



---

## Community and Economic Development in North Carolina and Beyond Blog: Holistically Folding Service Delivery into Chapel Hill's Comprehensive Planning Process

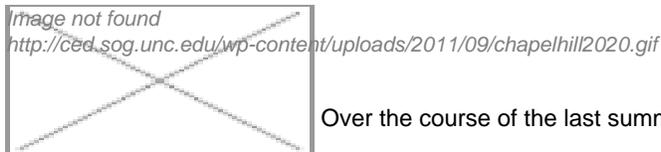
By CED Program Interns & Students

Article: <https://ced.sog.unc.edu/holistically-folding-service-delivery-into-chapel-hill%e2%80%99s-comprehensive-planning-process/>

This entry was posted on September 16, 2011 and is filed under Community Development, Community-Campus Partnership, Human & Cultural Assets

---

*Andrew Guinn is a PhD student in the UNC Department of City and Regional Planning and a CCP intern working in Chapel Hill.*



Over the course of the last summer, the Community Campus Partnership extended its activities into Orange County and began working with the Town of Chapel Hill in support of its new Comprehensive Planning process. One of the outputs of this collaboration was a far-reaching inventory of Town-provided services, the first of its kind in Chapel Hill. Now that the planning process is officially beginning on September 27, it is time to begin putting this document to use as an informational tool for public planning meetings.

This inventory will be useful because, in addition to the issues normally associated with comprehensive plans such as land use and transportation, Chapel Hill's new comprehensive plan will incorporate all facets of town services, such as those offered by the Police, Fire and Public Works Departments. It is important to take such a holistic view of service delivery in the plan because the planned development of land uses and transportation networks are directly linked to the organization, priorities and funding of town departments. For example, sprawling development patterns could make the effective provision of public safety or road maintenance more expensive, whereas planning for density could keep the marginal costs of service provision lower. Or, lowering service standards in the area of waste disposal could free up resources for facilities maintenance. So, the planning process entails a number of trade-offs that must be communicated to stakeholders to inform their decision-making.

During public planning meetings, then, information about service delivery – particularly service standards and relative costs – must be made available to participating stakeholders in a way that they can understand the relationship between, on the one hand, various growth and development trajectories and, on the other, the delivery of public services. Towards this end, I am currently working with an Operations Task Group comprised of town staff to produce helpful visual aids and other heuristic devices which will communicate relevant details.

The Town of Chapel Hill will hold a kick-off event for the Comprehensive Planning Process on Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> at Chapel Hill East High School, during which residents and other stakeholders will work on crafting a vision statement for the plan. In addition, there will be an Open House event to introduce attendees to information about Town operations. Information from the services inventory will be provided to stakeholders at this event, and feedback will be gathered so that the inventory tool can be more helpful and responsive to stakeholder needs during future public planning meetings.

This services inventory, which was made possible through the collaboration and support offered by the Community-Campus Partnership, is expected to be a heavily used tool during the upcoming planning process. Check the CED blog again in the future for updates about the use of the service delivery inventory and other topics related to Chapel Hill's comprehensive planning process.