

**MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 10-18**  
**Proposed New Police Station Location for Steele Creek Division of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police**

**PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:**

City of Charlotte Real Estate proposes that a facility be designed and constructed to meet the specifications for a new Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) Steele Creek Division headquarters that would replace the current facility located at 1790 Shopton Road on the grounds of the Police and Fire Training Academy. The new 12,500 square foot facility would be constructed and owned by the City of Charlotte. The proposed site is approximately 2.9 acres at the southwest corner of S. Tryon Street and Westinghouse Boulevard in the City of Charlotte (consisting of parcels 201-171-09, 201-171-10 and 201-171-21).

The property is currently vacant land and is zoned I-1 (Light Industrial), according to the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance. Land use in the area is a mix of commercial and industrial. The property was cleared for development several years ago but the prospective buyer cancelled the contract.

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:**

The current Steele Creek Division is located in a 24,000 square foot building on the grounds of the Police and Fire Training Academy and is not accessible at night and weekends. The CMPD wants to have highly visible and easily accessible division offices, with 12,500 square feet of space.

The search for a replacement facility for the Steele Creek Division was initiated in March 2010. The following criteria were developed by CMPD to identify a site suitable for this facility:

- Site must be highly visible
- Site must be easily accessible from patrol division area.
- Site must be sufficient to accommodate a facility containing a minimum of 12,000 square feet of floor area, secured parking for 95 vehicles and public parking for at least 10 vehicles.
- Site must be centrally-located within the patrol division boundaries
- Site must be easily accessible by public transportation

Initially, the list of candidate sites contained over 50 locations, but by applying the site criteria, it was reduced to seven that were more thoroughly evaluated. Of those seven, three were identified as finalist sites. The final review of these three sites resulted in the subject site, as the other two sites did not meet the criteria to the degree the selected site does. Specifically, the other sites exhibited relatively:

- poor accessibility/visibility,
- greater distance from core response area,
- poor development conditions (e.g. located in floodplains, bad topography, site configuration, etc.), and
- difficulty locating minimum acreage needed.

By having the division headquarters building designed and constructed specifically to be a police station, the efficiency of the space will be improved over the existing facilities (that were initially designed and built as flex space and subsequently modified to serve CMPD's needs), while avoiding the potential need to spend a significant amount of funding in renovation of the existing leased facilities.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:**

Policies governing facility placement are contained in the criteria listed above. Additionally, priority is given to owning (as opposed to leasing) station locations as it is over time more cost-effective.

CMPD adopted a Facilities Strategic Plan in February, 2010 to identify facilities that needed to be upgraded and/or replaced. The Plan provides a framework to evaluate and prioritize existing facilities and to determine the order or sequence in which investments in new or improved facilities should be made. It also outlined the key criteria to be used in site selection of new facilities (as outlined above).

Based upon the evaluation of all CMPD division facilities, Steele Creek was ranked as the highest in terms of need for replacement. The subject property was identified inasmuch as it most closely met the site selection criteria and is located in an area that is primarily light industrial and retail.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:**

The *Southwest District Plan* (1991) recommends industrial uses along with a neighborhood serving retail center at this intersection of Westinghouse Blvd and South Tryon Street. The *Steele Creek Area Plan*, which is currently in the process of being drafted and is expected to be adopted by early 2011, has a preliminary land use recommendation for Office / Retail / Industrial-Warehouse Distribution for this location. The preliminary urban design recommendations also address the importance of this key intersection for the surrounding area, and that the development of this site has the potential of acting as a key catalyst for future redevelopment in the area. The development of this property at a key intersection should also follow the urban design policies in the *Steele Creek Area Plan* in developing civic buildings on major thoroughfares, making them pedestrian friendly and easily accessible.

**PROJECT IMPACT:**

The redevelopment of this site has the potential to be a catalyst for reinvestment in the area.

CMPD held a strategic planning retreat in January 2009 to develop implementation steps for key priorities in the department's strategic plan. Major components of successful neighborhood crime reduction included increased police visibility, enforcement and prevention strategies tailored to the crimes and offenders causing the most significant harm in each response area, rapid response to emerging trends, and incapacitation of criminals.

One priority examined in detail at the retreat was the role of police facilities (primarily patrol division headquarters) in supporting departmental goals. Neighborhood crime reduction is most effectively supported by division facilities that represent a broad range of police services at the neighborhood level and provide high visibility and accessibility to all areas within the divisions. Division offices should be accessible 24 hours per day, have staff sufficient to respond to service calls within the department response time parameters, proactively implement prevention and apprehension strategies, and be able to respond to a wide range of crimes with division-based investigative resources.

The proposed location meets the locational criteria and the presence of a highly-visible police facility at a major intersection should positively impact crime in the area.

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

There are no other public or private projects currently planned in this area.

**ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:**

The project would be completed by December 2012.

**JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:**

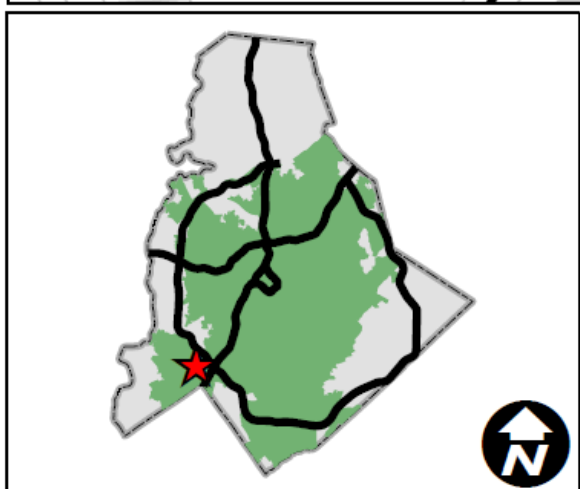
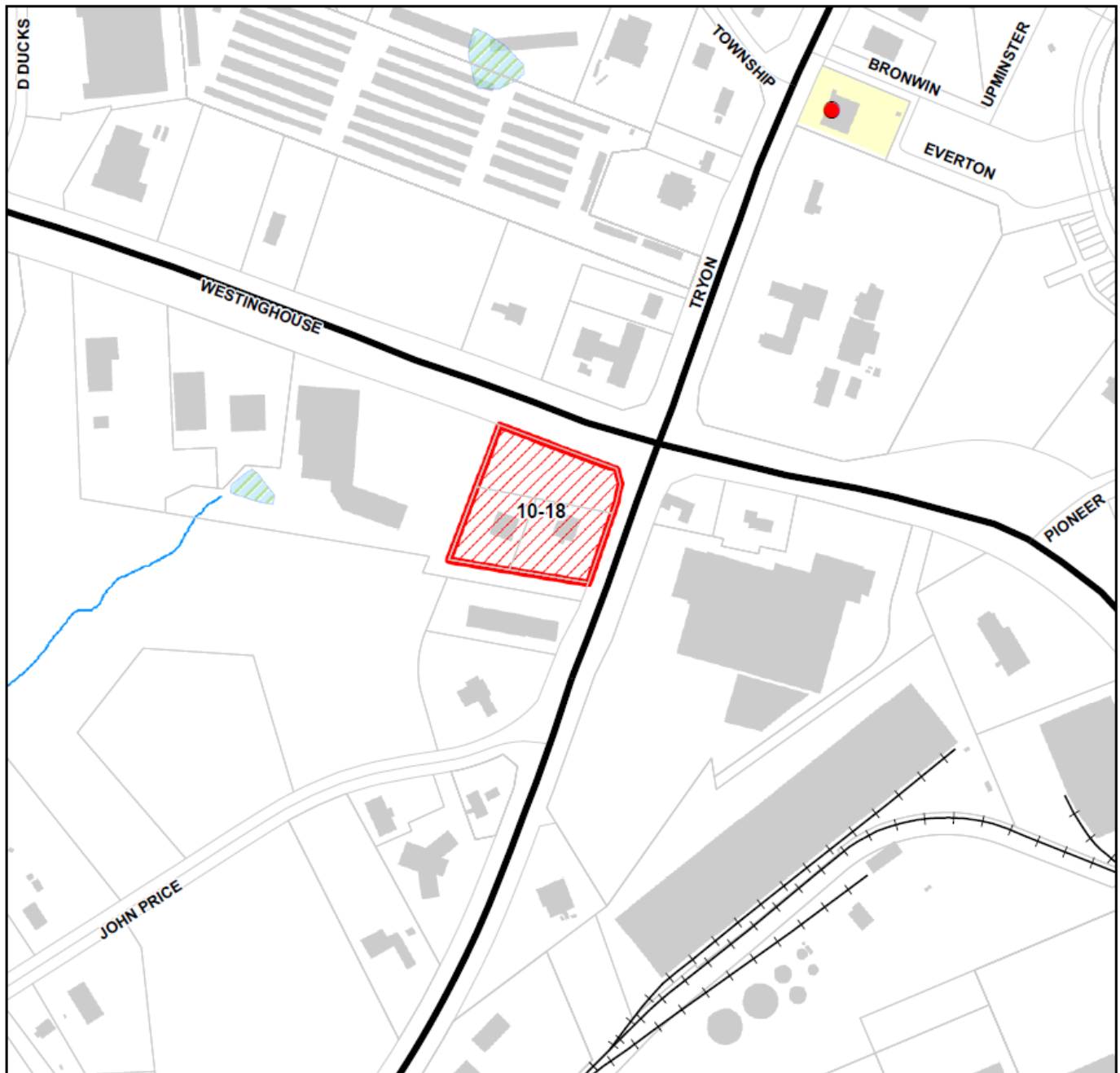
The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their October 6, 2010 meeting and no comments were offered.

**PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Planning staff recommends approval of the proposed land acquisition for the stated purpose.

**CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

At its October 19, 2010 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 4-1 vote.



## Mandatory Referral 10-18

Submitted by: City Real Estate, E&PM

Initiated by: CMPD

● Fire Station

▨ Mandatory Referral

■ City Property

■ Building Footprints

Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department

