

**Henderson County  
RAIL-TRAIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Monthly Meeting  
Wednesday, April 8, 2026**

The RTAC held a regularly scheduled meeting on March 11, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in the King Street Meeting Room and via Microsoft Teams. Voting members present online are denoted with the letter “O”.

Voting Member	Present	Not in Attendance
Chris Burns, Chair		X
Selena Einwechter, Vice Chair	X	
Douglas Moon, at-large		X
Patrick Kennedy, at-large	X	
Bart Salvaggio, at-large	X	
Ken Shelton, Friends of Ecusta Trail	X	
Brent Detwiler, City of Hendersonville	O	
Nancy McKinley, Town of Laurel Park	X	
Mike Egan, Conserving Carolina	X	

Also present: Autumn Radcliff, Planning Director; Bruce Gilliam, Parks and Recreation Director; Laura Rice, FOET Executive Director; Patrick Eubanks, NCDOT and Jason Williams, NCDOT, Tim Goodson with Tennoca Constructions. Joining remotely was Cory Blackwell, Parks and Recreation Supervisor

**Call to Order**

Vice Chair Selena Einwechter called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments given.

**Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Ken Shelton moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Mike Egan seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**Meeting Summary Approval**

Mr. Mike Egan made a motion to approve the meeting summary with amendments provided by Mr. Ken Shelton. Mr. Ken Shelton seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**Updates**

City of Brevard

None.

Henderson County

Ms. Autumn Radcliff stated that NCDOT received the bids for the design-bid portion of phase II. The lowest bid was around \$21.3 million, with further contingencies added to that figure. The county is currently working on a new cost sharing agreement with NCDOT for phase II. The expected completion date is 2029. Ms. Radcliff stated that County Engineer Marcus Jones is continuing to work with the contractor on the remaining phase I punch list items following a question from Mr. Ken Shelton.

Friends of Ecusta Trail Update

Ms. Laura Rice, FOET Executive Director, shared that North Carolina State University (NCSU) has selected phase I of the Ecusta Trail for an economic impact study, anticipated to be released in the late spring or early summer of this year. Additionally, there is a chance that NCSU will repeat the economic impact study upon

completion of phase II of the trail. Ms. Rice noted that FOET is working with NCDOT on a bicycle helmet initiative and will distribute bicycle helmets at upcoming trail events. FOET has additionally met with the Arts Council of Henderson County to discuss future events and/or art placements on the trail, likely in 2027. FOET has seen positive results with the trail ambassadors so far and will likely add shifts in the afternoons and weekends to meet staffing needs.

### **Ecusta Calls/Issue March Report**

Staff provided a handout on the issues reported by type through March, with a total of 33 reported issues. Mr. Bruce Gilliam, Parks and Recreation Director, stated that Parks and Recreation staff have not dealt with any serious issues on the trail in recent weeks. Committee members discussed continued incidents of cars turning onto the trail, highlighting the Whitted St. intersection as a common location for these issues and possible signage or bollard installations to reduce the chance of future incidents. Mr. Cory Blackwell, Parks and Recreation Supervisor, stated that six plastic bollards have been purchased and will be installed this week along the trail. Committee members discussed parking availability along the trail and expressed interest in finding partners to sponsor parking amenities.

### **US 64 Construction Impacts to Ecusta**

Mr. Patrick Eubanks, NCDOT Resident Engineer, shared information about the constructions plans for US 64 and its impact on the trail. Two roundabouts will be constructed at the intersections of US 64 and White Pine Dr and Daniel Dr. The construction of the roundabouts will be phased, as a shared detour route will be used while the respective roundabouts are built. Construction at Daniel Dr will require closing the trail for approximately 40 days, while construction at White Pine Dr will require approximately 65 days of trail closures. Due to the changes in grade required on White Pine Dr and Daniel Dr, NCDOT will need to demolish and re-build sections of the trail in order to bring the trail to the new grade. NCDOT anticipates construction at White Pine Dr to start on July 6<sup>th</sup> and have discussed multiple methods for trail closure including barriers, signage and safety fencing.

Mr. Eubanks stated that NCDOT and Tennoca Construction have separated the construction schedules of the two roundabouts to accommodate planned events for the Ecusta Trail in September. Ms. Selena Einwechter noted the high tourism traffic the area receives in October and asked if changes are possible to this schedule. Mr. Bart Salvaggio and Mr. Patrick Kennedy raised similar concerns and noted that a split construction schedule extends trail closures much farther into the fall. Mr. Eubanks and Mr. Tim Goodman, with Tennoca Construction stated that they would be able to alter construction schedules to construct the intersections sequentially without a gap. Ms. Autumn Radcliff suggested speaking to the organizers of events in September 2026 to move or reroute their events. Without a gap in construction, the trail would likely be closed from July 6<sup>th</sup> to October 18<sup>th</sup>. Parks and Recreation would follow up with the event organizers to adjust events to avoid the trail closures.

Mr. Patrick Kennedy moved for the committee to support a sequential construction schedule. Mr. Ken Shelton seconded. All voted in favor.

### **Other Comments:**

Mr. Ken Shelton made a comment about connecting parking with 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional including installing a connection from the parking area to the trail. The County has been discussing the item with the church and looking at other opportunities for parking needs.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

*This meeting was recorded, and the MP4 file can be available upon request. Please contact County staff.*