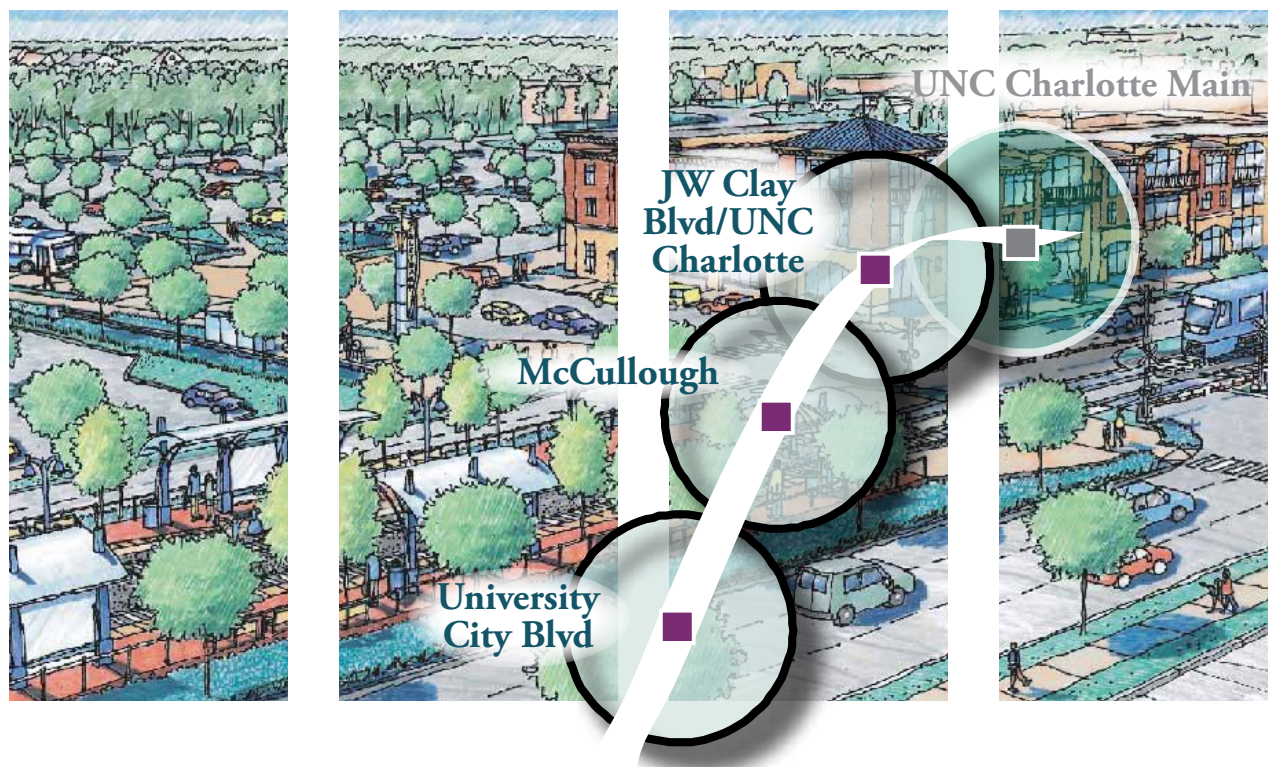


Volume 4: Adopted Plans and Policies





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Policies in Place to Guide Development

Since the 1980s, Charlotte has been one of the nation's fastest growing urban areas. Between 1980 and 2010, Charlotte grew from the 47th to the 17th most populous city in the United States. By 2035, it is projected that Charlotte will gain another 300,000 residents and 320,000 jobs. Charlotte's future will be defined by its ability to effectively accommodate this anticipated population and employment growth. The City of Charlotte has adopted citywide plans and policies that are intended to guide future growth and development patterns. The following policy documents are supplemental to the policies in this University City Area Plan that are specific to this area.

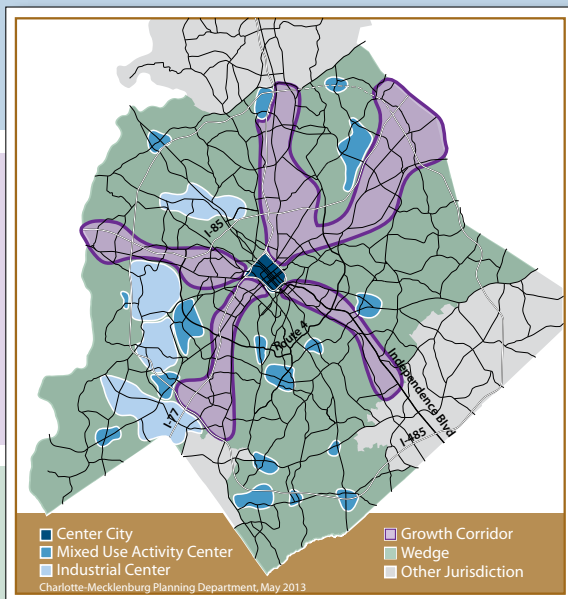
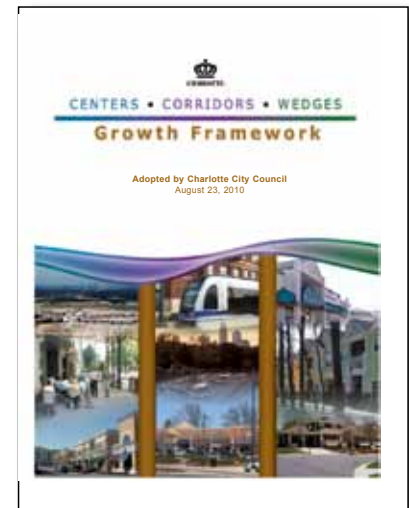
Adopted Plans and Policies

Adopted Plans and Policies

Centers, Corridors and Wedges Growth Framework helps guide growth throughout the county to the most appropriate areas.

Centers, Corridors and Wedges Growth Framework

The *Centers, Corridors and Wedges Growth Framework* (CCW) is intended to guide growth into areas that can best support it and away from areas that cannot. Thus, much of Charlotte's future moderate to higher intensity development is targeted within five major Growth Corridors and in designated Activity Centers, consistent with area plans. This will help maximize existing infrastructure and services. Low to moderate density residential and services supporting neighborhoods is targeted for areas between Corridors, referred to as Wedges.



Activity Centers are focal points of economic activity, typically with concentrations of compact development. Many existing Activity Centers have the capacity for significant new growth in conjunction with enhancements to the supporting infrastructure.

Growth Corridors are characterized by the diversity of places they encompass – from historic neighborhoods to vibrant mixed use areas to significant employment and shopping districts – and by the accessibility and connectivity that they provide for these places. Some areas within the Growth Corridors, particularly the Transit Station subareas, are appropriate locations for greater intensity development with appropriate planning and neighborhood support and involvement.

Wedges are the large areas between Growth Corridors, where residential neighborhoods have developed and continue to grow. The Wedges are comprised of mainly low density housing, as well as a limited amount of moderate density housing and supporting facilities and services.

Northeast Growth Corridor

Growth Corridors are elongated areas that stretch from Center City to the edge of Charlotte. There are five Growth Corridors – the South, Southeast, Northeast, North and West. These corridors encompass a wide diversity of places, including some with an increasingly urban mixture of residential, office and retail uses, especially in areas near existing or proposed transit stations and/or close to Center City.

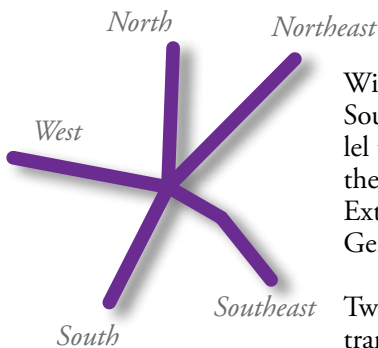
Four distinct subareas have been identified within Growth Corridors:



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Charlotte's five Growth Corridors



- Transit Station Subareas



- Established Neighborhood Subareas



- Interchange Subareas



- General Corridor Subareas

Within the **Northeast Corridor**, Interstate 85, US 29/North Tryon Street, the Norfolk Southern (NS) and North Carolina railroads and future LYNX Blue Line Extension run parallel to one another, allowing for areas of cross-corridor access among land uses. Also within the Corridor are a series of future Transit Station Areas along the future LYNX Blue Line Extension. Interchange Areas along I-85, are generally addressed in the UCAP as part of the General Corridor Area.

Two characteristics of Growth Corridors make them ideal locations for fixed guideway rapid transit systems. First, their linear nature means that much of the land in a Corridor can be within walking distance or a short driving distance of strategically located transit stations. In this regard, the population of a Corridor is well-served by transit. Secondly, the additional access created by transit allows some parts of a Corridor to absorb higher density development, thereby fulfilling its intended function.

The LYNX Blue Line Extension is the second segment to be developed in Charlotte's comprehensive rapid transit system, defined on **Map 10: 2030 Transit System Plan**, page 128. LRT was the chosen rapid transit technology for the Northeast Corridor. LRT is composed of an electric train powered by overhead lines operating in a fixed guideway and stopping frequently at stations where riders board from a platform.

Planning for the LYNX Blue Line Extension began in the late 1990s and followed the process required by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for projects receiving Federal funding. This included a major investment study (MIS), an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), Final Design and construction.

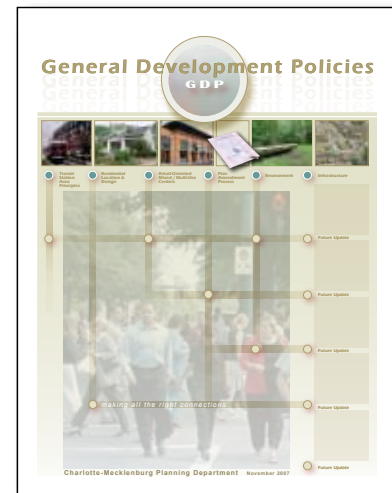
Ridership on the light rail system is projected to increase from 26,700 daily riders on the existing LYNX Blue Line to a total of 51,500 daily light rail boardings for the entire alignment (South to Northeast); this represents an addition of 24,800 riders per day on the light rail system.



Adopted Plans and Policies

General Development Policies (GDP)

The *General Development Policies* are a collection of policies on various topics relevant to future development and redevelopment in Charlotte. Phase I of the GDP was adopted in 2003 and included policies on Residential Location and Design, Retail Oriented Mixed/Multi-use Centers and the Plan Amendment Process. It also incorporated the *Transit Station Area Principles*, previously adopted in 2001. Phase II of the GDP was adopted in 2007 and includes chapters on the Environment and Infrastructure.



Transportation Action Plan

The *Transportation Action Plan* (2011) defines short and long term policies for accommodating motor vehicles, transit riders, bicyclists and pedestrians together with an implementation “blueprint” for improvements. The Transportation Action Plan’s comprehensive “toolbox” of transportation programs will help implement the policies of the station area plans.

2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The *2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan* defines the policies, programs and projects to be implemented over the next twenty-five years in order to reduce congestion, improve safety, support land use plans, and provide mobility choices in the CRTPO planning area. It also addresses the goals and objectives of the CRTPO, the various components of the transportation planning process, socio-economic and financial assumptions, and transportation-related environmental and health issues.

Transit Station Area Joint Development Principles and Policies

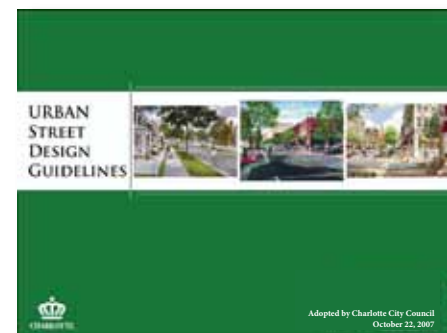
The *Joint Development Principles and Policies* were adopted by the City of Charlotte and neighboring jurisdictions in 2003. They provide a coordinated set of objectives and implementation tools for the development of station areas across Mecklenburg County. Along with the *Transit Station Area Principles* from the GDP, they guide the recommendations of the station area plans, especially implementation actions and joint public-private initiatives.

Greenway Master Plan Update

The *Greenway Master Plan Update* (2008) identifies an expanded greenway network and greenway trail system throughout Mecklenburg County. As land is acquired and set aside over time, the greenway system should also improve water quality by reclaiming natural floodplains, protecting wildlife habitats and open space and providing recreational and educational opportunities. The Little Sugar Creek and Toby Creek greenways traverse the corridor and are covered by the Greenway Master Plan Update.

Urban Street Design Guidelines (USDG)

The *Urban Street Design Guidelines* (2007) provide a comprehensive approach to planning and designing new and modified streets in Charlotte. The majority of these policies have been incorporated into the Subdivision Ordinance. They offer recommendations on block lengths and street cross-sections. The USDG serve as the basis for many of the streetscape recommendations in the station area plans.



Transit Station Area Principles

The *Transit Station Area Principles* (2001) make general recommendations for the type of land use, design and transportation facilities desired within ½ mile walk distance of a rapid transit station. The *Transit Station Area Principles*, summarized below, provide the backdrop for area plan policy recommendations.



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Adopted Plans and Policies

Transit Station Area Principles

This figure summarizes the policies of the Transit Station Area Principles (2001). The original wording for the policies can be found in the first chapter of the General Development Policies.

Land Use

- Encourage highest density uses (15 - 20 du at a minimum/ 0.5 - 0.75 FAR or greater) closest to transit stations and transition to lower densities adjacent to existing single family neighborhoods.
- Encourage a mixture of residential, office, service-oriented retail and civic uses, either through mixed or multi-use development.
- Disallow automobile-dependent uses, such as automobile sales lots, car washes and drive-thru windows.
- Consider special traffic generators - such as cultural, educational, entertainment or recreational uses - to locate in station areas.
- Preserve existing stable neighborhoods.
- Encourage a mixture of housing types, including workforce/ affordable housing.



Community Design

- Orient buildings to front on public streets or open spaces.
- Minimize setbacks and locate parking to the rear.
- Provide windows and doors at street level and minimize walking distance to entrances.
- Screen unsightly elements, such as dumpsters, loading docks, service entrances and outdoor storage from the transitway.
- Include active uses on the ground floor of parking structures.
- Include elements such as street trees, pedestrian scale lighting and benches in streetscape design to encourage pedestrian activity.
- Place utilities underground, wherever possible.
- Establish public open spaces that act as development catalysts and serve as focal points around transit stations.
- Design open spaces to be centers of activity that include items such as benches, fountains and public art.



Mobility

- Create a multi-modal environment that emphasizes pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Provide an extensive pedestrian system throughout the station area to minimize walking distances, connect to neighborhoods, accommodate large groups of people, and eliminate sidewalk gaps.
- Design the pedestrian system to be accessible, safe and attractive, by using planting strips, street trees, on-street parking and bicycle lanes.
- Develop an interconnected street network with maximum block lengths of 400'; provide mid-block crossings if blocks are larger.
- Establish parking maximums, rather than minimums.
- Minimize surface parking and encourage shared parking facilities.



LYNX Blue Line and Blue Line Extension

The graphic below illustrates where the land use policy documents for each Blue Line and Blue Line Extension transit station can be found.



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Adopted Transit Station Area Plans

- ▶ *South End Transit Station Area Plan, 2005*
- ▶ South Corridor Station Plans available under individual station names, 2008

- ▶ *Center City 2020 Vision Plan, 2011*
- ▶ *BLE Transit Station Area Plan, 2013*








Station Types

There are eleven stations along the LYNX Blue Line Extension, each with slightly different characteristics. Based on common features, the stations have been categorized into five types. These are shown in the table below.



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Adopted Plans and Policies

LYNX Station Types		
BLE Stations	Station Types and Description	Existing LYNX Blue Line Transit Stations
9th St Parkwood 25th St 36th St	Urban Stations are walk-up and bike-up stations that serve the area within a ½ mile radius of the station. They do not include park-and-ride facilities. Urban stations are designed to fit within the existing community fabric. <i>Existing Urban Stations: Bland, Carson, Stonewall, 3rd St/Convention Center (shown at right), and 7th St</i>	
Tom Hunter McCullough JW Clay Bv/ UNC Charlotte UNC Charlotte Main	Neighborhood Stations are primarily walk-up and bike-up stations that serve a 1 mile radius with the support of bus connections. They may include small park-and-ride facilities. They are also designed to fit within the existing community fabric. <i>Existing Neighborhood Stations: Archdale (shown at right), Scaleybark, New Bern, and East/West Blvd</i>	
Sugar Creek Old Concord	Community Stations serve multiple destinations within a 3 mile radius with heavy reliance on bus connections and park-and-ride facilities. They are often located in areas that are not initially transit oriented development. <i>Existing Community Station: Sharon Rd West and Arrowood (shown at right)</i>	
University City Boulevard	Regional Stations are located at the end of the line or near regional roadways, serving an area of 5 miles or greater with the assistance of bus connections and park-and-ride facilities. Even though they are frequently located in greenfield environments, their access creates a relatively strong potential for transit oriented development. <i>Existing Regional Station: I-485/South Blvd (shown at right), Tyvola, and Woodlawn</i>	
	Multi-modal Stations are located on the confluence of multiple rapid transit lines, providing transfer between these modes. <i>Existing Multi-Modal Stations: Charlotte Transportation Center (shown at right)</i>	

Map 10: 2030 Transit System Plan

for more
information
go to the
CATS
website

<http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/cats/planning/2030Plan/Pages/default.aspx>

2030 Transit System Plan

