

Item Title: Approve the Acquisition of a New Property at 1321 and 1405 Athens Drive for a Future Library in Southwest Raleigh

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners authorizes the County Manager to execute a contract to acquire 1321 and 1405 Athens Drive, Raleigh, NC, for a new Community Library facility, along with any other documentation necessary to acquire the property, subject to the terms and conditions acceptable to the County Attorney.

Item Summary:

Purpose: The Board of Commissioners must approve all County real estate acquisitions.

Background: The Athens Drive Library is located inside Athens Drive High School. Wake County Public School System plans to build a new high school, and the design does not include space for a library. Wake County long range plans have called for a new library facility in this area to be completed in early FY 2029.

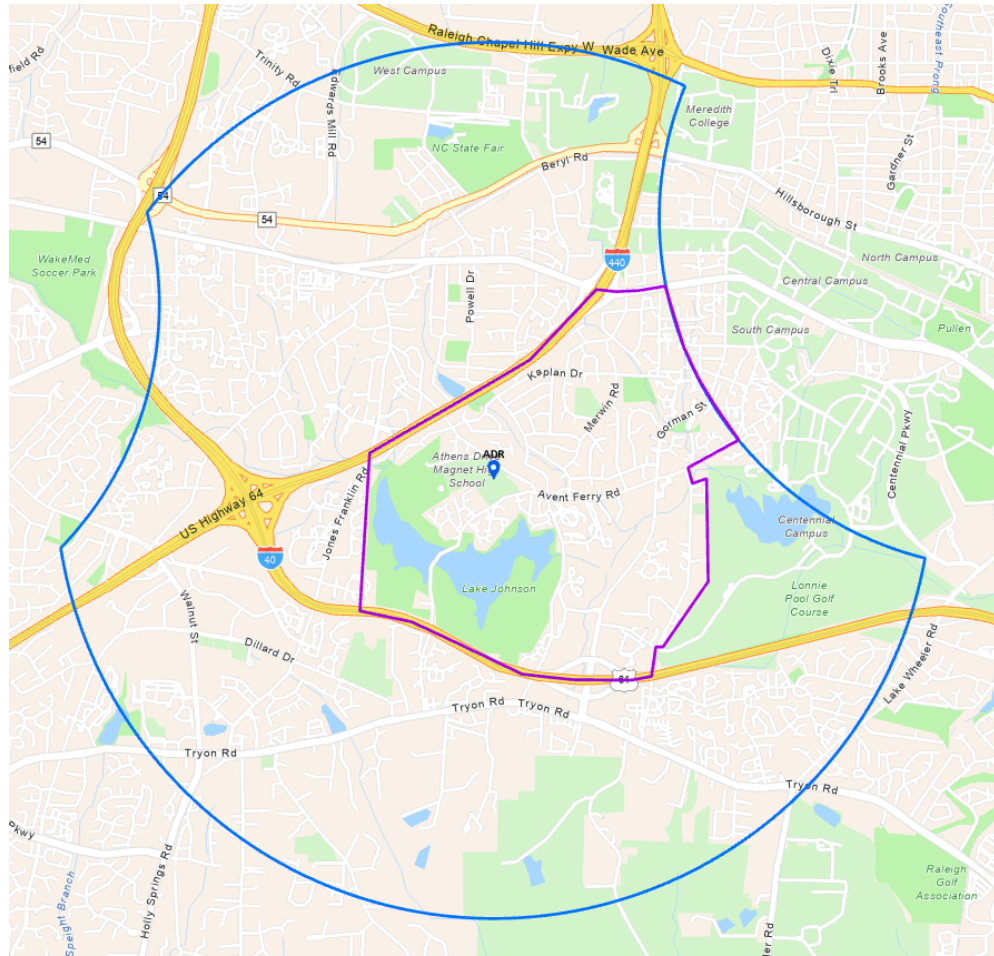
Strategic Plan: This action supports Lifelong Learning Goal 4: By 2029, three out of four residents asked will share that Wake County has high-quality education-based facilities, including schools, libraries, and other educational resources.

Fiscal Impact: The proposed purchase price for this site is \$1,586,000. Funds for the purchase of these properties are currently appropriated in the Libraries Element of the Capital Improvement program which is funded by the recently approved Library Bond Referendum.

Additional Information:

Since 1978, Wake County has operated the Athens Drive Community Library at Athens Drive High School in southwest Raleigh. The Wake County Public School System is redeveloping the high school campus to meet current and future educational needs. Because Athens Drive is one of the smallest high school campuses in the county, space for expansion is limited. To support the growth of academic and student programs, the available campus space must be prioritized for school use. Consequently, there will no longer be adequate space to continue operating the community library at its current location.

Wake County Community Services (CS) staff conducted an analysis of library service areas and customer drive times to surrounding Wake County library locations to establish a preferred search area for a replacement facility. Community Services collaborated with Facilities Design & Construction (FDC) to assess potential sites within the identified area and determine the most viable alternatives. The map below depicts the preferred search area evaluated during this process.



Within the preferred search area, there were two sites considered. This consideration included the subject property and one other. Both sites were evaluated, and the subject property was selected to move forward for negotiations. The subject property consists of two adjacent parcels which total 2.62 acres. The purchase price is \$1,586,000. An appraisal by B. Carter Kennemur, CCIM, a licensed NC General Appraiser, supports the total purchase price.

Staff recommends approval of this acquisition subject to terms and conditions acceptable to the County Attorney. The design phase for conversion of this property to a library will begin later in this fiscal year, and construction is projected to begin in FY 2027, with completion anticipated in early FY 2029.

Attachments:

1. Presentation
2. Subject Site and Current Athens Drive Library Location