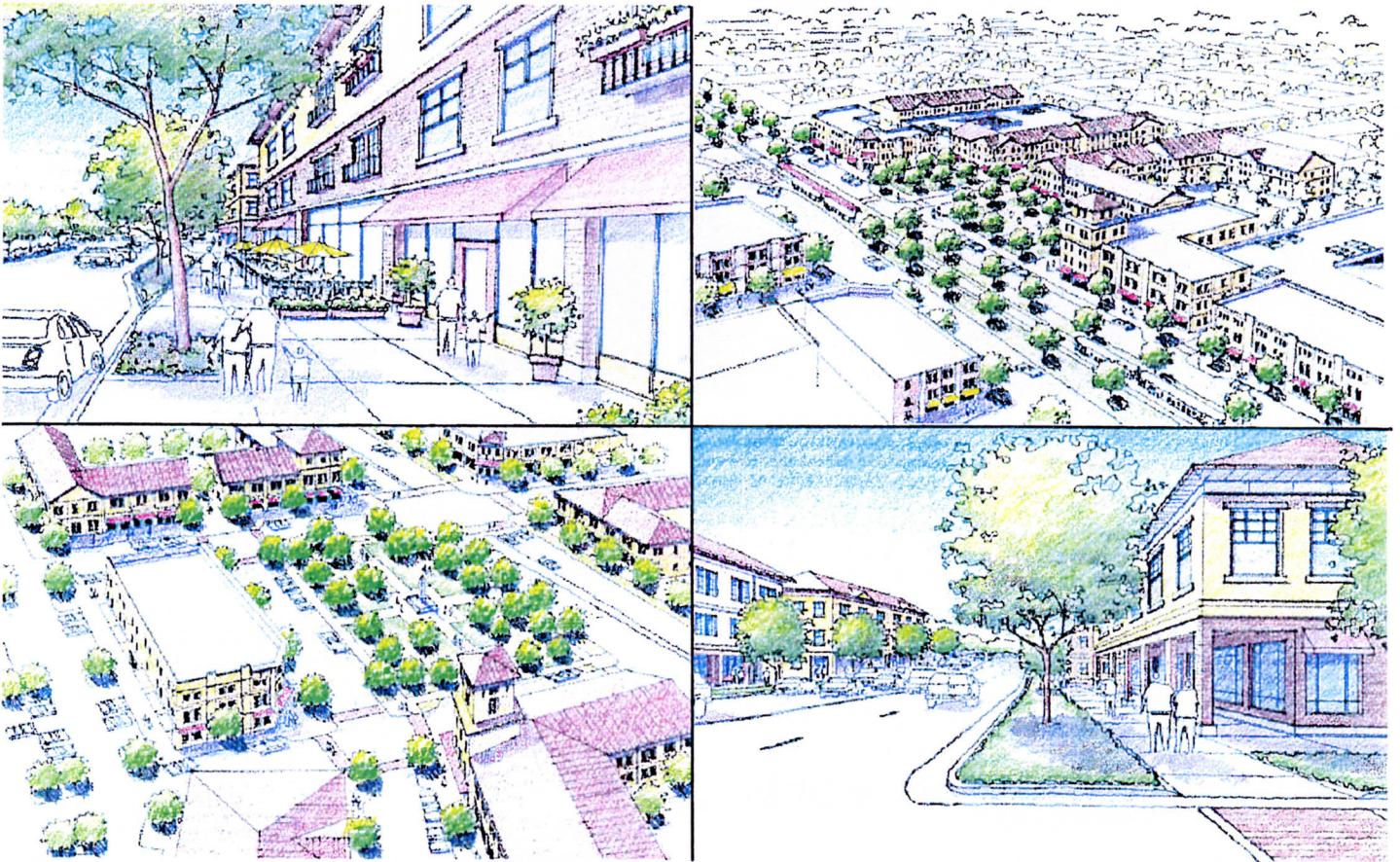


# TRANSIT STATION AREA PRINCIPLES

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES  
CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG PLANNING COMMISSION

For More Information Contact: CMPC, 704-336-2205



## The Transit and Land Use Connection

Building an integrated land use and transit system is key to managing the rapid growth occurring in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area and to invigorating existing communities and making them better places to live and work. As detailed in the 2025 Integrated Transit/Land Use Plan, Charlotte-Mecklenburg's land use vision focuses future higher density residential and employment growth in transit station areas and major activity centers/hubs where it can be best accommodated by transportation services and other public facilities. In addition to focusing development in areas that can be well served by transit, it is important to ensure that the new development takes advantage of access to transit and helps promote transit use in the community. Therefore, this section of the General Development Policies provides guidance for future development and redevelopment at transit station areas.

## What is Transit Supportive Development?

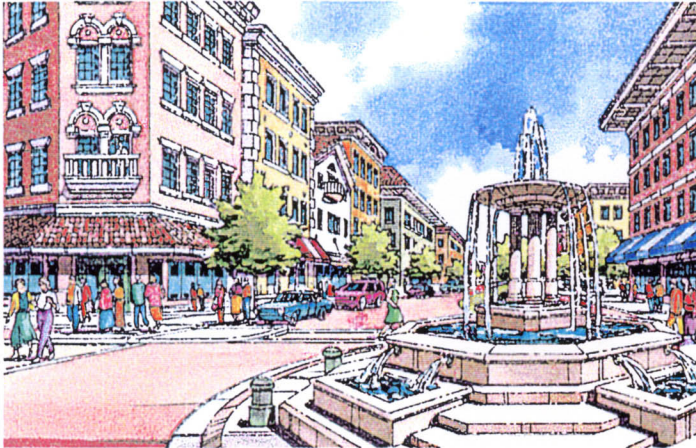
Transit supportive development focuses on creating compact neighborhoods with housing, jobs, shopping, community services, and recreational opportunities all within easy walking distance (i.e., within ½ mile) of a transit station. The intent is to create well designed, very livable communities where people can get from home to such places as the office, grocery store, daycare center, restaurant, dry cleaner, library or park without using a car.

Transit supportive development policies provide direction for developing and redeveloping property around rapid transit stations in a way that makes it convenient for many people to use transit. Such policies focus on land uses, mobility and community design.

The following policies apply to the area within ½ mile walking distance of an identified rapid transit station. Additionally, land use and urban design plans will be developed for the transit station areas along each of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's five rapid transit corridors. These land use and design plans will provide more specific guidance for each station area.



# LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT - Concentrate a mix of complementary, well-integrated land uses within walking distance of the transit station.

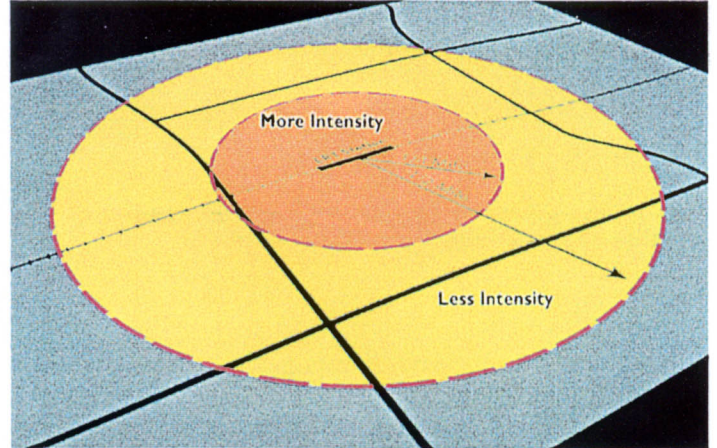


## Mixture of Complementary Transit-Supportive Uses\*

- Provide a range of higher intensity uses including residential, office, service-oriented retail and civic uses that are transit supportive. Such a mix of land uses increases the attractiveness of the area and increases trip options for transit users.
- Disallow automobile-dependent uses, such as automobile sales lots, car washes, and drive-thru windows.
- Provide uses that attract/generate pedestrian activity, particularly at ground floor level.
- Consider special traffic generators - such as cultural, educational, entertainment, and recreational uses - to locate either within or adjacent to station areas.
- Encourage multi-use developments which include a mixture of uses on the same site. Mixed-use developments, with a mixture of uses within the same building, are also encouraged.
- Encourage a mixture of housing types.
- Preserve and protect existing stable neighborhoods.
- Encourage development of workforce/affordable housing.
- Encourage upgrading of existing uses to make them more transit and pedestrian friendly.



*An example of increasing the intensity and mixture of uses*

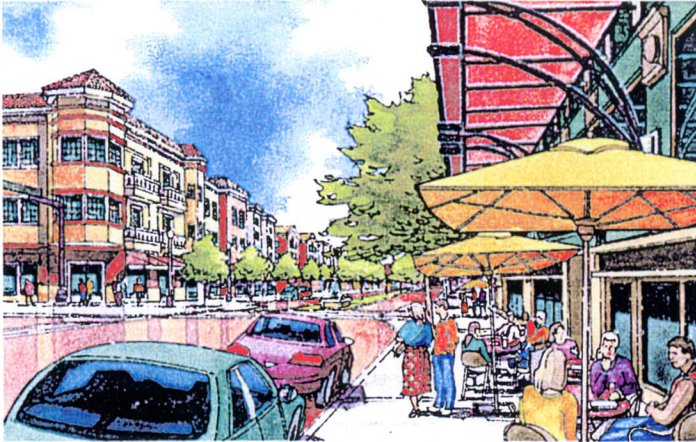


## Increased Land Use Intensity\*

- Encourage higher densities for new development, concentrating the highest densities closest to the transit station and transitioning to lower densities adjacent to existing single-family neighborhoods.
1. In most cases, minimum densities for new residential development within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile walking distance from a transit station will be 20 dwelling units per acre (net) or greater. Between  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile walking distance, the typical minimum density will be 15 dwelling units per acre (net) or greater.
  2. In most cases, non-residential or mixed-use intensities within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile walking distance from a transit station will be, at a minimum, 0.75 FAR (net). Between  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile walking distance from a transit station, the non-residential or mixed-use intensities will be, at a minimum, 0.50 FAR (net).
  3. In some cases, station area plans will recommend lesser intensities or densities for new development. These lesser intensities might be necessary to preserve existing structures, to insure that new development is consistent with the character of existing transit supportive development, to protect existing neighborhoods, or to mitigate traffic impacts.
- \* Changes to existing zoning may be required to meet land use objectives for complementary transit-supportive uses and increased land use intensity.



# MOBILITY - Enhance the existing transportation network to promote good walking, bicycle and transit connections.



## Pedestrian and Bicycle System

- Provide an extensive pedestrian system throughout the station area that will minimize walking distances for pedestrians.
- Eliminate gaps in the station area pedestrian networks.
- Establish pedestrian and bicycle connections between station areas and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Design the pedestrian system to be accessible, safe, and attractive for all users.
- Insure that the pedestrian network will accommodate large groups of pedestrians.
- Utilize planting strips/street trees, onstreet parking, and/or bicycle lanes to separate pedestrians from vehicles.
- Encourage the provision of bicycle amenities, especially bicycle parking facilities.

## Street Network

- Within station areas, design streets to be multi-modal, with an emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle circulation and set vehicular levels of service to reflect an emphasis on pedestrians and bicyclists.

- When necessary, redesign existing street intersections with a greater emphasis on safe and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle crossing.
- Develop an interconnected street network designed around a block system, with blocks a maximum length of 400'.
- Insure that the pedestrian network will accommodate large groups of pedestrians comfortably, especially within ¼ mile of the station.
- Consider new mid-block street crosswalks in congested areas with long distances between signalized crossings.
- Incorporate traffic calming into the design of new streets.

## Parking

- Reduce regulatory parking requirements in station areas and establish parking maximums.
- Minimize large surface parking lots (greater than two acres) for private development, especially within ¼ mile of the station. Instead of surface lots, well-designed parking decks are preferred.
- Encourage shared parking facilities.



*An example of improving the street for all modes of travel*



# COMMUNITY DESIGN - Use urban design to enhance the community identity of station areas and to make them attractive, safe and convenient places.



## Building and Site Design

- Design buildings to front on public streets or on open spaces, with minimal setbacks and with windows and doors at street level instead of expansive blank walls.
- Locate building entrances to minimize the walking distance between the transit station and buildings.
- Locate surface parking, with the exception of on-street parking, to the rear of buildings and where necessary, provide pedestrian paths through surface parking to the station.
- Design parking structures to include active uses on the ground floor street frontage.
- Typically limit building heights to 120', with the tallest and most intensely developed structures located near the transit station and buildings adjacent to established neighborhoods limited to low-rise structures.
- Screen unsightly elements, such as dumpsters, loading docks, service entrances, and outdoor storage, from the transitway.
- Take safety and security concerns into account during design.



## Streetscape

- Design the streetscape to encourage pedestrian activity.
- Include elements such as street trees, pedestrian scale lighting, and benches in streetscape design.
- Place utilities underground whenever possible.

## Open Space

- 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.
- Orient surrounding buildings onto the open spaces.



*An illustration of how site design impacts the pedestrian environment*