

MANDATORY REFERRAL-REPORT NO. 04-17
Proposed Acquisition of Land on Shopton Road West to Serve as a Future Fire Station Site

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

The Charlotte Fire Department has analyzed the areas qualifying for 2005 annexation to determine the resources needed to provide emergency services once annexation becomes effective on June 30, 2005. Annexation of properties in the Steele Creek area will require the construction of a fire station on Shopton Road West to provide these services. The selected parcel is part of a development project proposed by Crescent Resources. As part of the rezoning process, Crescent agreed to set aside this parcel for the fire station, provided that it is built before 2009. The property identified for acquisition is a +/- 1.5-acre portion of 7.1-acre Parcel 19921306, a property located on Shopton Road West just west of the Armour Creek Bridge. The map accompanying this report portrays the approximate site configuration that was included in the rezoning petition. Precise site boundaries are to be finalized between Crescent and the City as part of the City's preliminary facility design process.

This parcel meets the Fire Department's station location criteria with regard to topography, distance from existing fire stations, and quick access to neighborhoods scheduled for annexation. Each fire station needs to be approximately 2.5 miles from other stations to provide proper response times to service areas. The proposed site is strategically located to prevent overlap of the nearest existing fire station (Station 26 located at 9231 South Tryon Street) and other potential future station sites.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

A fire station at this location is needed to provide emergency services to the areas to be annexed June 30, 2005. A requirement of annexation is that services extended to annexation areas must be comparable to those provided in the City. This station will enable that requirement to be met.

(It should be noted that the proposed 2005 annexation in this area will necessitate two additional proposed real estate transactions: acquisition of a second permanent station location on York Road, and acquisition of a site to serve as a temporary station location in the Sledge Road/Shopton Road West area. These transactions will be covered under separate Mandatory Referrals.)

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

Fire protection services must be made available to annexation areas in accordance with applicable state annexation statutory requirements. The level of service that the Charlotte Fire Department provides requires the establishment of a fire station at this site to meet this requirement.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The Southwest District Plan calls for single-family residential (3 dwelling units per acre) on this parcel and abutting properties, and office on properties located further east off Shopton Road West and Westinghouse Boulevard. A fire station is considered to be an appropriate land use that would be supportive of the surrounding and nearby residential, commercial and industrial uses.

PROJECT IMPACT:

The proposed fire station on Shopton Road West will provide fire protection for the neighboring communities and the City will comply with the mandate for fire protection in the future annexation area. In addition to fire suppression, Charlotte firefighters also provide "first responder" emergency medical services, hazardous materials mitigations, and technical rescue services.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

The acquisition of this parcel is necessitated by the proposal to annex this area into the City, with an anticipated effective date of June 30, 2005.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

A phased-in construction process is anticipated for this station. An engine company will be housed in a temporary facility while the other permanent annexation station is being built. Once the other new permanent station is occupied, a new engine company will move into the temporary facility and construction will begin on this station. The goal is to occupy this station by December 2006.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task Force met on June 2, 2004 and comments were made regarding appropriateness of incorporating a stormwater pilot project into the design and construction of the proposed fire station. In addition, there was mention of the feasibility of placing a Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police lake patrol facility on this parcel in addition to the new fire station, to replace the old structure currently located at McDowell Park.

CMPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Planning Staff believes that, based upon the Southwest District Plan, the potential growth in the area and associated need for provision of additional services, locating a fire station at this site is appropriate. Staff therefore supports acquisition of this site for this project, contingent upon clarification regarding a proposed stormwater pilot project and sharing the site with a lake patrol facility.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Committee recommended approval by a 6-0 vote at their June 15, 2004 meeting.

MR 04-17

