NEIGHBORHOOD NODE

__% OF CHARLOTTE IS CATEGORIZED AS NEIGHBORHOOD NODE

GOALS:
- Be the focal point for the surrounding neighborhood and designed to be a pedestrian-friendly concentration of neighborhood activity.
- Provide daily services to residents within a 5-10 minute walk or drive.
- Designed to fit within the context of the surrounding area and be accessible by all modes of transportation.

LAND USE:
- A mixed use place that offers higher intensity residential uses and neighborhood services, like a grocery store, offices, and institutional uses.

URBAN DESIGN:
- Building types are typically low- to mid-rise commercial, residential, civic/institutional, or mixed use buildings.
- Reuse of existing structures is encouraged where a historic building character prevails. New structures should respect the character of the area.

TRANSPORTATION:
- These places should be easily and directly accessible from nearby neighborhoods to encourage walking and cycling, and support the concept of a Complete Neighborhood.
- The Local Street network should be well-connected, designed for slow traffic, and include very good pedestrian facilities.
- Arterial Streets should provide for safe and comfortable travel along and across them for easy access to and from the Node and surrounding areas.

A. LAND USES:

- 10% Residential
- 80% Non-Residential
- 10% Common Open Space

B. ZONING DISTRICTS:
This place type has a range of zoning districts that acknowledge the diverse character of the neighborhoods they serve.
Specific Zoning Districts will be developed for this Place Type and included here.
C. BUILDING TYPES:
- The predominant building type is low-rise commercial, but low-to mid-rise mixed use (C1) and multi-family buildings (C2) are frequently found in a Neighborhood Node.
- Some buildings may be single use.
- All buildings should provide ground floor activation, particularly along Local Streets, Avenues with on-street parking, and Main Streets.

D. BUILDING SIZE:
- Building sizes may range from small commercial spaces, around 1,000 square feet, to an anchor size of about 45,000 to 60,000 square feet (D). The overall size of Neighborhood Nodes will vary throughout the city but should not be much greater than 130,000 square feet of commercial space.
- A grocery store is a typical anchor in a Neighborhood Node.

E. BUILDING LENGTH ALONG THE STREET FRONTAGE:
- Shorter building lengths provide a more interesting and comfortable pedestrian environment and allow for better block structure.
- Buildings are typically no greater than 100’ in length and should be no greater than 200’ in length.

F. BUILDING HEIGHT:
- Buildings are no more than 4 stories (F1).
- Transitions to adjacent residential neighborhoods should be addressed with decreased height (F2) toward residences and placement of buildings to minimize impact and respect the character of the neighborhood.

G. YARDS:
- Varies by context.

H. BUILDING ORIENTATION:
Note: Arterial Streets are higher volume streets (not freeways) that travel to and through Places. The terms Main Street, Avenue, Boulevard, and Parkway refer to the more specific design classifications (from the Urban Street Design Guidelines) that refine the generic Arterial Streets into context-based streets. Arterial Streets is used generically here, with USDG classifications applied where necessary to make distinctions between expected design and context. Local streets are lower-volume streets that provide direct access to land uses off of Arterial Streets.
- Neighborhood Nodes are typically located along and oriented to types of Arterial Streets, and may also include Local Streets external or internal to the site.
- Principal buildings should orient to streets and be set back far enough to allow for outdoor seating and display where such uses
are anticipated (typically for Main Streets, most Avenues, and Local Streets).

- Buildings should be set back farther from Boulevards and some Avenues, but should still orient to and provide direct pedestrian access from the street onto the site and to principal buildings.
- Neighborhood Nodes and their principal buildings should not orient to Parkways, but should instead be accessed and oriented to other streets (Arterial Streets or internal Local Streets).
- Orientation to useable common open spaces is also encouraged.
- Buildings should not be oriented toward a driveway, interior parking lot, or alley.
- In a transit station area, buildings should orient to the street and to any pedestrian network that provides direct accessibly to the station.

I. BUILDING FRONTAGE ALONG STREETS

- Neighborhood Nodes must be accessible by multiple modes from nearby neighborhoods. Sites should be designed to provide direct local street connections and a safe, interesting public realm from nearby neighborhoods and transit stops, thereby encouraging walking, cycling, and transit use.
- Buildings should include operable entrances and significant transparency along street frontages, particularly along Main Streets, Avenues, and Local Streets.
- Buildings set farther back from an Arterial Street (along Boulevards, e.g.) should still include clearly visible pedestrian connections and operable entrances from the Arterial Street at intervals no greater than 200 feet.
- Buildings on corner lots are encouraged to have entrances that front on both streets or provide an entrance from the corner of the building. Entrances should be aligned with existing or future planned pedestrian facilities where feasible.
- Corners of streets and driveways from Arterial Streets into Neighborhood Nodes should be wrapped by a building to create an inviting, comfortable route for pedestrians from the Arterial Street.
- Parking (other than on-street parking) should typically not be located between the building and street. One bay of parking may be allowable along Parkways, Boulevards and some Avenues.
- Space between the building and the sidewalk may provide appropriate locations for outdoor seating or usable open space, which can positively contribute to an improved public realm.
- Street frontages should be substantially built out, with minimal driveways, to maintain a good pedestrian environment and public realm.

J. PLACEDHOLDER
K. BUILDING COVERAGE AND IMPERVIOUS SURFACE:
- Impervious surfaces typically cover 70% of development within a Neighborhood Node.
- Building coverage is typically up to 30% of the land. Additional impervious coverage is driveways, streets, parking, plazas, and buildings.
- Approximately 30% of land in a Neighborhood Node is pervious. Preferably, some of these areas are grassed or landscaped and designed to provide a pleasant pass-through environment or a place to stop and enjoy.
- Pervious areas can accommodate trees that contribute to the city's tree canopy.

L. OPEN SPACE:
- Usable open space should be incorporated into Neighborhood Nodes, in addition to vegetative buffers that provide transitions to primarily residential areas and screening.
- These spaces should be designed to provide a pleasant pass-through environment or a place to stop and enjoy.
- They may be designed as plazas, courtyards, or more passive park space and can be the focal point of a Neighborhood Node.
- These areas are an opportunity to contribute to the tree canopy in the Neighborhood Node, in addition to the street trees and others that may serve as buffers.
- Common open spaces of various types should occupy about 5-15% of a Neighborhood Node.
- Buildings adjacent to usable open spaces should orient to them and include accessible entrances from the space and ground floor activity to activate the open space.
- Neighborhood Nodes should also provide bike and pedestrian connectivity to any nearby greenway network.

M. CONNECTIVITY:
- A well-connected Local Street network and cross-access can help provide access to these places without relying only on thoroughfares.
- Block lengths are preferably no greater than 500 feet, and should be closer to 400 feet to promote walkability, particularly if the Neighborhood Node is also within a Transit Station Area.

N. PEDESTRIAN NETWORK:
- The street network should support pedestrian mobility by providing a high-quality public realm between the Neighborhood Node, surrounding neighborhoods, and transit stops.
- The pedestrian network consists of streets with sidewalks, on-site sidewalks, and off-street pedestrian paths.
- The external pedestrian network (along adjacent Arterial or Local Streets) should include clear and visible on-site sidewalk connections directly to buildings and/or the internal pedestrian network.
- Off-street sidewalks should include connections from streets to adjacent greenways, parks, schools and other streets where possible.

O. PARKING:
- On street parking is typically included (Wide Local Streets, Main Streets, and some Avenues) to provide access to land uses, while encouraging a more walkable environment.
- Off-street parking should be located behind or beside primary buildings. Parking lots should be designed and located to provide vehicular cross access between streets.
- There should not typically be surface parking between buildings and streets. Minimal parking may be located along some Arterial Streets (some Avenues, Boulevards, e.g.) and buildings. In those instances, trees and low landscaping and walls can help screen the parking, as long as it does not encroach onto the sidewalk, open sightlines are maintained for pedestrian comfort and security, and the frontage is highly permeable from the sidewalk (with pedestrian connections from the street into the site to buildings at least every 200 feet along the frontage).
- Structured parking is encouraged. The ground floor of parking structures along streets should be wrapped with active uses such as residential, office, and retail. Existing surface lots are opportunities for future infill development.

P. VEHICULAR ACCESS:
- Off-street parking should be accessible from internal streets (Local Streets) or alleys, not from Arterial Streets.
- Parking lot and deck entrances should be accessed from Local Streets. Vehicular entrances should be designed and located so that driveways align on either side of Local Streets.
- Driveways should be limited (preferably not more than one per block) to maintain a high quality pedestrian environment. For the same reason, shared driveways and cross access are highly encouraged.

Q. STREETS:
- Neighborhood Nodes are typically located along Avenues, Main Streets, and/or at intersections with Local Streets.
- Local Streets should include on-street parking.
- Arterial Streets should be designed to allow convenient crossings and a public realm that supports pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access.
- Most Arterial Streets will be Avenues or Boulevards, but Main Streets may be appropriate in some Neighborhood Nodes.
- Target speeds should be low (20-25mph on internal/Local Streets and Main Streets; 30-35mph on Arterial Streets).
Arterial Streets in a Neighborhood Node will typically have more crossing opportunities than Arterial Streets located outside of Neighborhood Nodes and Centers.

**R. SIDEWALKS:**
- Sidewalks should be wide enough to accommodate high pedestrian volumes and maintain unobstructed walking space when adjacent to outdoor seating and displays (in the setback).
- Most Arterial Streets and all internal and Local Streets will have minimum 8 foot wide unobstructed sidewalks.
- Main Streets will have minimum 10 foot wide unobstructed sidewalks.
- Additional sidewalk width or hardscaped area between the building and the street is needed to accommodate outdoor dining and display.
- The external pedestrian network (along adjacent Arterial or Local Streets) should include clear and visible on-site sidewalk connections directly to buildings and/or the internal pedestrian network.

**S. GREEN ZONE:**
- The Green Zone consists of a planting strip or hardscaped amenity zone. It is typically no less than 8 feet wide to accommodate shade trees, grass, and/or hardscape elements. It provides separation between pedestrians and vehicles, helps calm traffic, provides an attractive public realm, contributes to the City’s healthy tree canopy, and shades the streets and users.
- An 8 foot wide hardscaped amenity zone with trees planted in grates or curbed planters is appropriate on streets with on-street parking and in Transit Station Areas or areas with heavy transit use.
- An 8 foot wide grassed or vegetated planting strip is appropriate along most streets without on-street parking or heavy transit use to provide appropriate separation between motor vehicles and pedestrians.

**T. BICYCLE FACILITIES:**
- Dedicated bicycle facilities are expected on most Arterial Streets, due to higher motor vehicle speeds and volumes.
- Dedicated bicycle facilities are not typical along Local Streets and Main Streets, since speeds and traffic volumes should be low and therefore bicycles and motor vehicles can safely share the travel lane.
- Design of the bicycle facility varies (see general provisions, p. XX, for factors influencing bike facilities).

**U. STREET FURNISHINGS:**
- Street furnishings should be located in the Green Zone or area behind the sidewalk, not in the sidewalk.
- The Green Zone, combined with a setback, should be wide enough to include trees, landscaping, pedestrian lighting, benches, transit stops/facilities, trash receptacles, outdoor seating/displays, doors and entrances, and/or bike parking.