

**MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 04-03**

**Request to Convey Certain City and County-owned Properties in Belmont Community to the Housing Authority**

**PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:**

The City of Charlotte and County of Mecklenburg propose to convey a number of City- and County-owned properties to the Charlotte Housing Authority as part of the FY2003 Piedmont Courts HOPE VI application for federal funding in order to redevelop the Piedmont Courts public housing complex. The application is to be submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development on January 20, 2004. The Piedmont Courts HOPE VI plan intends to demolish existing on-site structures and redevelop the site with a well designed mixed-income residential community. In concert with the redevelopment of Piedmont Courts, the HOPE VI application contemplates a wider community revitalization including the redevelopment of the parcels discussed herein.

The properties proposed for transfer (and their current ownership, acreages, and current zoning) are:

<u>Parcel</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Zoning</u>	<u>Location</u>
08015303	County	0.096 acre	B-2	Adjacent to I-277
08015301	County	0.043 acre	B-2	"
08015211	County	0.115 acre	B-2	"
08015202	County	0.064 acre	B-2	"
08015201	County	0.011 acre	B-2	"
08108611	City	0.680 acre	I-2	Seigle Avenue
08103401	City	0.304 acre	I-2	Brevard/Caldwell Connector (Optimist Park)
08103405	City	0.061 acre	I-2	"
08103501	City	0.356 acre	I-2	"
08103502	City	0.126 acre	I-2	"
08309109	City	0.325 acre	B-1	Parkwood Avenue at Pegram

Total County acreage is 0.329; City acreage is 1.852 for a total acreage of 2.181 acres. All the parcels are currently vacant.

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:**

As the Charlotte Housing Authority's oldest apartment complex, Piedmont Courts is badly in need of replacement.

The HOPE VI planning effort has been rigorous and thorough. The Charlotte Housing Authority and its development team have met with Congressional members, County staff, City staff, local stakeholders and the residents on numerous occasions. It has been determined that the parcels listed above are integral to the overall success of Piedmont Courts' revitalization.

Numerous locations were considered for revitalization as part of the Piedmont Courts HOPE VI submission. The parcels listed above were chosen because they will help realize an important HOPE VI objective. Specifically, with control of these properties (a requirement by HUD), the Charlotte Housing Authority will be able to demonstrate that the Piedmont Courts HOPE VI will mean more than on-site replacement housing; instead, it will show a larger community revitalization that will improve all of the Belmont neighborhood, not just Piedmont Courts. These parcels were chosen because they specifically address HUD's wish that the plan's impact on the neighborhood be maximized. Without CHA control of these parcels, it will be impossible to show HUD that a HOPE VI award will have a significant impact on the community.

The Charlotte Housing Authority is also currently in negotiations to option other properties in the Belmont neighborhood to complement those listed above.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:**

Completion of this initiative is in keeping with overall goals of neighborhood revitalization and provision of affordable housing.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:**

The HOPE VI redevelopment proposal is consistent with adopted land use plans for the area. The proposed land conveyances fall within the *Belmont Area Revitalization Area Plan* (adopted May 2003) and the *Optimist Park Neighborhood Plan* (adopted March 2002).

One of the stated goals of the *Belmont Area Revitalization Plan* is to "increase and facilitate homeownership, while stabilizing existing housing stock." The plan recommends the redevelopment of Piedmont Courts as one of the most significant initiatives for influencing the development of new housing for the Belmont area. Specifically:

“The redevelopment of aging Piedmont Courts would mean better housing conditions for its residents and have significant impact on the future of the larger Belmont Community. It would help stabilize the neighborhood and create an environment attractive to new investment. Without redevelopment [of Piedmont Courts], housing construction and rehabilitation would lag and probably occur on a spot basis.”

The proposed uses for the sites are consistent with the recommended land uses in the land use policy plans for the area. The Belmont Plan recommends residential development up to 22 du/a at the subject sites adjacent to I-277 and on Seigle Avenue. The plan recommends mixed-use development at the site on Parkwood at Pegram. The Optimist Park Plan recommends mixed residential development of up to 12 du/a at the subject sites on the Brevard/Caldwell Connector. CHA is petitioning to rezone the subject sites to zoning categories that will be consistent with the proposed HOPE VI development plans.

**PROJECT IMPACT:**

The HOPE VI program will bring tremendous resources and investment to the Belmont Community (a fragile neighborhood) and the Piedmont Courts site in particular. The plan contemplates the creation and preservation of greenspace, significant infrastructure improvements, and the construction of a new community center, sorely needed retail and new, well-designed residential units.

**RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:**

The HOPE VI grant will bring needed infrastructure improvements to the Belmont area. The City of Charlotte is proposing to provide capital investment funds for infrastructure improvements recommended in the *Belmont Area Revitalization Plan*, -- specifically for streetscapes, intersections, gateways, thoroughfares, lighting, sidewalks, and utilities -- as part of the City's matching funding for the HOPE VI application.

The HOPE VI plan also proposes the creation of new green space, and the conservation of existing greenspace specifically around Little Sugar Creek. The Piedmont Open Middle School across Seigle Avenue from Piedmont Courts is currently being renovated. Discussions are underway regarding joint use opportunities, including use of greenspace and ball fields.

**ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:**

The HOPE VI funding award announcements will most likely occur in June 2004. Construction of the HOPE VI project will occur beginning approximately one year following award of the grant -- summer 2005. Estimated completion for the entire HOPE VI will be 2009. However, the specific construction start date is dependant on the date of HUD's HOPE VI award and subsequent required HUD approvals.

**JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:**

Given the mandated tight time frame for this review, the Joint Use Task Force did not review this proposed transaction.

**CMPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the sites be conveyed to CHA to support the HOPE VI grant and to implement both the Belmont and Optimist Park plans.

**CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

The Planning Committee considered this matter at a special meeting called on January 5, 2004, and recommended approval by a 5-0 vote.

# Belmont Area Proposed Property Acquisitions

