



City Council Transportation & Planning Committee Discussion

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission
Work Session

March 6, 2017

Livable City Policy Statement

Develop a livable city where Charlotteans of all incomes can achieve, “a complete state of physical, mental and social well-being” 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.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Zoning District

Purpose

“to require compact urban growth, opportunities for increased choice of transportation modes, and a safe and pleasant pedestrian environment by ensuring an attractive streetscape, a functional mix of complementary uses, and the provision of facilities that support transit use, bicycling, and walking.”

Street Level & Pedestrian Activation

Livable City Guiding Principle:

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.

Priority:

Strengthening 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.
- Require the first floor of residential units facing the street to physically connect to it.
- Require development to have true, honest, walkable, pedestrian scaled connections(s) to the street, leading to where we want activity and pedestrians.

Parking Design & Street Treatment

Livable City Guiding Principle:

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.

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 the parking deck, and totally walled off compounds

Rail Trail

Livable City Guiding Principle:

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.

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.

Architectural Design & Density

Livable City Guiding Principle:

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;

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.

Parking Standards

Livable City Guiding Principle:

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.

Priority:

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

Next Steps

- In the short term, the existing TOD standards be enforced to the fullest extent possible, with particular attention given to the Commission's identified priorities;
- The identified priorities be used to help shape the elements included in Charlotte's Place Types; and,
- Ultimately, the Commission's identified priorities be incorporated and addressed in the update of the development ordinances (zoning ordinance update), especially related to TOD.