

CHARLOTTE
CENTER CITY
2040
VISION PLAN

Published July 2021







CHARLOTTE CENTER CITY 2040 VISION PLAN

Public Review Draft July 2021

Prepared by









TABLE OF CONTENTS

1: INTRODUCTION	1
2: PLANNING PROCESS	9
3: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	19
4: PLAN FRAMEWORK	31
5: STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS	43
6: FOCUS AREAS	89
7: ORGANIZATION AND ACTION	141
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	147











CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

An Evolving Center City in a Changed World

Dynamic. Growing. Creative. Filled with dreams and bursting with opportunity, the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County lies in the center of the dynamic, rapidly growing southeastern United States (see Figure 1.1 on page 4). Its vibrant Center City is the economic, social and cultural heart of the region.

In the last decade, the city and county changed profoundly. The region's population grew by about 400,000 residents between 2010 and 2019. Charlotte ranked among the 10 fastest-growing large cities for most of the decade. The city also became much more diverse, with an estimated 17% of the 2019 population having been born outside the United States. A booming economy, including a growing technology sector, brought new prosperity to the city, and spurred development and investment in Uptown, South End, and other close-in neighborhoods. Over the last decade, almost 20,000 new housing units were planned or built in Center City, defined as Uptown and the surrounding neighborhoods. New hotels, restaurants, bars, and entertainment venues – as well as grand park spaces and a minor league baseball stadium – brought significant additional activity, culture and nightlife to Uptown Charlotte. Public investments in light rail, streetcar, greenways and innovations in shared mobility (i.e.ride share, bike share and scooters) helped to double the number of commuters using alternate modes of transportation and increasing convenient access to Uptown for more people.

Charlotte has a great deal of positive momentum heading into the decade, with many new programs and efforts already kickstarted by residents, businesses, community organizations and government agencies. And importantly, Center City still has ample room to grow and to accommodate future development and incorporate additional mobility options in and around Uptown. With growth, there is opportunity to bring more essential amenities to neighborhoods

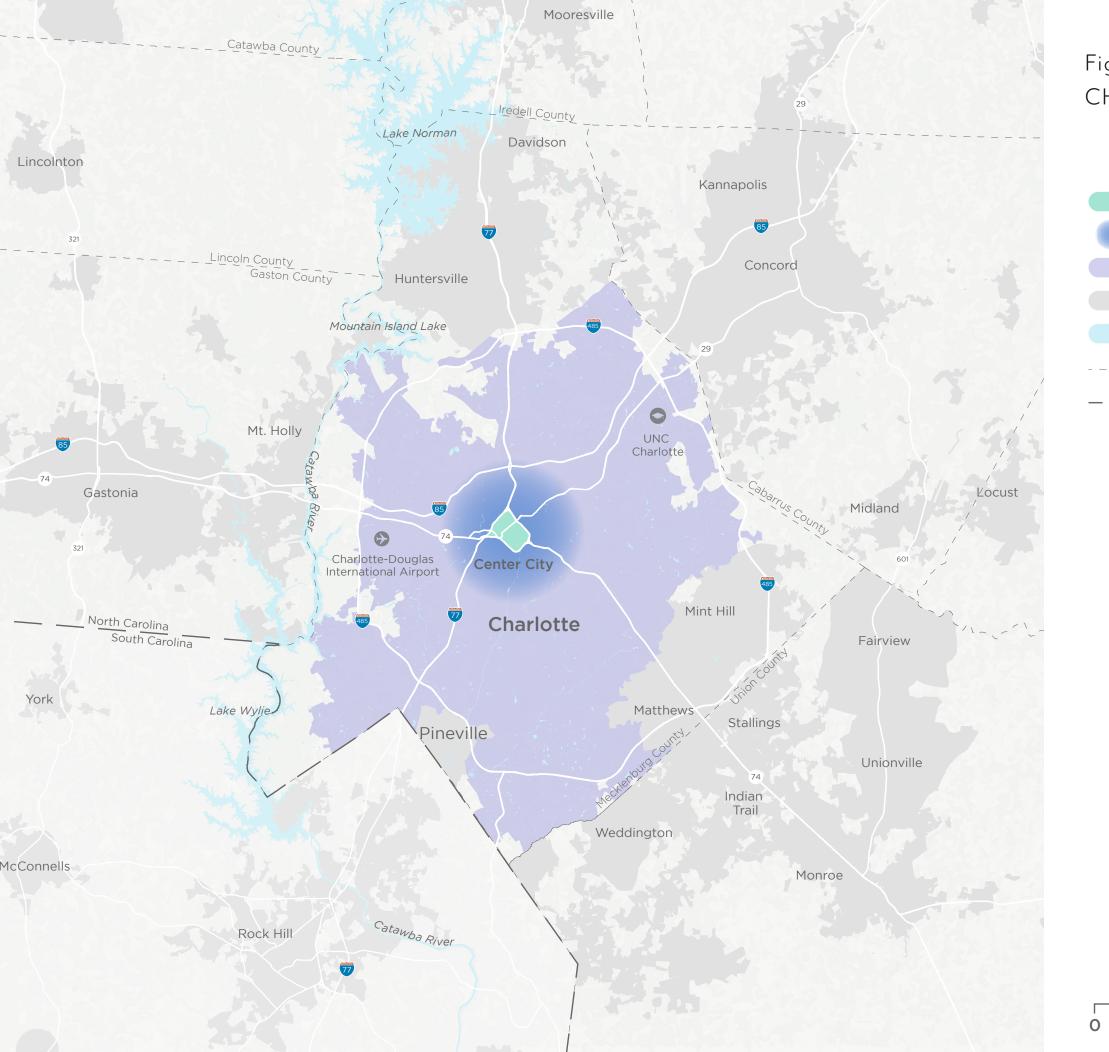


Figure 1.1 CHARLOTTE REGION







Cyclists gather at Johnson C. Smith University for the West Side Ride with Charlotte Joy Rides (formerly Charlotte B-cycle)

while developing in a more sustainable manner that benefits people and the planet. Innovative thinking, ideas and energy will continue to emanate from talented local students, neighborhood activists, creatives and small businesses as well as from energetic and aspirational new residents who will want to make their mark on our ever evolving city and region.

As we consider the future, we must also acknowledge the reality that the rapid growth, investment and prosperity of the past decade was not equally shared by all Charlotteans or Center City neighborhoods. Rather, existing disparities were amplified as the gap widened between neighborhoods and residents. Mirroring trends in fast growing cities across the country, Charlotte added more jobs than housing units, which contributed to a rising cost of living and the displacement of residents.

More fundamentally, all Charlotteans do not enjoy equal access to opportunity. A widely cited 2014 Harvard-UC Berkeley Opportunity Study ranked Charlotte last among major cities for economic mobility. This report highlighted broad socioeconomic discrepancies between neighborhoods, demonstrating that children raised in poverty in Charlotte are unlikely to have the same opportunity and prosperity as their neighbors in wealthier zip codes.

The Vision Plan was in development when the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020. Practically overnight, this global event drastically changed how Charlotteans work, travel, learn, worship and shop, severely impacting Center City's residents, workers and businesses and disproportionately, people of color. A few short months later, the death of George Floyd and others, set off a series of protests and a nationwide call for justice. As the coronavirus highlighted and amplified

existing social and economic disparities, necessary community conversations brought greater awareness of the impacts of systemic racism. On top of these challenges, communities across the globe continue to experience the detrimental effects of climate change.

Against the backdrop of these historic occurances, the Vision Plan evolved to be more bold, ambitious and intentional in addressing these challenges.

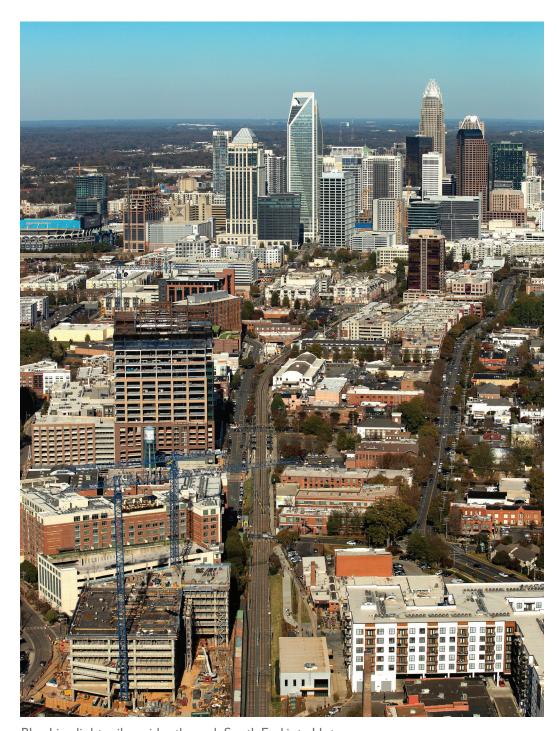
New Opportunities

The confluence of these circumstances presents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to stretch our thinking about what Center City Charlotte should be and what a Vision Plan can accomplish. While many issues that Charlotteans face are systemic and deeply rooted, and beyond what this plan can address, a heightened awareness has spurred an ongoing, open civic dialogue about potential solutions. It is still possible to introduce incremental and transformative ideas to move toward positive change for those seeking opportunities and specifically to foster life-changing and positive impact on the lives of our youth.

Charlotteans are welcoming and they value innovation and inclusivity. Underlying these shared values is a sense of accountability and a recognition that business as usual is not working for everyone. To move forward, the Charlotte community must acknowledge past mistakes and learn from its history to help communities heal and prosper. The primary challenge of the next decade is for Charlotte to harness the energy, wealth and creativity of Center City to guarantee opportunity for all residents regardless of zip code, education, income, race, orientation or culture.



Community members enjoy a movie and local food trucks at Victoria Yards in Uptown



Blue Line light rail corridor through South End into Uptown

The 2040 Vision Plan frankly and boldly faces this challenge. It identifies ways that the people, organizations, and communities of Center City can collaborate and move toward a more just, equitable and prosperous shared future. The Plan will also be used to monitor and measure progress toward these goals, and to keep Charlotte accountable in advancing the shared vision.

What is the Vision Plan?

The Charlotte Center City 2040 Vision Plan was created to build on past momentum while addressing challenges head-on to create greater equity and allow more people to prosper. As the economic engine for the region and a leading force for the prosperity and quality of life for residents, Center City is uniquely poised to generate resources and set forth an inspirational vision as Charlotte continues to grow and evolve.

The Vision Plan provides a "big picture" yet strategic framework and a bold, unifying vision for Center City growth and development. The Plan sets forth an outlook for the future that is unique and authentic to Charlotte-Mecklenburg, providing a set of innovative, transformative strategies and recommendations that will chart the course for achieving it.

The recommendations include major, long-term projects that will enhance the landscape of Center City; policies that will guide investment and deployment of resources; and programs to support Charlotte residents and businesses. The Vision Plan also suggests an organizational structure to guide the City, County and Center City Partners in working together with the Charlotte community to implement the plan.

A Call to Action

The Charlotte Center City 2040 Vision Plan is more than a strategic blueprint for the next 20 years. It is an opportunity for the Charlotte community to reflect on the trends of the past decades and the singular experiences of 2020 and 2021, build upon the momentum created during a period of prolific positive change and commit to an equitable and sustainable future.

Center City is well positioned to continue to develop, grow and prosper while supporting business, arts, culture, education and entertainment. Moving forward, this growth will – and must—be more sustainable, equitable and widely shared among the community. The 2040 Vision Plan is a call to action for Charlotte residents to work with neighbors, community groups and civic leaders to help shape Center City for future generations. Charlotteans can help make the ideas in this plan a reality by:

- Reviewing the Vision Plan
- Identifying recommendations to support and champion
- Connecting with others who share your interests
- Contacting decision-makers and influencers to advocate for action
- Sharing experiences, expertise and energy; and
- Celebrating achievements.











CHAPTER 2

PLANNING PROCESS

Why Plan?

Plans guide growth, present transformational ideas, and document the steps needed to realize shared goals. The decisions and investments made over the next twenty years will shape the city for generations to come.

Charlotte has a successful legacy of planning that has guided investment and shaped the fabric of Center City for decades. Strategic and visionary plans for Center City have been developed approximately every 10 years since the 1960s. These plans are shaped by the work of civic leaders and community members, encouraging residents to dream big and think boldly about the future. Revisiting this shared vision every decade ensures that the growth and character of Center City reflects demographic, economic and cultural change and is consistent with current community values and priorities.

Treasured places and amenities such as First Ward Park, Romare Bearden Park, the Blue Line Rail Trail, and Little Sugar Creek Greenway – as well as Uptown's sports and entertainment venues, new hotels and residences, and the city-defining skyline – are some of the projects envisioned through previous planning efforts. Each was an idea championed by the Charlotte community, included in a Vision Plan, and ultimately realized through strategic planning, dedicated resources, and multi-party partnerships and collaboration.

As Charlotte has grown, the focus of its Center City plans has expanded beyond the core business district and Uptown to include many diverse close-in neighborhoods. The geographic focus of the 2040 Vision Plan is roughly a two-mile radius from the intersection of Trade and Tryon streets (see Figure 2.1). We make plans to guide our growth, present transformational ideas and document the steps we must take to move into the future. Plans remind us of our aspirations and hold us accountable over time to ensue these ideas become a reality and result in a greater quality of life and opportunity for all

Why Now?

The last plan, created in 2010, helped guide a decade of tremendous growth and transformation in Charlotte and its urban core. New offices, homes, transit lines and destinations emerged in Uptown and throughout Center City. This brought new businesses, residents, venues, and economic activity, while also impacting existing neighborhoods, jobs and overall affordability. The amount of change in the last 10 years merited a wholesale, fresh look at the people, places and potential of Center City. The 2040 Vision Plan builds on earlier efforts but is grounded in current data, community input and an updated vision of the future.

To understand Center City's potential for growth and development through 2040, the Center City Growth Projections Study analyzed market conditions in 2020-21, identified opportunities for growth, and established targets for new housing, jobs, and visitors. The Growth Projections Study ensured that the recommendations of the Vision Plan are grounded in data. In 2019 and 2020, there was



Center City Snapshot

The following is a brief summary of key statistics, trends and conditions in Center City that inform the Vision Plan.



BETWEEN 2010 AND 2020:

- Center City's population increased by about 5%, or 2,500 people, per year
- Almost **one-fourth** (24%) of Charlotte's total housing growth was in Center City
- Jobs have grown at about **four times the rate** of housing units, driving up the cost of housing
- More jobs were imported to the City than were created locally



IN THIS SAME PERIOD, CENTER CITY ADDED:

- Housing for over 20,000 new residents
- Over 3,000 hotel rooms
- More than 9.5 million square feet of office space, and
- Over 500,000 square feet of retail for shops and restaurants

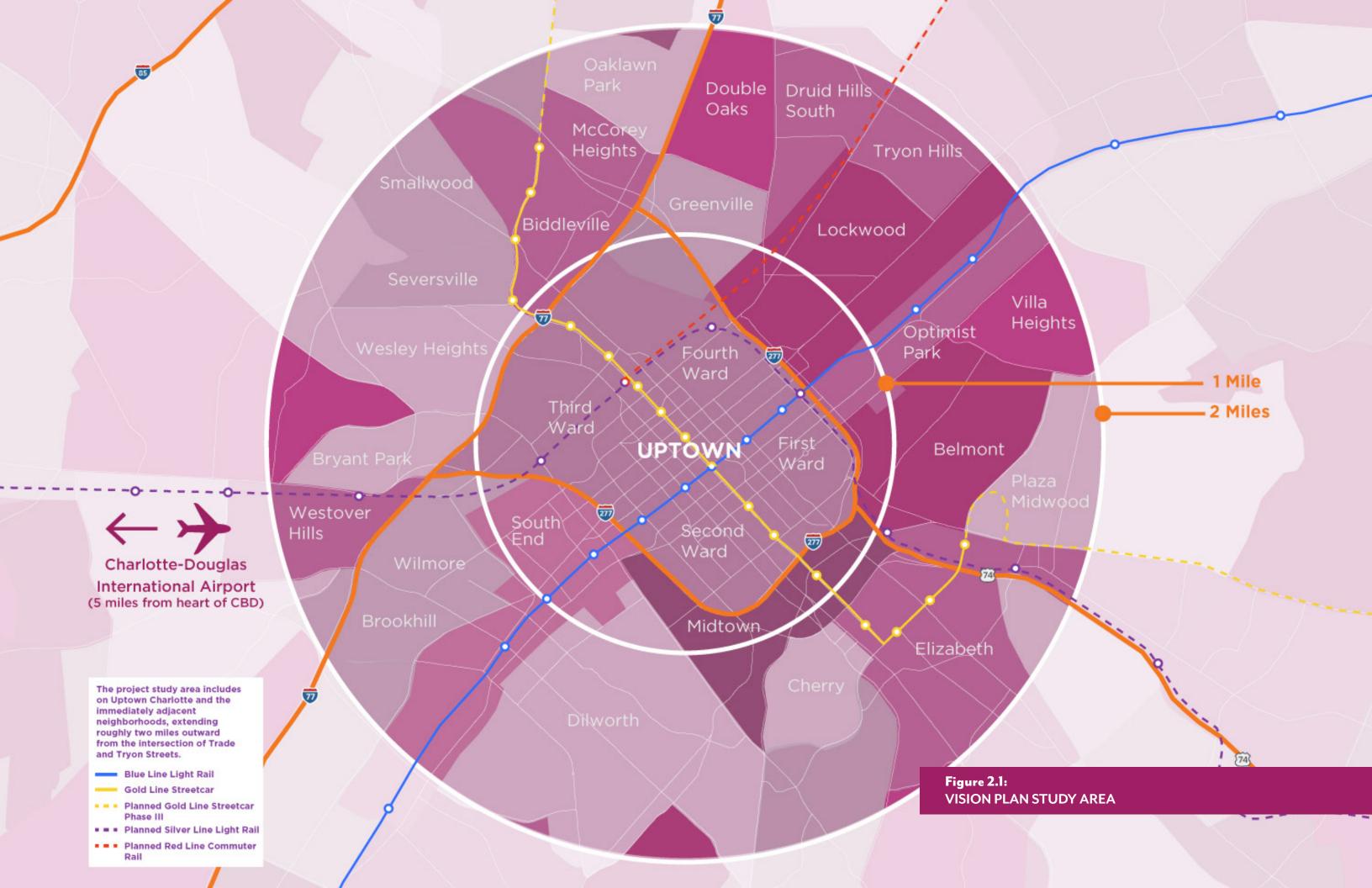


FOR +20,000 RESIDENTS

70% OF RESIDENTS HAVE A BACHELOR'S OR HIGHER

IN 2020, CENTER CITY HAD:

- 67,000 residents whose median age is 33
- 27,500 residents in Uptown and South End, of whom 70% have a bachelor's degree or higher
- 28% of all jobs in the City
- The largest 5-year growth of tech sector employees among similar cities
- 2,700 Rail Trail users daily
- Ten light rail stops
- 131 acres of parks, trails and greenways in Uptown



also a unique opportunity to coordinate with other planning processes. Mecklenburg County, the City of Charlotte and other community partners were undertaking parallel and related planning projects efforts including:

- Charlotte Future 2040: City of Charlotte Comprehensive Plan
- Meck Playbook: Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- Charlotte Moves: Charlotte Department of Transportation Strategic Mobility Plan
- CATS Silver Line: Charlotte Area Transit System Light Rail Plan and Design
- CATS Envision My Ride: Charlotte Area Transit System Bus Corridor Study
- 5 Points Forward: Historic West End Partners Community and Corridor Plan
- Uptown Connects: Bicycle Infrastructure, Trails and Greenway Improvements

- Livable Meck: Countywide Engagement and Coordination
- Other City-led efforts
- > Tree Canopy Action Plan
- > Corridors of Opportunity
- > Unified Development Ordinance



A Comprehensive Plan community open house collected input from residents



The Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan is the "umbrella" policy document for the City

"Charlotte is a city
where you can still leave
your mark on it."
-Vision Plan Kick-off Participant









Center City is home to many diverse residents, business owners and artists

How Was the Vision Plan Created?

The Center City 2040 Vision Plan process began in late summer of 2019 and was organized in five phases.

The development of the draft recommendations (Phase III) was underway when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the United States and Charlotte. As the pandemic drastically changed day-to-day life in Center City, the tragic deaths of George Floyd and others led to a national and global awakening and recognition of systemic racism and social injustice.

At this point in the process, the project team paused the Vision Plan development to consider how these profound changes and experiences would impact the growth and development of a post-COVID Center City. This also created opportunities to re-engage stakeholders to consider the impact of the pandemic and racial justice movements on the Vision Plan, to ensure recommendations are relevant and ambitious enough to address the pressing issues of this critical time in Center City's history (see Figure 2.2 Vision Plan Timeline).

Phase I: Visioning

The first phase involved community engagement activities designed to collect ideas and input from a diverse range of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community. Residents, business owners, community advocates and civic leaders shared their ideas regarding Center City assets, challenges and opportunities. In parallel, the project team reviewed data and relevant documents, building on the Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan to create a complete picture of Center City conditions.

Phase II: Ideas, Opportunities and Strategies

Next, the project team developed draft ideas and strategies to guide long-term Center City growth and development. These ideas were directly tied to community input and designed to build upon identified assets, overcome challenges, and take advantage of opportunities identified by the community.

Phase IV: Draft Vision Plan

This phase included the development, review and revision of the Draft Vision Plan. Community members were invited to participate in an online workshop to learn about the Draft Vision Plan and asked to provide comments via the website. Public meetings at the City and County also offered an opportunity for residents to learn about the plan and give feedback.

Phase V: Final Vision Plan and Strategies

The Final 2040 Vision Plan will reflect community and stakeholder feedback and comments on the Draft Vision Plan. It will be considered for adopted by the Charlotte City Council and endorsement by the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners.

Phase III: Draft Recommendations

In Phase III, the team developed a preliminary set of recommendations based on input and feedback from the previous steps. Project stakeholders and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community weighed in on a set of draft recommendations and strategies before development of the full Vision Plan.

"Lift up, don't change a community." -Focus Group Participant













CHAPTER 3

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

"ALL IN" on Engaging New Voices

Developing the 2040 Vision Plan involved broad community engagement in Center City, as well as throughout Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. This included deliberate and proactive outreach to **residents and community leaders who have not typically been sought out or invited to participate** in community planning, and whose neighborhoods have historically experienced less investment and more disruption.

From the summer of 2019 through 2021, hundreds of Charlotte-Mecklenburg residents participated in online and in-person exercises to share their vision and priorities for the next 20 years of Center City growth and development. Once these ideas evolved into recommendations, stakeholders and the community at large were invited to provide feedback to ensure the Vision Plan was consistent with the values of the Charlotte community. The following describes the project engagement approach, activities, and findings.

"We must over-invest in under-invested communities." -2040 Vision Plan Steering Committee Member

ALL IN

The community engagement program was branded as ALL IN to represent the **commitment to involving all voices in developing the Vision Plan**. It also reflects the intention of making Center City more inviting and accessible, and to reflect the diverse aspirations and perspectives of those who live, work and visit. The ALL IN philosophy guided the Vision Plan to make certain we grow in a manner that creates broadly shared opportunity, gives everyone a sense of belonging, and invites all to participate and share in the success of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's Center City.

Initially, public and stakeholder meetings took place throughout Center City neighborhoods, rather than in traditional settings such as Government Center. Hosting events in community and public places in partnership with community groups engaged more diverse residents and strengthened connections with neighborhood and grassroots organizations.

COVID-19 and social distancing required that most 2020 engagement activities were held online. Carefully designed digital events allowed the project team to host energetic presentations and continue to capture ideas from the Steering Committee, community leaders, and hundreds of Charlotte residents.



West End engagement activity in summer 2020



Residents worked with magnetic poetry to craft their vision for Center City

Getting Together and Gathering Ideas

The community activities described below made it easy to participate by providing **multiple opportunities and methods of sharing ideas and input**. Hosting events throughout the City and with partner organizations allowed the project team to meet people "where they are."

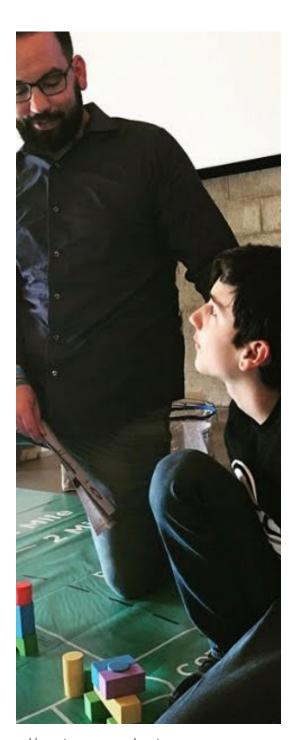
STEERING COMMITTEE

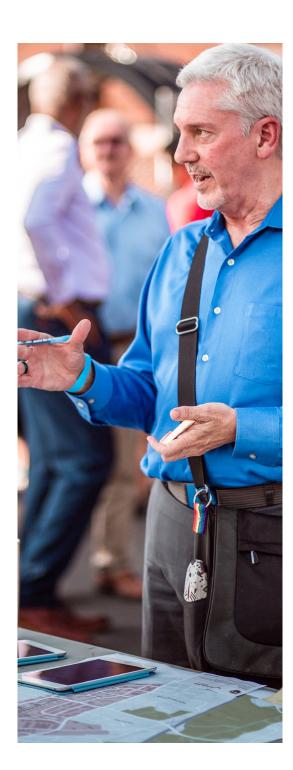
The planning process began with the formation of a diverse group of 30 community leaders from throughout Center City, the City of Charlotte, and Mecklenburg County. Led by Jennifer Appleby, Chief Creative Officer of Wray Ward and Clay Armbrister, President of Johnson C. Smith University, this group brought a range of perspectives to advance an inspirational vision and to help develop and refine proposed plan policies and strategies. Meeting agendas focused on the following topics

- Big Ideas, Assets, Opportunities and Challenges
- Community Engagement Update and Vision Plan Framework
- Focus Area Concepts
- Draft Recommendations

"Affordable housing needs to be part of every conversation." -2040 Vision Plan Steering Committee Member







"Pedestrian friendly environments allow for equitable access across the age spectrum."

-Community Member,

Focus Group #2 Charrette

"... support our young people in early childhood education, as well as community college education..."

-Vision Plan Kick-off Participant

Residents were able to provide input at events and locations across the city









COMMUNITY KICK OFF MEETING

More than 250 people from across the county attended the Vision Plan Community Kick-off event at Camp North End in the Summer of 2019. The public participated in fun activities to contribute their ideas, explore opportunities, and identify issues for the growth and development of Charlotte's Center City – while listening to great local musicians, enjoying delicious food, and meeting with neighbors.

INNOVATORS ACTION FORUM

At the Innovators Action Forum, national thought leaders came to Charlotte to share new ideas related to growing jobs, cultivating entrepreneurship, and fostering arts, culture and housing for all. These city builders delivered inspirational talks on innovative approaches to housing, jobs and community resilience to engaged Charlotteans in the McGlohon Theater at Spirit Square.

MOBILITY SUMMIT

Local transportation professionals met at a Mobility Summit to discuss projects, trends, and issues that will play an important role in shaping Charlotte and Center City over the next 20 years or more. Participants were asked to think big in assessing needs, discussing best practices, and developing solutions for the community's future transportation and mobility.

POP-UP ENGAGEMENTS

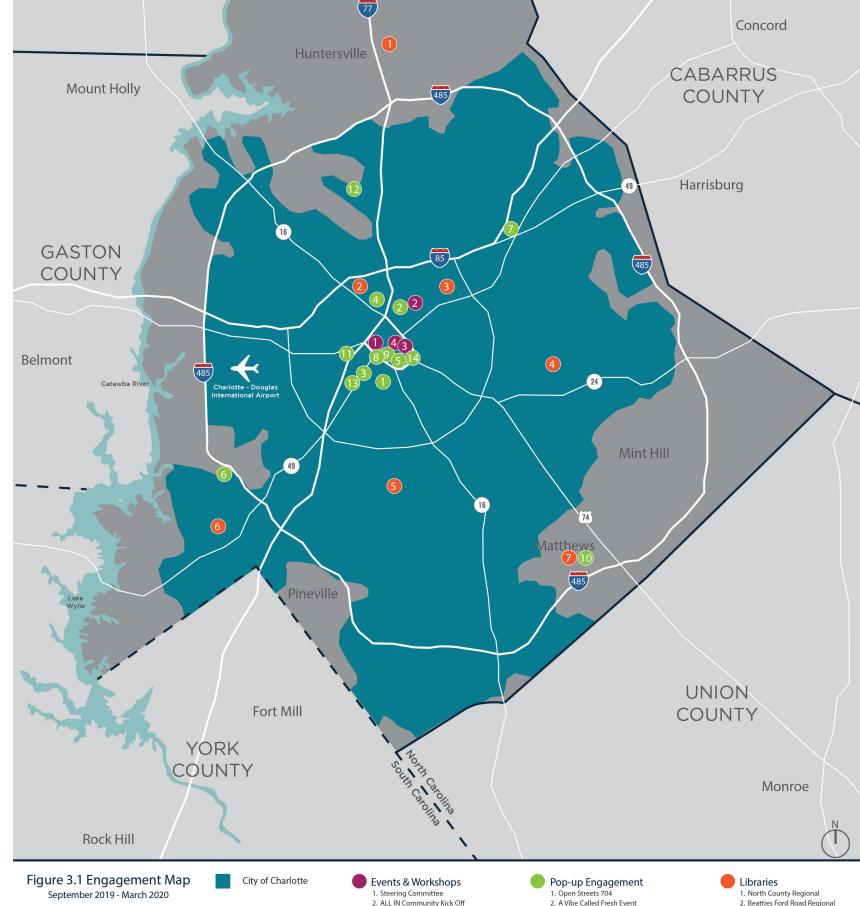
The project team attended multiple events across the city and county and participated in other ongoing planning projects' engagement activities (see Figure 3.1). Some of these events included:

- West End Huetiful Celebration
- A Vibe Called Fresh
- Open Streets 704
- Small Business Saturday
- Equitable Communities Event
- Charlotte Future 2040 Community Meeting and Workshops
- HOLA Charlotte
- Festival of India
- Meck Playbook Workshops
- South End Community Meeting
- Platform Music and Culture Series

LIBRARY OUTREACH

The project visited the following libraries throughout the county to engage with citizens and gather input for the plan.

- North County Regional
- Matthews
- Sugar Creek
- Beatties Ford Road
- Steele Creek
- Morrison Regional
- Hickory Grove



September 2019 - March 2020

- - 3. Mobility Summit 4. Innovators Action Forum
- - Open Streets 704
 A Vibe Called Fresh Event

 - 3. South End Community Meeting
 - 4. Equitable Communities & CLTFuture2040
 5. CLT Future 2040 Community Meeting
 6. CLT Future 2040 Workshop 1

3. Sugar Creek Library

4. Hickory Grove Library Morrison Regional
 Steele Creek Regional

7. Matthews Library

- 7. CLT Future 2040 Workshop 2
- Hola Festival
 Festival of India
- 10. MeckPlaybook Workshop 1
- 11. MeckPlaybook Workshop 2
- 12. MeckPlaybook Workshop 3

14. Platform Music + Culture Series

13. Small Business Saturday



Transportation experts shared their ideas at the 2019 Mobility Summit

FOCUS GROUPS

In the summer of 2020, after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and amidst the protests and calls for racial justice and social equity, the project team met with a dozen groups of diverse community leaders and advocates. These Focus Groups facilitated small-group conversations that tested project ideas, and specifically asked for actionable ideas about how this Vision Plan could respond to and address the ongoing pandemic, social injustice and the recession. These meetings were organized into the following interest groups:

- Neighborhood Leaders West of Tryon
- Neighborhood Leaders East of Tryon
- Transportation, Environment and Sustainability Advocates
- Housing and Service Providers
- Real Estate, Planning and Design Professionals
- Hospitality, Culture and Entertainment Representatives
- Artists and Creative Professionals
- Child Care Providers
- Multicultural Community Representatives
- Center City Business Executives
- North End Neighborhood Leaders
- West End Neighborhood Leaders

"Nothing about us, without us." -Focus Group Participant

ONLINE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

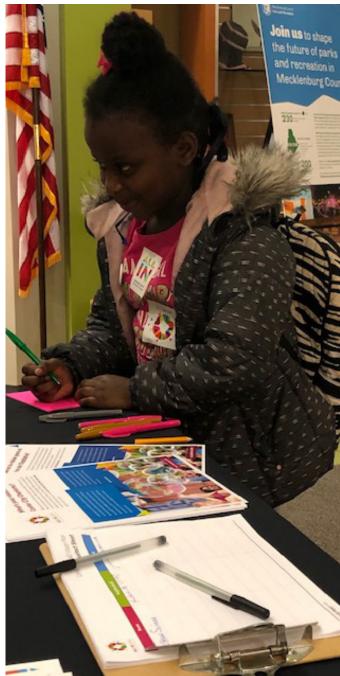
In November 2020, an online community workshop was held to preview draft recommendations. More than 80 people participated in the Zoom-hosted event and an additional 500 people viewed the recording of the meeting later.

GOVERNMENT UPDATES

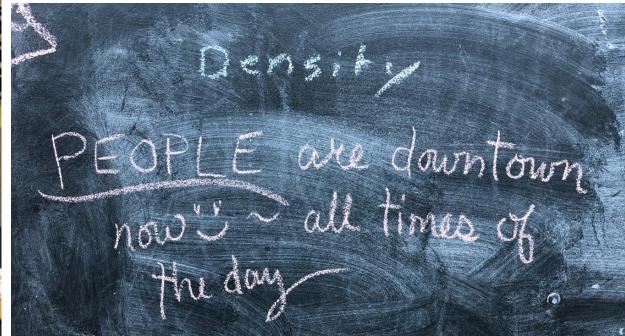
Throughout the Vision Plan development, the project team provided updates to several governing bodies, including the City Council's Planning, Transportation and Environment Committee; the Planning Commission; and the Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners. The project team also met regularly with colleagues leading other parallel planning efforts to share information, coordinate outreach, and develop consistent recommendations.

PROJECT WEBSITE

The project website ALLIN2040.com was the information hub for the Vision Plan. Visitors could learn about the project schedule and process, review community input and draft ideas, discover engagement opportunities, watch videos, and provide comments or ask questions of the project team.







Chalkboards, maps, postcards, sticky notes and more were used to collect ideas from residents of all ages

Community Perspectives

The following major themes emerged from the engagement efforts. These initial findings were critical in developing the Center City 2040 Vision Plan recommendations and strategies.

Strengths

- Growing transit, greenway, trail and bicycle networks
- Comfortable size and scale of Center City with room to grow
- Increasing ethnic and racial diversity
- Deep sense of history
- Home-grown talent and an entrepreneurial spirit
- More housing, vibrancy and activity in Uptown
- Continued economic growth and diversification
- Successful collaborations and partnerships
- Regional arts, cultural, sports and entertainment destinations
- Shared sprit of optimism and momentum

Challenges

- Increasing cost of living and lack of affordable housing
- Growing homeless population and encampments
- Growing inequality
- Neighborhood gentrification and displacement
- Cost and availability of childcare
- Lack of essential services in neighborhoods
- Continued need for automobiles
- Unsafe or incomplete streets, bike lanes, trails and sidewalks
- Vacant land and "gaps" along streets
- Limited infrastructure to support growth
- Major barriers between neighborhoods
- Few small urban parks and spaces including dog parks
- Changing climate and hotter weather
- Limited ground-floor and street activity
- Few low-cost, family-friendly destinations

Opportunities

- Complete, grow and connect transit systems
- Design public spaces and streets for all ages and abilities
- Reconnect neighborhoods
- Address systemic racism and economic injustice
- Focus investment in underinvested communities
- Recognize and celebrate history
- Use technology to improve access to transit, healthcare and education
- Make buildings and streets more environmentally friendly
- Increase access to education and jobs
- Become an international destination











CHAPTER 4

PLAN FRAMEWORK

Vision Plan Guiding Principles

Building on the community assessment of Center City assets, challenges and opportunities, the following principles guided the development of Vision Plan recommendations. These principles were used to test ideas and to ensure our recommendations were **ambitious and aligned with the values of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community**.

- Be bold and courageous. Face problems head-on and welcome big, transformative ideas.
- Put people first. Prioritize the wellbeing and quality of life of residents in all recommendations.
- **Infuse equity into all that we do.** Consider the impacts of all decisions and seize opportunities to invest in communities where it is most needed.
- **Welcome everyone to Center City.** Create an exciting, multi-cultural environment where everyone feels safe, comfortable and engaged.
- **Regenerate our environment.** Go beyond protecting the environment to actually improving it as we grow.
- **Learn from and build upon our history.** Acknowledge and understand past mistakes, while celebrating positive legacies.

Plan Framework

The Plan Framework organizes the Center City 2040 Vision Plan recommendations and establishes a blueprint for how Center City will grow and evolve over the next two decades and beyond. The foundation of the Framework reflects the insights and ideas gleaned from the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community. Each element of the Framework is described below, and the following chapters outline specific recommendations (see Figure 4.1).

Vision Elements

The Vision Elements describe how Center City will look, feel and function in the coming years. The elements express the community's hopes and aspirations at this time in Charlotte's history and describes what Center City should strive to become by 2040: "a Thriving, Inclusive, Memorable, Resilient, and Sustainable center city that is Loved by all".

Goals

The Vision Plan Goals describe *what* the community strives to achieve for Center City by 2040. They directly address challenges and build on assets and opportunities defined by stakeholders. These goals address the topics and priorities defined through community outreach and are consistent with and supportive of the Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan goals. Chapter 5 provides detailed strategies and recommendations to achieve these goals and make this vision a reality.



Charlotte's skyline with new development in the foreground

vision elements

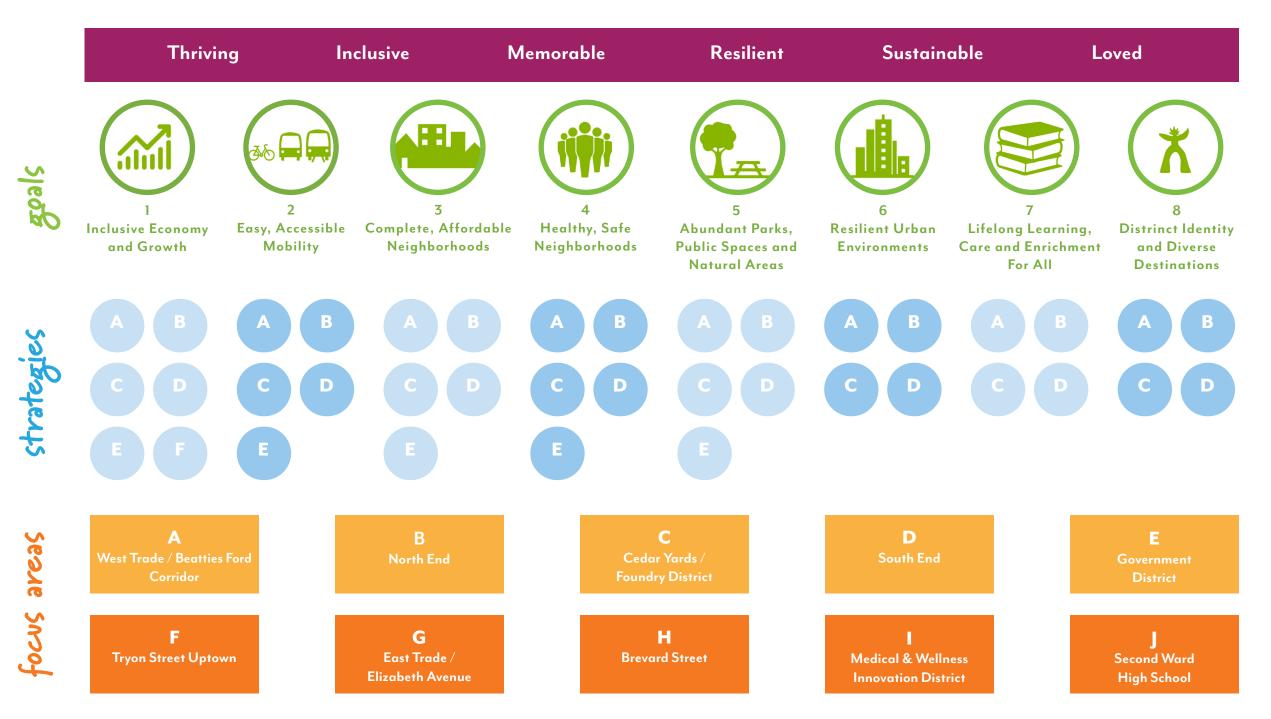


Figure 4.1 VISION PLAN FRAMEWORK

4 PLAN FRAMEWORK

VISION ELEMENTS

Thriving



Center City continues to be the region's economic center. Sustained, shared growth and prosperity create resources that benefit Charlotte neighborhoods, businesses and residents. Thriving means Center City:

- Continues to be a desirable place for people to live and for businesses to locate;
- Provides an abundant and diverse mix of job opportunities;
- Has a robust arts and culture scene:
- Remains affordable for all Charlotteans; and
- Includes more housing, jobs and activity in Uptown and close-in neighborhood centers.

Inclusive



Center City welcomes everyone and provides equitable access to education, enrichment and economic **opportunity.** An Inclusive Center City:

- Reflects the diversity of the greater Charlotte region;
- Invests in historically disenfranchised communities;
- Uses resources to support vulnerable residents; and
- Demonstrates that Black Lives Matter; and
- > Is safe and welcoming to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and people of all cultures.

Memorable



Center City is a renowned destination that is uniquely Charlotte, offering an exciting mix of experiences to everyone who works, lives or visits the urban core. To be truly Memorable, Center City:

- Includes many districts and neighborhoods with their own distinct character;
- Reflects local and regional culture and history through design, events and art;
- · Celebrates the growing multicultural population and character of the city; and
- Offers destinations and experiences that can only be found in Charlotte.



Center City is an enduring place in which all residents can **reliably and easily find everything** from jobs to groceries to medical care. A Resilient Center City:

- Has a broad range of job types and industries and an entrepreneurial spirit, enabling it to withstand economic downturns;
- Offers safe, affordable and convenient transportation options;
- Includes "complete" neighborhoods with amenities to support day-to-day living nearby;
- Has systems and infrastructure in place for emergencies and crises; and
- Bounces back from unexpected events such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sustainable



Center City is a low-carbon environment that makes it easy to live, work, and travel while **mitigating harm to** and ultimately repairing the natural environment. A Sustainable Center City:

- Invests heavily in transit and other travel and commute options:
- Builds a circular economy to reduce waste;
- Reduces greenhouse gases and energy use by buildings;
- Improves air quality, water quality, urban habitat with an abundant tree canopy; and
- Embraces innovation and technology in the design and construction of buildings, infrastructure and open spaces.

Loved



Center City is treasured by visitors and is a **source of pride for the entire Charlotte Region.** Loved by all, Center City:

- Welcomes everyone;
- Fosters a sense of community through shared values and the expressed caring for one another;
- Adds and improves upon public spaces that host all types and sizes of programs and events;
- Has a consistently high quality of street design and building architecture: and
- Creates an active, surprising and joyful urban environment.

VISION GOALS



1. INCLUSIVE ECONOMY AND GROWTH

Ensure the next decades of Center City growth will eliminate economic disparities and benefit all Charlotteans.



2. EASY, ACCESSIBLE MOBILITY

Provide multiple convenient, safe and affordable travel options for getting to and around Center City.



3. COMPLETE, AFFORDABLE NEIGHBORHOODS

Ensure access to a range of housing types and essential amenities, so that goods and services are within a 10-minute trip from home for all residents in all Center City neighborhoods.



4. HEALTHY, SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS

Ensure residents and visitors feel secure and can easily access what they need for daily personal, family and community wellness.





5. ABUNDANT PARKS, PUBLIC SPACES AND NATURAL AREAS

Strengthen connections to nature and create a strong network of diverse outdoor public spaces and experiences around Center City.



7. LIFELONG LEARNING, CARE AND **ENRICHMENT FOR ALL**

Support family and individual growth, learning and well-being at all life stages.



6. RESILIENT URBAN ENVIRONMENTS

Design buildings, streets, infrastructure and public spaces that adapt to a changing climate, support a low-carbon future, and contribute to ecological restoration.



8. DISTINCT IDENTITY AND DIVERSE DESTINATIONS

Celebrate and promote retail, entertainment, arts and culture throughout Center City to transform Center City into an international destination.

Strategies

The Vision Plan Framework includes dozens of Strategies that describe how the Plan Vision and Goals will be realized. These Strategies will **guide decision-making, prioritization and investment** in the coming years. Each is described in detail in the next chapter and supported by specific policies, programs and project recommendations.

Focus Areas

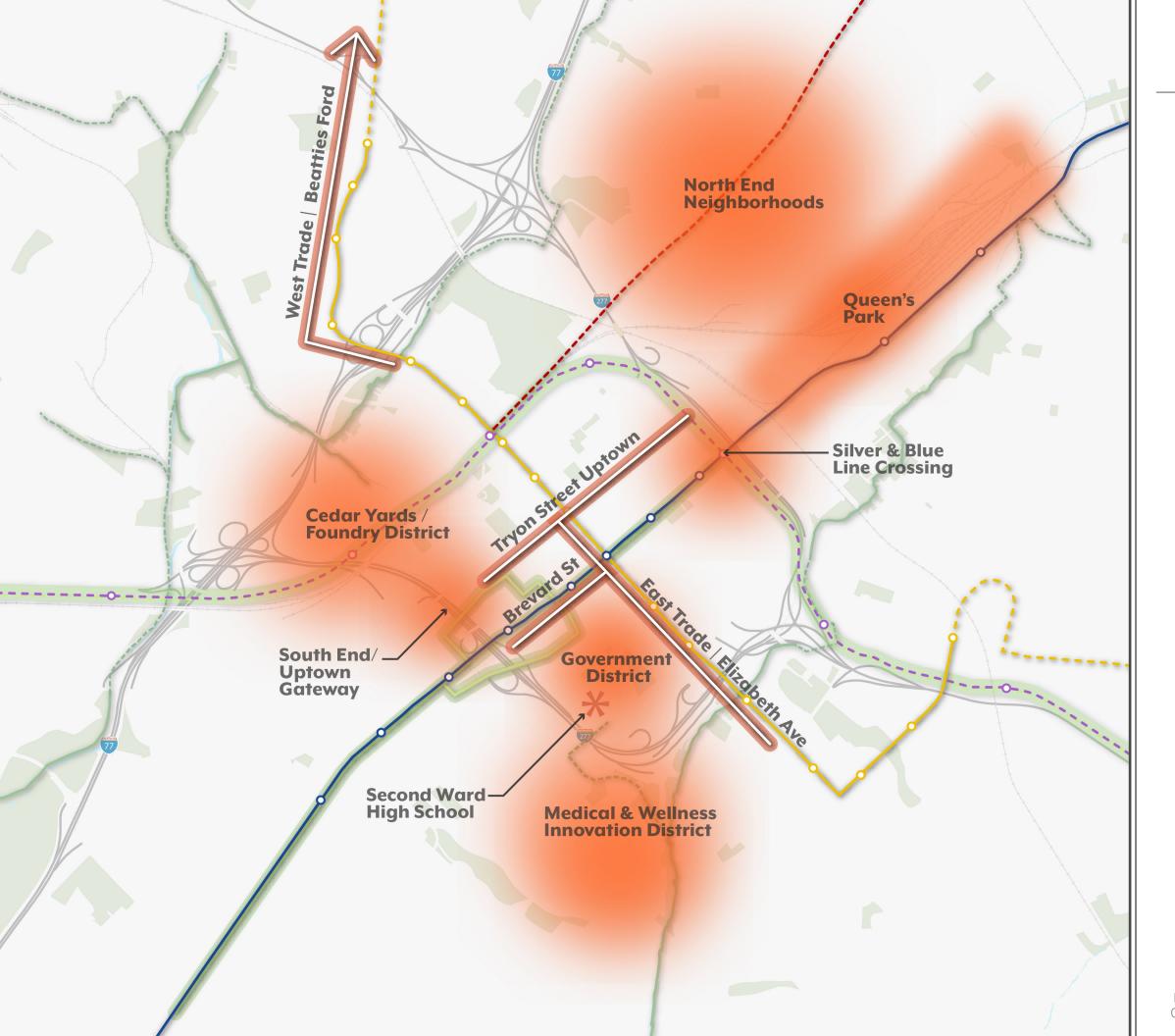
Ten Focus Areas around Center City are prioritized for transformative change in the coming years. Recommendations for these areas address land use, connections, streets, urban design, development opportunities, and community benefits. The Focus Areas bring the Plan Vision and Goals to life by **implementing the Strategies in a tangible, physical way** that will improve the urban environment across Center City (see Figure 4.2).

CRITERIA

With community and stakeholder input and feedback, these Focus Areas were identified because they have the potential to:

- Support multiple Vision Plan goals and strategies;
- Take advantage of existing and catalyze new private and / or public investment;
- Continue projects from the 2020 Vision Plan that have yet to be completed;
- Jump-start change and investment in the near term;
- Improve social and physical connections to connect and reconnect neighborhoods;
- Direct investment to areas of historic underinvestment; and
- Have high stakeholder and public support.





FOCUS AREAS

Figure 4.4

Existing Features

- Uptown Building Footprint
- Building Footprint
- Park / Open Space / Cemetery
- --- Highway
- Railroad

Focus Areas

- Focus Area
- Focus Area Corridor
- Potential Opportunity Site

Transportation Infrastructure

- -O- Gold Line Streetcar
- Blue Line Light Rail
- -O- Gold Line Proposed Streetcar Phase III
- -O- Silver Line Proposed Light Rail
- •O• Red Line Proposed Commuter Rail

Trails and Greenways

- Greenways (Existing)
- Greenways (Proposed)
- Rail Trail (Existing)
- Rail Trail (Proposed)

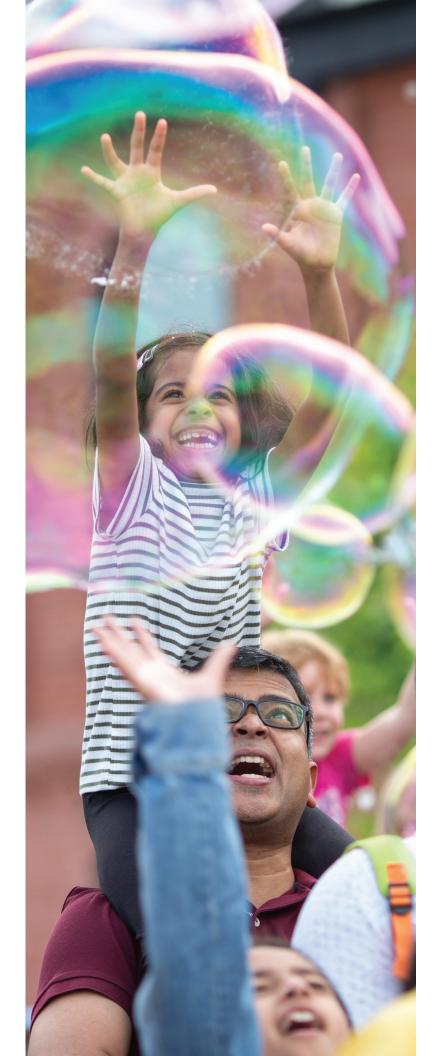


1/2 mile











CHAPTER 5

STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Vision Plan goals will be achieved by implementing multiple strategies that provide a structured approach to moving forward. These strategies, in turn, are supported by numerous recommendations that will guide the work of the City, County, Center City Partners and their collaborators. Strategies are based on community and stakeholder input and ideas as well as best practices from across the country and world.

The recommendations are based upon the following criteria:

- Actionable: helps explain how to achieve the plan goals
- Measurable: is specific enough to easily tell if it was successful
- Implementable: is politically feasible and has stakeholder and community support
- Broadly supported: applies, supports, or advances ideas in other plans
- **Consistent:** is consistent with our community values and vision.

This chapter includes the strategies and recommendations, organized by Goal. The Vision Plan Goals describe what the community strives to achieve for Center City by 2040, and the detailed strategies and recommendations describe how they will be realized.

GOAL 1

INCLUSIVE ECONOMY AND GROWTH





Ensure continued Center City economic growth that reduces economic disparities and optimizes opportunities for all Charlotteans.

BIG IDEA: Create a Center City Equity Fund (CCEF) to provide funding for equity-driven community and economic development in the urban core

The rapid growth of Charlotte-Mecklenburg and Center City over the last decade has created benefits and opportunities, but also significant growing pains and challenges.

The City Center Growth Projections Study sheds light on the nature of recent growth and development and identifies goals (or growth targets) that informed the recommendations of the 2040 Vision Plan. As the economy grew and brought new businesses and job sectors (e.g., high tech) to Center City, housing production did not keep up the pace needed to accommodate residents and newcomers. As a result, housing prices have shot up and many residents have been displaced, are struggling to pay for housing, or have become homeless.

Continued and expanded economic growth is fundamental to reaching the goals of the 2040 Vision Plan, because it provides the resources needed to invest in neighborhoods. Improvements in parks and open spaces, transit systems, and neighborhood amenities all depend on a strong economy that provides tax revenue and other funding to the City and County.

			-	CENTER OF THE CITY					
	Annual % Job Growth (2010 – 2015)	% Capture of MSA Growth (2010 – 2015)		% of Citywide Housing Units (2018)	% Capture of New Citywide Units (2010 – 2018)		Change in Jobs (2010 – 2015)	Change in Households (2010 – 2015)	Ratio of New Job to New Households
Charlotte	5.7%	62%	Minneapolis	36%	53%	Atlanta	309,673	67,075	4.6
Austin	2.7%	52%	Seattle	27%	45%	Charlotte	225,400	53,141	4.2
Nashville	2.1%	33%	Denver	23%	38%	Minneapolis	165,693	39,123	4.2
Denver	2.8%	33%	Atlanta	22%	35%	Phoenix	252,422	61,612	4.1
Phoenix	1.8%	31%	Nashville	10%	30%	Denver	191,935	53,891	3.6
Minneapolis	3.0%	28%	Charlotte	9%	24%	Seattle	217,690	66,709	3.3
Atlanta	3.6%	23%	Austin	11%	19%	Nashville	130,887	41,834	3.1
seattle	1.6%	19%	Raleigh	11%	18%	Raleigh	97,639	43,585	2.2
Raleigh	1.0%	17%	Phoenix	4%	6%	Austin	156,369	77,912	2.0

WITHIN 2 MILES OF THE CENTER OF THE CITY

Peer cities MSA employment capture Source: US Census, Economic & Planning Systems Peer cities Center City housing capture Source: ESRI Peer Cities ratio of new jobs to households Source: ESRI, US Census, Economic & Planning Systems





Small businesses are the heart of Charlotte's economy

However, development and growth must be guided in order to ensure that issues of affordability, displacement and inequity are addressed.

To achieve greater equity and access to opportunity, more housing is needed to ensure all Charlotteans can live in neighborhoods of their choosing, close to transit, jobs, places of worship, health care, retail and services. More housing being built overall means that more people can find housing that meets their budget and needs in their preferred neighborhood.

To remain affordable and livable, Center City must build more housing, attract new visitors to support the local economy, and diversify the types of jobs and businesses in Center City. This includes:

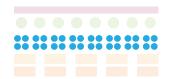
- Tailoring workforce and talent development programs to match residents to jobs in growing sectors
- Preserving and adapting existing industrial buildings and other spaces that can house a variety of businesses, including retail, technology, and small manufacturing
- Protecting the affordability of existing workspaces and managing the cost of doing business in Center City
- Strengthening support for entrepreneurs to create and grow local businesses
- Ensuring jobs in Center City provide opportunity for people with all skill and education levels.

Why is This Important?

Despite its growing economy, Charlotte has the least upward economic mobility of America's 50 largest cities. This means that people who grow up in certain neighborhoods and zip codes have much less of a chance of economic success than those in communities just a few miles away. Many of these disadvantages, particularly for African-American residents, resulted from government policies and actions, including redlining, over many decades.

The deep-seated inequality between Charlotte neighborhoods and ethnic groups became especially evident when COVID-19 swept the United States. Underlying differences in access to health care, neighborhood and housing conditions, and types of work all contributed to much higher rates of infection among people of color.

The City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County is committed to addressing these divisions and inequities head-on. This Vision Plan seeks to **improve access to opportunity** and economic wellbeing for all residents. This requires continued economic growth and success of Uptown and Center City, so that the City and County have enough resources to invest in other communities and neighborhoods.



How Can We Achieve This?

STRATEGY 1A: ENHANCE CENTER CITY'S ECONOMIC BASE TO SUPPORT REGIONAL GROWTH

As the economic engine of the region, Center City must have a thriving economy to support the goals of this plan. Charlotte's economy must continue to grow – and to grow more equitably. Expanding the City Center economy is critical to creating the resources needed to support more jobs, opportunity and education for all residents. As housing options expand and more people are able to live in Center City, local businesses such as restaurants, cafes and retail shops will thrive.

To guide growth and support community goals, including housing affordability, the Center City Growth Projections Report proposes the following targets for 2040:

- 35,000 new housing units including 3,500 permanently affordable homes
- 10.5 million additional square feet of office / employment space to accommodate over 19,000 new workers
- 350 new retail, restaurant, bar, and service businesses
- 8,000 hotel rooms providing for over 2 million annual stays
- > Specific targets will guide growth and development to meet the employment, opportunity and affordability goals of this plan, including: A jobs-to-new-resident ratio of 1.6 or less
- 20% of jobs provided by small businesses with fewer than50 employees
- > 10% of jobs provided by new businesses in operation for 5 or fewer years

- 1a-1 Develop a strategic action plan for Center City job growth and workforce development that addresses:
- > Target growth industries including financial and technology (FinTech) and advanced manufacturing
- > The connections between land use, mobility, job growth and equity
- > Opportunities to better connect workforce and talent development programs with Center City employment
- > Connections between workforce and talent development programs with Center City employment, including projects and programs that are part of the City's Corridors of Opportunity effort.
- 1a-2 Support and preserve existing restaurants and small businesses, particularly those hard-hit by COVID-19.
- 1a-3 Encourage the development and creation of diverse types of employment spaces that allow for a wide variety of businesses to locate in Center City.
- 1a-4 Facilitate higher-density development and employment in Uptown, along transit corridors, and in neighborhood centers.
- 1a-5 Expand the hotel room inventory to support hospitality jobs and visitor spending at local businesses.
- 1a-6 Ensure that the development / redevelopment of public property in Center City (e.g., the Hal Marshall Center) is directly tied to economic development, business recruitment and achieving the City and County's equity goals.



Charlotte's small businesses were resilient through the pandemic



The The City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County employs thousands of residents



Case Study

YOUTHFORCE CAREER PATHWAYS (NEW ORLEANS)

Public school districts that serve historically underrepresented students often lack resources to equip students with the skills and experience to be competitive in target industries and sectors after high school. In New Orleans, they are tackling this issue through YouthForce NOLA – an education, business, and civic collaborative and public-private partnership that creates pathways for New Orleans youth to gain the experience and skills needed to enter high-wage, high-demand career pathways. Through their Career Pathway Programs of Study (CPPS), students are given access to

- Soft-skill development
- · Career-awareness and exposure
- Technical training
- Internships

STRATEGY 1B: IMPROVE PATHWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY FOR ALL

Studies have shown that career and college readiness is a key factor in economic mobility. This means skill development programs need to be improved to better connect students and job seekers to family-supporting careers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **1b-1** Build the resilience of the Center City economy by aligning education, training and professional development opportunities with the needs of local employers.
- **1b-2** Prioritize career and workforce services for residents who lost their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on developing new skillsets in growth industries such as health care and construction.
- **1b-3** Identify family-supporting wage and high demand professions and align career technical education and workforce development programs and curricula to grow the local talent pipeline.

- 1b-4 Increase Center City business participation in workforce development and Career Pathway Programs of Study (CPPS) for local high school students to gain exposure to target industries and sectors.
- **1b-5** Support talent development and training programs through public revenue funding tools.
- 1b-6 Partner with major employers to establish and/or expand project-based learning opportunities, with an emphasis on paid internships for local high school students.
- **1b-7** Provide financial and program support to employers that provide in-house advancement, training and certification opportunities.

NEIGHBORHOOD REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUST (REIT, PRONOUNCED "REET"):

A tool to improve access to real estate wealth, by allowing residents to invest in local real estate. Ownership shares are offered at low prices (e.g., \$100 and up) and investors benefit as the building value increases.

STRATEGY 1C: SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURS TO ESTABLISH AND GROW BUSINESSES

A healthy, sustainable economy and city relies on talented entrepreneurs to create small businesses to innovate, create jobs and reinvest in their communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1c-1 Partner with major employers and private donors to create an entrepreneurial accelerator program and/or resource center for people of color.
- 1c-2 Adopt an asset-based community-wealth-building approach to economic development by identifying and investing in neighborhood strengths, supporting local business ownership and creating jobs that pay familysustaining wages.
- 1c-3 Work with business owners impacted by the COVID-19
 pandemic to negotiate flexible commercial lease terms
 and agreements, such as "turnover rent" in which rents are
 based on tenant profit, in order to preserve small businesses
 and prevent vacant storefronts.
- 1c-4 Conduct a needs assessment for small- and mediumsized businesses to identify specific challenges and growth barriers with a focus on immigrants, people of color, the LGBTQ community, women and other under-represented groups.

NEIGHBORHOOD REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT TRUST (REIT, PRONOUNCED "REET")

A tool to improve access to real estate wealth, by allowing residents to invest in local real estate. Ownership shares are offered at low prices (e.g., \$100 and up) and investors benefit as the building value increases.

• 1c-5 Build small commercial spaces for lease, i.e., microshops of 400-1200 square feet and shared common spaces to create lower-cost opportunities for local retail and service businesses.

STRATEGY 1D: IMPROVE ACCESS TO CAPITAL AND EQUITY-BUILDING FOR RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES

In addition to differences in income, there are stark differences in the wealth gap that families have based on their race and ethnicity. This makes it harder for people to get ahead by having the funds (or access to the funds) for a new business or to buy a home.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **1d-1** Create or support market-driven cooperative (employee-owned) businesses to create jobs, build wealth and support the local economy.
- 1d-2 Support opportunities for residents to invest in the growth and improvement of their communities through Neighborhood Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs).
- 1d-3 Support home ownership and equity-building programs, especially for the Black community. Engage Center City residents displaced from Brooklyn and other former African American neighborhoods.
- **1d-4** Improve access to capital for micro-entrepreneurs through lending circles and money pools.

STRATEGY 1E: DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY AND ENSURE A BALANCE OF INDUSTRIES AND JOB TYPES

A healthy economy has a balance of job types and sectors so that the community and region are not vulnerable to changing trends or market shifts, providing more stability and opportunity to more people.

- **1e-1** Focus recruitment and other economic development efforts on employers that provide jobs at all skill and wage levels (i.e., "GED to PhD").
- 1e-2 Attract complementary start-ups and expanding firms to the North End Smart District, Atrium Health and Wellness District, the West End, and other Center City innovation and employment centers.
- 1e-3 Leverage stable and growing anchor institutions such as universities and hospitals, to support small business growth by:
- > Hiring local residents
- > Purchasing goods and materials from local vendors
- > Providing talent development and training
- > Incubating new businesses
- > Advising and providing technical assistance
- > Leveraging real estate to support local retail, affordable housing and other community priorities.

EQUITY FUND TO A PROVIDE DEDICATED FUNDING STREAM FOR INVESTMENTS IN EQUITABLE ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OF CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG'S URBAN CORE.

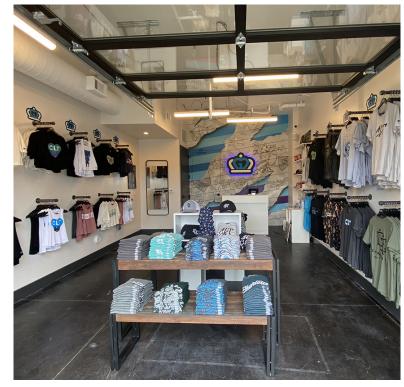
Despite the most prolific decade of Center City growth in Charlotte's history, disparities grew. Market forces alone do not allow our community to act on its stated values. Limiting factors, such as the cost of land or commercial space, can often prevent well-intentioned, equity-building projects and initiatives from taking root in Center City.

The Center City Equity Fund (CCEF) investments will provide a tool to directly tie future economic growth to the goals of the 2040 Vision Plan in a way that is strategic and sustained. This fund will create new opportunities for residents and entrepreneurs, making Charlotte more just, vibrant, and innovative.

The CCEF will be designed to capture a portion of the value from future tax growth in Center City to fund people, organizations, initiatives, and projects that seek to make Center City a place where more can prosper including:

- Affordable housing development
- Homeless services and supportive housing development
- Subsidizing commercial rents for emerging BIPOC (black indigenous or people of color) or other under-represented business owners
- Workforce development and training programs
- Strategic land banking
- Anti-displacement.

- 1f-1 Establish an investment board (potentially a Development Corporation) comprised of experts in grant making, equitable economic and community development and community members to guide the CCEF, advise on investments and report to the public on the use of funds.
- **1f-2** Confirm the boundaries of the CCEF which will include at least Uptown, but may be expanded or revised over time at the direction of the investment board.
- **1f-3** Identify funding categories and priorities consistent with the goals of the Vision Plan.
- **1f-4** Design and implement a process for community input, including working with community organizations and other funders (e.g., affordable housing developers) to inform investments and ensure transparency.



Glory Days Apparel is one of many shops open at Centro Railyard



Centro Railyard is an aprtment community in South End with fifteen 400 sf micro-unit retail spaces on the ground floor.

GOAL 2

EASY, ACCESSIBLE MOBILITY





Provide multiple convenient, safe and affordable travel options for getting to and around Center City.

BIG IDEA: Fund and construct remaining Uptown CyleLink segments connecting to existing greenway and trail networks

Why is This Important?

For several decades, cities were primarily designed for drivers, and streets were built to move cars into and out of downtowns as quickly as possible. Charlotte's freeway and road network, followed similar patterns, creating barriers between Center City neighborhoods and between Uptown and adjacent areas. As a result, some Center City streets are wide, with multiple vehicle lanes and fast-moving traffic. These freeways and roads divided neighborhoods from one another and from Uptown, isolating communities and making it more difficult for residents to access amenities and opportunities in other nearby areas.

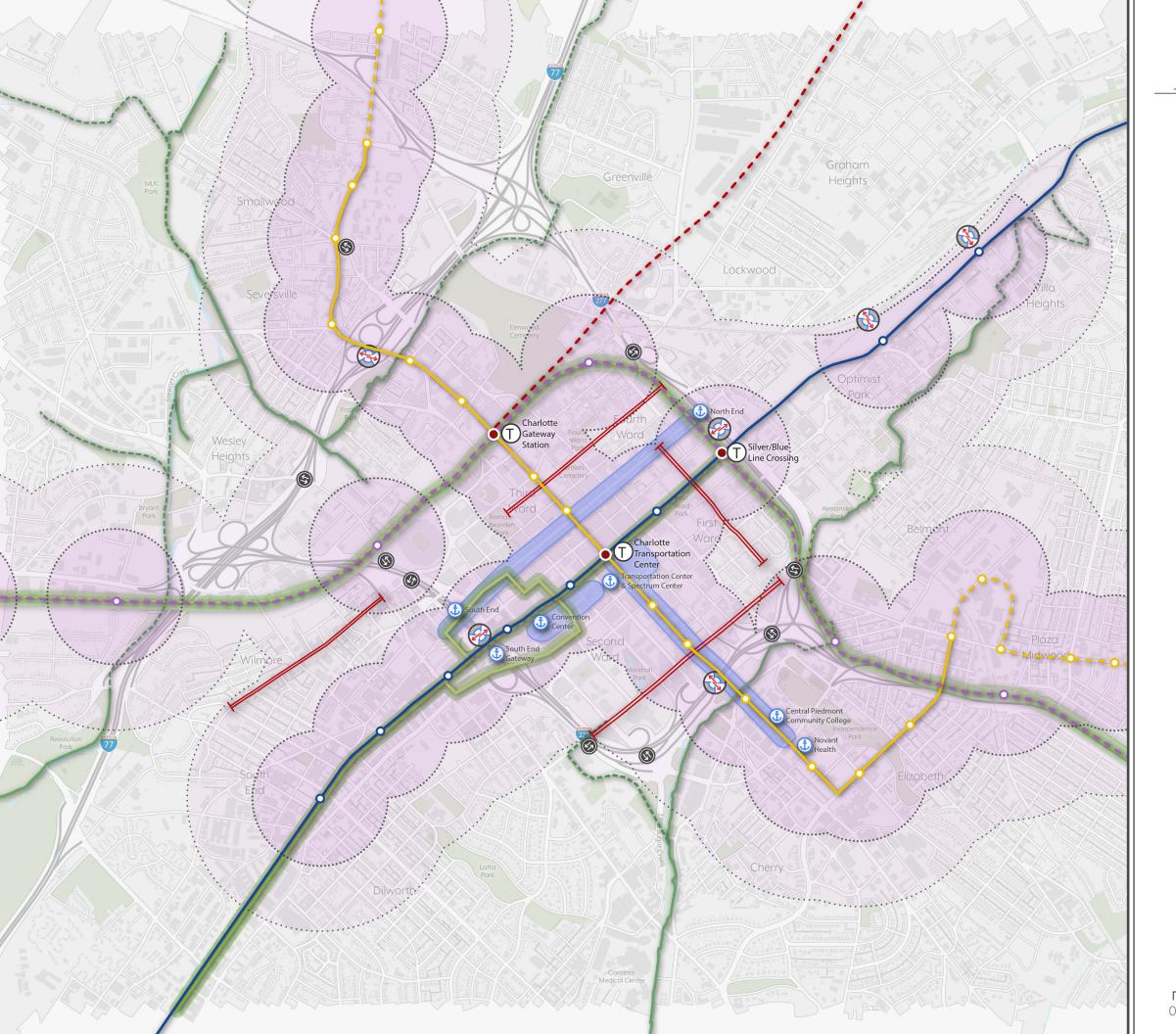
These factors create a challenging environment for pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchair users, and others using the streets and sidewalk spaces. It also means that driving to and parking in Center City is often still the most convenient option. Raising the share of trips taken by other modes has multiple benefits for the city, including improving the street environment and lowering carbon emissions.

Getting to and around Center City should be safe, comfortable and affordable for travelers of all ages and abilities. Center City has a rich concentration of jobs, schools, cultural hubs, health care providers as well as parks and public art. Charlotteans must have affordable options for travelling to the urban core to access these resources for wellbeing, enrichment and economic opportunity.

Creating a network of connected mobility options will give people more choice and flexibility when they travel. Center City's multi-modal transportation network will include options for driving and ridesharing; taking light rail, bus or autonomous shuttle; or walking, biking or riding a scooter. Less driving could allow land that is currently devoted to automobiles – including freeways, roads, ramps, interchanges and parking lots and decks – to be used community-oriented uses, while supporting easy, accessible mobility. While we will not eliminate the need for automobiles entirely, the growth in mobility options moving forward must be dramatically less auto-centric.



New transit lines connect people to Center City



CONNECTIVITY

Figure 5.2.A

Existing Features

- Uptown Building Footprint
- Building Footprint
- Park / Open Space / Cemetery
- --- Highway
- Railroad

Trails and Greenways

- Greenways (Existing)
- Greenways (Proposed)
- Rail Trail (Existing)
- Rail Trail (Proposed)

Transportation Infrastructure

- -O- Gold Line Streetcar
- -O- Future Gold Line Expansion
- -O- Blue Line Light Rail
- O Silver Line Proposed Light Rail
- •O• Red Line Proposed Commuter Rail
 - Proposed Multi-line Stations
- 1/4 Mile Radius from Station
- : 1/2 Mile Radius from Station
- (T) Transit Hub
- Connectivity Corridors
- Transit Anchors
- Barrier Breakthroughs
- © Enhanced Mobility Connection
- Future Proposed Complete Streets

CENTER CITY CONNECTIVITY

Center City's multi-modal network is maturing, expanding, and better connecting the city. (see Figure 5.2.A). The following are general observations and recommendations which are reflected in the strategies and recommendations that follow.

Light rail and streetcar access: Permanent rail infrastructure significantly expanded the areas of Center City that are considered "walkable" to transit. Proximity to rail and transit hubs should be a primary consideration when evaluating redevelopment opportunities.

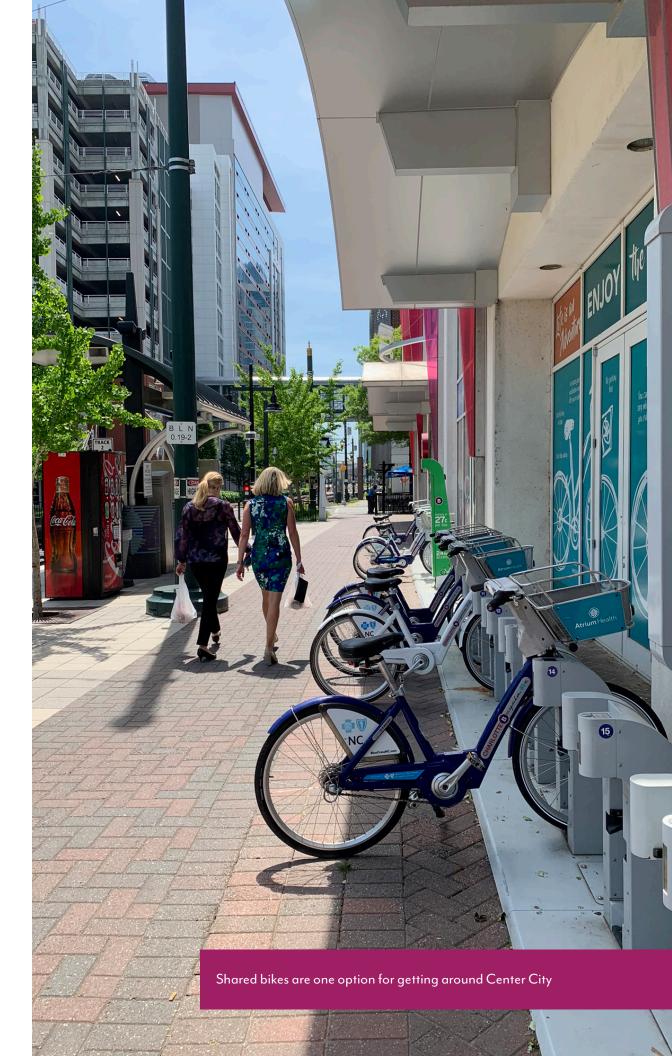
Connections: As the transit network is built out, there are more areas where multiple fixed rail lines intersect, with more planned. These multi-line stations should be envisioned as part of mobility hubs that should include expanded bus service, shared mobility options, community amenities, built within vertical mixed-use developments.

Connectivity Corridors: Key corridors within the Center City boundary function as connective tissue for major destinations. These streets and corridors are opportunities to activate the public realm through redevelopment, programming, and multimodal accommodations, like transit stops with amenities and real-time data.

Breaking Through Barriers: Interstate 277 (I-277)

functions as a major barrier encircling Uptown, as does the Norfolk Southern Rail Yard in the North End. Smaller-scale interventions, such as improved underpasses and shared bikes and scooters should be located at key intersections connecting Uptown to the greater Center City. Investment in transformative projects that can truly overcome the I-277 barrier should be built along major corridors such as West Trade, North College, North Caldwell, and South Church Streets.

Linking Greenways: Center City is flanked by two north-south regional greenway corridors, the Cross Charlotte Trail and the Seam Trail. When complete, these trail corridors will stretch a combined length of over 80 miles, connecting multiple towns, major employment centers, retail hubs, and hundreds of thousands of residents to Center City. These greenways should be linked across Center City to support affordable, low-carbon transportation options and cement Center City as the heart of the regional trails system.





Case Study

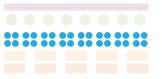
TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (SEATTLE)

As the economic engine of the Pacific Northwest, Downtown Seattle added 129,000 jobs between 2010 and 2020. Recognizing the need for these workers to have commute alternatives to driving alone in their cars, King County Metro and the City of Seattle's Department of Transportation worked together to launch Commute Seattle. As a non-profit transportation management association (TMA), Commute Seattle provides consulting and commuter education for Seattle employers and property managers to encourage the use of transit, light rail, walking, biking and carpooling. Examples include:

- Developing and promoting cost-effective commuter programs, benefits and amenities
- Creating a Commute Trip Reduction Program that reduces congestion, increases travel choices, and reduces emission
- Assisting property managers with developing infrastructure and subsidies that promote the use of alternative modes of transportation
- Crafting "Flexwork" policies that encourage a combination of commuting and working from home

As a result of these efforts, worker commutes to Downtown Seattle in 2019 consisted of:

- 74% using a travel mode other than driving alone, including
- > 46% taking transit
- > 10% walking and biking



How Can We Achieve This?

STRATEGY 2A: BALANCE TRIPS TO AND WITHIN CENTER CITY AMONG DIFFERENT MODES INCLUDING BUS, RAIL, WALKING, BIKING AND DRIVING

Meeting climate and energy goals, as well as creating a safe and welcoming urban environment, requires a transportation system that is not overly dependent on automobiles. More travel modes mean more flexibility, affordability and access for more people while lowering carbon emissions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **2a-1** Collaborate with the Planning Department and the Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT) to establish ambitious Center-City specific goals for the share of trips taken by different modes, including walking, biking, transit and shared/micro mobility.
- 2a-2 Partner with major employers and other private organizations to develop tools and incentives to support transportation choice and to achieve mode share goals.
 Establishing a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program can include:
 - > Discounted or free transit passes
 - > Organized rideshare systems
 - > Reducing or eliminating free parking and maximizing use of existing supply via technology, marketing and promotion.

- 2a-3 Launch a coordinated marketing and promotional campaign to promote transit and reduce the stigma associated with bus ridership.
- **2a-4** Complete implementation of the Uptown CycleLink (protected bike network) project to enhance the city's all ages and abilities (AAA) bicycle network. (Figure 5.2.B)
- > Provide more e-scooter corrals and bike parking
- > Launch education and marketing programs about the safety and accessibility of the network.



Figure 5.2.B - Uptown CycleLink Network



MODE SHARE

The portion of total trips taken by different ways of getting around, such as walking, biking, taking transit, driving alone, carpooling, etc.

- **2a-5** Plan, design and construct clusters of amenities such as shade structures, water fountains, bike racks, and bike repair stations to encourage walking and biking yearround.
- **2a-6** Expand the bike-share network and availability of electric bikes through Charlotte Joy Ride (formerly B-Cycle).
- > Focus on existing and planned greenway and transit networks to enable and encourage first mile/last mile commuting options.

STRATEGY 2B: PLAN FOR AND INVEST IN THE COMPREHENSIVE, FLEXIBLE, ACCESSIBLE TRANSIT SYSTEM AND MOBILITY HUBS

As Charlotte grows, it will be critical to have a transit network that moves people in, out and around the urban core without causing congestion and delays. Center City is the core of Charlotte and of the proposed "Transformational Mobility Network (TMN)" recommended by the Charlotte Moves Task Force, which will transform how people and goods move throughout the City.

MOBILITY HUB

Areas of activity in or around transit stations, including pick-up and drop-off areas, bike / scooter parking and rental, rideshare centers and community amenities such as groceries, pharmacies and childcare.

- **2b-1** Update the 2011 Center City Transportation Plan to include the policies, recommendations and actions of the priority transportation networks that will be described in the forthcoming Strategic Mobility Plan, which will support the Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan, this Center City 2040 Vision Plan, and ongoing plans/studies including the Strategic Mobility Plan, the Silver Line (Project Design, Rail Trail Plan, and TOD Plan), the Uptown CycleLink study, and the CATS Center City Bus Priority Study.)
- **2b-2** Construct the Silver Line through Center City including seven stations at or near:
- > Pecan Avenue
- > Central Avenue
- > The intersection of the Silver and Blue Lines (11th Street)
- > North Graham Street
- > Gateway Station
- > Morehead Street
- > Suttle Avenue
- **2b-3** Complete Phase 3 of the Gold Line in West End from French Street to the Rosa Parks Community Transit Center along Beatties Ford Road as well as expansion east from Sunnyside Avenue down Central Avenue to Eastland.
- 2b-4 Complete the CATS Bus Priority Study and implement recommendations to reduce waiting time and improve the speed and reliability of the bus network that serves Center City employment and activity centers.



- **2b-5** Redesign the Charlotte Transportation Center as a safe and welcoming bus and mobility hub that is part of a high-density mixed-use development with affordable housing, space for small, local businesses, and cultural civic facilities.
- **2b-6** Prioritize projects that overcome barriers to transit ridership through tactics including:
- Providing seamless connections between transit modes and lines at mobility hubs and other priority destinations
- > Increasing options for first- and last-mile trips through shared mobility like scooters, bike share etc...
- > Improving headways (reducing waiting time between buses) and response time
- > Designing and building high-quality bus stops and shelters with real time digital interaction
- > Providing accurate and current bus and train arrival and departure times
- > Increasing on-board amenities.
- **2b-7** Design and build Charlotte Gateway Station as the multi-modal hub of the regional commuter transit network as part of a dense, mixed-use development with service for:
- > Silver Line light rail
- > Inter-city and express commuter bus routes
- > Gold Line streetcar
- > Future Red Line commuter rail and high speed rail

STRATEGY 2C: DESIGN AND MANAGE STREETS AND CURB LANES FOR ALL MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

Redesigning roadways can improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists, prevent crashes, and make transit faster and more convenient. The curb lane must work for many users, particularly in response to the rise of rideshare systems (e.g., Uber and Lyft) and online shopping deliveries.

- **2c-1** Incorporate Complete Streets principles (design for all travel modes) and emphasize safety in the planning and design of roadways by re-allocating space for all modes of travel, such as transit priority or bus-only lanes and bike lanes. Provide on street e-scooter corrals and bike parking where feasible and appropriate.
- 2c-2 Leverage the CDOT Strategic Mobility Plan and amend the Uptown Street Enhancement Standards Map to identify priority streets for redesign and/or management consistent with pedestrian and bicycle-friendly principles, including:
- > Design streets to function more as public spaces that reflect local character and history and are animated with a variety of activities and programming
- > Ensure safety of pedestrians, cyclists and those using mobility devices such as scooters
- > Create places to gather and interact
- > Provide alternative transportation options
- > Function as a complete network.
- 2c-3 Prioritize pedestrian and bicycle-friendly roads that are near neighborhood destinations, such as parks and shopping and service centers and connect residential areas to employment centers, including:

- > East 9th Street in First Ward
- > Davidson Street in First and Second Wards
- > South Mint Street in Third Ward
- > North Poplar Street in Fourth Ward
- > 11th Street in First Ward
- > Smith Street in Fourth Ward.
- 2c-4 Identify streets and blocks to limit or eliminate vehicle traffic during certain days and/or times, such as community events and pop-up markets, and establish a policy and criteria for no-vehicle periods.
- **2c-5** Develop a comprehensive curb lane design and management system for Uptown and Center City neighborhood nodes that:
- > Prioritizes pedestrian safety
- > Balances the needs of commercial corridors, including loading/unloading goods and waste management, with a pedestrian-friendly environment
- Designates and strategically locates shared drop-off/ pick-up zones
- > Provides on-street parking in strategic locations
- > Encourages the use of smaller commercial delivery vehicles
- > Minimizes conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles
- > Offers flexibility during non-peak hours and days
- > Allows for emerging mobility tools and systems including autonomous and electric vehicles.
- **2c-6** Encourage slower vehicle traffic through "traffic calming", roadway design, additional signals, signal timing and other tools.

- 2c-7 Transform traditional "workhorse" streets that carry large numbers of vehicles into and out of Uptown during peak times to become safe, comfortable multi-modal corridors, consistent with CATS plans to use these streets as future bus priority corridors:
- > 3rd Street
- > 4th Street
- > College Street
- > Church Street
- > Graham Street
- > McDowell Street
- > Stonewall Street.
- **2c-8** Conduct a readiness assessment / feasibility study to analyze Center City's ability to incorporate technologies and infrastructure to support autonomous vehicles, electric vehicle charging and other emerging smart technologies.

STRATEGY 2D: MANAGE PARKING TO SUPPORT MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION AND IMPROVE THE STREET ENVIRONMENT

While parking is an important amenity, devoting too much space to it negatively impacts the street environment, encourages driving, and causes situations where pedestrians, buses and cars can come into conflict (such as parking garage entrances at sidewalks). Redesigning existing parking structures can make them more pedestrian friendly and useful to visitors and tourists.

- **2d-1** Develop a comprehensive, phased plan for updating single-use parking decks and lots in Center City to support traveler choices and comfort and provide additional amenities, including:
- > Shared parking
- > Storage for private and shared bicycles, scooters and other micro-mobility devices
- > Public amenities including restrooms
- > Electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- > Solar readiness
- > Capacity for rooftop gardens, public/private open space and other green infrastructure
- > Active ground-floors
- > Public WiFi.
- 2d-2 Eliminate parking minimums for new development.
 And, once the Region and City has built out a more comprehensive transit system, consider establishing parking maximums.
- 2d-3 Implement shared parking in Uptown at Gateway
 Station, Charlotte Transportation Center and other Center
 City park-and-ride mobility hubs for uses in and around these station areas.
- **2d-4** Study the feasibility of parking district programs and permitted on-street parking in Center City outside Uptown and South End, including an assessment of political, community and business-owner support for residential and neighborhood permit programs.



STRATEGY 2E: IMPROVE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOODS

Many Center City neighborhoods and communities are divided by roadways – most notably Interstate 277 (I-277) – and other barriers such as rail lines or large uninterrupted blocks. Restoring or building connections between communities supports "10-minute neighborhoods" where people can meet their needs close to home (such as groceries, banking and other essential needs). These connections also make it easy for people to use alternate modes of travel and supports access to jobs and amenities.

- 2e-1 Reimagine I-277 to reduce or eliminate barriers between Uptown and adjacent neighborhoods. Work with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to identify and evaluate opportunities to reconnect neighborhoods and improve mobility, including:
- > Reclaiming public land from the I-77 and West Trade reconfiguration to accommodate a new mixed-use development
- Adding a signature pedestrian and bicycle bridge over I-77 and West 5th Street
- > Capping I-277 to provide a seamless connection between Uptown and South End.
- **2e-2** Develop metrics and decision-making criteria for:
- > Evaluating I-277's current impacts and assessing the opportunities in transforming the freeway to reconnect Uptown and nearby neighborhoods
- > The success of a robust transit system

- > Transformed multi-modal streets
- > Reducing the need for solo car trips and parking.
- 2e-3 Plan and build the Silver Line Rail Trail as a premier trail, public space amenity and connection to other active transportation facilities, including the Cross-Charlotte Trail and Uptown CycleLink.
- **2e-4** Redesign and implement Complete Streets principles on key corridors that connect Uptown and Center City transit stations with surrounding neighborhoods:
- > Morehead Street
- > East Trade Street / Elizabeth Avenue
- > Statesville Avenue
- > Graham Street.
- 2e-5 Improve pedestrian and cyclist experience between
 Uptown and other neighborhoods by improving
 underpasses, sidewalks, greenways, bikeways, and bridges
 that provide safe, comfortable and welcoming connections,
 including:
- > Blue Line Rail Trail extension north of 12th Street
- > East Trade Street and Elizabeth Avenue
- > West Trade Street and West 5th Street
- > North Graham Street and I-277
- > West 4th Street and I-277
- > West Morehead Street and I-77
- > South Mint Street
- > South McDowell Street
- > East 10th Street

- > East 7th Street
- > The Cedar Yards/Foundry area.
- **2e-6** Explore the use of autonomous vehicles to connect neighborhoods to transit stations and Uptown, including:
- > North End neighborhoods to Blue Line stations
- > Carolinas Medical Center and Medical School Campus to Uptown.
- **2e-7** Convert Brevard and Caldwell Streets in Uptown to two-way streets.
- 2e-8 Extend the Stonewall Street past Bank of America Stadium, under the rail lines to connect to Cedar Street in the Third Ward
- **2e-9** Rebuild and reconnect 10th Street between Fourth and First Wards.
- 2e-10 Construct the Euclid Avenue bridge across I-277 to Stonewall Street.
- 2e-11 Better connect major destinations and encourage walking by activating the pedestrian experience and adding amenities to transit stops along Connectivity Corridors, including:
- > Tryon Street
- > Trade Street / Elizabeth Avenue
- > Brevard Street

GOAL 3

COMPLETE, AFFORDABLE NEIGHBORHOODS





Residents in all Center City neighborhoods will have access to attainable housing as well as essential amenities, goods and services within a 10-minute trip from home.

BIG IDEA: Consider creating Housing Incentive Overlay Zones to build more affordable housing

Why is This Important?

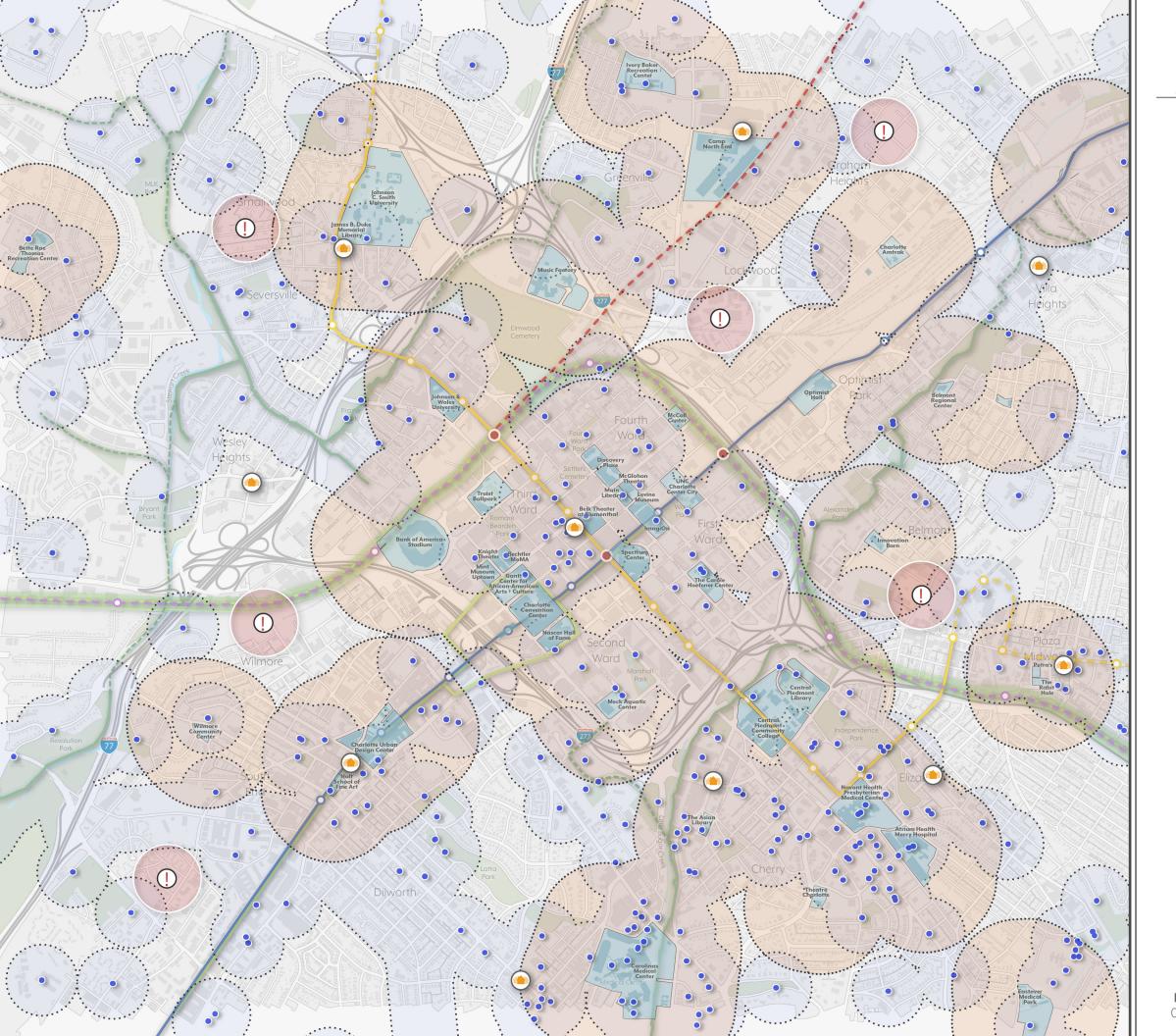
The price of Center City housing is quickly rising, and disparities between Center City neighborhoods are growing. Some neighborhoods, particularly in the North End and West End, still lack access to basic goods and services such as grocery stores, pharmacies, sidewalks, and bike lanes. As rents increase and neighborhoods are gentrified, renters - including small businesses and community organizations - are being displaced. After housing, transportation is the largest expense for many families, and these costs tend to go up the farther out housing is from jobs. The increase in these household expenses have contributed to increased housing insecurity and homelessness throughout the City.

Creating opportunity and a place for everyone in Center

City requires building more housing of all types and price points, providing affordable public transportation, supporting local small businesses, artists, and community organizations. It also means providing housing and services for the most vulnerable residents, including unsheltered residents and those at risk of losing their housing. People from all income levels and cultures should be able to afford housing in Uptown and close-in Center City neighborhoods.



Center City provides a walkable environment for residents



AMENITIES

Figure 5.3.A

Existing Features

- Uptown Building Footprint
- Building Footprint
- Park / Open Space / Cemetery
- Highway
- Railroad

Amenities

- Destination / Institutional Amenities
- Destination / Institutional Amenity Areas of Influence
- 0 Significant Amenity Gap
- Neighborhood Center
 - Existing Neighborhood / Community Amenity
 - Parks & Open Space Early Childhood Learning
 - Community Facilities Clinics/Hospitals
 - - Grocery Stores
 - Civic Spaces
 - Trails and Greenways Pharmacies
- ::::::: Neighborhood / Community Amenity Areas of Influence

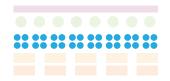
Transportation Infrastructure

- -O- Gold Line Streetcar
- -- Future Gold Line Expansion
- Blue Line Light Rail
- -O- Silver Line Proposed Light Rail
- -O- Red Line Proposed Commuter Rail
- Multi-line Stations

Trails and Greenways

- Greenways (Existing)
- Greenways (Proposed)
- Rail Trail (Existing)
- Rail Trail (Proposed)





COMMUNITY AMENITIES

Several clusters of community amenities and destinations are located throughout (see Figure 5.3.A) Center City, including libraries, recreation, community centers, public spaces, and entertainment venues. The following are general observations and recommendations which are reflected in the strategies and recommendations that follow.

Walkability: By applying a radius of a comfortable walking distance around larger destinations or institutional amenities (shown in light yellow on the amenities map 5.3.A) and existing neighborhood or community amenities (shown in light blue on the amenities map 5.3.A), several significant gaps in access can be seen, particularly in lower-density residential neighborhoods to the North and West of Uptown.

A walkshed analysis (which shows the area around an amenity that can be reached on foot in about ten minutes) demonstrates that the recommendations of this Vision Plan will reduce, but not eliminate, some barriers. Improving access to existing amenities in under-served areas should be a primary consideration for all Center City Community Area Plans. As specified in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, Community Area Plans are the next phase of neighborhood planning, which will go into greater detail for each community.

Future planning should include service area analysis that take roadways and barriers into consideration to assess true walkability.

How Can We Achieve This?

STRATEGY 3A: PREVENT DISPLACEMENT OF RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES, AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

As the cost of living in Charlotte gets more expensive, many economically challenged residents have to relocate to other neighborhoods, often further out from Center City and work, friends and family, and community destinations like places of worship, one-of-a-kind cultural venues and employment. In addition to residents being "priced out," many small businesses, non-profit organizations and community groups are displaced because the cost of commercial space is also rising. These trends contribute to Uptown being less diverse than other residential areas, and to its perception as an exclusive and homogeneous neighborhood that does not reflect the myriad of Charlotte's cultures nor offer opportunity for all.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• **3a-1** Establish a commercial Center City Equity Fund to support and/or subsidize affordable spaces for small local businesses and nonprofits in Center City.

- 3a-2 Identify a suite of options for increasing access to affordable commercial and nonprofit spaces while addressing ground-floor vacancies and other underutilized spaces, including:
- > Using publicly owned land or buildings
- > Supporting flexible, short-term leases
- > Funding loans for small businesses and nonprofit organizations to buy their buildings
- > Locate micro-retail spaces (under 1000 sf) on the ground floor of new and existing buildings
- **3a-3** Support community-led efforts to establish cooperative ownership for neighborhood businesses and services with technical assistance and/or funding.
- **3a-4** Protect, rehabilitate and improve existing "naturally occurring" (i.e., non-subsidized) affordable housing.
- **3a-5** Extend the length of time that publicly subsidized affordable housing units (such as those funding with Low Income Housing Tax Credits) are required to be below market rate.





The 7th Public Street Market is a business incubator that provides affordable commercial spaces to small and local businesses.



STRATEGY 3B: IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES AND AMENITIES

Many Center City residents cannot easily reach day-to-day necessities and conveniences such as a bank or ATM, post office, pharmacy or grocery store. This means that people often have to travel further to meet their basic needs, travel on routes that are uncomfortable and unsafe, or forgo necessities all together.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **3b-1** Build upon and add detail to the Charlotte 2040 Comprehensive Plan equity metrics to inventory and map locations and access to basic infrastructure, essential services and amenities in Center City neighborhoods, including:
- > Install new pedestrian infrastructure including sidewalks and crosswalks
- > Fresh, healthy food options, grocery stores, and co-ops
- > Parks, nature preserves, greenways, trails or other public spaces
- > Basic neighborhood goods and services including health clinic; post offices, banks, credit unions and ATMs
- > Low-cost health care and pharmacies
- > Community facilities (libraries, schools, senior centers, community and recreation centers, early childhood education and eldercare centers, etc.)
- > Neighborhood and cultural destinations including restaurants, cafes, theaters, galleries and affordable art studios.

- **3b-2** Review equity data with residents and community groups to prioritize new services and amenities, and to map sites and opportunities for improved neighborhood connections.
- **3b-3** Require commercial space for services, stores, and bodegas to be built in the ground floors on main streets and on corners in multifamily developments located on side streets or in more interior areas of neighborhoods.

STRATEGY 3C: PURSUE FUNDING SOURCES FOR IDENTIFIED COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED IMPROVEMENTS FOR CENTER CITY NEIGHBORHOODS

- **3c-1** Work with local stakeholders to create a customized and prioritized set of Center City neighborhood programs and improvements that directly address the goals of this plan, including:
- > Investment and entrepreneurship opportunities for residents
- > Space or funding for high-priority community priorities such as childcare facilities, full-service grocery stores, pharmacies and health clinics
- Encourage contracting and hiring neighborhood residents that will be impacted by new development and infrastructure
- > Public spaces, parks, greenways, trails
- > Affordable housing and commercial space

- 3c-2 Explore the feasibility of RFP requirements or social covenants to provide community benefits for publicly subsidized projects.
- **3c-3** Promote and encourage the integration of desired community improvements to developers and investors in projects using the Opportunity Zones program or in "Corridors of Opportunity".

STRATEGY 3D: INCENTIVIZE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT TO INCREASE RESIDENTIAL OPTIONS AND AFFORDABILITY

While a lot of housing has been built in Center City in recent years, the type and cost of this housing was mostly determined by the private market and decisions of property owners and developers. In Uptown, South End and other adjacent neighborhoods, most new units are rentals at a relatively high price point. The City and its partners should continue to work with developers to create more types and sizes of housing at different affordability levels to better meet community needs.

- **3d-1** Establish and monitor annual housing production targets by income range and tenancy through 2040, with updates at least every five years. Consistent with the Center City Growth Projections Study:
- > Develop 1,750 net new residential units per year
- Capture at least 25% of City-wide housing development in Center City

- **3d-2** Provide support and incentives for the development of for-sale, multifamily units and projects that provide a range of housing types and sizes (excluding single-family development in Uptown).
- 3d-3 Aggressively promote the use of vacant publicly owned land as sites for affordable housing development.
- **3d-4** Explore programs/partnerships with the private sector that encourage or incentivize employees of Center City businesses and institutions to live in Uptown.
- 3d-5 Provide alternatives and exceptions to required ground-floor retail in UMUD to create opportunities to locate childcare providers and community or arts groups.





McCreesh Place is a Supportive Housing Community in along North Davidson Street



Affordable housing projects can provide a range of housing types, unit sizes and densities.



STRATEGY 3E: INCREASE RESOURCES AND REMOVE BARRIERS TO AFFORDABLE AND WORKFORCE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Creating housing that is affordable for low-and middle-income residents and families is very challenging and expensive.

Encouraging and supporting the development of this type of housing involves a two-pronged approach – increasing funds and resources for housing and eliminating factors that make it more difficult and expensive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **3e-1** Coordinate across government and non-profit sectors to advocate for state legislation enabling inclusionary zoning.
- 3e-2 Consider establishing a public organization like a redevelopment authority to facilitate developer/partner relationships, strategic land banking, and streamline affordable housing development.
- **3e-3** Create and implement a City Center-specific toolkit of alternatives, such as conditional zoning and incentive overlays.
- **3e-4** Strengthen or create programs including community land trusts and strategic land banking programs to increase the scale of affordable and workforce housing development.

INCENTIVE OVERLAY

Housing incentive overlay zones (HOZs) are added layers on top of existing zoning ordinances that provide incentives for developers to build housing, particularly affordable housing, within specific districts.

GOAL 4

HEALTHY, SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS





Ensure all residents and visitors feel safe and secure in Center City and can easily access what they need for personal, family and community wellness.

BIG IDEA: Work with business and property owners to transform convenience stores into sources of fresh, healthy food

Why is This Important?

Supporting the health, safety and well-being of the Center City community requires effort on multiple fronts. An urban environment that supports well-being includes easy access to housing, fresh food, health care, and parks and public spaces – both day-to-day and in the face of pandemics and other emergencies.

Safety and shelter are fundamental to the wellbeing of all people. The homeless population of Charlotte and Center City is growing, and the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting recession have added to this crisis. Providing services to these vulnerable populations is critical to maintaining health, safety and sanitation, and more fundamentally, it is consistent with community values.

The pandemic and renewed racial justice movement have brought more attention to the health, safety and security of all residents, and particularly people of color. The City is working with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) and others to create a **holistic approach to community wellness**, reduce police officer involvement in wellness calls, and eliminate bias. As the heart of the community, Center City must be safe, accommodating and welcoming to all.



Center City streets host events and celebrations year-round

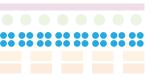


Case Study

HOUSING FIRST CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG

In 2015, Charlotte-Mecklenburg created Housing First Charlotte Mecklenburg, an initiative to end and prevent chronic homelessness in Mecklenburg County. This bold undertaking was led by the Urban Ministry Center, the Mecklenburg County, the City of Charlotte, Charlotte Center City Partners and a consortium of private, public, not-for-profit, foundations, medical, houses of faith and university partners. In 2018, the initiative was folded into the Continuum of Care (a consortium of homelessness providers) and the work continues. UNC Charlotte's Urban Institute evaluated the effort in November 2020 through the Housing First Charlotte Mecklenburg Outcomes and Utilization Report. All data below is from that report and Mecklenburg County.

- As of summer 2021 approximately 1,100 chronically homeless neighbors have been housed
- A "by-name" registry was created to track each chronically homeless neighbor
- 73% were still housed as of November 2020
- 80% in permanent supportive housing were still housed
- 58% decline in arrests among those housed
- 30% increase in quality-of-life scores after housing
- 26% reduction in trauma symptoms
- 35% decrease in mental illness symptom scores after housing
- 37% reduction in substance use, even though Housing First does not require sobriety or abstinence



How Can We Achieve This?

STRATEGY 4A: IMPLEMENT THE 2025 CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PLAN

In 2021, more than 200 individuals, led by the County, City, Charlotte Center City Partners, the Continuum of Care, McKinsey and Co., Washington's Urban Institute, local housing, grassroots and homelessness experts, those with lived experience, private, public and not-for-profit corporations, foundations, medical systems, houses of faith and universities united to create a five-year strategic plan to help Charlotte-Mecklenburg become a national leader in addressing current and preventing future homelessness. The comprehensive strategic plan offers aligned strategies, unified goals, clear funding pathways, policies to address equity and parity with Housing First as a foundation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4a-1 PREVENTION Strengthen the prevention system with interventions that target and help households maintain housing and address systems & structures that address housing instability and economic mobility. Implement the recommendations of Evaluate Upstream.
- 4a-2 TEMPORARY HOUSING Optimize temporary housing for those who are homeless initiatives using data-driven solutions that that address diversion, emergency shelter, and transitional housing.
- 4a-3 AFFORDABLE HOUSING Grow permanent affordable housing through initiatives to preserve, rehabilitate, develop, and access affordable housing.
 Optimize short- and long-term rental subsidies and grow options for affordable and accessible homeownership.

- 4a-4 CROSS SECTOR SUPPORTS Strengthen crosssector support initiatives to improve preventive support services to help families and individuals get and keep housing (e.g., mental health, wages, substance use services, healthcare) and peripheral supports (e.g., childcare, transportation, education, workforce development).
- **4a-5** PLAN SUPPORT Support all initiatives with aligned policy, funding alignment, data and communications.

 Create a trusted "quarterback" organization to own the plan and implementation.

STRATEGY 4B: USE BEST PRACTICES TO KEEP CENTER CITY RESIDENTS, VISITORS AND WORKERS HEALTHY

The COVID-19 pandemic led people to quickly change behavior and adapt to new practices including hand-washing, wearing masks and social distancing. As pandemic recovery moves forward, it is critical to provide resources and guidelines to ensure public health is protected as more and more people return to work, shop and go out in Center City.

- 4b-1 Partner with public health professionals to integrate health considerations (such as ample open space, indoor ventilation and handwashing stations) in Center City community plans, new developments and significant retrofits.
- **4b-2** Institutionalize policies, regulations and projects to support safe recreation, dining, workplaces, and entertainment, including Open Streets and parklets.

- **4b-3** Implement and enforce state, county and city public health guidelines and provide easy-to-understand information in public spaces such as parks, plazas and transit stops.
- 4b-4 Provide sanitation stations and restrooms to support cleanliness and health in and near publicly accessible locations throughout Center City including parks, recreation and community centers, libraries, public parking facilities and schools. Include supplies and receptacles for pet waste in parks and public spaces.

STRATEGY 4C: IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY AND ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS FOR ALL RESIDENTS

Many Center City residents live in neighborhoods without grocery stores or other sources of fresh, healthy food options. Due to market forces it can be difficult to bring a full-service grocery store to many neighborhoods, but there are other facilities and methods that can provide healthy options to communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **4c-1** Represent Center City in the development of the City's Urban Agriculture Plan and identify municipally-owned land suitable for urban agriculture programs and projects, such as community gardens.
- 4c-2 Continue to work with the Mecklenburg County
 Department of Health and Human Services to implement
 and update the Food Desert Assessment. Inventory and
 identify needs including:
- > Grocery stores
- > Convenience stores, corner stores and bodegas

- > Farmers markets
- > Food co-ops
- > Food banks
- > Concessionaires
- **4c-3** Work with business and property owners to transform convenience stores into sources of fresh, healthy food in neighborhoods without grocery stores:
- > Provide technical assistance to store owners to identify resources, tools and profitable strategies
- > Identify grants and other funding resources to support an ongoing inventory of these products
- > Re-brand, market and promote the availability of fresh foods in local markets.
- **4c-4** Support the planning, design and operations of community grocery stores and/or food co-ops in Center City food deserts.
- 4c-5 Replicate and scale successful models, such as the Rosa Parks Farmers Market and Three Sisters co-operative, to more Center City neighborhoods.
- **4c-6** Bring mobile healthy food markets or fresh food trucks, such as the Bulb, to Center City neighborhood activity centers and events. Expand the capacity of existing programs through funding support.
- **4c-7** Partner major grocery retailers and wholesalers with corner stores to sell store brand labels and fresh foods.



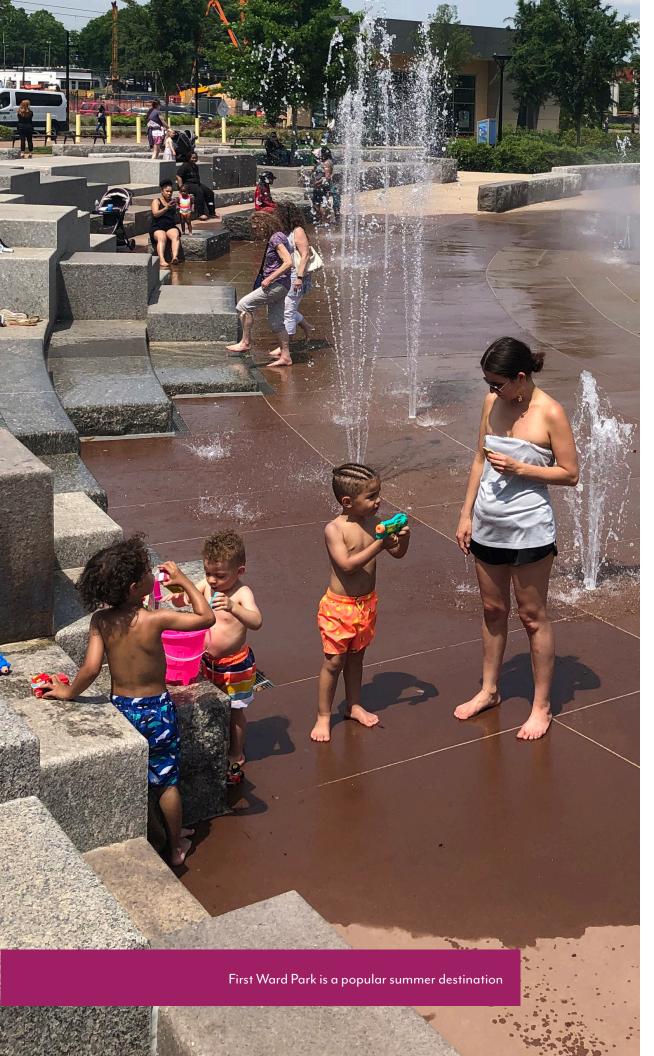
Case Study

CO-OP GROCERY STORE (OAKLAND)

West Oakland in the San Francisco Bay Area has struggled with the decades of systemic racism and disinvestment, resulting in the neighborhood having limited access to amenities and resources including markets with healthy and affordable foods. This is known as a "food desert", which is common in communities of color across the country.

To ensure residents had access to nutritious foods, Community Foods Market opened with the help of local shareholders who wanted the chance to own a part of something that would improve their neighborhood, along with loan funds, traditional grant funding and angel investors. Along with providing fresh, organic produce, the Market has been able to better serve the community by:

- Hiring employees from the area and provide a competitive wage with health insurance
- Installing a meat and seafood counter that provides custom cuts instead of prepackaged items
- Opening a café that develops a menu based on community interest and provides a social space for customers



STRATEGY 4D: ENSURE PUBLIC SPACES AND STREETS ARE SAFE, ACCESSIBLE AND WELCOMING

Most Center City parks, plazas and streets are public spaces, open to all, but they may not be comfortable or welcoming for everyone. Issues like a lack of lighting, visibility or accessible, connected pathways can discourage their use and make people feel unsafe.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **4d-1** Exceed legally required standards to provide universal, accessible design of public spaces for people of all ages and abilities.
- 4d-2 Ensure that design and development teams for public spaces are representative of the community that will use them to ensure that these places support community safety, health and comfort and provide necessary amenities like Wi-Fi and public restrooms.
- 4d-3 Strengthen construction mitigation efforts and public information for new projects to maintain safe access to public roadways and sidewalks and alert travelers of potential or planned traffic changes.
- 4d-4 Continue to work collaboratively with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD), service providers and private security organizations in Center City to implement the recommendations of the Safety and Accountability for Everyone (SAFE) Charlotte report, including developing a nonsworn officer responder model for Center City mental health and homeless calls to CMPD.
- **4d-5** Ensure that existing and new public space is well programmed and maintained.

STRATEGY 4E: IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Health care, including clinics, affordable pharmacies and preventative care, should be an essential amenity in all Center City neighborhoods. Improving access to care is about locating services closer to where people live, using mobile outreach, and engaging in telehealth technology.

- **4e-1** Engage large health-care employers and institutions to support neighborhood health clinics and outreach services (e.g., mobile clinics) to underserved neighborhoods through funding, space and/or technical assistance.
- **4e-2** Improve access to routine health care by promoting telehealth options through a Center City public information campaign. Provide information on transit, at community centers and libraries, and at community events.
- **4e-3** Co-locate health clinics and grocery providers in accessible locations including:
- Major transit hubs including Gateway Station, Charlotte Transportation Center, Rosa Parks Transit Center, and the future Silver and Blue line crossing
- > Schools and colleges
- > Community and recreation centers
- > Resource centers and libraries.

GOAL 5

ABUNDANT PARKS, PUBLIC SPACES AND NATURAL AREAS





Create a strong connected network of diverse outdoor spaces and experiences throughout Center City.

BIG IDEA: Consolidate rail infrastructure at Norfolk Southern rail yard to create a large (75 - 150 acre) signature public space in Center City

Why is This Important?

Spending time outdoors provides access to fresh air and sunlight, a break from screens, opportunities for recreation and socializing, and connections to nature. Research shows that access to nature and the outdoors improves physical, social and mental wellbeing.

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the value of parks and public spaces when mobility was restricted and indoor gatherings were prohibited. Parks and public space suddenly started to function as gyms, offices and living rooms. Responding to evolving urban park trends and increasing outdoor activities in a post-pandemic world, small parks and plazas should include elements and spaces that allow sites to be used differently throughout the day and week.

While each ward in Uptown and several adjacent neighborhoods have parks, Center City does not have a very large public park with space for celebration, gathering and community-building. As the population and density of Center City grows it is critical to **identify, protect and improve urban parks and public spaces** to ensure these benefits are enjoyed by current and future residents.

CENTER CITY PUBLIC SPACE

Parks and public spaces are a valued asset for Charlotteans and play a significant role in the quality of life for all Center City residents and visitors (see Figure 5.5.A). The following are general observations and recommendations which are reflected in the strategies and recommendations that follow.

Access and Distribution: Existing parks and public spaces, distributed throughout the Center City, are within walking distance for many neighborhoods. However, significant gaps are evident, particularly in the North End and in areas with fewer homes. While this analysis does not account for obstacles and barriers to access, it demonstrates clear service gaps.

Park Enhancements: Existing parks identified for upgrades should include improvements to the park design and amenities (e.g., play spaces, water and shade) as well as and park access, including visibility, entrances and connections to sidewalks and trails.

Connections: Opportunities to connect parks and public spaces can provide multiple benefits, by improving access and creating more active transportation routes through Center City.

Future Parks: New open and gathering spaces will be needed to fill in the parks and public spaces service gaps in Center City and to meet other Vision Plan goals. Significant park investments can also help overcome barriers, such as the Norfolk Southern Railyard and I-277 by connecting neighborhoods with public space.

Land Opportunity: There are still parcels in Center City that are undeveloped or under-developed and could be acquired for use as public space. As Center City land prices and density increase, it will only become more difficult to purchase the spaces.



PUBLIC SPACE

Figure 5.5.A

Existing Features

- Uptown Building Footprint
- Building Footprint
- Park / Open Space / Cemetery
- --- Highway
- --- Railroad

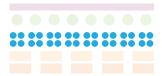
Public Space

- Influence Zone of Existing Parks and Open Spaces
- Existing Parks to be Enhanced
- Proposed Parks and Open Spaces
- Future Gathering Spaces
- School Parks

Trails and Greenways

- Greenways (Existing)
- Greenways (Proposed)
- Rail Trail (Existing)
- Rail Trail (Proposed)





How Can We Achieve This?

STRATEGY 5A: CREATE A NEW, LARGE-SCALE SIGNATURE PUBLIC SPACE

Vision Plan outreach showed that Charlotteans are excited about establishing a major, iconic park within Center City. Like New York's Central Park and Atlanta's Piedmont Park, this space would be a major destination for both residents and visitors.

The space will be accessible and welcoming to all residents and visitors, providing no-cost recreation options. It would include many different spaces, environments and amenities including a large outdoor public area for public celebrations, cultural events and socially-distanced gathering.

- **5a-1** Consolidate rail infrastructure north of Uptown at the current Norfolk Southern yard and secure at least 75 150 contiguous acres of land within a 2.5-mile radius of Trade and Tryon.
- 5a-2 Plan, design and program the new signature space as part of a coordinated effort that leverages public resources to maximize community benefits including affordable housing, small business support, equity goals and improved access to parks and public spaces and recreation opportunities.

- **5a-3** Ensure the new space is seamlessly connected to Uptown and adjacent light rail stations, greenways and trails, and nearby parks and public spaces.
- **5a-4** Provide multiple destinations, environments and experiences within or adjacent to the new space, including:
 - > Cultural venues
 - > Recreation center(s)
 - > Schools and / or other educational facilities.
- **5a-5** Include a central, flexible civic gathering space for events that allow social distancing, as needed, in the new park.
- **5a-6** Engage neighboring communities in all stages of the design, planning and programming of the new space.
- **5a-7** Preserve the site and redesign the existing Amtrak station on North Tryon Street to serve the North End and new signature park.





STRATEGY 5B: INCREASE THE NUMBER AND DIVERSITY OF PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES

Making it easy for people to have access to more parks and public spaces can be accomplished by adding additional parks closer to people, and by improving access to parks that are already close by, but may be inaccessible due to major barriers like freeways, busy roads, fences, and vacant and underutilized spaces.

- **5b-1** Ensure each Center City household is within a halfmile (10-minute walk) of a public park or public space.
- **5b-2** Identify new and renovate existing parks and public spaces to be welcoming to people of all incomes and cultures.
- **5b-3** Analyze Center City land use and ownership to identify opportunities for new public spaces within existing neighborhoods, such as vacant lots or underutilized public land.

- **5b-4** Pursue or strengthen partnerships and joint use agreements with schools, non-profits, places of worship and other civic organizations to enhance public access to private parks, playgrounds and open spaces.
- **5b-5** Encourage large mixed-use development to provide publicly accessible open space as a part of their projects.
- **5b-6** Reinvest in the publicly accessible parks and open spaces in neighborhoods with service gaps and/or poorly rated parks.
- **5b-7** Enable the ongoing use of public spaces such as sidewalks, streets and parklets to provide safe places for socially distanced gatherings.
- **5b-8** Continue to renovate, activate and increase maintenance of Pinewood/Elmwood cemeteries in Uptown to be used as a public space.

STRATEGY 5C: CREATE A CONNECTED SYSTEM OF OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES ALONG CREEKS, TRAILS AND GREENWAYS TO SUPPORT ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS TO COMMUNITY AMENITIES

Connecting parks and public spaces to one another and to trails, greenways and neighborhood centers makes it easier for people to access and enjoy a range of activities and experiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **5c-1** Design and build the Silver Line Rail Trail as a premiere trail and public space that connects neighborhoods, provides access to all ages and abilities (AAA) destinations, and reflects local identity, diversity and character.
- 5c-2 Complete the West End (Irwin Creek) Greenway along West 5th Street to provide a seamless connection between Five Points, Uptown / Gateway Station, the Irwin Creek Greenway and the AvidXchange Music Factory.

- **5c-3** Improve and expand the Blue Line Rail Trail, including:
 - > Extending the trail north of 12th Street
 - > Filling key gaps
 - > Building more activity areas
 - > Adding more public art
 - > Developing guidelines to manage a vendor program
 - > Creating guidelines and/or ordinances to encourage the development of ground floor space to add shops, basic neighborhood services, cafes, and galleries.
- **5c-4** Complete trail and greenway networks in Center City including the Cross Charlotte Trail, Urban Arboretum Trail and other trail networks.
- **5c-5** Create a seamless connection across the rail lines connecting the future Silver Line Rail Trail to the AvidXchange Music Factory.

STRATEGY 5D: STRATEGICALLY IMPROVE PRIORITY PARKS AND FACILITIES THROUGH DESIGN AND PROGRAMMING.

Center City has many existing public and private open spaces that can be improved to better meet the needs of a growing and changing population, and to adapt to recreation trends over time. Additional recommendations for Center City are included in the 2021 Meck Playbook plan.

- 5d-1 Establish the new City program for local shared management and programming or adoption of public spaces for all Center City parks, in partnership with Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, neighborhood groups, stewardships, conservancies and other community organizations.
- **5d-2** Convene a working group to advise on public space design and practices that foster safe, secure and welcoming environments for Charlotte's diverse population.



Urban trails provide safe outdoor recreation options during the pandemic



The I Heart Rail Trail: Lights installation celebrated local artists



Case Study

INTERSTATE 35 MONARCH HIGHWAY

A highway for butterflies? The I-35 "Monarch Highway" runs along the central flyway of the monarch migration in the states of Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. The Monarch Highway Joint Venture project is a public-private partnership between state departments of transportation, conservation organizations and property owners and uses available land next to the freeway to use transportation right-of-way land for pollinator habitat. Benefits of this program include

- Restoring native pollinator habitat restoration along transportation routes
- Enhancing conservation along the highway
- Encouraging individuals to plant pollinator-attracting plants like milkweed and wildflowers in backyard, weedy areas, community gardens, and at schools

Enhancement of pollinator habitat along this roadway and flyway will ensure that essential pollinators like the monarch continue to thrive and positively impact the environment.

- 5d-3 Establish a mixed-use all ages and abilities recreation center in Uptown to serve the growing residential population, expanding on the existing Second Ward High School Gymnasium and Mecklenburg County Aquatic Center
- > Serve as a tool for welcoming people from across the community into uptown for low- or no-cost recreation
- **5d-4** Develop and implement a Master Plan for Frazier Park that:
- > Enhances its attraction as a community destination
- > Ensures access and experiences for all ages and abilities
- > Improves park design and function
- > Emphasizes access to Irwin Creek
- > Incorporates nature play
- > Provides amenities for an urban neighborhood, including off-leash dog areas and flexible gathering spaces
- > Reduces the area dedicated to open turf, and adds sustainable features and ecosystem services such as wildlife habitat and stormwater filtration.
- **5d-5** Improve Seversville and Martin Luther King Parks and enhance the connections from Frazier Park along the Stewart Creek Greenway to create one large public space that serves the growing West End neighborhoods.
- **5d-6** To protect Romare Bearden Park and to add new destinations and experiences, relocate some events and programs from to other nearby neighborhood parks

STRATEGY 5E: RESTORE AND EXPAND THE TREE CANOPY AND URBAN FOREST

As Center City has grown and developed over the last several decades, many trees that make up the urban tree canopy have been lost, along with their ecological, health and aesthetic benefits.

- **5e-1** Protect and preserve the existing tree canopy in Center City through auditing, maintenance, regulation, and stewardship consistent with the Tree Canopy Action Plan recommendations (anticipated 2021).
- 5e-2 Enhance and extend the tree canopy in underserved neighborhoods, focused on locations where trees can provide multiple benefits such as shade, improved air quality and carbon sequestration, particularly in South and North End.
- 5e-3 Establish best practices and guidelines for tree
 planting in Uptown and other dense City Center
 neighborhoods to ensure maximum flexibility on sidewalks
 and other public spaces for programming, outdoor seating,
 vending and other uses.
- **5e-4** Pursue other opportunities to expand the benefits of the tree canopy through green roofs and conversion of impervious surfaces (e.g., surface parking).
- 5e-5 Work with NCDOT and other owners of large land areas (e.g., Tree Canopy Preservation Program properties) to create pollinator plantings on remnant or undevelopable land along highways or other infrastructure.

GOAL 6

RESILIENT LOW-CARBON URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS





Design buildings, streets, infrastructure and public spaces that adapt to a changing climate, support a low-carbon future, and contribute to ecological restoration.

BIG IDEA: Ensure all new or retrofitted buildings include capacity and infrastructure for electric vehicles and solar energy generation.

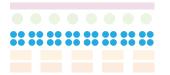
Why is This Important?

Center City will continue to grow over the next two decades and beyond. While this means more people living, working and playing in the urban core, it also creates an opportunity to design and build using tools and techniques that are more efficient while benefitting people and the planet.

Charlotte's culture of innovation and creativity provides an ideal setting to develop and apply new green building and energy methods and to pursue solutions that give back to the environment by generating energy, improving air quality, cooling the city and cleaning our water.



Trails offer alternative and active transportation options



How Can We Achieve This?

STRATEGY 6A: AGGRESSIVELY IMPLEMENT THE STRATEGIC ENERGY ACTION PLAN'S TRANSPORTATION, ENERGY AND BUILDING STRATEGIES TO MAKE CENTER CITY A LOW-CARBON URBAN CENTER BY 2050

The Strategic Energy Action Plan (SEAP) is a how-to guide for the City of Charlotte to become a low-carbon city by 2030 and for City buildings and equipment to be zero-carbon by 2050. Given the scale and size of development and the expected new growth, Center City presents the city's greatest opportunity to reach these goals.

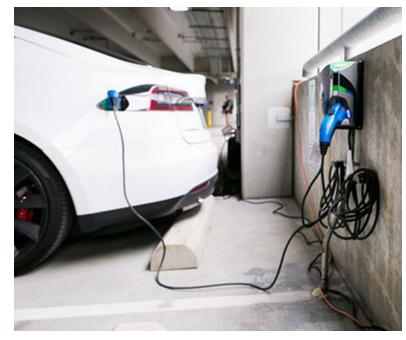
RECOMMENDATIONS

- **6a-1** Implement the Strategic Energy Action Plan recommendations for existing and new Center City buildings, prioritizing retrofitting existing buildings and requiring low-carbon construction.
- **6a-2** Study the feasibility of using wood and crosslaminated timber construction for buildings over seven stories to reduce carbon generation and energy use in construction methods.
- **6a-3** Establish green building requirements for Center City development and strengthen workforce training programs in sustainable design and construction.
- **6a-4** Ensure all new or retrofitted buildings include capacity and infrastructure for electric vehicles and solar energy generation.
- **6a-5** Encourage all Center City buildings to publicly benchmark their energy use.

STRATEGY 6B: PILOT A RESILIENT INNOVATION DISTRICT TO TEST ENERGY AND RESILIENCY INNOVATIONS

A Resilient Innovation District (RID) is a neighborhood or district in which new strategies for urban resiliency can be tested and where ideas and resources can be shared to advance sustainable solutions. The Strategic Energy Action Plan identifies tools, rules and recommendations for RIDs and one or more Center City neighborhoods such as West End and North End to pilot this model.

- 6b-1 Identify a site within Center City and implement an RID to pilot and advance resilience innovation policies and projects, including those in the Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan and UDO.
- **6b-2** Partner with community-based organizations, schools and colleges, and local businesses to identify areas with limited employment opportunities and workforce development programs and structure RID projects and programs that provide training, employment and investment opportunities for local residents.
- **6b-3** Leverage public, private and nonprofit resources to allocate substantial funding to design, build and maintain sustainable, low-carbon, resilient, and equitable RID projects.
- **6b-4** Incorporate circular economy strategies and projects to eliminate waste and re-use or reinvest energy, goods and resources in RID and local community projects.



Electric vehicle charging should be provided as a necessity



Green building and regenerative design offer opportunities to enjoy nature in the urban core

STRATEGY 6C: ENSURE UTILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT, LOW-CARBON, AND EQUITABLE GROWTH

The systems that support roads and buildings and provide water, electricity and internet access have not kept up with the rapid pace of Center City growth. As the urban core gets increasingly dense, it is critical to ensure not just that these systems are in place to serve more people, but that they are designed to be more efficient and environmentally sustainable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **6c-1** Develop a Climate and Disaster Resilience Plan for Center City neighborhoods with quantitative goals and performance metrics.
- 6c-2 Develop a Center City Infrastructure Plan that:
- Comprehensively assesses existing and planned infrastructure and utilities, including water, sewer and stormwater systems and wi-fi/internet access
- > Identifies infrastructure investments and improvements that will accommodate several decades of growth

- Accounts for climate change and extreme weather events
- > Uses an equity lens and prioritizes improvements in underserved neighborhoods
- > Applies the recommendations of the City's Strategic Energy Action Plan (SEAP)
- > Maximizes the use of low-carbon infrastructure solutions.
- **6c-3** Require that utility and infrastructure improvements, including water, stormwater and sewer systems, are made in advance of or at the same time as development, to keep up with growth and higher density in Center City.
- **6c-4** Require all new and existing utility lines be built or relocated underground to:
- > Minimize power outages from severe weather and storms
- > Eliminate the visual clutter from wires and poles and
- > Improve neighborhood aesthetics.
- **6c-5** Require local resident training and employment opportunities as a component of the utility line underground relocation infrastructure effort.



Case Study

CLIMATE RESILIENCY DESIGN GUIDELINES (NEW YORK CITY)

Developed in the fall of 2020, the New York City (NYC) Climate Resiliency Design Guidelines provide step-by-step instructions for creating resilient designs that will anticipate a rapidly changing climate in NYC. The guidelines specifically address increased heat, increased precipitation, and sea level rise. These guidelines take into account the following sources of information to inform the design of NYC capital projects:

- Historic weather data
- New York Panel on climate change predictions
- Climate resiliency design guidelines
- Building code and design standards

Resilient design includes green infrastructure, operational resiliency strategies, address multiple climate hazards at once, and reduce climate change risk by addressing energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emissions. The NYC climate resiliency plan works to go beyond the use of historic weather data and anticipates how the climate may rapidly change in the coming years and how the designs created today can address and mitigate these changes.



STRATEGY 6D: UTILIZE LAND AND BUILDINGS THROUGHOUT CENTER CITY TO PROVIDE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Dense urban centers and new growth create the opportunity implement "green" solutions that benefit people and the planet. This includes using land and natural resources as well as building design and performance to improve the environment.

- 6d-1 Develop a menu of Low-Impact Development (LID) strategies and other sustainable practices that can be applied throughout Center City to provide ecological benefits including:
- > Improved air quality through carbon sequestration
- > Improved water quality from natural stormwater treatment
- > Reduced energy use and increased comfort from passive heating and cooling
- > Biological diversity through animal habitat protection and restoration.

- **6d-2** Analyze Center City to identify land, properties and public spaces that can be used for providing ecological benefits, such as planting trees, generating solar energy and filtering stormwater to improve water and air quality. Types of land include:
- > Vacant and underutilized parcels
- Land that cannot be developed due to certain site constraints
- > Portions of existing public parks and public spaces
- Other "remnant" lands such as spaces along highway on-ramps
- > Rooftops

GOAL 7

LIFELONG LEARNING, CARE AND ENRICHMENT FOR ALL





Support family and individual growth, learning, and well-being at all life stages.

BIG IDEA: Recognize childcare as an essential element of economic development

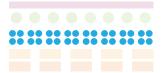
Why is This Important?

Countless opportunities for learning are available across
Center City – from traditional classrooms, innovative labs
and maker spaces to community-based programs and more.
Cultural and civic institutions, including libraries, community
centers and museums, offer resources for enrichment and
exploration for all ages. And, as the economic hub of the
region, Center City is also a rich source for job and career
opportunities. Of course, not all schools are the same and not
all residents have equitable access to resources that support
wellbeing and learning. Addressing disparities in education,
employment and earning potential is a fundamental aspect
of the Vision Plan. This begins with ensuring all families have
access to high-quality, affordable child- and elder care so that
residents can advance their education or careers while family
members receive high-quality care.

The next two decades present the opportunity to bring new areas of study like music and medicine, to Center City. Keeping home-grown talent in Charlotte while attracting and training the next generation of leaders will make sure the city's workers are poised for personal achievement and participation in a healthy economy.



Libraries and community centers provide opportunities for enrichment at all ages



How Can We Achieve This?

STRATEGY 7A: MAKE CHILDCARE ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE TO ALL FAMILIES

Charlotte has a serious shortage of childcare for working parents, and spaces that are available are often expensive and distant from a family's home and job. A shortage of quality childcare is not just a household issue, it is an economic development issue, keeping people out of the workforce and limiting the pool of candidates employers have to choose from. This only became more evident as parents and guardians struggled with access to daycare during the early days of pandemic.

- **7a-1** Recognize childcare as an essential element of economic development efforts and work with employers to address childcare needs in their talent recruitment and retention programs.
- 7a-2 Work with partners like Childcare Resources to inventory, map and analyze childcare facilities and programs in Center City to inform strategies and actions.
- 7a-3 Include childcare facilities and/or funding through an ordinance that requires resources for childcare in developments of a certain scale or size.
- 7a-4 Locate childcare in or near mobility hubs in Center City and in large office and multifamily housing developments.

- **7a-5** Convene a working group of employers, parents, family representatives, and care providers to identify strategies to support accessible, affordable child, dependent and eldercare for families at all income levels. Address challenges including:
- > Availability and affordability of space
- > Requirements related to social distancing and safety
- > Proximity of care facilities to job centers
- > Staffing and wage challenges
- > Access and transportation issues
- > Retirement of care providers.
- **7a-6** Support outreach to and resources for protecting at-risk programs, with an emphasis on in-home care and independently owned childcare centers.
- 7a-7 Work with corporate partners to provide on-site or nearby childcare for employees, especially for lower-paying industries and those with swing and night shifts, such as hospitality.
- **7a-8** Encourage employers to enroll children in on-site centers from outside the company and neighborhood to support diversity.
- **7a-9** Make it easy for nighttime and other shift workers, such as those in the hospitality and medical professions working in Uptown and other Center City neighborhoods by providing affordable, 24-hour childcare centers.





Affordable pre-K childcare is a critical need in Center City

STRATEGY 7B: STRENGTHEN AND ESTABLISH CENTER CITY SCHOOLS TO EXPAND ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

Access to high-quality education is a key factor in career and economic success. A diverse and dynamic city should provide opportunity to learn and study in any and all subjects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **7b-1** Partner with Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), the private sector, and philanthropic organizations to establish a Second Ward High School with a unique curriculum that targets underserved students aligned with business needs and partnerships.
- 7b-2 Establish a plan to provide sustained, free public Wi-Fi
 to underserved communities without interruption after pilot
 program or emergency funding is spent.
- **7b-3** Work with Atrium and Wake Forest University to establish a medical school in Center City with direct connections to Center City schools, businesses, and talent development programs to provide opportunities for medical research and bio-technology entrepreneurs to establish new business and create new jobs.
- 7b-4 Develop art, design and music schools in Center
 City, including expansions or extensions of local and/or
 nationally-known colleges and universities such as Johnson
 C. Smith, Queens University, CPCC and UNC Charlotte,
 potentially within mixed-use developments.

STRATEGY 7C: CREATE A STRONG, CONNECTED SYSTEM OF ARTS AND CULTURE EDUCATION, PROGRAMS AND PROFESSIONS

Music, arts and culture can enrich a person's life and also become a career for many. Linking together working artists with students and supporting creative professionals will benefit all Charlotteans as well as support economic development and talent recruitment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7c-1 Attract more arts and creative businesses to Center City by:
- Designating target areas for creative clusters in Center City neighborhoods
- > Making space affordable for artists and arts organizations
- > Increasing the visibility of the arts and commissions for artists of all types.
- **7c-2** Leverage successful programs, including the Charlotte Shout! festival, to create year-long music, art, food and culture programs, events and installations.
- **7c-3** Identify strategies to provide affordable studio, gallery and event spaces throughout Center City, such as:
 - > Including arts and culture spaces and/or funding in new public and private development
 - > Supporting non-traditional / short-term lease agreements
 - > Using vacant retail or other underutilized ground-floor spaces



Case Study YOUTH ON RECORD (DENVER)

When budgets are strained, many cities and school districts cut funding for the arts, making it difficult to ensure youth have access to creative outlets that are critical for development. In Denver, CO, a non-profit called Youth on Record provides free music and studio production courses to high school students from under-resourced communities as an incentive to finish school and get a diploma. The combination of education and art creates a powerful framework for empowerment and equity. Additional goals of the program include increasing:

- Social-emotional skills
- Resiliency
- Academic success and achievement
- Post-secondary readiness to ensure more economic stability

The program not only teaches professional-level skills but gives students access to a \$2.2-million state-of-the-art media studio, which stays open six days a week.



- Reimagining portions of the Overstreet mall for studio spaces
- > Establishing an artist-in-residence program businesses with underutilized office space
- **7c-4** Foster creative collaborations with local institutions to support and promote local artists.
- **7c-5** Expand and/or increase allocations to strengthen the percent-for-art ordinance to develop a permanent, dedicated stream of funding for local arts and culture.
- **7c-6** Implement the Music Ecosystem Study and Action Plan recommendations to develop music-based leadership and organization.
- **7c-7** Support connections between local professional artists and students to provide enhanced arts education, provide mentorship, and create a talent pipeline.
- **7c-8** Nurture, support and financially sustain small and large, authentically Charlotte arts and cultural organizations.
- 7c-9 Identify highly visible, low-cost ground-floor locations in Uptown for small home grown organizations such as The Light Factory, Clayworks, Latin American Contemporary Art (LACA), Latibah Collard Green Museum, and others.
- 7c-10 Facilitate the co-location of galleries and other artsbased businesses to improve their visibility and viability and to create a destination.

STRATEGY 7D: PARTNER WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS TO EXPAND PROGRAMMING AND ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES AND CULTURES

Extending programs further into neighborhoods will help more Center City residents access resources close to home.

- **7d-1** Identify and expand successful programs, such as idea labs, within existing community facilities, including libraries and recreation centers.
- 7d-2 Partner with Discovery Place and Charlotte
 Mecklenburg Schools to expand successful STEM
 education and programs throughout Center City
 neighborhoods including outdoor spaces and parks.
- **7d-3** Increase summer programming in Center City parks, particularly in underserved neighborhoods.

GOAL 8

DISTINCT IDENTITY AND DIVERSE DESTINATIONS





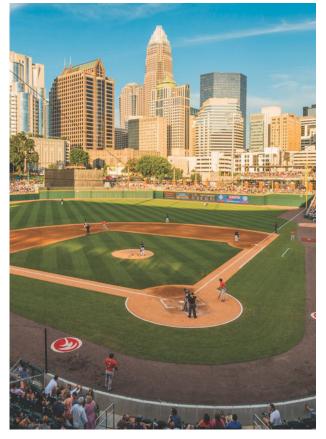
Celebrate and promote retail, entertainment, arts and culture throughout the urban core to transform Center City into an international destination. **BIG IDEA:** Create a uniquely Charlotte destination icon and experience

Why is This Important?

The number of destinations in Center City grows year over year. These include world-class museums, professional sports venues and arts and cultural festivals. In the last decade, one of the most exciting aspects of Charlotte's evolution has been the emergence, growth and maturing of new, unique destinations outside Uptown, like the growing neighborhood centers of Plaza Midwood, Wesley Heights, Selwyn Corners, Pecan Point in Elizabeth and others. These authentic hubs have become more poplar with visitors heading to breweries in South End, live music in NoDa, and shops and events at Camp North End.

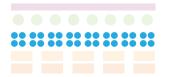
As Charlotte grows, it has the potential to become a renowned destination. Raising the City's profile will encourage visitors from all over the country and the world to see what Charlotte has to offer, including the incredible concentration of activities and experiences in Center City. Bringing more people to Charlotte will help create jobs in the hospitality and restaurant industry and support small local businesses and artists.







Center City offers a variety of events and destinations for residents and visitos



How Can We Achieve This?

STRATEGY 8A: ESTABLISH MORE AFFORDABLE, DIVERSE AND FAMILY-FRIENDLY DESTINATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

Residents from all over Charlotte and Mecklenburg County shared their desire for more affordable, family-friendly activities in the city as well as events and destinations that better reflect the cultural diversity of the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8a-1 Cultivate, recruit and support affordable, culturally diverse food establishments in Uptown and other Center City neighborhood centers, potentially in a multicultural food hall / market.
- 8a-2 Establish support for professional event staff and sustained funding to support festivals and events in neighborhood centers.
- 8a-3 Build on successful models, such as ArtsWalkCLT, Charlotte Shout! Festival, BOOM, Festival of India and Hola Charlotte, to develop new destinations and experiences. Preserve event elements and art pieces as permanent or temporary public installations.
- **8a-4** Use survey and market data to identify desired family and visitor destinations or experiences to bring to Center City, such as a zoo or aquarium.

STRATEGY 8B: CREATE AN ICONIC DESTINATION EXPERIENCE

A common theme among community stakeholders is that Center City needs a recognizable iconic experience, like "The Bean" in Chicago's Millennium Park or the San Antonio River Walk. A unique, recognizable destination will strengthen Charlotte's identity as a city and as a destination.

- **8b-1** Propose a process by which the iconic destination experience will be chosen, designed and funded including a robust engagement effort to solicit ideas and establish selection criteria based on community values (e.g., accessibility, local artists).
- **8b-2** Develop an iconic destination that fulfills multiple community and design objectives, including:
- Representing the diverse cultures and residents of Charlotte
- > Offering a no-cost recreation opportunity for all
- > Attracting and supporting businesses and economic investment
- > Is within a quarter-mile unobstructed walk of one or more transit stations
- > Provides access for all ages and abilities
- > Builds civic pride
- > Is memorable and invites interaction



Public spaces of all types can be used for programs



"The Bean" in Chicago is a must-see part of the city

STRATEGY 8C: LEVERAGE INVESTMENTS IN SPORTS, CULTURE AND ARTS TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHEN OTHER VISITOR DESTINATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

- **8c-1** Ensure consistent and sustained public and private funding for arts and culture endeavors to enrich residents while supporting local arts and culture professionals.
- 8c-2 Encourage visitors to return to Center City as COVID-19
 restrictions are lifted by adding amenities and programs
 to public spaces, including local art, performances, and
 exhibitions.
- 8c-3 Collaborate with arts and cultural institutions to host Family Days in Center City open spaces with free, activities for kids and families.
- **8c-4** Partner with professional sports organizations to identify opportunities for no- and low-cost ways for fans to celebrate the teams (e.g., viewing games in parks or plazas).
- **8c-5** Ensure all major sports, culture and arts projects include:
 - New opportunities and support for local artists and small businesses
- > Publicly accessible programs or events
- > Partnerships with schools or community-based organizations.
- **8c-6** Cultivate a mixed-use urban district around the Bank of America Stadium that offers year-round, family-friendly entertainment options.
- **8c-7** Introduce new land uses and outdoor activities adjacent to the Spectrum Center.
- **8c-8** Renovate, re-energize and reposition the EpiCentre as a mixed-use hospitality destination.





Downtown environments can include large-scale events and informal play opportunities

STRATEGY 8D: TRANSFORM UPTOWN INTO A WARM, DISTINCTIVE AND INVITING PLACE

Many parts of Uptown have become increasingly active over the last decade or more, as restaurants, events and cultural attractions have drawn people outside of business hours. At the same time, some areas are dark after working hours, and blank walls and quiet blocks make Uptown less welcoming. Uptown also lacks local and culturally diverse food and beverage businesses and shops that represent the rich and unique mosaic of the city's people.

Improved urban design and public space activation, and new culturally diverse small businesses will bring more vitality and enjoyment to the urban core, year-round and around the clock.

- **8d-1** Design and program Tryon Street as a cultural corridor that connects Center City neighborhoods and destinations through art, design, wayfinding, programming and promotion.
- 8d-2 Prohibit the development of new skywalks that removes foot traffic from surface streets and negatively impacts the pedestrian environment.
- 8d-3 Engage a professional retail consultancy to evaluate and determine the future and best use of the Overstreet Mall, and develop new wayfinding and signage at key entrances to make it easy for visitors and customers to find.
- **8d-4** Increase year-round activity and programming on sidewalks and in plazas and open spaces.
- 8d-5 Better connect the Music Factory to Uptown via new connections from planned Silver Line Rail Trail, the Pinewood/Elmwood Cemetery and Irwin Creek Greenway network.







Center City neighborhoods offer eclectic and unique destinations and art











CHAPTER 6

FOCUS AREAS

Bringing the Plan Vision, Goals and Strategies to life will be achieved in part through physical changes in specific Center City Focus Areas. The 2040 Vision Plan includes strategies and recommendations for 10 Focus Areas that are **ready for new public and private investment and catalytic transformation**. The Focus Areas are geographically dispersed across Center City to ensure a broad distribution of resources and energy, while acknowledging that some areas of the city are historically underserved and may require additional investment.

Each Focus Area has a customized set of context-specific strategies and recommendations that propose complementary land uses and infrastructure, innovative urban design ideas, creative architecture, and socially and culturally-oriented programs that provide opportunities and advancement for residents who historically have not benefited from the city's great prosperity. These, in turn, are supported by recommended policies and programs that support the overarching goals of the Vision Plan.

Criteria

Focus Areas were selected based on their potential to:

- Support multiple Vision Plan goals and strategies
- Leverage private or public investment
- Direct investment to areas of underinvestment
- Advance relevant elements of the Center City 2020 Vision Plan
- Strengthen other elements of the Center City 2040 Vision Plan
- Catalyze near-term change and investment
- Improve social and physical connections
- Have broad stakeholder and community support

FOCUS AREA A WEST TRADE / BEATTIES FORD CORRIDOR



BIG IDEA: Reconfigure the interchange at I-77 and West Trade Street to create new public land for development that generates new tax revenue that can be reinvested back into the West End

Context and Rationale

Charlotte's West End is experiencing profound change as a result of public investment and an influx of new homebuyers and private developers. The West End is rich in history, arts, culture and spirit. The neighborhoods along West Trade Street and the Beatties Ford Corridor include some of the city's oldest African-American neighborhoods and first racially integrated neighborhoods (see Figure 6.A.1).

The area is now at a turning point where its character may change in detrimental ways if growth and investment are not consistent with community needs and priorities. The recent construction of phase II of the Gold Line streetcar has improved access between Uptown and the West End, including the planned Five Points Plaza and Johnson C. Smith University. The third phase of the Gold Line will extend along Beatties Ford Road to the Rosa Parks Community Transit Center, bringing with it more investment and speculation.

There have been numerous plans and studies that address West End neighborhoods, with limited tangible results. The time has come to identify, fund and complete projects that support shared community goals.

The 5 Points Forward Plan (2021) focuses on a subsection of the Focus Area. Built on extensive community engagement, the plan envisions a renewed West End Gateway Arts and Cultural Place, which will serve as a welcoming neighborhood center between Uptown and the larger West End. The 5 Points Forward Plan includes transformative recommendations for this area including a signature pedestrian and bicycle bridge over the freeway and a pedestrian promenade on public land reclaimed from the I-77 interchange redesign. It recommends improved connections to and between adjacent neighborhoods while bringing new offices, services and gathering places to the neighborhood.

As these developments take shape, and the Gold Line extension moves further north, it is imperative that the **history**, culture and character of the West End are valued, protected and preserved. Neighborhood transformation and investment should be focused on equitable, inclusive development and creating a truly mixed-income, diverse



Figure 6.A.1: WEST TRADE / BEATTIES FORD CORRIDOR

neighborhood. Affordable and workforce housing, walkable neighborhoods, and local business support is necessary to prevent displacement as growth continues along West Trade Street and Beatties Ford Road.

Objectives

- Implement programs to minimize displacement of existing residents and businesses
- Create a cultural destination and neighborhood center that serves and celebrates the community
- Extend investments and community benefits along the Beatties Ford corridor as the Gold Line is developed and extended
- Reconfigure the I-77 / West Trade interchange and develop



Local organizations reflect and celebrate neighborhood culture

- the West End Gateway
- Identify opportunities for neighborhood-appropriate infill development
- Employ the principles of Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD)

Strategies and Recommendations

A1. AUTHENTICALLY ENGAGE WITH WEST END RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS TO IDENTIFY AND IMPLEMENT PRIORITY PROJECTS

- A1-1 Partner with the Historic West End Neighborhood Association, the Northwest Corridor Council of Elders, and Historic West End Partners to identify shared goals and align resources
- A1-2 Work with community leaders and existing organizations, including schools and places of worship, to engage with community members

A2. IMPLEMENT A UNIFYING "ONE WEST END" CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT, MAKING SURE INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY EXTENDS BEYOND JCSU AND ROUTE 16 ALONG BEATTIES FORD ROAD TO HORNETS NEST REGIONAL PARK / TRINITY ROAD

- A2-1 Implement the Beatties Ford / Rozzelles Ferry
 Corridor of Opportunity (COO) projects to leverage public
 investment and identify strategic next steps, including:
- Affordable housing developments with public and private organizations including the West Side Land Trust

- > Public safety and violence reduction programs in partnership with the Safe CLT program
- > The Charlotte Equity Fellowship Program community organizing work
- > Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements including lighting
- Asset-based community development training for residents and CBOs
- > Operations support for fresh and healthy food programs, including the 3 Sisters Market.

EQUITABLE TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (ETOD)

Using programs and policies to ensure that individuals at all income levels can participate in the benefits of living near transit. ETOD policies also are designed to minimize potential displacement of lower-income persons who live near major transit investments.

ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

An approach to sustainable and equitable economic development in which communities can drive the development process by identifying and mobilizing existing, but often unrecognised assets.

CBOs (COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS)

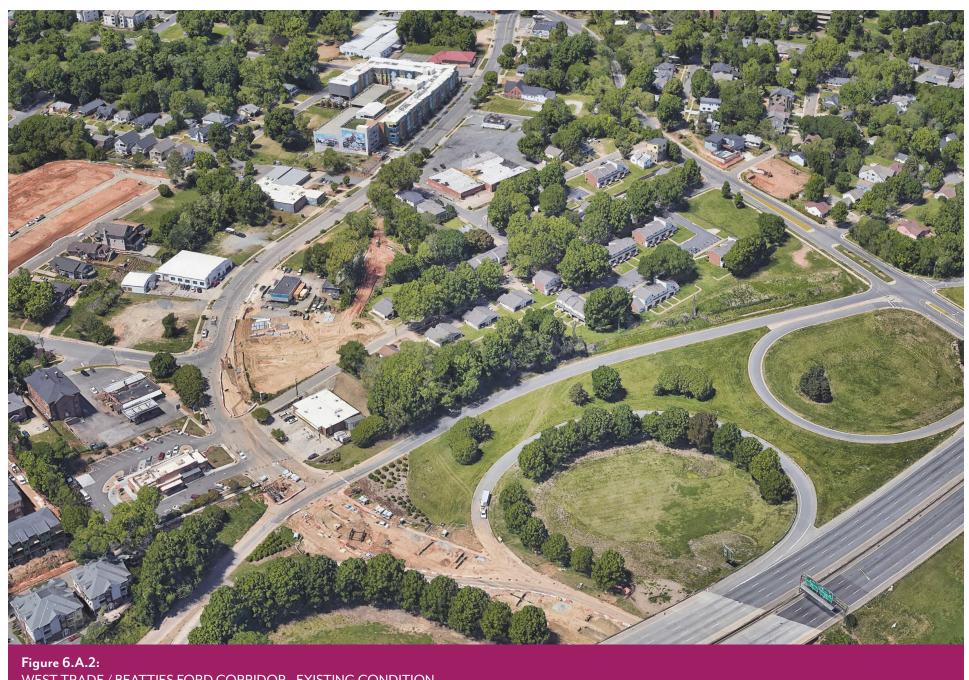
Non-profit, non-governmental, or charitable organizations that represent community needs and work to help them. CBOs may be associated with a particular area of concern or segment of the community like Historic West End Partners, or Community Matters Cafe.

A3. IMPLEMENT THE 5 POINTS FORWARD MASTER PLAN COMMUNITY GOALS AND **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- A3-1 Reconfigure the I-77 interchange and develop the West End gateway area at West Trade and 5th Streets to include an urban park, higher-density mixed-use development, a signature pedestrian and bicycle bridge, and promenade
- A3-2 Program and maintain the 5 Points Plaza and support of the 5 Points Center, a commercial hub for businesses owned by people of color
- A3-3 Re-animate Beatties Ford corridor and connect the JCSU campus to the rest of Five Points through the design and programming of the Biddle Hall Green

A4. POSITION THE WEST END AS A DESTINATION FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN ARTS, **CULTURE AND HISTORY**

- A4-1 Establish a West End arts and cultural institution on the Beatties Ford / Rozzelles Ferry corridor to highlight and celebrate the area's history, host local arts and cultural exhibits, and provide programs and community space for residents and neighborhood organizations
- A4-2 Create a signature gateway that announces arrival in the West End and celebrates the area's identity and history
- A4-3 Market and promote events, programs and local businesses to foster a shared identity, encourage investment, and attract visitors
- **A4-4** Preserve and protect culturally significant institutions including the Grand Theater, the Excelsior Club and the Mt. Carmel Baptist Church



WEST TRADE / BEATTIES FORD CORRIDOR - EXISTING CONDITION



 A4-5 Incorporate local arts, identity, history and culture into the design of public places including greenways, transit stops, and open spaces

A5. IMPLEMENT PLANNED INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AND INVESTMENTS

- A5-1 Complete the West Trade / Rozelles Ferry
 Comprehensive Neighborhood Improvement Program
- A5-2 Construct the third phase of the Gold Line to Rosa Parks Transit Center
- A5-3 Reconfigure the I-77 interchange to improve connections to Uptown and create new public land for development that generates new tax revenue that can be reinvested back into the West End

A6. MITIGATE DISPLACEMENT OF EXISTING RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES AND INCREASE SOCIOECONOMIC DIVERSITY

- A6-1 Implement a suite of affordable housing, wealthbuilding and business support programs for residents
- > Property tax or rental assistance for long-time residences
- > Programs and funding to rehabilitate older structures so residents and established businesses can remain in the neighborhood
- > Partnerships with banks and financial institutions to support home ownership; and technical assistance, incubation and other small business support programs for the BIPOC community.
- A6-2 Identify specific opportunities in the corridor for creation and growth of small business, and equity building for the African American community

- A6-3 Support the sustainable growth and success of the West Side Land Trust
- A6-4 Encourage a mix of housing types, unit sizes and affordability levels

A7. CREATE WALKABLE "10-MINUTE NEIGHBORHOODS" ALONG THE CORRIDOR

- **A7-1** Provide basic amenities and infrastructure including sidewalks, bike lanes, and free Wi-Fi
- A7-2 Plan and design neighborhoods to include a mix of essential services and amenities including parks and public spaces, groceries and pharmacies, and childcare, eldercare, and health clinics
- A7-3 Improve connections between neighborhoods and the commercial activity along the Gold Line while protecting the character of existing residential neighborhoods
- A7-4 Recruit and support small businesses, artists, creatives, and entrepreneurs to bring more people to the neighborhood and support other businesses such as restaurants, bars, galleries, studios, shops and clubs



Murals are opportunities for local artists and neighborhood expression



A pedestrian and bicycle bridge will create a new connection to the West End



A central pedestrian space will add connections within the gateway area







FOCUS AREA B NORTH END



BIG IDEA: Create a new mobility hub at the heart of a dense mixeduse redevelopment of the Hal Marshall site where the Blue Line and planned Silver Line light rail will intersect

Context and Rationale

The North End spans a large area of Center City that includes several residential neighborhoods, industrial activity zones, the Blue Line light rail, greenways, and the Norfolk Southern railyard. With recent investment, growing interest in creating a new signature public space, and the design and construction of the Silver Line light rail, the North End is on the brink of significant transformation.

It will be critical to guide North End growth and investment in a manner that benefits existing residents and businesses, and addresses the challenges facing the area, which include:

- Poor connections between neighborhoods and from Uptown to the North End
- Neighborhoods lacking in amenities including complete sidewalks, comfortable bus stops, grocery stores and other community uses
- Residents at risk of displacement due to development pressures and rising costs

- Limited parks and public spaces
- Difficult access to Blue Line stations from North End neighborhoods
- Homelessness and access to community services.

The Focus Area recommendations address three interconnected topics – the North End neighborhoods; the potential conversion of the rail yard into a major new public space known as Queen's Park; and the intersection of the Silver and Blue light rail lines.

The recommendations address these major projects while also laying the groundwork for **specific**, **tactical neighborhood improvements**. Strategies are intended to take advantage of the once-in-a-lifetime "big moves" at the crossing of two light rail lines and railyard to funnel investment to underserved communities, creating complete neighborhoods and bringing more amenities and opportunity to the North End.

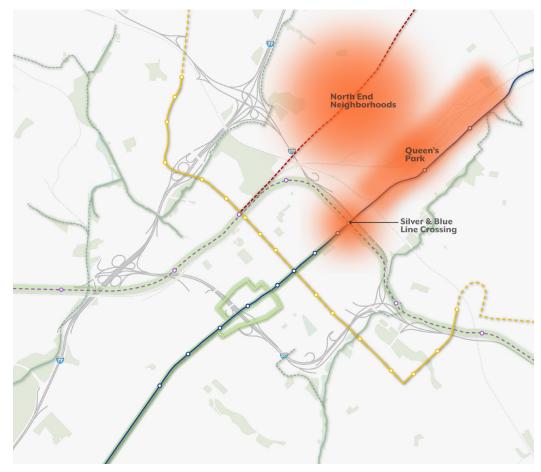


Figure 6.B.1: NORTH END

NORTH END NEIGHBORHOODS

The inner North End neighborhoods, particularly those between I-77 and North Davidson Street north of the I-277 loop, are a mix of low-density housing, light industrial activity, and a growing number of independent businesses and enterprises. They also comprise the North End Smart District, a City-led effort to leverage local assets and technology to address community priorities (see Figure 6.B.1).

A community-driven neighborhood planning and visioning process for the North End is needed to **identify, prioritize** and implement community improvements. These include ensuring all residents have access to fundamental amenities, including reliable WiFi and safe, well-lit streets and sidewalks. The plan should address how to use former industrial land to support jobs, innovation and training and development; how to build new and preserve affordable housing and prevent displacement; and how to improve the challenging roadway and infrastructure conditions to support mobility and sustained growth.

SILVER AND BLUE LINE CROSSING

Along the north edge of Uptown, the future Silver Line will intersect with the Blue Line. This connection will create a new regional mobility hub, allowing travelers from around the city and the county to access and navigate Center City more easily. This connection also presents the opportunity to create a new civic cornerstone, to re-imagine what a transit station can be and to re-think the entire area between Uptown and North End (see Figure 6.B.2).

The Silver and Blue Line Crossing will be a **dynamic, mixed-use employment and activity hub** that provides seamless connections and transfers between transit lines, as well as bike parking and rental, rideshare pick-up and drop-off locations, and access to scooters and other mobility devices. It is also an opportunity to site community services including health care providers and child-care facilities in a central, transit-oriented location that is adjacent to employment uses and easy for families to access. Retail, including a grocery store, and restaurants would serve office workers, residents, commuters and visitors—bringing life and energy to the neighborhood.

QUEEN'S PARK

Consolidating and relocating railroad activity could open up land to be re-envisioned and redeveloped as a large premier public space. "Queen's Park," as the community-driven concept is currently known, would be a 150-plus acre park that includes public spaces, natural habitats, public art, a trail system, an outdoor event venue, and sports courts and fields. It would be within walking distance of Uptown and be bordered by new, dense urban development with significant affordable housing and commercial space for local businesses and organizations. The park could also include new arts or cultural venues, a recreation center, and classrooms or other community spaces and would provide stellar views of Charlotte's skyline. The parks and adjacent land would remove the barrier the railyard creates, connecting neighborhoods to one another and improving access to transit, public space and other amenities (see Figures 6.B.3 and 6.B.7). The railyard and historic uses can provide design inspiration for the area.

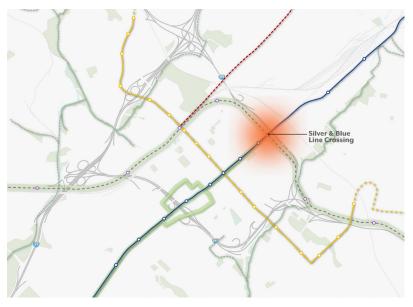


Figure 6.B.2: NORTH END - SILVER + BLUE LINE CROSSING



Figure 6.B.3: NORTH END - QUEEN'S PARK

Objectives

- Improve connections between Uptown and the North End, and between North End neighborhoods
- Retain and support existing businesses and employment uses compatible with the vision for the area
- Create major new public spaces and activity centers to provide both basic services and amenities
- Transform North End neighborhoods into complete, walkable communities
- Prevent displacement of existing residents and community organizations
- Leverage public land, assets and new development to support affordable housing, new public spaces, community programs and equity goals

Strategies and Recommendations

B-1. CREATE AND IMPLEMENT THE NORTH END NEIGHBORHOODS AREA PLAN IN PHASE 1 OR 2 OF THE CITY'S COMMUNITY AREA PLANNING PROCESS. ENSURE THE PLAN ACHIEVES THE FOLLOWING GOALS:

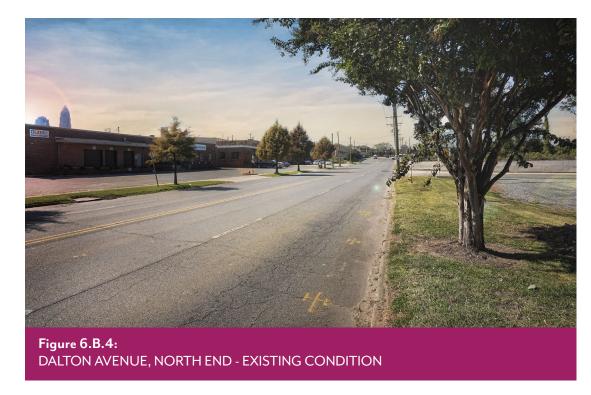
- **B1-1** Identify and deliver phased roadway and active transportation projects that overcome barriers within and between North End neighborhoods
- **B1-2** Complete basic neighborhood infrastructure including Wi-Fi access, sidewalks, lighting and crosswalks

- B1-3 Support a mix of residential, commercial and employment uses including affordable, workforce and market-rate housing as well as light industrial and other employment uses
- **B1-4** Retain and renovate the existing North Tryon Amtrak station to serve as a secondary transit facility and unique infrastructure feature in the North End

B-2. WORK WITH HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICE PROVIDERS, INCLUDING ROOF ABOVE, TO ENSURE HOMELESS PEOPLE AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS CAN ACCESS NEEDED SERVICES

B-3. LEVERAGE PUBLICLY OWNED LAND
AT THE HAL MARSHALL SITE TO CAPTURE
VALUE FROM NEW HIGH DENSITY MIXED USE
DEVELOPMENT TO FUND IMPROVEMENTS AND
COMMUNITY GOALS THROUGHOUT UPTOWN
AND THE NORTH END NEIGHBORHOODS
INCLUDING:

- Affordable housing
- Parks and public space
- Childcare facilities
- Low-cost commercial space
- Arts and culture facilities and venues





Neighborhood shops, cafes and services can thrive in the ground floor of residential buildings



B-4. INTEGRATE A MULTI-STORY TRANSIT STATION INTO A DENSE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT MAXIMIZING ACCESS TO THE BLUE AND SILVER LINES

- **B4-1** Incorporate a large, central gathering space into to the development that includes amenities such as shade, art, and furniture and can accommodate events and programs
- **B4-2** Allow for a multi-modal connection under or over I-277 (as determined by future study of the highway's vertical alignment)
- **B4-3** Complete a detailed financial feasibility analysis for adjacent blocks to determine the viability and scale of potential development
- **B4-4** Engage in a public-private partnership to redevelop the Hal Marshall site on North Tryon Street to include:
- > Mixed-use development with active ground floors and an anchor tenant
- > A 5+ acre plaza or public space
- > A mix of residential options including workforce housing, rental and business ownership opportunities
- > Affordable housing
- > Strong walking and biking connections to transit including the Silver Line
- > Mid-block pedestrian pathways
- > Arts, cultural, education, or other civic facilities.









Multi-story transit centers can provide retail and public spaces with modern amenities and services



B-5. ENSURE THAT THE SILVER LINE TOD STRATEGY PLAN REFLECTS PRINCIPLES OF EQUITABLE TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (ETOD) INCLUDING:

- Allowing all people to access and experience the benefits of dense, mixed-use pedestrian-oriented development near transit and mobility hubs
- Working with community members in decision-making processes
- Improving connections to opportunities including education, employment and enrichment
- Establishing equity goals and monitoring progress towards ETOD benefits, such as affordable housing, accessibility, economic growth, environmental benefits and public health

B-6. CONSOLIDATE AND RELOCATE THE NORFOLK SOUTHERN RAIL LINES TO RECAPTURE LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT AND TO CREATE A SIGNATURE PARK (see also Strategy 5a pg.70)

- **B6-1** Create a connected system of public spaces between Uptown and the new park that serves as an active trail similar to the Blue Line Rail Trail
- **B6-2** Preserve the ability to serve the neighborhood and park via Amtrak as the area matures









A new signature park can reflect the railyard's history in its design and include many different settings and spaces







FOCUS AREA C

CEDAR YARDS / FOUNDRY DISTRICT



BIG IDEA: Create a lively mixed-use district around Bank of America stadium that integrates wellness, athletics and entertainment activities

Context and Rationale

The Cedar Yards / Foundry District area of the Third Ward is poised to become Center City's next great urban mixed-use neighborhood. As the Silver Line extends from Gateway Station to the southwest, the opportunity will be created for context-sensitive transit-oriented development and a new, dynamic district within steps of the urban core (see Figure 6.C.1).

The Bank of America stadium draws thousands of visitors to football and soccer games as well as concerts and other large-scale events. Outside of these events, there is incredible potential to activate this neighborhood year-round by creating new housing, a mix of entertainment, food and beverage, retail and office uses, well-designed streets, and multimodal connections.

The neighborhood will seamlessly connect to the Silver Line, West End neighborhoods, the Gold District, the redeveloped Pipe and Foundry site, Bank of America Stadium and the core of Uptown. Indoor and outdoor recreation and entertainment options should be located on all sides of the stadium, so that it

is part of the fabric of the neighborhood, and provides a safe, dynamic experience 365 days a year.

Objectives

- Create a new, active mixed-use urban district around Bank of America stadium
- Improve connections from Uptown to FreeMoreWest, the Gold District and Third Ward
- Create a neighborhood that thrives day to day and during the large scale events yet accommodates and respects the lifestyle of current residents

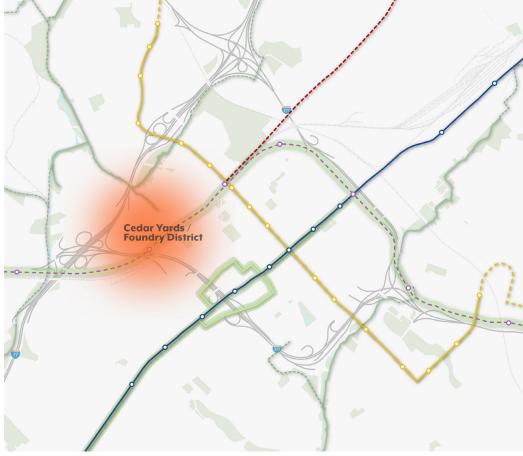
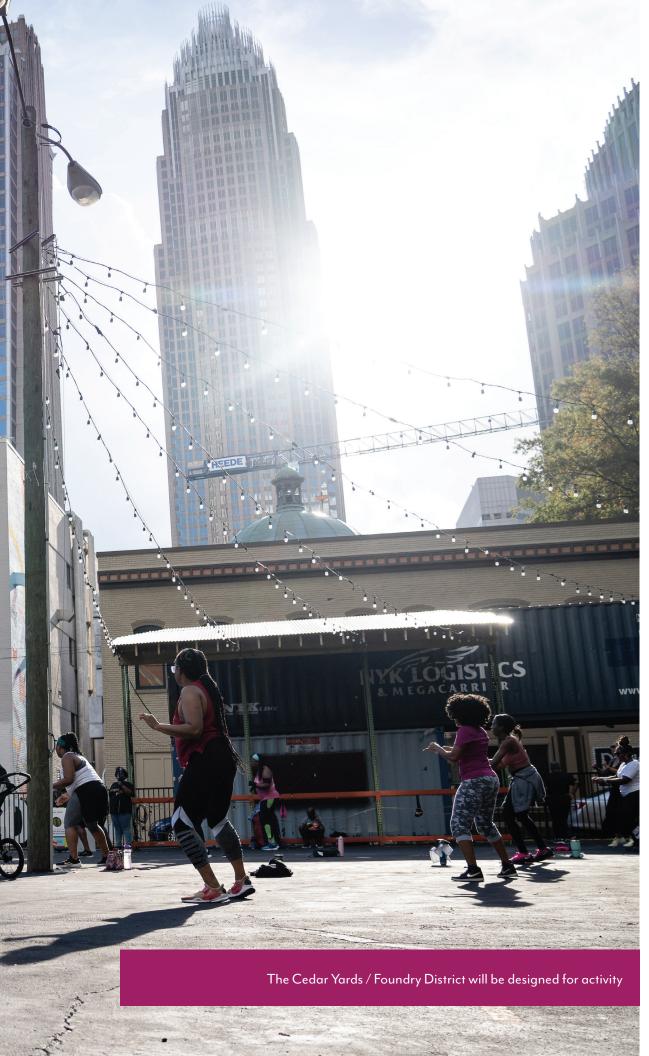


Figure 6.C.1: CEDAR YARDS / FOUNDRY DISTRICT



Strategies and Recommendations

C1. DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE VISION, GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE PIPE AND FOUNDRY PROPERTY AND THE THIRD WARD WEST OF THE STADIUM AND SOUTH OF WEST 4TH STREET

- C1-1 Preserve single-family residential uses North of West First Street near Frazier Park
- C1-2 Plan and design the area between West First Street and West Morehead Street as a transitional area between lower-density established neighborhoods and high-density mixed-use transit-oriented development
- C1-3 Apply the UMUD designation to properties southwest of Morehead and the Pipe and Foundry site to support high-density, mixed-use neighborhoods
- C1-4 Consolidate multiple surface parking into structures shared between daily users (residents and workers) and public / event parking
- **C1-5** Preserve and adaptively re-use key historic and industrial structures
- C1-6 Establish and enforce design guidelines and standards that reflect the historic character, architecture and materials of the Pipe and Foundry site and Third Ward
- C1-7 Strengthen the network of connected parks and public spaces to serve high-density neighborhoods, provide active transportation connections, and organize district development

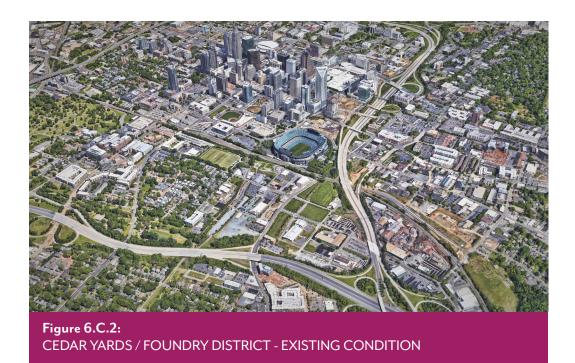
C2. INTEGRATE MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE THIRD WARD, PIPE AND FOUNDRY SITE AND FREEMOREWEST

- C2-1 Design and build an elevated pedestrian walkway over the rail lines that includes art, landscaping and memorable architecture
- C2-2 Improve the Coca-Cola Catwalk through Cedar Yards / Foundry District to create a seamless pedestrian / bicycle connection between the Wesley Heights Greenway, the Uptown CycleLink and Bank of America Stadium
- C2-3 Coordinate with the Silver Line alignment to extend Stonewall Street from Graham Street under the railroad tracks to Cedar Street
- C2-4 Implement the Meck Playbook recommendations to create greenway and trail connections from Frazier Park to neighborhoods west of I-277
- C2-5 Re-establish the street grid and regular block patterns south of West Morehead including the Pipe and Foundry site
- **C2-6** Assess the condition of I-277 over- and underpasses and prioritize improvements for safe, comfortable environments for pedestrians and cyclists
- C2-7 Improve I-277 underpasses at South Mint / West Morehead and Clarkson Street
- **C2-8** Create seamless connections from the Bank of America stadium, Pipe and Foundry / Gold District and Third Ward to the new Silver Line station(s)
- C2-9 Ensure strong connections between the southern side of Pipe and Foundry and the Gold District
- C2-10 As the area develops, preserve the opportunity for a
 potential additional Silver Line station along the Pipe and
 Foundry property around the Summit Street area

C3. CREATE A LIVELY, MIXED-USE DISTRICT THAT INTEGRATES WELLNESS, ATHLETICS AND ENTERTAINMENT ACTIVITES AROUND BANK OF AMERICA STADIUM

- C3-1 Improve the transition from the Bank of America stadium into adjacent neighborhoods by working with Tepper Sports to develop and curate new, street-facing ground-floor activity at or around the base of the stadium
- **C3-2** Design, program and activate plazas and public spaces year-round
- **C3-3** Use small spaces to create pocket parks, tucked-in courts, and streets that can be easily closed and converted to games and sports
- C3-4 Designate walkable, nearby spaces for tailgating
- **C3-5** Support flexible ground-floor active uses, prioritize streetscape design, and provide generous pedestrian amenities to support a dynamic urban environment
- **C3-6** Create a range of commercial spaces targeted at local businesses, shops and restaurants that reflect all of Charlotte's cultures
- **C3-7** Increase residential development throughout the Third Ward
- C3-8 Ensure the redevelopment of the existing Panthers practice field becomes an active and vibrant transition between Third Ward and Bank of America Stadium and the Gateway Station area







Creative design and programming can help overcome and animate celebrate what could be seen as an infrastructural barrier



FOCUS AREA D SOUTH END



BIG IDEA: Construct a freeway cap between Streets linking Uptown and South End

Context and Rationale

The South End has transformed over the last decade into a vibrant, residential mixed-use neighborhood and extension of Charlotte's core business district. This tremendous growth has strained the city's infrastructure and systems, and South End is still disconnected from Uptown, with limited options for pedestrian and bicycle connections. However, new development, energy, and infrastructure between the Bank of America Stadium and Tryon Street are transforming the area (see Figure 6.D.1).

Directly connecting Uptown to the South End can be achieved with a "big move" of adding a freeway cap over I-277, where it runs below grade. Building over the freeway would effectively create new, taxable city blocks, while allowing traffic to move underneath them. This new land could be used for a grand new public space, lined with mixed-use buildings fronting the park providing myriad opportunities for community gathering and events, public art, and economic development.

Objectives

- Continue to implement recommendations in the South End Vision Plan
- Seamlessly connect South End and Uptown
- Update and continue to implement the strategies and recommendations in the Blue Line Rail Trail Vision and Framework Plans
- Leverage investment to create a new park and more public space with public art, community-oriented retail and amenities as well as arts, cultural and civic venues
- Ensure roads, sidewalks and utilities in the South End support density and continued growth

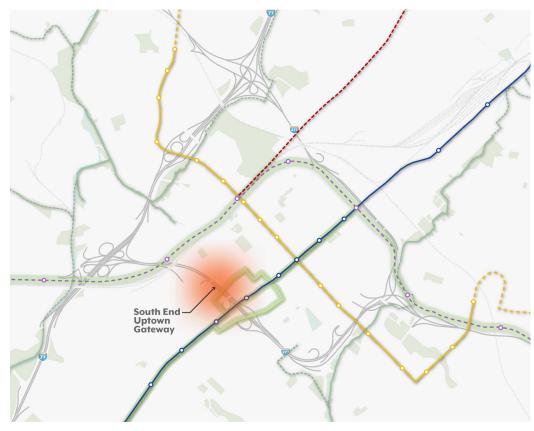


Figure 6.D.1: SOUTH END

Strategies and Recommendations

D1. CREATE NEW CONNECTIONS BETWEEN UPTOWN AND SOUTH END TO OVERCOME THE FREEWAY BARRIER

- **D1-1** Construct the new Rail Trail Pedestrian Bridge to complete the trail gap and provide a safe dedicated pathway for pedestrians and cyclists across I-277
- **D1-2** Create a freeway cap over I-277 between South Church and South College Streets to create developable land, a new public space, and a seamless connection between Uptown and South End
- **D1-3** Identify options for development along the park edges and include small-scale commercial spaces and other business opportunities for entrepreneurs of all cultures, and public art
- **D1-4** Construct the planned Stonewall to Euclid bridge across I-227











Creating freeway caps provides opportunities for new public spaces and connecting residents like Klyde Warren Park in Dallas

D2. ENHANCE THE BLUE LINE RAIL TRAIL TO CONTINUE ITS TRANSFORMATION INTO A COHESIVE, WELL-DESIGNED DESTINATION AND AMENITY FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

- **D2-1** Continue to implement the recommendations in the Blue Line Rail Trail Vision and Framework Plans as well as the Rail Trail Public Art Master Plan
- **D2-2** Produce an updated Rail Trail enhancement and investment strategy that includes
- > Economic impact analysis and strategy
- > Pedestrian counts and other user data
- > Community engagement
- > Public realm programming and management strategies
- > Conceptual and schematic designs, construction documents and cost estimates
- > Structure for facility management, funding, governance and maintenance (e.g.,501c3 Friends of the Rail Trail)
- **D2-3** Develop and implement signage and wayfinding system for the Rail Trail
- **D2-4** Work with CATS and other City departments to create cohesive but distinct brands for all current and future Rail Trails
- **D2-5** Establish a public and private sector partnership to fund, manage and advise the process



The new Arch Park bridges across I-44 and connects tourists with downtown St. Louis

D3. CREATE A COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN FOR THE SOUTH END TO ENSURE EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

- D3-1 Create a capital improvement plan for South End stormwater and sewer systems to ensure adequate infrastructure supports new and existing development
- **D3-2** Maximize green infrastructure and low-impact development opportunities
- **D3-3** Implement the South End Vision Plan street design guidelines and the TOD / Blue Line Streets Map to ensure streets and sidewalks are designed for dense residential and commercial neighborhoods



Figure 6.D.2:
SOUTH END - EXISTING CONDITION



The Rose Kennedy Greenway caps a freeway and connects Boston neighborhoods



FOCUS AREA E

GOVERNMENT DISTRICT



BIG IDEA: Transform Government District into a full service, mixed-use neighborhood

Context and Rationale

The Government District Focus Area includes the area located between South McDowell Street, East Trade Street, Brevard Street and 3rd Street (see Figure 6.E.1). Dominated by large blocks and buildings and civic uses including City and County offices, the County courthouse and Sheriff's office, the area no longer has the original street grid or urban fabric of the historic Second Ward.

Today, however, it does enjoy proximity to new investment and amenities, including the Blue and Gold Lines and new development along Stonewall Street. It is also adjacent to the former Brooklyn neighborhood which was razed during urban renewal in the mid-1960s. As plans evolve for a new, mixeduse Brooklyn Village, the Government District itself is ripe for change.

Government District is dominated by civic buildings and functions, lacking other uses like restaurants or shops nearby. Many properties do not generate tax revenue that supports City and County improvements. The area is not very

pedestrian friendly, with large buildings and long blocks, and most street-level activity stops at 5pm. Infusing new life into this strategically-located neighborhood in the near-term can be accomplished with **new uses, more active ground-floors, and improved connections** that add energy to the area's streets and sidewalks.

Over the next several years there is opportunity to consolidate civic operations into more dense buildings. This would allow the City and County to use or **leverage publicly-owned land for neighborhood improvement**, including affordable housing, and to increase the tax revenue generated by these properties. The City and County should continue collaborating to share facilities and coordinate development plans to ensure related uses (e.g., jail and courthouse) are located near each other.

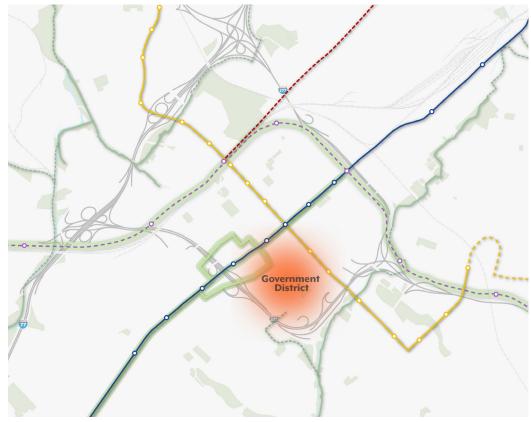


Figure 6.E.1:
GOVERNMENT DISTRICT

Objectives

- Transform the Government District into a mixed-use neighborhood that is lively during the day and evenings
- Improve walkability by adding connections through the district to Brooklyn Village and Trade Street
- Take advantage of publicly owned land to create a dynamic, high density mixed-use neighborhood
- Improve existing parks and public spaces such as the Government Center plaza and the space in front of old city hall

Strategies and Recommendations

E-1. ADD CONNECTIONS BETWEEN BLOCKS AND DESTINATIONS TO INCREASE WALKABILITY AND CREATE A SAFE, COMFORTABLE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

- **E1-1** Require new development to provide mid-block pedestrian and bicycle connections
- **E1-2** Re-establish north-south vehicle connections between MLK and Trade Streets where possible

E-2. ENSURE NEIGHBORHOOD LAND USE AND URBAN DESIGN SUPPORTS A MIXED-USE 18-HOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

- E2-1 Create multiple activity nodes including pedestrianoriented ground floor environments
- **E2-2** Install engaging art and consistent lighting throughout the district
- **E2-3** Identify and incentivize new land uses that complement nearby civic, hospitality and entertainment destinations
- **E2-4** Ensure design anticipates and respects adjacent development and change, including plans for the Brooklyn Village neighborhood and Marshall Park





Vibrant urban areas include active public spaces, transparent ground floor uses and landscaping

E-3. ESTABLISH PARAMETERS AND CONDITIONS FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF MUNICIPALLY OWNED PARCELS ALONG TRADE **STREET**

- **E3-1** Establish land use and design expectations consistent with E-1 and E-2
- **E3-2** Increased density and improved streetscape design
- **E3-3** Substantial neighborhood investments including affordable housing and childcare facilities for government district workers
- **E3-4** Relocation and / or consolidation of civic uses into smaller footprints and mixed-use developments

E-4. ENGAGE IN A MASTER PLAN AND VISIONING PROCESS TO ESTABLISH A LARGER VISION FOR THE GOVERNMENT DISTRICT AND THE GREATER SECOND WARD

- **E4-1** Create a task force / subcommittee to establish a ward-wide land-use program
- **E4-2** Perform a feasibility study for major program recommendations
- **E4-3** Engage displaced Brooklyn Village residents and their families

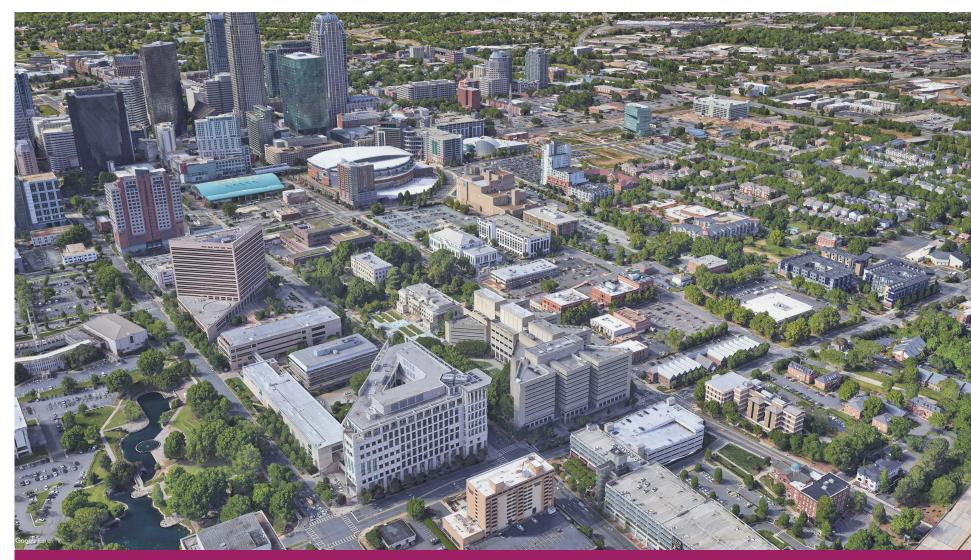


Figure 6.E.2: **GOVERNMENT DISTRICT - EXISTING CONDITION**



TRYON STREET UPTOWN



BIG IDEA: "Reimagine" Tryon Street by creating and implementing a new comprehensive streetscape vision

Context and Rationale

Building upon its storied past and place in the city and region, Tryon Street in Uptown will evolve as Charlotte's **true signature corridor** for the 21st century, known on a national scale and reflecting the diversity, energy and character of the entire Charlotte region (see Figure 6.F.1).

For decades, Tryon Street has functioned as the commercial center of Uptown, where some of the country's major corporate headquarters, businesses and institutions line the blocks. It is also a gathering place for celebrations and parades, drawing visitors from all over the region. In 2020, Tryon became a new kind of destination, when vehicular traffic was restricted for several blocks and the street was covered in a giant Black Lives Matter mural, signaling to the city – and the entire world—that Center City is a place where Black lives and the aspirations of African-Americans are valued in a downtown that is safe, welcoming and celebrated.

While it has many positive features and "good bones," Tryon Street was designed and developed in the 1980s and 1990s.

As a result, it feels somewhat dated, and it does not function well in a current urban environment characterized by increased numbers of pedestrians and bicycles, scooters, ride-share services, on-demand delivery, pop-up events, and street art. Tryon Street needs to reflect the **culture and community** of **Charlotte's future**. It should feel more **intimate**, warm and celebratory with public art, local and culturally diverse businesses and lively streets.

Prior to the pandemic, the Charlotte community expressed desires for safe, comfortable streets that make room for music, art and discovery. During the pandemic, the use of public space and streets for dining, shopping and socializing became critical to keeping businesses open and residents connected. This **flexibility and adaptability** of space should be the cornerstone of a re-envisioned Tryon Street that puts people first.

During the pandemic recovery and into the coming decades, Tryon Street will better balance the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and transit riders with the needs of businesses and vehicles. The corridor design will allow for events and activities

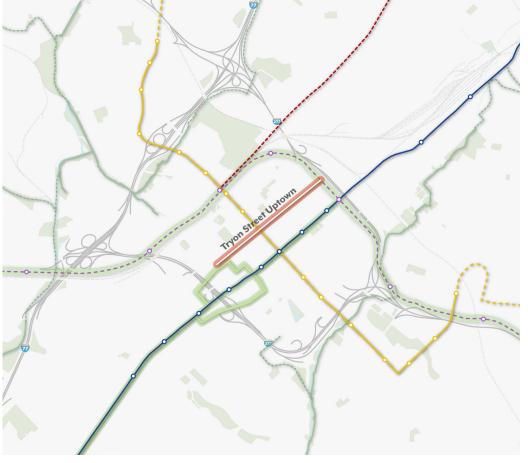


Figure 6.F.1: TRYON STREET UPTOWN

not just during business hours and holidays, but into the evenings and on weekends, for the entire year.

As a true multi-cultural corridor at the center of this dynamic and diverse community, Tryon Street will use creative seating, lighting, and interactive art to improve the function and enhance the beauty of the street. Points of interest along the corridor will encourage people to explore, linger, and experience the creativity and all the cultures of Charlotte's people.

Objectives

- Create a safe, warm and welcoming environment for all
- Celebrate Tryon Street as Charlotte's birthplace, primary Main Street, and regional civic gathering space
- Strengthen its identity as a cultural corridor through marketing and design, building on the many existing civic and arts institutions
- Foster a distinct and impressionable identity
- Invest in and increase funding for more inventive and creative programming and events
- Balance elements of historic and cultural significance with contemporary streetscape design and the use of technology for programming, wayfinding and parking

Strategies and Recommendations

F1. BRAND AND PROMOTE TRYON STREET AS A MULTI-CULTURAL CORRIDOR THAT REFLECTS AND CELEBRATES THE DIVERSITY OF CHARLOTTE

- **F1-1** Create a greater mix of activities and destinations on Tryon Street, including no- or low-cost, family-friendly activities
- **F1-2** Identify spaces for temporary and permanent local public art including sculpture, street art, and performances
- F1-3 Develop a branding and marketing strategy to promote Tryon Street and its destinations as a cultural corridor for all
- **F1-4** Add opportunities for interactive activities, signage and furnishings





Tryon Street's sidewalks are wide enough to accommodate flexible uses

F2. DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE STREETSCAPE DESIGN PLAN FOR TRYON STREET FROM I-277 TO I-277

- **F2-1** Ensure streetscape design supports Tryon's identity as a multi-cultural corridor
- **F2-2** Redesign the sidewalk to include distinct areas including a frontage zone, pedestrian zone and amenity zone
- F2-3 Create more usable and flexible spaces such as creative seating, curbside dining, music and art, and microretail to encourage outdoor street-level activity along the corridor
- **F2-4** Create a new toolkit of streetscape materials, lighting and furnishings that balance contemporary and traditional design elements
- > Toolkit elements should respond directly to the adjacent land / building use when appropriate (e.g., outdoor seating adjacent to dining)
- **F2-5** Establish design standards that reduce visual clutter and maintain the flexible use of spaces
- **F2-6** Establish gateway elements at the edges of Uptown
- **F2-7** Maintain, enhance and plan for the evolution of the tree canopy and landscaping
- **F2-8** Introduce green infrastructure elements while maximizing usable sidewalk space
- **F2-9** Strategically re-allocate on-street parking and ensure efficient shared use of curb space
- **F2-10** Shorten pedestrian crossings

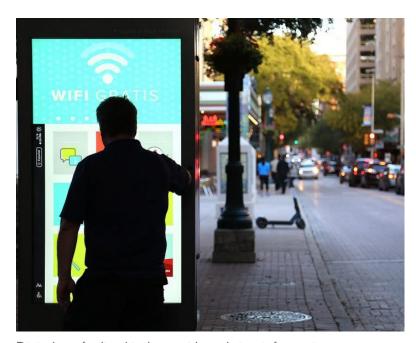


Figure 6.F.2: TRYON STREET UPTOWN - PROPOSED CONDITIONS

F3. ENSURE GROUND-FLOOR ACTIVATION AND TRANSPARENCY TO PROVIDE A DYNAMIC, WELCOMING AND SAFE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT THAT PROVIDES BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES TO PEOPLE OF ALL BACKGROUNDS

- **F3-1** Prohibit the expansion or addition of skywalks to bring more pedestrians to street level to activate the pedestrian environment, and to support businesses on the corridor
- **F3-2** Encourage and incentivize ground floor and parking garage retrofits (on Tryon and cross-streets) to support an active street life incorporating elements such as:
- > Facade enhancements with increased transparency and permeability
- > Varied materials to create more interesting places, facades, signs etc. to add more character
- > Activation below building overhangs
- > Well-designed and distinctive signage
- > Visible storefronts
- > Outdoor seating options and cafes
- > Bike and scooter parking
- Preserve tree canopy and integrate stormwater management
- **F3-3** Reprogram, redesign and/or retrofit large groundfloor lobbies along Tryon Street to accommodate active and engaging uses. Explore limiting the size of lobbies relative to total ground floor frontage.

- **F3-4** Work with building and property owners to eliminate or mitigate gaps along the street, including surface parking lots and vacant parcels, through infill development, landscaping, creation of pocket parks and / or programming
- **F3-5** Establish a clearly defined policy and program to encourage greater use of existing private open spaces, courtyards, forecourts, plazas and other "nooks and crannies" along Tryon Street
- **F3-6** Update the UDO and UMUD to ensure active ground-floor uses and transparency



Digital wayfinding kiosks provide real-time information



Undeveloped ground floors can be converted to small retail spaces



Small retail kiosks can provide pop-up shopping





FOCUS AREA G

EAST TRADE STREET / ELIZABETH AVENUE



BIG IDEA: Redesign and program current public spaces at Government Center Plaza, Old City Hall and the Old County Courthouse to be more useful and attractive public spaces along East Trade Street

Context and Rationale

East Trade Street, from the intersection of the Blue and Gold Lines in Uptown to Elizabeth Avenue, is poised to transform into a **dense**, **walkable**, **transit-oriented corridor**. Key area assets – including the recent Gold Line investment, connections to the Rail Trail, Central Piedmont Community College, and major destinations including the arena and transit center – all position East Trade Street as the **next great urban corridor in Center City** (see Figure 6.G.1).

Alongside historic structures, there are many surface parking lots and spaces that should be used to create a more complete neighborhood with high-density housing, hotels and office buildings. Infill development on surface lots and redevelopment of low-density structures will bring more people and life to the area, improving comfort and safety, particularly for pedestrians. Increased density will also result in greater tax revenue to support community amenities.

The redevelopment of the Charlotte Transit Center creates a once-in-a-generation opportunity to alter the character of the area around the Spectrum Center, where multiple transportation routes intersect, into a lively, civic-oriented community hub.

New development and investment along East Trade will support a ground-floor environment that caters to pedestrians and transit users. Safe intersections, great active sidewalks, more trees and a network of connected parks and public spaces will create a consistent streetscape that better connects East Trade Street to neighborhoods and destinations east of I-277.

Objectives

- Transform East Trade Street into a dense, safe, walkable mixed-use transit corridor connecting Uptown to Elizabeth Avenue
- Catalyze infill opportunities and enhance outdoor spaces to create an active corridor
- Retain and enhance buildings of architectural or historic significance
- Improve connections under I-277 to Central Piedmont Community College and Elizabeth

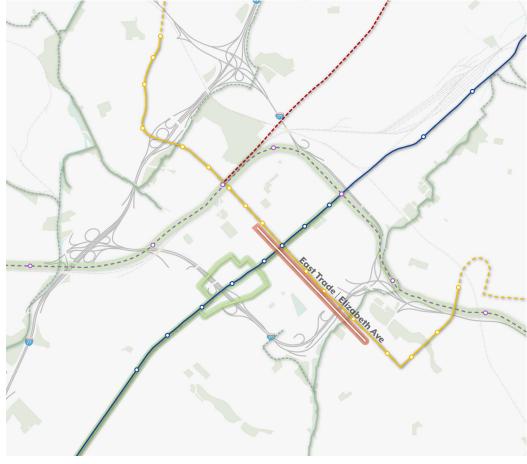


Figure 6.G.1: EAST TRADE STREET/ELIZABETH AVENUE

Strategies and Recommendations

G1. CREATE A CONSISTENT AND HIGH-QUALITY STREETSCAPE AND PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCE FROM THE BLUE LINE RAIL TRAIL AND CHARLOTTE TRANSIT CENTER TO ELIZABETH AVENUE AND THE LITTLE SUGAR CREEK GREENWAY

- **G1-1** Provide active ground floors through land use and design requirements, building retrofits and façade improvements
- **G1-2** Improve intersections and pedestrian connections across Trade Street at Gold Line stops
- **G1-3** Work with local artists to design and install engaging art and installations under I-277
- **G1-4** Encourage architecture that respects and complements key features of historic structures
- **G1-5** Identify programs or events to temporarily activate parking lots and other underused
- **G1-6** Identify areas along East Trade Street where space for pedestrians can be added for a more comfortable walking environment, prioritizing areas in front of buildings that have ground-floor activity

G2. FACILITATE TRANSIT-ORIENTED COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL MIXED-USE INFILL DEVELOPMENT WHILE RETAINING HISTORIC AND CIVIC ASSETS

- G2-1 Work with property owners, employers and developers to support new development on strategic parcels including surface parking lots, and smaller-scale parking structures, including:
- > 551 East Trade Street
- > 426 East Trade Street
- > 407 East 4th Street
- **G2-2** Require active ground-floor uses while allowing flexibility in building and design standards and uses to allow
- > Community and civic uses (e.g., public meeting rooms or recreation spaces)
- > Retail, dining and entertainment
- > Co-working or workspaces with ample foot traffic and visibility (e.g., leasing office)
- > Recreation, gym or studio spaces
- > Art studios and galleries including temporary / pop-up events and installations



Transit stops can provide shelter, shade, seating and arrival times



Large plazas provide play environments and gathering spaces

- **G2-3** Establish a maximum allowed distance between building entryways and minimize lobby sizes to support building access and street activity
- G2-4 Ensure that ground-floor uses have entrances and are accessed directly from the sidewalk
- **G2-5** Retain and protect civic uses and structures along the corridor, preserve key historic and/or unique structures, including:
- > 725 East Trade (Court Arcade)
- > 926 Elizabeth Ave (Uptown Church, Great Aunt Stella Center)
- **G2-6** Ensure new development supports the uses and structures noted in G1-5

G3. CREATE A CONNECTED SYSTEM OF PUBLIC SPACES AND GATHERING PLACES ALONG EAST TRADE STREET

- G3-1 Create a new public gathering space at Brevard and Trade that welcomes commuters and visitors to Uptown and can serve as a civic plaza
- G3-2 Enhance and re-program existing parks and green spaces between Myers Street and Caldwell Street to improve permeability and visibility (as feasible on municipally owned land)
- G3-3 Redesign and activate the Plaza at Government
 Center, Old City Hall and the old County Courthouse to
 become more active and attractive spaces during and after
 business hours of the City and County



Activated plaza with daytime and nighttime use

G4. REDEVELOP THE CHARLOTTE TRANSPORTATION CENTER AS AN EFFICIENT, SAFE AND WELCOMING HIGH DENSITY MIXED-USE ENVIRONMENT

- G4-1 Improve connections between the Charlotte
 Transportation Center busses, the Blue Line station, the Rail
 Trail and the Gold Line with lighting and signage
- G4-2 Upgrade the bus terminal to accommodate more efficient and frequent service and decrease noise and exhaust



- G4-3 Encourage Charlotte Transportation Center designs that move the terminal underground to make more land available for development and community spaces
- **G4-4** Improve lighting, air flow, transparency and permeability along Trade Street for improved rider safety and comfort



FOCUS AREA H BREVARD STREET



BIG IDEA: Transform Brevard Street into a fun, authentically Charlotte place that celebrates Second Ward's African-American history

Context and Rationale

Brevard Street stretches across five blocks in the Second Ward, from Stonewall Street to the Spectrum Center, near multiple Uptown destinations and activity centers. Recent development along Stonewall has brought hundreds of residents and new energy to the area, which includes the Charlotte Convention Center and NASCAR Hall of Fame. At the other end of Brevard Street is the Charlotte Transit Center and the Spectrum Center at East Trade Street (see Figure 6.H.1). These major destinations bring thousands of visitors to the area every season, but the scale and design of the facilities create challenges for the streetscape.

Steps from the Blue Line, Gold Line and Rail Trail, Brevard Street is ideally located to cater to visitors and residents alike. Yet, this five-block segment of South Brevard Street lacks the qualities of a place that attracts visitors and invites activity. It is characterized by large blank facades and inactive streetscapes. Brevard Street does not have a clear identity or consistent look and feel, nor does it have attractions that would draw people from nearby hotels, offices, conferences, games and events.

A hundred years ago, the intersection of East 3rd Street and South Brevard Street was a social and commercial hub in the Brooklyn neighborhood, an African-American community that was destroyed by government Urban Renewal programs in the 1960s. The two remaining structures are the Grace A.M.E. Zion Church and the Mecklenburg Investment Company (MIC) Building, which was the first office building for Black professionals, designed by the city's first Black architect, William W. Smith. Today, these buildings are surrounded by surface parking lots.

Taking advantage of its history and location, Brevard Street can be transformed into a **bustling activity center and transformed into a "festival street"** when large events are taking place in the Spectrum Center or Convention Center. These major uses can extend their programs onto Brevard Street and its sidewalks, creating an arts, culture, entertainment and sports hub. Sidewalks can host outdoor dining and mobile food vendors and pop-up retail. And, day-to-day visitors can enjoy restaurants, coffee shops, music venues and bars just a short walk from transit and other active neighborhoods.



Figure 6.H.1: BREVARD STREET

Planning is underway for the historic structures at 3rd Street and Brevard to re-emerge as a community hub – one with a mix of uses focused on upward mobility. The "Brooklyn Collective" building is planned to include space for small businesses, artists-in-residence program, community meeting space, and a small museum dedicated to the history of the Brooklyn neighborhood. This site can be a catalyst of activation for the entire area, supporting a blend of historic and new venues and businesses that celebrates and advances Charlotte's African-American community.

Objectives

- Create a fun, and vibrant area in Second Ward that commemorates and celebrates the history of the former Brooklyn neighborhood and preserve the local historic assets that remain
- Provide destinations and attract visitors from the Spectrum Center, NASCAR Hall of Fame and the Charlotte Convention Center
- Create spaces for small, local and BIPOC-owned businesses and restaurants to complement the Brooklyn Collective and honor the heritage of the formerly vibrant Black business district
- Enliven the street environment during business and evening hours
- Increase small business job and training opportunities in the redevelopment, design and programming of the street

Strategies and Recommendations

H1. RE-DESIGN AND ACTIVATE THE STREETSCAPE FROM STONEWALL TO EAST TRADE

- H1-1 Encourage events and activities from the Spectrum Center, NASCAR Hall of Fame and Charlotte Convention Center to "spill out" onto Brevard Street
- H1-2 Include generous sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians and allow activity such as outdoor dining and retail
- **H1-3** Add street trees and landscaping to soften the urban environment, while maintaining visibility
- **H1-4** Include design elements that are visible from either end of the street to attract visitors, such as overhead lighting and public art installations
- **H1-5** Improve intersections to support safe pedestrian crossings and create a distinct identity for the street through art or improved crosswalk markings
- H1-6 Provide temporary street closure options while maintaining transit/vehicular access along 3rd and 4th for overall transit connectivity
- H1-7 Develop a new brand and identity for Brevard Street based on the Second Ward neighborhood history, art and culture



A Brevard Street mural honors African-American community leaders



Mobile grocery stores provide access to fresh food in small spaces

H2. EXPLORE CHANGES TO THE RIGHT-OF-WAY ASSOCIATED WITH THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE CHARLOTTE TRANSPORTATION CENTER BUS TERMINAL, SUCH AS

- Converting Brevard to two-way traffic
- Diverting bus traffic from the Charlotte Transportation Center
- Designating bus-only lanes to manage Charlotte
 Transportation Center bus traffic and slow other vehicles

H3. CATALYZE INFILL DEVELOPMENT TO FILL IN GAPS IN THE STREET, INCREASE DENSITY AND ADD NEW ENTERTAINMENT-FOCUSED GROUND FLOOR USES

- H3-1 Encourage design that provides activity at and above the ground-floor, such as upper-story patios and roof decks-floor patios
- H3-2 Create opportunities for African American entrepreneurs and Black-owned businesses to locate along Brevard Street and to benefit from the growth and redevelopment of the area

H4. DESIGNATE MULTIPLE PUBLIC SPACES FOR FLEXIBLE RETAIL INCLUDING FOOD VENDORS, KIOSKS AND STAGES

- **H4-1** Use surface parking lots for farmers markets, food trucks and other temporary programming before sites are developed
- H4-2 Partner with Black-owned businesses and organizations (e.g., Black Chamber of Commerce) to locate and expand enterprises along Brevard Street to reestablish and reflect the historic Brooklyn culture
- H4-3 Study the feasibility of converting the ground floor
 of the NASCAR Hall of Fame parking deck into new microretail spaces, such as kiosks, to enliven the street, and create
 strategically located locations for new restaurants, bars and
 shops

H5. PROTECT AND RESPECT THE HISTORIC BUILDINGS ON BREVARD STREET

- **H5-1** Ensure new development does not impede the ongoing use of the Grace Church and Mecklenburg Investment Company Building
- **H5-2** Establish design guidelines for new development to complement these structures
- H5-3 Protect the remaining buildings on the corner of Brevard and Trade Streets and ensure new development and site design complements the architecture of those structures





Existing NASCAR Hall of Fame edge along Brevard Street



FOCUS AREA I

MEDICAL & WELLNESS INNOVATION DISTRICT



BIG IDEA: Create a new neighborhood centered on health education and innovation that benefits residents, schools and the surrounding area

Context and Rationale

Atrium Health and the Wake Forest School of Medicine are planning a new regional medical school in Charlotte's Center City. Locating a medical school, research center and teaching hospital in the area that will be transformational for the region. In addition to attracting talented students, physicians and researchers to the city, this major new establishment will increase access to health care, add hundreds of new jobs, and support a culture of innovation. While exact details are still being finalized, the Medical School campus will be located just outside Second Ward along McDowell Street between the Cherry and Dilworth neighborhoods, north of the existing Atrium Health Carolinas Medical Center.

Rather than a singular, stand-alone campus, the new medical school should be the anchor of a fully integrated Center City neighborhood designed for health and wellness. The neighborhood can include traditional medical school elements like classrooms, labs and a hospital mixed with housing for students, workers, teachers and patients' families. Shops and essential services, hotels, restaurants and offices should

co-exist next to innovation centers and business incubators in a traditional block pattern that is integrated into existing neighborhood in a complementary way that connects seamlessly to surrounding roadways. Outdoor spaces should contribute to environmental and personal health and healing, such as green infrastructure and roofs, edible landscapes, healing gardens and a network of parks and public spaces and pathways with shade, water and exercise equipment.

The medical school also presents an incredible chance to **expand and improve personal opportunity and wellbeing**, not just for students and patients, but for the entire community. Hundreds of new jobs, local business support, and career pathway programs will bolster the local economy while community members will have improved access to a full range of care (see Figure 6.I.1).

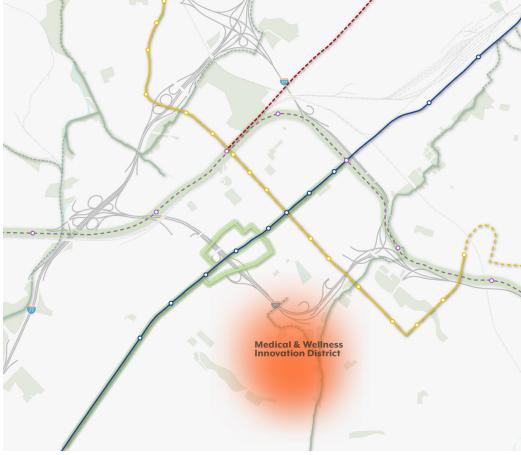


Figure 6.I.1: MEDICAL SCHOOL OPPORTUNITY

Objectives

- Create a complete, integrated health and wellness district in partnership with the Atrium / Wake Forest medical school to promote holistic health and well-being
- Support the growth and evolution of the healthcare industry by creating an environment for entrepreneurship and innovation
- Improve parks and public spaces and trail connections between Uptown, adjacent neighborhoods and existing medical center

Strategies and Recommendations

I-1. PROVIDE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR STAFF, PATIENTS, VISITORS AND STUDENTS IN THE DISTRICT

- A range of outpatient and supportive housing options, including rehabilitation centers, to accommodate patient recovery and independence with easy access to care facilities
- Short and long-term housing for inpatient friends and family
- Units reserved for students and faculty, including a mix of unit sizes to accommodate families and shared living arrangements
- A hotel to accommodate visiting faculty, conferences and other events
- Affordable housing options for all levels of support staff such as nurses, custodians, and food service employees

I-2. DESIGN THE PUBLIC REALM AROUND HEALTH AND WELL-BEING, INCLUDING:

- Healing gardens and other parks and public spaces for quiet activities and contemplation
- Community gardens and edible landscapes (such as fruit trees)
- Parks and outdoor spaces for public and patient exercise and activity
- Healthy public realm amenities and services, including retail, recreation, shade, seating, water, edible landscapes, healing gardens and more
- A system of wide, AAA (all ages and abilities) paths and trails
- Age restricted and Veteran housing

I-3. INTEGRATE SPACES FOR SHOPS AND CAFES, SERVICES, WORKSPACES THROUGHOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD

- Incubate, recruit and support local businesses and entrepreneurs
- Make it easy for students, patients and others to easily access day-to-day amenities
- Ensure a dynamic, lively neighborhood 24/7



Plaza space and landscaping outside a medical school

I-4. PRODUCE URBAN DESIGN STANDARDS TO GUIDE THE INTEGRATION OF NEW FACILITIES INTO THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND CONSIDER CONCEPTS AND INSTITUTION-DIRECTIVES SUCH AS:

- Requiring active ground floor uses and transparency
- Locate parking decks back at least thirty (30) feet from the street to provide space for liner buildings in the space between curbs and garages; preventing blank walls and creating a more enjoyable pedestrian experience, and providing commercial space and small business opportunities for entrepreneurs from historically marginalized cultures

I-5. CREATE A SYSTEM OF HEALTH EDUCATION AND INNOVATION THAT INCLUDES AND BENEFITS RESIDENTS, SCHOOLS AND NEIGHBORHOODS

- **15-1** Develop a bioscience / health incubator to support innovation and entrepreneurship
- 15-2 Establish a partnership between Wake Forest, Atrium, and CMS to create health and bioscience educational programs, courses and pathways from pre-K through college
- > Pursue partnerships and opportunities to connect the new Second Ward High School with the medical school and other neighborhood organizations

I-6. ENCOURAGE LANDOWNERS AND DEVELOPERS TO SUPPORT CENTER CITY NEIGHBORHOODS, RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES

- **16-1** Establish local purchasing and hiring relationships for the hospital and university
- **16-2** Create and/or support career pathway and talent development programs at all professional levels

I-7. CONNECT THE MEDICAL SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOODS TO UPTOWN AND ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS

- 17-1 Align street networks with established neighborhood roadways
- 17-2 Link neighborhood destinations and employment center to transit hubs in Uptown with flexible shuttle and bus systems
- 17-3 Plan for shuttles and busses to transition to electric and autonomous vehicles as technology and operations evolve



Healing gardens provide therapeutic environments to hospital patients and visitors



The medical school will be integrated into the neighborhood with public open spaces



FOCUS AREA J SECOND WARD HIGH SCHOOL



BIG IDEA: Re-build Second Ward High School with a unique curriculum addressing economic mobility and aligned with business needs and partnerships

Context and Rationale

When the Brooklyn neighborhood was destroyed by the policies and programs of Urban Renewal in the 1960s, an entire African-American community was displaced. Homes, churches, and businesses of the Black Main Street were destroyed. The Second Ward High School was the first to serve black youth in Charlotte and was originally located alongside the Brevard Street library and YMCA that served African Americans. In 1970, the school was closed and torn down. Commitments were made to rebuild the high school in the Second Ward once the community was "renewed" but this never came to fruition (see Figure 6.].1).

As Charlotte enters into a new era of addressing historic inequities, the time is right to honor this 50-year old promise and create a new Second Ward High School. A public magnet school with a unique curriculum would **address economic mobility and focus on career pathways.** Students would have access and exposure to a dynamic urban center and real-world work experiences. Student housing can also be created for students without stable housing or home environments, similar to the North Carolina School of Science and Math.

The new high school would become **fully integrated into the fabric of the Second Ward and mixed-use Brooklyn village**. Classrooms, workshops and athletic facilities
would co-exist with residential development, businesses and
community services.

Objectives

- Restore a part of the Brooklyn community destroyed by Urban
 Renewal and fulfill the promise of a new Second Ward High School
- Create a unique curriculum that addresses social disparities and creates a talent pipeline for Center City
- Honor the legacy of the Second Ward High School, Myers Street School and Carver College by serving a diverse student body from the entire city and county



Figure 6.J.1: SECOND WARD HIGH SCHOOL

Strategies and Recommendations

J1. PARTNER WITH CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS (CMS), THE PRIVATE SECTOR, AND PHILANTHROPIC ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING TO ESTABLISH A SECOND WARD HIGH SCHOOL

J2. BUILD A HIGH SCHOOL ON CMS-OWNED LAND ALONG EAST MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BOULEVARD

- **J2-1** Design a site that:
 - Provides pedestrian connections to community destinations including the Second Ward High School Gym, Mecklenburg Aquatic Center, Marshall Park and new public spaces developed through the Brooklyn Village Plan
 - > Connects students to Center City transit hubs and employment centers via bus, shuttle and/or active transportation
- **J2-2** Identify development opportunities in the blocks bordered by South Caldwell, East Stonewall, East Fourth Street and South McDowell Streets
- J2-3 Prioritize potential sites in the blocks bordered by South Caldwell, East Stonewall, East Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and the Metro School (former South Alexander Street)

J3. DEVELOP A UNIQUE CURRICULUM THAT ADDRESSES ECONOMIC MOBILITY AND IS ALIGNED WITH BUSINESS NEEDS AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Include specialized courses and curricula that attract students from the entire city and county and emphasize topics such as business and finance, arts, design, energy, fintech, medical and sustainability
- Consider dual/concurrent enrollment with Center City's colleges and universities
- Consult with opportunity Insights / Leading on Opportunity and other organizations and leaders addressing economic mobility
- Partner with Center City businesses and institutions to develop an academic and business co-op curriculum to provide paid internships and other opportunities to develop talent aligned with employer needs



San Francisco's Urban School is an integral part of a mixed-use neighborhood

J4. COLLABORATE WITH MECKLENBURG
COUNTY, CMS AND THE DESIGNATED
DEVELOPER OF THE BROOKLYN VILLAGE
PROJECT TO EXPLORE CO-LOCATION
OPPORTUNITIES AND AN APPROPRIATE MIX OF
USES FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING AND/
OR BLOCK SUCH AS:

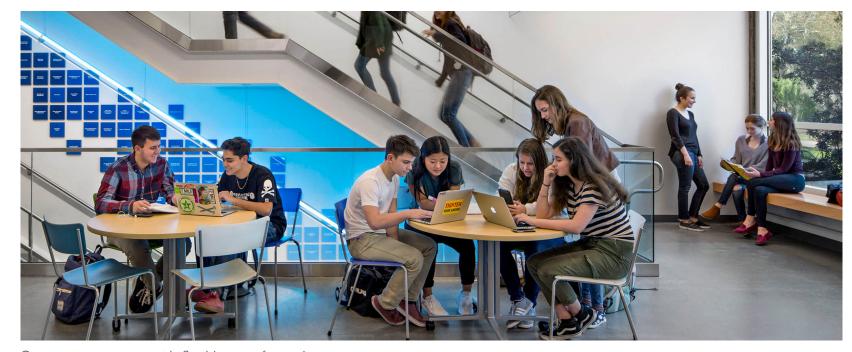
- Childcare facilities
- Recreation center
- Community center
- Senior center
- Parks, public spaces, and community gardens
- Satellite or branch locations of local colleges and universities

J5. WORK WITH THE SECOND WARD HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL ALUMNI FOUNDATION TO ESTABLISH A NEW MUSEUM IN THE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT TO:

- Employ students as docents
- Commemorate the former Brooklyn neighborhood
- Highlight the accomplishments of and contributions made by former students and other African-Americans
- Educate a new generation of Charlotteans on the area's civic history



Houston's Kinder School is integrated into the downtown



Open environments provide flexible space for students



Outdoor education provides landscape design experience on campus







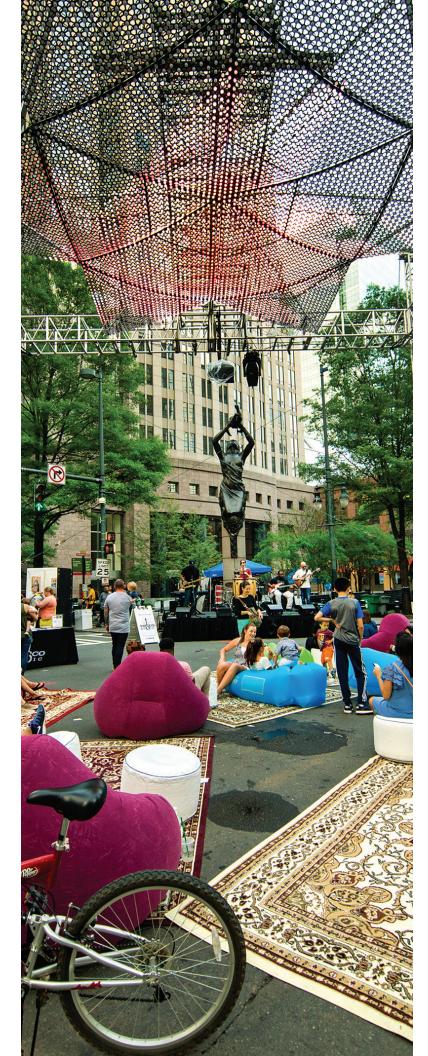














CHAPTER 7

ORGANIZATION AND ACTION

Realizing the Vision

The Center City 2040 Vision Plan establishes a bold, ambitious 20-year agenda for the growth and evolution of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's urban core that already has incredible momentum heading into the decade. Maintaining this energy and focus is necessary to advance economic mobility, racial justice, and social equity – all goals that can be realized through the implementation of this Plan.

The Vision Plan was built on a foundation of stakeholder and community engagement and will rely on sustained partnership, collaboration and teamwork to implement the strategies and recommendations.

For example, the 2040 Vision Plan Steering Committee included representatives with a broad and diverse range of perspectives from diverse organizations who should continue to be engaged.

Priorities and Catalytic Projects

By coordinating with partner organizations developing plans at the same time, the Vision Plan has already laid the groundwork for implementation. This continued collaboration, along with community input and feedback, will ensure that Vision Plan recommendations reflect shared community values and are consistent and mutually supportive.

Some, but not all, of the projects, programs and policies that should be considered priorities and catalysts to incentivize positive change and support implementation of other Vision Plan recommendations and strategies are to:

- Establish the Center City Equity Fund to provide sustained financial support of economic mobility goals
- Lobby to pass legislation for inclusionary zoning to support affordable housing goals
- Establish green building requirements for Center City development
- "Re-imagine" and transform Tryon Street into a more dynamic and welcoming place
- Redevelop Brevard Street as a unique destination that supports tourism and celebrates Charlotte's African-American history and culture
- Work with CMS, the community, and the private sector to build a new Second Ward High School
- Consolidate and/or relocate Norfolk Southern Rail Yard in North End and build Queen's Park
- Involve the community to create the North End Vision Plan

- Create the process to build a mixed-use development at the Hal Marshall site that includes a major multi-modal Blue & Silver Line transfer station
- Reconfigure the West Trade / I-77 Interchange to create a new mixed-use development and employment center
- Conduct a feasibility study for I-277 Freeway Cap between Uptown and South End

Intentional and Sustained Collaboration

As lead entities in sponsoring and implementing this planning effort, the City, County and Center City Partners should be nimble in taking advantage of new opportunities as they arise, but also be focused on ensuring investment and decisions are consistent with the direction of this Vision Plan and the priorities of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community. As market conditions, financial resources, staff capacity, and political priorities are certain to shift over time, flexibility will be paramount.

Realizing many of the plan recommendations will require years of ongoing collaboration between dedicated and tenacious public and private sector partners and the community. Therefore, a strong organization comprised of professionals and stakeholders should be established to implement the key priorities and projects noted above. This collaborative team would regularly work together over the coming years to achieve the plan recommendations. To be successful, the collaborative should:

FUNDING AND COORDINATION

- Be jointly funded by the public, private and non-profit sectors
- Prioritize and align projects and recommendations with partner budgeting timelines and cycles
- Assign responsibilities to appropriate lead agencies and private partners, informing strategic plans and annual work programs
- Set and commit to regular meeting cadence
- Represent Center City in City-led Charlotte Future 2040 implementation processes including:
- > Place Type Mapping (2021)
- > Community Area Planning (2021-2030)
- > Quarterly Implementation Committee Meetings (ongoing)
- > Review, re-assess and update the Action Plan annually

ENGAGEMENT AND TRACKING

- · Assign responsibilities to appropriate lead agencies and private partners, informing strategic plans and annual work programs
- Design a complimentary engagement process to inform and involve the community on progress and advancement
- Engaging with the community to help inform prioritization of actions, Updating and educating about opportunities, projects, policies and programs
- Establish metrics and milestones to track and report on progress



- Monitor circumstances and developments that may preclude implementation of a given recommendation or project idea
- Review, re-assess and update the Action Plan annually
- Be prepared to take advantage of opportunities as they arise
- Assess new opportunities for consistency with plan goals and strategies

COLABORATION PARTNERS

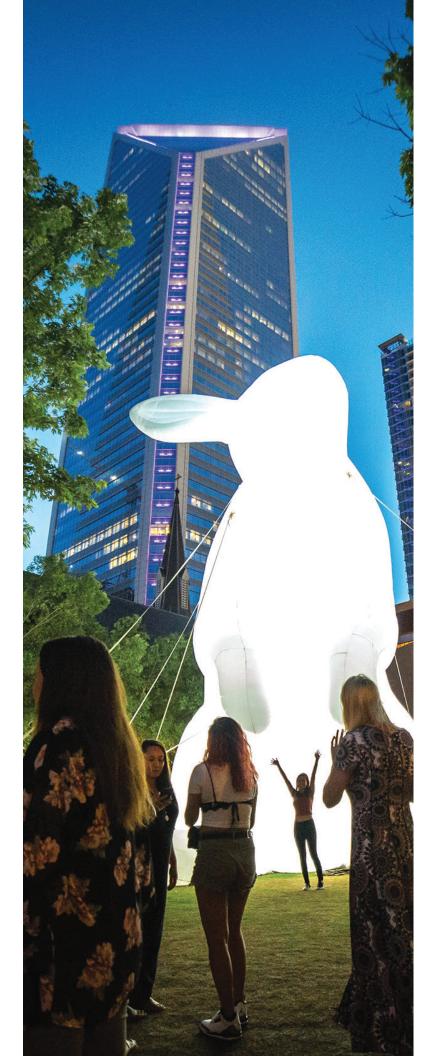
Partner agencies and departments could include but are not limited to:

- Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT)
- Charlotte Area Transportation System (CATS)
- Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation
- North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)
- Charlotte Regional Business Alliance
- Arts and Sciences Council
- Foundation for the Carolinas
- Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority
- DreamKey Partners (formerly Charlotte Mecklenburg Housing Partnership)
- Inlivian (formerly Charlotte Housing Authority)
- Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools
- Livable Meck
- Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department

As well as a robust network of:

- Neighborhood organizations
- Advocacy groups
- Community-based organizations
- Major employers
- Philanthropic organizations
- Community service providers
- Affordable housing providers
- Private developers and investors
- Business and property owners







ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CHARLOTTE CITY COUNCIL

Vi Alexander Lyles, Mayor

Julie Eiselt, Mayor Pro Tem

Dimple Ajmera, At Large

Greg Phipps, At Large

Braxton Winston, At Large

Larken Egleston, District 1

Malcolm Graham, District 2

Victoria Watlington, District 3

Reneé Johnson, Council District 4

Matt Newton, District 5

Tariq Bokhari, District 6

Edmund H. Driggs, District 7

CHARLOTTE CITY MANAGER

Marcus Jones

MECKLENBURG COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

George Dunlap, District 3 | Chair

Elaine Powell, District 1 | Vice Chair

Leigh Altman, At Large

Pat Cotham, At Large

Ella B. Scarborough, At Large

Vilma D. Leake. District 2

Mark Jerrell, District 4

Laura Meier, District 5

Susan Rodriguez-McDowell, District 6

MECKLENBURG COUNTY MANAGER

Dena Diorio

PLANNING COMMISSION

Sam Spencer | Chair

Erin Barbee

Andrew Blumenthal

Astrid Chirinos

John Fryday

Phillip Gussman

John Ham

Peter Kelly

Elizabeth McMillan

Victoria Nwasike

Courtney Rhodes

Keba Samuel

Cozzie Watkins

Douglas Welton

CHARLOTTE CENTER CITY PARTNERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tom Finke, Adaraq Acquisition Corp. I Chairman

Diane Morais, Ally Bank

Clay Armbrister, Johnson C. Smith University

Malcomb Coley, EY

lesse Cureton, Novant Health

Dr. Kandi Deitemeyer, Central Piedmont Community College

Darryl Dewberry, Spectrum Cos.

Dena Diorio, Mecklenburg County

George Dunlap, Mecklenburg County Board of

Commissioners

Rob Engel, Wells Fargo

Kodwo Ghartey-Tagoe, Duke Energy

Tom Glick, Carolina Panthers

Malcolm Graham, City of Charlotte

Johno Harris, Lincoln Harris

Mark Holoman, Cousins Properties

Taiwo Jaiyeoba, City of Charlotte

Marcus Jones, City of Charlotte

Sam Judd, Asana Partners

Janet LaBar, Charlotte Regional Business Alliance

Tiffani Lewis, Entrepreneur

Carol Lovin, Atrium Health

Dr. Michael Marsicano, Foundation For The Carolinas

Tom Murray, Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority

Tom Nelson, National Gypsum

Cindy Noble, Compass Group, North America

Mike Praeger, AvidXchange

Ernie Reigel, Moore & Van Allen

Dr. Cheryl Richards, Johnson & Wales University

Pat Riley, Allen Tate Companies

Pat Rodgers, Rodgers

Bill Rogers, Truist Financial Corporation

Neelima Sharma, Lowe's

Krista Terrell, Arts & Science Council

Earnest Winston, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Darrel Williams, Neighboring Concepts

STEERING COMMITTEE

Jennifer Appleby, Wray Ward | Co-Chair

Clarence Armbrister, Johnson C. Cmith University | Co-Chair

Erin Barbee, Dream Key / LGBT Chamber of Commerce

John Barton, Northwood Office

Terry Bradley, CATS

Liz Clasen-Kelly, Roof Above

Lonnie Davis, JazzArts Charlotte

Paul Freeston, Greenways for Mecklenburg

David Furman, Centro CityWorks

Kevin Giriunas, Advent Co-Working

Tom Glick, Carolina Panthers

Seemantini Godbole, Lowe's

Charles Hands, Engage Millennials

Johno Harris, Lincoln Harris

Damon Hemmerdinger, ATCO Properties

Katherine Hill, Levine Museum of the New South

Catherine Wilson Horne, Discovery Place

Kathleen Jordan, Gensler

Jamall Kinard, Lakewood Community Development

Corporation

Collin Lane, Atrium Health

Janet LaBar, Charlotte Regional Business Alliance

David Longo, CBI

Valecia McDowell, Arts & Science Council

Fulton Meachem, Inlivian

Tom Mitchell. Moore & Van Allen

Tom Murray, Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority

Sagar Rathie, Crescent Communities

John Saclarides, Wells Fargo

Thomas Scrivener, Bank of America

Rev. Lorenzo Small, First United Presbyterian Church

CONSULTANT TEAM

MIG

Chris Beynon, AICP, Principal in Charge

Ellie Fiore, AICP, Project Manager

Mark De La Torre, Urban Design Director

Evan Lanning, Urban Designer

Blaze Syka, Project Associate

Phoenix Alfaro, Project Associate

Neighboring Concepts

Darrel Williams, FAIA, Principal in Charge

Eric Orozco, AICP, LEED AP ND, Project Manager

Economic & Planning Systems

Andrew Knudtsen, Managing Principal

Matt Prosser, Vice President

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS & INVITEES

Darius Adamczyk, Honeywell

l'Tanya Adams, Historic West End Partners

Steve Allen, South End

Carl Amato, Novant Health

Angela Amboise, Ambroise Real Estate

Annie Anderson, Greater Enderly Park Neighborhood

Association

Michaelina Antahades, Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority

Jennifer Appleby, Wray Ward *

Clay Armbrister, Johnson C. Smith University *

David "Dae Lee" Arrington, Fair Play CLT

Rev. Cornelius Atkinson, Northwest Corridor Council of Elders

James Atkinson, Optimist Park

Amy Aussieker, Envision CLT

Amy Bagwell, Good Year Arts

John Barton, Northwood Office *

Natalie Kennedy Beard, McCrorey Heights

Eric Bernier, Project 658

Cathy Bessant, Bank of America

Shannon Binns, Sustain CLT

Sylvia Bittle-Patton, Cherry Neighborhood

Peter Blair, Jewish Community Center

June Blotnick, Clean Air Carolina

Terri Bradley, CATS, ADA Program *

Elisha Brewster, Center City Ambassador Program

Curtis Bridges, Belmont Community Association

Jeep Bryant, Arts & Science Council

Chris Byers, RBA Group

Themla Byers-Bailey, Historic West End Neighborhood

Association

Kay Carter, Second Harvest Food Bank

Erin Barbee, Dream Key Partners | LGBT+ Chamber of

Commerce *

Iman Atif Chaudhry, Islamic Society of Greater Charlotte

Noufissa Chouffani, Small business owner

Liz Classen-Kelly, Roof Above *

Derrick Close, Springs Creative

Chris Clouden, 7th Street Public Market

Chuck Cole, Trees CLT

Denise Coleman, Norsan Media / HOLA Charlotte

Malcomb Coley, Ernst & Young Hamilton Cort, Plaza Midwood

Victoria Corwin, Ashley Park Neighborhood Association

Shawn Cosner, 3rd Rock Events

Dorothy Counts-Scoggins, Historic West End Neighborhood

Association

Sarah Crowder, Elizabeth

Candace Davis, Villa Heights

Lonnie Davis, JazzArts Charlotte *

Alex Delarge, Talking Walls

Christopher Dennis, Lockwood Neighborhood Association

Walter Dolhare, LaCa Project

Bobby Drakeford, The Drakeford Company

Gaile Dry-Burton, Third Ward

Matt Dubois. Taste of Charlotte

Janelle Dunlap, League of Creative Interventionists

Rob Engels, Wells Fargo

Rick Elias, Red Ventures

Marvin Ellison, Lowe's

Larry Farber, Middle C Jazz

Tom Finke, Barinas

Paul Freeston, Parks & Recreation Commission | Greenways

for Mecklenburg *

Sue Freyler, Cole Jenest & Stone

Josh Galloway, The Creative Gent

Darryl Gaston, North End Community Coalition

Melissa Gaston, North End Community Coalition

Jon Giles, Keep CLT Beautiful

Tom Glick, Carolina Panthers *

Ann Gonzales, Asian Chamber of Commerce

Rocio Gonzales, Latin American Chamber of Commerce

Lynn Good, Duke Energy

Quintel Gwinn, QuinGwinn Studios

Mark Hahn, Mecklenburg County

John Hairston Jr., All City Studios

Carol Hardison, Crisis Assistance Ministry

Lauren Harkey, Hodges Taylor Gallery

Mike Harrell, Beacon Properties

José Hernández-Paris, Latin American Coalition

Catherine Horne, Discovery Place *

Shannon Hughes, Wesley Heights Neighborhood Association

William Hughes, Oaklawn Park Community Improvement

Organization

Liana Humphrey, Crisis Assistance Ministry

Patty Hunter, Visit Charlotte

Douglas Hustad, Omni Hotel

Taiwo Jaiyeoba, City of Charlotte

Mohammed Jenatian, Greater Charlotte Hospitality & Tourism

Alliance

Kory leter, Greystar

Erik Johnson, White Point Partners

Mary Johnson, Historic West End Neighborhood Association

Kathleen Jordan, Gensler *

Sam Judd, Asana Partners

Donna Julian, Charlotte Hornets

Manoj Kesavan, BOOM Fest

Jamall Kinard, Lakeview Community Development

Corporation *

Kelly King, Truist Financial

Luke Kissam, Albermarle Corp

Robert Krumbine, Charlotte Center City Partners

Justin Lane, Wilmore Neighborhood Association

Noah & Rick, Lazes NC Music Factory

Christine Lockett, Charlotte Center City Partners

Jonell Logan, League of Creative Interventionists | 300 Arts

Project

Khaleel Loyd, Loyd Visuals

Tony Marciano, Community Matters Café / CLT Rescue

Mission

Justin Markel, North End Community Coalition

Todd Mansfield, Crescent Communities

Mattie Marshall, Historic West End Neighborhood Association

Adrienne Martinez, North End Community Coalition

Steve McClure, Spectrum Companies

Rev. Mildred McCullough, Northwest Corridor Council of

Elder

Calvin McDougal, Historic West End Neighborhood

Association

Valecia McDowell, Arts & Science Council *

Ray McKinnon, Brookhill

Dylan McKnight, Stantec

Bill McMillan, Visit Charlotte

Fulton Meachum, Inlivian *

Deronda Metz, Women's Shelter / Salvation Army

Kathryn Meyer, Party Reflections

Tchernavia Montgomery, Crisis Assistance Ministry

Diane Morais, Ally Financial

Tom Murray, Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority *

Dionne Nelson, Laurel Street Residential

Compie Newman, CBRE/Brokerage

Tanique Odom, Marriott Center City

Alysia Osborne, City of Charlotte Planning, Design &

Development

Jack Ossa, Ossa Studio

Laura Peres, First Ward

Richard Petersheim, LandDesign

leff Pharr, North End Community Coalition

Kamille Pickens, Center City Ambassador Program

Tina Postel. Loaves & Fishes

Valerie Preston, Dilworth

Mike Praeger, AvidXchange

Adam Raskoskie, Charlotte Bicycle Advisory Council

Sagar Rathie, Crescent Communities *

Keri Revans, Camino Community Center

Katie Riddle, City Manager's Office, Special Projects -

Sustainability

Frederico Rios, City of Charlotte, Equity & Includion Office

Pat Rodgers, Rodgers Builders

Boris "bluz" Rogers, Blumenthal Performing Arts Center | Poet & Spoken Word Performer

Elliott Royal, RAO Community Health

Toni Sawhney, Festival of India

Julia Sain, Disability Rights & Resources

Tim Scott, Charlotte Center City Partners, Artist-in-Residence

Terry Shook, Shook Kelley

Janet Singerman, Child Care Resources

Rev. Lorenzo Small, First United Presbyterian Church*

Nancy Stroud, Northwest Corridor Council of Elders

Erik Suarez, UNCC CHARP

David Taylor, Harvey B. Gantt Center

Aisha Thomas, Aisha Thomas Events

Lal Vishin, India Association of Charlotte

Charlie Welch, Myers Park

Darrel Williams, Neighboring Concepts

Samantha Williams, International House

Miller Winecoff, Fourth Ward

Gene Woods, Atrium Health

Phin Xaypangna, Mecklenburg County Office of Equity &

Inclusion

Bridget York, Ivey's Hotel

India Young, North End Community Coalition

Sharon Young, North End Community Coalition

Martin Zimmerman, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Climate Leaders

* Steering Committee member who participated in Focus Group sessions

PROJECT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Taiwo, Jaiyeoba, City of Charlotte Department of Planning, Design & Development | Project Director

Michael Smith, Charlotte Center City Partners | Project Director

Grant Meacci, City of Charlotte Department of Planning, Design & Development | Senior Project Manager

Cheryl Myers, Charlotte Center City Partners | Senior Project Manager

Karen Westin-Chien, Mecklenburg County | Senior Project Manager

Klint Mullis, Charlotte Center City Partners | Project Manager

Lorna Allen, City of Charlotte Department of Planning, Design & Development

Kathy Cornett, City of Charlotte Department of Planning, Design & Development

David Harrison, Charlotte Department of Transportation

Charles Trowell, Charlotte Center City Partners





