

# **Town of Carrboro, North Carolina**

## **Principal Officials**

### ***Board of Aldermen***

Lydia Lavelle, Mayor  
Damon Seils, Mayor Pro-Tempore  
Sammy Slade  
Bethany Chaney  
Jacquelyn Gist  
Barbara Foushee  
Randee Haven-O'Donnell

### ***Town Manager***

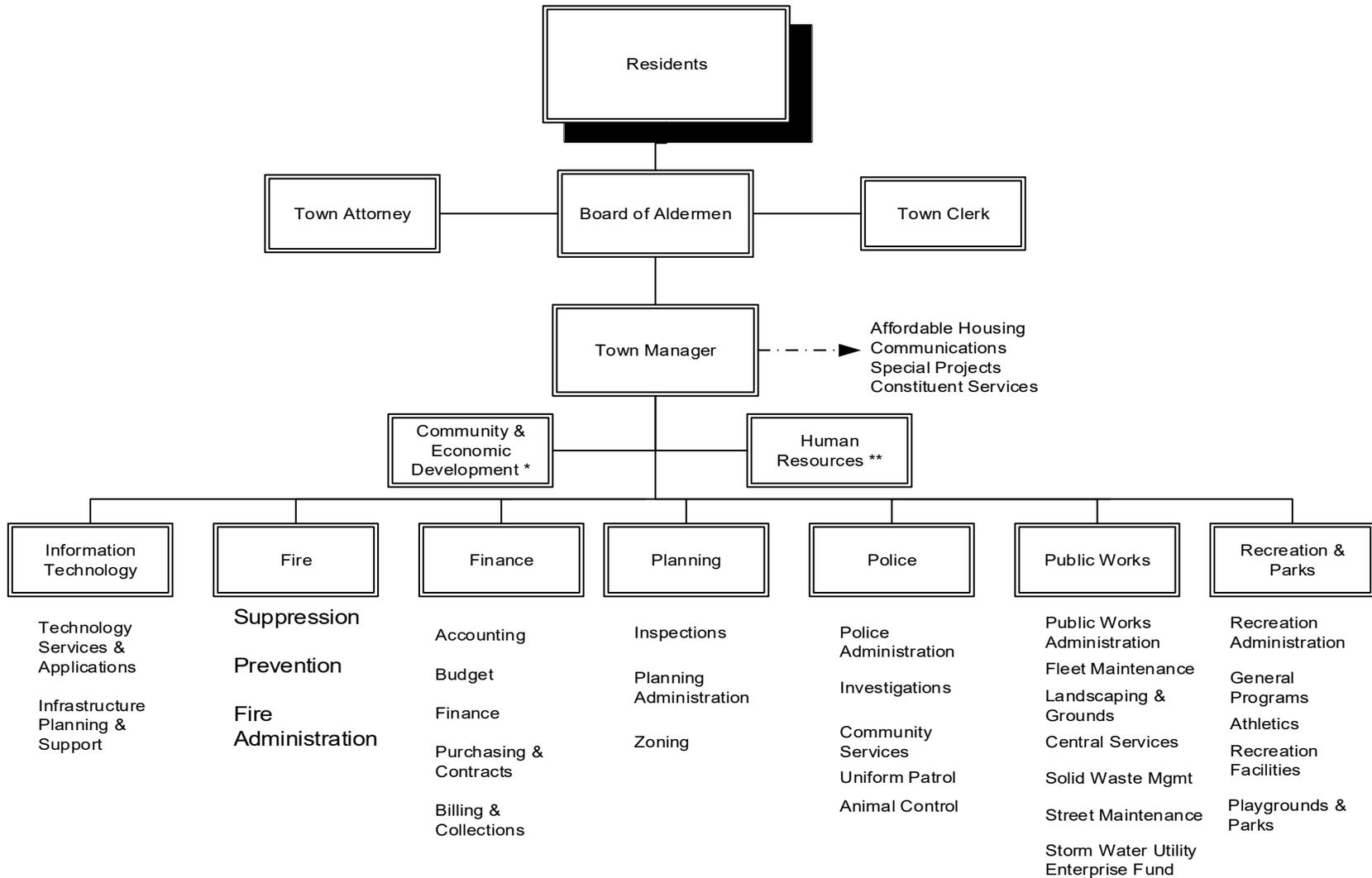
David Andrews

### ***Finance Department***

Arche L. McAdoo, Finance Director  
Donald Coble, Assistant to the Finance Director  
Jane Bowden, Accounting Technician  
Kathleen Nolan, Payroll and Benefits Specialist

# Town of Carrboro, North Carolina

## Organizational Chart



\* Economic Development, Redevelopment, Human Services, Neighborhood services

\*\* Recruitment & Retention, Employee Services, Compensation & Benefits



December 28, 2018

## **Honorable Mayor and Members of the Board of Aldermen Town of Carrboro**

We are pleased to submit the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) of the Town of Carrboro for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018 (FY 2017-18). As required by North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS), the CAFR includes financial statements that have been audited by an independent certified public accounting firm. Responsibility for the accuracy of the data, and the completeness and fairness of the presentation, including all disclosures, rests with the Town. To the best of our knowledge and belief, the enclosed data accurately presents the financial position and the results of operations of the Town as measured by the financial activity of its various funds. All disclosures necessary to enable the reader to gain an understanding of the Town's financial activities have been included.

Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) requires that management provide a narrative introduction, overview, and analysis to accompany the basic financial statements in the form of Management's Discussion and Analysis (MD&A). This letter of transmittal is designed to complement the MD&A and should be read in conjunction with it. The Town's MD&A can be found immediately following the report of the independent auditors section. Other documents that are helpful in understanding the Town's budget and financial planning include the Town's annual operating budget and capital improvements plan documents. These documents, along with the annual audit report, are posted on the Town's website at <http://www.townofcarrboro.org/250/Financial-Documents>.

The Town is a small community located within Orange County in the north central portion of North Carolina. It is situated next to Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina, and is near the Research Triangle Park. The area's topography is characterized by rolling hills. The Town, incorporated in 1911, now covers an area of 6.35 square miles and has a population of 20,867. The growth of the Town is directly related to the expansion of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and growth in the Research Triangle Park. Enrollment at the University has increased slightly from 29,084 in 2016 to 29,911 in 2017. It is anticipated that expansion will continue to occur in University-related health facilities, such as the University of North Carolina Hospitals, and with the proposed development of the Carolina North Campus.

The character of the Town is driven by core values adopted by the Board based on maintaining a sustainable community that is a highly desirable place to live. These priorities are to:

- A. Diversify revenue stream to maintain ethnic and economic diversity;
- B. Protect historic neighborhoods and maintain Carrboro's unique identity;
- C. Improve walkability and public transportation;
- D. Encourage development that is compact, dense, and appeals to diverse lifestyles and incomes;  
and,
- E. Enhance and sustain quality of life/place issues for everyone.

The support for these strategic priorities is noted by the amounts allocated within the annual operating and capital budgets, and the various awards received by the Town.

The Town commits over one million dollars for an affordable housing fund with the goal of increasing the stock of affordable, safe and decent housing within the Town. Almost two million dollars is provided annually for fare-free transit for Town residents to help reduce reliance on automobiles and to promote public transit, walking, and biking. Carrboro is one of 27 communities in the nation that has been awarded the Silver Level Bicycle-Friendly Community designation by the League of American Bicyclists in recognition of its commitment to providing safe accommodations and facilities for bicyclists, as well as efforts to encourage bicycling for fun, fitness, and transportation. Additionally, the Town has amended its street standards to require bike lanes on all collector roads. According to the latest census, 5.2% of residents in Carrboro bike to work. The community approved a \$4.6 million bond referendum in November 2003 to construct sidewalks and greenways to increase the safety and convenience of walking throughout the Town's neighborhoods.

### ***Governance***

The Town has a council/manager form of municipal government. Under the council/manager form of government, the Board of Aldermen performs the legislative functions of the Town: establishing laws and policies. The Board is an elected body and consists of a mayor and six aldermen. The mayor and the aldermen are elected by the voters of the entire town. The mayor is elected to serve a term of two years and the aldermen are elected to serve staggered terms of four years. The mayor acts as the official head of town government and presides at Board meetings. The mayor is a voting member of the Board. Appointments to advisory boards and committees are made by the Board.

The Board appoints a manager who carries out the laws and policies enacted by the Board, and is responsible for managing the Town's employees, finances, and resources. The Board also appoints a Town Clerk to maintain Town records, and appoints an attorney to represent the Board and Town administration in legal matters.

Local governments in North Carolina exist to provide a wide range of basic services on which we all depend: police and fire protection; public works (garbage collection, street resurfacing, fleet maintenance, landscaping, and building and grounds); planning; inspections and zoning; economic and community development; and parks and recreation programming. The major services provided by the Town include all of the services above, but exclude water and sewer services, and tax collections. Certain large costs assumed by the Town are for key services that are contracted with other governmental jurisdictions, such as transit, recycling, and landfill services. The Town also had administrative support units (e.g., personnel, technology, finance, budget, purchasing, etc.) that provide both direct services as well as indirect support services.

### ***Economic condition and outlook***

The 2016 median household income is \$53,513. Twenty-two percent of the households earn less than \$25,000 a year. Twenty-five percent of households make between \$25,000 and \$50,000 a year. Fifty-three percent (53%) make more than \$50,000 a year.

Employment levels in Carrboro had a slight decrease in the unemployment rate from 4.1% in 2016 to 3.6% in 2017, which is well below the statewide rate of 4.4%. The local employment base is relatively stable with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of North Carolina Health Care System, and Research Triangle Park in close proximity to the Town.

The Town relies on a largely residential tax base to provide services. The commercial base is primarily retail with some service-oriented businesses. Major employers within Orange County (those with 450 or more employees) reflect the dominance of the professional services and retail sectors. The Town continues to experience modest growth and is considered to be a desirable place to live and work.

Long-term debt obligations for the Town increased by 45.2% or \$9,213,118 from \$20,405,044 at June 30, 2017 to \$29,618,162 at June 30, 2018. This is primarily due to increased liability associated with the OPEB plan.

The Town had debt retirement for this fiscal year with the principal repayment of \$1,001,731. Additions to debt during 2018 total \$240,000 for vehicles and equipment.

For a more comprehensive analysis of the Town's capital needs and future financing, please consult the Town's Capital Improvements Program available on the Town's website. The potential impact on property tax rates of capital projects will be affected by the timing of the implementation of the proposed projects, availability of other revenue sources, and/or cost savings to fund the projects.

### ***Major Town Initiatives***

Several initiatives commenced in previous fiscal years will continue into FY 2017-18. These include:

- Implementation of a parking plan based on completed Town-wide parking study,
- Completion of the comprehensive solid waste study and evaluation of "best practice" options,
- Continue to pursue gold level bicycle designation,
- Implement new permitting software for planning, zoning and inspections,
- Acquire body worn cameras for police officers,
- Replacement of all public safety radios due to obsolescence and no future technical support from vendor, and
- Continued implementation of Strategic Energy and Climate Protection Plan.

Two major initiatives were implemented in 2017-18. The first was the creation of a Storm Water Utility Enterprise Fund and the hiring of a Storm Water Utility Manager. The primary purpose of the Utility Enterprise Fund is to address the increasing demands of regulatory compliance and increased flooding throughout the Town. In 2018-19 the Town anticipates the establishment of a fee schedule for stormwater management that will provide ongoing financial support for the utility, rather than continuing to fund these activities from the General Fund. The second major initiative was the planning and design of a new facility to house the Orange County Southern Branch Library and administrative space for Town operations. This facility is a joint undertaking with Orange County.

As noted above, the Board of Aldermen has established strategic priorities for the Town with the ultimate goal of creating and maintaining Carrboro as a sustainable community that is a highly desirable place to live. Some of the noteworthy accomplishments include:

- Town residents approved \$4.6 million of general obligation bonds in a referendum in November 2003 to construct sidewalks and greenways throughout the Town to increase the safety and convenience of walking. To date the Town has constructed 22 sidewalks covering 7.72 miles, completed construction of the Wilson Park Multi-Use Path, and construction of the Homestead-Chapel Hill High School Multi-Use Path.
- Construction of the Rogers Road sidewalk is expected to begin in fall of 2018.
- The Town has been awarded a Silver Award by the League of American Bicyclists as a Bicycle-Friendly Community (BFC). The award is presented to communities that are committed to bicycling, provide safe accommodations and facilities for bicyclists, and encourage bicycling for fun, fitness, and transportation. This is a four-year award valid through 2018. The Town's goal is to achieve Gold Level status.
- The Town continues to participate in the North Carolina League of Municipalities "Green Challenge," for Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory and Reduction to reduce the carbon footprint; and to assess the Town's energy efficiency through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "Energy

Star Challenge” that involves reviewing and reducing utility consumption in Town facilities, streetlights, and fuel usage.

- The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award has been awarded to the Town for its FY 2016-17 budget document. It is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting.
- The Town’s continued commitment to the environment was rewarded with its national designation as a Tree City USA Town for the 30<sup>th</sup> year.
- The Town has AAA bond rating from Standard and Poor’s and Aa1 bond rating from Moody’s.

## ***Financial Information***

### **General Fund Balance**

The Board has adopted a policy of maintaining a General Fund unassigned fund balance within a range of 22.5% to 35% of budgeted appropriations. When the General Fund unassigned fund balance exceeds 35%, the Town Manager may set aside an amount in assigned fund balance for transfer to Capital Reserves Fund for specific future capital projects. Should the unassigned fund balance in the General Fund fall below 20%, the policy requires the Town Manager to develop and implement a plan to rebuild the balance to 22.5% within one year.

For the year ended June 30, 2018, the Town had a \$10.6 million General Fund unassigned fund balance or 52.3% of total General Fund expenditures. This compares to an unassigned fund balance of \$10.8 million or 53.7% of expenditures in 2017. In 2017 and 2018 the Town used reserves to fund construction improvements to Town Commons and to construct Martin Luther King, Jr. Park.

The Town’s management continues to take a conservative approach to revenue projections in relation to the numerous decisions to adapt its operating budget, capital plans and financing to existing and future anticipated and unanticipated financial challenges. The steps taken in this regard include reducing less vital operating expenses, increasing emphasis on economic development activities, and prioritizing capital expenditures. The Town has AAA bond rating by Standard and Poor’s and Aa1 by Moody’s. These ratings indicate the Town’s extremely strong creditworthiness and ability to meet financial obligations.

### **Budget Control**

As required by North Carolina General Statutes, the Board of Aldermen adopts a budget ordinance prior to the beginning of each fiscal year. All governmental units are required to adopt a balanced budget by July 1 of each year. The budget ordinance adopted by the Board creates a legal limit on spending authorizations at the functional level. Through the use of a requisition encumbrance and purchase order system, the adequacy of available funds are ensured prior to the placement of orders and/or award of contracts.

Public input and review of the budget prior to adoption by the Board is encouraged. The fiscal budget is prepared by the Town Manager for a one-year fiscal cycle beginning July 1 and ending June 30 of the following year. The Town holds two public hearings, one to receive community input prior to presentation of the Manager’s recommended budget and a legally mandated one following presentation of the Manager’s recommended budget to the Board. Prior to the adoption of an annual budget, the Board may hold budget work sessions on the Manager’s recommended budget. The adopted budget document is available at the Town Clerk’s office and the Town’s website for review.

## Internal Controls

In order to provide a reasonable basis for making these representations, a comprehensive internal control framework has been designed in developing and maintaining the Town's accounting system. These internal accounting controls are designed to provide a reasonable, but not absolute, assurance regarding:

- Safeguarding of assets against loss from unauthorized use or disposition;
- Reliability of financial records for preparing financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America and maintaining accountability of assets;
- Effectiveness and efficiency of operations; and
- Compliance with applicable laws and regulations related to federal and state financial assistance programs.

The concept of reasonable assurance recognizes that the cost of control should not exceed the benefits to be derived, and the evaluation of costs and benefits requires estimates and judgments by management. All internal control evaluations occur within the above framework. We believe that the Town's internal accounting controls reasonably achieve the above objectives and provide reasonable assurance of proper recording of financial transactions.

## ***Other Information***

### Independent Audit

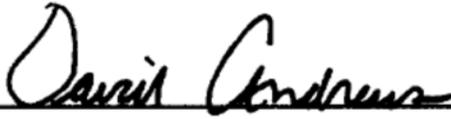
North Carolina General Statutes Chapter 15, the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, requires that units of local government have an annual audit by independent certified public accountants. The accounting firm of Dixon Hughes Goodman LLP was selected by the Board and performed this audit. The auditors' report on the basic financial statements, and combining and individual fund statements and other schedules are included in the financial section of this report. The auditors' reports on internal controls and compliance with applicable laws and regulations are included in the compliance section.

### Awards and Acknowledgements

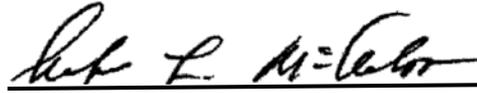
The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) awarded, for the thirteenth consecutive year, a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the Town of Carrboro for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report issued for fiscal year 2016-17. In order to be awarded a Certificate of Achievement, a government must publish an easily readable and efficiently organized comprehensive annual financial report whose contents conform to GFOA program standards. This report must satisfy both generally accepted accounting principles and applicable legal requirements.

A Certificate of Achievement is valid for a period of one year only. We believe that our current comprehensive annual financial report continues to meet the Certificate of Achievement Program requirements and we will submit our CAFR for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018 to the GFOA to determine its eligibility for another year. The Certificate Program managed by the GFOA was established in 1945, and is designed to recognize and encourage excellence in financial reporting by state and local governments. Further information about the Certificate Program can be obtained by visiting GFOA's website at: [www.gfoa.org](http://www.gfoa.org). The GFOA reports a growing awareness that the annual financial report should be management's report to its governing body, constituents, oversight bodies, resource providers, investors, and creditors. We agree with this direction and, in keeping with our past practice, have made available a copy of this report to each of you, Town departments, bond-rating agencies, the North Carolina Local Government Commission, and other financial institutions that have expressed an interest in the Town's financial affairs.

Preparation of this report would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the Finance Department Staff. Other departments of the Town have contributed directly or indirectly in the preparation of this report, and their cooperation and continued assistance is appreciated.



**David L. Andrews, ICMA-CM**  
**Town Manager**



**Arche L. McAdoo**  
**Finance Officer**



Government Finance Officers Association

**Certificate of  
Achievement  
for Excellence  
in Financial  
Reporting**

Presented to

**Town of Carrboro  
North Carolina**

For its Comprehensive Annual  
Financial Report  
for the Fiscal Year Ended

**June 30, 2017**

*Christopher P. Morill*

Executive Director/CEO