# Building Integrated Communities in Chapel Hill, NC

## Community Perspectives and Recommendations for Local Government

A report for Chapel Hill Building Integrated Communities (BIC)

August 2018


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TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

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*Terminology and definitions:*

The label of "immigrant" or "refugee" is limited in describing Chapel Hill diverse global communities, which are made up of individuals who identify themselves in many different ways. In this report, we seek to use the most inclusive language possible. We use the following terms and phrases to refer to local residents who have moved to Chapel Hill from other parts of the globe: "residents born outside the U.S.," or "born abroad." We use U.S. Census terminology of "foreign-born" when presenting data collected by the U.S. government for clarity. This report uses the terms *Hispanic*, *Latino*, *Latina and Latinx* both together and interchangeably to refer to people in the U.S. of Latin American origin or ancestry.

We define "immigrant" according to the definition of the U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act [1] as *any* person present in the United States except for those admitted specifically under non-immigrant categories. This definition includes those who entered the U.S. under an immigrant status and those that entered the U.S. without undergoing an inspection.

We define refugee according to the definition of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security [1] as a person who is outside his or her country of nationality who is unable or unwilling to return to that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution. Persecution or the fear thereof must be based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

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# Acknowledgements

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| | |
|---|---|
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Finally, we are grateful for the 250+ individuals in Chapel Hill who contributed their perspectives to this report through public meetings, interviews, and focus groups.

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# Chapel Hill Building Integrated Communities
## Executive Summary

### Overview

In 2017, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) selected the Town of Chapel Hill to participate in the Building Integrated Communities (BIC) initiative. BIC is a collaborative initiative of the Town of Chapel Hill, community residents and organization leaders, and UNC that aims to understand the experiences of immigrant and refugee residents [1] and develop recommendations for the Town Council to consider that support the integration, wellbeing, and leadership development of immigrant and refugee community members. This executive summary offers an overview of the findings and recommendations from the community assessment phase of the BIC initiative. To read the Executive Summary in Burmese, Karen, Mandarin and Spanish, or to read the full report in English and Spanish, please visit: www.townofchapelhill.org/BIC.

### Methods

The community assessment phase of the BIC used a variety of methods to gather information for this report, including:

- Community meetings with 160 immigrant and refugee residents.
- Secondary data compiled from the U.S. Census and other sources.
- Data visualization and comparison through Geographic Information Systems (GIS).
- Analysis of 25+ oral histories from the New Roots/Nuevas Raíces Latino Oral History Initiative, The Carrboro Oral History Project, and the Arab Refugee Oral History Project at Duke University.
- 13 interviews with organizations and businesses that work with immigrant and refugee residents.
- Surveys of 74 refugees by Transplanting Traditions Community Farm and the Refugee Support Center.
- Analysis of reports, service offerings, and other information from organizations that provide services to immigrant and refugees.

*Residents at community meetings in January 2018*

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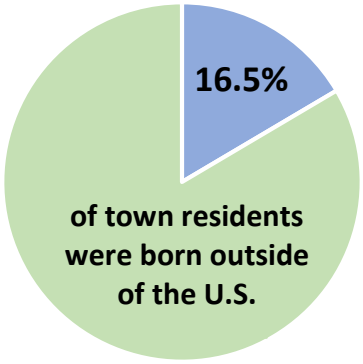
## Immigrant and Refugee Demographic Profile

**Population:** From 2011-2016, the total population of the Town of Chapel Hill was about 59,005 people. About 9,691 of those residents, or 16.5% of town residents, were born outside of the U.S.[2]



**Country of Origin:** Chapel Hill's foreign-born residents come from several different countries of origin. The top ten countries of origin are listed in Table 1 below [3]. Undocumented residents are predominately of Latin American origin and speak Spanish, with a much smaller minority who speak indigenous languages. Since 2005, 1,121 refugees have arrived in Orange County; most come primarily from Burma/Myanmar, Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, El Salvador, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, Laos, Russia, and Syria [4].

**TABLE 1:** Top 10 countries of origin for Chapel Hill residents born outside the U.S.

| Country | Population Estimate | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **China** | 2330 | 24.0% |
| **India** | 854 | 8.8% |
| **Korea** | 805 | 8.3% |
| **Mexico** | 490 | 5.1% |
| **U.K.** | 432 | 4.5% |
| **Canada** | 295 | 3.0% |
| **Germany** | 291 | 3.0% |
| **Russia** | 263 | 2.7% |
| **Japan** | 234 | 2.4% |
| **Argentina** | 230 | 2.4% |

*Source: ACS 2016 (5 Year Estimates), Table B05006*

**Income:** Residents born outside of the U.S. *without* U.S. citizenship have substantially lower household incomes than residents *with* U.S. citizenship (Table 2[5]). Furthermore, Chapel Hill residents not born in the U.S or who are naturalized citizens have a higher median household income than residents born in the U.S. This difference may be influenced by the high number of graduate or professional degree holding foreign-born residents in high paying professions who relocate to Chapel Hill. Of Chapel Hill residents working in professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services, 12.60% were born abroad [6].

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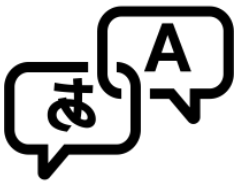
**TABLE 2:** Household incomes by citizenship status in Chapel Hill

| Characteristic | Born in the U.S. | Not Born in the U.S. | Not Born in the U.S., Naturalized Citizens | Not Born in the U.S., Non-citizens |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Median Household Income** | $65, 026 | $71, 198 | $106, 250 | $46, 045 |

*Source: ACS 2016 (5 Year Estimates). Table S0501*

**Education:** Chapel Hill has a higher percentage (44% overall) of residents with a graduate or professional degree than the North Carolina average (10.2% overall)[6]. In fact, more foreign-born Chapel Hill residents have a graduate or professional degree than residents born in the U.S., reflecting the global recruiting practices of institutions of higher education and companies in the Triangle area[6]. However, foreign-born populations have lower general educational attainment than native-born populations. In particular, high school graduation rates for immigrants and refugees are comparatively low.




**English Language Ability***:* About 24% of foreign-born residents live in households with limited English speaking ability [3]. Of those with limited English-speaking ability, as shown in Table 3, residents who speak Asian and Pacific Island languages (such as Chinese, Vietnamese, Hmong, Urdu, Bengali, Korean, Iloko, Nepali, Burmese, and Chuukese), are the largest number (705 residents).

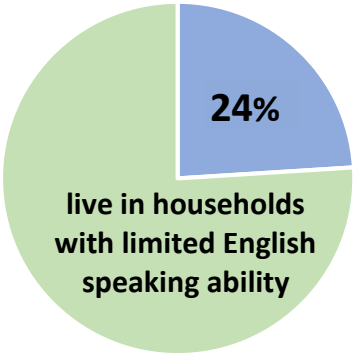



**TABLE 3:** Self-rated English-speaking ability among the residents of that were born outside the U.S. and speak a non-English language at home.

| Residents who speak… | Number who speak English "Not well" or "Not at all" | Total surveyed |
|---|---|---|
| Spanish | 537 (43%) | 1,248 |
| Indo-European languages | 115 (5%) | 2,188 |
| Asian and Pacific Island languages | 705 (19%) | 3,728 |

*Source: ACS 2016 (5 Year Estimates)*

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## Key Findings and Resident Recommendations

Table 4 below provides an overview of key findings and recommendations that emerged from the extensive community meetings, interviews, and surveys of immigrant and refugees in Chapel Hill through the Community Assessment phase of the BIC.

**TABLE 4:** Key findings and recommendations from immigrant and refugee residents

| Issue | Findings | Recommendations |
|---|---|---|
| **Public Transportation** | ▪ Chapel Hill Transit (CHT) is the only form of transportation to which many have access.<br>▪ Reasons for limited personal transportation include: undocumented residents cannot obtain a license, unfamiliarity with driving in the U.S. and/or the DMV, low income, etc.<br>▪ Current CHT routes do not offer late night routes to many locations where immigrant and refugees live. | ▪ Increase access to public transit through:<br>○ More bus stops near neighborhoods, especially public housing as well as naturally occurring affordable housing.<br>○ Expand CHT routes.<br>○ Improve weekend and late-night services to areas where residents live.<br>▪ Improve language access, and enhance outreach with foreign-born residents.<br>▪ Engage Chapel Hill employers in improving direct work access for low-income and night-shift employees. |
| **Housing** | ▪ Many immigrants and refugee residents face challenges in affording housing in Chapel Hill.<br>▪ Public housing challenges:<br>○ There is not enough public housing.<br>○ Undocumented residents do not qualify.<br>○ Limited understanding of public housing policies and practices.<br>▪ 35% of households in public housing have family members who were born abroad.<br>▪ The cost of housing in Chapel Hill impacts where immigrant and refugee residents live. Some live outside of town limits in locations with limited access to public transit. | ▪ Continue to explore affordable housing strategies, particularly those that are accessible to immigrant and refugees.<br>▪ Improve conditions of existing rental housing.<br>▪ Provide bilingual legal resources about fair and affordable housing, as well as other materials including public housing application requirements, etc.<br>▪ Engage residents in mobile home communities in Town planning processes. |

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|---|---|---|
| **Public Safety and Law Enforcement** | ▪ Some participants were enthusiastic about local law enforcement efforts to develop identification documents for use by immigrant community members.<br>▪ Some residents believe Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids and police checkpoints have a negative impact on trust with local law enforcement.<br>▪ Some reported that they have fears of gun violence (in schools and elsewhere) as well as youth drug abuse. | ▪ Expand community-police relationships.<br>▪ Provide more legal resources about ICE raids and civil rights.<br>▪ Expand bilingual education related to gun violence prevention and youth drug abuse. |
| **Leadership** | ▪ Strong interest in civic engagement and leadership opportunities.<br>▪ Participants shared positive reactions to the Town's past efforts to eliminate language barriers by providing interpretation and translation services at local government and other community meetings.<br>▪ Many foreign-born community members perceive an anti-immigrant climate that has been exacerbated in recent years by national and state leaders, and highly value local leaders' efforts to engage their perspectives and recommendations. | ▪ Increase the accessibility of elected, appointed, and Town positions to residents with knowledge of foreign languages.<br>▪ Provide interpretation at public meetings.<br>▪ Publicize events with welcoming language.<br>▪ Create bilingual hiring policies.<br>▪ Provide youth with more opportunities to connect with local government elected officials during public meetings.<br>▪ Organize multilingual "People's Academy" and other opportunities for civic education. |
| **Government Communication** | ▪ Key languages critical for communication:<br>○ Spanish, Chinese, Karen, and Burmese.<br>▪ The Town and other key community institutions do not offer adequate language access.<br>○ Most communications and services are English-only.<br>▪ Services are not standardized across Town departments. | ▪ Make communications language accessible, particularly Town and County regulations, general civic information, local resources, and leadership opportunities.<br>▪ Local government should hire more bilingual staff in local government.<br>▪ Enhance publicity of special events, disaster response, and other local information. |

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See a Spanish version of the full report at: https://migration.unc.edu/programs/bic/reports-and-resources/. Information from this assessment will guide the collaborative creation and implementation of a town-wide action plan for immigrant integration in 2018 and 2019. Residents who are interested in participating in the project and creating action plans are encouraged to contact Latino Migration Project staff by phone at 919-966-1484 or by email at hgill@email.unc.edu, isaurag@live.unc.edu, and jgutierrez@unc.edu *(Hablamos español.)*

# I. Methods

Our findings reflect the valuable input of the 250+ local residents who took part in this assessment through **public meetings, surveys, interviews, and a review of oral history collections**. The 250+ participants included primarily Chapel Hill residents born in the following countries: Brazil, Burma/Myanmar, Canada, China, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Iraq, Japan, Libya, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, South Korea, Switzerland, Syria, Taiwan, Thailand, Uganda, Ukraine, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

Participants represented a diverse sample of immigrants and refugees from homes in Chapel Hill, Carrboro, as well as other parts of Orange County. This included both speakers of English as well as other languages spoken by residents from different countries of origin (see languages below), as well as U.S.-born children of immigrant parents.

Because BIC works with local government, we focused many of our questions on areas and services that the Town of Chapel Hill provides such as housing, transportation, communication, law enforcement, leadership, and parks and recreation. We also asked open-ended questions to generate ideas and perspectives about other areas of local experience.

## Public Meetings

In January and February 2018, Chapel Hill BIC organized three public meetings to understand the experiences of residents. **More than 160 people** participated in "focus group" style conversations in three locations: St. Thomas More Catholic Church, (which has a congregation of 5,000 Hispanic adults and children), Chapel Hill Public Library, which sees more than 1000 visitors daily and provides resources for English language learners, and the Seymour Senior Center, where hundreds of Chinese-speaking elders participate in daily activities.

The meetings were facilitated in English, Russian, Korean, Mandarin, Burmese, Karen, Arabic, and Spanish languages. They were facilitated by UNC staff from the Institute for the Study of the Americas, the Center for Global Initiatives, the European Studies Center, Town of Chapel Hill staff, CHICLE Institute interpreters, and 20 community volunteers. Most of the facilitators and note takers were born in a foreign country with fluency in languages other than English. Town Council Members Buansi, Anderson, Oates, and Mayor Hemminger attended.

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Participants in public meetings were between the ages of 18 and 82 years old. Nearly everyone resided in Chapel Hill, with the exception of the Spanish-speaking participants, who were predominately from Mexico and living in Orange County, outside the Chapel Hill and Carrboro town limits.

## Interviews

In addition to these meetings, UNC BIC staff and students from the UNC Global Studies Curriculum interviewed 12 individuals who work with immigrants and refugees. Interviewees include residents and staff members from local organizations and networks in North Carolina such as El Futuro, El Centro Hispano, Refugee Support Center, Carolina Asia Center, the Family Success Alliance, the Chapel Hill/Carrboro Schools, the Orange County Schools, and the UNC Graduate School for Diversity and Student Success.

## Surveys

We collaborated with two organizations in Orange County, Transplanting Traditions Community Farm, and the Refugee Support Center, to administer surveys to refugee constituents. A total of 74 people participated, with a majority (57) from Burma and speakers of Karenic languages. Many were employed full-time by the university (25), in housekeeping or dining services, with an average monthly income of $1700, which is below the NC living wage.

## Secondary Data

We also reviewed other information that included demographic data from the Chapel Hill/Carrboro Public Schools, Orange County Health Department, UNC Chapel Hill, the Town of Chapel Hill, the U.S. Census, the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Worker demographic info for Orange County, NC, and local non-profit organizations.

An analysis of the oral histories of Orange and Durham County residents from the New Roots/Nuevas Raíces Latino Oral History Initiative; The Carrboro Oral History Project; and the Arab Refugee Oral History Project at Duke University.

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# II. A demographic picture of Chapel Hill's global communities

## Key Findings*

- 16.5% of town residents were born outside of the U.S.
- 42% of residents born outside of the U.S. are naturalized citizens.
- 58% of residents born outside of the U.S. are not U.S. citizens.
- The top ten countries of origin of Chapel Hill residents born outside of the U.S. are China, India, Korea, Mexico, U.K., Canada, Germany, Russia, Japan, and Argentina.
- Spanish is the top foreign language spoken in Chapel Hill, followed by Chinese, Korean, and other Asian languages that include Burmese and Karen.
- Residents born outside of the U.S. *without* U.S. citizenship have substantially lower household incomes and home ownership than residents *with* U.S. citizenship.
- About 24% of foreign-born residents live in households with limited English speaking ability.

**All data is from the American Community Survey 2016 (5-Year Estimates), U.S. Census Bureau.[3]*

## POPULATION SIZES AND ORIGINS

From 2011-2016, the total population of the Town of Chapel Hill was about 59,005 people [3]. About 9,691 of those residents, or 16.5% of town residents, were born outside of the U.S.[3]. In total, the most recent U.S. Census Bureau information from 2016 lists 17 specific countries of origin for Chapel Hill. This does not encompass all sending countries, as there are other countries not named and classified under "Other" or "not elsewhere classified." In the table and map below [3], we offer a detailed picture of the top ten countries of origin for Chapel Hill residents born outside the U.S.

***TABLE 1 Top ten countries of origin for Chapel Hill residents born outside the U.S.***

| Country | Estimate | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **China** | 2330 | 24.0% |
| **India** | 854 | 8.8% |
| **Korea** | 805 | 8.3% |
| **Mexico** | 490 | 5.1% |
| **U.K.** | 432 | 4.5% |
| **Canada** | 295 | 3.0% |
| **Germany** | 291 | 3.0% |
| **Russia** | 263 | 2.7% |
| **Japan** | 234 | 2.4% |
| **Argentina** | 230 | 2.4% |

*Source: ACS 2016 (5 Year Estimates), Table B05006*

***FIGURE 1 Countries of origin for the Chapel Hill population born outside the U.S.***

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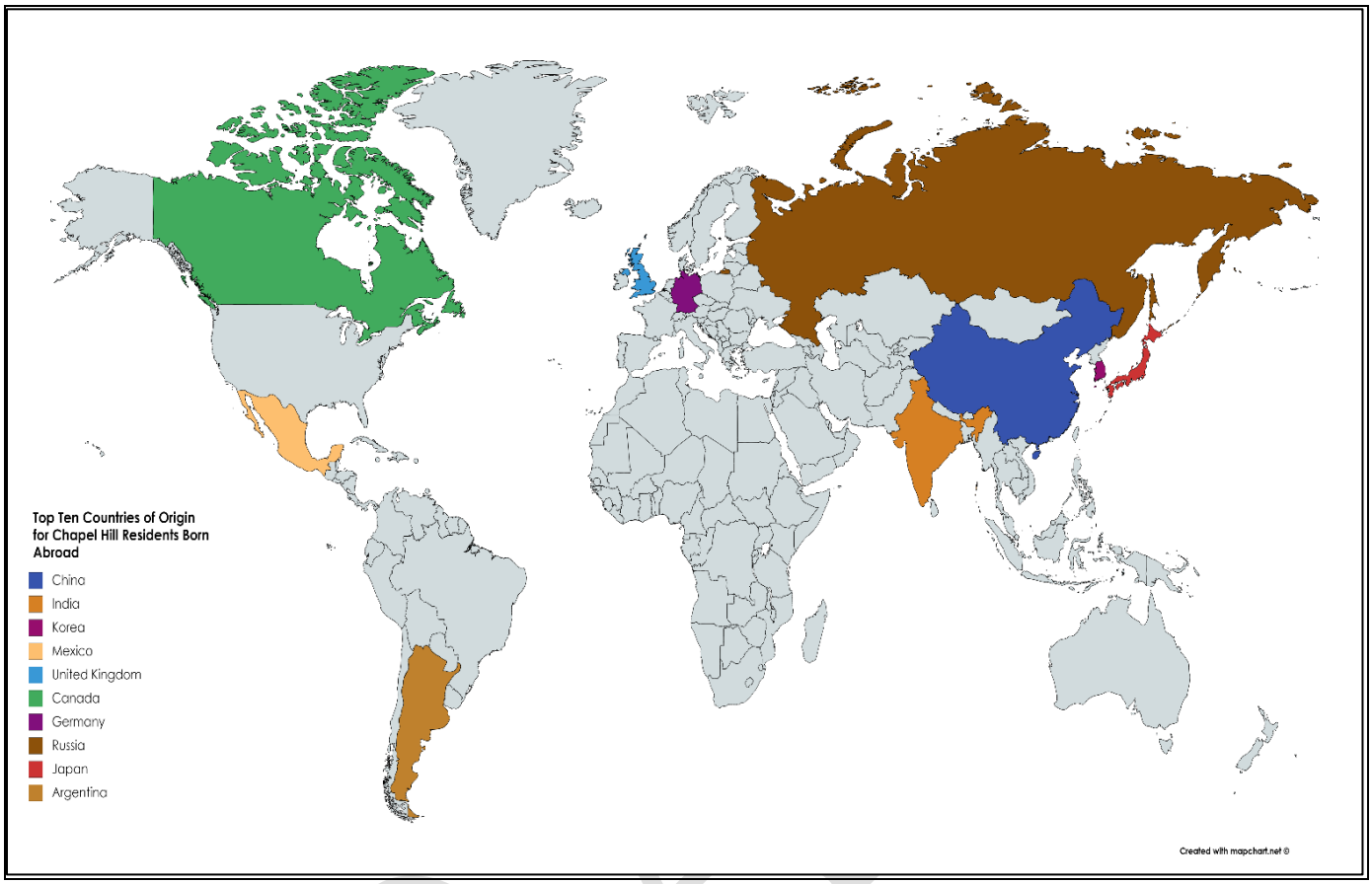


*Source: Map generated by Isaura Godinez using Mapchart.net*

## Refugee Resettlement in Orange County

Approximately 1,200 refugees reside in Orange County, with approximately 90% originating in Burma [7]. North Carolina is one of the top U.S. states for resettlement of refugees fleeing political instability and violence in Burma [8]. Refugees are resettled either from camps along Burma's border with Thailand or from urban areas within Thailand and other metropolises, such as Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia [8]. In recent years, Orange County has also becoming a home for those forced to leave the Democratic Republic of Congo [DRC] [7]. As is the case in Burma, armed conflict and ethnic tensions have precipitated the refugee situation in the DRC [9]. In addition, a smaller number of Syrian refugees have also settled in Orange County. During the first three months following resettlement, refugees receive assistance from refugee resettlement agencies (RRAs). After this period, refugees must find resources to continue their transition. The following chart table [4] provides a summary of refugee arrivals to Orange County from 2005-2017 by enumerating arrivals, their origins, and the resources that are available.

***TABLE 5 Refugee Direct Arrivals* in Orange County, Trends 2005-2017***

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| Fiscal Year | Refugee Arrivals | Countries of Origin | Community Factors |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2005-2006** | 19 | **Burma,** Cuba, Iran | ▪ One Triangle Refugee Resettlement Agency – Lutheran Family Services |
| **2006-2007** | 55 | **Burma** | ▪ Refugees from Burma arrive in larger numbers<br>▪ A second Refugee Resettlement Agency opens Triangle office – USCRI |
| **2007-2008** | 255 | **Burma,** Iran, Colombia | ▪ A third Refugee Resettlement Agency opens Triangle office- World Relief<br>▪ Numbers from Burma increase dramatically<br>▪ OCHD initiates an Immigrant and Refugee Health Program |
| **2008-2009** | 194 | **Burma,** Bhutan, Iran, Iraq | ▪ A fourth Refugee Resettlement Agency opens Triangle office – Church World Service<br>▪ Numbers of arrivals begin to decline as economy changes resettling patterns |
| **2009-2010** | 57 | **Burma**, DRC (Congo), Haiti | ▪ Numbers are much lower than two last years. Per Resettlement Agencies, we will mostly get family reunification cases, with some "free cases" (without family ties). Job availability will dictate some resettling patterns. |
| **2010-2011** | 86 | **Burma**, Laos | ▪ Numbers continue to be relatively low, but local agencies (schools/health care) report significant in-migration of Burmese/Karen/Chin from other counties and states. |
| **2011-2012** | 53 | **Burma** | ▪ Numbers continue to be relatively low possibly due to stricter national security measures as well as more family-reunification vs. free cases in Orange County. Majority are Karen. |
| **2012-2013** | 83 | **Burma,** DRC, Iraq | ▪ Numbers increase compared to last year. Few individuals from the DRC and Iraq. Great majority continues to be from Burma.<br>▪ Diversity of languages/ethnicities from Burma also expanded: Hakha Chin, Chin Mindat, and Malay. |
| **2013-2014** | 80 | **Burma**, Iran, Cameroon | ▪ Numbers were steady compared to last year. Four individuals from Iran and one from Cameroon. Remaining 75 from Burma, speaking mostly Karen, but also Mizo, Burmese, Chin, Tedim and Zotung. |
| **2014-2015** | 54 | **Burma,** Iraq, Iran, DRC | ▪ More Chin arrivals (14) compared to years past. Majority of arrivals (44) were from Burma. |
| **2015-2016** | 83 | **DRC, Burma,** Iraq, Russia | ▪ Significant increase in arrivals from DRC (39). Equal number of arrivals from Burma (including Rohingya). (4: Iraq, 1: Russia) |
| **2016-2017** | 102 | **Burma, Syria, DRC,** El Salvador | ▪ High arrival numbers at beginning of year. Slowed substantially after Travel Ban in early 2017.<br>▪ Large families arrived from Syria and DRC. Only two from El Salvador. |

*Data and chart provided by the Orange Co. Health Dept. in August, 2017. *NOTE: Unable to measure in and out migration. These data reflect direct arrivals to Orange County, NC.*

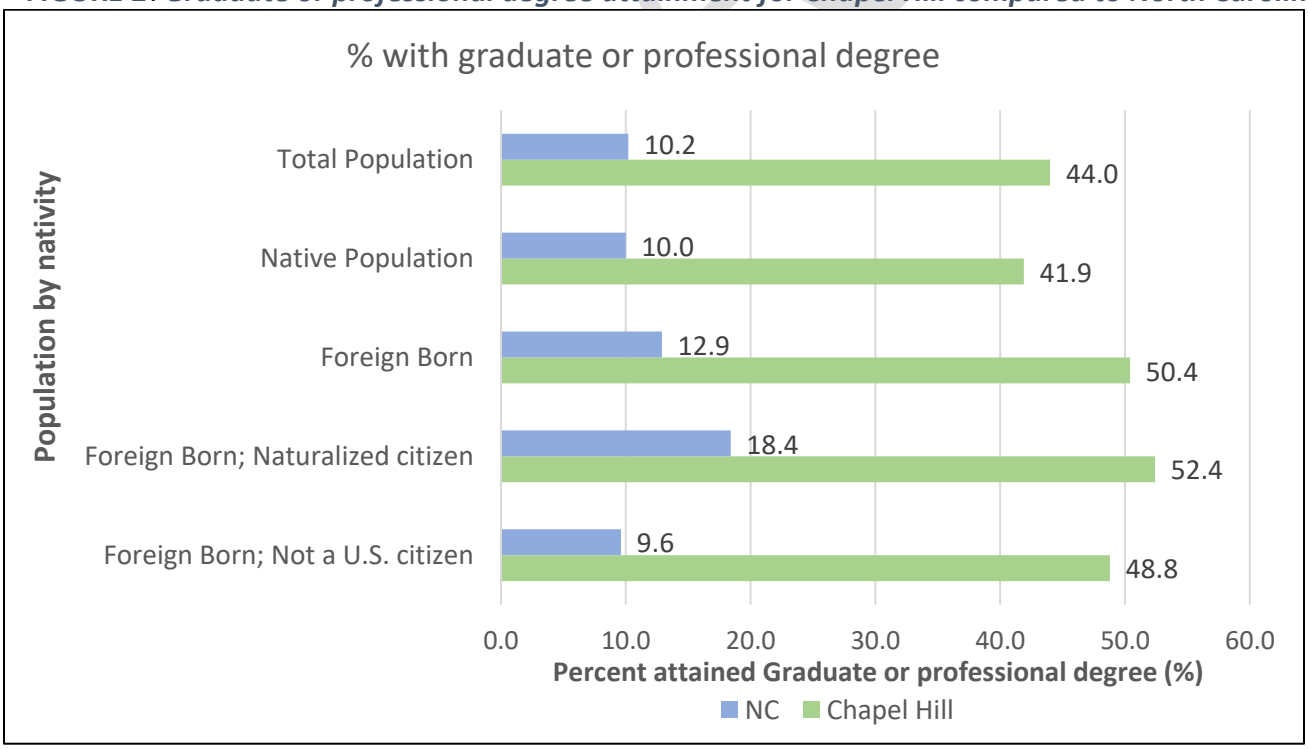
## SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

### Educational Attainment, Employment, and Household Income

Among Chapel Hill residents born abroad, educational attainment varies by place of birth and citizenship status, aligning with national trends [10]. In general, the foreign-born population of the U.S. concentrates at both the lower end and the upper end of educational levels. Immigrants originating in Mexico and Central America tend to be over-represented among the lowest levels of educational attainment. Immigrants coming from countries such as China, India, Korea and Japan tend to arrive in the U.S. with levels of education equal to or above those of the U.S.-born population[10]. These differences in education among immigrants are likely due to differences in access to education in the countries of origin and reflect different motivations for migrating to the U.S.

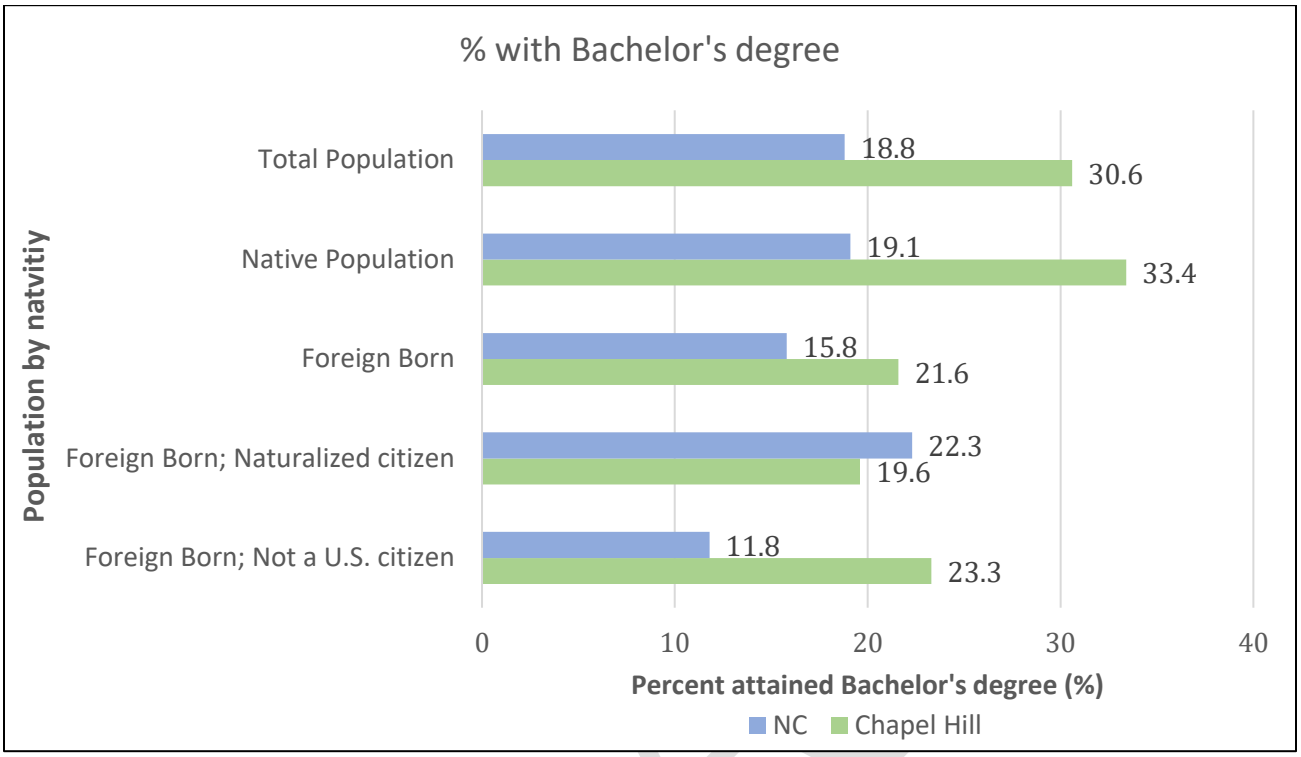
As it might be expected given the presence of the University, Chapel Hill has a higher percentage [44%] overall of individuals with a bachelor, graduate, or professional degree than the North Carolina average [10.2%] [6]. Additionally, foreign-born populations in Chapel Hill have a much higher percentage compared to NC for these same degrees. This trend reflects the global recruiting practices by biotech, information technology, and other industries in RTP and at local universities. Figures 2 and 3 below illustrate the difference in educational attainment for these degrees between Chapel Hill and North Carolina.

***FIGURE 2**: **Graduate or professional degree attainment for Chapel Hill compared to North Carolina***




Source: ACS 2016 (5 Year Estimates) S0501

*FIGURE 3: Bachelor's degree attainment for Chapel Hill, NC compared to North Carolina*




Source: ACS 2016 (5 Year Estimates) S0501

Immigrant and refugee residents of Chapel Hill work in many different industries. In 2016, nearly 46.90% of all employed Chapel Hill residents worked in the field of educational services, health care and social assistance [5]. Notably, more than half (56.80%) of these employees were born outside of the U.S., illustrating the importance of immigrant and refugee employees in the fields of education and health care. Immigrant and refugee residents of Chapel Hill are also heavily employed in agriculture, construction, transportation and warehousing, and utilities industries. They also have an important presence in professional, scientific, administrative and waste management services (7).

Overall, home ownership rates and median household incomes among Chapel Hill residents born abroad and residents born in the U.S. are about the same. However, there is a notable difference for foreign-born residents who are naturalized U.S. citizens and foreign-born residents who are NOT U.S. citizens. Residents born outside of the U.S. *without* U.S. citizenship have substantially lower household incomes and home ownership rates than residents who are naturalized U.S. citizens. Furthermore, Chapel Hill residents not born in the U.S who are naturalized citizens have a higher median household income than residents born in the U.S.

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*TABLE 6 Household incomes and home ownership by citizenship status in Chapel Hill*

| Characteristic | Born in the U.S. | Not Born in the U.S. | Not Born in the U.S., Naturalized Citizens | Not Born in the U.S., Non-citizens |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Median Household Income** | $65, 026 | $71, 198 | $106, 250 | $46, 045 |
| **% Households below 200% of the poverty level** | 31.7% | 32% | 19.2% | 41.4% |
| **% who live in homes that they RENT** | 52.6% | 47.7% | **21%** | **71.8%** |
| **% who live in homes that they OWN** | 47.7% | 52.3% | **79%** | **28.2%** |

*Source: ACS 2016 (5 Year Estimates). Table S0501*

In addition to the difference in income between naturalized citizens and non-citizens, there is a large income distribution within the resident population born outside of the U.S. The table below illustrates this income disparity among Chapel Hill's residents born outside the U.S.. The countries listed below reflect the top ten countries of origin described above as closely as possible based on available information.

*TABLE 7 Income Distribution among Chapel Hill Residents born outside the U.S.*

| Ancestral Origin | Estimated Median Household Income |
|---|---|
| **Indian** | $119,318 |
| **British** | $103,929 |
| **Russian** | $95,833 |
| **Chinese** | $93,878 |
| **German** | $79,767 |
| **South American** | $71,842 |
| **Korean** | $44,500 |
| **Mexican** | $27,314 |

*Source: ACS 2015 (5 Year Estimates). Table B19013*

## Economic Impact

We examined the economic impact of immigrant residents through data from the non-profit New American Economy. Their analysis situates Chapel Hill within a region that encompasses the counties of Chatham, Orange, Durham, and Person [11]. Within this region, immigrants make up 12.3% of the population. This presence resulted in a contribution of $497 million paid in federal, state, and local taxes in the year 2014. The spending power of immigrants in this area totals approximately $1.4 billion.

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In this region, workers born outside the U.S. are concentrated in five industries: Construction (45.5%), Administrative Support (29.8%), Tourism, Hospitality, and Recreation (26.2%), Manufacturing (18.7%), and Transportation and Warehousing (15.1%). In addition, they play an important role in generating jobs in this region and are 25% more likely than native-born residents of the area to be entrepreneurs [11].

## English Language Ability

Overall, local trends in the growth of both Latin American and Asian immigrant populations in Chapel Hill mirror recent immigration patterns that exist statewide. Between 2010 and present, there was a decrease in immigrants from Mexico accompanied by an increase in newcomers from Central America [12]. We note that preferred language for self-identification varies among people of Latin American origin, and the U.S. Census has historically used the term *Hispanic* to refer to Spanish-speakers from both Latin America and Spain. This report uses the terms *Hispanic*, *Latino*, *Latina and Latinx* both together and interchangeably, to refer to people in the U.S. *of Latin American origin or ancestry*. Table 8 below lists the multiple languages spoken among the immigrant and refugee communities of Chapel Hill. Some of the top languages spoken by refugees in Chapel Hill are not directly enumerated by the Census Bureau.

*TABLE 8 Speakers of Languages other than English in Chapel Hill*

| Non-English Language | Estimated No. of Speakers | Percent of Total Population |
|---|---|---|
| **Spanish or Spanish Creole** | 3,206 | 5.63% |
| **Chinese** | 2,727 | 4.79% |
| **Korean** | 987 | 1.73% |
| **Other Asian languages** | 852 | 1.50% |
| **French (incl. Patois, Cajun)** | 613 | 1.08% |
| **German** | 465 | 0.82% |
| **Russian** | 368 | 0.65% |
| **Hindi** | 295 | 0.52% |
| **Japanese** | 268 | 0.47% |
| **Other Slavic languages** | 263 | 0.46% |
| **Other Indic languages** | 252 | 0.44% |
| **Urdu** | 187 | 0.33% |
| **Vietnamese** | 161 | 0.28% |
| **African languages** | 155 | 0.27% |
| **Tagalog** | 149 | 0.26% |
| **Greek** | 118 | 0.21% |
| **Other Indo-European languages** | 114 | 0.20% |
| **Arabic** | 96 | 0.17% |
| **Gujarati** | 84 | 0.15% |
| **Italian** | 71 | 0.12% |
| **Scandinavian languages** | 70 | 0.12% |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Other West Germanic languages** | 58 | 0.10% |
| **Persian** | 56 | 0.10% |
| **French Creole** | 44 | 0.08% |
| **Hmong** | 41 | 0.07% |
| **Polish** | 39 | 0.07% |
| **Hungarian** | 35 | 0.06% |
| **Thai** | 31 | 0.05% |
| **Other Pacific Island languages** | 30 | 0.05% |
| **Portuguese or Portuguese Creole** | 25 | 0.04% |
| **Mon-Khmer, Cambodian** | 22 | 0.04% |
| **Hebrew** | 10 | 0.02% |
| **Native North American languages** | 7 | 0.01% |
| **Other and unspecified languages** | 4 | 0.01% |

*Source: ACS 2016 (5 Year Estimates)*

Examples of Asian and Pacific Island languages spoken in the U.S. include Chinese, Vietnamese, Hmong, Urdu, Bengali, Korean, Iloko, Nepali, Burmese, and Chuukese. Examples of "other" Indo-European languages spoken by in the U.S. (besides Spanish) include French, Haitian, Gujarati, Portuguese, Polish, Hindi, Russian, German, and Persian.

Speakers of non-English languages demonstrate various levels of English-language proficiency. Specifically, about 24% of foreign-born residents live in households with limited English speaking ability. The tables below show snapshots of the self-rated English-speaking ability among residents born outside the U.S. who speak another language at home. The first table condenses the information that is found in the second table. Of residents with limited English-speaking ability, those who speak Asian and Pacific Island languages are the largest number (705 residents).

***TABLE 9 Self-rated English-speaking ability among the residents of that were born outside the U.S.***

| Residents who speak… | Number who speak English "Not well" or "Not at all" | Total surveyed |
|---|---|---|
| **Spanish** | 537 (43%) | 1,248 |
| **Indo-European languages** | 115 (5%) | 2,188 |
| **Asian and Pacific Island languages** | 705 (19%) | 3,728 |

*Source: ACS 2016 (5 Year Estimates)*

***TABLE 10 Ability to Speak English Among Chapel Hill Residents Born Outside the U.S.***

| | |
|---|---|
| Residents who speak Spanish: | 1,248 |
| **Speak English "very well"** | 569 |
| **Speak English "well"** | 142 |
| **Speak English "not well"** | 302 |
| **Speak English "not at all"** | 235 |
| Residents who speak other Indo-European languages: | 2,188 |

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| | |
|---|---|
| **Speak English "very well"** | 1,782 |
| **Speak English "well"** | 291 |
| **Speak English "not well"** | 86 |
| **Speak English "not at all"** | 29 |
| Residents who speak Asian and Pacific Island languages: | 3,728 |
| **Speak English "very well"** | 1,639 |
| **Speak English "well"** | 1,384 |
| **Speak English "not well"** | 489 |
| **Speak English "not at all"** | 216 |
| Residents who speak other languages: | 275 |
| **Speak English "very well"** | 245 |
| **Speak English "well"** | 30 |
| **Speak English "not well"** | 0 |
| **Speak English "not at all"** | 0 |

*Source: ACS 2016 (5 Year Estimates)*

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## III. Findings

Below, we describe major issues and residents' recommendations for improving integration. They are grouped by the following themes: transportation, housing, communication, public safety and law enforcement, and leadership/civic engagement.

In addition to identifying some of the challenges faced by members of the community born abroad, we learned about the many existing assets that Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Orange County local governments, schools, non-profit organizations, and businesses offer to support the integration of immigrants and refugees. Many of these efforts have been initiated by immigrant and refugee leaders and have made progress in improving people's lives (see p.35 for a list of organizations and businesses supporting immigrant and refugee communities). Participants described many positive qualities about living in Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Orange County that included friendly people and neighbors; an excellent public transportation system; and high quality schools.

### Public Transportation

Enhancing access to transportation is one of the key ways that local governments can improve the quality of life of immigrant and refugee residents. Members of this population may not be able to afford to buy a car initially, and undocumented migrants are not authorized to acquire a state driver's license by state law. Uber and Lyft do not work for people without debit cards or credit cards, which are inaccessible for some members of the immigrant community without documentation. Limited transportation options can restrict the autonomy and independence of immigrants and refugees, which can adversely impact their ability to find a job, receive necessary medical care, and access other essential goods and services, such as food and clothing [13].

Enhancing access to transportation is one of the key ways that local governments can impact the quality of life of immigrant and refugee residents.

Moreover, immigrants with reduced mobility are more likely to be unable to access existing services that assist with the process of integration to the community. These services include English language courses, educational and cultural workshops, civic engagement opportunities, and more. Participants provided many specific recommendations for how to improve local public transportation that are outlined in this report. Some of these issues, such as the need for increased Sunday and night services, are currently being addressed in the 2018 CHPT Short-Range Transit Plan.

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### Chapel Hill Transit

The Chapel Hill Transit (CHT) System is an important resource for foreign-born residents in Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Orange County. For many immigrants and refugees, this is the only form of transportation to which they have access. Chapel Hill Transit operates fixed-route and demand-response service throughout the Towns of Chapel Hill and Carrboro with connecting routes to the regional transit provider, GoTriangle. Many residents use GoTriangle services to access English language courses and other courses at Durham Technical Community College, as well as shopping centers in Durham.

> "I'm so grateful for the bus because I can go anywhere I want in the town using the bus and it's free, but can be improved by having transportation on the weekends." –Chapel Hill resident from Honduras

Some participants were not familiar with the bus routes but most reported that they used the bus frequently. When asked for feedback about how to improve the service, a major theme was the need for improving neighborhood access to bus stops and expanding hours of service.

### Neighborhood access and service hours

During the week, Chapel Hill Transit offers an array of routes and services for many parts of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro area. Yet participants mentioned specific neighborhoods that public transit does not reach where many people working as employees in Chapel Hill businesses and the university live with their families. These neighborhoods include Governor's Club area and Nature Trails, the Calvander Road area, Phoenix Place (a Habitat development off Rogers Road), Transplanting Traditions Farm (a non-profit organization and community garden south of University Lake), and Piney Mountain Road public housing communities.

Moreover, transit services are significantly reduced at night and on weekends and during UNC fall, winter, spring, and summer breaks. CHT currently only runs three late night buses (alongside UNC's P2P campus bus route and the newly-established Baity Hill Shuttle): The Safe G, J, and T routes that operate on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights until 2:30am. None of these late night routes- which enhance public safety primarily for UNC students- serve Carolina Apartments or the South Estes Drive public housing community, where two of the largest refugee communities in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro area reside.

CHT reduces operations on the weekends, running a limited number of routes on Saturday and Sunday. The HS route that services Rogers Road, including low-income families in Habitat homes, ends at 6:30 pm on weekdays, and does not run on the weekend. The HS route, created primarily to serve K-12 students at Morris Grove Elementary and Chapel Hill High School, is inadequate for residents working night shifts or weekends at UNC or other local businesses. Participants living in these areas reported that they must walk several miles to access the nearest operating bus stop.

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Representatives from the Center for Employment and Leadership shared how day laborers (individuals paid for daily contract work who are often undocumented) work on weekends but have more transportation needs. "Some residents walk up to five miles to get to places. When it rains or snows, this is difficult or impossible," said one Spanish-speaking participant.

> "My husband has to walk home in the dark all the way from Martin Luther King Blvd to Phoenix Place. Not safe." – Chapel Hill resident from Burma

For the many participants living in mobile home communities with their families outside Town limits, CHT is not easily accessible for traveling to jobs, shopping, medical visits, or school. Participants spoke of no sidewalks in their communities and having to walk along roads for a long way in order to get home after getting off the bus. As part of the BIC assessment, the Town of Chapel Hill created a map entitled "Affordable Housing, Transit Access, and Social Vulnerability[14]" that illustrates gaps in service in neighborhoods where immigrant and refugee participants live. The map is available online at https://migration.unc.edu/programs/bic/reports-and-resources/.

### UNC Chapel Hill

The majority of funding for CHT (80%) comes from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and UNC students represent a large share of riders. At the same time, UNC Chapel Hill also has thousands of employees who seek access to work. For example, UNC Chapel Hill's housekeeping staff employs 400 people, many of whom are refugee residents of Chapel Hill and Carrboro who work late shifts when there is no public transportation. One participant employed in housekeeping at UNC described how she and her coworkers walk along highway 54 at night to get to work and return early in the morning.

### Summary of Key Transportation Findings

- The public bus system is an important resource that can be made even more accessible to residents through improvements in language access, the expansion of routes as well as weekend and late night services to neighborhoods where residents live, and enhanced outreach with immigrant and refugee residents.
- Undocumented immigrants are not able to obtain driver's licenses because of state laws, making access to transportation difficult. Foreign-born residents with low income and unfamiliarity with driving in the U.S. and the DMV may also have limited access to personal transportation.
- Many people of Latin American origin working as employees in Chapel Hill businesses and the university live with their families in mobile home communities outside town limits. Participants reported that their neighborhoods are on busy roads unsafe for children, and report walking up to five miles, sometimes in the dark, to the closest bus stop. These neighborhoods have a great need for better access to transportation to access employment, healthcare, municipal services, and shopping in Chapel Hill.
- Elderly residents rely upon public transportation and seek direct routes from their neighborhoods to shopping centers and services.

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- UNC Chapel Hill's housekeeping staff employs 400 people, many of whom are Burmese and Karen refugee residents of Chapel Hill and Carrboro who work late shifts when there is no public transportation. None of Chapel Hill Transit's late night routes serve Carolina Apartments or the South Estes Drive public housing project, which host two of the largest refugee communities in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro area.
- Many residents work as day laborers on weekends in Chapel Hill neighborhoods and have difficulties getting to a worksite from the Center for Employment and Leadership in Carrboro because of reduced public transit hours.
- Taxis are expensive, and Uber and Lyft do not work for people without debit cards and credit cards.

### Resident Recommendations

> "The Triangle Transit 800 bus has a call in number in Spanish and it has really helped me in the past. Now I know the route so I don't need it anymore." – Chapel Hill resident from Russia.

- More sidewalks in low-income neighborhoods peripheral to the town would improve community safety.
- The electronic bus schedule and bus stop signs should be translated into languages that include but are not limited to Karen, Burmese, Spanish, Arabic and Chinese.
- Create late night transit services direct to UNC Chapel Hill for night shift workers living in Carolina Apartments on HW 54, South Estes Drive and Piney Mountain Road public housing communities.
- Provide more weekend transit services.
- Chapel Hill Public transit could hire a fluent Spanish speaking switchboard operator.
- Extend transit services to neighborhoods that include the Governor's Club area and Nature Trails, the Calvander Road area, Phoenix Place (a Habitat development off Rodgers Rd), Morris Grove Elementary School, South of University Lake, and Durham Tech.
- Work with UNC Chapel Hill to provide transportation services for late-night employees.

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# Housing

Finding affordable housing in Chapel Hill is a challenge for many immigrants and refugees. As such, this was a theme that reoccurred in the residents' assessment. There are many barriers to home ownership that include high costs of real estate, lack of credit history, and lack of access to a social security card required to secure a loan in many banks (see Table 6 to view household income/home ownership by citizenship status). Chapel Hill's immigrant and refugee residents have lower rates of home ownership and a larger rental burden compared to native-born residents. Foreign-born residents make up only 10% of homeowners in Chapel Hill despite the fact that they represent 17% of the population. Only 540 non-citizen residents of Chapel Hill own homes.

Many participants rented rather owned their homes. Participants described how much of the rental housing is in sub-standard condition, and shared experiences about landlords who did not return rental deposits or make needed repairs. Many residents shared that they had been evicted from their homes and had lived in multiple places in recent years. Apartment complexes in Carrboro and Chapel Hill where many low income immigrant families and individuals have lived for the past twenty years are now too expensive, as landlords have remodeled "luxury" apartments and market to college students.

## Mobile Home Communities

There are 160+ mobile homes in Chapel Hill. Many of these communities are centrally located in close proximity to Chapel Hill's public transit, shopping centers, and other services. However, some of the immigrant and refugee community live in mobile home communities outside of Chapel Hill town limits. These individuals often work, go shopping, seek services, and are a part of faith communities in Chapel Hill, but have trouble getting to Chapel Hill because of limited public transit near their communities.

## Public Housing

The Town of Chapel Hill has 336 public housing units in its portfolio of affordable housing. These make up about a third of the 1,065 affordable housing units, which include units that are owned, subsidized, or rented. Families wishing to apply for Public Housing are required to complete an application and other required forms to determine their eligibility, and join a waitlist for housing, as there is not enough public housing for all who qualify. Thirty-five percent of households are in subsidized public housing neighborhoods have occupants born in foreign countries, many of whom have refugee status. Focus group participants that live in public housing indicated that they have a limited understanding of subsidized housing policies and practices, such as how the waitlist functions and what the requirements are to qualify. They also cited the inability to communicate with public housing staff as a barrier to apply. Eligible applicants for public housing must have U.S. citizenship, permanent residency (green card), or refugee/asylum status. These requirements exclude undocumented immigrants from public housing.

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*Table 11 Chapel Hill Public Housing with residents born outside of the U.S.*

| Public Housing Community | # Homes with Foreign-born Residents |
|---|---|
| **Airport Gardens** | 5 |
| **Church/Caldwell** | 4 |
| **Craig-Gomains** | 11 |
| **Lindsay Street** | 4 |
| **N. Columbia Street** | 3 |
| **Pritchard Park** | 8 |
| **Trinity Court** | 0 |
| **Colony Woods West** | 11 |
| **Eastwood** | 10 |
| **Oakwood** | 12 |
| **Rainbow Heights** | 11 |
| **South Estes Drive** | 24 |
| **S. Roberson** | 3 |

*Data from the Town of Chapel Hill*

Participants described Habitat for Humanity as an important community resource for low-income residents, but shared frustrations that the program is not available to undocumented immigrants. The Community Home Trust provides homeownership opportunities to low-income households in Chapel Hill [15], however as with Habitat, residents may face challenges qualifying for loans to purchase a CHT home if they do not have documentation status.

### Summary of Key Housing Findings

- Chapel Hill is not affordable for many low-income immigrant and refugee families.
- Increasing rents in Carrboro and Chapel Hill have impacted where some immigrant and refugee families can live. Some now live in mobile home communities outside of town limits with limited access to public transit and other amenities. However, these residents still work or seek services and faith communities in Chapel Hill.
- Undocumented residents do not qualify for public housing, and there is not enough public housing even for residents who do qualify.
- 35% of households in public housing neighborhoods have family members who were born abroad; many have refugee status and speak Burmese or Karen languages.
- The quality of housing is poor for many low-income residents, and much of the rental housing is in substandard condition.
- Participants had a limited understanding of public housing policies and practices, such as how the waitlist functions and what the requirements are to qualify. They also cited the inability to communicate with Town housing department staff as a barrier to applying.
- Barriers to home ownership for residents born abroad include lack of access to a social security card (for undocumented people) needed to secure a loan in many banks.

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### Resident Recommendations

- Chapel Hill Public Housing could enhance its language access by providing more materials and sharing information on the Town website and via social media languages other than English, such as Karen, Burmese, Chinese, Arabic, and Spanish languages.
- Chapel Hill Public Housing could enhance language access by hiring more staff with knowledge of target languages and immigrant/refugee experiences.
- Recommended materials to translate include public housing application requirements, the application, and an explanation of how the waitlist functions. Letters to residents should be language accessible, with follow-up through phone calls to answer questions.
- Residents would like more bilingual legal resources about fair housing and affordable housing.
- Habitat for Humanity is an important community resource that could have a much greater positive impact if it were available for all residents, regardless of immigration status.

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## Public safety and Law Enforcement

Safety was an important theme throughout the assessment. Participants had divergent views of local law enforcement. Many were enthusiastic about police efforts to work with community organizations to develop legal identification documents. For example, the Faith ID program administered by El Centro Hispano and other non-profit organizations is well regarded by participants as a way to build trust between law enforcement agencies and foreign-born residents.

Others shared that they fear police, have experienced racial profiling, and are hesitant to report crime or go to them for help. They perceive Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids and police checkpoints to have a negative impact on trust between residents and local law enforcement. Much of the perception of local police is linked to ICE raids conducted by federal officers, discriminatory traffic-stopping procedures and police checkpoints conducted by state and local agencies, and the participation of local law enforcement agencies in federal deportation programs like 287g and Secure Communities in recent years. During the assessment process, an ICE raid resulted in the arrests of 25 people in the Triangle area, including in Orange County.

Some participants reported that they have fears about gun violence (in schools and elsewhere) as well as youth drug abuse and seek more resources and information about prevention.

### Resident Recommendations

- Participants seek more bilingual police-community education related to youth drug and gun violence prevention.
- Building relationships between foreign-born and law enforcement must not be a one-time event, but must be a continuous, ongoing effort with regular events and interactions.
- The Chapel Hill Police should hire more bilingual staff, with cultural training and knowledge related to immigrant and refugee experiences.
- The Chapel Hill Police should support more Spanish language training among existing officers.
- Statements of public leaders addressing urgent information related to ICE raids, emergencies, safety, must be accessible in multiple languages —including, but not limited to, Spanish. Moreover, it must be communicated in multiple ways that include local foreign language media, direct phone calls to residences, and/or information sent home through the school system.

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# Leadership

Many immigrant and refugee residents are strongly engaged in local civic leadership activities through their neighborhoods, faith communities, businesses, or non-profit organizations. In local government leadership, town council member Allen Buansi is Ghanaian-American and Hongbin Gu is the council's first Chinese-American member. Increasing the accessibility of elected, appointed, and Town staff positions to local leaders with knowledge of foreign languages and immigrant and refugee experiences is a key way to support immigrant integration.

Throughout the community assessment process, participants had a strong, positive response to the Mayor and Town Council Members' appearance at public meetings. Youth participants were particularly enthusiastic about the opportunity to connect with local government elected officials during public meetings. Many participants were unfamiliar with the functions of local government and had not met local elected officials, and voiced a strong interest in civic engagement and leadership opportunities. Some expressed an interest in workshops to learn about the functions of boards and commissions or the structure of local government. Many already had participated in free English courses available in Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Orange County, and expressed how important these resources are for supporting civic engagement.

Participants shared positive reactions to the Town's preliminary efforts to eliminate language barriers by providing interpreters at local government and other community meetings, and sharing translated materials as a follow-up after meetings. For example, during the assessment process in January of 2018, the Town of Chapel Hill provided Spanish interpretation for a Town Council Meeting for the first time, as the Council considered a concept plan application for the redevelopment of one of the mobile home communities in Chapel Hill. Over 100 mobile home park residents attended the Council, taking advantage of the interpretation service, and approximately 20 spoke directly to the Council via an interpreter.

After the March ICE raid and arrests of local residents, Orange County, Carrboro and Chapel Hill elected officials attended a "Know Your Rights" event sponsored by El Centro Hispano. These kinds of events provided critical, language accessible information and enabled many immigrant residents to share their perspectives.

### Summary of Key Leadership Findings

- Participants have a strong interest in civic engagement and leadership opportunities.
- Participants appreciate free English courses available in Chapel Hill and many people have taken advantage of them.

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- Participants shared positive reactions to the Town's past efforts to eliminate language barriers by providing interpreters at local government and other community meetings, and sharing translated materials as a follow-up after meetings.
- Many foreign-born community members perceive an anti-immigrant climate that has been exacerbated in recent years by national and state leaders, and highly value local leaders' efforts to engage their perspectives and recommendations.

### Resident Recommendations

- When publicizing events, information needs to clear about what is required to attend (e.g. "no identification required," "all welcome,") and what the meeting will be about.
- Organize town leadership recruitment programs for youth and adults that include civic education, opportunities to meet current leaders, and support for filling out applications for boards and commissions, as well as other leadership opportunities.
- Provide language accessible materials and interpretation for public meetings.
- Organize a People's academy in Spanish and other languages to engage a greater diversity of residents.
- The Town of Chapel Hill should provide translations of permits, forms, and other information through its website.

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## Business and Entrepreneurship

Many of Chapel Hill's immigrant and refugee leaders are entrepreneurs. In Chapel Hill and Orange County, immigrants are 25% more likely than native-born residents of the area to be entrepreneurs [11]. These leaders play an important role in generating jobs in this region, and Chapel Hill is home to businesses owned by residents with personal experiences of migration. In our conversations with these local business owners, we asked how the Town of Chapel Hill and local partner organizations could better support immigrant and refugee entrepreneurs.

Participants pointed to a number of examples of how businesses have facilitated immigrant and refugee integration through employment and entrepreneurship. For example, a partnership between the non-profit organization, The Refugee Community Partnership, and Vimala's Curryblossom Café recently launched "Traditional Kitchens," a refugee women-led cooperative cookery [16]. Transplanting Traditions Community Farm (TTCF) has also supported refugee entrepreneurial activities providing refugee adults and youth access with land, healthy food and agricultural and income-generating opportunities. TTCF operates a Community-Supported Agriculture program (CSA) for 150 members and refugee farmers sell at the Chapel Hill Farmers' Market and the Carrboro Farmers' Market. Through these sales, TTCF generated almost $100,000 in direct funds to refugee farmers in 2018 [17]. Another recent effort by The Refugee Community Partnership created an Interpreter Bank to provide language services across local institutions as well as create career pathways for refugee community members [18].

Business owners stressed the importance of employment for immigrants and refugees not only as a source of income, but as a source of pride. "Refugees do not want to be taking charity from organizations all the time. They want to work and support themselves," said one business owner and former refugee. "Businesses can support refugees by hiring them, and they will learn fast, and they will learn English." The story of Sufyan, who moved to North Carolina in 2012 with his family from Baghdad, Iraq, illustrates the kind of skills and knowledge that migrants can contribute to receiving communities. Sufyan's language skills have allowed him to work as a translator and English teacher in the United States. Sufyan believes that U.S. communities are missing opportunities for refugees and other immigrants to "utilize their skills to reach their full potential." Local businesses can engage the expertise of people like Sufyan to facilitate the hiring of and communication with immigrants and refugees [19].

Participants suggested that the Chamber of Commerce can play an important role in providing resources and connections between local businesses hiring immigrants and refugees, particularly those recently arrived. The Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitor's Bureau and The Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership, which hosts the annual Near and Far Festival to celebrate Chapel Hill's global community, would also be important partners.

Mobile food businesses are another important way that immigrants support local economies as entrepreneurs. They are often a source of economic independence for workers in the food industry, who are often immigrants with low wages. The relatively low cost of starting a mobile food business is

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more feasible for immigrants who may have less capital to invest in a "brick and mortar" location. The Town of Chapel Hill passed rules to allow food trucks in 2012, citing that it would promote diversification of the Town's economy and employment opportunities and would support the incubation and growth of entrepreneurial/start-up businesses [20]. Cecilia Polanco, a recent UNC graduate, started the mobile food business So Good Pupusas with her family in 2015 and the non-profit Pupusas for Education in 2016. The business and non-profit provide scholarships to undocumented and DACAmented students to attend higher education institutions. So Good Pupusas not only provides local employment, but supports "cultural sharing" and appreciation through food [21].

### Summary of Key Business and Entrepreneurship Findings

- Entrepreneurship is higher among Chapel Hill residents born abroad. Many immigrant entrepreneurs also hold leadership roles within the community.
- Businesses owned by members of the immigrant and refugee community lead the way in providing opportunities and fostering integration of new arrivals.
- A wider network of businesses providing opportunities would aid with immigrant and refugee integration, as members of this group want to provide for themselves and not be dependent on aid.
- Members of the immigrant and refugee community bring skills that are often underutilized.
- The Chamber of Commerce, and similar organizations, can facilitate the process for local businesses to support immigrant and refugee integration.
- Mobile food businesses are a more feasible form of entrepreneurship for immigrants and refugees in the area and these businesses also stimulate economic growth among the broader community. These enterprises should not be subject to undue restriction.

### Resident Recommendations

- The Chapel Hill Chamber of Commerce could provide a forum for local business owners to come together and exchange ideas for supporting and hiring refugees, who are in great need of local employment.
- Local government should continue to support mobile food businesses to generate employment opportunities for immigrants, who may have less capital to start a "brick and mortar" business.
- Work with settled refugees to support recruitment of and communication with newcomers from similar language backgrounds.
- Recognize immigrant and refugee business leaders and recruit them for local government service and leadership opportunities.
- Build stronger connections between non-profit organizations, local government and local businesses.

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# Government Communication

Communication between the Town of Chapel Hill and local residents is critical for community safety, well-being, and prosperity. Although many immigrants and refugees are actively learning or have already learned English, about 24% of residents born in foreign countries live in households with limited English speaking ability (7). Language access for LEP individuals (limited English proficiency) is mandated by federal law under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 for all programs that receive federal funds.

We identified Spanish as a critical language for communication. The world region where Spanish is a primary language is the fourth contributor of Chapel Hill residents born in a foreign country. Forty-three percent of residents who speak Spanish language at home speak little or no English, and Spanish is the most commonly requested foreign language at the Orange County Health Department.

Additionally, various Asian and Pacific Island languages are key languages of communication in Chapel Hill. Chapel Hill has a large number of Chinese speakers with limited English proficiency, and Chinese is the second most commonly requested foreign language at the Orange County Health Department and the top sending country for immigrants living in Chapel Hill. Korean, Karen, and Burmese are also key languages of communication. Of residents who speak Asian and Pacific Island languages at home, 19% speak little or no English.

Language access is critical for refugee communities. Top countries of origin for refugees in Chapel Hill include Burma/Myanmar, The Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq and Syria. Since 2007, the U.S. has resettled more refugees from Burma than from any other country. Top refugee languages requested by patients at the Orange County Health Department include **Karen** (#1), **Burmese** (#2), **Arabic** (#3), and **Kinyarwanda/Kinyamulenge** (#4).

*Town of Chapel Hill Department Communications Survey*

In November 2017 the Town of Chapel Hill conducted a survey of all 14 town departments regarding their interpretation and translation services (see full report in the appendices). The following bullets summarize responses:

- Many Town of Chapel Hill departments do not have interpretation/ translation services. If departments have interpretation/translation services, these services are generally on an as needed basis.
- A majority of surveyed departments have employees that speak languages other than English.
- Only half of surveyed departments provide communications in other languages.
- Eight departments offer services in other languages by providing translated documents, a translator/ interpreter, and some activities in other languages.
- 50 percent of surveyed departments at least somewhat frequently account for a need for translation/ interpretation services.

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- Departments identify needs for increased translation services, especially in Spanish and Karen, and translation of department websites.
- 93% of surveyed departments do not offer incentives to employees for speaking other languages. Only the Police/ Inspections, Parking Department offers incentives.
- Overall, translation/ interpretation services are not standardized across departments and many departments have interest in learning more about resources and services.

We asked participants how the Town of Chapel Hill could better communicate information about many areas that include utilities and public services, public safety issues, public meetings, civic engagement and leadership opportunities, and Town news and events.

### Summary of Key Findings for Communications

- 24% of residents born in foreign countries live in households with limited English speaking ability.
- Spanish is a critical language for Town communications. 43% percent of residents who speak Spanish language at home speak little or no English. Spanish is the most commonly requested foreign language at the Orange County Health Department.
- Asian and Pacific Islander languages that are important for Town communications include: Chinese, Burmese, and Karen.
- There is a need for communications in refugee languages that include Karen, Burmese, Arabic, and Kinyarwanda/Kinyamulenge. Many Town of Chapel Hill departments do not have interpretation/ translation services but have interest in learning more about resources.

### Resident Recommendations

- Local government websites should make information available in multiple languages, with a priority for languages spoken by low-income immigrant and refugee communities.
- Local government offices and agencies should hire more bilingual or multilingual staff.
- Karen-speaking participants shared that they would be receptive to Town communications via television or the Town website, and that news like weather and crime should appear in one place. Almost every interviewee voiced a need for news services in Karen.
- Karen-speaking participants expressed an interest in information regarding local government functions, how to apply for different services, and local laws, including hunting ordinances. They also cited the need for more information about how to combat discrimination and exercise their rights.
- Good places to publicize events or other info are at churches, mosques and other faith institutions, laundromats, stores like Wal- Mart or *tiendas*, radio, facebook, social media (like Snapchat or Instagram) or through paper flyers, utility bills, direct calls, the school system Peachjar communications, or letters to residences.

*For more ways to connect: See Institutional and Organizational Resources on the following page.*

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## IV. Institutional and Organizational Resources

Many organizations and some businesses in Chapel Hill, Carrboro and Orange County provide services, support and employment with immigrant and refugee communities. The Orange County Health Department's Immigrant/Refugee Health Program maintains several resource guides in multiple languages, including a Refugee Resource List and Latino Resource List: http://www.orangecountync.gov/departments/health/immigrant_refugee_health.php

In addition to the links above, participants recommended the following places/people/methods for communicating with immigrants and refugees:

Habitat for Humanity
Refugee Support Center
UNC Healthcare
Orange County Health Department
Carrboro Community Health Center
Chapel Hill Children's Clinic
Carrboro Pediatrics
Chapel Hill Family Practice
Chapel Hill Mosque
Karen Baptist Church
Refugee Community Partnership
Early Head Start Program
Department of Social Services
Church World Service
St. Thomas More Catholic Church
United Church of Chapel Hill
Transplanting Traditions
El Centro Hispano
Mediterranean Deli

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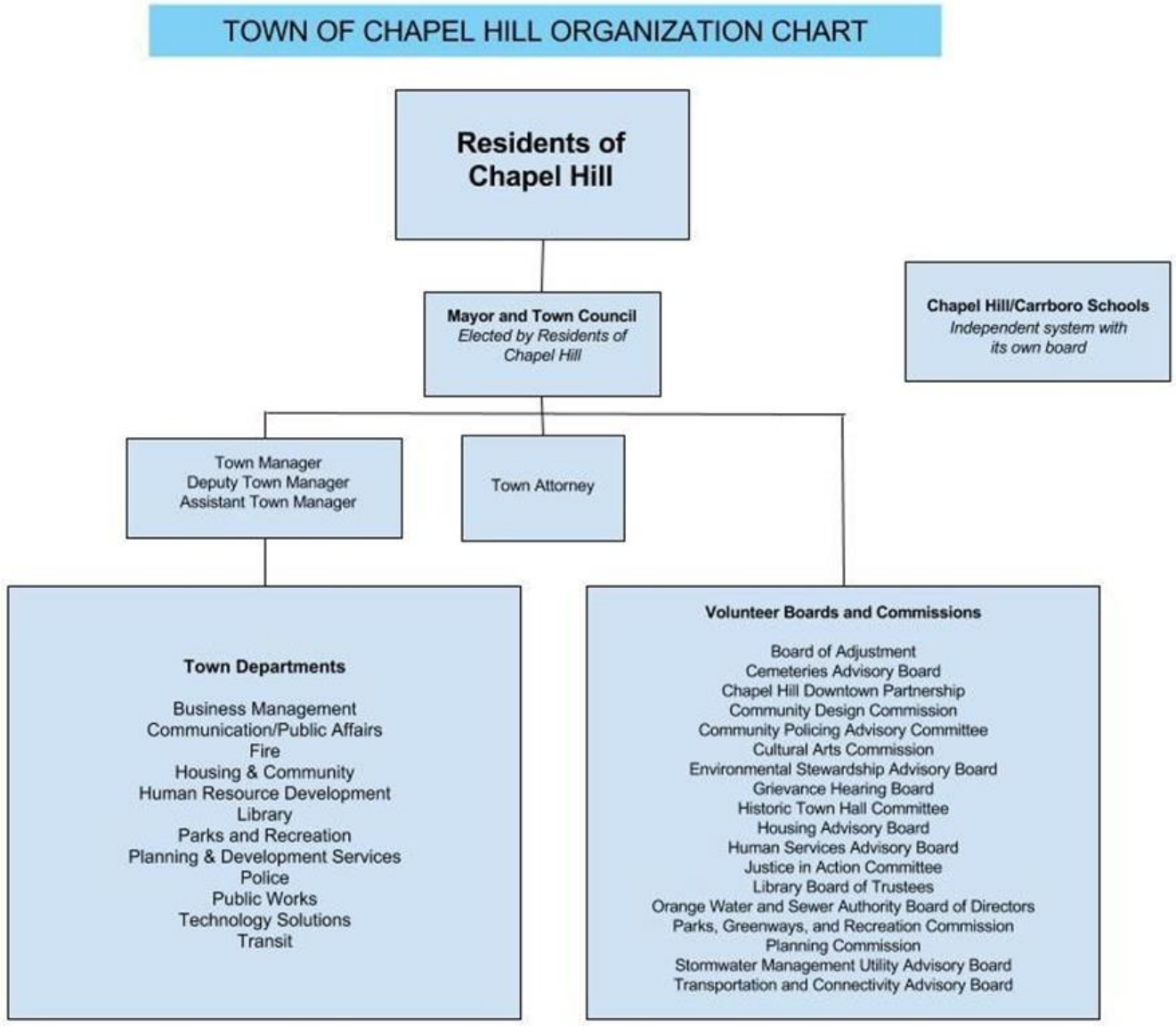
# VI. APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: A Guide to Chapel Hill Town Government

**Our mission: Learning, serving and working together to build a community where people thrive!**

Town government provides basic services to residents, such as police protection, fire protection, solid waste services, and building permits and inspections. The Town of Chapel Hill also has a long-standing commitment to providing other community services, such as public housing, a public library, and low or no cost parks and recreational programs and facilities.



## About Town Services

*Emergency Services can provide interpreter upon request.*

Chapel Hill Transit
- provides fare-free rides on 100 buses serving Chapel Hill and Carrboro
- door-to-door ride service for the mobility-challenged (EZ Rider)

Communications and Public Affairs helps residents know what is going on in town government and Chapel Hill

Fire
- provides emergency services
- installs child car seats

Housing and Community
- implements affordable housing policies and programs
- manages grant programs that support affordable housing and human service agencies
- coordinates programs to engage students, youth, elderly, faith communities, and low-income residents

Human Resource Development recruits and selects for all jobs in the Town of Chapel Hill

Library
- loans books, movies, music, and more
- provides free computer classes and access to online resources
- language learning materials
- community programs for all ages

**Chapel Hill eNews**
Get free weekly email updates. Email your subscription request to info@townofchapelhill.org

Parks and Recreation
- provides parks, trails, festivals, and athletic facilities
- offers recreational programs and cultural activities for all ages

Planning and Sustainability
- assists with decisions about how our town grows and promotes a sustainable future

Police
- keeps residents safe
- provides Community Outreach (educational and safety programs)

Public Housing
- provides affordable rental housing for low-income families
- provides programs and services to help improve life skills and achieve economic independence for low-income families

Public Works
- maintains town infrastructure, collects garbage, paves streets, builds sidewalks

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## Get Involved - Advisory Boards & Commissions

**Job Openings with the Town**
You can apply online for employment by visiting:
**www.townofchapelhill.org/jobs**
For more information email: **hr@townofchapelhill.org**

Advisory Boards and Commissions are open to all residents of Chapel Hill and provide an opportunity to help shape Town policies. Appointments are made by Town Council. Terms run from July 1 to June 30. For more information, including how to apply, please visit: http://www.townofchapelhill.org/town-hall/government/boards-commissions

**Board of Adjustment:** Considers zoning and development appeals and variance requests.

**Cemeteries Advisory Board:** Provides input on policies for the operation and maintenance of the Town's cemeteries.

**Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership:** Brings the Town, University, and downtown community together to maintain and promote downtown as the hub of Chapel Hill.

**Chapel Hill Cultural Arts Commission:** Provides input on art-related programs and initiatives to increase access to public art and promote awareness of it.

**Community Design Commission:** Reviews ideas for development and makes recommendations regarding design and appearance.

**Community Policing Advisory Committee:** Provides input on Police Department procedures and helps enhance community and police relations.

**Environmental Stewardship Advisory Board:** Strengthens environmentally responsible practices.

**Grievance Hearing Board:** Provides input on Town employee grievances not resolved through the dispute settlement process.

**Historic District Commission:** Reviews applications for "Certificates of Appropriateness" for construction in the three historic districts.

**Housing Advisory Board:** Develops and promotes housing to meet Chapel Hill community needs.

**Human Services Advisory Board:** Determines human services needs of the Town and requests proposals from community agencies to meet those needs.

**Justice in Action Committee:** Educates about and advocates for diversity and inclusivity.

**Library Board of Trustees:** Makes recommendations on library services, facilities, fees, and budget.

**Orange Water and Sewer Authority**: OWASA is a public water and sewer utility serving Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and outlying areas.

**Parks, Greenways and Recreation Commission**: Provides input on recreation services, greenways, facilities, fees and budget.

**Planning Commission:** Provides input on plans for managing the growth of the community.

**Stormwater Management Utility Advisory Board**: Provides input on the Stormwater Management Program Master Plan.

**Transportation and Connectivity:** recommends, advocates and plans for comprehensive, safe, effective and sustainable multi-modal transportation and connectivity.

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## Contact Town Departments

Automated Attendant ….919-969-5000
Attorney, Town….919-968-2746
Business Management….919-968-2712
Chapel Hill Transit….919-969-4900
Communications and Public Affairs....919-968-2743
Council, Town....919-968-2743
Fire (Non-Emergency)....919-968-2781
Housing and Community....919-968-2728
Human Resource Development....919-968-2700
Library....919-968-2777
Manager....919-968-2743
Mayor....919-968-2714
Parks and Recreation....919-968-2784
Planning and Sustainability....919-968-2728
Police (Non-Emergency)....919-968-2760
Public Housing....919-968-2850
Public Works (includes Engineering, Stormwater, Traffic, Streets and Trash) ....919-969-5100
Town Hall Info….919-968-2743

## WHERE DO I CALL?

*Animal Control….919-942-7387
*Birth Certificates....919-245-2675
Building Permits....919-968-2718
Bus Schedules....919-969-4900
Child Seat Inspection....919-968-2781
*Clerk of Court....919-644-4500
Community Centers....919-968-2790
Council Meetings....919-968-2743
*Driver's License....919-929-4161
*Elections, Board of....919-245-2350
*Emergency….911
*Health Dept (County)....919-245-2400
Jobline....919-969-5000 ext. 1500
*Landfill....919-968-2885
Leaf Collection....919-969-5100
*Marriage Licenses....919-245-2700
Parking Tickets....919-932-2912
Paying Town Bills....919-968-2712
*Post Office (Main)....919-942-4170
Privilege Licenses....919-968-2759
Public Arts....919-968-2750
Public Housing....919-968-2850
Purchasing....919-968-2712
*Recycling....919-968-2788
*Senior Center....919-968-2070
*School System....919-967-8211
Snow on Streets....919-969-5100
*Social Services....919-245-2800
Stormwater Management....919-969-7246
Street Maintenance….919-969-5100
Sustainability....919-969-5075
Swimming Pools
A.D. Clark Outdoor Pool at Hargraves Community Center….919-968-2794
Chapel Hill Community Center Indoor Pool….919-968-2790
Homestead Aquatic Center….919-968-2799
*Traffic Court....919-245-2200
Traffic Engineering....919-969-5093
Trash Collection....919-969-5100
*Unemployment ..... 919-644-1051
*Vehicle Registration .....919-929-0204
*Water and Sewer (OWASA)....919-968-4421
Yard Waste Collection….919-969-5100
Zoning Regulations….919-968-2728

**Not a Town service*

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## Client survey conducted by non-profit organizations in collaboration with Chapel Hill BIC

Question 1: Is there anything you would like to know or learn about the town government in Chapel Hill? (or, What questions do you have the town government?)

Question 2: What would be the best way for the Chapel Hill town government to share information with you about the town's services and programs?

## Focus group discussion guide conducted by Chapel Hill BIC

TOWN SERVICES & PROGRAMMING

**1.** What town services or programming are unfamiliar to anyone here, or something that you don't know a lot about?

**2.** How can the town improve you or your family's experiences with any of these services or programs?

**3.** What concerns or worries do you or your families have, if any, about contacting or interacting with different services or departments?

**4.** What would be the best way for the town to share information with you or your families about town services or programming?

TRANSPORTATION

**5.** We are interested in your families' experiences with transportation (including public transit) in Chapel Hill. How do you and your families usually get to the places that you need to go?

**6.** What public transportation services are most needed, if any?

HOUSING

**7.** Tell us about you or your families' experiences finding, or trying to find, housing that is decent and affordable.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

**8.** What experiences have you or you families had with the *groups or people who help to make decisions for the town of Chapel Hill*, such as the Town Council or the town boards and commissions?

**9.** What kinds of town decisions would you like to be involved with, or more involved with, if any?

**10.** If you or your families do want to get more involved or communicate with the Town Council or the Town's Boards and Commissions, how could the town government support you and help you get more involved?

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## About Building Integrated Communities

Building Integrated Communities (BIC) is a **community planning process** used to develop comprehensive integration plans with local government and immigrant and refugee leaders. BIC is a statewide initiative of The Latino Migration Project at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Conceptualized in 2010 in collaboration with the UNC Chapel Hill School of Government and funded by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, the intent of this initiative is to help NC local governments successfully engage with immigrant and refugee populations to promote local economic development, enhance livability, and improve relationships through a community planning process.

The expectation of this multi-year process is that local governments and groups of diverse immigrant and community stakeholders will come together to address issues faced by the immigrant and refugee community and generate innovative, locally-relevant public policies to strengthen desired outcomes. This process occurs through a series of stakeholder workshops facilitated by professionals from UNC Chapel Hill and is intentionally comprised of both local government officials and engaged community members, particularly leaders and advocates from the immigrant community. Since 2010, BIC has worked with the cities of Chapel Hill, High Point, Greenville, Winston-Salem, and Sanford.

Local governments apply to the program and are selected based in part on willingness of elected officials to expand opportunities for sustained immigrant leadership and civic engagement. Participants consist of elected officials, residents born abroad, and other community stakeholders from multiple sectors of the community. Together, they develop strategies to improve communication and trust between immigrants, refugees, town/city/county agencies, and law enforcement officials.

Chapel Hill joined the BIC program in 2017.

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