

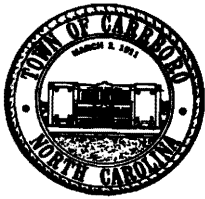
A RESOLUTION APPROVING SUBMITTAL OF A LETTER OF INTEREST TO THE
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S BUILDING BLOCKS FOR SUSTAINABLE
COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the Town of Carrboro wants to demonstrate that conservation practices can be applied to the daily operations of municipal government and to infrastructure projects; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities Program seeks to provide technical assistance on the use of various tools to help local governments achieve their goals for sustainability and growth, with one of the tools offered being for the investigation of "green streets"; and,

WHEREAS, green street principles can address both stormwater management and transportation goals, representing a "win-win" strategy;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Carrboro Board of Aldermen approve the submittal of a letter of interest to EPA's Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities Program to provide technical assistance with Town efforts to pursue "green streets."



TOWN OF CARRBORO
NORTH CAROLINA
WWW.TOWNOFCARRBORO.ORG

Ms. Sarah Dale
Office of Sustainable Communities
USEPA
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Ms. Dale,

This letter is being sent in response to your Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities 2012 Request for Letters of Interest (RFLI). The Town of Carrboro enthusiastically submits this letter seeking assistance for the implementation for **Tool #5: Creating a Greens Streets Strategy.**

The Challenge of Greening Streets in Carrboro. Carrboro is located in the Jordan Lake watershed, a drinking water supply recognized as being impaired for nutrient over-enrichment. In addition, the two headwater creeks in Carrboro are both recognized by the North Carolina Division of Water Quality as being impaired. Almost half of the impervious surface in Carrboro is associated with transportation infrastructure, creating a great challenge to reducing the volume and improving the quality of stormwater runoff. The environmental challenge is amplified by the Town currently having no dedicated revenue for the “greening” of streets, very little available land in the public right-of-way for landscaping and stormwater treatment, and relatively poorly-drained soils in areas, a combination which constrains the Town’s current ability to pioneer green streets. For new development, provisions in the land use ordinance may present barriers to creation of green streets. Another consideration is that some of the streets in Town are State-owned and -maintained; the North Carolina Department of Transportation does not currently have the capacity to take on the greening of municipal streets. The Town is mostly involved in the review of new roads associated with development, road maintenance, and projects such as sidewalks, bicycle facilities, traffic calming, and other safety improvements. Perhaps most importantly, there is a lack of a clearly-articulated strategy to pursue the greening of the street network. The above challenges could all be addressed with such a strategy.

Relevance of the Green Streets Tool to the Challenge. The 1-2 days of onsite assistance and follow up memo are seen as essential catalysts to moving forward and gaining broad investment and momentum for green streets in Carrboro. Examples of questions that it is anticipated that technical assistance will shed light on include: How can adequate drainage be maintained and utility infrastructure be protected while stormwater treatment is also achieved within the right-of-way? What is the best funding/financing approach for green streets? On which candidate street sections is the Town most likely to have success, and how will success be measured? How can the Town best integrate green streets with safety improvements? Which specific tools (e.g. curb extensions, floating islands, street trees, kiosk eco-roofs, photocatalytic pavers, permeable pavement, rain gardens, etc.) offer the best opportunities, and where? The anticipated success in addressing these questions is a function of simultaneously engaging the local decision makers and stakeholders with the technical assistance providers with expertise. Broader and deeper understanding of the value of green streets will be gained, along with a plan for specific steps to overcome barriers.

Plan for engaging traditionally underrepresented communities. As of the 2010 Census, 71% of the Town’s population was white, 14% of the population was Hispanic/Latino, and 10% was African American, with several other ethnicities having a smaller representation. About 11.0% of families and 19.0% of the population were below the poverty line. Many of the ethnic minority and lower income residents live in multifamily rental housing. A key task for before, during, and after the technical assistance event will be identifying and pursuing several green street candidate sites that will be most beneficial to traditionally underrepresented communities and reaching out to those residents. Community-based organizations will be key partners in reaching these residents. It is specifically proposed that at least 2-3 of the 4-6 candidate sites to be studied be targeted in areas of greatest impact to these

communities. One excellent opportunity exists in the near term for Jones Ferry Road, an arterial street adjacent to several large multifamily complexes with a high concentration of residents of ethnic minority/lower income, and a planned transportation improvement project. Another recommended site for study is the planned construction of a sidewalk in Carrboro along Rogers Road, which is on the border with Chapel Hill. Rogers Road runs through a community that has been the focus of environmental justice issues due to the siting of the Orange County landfill near the neighborhood. Town staff have identified 3-4 other good locations for exploring improvements in neighborhoods that include underrepresented communities, and will continue to investigate opportunities prior to the on-site visit.

Capacity for implementation. A factor that cannot be overstated is the progressive and engaged nature of the community at all levels. One demonstration of how ripe Carrboro is for this effort is that Carrboro is an overachiever as the smallest community east of the Mississippi River to attain a Silver level Bicycle Friendly Community rating from the League of American Bicyclists. We have every reason to believe that the emphasis on livability, sustainability, and localization in Carrboro and community involvement will result in this effort being very well received and productive, and Carrboro leading the way in North Carolina and the southeast with green streets efforts. Town staff and elected officials have reviewed this application and are committed to its success. The Town is specifically committed to remove obstacles to creating green streets from the Town's Land Use Ordinance, and, outside of this application, working with NCDOT to pursue at least one intersection improvement (Hillsborough Road and James Street) with a green street component in the immediate future.

Complement work from other federal funding sources. The Town has not to date and is not seeking as part of this current funding cycle additional funding assistance from EPA or other Partnership for Sustainable Communities agencies. This is not a function of lack of interest, but rather of recognition of capacity and intent to focus efforts on Green Streets. The Town has and continues to receive federal funding for various transportation efforts (e.g., Safe Routes to Schools and greenways implementation) and for watershed restoration efforts through EPA (319 nonpoint source) funding. The Town works in partnership with the Durham-Chapel Hill Metropolitan Planning Organization for many transportation related projects to pursue federally funded projects. Consistent with the modus operandi in Carrboro, a Town well-recognized for its inclusive and highly-participatory governance, staff and the Board of Aldermen are invested in reaching out and seeking collaboration specifically and more intensely with residents and businesses near the 4-6 sites of investigation and generally to the entire community to publicize the project and benefits of green streets

Finally, I would like to affirm that Carrboro is 100% committed to providing assistance with marketing, making sure key stakeholders/decision makers attend the event, logistics, availability of key contacts, and any other factors identified to insure the success of this effort. The Town's involvement in this effort will be spearheaded by Randy Dodd, Environmental Planner (919 918-7326; rdodd@townofcarrboro.org) and Jeff Brubaker, Transportation Planner (919 918-7329; jbrubaker@townofcarrboro.org). The mailing address for both is 301 West Main Street, Carrboro, NC 27510. Other key stakeholders will include the Town's Streets Superintendent; Planning Administrator; Public Works, Planning, and Economic and Community Development Department Heads; the Town Manager; the Transportation and Environmental Advisory Boards; the Planning Board; and the Board of Aldermen. Contact information for all of the above is available on the Town's website.

Sincerely yours,

Mark Chilton, Mayor

Cc: Department Heads, Board of Aldermen, TAB, EAB, Planning Board