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# THE CHEROKEE LEDGER-NEWS

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## County approves conference center site

### County Commission buys 23.6-acre tract for \$1.77M in Bluffs at Technology Park

BY TOM BROOKS  
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The site selected for the \$23-million Cherokee County administration and conference center complex is in the Bluffs at Technology Park in Canton.

The Cherokee County Commission approved a \$1.77-million pur-

chase agreement for a 23.6-acre tract in the mixed use development on Bluffs Parkway in North Canton. The decision to choose the Bluffs, after officials had previously eyed land in downtown Canton near the Justice Center and



Cooper

a site at Interstate 575's Exit 19, was reached formally during the June 20 county commission meeting.

The deal is the first non-residential real estate transaction reached for the Bluffs, which has been touted as a future high-technology employment hub for the county for the past several years. The Bluffs is north of the Riverstone business district.

The Development Authority of Cherokee County (DACC) sold 625 acres of the Bluffs site earlier this

year. Except for 65 acres bought by a company for a planned residential development in the Bluffs, the land was purchased by Technology Park/Atlanta, which is marketing the site as a mixed-use office park that will ultimately employ thousands. The office park developer already owned about 75 acres that is part of the 700-acre Bluffs site.

Construction of the complex is to take about two years, said County Manager Jerry Cooper.

SEE LAND PURCHASE, PAGE 9

## LAND PURCHASE: County approves \$1.77M purchase

FROM PAGE 1

Grading of the land for the government complex is expected to begin in September or October, he added.

Smyrna-based The Facility Group is the general contractor for the complex. Funding for the complex is from the county Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST).

The administration building will house government offices, including space for the Cherokee County Commission. The county commissioners and other officials will move out of the Justice Center, which will house more judicial system-related offices, officials say.

Plans for the Bluffs also call for

development of a hotel that would help draw business meetings and other activities to the conference center, officials say.

Canton Mayor Cecil Pruett, who has promoted the Bluffs since meeting with Technology Park/Atlanta officials in the 1990s to draw them to Canton, said city officials are "extremely pleased" to learn the government complex will be located in the Bluffs.

The other sites were dropped from consideration due to development costs for the tracts, officials said. The Exit 19 location near the southwestern corner of the interstate intersection would have cost about \$1 million more to develop than the Bluffs land, Cooper said.

DACC Chairman Marshall Day said the Bluffs is a sound choice, especially as growth occurs in and near the Bluffs. The Exit 19 site near Ga. 20 is more visible, but the development costs were considered too high, he added.

"From the cost standpoint, they made the right decision," said Day, a former Home Depot chief financial officer.

The administration building and conference center will be a boost for the marketing of the Bluffs, Day said.

"We've got to get the Bluffs moving," Day said. "In my judgment, it will stimulate some economic development in the Bluffs and also in the county."

## PATRIOTS: Local group teaches historic principles

FROM PAGE 1

To be a SAR member, a man must have a direct hereditary link to an American patriot. While it might seem like a tumultuous task to tackle on one's own, Webb is there to assist with research in tracking a person's lineage back to the late 18th century. A prospective member's family tree doesn't

and sometimes honoring a family member of the patriot with lifetime achievements. One family member who was honored at a grave marking ceremony worked with Eagle Scouts for 40 years, according to Webb.

The group also honors local law enforcement and public safety

officers at the county level, \$500 at the state level and \$3,000 for first place at the national level.

The group also works closely with local Eagle Scouts and Junior ROTC programs. Each year, the Cherokee Chapter presents the SAR ROTC Medal and Certificate, which is recognized by each

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