## AGENDA

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<th>Meeting Type:</th>
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<td>Date:</td>
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City of Charlotte, City Clerk's Office
Holiday Greetings

Joint Luncheon
City Council/County Commission/Board of Education
Mecklenburg Town Mayors

December 21, 1999
12 00 Noon
Room 267, Government Center

AGENDA

City Council/County Commission/Board of Education

1 Welcome 12 00 Noon
2 Joint Planning-School Facilities Ten-Year Master Plan Proposal 12 00 – 12 30 p.m
3 Joint Land Acquisition and Management 12 30 – 1 00 p.m
4 Implications of City/County Tax Rate on School Funding 1 00 – 1 30 p.m
A Proposal for Revising and Updating the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Facilities Ten-Year Master Plan

Original Proposal Dec. 3, 1999
Revisions Proposed Dec. 14, 1999

Background

- First ten-year master plan
  - completed in November 1998
  - adopted by Board of Education in February 1999
- Updating needed because of the recent US District Court ruling
- Revision will address the need to
  - implement the new student assignment plan
  - provide geographic projections needed to support that plan
  - compare the need for new seats with the 1997 Bond additions and sites
  - develop a construction and renovation plan, especially in the inner city, to support the new assignment plan
  - coordinate the community’s CIP, including joint use and land banking objectives
Basic Areas of the Proposal

1. Lead responsibility
2. Role of the Planning Liaison Committee
3. Appointments to the Citizens Advisory Committee
4. Funding provided equally by all 3 elected bodies
5. Costs and funding of the proposal
6. Contract services to support the proposal
7. Staff resources to support the proposal
8. Time frame
9. Expected outcomes

Areas of Agreement - Part I

1. Lead responsibility - Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
2. Oversight role - Planning Liaison Committee
3. Citizens Advisory Committee
   - gives feedback to staff
   - oversees citizen involvement component
7. Staff resources
   - the staff steering committee
   - the CMS/CMPC school planning team
   - the joint use task force
Areas of Agreement - Part II

8. Time frame
- 3 elected bodies approve process in Jan./Feb. 2000
- technical data work begins ASAP
- planning process begins March 2000
- short range phase completed by June 2000
- long range master plan revision completed by Jan. 2001
- City/County review and CMS approval in Feb./Mar. 2001

Areas of Agreement - Part III

9. Outcomes
- **Short range program** for accelerated school construction & renovation (using County-authorized funds & re-allocated 1997 Bond funds) to comply with recent court ruling and the revised assignment plan
- **10 year needs assessment** identifying types, number and location of school facilities
- **10 year master plan** identifying construction, major renovation and replacement needs
- **3 year Capital Improvement Program**
- **Community planning & joint use guidelines**
Areas of Disagreement

- Composition of Citizens Advisory Committee
- CMS costs and funding for planning process
- Contract services to assist CMS
- Staff resources - town planners’ participation in the planning process
- Inner city schools’ site design guidelines

Composition and Appointment of the Citizens Advisory Committee

- Original proposal
  - 9 person committee
  - 3 each appointed by City, County and CMS
  - 1 of CMS appointees will be chair
  - choose as many members as possible from Committee of 16

- Revised proposal
  - 10 person committee
  - 3 each appointed by City and County
  - 4 appointed by CMS (including chair)
Costs and Funding

- **Original proposal - $100,000 (est.) more needed**
  - paid equally by City, County and CMS
  - specialized planning consultant services
  - technical services
  - advisory committee support
  - plan document preparation and printing

- **Revised proposal**
  - CMS has already funded these efforts
  - no additional funds needed from CMS
  - City and County may need/want to fund additional CMPC efforts

CMS & CMPC Contract Services

- **Original proposal**
  - developing data base, updating, refining enrollment & housing projections in small geographic areas
  - researching “best practices” in innovative facility design
  - devising space guidelines for interim facilities
  - advising on management capability needed to implement construction/renovation program

- **Revised proposal**
  - data base development and projections in small areas are already done or underway
  - CMS already takes advantages of sources for “best practices” in innovative facility design
  - interim facility space guidelines not needed
  - CMS employs Bovis to assist with management and implementation of construction and renovation programs
The School Planning Team

- Original proposal
  - involves CMS, CMPC and “small town” planning staffs
  - responsibilities include actual plan development, siting and programming recommendations

- Revised proposal
  - CMS and CMPC planners have primary responsibility
  - “small town” planners involved on an “as needed” and time-sensitive basis, to be determined by CMS staff

Inner City Schools’ Site Design Guidelines

- Original proposal
  - devise and implement site design guidelines
  - mandatory CMPC review of construction plans for inner city projects

- Revised proposal
  - NC Dept. of Instruction already has Facilities Guidelines for schools
  - advisory (non-binding) CMPC review of site designs in a timely manner and with “dedicated” personnel
  - additional costs associated with site or construction design changes require additional County funding
  - highest priority will be given to educational objectives and not site or construction design objectives, where the two are not consistent
**Additional Concerns**

- All non-CMS reviews and input must be sensitive to the impacts of added time and cost on the primary objective of delivering school facilities on schedule.
- CMS may need to start site selection, negotiation and acquisition of at least some future school sites before completion of the long range plan.
- Therefore, the final proposal should reflect this agreement of all elected bodies.
- Nothing in this planning process should interfere with this objective.
A Proposal for Revising and Updating the

Charlotte-Mecklenburg

School Facilities Ten-Year Master Plan

December 3, 1999

Need

The current ten-year master plan was completed in November, 1998, and adopted by the Board of Education in February, 1999. The plan is to be updated periodically but significant changes in recent months—especially the U.S. District Court ruling—require a major revision as soon as possible. This revision will address the need to:

- implement the Superintendent's proposed new student assignment plan,
- provide the detailed geographic projections necessary to support that plan,
- compare the need for new seats with the 1997 Bond additions and sites,
- develop a construction and renovation program, especially in the inner city, to support the Superintendent's plan, and
- coordinate with the community's overall capital program, including joint use and land banking objectives.

Objectives

1. In the first ninety days of this process, coordinate a short-range program—taking into account design guidelines—for getting construction and renovation of inner-city schools underway.

2. By February, 2001, revise the long-range comprehensive capital program—using new student assignment policies and updated enrollment projections.

Details

Details about process and participants begin on the next page.
1. **Lead Responsibility**
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is the lead agency responsible for developing the plan. They will be assisted by the inter-agency staff resources described below.

2. **Planning Liaison Committee Role**
The Planning Liaison Committee -- with representatives of the City Council, Board of County Commissioners, Board of Education, and Planning Commission -- will provide oversight and feedback. CMS will give update reports at each of the committee's monthly meetings. Planning Liaison members will keep their respective boards informed of the progress.

3. **Citizens Advisory Committee**
   - The charge of the advisory committee is to give feedback to the staff and oversee the citizen involvement component.
   - The committee will consist of nine (9) persons – with three persons appointed by each of the elected bodies -- Board of Education, Board of County Commissioners, and City Council.
   - The Board of Education will designate one of its appointees as the Chair.
   - It is suggested that as many members of the "Committee of 16" as possible be among the appointments, since this Committee drafted the current facilities master plan last year.

4. **Elected Bodies**
The three elected bodies will make appointments to the advisory committee, oversee the process through their representatives on the Planning Liaison committee, and each provide one-third of the total cost necessary for development of the master plan.

5. **Cost and Funding**
The preliminary estimate is $100,000. However, as project details are more fully defined in the weeks ahead, staff will need to prepare a firm cost estimate. The major cost components are:
   - specialized planning consultant services,
   - technical services (such as projections, mapping, computer time),
   - advisory committee support, and
   - plan document preparation and printing.
The final cost figure will be provided to the elected bodies in January when they consider approving this proposal. Each body will be asked to provide one-third of the total funding.

6. **Contract Services**
Staff of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission will be heavily involved in plan development. At the same time, specialized contract services will be needed for various functions (as part of the cost estimate above), for example:
   - developing the data base for the plan, including updating and refining enrollment and dwelling unit projections, and applying those projections to small geographic areas,
   - researching "best practice" information, such as innovative facility design practices,
   - assisting with specialized components, such as site design guidelines for inner city schools, or space guidelines for interim facilities that may be needed during renovation projects,
   - advising on general plan matters, such as the management capability necessary to implement the construction and renovation program, and...
• providing process support (allowing the limited staff resources to focus on plan development), including support to the advisory committee

7. Staff Resources
CMS is the lead agency and will need to commit both planning and facilities staff to the master planning process. At the same time, planning will be done collaboratively with other agencies who also serve as a source for staff assistance

• The Staff Steering Committee is a three-person group recommended by the Citizens Committee of 21 that developed the school planning model in 1997. It includes the lead Schools staff members for planning and for facilities, and a Planning Commission staff coordinator. Their primary role includes day-to-day leadership for the project.

• The School Planning Team, consisting of designated Schools and Planning Commission Staff, will be responsible for actual plan development -- including such functions as data analysis, policy development, and (together with Town Planners) siting and programming recommendations. The Schools, Planning, and Towns staff must also assure that school master planning is coordinated with broader issues of the community's capital program.

• The Joint Use Task Force is an existing inter-governmental and inter-agency staff group representing City and County departments, Schools, Planning Commission, and several other agencies, such as Central Piedmont Community College and the Charlotte Housing Authority. The Task Force would be asked to take a specific charge (perhaps through a subcommittee) to review and/or initiate joint use and land banking proposals in the plan.

8. Time Frame
The master plan process is to last one year, beginning in March, 2000. The generalized process is outlined on the next page. Key dates include

• The three elected bodies approve the process in January or February, 2000
• The planning process begins in March, 2000 (although technical data work begins earlier)
• The short-range phase will be complete in ninety days (June, 2000)
• The long-range master plan revision will be complete in January, 2001
• The elected officials will review (and the School Board will adopt) the revised plan in February and March, 2001

9. Outcomes
A) Short-Range Program, for accelerated school construction and renovation (using County-authorized funds and re-allocated 1997 Bond funds) to comply with the U.S. District Court ruling and the resulting revised school assignment plan

B) Ten-Year Needs Assessment for school facilities, identifying type, number and location

C) Ten-Year Master Plan for construction, major renovations or replacements, and interim space needs

D) Three-Year CIP (Capital Improvement Program) for funding

E) Design Guidelines, especially for inner-city school sites

F) Community Planning and Joint Use Guidelines, proposing practices to assure the coordination of school planning with other community planning and capital programming
Revision of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Facilities Master Plan
Generalized Process (Draft)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>I. Short-Range Initiative</th>
<th>II. Long-Range Plan Revision</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 1999</td>
<td>Staff Steering Committee Finalizes Process, Schedule, and Cost Estimates</td>
<td>Staff Continues Work on Data Base and Updating/Refining Projections</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2000</td>
<td>Staff Continues Work on Design Guidelines for Inner-City School Sites</td>
<td>Approval by School Board, City Council, County Commission</td>
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<td>February 2000</td>
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<td>Complete Technical Work</td>
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<td>Finalize Work Program and Contract Services</td>
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<td>March 2000</td>
<td>School Master Plan Process Begins, Citizen Advisory Committee Convenes</td>
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<td>April 2000</td>
<td>SHORT-RANGE PROGRAM INITIATIVE</td>
<td>LONG-RANGE PLAN DEVELOPMENT</td>
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<td>Design Guidelines</td>
<td>March June</td>
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<td>Inner-City Construction Program</td>
<td>Validate Existing Plan Components</td>
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<td>Guidelines for Interim Facilities</td>
<td>Define New Issues to be Addressed</td>
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<td>Renovation Work Program</td>
<td>Establish Policy Framework and Student Assignment Plan Assumptions</td>
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<td>Establish Joint Use Framework</td>
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<td>May 2000</td>
<td>Monthly Reports to Planning Liaison</td>
<td>June October</td>
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<td>Complete Needs Assessment</td>
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<td>June 2000</td>
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<td>Develop Plan for Location of Schools</td>
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<td>Citizens Advisory Committee Review</td>
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<td>July 2000</td>
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<td>Develop Phasing Plan for Construction</td>
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<td>Prepare Inventory for Renovation</td>
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<td>August 2000</td>
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<td>Link Renovation/Construction Plans</td>
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<td>Develop Financing Plan</td>
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<td>September 2000</td>
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<td>October November</td>
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<td>Prepare Annual Programs for Renovation and Construction</td>
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<td>October 2000</td>
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<td>Prepare Three-Year CIP</td>
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<td>Recommendations for School/Community Planning Coordination</td>
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<td>November 2000</td>
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Draft/December 1 1999
A Proposal for Review of Major Replacement/Renovations and Construction of Urban Schools

At the November 8 City Council Dinner meeting, Council asked staff to develop a model agreement between City, County, and Schools for all urban school sites. Staff was not able to complete the model agreement in time for discussion of the Greenville Park site at the November 22 City Council meeting. However, staff was directed to continue joint discussions using the Greenville Agreement as a model.

THE GREENVILLE AGREEMENT

The School Superintendent and the City and County Managers have agreed to recommend conveyance of City property in the Greenville neighborhood as well as the expansion of the restrictions on the Greenville Park property to include use for school purposes and enter into an agreement in accordance with the following guiding principles:

(A) Architectural Review. Review ensures compatibility with the neighborhood and that the school's design will enhance the overall aesthetic goals of the community as well as protect the City's investment in neighboring communities.

(B) Site/Layout Review. Review to ensure an urban layout that will both enhance the community as well as minimize impact on the existing neighborhood.

(C) Joint Use Agreement. Joint Use Agreement between the parties to ensure that the neighborhood and surrounding community have access to school facilities such as auditorium, parking lots, and playing fields during non-school hours and days.

(D) Understanding. Understanding between the parties to cooperate and work together in an expeditious manner in order to realize the final goal of opening the completed school in a timely fashion and within budget.

A joint staff committee (Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department, City and County Manager's Office and Charlotte Mecklenburg Planning staff) will be responsible for implementing this agreement.
Recommended principles to guide the review process for substantial replacement and/or renovation of existing school facilities and construction of new school facilities.

Architectural Review:

The purpose of the Architectural Review is to assist the Board of Education in achieving a style, character and quality of architecture design which will serve to enhance not only the function it is serving, but also the overall aesthetic goals of the neighborhood and surrounding community. The following architectural design standards are recommended:

- Create an identity element of the community that is unique yet, lasting in design
- Exterior building materials must be properly submitted in terms of high quality, type, color, texture and durability of the materials
- Reflective surfaces shall not create a public safety or nuisance problem
- Materials including exposed cinder block, pre-engineered metals installed with exposed fasteners, vinyl siding, or synthetic stucco are prohibited on any exterior wall
- All rooftop equipment and any other exterior equipment must be screened in a manner compatible with exterior building materials from adjacent side streets and sidewalks
- The facility must take advantage of its location and provide openings windows, doors, and access/egress toward significant views and to the neighborhood
- Pitch roofs are preferred. Long expanses of unrelieved roofs should be punctuated with dormers or other architectural elements
- There should be a single clearly identifiable front entrance, which is visible and physically accessible from the principle street of access
- Parking, service areas, and bus staging areas should not be sited between the street and the front entrance
- Interior spaces must be designed to contain large volumes of natural light
- Windows, doors and other openings should be designed to allow views from rooms to public areas, from administrative areas to public areas, from public areas to other public areas, and from the building to use areas outside the building
Site/Layout Review:

The purpose of the Site/Layout Review is to ensure an urban design that will both enhance the neighborhood as well as minimize the impact on the existing fabric of the neighborhood. An appropriate site design plan for the development of a school would address the following site layout guidelines:

- Building Placement (Relationship to the street and abutting uses)
- Building Massing (Scale to use, Relationship to site and location)
- Access to the site (Auto, Transit, and Pedestrian)
- Buffering and Screening (Location, Type of materials, Height and Opaqueness)
- Neighborhood Connectivity (Vehicle and Pedestrian)
- Parking Areas (Location, Size, Adjacent uses, Layout, and Access/Egress)
- Play Fields
- Lighting (Use, Security, Location, and Design of fixtures)
- Community Space Accessibility (Meeting Rooms, Library, Auditorium, etc)
- Co-location/joint use
- Infrastructure Improvements (Storm Water, Streets, Water and Sewer)

Joint Use Agreement

The purpose of the agreement is to ensure that the neighborhood and surrounding community have access to the school during non-school hours and days. The agreement would set forth such rules, regulations, and procedures as may necessary or appropriate to govern the use and operation of the facility, including such matters as the following:

- Hours of Use
- Access
- Building Systems
- Housekeeping
TO: Board of County Commissioners  
FROM: Darrel Williams, County Commissioner  
DATE: March 15, 1999  
SUBJECT: Public Lands Acquisition and Management Strategy (PLAMS)

Recently I have been seeking feedback from staff and various City, Schools, Chamber, and community representatives on the urgent need to acquire land now for public purposes. Whether it is schools, parks, libraries, transit, protecting our drinking water, preserving open space, greenways, bikeways, wetlands and creek protection, preserving rural farm land or other needs, it is absolutely essential that, if we are serious about Smart Growth, we must do this in a more systematic process now.

As a result of these discussions, I recommend that the Board proceed along two tracks for a more aggressive and collaborative approach regarding a Public Land Acquisition and Management Strategy.

Over the next few months, there are steps that can be taken to change the process for conducting negotiations and handling the mechanics of acquiring land. Additionally, the Board can be working with the other agencies that participate in the County’s bond referenda and the Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee to decide how to approach landbanking for the November 1999 ballot. Work should begin immediately on these issues.

In the long run, more time is needed for discussion and public input, particularly with the Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee, the Board of Education, and the Boards of Trustees of the other agencies, to determine a strategy for the future and the legislative changes that may be needed to achieve these long-term goals. I recommend that the Board decide how it would like to begin these discussions.

I am convinced that with the aggressive development and appreciation of land throughout the County, if we miss this opportunity to acquire the public land necessary to properly implement the 2015 Plan, we will never see the opportunity again. I am looking forward to your discussion and approval. If you have questions, please advise.

DW is

Attachment
THE PUBLIC LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (PLAMS)

Presented by Commissioner Darrel Williams

The Need for Open Space Preservation and Land Banking

Over the past twenty years Mecklenburg County has experienced significant economic and commercial development. The development of the county is expected to continue at a significant rate over the course of the next twenty years. While the creation of jobs and opportunity has its benefits, the protection of open spaces, the development of greenway systems, protection of drinking water supplies, preservation of wildlife habitats, saving farm land and also protecting land for recreation and educational purposes has become critical. Major urban areas that preserve a high quality of life for their citizens will be those that, among other things, preserve open spaces and manage their land resources effectively.

Across the United States communities are taking steps to preserve open space and be more proactive in their efforts to develop land banking programs. While no clear pattern or set approach has been developed that fits any and all communities, efforts have been made by numerous communities to adopt such programs in ways that best fit the needs of the community and work with existing governmental structures.

Cook County in Illinois, which includes Chicago, established Forest District Preserves as early as 1914. Today, even after the tremendous growth of Chicago, the Forest Preserve encompasses more than 67,700 acres, or approximately 11 percent of the land in Cook County. In San Francisco the "Greenbelt Alliance was formed in 1958 to protect the open spaces on the outerbelts of San Francisco. Their efforts are mirrored across the United States in Portland, whose citizens passed a $135 bond issue in 1995 to protect open spaces, Minneapolis, Dade County, Austin and Jacksonville. The Jacksonville initiative named the Preservation Project, was announced in January of 1999 and calls for a $312.8 million plan to protect 10-20 square miles of land in Duval County.

In Mecklenburg County the relationships of our land needs are diagrammatically outlined in Exhibit 1. As Mecklenburg County becomes increasingly urbanized, the ability to purchase land will diminish and the demand for open space will never be satisfied. Remember, once land is developed it is lost as open space for future generations. There is a clear relationship between the needs of each of the county’s agencies, transit development and open space protection. For the size of the community, Charlotte/Mecklenburg County is already well behind other similar sized communities in terms of dedicated open space per citizen.
As part of any **Smart Growth** plan, Mecklenburg County needs to begin a concerted effort to protect open space and develop a land bank program that will ensure that the needs of the citizens can be met in the future. It is with these needs in mind that I recommend the creation of a Public Lands Acquisition and Management Strategy (PLAMS) to coordinate the County’s land acquisition needs and to work as a clearinghouse for information on land management in the county.

**The Goal of the Public Lands Acquisition and Management Strategy**

The goal of the Public Lands Acquisition and Management Strategy is to ensure that Mecklenburg County adopts an efficient, orderly and proactive approach to meeting the needs for public lands through land banking. It will provide for the protection of open space and recreation, schools and other land-intensive public services needs. Also, it will protect and enhance the quality of life and livability of Mecklenburg County.

**The Benefits of a Public Lands Acquisition and Management Strategy**

- The County can protect land to meet its future needs. Once land is developed, it is lost as open space for future generations. As Mecklenburg County becomes totally urbanized, the need for park land and open space will not diminish.

- With greater coordination, the County can acquire land more aggressively and use resources more effectively.

- As Mecklenburg County develops its transit plan, a coordinated land banking effort can link greenways, open spaces, schools and parks to the transit system.

- As development reaches the outer limits of the county, the PLAMS will be in a stronger position to influence development if it owns open space land in the vicinity.

- Mecklenburg County will be in a stronger position to leverage State and Federal matching funds for land acquisition. Such initiatives as the Lands Legacy Plan and Better America Bonds are examples of funds that could be made more available if the County were to adopt such a plan as PLAMS.

- Mecklenburg County will also be able to coordinate efforts and work more effectively with private and public land trusts if it has a clearinghouse for land management such as the PLAMS.

- The PLAMS can also act as the clearinghouse for donated land from individuals and developers.
The Current Process

County departments and other agencies that participate in the County’s bond referenda (Library, Historic Landmarks Schools, CPCC WTVI) develop master plans, identify and acquire sites, and manage facilities. Coordination takes place in two forms.

First, the Engineering and Building Standards Department provides a centralized service for County departments (except Park and Recreation) for developing master plans, identifying and acquiring sites, maintaining a GIS-based inventory and mapping system, and receiving information on property that is for sale in the community and on offers to purchase County-owned property. Because of the volume of land acquired and managed the Park and Recreation Department performs these functions for the land it manages, coordinating closely with Engineering and Building Standards to ensure that County records remain complete and updated.

The second coordination initiative involves all of the entities that participate in the County and City bond referenda. The staff of these agencies and County and City departments, plus the Towns, are members of the Joint Planning and Use Staff Task Force, which coordinates planning, acquisition, and use of land and facilities among all of these entities. Each entity, however, remains individually accountable for planning, acquiring, and managing land.

The Creation of a Public Lands Acquisition and Management Strategy in Mecklenburg County

As a first step that could begin immediately, I recommend that the Board consider centralizing the real estate negotiation and acquisition process for the entities that participate in its bond referenda process (i.e., County departments, Library, Historic Landmarks, Schools, CPCC, WTVI). Under this proposal, the individual departments and agencies and their respective advisory or elected bodies would retain responsibility for developing master plans, identifying potential sites that meet the master plan criteria, approving actual sites for acquisition, and managing the land and facilities. These functions would be centralized (see Exhibit 2)

- Maintaining a GIS-based inventory and mapping of all property owned by these entities,
- Compiling the approved master plans to identify future land needs on either an individual or joint basis,
- Negotiating through real estate professionals on staff or on a contract basis for sites identified by the respective entities for potential acquisition,
- Handling the mechanics of the acquisition process, such as obtaining appraisals and surveys, preparing offers to purchase and sell, preparing documents and conducting real estate closings, recording deeds.
• Serving as a centralized referral and repository of real property offers and other related information,

• Managing the land being held for land banking purposes

• Analyzing the need to continue public ownership and carry out a disposal function

Under this approach, the County would add resources to the centralized function. Staff in other departments and agencies would be freed from these tasks to devote more time to identifying potential sites and to perform other critical duties. By having dedicated resources for negotiations, land could potentially be acquired more quickly than through the current process in which negotiations must be worked in with other high priority tasks.

The Funding of the Public Lands Acquisition and Management Strategy

There are many needs facing the county. There are no easy answers to the development of the county and how best to manage that growth. Also, there are no easy options to pay for managing that growth and also meet the needs and demands of citizens of the county in the years to come. Schools will still be needed and so will the demand for active and passive recreational facilities.

In Mecklenburg County we have county agencies that have significant land acquisition needs over the course of the next ten years. If we defer purchasing of land, the cost will increase and the amount of land available will decrease.

How do we finance such a program as the PLAMS? Ideally, the best form of financing is a “pay-as-you-go” scheme that does not add to the debt service of the County and does not burden future generations with debt. However, time is critical and financing land acquisitions through a General Obligation Bond is a sound form of financing.

I recommend that the County place bond referenda on the November 1999 ballot to protect open space and develop plans for a land banking plan covering the next ten years. The Board of County Commissioners should work with the Board of Education and the Boards of Trustees of the other agencies on how to reflect these requests in the November 1999 referenda. Additionally, the Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee should be asked for advice on this issue. It is critical that Mecklenburg County develops the ability to purchase land now and not wait until the 2001 bond cycle. Prime land will have disappeared and we will be further behind in meeting the needs of the citizens.

As a longer range step, I recommend that the County begin working with these other agencies on any legislative initiatives that might be necessary to authorize the County to use one referendum to provide land banking for all needs.
Looking Toward the Future for Our Region

Once the PLAMS model is working for entities that participate in the County's bond referenda, I recommend that the County and City work together to consolidate the programs of both of these jurisdictions.

As Mecklenburg County reaches a level of total urbanization in the early part of the twenty-first century and development pressures grow in the surrounding counties, the Public Lands Acquisition and Management Strategy can serve as the backbone of a regional approach to land management. It will develop the expertise and networks to ensure that the land is protected for the public benefit.

When the civic leaders of Cook County designated the Forest Preserves in 1914, they left a legacy from which future generations will benefit. In Mecklenburg County the time for leaving our open space legacy for future generations is now while the land is still available and still affordable.
Public Lands Acquisition and Management Strategy

Exhibit 1: Relationships Between Public Lands

Benefits of a unified approach for public lands:
- Protect land for future use
- Better coordination and utilization of funds
- Connectivity
- Encourage “Smart Growth” development initiatives
- Leverage state and federal funds
- Work more effectively with public and private land trusts
- Serve as a clearinghouse for donated land
# LANDS ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

## Individual Departments and Agencies and Their Respective Advisory or Elected Bodies

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Departments and Agencies and Their Respective Advisory or Elected Bodies</th>
<th>Centralized Support</th>
<th>Other Advisory or Staff Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development of Master Plans</td>
<td>GIS Inventory &amp; Mapping of Property</td>
<td>Planning Commission performs Mandatory Referral Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification of Potential Sites</td>
<td>Compilation of Master Plans to Identify Potential Future Land Needs</td>
<td>Planning Liaison Committee Oversees Capital Programs of County, City, and Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approval of Sites for Acquisition</td>
<td>Negotiations for Identified Sites*</td>
<td>Joint Planning &amp; Use Staff Task Force Staff Group Representing All Departments &amp; Agencies on County &amp; City Referenda to Coordinate Planning, Joint Use, Site Identification, etc</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilities Management</td>
<td>Acquisition Process Mechanics* Appraisals, Document Preparation, Closings, etc</td>
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<td>Centralized Referral and Repository of Real Property Offers and Other Info</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Management of land held for land banking</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Analysis of need for continued public ownership and disposal of surplus real property</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Represents a new centralized function