The Policy Audit provides one of the first steps in preparing a new comprehensive plan: understanding and documenting the existing policy direction that guides community decision-making and public investments. The Policy Audit:

- Synthesizes community-wide policies from numerous city and county plans;
- Organizes these policies using the plan framework and community planning topics;
- Ranks policy maturity and identifies policy gaps for exploration during the Charlotte Future process; and
- Captures staff's input on policy effectiveness and relationship to implementation.

Audit Organization

The following six topical plan elements and their relevant policy subtopics were used as the organizing framework for the policy audit:

1. Community Values & Vision
2. Livable & Connected City
3. Inclusive City
4. Healthy & Sustainable City
5. Prosperous & Innovative City
6. Regional City

Each of the six sections introduces the relevant policy subtopics and lists the following information for each subtopic:

- Related Plans and Studies.
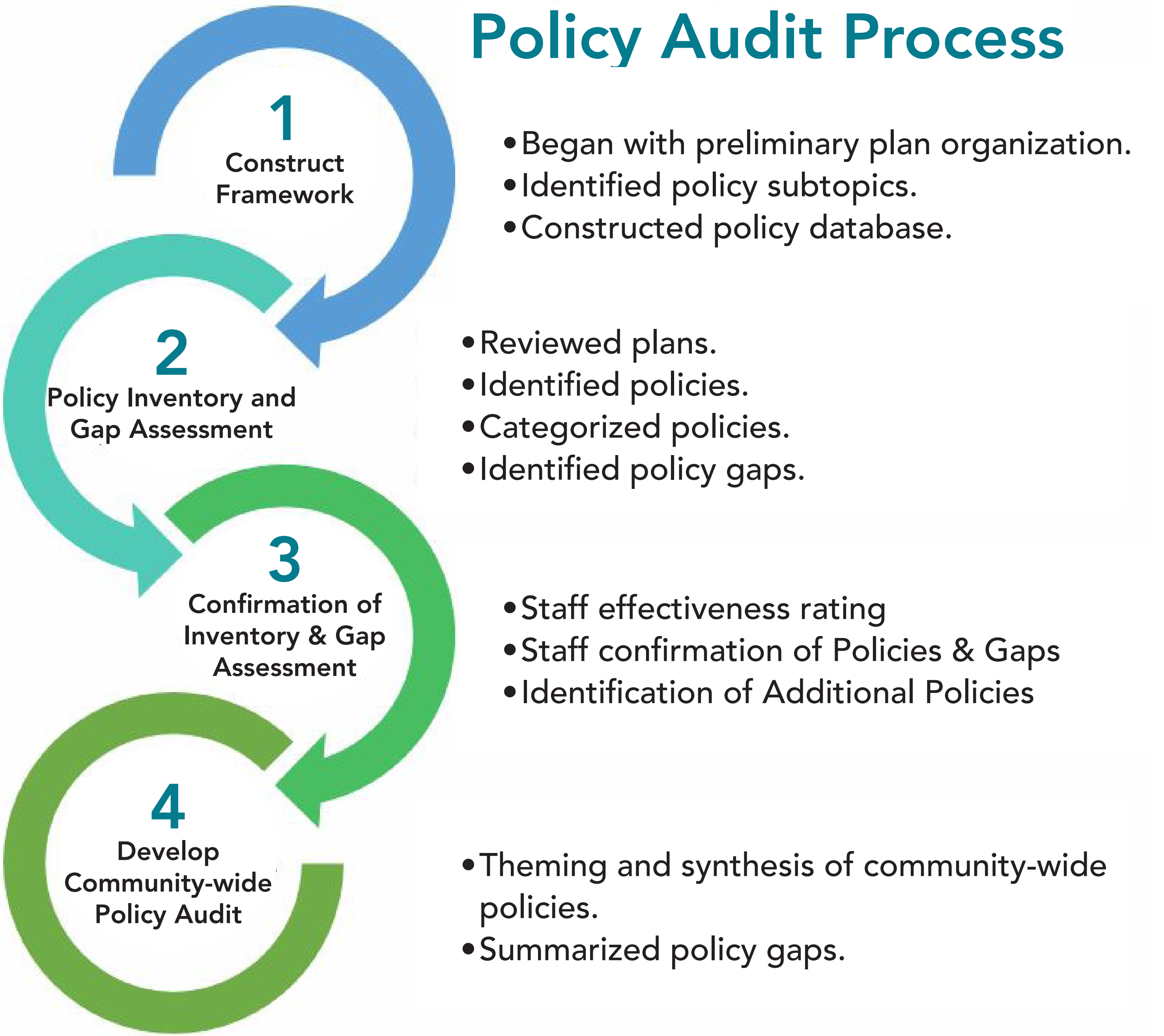- General Direction and Synopsis of Existing Policies.
- Potential Policy Gaps for Exploration.
- Policy Maturity.

Policy Audit Process

1 Construct Framework
- Began with preliminary plan organization.
- Identified policy subtopics.
- Constructed policy database.

2 Policy Inventory and Gap Assessment
- Reviewed plans.
- Identified policies.
- Categorized policies.
- Identified policy gaps.

3 Confirmation of Inventory & Gap Assessment
- Staff effectiveness rating
- Staff confirmation of Policies & Gaps
- Identification of Additional Policies

4 Develop Community-wide Policy Audit
- Theming and synthesis of community-wide policies.
- Summarized policy gaps.

Policy Maturity Ratings

Policy Seeds Have Been Planted. Policy subtopics that are emerging issues or topics within the community that have little to no guidance by current policies. Moving forward, these subtopics can be explored for opportunities to advance new policies and provide future guidance.

Policies Have Taken Root. Policy subtopics with basic foundational goals and policies. Moving forward, additional new policies and enhancements to existing policies will be considered.

Well Established Policies. Policy subtopics with established goals and policies that have developed over time. Moving forward, existing policies could be modified and enhanced to reflect up-to-date practices of the City or recommended best practices.

Note that the maturity rating does not necessarily reflect the effectiveness of the policy. Some policies that are well established are not as effective as they could be and the comprehensive plan is an opportunity to address such shortcomings.

Key Findings

- Need for overarching vision framework to provide common structure for organizing linkages to other plans.
- Many neighborhood / area plan policies should be considered for community- wide application.
- Development policies in the neighborhood/area plans are very prescriptive; place types being developed for the new plan are an opportunity to identify needed Unified Development Ordinance (U.D.O.) changes to put regulatory guidance in the right place.
- Community has an interest in advancing sustainability objectives.
- Place Types can help with unclear policy guidance on development related issues (infill, complete neighborhoods, urban design).
- Many policy gaps are opportunities for policy coordination with partner organizations and agencies.
- Some policy subtopics are emerging issues and an opportunity for Charlotte to lead the nation in setting policy direction.

Plan Element Policy Subtopics

The information below includes the six topical plan elements and their relevant policy subtopics which have been organized by their policy maturity rating.

COMMUNITY VALUES & VISION

Well Established Policies
» Vision statements
» Value statements
» Other expressed community aspirations

LIVABLE & CONNECTED CITY

Well Established Policies
» Future land use and community character
» Urban design
» Public spaces
» Green building and sustainable site design
» Connectivity and circulation
» Context sensitive street designs

Policies That Have Taken Root
» Growth management, annexation, and ETJ
» Historic preservation
» Redevelopment, infill, and neighborhood protection
» Complete neighborhoods
» Transit supportive development
» Provision of utilities, concurrency, and priority investment areas
» Active living environment (parks and recreation)
» Transportation safety
» Multimodal network - complete streets (streets, transit, ped, bike, shared mobility/dockless)
» Access management
» Design of streetscape and walkability (nexus with built framework)
» Travel demand management
» Parking

Policy Seeds That Have Been Planted
» Jobs-housing balance
» Curb lane management
» Autonomous vehicles

INCLUSIVE CITY

Well Established Policies
» Public safety

Policies That Have Taken Root
» Housing affordability, diversity, and accessibility
» Equitable provision of public services and facilities
» Access to healthy lifestyles (recreation and healthy foods)
» Transparency and accessibility of government
» Complete communities (support for vulnerable populations)
» Inclusivity and a sense of belonging

Policy Seeds That Have Been Planted
» Neighborhood reinvestment without displacement
» Environmental justice

HEALTHY & RESILIENT CITY

Well Established Policies
» Reducing carbon footprint and energy use
» Renewable energy generation
» Protecting air quality
» Water quality protection and water conservation
» Resiliency from flooding / watershed management

Policies That Have Taken Root
» Environmental stewardship and green infrastructure (connected natural networks and open space)
» Green stormwater infrastructure
» Habitat conservation / urban tree canopy / native plant species
» Reducing waste / increasing reuse and recycling
» Brownfields and superfund sites

Policy Seeds That Have Been Planted
» Climate adaptation
» Urban food systems
» Urban heat island effect

PROSPEROUS & INNOVATIVE CITY

Well Established Policies
» Green economy

Policies That Have Taken Root
» Education / Childcare/ job training of local workforce
» Economic diversification
» Entrepreneurship and innovation (small business)
» Public and community arts
» Fiscal health
» Smart city / technology
» Business-friendly community

Policy Seeds That Have Been Planted
» Equitable hiring practices
» Reduction of income gap
» Global competition
» Access to capital

REGIONAL CITY

Policies That Have Taken Root
» Regional collaboration
» Planning in multijurisdictional areas of common interest
» Center City / Regional destination
» Regional connectivity

Note that the maturity rating does not necessarily reflect the effectiveness of the policy. Some policies that are well established are not as effective as they could be and the comprehensive plan is an opportunity to address such short comings.

Community Values & Vision — Liveable & Connected City — Inclusive City — Healthy & Resilient City — Prosperous & Innovative City — Regional City