

MANDATORY REFERRAL-REPORT NO. MR03-32
Assemble Site for New Parking Deck at CPCC Central Campus

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

This project involves two proposed property transactions: (1) the disposal of a portion of a parcel owned by CPCC that is not needed for College purposes (property is currently being subdivided; in this Mandatory Referral it will be called *vacant lot*) and (2) the use of the funds from the sale of this land to acquire an adjoining parcel that can be combined with the portion of the parcel to be retained by CPCC to create a parcel upon which a parking deck can be built.

The College currently owns tax parcel 12510302, consisting of approximately 2 acres and zoned MUDD-O. This parcel is L-shaped, stretching along the eastern side of Independence Boulevard between East Fourth Street and Elizabeth Avenue and extending easterly on the Elizabeth Avenue edge almost to Torrence Street. There are three distinct uses that the College envisions for this parcel. First, at the corner of Elizabeth and Independence, the College is planning on building a new bookstore/classroom structure. Second, adjoining this new building with frontage on Elizabeth Avenue is the “vacant lot” of approximately 0.6 acres for which the College has no future plans and wishes to sell. Finally, adjoining the new bookstore/classroom building at Independence and East Fourth, the College plans to build a parking deck on the College-owned remainder of the parcel, and the adjoining parcels (12510305 and 12510307) that the College wishes to purchase. This property – zone B-2 - consists of approximately 0.6 acres.

To generate the funds to acquire tax parcels 12510305 and 12510307, the College desires to sell the vacant portion of tax parcel 12510302 (vacant lot).

Abutting this property between its boundaries and Torrence Street is a business (law office); across Elizabeth Avenue are retail establishments. Retail establishments are across Torrence and Fourth Streets from the property.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

CPCC has a need for up to an additional 1,000 parking spaces at its Central Campus due to growth in student population and programmed loss of surface parking. To meet a portion of this need, CPCC plans to construct the proposed parking deck. The size and configuration of the current property is not sufficient to accommodate the 600 to 800-space deck programmed to be constructed at this location. The College is seeking funding from the County to design and construct the deck, with CPCC paying the debt service costs from fee revenues.

The College considered various options for meeting the need for additional parking, including a joint use facility with the private or public sector, leasing spaces in other parking decks or lots in the area, and using other locations on College owned property. None of the options for a deck at non-CPCC property could provide the space and proximity needed. Other college-owned property did not meet the needs of the College regarding size and access and did not have options for expanding the footprints that exist at the desired location.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

This project is the top-ranked project in the College’s 2003-2012 Capital Needs Assessment. The property falls outside the *CPCC Central Campus Master Plan* (2000) boundary.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The *Central District Plan* (1993) encourages mixed development at this site that supports working, living, and leisure activities. Rezoning petition 01-025 rezoned parcel 12510302 to MUDD-O as part of a 51-acre rezoning initiated by the College. The condition of the rezoning petition prescribes mixed use on this parcel, and states that all future construction on the site will comply with the MUDD regulations with the exception of the following two optional requests:

1. To permit existing development conditions on the site to remain until new building construction commences at a particular, individual building on the site, at which time said new building construction shall comply with the provisions of the MUDD district.
2. Each building site shall comply with required streetscapes as each new building is constructed. However, there may be instances when established streetscape design shall remain as is without strict adherence to the required streetscape design.

Parcels 12510305 and 12510307 (proposed for acquisition) are zoned B-2 and are recommended for commercial land uses in the Central District Plan.

In addition, these parcels fall within the geographic limits of the Elizabeth Pedscape Plan planning area. The Plan, when complete, will prescribe the type, character, and scale of new development that is envisioned for the area, so as to encourage pedestrian activity within and around the district. Preliminary concepts for this block indicate retail development with upper-story residential on the “vacant lot” and a parking deck (containing street-level retail uses) on the

portion of the site that CPCC wishes to develop the parking deck. The site of the planned bookstore/classroom structure is indicated for "academic" use in the concept plan.

PROJECT IMPACT:

This project is not expected to adversely impact surrounding properties or public infrastructure such as CMU services, storm water management (the area is currently almost 100% impervious surface), and streets. Because the College has two other deck facilities accessed from East Fourth Street and surface parking in this area (that will be displaced by the new bookstore and classroom building and deck), it is anticipated that traffic will not significantly increase in the area.

The deck will be operated in such a manner so that parking can be made available to the public for adjoining non-College uses during off-peak college hours, thus reducing the overall need for parking in separate facilities in the area of Elizabeth Avenue scheduled for redevelopment.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

This proposed parking deck supports the expansion of facilities at CPCC and also considers the future impact on current surface parking lots related to improvements along Little Sugar Creek Greenway. This site has also been selected so as not to interfere with the potential Southeast Transit Corridor along Elizabeth Avenue and/or East Seventh Street. Because approximately 600-800 spaces of the projected 1,000-space need is provided by this project, this project will not supplant the existing use of transit by students and staff at Central Campus and will still leave a gap that encourages further use of transit.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

The College desires to have funding approval occur in 2004 such that the project can be completed no later than 2005.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task Force reviewed this matter at their December 3, 2003 meeting and no specific joint use opportunities were identified. However, several in attendance expressed concern that the function and design of the facility would differ from those decks being constructed by the City and County that have pedestrian-scale street-level retail space integrated into the structures. While CPCC personnel expressed their interest in constructing their deck in such a fashion, they reported that there was insufficient retail market in the area to justify the additional public expense. The Joint Use Task Force representatives in attendance were polled to determine whether any public entities had a need for "storefront" space at this location, and none were identified.

CMPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

There are two separate actions, with two separate recommendations.

Request to sell a portion of parcel 12510302 for private development:

Staff recommends approval of the sale of this portion of the parcel, conditioned upon future development's adherence to the conditions contained within zoning petition that covers the property. From a design perspective, it is recommended that new development adhere to the principles contained in the Elizabeth Pedscape Plan, once completed.

Request to purchase two parcels to be added to presently-owned property in order to construct a parking deck:

Staff is concerned about the lack of a street-level use in the College's plans for the parking deck, and the resulting structure that will lack pedestrian relevance. This is a concept that is very important in encouraging pedestrian activity, and in creating and preserving pedestrian-scale development in specific districts. Staff recommends approval of the proposed transaction in order for the College to construct a parking deck, but recommends the following be considered:

- The deck should contain street-level uses on the Independence Boulevard side as integrated into the design of the deck.
- Construction on the entire site (including the portion currently zoned B-2) should conform to the requirements as set forth in the MUDD requirements in effect for parking decks.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Committee considered this matter at their December 16, 2003 meeting and recommended approval of the staff recommendation by a 7-0 vote, with the following noted exception:

The wording "The deck should contain street-level uses on the Independence Boulevard side as integrated into the design of the deck" should be replaced with "The impact of the deck should be softened through pedestrian-friendly design".

Staff Resource: Eddie Moore

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