

**Figure 1:**  
Livable City Land Use Plan Classifications

## Urban Residential

### General Characteristics and Intent

The Urban Residential (UR) classification is primarily a single-family residential land use classification intended to create high quality residential neighborhoods with a variety of housing choices. Neighborhoods in the UR classification should embody innovative community design features such as those found in New Urbanism or Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) community designs. A local of example of this type of community design is Baxter Village, located near Fort Mill, SC. Conventional subdivisions with repetitive housing designs, few or no neighborhood amenities (i.e. sidewalks, lighting, open space, and others), and low quality construction shall not be permitted.

### Location Characteristics

- The UR classification should be applied to areas of the City that have or are envisioned to have low to medium density single-family housing and/or where more intense development would be inappropriate.
- The UR classification should only be applied to areas of the City and the unincorporated Rock Hill USA with adequate capital facilities and utilities (i.e. roads, water, sewer, and others). Residential development proposed in areas without adequate capital facilities and/or utilities should not be classified as UR.
- Areas of the City with emerging, higher residential densities should not be classified as UR.
- Intense and/or large scale commercial, office, and/or employment or industrial type developments should not be located on or adjacent to properties classified as UR.
- The UR classification should not be located along highly visible and/or accessible transportation corridors such as the I-77 corridor and the predominately commercial portions of the SC 21 and 161 corridors. Single-family residential development should not be permitted within one quarter mile of the I-77 right-of-way in order to maximize views and preserve landscape features or open space.

### Land Uses and Residential Density

- The UR classification should primarily be a single-family residential land use designation.
- Residential development should have approximate residential densities of up to three dwelling units per acre. Higher densities may be appropriate for Conservation Subdivision or Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) communities.
- Proposed residential development in the immediate vicinity of environmentally sensitive areas (i.e. lakes, streams, floodplains, wetlands, etc.) should be developed at the lower end of the UR density range.
- In limited instances, neighborhood-scale nonresidential land uses that generally serve the UR community such as public parks and recreation facilities, other public facilities and utilities, golf courses, places of worship, educational facilities, libraries, post offices, and the once common “corner store” may be appropriate. The Rock Hill Zoning Code will identify more specific permitted land uses.
- Non-residential land uses should generally be located on properties fronting collector or arterial type roadways, unless developed as a component of a mixed-use, master development plan.
- The location, scale, and/or frequency of proposed non-residential land uses shall not diminish or impose undue negative impacts to the single-family residential character of the UR community.

### Design Principles

- Neighborhoods in the UR community should generally allow for a mix of single-family housing types (i.e. detached houses, attached town homes, attached patio homes, condominiums, etc.).
- Narrow interconnected streets, pedestrian-scale lighting, and a public sidewalk system should be prominent features in the UR classification.
- Formal outdoor areas such as parks, greenways, and/or recreational areas should be used as central design elements and focal points for each neighborhood.
- Public or private playground facilities should be located in the immediate proximity (approx. one eighth mile) of residences in the UR classification.
- The Rock Hill Zoning Code will identify more specific neighborhood design standards to ensure a variety of housing designs and to help create healthy, attractive, and identifiable neighborhoods.

## Neighborhood Mixed-Use

### General Characteristics and Intent

The intent of the Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NMU) classification is to create an interesting and lively residential community by integrating a diverse mix of housing choices with complementary neighborhood-scale nonresidential land uses. The NMU classification embodies some of Rock Hill's older, more established neighborhoods such as portions of the Hagins-Fewell and Saluda Street neighborhoods, as well as more recently built and emerging communities throughout the City and the unincorporated Rock Hill USA. The NMU classification should not be used to support and/or continue strip type commercial development.

### Location Characteristics

- The NMU classification should be applied to areas of the City that have or are envisioned to have a diverse mix of moderately dense residential housing and neighborhood scale, nonresidential land uses.
- NMU areas should have immediate access to collector or arterial type roadways.
- NMU areas should be located in the vicinity of properties classified as UR in order to provide shopping and daily convenience opportunities to these communities.
- Single-family residential development should not be permitted within one quarter mile of the I-77 right-of-way in order to maximize views and preserve landscape features or opens space.
- In limited instances, the NMU classification may serve as a transitional area located between properties classified as UR and more intense, nonresidential land uses.

### Land Uses and Residential Density

- Housing choices in the NMU classification should include a diverse mix of single-family detached houses, single-family attached dwellings (town homes, patio homes, and condominiums), and multifamily dwellings (apartments and duplexes).
- Residential densities in the NMU area should range from approximately three to eight units per-acre.
- Nonresidential land uses in the NMU area should be of a neighborhood-scale and generally serve the immediate neighborhood community.
- Nonresidential land uses in the NMU area should include those typically associated with urbanized neighborhoods such as public parks and recreation facilities, restaurants, barber shops or hair salons, post offices, libraries, retail centers, offices, day cares, places of worship, education facilities, and other similar uses. The Rock Hill Zoning Code will identify more specific permitted land uses.

### Design Principles

- Mixed land uses may occur next to each other (on the same or adjacent properties) or in a single building (apartments over a retail center).
- Buildings and their primary entrances should be oriented to the public street and feature modest (or no) front setbacks to help create an urbanized, neighborhood environment. An exception to this may be an additional setback to accommodate an outdoor dining area, courtyard, sidewalk display, plaza, or other public gathering space.
- NMU areas should be equipped with well-maintained sidewalks, walkways, and bicycle facilities to help interconnect adjacent parcels and provide pedestrians from other residential communities with convenient and safe access to the NMU area.
- Pedestrian seating and intimate gathering places should also be incorporated into the sidewalk and walkway network to help further develop a pedestrian character and provide a focal point for public interaction.
- The Rock Hill Zoning Code will identify more specific design elements to ensure attractive and interesting sites and exterior building façades.

## **Rural Holding**

### **General Characteristics and Intent**

The Rural Holding (RH) land use classification is a conservation-oriented classification intended to prevent urban residential densities in areas of the City and/or the unincorporated Rock Hill USA where capital facilities and utilities (i.e. roads, water, sewer, and others) are not available and/or appropriate. The RH classification is also intended to preserve the community's open space and environmentally sensitive area (ESA) resources through conservation-oriented development practices and very low density development.

### **Location Characteristics**

- The RH classification should be located in outlying areas of the City and the Rock Hill USA that are characterized as being more rural in nature and where capital facilities and/or utilities are unavailable or inappropriate.
- The RH classification should be applied to properties with large concentrations of ESA (i.e. wetlands, floodplains, streams, steep slope areas, etc.) and/or open space resources that are not classified as being Open Space.
- Single-family residential development should not be permitted within one quarter mile of the I-77 right-of-way in order to maximize views and preserve landscape features or open space.
- Areas with emerging, higher urban densities should not be classified as RH.

### **Land Uses and Residential Density**

- The RH classification should primarily be a very low density, single-family residential land use designation.
- Proposed residential development should have a maximum density of one unit per-five acres. In limited instances, proposed development at higher densities may be appropriate upon availability of adequate capital facilities and utilities and where significant open space and/or ESA resources are preserved and/or protected through conservation subdivision design and development practices.
- Nonresidential development should be limited to public parks and recreation facilities, open space, public facilities and utilities, and similar land uses.
- Educational facilities should not be permitted in the RH classification, as these uses typically attract residential growth and development and would conflict with the low intensity nature of the classification.

### **Design Principles**

- Housing in the RH classification should be developed using conservation-oriented development practices that include clustering development away from ESA and preserving large quantities of publicly accessible open space.
- Low impact development (LID) pilot projects should be sought out in the RH classification in order to limit the amount of impervious surfaces and/or reduce the size of surface water management controls. LID projects could include improvements such as narrower streets that direct water runoff (generated from rain or snow) into bioretention gardens and/or grass swales, vegetated rooftops and/or rain barrels to manage runoff from buildings, and permeable pavement for driveways and walkways.
- The Rock Hill Zoning Code will identify more specific conservation-oriented design standards to ensure appropriate, very low density residential development.

## **Civic, Institutional, and Educational**

### **General Characteristics and Intent**

The Civic, Institutional, and Educational (CIE) land use classification designates areas of the City of Rock Hill and the unincorporated Rock Hill USA that are appropriate for large scale civic, educational, and institutional land uses. The CIE classification provides for an array of uses such as libraries, hospitals, post-secondary educational institutions, Federal, State, and Local government offices and facilities, utility facilities, and other similar type uses. It is envisioned that uses in the CIE classification will locate adjacent to one another in order to provide greater identity and functionality to the CIE area.

### **Location Characteristics**

- The CIE classification should be located on or adjacent to collector or arterial roadways.
- The CIE classification should be located in areas with convenient access to existing and/or future public transit facilities.
- Land uses that exhibit undesirable impacts such as excess noise, heat, light, glare, and/or regularly occurring large vehicle traffic (i.e. semi trucks, construction vehicles, etc.) should not be located on or adjacent to properties that are classified as being single-family residential, unless the residential area is envisioned for more intense and/or compatible land uses.

### **Land Uses and Residential Density**

- Land uses in the CIE classification should primarily be larger scale civic, institutional, and educational type uses. Appropriate land uses in the CIE classification include Federal, State, and Local government office facilities, hospitals, transportation facilities, larger postal facilities, post-secondary educational facilities, utility (i.e. water, sewer, cable, telephone, natural gas) offices and facilities, and other similar uses.
- In limited instances, commercial, service, and office uses intended to provide goods and services required on a regular basis or are customarily associated with civic, institutional, and educational type uses are also appropriate. Appropriate commercial, service, and office uses may include copying and reproduction services, catering and restaurant establishments, hotels, gas stations, convenience and/or drug stores, fitness centers, and private sector offices. The Rock Hill Zoning Code will identify more specific permitted land uses.
- In limited instances, residential uses, particularly multifamily, are appropriate in the CIE classification to provide housing opportunities near civic, institutional, and educational uses.

### **Design Principles**

- Buildings and their primary entrances should be oriented to the public street and feature modest (or no) front building setbacks.
- Proposed development in the CIE classification should feature formal outdoor spaces to provide public gathering places, identity, and help create outdoor activity.
- CIE areas should feature pedestrian sidewalks, walkways, and bicycle facilities that connect individual sites to each other and the public sidewalk system.
- Civic, corporate, and/or community art (i.e. statues, water features, clock towers, and other art forms) should be integrated into the site design.
- The Rock Hill Zoning Code will identify more specific design elements to ensure attractive and interesting sites and exterior building façades.

## **Community Mixed-Use**

### **General Characteristics and Intent**

The Community Mixed-Use (CMU) classification is intended to create a regional destination environment providing housing, shopping, entertainment, employment, and gathering opportunities for residents of Rock Hill, the unincorporated Rock Hill USA, and other surrounding communities. The CMU classification should accommodate a broad array of relatively intense nonresidential land uses that are integrated with Rock Hill's highest density housing. The resultant mix of intense, residential and nonresidential land uses will create a very lively, active, and diverse environment. The CMU classification shall not be used to support or continue strip type commercial development.

### **Location Characteristics**

- CMU classifications should be located on or adjacent to major transportation corridors that provide high levels of access and visibility.
- Sites located at the intersection of heavily traveled arterial roadways or with I-77 visibility and/or access are appropriate for the CMU classification, unless the Comprehensive Plan or other City long range plans indicate more intense, employment type uses are better suited.
- CMU areas, particularly Activity Centers, should be located in areas with convenient access to existing and future transit service.
- In limited instances, the CMU classification may serve as a transitional area between intense employment type uses and less dense residential communities.

### **Land Uses and Residential Density**

- Appropriate land uses in the CMU area include high density residential, commercial, office, services, entertainment, educational, civic, and other appropriate uses. Industrial type uses (i.e. manufacturing, assembly, warehousing, etc.) should not be permitted in the CMU classification. The Rock Hill Zoning Code will identify more specific permitted land uses.
- The CMU classification should permit unlimited residential density. However, the Rock Hill Zoning Code will establish some density controls through building setbacks, height requirements, and other standards.
- Residential development should have a minimum density of approximately eight units per-acre in order to establish a residential population base to help sustain future transit and the commercial, service, and entertainment land uses and create a lively streetscape.
- Single-family detached houses should not be permitted in the CMU classification.

### **Design Principles**

- Multistory, mixed-use development in a single building (apartments over retail center) should be the preferred development typology in the CMU area. This typology is intended to help concentrate development into an intense urban setting.
- Buildings and their primary entrances should be oriented to the public street and feature modest (or no) front building setbacks. An exception to this may be an additional setback to accommodate an outdoor dining area, courtyard, sidewalk display, plaza, or other public gathering space.
- Civic, community, and/or corporate art (i.e. statues, water features, clock towers, and other art forms) should be integrated into the site design.
- CMU areas should be very pedestrian oriented and feature pedestrian sidewalks, walkways, and bicycle facilities that connect individual sites to each other and the public sidewalk system.
- Pedestrian seating and gathering places such as benches and large plaza areas should be prominent features in CMU areas to help create liveliness and provide a focal point for public interaction.
- The Rock Hill Zoning Code will identify more specific design elements to ensure attractive and interesting sites and exterior building façades.

## **Downtown**

### **General Characteristics and Intent**

The (DTWN) classification is intended to ensure that Downtown Rock Hill redevelops with an intense mix of land uses, activity, and community gathering places. The DTWN classification should serve as a regional destination environment, in addition to providing employment, shopping, and entertainment opportunities to local residents, particularly the nearby students and staff at Winthrop University. It is envisioned that Downtown Rock Hill will be a center of daytime and evening activity and resume its former role of being the center of commerce and the City's primary gathering place. Future development or redevelopment shall be designed using themes and exterior building materials that are consistent with Rock Hill's historic architecture and culture.

### **Location Characteristics**

- The DWN classification applies only to Downtown Rock Hill, which is defined as the area within Wilson Street, Johnston Street, and Elizabeth Lane. However, characteristics of the DTWN classification such as land uses, residential density, and urban design principles may be used to supplement the underlying land use classification in limited portions of *Old Town* Rock Hill such as the Textile Corridor and other suitable areas of *Old Town*.

### **Land Uses and Residential Density**

- Housing choices in the DTWN classification should include a creative mix of single-family attached and multifamily housing types. Live/Work units and lofts or Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units should be permitted.
- The adaptive reuse of older buildings or buildings with outdated floor plans should be encouraged, particularly for residential uses. Housing above ground floor retail uses is strongly encouraged.
- Housing developments catering to senior or handicap residents should be encouraged in the DTWN classification.
- New single-family detached homes should not be permitted in the DTWN classification.
- The DTWN classification should permit unlimited residential density. However, the Rock Hill Zoning Code will establish some density controls through building setbacks, height requirements, and other standards.
- Residential development should have a minimum net density of approximately eight units per-acre in order to establish a residential population base that will help sustain future transit and the commercial, service, and entertainment land uses.
- Nonresidential land uses in the DTWN area should include those typically associated with Downtown communities such as retail, office, public parks and recreation facilities, restaurants, service businesses, post offices, libraries, day cares, places of worship, education facilities, and other similar uses. Downtown Rock Hill should continue to be the principle location for local government and other civic uses. Large retail, service, and industry-oriented land uses should not be permitted in the DTWN classification. The Rock Hill Zoning Code will identify more specific permitted land uses.

### **Design Principles**

- Multistory, mixed-use development in a single building (such as housing over retail) is the preferred development typology in the DTWN classification. This typology is intended to help continue the existing urban scale and environment.
- Buildings and their primary entrances should be oriented to the public street and feature modest (or no) front setbacks to help reinforce the existing urban streetscape. An exception to this may be an additional setback to accommodate an outdoor dining area, courtyard, sidewalk display, plaza, or other public gathering space.
- Ground or street level non-residential uses should feature large window areas for merchandise or service display.
- New drive through facilities should not be permitted in the DTWN classification.
- New streets in the DTWN classification should continue the existing gridline street pattern.
- Large parking areas should be developed in structured facilities (parking garages) and be publicly accessible. New structured parking facilities should be designed consistent with the existing historic architecture and incorporate ground floor retail space along retail-oriented streets.
- Civic or community gathering places should be incorporated throughout the DTWN classification.

- Pedestrian seating and intimate gathering places should also be incorporated into the sidewalk and walkway network to help further develop a pedestrian character and interconnect gathering places.
- Civic, community, and/or corporate art (i.e. statues, water features, clock towers, and other art forms) should be integrated into the site design.
- The Rock Hill Zoning Code will identify more specific design elements to ensure attractive and interesting sites and exterior building façades.

## **Employment and Industry**

### **General Characteristics and Intent**

The Employment and Industry (EI) land use classification is intended to help create lasting, high quality employment opportunities and economic activity in the City of Rock Hill and the unincorporated Rock Hill USA. The EI classification provides for a broad array of employment generators ranging from corporate offices to more trades-oriented industries. It is envisioned that uses in the EI classification will locate adjacent to one another in a campus-like environment to help further increase the economic activity in Rock Hill. The EI classification reflects the Piedmont region's transition away from intense, "smoke stack" type industries to less intense employment uses that include customer service call centers, financial services, technology-oriented businesses, manufacturing, assembly, warehousing and distribution, and other similar uses.

### **Location Characteristics**

- The EI classification should be located on or adjacent to major transportation corridors with convenient access to outside regional economic markets.
- Sites located at the intersection of heavily traveled arterial roadways or with I-77 visibility and/or access are appropriate for the EI classification, unless the Comprehensive Plan and/or other City long range plans indicate more intense commercial land uses are better suited.
- The EI classification should be located in areas with convenient access to existing and/or future public transit facilities. In limited instances, EI areas should also have access to heavy rail facilities.
- The EI classification should not be applied on or adjacent to properties that are classified as being single-family residential, unless the residential area is envisioned for more intense and/or compatible land uses.

### **Land Uses and Residential Density**

- Land uses in the EI classification should primarily be large employment generators that include large-scale office and industry type uses. Appropriate land uses in the EI classification include office, research and development, manufacturing, fabrication, warehousing and distribution, publishing, large-scale food preparation, and other similar type uses.
- In limited instances, commercial, service, and institutional uses intended to provide goods and services required on a regular basis by businesses in the EI classification are also appropriate. Appropriate commercial, service, and institutional uses may include copying and reproduction services, small-scale postal facilities, government offices, courier services, hotels, catering and restaurant establishments, gas stations, convenience and/or drug stores, fitness centers, satellite library branches, satellite educational facilities, and other similar type uses. Commercial, service, and institutional uses that do not directly support the needs of EI classified properties should not be permitted. The Rock Hill Zoning Code will identify more specific permitted land uses.

### **Design Principles**

- Buildings and their primary entrances should be oriented to the public street.
- Proposed development in the EI classification should be encouraged to locate in high quality, park-like settings that feature formal public outdoor space with passive and active recreational facilities.
- EI areas should feature pedestrian sidewalks, walkways, and bicycle facilities that connect individual sites to each other and the public sidewalk system.
- Corporate art (i.e. statues, water features, clock towers, and other art forms) should be integrated into the site design.
- Heavy landscaped buffers should be incorporated throughout the EI area to help ensure potential undue impacts from excess light, heat, noise, and/or noxious fumes do not negatively affect surrounding areas.
- The Rock Hill Zoning Code will identify more specific design elements to ensure attractive and interesting sites and exterior building façades.

## **Activity Centers: Commercial Centers and Employment Centers**

### **General Characteristics and Intent**

Activity Centers provide core building blocks for the Community Mixed-Use (CMU) and Employment and Industry (EI) land use classifications. Properties radiating outward from the Activity Center serve as “frame areas”, which complement the Activity Center and provide a transition between the high-activity “core areas” and less intense “frame areas.” Activity Centers should generally permit the same uses as the underlying land use classification, but at higher densities and/or intensities.

Activity Centers within the CMU land use classification are referred to as Commercial Centers. Activity Centers within the EI land use classification are referred to as Employment Centers.

### **Location Characteristics**

- Activity Center boundaries depicted on the 2025 Livable City Land Use Map are of a generalized nature. Specific boundaries will be developed as part of future focal area plans and/or master plan developments.
- Activity Centers are generally located at the intersection of major arterial or collector roadways and in areas with good access and/or visibility to the I-77 Corridor.
- Activity Centers and their frame areas should generally extend approximately ¼ to ½ mile outward (or a 5 to 10 minute walk) from its center point.
- Future mass transit stations (if any) should be located within Activity Centers.

### **Land Uses and Residential Density**

- Land uses permitted in the underlying CMU and EI land use classifications should be permitted within their respective Activity Centers. However, for classifications that permit single-family residential uses, detached housing units should not be permitted within Activity Centers.
- The highest concentration of residential densities (where permitted) should be located within Commercial Centers in order to help create the critical mass to support mass transit and enhance the viability of the center.
- Commercial Centers should generally be anchored by a retail shopping district or mall, supermarket, discount retail establishment or home improvement center, and/or similar non-residential land use. The appropriate “anchor” use or development will depend on a combination of the size of the underlying development area and market factors.
- Employment Centers should generally be anchored by a large employment and/or industry type facility and/or a post-secondary or trades-oriented education facility.

### **Design Principles**

- Design principles applicable in the underlying CMU and EI classifications should also apply within Activity Centers. However, there should be a greater focus on achieving more vertically-oriented, mixed-use development.
- Urban design is of critical importance within Activity Centers. Detailed attention should be given to ensure interesting and visually appealing architectural building designs and facades that are designed on a pedestrian scale.
- Urban design amenities and pedestrian facilities such as walkways, seating, landscaping, lighting, public spaces, art, and transit facilities (where appropriate) should be integral components within Activity Centers.

## **Open Space**

### **General Characteristics and Intent**

The Open Space (OS) classification is intended to ensure the preservation of existing and potential future open space sites for public use and enjoyment. Open Space is a property that because of its location, presence of environmentally sensitive areas, presence of threatened or endangered species, recreational value, cultural or historical significance, and/or aesthetics is suitable for preservation. The application of the Open Space classification on the Livable City Land Use Plan Map is currently limited to depicting existing parks and open space resources. However, it may be appropriate to use the Livable City Land Use Plan Map to identify general and/or specific areas envisioned for potential open space, consistent with the Rock Hill Open Space Plan.

### **Location Characteristics**

- The OS classification should be applied to properties meeting the open space definition(s) specified in the Rock Hill Open Space Plan.
- The OS classification should also be applied to select properties in rapidly growing areas of the City to ensure adequate open space and recreational opportunities and to acquire land prior to land values significantly increasing.
- Priority consideration should be given to potential open space properties located within the identified open space focus areas on the Rock Hill Open Space Plan Map.

### **Land Uses and Residential Density**

- Residential uses should be prohibited beyond living facilities for open space caretakers (if any).
- Non-residential land uses in the OS classification should be restricted to parks and recreation type uses and public utilities. An exception to this may include very small scale retail or service uses (such as a snack bar or equipment rental station) that serve users of an open space site.

### **Design Principles**

- OS should largely be kept in a natural state and only limited improvements should be permitted. Acceptable improvements may include parking facilities, public utilities, trails, boardwalks, walkways, signage, limited retail or service facilities, caretaker housing, and/or other improvements typically associated with open space areas.
- Improvements should be designed to minimize potential negative impacts to the open space area. Improvements constructed on open space facilities, particularly parking, walkway, and surface water management facilities should be constructed using Low Impact Development (LID) techniques (i.e. pervious pavements, landscaped drainage swales, and others).