

## October 27, 2022 PLANNING BOARD ADOPTED VERSION

### 2045 Comprehensive Plan Edits and Additions

The County held 5 public input meetings throughout the county this fall regarding the draft plan. Staff also presented the draft to internal county committees and asked for input. Based upon that feedback, the following are suggested edits, additions, and clarity changes to the plan. There are also three additional definitions for the plan glossary. All edits and additions were included in the revised draft 2045 Comprehensive Plan.

#### Edits:

- Under Goal 3, Recommendation 3.1, remove action step “B” as it is an oversight.
- Under Goal 8, Recommendation 8.2, remove action step “D” as recommended by HCHD.
- Rename Urban Service Area to one of the following:
  - Utility Service Area (USA)
- Under Goal 3, Recommendation 3.1, action step “D” (was “E” before deletion of “B”):
  - Rephrase the action step to state: Limit development on steep slopes and mountain ridges by lowering the slope threshold for density reductions and consider requiring geotechnical review of developments with slope greater than 40%.

#### Additions:

Additional action steps to bolster content related to farmland preservation and resources for farmers.

- Under Goal 2, Recommendation 2.1, add action steps “H” and “I”:
  - Collaborate with the NC Cooperative Extension and other organizations to connect current and future farmers to federal agricultural funding programs like the USDA’s Farm Service Agency and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture. A full list of potential grant and loan programs are listed within the Supplemental Information Document.
  - Work with the NC cooperative Extension and other organizations to help farmers to negotiate lease agreements that include the right of first refusal.
- Under Goal 2, Recommendation 2.2, add action steps “D-F”:
  - Consider the introduction of Smart Solar programs throughout the County to encourage solar energy development and safeguard farmland. (Term listed in Glossary)
  - Study the creation of a County-wide Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. (Term listed in Glossary)
  - Consider applying the County Voluntary Agricultural District to all Present Use Value enrolled farms to further protect farmland from development pressure.

Additional action steps to further address environmental concerns related to development.

- Under Goal 3, Recommendation 3.1, add action steps “E-H”:
  - Study the creation of a Conservation Overlay District for all County public lands.
  - Consider increasing the open space requirements when developing within a Farmland Preservation District.
  - Consider incentivizing open space conservation in new industrial developments of a certain size and where appropriate.

- Consolidate steep slope requirements within the LDC for transparency.
- Under Goal 3, Recommendation 3.3, add action step “H”:
  - Consider amending the County’s street tree requirements within new developments to enhance the benefits of the requirement.

Additional recommendation and action steps to conserve rural character.

- Under Goal 2, add Recommendation 2.5:
  - Utilize zoning tools to help conserve rural character.
- Under Goal 2, Recommendation 2.5, add action steps “A-D”:
  - Study existing rural character and identify defining elements that can be modeled.
  - Require lighting mitigation standards for all new commercial and industrial developments within proximity to an existing residential area.
  - Work with developers to strategically locate required open space to increase visual compatibility.
  - Consider requiring robust buffers or “green belts” between commercial development and residential and between residential development and farmland.

Additional action steps to address traffic concerns and other unintended impacts of development.

- Under Goal 4, Recommendation 4.2, add action steps “E-F”:
  - Consider additional sidewalk/trail requirements for new commercial developments, especially when adjacent to an existing trail.
  - Consider requiring connections between existing and new commercial developments to reduce curb cuts and make it easier to access the businesses.
- Under Goal 4, Recommendation 4.4, add action step “F”:
  - Work with NCDOT, Laurel Park, and Hendersonville to create guidance for businesses that want to connect to a greenway identified in the Greenway Master Plan.
    - Ensure safety of pedestrians and bicyclists through parking lots and via roadway access.
  - Encourage adjacent businesses to develop connections along existing trails.

**Clarity Changes:**

- Clarify Goal 7 by inserting the word “increase”. It shall now read, “Diversify housing choices and increase availability”.
- Under Goal 8, Recommendation 8.2, edit action steps “A-C” to read as follows:
  - Coordinate with the County Health Department and non-profit partners to promote physical and emotional resiliency through the utilization of existing parks for physical and mental health programs.
  - When expanding public transit and paratransit services, consider connecting areas with medical services and addiction recovery programs to residential areas for easier access.
  - Address substance misuse and mental health by utilizing the opioid litigation settlement funds to support programs and spread awareness of Strategy-Specific Resources for addiction recovery.

**Glossary Additions:**

- *Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program:* A Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP) produces maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts on agricultural resources. In similar models, agricultural land is rated according to soil quality and irrigation status; the best quality land is called Prime Farmland. The maps should be updated every two years with the use of a computer mapping system, aerial imagery, public review, and field reconnaissance.
- *Smart Solar:* [Smart Solar](#) refers to solar projects that meet three main, equally important goals: (1) accelerating solar energy development, (2) strengthening farm viability, and (3) safeguarding land well-suited for farming and ranching. Smart solar guides solar development to where it has the least negative impact on land well suited for farming, ensures that agricultural land where projects are sited can be farmed in the future, and promotes “agrivoltaics” solar projects to create opportunities for both farming and solar energy on the same land. If done well, Smart Solar projects can provide income for farmers and landowners and protect land well-suited for agriculture. For more information, visit: [www.farmland.org](http://www.farmland.org).
- *Strategy-Specific Resources:* Strategy-Specific Resources are High-Impact Opioid Abatement Strategies, provided by the North Carolina Department of Justice. County specific strategies include but are not limited to: Evidence-based addiction treatment, Recovery support services, Early intervention, and Criminal justice diversion programs. For more information, visit: [www.https://ncopioidsettlement.org/](https://ncopioidsettlement.org/).

**Future Land Use Map and Character Area Changes:**

- The Board approved amending the USA boundary in Etowah. Changes are shown on the current map.
- The Board merged the Very Low Density Area and Agricultural/Rural area together. The area is called Agricultural/Rural, and the density range was adjusted.
- The Board was concerned that the names in the Future Land Use Map were confusing since it was not a zoning map or district. The Board approved changing the names as follows: Low Density Area to Transitional Area and Medium Density Area to Infill Area.

**Reformatting:**

- The draft plan was reformatted into three parts instead of two to separate out the plan outcomes, recommendations, and action steps so that it was more user friendly.

# Etowah USA

