



AGENDA

STEERING COMMITTEE #1 3/21/22

- 01** Welcome & Planning 101
- 02** Next Steps & Schedule
- 03** Map Packet Review
- 04** 2008 Plan Discussion
- 05** Workbook Review & Discussion

Town Planning Resources: A “Planning 101” Guide for Beginners

Compiled by William Seaman, Member,
Montreat, North Carolina, Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

March 10, 2022

This document was assembled to meet one person’s need for basic information on how towns prepare comprehensive plans, never having been involved in such an activity before. While a consulting group is leading the effort and doing the heavy lifting to assemble and analyze a wealth of information and data concerning Montreat, I felt the need to become informed on at least some of the basic procedures. Below are excerpts and thumbnail sketches of comprehensive plans from our local area, along with assorted links to websites and documents. Even a quick perusal provides something of a “Planning 101” guide.

Buncombe County

Comprehensive Plan 2043, <https://www.buncombecounty.org/comprehensive-plan-2043/>

Video that visually explains what a comprehensive plan is and what it contains, the planning process, and importance of community involvement. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtzVZLxTQIY>



The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee aides in developing a plan to focus on the next 20-year period for the County. They provide perspective on information gathered as well as feedback on draft policies and implementation actions. They also act as a sounding board for residents, and advocate for The Plan. The Committee meets the second Tuesday of every month.

Weaverville

<https://www.weavervillenc.org/departments/planning-zoning/comprehensive-land-use-plan-updated-august-2021/>



Using information obtained from the 2010 US Census, the 2016 American Community Survey, the 2017 Population Estimate Program, Buncombe County GIS data, and Weaverville departmental data, Town staff studied the following areas: population characteristics and estimates, basic information on the Town’s geographic characteristics, housing profiles and housing stock, data concerning education and income, industry and occupational characteristics, and governmental infrastructure. Staff also compared its findings with neighboring jurisdictions.

Woodfin

<https://www.woodfinnc.gov/departments/planning-zoning/2022-comprehensive-plan-update.php>

The Town of Woodfin is undergoing an update to its 2021 Comprehensive Plan with the assistance of J.M. Teague Engineering & Planning and Linda Giltz Consulting. This planning initiative will establish a unified vision, goals and priorities to guide future growth and development. It will also provide a basis for decision-making, problem-solving and policy development for the Town over the next 10-20 years. The Woodfin Comprehensive Plan will address community elements



such as land use, transportation, public services, infrastructure, parks and recreation, and natural and cultural resources. A future land use map ... will ultimately act as a policy tool that guides the Planning Board's and Town Council's land use decisions.

Community engagement is a cornerstone of a successful comprehensive planning process. Please follow this page or check back frequently for details on community engagement and how to get involved. A Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee (CPSC) will help staff guide the work of the plan and goals for the Town along with citizen engagement. To learn more about the Steering Committee, [click here](#).

Black Mountain



Introducing the Elevate Black Mountain Comprehensive Plan! Following one year of in-person and online community engagement, the Elevate Black Mountain Comprehensive Plan is ready for public unveiling! Hundreds of community members have shaped the plan. Now it's time for the community to review the plan. Check out the full plan here.

<https://www.townofblackmountain.org/DocumentCenter/View/2544/Elevate-Black-Mountain>

Elevate Black Mountain is the highest level policy document for the Town of Black Mountain, NC. Watch this short video to learn more about the comprehensive plan.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v&L.vp80QvXY>

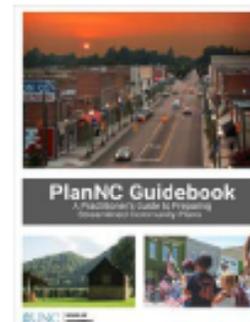
Asheville

<https://www.ashevillenc.gov/departments/planning-urban-design/plans/comprehensive-plans/>

North Carolina-wide

PlanNC Guidebook: A Practitioner's Guide to Preparing Streamlined Community Plans

Beginning on July 1, 2022, NC towns and counties must have a reasonably up-to-date plan in order to enforce zoning. Often the most difficult part is getting started, but the School of Government is offering an array of resources to help towns begin the planning process. [*PlanNC Guidebook: A Practitioner's Guide to Preparing Streamlined Community Plans*](#) is a practical guide for planners and local government staff for crafting a meaningful comprehensive or land use plan with limited time and resources.



American Planning Association, North Carolina Chapter, <https://northcarolina.planning.org/>

- Resiliency Resource Websites, <https://northcarolina.planning.org/knowledge-center/resiliency-nc/>
- Assistance is Now Available Upon Request from Professional Planners, <https://northcarolina.planning.org/community-outreach/ncpat/community-assistance/>

"Ah! Yes! I know: Town planning--densities, broad vistas, open spaces. Give me the romance of the 18th-century alley, with its dark corners, where footpads lurk." Sir Winston Churchill, 1942.

RELEVANT BEST PRACTICES



A Comprehensive Plan is NOT

- An exhaustive financial operations plan or capital improvement plan
- A duplication of widely-available information like history, laws, or policies (which may change)

Data-Driven Plans should:

- Assess Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
- Establish fact base and current trendline
- Acknowledge interconnectedness of social, natural, and built systems
- Develop a future vision using shared community values
- Consider key concepts like infrastructure, environment, economy, equity, health, and regionalism in addition to land use
- Develop goals and strategic actions to achieve the vision; realistic implementation
- Communicate clearly to all with easy to understand, well-designed materials

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR MONTREAT TOMORROW (SO FAR)

Montreat is a sustained source of peace and community for those who live, study, and visit in the Town. *Montreat Tomorrow* should assess how the Town is changing and empower the Town government to make strategic decisions towards greater resiliency, so that Montreat can be enjoyed for generations to come.

TRANSPARENT

Offer meaningful opportunities for public involvement in a variety of ways; provide clear communications and materials that are easy to understand.

RESPECTFUL

Respect the spiritual character of the Town's institutions, while acknowledging that the plan must serve the community overall. Consider the needs of property owners with equality and respect. Identify mutual goals and opportunities to partner where appropriate.

FLEXIBLE

Planning in the time of a pandemic and changing planning laws in the State makes for a challenge! Meet this challenge with flexibility, accommodating virtual and in-person engagement and clear, strong project management.

DRAFT EVENT SCHEDULE



PROPOSED DATE	EVENT	GOAL	CONSULTANT TEAM'S NEXT STEPS
Mid-April	Stakeholder Interviews x2, Virtual	Informational interviews with regional agencies like Buncombe County, Land of Sky RPO, or environmental groups.	Identify most relevant agencies and schedule discussions; invite Chair of the Committee or an alternate. Share meeting notes with all.
Early May	Public Survey Release	Hear from Montreat residents about their vision for the future character and services of Montreat.	Develop online survey; send draft to Committee for review. Develop marketing plan that includes in-person and online ads.
June 9th	Town Council Presentation	Introduce the project to the Town's elected leaders.	Prepare presentation
June 10th	Community Workshop	Showcase plan concepts to the public along with a series of activities designed to get people thinking about the future of the Town and share their opinions about possible recommendations. Could include "pop-up" activities in Town over the weekend to catch those that cannot attend.	Set date and venue, create presentation and activities
Choose Date: Late June (Saturday?)	Virtual Steering Committee #2	Present "current trendline" data for review and discussion, summarize Workshop findings. Discuss draft recommendations and Future Land Use map.	Create presentation and activity.
July-September	Email Updates and Activities	While we work on the first draft of the Plan, we will keep the Committee involved and informed with monthly email updates and online activities, like additional Workbooks, surveys, and draft chapters.	Create presentation and activity.
Choose Date: November 14-16	Virtual Steering Committee #3	Review and discussion of draft plan; take detailed feedback and head "back to the drawing board" as needed!	TBD
December 8th	Town Council Presentation #2	Presentation on draft plan.	TBD
December 10th-11th	Public Open House	Open House to showcase plan concepts and gather feedback. We ask the question- "Did we get it right?"	TBD

2008 PLAN REVIEW



CRITIQUE OF THE 2008 PLAN	REVISED APPROACH TO MONTREAT TOMORROW
POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE 2008 PLAN	ELEMENTS TO RETAIN IN MONTREAT TOMORROW

Discussion Questions:

- What do you think about the plan’s length, design, and organization?
- What are your favorite elements of the 2008 plan?
- Is the document user-friendly?
- Do you find the recommendations to be realistic?
- Is there consistent, thoughtful analysis of major topics?