



UDO Code Diagnosis Overview with Development Interests



TOWN OF CARRBORO • NC

June 3, 2026

OVERVIEW



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PROJECT BACKGROUND

Work to Date, Project Objectives, Priorities

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CODE DIAGNOSIS

Purpose, Contents

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KEY THEMES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Recommendations

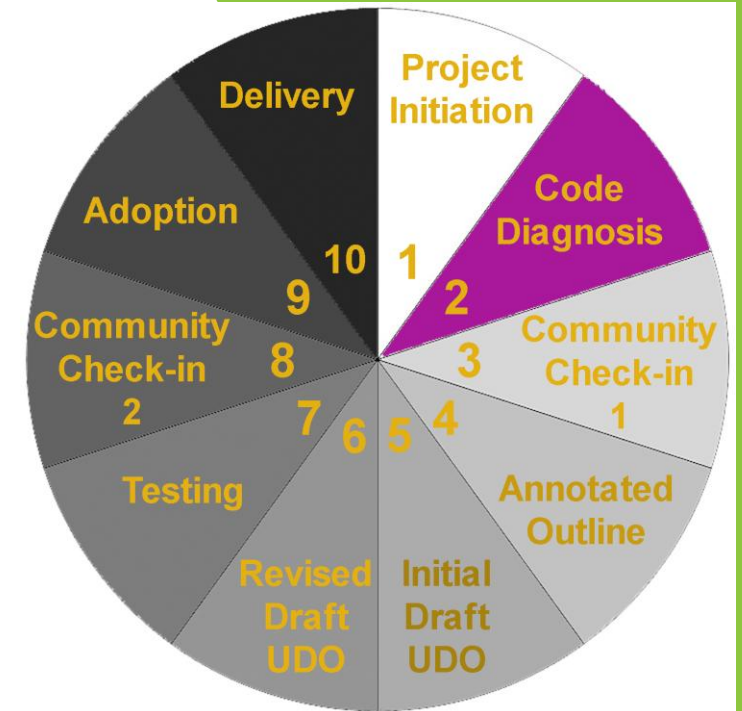
04

NEXT STEPS

Where We Go from Here

WORK TO DATE

Interested Party (23) Discussions	Late 2024 to early 2025
Development Interests Meeting	Late 2024
Town Council Project Introduction Meeting	Late 2024
Town Council Work Session 1	Feb 2025
Public Forum 1	March 2025
Earth Day/Open Streets Engagement	April 2025
Follow-Up Council Meetings	May 2025
July 4 Engagement	July 2025
Town Council Work Session 2	Sept 2025
Code Diagnosis Staff Review	Early 2026

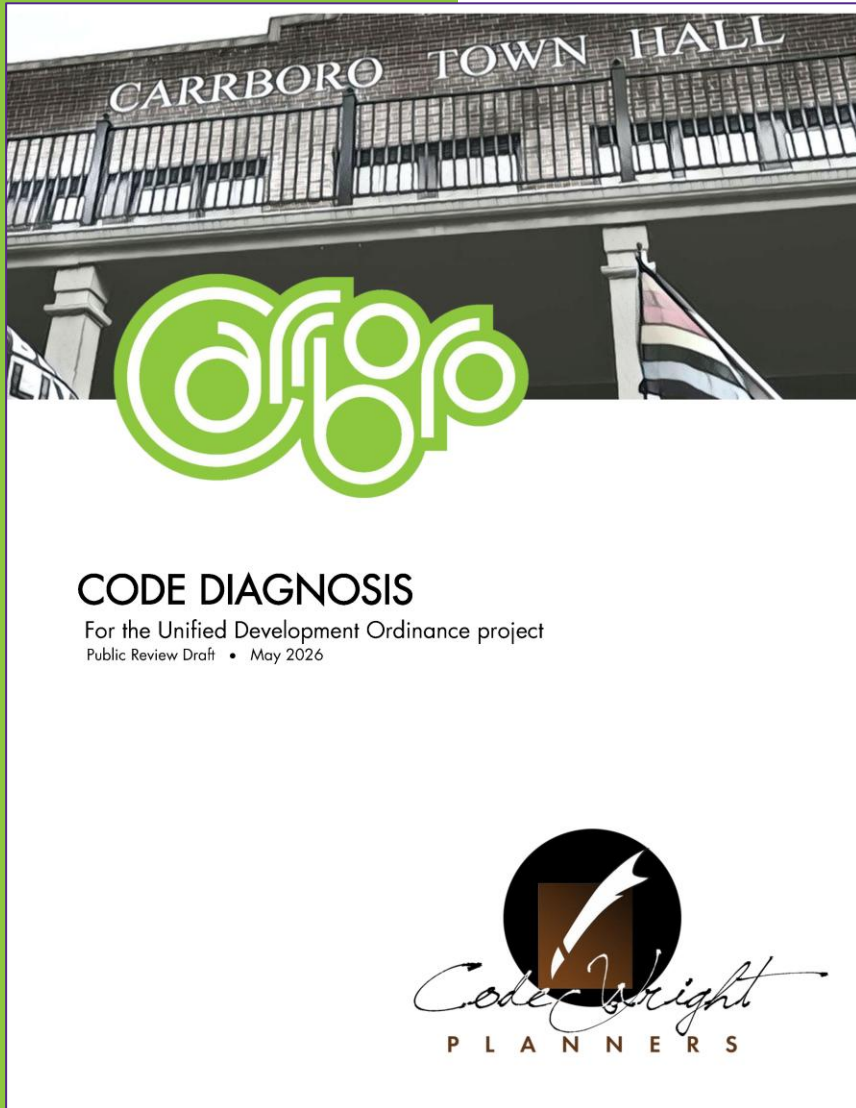


PROJECT OBJECTIVES

1. INCREASE PREDICTABILITY	2. FOSTER MORE HOUSING CHOICE	3. ENHANCE CLIMATE RESILIENCY	4. PROMOTE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
- Clarify Text - More Illustrations - Delegate to Staff - Add Process Efficiency	- Wider Range - Higher Densities - More Incentives for Affordable	- Reduce VMT - Manage Stormwater - Tree / Open Space Protection	- Maintain Town Commitment - Prioritize

BALANCING PRIORITIES

Stronger Standards	Managing Costs
Procedural Streamlining	Public Participation
Redevelopment	Downzoning Limitations
Increased Densities	Environmental Protection
Mandates	Incentives



CODE DIAGNOSIS

- ‘Road Map’ for the new UDO
- Framework for discussion about potential changes to the current UDO
- Explores gaps between policy guidance and development rules
- Provide recommendations for change

CODE DIAGNOSIS CONTENTS

SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES FOR IMPROVEMENT

SIMPLIFY THE UDO

- 1.1 Restructure from 21 to 11 Chapters
- 1.2 Use More-Intuitive Chapter Names in Alphabetical Order
- 1.3 Place 'Like' Material Together in the Document
- 1.4 Update the Page Layout with More Navigational Aids for the Reader
- 1.5 Use Numbered Statements Instead of Prose
- 1.6 Increase Use of Summary Tables
- 1.7 Add More Illustrations and Flow Charts
- 1.8 Replace 'Legalese' with Plain English
- 1.9 Self-Codify the UDO

SAFEGUARD EQUITY

- 2.1 Where Possible, Reduce Application Review Times & Uncertainty to Ease Beneficial Development
- 2.2 Explore Differential AML Ranges for Rental (80%) Versus Ownership (60%)
- 2.3 Add Relevant Definitions (Diversity, Equity, etc.) to the UDO
- 2.4 Strengthen Standards on Short-Term Rentals
- 2.5 Review and Update Contextual Overlay District Protections
- 2.6 Explore Opportunities for Lower Application Fees
- 2.7 Ensure Required Notice is Multi-Lingual
- 2.8 Broaden Range of Districts Where Manufactured/ Mobile Homes/ Moveable Tiny Homes are Permitted
- 2.9 Soften Limitations on Home Occupations, Micro-Retail, and Some "Social Service" Uses
- 2.10 Explore Increased Use of Development Agreements for Larger Developments

ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE

- 3.1 Replace Cluster Subdivisions with Conservation Subdivisions
- 3.2 Limit Plants to Native Species and Add Species Diversity Standards
- 3.3 Promote "Green" Stormwater Infrastructure
- 3.4 Ease Review Process for Renewable Energy Structures
- 3.5 Review and Update Open Space Provisions
- 3.6 Prohibit New Development in the Special Flood Hazard Area
- 3.7 Require Parking Provided Beyond Minimums to be Pervious
- 3.8 Disincentivize Mass Grading and Incentivize Contour Grading
- 3.9 Prioritize Greenways and Multi-Use Trails Over Sidewalks
- 3.10 Add Voluntary Sustainable Development Options and Incentives



Carroll County New Unified Development Ordinance

Land Use Policy Summary February, 2025

The Carroll County New Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is an effort to rewrite the Town's Land Use Ordinance (or "LUO") to implement the 2022 Carroll County Comprehensive Plan.

Carroll County Connects is the result of a community-wide planning effort to articulate the Town's vision for its future and identify the actions needed to help that desired future become a reality.

The UDO is one of the Town's primary tools for implementing the policy guidance and desired actions in Carroll County Connects. It is the basic set of laws used by the Town to regulate land uses in order to protect public safety, support property values, protect the environment, and ensure adequate mobility. This UDO project is innovative in that it will address the basic elements included in most other development regulations while also maintaining a focus on:

- Creating greater climate resiliency;
- Promoting social justice;
- Ensuring attainable housing for current and future residents; and
- Protecting Carroll County's community character.



Carroll County New Unified Development Ordinance

Land Use Ordinance Analysis September 2025

The following table is a section-by-section review of Carroll County's current Land Use Ordinance ("LUO"). The table identifies the current articles, section numbers, section titles, and includes a short description of the current section contents. Articles are identified with green rows. The column on the right "Implementation Ideas in the New UDO" details recommendations for how to revise the current section for greater consistency with the Town's adopted policy guidance, State law, regulatory best practice, or community input received to date. In some cases, there are questions or ideas that merit further discussion or consideration included in yellow cells. Some articles are supplemented with text in a grey row found at the end of the article's contents. These grey rows suggest new sections or information that could be added to the new UDO. The ideas and information in this table form the basis for the recommendations to be included in the Code Diagnosis, the "blueprint" for the Town's new Unified Development Ordinance.

CARRBORO LAND USE ORDINANCE (LUO) ANALYSIS TABLE			
S	Title	Description	Implementation Ideas in New UDO
Yellow cells include topics for further discussion with Town staff and officials.			
Article 1: General Provisions			
15-1	Short Title	This ordinance is officially called the Carroll County Land Use Ordinance.	• Changing name to Unified Development Ordinance • Include reference to Official Zoning Map and any other applicable maps in addition to the Zoning Map
15-2	Authority	Ordinance derives authority from multiple North Carolina General Statutes and various Session Laws.	• Carry forward with new references to Town Charter and include references to various NCOS statutes and special legislation
15-3	Jurisdiction	Ordinance applies within Carroll County's planning jurisdiction; jurisdictional adjustments allowed by mutual agreement per G.S. 160D-203.	• Clarify what constitutes the "planning jurisdiction" • Suggest adding additional clarity regarding the applicability of these standards to home life forms and agricultural uses • Clarify the standards in the UDO are minimum requirements unless subject to an authorized condition of approval, approved variance, vested right, or preferred development incentive
15-4	Effective Date	Ordinance originally enacted and effective November 25, 1980.	• Replace with new effective date • Suggest the UDO include both an adoption date and an effective date (it is not uncommon to delay the effective date for 60-90 days to allow the Town time to update its applications forms, conduct training, etc.)
15-5	Relationship To Existing Zoning, Subdivision, and Flood Control Ordinances	Substantively unchanged provisions are continuations of earlier ordinances; prior unlawful situations remain unlawful.	• Delete. This language is from 1980. No need to carry forward. Prior approval, violations, continue as set down in a new Transitional Standards section in new Chapter 1, Administration



Carroll County New Unified Development Ordinance

Initial Zoning District Transition Table May, 2026

The following table is an initial consideration of how base and overlay districts in Carroll County's current LDO might be translated under the new UDO. Base zoning districts are generally listed in order of intensity. Columns on the left side of the table denote current districts, and columns on the right side show how the districts might be structured under the new UDO. This table is based, in part, on the dimensional standards for the Town's current zoning districts.

CARRBORO UDO INITIAL ZONING DISTRICT TRANSLATION TABLE			
CONVENTIONAL BASE DISTRICTS			
Residential	Conservation	CDM	Conservation
WR	Watershed Residential	WTR	Watershed Residential
RR	Rural Residential	RUR	Rural Residential
R-20	Residential - 20	SUR	Suburban Residential
R-15	Residential - 15	ROR	Rogers Road Residential
HR-R	Historic Rogers Road Residential		
R-10	Residential - 10		
R-SLR	Suitable for Intensive Residential		
R-SLR-2	Suitable for Intensive Residential - 2		
R-2	Residential - 2		
R-7.5	Residential - 7.5		
R-3	Residential - 3		
R-3	Residential - 3		
Commercial			
CT	Corporate Town		
OM MU	Office		
QA	Office/Assembly		
BS	Watershed Commercial		
PF	Public Facilities		
HR-CC	Historic Rogers Road Community Commercial		

Carroll County, NC UDO			
Current UDO Dimensional Standards Table (Based on standards in UDO Article 15)			
The following summary table is a condensed version of the standards in UDO Article 15. The district listed is based upon Section 15-1.1. All other districts are included in the table. Districts not included in the table are not included in the UDO.			
Yellow cells show districts that lack dimensional standards (garage/lot size) staff can help us identify these standards!			
Red numbers in brackets are table notes listed at the end of the table.			
Suggest the new UDO be implemented with additional detail on:			
• Minimum lot coverage for residential			
• Minimum spacing between buildings			
• Residential setbacks for utility easements			
• How setbacks affect between principal and accessory structures			
• Minimum rear yard setback percentage for the district			
District	Name	Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	Min. Lot Front Setback (ft.)
R-2	Residential - 2	2,000 (2)	25 (2)
R-3	Residential - 3	2,000	25
R-7.5	Residential - 7.5	2,000	25 (2)
R-10	Residential - 10	20,000	25 (2)
R-15	Residential - 15	20,000	25 (2)
R-20	Residential - 20	20,000	25 (2)
R-SLR	Suitable for Intensive Residential	10,000	25 (2)
R-SLR-2	Suitable for Intensive Residential - 2	10,000	25 (2)
R-2	Residential - 2	10,000	25 (2)
R-7.5	Residential - 7.5	10,000	25 (2)
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R-3	Residential - 3	10,000	25 (2)



Carroll County New Unified Development Ordinance

Interested Party Input Summary February, 2025

The Carroll County New Unified Development Ordinance Update (or "UDO") project is an effort to update the Town's development regulations, currently called the Land Use Ordinance (or "LUO"), to implement the 2022 Carroll County Comprehensive Plan and bring the current LUO into better alignment with State planning law and best planning practice. The project has a special focus on increasing climate resiliency, promoting fairness for everyone, encouraging attainable housing, and ensuring the new UDO is clear and predictable.

Task 1, Project Initiation, of the UDO update effort includes a series of interviews with interested parties about their views on what is working or not working with the Town's current development regulations and review process, as well as discussion about what makes Carroll County great (and the areas where improvement is needed). This document summarizes the input collected through a series of nine interviews with the Town Council and Town-identified interested parties. Interviews were conducted by members of the consulting team with Town staff present and took place in-person and virtually over several days from mid-December 2024 to mid-January 2025. Great care was taken by Town staff to ensure a diverse blend of perspectives and points of view were included in the interviews.

This report summarizes the comments provided. It also identifies additional parties who interviewed thought the consulting team should speak with about the project. The information collected during the interviews in December and January is not attributed to any one individual. Thoughts and ideas are paraphrased, grouped by topic, and consolidated in cases where multiple people expressed the same or similar sentiments. The input is not prioritized or listed in any particular order.

Interviewees were encouraged to share their thoughts freely, but were asked the following five questions:

1. What aspects of the Town's current regulations are problematic?
2. What parts of the Town's current application review process are in need of improvement?
3. What parts of the Town's current regulations or review process should be changed?
4. What makes Carroll County great?
5. Who else in Carroll should we speak with?

The table on the following page identifies the 23 people interviewed. We note that meaningful and representative public engagement is a cornerstone of this new UDO project and the proposed work program includes numerous other opportunities for anyone to provide input and suggestions as the project progresses.

KEY THEMES

- 1 Simplify the UDO
- 2 Safeguard Equity
- 3 Adapt to Climate Change
- 4 Address Housing Choice
- 5 Integrate Policy Guidance
- 6 Increase Predictability
- 7 Ensure Legal Sufficiency
- 8 Incorporate Incentives

1

SIMPLIFY THE UDO

- Restructure
- New page layout
- More tables & illustrations
- Remove “legalese”

Navigational Aids

Illustrations

High Visibility
Text

Simple Numbering

Dynamic
Cross-References

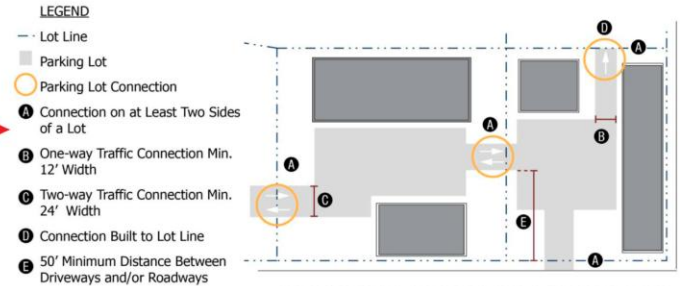
Summary Tables

Last Updated

Chapter 6 Standards

Section 6.1 Access and Circulation
Sub-section 6.1.7 Sight Distance Triangles

FIGURE 6.1.6: PARKING LOT CONNECTIONS



6.1.7 SIGHT DISTANCE TRIANGLES

A. SIGHT DISTANCE TRIANGLES ESTABLISHED

Corner lots and lots with driveways, alleys, or other methods of ingress/egress to a street shall include sight distance triangles to ensure visibility for drivers and pedestrians moving through or in an intersection. Required sight distance triangles shall be configured in accordance with Table 6.1.7: Sight Distance Triangle Requirements. Land within a required sight distance triangle shall comply with the standards in Section 6.1.7C, Limitations on Obstructions within Required Sight Distance Triangles.

TABLE 6.1.7: SIGHT DISTANCE TRIANGLE REQUIREMENTS

TYPE OF STREET, INTERSECTION, OR DRIVEWAY		MINIMUM SIGHT DISTANCE CONFIGURATION REQUIRED [1] [2]
Intersections of street [3]		10/70
Driveways serving parking lots		10/70
Driveways serving individual land uses without parking lots	Single-family detached, single-family attached, Duplex, Triplex, Quadplex	None
	All other uses of land	10/70, wherever possible

NOTES:

- [1] The NCDOT or the Town may require an alternative sight distance triangle configuration.
 [2] AASHTO requirements shall be applied to curved or curvilinear streets.
 [3] Includes all streets (State-maintained or Town-maintained).

Example page layout from a different code

- Reduce review time/uncertainty in development review process
- Add AMI targets (~60%) for ownership
- Enhance short-term rental regulations
- Review overlay protections
- Soften limits on “neighborhood-supporting uses”
- Explore community benefit agreements

SAFEGUARD EQUITY



Race & Equity

- More housing and lot size options
- Multi-generation housing
- Density impacts in historically Black neighborhoods and to BIPOC residents
- Micro / affordable commercial uses
- Review Conditions, Covenants, & Restrictions (CCR) for affordability
- Process improvements, clear language, office hours



Slide from 2.11.25 Work Session –
provided as a reminder of topics discussed



ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE

- Conservation subdivisions (not cluster)
- Native species / species diversity requirements
- Promote green stormwater infrastructure
- Ease renewable energy uses
- Update open space standards, generally
- Limit new development in the Special Flood Hazard Areas
- Overflow parking = pervious
- Disincentivize mass grading
- Prioritize greenways
- Sustainable development options

4

ADDRESS HOUSING CHOICE

Attainable Housing

- Increase number of attainable units
- Increase densities, especially in infill areas
- Expand housing options
- Increase incentives for private sector supply of units
- Affordable Housing for whom?



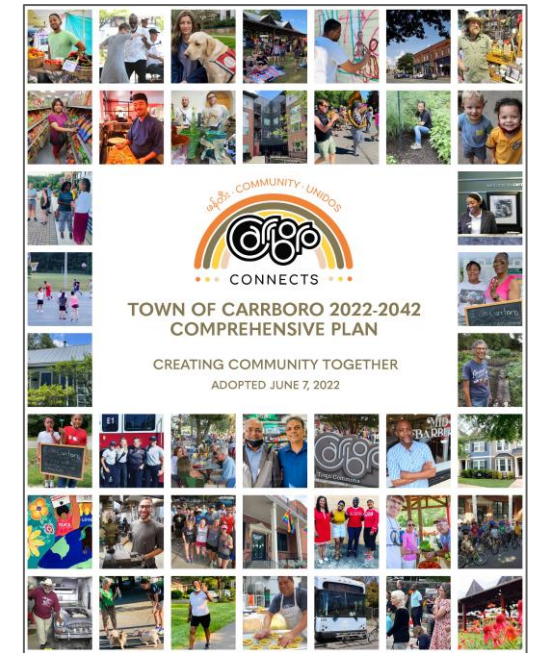
- Refine SUP requirements if development meets housing targets
- Protect “NOAH”
- Exempt affordable housing from density counts
- Allow “middle” housing by-right in most areas
- Establish max. sizes/min. densities for detached residential
- Simplify ADU standards

Slide from 2.11.25 Work Session – provided as a reminder of topics discussed

INTEGRATE POLICY GUIDANCE



- Abolish required parking space requirements?
- Utilize fee-in-lieu system for pedestrian features
- Incentives for publicly-accessible open space
- Explore increased use of development agreements for affordable housing
- Converting some residential districts to mixed use districts
- Increase public participation for
 - UDO text amendments
 - Applications seeking deviations from UDO standards





INCREASE PREDICTABILITY

- Reduce application times, where possible
- Clarify measurement
- Add definitions
- Establish criteria for all applications
- Streamline special use permits
- More pre-applications required
- Delegate more reviews to staff
- Add flexibility “safety valves”
- Limit conversion of application review types
- Clarify dimensional standards



ENSURE LEGAL SUFFICIENCY

- Address downzoning limits (HB382)
- Remove criminal penalties
- Remove content-based sign rules
- Unlisted use ≠ prohibited use (§15-149)
- Vested rights may not be withheld (§15-148)
- Abolish construction management plan (§15-49)
- Remove single-family design controls (§15-177)
- Clarify authority for schools APF requirements

INCORPORATE INCENTIVES



- Exempt affordable housing from density counts
- By-right review for affordable and “middle” housing
- Accelerated credit for tree retention
- Exclude structure parking from height
- Conservation subdivisions
- Density bonuses for voluntary design compliance
- By-right mixed-use in some residential districts
- Credit GSI towards open space

NEXT STEPS...



1. 2nd Board & Commission Review Meeting - 6/4/26
2. Council Work Session – 6/16/26
3. Public Discussion - July (?)
4. Task 4: UDO Annotated Outline – July to Oct

Discussion



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