



Tropical Storm Chantal Mid-Term Operations Facilities Strategy Options Review: July 22, 2025

Participants: Town Manager Eric Peterson, Assistant Town Manager Matt Efird, Utilities Director Marie Strandwitz, Planning & Economic Development Manager Shannan Campbell, Public Space & Sustainability Manager Stephanie Trueblood, Engineering Services Manager Bryant Green, Public Works Manager Dustin Hill, Utility System Superintendent Joel Lashley, Budget & Management Analyst Josh Fernandez, and Administrative Intern Sheala James

1. Objective

- a. Determine the most efficient and effective location for a Public Works Operations base during the construction of the Highway 86 North Facility, and the appropriate next steps for the Adron Thompson building.

2. Topics of Discussion

- a. PW Operations
 - i. Construction timeline of NC-86 facility
 1. NC 86 facility target completion date is 9/9/26, about 14 months out
 2. Current construction timeline requires PW and Fleet to vacate site in about 30 days (late August)
 3. PM very hesitant to delay construction as subs are lined up and there may be issues with the contractor – liquidated damages, etc.
 - ii. Option to use current Dimmock's Mill site?
 1. Option had previously not been considered as this site was to be demolished in about a year as part of the Adron Thompson project, so it did not make sense to put money into repair/renovation.
 2. Site has not had any mold or moisture remediation post-Chantal, and the cost of cleaning/sanitizing, replacing the electrical system, furnishing and outfitting is likely higher than moving to another site considering the plans to demolish.
 3. Additionally, the Admin trailer would have to be replaced. Still exploring insurance coverage on the previous trailer and what might be owed to

the owner. Cost to rent was about \$800/month, but there will be haul-off and set-up charges related to replacing.

4. Staff noted that OC was currently accepting construction debris related to storm damage for free, so it might make sense to go ahead and demo the building.

iii. PW operations site needs

1. For daily operations, PW needs 2-3 office spaces (supervisory staff), a large break/assembly space for the crews (9-10 seats), restroom access (more than one if possible), parking for about 7 personal vehicles and 15-20 work vehicles (solid waste, brush trucks, pickups, excavators, trailers, etc.), storage for materials & supplies and small equipment, and access 24/7 for emergency situations.
2. It was noted that depending on the intensity of use, this could be considered a “Government Maintenance Yard” for zoning purposes, making it necessary to locate in a Light Industrial zone. Could potentially fit in a High Intensity Commercial zone if similar to surrounding uses.
3. Staff discussed how large of a space was really necessary. Logistics of ferrying employees from a central office to a separate parking area were discussed, and the need for active management and supervision of employees. It was recommended to try to co-locate as much as possible.

iv. Alternatives Analysis

1. Staff reviewed a number of commercial spaces available for lease or purchase (see attached slides). Other suggestions to review included potential to share space at NCDOT maintenance facility on Churton, Chapel Hill operations facility on Millhouse Road, the Thalle site adjacent to NC-86 N.
2. Staff also reviewed and discussed options related to abandoning the current NC-86 project and finding a site to build a larger operations facility to house both PW and Utilities (currently co-located at Adron Thompson/Dimmock’s Mill site). It was determined that a site could likely not be located, purchased and constructed for less than the planned cost of both proposed projects (approximately \$10 million).
3. Based on feedback and review of the current options, the group determined that a three year lease at 604-A Cornerstone Dr. was the best option to house Public Works temporarily and then Utilities staff during the Adron Thompson project.

b. Adron Thompson Facility

i. Flood mitigation options

1. Based on flooding experienced during Tropical Storm Chantal, it is appropriate to review the planned renovation/expansion of the Adron Thompson facility in order to mitigate potential future damage in flood events. The architect for the project has provided options for consideration.

ii. Alternatives Analysis

1. Staff reviewed the five options prepared by the architect, summarized in the attached slides.
2. A big risk associated with the continued use of the site remains with parking vehicles and equipment in the floodplain, regardless of building renovation options.
 - a. It was suggested that a parking area be created on the Water Treatment Plant site in space that is not a flood risk currently used as “dry ponds” or “alum ponds” to be used in future storm events to reduce risk to vehicles and equipment.
 - b. Additionally, as a part of a future project (potentially Sodium Hypochlorite conversion) a loop road would be built around the WTP (if feasible due to topography).
3. After discussion, staff felt that Option 1 was the best fit for Adron Thompson facility.
 - a. This option raises the elevation of the proposed addition and vehicle storage building, will likely increase construction and design costs, and delay the project by about six months, but reduces the risk of future flood damage to the facility.
 - b. Staff discussed flood wall options for this site and the adjacent WTP, both will be further reviewed.
 - c. Further discussion will be had between Planning and Engineering staff on next steps regarding SUP or other administrative approval options.
4. Based on the timeline for design and construction, Utilities staff would need temporary facilities about a year from now for approximately two years. The current plan is to rent trailers, which would cost \$3,700/month plus about \$40k in set-up and removal fees. Given that information, it supports the recommendation to pursue the Cornerstone property as it is big enough to accommodate Utilities and PW temporarily and as PW moves to NC86, Utilities can fully occupy Cornerstone, avoiding the cost of the trailer rentals.

3. Next Steps

- a.** Matt to reach out to the property broker for Cornerstone to discuss lease terms and work out details on parking, IT needs, furniture, etc.
 - i.** Board approval needed for budget amendment. Josh provided information regarding LGC treatment of leases. Per Town Code it appears Town Manager can approve the lease but budget authorization still needed.
- b.** Bryant to release architect to adjust Adron Thompson site plans based on Option 1, and begin working on plans for additional parking and access road on WTP site
 - i.** Bryant and Shannan to discuss zoning compliance for project