



University Village

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

A Proposed Mixed Use Community

**Statement of Justification
For the
Proposed Establishment of a
Mixed Use – Village
Zoning District**

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Statement of Purpose

The benefits of compact Mixed Use development that offers options of transportation, housing and employment to a broader population have been well documented in studies and publications worldwide. The Triangle Transit Authority (TTA) notes the following in their Development Guidelines:

“The principals of compact development address many of the needs of our Region's expanding population of elderly, singles, single-parent families, empty nesters and other demographic groups. Opportunities exist within these pedestrian-friendly communities for a wider variety of housing types and prices, the option of walking to work, and increased mobility for the young, elderly and disabled. In addition, development near transit provides people with cost-saving options of not having to use a car or purchase a second car.”

“Transit-supportive development provides the opportunity for re-focusing growth away from open space and farmland. This shift reduces the amount of land consumed by development, preserves open space, and protects air and water quality and other natural resources.”

Having recognized the benefits and need for compact Mixed Use development that is both sustainable and supportive of mass transit systems, the Town of Chapel Hill established Mixed Use (MU) zoning districts. MU Districts are designed to promote areas of higher density which include a diversity of uses in close proximity of Transit Stations or Major Bus Boarding Locations (between ¼ and ½ mile). Mixed Use – Village (MU-V) targets existing and proposed Community Commercial districts in an effort to integrate a broader diversity of residential and office uses in a development pattern that is more pedestrian friendly and sustainable.

The University Village site meets this “Designation Criteria” of a MU-V District since all of the land area lies adjacent to and within ¼ mile of two, existing Major Bus Boarding Locations on NC 54/Raleigh Rd. A future guided-rail Transit Station is also planned along Prestwick Rd. adjacent to the site.

The rezoning of the University Village site is proposed to meet the objectives of a MU-V and in so doing **“achieve the purposes of the Comprehensive Plan” while promoting the public's health, safety and general welfare.** This Statement of Justification identifies important characteristics of a Mixed Use development in this context and addresses standards for permitted uses, intensities and development patterns which are supportive of transit and serve to promote pedestrian activity.

Comprehensive Plan - Principals

The Town's Comprehensive Plan identifies the following planning principals in order to fulfill its purpose and objectives. These principals are designed to foster an ecologically and economically sustainable living environment that is in character with Chapel Hill. Currently, the site is zoned Community Commercial and is designated as Mixed-Use on the Town's Land Use Plan. The following text summarizes how the development of University Village as a MU-V will better achieve these principals.

Maintain the Urban Services/Rural Buffer Boundary - University Village proposes re-development of the University Inn site and two adjacent infill lots, all presently served by public utilities and extensive public bus transit. Compact, infill development in the form of a MU-V enables more efficient service by existing Town facilities and fosters other mixed use development helping to reduce encroachment and sprawl into rural buffer areas.

Participate in the Regional Planning Process – Regional planning efforts promote the development of Mixed Use Districts within close proximity of existing employment, urban services and proposed mass transit stations. The Triangle Transit Authority has identified the Meadowmont/Friday Center area, (112 mile to the east), for a future regional guided-rail transit station. A local guided-rail station is designated immediately adjacent to the site which will help to improve the viability of future plans for regional transit systems. University Village, developed as a MU-V, will help to provide convenient services for the local community and “in town” housing needed for major regional employers including UNC and UNC Hospitals.

Conserve and Protect Existing Neighborhoods – By planning for a mix of small shops, office, hotel and residential uses, a pedestrian-friendly “sidewalk” atmosphere can be created serving as a focus for the proposed community and adjacent neighborhoods. A careful balance of this mixture of uses, combined with human-scale architecture characteristic of a MU-V, will ensure that University Village enhances the “livability” of the entire Glen Lennox area. The high percentage of residential floor area and extensive pedestrian walks within the development will serve to help strengthen the residential character of the overall community while providing a focal place for gatherings and entertainment.

Conserve and Protect the Town's Existing Natural Setting – The “wooded lawn” entryway created by the stand of large mature oaks along the NC Hwy. 54/Raleigh Rd. will be preserved to a great degree. The pine backdrop, formed by the wooded area south of Prestwick Road, provides a “native character” typical of Chapel Hill. Landscaping which utilizes native plant species will help to preserve this native character, conserve natural resources and minimize the need for artificial cultivation practices more common with exotic plant species.

Identify Areas Where There Are Creative Development Opportunities – Few development sites exist within the Urban Services boundary, that offer the accessibility to alternative transportation modes as University Village. A MU-V in this location creates an opportunity to maximize ridership of existing transit services and provides for a unique living environment where residents can enjoy a lifestyle without total dependency on an automobile. The NC 54/Raleigh Road barrier has historically served to isolate the adjacent neighborhoods allowing service retail to dominate which is accessible only by automobiles. The primary planning objective of University Village as a MU-V is to provide a pedestrian-friendly focus to the community that fosters synergy and cohesion to the existing development pattern. The redevelopment of this site, where uses have become outdated, provides for a mixture of housing and services that are more responsive to the needs of the Town.

Encourage Desirable Forms of Non-Residential Development; Create and Preserve Affordable Housing Opportunities – The adopted Land Use Plan proposes a mixture of uses for the subject site. University Village will be planned as a MU-V to include transit supportive uses (e.g. drug store, small shops, restaurants, offices, hotel, residential, etc...). These uses will be oriented around pedestrian-friendly commons areas which will be designed to promote community gathering, shopping, dining and entertainment. Retail shops will be planned to include offices and residential housing above and will front on walkways with outdoor dining and gathering areas. Only essential amounts of convenience parking will be provided at storefront areas with larger mass parking facilities located below grade or in structured parking. The opportunity for parallel “on-street parking” should be maximized where possible in order to avoid large on-site surface parking areas and to aid in traffic calming.

Affordable housing will be provided that meets and exceeds the Town's minimum requirement. These units will be distributed throughout the various buildings and will be serviced equally with covered secure parking and equal access to all recreational facilities.

Promote the Vitality of Downtown – By providing significant levels of infill and affordable housing that is easily accessible to the Chapel Hill Downtown Area, University Village will encourage support of those business and services. Where compact in-fill development can be provided that is served by existing bus transit, easy access to downtown is made available to a broader more diverse population.

Work Toward A Balanced Transportation System – Mixed Use developments by their nature, exist to provide alternatives to automobile transportation. Two existing Major Bus Boarding Locations located along NC 54/Raleigh Rd., establish University Village as a “Core” District. The proposed site is also located within ½ mile of the proposed Friday Center TTA station and “Park and Ride” lot. Existing bus transit, sidewalks, greenways and bikepaths connect the University Village site to this facility and the proposed TTA station. Bike lanes extend westward from 15/501 to the UNC Campus and a future guided-rail transit stop is planned by the Town within a corridor

extending along Prestwick Rd. Access to this transit stop will be incorporated into the site planning to enable residents, employees and visitors safe and convenient access at such time as this transit system is in place.

University Village provides an opportunity to link these transit routes in a pedestrian friendly environment that will help to promote ridership of the existing bus transit system. These multi-modal systems with the existing bus routes combine to make University Village a critical link in balancing alternative transportation modes with convenient living opportunities. Facilities and programs will be provided that encourage bicycle and “alternative fuel vehicle” use over that of private automobiles. These programs will also help to disseminate information related to “alternative transportation modes” to residents and visitors thereby lessening dependence on the automobile.

Complete the Bikepath/Greenway/Sidewalk Systems – Interconnected bikepaths, greenways and sidewalks encourage pedestrian and non-automobile activities and are a fundamental component of any Mixed Use District. University Village will extend the bike/pedestrian path along its frontage on NC54/Raleigh Rd., meandering somewhat in the areas of existing trees. Sidewalk connections will be made to provide convenient and safe access for the residents and public throughout the site, connecting with outdoor gathering spaces. These systems not only facilitate pedestrian movement within the site but also serve to connect with adjacent neighborhoods and businesses. The adjacency of the UNC cross-country trail to the south of Prestwick Rd. provides additional recreational and transportation opportunities.

Provide Quality Facilities and Services – The adopted Land Use Plan designates the University Village site as mixed-use with an emphasis on office and commercial uses. Facilities needed for daily shopping by the residents of the community and adjacent neighborhoods will be given priority when designing and leasing the retail and office space. Development Standards are established to protect against land uses that are not supportive of transit or that may occupy large land areas antithetical to Mixed Use. This will help to ensure that residents will have the opportunity of obtaining the daily essentials without having to rely unnecessarily on the automobile.

Sustainability – Although not specifically noted in the Town's Comprehensive Plan, the principal of “sustainable development” is fundamental in the concepts described above. University Village will also be planned to achieve a LEED-Silver Level certification for Neighborhood Development by the US Green building Council as an added level of commitment to sustainable Development. This effort will document that the foregoing principals are being met and that management programs are monitored to ensure ongoing compliance. It is through this commitment to sustainable development the public health, safety and general welfare is greatly enhanced, promoting new standards for development in Chapel Hill.

Uses & Dimensional Standards

The two following principals guide the development of standards for Use and Intensity for the University Village MU-V District.

Mixture of Complementary Transit-Supportive Uses

Encourage the greatest mix of uses around transit stations so that they become the focal point of activity.

Encourage the use of urban parks, plazas and pedestrian access as organizing elements around which complementary private and public uses are located. This type of land use is an important land use for generating outdoor activity and an amenity for residential and non-residential development. Locate larger parks outside of the core area.

Provide a range of higher intensity uses including residential, office, service-oriented retail and civic uses that are transit supportive. Such a mix of land uses increases the attractiveness of the area and increases trip options for transit uses.

Disallow automobile-dependent uses, such as sales lots and drive through windows. Provide uses that attract/generate pedestrian activity, particularly at the ground floor level.

Discourage development practices that separate complementary land uses.

Encourage multi-use developments which include a mixture of uses on the same site. Mixed-use developments with a mixture of uses in the same building are encouraged.

Eliminate buffer requirements and setbacks between complementary uses and replace them with performance standards and design guidelines to ensure aesthetic and functional compatibility.

Encourage development of workforce/affordable housing.

Increased Land Use Intensity

Encourage higher densities for new development concentrating the highest densities closest to bus loading locations and transit stations.

In most cases, minimum densities for new residential development within ¼ mile from a transit station will be 20 dwelling units per acre (net) or greater. Between ¼ and ½ mile walking distance the typical minimum will be 15 dwelling units per acre (net) or greater.

In most cases, non-residential or mixed-use intensities within ¼ mile walking distance from a transit station will be, at a minimum, 0.75 FAR (net). Between ¼ and ½ mile walking distance from a transit station the non-residential or mixed-use intensities will be, at a minimum, 0.50 FAR (net).

In high density development allow 50% of the ground floor to be commercial uses.

This Statement of Justification establishes the following permitted and prohibited uses for University Village MU-V. It provides for a mixture of complementary uses and intensities that support rail or other “high capacity” transit.

Permitted Uses, Densities and Intensities

- Multi-family (20 du/ac maximum; 35% minimum of total floor area)
- Offices-professional, clinical, medical, government, key-man, etc. (1.1 FAR maximum)
- Hotels, Inns Including Conference Facilities (1.1 FAR maximum)
- Retail Uses (1.1 FAR maximum, 18,000 sf/max per single user)
 - Retail Shops
 - Service Businesses (no drive-through window)
 - Grocery stores and specialty foods (incl. sale of wine, beer, etc.)
 - Restaurants with outdoor dining (no drive-through window)
 - Studios and artisan workshops
 - Taverns and bars
 - News stands and kiosk for outdoor sale of goods (100 sf max./kiosk)
- Motion picture. theater and entertainment (outdoor events by SUP only)
- Banks (no drive-through window; 8,000 sf max.)
- Religious Institutions
- Day care
- Schools, institutions (8,000 sf max.)
- Home occupation
- Civic and/or Cultural Uses
- Outdoor squares, plazas, parks and playgrounds (including play equipment, art, etc.)
- Health club, private recreation club and/or pool facilities

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- Transit stations
- Parking lots, garages and decks
- Signage
- Other ancillary or support facilities

Prohibited Uses

- Large tenants (over 15,000 sf)
- Industrial or manufacturing
- Automobile service or parts
- Nightclubs
- Warehousing

Development Standards

Development Standards determine the form (height & massing), setbacks, buffers, landscaping and parking requirements. In an effort to animate street-level pedestrian activity which encourages the use of transit, University Village focuses on maximum setbacks and maximum parking ratios. Large setbacks tend to disconnect the pedestrian from storefronts and have the effect of promoting automobile use. While it is recognized that some convenient parking is essential to retail activity, large parking areas are located underground or in structured parking decks.

The following Development Standards are proposed for University Village.

Sustainability – Fundamental in the Town's approach to growth management, “sustainability” defines the total approach to ensuring a balance of environmental, economical and livability concerns. University Village is dedicated to this balance and includes the following in its Standards.

- Incorporate holistic concepts of sustainability in design, through USGBC-LEED Certification or similar programs.
- Integrate affordable housing equitably into residential components and provide equitable access to all site amenities. Meet or exceed minimum regulatory requirements for affordable housing.

Site Design, Transportation and Parking – Mixed Use Developments exhibit a development pattern that evolves from the following design principals and standards. While these standards represent important design objectives the realities of site constraints, existing infrastructure and market conditions must be balanced with these ideals.

- *Livability: Buildings and outdoor spaces should be designed to fit human scale, harmonize with the design of streets, and accommodate pedestrian traffic.*
- *Mobility: Land design concepts should provide a network of roads, bicycle paths and lanes and sidewalks that give strong consideration to the safety of motorists, cyclists, joggers and walkers.*
- *Activity Centers: Structures and complexes should enhance community life by use of “destination points” such as arcades, lobbies and ground level retail stores, while at the same time providing safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians.*
- Design open spaces, parks and plazas to be focal points of activities around which buildings are oriented. Include benches, lighting, fountains and/or public art to encourage pedestrian activity.
- Provide an extensive pedestrian system throughout the core area that will minimize walking distances. Block lengths will be limited to 400' maximum between intermediate pedestrian connections.
- Establish pedestrian and bicycle connections to neighboring properties.
- Utilize planters, street trees, and on-street parking to separate pedestrians from vehicles.
- Design pedestrian and bicycle amenities to be safe and attractive for all users, meeting or exceeding those specified by the Town's LUMO.
- Incorporate design elements (raised crosswalks, bulb-outs, special paving patterns, etc.) to accentuate a priority of pedestrian circulation over that of the automobile.
- Incorporate traffic calming techniques and minimize design speeds of local access streets and automobile circulation routes.
- Utilize reduced gutter widths and lane widths as much as practicable to promote traffic calming and promote a character that is more pedestrian in nature.
- Round-a-bouts and traffic circles should be considered to minimize vehicular congestion where it would compromise adequate pedestrian movement.
- Reduce regulatory parking requirements where possible and maximize multi-modal transportation alternatives.
- Encourage shared parking facilities and utilize off-peak parking areas for loading when appropriate. Minimum loading space shall be 10' x 45' for “secondary” curbside zones and shall be signed appropriately to indicate hours of use. No screening shall be required for “secondary” loading areas.
- Locate larger surface parking areas in parking garages or parking decks.
- Screen unsightly elements, such as loading docks, service entrances and outdoor storage taking into account safety and security concerns.
- Stormwater management requirements and other design standards not specifically addressed herein shall apply.

Building Massing and Form – In order to ensure a human scale, design standards are created to address building design for larger structures and walls without fenestrations.

- *Visual Impact: New public and private projects should be visually appealing and compatible with other development in the surrounding area.*
- Provide variety in architecture, materials and form for larger buildings to create interest at a pedestrian scale.
- Provide direct access from buildings to public spaces.
- Locate building entrances to minimize the walking distance between the transit station
- Limit building heights to 85', locating taller buildings near transit stations.

Setbacks and Lot Layout – The scale of urban pedestrian spaces is determined to a large extent by building setbacks. The character of this space is also dependent on the size of the buildings and the activities which are anticipated. To ensure that a comfortable visual connection is maintained with the pedestrian, maximum setbacks along storefront/entrance areas are established.

- Maximum setbacks from the street R/W shall average 30' except where grades, utility easements or planting areas dictate otherwise.
- Storefront setbacks to pedestrian and/or vehicular plazas shall average 20' maximum except where outdoor seating/dining is provided in which case deeper setbacks may be allowed.
- No internal setbacks or minimum lot areas are required. Requirements established by the Uniform Building Code shall prevail.

Landscape Plantings – Designed to protect adjacent properties, screen service areas and provide important connections between compatible uses the following standards are proposed. These standards balance the natural character of the landscape along NC54 to the east with that of a mixed use urban entranceway. Important open spaces are preserved and where loss of significant large trees is necessary, re-planting is proposed. Standards are included to address critical landscape issues. These include parking lot and pedestrian area shading, the use of native plant species and high-efficiency irrigation design.

- *Vegetation: Landscape design concepts should preserve existing trees and incorporate new trees and shrubbery. The landscape theme should be aesthetically compatible with that of the surrounding neighborhood.*
- **NC54/Raleigh Rd. - Planting Area 1** (extending from the northeast corner to the primary entrance) shall protect the existing oak tree stand to the greatest degree possible and establish additional oak and evergreen tree plantings. These plantings shall serve to provide additional buffering to proposed residential buildings in this area. This planting area shall range in width from 40' to 100' or more and shall include plantings equal to a Type 'A' Buffer. Shrubs shall be primarily limited to entrance areas.

- **NC54/Raleigh Rd. – Planting Areas 2 & 3** (extending from the primary entrance westward to Hamilton Rd.) landscape plantings will be more urban in character with groupings of flowering trees, shade trees and lawn areas. While it is important to “soften” the building elevations to the adjacent street and neighboring residents, these areas must also invite pedestrian access and encourage movement from the Major Bus Boarding Locations along NC54. It is recognized that an existing OWASA force-main and underground fiber optic cable will dictate where trees can be planted in these areas. Key entrance areas (e.g. Hamilton Rd/NC54, primary building entrances, etc.) will emphasize pedestrian/bicycle access by use of special plantings, pavers, signage and/or bollards. Plantings equal to a Type ‘A’ Buffer will be required for these areas. Shrubs shall be limited to entrance areas and essential screening purposes.
- **Hamilton Rd. Frontage – Planting Area 4** (extending from NC54 to the common property corner with the Town's fire station) provides an important pedestrian and visual connection to the businesses west of Hamilton Rd. Shade trees and groupings of flowering trees are required to soften building elevations while encouraging pedestrian movement and connectivity to the building entrances and ground floor spaces. Plantings equal to a Type ‘A’ Buffer will be required for these areas. Shrubs shall be limited to entrance areas and essential screening purposes.
- **Interior Common Boundary – Planting Area 5** (extending from Hamilton Rd. along the common boundary with Town Fire Station to Prestwick Rd.). Plantings equal to a Type ‘A’ Buffer will be required for these areas. Shrubs shall be limited to entrance areas and essential screening purposes. Where the OWASA forced main prohibits tree plantings due to required easement widths, no trees are proposed.
- **Prestwick Rd. – Planting Area 6** (extending from the southwestern-most corner along Prestwick Rd. to the southeastern-most corner). The landscape plantings in this area serve to screen service access from the adjacent street and UNC golf course. A portion of the area is traversed by an overhead Duke Power utility line which will be relocated underground along the south side of Prestwick Rd. Plantings planned for this area shall include an opaque hedge (5' height) separating service access areas and groupings of small flowering trees. Shade trees shall be provided where adequate space allows and plantings will not block views more than 50% from any residential unit located above the street level. Plantings equal to a Type ‘A’ Buffer will be required for these areas. Shrubs shall be limited to entrance areas and essential screening purposes.
- **Interior Common Boundary – Planting Area 7** (extending from the southeastern-most corner heading east along Prestwick Rd. to a point common with the extreme limits of the buffer established for Area 1). This property line forms a common boundary with Prestwick Place and other office uses. Dominated by surface parking the plantings established for Area 7 will meet the Town's guidelines for the planting requirements of a Type ‘B’ Internal Buffer and parking lot screening standards.
- **Pedestrian Areas and Parking Lot Shading** – The Town has established guidelines for parking lot shading that minimizes heat-island effects and provides greater comfort for users. All Vehicular Surface Areas (V.S.A.) will meet the Town's 35% shading guidelines. Where below grade parking structures prohibit the planting of large trees, planters with small to medium size trees shall be used to achieve shading to the maximum extent practical. Typical varieties include Eastern Redbud and similar species. Plantings at the rate of two small/medium trees may be substituted for 1 large

shade tree in plaza areas. Strict adherence to the Town's guidelines will not apply to these conditions.

- **Other Landscaping and Irrigation Standards** – Standards for sustainability include the use of native plant species and minimal use of potable water for irrigation. University Village will use only native plant species or species determined not to be invasive. Where native species are not used, they will be limited to special applications such as planters where no reasonable alternative exist. Irrigation will be designed to make use of low-application rate emitters and drip irrigation wherever possible. Stormwater management plans shall capture and re-use storm water for irrigation to the greatest extent practical.

Open Space, Parks and Recreation – Mixed Use Developments generate recreation and park needs that are quite different from other zoning districts and land uses. Small pocket parks, outdoor plazas, tot-lots and indoor/outdoor club facilities are some of the varied types of facilities that combine to provide needed recreational opportunities. Both active and passive spaces help to fulfill this purpose and University Village will be planned to incorporate a diversity of each.

- Recreation space required for active recreational activities shall be consistent with the Town's maximum requirement for multi-family dwellings (.046 RSR).
- Passive recreation areas, open space parks and pedestrian plaza areas shall be provided in an amount equal to active recreation areas.
- No minimum size shall be required for any individual recreation area (active or passive).

Lighting, Signage and Pageantry – Mixed Use Developments are designed to promote extended hours of activity. Adequate lighting, signage and pageantry combine to create a vibrant streetscape atmosphere essential for pedestrian activities. Sustainability guidelines recognize the desire for the control of light pollution at the project boundaries and within the site. With these principals in mind University Village proposes the following Standards.

- Lighting Standards established in Section 5.11 of the Town's LUMO shall apply.
- Signage Standards established in Sections 5.14.8 & 5.14.11 of the Town's LUMO shall apply.
- Informational kiosk may be allowed by private interest pursuant to size limitations established in Section 5.14.3(m) LUMO and where not located in public R/W.

Other Development Standards – Where other Development Standards established by the Town are not specifically addressed herein, the Town's LUMO and Guidelines will apply. Standards which conflict with the development “as proposed” that do not compromise the public's health, safety and welfare or where an acceptable alternative is proposed, may be waived by the Town Manager.

End