

**MANDATORY REFERRAL-REPORT NO. 14-40**  
**Proposed Development of Phase III of CPCC Cato Campus**

**PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:**

Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) proposes construction of a new 85,000 square foot, four story classroom building, a 2,000 square foot horticulture building and related site improvements (including approximately 300 parking spaces) at the existing Cato Campus utilizing 2013 Mecklenburg County Bonds funding. The 33.135-acre campus is located at the southeast corner of East W.T. Harris Blvd. and Grier Road (parcels 10509128, 10509120 and 10509106) in East Charlotte.

Currently, the Cato Campus consists of the Cato I and Cato II classroom buildings, Horticulture classroom building, greenhouses, horticulture equipment, garages and surface parking for approximately 600 cars. The proposed building would be considered Cato III. Zoning of the campus is R-3 (single family residential) according to the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance. Adjacent improvements include Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Grier Academy Elementary School to the northeast, a television transmission tower to the east and Northridge Middle School to the south. Multi-family residential development is across East W.T. Harris Blvd. to the west.

Preliminary site studies identified three potential sites for new building on the campus. One was adjacent to Cato I but allowed too small a footprint for the required building size. A second site was across the creek from the existing buildings and was deemed too remote to the other development on the campus. The third, and chosen, site was on the site of current parking with additional parking being built to the east across the protected creek, to offset the loss of parking and to provide parking for the new building.

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:**

CPCC currently has approximately 60 square feet of building area per student total for all of its campuses. The NC Community College System recommends 100 square feet per student. The Mecklenburg County Commission gave CPCC the charge to increase its facilities to a point that will provide at least 90 square feet of building area per student. The projects funded by the 2013 Mecklenburg County Bonds are being done to address that deficiency and provide needed curriculum program spaces.

In requesting bond funding, CPCC utilized its Master Plan and in-house analysis of curriculum needs, both current and anticipated, to develop needs assessments at the different campuses including preliminary program of spaces required by the different programs at each campus. That information was converted into areas of new facilities required and their estimated costs including design fees, furniture, equipment and other soft costs. That was the basis for the bond funding request.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:**

Cato III reflects a response to the County Commission's directive to increase campus space from the current 60sf/student to 90sf/student. The project also addresses specific curriculum needs for the programs offered at this campus.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:**

The *Northeast District Plan* (1996) recommends institutional land uses for these parcels. Schools are considered an institutional land use, therefore the intended use is consistent with the Plan.

**PROJECT IMPACT:**

The project will provide needed additional classrooms spaces as well as improvements to current programs including Horticulture, Paralegal, American Sign Language as well as addressing a major need for additional general classrooms and computer classrooms throughout the college. The new building will also provide a new, larger library facility to serve the growing campus enrollment.

Cato III will also provide a small auditorium and multi-purpose room available for use by the community as well as the college. A student lounge is provided so that the students have somewhere to rest and work between classes. Site improvements will include the construction of an amphitheater adjacent to the new building. This will provide an outdoor space of classes, concerts and relaxation for the students and faculty.

As the campus grows with this added building there will be increased traffic to and from the site. The existing entrances off East W. T. Harris and Grier Road will remain as the only points of access in order to best control traffic. The existing creek on the site runs south to north and crosses under Grier Road. A protective 50 foot buffer is provided on both sides of the creek. A pedestrian bridge crosses the creek from the new parking to the east to Cato III to the west. The bridge was designed and installed with minimal impact on the creek, its buffers and the surrounding trees.

Cato III will be serviced using existing on site utilities for water and sewer. Power will be feed from the existing service main along Grier Road.

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

Cato III and its related site improvements should not result in any degradation of any of the adjacent properties (Grier Academy, Northridge Middle School and transmission tower). It will provide the greater Charlotte Mecklenburg community with enhanced educational and training opportunities for its citizens leading to a better quality of life for the community.

The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) has relocated a bus stop from a spot on campus to a location on the north side of Grier Road across from the existing south side bus stop. Should CATS decide that it would like to return to an on-campus route and stop, CPCC would work with them on that possibility.

The Cato Campus hosts approximately 170 high school students with the CMS Middle College program. This program has proven to be popular and successful and has being expanded to CPCC Levine Campus and is being expanded to the CPCC Harper Campus. CPCC values its relationship with CMS in educating the citizens of Charlotte Mecklenburg.

**ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:**

Cato III is being built utilizing 2013 Mecklenburg County Bond funds. The new Cato III classroom building is scheduled for completion in time for its full use starting January 2016.

**JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:**

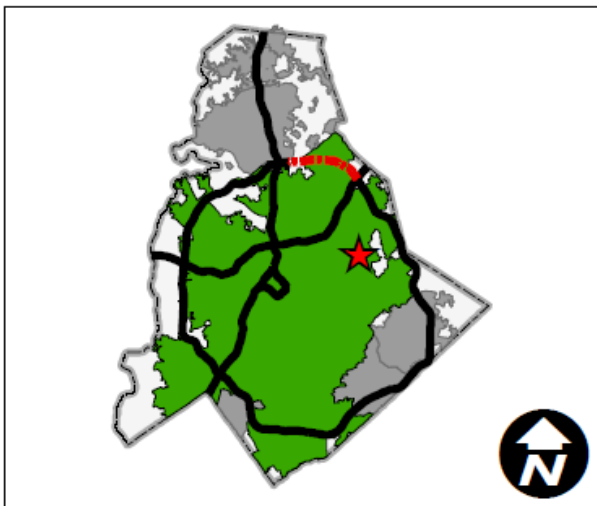
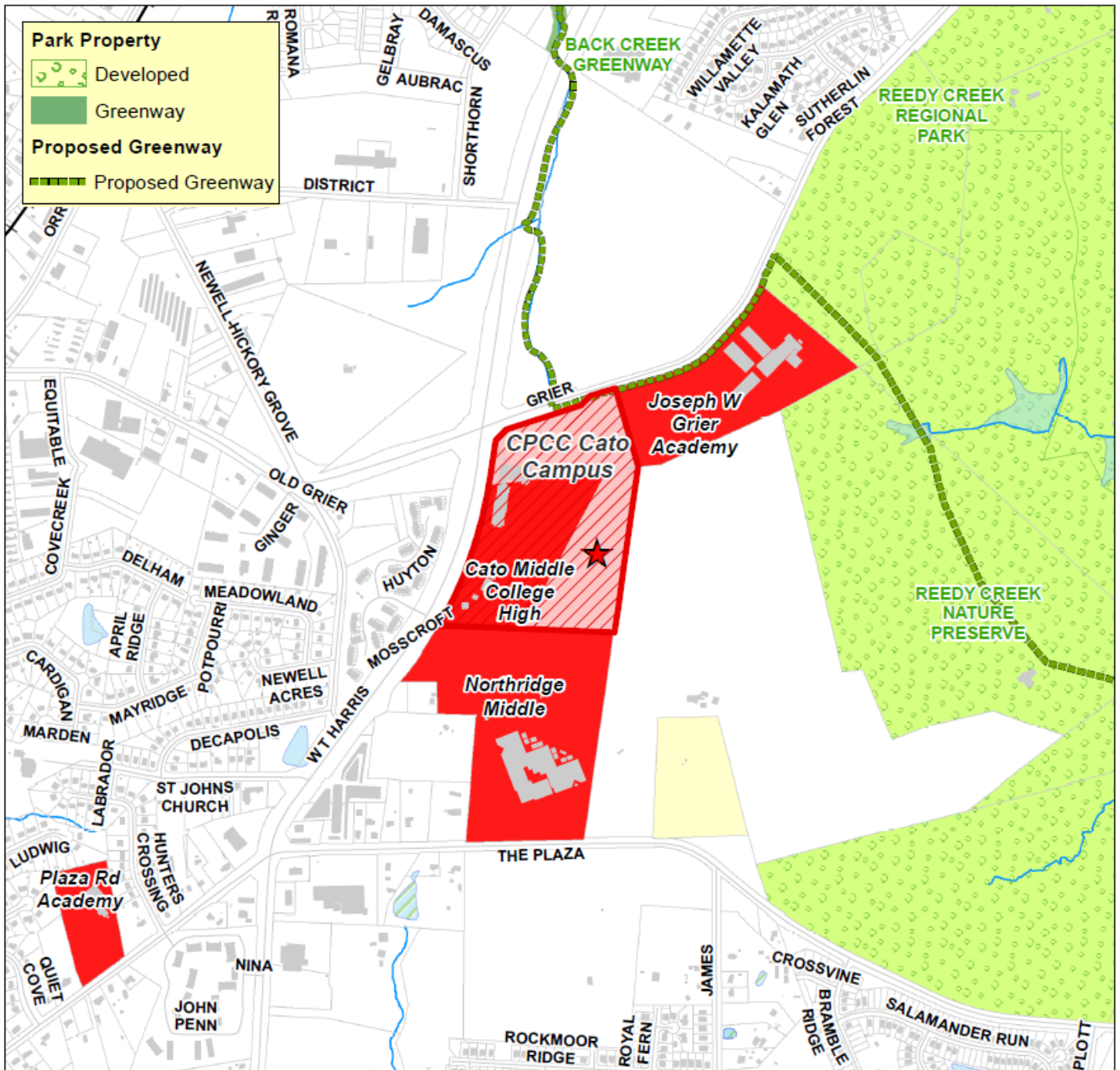
The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their September 3, 2014 meeting and no joint use comments were offered.

**PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of this proposal.




**CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

At their September 16, 2014 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 5-0 vote.



## Mandatory Referral 14-40

Initiated & Submitted by: CPCC

-  Mandatory Referral
-  Schools
-  City Property

Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department











