

**MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 17-02**  
Proposed Land Exchange in West Charlotte for Stewart Creek Greenway

**PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:**

Mecklenburg County proposes a series of land exchange transactions involving three parcels in the West Morehead Street/Freedom Drive area. These parcels are described as follows:

- a 2.26-acre portion of 9.8-acre County-owned Tax Parcel 067-031-11, that is wooded, undeveloped, and zoned I-1 (industrial) according to the Charlotte Zoning Ordinance
- a 3.58-acre portion of 15.55-acre privately-owned Parcel 067-031-04, that is also vacant, wooded and zoned I-1. (The northern edge of this property is crossed by what appears to be two old and inactive railroad sidings.) Stewart Creek forms the eastern boundary of this parcel.
- a 1.90-acre portion of 3.76-acre privately-owned Parcel 067-031-03 that is partially wooded, largely vacant (except for an unimproved parking lot) and zoned B-1 (business). This parcel is bordered by an inactive railroad siding. Stewart Creek forms the western boundary of this parcel.

All three properties are located within the West Morehead/Freedom corridor that is undergoing significant commercial and residential reinvestment and redevelopment. Mecklenburg County has a significant stake in the area, given the recent and anticipated work on completing this segment of the Stewart Creek greenway. The goal of this transaction is for the County to gain easements for a future greenway trail along Stewart Creek, and for the owners of the two privately-owned parcels (described above) to gain ownership of a single contiguous parcel for a proposed mixed use or residential development.

West of Stewart Creek and fronting on Freedom Drive, the County proposes to obtain from the private owner +/- 3.58 acres of greenway easement along the tributary of Stewart Creek (on the northern edge of Parcel 067-031-04) in exchange for +/- 2.26 acres (fee simple) of adjoining County-owned Parcel 067-031-11. In addition, as part of the transaction, it is proposed that east of the creek and along the main stem of Stewart Creek (on privately-owned parcel 067-031-03), the County will purchase an easement of about 1.98 acres needed for construction of the greenway trail.

Finally, as part of this proposed arrangement, the County will obtain donation of a storm water easement along the creek (on parcels 067-031-03 and 067-031-04) for necessary creek improvements (the exact size and dimensions of this easement will be determined at a later date).

The owner of parcel 067-031-04 plans to submit a rezoning request to the City to have that parcel (and the portion of the County's Parcel 067-031-11) conveyed to him as part of this proposed transaction rezoned to either the MUDD (CD) or MUDD-O zoning category, in order to construct a proposed mixed use or residential development.

**PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:**

This project will allow the County to move forward with construction of Stewart Creek Greenway in the future and is necessary to have uninterrupted trail along the creek. Additionally, it will enable the private owner to develop additional housing along the Freedom Drive and West Morehead corridors.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:**

Acquisition of greenway land is consistent with the County's *Park & Recreation Master Plan*.

**CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:**

The *Bryant Park Land Use and Streetscape Plan* (adopted 2007) recommends Greenway and Park/Open Space land uses for these parcels. The plan also recommends Residential/Office/Retail land uses for the portion of PID# 067-031-04, that is not included as part of the land transaction, but is where the proposed mixed use development is to be developed.

**PROJECT IMPACT:**

Acceptance of this donation would allow for potential expansion of the greenway and related stream enhancements.

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

The parcels are located with the West Trade / Rozzelles Ferry Comprehensive Neighborhood Improvement Program (CNIP) area. Also, the developers of the mixed-use project on PID #067-031-04 would be requested by the City to build a road connection extending Wesley Village Road across Freedom Drive and Stewart Creek, connecting to W. Morehead Street (see attached graphic illustrating the location of the proposed road extension).

**ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:**

Acquisition of this property is expected to be complete during the spring 2017.

**JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:**

The Joint Use Task Force discussed this matter at their January 4, 2017. No joint use comments were offered, although the comment was raised if the County was aware of the City's CNIP projects in the area.

Agencies represented at the JUTF meeting: City Neighborhood & Business Services, Mecklenburg County Library, City Real Estate, County Asset Management, Charlotte Department of Transportation, CMS, City Engineering & Property Management, CATS, Town of Matthews, County Finance, Planning, County Manager's Office, County Health, City Solid Waste Services, Charlotte Mecklenburg Police.

**PLANNING STAFF REVIEW:**

Planning staff has reviewed the proposed land transactions and the proposed use is consistent with Council adopted goals and policies for this property and the area.

**Rationale:**

- The opportunity to gain the land needed for the future Stewart Creek Greenway and Camp Green connection meets the overall goals and objectives for more pedestrian and bicycle connections found in the *Bryant Park Land Use and Streetscape Plan*, as well as the strategies for the West Trade / Rozzelles Ferry CNIP.

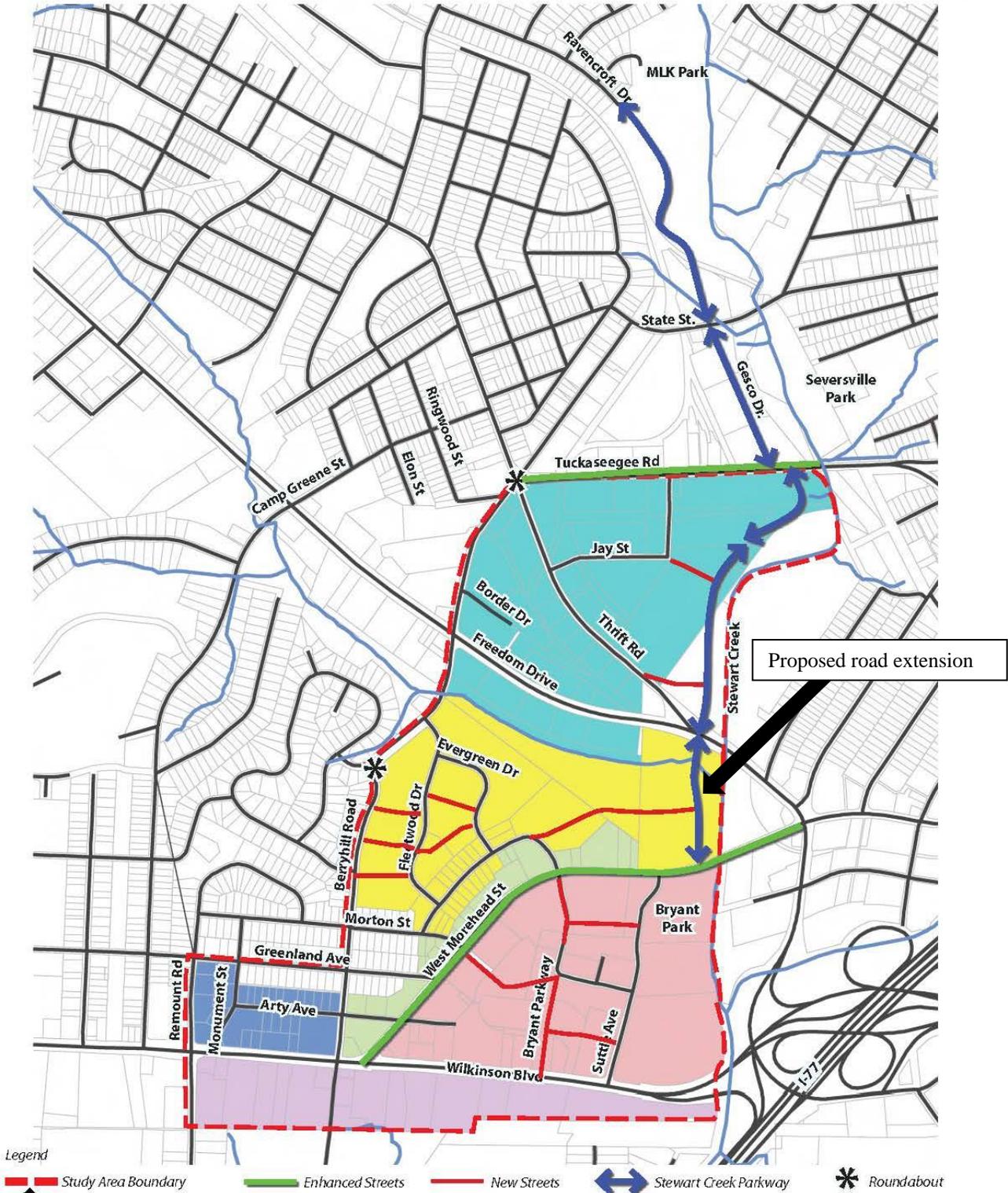
**Adopted Goals and Policies:**

- The adopted future land use for the parcels is greenway and park/open space as per the *Bryant Park Land Use and Streetscape Plan (2007)*.
- The recommended land transactions for future greenway connections helps further a number of the strategies established by the City's CNIP program for this area. The strategies include enhance the public space network, connect opportunities in the neighborhood, leverage public and private investments and help make a great community.
- The *Bryant Park Land Use and Streetscape Plan (2007)* also included a road connection through these parcels, extending Wesley Village Road across Freedom Drive to West Morehead Street (see "recommended streetscape improvements" graphic attached for more details).

**CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE REVIEW:**

At their January 17, 2017 the Planning Committee voted by a 5-0 vote that it had reviewed this Mandatory Referral and has no additional comments for the submitting agency.





Legend  
- - - Study Area Boundary      - - - Enhanced Streets      - - - New Streets      ↔ Stewart Creek Parkway      \* Roundabout



Recommended Transportation Network: Map 12

RECOMMENDED STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS