

August 5, 2022



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## Message from Mayor Rick Cross

When preparing each monthly message, I like to review prior messages from the same time last year, as well as those from the past few months. Last August, I responded to a number of residents' questions regarding happenings around town. To continue with that theme, I'd like to speak to a few timely questions we have been receiving.

**What is happening on the property "behind the Walgreens at 801/158"?** What's going on with the houses that are on that property? In my [March 1 Message](#) I addressed the rezoning of that property. The properties have been purchased with the plan to build Ariston Place, a 98-unit apartment community. We will continue to share more information as things proceed with that development. In the immediate future, we see activity around the brick home and the two small white homes on those properties. All three of those homes are being relocated and will continue to be used as residences in our county. The brick home has already been moved, and the other two homes will likely be moved during the next several days. Please read this recent [Davie Enterprise article](#) for the more information on these homes and how they have been donated to deserving families. Additionally, before being removed, the large brick building on the property will be used by our local fire departments for firefighter training purposes. We will continue to keep you posted on progress.

**When will work be done on the previously communicated improvements at 801/158 intersection?** Interestingly, there was a recent [ASK SAM](#) piece in the *Winston-Salem Journal* inquiring about the intersection. It provides the perspective of NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) on timing, which we have communicated during the past several months. NCDOT is in design process for improvements to the intersection and right of way acquisition, for construction by summer of 2023.

We will continue to work with NCDOT and our state representatives to monitor and study traffic volume, and to determine solutions for roadways along NC 801 and US Hwy 158.

**It seems like there is a significant increase in activity around new construction, specifically for apartments. Why is there so much activity around re-zoning requests by companies looking to build in our town?** In my [April 1 Message](#) I spoke to the increase in this activity and how we deal with it as a matter of process. Ours is a desirable community for many reasons. As our Town Council, Planning Board, staff, and I consider formal requests, we rely on our town's Comprehensive Plan, town ordinances and — very importantly — continued input from and dialogue with you, our residents, to determine the best way forward.

As I have said before, the interest in our town, and eastern Davie County, is unprecedented. With the increased interest for development, we are ever-mindful on the impact on our infrastructure, quality of place, and effect on existing and future amenities.

As we follow the necessary and appropriate process for all formal requests that are received by the town, we — the Town Council, Planning Board, staff, and I — will continue to work diligently to arrive at the best decision, short-term and long-term, for our community. It's not always easy, and there are times where vigorous debate will be a part of the process. If you have questions, or want more information, please reach out. Our

Town Council, staff, and I want residents to be informed and engaged.

I want to express gratitude to our Planning Board, Town Council, and staff for their continued hard work and diligence as they work through the many items coming before them, and for their on-going efforts on the update of our town's Comprehensive Plan.

### **How long has the town been planning for the [Blue Heron Trail](#)?**

This and similar questions often arise. Hopefully, sharing some additional points helps to remind us how long we have been working on this project and some of the needs/requirements we must meet and abide by during design and construction.

- The Blue Heron Trail is a commitment to our community to provide safe and efficient pedestrian networks that we began discussing and working on as far back as 2013. Around this time, we also began seeking funding through NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT).
- As a reminder, funding for this trail is paid 80% by NCDOT and 20% by Town of Bermuda Run. Detailed Plans for the project are located at Town Hall and are available for viewing and additional explanation.
- The original 2012 Comprehensive Plan, its 2017 update, and the current feedback from residents with our 2022 update have all shown a clear desire for bike and pedestrian amenities, and so is included as an objective and strategy to help plan for funding to complete the Blue Heron Trail over time.
- We have continuously communicated and advocated for this project in Town Council meetings, public hearings, newsletters, social media, and planning sessions during the past 8+ years.
- The Town and designers of this project took great care and diligence in surveying and planning the location of the trail to protect as many trees as possible. A forestry/tree survey was not conducted or required as part of this project; however, trees are an important asset to the Town. It would have been less expensive and easier to construct in a straight line. Viewing the trail plans shows how the trail curves and meanders and identifies "tree protection area" signifying the importance of tree preservation.
- NCDOT requires the trail to be constructed just outside of the US 158 Right of Way. This property has been obtained from adjacent property owners, acquired largely by their generous donation of land.
- Most of the clearing you see is required to grade the trail properly and to install the correct drainage systems with berms needing to be reduced to avoid steep slopes that would violate Federal standards for safe walking on trails of this type.
- Much of the cleared area (except for the 10' wide asphalt surface) will be revegetated, initially with grass and then with other landscaping in future projects. The Town is taking this approach to strategically locate vegetation to protect lines of sight, screening, and buffering. Also, as development takes place along the remaining out-parcels of Kinderton Commercial along US 158, robust landscaping will be required as part of our town's zoning requirements.

I hope this information, and that which we have shared over time, is helpful.

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I continue to look for opportunities to meet with you, our town's residents — one-on-one, in small informal groups, or in larger planned gatherings.

Sometimes there is a specific topic you want to discuss - This past week, I was able to spend time with a number of residents from Kinderton Village who have continued to express significant concerns regarding an upcoming re-zoning request allowing for an apartment complex to be developed on property adjacent to the Kinderton Village neighborhood behind the Lowe's shopping center. The discussion was interactive and productive, and I continue to learn each time I gather with residents.

Sometimes we get together to discuss general town-related topics - Recently, I spent time

with a number of residents at Bermuda Village when the primary topic of discussion was the update to our Comprehensive Plan. I was able to share input we have already received, and to hear some additional thoughts and ideas from those in attendance. Don't hesitate to let me know if you would like to get together.

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Finally, a great opportunity to gather as a community will be on Saturday, August 13th at 7:00pm in our Town Center. We will host Trial By Fire - A Tribute to Journey. Please come out and enjoy an evening with friends and neighbors.

In the meantime, I will continue to reach out across our town. I want to hear from you, and appreciate those from whom I have heard. You can reach me at [rcross@townofbr.com](mailto:rcross@townofbr.com) or 336-391-1992.

Rick Cross