



Sherrills Ford project to total 1,950 homes

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Catawba County has approved a plan that would create a mixed-use village and a total of 1,950 homes in four communities on the county's eastern side — Catawba's largest housing development ever.

This week, the Catawba Board of County Commissioners approved zoning for four communities near Lake Norman that seeks to preserve some of the area's rural landscape while also making room for 10,000 new residents in the Sherrills Ford area.

"The desire is to keep it in its natural state as much as possible by minimizing clear-cutting and (requiring) buffers and tree-lined streets," says Joellen Daley, assistant city manager.

The development site off N.C. Highway 150 exceeds 2,200 acres. The four communities aren't contiguous.

Crescent Resources of Charlotte owns most of the land and will develop one or more of the communities.

"Creating a comprehensive plan allows the county, residents of Sherrills Ford and future buyers of the property to know what's ultimately going to be there," says Crescent executive Phil Hayes.

The company's development agreement with the county extends 20 years, but Daley expects the bulk of the construction to be complete within 10 years.

One community, unofficially dubbed Mountain Creek, would carve out 700 acres on Molly's Backbone Road that would be limited to 100 homes, some of which would cost more than \$1 million.

Crescent is expected to develop the 200-acre Village Center on N.C. 150 within five years, starting with a 125,000-square-foot retail center.

The Village Center would eventually total 414,000 square feet of retail, 163,000 square feet of offices, 135 senior housing units and 77,000 square feet of mixed-use development.

There's also room on the site for an elementary school, a YMCA, a day-care center and a community-service center.

Another nearby community, Key Harbor, would total 674 acres and include frontage on Lake Norman.

MAG Land Development has purchased that site, where it plans as many as 1,400 single-family homes and 100 attached homes.

Another 630 acres, called Terrapin Creek, would be reserved for a county park or low-density housing.

In approving the development plans, county officials are stressing their hope of boosting sales-tax revenue in the Sherrills Ford area.

"One of the goals is to keep people shopping in Catawba County instead of driving to Iredell County," Daley says.

The site is about seven miles west of Interstate 77 exit 36 in Mooresville, which has seen extensive retail development during the past decade.