

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 09-02
Proposed Acquisition of New City Light Equipment Maintenance Facility

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

City of Charlotte Real Estate proposes acquisition of 8.88 acres of land located at 3001 N. Graham Street (parcel # 07709119) located at the northwest quadrant of North Graham Street and Atando Avenue in the City of Charlotte to serve as a new site for the City's light equipment maintenance facility. The site is currently vacant and zoned I-2 (heavy industrial) according to the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance. Land uses in the vicinity of the site consist of warehouse distribution, service related businesses and some strip commercial as well as heavy industrial uses.

The current 4.66-acre site located at 829 Louise Avenue in the Belmont community is functionally-obsolete and too small to serve the anticipated needs of the City.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

The current light equipment maintenance facility located in the Central Yard (on Louise Avenue) is functionally obsolete and there is inadequate parking for the vehicles at that site. This proposed site is centrally located and will allow the City vehicles to have minimal commuting distance to be serviced. The project will create surplus land in the Central Yard which can then be developed to create additional tax base and enhance the Belmont Neighborhood Revitalization.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

This project is specifically listed in the *Operational Facilities Master Plan* that was adopted by the City Council in October 2007.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The *Central District Plan* (1993) recommends heavy industrial land use on the subject parcel, making the proposed use consistent with the *Central District Plan*. The site is also adjacent to the proposed CATS North Corridor commuter line. However, a transit station is not recommended in this location, so a Station Area Plan or Transit Overlay District will not be applicable at this location. The nearest proposed stations would be in Derita in the vicinity of Nevin and Gibbon Roads approximately three miles to the north, and Uptown at the proposed Gateway station 2 ½ miles to the south.

PROJECT IMPACT:

Relocation of this City function will provide sufficient space for future expansion.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

The North Corridor commuter transit rail line is proposed to run on the Norfolk Southern "O" line that passes along the southeast edge of the site. The current plan is to shift the track centerline 15 feet to the northwest, within the railroad right-of-way encroachment on the site.

The site currently contains a private at-grade crossing of the Norfolk Southern tracks out to N. Graham Street. The current North Corridor plans call for the closure of this crossing, as well as another private crossing immediately to the north of this crossing and south of Atando (that is currently closed and would remain so). It is CATS staff's opinion that Norfolk Southern would be unlikely to allow either of these private crossings to remain, given the heavy-duty nature of the trucks and vehicles currently operating at this location (and that might be operating if the City were to use the site), and given that more than adequate (and much safer) site vehicular access is available from Atando Avenue.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

The new Light Equipment Maintenance Facility is proposed to be completed by December 2010, inasmuch as the project is funded and is part of the Central Yard Relocation approved by City Council in FY 2002.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

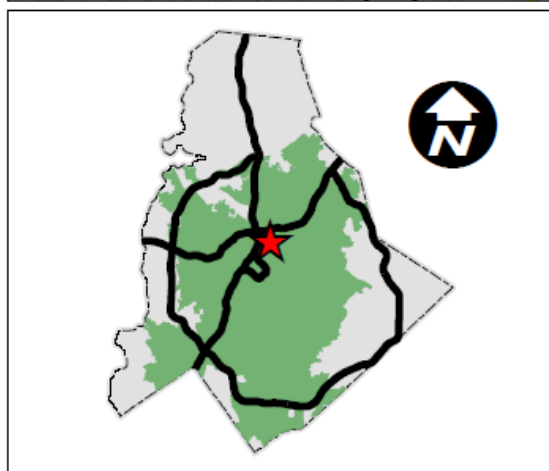
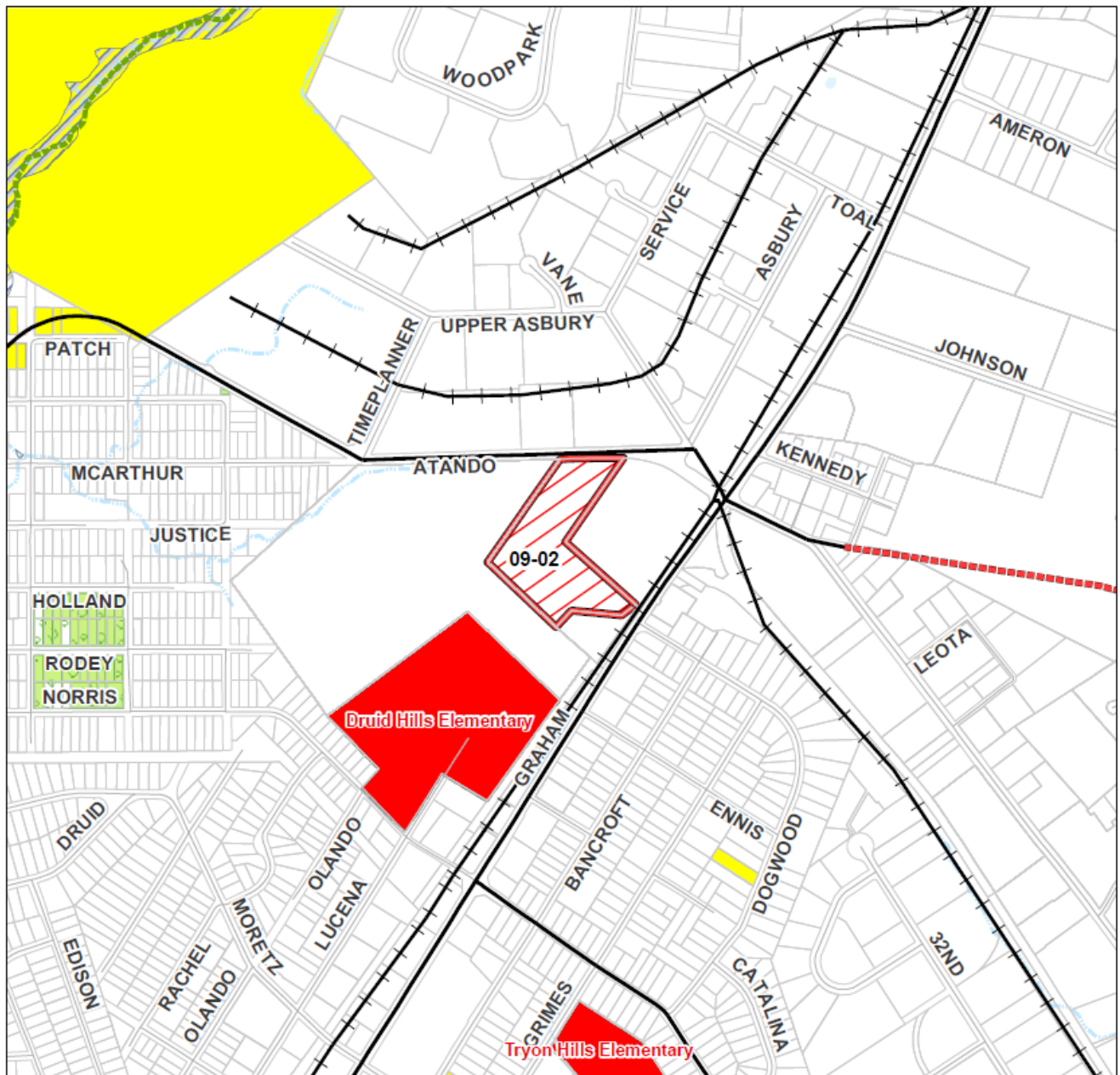
The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their January 7, 2009 meeting. The point was raised that the "light equipment maintenance" use intended to occupy the N. Graham Street site appeared to be nearly identical to the "motor fleet management" function being proposed by the County at a site on Montana Drive and described in Mandatory Referral MR09-01. Pursuing these sites separately and independent of one another appeared to be a lost joint use opportunity.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Planning staff recommends the proposal to acquire property for the light equipment maintenance facility at 3001 North Graham Street, inasmuch as the proposed use is consistent with the area plan land use recommendation, subject to the condition that necessary site design and development precautions (as identified above by CATS with regard to shifting track location and grade crossing closures) are respected.






CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

At their February 17, 2009 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval 5-0, noting and recommending staff's condition regarding site design relating to track shift and crossing closure.



Mandatory Referral 09-02

City Real Estate

-  Mandatory Referral
-  City Property
-  County Property
-  Park Property
-  Commuter Rail Line

Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department



