Economic Development Update

Ferry Road – Property Analysis
March 2, 2021
Background and Request

Background:
• On October 30, 2020, Buncombe County released an RFQ for Property Analysis and Site Planning Services.
• The evaluation team selected Equinox from seven proposals.
• Equinox will:
  • Analyze the Ferry Road property for potential multi-functional usage, and
  • Provide development scenarios for Board consideration in alignment with Buncombe 2025 Strategic Plan Goals (e.g., affordable housing, environmental stewardship, recreational).

Request for Board Action:
• Authorize the County Manager to contract with Equinox.
Site Location

- Benchmark / Seagave Property
- Subject Property
- Biltmore Farms Property
Scope of Services

• Phased approach with decision points and optional tasks

• Emphasis on:
  • Environmental and natural resource assessment
  • Transportation and access assessment
  • Mixed use development with Strategic Plan alignment (e.g., affordable housing, recreational opportunities, environmental stewardship)

• Community and public input throughout the phases.
PROJECT APPROACH:
PHASE 1 (2-3 MONTHS)

BACKGROUND & BASELINE SITE ASSESSMENT

- Kick Off Meeting w/ Leadership Team
  Early vision and goal setting
- Site Analysis & Natural Resource Assessment
  Areas to conserve & enhance
- Transportation Access Assessment
  Options for transportation access to the site
- Suitability Plan
  Opportunities & constraints for conservation, development, & recreation

DEVELOPMENT & SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK DIAGRAMS

4-6 high-level concept sketches that convey overall land use (housing, commercial, etc), open space and recreation, conservation, transportation, etc.

INFORMATION PACKAGE FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONER’S WORK SESSION/ MANAGER’S ADVISORY GROUP

Presentation of Phase 1 findings and the Development & Sustainability Framework Diagrams, input on preferred 3 frameworks

MAJOR CHECKPOINT: DECISION TO MOVE FORWARD

(Suitability Plan Example)

**Buildable Areas**
- Most Suitable for Buildings/Development
- Suitable for Buildings/Development
- Areas with Lower Conservation Value, but More Difficult to Develop

**Conservation Zones**
- Primary Zone
- Secondary Zone

Area is most suitable for building due to gentle slopes, soils most suitable for septic, and close proximity to roads and utilities.
PROJECT APPROACH: PHASE 1

Analysis/Development & Sustainability Framework Diagrams

- Anderson Creek Heritage Trail
- Dawson Forest Trail Connector
- Best Areas for Low Density Development
- Areas Within Easement That Allow for Increased Impervious Surface/Buildings

PARCEL A: Low Density Development (273.28 acres)

**Suitability Factors:**
- Close proximity to Highway 52
- Some septic suitability
- Gentle slopes for building
- Conservation values limited to ridge top and creek
- Fewer options to connect into the property/National Forest
- Close to electric utilities
- Best visual connection to Highway

PARCEL B: Conservation Subdivision (161.21 acres)

- 161.21-acre potential conservation subdivision (parcel south of Highway 52)
- Cluster homesites in flat areas, with lot sizes greater than 3 acres
- Keep homesites out of primary conservation zones
- Defined building envelopes surrounded by a conservation easement
PROJECT APPROACH:
PHASES 2 & 3
(3-4 MONTHS)

SITE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS
LEADERSHIP TEAM & STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS
Vetting vision and goals, review Phase 1 findings, input on Development & Sustainability Framework Diagrams, input on preferred 3 frameworks
-Leadership Team and Key Stakeholder Virtual Work Session
-Advocacy & Board Virtual Work Session
PUBLIC SURVEY & INFO ON DEVELOPMENT & SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK DIAGRAMS LAUNCHED

SITE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS
Top three frameworks decided on based on all input and feedback given up to this stage. Development Scenarios will include:
3 Conceptual Site Development Options-low, medium, & high intensity development scenarios
All scenarios are assumed to include some component of affordable housing, open space/recreation, and sustainability principles
• Conceptual illustrative site plans
• Massing & scale diagrams
• Development program (types of uses, mix of use, and density calculations)
• Comparison matrix showing relative strengths and weakness of each scenario
LEADERSHIP TEAM INPUT SESSION
-REVISIONS AS NEEDED-

PUBLIC INPUT
PHASE 1: PROJECT WEBPAGE
Early info hosted on county’s website, (scope, schedule, ways for public to engage etc.)

PHASE 2: PUBLIC INPUT (SURVEY & WEBSITE UPDATE)
Larger project page launched, information provided on Framework Diagrams, survey launched for public input on diagrams

PHASE 3: PLAN REVISIONS
FINAL LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING
Decisions and discussion on implementation recommendations, phasing, public/private investment, potential range of cost
PRESENTATION TO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

FINAL PLAN DEVELOPED, FEEDBACK INCORPORATED
Final plan posted on public project page
PROJECT APPROACH: PHASES 2 & 3

Site Development Scenarios Examples
Contract Details

• Phase 1:
  • **Price:** $60,000
  • **Key Deliverables:** Natural resource inventory, suitability plan, transportation assessment and network proposal, and online project page.
  • **Decision Point:** Board of Commissioners can opt out after completion of Phase 1 deliverables.

• Phase 2 and 3:
  • **Price:** $90,000
  • **Key Deliverables:** Public input process and community engagement documentation, site development scenarios, final site assessment/planning documents.
Request

Request for Board Action:

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