% OF CHARLOTTE IS CATEGORIZED AS CENTER CITY

A. LAND USES:
- 20% Residential
- 70% Non-Residential
- 10% Common Open Space

B. ZONING DISTRICTS:
- This Place Type has a range of districts that acknowledge the diverse character of the areas they serve. Zoning Districts will have varying standards related to height, intensity, uses, parking, building placement, and other site design elements.
- Specific Zoning Districts will be developed for this Place Type and will be included here.

GOALS:
- Accommodate XX% of future growth.
- Center City is the center of activity for the City of Charlotte and the surrounding region.
- Highly accessible by a multi-modal network that includes transit and the greenway network in addition to major streets and interstates.

LAND USE:
- Center City includes a diverse mix of uses including offices, residential, retail and entertainment, civic and institutional, and open spaces.
- It is the economic hub for the region.

URBAN DESIGN:
- Building types are diverse throughout Center City. Employment-based areas typically include high rise buildings, surrounded by high- to mid-rise office, mixed use, or multi-family buildings and low-rise residential in historic and other neighborhoods along the fringes of Center City.
- The heart of Center City, around Trade Street and Tryon Street, is the most intensely developed place in Charlotte.

TRANSPORTATION:
- Center City is the hub of local and regional multi-modal transportation and is located within the I-277 loop.
- Center City is supported by a dense network of streets, alleys, greenways, paths, and variety of transit options focused on providing a high level of service for pedestrians, bicyclists, and supports accessibility by all modes and strong relationship to adjacent land uses.
C. BUILDING TYPES:

- The predominant building types are high- to mid-rise commercial and mixed use buildings, primarily near Trade Street and Tryon Street and along nearby corridors. In this area, buildings are typically vertically integrated.
- Buildings transition in height toward existing residential neighborhoods with mid- to low-rise buildings that may be residential, commercial, or mixed use.
- Within the residential wards, small commercial buildings exist and should be expected to remain as businesses but the area should be predominantly residential.

D. BUILDING SIZE:

- High-rise buildings are typically 400,000 to 1,000,000 square feet or more.
- Buildings may vary in size depending upon their context, particularly residential buildings. Within historic or established primarily single family neighborhoods, buildings should have smaller footprints and massing consistent with surrounding buildings. Where multi-family buildings are more predominant (typically in transition areas between the business district and neighborhoods), their footprint and overall size will be much larger.

E. BUILDING LENGTH ALONG THE STREET FRONTAGE:

- Shorter building lengths provide a more interesting and comfortable pedestrian environment and allow for better block structure.
- Building length varies based on the context of the area, but should be similar to surrounding buildings and no more than 400’ long along a block face in the core area (near Tryon St. and Trade St.) and much smaller when located within an established primarily single family residential neighborhood.

F. BUILDING HEIGHT:

- Building heights are unlimited (F1) in the core of Center City (Trade St. and Tryon St. and nearby corridors). However, buildings that are developed at the build-to line (F2) should provide a step back above at least the third floor of the structure to mitigate the massing of large structures and prevent a canyon effect.
- Transitions to residential neighborhoods should be addressed with tapered height toward residences and placement of buildings to minimize impact and respect the character of the neighborhood. Typically, buildings in the low-scale residential neighborhoods are no greater than 3 stories.
G. YARDS:
- High-rise buildings and mid-rise buildings in the core of Center City and the surrounding area typically do not have yards. Their relationship to the adjacent street and other parcels is either through the pedestrian realm, alleyway access, or are attached to one another.
- The edges of Center City that are predominately residential neighborhoods do have yards that establish a characteristic rhythm and pattern along a street, similar to Neighborhood 1 or 2. Similar front yard depths and side yard widths, coupled with height and orientation help to define the character of neighborhoods.

H. ORIENTATION:
*Note: Specific street design classifications (from the UrbanStreet Design Guidelines) do not apply to streets within Center City, however, street design concepts should still be based on the context-sensitive approach defined by the USDG. Cross sections and setbacks are defined by either the Center City Transportation Plan or other plan as appropriate.*
- Buildings should orient to streets and be set back far enough to allow for outdoor seating and display where such uses are anticipated.
- Buildings on corner lots are encouraged to have entrances fronting on both streets and/or corner entrances.
- Buildings should not be oriented toward a driveway, interior parking lot, or vehicular alley.
- Orientation to useable common open spaces is also encouraged (like pedestrian alleys, arcades, greenways, the rail trail, transit stations, etc.).
- Buildings adjacent to transit stations should orient to the street and to any pedestrian network that provides direct accessibly to the station.

I. BUILDING FRONTAGE ALONG STREETS:
- Center City is the densest place in the Charlotte region with the most diverse mix of uses, and it has a high quality public realm that is designed to be accessible by all modes of transportation.
- Sites should be designed to provide direct street connections and a safe, interesting public realm from nearby neighborhoods and transit stops, thereby encouraging walking, cycling, and transit use.
- Buildings and open spaces should also establish clear connections to adjacent streets to encourage pedestrian travel throughout Center City and create a park-once environment.
- Buildings should include operable entrances and significant transparency along street frontages.
- Buildings set farther back should still include clearly visible pedestrian connections and operable entrances at intervals no greater than 250 feet.
- Buildings on corner lots are encouraged to have entrances that
K. BUILDING COVERAGE AND IMPERVIOUS SURFACE:
- Center City differs from most other place types in terms of pervious and impervious surfaces due to the diversity of intensity within the geography. Some sites may have little to no pervious surface but other areas of Center City are large, public open spaces that serve several blocks of residents, visitors, and employees, as well as help mitigate environmental impacts of vast areas of impervious surface.
- Impervious surfaces differ throughout the Center City area. In the core employment area of Center City, buildings may occupy all or a significant portion of the site; however, the edge areas that are made up mostly of detached or plex structures should have impervious surface closer to 30%, similar to Neighborhood 1.
- Areas between the Center City core area and the low-intensity edge areas may have greater pervious area than the core, closer to 70%. Most is used as common open space and small yard areas.
- Impervious surfaces may be made up of buildings, driveways, streets, sidewalks, parking, plazas, and buildings.
- Sites in the core of Center City have little to no pervious surface areas. Sites on the edges of Center City that have similar patterns of development as other Place Types, like Neighborhood 1 and 2, may have more pervious surface area than core Center City sites, but are still limited on space and tend to have less pervious surface than sites outside of Center City. To make up for the lack of pervious surfaces on site, additional common open spaces should be provided to mitigate against impacts to the environment in this urban area.
- Pervious areas can accommodate trees that contribute to the city's tree canopy.

L. OPEN SPACE AND YARDS:
- Usable common open spaces are a key element of Center City. The minimal area of private or semi-private open space on sites in Center City inform the need for significant areas of usable, accessible common open spaces for residents and employees to use.
- Open Spaces of various types should occupy about 10% of Center City overall. In the core of Center City, many common open spaces may be located within hardscaped plazas or courtyards which differ from open spaces in many other places in Charlotte that are made up of more pervious surfaces. Large public parks help to mitigate against the environmental effects of the lack of green space on individual sites in Center City. Yards, semi-private open spaces, and neighborhood parks are more common in the edge areas of Center City.
- These spaces should be designed to provide a pleasant pass-through environment or a place to stop and enjoy.
- Open spaces range in design and include plazas, courtyards, greenways and parks, a major cemetery, and private and semi-private yards and spaces.
- Buildings adjacent to open spaces should orient to them and include accessible entrances from the space and ground floor activity to activate the open space.

M. CONNECTIVITY:
- Center City has the highest level of connectivity in Charlotte. The grided street network, access to fixed guideway rapid transit, the transit hub, and multiple interstates enables people to move around and through Center City with many modes and route options.
- Block lengths should be 400’ or less to promote walkability and route choices. Short blocks allow for a high frequency of pedestrian crossing opportunities. Large blocks should be broken up to restore the grid by extending the existing street network.
- Well-designed pedestrian and bicycle connections should be encouraged between blocks, along with new street and pedestrian/bicycle connections across the I-77/I-277 loop, when possible, to create additional route options for all modes.

N. PEDESTRIAN NETWORK:
- Streets should also support pedestrian mobility, by providing a high-quality public realm and frequent crossing opportunities.
- There should be clear and visible on-site sidewalk connections from streets directly to buildings and to the internal pedestrian network. Buildings should have active ground floor uses with entrances from pedestrian facilities along all streets.
- Other pedestrian connections (like alleys, arcades, greenways, the rail trail, etc.) can provide additional circulation options to further enhance the pedestrian network and are encouraged where possible.
• Sidewalks should be provided along all streets in Center City, and pedestrian connections should be made between public open space, plazas, parks, and other key destinations.
• Sites should be designed to accommodate pedestrians traveling from all directions, and there should be clear access between all pedestrian travel ways and building entrances.

O. PARKING:
• On-street parking encourages a more walkable environment, and will be present on most streets in Center City.
• Structured parking is prevalent in the core area of Center City, particularly for moderate and high-rise buildings.
• Surface parking lots exist within the core area of Center City and toward the edges, but should transition over time to become infill building sites with structured parking or with surface lots located to the rear of buildings.
• Edge areas of Center City that are lower-intensity should locate parking to the rear of buildings when possible, and to the side when constrained. Existing parking between buildings and streets in Center City should be considered for conversion to outdoor seating and wider pedestrian ways when feasible (or removed upon redevelopment).

P. VEHICULAR ACCESS:
• Shared driveways are encouraged in order to reduce the frequency of driveways and related conflicts for pedestrians and bicyclists.
• Access to surface lots and parking decks should typically be from one-way streets or high-traffic volume streets where feasible.
• Driveways, structured parking, and other vehicular access points are prohibited on Tryon Street, and strongly discouraged on Trade Street and S. Brevard Street (between E. Stonewall Street and E. Trade Street).
• Driveways to access to single family homes within Center City are allowed with shared driveways strongly encouraged.

Q. STREETS:
• A combination of two-way and one-way streets provide access to City Center, and they should be designed to allow convenient crossings and a public realm that supports pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access.
• The I-77/I-277 loop is a barrier to all modes of transportation into Center City. Some streets, however, serve important commuter functions and will be designed to accommodate and process high volumes of vehicular traffic.
• Due to the high intensity of development, all streets should allow for on-street parking and maneuvering traffic.
• Target speeds for streets should be low (preferably maximum 25mph or lower)

R. SIDEWALKS:
• A well-designed sidewalk system in Center City is critical to providing a high quality pedestrian environment.
• Sidewalks should be wide enough to allow for frequent pedestrian activity along with adequate space behind the sidewalk for adjacent business and residential activity.
• The minimum sidewalk width is 8’ (not including the Green Zone), though exceptions are allowable in single family residential areas.
• Specific sidewalk width is determined based on the Uptown Street Enhancements Map in the Center City Transportation Plan or other plan as appropriate.
• Pedestrian arcades may be appropriate in certain contexts within Center City, and should feature a high-quality design and enough width to accommodate the required sidewalk width and Green Zone functions. Arcade elements should also be designed to ensure high levels of visibility between pedestrians and passing traffic.
S. GREEN ZONE:

- The Green Zone is typically no less than 8’ 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.
- Street trees shade the street (and its users), help calm traffic, provide an attractive public realm, and contribute to the City’s healthy tree canopy.
- Grass planting strips are inappropriate for most building types and land uses in Center City but may be allowable in some single family residential contexts.
- Hardscaped amenity zones are ideal for most uses and building types in Center City and should be used next to full-time on-street parking on all streets.
- New pedestrian and bicycle connections should be encouraged between blocks and across the I-77/I-277 loop when possible to create additional route options for these modes.

T. BICYCLE FACILITIES:

- Bicyclists should have efficient and safe access to, from, and within Center City.
- Bicycle facilities must be compatible with the street network while safely accommodating riders of all skill levels.
- Dedicated bicycle facilities are expected on high-volume streets.
- Design of the bicycle facility varies (see general provisions, p. XX, for factors influencing bike facilities).
- The high level of connectivity within Center City provides many low-speed streets and route options for cyclists in mixed traffic.

U. STREET FURNISHINGS:

- Should be located in the Green Zone or areas behind the sidewalk, not in the sidewalk.
- The green zone (typically hardscaped), combined with a building setback, should include trees in grates and should be wide enough for pedestrian lighting, benches, transit stops/facilities, trash receptacles, outdoor seating/displays, doors and entrances, bicycle parking, and other items.

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