

MANDATORY REFERRAL-REPORT NO. 16-19
Proposed Pearle Street Neighborhood Park Property Exchange and Sale

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

Mecklenburg County (County), the City of Charlotte (City), and the Charlotte Housing Authority (CHA) have been asked to partner in a proposed private developer-led redevelopment project in the Midtown area of Charlotte. The redevelopment plan calls for a series of property exchanges which will result in a new street network and connectivity (auto, pedestrian, and bicycle) in the portion of the Midtown area north of Kenilworth Avenue and between Greenwood Cliff and Baxter Street.

The real estate transactions outlined below will be completed by the County, the City, the CHA, and a private developer of specified adjacent properties.

Mecklenburg County

1. County to accept a portion of Tax Parcel #125-201-56 from the City (#1 on the attached maps) for incorporation into Pearle Street Neighborhood Park.
2. County to convey a portion of Tax Parcels #125-201-47 and #125-201-48 (collectively, Pearle Street Neighborhood Park) to the City (#2 and #3 on the maps). #2 on the map will become right-of-way for the extension of Pearl Park Way. #3 on the map will become a remnant parcel to be sold to the private developer after the City removes its park and recreation use restrictions imposed by the City in the parks consolidation deed to the County.
3. County to accept a portion of Tax Parcel #125-201-52 (Charlottetown Terrace complex) from the CHA (#8 on the maps). A portion of this property will be incorporated into Pearle Street Neighborhood Park.
4. County to accept residual land from the abandonment of Baxter Street right-of-way from the City (#5 on the maps) for incorporation into Pearle Street Neighborhood Park.
5. County to convey a portion of the existing Baxter Street Neighborhood Park to the CHA (#6 on the maps).
6. County to convey a portion of the property conveyed from the CHA (#8 on the maps) to the City for right-of-way for the realignment of Baxter Street (#9 on the maps).
7. County to convey the remnant parcel from Tax Parcel #125-201-52 to the City (#11 on the maps).

City of Charlotte

1. City to convey a portion of Tax Parcel #125-201-56 to the County (see #1 above and on the maps).
2. City to accept a portion of Tax Parcels #125-201-47 and #125-201-48 from the County for right-of-way (see #2 above and on the maps).
3. Private developer to purchase remnant portions of Tax Parcels #125-201-47 and #125-201-48 that is conveyed to the City from the County (#3 remnant parcel on the maps) after the City removes its park and recreation use restrictions imposed by the City on Parcel #125-201-48 in the parks consolidation deed to the County.
4. Private developer to dedicate portion of Tax Parcels #125-201-43 and #125-201-41 to the City for right-of-way for the extension of Pearl Park Way (#4 on the maps).
5. The City to abandon the Baxter Street right-of-way and convey the residual property to the County to be incorporated into Pearle Street Neighborhood Park (see #4 above and #5 on the maps).
6. Private developer to purchase the remnant parcel from Tax Parcel #125-201-48 from the City (#10 on the maps) once the City has removed the park and recreation use restrictions that were imposed in the parks consolidation deed to the County.
7. Private developer to purchase the remnant parcel from Tax Parcel #125-201-52 from the City (#11 on the maps).
8. Private developer to purchase the remnant parcel from Tax Parcel #125-201-56 from the City (#12 on the maps).

Improvements to the park will include removal of old asphalt and replacement with turf at the former site of the Midtown Sundries restaurant, and a bike/pedestrian path through the park. The current Baxter Street Neighborhood Park property could be redeveloped by the CHA for affordable multi-family residential in the future. Portions of the privately-owned property immediately south of the new Pearl Park Way extension and a few parcels fronting onto Kenilworth Avenue will be redeveloped for mixed-use residential and commercial uses. This development project is proposed to include a new office for the Charlotte Regional Realtors Association, multi-family housing units, a hotel, office space, and a parking deck to accommodate 1,239 parking spaces. The project area falls into several zoning categories; the existing Pearle Street Neighborhood Park is zoned B-2, the CHA property and the existing Baxter Street Neighborhood Park are zoned MUDD, and the private development area is zoned O-2. The CHA and the private developer will be responsible for obtaining the appropriate zoning designations for their proposed developments.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

Participation in this project by the County allows for an expanded and better utilized Pearle Street Neighborhood Park. The park is heavily used and additional land area will allow greater use of the property by the public. Additionally, the improved street network by the realignment of Baxter Street to the extension of Pearl Park Way along with the addition of bike lanes and a bike path through the park will allow for greater accessibility to the park by both pedestrians and vehicular traffic.

The current Baxter Street Neighborhood Park is under-utilized and exchanging this park will allow for greater use of the more heavily used Pearle Street Neighborhood Park. Additionally, both the County and the City are supportive of the goal of increasing affordable housing to serve the community, which could be accomplished by future residential development to be built by the CHA on properties exchanged with the County. A use-restriction will be placed on the existing Baxter Street Neighborhood Park property conveyed from the County to the CHA to ensure the property will be used for additional residential development.

Participation in this project by the City allows for increased road, bicycle, and pedestrian connectivity and other infrastructure improvements in the Midtown area as described in the Midtown Morehead Cherry Area Plan. This public-private partnership provides an opportunity to complete these improvements on an accelerated timeline and boosts transportation networks while preserving urban open space.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

This acquisition is consistent with several County-adopted policies and plans such as the Mecklenburg County *Park and Recreation Master Plan* which seeks to expand and better utilize the County's existing parks.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The *Midtown Morehead Cherry Area Plan* (2012) recommends a mix of office and residential land uses for the Charlotte Housing Authority site fronting Baxter Street and all parcels fronting Greenwood Cliff. The plan recognized continued park use for both Pearle Street Park and Baxter Street Park. The plan envisions the larger East Morehead Street area, including Baxter Street and Greenwood Cliff, as a pedestrian zone and recommends establishing an urban fabric by promoting a pedestrian-oriented setting with a mixture of uses. The proposal reorders proposed land use slightly from the Plan's mapped uses by consolidating park land into a single larger facility, and providing for affordable housing development on the Baxter Street Park site.

The plan also specifically recommends extending Pearl Park Way across Kenilworth Avenue to Baxter Street. The street extension will link Baxter Street and Pearle Street Park with the Little Sugar Creek Greenway and create a more continuous system of green space, and will provide a significant improvement in street connectivity for the area. Design and implementation of the street extension has been coordinated with development plans for the Realtor Association and Charlottetowne Terrace (CHA) properties as well as with Park and Recreation, in order to develop quality, active street edges. It should be noted that the plan stressed the importance of on-street parking along the new street.

PROJECT IMPACT:

This project is expected to have a major impact on the Midtown area just outside of Uptown Charlotte. It will result in added housing and retail options close to the city core. The public investment in the project will significantly improve the park's aesthetics and utility. Additionally, the improved walkability, street networks, and park access will continue to enhance the surrounding community.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

Other than the private and public entities involved in the project, the project has no known relationship to other projects.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

This project is for land conveyances only and is expected to be completed in 2017 pending federal Housing and Urban Development approval on conveyance of the CHA parcel.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their May 4, 2016, meeting and there were no comments. It was noted that a street abandonment has not yet been undertaken for the Baxter Street cul-de-sac end; this process should be started if and when this proposed land exchange concept is approved and advanced.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The proposed street extension is a specific plan recommendation of the *Midtown Morehead Cherry Area Plan* (2012), and is fully consistent. The proposed land use is either consistent or compatible with the plan's overall vision and recommendations. Staff recommends approval of the proposal.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

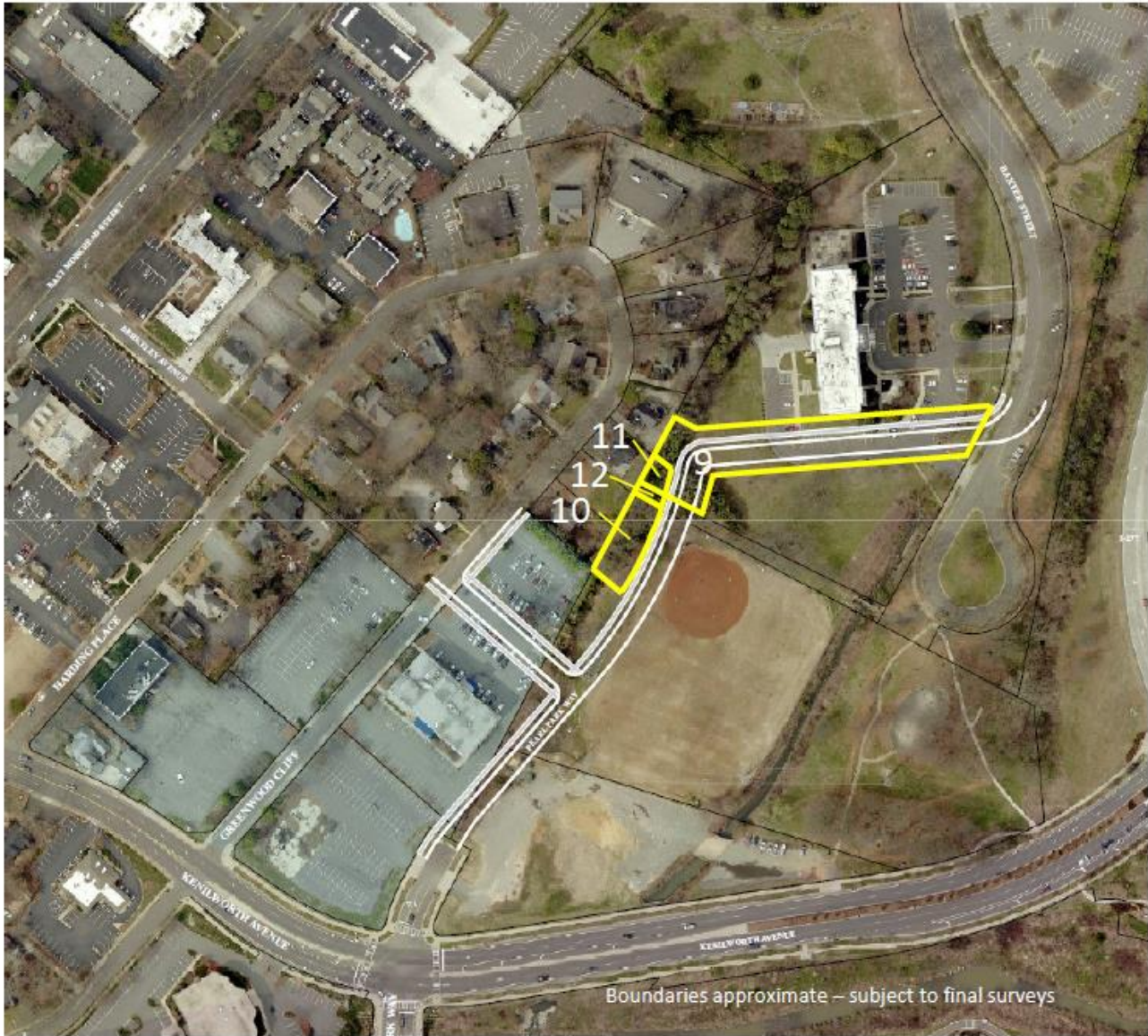
At their May 17, 2016 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 7-0 vote.

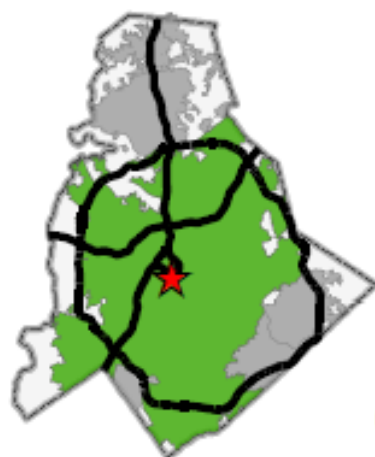
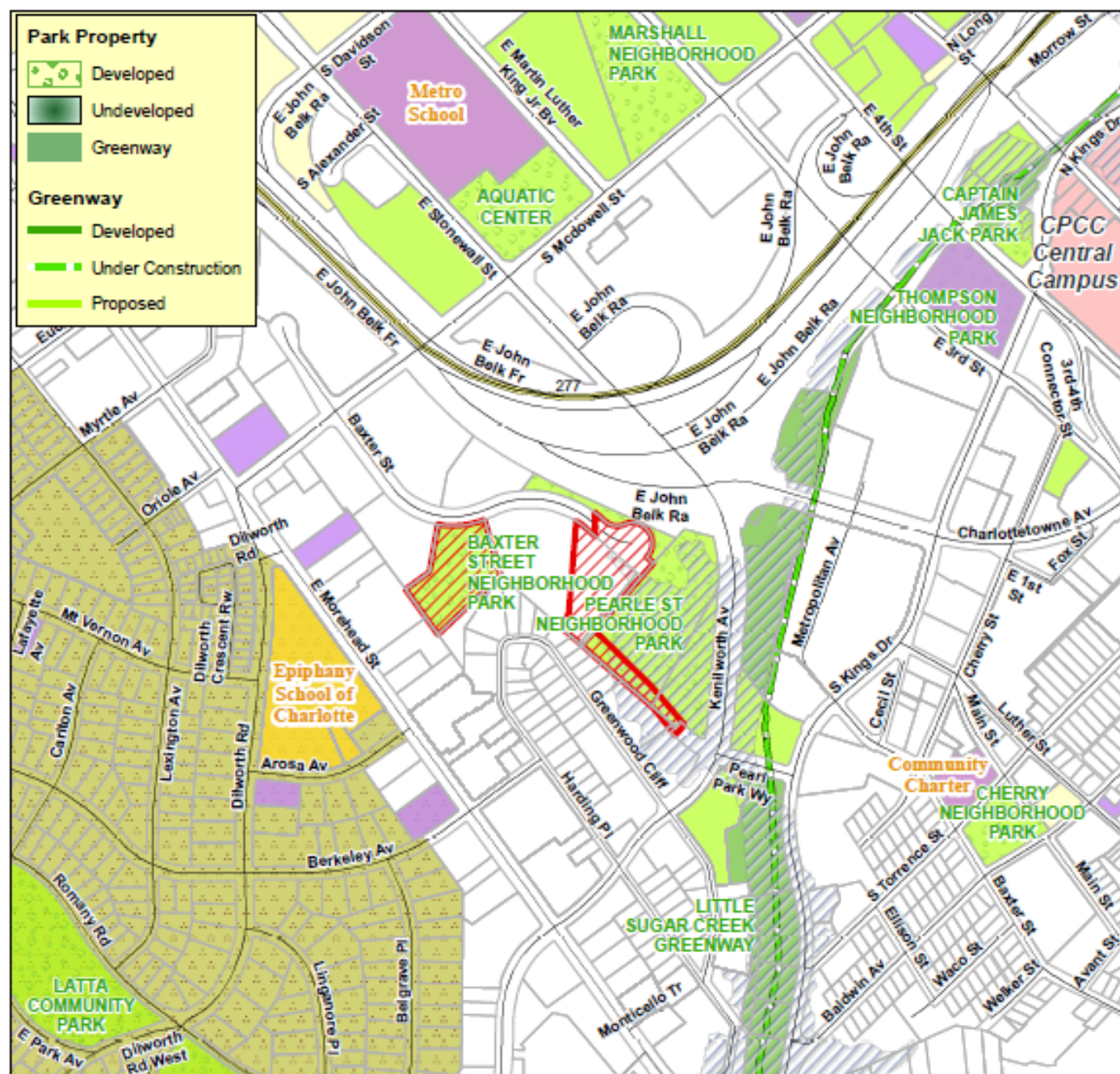












Mandatory Referral 16-19

Initiated & Submitted by:
County Asset & Facility Management

	Mandatory Referral		FEMA 100 Year Floodplain
	Schools		Historic Districts
	County Property		Local Historic Landmark
	City Property		Colleges



Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department