

# COMMUNITY CHARACTER

## WHAT IS COMMUNITY CHARACTER & WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Community Character refers to the distinct qualities and features of a place and may encompass aspects from the physical environment or the people who live in the community. Within Community Area Plans (CAPs), character is focused on Placemaking, which refers to the distinctive elements and amenities within the public realm that make Charlotte's mixed-use Place Types vibrant and unique. Realizing Charlotte's aspirations for a highly amenitized public realm will require efforts from City and County agencies, developers, organizations, and business and property owners.

## HOW IS COMMUNITY CHARACTER MEASURED?

CAPs include an assessment of existing public realm amenities in areas recommended to evolve into a mixed-use Place Type:



**Innovation Mixed Use**



**Community Activity Centers**



**Neighborhood Centers**



**Regional Activity Centers**

Areas recommended to evolve into a mixed-use Place Type are expected to accommodate the majority of Charlotte's projected growth and help address the needs of each community. As such, the Placemaking Assessment should be used by decision-makers to identify future projects or improvements, prioritize programmatic funding, and/or collaborate with appropriate organizations.

The Placemaking Assessment evaluated how well existing public realm amenities align with Charlotte's aspirations for highly amenitized public spaces by examining seven key elements, as shown in the table to the right.

Each area recommended to evolve into a mixed-use Place Type was assigned one of the following scores: **Aligned**, **Somewhat Aligned**, or **Not Aligned**. Areas with 'Somewhat Aligned' or 'Not Aligned' scores should be prioritized for projects, funding, or partnerships as described above.

## PLACEMAKING ASPIRATIONAL ELEMENTS

Charlotte's Placemaking aspirations aim to advance highly amenitized public spaces through seven key elements:

Mixed-Use Geographies:	Signage	Public Art	Amenities & Furnishings	Branding	Public Spaces	Public Play Areas	Property Ownership Patterns
Neighborhood Center (NC)	Wayfinding is provided to support a well-connected, walkable, and easily navigable environment.	Public art is present to support vibrant spaces and contributes to the unique character and identity of the hub.	The public realm is highly amenitized, with frequent provision of benches, planters, tables, waste receptacles, lighting, bike racks, and bus stops with shelters.	Public and/or private branding contributes to the unique character and identity of the hub. These features help people remember and reference the hub, and often helps to establish hub boundaries.	Active and passive community gathering spaces are provided, including plazas, patios, courtyards, and parks.	Formal and informal amenities that encourage multi-generational play or physical activity are provided, including playgrounds, climbable sculptures, sports facilities, etc.	A diversity of property owners allows for a greater array of business and building types and provides greater opportunity for the creation and operation of a Special District to support local placemaking efforts.
Community Activity Center (CAC)							
Regional Activity Center (RAC)							
Innovation Mixed Use (IMU)							

## WHAT ABOUT COMMUNITY CHARACTER IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD?

While the Placemaking Assessment focuses on mixed-use geographies, Placemaking in residential neighborhoods is equally important. The CAP Neighborhood Toolkit provides an inventory of over 40 programs and tools designed to help neighborhoods strengthen, celebrate, and preserve their unique character.

Explore the Neighborhood Toolkit to discover opportunities for integrating public art, signage, and furnishings in your neighborhood.



**CHARLOTTE FUTURE 2040  
COMMUNITY AREA PLANNING**

NEIGHBORHOOD TOOLKIT

OCTOBER 2024

