# **Southend** VISION PLAN

DRAFT 09.19.2017



South End is a premier walkable, urban district supported by vibrant neighborhoods, built on transit, and fueled with energy and innovation from some of Charlotte's most diverse and creative people.













South End is 25 years old this year—the same as the architectural firm my partner, Kevin Kelley, and I founded in the Atherton Mill.

Back then, the blocks that were to become South End constituted a borderland, a largely forgotten post- industrial zone that mitigated life between the Dilworth and Wilmore neighborhoods.

It was also a frontier, and a place where Charlotte piloted change. This part of Charlotte where the first railroads came to town, and where cotton became textiles—transformed warehouses into space for creatives, and where the trolley followed by light rail sparked a renaissance of residential investment, and founded a new neighborhood.

The evolution from an industrial area into a creative design district and then vibrant urban neighborhood has been fueled by both the creativity and dedication of individuals and small businesses, and by targeted investment and support from public agencies. Spinning together history and new energy, the neighborhood has become one of Charlotte's great assets. As newcomers and new investors arrive, we needed a new playbook or plan to ensure that the next phase of development improves South End's urban design, broadens its mix of uses, fosters vibrant public streets and amplifies and creates parks and open spaces for those who choose an urban life.

Therefore, as chair of the South End Advisory Committee, the Vision Plan Steering Committee, a South End real estate and business owner, and long-time advocate for this neighborhood, I am pleased to present this vision and plan for the future.

South End is already Charlotte's first transit-oriented neighborhood in our post-street car era. This plan will guide its next stage of development, maturing it into one of our city's first and best examples of a livable city, with a state-of-the-art transportation system, a walkable and bikeable oasis with expanded housing offerings, and featuring inviting, activity-filled streets and public spaces.

We plan for thoughtful growth by design, expecting density around transit stations, and intentional diversity of residents, businesses, commerce and retail. We want a culture of supporting local artists, entrepreneurs and retailers, with pilot programs that can extend opportunity in South End and by extension, Charlotte. And we will build on our greatest assets, celebrating and strengthening the natural neighborhood centers around each transit station and nurturing the Rail Trail into an outstanding example of a vibrant linear park, a recreational public space, and a connector of neighborhoods.

The South End Vision Plan and design guidelines will also serve as a springboard and testing ground for the city's efforts to overhaul our comprehensive zoning policy, allowing the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission and planning staff to pilot new ideas and design policies in a fast-growing area.

The founding of South End was arguably the greatest grass roots effort in the history of Charlotte. All of us who have worked on this vision and plan are grateful to the many community members whose ideas, feedback and questions guided its development. The core values from the community reaffirm our city's commitment to becoming the best example of a livable city that supports well-being for everyone through excellent neighborhood design, public infrastructure, open space, employment and housing options.

The future of our city and South End is bright. Let's build the best place we can for the next 25 years, and beyond.

Sincerely,

Terry Shook

"The founding of South End was arguably the greatest grass roots effort in the history of Charlotte."

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission has adopted this Livable City Policy Statement and Guiding Principles to articulate the Commission's priorities for the growth and development of Charlotte and guide the Commission's work in advising the governing bodies it serves.

This policy statement is founded in the City's adopted Centers, Corridors and Wedges Growth Framework, General Development Policies and area plans, and serves to focus and prioritize the Commission's work and recommendations. By incorporation as part of the South End Vision Plan, this Policy Statement and its Guiding Principles serve as the adopted policy foundation for the South End Vision Plan.

#### Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission Livable City Policy Statement

Develop a livable city where Charlotteans of all incomes can achieve, "a complete state of physical, mental and social wellbeing<sup>"1</sup> through the design of neighborhoods, public infrastructure and open spaces, and through easy access to employment and housing choices.

#### **Guiding Principles**

- » Create a state-of-the-art transportation system that equally provides for the health and safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists and is accessible to people of all ages and abilities;
- » Promote a mix of land uses within a close proximity so that Charlotteans can live, work, play, shop and worship in a neighborhood without the need for an automobile;
- » Ensure access to affordable housing by supporting the dispersal of a range of housing types throughout the city, so that the availability of transportation does not limit access to economic opportunity;
- » Build vibrant and activity-filled public streets and open spaces that promote community engagement so that Charlotteans of all ages and abilities can participate in a public life;
- » Promote access to affordable and healthy/local foods so that income and location don't limit dietary choices; and
- » Protect the air we breathe, and the trees that filter it, while also shading us from the hot, southern sun.
- » Build safe communities, by using planning tools to prevent crime and violence through environmental design.

<sup>1</sup> Excerpt of World Health Organization definition of public health

#### How to use this document

All of us who live, work or play in South End have a picture in our minds of what we want the neighborhood to be. We see things existing that we love as well as pieces that could be better and even ideas yet to be. In order for that collective picture to become a reality, South End must have a plan that gets us there. This document is that plan. If followed, updated and revised along the way, South End will continue to be that amazing place that we all envision.

The plan is a collective vision that was created by compiling extensive input from South End neighborhood leaders, business owners, residents and other stakeholders. Chapter 1 is a look at where we've come from and what's happening now in South End. Chapter 2 tells us how to get where we want to go. At its core are a set of values and goals to achieve. Chapter 3 shows us what our future could look like if we follow the plan in each focus area. Chapter 4 informs specific projects and initiatives to tackle to achieve our goals. Chapter 5 contains specific guidelines intended to shape the physical form of the district.



# A NEIGHBORHOOD PARK A Star //

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# Why This Plan, Why Now?



#### Introduction

Over the past ten years, South End has grown into one of Charlotte's most dynamic locations. From its history as a neglected industrial and commercial part of town in the 1980s, it reinvented itself as a low-cost haven for artists and other creative people in the 1990s and early 2000s.

With the Blue line of the light rail line opening 2007, a new wave of apartment construction progressively filled vacant sites and replaced much of the original built fabric.

breweries.

hotel.

In early 2012, a Center City Partners Three-Year Strategic Plan articulated a set of actionable goals for South End's growth and development. That plan's six goals, developed through a series of community surveys and extensive stakeholder interviews, were as follows:

- » Develop Camden Road as the natural neighborhood center

By the end of the first decade of the 21st century, South End had developed a reputation as a creative hub with the clustered presence of working design professionals. Since then, the area has emerged as a vibrant urban mixed-use district, with more active street level retail uses - especially restaurants, bars and

Spurred by a strong rebound from the recession, the neighborhood's population has grown to an estimated 9,000 residents with over 3,500 housing units actively under construction or recently delivered (at the time of writing in 2017). While much of this growth has been driven by new upmarket rental housing, a welcome variety is being added by new office buildings, more retail-oriented projects, and at least one

» Nurture authentic neighborhood retail

- Plan and develop a public realm of parks, open space, and recreation activities
- » Improve neighborhood connectivity
- » Raise the development bar
- » Keep South End accessible to those who make it areat.

Along with each goal, a series of recommendations and actions were proposed that have guided Charlotte Center City Partner's (CCCP) program of work in the neighborhood. While many of the strategies have been acted upon, work on others is either ongoing or has yet to be accomplished. For example, the continued development and build out of the Rail Trail has begun, while the promise of a much needed neighborhood park remains unfulfilled.

In 2016, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission identified a series of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Priorities based in part on a review and assessment of recent development in South End. This review identified areas of the current TOD regulations that need to be strengthened to fulfill the purpose set out in the TOD ordinance. These priorities emphasize the need to strengthen the public realm with renewed attention to street level pedestrian activation, parking standards and design, the Rail Trail, and overall architectural design and density. This work represents important lessons learned over the past decade of investment and development in South

# done."

-Nelson Mandela

End and highlights the need to renew our vision and redefine our expectations.

With a growing population, proximity to Uptown and the Blue Line light rail, and many available, well-located but underutilized parcels and sites, developers continue to be interested in South End. For the neighborhood to become a more vibrant place, capitalize on its real estate value, and maximize its potential as Charlotte's most walkable, transitoriented neighborhood, the community must articulate an updated vision for how South End should grow and develop in ways that are sustainable over the longer term. At the same time, neighborhood "focus areas" have emerged with special characteristics and issues that deserve special attention.

#### The Purpose of This Plan

Accordingly, this 2017 plan provides a refreshed and compelling vision with urban design guidelines, strategies, and tools to help achieve the high-quality development that the community



#### South End is Established

Dilworth's old industrial district officially becomes known as South End with the incorporation of the South End Development Corporation (now Historic South End) to promote and revitalize the area.



#### • A Transit Rebirth

South End stakeholders revive an historic Charlotte streetcar and begin running it from South End to Uptown along an old freight rail line.



Recent Timeline

demands while preserving the distinct character of each focus area.

The purpose of this Plan will be to:

- 1. Establish a community-driven vision for the ongoing development of South End while defining more specific visions for the focus areas listed and
- 2. Inform the City's existing South End and New Bern Station Area Plans and comprehensive zoning ordinance revision with a toolbox of design standards to guide development and redevelopment activity in South End.

#### Historic Mill Revitalized

In a \$2-million rehab project, the historic Parks-Cramer Building is converted to a 48,961-square-foot office and retail complex called Atherton Mills.

#### South End's Story

#### Pre-Industrial to "Little Manchester" to "Creative" District

The area we know today as South End is a fairly recent branding invention, but it has a fascinating history. This new planning vision and implementation strategy has the potential to write an exciting new chapter in this district's compelling historical narrative, a story that begins over two hundred years ago. To understand where we as visionaries and plan makers want to go, we need to understand where we have been, and this is best understood as a sequence of five historical periods.

Gold! (1799-1860)



#### Factory to Design Center

The historic Nebel Knitting Annex is rehabbed and renovated into the Design Center of the Carolinas, paving the way for the inventive rehab of other old buildings in South End.

Gold was first discovered near Charlotte in 1799 and between that year and 1860 gold workings in the Charlotte area extracted 60 million dollars' worth of that precious metal. The brief and hectic "boomtown" period began in 1831 and lasted until larger gold deposits were discovered in California in 1848 (Morrill, 2011). But during those years important mines operated within an area of approximately 70-acres of what is now South End -- bounded today by West Morehead Street to the north, South Graham Street to the west, South Church Street to the east, and West Summit Avenue to the south. Although fleeting, this gold rush generated the building of a U.S. Mint in the city and established the beginnings of Charlotte's eminence as a financial center.

# to present)



#### Rise as Design Hub

South End is home to 200 design businesses, including showrooms and offices for architects, builders, interior and landscape designers, and graphic and web designers.



#### Explosive Growth

As Charlotte recovered from the Great Recession, South End's population of 20 to 34 year olds grew over 500% from 2000 with the addition of 4,200 housing units.



## Railroads and Connections (1852

The next major phase in the evolution of what we today call South End began shortly after the gold rush faded. The first train from Columbia, S.C puffed and clattered slowly along the tracks parallel to what is now Camden Road in October 1852. This began an era of railroad expansion that connected Charlotte to points north, south, east and west, and established the young town as the railhead and distribution center of the region. The original tracks through South End parallel to Camden Road fell into disuse several decades ago. The right of way was acquired by the City of Charlotte, enabling the subsequent construction of

The Lynx Blue Line light rail opened, running 9.6 miles from Uptown through South End to south Charlotte, and catalyzed more than \$1 billion in development along the corridor, much of it in South End.

the light rail line along that same corridor. Light rail service started in 2007.

From Trolley to Light Rail

#### Mills and Manufacturing (1890s -1980s)

During the last decade of the 19th century, the area along the rail tracks became a site for industrial expansion. Most notably, the large Atherton Cotton Mill was constructed in 1892. This steampowered mill, which drew its water from the old Summit Hill Gold Mine to the north, was one of a host of new textile factories in the vicinity, so much so that in October, 1895, the Charlotte Daily Observer described the industrial parts of Dilworth as "the Manchester (U.K.) of Charlotte."

In the ensuing decades this new "Dilworth industrial corridor" flourished, and fostered the development of adjacent residential suburbs - Dilworth to the east and Wilmore to the west of the rail line. The block of East Park Avenue between Camden Road and South Boulevard functioned as a mini "Main Street" for both neighborhoods. However, this period of prosperity was curtailed during the 1930s when many factories closed, casualties of the Great Depression of 1929-42. However, the buildings that survive from these early decades of the 20th century now form the basis for the revived "Historic South End".

#### The Creation of "Historic South End" (1990 - 2000s)

The first seeds of an urban revival were planted in 1983, when the designer Gaines Brown purchased property in the triangle

of land formed by Camden Road, South Tryon Street and West Park Avenue. Brown operated his design and fabrication business there for more than three decades and leased out space in the old buildings at cheap rents that artists and other creative professionals could afford. The gradual emergence of that block as a local creative hub was bolstered by the arrival in 1996 of the Charlotte Art League and a coffee shop and art gallery in 2000.

In 1995, South End would unite to propose a new trolley system, now the Lynx Light Rail, to connect the area to the center of the city. Directed by Terry Shook and Kevin Kelley, the neighborhood would commence the planning and development of a principle element of the neighborhood for both transportation and economic development.

> The initiatives of Tony Pressley,

former CEO of MECA Real Estate Services, also significantly revitalized South End. He helped establish the first rehabilitation code in North Carolina to make adaptivereuse projects a viable option for developers. Pressley was also influential in obtaining investments for real estate development. His admirable legacy of projects he led include Atherton Mill, the Design Center of the Carolinas, Camden Row, and much more.

The last decade of the 20th century development saw new activity at the southern end of Camden Road. The Parks-Cramer building (now part of the Atherton Mill complex) was rehabbed into a retail complex in 1993. In 1996 the beautifully restored historic Charlotte trolley began running along a short length of track from its workshop in Atherton Mill, eventually extending this trip in 2004 along the refurbished rail line parallel to Camden Road. These separate initiatives became unified under a new umbrella organization, the South End

Development

Corporation, created in 1994 to promote and revitalize the area.

The name "South End" was an inspired branding invention derived from the success of the "West End" area in Dallas, TX. There, several blocks of old industrial brick buildings directly west of downtown Dallas had been rehabilitated into trendy restaurants, apartments and workplaces. The old "Dilworth industrial corridor" south of downtown Charlotte was thus reborn as "South End," and in 2004 the South End Development Corporation merged with its larger uptown neighbor, Charlotte Center City Partners, creating the current entity "Historic South End."

#### Light Rail and Rapid Growth

The City of Charlotte's investment in the first phase of the CATS Blue Line led to an astonishing growth spurt of private sector development along the rail line in South End. From 2005, before the rail line opened, to the present day in 2017 private development totaling over \$2.2 billion has transformed the area. Additionally, a further \$1.46 billion of development is under construction or in the planning stages.

#### The

historic Car 85 streetcar sits behind the Fowler Building near what would become the Bland Street light rail station. A vacant site

sub-market

#### REFERENCES

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With numbers like these, the Charlotte encompassing uptown and South End was rated as the top development market in the USA in 2015, a testament to the area's original visionaries and planners. But there is always room for improvement: in particular the quality of urban and architectural design has been inconsistent; the lack of variation in housing products has not matched the neighborhood's ambitions; and the network of public spaces has not yet matured into a fully-fledged system.

This focused need for improvement creates a major springboard for this plan. This opportunity allows for more attention to be paid to sustainability and adaptive reuse of existing buildings. It also allows for more attention to be paid to critical issues of public open space, housing affordability and diversity, and the retention and recruitment of productive businesses as well as uses based primarily on consumption and retail.

"Charlotte Trolley Vision Plan" Shook Kelley, Inc.

Fahey, Ahsley "Pillar Award: Tony Pressley Made South End and so Much More." Charlotte Business Journal. November, 2016. Web

Atherton Cotton Mills." The Atherton Cotton Mills. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Preservation Foundation, n.d. Web. 04 May 2017.

Wilkinson, Henrietta H. The Mint Museum of Art at Charlotte; a Brief History. Charlotte: Heritage Printers, 1973. Print.

Approximate areas of the St. Catherine mines and the Brush Hill -Rudisill mines in the Gold District







#### South End Fast Facts

#### Demographics

# Population Distribution by Age

South End's population is more heavily distributed between the ages of 20 to 34 than is Charlotte's.



**Educational Attainment** 

60% of South End residents have an Associate degree or above whereas 47% of Charlotte's residents have the same educational attainment.



# lousehold Size

Compared to Charlotte, South End has more than twice the single person households and fewer 2+ person households.





#### Marriage and Children

The majority of South End residents are unmarried and without children. About 13% have been widowed or divorced.



#### What Matters to Residents

- » Respondents represented the young and affluent demographic group that dominates the South End geography based on Census data
- » 60% of respondents had lived in South End for less than two years, reflecting an influx of new residents
- » They relocated from other parts of the Charlotte region
- » Overall, respondents had a positive view of South End, valuing the area's walkability and unique local flavor supported by locally owned shops and restaurants



1	00%
	90%
	80%
	70%
	60%
	50%

- 30%
- 20%
- 10%
- 0%

- In 2015, South End residents were surveyed on their opinion of the neighborhood. In summary:
- » They expect and desire more growth of retail and restaurants
- » While most residents shop elsewhere for soft goods, there is only moderate demand for major chain retail in the district
- » Most residents would like to see locally owned restaurants and shops rather than national chains
- » Its critical to retain existing local businesses and add new local businesses for the ongoing improvement of South End
- » Other critical factors were adding a traditional park, festivals and events and completing the Rail Trail

Unimportant

Very Important



#### How do you feel these factors impact the ongoing development of South End as a great place to live?

#### South End Fast Facts \*as of 2nd Quarter 2017



SOUTH END VISION PLAN



Recent Development \*as of 2nd Quarter 2017

> From 2005 to 2017, \$2.2 billion in private development has transformed the area and a further \$1.46 billion is under construction or in the planning stages...

...but there is room for more.



Recently completed Under construction







Top, left to right / 1 The Gold District / 2 Camden Road / 3 South Boulevard Bottom, left to right / 4 South Tryon Street / 5 Distribution/New Bern



#### Study Area and Focus Areas

The South End Vision Plan study area is delineated by CCCP's Municipal Service District boundary as shown in the map on the following page. This area is defined approximately as follows: On the east by South Boulevard; to the south by Marsh Road at its junction with South Boulevard and by Foster Avenue at its junction with South Tryon Street; to the west by South Tryon Street (with the inclusion of a few properties west of South Tryon Street on either side of West Tremont Avenue) and,

north of Summit Avenue, by South Mint and South Graham Streets and to the north by the southern loop of I-277 at the border of Uptown Charlotte.

For the purposes of this Plan, this study follows best practices in urban design and urban planning and includes the plan's context, specifically extending two blocks beyond the "official" South End boundaries. It does this because the city streets defining the boundaries are not experienced on the ground as hard boundaries, but shared corridors of public space – urban rooms within the city.

Within this plan area are key focus areas whose characteristics have emerged over the past few years and continue to do so today. These include but are not limited to:

- » Gold District: the area roughly bound by Morehead, Mint, Summit and Church Streets
- Camden: the Camden Road corridor from the South Tryon Street intersection to West Tremont Avenue and Hawkins Street from West Tremont Avenue to West Kingston Avenue

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- » Distribution/New Bern: the area north of the New Bern Blue Line station on either side of Remount Road
- » South Boulevard: encompassing the area on either side of South Boulevard from I-277 to Marsh Road
- » South Tryon Street: the area on either side of South Tryon Street from West Kingston Ave to Remount Road

#### Study Area & Focus Areas Map



South End Boundary





#### Planning Process

The planning work was completed by a core team which consisted of consultants from Stantec, and staff from Charlotte Center City Partners, the City of Charlotte Urban Design, and Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation. A Steering Committee vetted and guided the planning process. That committee included South End residents, business owners and community leaders. Full lists of team and Steering Committee members can be found in the Appendix of this document.

#### Reconnaissance

The analysis of previous planning work revealed a considerable body of work from past years, replete with many

However, accomplishments. some items remained incomplete, and fast changing physical and demographic circumstances had raised expectations for the area. Extensive on the ground "surveys heightened the team's close-grained physical and historical knowledge of and familiarity with the vision plan area.

#### Community Outreach

The team vetted the vision, goals, and recommendations from the previous plan with the community (at large and in stakeholder interviews) and with the Steering Committee to determine if these goals were still valid. This process revealed new goals and values which were used to craft a new vision statement.

An interactive Community Open House was held in October 2016 during which community members discussed what they value in South End, and which amenities and character elements are missing or can be increased. Summary feedback from major questions asked is as follows:

#### Where would you like to shop in South End?

- » Specialty foods & beverage 23%
- » Apparel 14%
- » Sports & recreation 10%

#### What prevents you from walking, biking or taking transit more?

- » Efficient public transit doesn't go to where I live/work/recreate
- » Busy streets, few safe crossings
- » Afraid of cars (for biking)



- » Street fairs
- » Cafes
- » Theater venues

# End?



**Community members selected their** favorite images from a set and listed characteristics they depicted that would be good for South End.

Left / 1 Street festivals, outdoor events and community

Bottom / 2 Walkability, architecture and shops

**Right / 3** Public space, art & water, and interaction





What is missing in South End that would feed your creative side?

» Classroom space

» Outdoor music spaces

#### What will life be like in the future South

» "I can take the train to my favorite parks, museums and ice cream shops." » "I'll never have to go outside a 3 mile radius to get anything I need." » "I'd be able to find an affordable studio or 1-bedroom apartment, a decent job (maybe even at a new tech company), and ride my bike and walk everywhere."

Community Input | Round 2









Top, left to right / 1 Queen City Quiz Show / 2 Visual Preference Survey / 3 Crowd listens to presentation

Bottom, left to right / 4 Sign In Table / **5** Participants pick up their South End passports



#### Plan Development

This Vision Plan represents the culmination of this planning process, articulating the combined conversation of the community, steering committee and area stakeholders about the future of South End. The resulting vision and goals provided a foundation for the development of specific recommendations and design guidelines and lays the groundwork for implementation. Throughout the process one theme became clear; South End is a place where Charlotte is not afraid to create and test new things and new ideas.

This Vision Plan builds on that legacy and envisions a South End that continues to be on Charlotte's leading edge of urban livability, technology and sustainability.

# Where We Want $\overline{} \cap (\overline{} ) \cap \overline{} \cap$

#### VISION

South End is a people-first, walkable urban district of vibrant neighborhoods, built on transit, and fueled with energy and innovation from some of Charlotte's most diverse and creative people.

to offer.





In 2030, South End will be the vibrant center of many surrounding neighborhoods. Residents of Dilworth, Wilmore and Sedgefield will be able to safely and enjoyably walk to and cross South Boulevard and South Tryon Street - their main streets - to shop, to meet friends, and to experience all that Charlotte has

Tens of thousands will live in this place where stepping onto a train or catching a ride on an automated vehicle will be as comfortable and convenient as walking and biking. Wide sidewalks will be alive

with activity, shaded by street trees, and anchored by the beautiful South End skyline. It is a skyline that has embraced its industrial roots through preservation and re-use alongside new towers overlooking grand urban parks and transit stations and mid-rise buildings for modern workplaces and housing for people of many lifestyles and economic means.

Public space will define each of South End's neighborhoods. The ever-increasing popularity of the Rail Trail, South End's linear park will continue to grow as new connections are made, narrow spots are

-Jane Jacobs

widened, public art is added, and areas of respite and entertainment are layered along its length. Some blocks will be anchored by large neighborhood parks full of formal activities, places to relax, and places to let dogs run free. Others will have gathering places that are more intimate in nature as part of a restaurant's courtyard or a pedestrian alley with string lights and seating.

This shared space ethic is also manifested South alona End's streets with its well-placed

12 11

landscaping, decorative lighting, plentiful seating, and eclectic artwork. South Boulevard is a grand boulevard built in the tradition of great streets across the world and it is so well-detailed that it is considered one of the great civic art contributions to Charlotte. Once, South Boulevard and South Tryon Street were considered dividing lines separating people but these corridors have long since been transformed into seams that bring people together - to shop, to eat, and to celebrate.

Density and mixed-use bring more people and wonderful new amenities including restaurants, shops, hotels, theaters, parks, and activity. The lunch time crowd, bolstered by large corporate offices and smaller-scale

15.8

e a series a

entrepreneurial business, give way to evening night life and weekend activity. From start-up to corporate, young and growing to older and established, South End is at the intersection of Charlotte's creatives and creators.

It's a place that welcomes apartment and condo dwellers along the rail corridor, and people from the many surrounding neighborhoods. Housing prices vary from those that house teachers and firefighters, young professionals and families with children, to those that can afford the penthouse lofts that soar above the transit stations. South End is a place where many cultures and lifestyles come to express themselves and to find success.

And, it's a place that never forgot about its heritage of experimentation, it's willingness to try new things, and it's place as a living laboratory for Charlotte's investments in creating great places.

> With the Lynx Blue Line as the spine of South End, mobility and density intersect to create economic opportunities and public amenities.







Taken implementation.

20

#### Realizing this Vision

To realize this vision, it's important to translate it into sets of community-wide values, goals, and strategic initiatives built on the valuable input of an inclusive community planning process.

> Core values are broad buckets of what is important to the community, literally what is valued. They guide decision making in the community and have been used to develop the Goals.

> Goals are more specific objectives that begin to demonstrate how the neighborhood will maintain its values while it grows, but are still overarching strategies and not site or project specific.

> Initiatives are identified for immediate action and impact - they are the "how to" element of the three providing projectspecific action items that embody the Values and Goals. It is not enough to simply be aspirational. This plan must be practical in advancing it year after year.

together, this combination drives the Vision Plan and supports its

#### Core Values

Core Values are essential for navigating our urban future as a community of people with shared needs and experiences. They underlie all of our decisions and form the basis for how we interrelate as a community both now and with each successive generation that inhabits and uses South End and add their stamp upon it. In short, South End should be (in alphabetical order):

#### Authentic

Experiences of living, working, and playing in South End should be genuine, memorable, and linked to ocal and global culture.



#### Adaptable

Older, cheaper buildings are key to nurturing creativity and innovation. New buildings should be designed for maximum flexibility and change of use for future resilience and sustainability.



#### Beautiful



#### Connective

South Boulevard and South Tryon Street become seams that unite the neighborhoods to the east and west so South End can become their Main Street (e.g., Davidson Street in NoDa.)



#### Creative

A sense of activism, innovation and experimentation in the arts, business, entertainment, and infrastructure should permeate the whole neighborhood.



#### Dynamic

Residents, workers and visitors enjoy walkable neighborhoods in South End, with dense and lively 18-hour activity focused especially along the rail corridor.



#### Inclusive

South End should be open and accessible to a wide range of individuals, groups, and lifestyles.



A highly-integrated transportation system encourages mobility without the need for car ownership and promotes healthy living.

#### Safe

Residents and visitors alike will feel safe at all times with well-lit spaces and plenty of neighbors keeping an eye out for each other and visitors.







# Goals

Throughout the year-long planning process, our steering committee, major stakeholders, and the general public helped to craft seven key goals that are critical to the long-term success of South End.

- 1: Grow By Design
- 2: Expand Our Mix
- 3: Pursue Affordability 6: Never Stop
- 4: Celebrate Public Space
- 5: Move.Connect. Network.
- : Never Stop Experimenting
- 7: Manage Our Common Resources

# 1: Grow By Design

Expect Density Pay Attention to the Details Bake in Amenities





Build high quality architecture and create urban design that humanizes density. Tall buildings provide higher density and make more efficient use of highly valuable land close to transit stations. But, South End needs human scaled density as well. In other words, the ground floor of tall buildings can be designed to be very permeable and accessible with spaces for small shops and larger restaurants alike. Architecture that endures and adapts gracefully to change is the foundation of a great neighborhood; building eclectic and beautiful places today means that future residents will fight to preserve them tomorrow as South End continues to evolve.

Architecture that endures and humanizes density, Alexandria, VA 🖊 2 Density near transit stops, Phoenix, AZ **3** Density-supported retail on Regent Street, London, U.K. / 4 "The Golden Triangle," incorporates a vibrant sidewalk, an interesting façade, and on street parking to protect pedestrians , Ann Arbor, MI Case Study / 5 Distinct architecture / 6 Human scaled density / 7 Mixed use with upscale ground floor retail

Control the massing, form, and density of new development to create a clear hierarchy of density along the rail line. This would feature much greater minimum expectations close to transit stations and uptown (15+ stories), mid-rise buildings (6-10 stories) in areas a few blocks away from transit stations and a finer grain and smaller scale of urban (re)development (3-5 stories) in areas near surrounding neighborhoods.

Increased density can provide a more sustainable market for essential neighborhood services that aren't dependent on driving -- such as groceries, soft goods (clothing), food and beverage, and personal services (e.g., hair and cosmetic services.)

Details are important. The ground floor of all new development that faces a public street should be designed with maximum flexibility to accommodate a variety of uses as density increases to support a more sustainable and consistent retailing environment. Minimum floor to floor heights should be established to support a variety of uses. For example, a residential or office ground floor unit may be converted to a retail shop or cafe as the market changes over time. Any new ground floor residential units that face a public street should be elevated from the grade of the street (24 -30 inches) by a stoop or landing and have individual private entrances. This supports active street life while safeguarding visual privacy for residents.



Regulate the placement of new buildings so that they make good, pedestrianfriendly urban spaces. Design the ground floor of buildings to promote activity, visibility, and a mix of uses. "The Golden Triangle" identifies the sidewalk, two bottom stories of the façade, and on-street parking as essential design components.

Encourage finer grain development. Large development tracts should be broken up into smaller blocks, using small-scale streets or alleys, mid-block pedestrian passageways, and small public spaces. Avoid building façades that stretch across the entire block face. This is an important component of creating a built environment that is scaled to the pedestrian and feels more like a neighborhood than a central business district.



CASE STUDY: Portland's Pearl District/River District Design Guidelines, Portland, OR

Following the removal of the Lovejoy Viaduct in the 1990s, the area once occupied by warehouses and rail yards is now vibrant with new development including upscale galleries and boutique apartments and townhouses. Within the boundaries of the Pearl District is a wealth of new buildings that blend with the existing warehouses, all contributing to the success of the neighborhood.

The River District Design Guidelines were originally adopted in 1996 and have been updated several of times. The foundation for new construction, these guidelines layer on the Central City Fundamental Design Guidelines and can have Special Areas that add to them in certain circumstances. Guidelines are first outlined and then specifically identified implementation strategies are listed. This enables developers to both see photos of successes and have metrics to design buildings with. In the Special Area Guidelines, there are even requirements for ground floor retail, multiple story buildings, limited garage entrances, and driveways, and signage details. All of these standards add up to distinctive, attractive buildings with quality architecture.

River District Design Guidelines Link: https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/ article/58869

# 2: Expand Our Mix

Support Entrepreneurship Curate Vibrant Shopping & Entertainment Attract a Daytime Population



1 Market stalls, Grove Arcade, Asheville, NC / 2 Small increment storefronts, Birmingham, MI / 3 Shared retail, Good Bottle & Hex Coffee, South End / 4 Small, shallow

(20 feet deep) shops in Falls Park, Greenville, SC

Case Study / 5 Twin Cities METRO Green Line / 6 Cultural festival / 7 Break-dancing event / 8 Little



commercial diversity Encourage South End's history is in South End. built on innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship. It has long been a place where a new businesses can start-up, add a second location, or even attract a national tenant. This diversity is important to providing a vibrant, sustainable place. Increasing the number and size of spaces that can house retail shops and restaurants on the ground floor will increase the general supply. To this end, the ground floors of most buildings, but particularly along South Boulevard, Mint Street, Camden Road, and South Tryon Street should be designed principally as shopfront spaces. To further expand this mix and encourage a most consistent pedestrian environment, these spaces should be predominately retail, food and beverage tenants. Interim uses in

these spaces should be under temporary, short-term leases only to preserve the opportunity to convert over when a preferred tenant comes forward. The second floor of buildings are potential locations for additional retail and services salons, gyms, restaurants, and shops.

Mekong Night Market

Support entrepreneurship and local business expansion. Curate and support authentic local businesses and locate them in prominent ground floor spaces together with larger spaces suitable for chain stores, soft goods vendors, and neighborhood services like drug stores. Promote shared use tenant spaces that offer goods or services at different times of the day (e.g., Hex Coffee and Good Bottle - a symbiotic partnership that is a coffee shop by day and a bottle shop in the evening).

Formulate retail incubation tools. Retail - places to shop and receive personal services - are just as critical to vibrancy as food and beverage services. Develop a toolkit for retail incubation including space-sharing/co-hosting, master leases to permit smaller short-term leases, and other non-traditional techniques and encourage the creation of small, pop-up and semi-permanent kiosk-style retail shops. The expected wide sidewalks and Rail Trail area will provide highly visible locations for pop-up stands and certain areas of parking decks may be adapted for inexpensive space that may not command the higher rents that more prominent spaces would elsewhere.



Attract More Daytime Employment. Increasing office development and daytime employment in South End has a number of very positive benefits. First, it provides a lunch-time crowd for area restaurants helping to both double their peak periods and lessen the need for on-site parking to accommodate patrons who would otherwise drive in. Second, an increased daytime population increases the effective market capture for new retail shops which would otherwise rely upon night and evening shopping. Third and finally, office workers can most effectively share the residential parking that is in high abundance in the district.



CASE STUDY: Minneapolis/St. Paul's Central Corridor Funders Collaborative

The Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, an innovative partnership supported by 14 local and national foundations, was created as a resource to encourage diversity, affordable housing, and locally owned businesses in the communities affected by the Twin Cities' METRO Green Line construction from 2007 until 2016.

While the area has a rich history as a home to waves of immigrant workers since the second half of the 1800s, it suffered from urban divestment and demolition due to Urban Renewal. The focus of its efforts was placemaking with public art, public spaces, increased urban livability investments, intentional programming, and façade grants. As a result, 450 business made preparations for the construction and improvements using \$3+ million in loans and \$260,000 in facade grants. These efforts set the stage for 128 new street-level businesses opening during the construction period and an eventual \$4.2 billion in new development projects since 2009.

Image source: Central Corridor Funders Collaborative http://www. funderscollaborative.org/

# 3: Pursue Affordability

Encourage Mixed-Income Housing Preserve and Provide Affordable Workspaces





Affordability should be a part of every development conversation. To provide for a diversity of opportunity it is imperative to ensure that **commercial affordability** and **mixed income** are a part of every growth and development conversation. For some projects, it may be proactively working with the development team in advance. For other projects, there may be an opportunity for a third party partner to enter the program or even the provision of a subsidy from a fund.

Encourage greater housing densities. Limited supply and increased demand is a recipe for increased prices. Like its other benefits, increased density will increase the total supply of residential options and provide more fluctuation in the rent structure for the South End submarket.

1 Redevelopment of Strawn Cottage as mixed-income housing, South End / 2 Mixed-income housing in First Ward / 3 Adaptable workspaces, C3 Labs, South End / 4 Current South Boulevard Pedestrian Environment Case Study / 5 Hollywood/Western Apartments 6 Westlake/McArthur Park 7 Hollywood/Vine Apartments / 8 Taylor Yard

Focus on the provision of affordable lifestyles, not just affordable housing. It is not enough to simply provide smaller units or lower rents. For low to moderate income households to truly live an affordable lifestyle, they often need to eliminate car ownership from their monthly expenses. The continued expansion of mobility options that don't require car ownership as well as the number of new essential neighborhood services (e.g., grocery stores), mean that one can now live in South End car-free.

Unbundle the cost of parking from housing. To further reduce housing costs, the expense of parking should be unbundled from the cost of housing to further drive down housing costs and car usage/ownership. Some possible solutions

include the provision of a parking space as a surcharge to the rent rather than as a embedded component and the provision of public parking decks that are shared and collectively managed.

Promote workforce housing as a component of all new residential development in South End. Housing diversity stratified by a range of costs and sizes is a necessary element to any great city, particularly with superior access to the transit system. In coordination with the City's Department of Housing and Neighborhood Services, a goal for workforce housing development should be established to ensure a long-term and sustainable economic diversity of housing choices in South End. This goal should define expectations for new housing development in partnership with the City's programs, incentives and resources that support the development of workforce and affordable housing.





#### CASE STUDY: Los Angeles Metro Joint Development Program

Through its Joint Development Program, Los Angeles Metro has worked with affordable housing developers and local jurisdictions to create transit-oriented affordable housing at or near a number of Metro Stations. To date, Metro's Joint Development Program has created over 2,000 units of housing, of which, 31% are affordable. In 2015, the Metro Board increased their affordable housing objectives to provide that 35% of their total portfolio be affordable (defined as qualifying residents earning 60% or less than area median income (AMI)).

Additionally, Metro committed \$9 million to the Metro Affordable Transit Connected Housing Program (Metro MATCH) and \$1 million to the Transit Oriented Communities Small Business (TOC-SB) Loan Program in August 2016. The \$9 million in Metro investment for affordable housing is expected to leverage up to around \$75 million in contributions from other financing partners. The \$1 million in small business loans will go to owners of buildings with vacant ground floor retail space adjacent to transit who can use the loans to build out tenant space and offer space to small business tenants and below market rents.

Information and image source: https://www.metro.net/projects/joint dev pgm/ affordable-housing/

# 4: Celebrate Public Space

Complete the Rail Trail Construct Many & Varied Public Spaces Attract & Support Cultural and Entertainment Venues





**Case Study / 5** Temporary basketball league in the street / 6 Variety of activities / 7 Pop up beach





Complete and improve the Rail Trail. As the principal public space of South End and by far it's most well-used mobility corridor, the Rail Trail's popularity has exceeded its capacity in many locations particularly where the trail narrows or doesn't currently extend along one side. The Rail Trail Framework Plan should be implemented as quickly as possible.

Treat the Rail Trail like other Main Streets. Properties along the Rail Trail should be required to provide pedestrian and bicvcle amenities consistent with other street frontages such as simple movable seating, bike racks and landscaping as well as to provide public space like plazas and small gathering spaces as well as decorative facade details facing the Rail Trail. Perhaps, most importantly, given the popularity of the Rail Trail, all development should also provide shopfront space along

the ground floor to accommodate active uses such as shops and restaurants.

Construct new public spaces throughout South End. The Rail Trail alone is not sufficient to serve as South End's only public space. The district requires parks and public spaces of all sizes and shapes to serve its many programmatic and passive functions. The future Wilmore Centennial Park should be expanded when funding allows to extend its borders all the South Tryon Street and West Boulevard so that it can be bound on all sides by a public street. In addition, the current one acre parking lot in the Gold District bound by Bland, Commerce, Mint, and Graham Streets should be considered for redevelopment as a public park when appropriate. Other squares, plazas, commons, courtyards, and alleys should also be curated as development and redevelopment occur

with a mix of public and private ownership and stewardship. San Francisco provides a good manual for public space stewardship (http://sf-planning.org/public-spacestewardship-guide). Redevelopment of brownfield sites for adaptive reuse should consider liability, cleanup standards, and costs as potential barriers.

Encourage a variety of daytime and nighttime programming to create 18-hour vibrancy in focal public areas. Explore collaborative opportunities with public and private entities in South End to construct and program small and large public spaces. Support and expand organic programming led by others. Entertainment and nighttime uses should be clustered to maximize their synergy and minimize "dark zones" between individual venues.

# End.

Attract and support a variety of cultural, entertainment, and community facilities. To truly function as the village center for the neighborhood it serves, South End needs more public and private community facilities and entertainment venues. Museums, libraries, theaters, community meeting facilities, churches, and schools are critical to any sustainable community. Community facilities provide an entirely different cultural element than private galleries; both are important components to a community. Public facilities can be more accessible to a wider range of artists, students and youth. Whether public or private, these cultural elements and those individuals involved with them should be deeply ingrained in the spontaneous and unique projects that take place in South





#### CASE STUDY: Campus Martius Park, Detroit, MI

Campus Martius Park in Detroit is at the center of a two square block district in the commercial center and heart of downtown. At 2.5 acres, it serves as a stage of entertainment and community events throughout the year

and is the hub for all major avenues downtown that radiate from its center. The park is part of a neighborhood comprised of 20,000 office employees, 750 residents, 35+ restaurants, 50 retail outlets, and over 2 million annual visitors. In 1999, Campus Martius Park was adopted as part of the Detroit Legacy Project and a Campus Martius Park Task Force was established to oversee its redesign and redevelopment. The park was completed and opened in to the public in 2004.

Campus Martius Park is designed to be programmed year round and is the center of the majority of downtown activity. It is programmed 250 days of the year and is home to several high-profile events. Additionally, it has gardens, lawns, fountains, kiosks, café, and flexible seating for residents and visitors to relax and socialize. The Detroit 300 Conservancy, a subsidiary of the Downtown Detroit Partnership, uses Campus Martius Park to house music performances in the summer and holiday events including ice skating in the fall and winter months. In addition to special events, the Conservancy secures private funding from the Park's neighbors and supports the utilities, maintenance, and safety.

http://www.campusmartiuspark.org/

# 5: Move.Connect. Network

Put People First Connect all Modes Embrace the Mobility Revolution







Put people first. A sea change is necessary in South End in how infrastructure is oriented and prioritized. Vehicle speeds, block lengths, lane widths, signal timing, crosswalks, curb radii, and capacity should be tilted in favor of pedestrians and cyclists over the automobiles. Automobiles are still very welcome to travel the streets but moving much more slowly and disciplined as detailed in the Charlotte Walks Pedestrian Plan. This is also consistent with Charlotte's adoption of Vision Zero, a set of goals intended to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, and equitable mobility for all.

Complete the conversion of South Boulevard and South Tryon into "Main Streets" that favor cyclists and pedestrians. Since the adoption of the South End Station Area Plans the goal has been to slowly retrofit these corridors with enhanced amenities for pedestrians (wide sidewalks and streetscape), cyclists (bike lanes), and on-street parking (which improves pedestrian safety). Rather than continuing to wait for development to complete the public realm of these corridors, a coordinated capital project(s) should be undertaken to bring these corridors up to their final, preferred state as soon as possible.

High visibility pedestrian crossing on the Rail Trail, South End / 2 EasyMile Shared Autonomous Vehicle (SAV), Concord, CA / 3 Pedestrian and bicycle counter, South End / 4 Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL **Case Study / 5** Unique and attractive pavement patterns / 6 Public art and lighting / 7 Landscaping and signage **/8** Distinct wayfinding and branding

> pedestrian Enhance bicycle and infrastructure. Install bike boulevards (signed bike routes on low-speed, low volume streets), consider conversion of existing bike lanes on Carson Street and Remount Road to protected facilities, prioritize bicycle and pedestrian connections to surrounding neighborhoods, establish more crossing points for pedestrians and cyclists on the Rail Trail, illuminate crosswalks, and provide mid-block pedestrian connections via unique and attractive alleys, woonerfs and paseos. In addition, at a minimum, all sidewalk areas (comprised of both the walkway and the tree planting area) should be no less than 16 feet in width. In general, this consists of trees in wells for most areas, though along more residential frontages a planting strip can be acceptable.



Construct a new light rail station between East/West and New Bern stations. An ideal location for this important new element of connectivity is the Rampart Street and Hawkins Street intersection behind Publix. This location serves a critical gap in the rail system and provides needed pedestrian connectivity east to west near the grocery stores (to eliminate an unsafe condition

where people hop over a fence).

vehicles.

Accommodate and support innovative mobility solutions. South End owes its history to the mobility revolution of the early railroads and then to light rail. Continue this spirit of innovation by testing new modes and technologies for personal and shared mobility including expansion of the bike share program, car-share services, electric car charging, and shared autonomous





In 2013 the Indianapolis Cultural Trail opened crossing 8 miles of Indianapolis' downtown. This bike and pedestrian path connects neighborhoods, cultural districts and entertainment amenities by forming a loop around downtown with separated pedestrian and cycling facilities. The trail was built in seven phases and each segment had a separate design concept tailored to each of the districts unique historic characteristics and environmental considerations. In more urban areas the path is 12 feet wide located directly adjacent to the pedestrian area outside of mixed-uses. In many cases benches, bike racks, and additional street furniture separate this space from the trail. Because of the large width of streets in Indianapolis, one lane was taken to provide the trail facilities.

Over \$300 million of new development has been constructed along the route since the beginning of construction in 2008. Two of the areas along the trail that have numerous retail and entertainment uses are Massachusetts Avenue and Fountain Square. The design of the trail in these areas with an existing active public realm adjacent to active ground floor uses is very sensitive to its surrounding context. http://indyculturaltrail.org/



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#### The Vision for South Boulevard

The South Boulevard of the future will be a beautiful street lined with canopy trees, and wide sidewalks with frequent crosswalks, parking-protected bicycle tracks, on-street parking and autonomous shuttles running its length. South Tryon Street will be similarly detailed with high quality pedestrian and bicycle amenities. 77



#### Street Types

The street regulating plan presented on this page ties required street sections to specific blocks and corridors in accordance with the Charlotte Urban Street Design Guidelines (USDG). (For more specific information, please refer to the South End and New Bern Station Area Plans)



# 6: Never Stop Experimenting

Encourage Spontaneity Embed Art into Everything Be Creative





Case Study / 5 Experiential placemaking installation / 6 Interactive rotating bench / 7 Temporary prototype educational art installation





Support South End as a center for creativity. South End has a history as a place for innovation and creativity. Increasing rent and diminishing space will make this creative proliferation more difficult. Therefore, it will be important to be intentional about continuing to support planned and spontaneous artistic, technical, and social innovation, experimentation, and production. Attract start-ups with supportive programs to assist with finding space and funding (investors).

Protect and maintain buildings and spaces that are affordable to artists and other creative professionals. Explore ways to keep creative maker spaces from being priced out of the area; this includes subsidies, artist-in-residence programs, and partnerships with academic, private, and non-profit institutions.

Create flexible, innovation-friendly employment spaces. Ideally located both near transit stations as well as in older, utilitarian buildings elsewhere, these buildings should meet the highest standards for design, and employ new technologies and innovations that advance South End's desire for creativity and uniqueness in architecture, urbanism, and sustainability.

Support a spirit of innovation that generates activity on the street. Ground floor workshops and innovation labs that have transparent windows facing the street add life at different times of the day. Curate exhibitions and performances, and encourage spontaneous creativity through "tactical urbanism" and similar events by expanding existing micro-grants program and other similar programs.

Support venues for making and performing experimental art. Establish and support a "Civic Arts Lab" as a space to explore community issues through art and design and seek to provide black box and other small format theaters. Promote locally organized maker events and expand to attracting a nationally recognized innovation event like Maker Faire (http:// makerfaire.com/).

Embed art into public infrastructure and buildings throughout the district. From sidewalk treatments to wall facades to aerial sculpture (e.g., http://www. echelman.com/), public art should be everywhere.

Light up the smokestack at Atherton Mill and other recognizable landmark features. The smokestack at Atherton Mill is one of the most iconic structures in South End. It rises above the old mill buildings as a visual terminus on South Boulevard and is a reminder of the district's industrial heritage. It is even more visible from long distances along the Rail Trail. Along with the water tank at the Design Center, they have become recognizable figures in the neighborhood and the focus of art competitions. Using LED lighting, light up these features and others of similar importance to provide additional nighttime character and landmarks.



CASE STUDY: Market Street Prototyping Festival, San Francisco, CA

The Market Street Prototyping Festival held its first festival in April 2015. Over the course of three days, Market Street came alive with more than fifty models, or "prototypes," ranging from performance spaces, relaxation zones, educational spaces, green spaces and interactive art installations. Each prototype was conceived and built by members of the community-everyday citizens, artists, designers, urbanists, architects, etc.-with mentorship from professional design expert partners and feedback from residents of San Francisco. The festival engaged 590,000 people over three days and thousands more engaged online.

The Market Street Prototyping Festival is a natural progression of the innovation displayed by the Urban Prototyping Festival (UP), a pioneering program of citizen engagement in urban design developed in 2012 by San Francisco nonprofits Gray Area Foundation for the Arts and Intersection for the Arts. Included on the selection jury for UP was the San Francisco Planning Department, who then went on to commission a prototype from the UP festival to be placed in a community market.

Images 6 & 7 source: http://marketstreetprototyping.org/

# 7: Manage Our Common Resources

Organize Parking as a Public Resource Preserve Valuable Building Stock Prepare for the Future





Create a parking district to manage public and private parking. There is an opportunity to better manage parking agreements, through shared-use coordinated management, and enhanced wayfinding. The creation of a parking management district with a dedicated revenue stream can not only manage public and private spaces, including real-time availability, but also construct new public parking in centralized areas to minimize the need for on-site private parking.

Plan for adaptable reuse of parking. Consider adaptive reuse opportunities for parking decks as options for personal mobility as we increasingly transition to greater use of shared, autonomous, on-demand vehicles.

Opportunity to enhance public space, South End 2 Successful adaptive reuse of an older building with distinct architecture, South End **/ 3** Parking deck screened with a green wall, San Francisco, CA / 4 Start up businesses in older building, South End **Case Study / 6** Parking sensor diagram **/ 7** Streetline Parker App / 7 Streetline Parker sensor installed

Parking should be screened by buildings and access should be from side streets. Only occupiable building space should be visible from public streets - not parking. Additionally, to enhance the pedestrian realm along South Boulevard, South Tryon Street, Camden Avenue, and Mint Street, all parking structures should take their access from side streets or alleys only.

Adapt infrastructure for increased ride hailing, car-sharing, bike sharing, and vehicle charging. Adapt public and private infrastructure to accommodate spaces for car sharing, vehicle drop-off locations, expanded bike share locations, and electric charging stations. In addition to physical improvements, there should be coordination with CDOT and CATS to maximize all of the mobility options in South End.

South End's existing, older buildings are a vital community resource worthy of protection. An important element of South End's character comes from the adaptive reuse of old buildings and its history as a walkable neighborhood. Preservation and adaptive reuse should be emphasized as the essential counterpoint to welldesigned new development. The stock of older, simple buildings offers affordable "startup" spaces for innovative and entrepreneurial activities that create the district's unique flavor. Codes and policies (e.g., stormwater, tree protection) will need to be adjusted to make adaptive reuse projects and change of use more feasible. Additionally, consider zoning mechanisms such as maximum height and maximum floor-to-area ratio (FAR) that would encourage reuse in older industrial



tenants.

relocated.

Convert to LED lighting and local energy systems. All existing and future lighting should be converted to LED or more advanced, low-energy lighting. All buildings, new and old should convert to renewable, district or building-level energy over time as the technology becomes cost-effective.

areas such as Distribution and New Bern, where there are many highly adaptable workspace buildings, to prevent overvaluation and preserve affordability for

Bury/relocate overhead utilities. All overhead utilities (main transmission lines and service lines) should be buried or





The City of Boston has long struggled with congestion and air pollution tied to drivers circling neighborhoods to find parking. At the same time, more drivers are relying on real-time navigation from on-board systems or their smartphones.

In the winter of 2013, the City partnered with Streetline to install 330 sensors hockey puck-sized sensors flush to the surface of the road to detect open parking spaces in the Innovation District and then made that information available via the Parker App, Streetline's custom websites, and its API. The project gave the City a wealth of real-time data on parking. Using this collected information, can ensure that parking is more closely aligned with true utilization, will spur higher turnover at on-street parking spaces, and help to promote parking availability for patrons of area businesses. Boston drivers can view real-time, on-street parking availability in the area by downloading the Parker<sup>™</sup> app, available for Apple and Android, to their smartphone. Parker's voice guidance feature gives drivers a hands-free option for safe operation while driving.

https://www.cityofboston.gov/

# how we get there: Focus Areas



The Focus Areas are a mix of corridors and neighborhood centers. The corridors, South Boulevard and South Tryon Street, form the eastern and western edges of South End but change character from north to south. The neighborhoods, the Gold District, Camden, and Distribution/New Bern have emerged with their own unique identities and generally definable boundaries.

SOUTH END VISION PLAN



#### The Focus Areas

- » South Boulevard: encompassing the area on either side of South Boulevard from I-277 to Marsh Road
- » South Tryon Street: the area on either side of South Tryon Street from West Kingston Ave to Remount Road
- » Gold District: the area roughly bound by Morehead, Mint, Summit and Church Streets
- » Camden: the Camden Road corridor from the South Tryon Street intersection to West Tremont Avenue and Hawkins Street from West Tremont Avenue to West Kingston Avenue
- » Distribution/New Bern: the area surrounding the New Bern Blue Line station on either side of Remount Road



South End Boundary



#### The Vision for South Boulevard (2030)

As the Main Street for South End, South Boulevard serves as the shopping and entertainment hub for not just South End but also for Dilworth, Wilmore, Sedgefield, and beyond. The final transformation, enabled first by the transition to electric vehicles and their clean, quiet operation, and then to autonomous vehicles – both shared shuttles and private passenger cars – rebalanced the priorities of the street to people – people walking, riding bikes, and sitting and eating.

It is a place where the density of new housing and offices created a builtin demand for a continuous retailing environment from Carson Street to the New Bern Station. It's new buildings gracefully transition in height and massing into the canopy of the homes in Dilworth and Sedgefield. Perhaps what is most unique about South Boulevard is that it's a corridor of celebration. The wide sidewalks are places to meet your neighbors and to window shop and it's constantly alive with activity. Thousands of bicyclists use the raised, protected cycle tracks to move up and down the corridor every day. Trees soften the landscape both in the sidewalks as well as in occasional medians. On-street parking is well-managed and the frequent crosswalks make every block accessible for everyone to navigate.

Most of all, South Boulevard is a symbol of the vibrancy of Charlotte led by its willingness to experiment and innovate. It was one of the first corridors to truly embrace on-demand cars and shuttles who drop people off and pick them up right at the curb along this smart corridor.



1 Existing conditions looking north on South Boulevard near Atherton Mill

2 Conceptual illustration of a treelined boulevard flanked by mixeduse buildings, wide sidewalks, and parking-protected cycle tracks







**1** Existing conditions looking north on South Boulevard at Rensselaer Avenue / 2 Conceptual illustration depicting the corridor full of public art and trees with infrastructure and activities that prioritize pedestrians, bicyclists, and the use of autonomous vehicles

#### South Boulevard: Key Changes/Improvements

- » Complete the streetscape from Carson to New Bern: Wide sidewalks (14 foot minimum); underground utilities; street trees in wells, street furnishings; decorative lighting; 7.5 foot raised, parking-protected cycle tracks on both sides; on street parking; 10 foot travel lanes; and an intermittent landscaped median.
- Create a Smart Corridor: Install smart corridor technology (e.g., fiber opticfed sensor technology, 5G wireless services)
- Convert the Atherton Mill surface lot to a multi-functional plaza: Parking by day, entertainment venue on nights and weekends
- Active uses: A continuous, vibrant, ground-floor environment is expected along with the enhanced streetscape and widened sidewalk. These uses should be a mix of specific types of retail, such as shopping, entertainment, and dining establishments.

- » Infill and redevelopment: New development and adaptively reused buildings on both sides bring new homes and workplaces to the area and support a continuous, vibrant, groundfloor environment. The improved streetscape and new infrastructure development make the area more captivating, which supports local retail and amplifies the pedestrian experience by attracting more people to this location.
- » Alive with Art: Incorporate highly visible public art installations all along the corridor as both standalone elements and integrated into the infrastructure.
- » Break down the super-blocks: Install additional high quality pedestrian crosswalks and new traffic signals to slow traffic while managing the current volume and dramatically improve the ability of pedestrians to move safely across the street.

#### The Vision for South Tryon Street (2030)

Like South Boulevard, South Tryon Street underwent a similar transformation converting from the old state highway focused on moving cars quickly in and out of uptown to a much more neighborhoodfriendly corridor. Trees line the edges and a landscaped median adds to the lush quality of the area. Cyclists safely enjoy the cycle tracks while pedestrians stroll along wide sidewalks in front of a variety of shops and restaurants. Upper stories are filled with residents of diverse backgrounds and employees in offices and other workspaces.

The centerpiece of South Tryon Street is the Wilmore Centennial Park. Phase one set the park in motion but phase two completed its true potential reaching all the way to West Boulevard and diversifying the program of activities and landscape. Development reacted by building up its

edges. New towers with stunning views of uptown and the greater region overlook the park on one side and the Blue Line on the other.

South Tryon Street carefully acknowledges its neighbor to the west, Wilmore, with its historic homes and tree-lined streets by making the walk from the neighborhood safe and enjoyable.

Reminiscent of the relationship of King Street to Meeting Street in downtown Charleston, South Tryon Street, is more subdued than its busier sister, South Boulevard, but remains a thriving corridor of boutiques and local flavor nonetheless. And, akin to its older brother, North Tryon Street (in Uptown), it is an important office address known throughout the region.

1 Existing conditions looking east at West Boulevard at South Tryon Street

2 Conceptual illustration of South Tryon Street depicting the full build-out potential of the Wilmore Centennial Park surrounded by grand mixed-use buildings









1 Existing conditions looking south on South Tryon Street near Morehead Street / 2 Conceptual illustration of South Tryon Street extending the prominent office address out of uptown along with a vibrant sidewalk and protected bike lanes

#### South Tryon Street: Key Changes/Improvements

- » Complete the streetscape from Carson to Remount: Wide sidewalks (16 foot minimum); underground utilities; street trees in wells, street furnishings; decorative lighting; 7.5 foot raised, parking-protected cycle track on both sides; on street parking; 10 foot travel lanes; and an intermittent landscaped median. Beyond West Boulevard, the median is a regular element.
- » Infill and redevelopment: New development and adaptively reused buildings on both sides bring new homes and workplaces to the area.
- » Active uses: A continuous, vibrant, ground-floor environment is expected. These uses should be a mix of specific types of retail, such as shopping, entertainment, and dining establishments. These uses assure that many people come to the area to enjoy these pleasurable amenities.

- » Affordable shopfronts and workplaces: Encourage a variety of shop spaces and office tenant configurations in redevelopment projects along South Tryon Street for incubating new businesses.
- » Promote the Office Corridor: South Tryon Street will extend the regionally significant office corridor from the uptown into South End.
- » Complete and expand Wilmore Centennial Park: This 1.5 acre neighborhood park should grow to a 3.5 acre park with key acquisitions towards West Boulevard to be fully bound by streets along all of its edges. It will be the premier urban park in the area with a diversity of programming and landscape.

#### The Vision for the Gold District (2030)

From the early to mid 1800s, gold was mined in the area just west of Bank of America Stadium into the heart of Wilmore around Park Avenue. Today, it is real estate in the Gold District that is the new land of opportunity. One mine shaft, part of what once was the Rudisill Gold Mine has been incorporated into a regional museum located at Mint Street and Summit Avenue, welcoming tens of thousands of visitors every year to the Gold District.

As the Gold District developed over time, this history and heritage manifested itself in the public realm, with gold-colored street furnishings and lighting, interpretive elements in the streetscape, and a gold nugget sculpture by world renown fabric artist, Janet Echelman, hanging over Mint Street and visible from the offices in uptown. Other elements of public art can be found throughout the Gold District including along its many interesting alleys.

New mixed-use buildings sit alongside the 20th century industrial buildings, providing one of the most eclectic neighborhoods in South End. An urban square at Mint and Bland Streets provides a welcome respite to the vibrant urban environment around it teeming with breweries, restaurants, creative workspaces, boutique shops, and artist studios lining Mint Street, the main street of the Gold District.

Beyond Mint Street, the neighborhood has filled in with new buildings providing housing and workspaces in urban townhomes, smaller shops, mid-rise and high-rise offerings. (In the Gold Distict, residents and workers find a place that is equally convenient by foot and bike to uptown as it is connected to the larger region by rail.)



**1** Existing conditions looking east toward Mint Street / 2 Conceptual illustration of an urban park surrounded by new mixed-use buildings bound by Graham, Bland, Mint, and Commerce Streets







1 Existing conditions looking north on Mint Street near Lincoln Street / 2 Conceptual illustration of potential streetscape enhancements along Mint Street, infill development and adaptive re-use, and new public art integrated into the infrastructure and potentially as a gateway element over the street



#### Gold District: Key Changes/Improvements

» Streetscape Improvements: Several streets in the Gold District are without sidewalks and street trees, but new investment should begin on Mint Street with some enhancements being made with minimal funds. Consider restriping the west side of Mint to flip the parking lane and parking to provide a parkingprotected bicycle facility. Prioritize new streetscape installations on Graham, Summit, Mint, and Church Streets.

- » Infill and redevelopment: New development and adaptively reused buildings bring new homes and workplaces to the area. Massing is varied but height is encouraged to maximize its location.
- » Gold Square: A new public square bound by Graham, Bland, Mint, and Commerce Streets could be installed as redevelopment occurs in the area along with other public spaces throughout.
- » Active uses: A continuous, vibrant, ground-floor environment is encouraged along Mint Street, Summit Street, Morehead Street, and South Tryon Streets.
- » Gold District Museum: Honoring the history and heritage of the area, this new museum would be ideally located adjacent to the Rudisill Gold Mill and incorporate the mine shaft that is said to exist in that area.



Streets prioritized for ground floor retail



Retail priority streets

#### The Vision for Camden (2030)

Stretching from the flatiron corner of South Tryon Street to Tremont Avenue, the heart of South End has long been along Camden Road. Since it's earliest manifestation as a compact artist's row, Camden has grown into a major employment center that thrives on its connectivity to the region with both the Bland Station and the East/ West Station within easy walking distance.

Even though towers have sprung up in this corridor to take advantage of the regional transit system and the other amenities in walking distance, the older industrial buildings have been preserved and re-used. Their historic character, combined with their taller contemporary neighbors embraced a new generation of art galleries and museums.

Converted to a curbless festival street complete with brick pavers reminiscent of the original mills in the area, Camden is a place where events and celebrations occur on a weekly basis. By day, the street is open to traffic, but at night and on the weekends it becomes the property of the thousands who stroll by vendor carts and among its many bars, restaurants, and event venues.

And perhaps most importantly, as the hearth of South End, it's a place where the community gathers for festival like the Fourth of July, Christmas, or other neighborhood-specific celebrations as well as for nightly entertainment - both programmed and improvised.

**1** View of Camden Road near East Boulevard looking towards South Boulevard / 2 Conceptual illustration of new mixed-use towers within a short walk of the East/West Station







#### The Vision for Distribution/New Bern (2030)

The Distribution and New Bern area has taken on an important role as the region's hub for small scale innovation. Including Distribution and Dunavant Streets to the north, Youngblood and Griffith Streets to the south, and the New Bern Station, mid-century modern industrial structures have been preserved and affordably adapted by entrepreneurs and non-profits for their creative and service endeavors.

Surrounded by mid-rise housing along its edges and scattered through its blocks, the neighborhood is lively both day and night. Workplaces operate adjacent to evening entertainment venues and breweries. Mixed-income housing is a short walk away in the redeveloped Brookhill neighborhood and the light rail stations at New Bern and Southline (near Dunavant and Iverson) provide access to the greater region in less than ten minutes from anywhere in the area. And, perhaps most importantly, Remount Road has transformed to a mixed-use "main street" that provides a seam to both sides.

When not walking, people use the extensive bike boulevards to connect them to the Rail Trail, and, the New Bern Shuttle, an autonomous shuttle that circulates throughout the day and night, connects people to the LYNX Blue Line and into the surrounding neighborhoods.

What was once an area needing substantial powerlines and transformers to feed its industry, it has since become one of the first in Charlotte to convert to local power generation and storage, installing solar collector arrays onto the flat roofs and providing building-level battery storage.

Perhaps most importantly art has found a home here. Artists adopted the simple building forms as their individual canvasses and have made the neighborhood into a walkable gallery where paint and color share space with sculpture and light on the buildings and embedded in the infrastructure.

1 Existing conditions looking north on Distribution Street / 2 Conceptual illustration of subtle, yet significant adaptions of the existing buildings over time with advanced mobility and next generation energy to accommodate small business startups and creative working space.









1 Existing conditions looking north on Griffith Street towards Fairwood Avenue / 2 Conceptual illustration of potential streetscape enhancements and new infill with bike boulevards.

- Road.
- » Preserve the buildings: Working with groups such as philanthropies, investors, and perhaps a community development corporation, establish a preservation fund and other strategies to preserve the utilitarian structures for economic development opportunities.



#### Distribution/New Bern: Key Changes/Improvements

» While somewhat different in character, the following recommendation apply the areas on both sides of Remount

» Zoning: As a means to preserve the existing building stock and discourage over-development, consider tools that protect the over-development

and over-development of this neighborhood such as reducing height, density, and FAR.

- » Bike Boulevards: Install bike boulevards to expand safe biking alternatives and add connections to the Rail-Trail.
- » Complete the Rail Trail and build a park: Complete the critical link that is missing through the CATS light rail facility and convert the front lawn into a public park.
- » Convert Remount Road to a walkable, bike-friendly, mixed-use corridor from I-77 to South Boulevard.

- » Alternative energy strategies: Investigate and encourage the use of local energy collection and storage (solar panels and building batteries).
- » Keep it funky: Encourage art throughout Distribution and New Bern, particularly in wayfinding and in helping to add interest to buildings.



Image depicting opportunities to expand the Rail Trail and install a public park at the CATS Light Rail facility in Lo-So.

Opportunities Successful preservation

# IMPLEMENTATION: Key Initiatives



This Vision Plan sets out a realizable future for South End in 2035, 2040 . . . and beyond. The following ten Initiatives provide the initial stepping stones to reach that goal, and directions for all parties involved in making this future happen – e.g., the public agencies, non-profit organizations, private property owners, developers, residents and business owners and tenants.

# The Top 10 Each initiative is a direct outcome of one or more of the Goals that drive the vision.

- 1: Continue development of the Rail Trail
- 2: Finish the conversion of South Boulevard to South 7: End's Main Street
- 3: Implement new regulations to ensure a high quality public realm
- 4: Attract cultural facilities/ venues
- 5: Preserve and provide affordable workplaces

- 6: Construct the Wilmore Centennial Park and other green spaces
- 7: Construct a new crossing and transit station near Hawkins/Rampart
- 8: Increase density expectations at station areas
- 9: Manage parking as a district
- 10: Embed art into everything
# Continue development of the Rail Trail



## Why?

The Rail Trail is considered to be the premiere mobility corridor in the region seamlessly combining the Blue Line with active pathways for walking, running, and biking. It has become the primary shared public space in South End and is a key element in realizing the ambition to "Put People First" in the neighborhood.

In 2015, the Rail Trail Framework Plan identified how to transform the corridor into a network of unique commons and activity areas and provides programming ideas, design guidelines, management structure and funding strategies to guide future development, governance and maintenance of the Trail.

While it does more than any other part of South End to generate a lively and non-commercial sense of place and community, it remains incomplete - lacking adequate width and connections in certain stretches and in need of continued layering of amenities throughout its length. And, for all it's regional popularity, the predominant funding source has been private dollars - both in non-profit initiatives and in developer-led improvements.

## How?

- » Create continuous, wide trails alona both sides of the rail line for the full extent of the plan area by widening "pinch points" and missing links along the Trail.
- » Improve traffic management of vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians at key crossing points of the Trail, streets, and the light rail tracks – e.g., East/ West Boulevard, Tremont Avenue, Bland Street, and Remount Road.
- » Continue to add amenities to the Trail including small urban spaces for gatherings and small group events as it extends and matures following the precepts of the Rail Trail Framework Plan. Reach out to private property owners along the Trail to set up collaborative ventures for placemaking.
- » Construct the vital missing link between South End and Uptown Charlotte. Take advantage of the planned expansion of the Convention Center to implement this critical piece of infrastructure - first by a bridge across Stonewall Street followed by a signature and iconic bridge spanning I-277.

- » Seek out opportunities to extend the Trail laterally in locations that can connect it with other modes of transportation and with adjacent public spaces and neighborhoods.
- » Let art flourish along the trail with continual investments, as well as professional and community-based art/installations.
- » Integrate a broader funding strategy to address capital improvements including direct public CIP investments, bond funding, value-capture/tax increment financing (TIF) funding streams, and additional assessments over the current South End Tax District. This strategy should be done in continued collaboration with developmentled improvements, sponsorships, fundraising, and non-profit investments.
- » Implement the Design Guidelines in Chapter 5 and continue to attract retail and restaurant along the corridor.

### Resources

- » Indianapolis Cultural Trail: http:// indyculturaltrail.org
- » Atlanta BeltLine: http://beltline.org



## Why?

particular.

Even though development density has blossomed in recent years, the traffic volumes in the corridor have remained largely the same as they've been for more than a decade. During that time the city has been slowly implementing changes to the corridor on a project by project basis adding wider sidewalks, landscaping, on-street parking, and bike lanes.

# Finish the conversion of South Boulevard into South End's "Main Street"



South Boulevard, with its current orientation towards automobile movement, makes the corridor unpleasant for pedestrians and cyclists. As a result, it acts as a forbidding barrier between neighborhoods to the east and west - between Dilworth and upper South End /Wilmore, and between Sedgefield and Lower South End in

These improvements, embedded more than decade ago into the various small area plans, envisioned a mixeduse, pedestrian-focused "Main Street" that pulls together and connects all the adjacent neighborhoods along its length through South End. Rather than being a moat that separates, it becomes a seam that unites both sides.

## How?

- Change people's perceptions of the corridor by transforming its "rhythm" and "cadence" from one that's based on heavy vehicle use to a more people-first alternative predicated on active pedestrian life on the street by redesigning the right-of-way to reduce travel speeds with 10 foot travel lanes and more intersections, and to deliberately favor pedestrians with more frequent crosswalks and wide sidewalks.
- Support implementation of intersection redesign, additional traffic signals at key junctions, enhanced street paving treatments, crosswalk lighting, and pedestrian-actuated signalization at key crossings to slow cars, increase vehicular safety, and improve the ability for pedestrians and bicyclists to Cross.
- Update area plans to adapt the most current thinking including replacing bike lanes with raised, parkingprotected cycle tracks and installing wider sidewalk, as proposed in the Charlotte Department of Transportation Arterial Study on South Boulevard and South Tryon Street.

- » Adapt infrastructure to accommodate the shift towards on-demand, electric, and autonomous technologies including elements that address charging stations and curb usage for pick up/drop off zones.
- » Aggressively encourage higher density, mixed-use development with continuous storefronts full of active uses along the corridor to generate pedestrian use and serve the shopping and dining needs of the surrounding neighborhoods.
- » Complete the preferred improvements as a city-led capital project, as soon as possible using direct public CIP investments, bond funding, valuecapture/tax increment financing (TIF) funding streams, and additional assessments over the current South End Tax District.

- » NACTO Urban Street Design Guide: https://nacto.org/publication/urbanstreet-design-guide/
- » USDOT TIGER Program: https://www. transportation.gov/tiger

# Implement new regulations to ensure a high quality public realm

## Why?

Development in South End is subject to a wide variety of development codes implemented through the site plan process and guidelines implemented through the rezoning process. Combined with building codes, the tree ordinance, stormwater regulations, and various other standards and requirements, they form the menu from which projects derive their design.

The City's Transit Oriented Development (TOD) zoning district is one of the primary zoning tools used in South End to regulate and guide private investment and development. In 2016, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission identified a series of Transit Oriented Development Priorities based in part on a review and assessment of recent development in South End. This review identified areas of the current TOD regulations that need to be strengthened to fulfill the purpose set out in the TOD These priorities emphasize ordinance. the need to strengthen the public realm with renewed attention to street level pedestrian activation, parking standards and design, the Rail Trail, and overall architectural design and density.

future development and The redevelopment of South End requires zoning and urban design regulations that reflect best practices and produce high quality architectural and urban design designs worthy of a great place.

### HOW?

- » The quality of public space is largely a function of the façades and frontage designs of the buildings enclosing or lining the public space. This means that the design of building frontages at street level is critical and must always prioritize the visual experience and safety of pedestrians.
- » Urban streetscape details are essential. This means trees planted in grates rather than planting strips along specified urban frontages, plus humanscaled street lighting and furnishings in all commercial and mixed-use areas.
- » Minimize the physical and visual impact of the car. What's good for cars has rarely been good for people. Access to parking areas and decks must be from minor side streets and/or rear allevs. Parked cars in decks must be wrapped by occupiable buildings and/ or screened from view.
- » Encourage the use of renewable energy and physical activity in design guidelines.
- » Adopt the Design Guidelines in Chapter 5 as amendments to the existing station area plans.



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Celebrate Public Space

» Produce a design guideline reference for developers and architects that define the urban design principles and architectural design strategies that support the goals and recommendations of this plan. This reference should be well-illustrated and include plentiful examples of good design practice. Consider a design review process for these guidelines to promote and encourage its principles.

### Resources

- » Form-Based Codes Institute: http:// formbasedcodes.org/
- » Toronto Design Guidelines: https://web. toronto.ca/
- » NYC Active Design Guideines: https:// www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/plans/ active-design-guidelines/active-designguidelines.page



## Why?

pressures.

district.

city as a whole.

# ▲ Attract cultural facilities/ venues



Never Stop Experimenting

**Celebrate Public Space** 

Originally a home to primarily industrial properties, South End never historically had a neighborhood in which religious, cultural and institutional facilities were required by the immediate population. Prior to the current building boom, large, vacant buildings with plentiful parking and low rents were home to a number of beloved music venues (e.g., Amos' South End and Tremont Music Hall) who have in recent years given way to redevelopment

For South End to truly serve the needs of the thousands of new residents as well as those in the surrounding neighborhoods, neighborhood and community-scaled venues are necessary to reinforce the substance and ambiance of a rich cultural

Cultural programming can raise public awareness of events and build a demand for more and frequent content. And, while previous venues and facilities were often austere in their investment, new venues can and should take on a variety of sizes and levels of quality to properly serve not just the needs for South End, but for the

## How?

- » Many older industrial and warehouse buildings in South End include larger, long-span interior spaces suitable for a multitude of different uses. Great efforts should be made to preserve these buildings and adaptively reuse them for cultural, creative and entertainment purposes.
- Develop a cultural facilities strategy with arts groups and city wide non-profits to identify the specific need for such cultural and community spaces including (for example) street level galleries, craft workshops, teaching kitchens, and community design studios, or small "black box" theater and dance spaces accessible from minor streets and alleys. Outreach to libraries, museums, galleries, religious and community organizations can highlight opportunities for new local and satellite operations as well as "flagship" facilities.
- In addition to entertainment venues, creative co-working space and artist studios are equally critical.

- » A multitude of smaller amenities embedded throughout the neighborhood can arguably achieve more critical mass than a singular, facility.
- » Spaces for potential new cultural and entertainment venues should be "baked into" the design and development of new buildings and facilities by identifying specific community needs and working with developers early in the design process. Developers of new buildings should be encouraged (and incentivized) to include a proportion of space in their projects for adaptable, creative uses.
- » Potential partners involved in cultural and creative enterprises should be recruited to South End as a new home for their organization or as an extension of their current operations.

- » Charlotte Arts & Sciences Council: https://www.artsandscience.org/
- » Knight Foundation: https:// knightfoundation.org/

## 5 Preserve and provide affordable workplaces



Expand Our Mix

## Why?

What has made South End the funky, eclectic places for start-ups and creatives prevalence of inexpensive, is the adaptable space that can easily accommodate the art studio, the repair shop, the tech office, and the brewery. And yet, it is these simple buildings that are most prone towards redevelopment pressure because of their relative ease in demolition.

Dense urban neighborhoods like South End can excel in the process of creating new ideas. Joe Cortright with City Observatory notes that by "juxtaposing diverse people in close proximity, cities produce the serendipitous interactions that generate what Jane Jacobs called 'new work,'" not just new businesses, but art, music, culture, fashion, and all manner of sociocultural activity

To facilitate this creativity and entrepreneurship, everybody involved in South End's future should take this auote from the great American urbanist Jane Jacobs to heart:

"Cities need old buildings so badly it is probably impossible for vigorous streets and districts to grow without them. By old buildings I mean not museum-piece old buildings, not old buildings in an excellent and expensive state of rehabilitationalthough these make fine ingredientsbut also a good lot of plain, ordinary, low-value old buildings. (Jacobs, 1961)"

Simply stated, entrepreneurship, creativity and diversity in South End's future will wither on the vine without ordinary, older buildings that are affordable to small business start-ups and creative enterprises.

## How?

» Preserve the neighborhood's stock of older existing buildings using various strategies including facade easements, land banking, community development corporations, and zoning overlays on key areas of existing buildings to prevent their demolition and incentivize their adaptive reuse. Set maximum development intensity and building size, and specify use restrictions for areas where affordability and adaptive re-use are prioritized (e.g., Distribution and New Bern, Distribution/Dunavant Streets).

- Encourage the provision of affordable commercial space in new development - potentially as smaller tenant space and space located on secondary and tertiary frontages (side streets and alleys).
- » Encourage the provision of live/work "artist-in-residence" studios in each new building as way to provide affordable space scattered throughout South End. In order to keep these spaces affordable find a partner to manage and/or subsidize the cost of the unit.

### Resources

- » The Death and Life of Great American Cities by Jane Jacobs
- » "Authentically Allentown" Artistin-Residency Program: http:// upsideallentown.com/arts-businesscommunity-leaders-announce-newcultural-coalition-allentown-launchauthentically-allentown-artist-residencyprogram/
- » City of Phoenix Adaptive Reuse Program: https://www.phoenix.gov/ pdd/services/permitservices/arp

## Why?

Parks provide neighborhoods.

the area.

# 6 Construct the Wilmore **Centennial Park and other** green spaces



**Celebrate Public Space** 

benefits to manv Apart from their recreational and aesthetic attributes, they are also a source of positive economic benefits. They enhance property values, increase municipal revenue, bring in homebuyers and workers, and attract retirees. In short, they are an ideal device for fulfilling many neighborhood goals and aspirations within this Vision Plan.

At present, there are no public parks in South End. Wilmore has two small parks; Abbot Park and Wilmore Park adjacent to I-77. The nearest convenient park for South End workers and residents is the 31-acre Latta Park in Dilworth, approximately 1/2 mile east of Camden Road.

A basic principle for good neighborhood design is that no one should be more than a five-minute walk (1/4 mile) to a local park or playground. However, great urban places are comprised not only of more formal parks but also of less formal public and private spaces scattered throughout

## How?

- » The future Wilmore Centennial Park in South End sits between West Kingston Avenue, Hawkins Street, and South Tryon Street, and measures approximately 1.3 acres. In addition to constructing the first phase as quickly as possible, this site area should be extended to West Boulevard to create a park covering a full block measuring approximately 2.6 acres and bound by public streets along all its edges.
- In all cases of public park design, the spaces should be truly public, that is publicly owned and managed rather than private space that only looks public. As an approximate guide for activities in a neighborhood park, a 1-acre park can hold a crowd of a thousand people standing close together for a political rally or similar event, or approximately 400-500 people seated for a concert.
- The location of public park spaces throughout South End should follow an open space master plan for the neighborhood.
- » Consider the construction of a

neighborhood park in the Gold District - perhaps through the redevelopment of the current parking lot bound by Graham, Bland, Mint, and Commerce Streets - when redevelopment occurs on the surrounding block.

» As South End continues to expand further south, it is important to identify a site or sites for future, small pocket parks of +/-1 acre in size in southerly locations. The planning process should involve all property owners in Lower South End and beyond, together with residents and businesses from neighborhoods immediately adjacent.

- » Project for Public Spaces: https://www. pps.org/
- » City Parks Alliance: http://www. cityparksalliance.org/index.php

# Construct a new crossing and transit station near Hawkins/Rampart

## Why?

The growth of South End has brought with it major issues of access between properties on the east and west sides of the light rail tracks. This barrier has been further highlighted by the opening of the Publix store at 2222 South Boulevard in the Southline development. Lack of pedestrian crossings to access this store causes residents on the west side within walking distance to drive instead, negating the principle of transit-oriented development.

There is no legal crossing point for pedestrians or cyclists between Tremont Avenue and Remount Road, a distance of ½ mile, and the distance between the East/West and New Bern train stations is approximately 1.2 miles. Comparatively the distances between East/West, Bland and Carson stations are more walkable (approximately 3 blocks or just under a ¼ mile each)

Residential and mixed-use development has substantially densified in this area strongly supporting the construction of a new light rail stop between the New Bern and East/West Stations.

## How?

- » Construct a pedestrian crossing near the Southline development. This should be similar to the Bland Street stop, with the rail trail on both sides, and a pedestrian right-of-way across the tracks at surface level linking Hawkins Street (as a visual extension of Rampart Street), and along the northeast side of Spectrum South End, incorporating and widening the existing sidewalk along the edge of the parking lot to 2173 Hawkins Street.
- » Begin the federal studies necessary, identify funding, secure right-of-way, and construct a new transit station in the vicinity of the crossing noted above.

### Resources

- » Charlotte Department of Transportation: http://charlottenc.gov/ Transportation/Pages/default.aspx
- » Charlotte Area Transit System: http:// charlottenc.gov/cats/Pages/default. aspx



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**Above /** View looking north near the Southline development Bottom / Location map for study area





## Why?

the primary streets.

# Increase greater densities at the station areas

Grow By Design 111 

Historically, guidance for development densities around transit stops in the U.S. has been very much lower than the full potential of transit-oriented development requires. Such is the case in South End where, in spite of significant investment over the years, the relative density for many projects is less than elsewhere in Charlotte away from the light rail line and follows a mid-rise model found throughout suburban Charlotte. This greatly underleverages the investment of the light rail line, reduces its potential ridership, and limits the density necessary to support desired neighborhood amenities and continuous storefronts of active uses along

Beyond the concerns for establishing sustainable future prosperity for South End, this dense corridor concept creates a regional template for sustainable urban development that illustrates the best practices highlighted in the 2014 CONNECT Our Futures Preferred Growth Concept for the region.

## How?

- » Increase the required minimum densities and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in the transit station areas to achieve greater than 100 units/acre and/or an FAR of at least 5.
- Densification can occur through the development of available sites and the redevelopment of existing lower density properties while feathering back in density to the adjacent neighborhoods. Current analyses, studies, projections, and precedents suggest clearly that in 20-30 years' time many of the current transit-oriented projects developed at densities in the 70 units/acre range will be prime targets for redevelopment at higher densities in the 100-150 units/ acre range.
- These higher densities, in a "spine" of mixed-use development following the light rail line, will support more substantive retail outlets, entertainment and cultural venues, and neighborhood services - all situated closer together for connectivity and ease of walking.

- » The presence of larger office tenants is important; in addition to higher residential densities, it will be important to increase the intensity of employment, raising the concentration of daytime activity on the streets.
- » The evolution of the Buckhead area in Atlanta serves as a model for this type of densifying redevelopment that responds to and maximizes rising property values, with recently announced redevelopment projects that convert 4-5 story mid-rise projects to 22+ stories for residential and 45 stories for office buildings.
- » In coming decades, the Charlotte skyline could be uniquely marked by, in addition to the clusters of towers Uptown and at South Park, a third strong visual element: a line of glittering towers through South End, hallmarks of design elegance and urban sustainability.

- » Connect Our Future: http://www. connectourfuture.org
- » Center for Transit Oriented Development: http://ctod.org/

# View washing to be and the second sec 9 Manage parking as a district



## Why?

In South End, form follows parking. At present, parking is provided in South End at ratios largely independent of the presence of transit and other mobility options. In addition, these spaces are isolated within individual projects with no real practical opportunity for cross-sharing and few public parking spaces (aside from on-street spaces). Additionally, the provision of parking is also displacing development opportunity (i.e., greater density)

Increasing the density and the number of people living and working in South End is not, contrary to previous experience, likely to lead to an equivalent increase in vehicle ownership in the coming decades. The reduction in car ownership coupled with new mobility choices will decrease the need for each new development project to provide parking in the same ratios that have been common for the last several decades.

This reduction will change traditional parking formula and expectations for development economics, and instead support economies based on sharing and pooling resources for maximum efficiency.

## How?

- » Remove all minimum parking standards and Initiate maximum parking requirements and require or incentivize shared use of parking spaces between neighboring developments to reduce institutional pressure to construct an excess of spaces.
- » Strongly encourage extensive shared parking arrangements between individual development projects. Develop a strategy and operational plan for sharing and managing parking across whole sections of the South End neighborhood. This can be continuously updated as new projects come online.
- » In lieu of providing parking to residents or employers, building owners should consider providing the use of car sharing services (e.g., ZipCar, CarShare, Turo), discounted ride sharing services (e.g., Uber, Lyft), or similar shared vehicle service to encourage reduced individual car ownership or usage.
- » Consider pooling parking needs into common decks in adjacent blocks unbundled from buildings. These structures could be constructed by the public or by a third-party private operator, or some combination thereof.

- » Create a self-funding parking management district that manages the parking supply on behalf of public and private owners, including on-street parking, to balance the overall pool throughout the day. Partnerships between the public and private sectors will be vital to the success of this initiative.
- » Offer free parking to retail and entertainment customers during off-peak hours. This should become the norm for all major developments, allowing small site redevelopments to be free of parking requirements.
- Retrofit existing structures and require that new structures accommodate convenient electric vehicle charging stations.

### Resources

- » National Parking Association: http:// weareparking.org/
- » LA Metro Parking Management Districts Toolkit: https://www.metro.net/projects/ tod-toolkit/parking-managementdistricts/
- » Shared Use Mobility Center: http:// sharedusemobilitycenter.org/

### Why?

value of a place.

Public art projects offer a way to participate in the planning, design, and creation of communal space. They also provide a means by which a community can personalize its infrastructure, public spaces, and buildings using elements that are appropriate to its inhabitants.

# ] C Embed art into everything



Never Stop Experimenting

Public art is an essential component for creating and enhancing communities and had been a fundamental building block of South End since its earliest days.

Art that creates visual landmarks and special events enhances the experience of a place and the quality of life for its residents and workers. Such artworks engender a sense of pride and community identity, and they illustrate the cultural

Today in South End, art is supported through a basket of sponsors - Charlotte Center City Partners, Knight Foundation, local studios, private benefactors, and individual artists. Continued support for sanctioned and sometimes unsanctioned installations and applications is critical to keeping South End's character.

## How?

- Continue implementation of the Public Art Master Plan for the Rail Trail. Enhance and reinforce the concepts and content of the plan to be extended and amplified along its length.
- Encourage developers to incorporate art into the design of their buildings and spaces. When developers add this amenity to the public realm it demonstrates their care for and commitment to the neighborhood and its public spaces.
- Foster a sense of South End as a place of independent, unscripted artistic invention. This necessitated a fine balance between helpful and centralized assistance and a respectful "hands-off" approach to creative initiatives.
- Street festivals and other public events play an important role in building the identity of a neighborhood. The original Art & Soul arts festival in South End was a grass roots effort by local artists and business owners. Expand these programs to provide more regular events throughout the year.

- » Encourage a wide variety of art in South End, including public and private installations and programs. The unique placemaking attributes that public art brings to a neighborhood is a function of many and varied artistic voices and agendas. It is important that these private and often temporary initiatives are not conscripted into any single, cohesive organizational framework. That is antithetical to the spirit of South End as a place of creative and idiosyncratic energy and inventiveness.
- » Encourage local, temporary, pop-up, and grass roots efforts to provide programming using a wider network of sponsors and volunteers.
- » Maintain a South End public art blog as an open forum where individual artists and organizations can post their latest projects, ideas, and new initiatives.

- » Charlotte Public Art Commission: http:// charlottenc.gov/charlottefuture/ PublicArt/Pages/Public-art-commission. aspx
- » Americans for the Arts: http://www. americansforthearts.org/

# IMPLEMENTATION: Design Guidelines



One of the core implementing elements for any vision is the public policy that guides private investment in the form of codes and design guidelines. Key to all great places is a vigilant protection of high quality places for people. Both codes and guidelines therefore should principally focus on those elements that impact the public realm.

### 1.0 Preserve Flexible Workspace Buildings

Explanation: As a means to preserve existing buildings for continued adaptation as affordable workplaces, certain areas need to be protected from urban housing encroachment.

- a. Building Height (Maximum): 3 stories

Resources: Fulton Market Innovation District - Key Actions, Chicago, IL (https:// www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/ dcd/supp\_info/fulton-randolph-marketland-use-plan.html)

Urban Design Guidelines for the Gaines Street Design Review Districts - Adaptability and Reuse, Tallahassee, FL (https://www. talgov.com/Uploads/Public/Documents/ gaines/pdf/guidelines.pdf)

### Example Guideline

Maximum Development Intensity: For areas where affordability and adaptive re-use are prioritized (e.g., Griffith, Distribution, and Dunavant Streets) the following shall apply:

b. FAR (Maximum): 1.0

c. Use Restrictions: Uses are restricted to office, workplace, and light manufacturing in designated areas. Residential is permitted only as an accessory use (e.g., livework, artist studio)

### 2.0 Treat the Rail-Trail as a Main/Signature Street

Explanation: To ensure a safe and vibrant Rail-Trail corridor, buildings that face the Rail-Trail need to be designed in a manner that provides usable and attractive frontage on the trail as if it were a 'main street' with cars.

### Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission TOD Priority:

Requiring Development to consider rail trail a front that it must respect and enhance.

Commission Discussion:

- » Treat trail as though it were a street orient towards it, connect to it.
- » Make requirements for streets applicable to this pedestrian/bicycle oriented street.
- » Develop prototype designs and/or guidelines to demonstrate appropriate design of open space, especially rail trail.

### Example Guideline

For the purposes of the application of design standards, the Rail-Trail shall be considered a public street. All standards that would otherwise apply to the ground floor along Main/Signature Streets are applicable. use (e.g., livework, artist studio)

Resources: Atlanta Beltline Overlay District-Relationship of Building to Street/Beltline Corridor Frontage (http://atlanta.elaws. us/code/coor\_ptiii\_pt16\_ch36)











**Top to bottom / 1** Apartments with mid-block break at Lindbergh Station, Atlanta, GA / 2 Facade detailing with vertical proportions, Ann Arbor, MI / 3 Delineation between ground level and upper level floors at National Harbor, Alexandria, VA

### 3.0 Building Length and Proportions

Explanation: Long, uninterrupted façades have a negative impact on the pedestrian realm for a number of reasons: they provide less interest and variation at the pedestrian level, prevent sunlight access and skyviews to the street, limit pedestrian connectivity through a block, and limit the number of potential for valuable retail locations.

### Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission TOD Priority:

Requiring development to be more diverse, enhancing the pedestrian environment and contributing to a unique sense of place.

Commission Discussion:

- Break up large buildings with architectural elements.
- » Raise minimum density to existing conditions and require a mix of density across the site.
- Require architectural diversification in a development so the buildings do not all look alike, especially relative to adjacent property.

– Example Guidelines –

Maximum Building Face Length: No building shall exceed 250 feet in block face without a break in the façade. Covered driveway accesses to garages are not considered acceptable breaks.

- 2. Vertical Proportions: Urban buildings should be vertically proportioned so that the height of each bay should be taller than it is wide...
- Long Facades: When larger buildings are longer than 150 feet, the building should be architecturally divided into smaller increments. The use of window arrangement and size variation, vertical pilasters or other architectural elements should help create this effect. An over emphasis of this articulation, either in trying to make a larger building look like a series of significantly different small buildings or by extreme variation in surface plane should be avoided.

Resources: Toronto, ON Mid-Rise Buildings Performance Standards - Performance Standard #9 (https://www1.toronto. ca/City%20Of%20Toronto/wp/citygovernment/planning-development/ Sub%20Pages/Design%20Guidelines/ Mid-Rise%20Buildings/Mid-rise%20 Buildings%20Performance%20Standardsaccessible.pdf)

### 4.0 Facade/Material Detailing

Explanation: To encourage design quality and excellence for new buildings, facade detailing is necessary to avoid monolithic and dull facades.

- avoided.

### Example Guidelines

Delineation Between First / Base Floor and Upper Floors: The area where the first floor commercial base meets the second floor should be clearly defined with visual delineation.

Wall Depth / Material Detailing: The overall quality of façade is typically impacted by the perceived "depth" of the façade. Walls that have different materials and elements that occur in the same plane will appear flat and lifeless and should be

a. Where differing materials of a façade meet up, there should be a significant change in surface plane, likely 4-8 inches in difference.

b. Differing materials should typically terminate at inside corners.

c. Window Inset: Windows should have a slight inset so as not to appear flat.

### 3. Façade Detailing

a. Larger facades: Facades over 50 feet in length shall be divided into shorter segments by means of façade modulation, repeating window patterns, changes in materials, canopies or awnings, varying roof lines and/or other architectural treatments.

b. Façade Articulation: Building elevations shall be designed with vertical bays or articulated architectural features which shall include a combination of at least three of the following:

- » exterior wall offsets (projections and recesses a minimum of 6" in depth)
- » columns
- » pilasters
- » change in materials or colors
- » awnings
- » arcades
- » other architectural elements



Top to bottom / 1 Facade detailing with attention paid to the corner and modern elements, Chattanooga, TN / 2 Blank wall detailing, Chattanooga, TN



Top to bottom / 1 Uses and activities spilling onto the sidewalk, Denver, CO / 2 Uses and activities spilling onto the sidewalk, Boston, MA

### -Example Guidelines —

c. Blank Wall Detailing: Building elevations and site walls greater than 5 feet in height shall not have blank wall expanses greater than 20 feet in any horizontal or vertical direction. For blank walls areater than 10 feet, architectural features such as, but not limited to banding, medallions or similar design features, or materials will be provided to avoid a sterile, unarticulated blank treatment of such walls.

Resources: Downtown Urban Code -Building Standards, Spartanburg, SC (http://www.cityofspartanburg.org/cms\_ assets/Planning/Urban%20Code%202016. pdf)

Midtown Retail Storefront Design Manual - General Design, Atlanta, GA (http:// www.midtownatl.com/\_files/docs/retailstorefront-design-manual.pdf)

### 5.0 Ground Floor Activity and Uses

Explanation: People perceive a street that is predominately comprised of active uses such as retail shops and restaurants on the ground floor as safer and more entertaining, thus encouraging more pedestrian activity throughout the corridor. In addition, the presence of active uses are considered amenities to the density in the neighborhood.

### Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission TOD Priority:

Strenthening requirements to activate pedestrian oriented streets.

Commission Discussion:

- » Require more in Code Section 9.1209 to activate streets in contact with pedestrians.
- Require designs that allow for future activity when demand occurs (need minimum dimensions) and also require some percent of space to be active immediately.
- » Requre the first floor of residential units facing the street to physically connect to it.
- » Require developments to have true, honest, walkable, pedestrian scaled connections(s) to the street, leading to where we want activity and pedestrians.

Ground Floor Uses and Activities shall be as follows:

- be 20 feet.

Resources: Urban Design Guidelines Pedestrian-- Provide Multi-Tenant, Oriented Development at the Street Level, Austin, TX (https://www.austintexas. gov/sites/default/files/files/Boards\_and\_ Commissions/Design\_Commission\_urban\_ design\_guidelines\_for\_austin.pdf)

### Example Guidelines

a. Main Street Frontages: Retail, restaurants, galleries, and entertainment venues only shall occupy the ground floor.

b. Signature Street Frontage: Frontages shall be designed as Main Street frontages but are not subject to the same occupancy restrictions. Activity and community spaces such as gyms, recreation rooms, and community spaces are permitted to occupy that frontage.

c. Mixed-Use/Transitional Street Frontage: Frontages for commercial or mixed-use buildings shall be designed as Main Street frontage. Residential-only frontages are not subject to this requirement.

2. Tenant Space Depth: The required minimum tenant space for Main Street and Signature Street frontages shall

Laying the Groundwork (NYC Design Guidelines for retail and other groundfloor uses in mixed-use affordable housing developments) - Critical Success Factors Checklist for Ground-Floor Retail and Community Use (http://www1.nyc.gov/ assets/hpd/downloads/pdf/developers/ laying-the-groundwork-retail-designguidelines.pdf)





**Top to bottom / 1** Small storefront with 20 feet of tenant space depth in Ponce City Market, Atlanta, GA / 2 Small storefront space, Vancouver, CA.



Top to bottom / 1 Ground floor transparency exceeding 75%, Birmingham, MI / 2 Ground floor minimum tenant space height, Birmingham, MI / 3 Quality ground floor building materials (masonry and stone), Birmingham, MI

## 6.0 Ground Floor Design

**Explanation:** Large, transparent storefronts provide a sense of connection between the shopper and the merchandise or activity on the inside and provide lighting of the sidewalk at night. This perception of activity encourages pedestrian activity along the frontage.

### - Example Guidelines

- Ground Floor Transparency: The first floor of all buildings must include transparent windows and doors (not screened by film, decals, and other opaque material, glazing finishes or other semi or permanent window coverings) arranged so that the uses are visible to a depth of 20 feet and/ or accessible to the street of the first floor building elevation along the first floor street frontage between 2 feet and 10 feet measured from the sidewalk grade as follows:
- a. Main/Signature Street Frontage: 75% of frontage width
- b. Mixed-Use/Transitional Frontage: 60% of frontage width
- Ground Floor Height: The minimum first floor height (measured as finished floor to finished floor) shall be 17 feet.
- Entrance Heights: The maximum vertical distance between the finished sidewalk and the finished floor of the entry shall be:

- a. Main Street Frontages: 0 feet (Finished floor must meet finished sidewalk)
- b. Signature Street Frontages: 3 feet
- c. Mixed-Use/Transition Street Frontage: 5 feet
- 4. First Floor Building Façade Materials: High quality, durable finish materials should be used on the first floor street facade of buildings. This may include materials such as face brick and stone. Utility, decorative scored or split-faced block are not appropriate. (Split face block may be considered at the base up to no more than  $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet above the sidewalk) Simulated stucco/EIFS is not durable enough for use on the first floor.
- 5. Storefront Window Proportions: Windows should be large glazed panels, if possible, with smaller transom units above. Windows should fill most of the height of the first or base floor, to at least 10 feet above sidewalk grade. A series of narrow, vertical windows are typically not appropriate. Long groupings of storefront windows should typically have intermediate piers that help incorporate the commercial base with the massing above, ensuring the building does not appear "top-heavy or unsupported."
- 6. Extensions Into the Public Right of Way: Canopies, awnings and other

- 3 feet

Resources: Midtown Retail Storefront Design Manual - Dimensions, Atlanta, GA (http://www.midtownatl.com/\_files/docs/ retail-storefront-design-manual.pdf)

LowerDowntown (LoDo)DesignGuidelines - Design Guidelines for New Buildings, Denver, CO (https://www.denvergov.org/ content/dam/denvergov/Portals/646/ documents/landmark/design\_guidelines/ Lower\_Downtown\_Design\_Guidelines. pdf) SOUTH END VISION PLAN

projecting elements towards the top of the base floor elevation are encouraged to help engage the street, define the building in a three dimensional manner, and provide shelter from adverse weather.

Awnings should not be a vinyl material nor be back lit.

a. Minimum Projection (if provided):

b. Minimum Clearance above sidewalk: 8 feet

Building Utilities: Building utilities (e.g., exhaust vents, air intakes, grease trap connections, meter banks, utility meters) shall not be placed on any principal pedestrian frontage (public street or rail-trail).

Site Utilities: Site utilities (e.g., transformers, mechanical and electrical equipment, dumpsters, backflow preventers, meter banks) shall not be located along any pedestrian frontage unless placed in an underground vault.

### 7.0 Entrances

Explanation: Clear and easily definable entrances provide pedestrians with a clear sense of direction and connection with the tenant spaces.

### - Example Guidelines

- Ground Floor Unit Entrances: All ground floor commercial units shall provide entrances facing the fronting street and include direct pedestrian connections between street facing doors to sidewalks on fronting streets The main entrance shall not be set back more than five feet from the required setback, unless a public seating area or plaza is provided in front of the building. Along Signature Street frontages, a prominent entry that leads to a common building lobby from the street may be provided.
- 2. Operable Door/Entrance Spacing (Minimum): The minimum spacing along a facade for tenant entrances operable during normal business hours shall be:
- a. Main & Signature Street: 50 feet
- b. Mixed-Use/Transitional Street: 100 feet

Resources: Smart Growth Code - Mixed-Use and Commercial Buildings Design Standards, Germantown, TN (http:// www.germantown-tn.gov/home/ showdocument?id=14181)



Top to bottom / 1 Clear entrance with canopy and surround, Seattle, WA / 2 Frequent doorways provide a sense of anticipation and comfort for pedestrians, San Francisco, CA





**Top to bottom / 1** Raised stoop entries for housing at Glenwood Park, Atlanta, GA / 2 'Bookend" apartment concealing parking deck beyond, Greenville, SC

### 8.0 Residential Frontage Details along Mixed-Use/ Transitional Streets

Explanation: Raised stoops and entries provide a sense of privacy for residential occupants and differentiate them from commercial entries.

### - Example Guidelines

- Porches and Stoops Encouraged for Housing: Usable porches and stoops shall form a predominant feature of the building design and be located on the front and/or side of the building. Usable front porches should be covered and be at least 6 feet deep. Stoops and entry-level porches may be covered but should not be enclosed.
- Raised Entries: To provide privacy, all residential entrances within 15 feet of the sidewalk must be raised from the average sidewalk grade a minimum of 24 inches.

Resources: Downtown Urban Design Guidelines - Residential Buildings in the Non-Historic and Interface Areas, Boulder, CO (https://bouldercolorado. gov/planning/downtown-urban-designguidelines-update)

St. Charles/Rock Road Transit Station Area - Residential Building Standards, Pagedale, MO (http://cmt-stl.org/app/ uploads/2011/10/Pagedale-FBC-112713sm.pdf)

### 9.0 Parking and Driveways

Explanation: Vehicular movement and storage must be minimized so as to not negatively impact the pedestrian environment, improve aesthetics, and encourage the use of non-fuel injection, single passenger vehicles.

### Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission TOD Priority:

Requiring parking to be designed and located to support walkability.

Commission Discussion:

- » Prohibit parking, blank walls, "cars behind bars", wide roll up doors, fake windows or only wall recesses along streets.
- » Hide parking lots from view along a public street, rather than screening them.
- » Locate all parking behind a use with access and entrances directly to street.
- » Provide pedestrian access through the parking lot to all entrances.
- Prohibit no front door, exiting through parking deck, and totally walled off compounds.

Revisiting the amount of allowed parking to ensure an appropriate balance between supporting walkability/transit use and negatively impacting surrounding neighborhoods.

### Commission Discussion:

» Require freely accessible "minimum visitor parking" for residential

- pickup areas.
  - encouraged.

SOUTH END VISION PLAN

developments adjacent to single family and count it towards the maximum parking allowed in the Ordinance. » Ensure parking standards minimize the conflicts between residents (amount, size of spaces and location). » Provide ride sharing locations, bays,

### Example Guidelines

Parking Access: Access to off-street parking including both surface lots and structured parking facilities should be from the least prominent. least pedestrian street. Parking access should not be located in the middle of a building and should instead be located to the side or rear if possible. The creation of new sidewalk curb cuts shall be avoided whenever an alternative point of access is available or can be created. Shared access agreements are strongly

Residential Parking Access: Access to off-street parking areas for individual lots from the fronting street is prohibited. Such access should be from a low volume side street, rear alley or lane only. Garage doors for off-street parking areas facing public streets are prohibited.

Structured Parking Facilities:

a. Setbacks (Main/Signature Streets): All above-ground parking facilities should be set back 30 feet from

the sidewalk line

- b. Setbacks (Mixed-Use/Transitional Streets): Above ground may be built adjacent to the sidewalk provided the ground floor is screened by usable/occupiable space.
- c. Screening of openings: All openings must be designed so that vehicles are not visible from the sidewalk. Cars on all levels of a structured parking facility must be screened from view from the street or wrapped by occupiable building space. The use of decorative elements such as grillwork or louvers are permitted subject to Design Review on Signature Streets or Mixed-Use/ Transitional Streets only.
- 4. Drive-Thrus: Drive-thrus shall not be visible or accessed from any Main Street or Signature Street.
- 5. Maximum Parking: There shall be a maximum parking requirements of 1 parking space per housing unit and 2 spaces per 1000 square feet for any non-residential use. Shared use is strongly encouraged.
- 6. Bicycle Parking; Provide 1 dedicated bike parking/storage space per unit in structured parking decks.
- Electric Vehicle Charging Stations: A minimum of 10% of the parking stalls provided shall include an AC



Top to bottom / 1 Bike parking, Edmonton, AB / 2 Electric vehicle charging station, Charlotte, NC



Above Street tree in tree grate and well, Tempe, AZ

Level 2 charging station for charging cars. These spaces shall be located adjacent to or in close proximity of required accessible (ADA) parking spaces.

Car Sharing: For parking facilities with (200) or more parking spaces, the owner/operator shall provide the tenants associated with the building a car sharing service, discounted ride sharing services, or similar shared vehicle service to encourage reduced individual car ownership or usage.

**Resources:** Downtown Design Guidelines - Site Design Elements, Boise, ID (https:// pds.cityofboise.org/media/215767/ downtown-design-guidelinesrevised-6-23-16.pdf)

Toronto, ONMid-RiseBuildingsPerformance Standards (2009) (https://www1.toronto. ca/City%20Of%20Toronto/wp/city-gove rnment/planning-development/Sub%20 Pages/Design%20Guidelines/Mid-Rise%20 Buildings/Mid-rise%20Buildings%20 Performance%20Standards-accessible. pdf)

Electric Vehicle Charging Requirements, Vancouver, BC (http://vancouver.ca/ home-property-development/electricvehicle-charging-requirements.aspx)

Car Share Controls, San Francisco, CA (http://www.sfbos.org/ftp/uploadedfiles/ bdsupvrs/ordinances10/o0286-10.pdf)

### 10.0 Trees, Landscaping, and Lighting

Explanation: Trees, landscaping, and lighting are all critical elements of the streetscape and need to be selected based on the appropriate context.

### Example Guidelines

- Street Trees: For all Main and Signature frontages, trees shall be placed in wells with grates and the minimum sidewalk width shall be determined by the adopted street section (or 16 feet if none is provided). Mixed-Use/ Transitional Street may utilize planting strips.
- Lighting: All exterior lighting shall utilize LED or similar high efficiency fixtures only.
- Transitions: Along the rail-trail, provide a transition between the building and the trail edge a minimum of 8 feet in depth that includes landscaping, paving, porches, stoops, canopies, street trees, benches, pedestrian kiosks, bicycle rack or services, and pedestrian lighting as appropriate.

Resources: Downtown Urban Design Guidelines - Public Realm Guidelines, Greenville, SC (http://www.greenvillesc. gov/DocumentCenter/View/7912)

Unified Development Ordinance - New Streets, Raleigh, NC (https://www.raleighnc.gov/ content/extra/Books/PlanDev/ UnifiedDevelopmentOrdinance/#256) South FND VISION PLAN

### 11.0 Design Review **Required for Important** Frontages

Explanation: There are certain projects, locations, and requests that require discretionary design review in lieu of administrative approvals or variances. An appointed design review board can provide the necessary advisory and decision making authority necessary for more complicated urban design applications.

public parks.

» A design review process should be based on a design guideline reference for developers and architects that define the urban design principles and architectural design strategies that support the goals and recommendations of this plan. This reference should focus on buildings with frontages on Main and Signature Street Frontages and well as along any

Resources: Design Review Board, Davidson, NC (http://www.ci.davidson. nc.us/85/Design-Review-Board)

# Acknowledgements

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