

**MANDATORY REFERRAL-REPORT NO. 16-44**

**Proposed Construction of New CDL Driving Course and Lab Building on CPCC Merancas Campus**

**PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:**

Construction is proposed of a new 115,000 square foot Commercial Drivers' License (CDL) Driving Course and a 5,000 square foot one story Lab Building at the Merancas Campus utilizing 2016 Connect NC State Bonds funding. The proposed facilities would be constructed on the Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) campus located at 12332 Statesville Road at Verhoeff Drive in Huntersville. The property is comprised of 9.341 total acres and according to Huntersville Zoning Ordinance, is zoned NR (neighborhood residential), HC (highway commercial), and CI (campus institutional). The property is also adjoined by a number of commercial and institutional land uses.

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:**

CPCC has received numerous requests in recent years to implement a Commercial Drivers' License program to train students to drive commercial trucks in response to a shortage of drivers and aging out of the existing workforce. The program has been initiated but adequate facilities are needed to provide the required training. Utilization of 2016 Connect NC Bonds allows for the construction of a driving course and a modest accompanying Lab Building.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:**

The CPCC Merancas Campus currently houses many of the college's Transport Systems programs dealing with the maintenance and operation of Commercial vehicles (Collision Repair, Diesel and Heavy Equipment, Carolina CAT Service and Cummins Engines). The CDL program is a good complement to the existing curriculum programs at the campus.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:**

There is no specific Small Area Plan that covers this portion of the Town. However, the proposed development is within the existing campus, most of which is zoned CI (campus institutional). The proposed development is consistent with the intent of that zoning classification in the Zoning Ordinance which in part states that the intent of the campus institutional district is "to provide for large institutional complexes which are already in place and for new institutional complexes on 15 acres or more which, because of the scale of the buildings or the nature of the use, cannot be fully integrated into the fabric of the community. Campus districts... are buffered from neighboring properties; nonetheless, buildings in the campus district that front a town street shall relate to the street as prescribed by building type. Campus districts are intended primarily for existing institutions, as most new institutional projects can and should be designed within the fabric of the town."

**PROJECT IMPACT:**

The project will provide needed facilities for the new Commercial Drivers' License program. The large driving course will serve the program during the school day but be available for car parking on nights and weekends to serve the Town of Huntersville's adjacent recreation facilities.

Parking /Traffic Impact: The program will have a limited number of students present on the driving course and at the Lab building at any time. Truck traffic will remain primarily on the driving course but will also utilize adjacent streets. Entry drive into the site will be designed to comply with applicable regulations for location, size, configuration and sight triangles.

The project will be designed to comply with applicable zoning requirements of the Town of Huntersville. Any rezoning that may be required to develop the property will be done in accordance with the Town of Huntersville requirements.

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

The Project is workable due to an inter-local agreement between Mecklenburg County (who owned the land and transferred it to the college), the Town of Huntersville (who operates and maintains the adjacent Park and is building a new nearby Recreation Center) and CPCC (who will build new lots and permit their usage by the Town of Huntersville to serve the adjacent existing Huntersville Athletic Park, their new Recreation Center and the existing Huntersville Family Fitness and Aquatic Center.)

The college is also planning to build a new 100 space parking lot at the west side of the existing campus near the new Huntersville Recreation Center to provide needed parking for that facility (Mandatory Referral MR16-29). The college will use this lot during the school day and it will be used by the Recreation Center and Ball Fields at nights and on the weekend.

**ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:**

The new Commercial Drivers' License Driving Course and Lab Building is scheduled for completion by the end of 2017. (It is anticipated that the new 100 space parking lot on the main campus will be built concurrently.)

**JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:**

The Joint Use Task Force reviewed the matter at their November 2, 2016 meeting and no joint use comments were offered.

**TOWN OF HUNTERSVILLE PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Huntersville Planning staff recommends the construction of proposed CDL facility and lab as part of the overall *CPCC Merancas Master Plan*.

**Rationale:**

- The proposal will allow CPCC to expand its Transport Systems Curriculum.
- Town Staff will review the specific building plans to ensure it complies with town's ordinance(s).
- The town and CPCC will work together to rezone the properties as needed to allow for the construction of the proposed facilities.

**Adopted Goals and Policies:**

- The proposed plan meets the intent of the zoning district.

**CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

At their November 15, 2016 meeting the Planning Committee recommended approval by a 7-0 vote.





## Merancas Long Range Master Plan