

Initiated by: Lee Jones, Park & Recreation

Submitted by: Katie Daughtry, Asset & Facility Management

Planning staff resource: Jack Simoneau, Town of Huntersville

MANDATORY REFERRAL REPORT NO. 2018-26

Title of Proposed Transaction *Auten Nature Preserve Acquisitions*

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION: The County would like to acquire tax parcels 013-024-36 (±0.234 acres), 013-024-37 (±0.237 acres), 013-024-38 (±0.234 acres), 013-024-39 (±0.286 acres) and 013-024-12 (±0.454 acres) in Huntersville to add to Auten Nature Preserve. Zoned GR General Residential District according to the Town of Huntersville Zoning Ordinance. The property is surrounded by the existing Auten Nature Preserve and is also within close proximity to McDowell Creek Greenway with the creek lying north of the property. The properties are vacant and surrounded by Auten Nature Preserve and other vacant lots.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION: As the County continues to develop, the opportunity to preserve the area's natural habitat and vegetation will become increasingly rare. Acquisition of these properties takes steps toward achieving continuous uninterrupted property ownership for the nature preserve. Park and Recreation has found that nature preserves function better with large uninterrupted stretches of property so that plant and animal life can be maintained and protected.

In addition to expanding the nature preserve, acquisition of this property contributes to the County's water quality. The property is located within the McDowell Creek Watershed, Critical Area Three and feeds into Mountain Island Lake, the County's source of drinking water. Acquisition of the property removes the risk of future development that could contribute to downgrading the area's drinking water.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

This acquisition is consistent with several Mecklenburg County adopted policies and plans such as the *Park and Recreation Master Plan*, the *Mountain Island Lake Memorandum*, the *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Water Quality Buffer Implementation Guidelines* as well as several other water improvement ordinance and floodplain development ordinances.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS:

The Huntersville 2030 Community Plan includes as a policy the support for the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment, along with its scenic and cultural assets.

PROJECT IMPACT: Acquisition of this property takes this tract out of play for future development and expands the area protected by Auten Nature Preserve.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PROJECTS: There are no known related public or private projects.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE: Acquisition of these parcels is expected to be complete in FY19.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

The Joint Use Task Force members reviewed the proposed transaction via e-mail on January 9th, 2019 and the following comments were offered:

PLANNING STAFF REVIEW:

Huntersville staff has reviewed the proposed transaction and below are their key findings:

Conclusions:

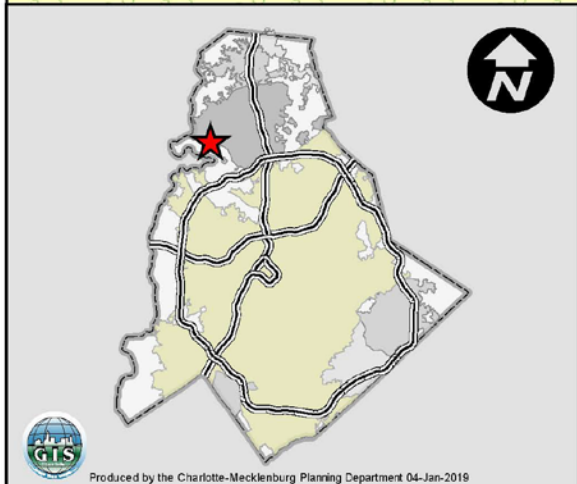
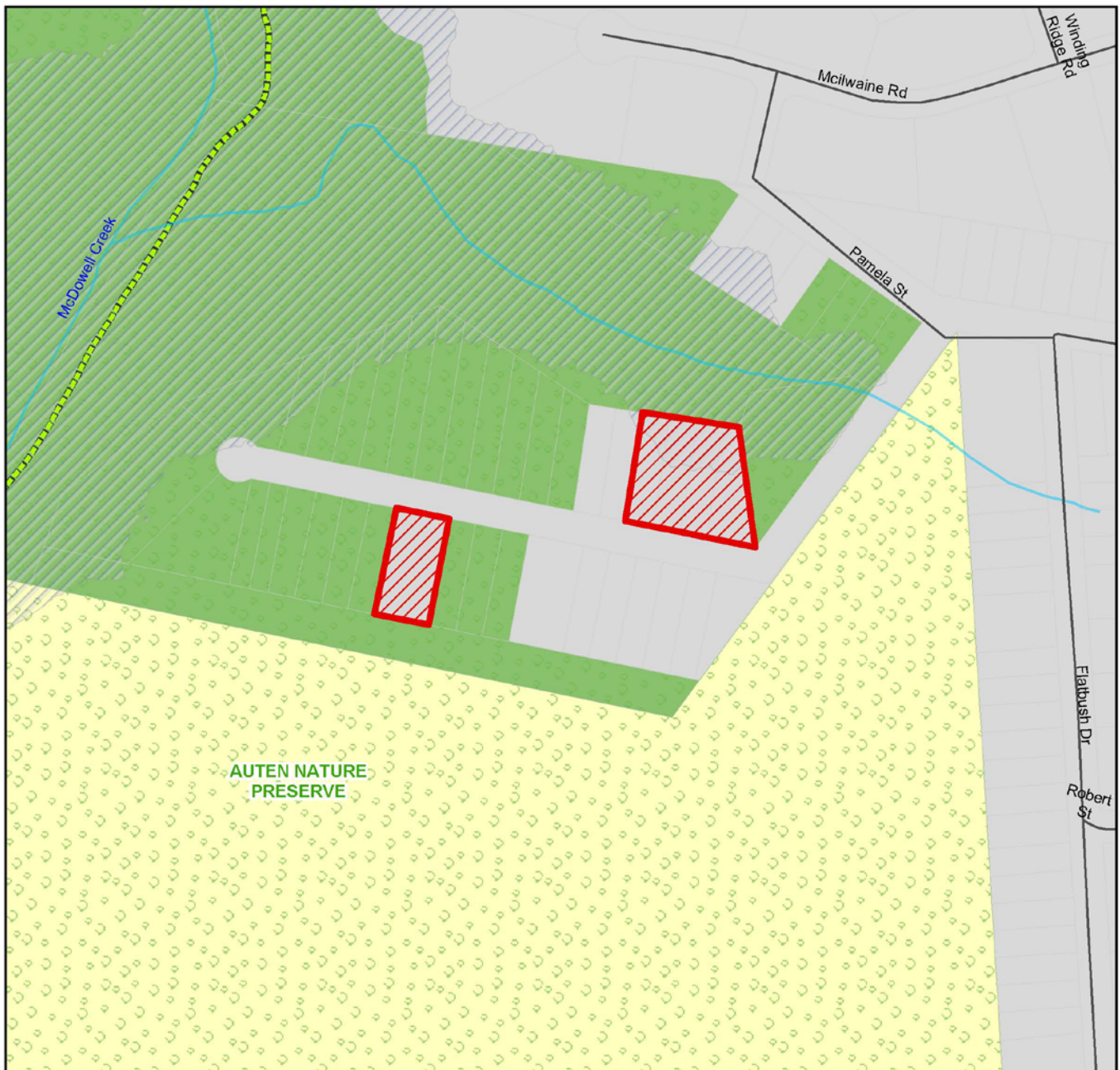
- The acquisition of these parcels for the expansion of the Auten Nature Preserve is consistent with the vision set forth in the Town of Huntersville 2030 Community Plan.

Adopted Goals and Policies:

- The expansion of the Auten Nature Preserve meets the objective of 2030 Community Plan to support the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment in the Town of Huntersville.

CMPC PLANNING COMMITTEE REVIEW:

At their January 15th, 2019 meeting, the Planning Committee reviewed the proposed acquisition and



Mandatory Referral 18-26

Initiated By: Park & Recreation

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-  Mandatory Referral
-  FEMA 100 Year Floodplain
-  County Property
-  City Property
-  Developed Park
-  Greenway - Proposed