

Greene Tract Environmental Assessment

Background

The Greene Tract is a 164 acre parcel of which 104 acres is jointly owned by Orange County/Chapel Hill/Carrboro and 60 acres owned by Orange County (Headwaters Preserve). Beginning in May 2017, a staff work group, comprised of planning, engineering, environmental, and stormwater staff from the three local governments, began to examine the preservation and development potential of the existing Greene Tract. Part of this work included a multi-jurisdictional environmental scan of the Greene Tract identifying existing environmental, cultural, and historical features of the site. This scan was completed in October 2017.

In 2019, the local governments began to examine the importance of completing a more specific environmental assessment for the Greene Tract to determine the most environmental sensitive areas in order to identify areas for preservation and areas which are most suitable for development. In January 2020, the local governments adopted the Greene Tract Resolution for a Path Forward, which initiated the drafting of an environmental assessment, approximated acreages of various land uses, and outlined goals for the Greene Tract.

Land Use Designations

- Approximately 22 acres for joint preserve
- A minimum of 16 acres for public school site and recreational site
- Approximately 66 acres for housing/mixed use development

Land Use Goals

- Promote mixed-income housing opportunities; development of housing that serves a range of incomes.
- Preserve valuable environmental features including tree canopy, open space, stream and wetland buffers, and wildlife habitat and corridors.
- Protect historical and cultural resources.
- Promote cost effective infrastructure.
- Incorporate school and recreation sites.
- Earmark development areas for mixed income housing and mixed-use potential.

Purpose

The proposed Greene Tract environmental assessment was initiated in order to obtain site-specific information on environmental and cultural conditions present on the Greene Tract. The assessment was to identify the most environmentally sensitive areas to be protected and preserved and identify areas most suitable for development in the future. In addition, the assessment would balance the environmental conditions in conjunction with future infrastructure (i.e. roads, water, sewer, stormwater, greenways, etc.) necessary for adjacent future development. The assessment was to include an environmental analysis on existing conditions of the Greene Tract including, but not limited to, geology (slopes), land use, soils, stream, wetlands, wildlife vegetation, public lands, and cultural and historical resources. In addition, the assessment was to incorporate a Suitability Analysis and provide land use alternatives.

Timeline

January 2020	The Towns and County adopted the 2020 Greene Tract Resolution. The resolution initiated the drafting of an Environmental Assessment (EA) of the Greene Tract.
February 2020	Orange County issued an Request for Proposal on February 10
April 2020	Orange County entered into an agreement on April 29 with SynTerra to complete the EA.
May 2020	SynTerra reviewed background information, conducted fieldwork, and completed an environmental analysis of the Greene Tract.
June 2020	SynTerra completed the Jurisdictional Determination application and submitted it to US Army Corps of Engineers on June 2.
	The draft EA was provided to staff on June 10 for their preliminary review and comment.
	The joint staff work group shared the draft with their environmental staff for additional review. All comments received from environmental and planning staff were provided to SynTerra in order to complete the final draft.
July 2020	The final EA was provided to the local governments on July 29.

The final Greene Tract Environmental Assessment can be found at the following links:

Town of Carrboro - <https://www.townofcarrboro.org/DocumentCenter/View/8688/Greene-Tract-Environmental-Assessment--Suitability-Analysis-July-2020?bidId=>

Town of Chapel Hill - <http://chplan.us/GreeneTract>

Orange County - <https://www.orangecountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/14103/2020-Greene-Tract-Environmental-Assessment>