

## **MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 13-13**

Proposed Acquisition of Properties along Proposed Barton Creek Greenway in Northeast Charlotte

### **PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:**

This project is the proposed acquisition of properties located along the future route of Barton Creek Greenway in northeast Charlotte. The properties in the area are zoned B-1SCD (Neighborhood Business) and R-20MF (Multi-family Residential) according to the City of Charlotte Zoning Ordinance.

The proposed route is located in an area with a mix of commercial, single-family residential and multi-family residential uses. Very little of the proposed route would be on floodplain property. The proposal is to acquire portions of parcels necessary for greenway development without displacing residential or commercial site occupants. The acquisitions would vary in width based upon negotiations with individual property owners, but is unlikely to be narrower than 40 feet.

### **PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:**

The purpose of the Mecklenburg County greenway system is to provide habitat conservation, protect the water supply, mitigate flooding, and provide an opportunity for active transportation and recreation for pedestrians and cyclists. Currently, the County has constructed approximately 37 miles of the planned 185 mile greenway system.

The paved trail on Barton Creek Greenway will be approximately 3/5 of a mile and will connect the existing trail on Mallard Creek Greenway to JW Clay Boulevard in northeast Charlotte in the vicinity of UNCC and University Place. It is anticipated that the trail will adhere to the County's typical trail specifications being at least 10 feet wide, paved and have a few feet of mown grass on either side. Topography challenges in this area may require the construction of some retaining walls at various locations along the proposed route. Bridges will be necessary to cross Mallard and Barton Creeks with the greenway trail.

This project will require the acquisition of several properties through donation or purchase of fee simple property or through the donation or purchase of temporary and permanent easements. Five neighborhoods will be impacted by the project: Glenwater at University Place, University Place, Welwyn, Walden Station and Walden Court.

### **CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:**

These acquisitions are consistent with *Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation 10 Year Master Plan*.

### **CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:**

The properties included along the greenway corridor lie within the *University City Area Plan (UCAP)* (adopted 2007) and the *Northeast District Plan* (adopted 1996). The *UCAP* set a goal to create a network of public open spaces, parks, and greenways and also identifies a connection between JW Clay Boulevard and the existing Mallard Creek Greenway. It is noted as a high priority for implementation by the County. The *Northeast District Plan* also sets a priority for greenway connections that provide access between more neighborhoods and parks. The location of the proposed greenway connection is consistent with both adopted area plans.

### **PROJECT IMPACT:**

Acquisition of this property for Barton Creek Greenway will provide an access for pedestrians to reach the existing trail on Mallard Creek Greenway, UNCC, University Place, CMC University and other office/retail centers in the University City region. This project will provide a main greenway trail that is a permanent part of the Mecklenburg County Greenway Program.

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

The proposed greenway trail will provide a connection to the future Charlotte Light Rail Blue Line Extension on North Tryon Street which is expected to be in operation by 2017. The proposed greenway trail will be in close proximity to the proposed J.W. Clay station and will provide convenient pedestrian and bicycle access between the station and nearby neighborhoods, businesses, and institutions. The project will connect to the existing Mallard Creek and Clark Creek Greenway system.

### **ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:**

Acquisition of the properties needed for this project is expected to be completed by early October 2013. Construction on Barton Creek Greenway is expected to begin in 2014 and last approximately one year.

### **JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:**

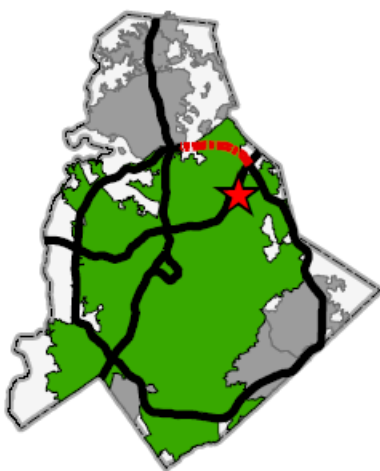
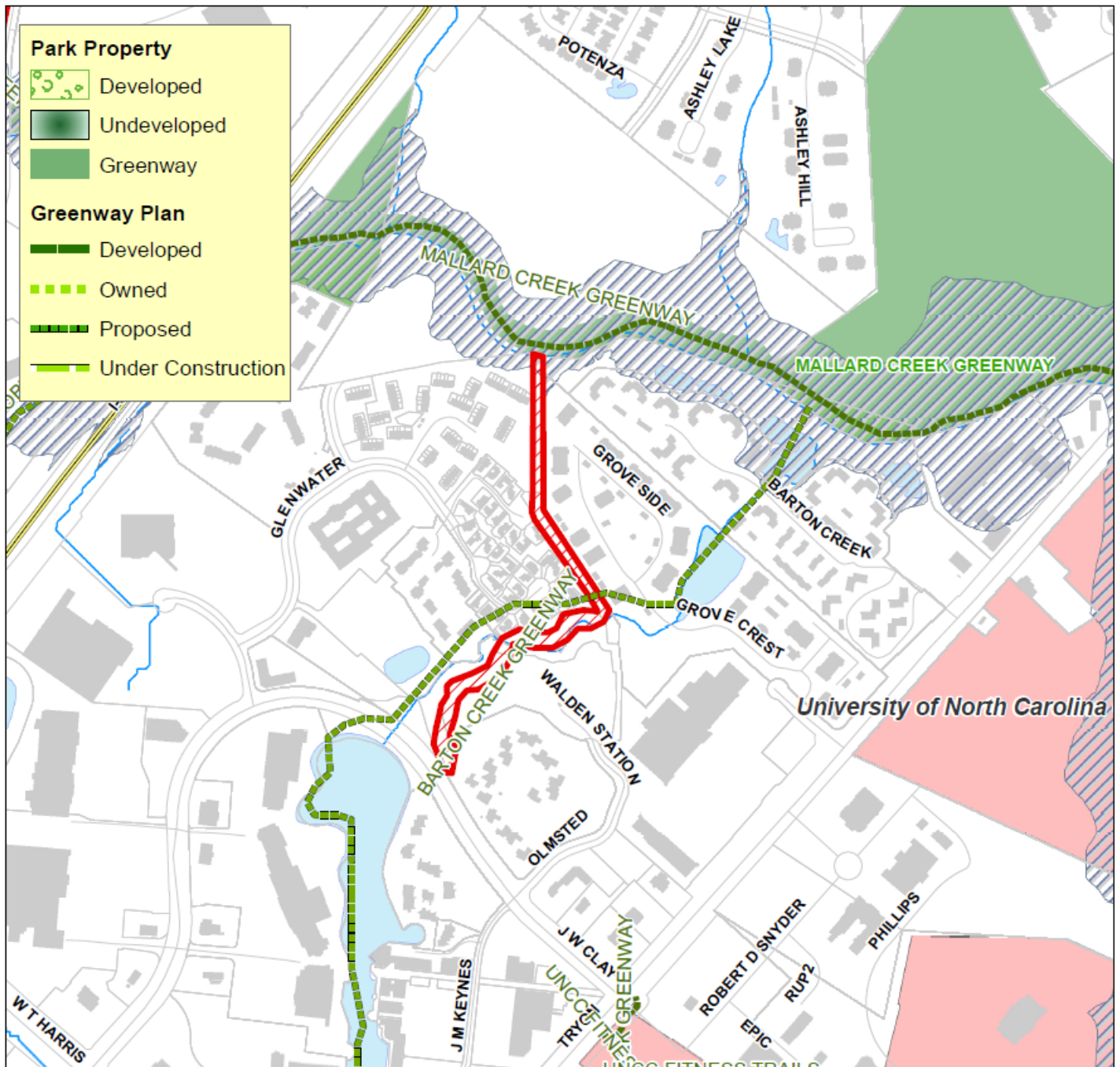
The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their September 4, 2013 meeting and it was noted that as part of the Northeast Corridor Infrastructure (NECI) project, sidewalks along JW Clay Blvd. are to be constructed between the southern end of this segment of the proposed greenway and the Blue Line Extension station at JW Clay Blvd. Construction schedules could be coordinated for mutual benefits.

**PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recognizes the need to reserve land for parks, open space, and greenways as part of future development. Therefore, staff supports acquisition of the proposed property for a greenway connection.

**CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

At their September 17, 2013 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 7-0 vote.



## Mandatory Referral 13-13

Initiated by: Park & Recreation Department

Submitted by: County Real Estate



Mandatory Referral



FEMA 100 Year Floodplain



Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department