turf fields can be played on year round and are lighted for evening play.



Improved longstanding festivals, created new events, and improved event permitting. We successfully moved fireworks to Southern Village, reimagined Festifall and created the Santa Rooftop Rescue. We launched a new website with improved external permit applications and internal processes.

Named C.J. Suitt as the new Poet Laureate for Chapel Hill to help create a poetry initiative and to serve as an ambassador for the arts.

Learned a lot about our shared history. From the Chapel Hill 1819/2019 celebration to the Women of the Movement program to the Re/Collecting Chapel Hill podcast to the development of the Chapel Hill Nine Marker, we are learning our community's history, from the bottom up and the inside out.

Dedicated a historical marker at 405 W. Franklin St. that honors the Chapel Hill Nine, who sat at a booth in the Colonial Drug Store and sought the same service that was given to white customers. Their courageous step sparked a decade of direct-action civil rights demonstrations in Chapel Hill.

Safe Community

Established LGBTQ+ Liaison to address and elevate the concerns of the LGBTQ+ community related to public safety and policing. The Liaison partners with divisions within the police department to fairly and equitably address issues.

Recruited 17 new police officers. An increase to starting pay and a renewed recruiting effort led to the hiring of 17 new police officers. Our newest Guardians of the Hill bring a variety of experiences and backgrounds.

Graduated the first five students to complete the full course of the High School Fire Academy. With the successful completion of program requirements, students are eligible for employment as professional firefighters upon high school graduation.

Launched the GEMS (Girls. Empowered. Motivated. Spectacular.) through the Chapel Hill Police Department, a program that helps young women explore future opportunities in public safety and local government careers. Women police officers and firefighters lead the eight-week program.

Opened new fire training facility on Millhouse Road, the only site in Orange County with a burn building. Ready access to a fire training facility is an essential component of maintaining departmental readiness and employee safety.

Translated emergency messages into Chapel Hill's most common languages, including Spanish, Burmese, Karen and Mandarin Chinese. We are working with community partners and local language service organizations on this video project.



Firefighters take a break from training (upper photo) – and (lower photo), demonstrate the use of the fire hose during the Peoples Academy.

Collaborative and Innovative Organization

Received the second highest score in NC on the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index (MEI) survey, thanks in large part to efforts of our LGBTQ+ Employee Resource Group. The MEI examines how inclusive municipal laws, policies, and services are of LGBTQ people who live and work there.

Engaged the public on a redesign of the Town Website through surveys and user testing. Communications staff worked with the UNC-Chapel Hill Hussman School of Journalism and Media. Launch anticipated in February 2020.

Joined the Government Alliance for Race & Equity (GARE) network. A team of 15 employees are designing next steps to advance racial equity for the Town.

Advanced transparency by videoing both Work Sessions and Council Committee on Economic Sustainability meetings, in addition to the regular Council meetings.

Trained 16 employees in meeting facilitation for times when a meeting needs a conflict resolution professional, complex process mapping or organization development.

