



ETOWAH AND HORSE SHOE COMMUNITIES PLAN



September 16, 2009

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Henderson County adopted its most recent version of the Henderson County 2020 Comprehensive Plan (CCP) on July 6, 2004. The Comprehensive Plan outlined the need to plan for small areas of the County. The timeframe for conducting plans for these areas was prioritized based on anticipated growth and an area's relation to the growth management strategy.

This plan is a community-specific comprehensive plan for the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities which outlines future goals as it relates to:

- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Agriculture
- Housing
- Community Facilities and Services
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Land Use and Development
- Community Character and Design

The process for developing the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities Plan began with the adoption of a Communities Plan Charter by the Board of Commissioners on August 14, 2007. A Communities Advisory Committee was formed by the Board of Commissioners on September 4, 2007. The Committee consisted of nine (9) community residents: four (4) from the Etowah Community, four (4) from the Horse Shoe Community, and one liaison from the Henderson County Planning Board. The purpose of the Committee was to serve as an advisory role to the Board of Commissioners for recommending policies specific to the Planning Area. Committee meetings were held monthly from October of 2007 to October of 2008 and public input reviewed in December for an estimated total of 33 hours, not counting Committee research and public interaction. Various recommendations and action strategies were formulated based on the elements of the Plan.

Public input for the Plan was assessed through the use of two public input sessions and a website survey. On November 13, 2007, the first public input session was held at Etowah Elementary School. Approximately 90 residents from the Communities came to the meeting to participate in discussion about the strengths of, concerns for, and 15-year vision for their Communities. The website survey compiled public input from October 2007 to January 2008. The second public input meeting was held on December 2, 2008 to allow residents to review and comment on the Draft Plan and talk with Committee Members and Staff. Approximately 100 residents attended.

On February 19, 2009, the Henderson County Planning Board held a joint meeting with the Etowah and Horse Shoe Advisory Committee. The Planning Board voted unanimously to send forth a favorable recommendation on the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities Plan.

On March, 26, 2009 the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities Advisory Committee presented the Plan to the Board of Commissioners highlighting each section and recommendation. On May 7, 2009, the Board held a public hearing on the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities Plan. On September 16, 2009, the Board of Commissioners voted to move forward with implementing the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities Plan recommendations.

The Etowah and Horse Communities Advisory Committee, used recommendations gathered from the public input sessions as well as available research provided by Henderson County and area experts, to guide the Committee during formulation of recommendations concerning each plan element. The goals and objectives are found at the end of each element of the plan. The following is a summary of those recommendations:

3.1: Natural and Cultural Resources (pp.13-14)

Protect Water Supply and Quality within the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities.

- Develop and adopt an open space plan for the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities in order to protect wetlands and flood areas, and to further regulate floodplain development.
- Prohibit public waterline extensions in the Planning Area in areas designated by the Henderson County 2020 Comprehensive Plan as Rural/Agricultural Areas.
- Support water quality protection and restoration programs in Henderson County, which could include the addition of water quality monitoring stations throughout the Planning Area and the County.
- Adopt local storm water regulations.
- Conduct a feasibility study focused on consolidating the existing wastewater treatment plants.

Protect Land Quality within the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities.

- Consider incorporating environmental assessments for major subdivisions into the Natural Resources Section of the Land Development Code.
- Consider incorporating stricter steep slope regulations in the Land Development Code for the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities to limit development on steep slopes.

Protect the Planning Area's historical and cultural resources.

- Continue to update and maintain a local inventory of historic sites available to all historic and cultural preservation agencies.
- Conduct further surveys of structures that contain architecture that is historically significant through the State Historic Preservation Office with attention to the Planning Area.

3.2: Agriculture (pg. 16)

Continue to promote and expand agricultural programs and practices.

- Make agriculture appealing to younger generations by creating incentives for these generations to keep farming.
- Determine the need for and possibly establish a location for a small farmers' market in the Planning Area.
- Continue and expand educational efforts for farmers and adjoining property owners in order to create awareness about the impacts of farming on adjoining properties.
- Encourage schools to buy and use local foods.

3.3: Housing (pp.18-19)

Address affordable housing in the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities.

- Consider incorporating affordable housing into new major subdivisions of 100 or more dwelling units.
- Create partnerships between the Residents of the Communities and organizations like the Community Foundation.
- Consider establishing a funding stream for affordable housing projects by creating an affordable housing trust fund.
- Highlight and focus attention on examples of exemplary affordable housing projects.

3.4:Community Facilities and Services (pp.24-25)

Expand local County parks and greenways in the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities.

- Consider adding corner and/or neighborhood parks at centrally located areas in the Planning Area.
- Consider the establishment of a multifunctional YMCA, governmental, or nonprofit full service recreation facility and community center in the Planning Area.
- Consider establishing a service district to create revenue to support recreation in the Planning Area.
- Consider establishing a greenway between Hendersonville and Brevard on the existing Norfolk- Southern railroad line.
- Incorporate pedestrian friendly measures in the core of the Communities.

Improve emergency services in the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities.

- Increase law enforcement presence and patrol in the Planning Area.

3.5:Transportation (pp.31-32)

Study and implement needed improvements such as the addition of traffic signals or improvements in road geometry at specified intersections in the Planning Area.

- Ask NCDOT to consider reviewing the following intersections for reconfiguration and/or signalization:
 - Cummings Road and US Highway 64 West (Brevard Road)
 - Etowah Park Road and US Highway 64 West (Brevard Road)
 - Battle Creek Road and US Highway 64 West (Brevard Road)
 - Broyles Road and South Rugby Road

Improve the transportation network in the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities.

- Consider improving safety and capacity within the Planning Area.
 - Consider widening the travel lanes and straightening Brickyard Road, from NC 280 to McKinney Road (Appendix 1, Map 8)
 - Consider lowering the speed limit along US Highway 64 West (Brevard Road) from 45 MPH to 35 MPH from Morgan Road at the fire station to the Etowah Valley Golf Course
- Consider the creation of a new connector road between Morgan Road and McKinney Road.
- Implement better access management standards at the following locations:
 - Along US Highway 64 West (Brevard Road)
 - Along Brickyard Road from US Highway 64 West (Brevard Road) to intersection with McKinney Road
- Avoid and correct situations where road names change multiple times. Specifically address the road name change at Holly Springs Road and Ray Hill.
- Consider incorporating pedestrian friendly measures in the core of the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities.

3.6:Economic Development (pg. 35):

Address economic development in the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities.

- Continue to support small local manufacturing operations by avoiding regulations that would inhibit these types of businesses.

3.7:Land Use and Development (pp. 40-41):

Residential Zoning District Map Amendments

- Maximum Residential Density: Consider eliminating the maximum densities allowed for multifamily development from all residential zoning districts in the Planning Area with the exception of the R1 Zoning District.
- Incorporate the following zoning map changes:
 - Replace R-40 in the southernmost portion of the Planning Area with R3.
 - Replace all R2R and remaining R-40 area with the R2 Zoning District.
 - Replace the R2R zoning that surrounds the north course of the Etowah Valley Country Club with R1 zoning. This includes land adjacent to the Etowah Valley Country Club and Turnpike Road and west of Holly Springs Road.

Commercial Nodes and Zoning District Map Amendments

- Local Commercial (LC) should be located in the following areas:
 - Between Old Highway 64, Sunset Hill Drive and Oakland Hill Drive.
 - Along both sides of Morgan Road between its intersections with US Highway 64 West.
 - Along the south side of US Highway 64 West (Brevard Road) from the Horse Shoe Gap Village Local Commercial Zoning District to the existing Community Commercial Zoning District in Horse Shoe.

- Along Brickyard Road from US Highway 64 West (Brevard Road) to its intersection with McKinney Road.
- Community Commercial (CC) should be located in the following areas:
 - Add a community commercial zoning district node to the south side of US Highway 64 West (Brevard Road) between the County border and Old US Highway 64
 - Expand areas around the existing Community Commercial Zoning District in Etowah to include additional commercial uses and property.

Provide Regulations that Protect Open Space and Rural Character

- Protect rural character through open space regulations in the Etowah and Horse Shoe Communities.

3.8:Community Character and Design (pp. 45-46)

Establish a Planning Area Overlay District.

- Prohibit unfinished steel or aluminum roofing on nonresidential uses in the overlay district. Aluminum siding material and vinyl siding is also prohibited. Design standards will require at least 30% masonry fronts which includes stone or brick. Alternatively, acceptable log or timber materials, consistent with the character of the Communities may be used in place of masonry material. Where buildings are visible from the side, appropriate evergreen plantings shall be used to obscure the view from adjoining streets.
- Require sidewalks for all new commercial businesses along Brickyard Road to McKinney Road and along any road frontage located in areas zoned commercial.
- Restrict sign height for commercially zoned areas to a maximum of eight (8) feet. Require adequate landscaping around signs to improve aesthetics of signage.
- Reduce front and side setbacks to zero (0) feet along Brickyard Road, from US Highway 64 West to McKinney Road (or other suitable roads). Place parking along the side and rear of new commercial buildings when feasible.
- Incorporate standards to limit light pollution.

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