

Planning Committee

Agenda Packet

June 18, 2024 |
Room 280
5:00 p.m.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

Planning Committee Meeting Agenda

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center, Room 280
June 18, 2024 | 5 p.m.

1. **Call to Order and Introductions**

2. **Approval of the May 21, 2024 Minutes. Attachment 1**

3. **M.R. #24-21** | The City of Charlotte proposes to acquire tax parcel 18926190 located on Thermal Road in the Charlotte, totaling approximately 3.51 acres for tree canopy preservation purposes. **Attachment 2.**
Staff Resource: Jason Pauling, Planning
 Tara Moore, Planning

4. **M.R. #24-22** | The Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority (CRVA), working through the City of Charlotte Economic Development, seeks to acquire a 0.7-acre portion of 401 South College Street (PID #12507108) in exchange for 1.9 acres of 501 South Caldwell Street (PID #12506201) to develop a Convention Center Plaza + reserve sites for a future hotel use. **Attachment 3.**
Staff Resource: Jason Pauling, Planning
 Todd DeLong + Liliias Folkes John, City of Charlotte Economic
 Development

5. **Innovation Engines + CLEANcarolinas: An overview of the National Science Foundation's Innovation Engines program (30 minutes)**
Staff Resource: Carolyn Keith, UNC Charlotte
 Mike Mazzola, UNC Charlotte

6. **Planning Academies Update (20 minutes)**
Resource: Maria Floren, Planning

7. **Adjournment**

Attendance

Planning Committee Members Present: Chairperson Andrew Blumenthal; and Commissioners Melissa Gaston, Ronnie Harvey, Theresa McDonald, Erin Shaw, and Robin Stuart

Planning Committee Members Absent: Vice Chairperson Courtney Rhodes

Planning Staff Present: Kathy Cornett, Zenia Duhaney, Erin Hinson, Monica Holmes, Tara Moore, and Jason Pauling

Other Staff: Bethany Fritts, Mecklenburg County Asset & Facility Management,

Presenters: Brian Nadolny, Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS), and Jim Fatula, Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS)

Round Table Participants: Greg Ascitutto, CharlotteEAST and Andrea Uhler, UDO Advisory Committee

Welcome and Introduction

Chairperson Blumenthal called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m., welcomed everyone, and introduced each commissioner and staff member.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Gaston seconded by Commissioner Shaw to approve the April 16, 2024, minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved. 6-0

Mandatory Referrals

M.R. #24-17 | General Services proposes to acquire two parcels totaling approximately 6.35 acres (PID #s 113-251-53 + 113-251-54) for tree canopy preservation. The properties are located on Windy Grove Road.

M.R. #24-18 | General Services proposes to acquire four parcels totaling approximately 1.259 acres (PID #s 113-163-01, 113-163-02, 113-163-03, 113-163-04) located on Brenda Ann Road, for tree canopy preservation.

M.R. #24-19 | Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation proposes to acquire approximately 73.55 acres (PID #s 139-241-19, 139-262-54, 139-262-32 + a portion of 139-262-33) located in Mint Hill on Surrey Road, adjacent to existing County owned Clear Creek Undeveloped Park.

M.R. #24-20 | Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation proposes to acquire approximately 0.90 acres (a portion of PID #12907507) located at 1110 Morningside Drive for a greenway extension.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gaston and seconded by Commissioner Harvey stating that the Planning Committee reviewed M.R. #24-17, M.R. #24-18, M.R. #24-19, and M.R. #24-20. on May 21, 2024, and has no additional comments for the submitting agencies. The motion was approved. 6-0

CATS Red Line Studies Update - Brian Nadolny, Senior Project Manager CATS presented an overview of the 25-mile Red Line commuter rail project that utilizes Norfolk Southern's existing rail network. He talked about the origins of the plan, Norfolk Southern's rail policy and its effects on planning, and the project's progress. Following several questions by commissioners, Chairperson Blumenthal asked that the presentation be shared with them.

CATS Gold Line Presentation Studies Update

Jim Fatula, Project Manager, Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) provided an overview of the Gold Line Extension. He provided background information regarding the Corridor System Plan. Phase 1 began in 2015 and most recently Phase 2 in 2021. CATS is currently working on an extension study. Mr. Fatula also shared the Gold Line's Extension timeline. Next steps in the process includes analyses of the population and demographics, alternatives along the corridor, a public meeting in 2024, incorporating public feedback into the design and utilizing sophisticated modeling programs. Commissioners asked several questions during the presentation that led to further discussion.

Neighborhood Roundtable Discussion on the UDO

Commissioners held a robust roundtable discussion about the UDO and the community understanding the processes. Guests and commissioners introduced themselves and provided background information. In their service to their neighborhoods and communities, each expressed concern about the amount of information being shared with the public. One concern revolves around information overload as it relates to the different city initiatives. Information received by citizens maybe overwhelming rather than not being understood. Within the group, there was consensus regarding the need to simplify the language used to inform the public. How do we help streamline the messaging and how do we help prioritize the community's concerns. Communicating with the public should include language in layman's terms rather than technical jargon utilized in the planning world. Throughout the discussion, all agreed to continue to work together on uplifting their communities to help drive understanding as it relates to the UDO and other key city initiatives. After additional discussion that included discussing the rezoning alignment process, the policy map comment period and next steps, and appreciation for how transparent the conversations have been, the meeting adjourned.

Resource:

Greg Ascitutto, CharlotteEAST
Melissa Gaston, Planning Committee
Theresa McDonald, Planning Committee

R.J. Harvey, Planning Committee
Andrea Uhlir, UDO Advisory Committee

Adjournment: 6:57pm

MANDATORY REFERRAL | REPORT NO. 24-21

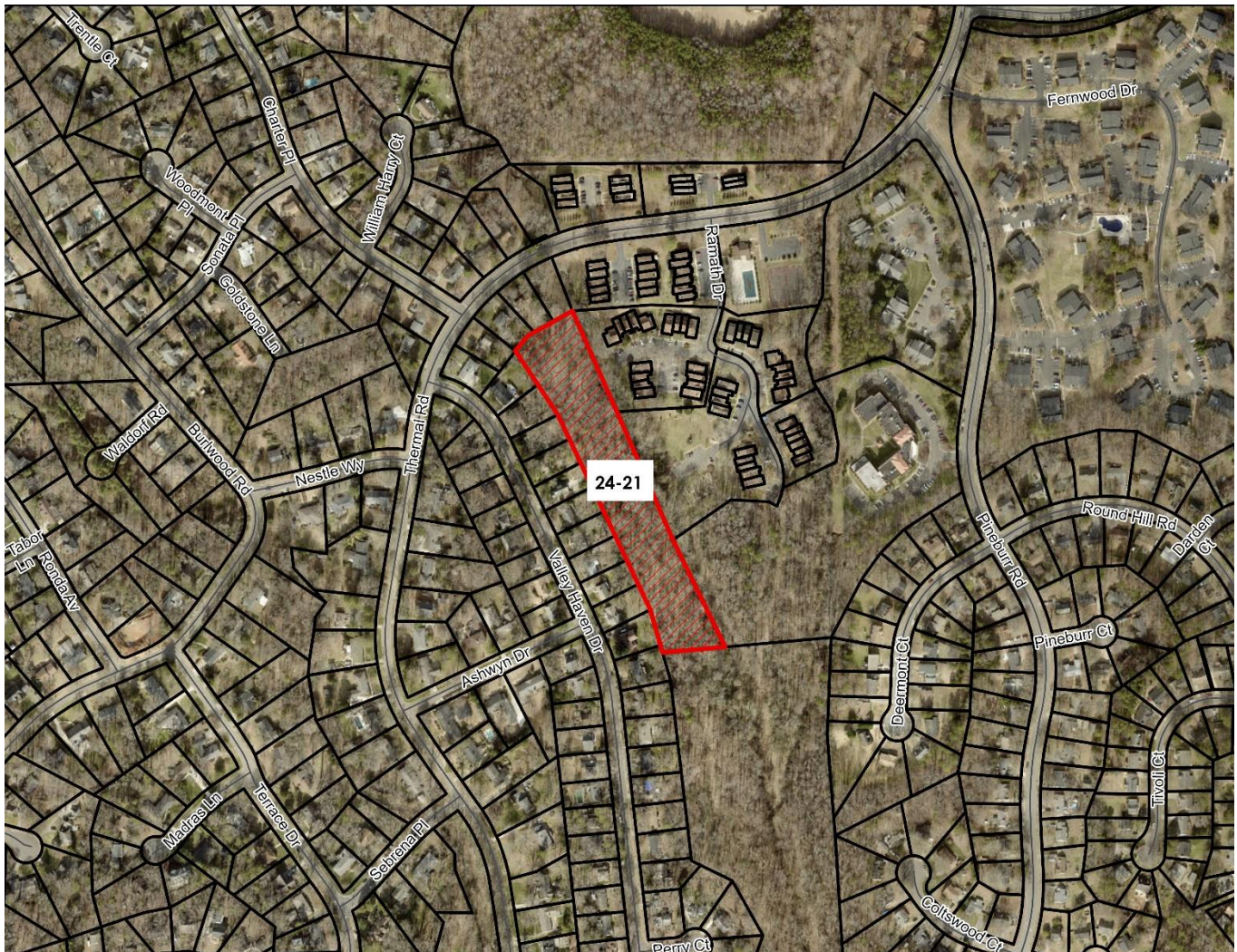
Proposal to acquire property for tree preservation and protection purposes

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

The City of Charlotte's Planning Department proposes to acquire one, 3.51-acre parcel (18926190) located on Thermal Road for tree canopy preservation.

Following acquisition of this property, the City anticipates securing a declaration of conservation to ensure that perpetual stewardship of the tree canopy is provided. This property is proposed to remain in a natural state following the acquisition and may be used for passive recreational purposes such as trails and/or open space.

AERIAL MAP:

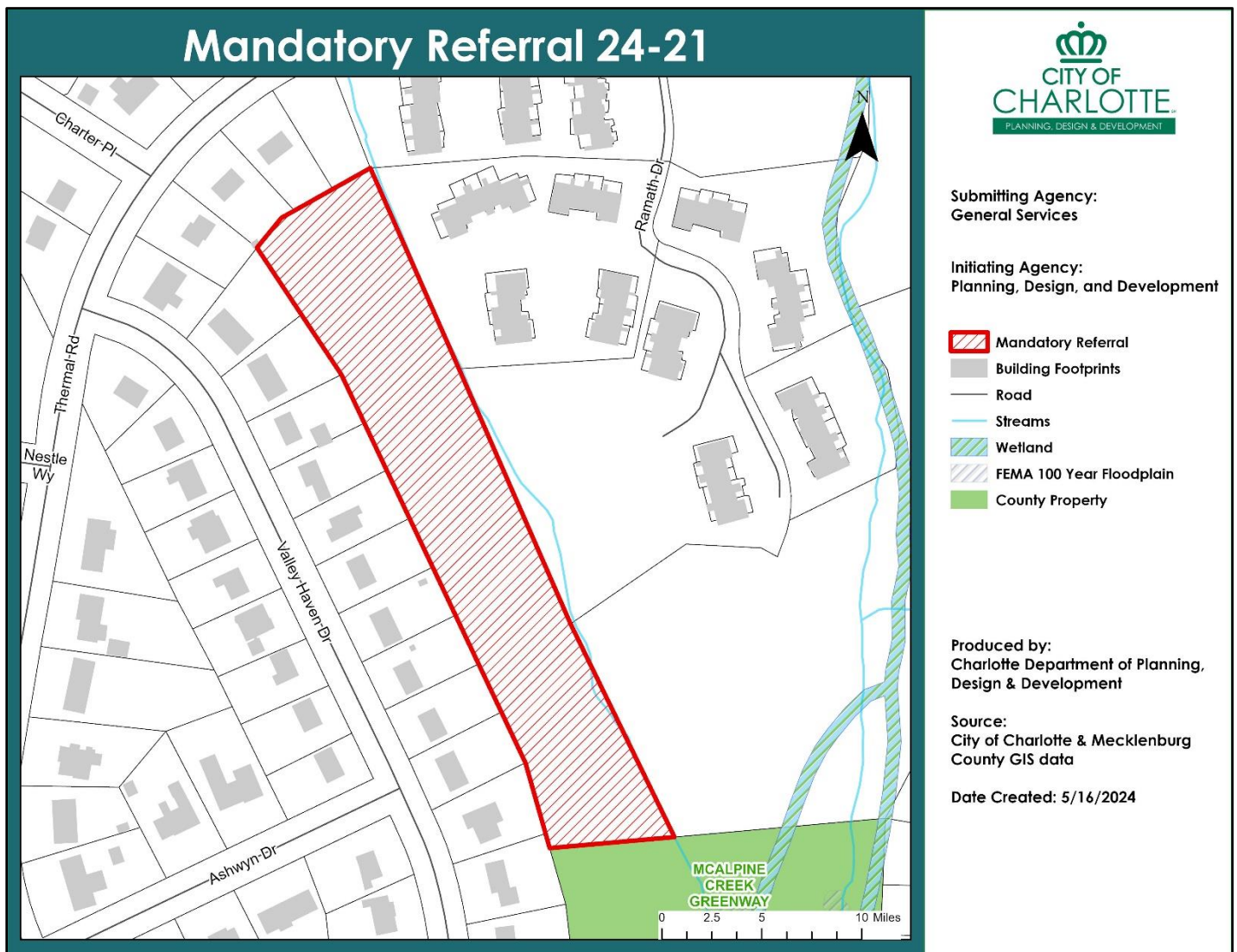


MANDATORY REFERRAL | REPORT NO. 24-21

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

The acquisition of this property will enable the City to work toward reaching Charlotte City Council’s goal of attaining fifty percent tree canopy coverage city-wide by 2050 through the preservation of forested properties in developing areas. This acquisition allows the City, as required by the Charlotte Tree Ordinance, to fulfill its role as administrator of a Tree Ordinance Mitigation Fund and to meet the greater intent of the tree ordinance to preserve and protect tree canopy and promote the benefits trees provided to the Charlotte community. This property was identified and considered under the City’s scoring model for tree canopy preservation and was determined to be a good candidate for preservation due to its conservation value, native species diversity, and connectivity with other county-owned forested parcels. This model uses criteria including acreage, current vegetative cover, and potential for connectivity to greenways and partnering opportunities, as well as the level of development in the general geographic area.

PROJECT MAP:



PROJECT IMPACT:

Acquisition will enable the City to work toward reaching the goal of attaining fifty (50%) percent tree canopy coverage city-wide by 2050 through the preservation of forested properties in developing areas.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

Staff is in negotiations with the property owner. Acquisition of this parcel is anticipated within three to four months of entering a contract and obtaining City Council approval.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

The acquisition of this property is consistent with the tree canopy and general environmental goals associated with the City of Charlotte’s Tree Canopy Preservation Program, City Council’s “50% in 2050” Tree Canopy Goal strategy (both adopted in 2011), and Urban Forest Master Plan (adopted 2018) and the Charlotte Future 2040 Plan (adopted 2021).

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS

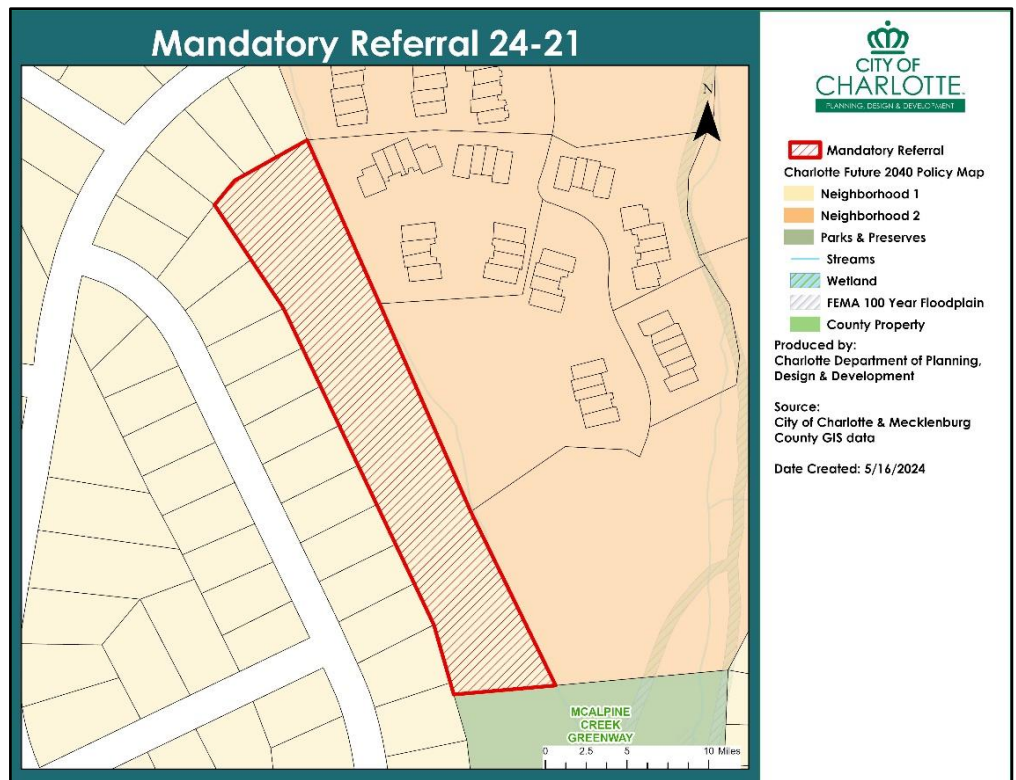
The City of Charlotte 2040 Policy Map designates the subject property as Neighborhood 1. Parks and Preserves are an appropriate land use within the N1 Place Type. Once a conservation designation is established, an amendment to the Policy Map to Parks and Preserves would be processed.

PLANNING STAFF REVIEW:

The acquisition of this property supports the Tree Canopy Preservation and Protection Divisions goals for 50% tree preservation and supports Goals 6 and 7 of the Charlotte 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

Tera Moore informed the group that this property is being sold under tax value for tree preservation and will have a stormwater component on the lot. Ms. Moore also mentioned that they are looking to obtain another



property in the area for an access easement to the property. Jason Pauling mentioned the opportunity for greenway connectivity to the south McAlpine Creek Greenway.

PLANNING COMMITTEE REVIEW:

MANDATORY REFERRAL | REPORT NO. 24-22

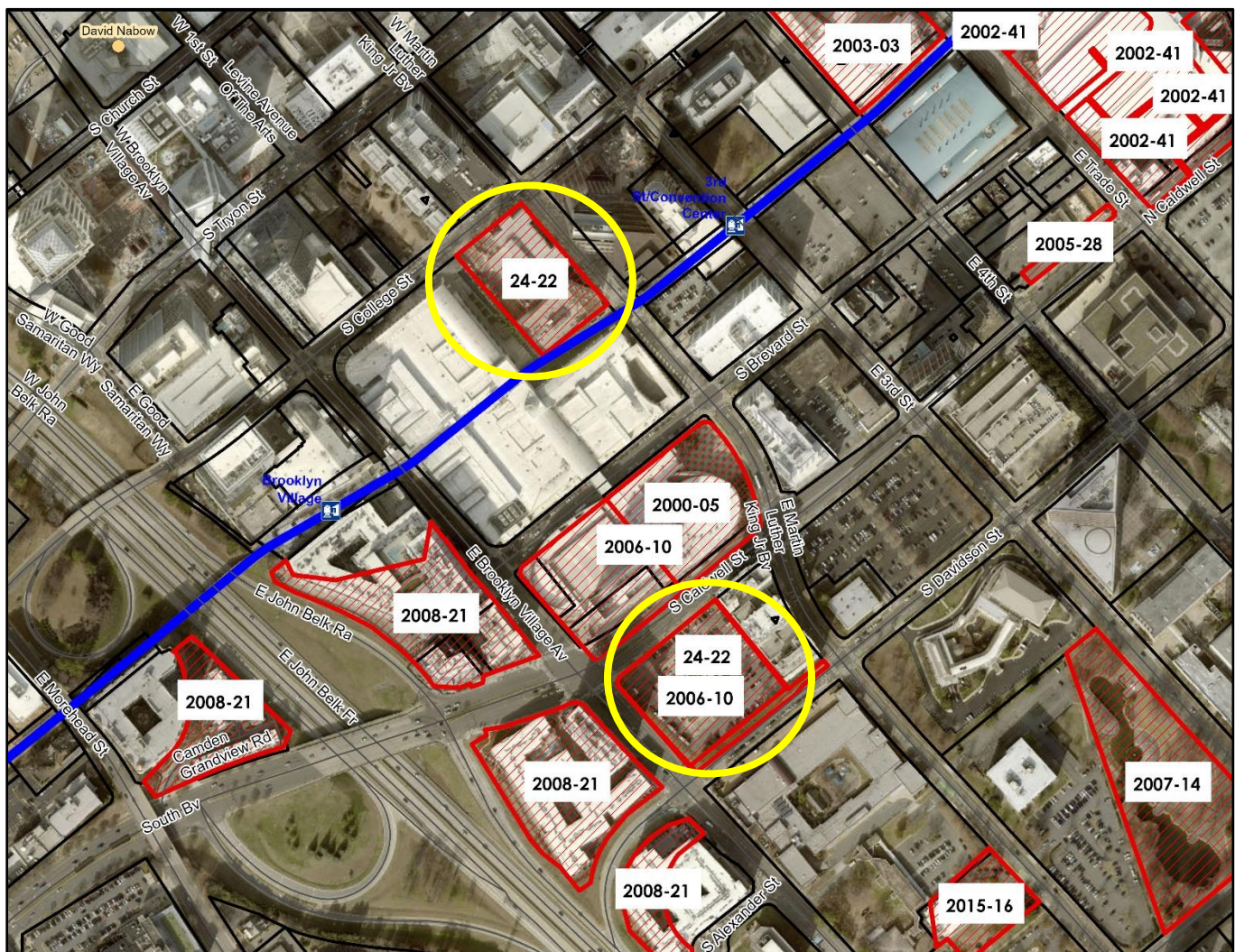
Proposal to exchange properties to develop a Convention Center Plaza, and reserve sites for hotel use

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND LOCATION:

This request involves properties located at 401 South College Street (Parcel ID: 12507108) and 501 South Caldwell Street (Parcel ID: 12506201) located in uptown Charlotte. The City of Charlotte purchased the Caldwell Street property in 1998 for uses supporting the Convention Center. The property at the corner of South College Street and East Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard adjacent to the Charlotte Convention Center is currently under contract to be purchased for private development.

The Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority, working through Economic Development, is interested in acquiring a 0.7-acre portion of the College Street property in exchange for 1.9 acres of the Caldwell Street property. Both properties are currently zoned Urban Mixed-Use (UMUD) and located in Council District 1.

AERIAL MAPS:



AERIAL MAPS (CONT.):

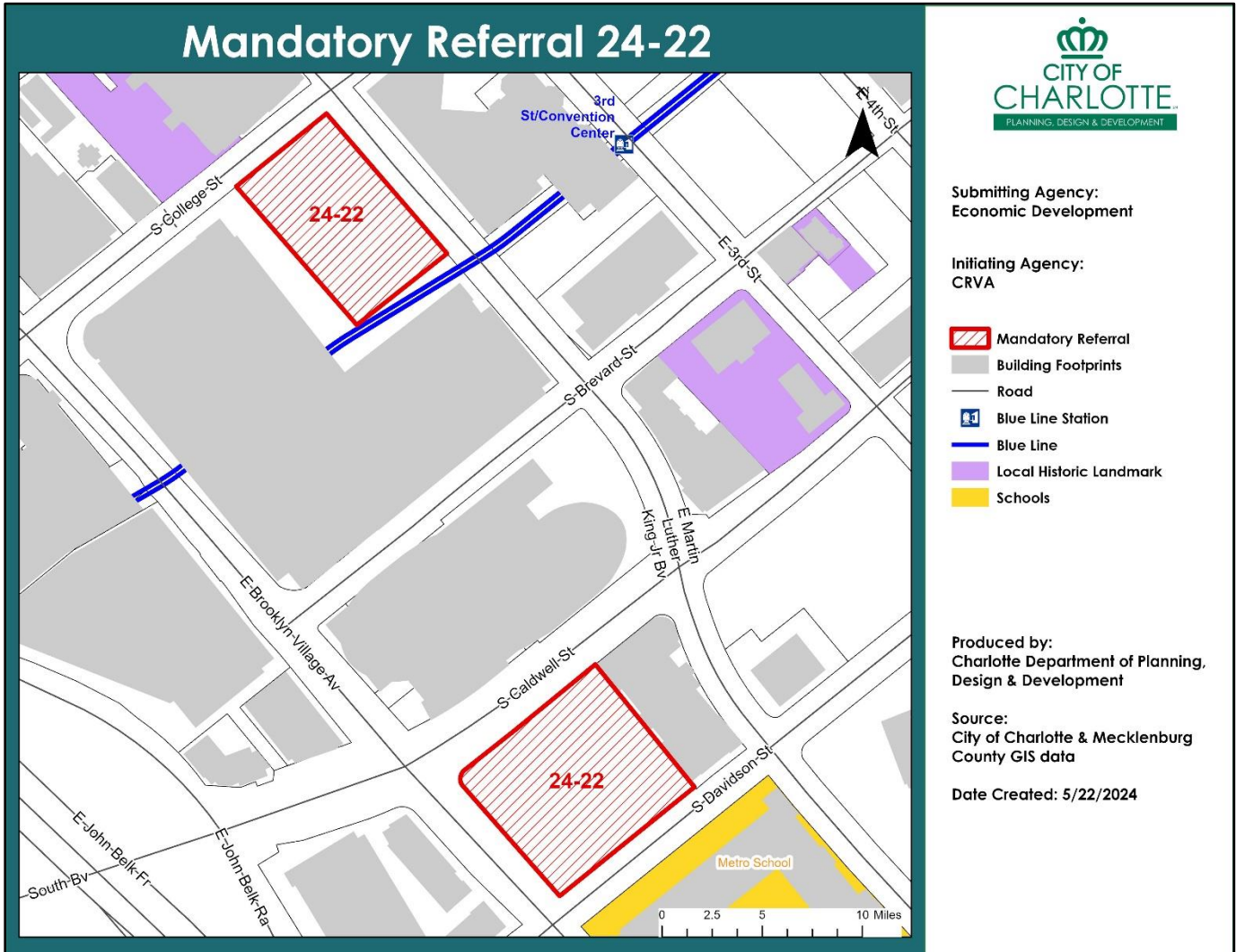


MANDATORY REFERRAL | REPORT NO. 24-22

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION:

The Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority seeks to provide the city and the CRVA with two sites for future hotel use, and to develop a plaza for the Charlotte Convention Center at the corner of South College Street and Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard (0.7 acres). The plaza will include landscaping, seating areas, and public facilities developed in conjunction with the hotel project within an exclusive temporary construction easement.

PROJECT MAP:



PROJECT IMPACT:

This proposal will have a positive impact on the community and area by providing the city and the CRVA with two sites for future hotels, and by developing a dynamic plaza space that can function as an additional amenity for the Convention Center, and for the Brooklyn Village neighborhood.

MANDATORY REFERRAL | REPORT NO. 24-22

ESTIMATED PROJECT COMPLETION DATE:

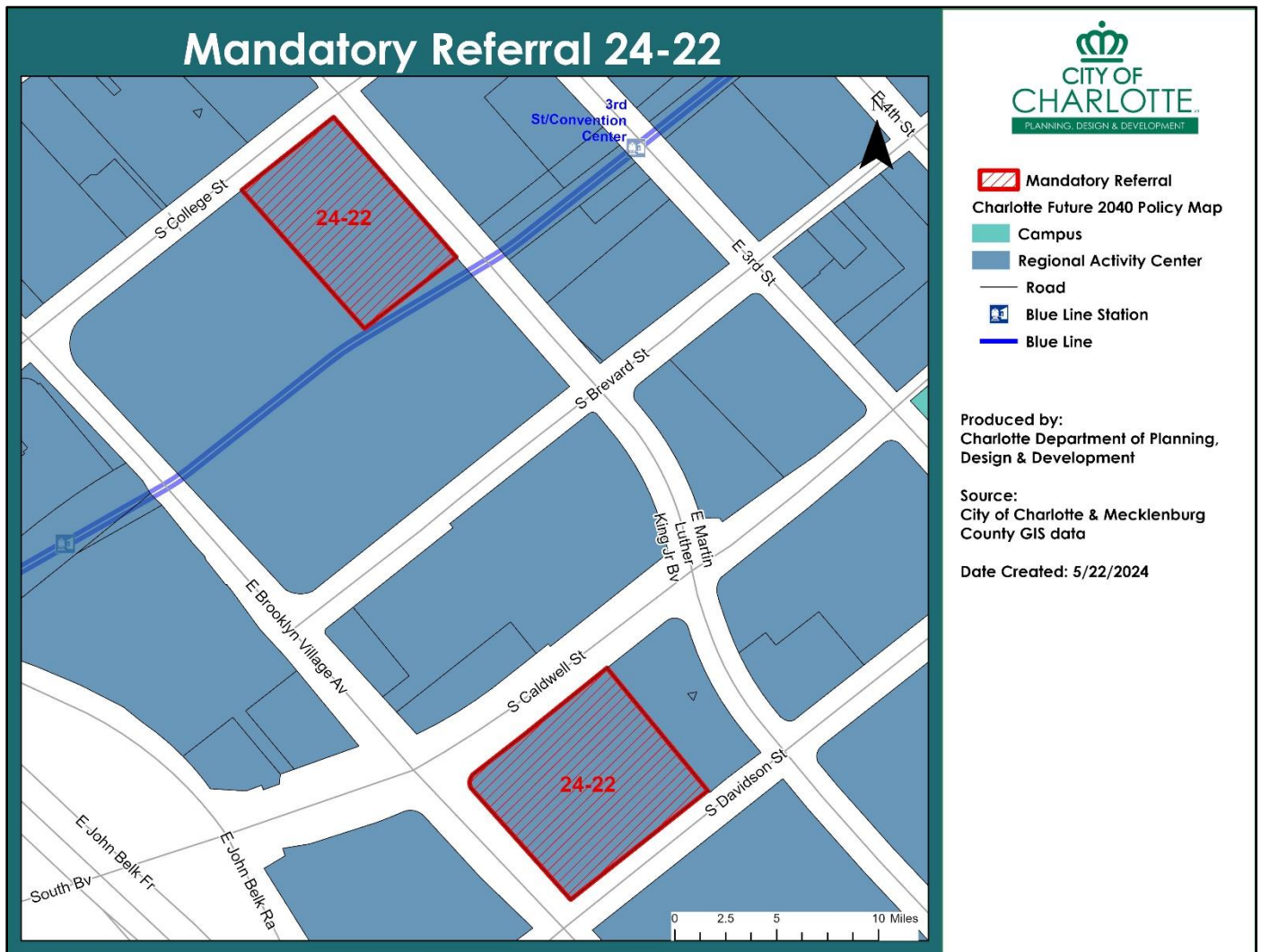
The final design of the Convention Center Plaza will be subject to approval by the city and CRVA. The cost is approximately \$4,000,000 and is not currently funded.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED PUBLIC POLICIES:

The current owner proposes to convey the 401 South College Street portion to the City subject to a deed restriction preventing residential or office development for a period of five years from the date of the conveyance, excluding the permitted use of hotels and their incidental uses, such as offices.

CONSISTENCY WITH ADOPTED LAND USE PLANS

The City of Charlotte 2040 Policy Map designates the subject property as Regional Activity Center, which are areas characterized and defined by their urban form, and intensely developed with access to all modes of transportation, including transit stations. Improved open space (plazas, patios, and courtyards), small parks, and green spaces are important features of Regional Activity Centers, which seek to define a vibrant public realm.



PLANNING STAFF REVIEW:

This proposal is supported by the following goals and objectives of the Charlotte 2040 Comprehensive Plan:

- 1.C. Increase the number of parks and plazas within a 10-minute walk, bike ride, or transit trip
- 7.A. Increase the number of small parks and plazas within or near activity centers that contain community amenities.
- 7.D. Increase amenities and open spaces within private developments that are open to the public.
- 8.L. Capture a greater share of employment growth within the City's existing and planned Regional Activity Centers
- 9.I & 10.A. Increase the capture of new jobs and households in Activity Centers.
- 10.D. Increase tax revenue generated per acre by new development.

JOINT USE TASK FORCE REVIEW COMMENTS:

Cameron Furr informed the group that this is a land swap of two properties, South College Street and Caldwell Street, and provides a unique opportunity for the Convention Center. The Convention Center will have the opportunity for a hotel pad and the developer including in the swap will demolish the existing building to create a plaza with access to the rail trail. Kathy Cornett asked if the Aerial Map includes all of the previous MRs in the area, which Jason confirmed. Bhavana Swayampakala asked if the submitting agency could tell the developer for the hotel to submit a capacity assurance program application when the land swap is completed since the use is a higher intensity than what is currently there. Gretchen Flores asked if there is a timeline for this project. Cameron Furr stated the swap will occur by the end of summer/early fall.

PLANNING COMMITTEE REVIEW: