

Legislation Text

File #: 15-12564, Version: 1

Land Acquisition for Tree Canopy Preservation Program

Action:

- A. Approve the purchase of an approximately 0.135-acre parcel (parcel identification number 125-233-16) located at 409 Eli Street for a purchase price of \$320,000,**
- B. Approve the additional expenditure of up to \$900,000 over 12 months for land acquisitions, and**
- C. Authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute any documents necessary to complete these transactions.**

Staff Resource(s):

Phil Reiger, General Services
Tony Korolos, General Services
Tim Porter, General Services

Explanation

- In 2011, City Council adopted a goal of 50 percent tree canopy coverage by the year 2050. The Tree Canopy Preservation Program (TCPP) supports the goal through acquisition and protection of properties that are already forested or provide planting opportunities.
- The city's Tree Ordinance allows developers to pay into the Tree Ordinance Mitigation Fund (Fund), administered by the city, in lieu of saving trees on site. The city uses these funds for property acquisition and expenditures associated with ongoing tree preservation and maintenance.
- The program has gained national recognition and received local awards. It has been adopted as an innovative model in other cities, including Atlanta, Georgia.
- TCPP has acquired 311 acres to date and protected three times greater tree canopy than developers would have been required to under the on-site tree save option.
- TCPP supports focus areas and initiatives outlined in Council's Urban Forest Master Plan, adopted September 25, 2017.
- Future plans for TCPP include increased preservation in more urban areas and development of an arboretum trail with educational signage and programming.
- All acquisitions through the program are voluntary.

Action A

- Staff identified the 0.135-acre parcel (parcel identification number 125-233-16) located in Council District 1 as a good candidate for the TCPP and its expansion into more urban areas due to location and partnership opportunities with other city projects.
- The purchase price has been negotiated with the property owners based on appraised value and list price.
- Through the mandatory referral process, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission recommended approval for the city to purchase the land on January 21, 2020.

Action B

- Target acquisition areas for preservation and trail connectivity are located in close proximity to

development sites where fund payments were collected.

- As properties are identified in more urban, rapidly developing areas where payments in lieu of tree save have been collected, the ability to proceed with acquisitions quickly is crucial to the program's continued success. Advance approval of expenditures for acquisitions will expedite the process of purchasing property and allow staff to respond to the timeframes needed by property owners, particularly residential owners.
- Staff will identify properties within the target acquisition areas based on location, forest quality or replanting opportunities, conservation value and/or arboretum trail connectivity, and partnership opportunities.
- Staff will negotiate purchase prices with the property owners based on appraised values and any relevant list prices.
- All acquisitions will be presented to the Joint Use Task Force and Planning Commission, as required by state law.

Fiscal Note

Funding: Tree Ordinance Mitigation Fund

Attachment(s)

Map - Land Acquisition for Tree Canopy Preservation Program

Map - Property Acquisition Target Area