

MANDATORY REFERRAL-REPORT NO. 16-23

Proposed Acquisition of Back Creek Greenway and Park Property in Northeastern Mecklenburg County

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

Mecklenburg County proposes to purchase Tax Parcels 051-14-117 (approximately 29.12 acres) for greenway and neighborhood park purposes. The property is located between University City Blvd and Interstate 485 in unincorporated Mecklenburg County, and is zoned I-2 (industrial) under the City of Charlotte's zoning ordinance. The property is vacant and has floodplain along its southern boundary.

The property is bounded by County-owned floodplain property to the south (paralleling Back Creek) and vacant property to the west, north and east. A Charlotte Water treatment facility is located immediately to the east of the property, which has frontage on Caldwell Park Drive.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

Adding this property to its portfolio will allow Park and Recreation to use the site for the greenway system as well as a neighborhood park. Back Creek runs along the southeastern portion of the property and the department envisions using this area of the property for greenway and biking trails. The upper portion of the property will likely be used for a neighborhood park and other amenities associated with the greenway such as parking. Acquisition of this property would help fulfill Park and Recreation goals of increasing park amenities and greenways throughout the County.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

This acquisition is consistent with the County's *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* which encourages the expansion and construction of greenway trails and neighborhood parks. This project is also consistent with the County's goals of increasing water quality and minimizing hazards by reducing development in the floodplain, increasing greenway trails and open space, and providing greater recreational opportunities for County residents. Additionally, citizens within the County ranked providing more greenway trails and connections as their top recreation need.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The *Rocky River Area Plan* (adopted 2006) recommends use for a greenway along the southern boundary of the property (generally within the floodplain) and warehouse/distribution uses for the remainder of the site. Specific locations for future parks are not typically identified in district or area plans and but are generally considered to be compatible with surrounding uses. The use of this property for a greenway is therefore consistent with the Plan's land use recommendation, although use of the remainder of the property for a park is not consistent, although park use is compatible with the surrounding area.

PROJECT IMPACT:

The project will allow Park & Recreation to meet its goals of increasing the amount of open space and add additional amenities available to County residents for parks, greenway and open space. The project will enhance park options for nearby residents and greenway access as well as provide on-site parking for Back Creek Greenway. Acquisition of this property will also allow the County to continue assembling parcels for future construction of this stretch of Back Creek Greenway.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS:

There are no other public or private projects being impacted by this park project.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

This project is for land acquisition only and is expected to be completed by the fall 2016.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

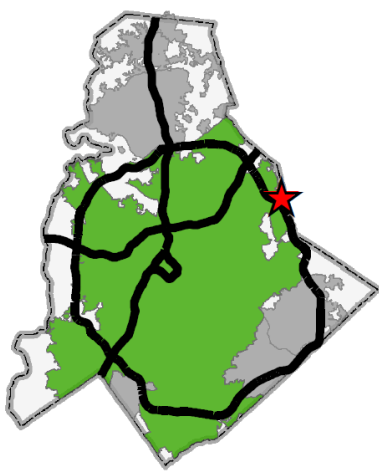
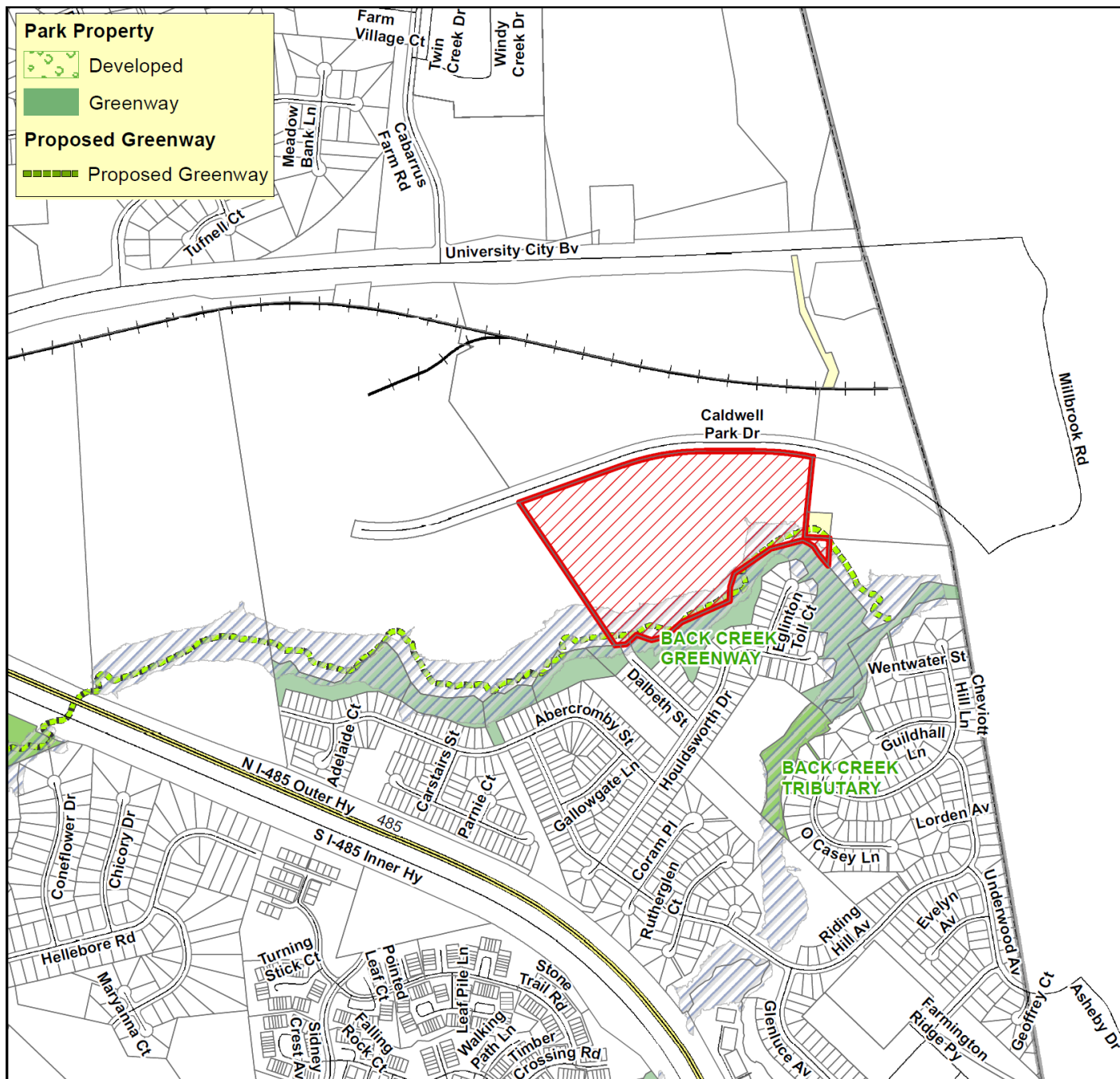
The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their June 1, 2016 meeting and provided no joint use comments, although it was noted that this parcel has limited development potential given its vehicular inaccessibility, making park development a suitable land use.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the acquisition of the property to serve as a future greenway and park.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

At their June 21, 2016 meeting the Planning Committee concurred with staff recommendation to approve by a 7-0 vote.



Mandatory Referral 16-23

Initiated by: County Park & Recreation

Submitted by: Asset & Facility Management

- Mandatory Referral
- County Property
- City Property
- FEMA 100 Year Floodplain

