CENTER CITY 2040 VISION PLAN

The Vision Plan is an overarching vision for how the city will grow over the next 20 years. It addresses key growth challenges around housing, transportation, environment, arts, and culture. It is an aspirational advisory land use plan that guides how we think about growth and development. The plan includes some very bold ideas challenging how we plan for the future and for the growth we know is coming in the future. This Plan introduces new tools for providing infrastructure to support that growth and outlines a process for continued engagement with the community as we implement the plan after its adoption with place type mapping and the UDO. This work will evolve over time and is a vision to be evaluated on an annual basis and updated every four years.

Taiwo Jaiyeoba, Assistant City Manager and Planning, Design and Development Director gave an overview of the Comprehensive Plan and topics for today’s meeting. Discussions will center around:

1. Single Family Zoning
2. Understanding the 10-minute neighborhood application
3. Process to resolving conflicting policies (policy prioritization)
The Plan is currently in the phase of Council Committee work sessions on key plan topics. The next phase is the 2nd draft of the plan to be released for public review in response to comments received, and finally in June Council consideration of final plan adoption.

To date over 650 comments have been received and commented on by staff and that spreadsheet can be view on the CLT2040 website https://www.cltfuture2040plan.com/

The purpose of presenting at the Council Committee work sessions is to continue important discussions related to the Plan as we work towards a final plan document, to create understanding and clarity of key topics related to the Plan within the community and among Council Members, and to identify programs and policies to be reviewed or researched for consideration, independent of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

The three questions to be reviewed in this presentation are:

1. What is the neighborhood diversity and inclusion goal intending to solve and are there other ways to accomplish these objectives?
2. Understanding the 10-minute neighborhood application
3. Process to resolving conflicting policies (policy prioritization)

1. **Neighborhood Diversity and inclusion:**
Taiwo Jaiyeoba presented the first question on Neighborhood Diversity and Inclusion; there are multiple objectives to this goal; it’s not just about housing affordability it also about lifecycle housing, as well as equitable development. It’s about allowing more housing types in traditional single-family zoning districts to encourage housing diversity everywhere in our community. The Plan will strive for all neighborhoods to have a diversity of housing options by increasing the presence of middle density housing (duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, accessory dwelling units and other small footprint housing types) and ensure land use regulations allow for flexibility in creation of housing within existing neighborhoods.

Currently in the plan are; Policy 2.1 allowing duplex and triplex housing units on all lots. Policy 2.2 Allow fourplexes on all lots fronting arterials where single family detached dwellings are permitted. And Policy 2.3 Provides opportunities for single family attached and small-scale multifamily housing developments (15 units or less)

Neighborhood 1 Place Types; the objective is not to eliminate single family-housing, it is still a part of the plan. There are Ten (10) neighborhood place types, Neighborhood 1 and Neighborhood 2 are predominately residential place types. Neighborhood 1 place type will continue to have single family housing, but will also allow different housing products, single-family house is still the predominant use.

How will this work? In policy 2.1 reference is made to conformance to setbacks, heights, and conformance to size of front and side yards. This is going on today when we look at areas of the city where there are these types of plex units, currently we don’t have enough of these units due to limitations in where they can be, (mostly corner lots) today there are less than 20 days of inventory of housing on the market.

Neighborhood diversity offers a range of building types, increases workforce/affordable housing options, overcomes inequities and creates more inclusive neighborhoods, allows for compact development and increases aging in place opportunities (lifecycle housing).
During the Great Neighborhoods Committee meeting it was requested for staff to revise the language in Policy 2.1 regarding lots, place types, equitable growth framework metrics and measures and incorporate the changes into the Comprehensive Plan.

Currently, policy 2.1 has duplex and triplex housing units on all lots but does not include references to place types and equitable growth framework. The change proposed will address having duplexes and triplexes in all place types. This was proposed during the Great Neighborhoods Committee meeting. It will be in our place types but driven by the community over the next six months after the approval of the Plan. We will still have neighborhood diversity in all place types subject to community place types mapping process, and consistent with the metrics and measures that we have in the plan’s Equitable Growth Framework. We will add a note to policy 2.1 which addresses conformance with the United Development Ordinance (UDO) with regards to setbacks, height, etc. There will also be changes regarding addressing not being applicable to areas with deed restrictions and covenants and protect vulnerable residents from displacement. It should be understood that these changes still have to go through the Planning Commission/Planning Committee since they are the legally required body to make a recommendation to Council. This will come back to Council for their review in the second draft. These are the proposed changes to Policy 2.1

2. 10-Minute Neighborhoods:
Alysia Osborne reviewed that the 10-Minute Neighborhoods is an idea about how households have access to essential goods and services within an easy walk, bike or public transit trip. The 10-minute neighborhood represents the time it takes a person to walk a half mile, today a lot of our neighborhoods are 10-minute neighborhoods. We want to be more intentional creating that same type accessibility throughout Charlotte in our Transit Oriented Districts (TOD) adopted by Council in 2019. The goal is to have three major components; housing density that talks about residents living in close proximity to essential goods and services. Not only should that density occur as we grow, we need to make sure there is infrastructure to support the growth and density such as sidewalks, bike lanes that are fundamental to residents’ safety. We also need to provide destinations that connect people to those essential goods and services, jobs, education and opportunity.

Benefits of the 10-Minute neighborhood are health, encouraging residents to be active in their daily commute and errands, creating a healthier and more active lifestyle. It helps our environment by reducing dependency on personal vehicles, reducing greenhouse gas emissions which helps and supports the goals in our Strategic Energy Action Plan. The 10-Minute neighbor also helps economic impact to residents, many of our residents housing cost are transportation cost and reducing the number of trips people have in a car essentially helps residents to save money on transportation cost.

Charlotte’s walk score is 26, we rank 49th on the list of most walkable large cities in America, coming in lower than some of our other cities in North Carolina such as Raleigh, Greensboro, Durham, Austin and Atlanta. However, many of our neighborhoods have higher walk scores; Fourth Ward, Second Ward, Third Ward, Cherry and Dilworth have the best walk scores in the city. Many of the recommendations within the Plan replicate citywide those elements and infrastructure, like sidewalks and connections to goods and services, in those neighborhoods that make them a good walk score neighborhood.

The Equitable Growth Framework is the glue that puts this together, it helps us to understand where the areas of greater need are and it assigns metrics to the goals we want to achieve. In establishing the need for access to essential goods and services some of the measures are; proximity to childcare, parks, open spaces and trails, community facilities,
fresh food, healthcare and pharmacies, financial services and access to internet service. As we move forward in making our decisions about land use and mapping our place types these are the types of metrics that are included in the methodology.

3. Process for resolving conflicting policies within the Plan
Taiwo Jaiyeoba discussed competing interest in the Plan, for example the desire for greater density while also addressing traffic congestion, parks and tree canopy, and the provision of Affordable Housing and yet requesting additional amenities. We have talked about recommendations that are not currently applicable without legislative changes that need legislative support, more of this will be addressed at the Workforce and Business Development Committee Meeting. We do have areas of competing interest and there are mechanisms for resolving them, the plan highlights these competing areas and the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) will help resolve them in terms of an approach going forward.

Laura Harmon reviewed what is being done in developing the UDO to address competing interest. In developing the UDO, we recognize the policy priorities differ based on development contexts. For example, in the more urban areas we will have higher priority for more density and a tighter street network than in more remote lower intensity areas. Staff is working on developing Context-based standards that reflect the different priorities, not a one size fit all approach. A number of standards in the UDO will vary based on the context, either the place type or the zoning district. Flexibility into to development standards is being developed to minimize conflicts. For example, where there might be conflicts between preservation of a tree and a curb line, flexibility is being built in to anticipate that and address it without having to go through a rigorous process. There are already existing conflict resolution tools being used, such as Alternative Compliance and Exception Zoning, as needed.

MOTION: Committee Chair Mayor Pro Tem Eiselt recommended directing staff to come up with a proposed modification for Policy 2.1 Motioned by Driggs/ second by Egleston. Voted upon, motion passed.

Taiwo Jaiyeoba indicated to the Committee his understanding of their apprehension about different parts of the Plan, staff foresaw that possibility and on page 175 of the Plan an Implementation Committee is mentioned, annually staff will bring back to Council the things that are working and what is not working prior to a five year strategic update to the Plan. We have the metrics and measures as that will let us know when we get there. With hopeful Plan adoption in June, that means we will come back to Council in one year to share what is working and what is not working; this is why we call it a living document.

Meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Next Meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for May 24, 2021