



## CHAPTER ONE

# Introduction & Plan Overview

Welcoming • Inclusive • Vibrant • Quirky • Diverse  
Eclectic • Green • Progressive • Walkable • Friendly

These are just some of the terms residents and community leaders have used during Carrboro's first formal and official comprehensive planning process. This process has been an opportunity for all residents, organizations, businesses, and appointed and elected officials to come together to develop a common vision for the future of Carrboro and set of goals and strategies to meet that vision. Built on the progress made by past planning and engagement efforts, **the comprehensive plan is a complete policy document that describes the type of community that Carrboro wants to be in the future with an implementation strategy to achieve that vision.**

The plan's engagement process took place in the midst of three crises: a global pandemic, racial equity injustices, and a climate emergency. Still, thousands of people in Carrboro collectively developed this plan to address these paramount issues through a set of ambitious and bold goals, summarized on the following pages.

"This plan is built on a foundation of race and equity and climate action."



# Plan Goals

**The Carrboro Connects Comprehensive Plan was developed with the foundational themes of race and equity and climate action, which are integral across every aspect of the plan.**

The following goals frame the strategies and projects that set a course for achieving Carrboro's vision for the future.



## Affordable Housing

- Increase the number of homeownership units that are permanently affordable with targeted strategies to serve households earning 80% of Area Median Income (AMI) or below with priority to historically disadvantaged households
- Increase the number of rental units that are permanently affordable to very low-income households earning up to 60% of AMI with a particular focus on those earning less than 30% AMI and historically disadvantaged households
- Diversify and expand a variety of housing options throughout Carrboro using a mixture of affordable housing types
- Maintain and improve the quality of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) and “missing middle” opportunities
- Support efforts with Orange County to ensure that all homeless individuals and families have access to safe housing, appropriate services, and a path to permanent housing.
- Expand resources targeted to affordable housing
- Reduce utility expenses for all homes

**KEY WORDS:** *Cost burden, Land trust, Missing middle housing, Naturally occurring affordable housing, Housing bond*



## Climate & Environment

- Achieve 80% reduction in per capita greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, as compared to 2010 levels
- Achieve 80% reduction in municipal emissions by 2030
- Expand equitable and inclusive community participation in the decision-making and implementation of climate change goals and policies
- Enable lower-income residents and small business owners to be able to financially participate and benefit from climate resiliency programs
- Conserve and restore watersheds, ecosystems, and native species
- Promote policies to ensure distribution of environmental burdens and access to natural areas and ecosystems to be equitable across race, income, and ability, especially in neighborhoods that have been denied and historically underserved

**KEY WORDS:** *Energy efficiency, Mitigation, Resilience, Urban heat island, Weatherization*

# Plan Goals



## Transportation & Mobility

- Address disparate impacts of transportation decisions and investments in Carrboro's BIPOC, lower-income, and differently-abled populations
- Continue to expand the transportation system to provide at least one non-automobile option (walking, biking, and transit) for every neighborhood to be usable for a variety of trip purposes
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicle use by 80% by 2030
- Improve the management of parking spaces in the downtown area

**KEY WORDS:** *Greenhouse gas emissions, Micro-mobility, Parking, Racial equity assessment tools, Transportation demand management, Vehicle miles traveled*



## Green Stormwater Infrastructure, Energy, & Water

- Increase the use of native plants and vegetation to mitigate climate change impacts, including stormwater mitigation and heat island effect
- Plant and maintain the tree canopy along identified roads
- Expand green infrastructure as part of stormwater, watershed restoration, and climate resilience efforts into the Town's public transportation investments
- Expand the use of green stormwater infrastructure to further watershed restoration and meet climate resilience goals
- Ensure that Carrboro residents are informed of and engaged with OWASA's water supply, quality, and cost plans
- Protect and restore watersheds and ecosystems
- Reduce the amount of Carrboro's treated water use while increasing water rate affordability
- Achieve 80% reduction 2010 levels of per capita greenhouse emissions by 2030

**KEY WORDS:** *Renewable energy sources, Stormwater management, Tree canopy, Water affordability*

# Plan Goals



- Create a more inclusive economy, encourage more racial equity in business development, increase support for locally-owned businesses and promote living wage jobs
- Promote economic development that is resilient, promotes excellence in design, reinforces a sense of place, expands commercial development opportunities, promotes infill development and reduces the tax burden on residents
- Grow the arts, entertainment, cultural and tourism sectors of the economy
- Encourage the transition of the economy to one based on green technology and low-impact industries

**KEY WORDS:** *Downtown and commercial districts, Green economy, Inclusive economy, Living wage jobs, Locally owned and BIPOC businesses, Retail spending gap*



- Promote recreational programming and cultural resources across all ages, genders, races, and abilities with affordable opportunities
- Ensure all people in Carrboro have safe, equitable, and connected access to parks, open space, and recreational facilities
- Ensure that recreation and park facilities and programming are environmentally responsible and help further climate change related goals
- Strengthen a sense of community and inclusion through the arts, events, and cultural programming that celebrates the diversity in Carrboro

**KEY WORDS:** *Active recreation, Connectivity, Green space, Park access, Passive recreation*



# Plan Goals



## Land Use

- Promote the design of new development, renovation of existing buildings and public spaces that add to the character and promote the diversity of the community
- Plan for the expansion of affordable housing availability through land use tools of planning, zoning, and development review
- Support development patterns that advance climate action goals and environmental protection
- Promote land use planning and development that reduces GHG emissions through reducing auto-dependence
- Expand appropriate development opportunities that meet the goals of the comprehensive plan
- Improve access and availability of Town Parks and schools to meet recreation and educational needs
- Preserve the architecturally significant and historic properties and districts in the Town that reflect the range of cultures and historic experiences in Carrboro
- Plan for future land uses that advance goals and strategies in the comprehensive plan and protect, enhance, and complement the unique character of each area

**KEY WORDS:** ADUs, Density nodes, Development review process, Equitable historic preservation, Key corridors, Overlay district



## Public Services & Communication

This chapter reflects the current priorities of the Town and its departments, including:

- Communications and Community Engagement
- Finance
- Fire-Rescue
- Human Resources
- Information Technology (IT)
- Planning
- Police
- Public Works
- Town Clerk
- Town Management
- Municipal Operations

**KEY WORDS:** Accountability, Customer service, Efficiency, Participatory budgeting, Partnerships, Responsive, Trust

# Introduction

Carrboro Connects is built on a foundation of **race and equity** and **climate action, meaning that these elements are woven into every part of the plan.** These foundations are described in more detail on pages 10-15. Goals, strategies and projects have been developed around topics like affordable housing; economic sustainability; environment; transportation; green infrastructure, recreation, parks, and culture; land use; and public services.

This is an ambitious plan, but it is founded on the capabilities, aspirations and proven track record of a town that has worked to understand its history and to develop policies and programs to bring equity and opportunities to its community. All are welcome to become part of the woven tapestry of the Carrboro community: those from every race and ethnicity; recently settled refugees or multi-generational families; members of the LGBTQ+ community; or anyone looking for home. The plan is built on the Town's record as a leader in transit, creating a more walkable/bikeable community, and being a partner in protecting its water and land resources with neighboring jurisdictions.

Planning is not new to Carrboro, but this process did face new challenges as it occurred during a public health emergency that exploded into a global health, social, and environmental pandemic: COVID-19, social unrest due to longstanding racial inequity, and tectonic shifts in climate patterns from the increase in worldwide greenhouse gas emissions.

Carrboro is also not new to planning during global crises. The Town's last comprehensive planning effort, Vision 2020, took place during the days following 9/11. Hundreds of residents, local leaders and businesspeople came out to participate in long hours of discussion during sunny September days and nights—oddly quiet with air travel suspended following terrorist attacks in New York, Pennsylvania, and Washington—to envision the future of downtown Carrboro. The decision to go forward was made in part based on the awareness that planning for the future was somehow more certain than anything else that could be imagined at that time. Ironically, the launch of Carrboro Connects coincided almost in exactly the same way with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Faced with a choice to enter the unknown possibility of developing a comprehensive plan with little or no direct physical engagement, or to delay—we jumped in.

What has this planning looked like? From Vision 2020 (adopted in 2000), which laid the groundwork for 20 years of bold action, to the most recent plans including the Climate Action Plan, Carrboro's residents believe in the power of community action based on purposeful and ambitious goals. While this plan may be the first time that all of these issues have been addressed together, it is built on a set of actions led by hundreds of involved residents through participation in Town activities, as well as various partners including non-profits, schools, the county government, transit agencies and universities.

This plan looks at least 20 years into the future – to set a course for actions that may be short-, medium- or long-term. How can Carrboro grow while respecting the history, culture, and aspirations of so many different types of people? How can residents and businesses join together with the Town to reduce its carbon footprint in an equitable manner? How can Carrboro continue to understand its complex history through uncovering truth and educating the community? How can the town become affordable so that anyone who lives or works in Carrboro can remain here? These are not easy questions. We thank all of the people involved for developing a set of cross-cutting approaches that will address these issues with as much effort as the challenges present.

The plan is built on a deep commitment to community engagement that included residents who have committed their time to the Town for years as well as youth, refugees, workers, students, and others who may just be getting involved in their community for the first time. Intentional efforts were taken to reach out to all races, ethnicities, genders, documentation status and refugees. It will take this larger community to implement the plan, with the aim of **building community, intentionally addressing race and equity, and advancing climate action.**

# Vision Statements

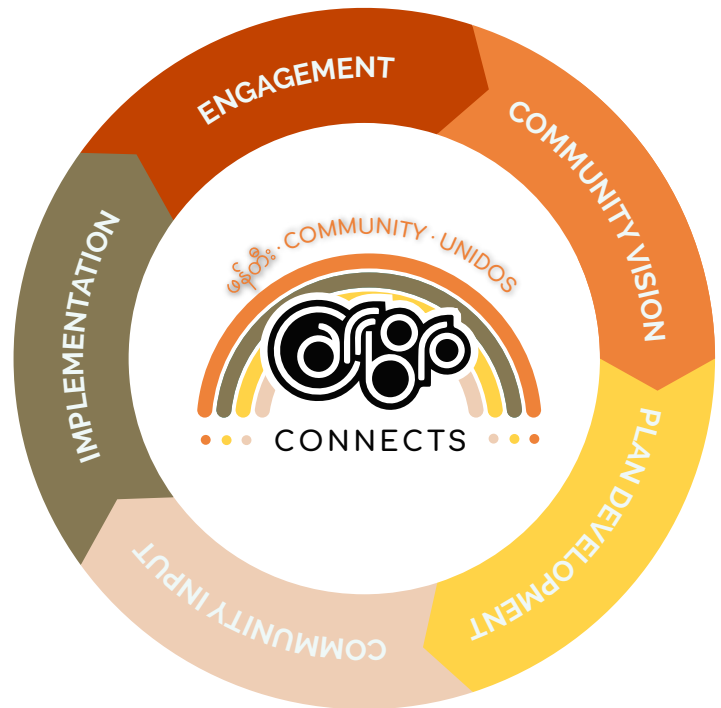
The following vision statements grew out of the various engagement techniques led by the Carrboro Connects Task Force with input from Advisory Boards, Town Council, residents, and partner organizations. In some ways, these vision statements are built upon the various plans, reports, and initiatives that have taken place in the past, now updated to address race and equity, climate action, and current aspirations. These statements guided the development of goals, strategies, and projects that make up the following chapters.

## Affordable Housing

- There is a home for everyone in Carrboro. Carrboro is affordable, safe and welcoming for all households who want to live in the community, works to prevent displacement of existing residents, advances racial equity and accessible housing, and has a full range of affordable options for all life stages and types of households, including BIPOC and other marginalized communities.

## Climate Action & Environment

- **Climate Action** - The Town is a leader in mitigating climate change, and in increasing resilience to climate change impacts for both residents and the environment. The Town prioritizes strategies to increase the resilience of BIPOC, low-income, and other residents who are disproportionately impacted by climate change.
- **Environment** - Preserve, protect, and restore natural areas and ecologically sensitive and productive areas through all feasible means. Plans and policies will improve equity by increasing the community's access to experiencing natural places, especially for those who currently have less access.



*The planning process is cyclical in nature, as this comprehensive plan will be updated in the future and community engagement will continue*

## Transportation & Mobility

- Every Carrboro resident, with particular attention to BIPOC populations, has increased safe and quality access to multimodal transportation options for efficient connections to jobs, recreation, and services.

## Green Stormwater Infrastructure, Water & Energy

- **Green Stormwater Infrastructure** - Carrboro routinely prioritizes green infrastructure over grey infrastructure to enhance ecosystems and improve vibrancy and quality of life in the community.
- **Water** - Pursue a “One Water” vision in which water is managed in a sustainable and inclusive manner. Align diverse stakeholders to find common ground solutions to water challenges. Current and future generations of Carrboro residents, especially BIPOC populations, reliably enjoy affordable access to high quality drinking water, while improving healthy environments and aquatic ecosystems for Carrboro wildlife.
- **Energy** - Carrboro reduces its dependence on fossil fuel energy sources with opportunities for all residents, especially low-income BIPOC residents, to participate.

## Economic Sustainability

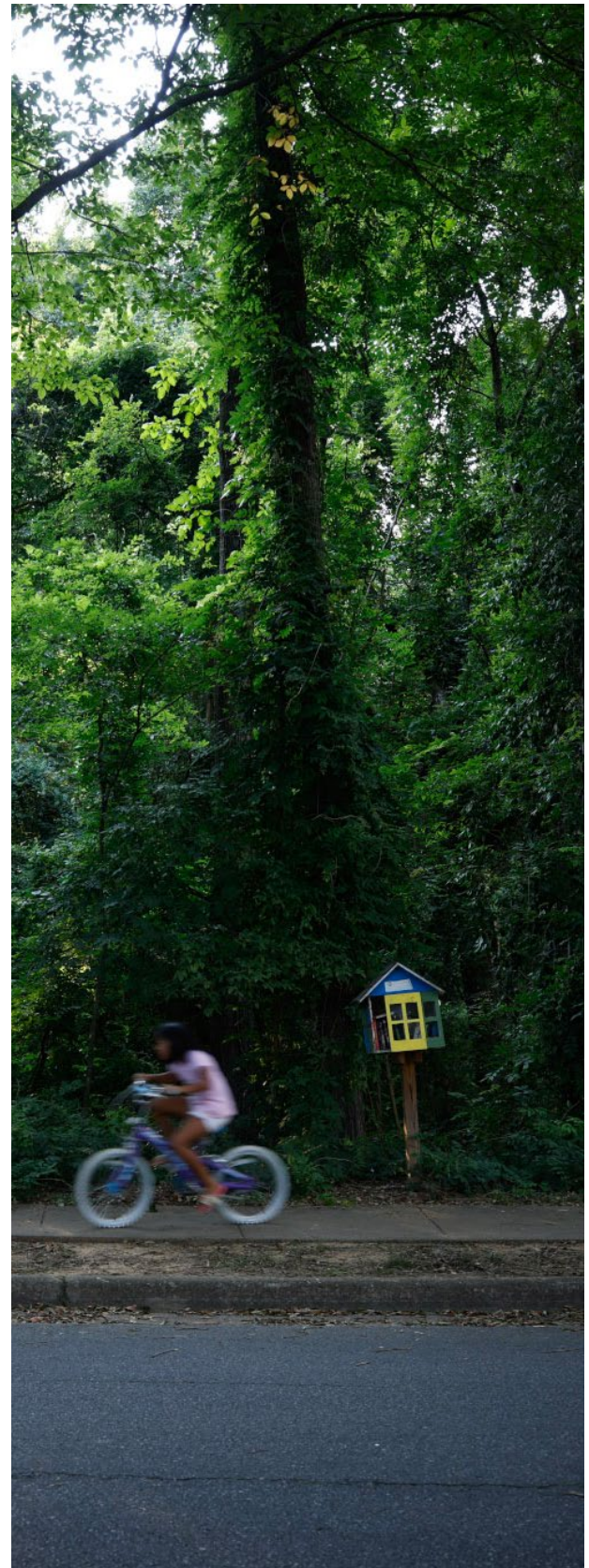
- Carrboro is a place where businesses thrive, living wage jobs are available and residents can create new businesses. The community supports a vibrant and inclusive local economy that meets the needs of the most vulnerable and underserved populations while supporting the growth of BIPOC businesses.

## Recreation, Parks & Culture

- All people in Carrboro, of all races and backgrounds, will have safe and equitable access to recreational and cultural opportunities, including a connected network of parks, green space, and trails. The Carrboro community comes together year-round through creative programming and events that celebrate the Town’s history, unique essence, and diverse range of cultures through festivals, music, and the arts.

## Land Use

- Promote equitable and sustainable use of land and natural resources that promote the diversity, values and character of the Town.





## Public Services and Communications

The following statements describe how the Town is organized to implement the policies, initiatives and programs outlined in the plan.

- **Communications** - The Communication and Engagement Department works to provide public information, encourage participation, improve trust in local government, and enhance the Carrboro brand and reputation. Through implementation of the Inclusive Carrboro Communications and Community Engagement Plan, we strive to ensure accessible communications to serve our diverse community with new pathways for resident engagement.
- **Finance** - The Finance Department provides financial management support for the delivery of town-wide services through the administration of financials, budgeting, accounts payable, purchasing and contracts, risk management and safety, billing and collections, payroll, and project development through best business practices.
- **Fire and Rescue** - To continuously strive to focus on our Community's needs, wants, and safety and to provide them our best possible service.
- **Human Resources** - To partner with the management team to recruit, hire, develop, and retain a highly qualified diverse staff dedicated to delivering exemplary customer service and to creating an atmosphere of positive employee relations that focuses on the health and wellness of all employees.
- **Information Technology** - Assist departments in delivering technology-based solutions that are cost-effective and increase effectiveness and efficiency. This is accomplished in a spirit of partnership with our stakeholders, which fosters a customer-focused environment that integrates people, processes, and technology. To work with various external and community organizations, as directed by the Town Manager, to discover mutually beneficial relationships sharing technology resources and strengths.
- **Planning** – The Planning Department's mission is to help the Town define and carry out its vision for sustaining existing and future populations. The department monitors the availability and use of resources needed to maintain a balance of the built and natural environments. The department fulfills this mission by offering professional planning, zoning, building code, and engineering and transportation and environmental geographic information services to residents, property owners, and businesses.
- **Police** - The Carrboro Police Department protects the residents, businesses and properties within the municipal limits of the Town of Carrboro by providing committed law enforcement officers and community services that foster a safe living environment in our community.
- **Public Works** - Promote a safe, healthy, and pleasing environment and community for residents and the general public through ever progressing projects, programs, and services.
- **Town Clerk** - Prepares Town Council meeting agendas and minutes and makes them available to residents and town staff; maintains official town documents; prepares and makes available updates to the Town Code and provides support for the Mayor and Town Council.
- **Town Manager** - Implements the policies of the Mayor and Town Council and communicates them to the citizenry. To be responsive to the community and to be responsive to the residents' needs to consistently meet their requirements.

*Note: Some Town departments are not detailed in this chapter because their priorities and services are discussed in other plan chapters (Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Resources; Housing and Community Services; and Economic Development).*

# Race and Equity

In launching the development of Carrboro's first comprehensive plan, the Town Council initiated a process that begins with considering the impact on race and equity. The Town's deliberate journey began in October of 2018 when the Council unanimously voted to formally begin race and equity work. In November 2018 the Town joined the Government Alliance for Race and Equity (GARE). The inaugural Race and Equity Officer was appointed and the Town developed a leadership core team. That core team participated in a cohort of communities across North Carolina, which culminated in a train-the-trainer model that has resulted in core team members training every Carrboro staff member. The Town started conversations with its partners in Orange County to create a county-wide message and plan. Every jurisdiction in Orange County is now a member of GARE.

Through this process, Carrboro's Vision statement on race and equity was formed and the logo created:

***The Town of Carrboro envisions being a community where race does not determine outcomes and all have equitable opportunities and resources. We envision a time when participation in community events, programs and advisory boards represent community demographics. All will feel safe, secure and know their voice is valued. We strive to be an inclusive and open minded organization that has a culture created by its diverse staff, which serves the public through a social (racial) justice lens.***



GARE training was provided to the Carrboro Connects Task Force and consultant team as part of this process and continues to be provided to all Town Advisory Boards and Commissions. This peer-to-peer training provides a welcoming atmosphere so that members can reflect and process the information in a deep, introspective manner.

In addition to Carrboro's participation in GARE, the Town is also an active member of One Orange, a county-wide initiative to provide a race and equity framework for reviewing government actions. The Town and its partners adopted The One Orange Countywide Racial Equity Framework in January 2022.

## One Orange Racial Equity Framework

"The One Orange Countywide Racial Equity Framework: Catalyst for Moving Forward is designed with the commitment of uncovering and addressing implicit biases in our jurisdictions to ensure that race no longer can be used to predict life outcomes in the Orange County community. Since August 2020, a multijurisdictional workgroup [the Towns of Carrboro, Chapel Hill, and Hillsborough and Orange County] collaborated on this framework using GARE methodology and listening to the community. The framework uses five pillars – 1) Training, 2) Community Engagement, 3) Racial Equity Index, 4) Racial Equity Assessment Lens and 5) Evaluation/Accountability. Each jurisdiction will use this framework as guidance to take action on a county and jurisdictional level."<sup>1</sup>

As part of the Town's participation in GARE and the urgent need to address disparities and create an equity-focused organization and community, each Town department has begun using the Racial Equity Assessment Lens (REAL) to evaluate policies, practices, procedures and services.

GARE principles were used and embedded in each step of the Carrboro Connects planning process, and the adopted One Orange Racial Equity Framework as well as the One Orange Racial Equity Assessment Lens (REAL) will be used in implementing the goals, strategies, and projects identified in this plan.

## Why Focus on Race & Equity?

Systemic racism is entrenched in the fabric of our society, from residential segregation to income equality. This plan focuses on strategies to advance race and equity to begin to achieve equity for all people in Carrboro. As described in the One Orange Framework: "In the United States, while race, income, and wealth are closely connected, racial inequity is not just about income. Even when income is the controlling factor, there still exist many inequities across multiple indicators of success, including education, jobs, housing, health and incarceration. In advancing racial equity, we will also be building systems that allow us to address income and wealth inequity and recognize the bias that exists based on gender, sexual orientation, ability, age, and religion. Focusing on race allows us to develop a framework, tools, and resources that apply to other areas of marginalization, recognizing that different strategies will be necessary to achieve equity in other areas."

The Town's commitment to advancing race and equity can be seen throughout the plan. Examples include:

- **Affordable Housing:** Promote the availability of affordable housing for both homeowners and renters; provide assistance toward the preservation of affordable housing units; and work with Orange County to provide services and housing for homeless/unsheltered individuals and families.
- **Climate Action & Environment:** Ensure distribution of environmental burdens and access to natural areas and ecosystems to be equitable across race, income, and ability, especially in neighborhoods that have been historically underserved.
- **Transportation & Mobility:** Address and reverse disparate impacts of past transportation decisions.
- **Green Stormwater Infrastructure, Water & Energy:** Invest in green infrastructure with a focus on Carrboro's BIPOC, lower-income and multiple abilities populations.
- **Economic Sustainability:** Create a more inclusive economy and encourage more racial equity in business growth and start-ups; support existing and attract new businesses that include a range of BIPOC, gender, ethnicities and multiple abilities.
- **Recreation, Parks and Cultural Resources:** Prioritize access for immigrant, BIPOC and other underserved communities while planning for new facilities and celebrate the diversity of Carrboro through cultural events, programming, artwork and stories.
- **Land Use:** Promote excellence in design that meets the diverse range and cultures expressed in the built environment; promote the development of affordable housing through modifications in the land use ordinance; and identify opportunities for affordable housing at key nodes and corridors throughout the Town.
- **Public Services and Communication:** Expand equitable community participation in the decision-making and implementation of Town goals and policies.

“Systemic and structural racism are pervasively and deeply embedded in systems, laws, written or unwritten policies, and entrenched practices and beliefs that produce, condone, and perpetuate widespread unfair treatment and oppression of people of color. Examples include residential segregation, unfair lending practices and other barriers to home ownership and accumulating wealth, schools’ dependence on local property taxes, environmental injustice, biased policing and sentencing, and voter suppression policies.”<sup>2</sup>

1. One Orange Countywide Racial Equity Framework (January 2022)

2. Braveman, Paula A., et al. “Systemic and Structural Racism: Definitions, Examples, Health Damages, and Approaches to Dismantling: Health Affairs Journal.” Health Affairs, 1 Feb. 2022, <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2021.01394>.

# Race and Equity (continued)

"Words and their multiple uses reflect the tremendous diversity that characterizes our society. Indeed, universally agreed upon language on issues relating to racism is nonexistent. We discovered that even the most frequently used words in any discussion on race can easily cause confusion, which leads to controversy and hostility. It is essential to achieve some degree of shared understanding, particularly when using the most common terms. In this way, the quality of dialogue and discourse on race can be enhanced." - *Racial Equity Tools*<sup>1</sup>

## On Language

The engagement process for Carrboro Connects took place during a specific moment in time, one in which the Town had already been well into the GARE process providing tools and resources to enter into honest dialogue, but also one in which racial equity took prominent center-stage locally and nationally.

GARE recommends utilizing direct language to acknowledge the impact that public policies have on racial equity. GARE principles guided the process and language used in the plan, and these recommendations call for being as specific as possible when discussing race.

Terms such as BIPOC – Black Indigenous People of Color – began to take hold in Carrboro and across the U.S. to acknowledge the disproportionate impact both on specific races and the fact that these impacts affect many different races and origins. In addition, the terms Latino/a, Latinx, and Hispanic are all used in the community. It is anticipated that there will be ongoing discussion of preferred usage of these terms in Carrboro.

**BIPOC:** An acronym for the term "Black, Indigenous, People of Color" which is used to highlight the unique relationship to whiteness that Indigenous and Black (African Americans) people have, which shapes the experiences of and relationship to white supremacy for all people of color within a U.S. context.

The outreach process also recognized that populations which have been historically disadvantaged and marginalized include a wide range of groups, from age discrimination to gender identification to persons with different abilities, to name a few.

For example, in the housing arena, Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) holds that:

"Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, known as the Fair Housing Act, requires HUD and recipients of federal funds from HUD to affirmatively further the policies and purposes of the Fair Housing Act, also known as "affirmatively further fair housing" or "AFFH." The obligation to affirmatively further fair housing requires recipients of HUD funds to take meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics, which are: race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), familial status and disability."<sup>2</sup>

In addition, national publications such as the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) have published the following guidance:<sup>3</sup>

1. Racial Equity Toolkit, <https://www.racialequitytools.org>.

2. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_opp/affh](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/affh)

3. Flanagin, A, Frey, T., Christiansen, SL, et al, "Updated Guidance on the Reporting of Race and Ethnicity in Medical and Science Journals," JAMA. 2021;326(7):621-627. doi:10.1001/jama.2021.13304 <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2783090>

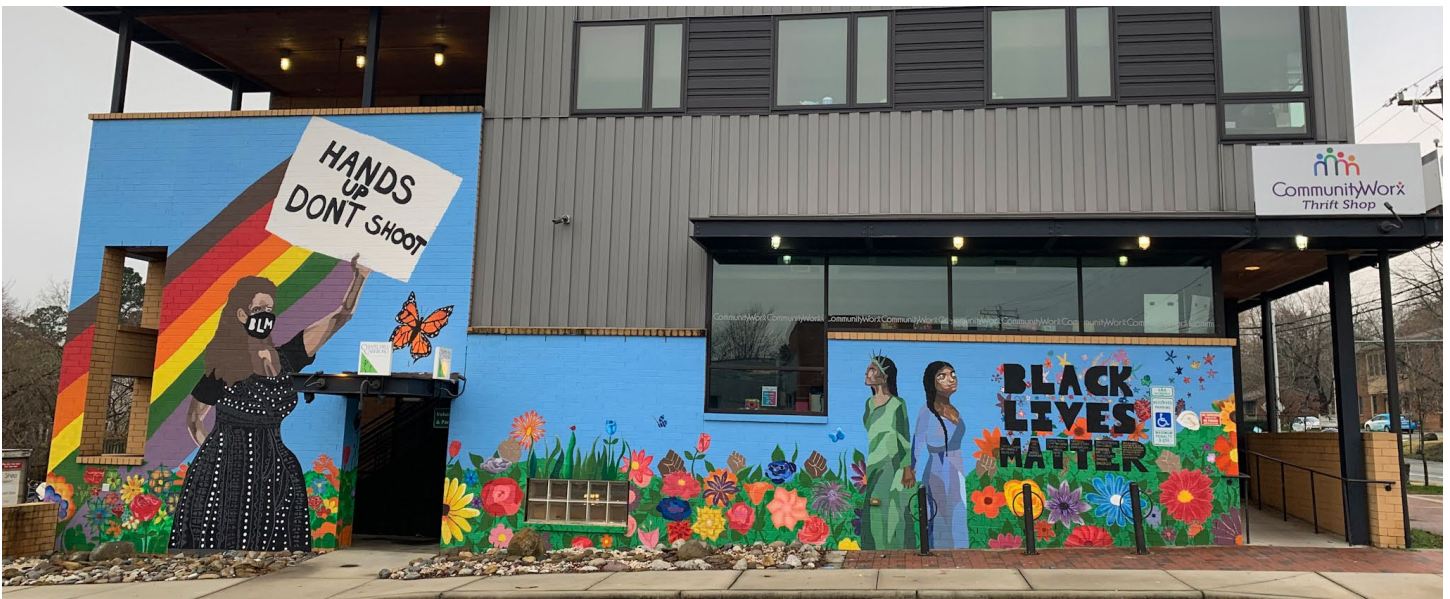


"Terminology, usage, and word choice are critically important, especially when describing people and when discussing race and ethnicity. Inclusive language supports diversity and conveys respect. Language that imparts bias toward or against persons or groups based on characteristics or demographics must be avoided."<sup>4</sup> "Specific racial and ethnic categories are preferred over collective terms, when possible."

Noted scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, an early innovator of the concept of "intersectionality," gave prominence to this term that describes the relationship between power, race and gender. In an interview she explained: "Intersectionality is a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects. It's not simply that there's a race problem here, a gender problem here, and a class or LGBTQ problem there. Many times that framework erases what happens to people who are subject to all of these things."<sup>5</sup>

The language of the plan is intended to be intersectional, cross-cutting many subjects, and it is based on cumulative input throughout the engagement process. Whenever possible, the language is meant to be inclusive of common experiences when appropriate as well as to be as specific when possible regarding disproportionate impact. The plan's language is meant to be authentic to that used during the 18-month process in which terms such as "BIPOC" were used regularly in meetings and materials, as well as terms denoting a wide range of marginalized and disadvantaged communities.

It is anticipated that **this language will continue to evolve and encourages on-going discussion of intentionality of language to best meet the challenges faced in our community to rectify injustices and set a course forward** for specific policies and programs to expand opportunities as a welcoming, diverse and inclusive Carrboro.



Mural at CommunityWorx Thrift Shop

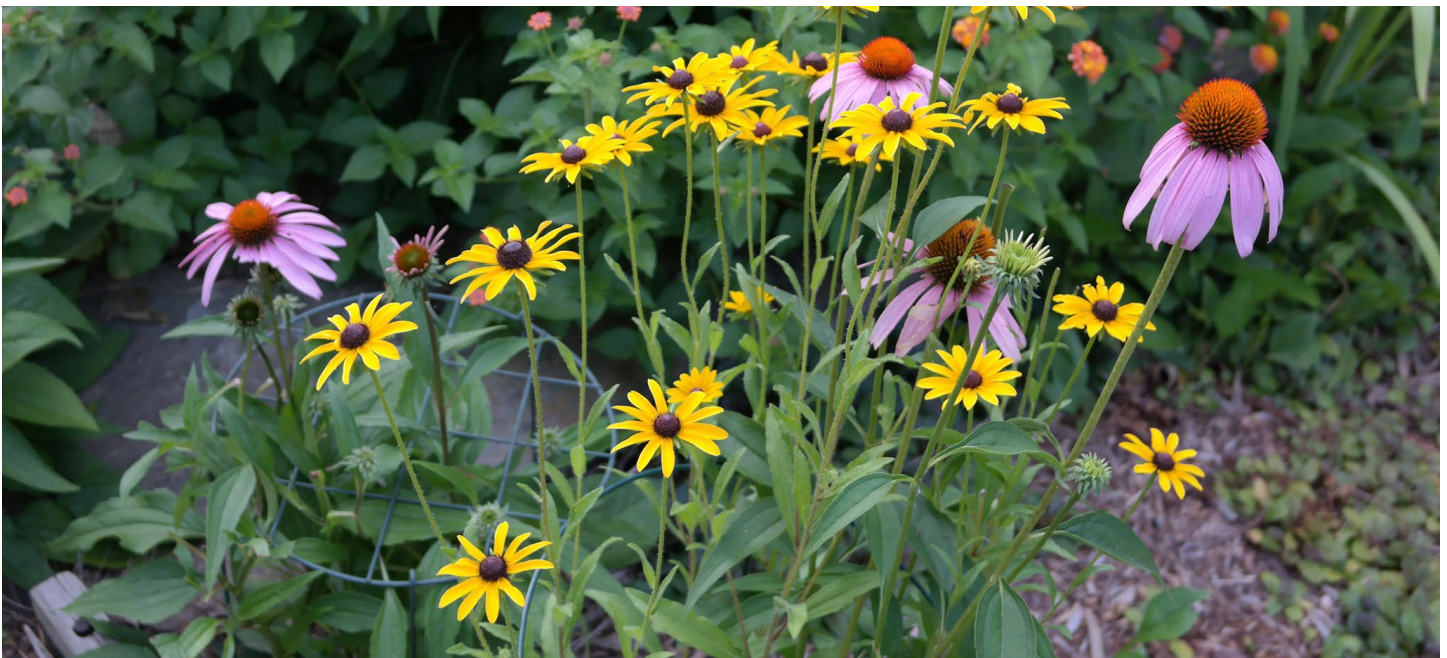
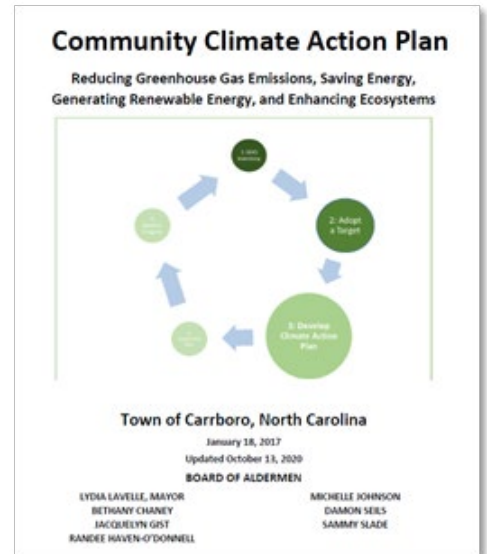
4. Flanagin A, Frey T, Christiansen SL, Bauchner H. The reporting of race and ethnicity in medical and science journals: comments invited. JAMA. 2021;325(11):1049-1052. doi:10.1001/jama.2021.2104

5. "Kimberlé Crenshaw on Intersectionality, More than Two Decades Later," Columbia Law School, <https://www.law.columbia.edu/news/archive/kimberle-crenshaw-intersectionality-more-two-decades-later>

# Climate Action

The second foundation of the Carrboro Connects Comprehensive Plan is climate action. The Town has been and continues to be a national leader in its efforts to address climate change with bold, actionable plans in place. Carrboro was one of the first communities of its size to commit to addressing climate change in a comprehensive manner. In 2009, the Carrboro Board of Aldermen passed a resolution committing the Town to reduce emissions of greenhouse gas emissions that are causing global climate change. In 2014, Carrboro developed a plan focusing on the Town's municipal operations, held three forums regarding climate action, and launched a Task Force to develop the Community Climate Action Plan, which was first released in 2017.

The Community Climate Action Plan (CCAP)—which is deeply integrated into the chapters of this plan—goes beyond municipal emissions and focuses on actions the broader community can take to reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions. In 2020, the Plan was updated to establish a goal of 80% reduction in GHG by 2030 as compared with 2010 levels. When the experts say “if we don’t act now the effects will be irreversible,” Carrboro takes that very seriously. The adoption of Carrboro’s Comprehensive Plan also includes the re-adoption of the Community Climate Action Plan (2017, Amended 2020) and the Energy and Climate Protection Plan (2014, Amended 2020). Both of these plans are being actively implemented.







## Climate Action (continued)

As a core foundation of this plan, climate action is interwoven into all of the elements of this plan. Examples include:

- **Affordable Housing** builds on recommendations for energy and water conservation in the CCAP to reduce housing expenses to lower-income renters and homeowners. Also expands the availability of affordable housing for people who work in Carrboro that would potentially reduce transportation emissions.
- **Climate Action & Environment** includes many of the CCAP recommendations such as the 80% reduction in GHG by the community, and expand access to weatherization, energy efficiency and water conservation measures.
- Reducing transportation emissions and finding more sustainable mobility options is a focus of **Transportation & Mobility**.
- **Green Stormwater Infrastructure, Water and Energy** includes various ways to implement CCAP, expand use of green infrastructure, conserve water and energy.
- **Economic Sustainability** recommends advancing the green economy and agricultural economy, supporting businesses that can keep jobs local, and calls for reduction in retail sales gap that could reduce transportation emissions by reducing driving out of town to buy products or ordering online that results in inefficient deliveries.
- **Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources** recommends expanding use of stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) in parks both for direct environmental benefits and as a public education tool.
- Update the **Land Use** Ordinance and development review process to address climate action and environmental protection, and more efficient use of land to accommodate growth while preserving land, open space and natural resources as well as making development patterns more transit-friendly for buses, bikes and pedestrians.
- **Public Services** involves the various Town departments that will lead 80% reduction in municipal GHG emissions by 2030.

# How to Use this Plan

The Plan takes a systems-based approach to planning, meaning that all elements of the plan are interrelated. For example, land use changes may be needed to support affordable housing development, or Public Works needs to be involved to build and maintain the Town's parks. From an organizational perspective, however, the content of the plan is divided into eight main planning elements:

- **Affordable Housing** includes recommendations to expand the availability of affordable housing, access to housing, and preserve existing affordable housing opportunities.
- **Climate Action and Environment** describes items from the CCAP and ways to implement CCAP as well as protect Carrboro's environmental resources.
- **Transportation & Mobility** recommends strategies and improvements to the Town's multimodal mobility network.
- **Green Stormwater Infrastructure, Water, & Energy** provides a comprehensive approach to infrastructure investments in Carrboro that may be guided by the Town and/or related agencies including OWASA.
- **Economic Sustainability** discusses ways to support existing businesses (especially BIPOC, small, and local businesses), attract new investment, and expand employment.
- **Recreation, Parks and Cultural Resources** focuses on serving the community through the Town of Carrboro's parks and recreational and cultural programming as well as coordination with other agencies including Orange County, UNC (Carolina North Forest and University Lake) and cultural groups.
- **Land Use** includes the planning for a variety of land uses in Town – from housing to commercial development, including specific recommendations for corridors that have been experiencing changes over time and ways to promote excellence in design in the public and private realms.
- **Public Services** details how the plan will be implemented by various departments including Communication and Engagement, Finance, Fire and Rescue, Information Technology, Police, Public Works, Town Clerk and Town Manager.

While the recommendations in the plan have intentionally been crafted to have cross-cutting impacts across the various planning elements, they are organized based on the primary source of implementation (e.g. recommendations to support affordable housing development approvals are listed in the Land Use Element). At the end of each chapter, additional related strategies and projects that are identified in other chapters are listed in a table for easy reference.



Mural at local business, Present Day on Main; Image credit: Soteria Shepperson



## How to Use This Plan (continued)

Each planning element includes the following components:

- **Vision:** the big picture of what Carrboro wants to be
- **Key Findings:** a summary of facts from past research and plans as well as input gained through the comprehensive planning process. See more information at Carrboro Connects Issues and Opportunity Reports and community engagement summary reports that can be found at <https://www.carrboroconnects.org/documents>
- **What We Will Measure:** these are aspects we will measure over time to determine progress toward meeting the plan's goals. Progress toward these metrics can also be used to refine goals and strategies during plan updates.
- **Goal:** outcome-focused "what" Carrboro is trying to achieve
- **Strategy:** "how" Carrboro will achieve the goal
- **Project:** specific initiatives that will be undertaken to implement the strategy

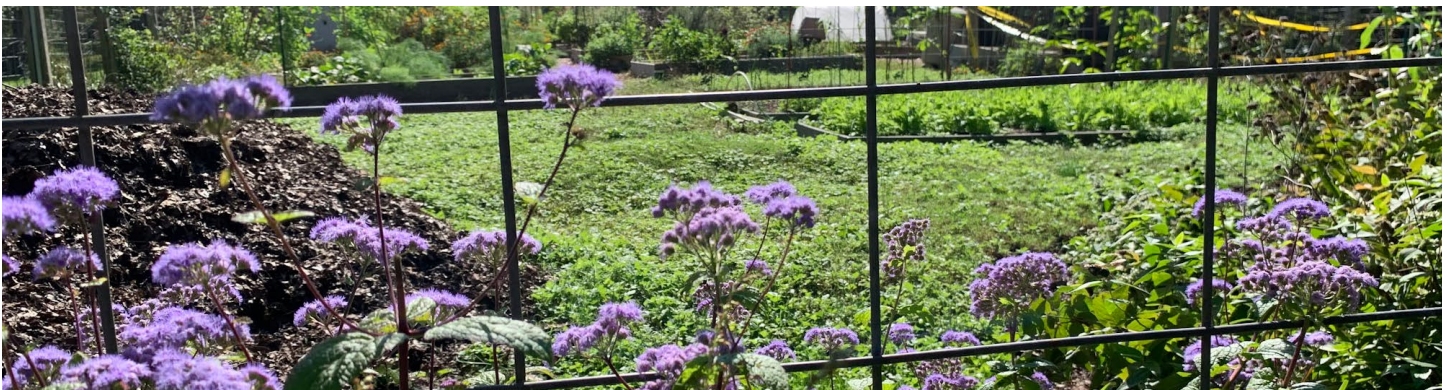
Following the planning element chapters, an Implementation Plan identifies each goal, strategy and project and the associated project leads, partners, timeframes, and estimated needed resources and costs.

Each element also includes a discussion into how the element specifically relates to race and equity and climate action, the two foundations of Carrboro Connects.

In addition to the new content that was developed for the Comprehensive Plan, the following recent plans are recommended to be adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan so that they will have the same standing in budgeting, review of policies, and developments:

- Community Climate Action Plan (2017, Amended 2020)
- Energy and Climate Protection Plan (2014, Amended 2020)
- Downtown Parking Plan (2017)
- Economic Sustainability Plan (2017)
- Bike Plan Update (2020)

Finally, **Chapter 11: Implementation** summarizes priority projects and key action steps for the first five years after plan adoption, as well as each goal, strategy and project, the lead agency responsible for the project, possible partners, and an implementation timeframe. As part of regular reporting and updates to the plan, all implementation items will be reevaluated and measured for necessary adjustments. This is a living document, intended to be updated as needed to help Carrboro pursue its vision for the future.



Garden at Baldwin Park

# A Brief History of Carrboro

Just as past residents, a railroad, a university, and a few textile mills helped shape the Town of Carrboro today, current events and people will continue to shape the Town into the future. Along with the transition to a new decade, 2020 has also brought the COVID-19 global pandemic, a social justice uprising in the fight against systemic racism, and a continuing climate emergency. While these issues are not unique to the Town of Carrboro, the way we choose to respond to these crises will undoubtedly change our Town long into the future, and we hope to emerge a stronger, healthier, and more equitable place. Working to create a clear vision and path for the Town through the Comprehensive Plan, we begin with an acknowledgement of the past.

Located in the Piedmont region of North Carolina, Carrboro has a rich history, with a wealth of natural flora and fauna developing from the weathered, ancient mountain range underlying the present-day rolling hills, forests, and streams. For at least 12,000 years before Europeans moved into the area, indigenous peoples flourished in the rich hardwood forests of the area now-called Orange County. In 1701 when English explorer John Lawson passed through the area, he was hosted in a stockade village called Occaneechi Town (within the now Town of Hillsborough) whose Siouan inhabitants had been displaced by Europeans spreading south and west from coastal Virginia settlements. Officially established in 1752 with a land area nearly ten times that of present day boundaries, Orange County's population grew steadily in the lead up to the American Revolution becoming the most populous county in the colony by 1767.

During this period of colonization, most early immigrants were of Scots-Irish, Welsh, and English Quaker descent and were primarily small scale farmers who found the land was most suitable for growing corn and other small grains. It is estimated that in 1755, 8% of households in Orange County included enslaved household members (with no more than ten slaves). By 1790, enslaved people made up approximately 20% of the County's population. The County was centered on the Town of Hillsborough which at one point, even with its relatively small population (474 people in 1800), was in the running to be named the State's capital.

## The End of Slavery

The end of the Civil War ushered in a new era of emancipation and southern Reconstruction. Prior to emancipation, some 6,000 enslaved people made up about a third of Orange County's population.

Previously enslaved people could for the first time own land and pursue prosperity. While many formerly enslaved people left the area, others demonstrated their freedom by purchasing land and forming schools, churches, and businesses in what is now modern day Carrboro.

*Dolores and Lorie Clark are 7th generation descendants of formerly enslaved people who lived in Carrboro. They shared their family's story and shed light on local history at one of Carrboro Connects' virtual community meetings. ►*



The St Paul AME Zion Church was the first Black church in Carrboro. Established in 1864 near what is now the juncture of downtown Carrboro and Chapel Hill, it continues to serve many in the local Black community. In 1866, two Black freedmen, Benjamin Craig and Green Cordal, purchased a parcel of land across the street from the St. Paul AME Church. With the help of the Quaker-run Friends of Philadelphia, they built the first Freedman School in Orange County on the site that is now the Black-owned Carolina Car Wash. A plaque recognizing Craig and Cordal's actions was unveiled on August 9, 2021. The school served hundreds of free Black children and adults from founding until closure in 1917.

One of the families living in the area that would become Carrboro was that of Toney and Nellie Atwater Strayhorn, both of whom had been enslaved from birth until they were made free by the Emancipation Proclamation. Dolores Hogan Clark and Lorie Clark, great- and great-great granddaughters of Mr. and Mrs. Strayhorn, represent the 7th generation in their family to own and reside in the home Toney built after purchasing land in what is now downtown Carrboro following his marriage to Nellie in the 1870s. The Strayhorns were well known for their industry and hospitality and for Mr. Strayhorn's skills as a farmer and brick mason.

Many descendants of formerly enslaved people, including those of Toney and Nellie Strayhorn, still reside in Carrboro and Chapel Hill. The work of their ancestors is reflected in the history and continues to shape the legacy of the community today. A marker erected in June 1995 on West Main Street honors formerly enslaved members of the Carrboro community and their descendants.



*The second truth plaque in Carrboro -- a product of the Truth Plaque Task Force -- was installed on August 9, 2021 to recognize the Freedman School which served hundreds of free Black children and adults.*



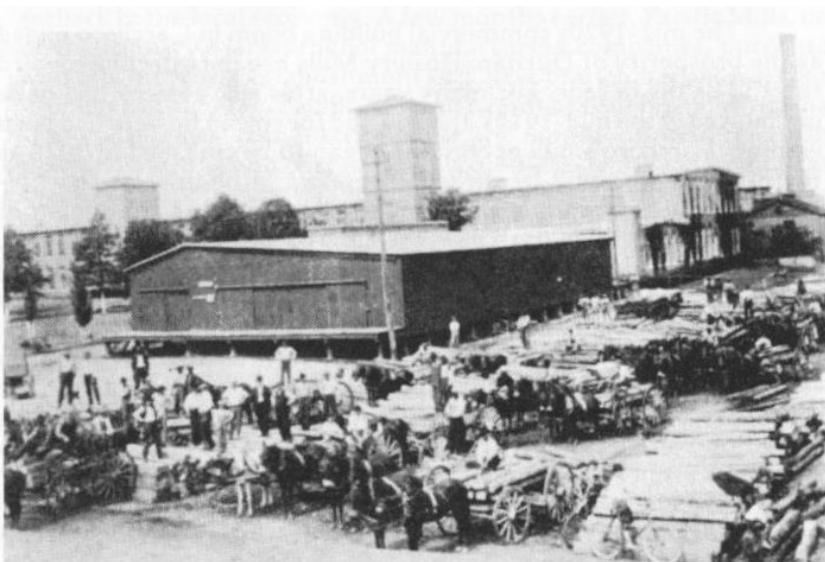
## Birth of a Town

1882 marked a critical turning point for Chapel Hill, the university town, when the University Station Spur Railroad was extended south from Hillsborough to a location just one mile west of the North Carolina campus. With no paved roads in the area, both travel and transport of goods was difficult. For this reason, rail was the preferred method of transportation. The construction of this new spur allowed for direct passenger service to UNC-CH, and supported the transport of goods to and from the area. It was with this event that the small community known at times as Lloydville and West End began its transition to modern day Carrboro.

In addition to the expanding University, the rail extension provided another catalyst for the area to grow. As the 20th century was ushered in, what was once a rural agricultural-based economy, transitioned to industrial textile manufacturing. In 1898, Thomas Lloyd built the Alberta Mill, now Carr Mill Mall, the area's first textile mill for the production of cotton hosiery. Lloyd would go on to build two other adjacent mills, neither of which remain. With the success and expansion of the mills came jobs and opportunity.

A decade or so later, seeing the success of the mills, a businessman from Durham named Julian Shakespeare Carr purchased the mills from Lloyd. The mills were renamed the Durham Hosiery Mills and continued to grow and fuel the local economy.

The Town charter was granted March 14, 1911. The Town was named Venable, in honor of Francis Preston Venable, a much-loved educator and scientist, who was serving as President of the University at Chapel Hill at the time, a role he held from 1900 to 1914. The General Assembly approved a name change to Carrboro two years later on October 11, 1913, in honor of Julian Shakespeare Carr. Carr was an Orange County native, veteran of the Civil War, had served on the University Board of Trustees and purchased two of the mills. The Town was renamed Carrboro in exchange for his providing electricity to the Town.



Circa 1920 view of the cross tie market on East Main Street, in front of Durham Hosiery Mill No. 4. The frame cotton warehouse and the upper stories of the brick towers have been removed, and the east end of the mill has been extended with a brick addition. From copy in North Carolina Collection, UNC Library, Chapel Hill.

*Circa 1920 view of the cross tie market on E. Main Street, in front of Durham Hosiery Mill No. 4 (Image credit: UNC-CH)*



*Aerial view of Carrboro, looking north, taken in the late 1940s (Image credit: UNC-CH)*



On June 2, four months before the renaming, Carr gave a racially charged speech at the dedication of a monument to the confederacy on the UNC campus, known as Silent Sam. The monument was removed following a 'Remove Silent Sam' rally on the night of August 20, 2018. The relationship of both Carr and Venable to segregation, bigotry, discrimination, and racism has come into clearer focus in the decades since the Town was chartered. In an effort to tell the whole truth of the racist history of Julian Carr, the Town's namesake, a Truth Plaque Task Force was established in 2018 to gather input for the possible installation of a "truth plaque." The first Truth Plaque was installed on April 16, 2019 and can be found on the front of Town Hall.

By 1913, the newly named Town of Carrboro had grown to approximately 1,000 residents. A small grocery, a cross tie market, a post office, two schools, and the Fitch Lumber Company developed in the coming years. Starting in the late 1930s, most Black residents lived in a neighborhood straddling the border of Carrboro and Chapel Hill extended into the Partridge Field area east of the railroad tracks. Segregation, defacto and enforced, was apparent in this neighborhood and other Carrboro neighborhoods near E. Main Street and Jones Ferry Road. The few Black wage earners employed in the mills worked as sweepers. Most working residents were employed as day laborers or domestics, or were self-employed as farmers, blacksmiths, carpenters and stone masons producing food and the built environment for the growing community.

### Did you know?

The conductor of the University Railroad that brought people to and from UNC-CH in the late 19th century offered students free first rides. Today, the Carrboro-Chapel Hill area is well known for its free and reliable bus service as part of a commitment to alternate modes of transportation.



## Growth and Change

For the first few decades after its incorporation, Carrboro maintained a distinct identity as a small mill town on the other side of the tracks from Chapel Hill. Economic decline in the late 1920s saw reduced mill operations. Within 10 years, Durham Hosiery Mills had closed its plants and sold much of its property, including most of its mill houses, at auction. As a result, workers shifted to plants in Durham, the University, or agriculture. One mill became a shell loading plant during World War II; both were opened again to manufacturing textiles after Pacific Mills brought its woolen hosiery production to town from 1945 to 1957. Carrboro's population began to increase during the 1960s due to growth occurring at UNC-CH and supporting businesses. This new population included a large number of students who would play an important role in shaping the Town's politics and culture.

In 1969 Carrboro's first Black elected Town leader, Braxton Foushee, joined the Board of Aldermen and went on to serve until 1981. Ruth West served as Carrboro's first woman Mayor, elected in 1975. Robert "Bob" Drakeford, Carrboro's first Black mayor, served from 1977 to 1983. Drakeford hired the first Black Town Manager, Richard Knight, as well as the Town's first planner and helped to advance alternate modes of transportation such as biking, walking, and transit, key features of life in Carrboro to this day. Since the decline of manufacturing, some downtown buildings have been preserved including the railroad depot and the original textile mill, businesses,

and many homes. In 1976, the former Alberta Cotton Mill was rehabilitated to create the Carr Mill Shopping Village which remains a central area for commerce, today housing Weaver Street Market and boutique shops. In 1977, the Town successfully sought funding from the NC General Assembly to build a shelter for a farmers' market. The "locally grown, nationally known" Carrboro Farmers Market continues in its 45th year. Joal Hall Broun served as the first Black woman elected official in Carrboro beginning in 1999.

## Entering the 21st Century

Since the end of the textile manufacturing era, Carrboro has experienced a rebirth. It has developed an eccentric culture and a reputation as one of the most accepting communities in the South, welcoming people from all walks of life and all parts of the world. Carrboro has established Sister City relationships with Juventino Rosas and Celaya both in Guanajuato Mexico as well as San Jorge, Nicaragua, El Menisha, Egypt, and Saratov, Russia. In the early 1990s Carrboro experienced a large influx of Latino immigrants. The Hispanic population increased by 936% between 1990 and 2003 making up 12% of the Carrboro population. Founded in 1992, originally as the Hispanic Resource Center, El Centro Hispano is a local Latino nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the community, building bridges and advocating for equity and inclusion for Hispanics/Latinos in the Triangle



The "locally grown, nationally known" Carrboro Farmers Market



Area. In 2001 John Herrera was elected to the Carrboro Board of Aldermen becoming the first Hispanic immigrant elected to a N.C. municipal office and served until 2009. Herrera co-founded La Fiesta del Pueblo, the Triangle's largest Latinx cultural festival, which started in Carrboro but has since moved to Raleigh to accommodate the 20,000 annual participants.

Carrboro has welcomed refugees from all over the world including people from Syria, Afghanistan and the community from Burma. The Refugee Community Partnership is a local organization that helps to connect people to the resources they need and works to eliminate barriers to access.

Carrboro was the first municipality in North Carolina to elect an openly gay Mayor in 1995, and was also the first local government in the state to grant domestic-partner benefits to same-sex couples.

The Town has continued to grow steadily; in 1960, approximately 2,000 people lived here. Today over 20,000 call Carrboro home and it is a vibrant and diverse community, hosting numerous venues and events. The ArtsCenter and Cat's Cradle both host national music acts, and annual arts and cultural festivals such as the Carrboro Music Festival, WestEnd Poetry Festival, and the Carrboro Film Festival take place in community spaces throughout the downtown.

More information about the Town is available at [www.townofcarrboro.org/860/ABOUT-CARRBORO](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.



*Carrboro's Town Hall*

# Overview of Carrboro Planning

Zoning authority was enacted in 1954. In the 1960s, the Town worked with Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG) and Chapel Hill and a limited set of land use regulations. The Town prepared a land use plan in 1970. Soon after, Carrboro partnered with Chapel Hill to create the Chapel Hill Transit system, joined the National Flood Insurance program, and adopted a new Land Use Plan followed by a robust unified development ordinance (the first of its kind, with strong environmental protection and requirements for bike lanes and sidewalks in new development) and a revitalization strategy for the downtown.

Years of rezoning studies and comprehensive rezonings followed to establish areas for mixed use and high-density development and to protect the water supply watershed nearby. Population grew by over 300 percent in 20 years and the community was transformed from a declining mill village to a busy town. The land use regulations emphasized residential development with limited commercial areas in order to maintain the economic vitality and focus on the downtown–Main Street–and two designated highway commercial nodes. Current commercial areas in Town include one hundred acres of land downtown, at Highway 54 Carrboro Plaza, and Willow Creek Shopping Center. There are a number of other non-residential areas that were in place prior to 1980; these are generally quite small in land area and are often mixed use. Key planning concepts have included the following:

## Downtown/Commercial Nodes

**Strategies that have been used to support the downtown area have included limiting non-residential areas, focusing on arts and entertainment, overlays to encourage density, outdoor dining and supporting non-vehicular travel such as transit, bike and pedestrian movement.** In the 1990s, Office/Assembly districts were added to the zoning ordinance. In 2001, the Downtown Vision laid out these strategies to preserve and strengthen the downtown which led to an increase in the maximum building heights and architectural standards.

## Neighborhoods/Housing Diversity

Since the 1960s there has been an increase in housing tied to the growth of UNC, resulting in the development and expansion of a robust transit system in Carrboro and Chapel Hill. Various mechanisms have been used to support infill development including more intensive residential districts, allowing accessory dwelling units and architecturally integrated subdivisions. **Mechanisms to support affordable housing have included a density bonus, permit fee waiver, size-limited units and open space and reductions in parking requirements.**

## Environmental Protection

Starting in 1970s, floodplain management began, along with stream buffers. **These efforts have included a strong open space requirement in residential development; tree protection, shading, replanting and tree cover; regulating invasive plants and instituting water quantity and water quality standards.**

## Compact Urban Area

The **formation of OWASA and water supply protection have limited development**, not allowing water and sewer to expand into the University Lake Watershed, in which much of the Extra Territorial jurisdiction is located. The Joint Planning Area allows for controls over development in the northern part of Carrboro. The Jordan Lake Rules offer additional protection that guides development in those areas.

## ETJ and the Transition Areas

The Town's Planning Jurisdiction includes Town limits, the Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) and the Carrboro Joint Development Review Area (CJDA) which includes **Transition Areas 1 and 2**. The Facilitated Small Area Plan for Carrboro's Northern Study Area, adopted in 1999, is a policy document for Carrboro's northern growth area, referred to as the Northern Study Area which includes the two Transition Areas. The Northern Transition Area Advisory Committee provides input into planning and development of this area. Authority for planning in the Transition areas is found in the Joint Planning Agreement and Joint Planning Land Use Plan between Orange County and the Towns of Carrboro and Chapel Hill.