



THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL

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Kevin Foy, Mayor  
Town of Chapel Hill  
405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514-5705

Dear Kevin:

I am pleased to transmit to you the University's response to the Town's Horace Williams Citizens Committee report, and I ask that you share it with your fellow Council members and with members of the committee. I believe we have a great deal of agreement on many of the report's principles, not the least of which is a strong commitment to sustainability.

The HWCC report is proving useful in our planning for Carolina North. It is important to note, though, that our planning is still in the conceptual stage, so the attached document responds to the report's general principles. I am certain that the report will be a helpful document for the leadership advisory committee that former Chapel Hill Mayor Ken Broun has agreed to chair.

I understand that community members are disappointed that we have not responded earlier to the report. Please know that our delay was not meant as disrespect. With the unsettled questions regarding the future of the Horace Williams Airport, our attention was diverted to finding an alternative for the MedAir operations of AHEC, and the details of the physical plan took a back seat to these considerations. Now that we have announced the Leadership Advisory Committee for planning Carolina North, our attention is again squarely on the Carolina North plan. The HWCC has produced a thoughtful report, and we look forward to continued dialogue on these issues.

Sincerely,

James Moeser

**Carolina North:  
A response to the Horace Williams Citizens Committee report**

*Submitted January 25, 2006, to Kevin Foy, Mayor of Chapel Hill  
by James Moeser, Chancellor, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

During a year-long effort ending in early 2004, the Town of Chapel Hill's Horace Williams Citizens Committee (HWCC) did extensive work to complete its charge from the Town Council to "develop a set of Principles, including community interests and goals and objectives, to guide the Council's deliberations with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill regarding the development" of Carolina North. In addition, the Town Council asked the HWCC to compare the principles, goals and strategies of the HWCC's report to the University's presentation on May 5, 2004, of its draft conceptual plan for Carolina North.

As an important step in moving forward with a cooperative and productive dialogue between the Town and the University regarding the development of Carolina North, the University carefully considered the HWCC's report. First and foremost, the University respects the time and effort put forth by citizen volunteers to analyze a project such as Carolina North and to summarize a year-long effort into a well-organized and understandable report.

The University's primary reaction to this report is that the vast majority of the general principles established by the HWCC are shared by the University. There are many more areas of agreement than disagreement, and many of the points are remarkably similar to those set forth in 2003 by the Carolina North advisory committee and its subcommittees, which included a broad and diverse range of participants from inside and outside the University. (Final reports from the subcommittees are available online at <http://carolinanorth.unc.edu/>.)

The intent of the University's Draft Conceptual Master Plan for Carolina North was not to advance the specifics of infrastructure development but to express a vision that would serve as a basis for thoughtful discussion and more detailed planning. In December 2005, Kenneth S. Broun, a long-time member of the Chapel Hill community and a former mayor, agreed to chair a leadership advisory committee. That committee will seek broad community input for the planning for Carolina North, and guiding principles for development, representing stakeholder interests, will emerge from this process. In the meantime, the University provides the following brief discussion of the key principles in the HWCC Report.

## **General Principles**

*Principle 1: Carolina North shall adhere to sustainability principles as defined by the Sustainable Development Task Force in its October 1998 Report.*

The University fully embraces the principle that Carolina North should be a sustainable project in the truest sense of the word. The University expects Carolina North to be a model of sustainability, and we have begun examining principles that will help us meet that goal. We have tried very hard to implement principles of sustainability on the Main Campus and believe we have had success in many respects. In the Carolina North Infrastructure Report of May 2003, the major recommendations of the subcommittee included 11 sustainability principles for conserving natural resources (pg. 7). Social and economic sustainability also are significant priorities. With this in mind, the University has conducted an economic-impact study, available on the Carolina North website. We need continually to reassess our efforts in planning for the future. We hope that the leadership advisory committee will assist us in developing principles, specifically applicable to Carolina North, that would include fiscal equity and other factors related to long-term social and economic sustainability.

*Principle 2: Development of the Horace Williams property shall benefit the University, the towns of Chapel Hill and Carrboro, Orange County, and the surrounding areas, as well as the State of North Carolina. The planning and execution of Carolina North shall be a model of cooperation and mutual benefit of all stakeholders.*

The University endorses this principle and looks to the leadership advisory committee chaired by Ken Broun to initiate an open process in which the stakeholders will work toward this common goal.

*Principle 3: Both the Town and the University need to recognize that there could very well be a point when the cumulative impacts of University and Town growth on our natural resources and our public facilities are such that no amount of mitigation would be possible and still retain the charm of the Town and the quality of life which both the citizens of the Town and the State of North Carolina expect from Chapel Hill.*

The University understands the charm of Carrboro and Chapel Hill, and the quality of life here helps attract students, employees, alumni and visitors to UNC. The University has always made a substantial contribution to this quality of life, and that contribution will continue. Sustainability principles will help guide responsible development, enabling us to balance this goal with our obligation to advance the University's mission of teaching, research and public service.

## **Development Management Principles**

*Principle 1: Manage development of Carolina North to minimize impacts on neighborhoods and the environment.*

This is an essential principle that can and should be considered in every aspect of the planning for Carolina North. Of critical importance to both the University and the community is establishing a reliable and understandable review system for the project and its implementation. The leadership advisory committee established by Chancellor Moeser will develop a process for moving forward with the planning and development of Carolina North with this principle in mind.

## **Neighborhood / Community Interface**

*Principle 1. Planning for Carolina North shall address community needs for housing, schools and other facilities.*

While the primary purpose of Carolina North is to support the University's mission of teaching, research and service, a key to its long-term success will be the creation of a setting that blends academic activities with housing, schools, businesses, retail services and civic uses. The University has agreed to two school sites on the Carolina North property, and one of the first projects envisioned for the property will be the innovative First School, which will embody principles of early childhood education developed at UNC. Carolina North will not house everyone who works there; nor will it solve all of the housing problems in Carrboro and Chapel Hill. But it will help meet our employees' need for housing—a large component of the community need.

*Principle 2. Create a campus facility that is open, welcoming and part of the community fabric while at the same time respecting the privacy and integrity of adjoining neighborhoods.*

The University fully supports this principle and will make every effort to embody it at Carolina North.

## **Fiscal Equity**

*Principle 1. The University or State or Carolina North tenants shall bear the costs of Town services required by Carolina North so that Town residents do not subsidize those uses through their local taxes. The Carolina North development shall either be revenue positive or revenue neutral for the Town.*

The University is committed to working with the Town toward the goal of Carolina North being revenue neutral for the Town. A key element of the planning effort must be working cooperatively to identify the real costs and benefits and to ensure that they are allocated fairly to all parties involved.

## **Water and Sewer / Stormwater Management / Air Quality**

*Principle 1. Assume a leadership position in sustainable water management and waste water treatment and reuse.*

The University's commitment to be a model of sustainability embodies this principle. The University expects to build upon its successes and improvements on the Main Campus to help ensure this principle is realized at Carolina North.

*Principle 2: Ensure that development of Carolina North results in no net increase in stormwater discharge. Establish the stormwater requirements that were adopted for the main campus by the Town Council on July 2, 2001, as the minimum standards for the development of Carolina North.*

The University expects to meet these objectives. In the Carolina North Infrastructure Report of May 2003, one of the major recommendations of the subcommittee was to "allow no net increase in volume of runoff" (pg. 7).

*Principle 3: Ensure that Carolina North has no negative impact on the air quality of Chapel Hill.*

The University's commitment to be a model of sustainability will result in pursuing various techniques to control and mitigate air-quality impacts from Carolina North. In the Fall of 2005, the Town and University agreed to join together in the Community Carbon Reduction program (CRed). As part of this program, UNC students and faculty are developing an inventory of carbon dioxide releases from University operations and will use this inventory to develop short, medium and long-term strategies for carbon emissions reductions. These projects are being conducted under the guidance of the Vice Chancellor's Sustainability Advisory Committee, and they draw on the extensive work the University has already done in bringing principles of sustainability and air-quality management to the campus.

## **Natural Areas / Parks and Recreational Facilities**

*Principle 1. Preserve in perpetuity the maximum amount of open space possible with a goal of preserving 75% of the Horace Williams property as stated by the University.*

The University believes that open space and parks should be a part of any plan for Carolina North. The University also has pledged to work with the State to protect environmentally sensitive areas of Carolina North in perpetuity. However, we believe that it is inappropriate to set a specific target percentage at this time.

*Principle 2. Develop and maintain a network of trails and greenways at Carolina North.*

The University is committed to this goal at Carolina North.

*Principle 3. Conduct and maintain an inventory of natural resources and use it as a guide for planning and development.*

As the planning moves forward and achieves greater detail, the University agrees that this information is essential. This principle is consistent with a recommendation of the Carolina North Infrastructure Report (pg. 20).

*Principle 4. Follow sustainable site design principles and goals.*

The University agrees that this is an essential principle to make Carolina North a model of sustainability. As part of its responsibilities, the leadership advisory committee will consider and integrate sustainability as it recommends principles.

### **Transportation and Land Use Principles**

*Principle 1. Carolina North will create minimal impact on traffic and will promote commuter safety. The Transportation Plan will be developed around a transit system including the use of Chapel Hill transit rather than single occupancy motor vehicles.*

As a majority partner in the Chapel Hill transit system, the University is fully committed to working with the town, the region and the state to realize success in appropriate transportation. The University now pays a substantial share of the operating costs of the transit system, which serves Carrboro as well as Chapel Hill and UNC. We have reduced the use of single-occupancy vehicles by initiating fare-free transit, van pools, and other measures. We will build on this successful experience at Carolina North, which is conceived of as a transit-friendly, walkable community with a multi-mode strategy for transportation. The plan for Carolina North must balance near-term realities with long-term achievable objectives. As the town and region become more transit-oriented, so will Carolina North.

*Principle 2. Carolina North will comply with the town's Comprehensive Plan.*

The leadership advisory committee, which will include Town representatives, will help ensure that principles outlined in the Comprehensive Plan inform the planning for Carolina North.

*Principle 3. Retain existing zoning of OI-2 and re-zone balance of property OI-2. Engage University officials in dialogue about the regulatory approach to the Horace Williams tract of the early stage of planning for Carolina North.*

A significant responsibility of the leadership advisory committee will be to gather community input and relevant information about appropriate zoning for Carolina North.