The Biltmore Forest Chronicle

September 2026



Understanding Your 2026 Town Property Tax Bill

Town property tax bills for 2026 will arrive in mailboxes over the next few weeks. Buncombe County has already mailed its tax bills, but the Town bills and collects property taxes separately, so Town bills are being sent a little later.

This year's property tax process has been more complicated than usual. Because the Town had anticipated the revaluation, it had been incorporating updated property values into its capital planning for facility and infrastructure improvements since 2023. The revaluation was initially scheduled for 2025 but was delayed because of Hurricane Helene. In 2026, Buncombe County completed the property revaluation, as required by state law. The Town used those new values when it adopted its budget and set the tax rate in June 2026. In July, however, the North Carolina General Assembly approved legislation that changed when the 2026 property values could take effect. Because of that change, Buncombe County and all municipalities in the county had to review their adopted budgets and consider new tax rates based on the older 2021 property values.

For the Town, the 2026 tax rate is 51.5 cents per $100 of assessed value. This rate is based on the 2021 property value, not the 2026 value notice residents received from Buncombe County in April 2026. Property tax proceeds will support service improvements in Public Works, continued proactive community policing, and facility and infrastructure improvements.

As always, please contact Town Hall with any questions about your bill or the property tax process.

Mayor
George F. Goosmann, III

Commissioners
Doris P. Loomis – Mayor Pro-Tem
Drew Stephens
Allan Tarleton

Town Manager
Jonathan Kanipe
(828)274-0824
jkanipe@biltmoreforest.org

Director of Public Works
Harry Buckner
(828)274-3919
hbuckner@biltmoreforest.org

Police Chief
Chris Beddingfield
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cbeddingfield@biltmoreforest.org

Rooted in Resources





September 15, 4-6 p.m.
Town Hall

Whether you need services to support your beloved family or the cherished plants in your yard, we'll have professionals and nonprofits on hand to assist!

Featured Organizations:

- Mountain Mobility
- Memory Care
- Meals on Wheels
- Mountain Care Adult Day Care

- Home Instead (keep our loved ones at home) and
- Arms Around ASD of Asheville (support for neurodivergent individuals and caregivers)

- Eco Foresters (invasive plants removal)
- Hemlock Restoration Initiative
- American Chestnut Foundation
- And more!

The Friends of Biltmore Forest and the Tree Committee are hosting a drop in resource fair event at town hall from 4pm 6pm on September 15.

Refreshments will be available.



TOWN of Biltmore Forest

Come learn about locally available services for our community families and landscapes!

Holiday Trolley Tour and Home Decoration Contest

The holiday trolley tour is returning to Biltmore Forest this December! Join us on our Holiday Trolley on December 10. Trolley rides will start at 5 p.m. and run every half hour until 7:30 p.m. Hot chocolate and cookies will be served at Town Hall. Trolley passengers will vote on their favorite displays. All children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

Don't just go on the trolley, decorate your home and dazzle the tour guests! The top two homes will each receive a garden plaque to commemorate their legendary displays. Winners will be crowned by live vote from our trolley. To be eligible for the tour and prize, your house needs to be on a through-street and your decorations need to be visible from the road. Our trolley's route will feature as many homes as possible!

Holiday Trolley Tour and Decoration Sign-Ups

Trolley Tour Sign-up



You may also visit the sign-up site via the link: https://forms.gle/nQNys1RBb2qVtjSz7

Home Decoration Contest Sign-up



You may also visit the sign-up site via the link: https://forms.gle/2uA92MPL3MD55PwS8

Public Works Update

Stormwater Management in Biltmore Forest: Roles and Responsibilities

Jonathan B. Kanipe, Town Manager and Harry B. Buckner, PE, Director of Public Works

One of the most frequent requests for assistance the Public Works department receives is how to handle stormwater runoff entering private property—either from an uphill neighbor or a Town-owned public street. Recent heavy afternoon rain showers have caused an increase in these calls, which are typically accompanied by requests for the Town to physically intervene and redirect the water.

Stormwater management is a legally complex topic. This article attempts to clarify the roles, responsibilities, and legal authority of both property owners and the Town under North Carolina water law.

The "Estate" Rule: North Carolina Water Law

General Law in North Carolina dictates that a property owner on a "lower estate" (downstream) must receive and pass natural water runoff coming from a "higher estate" (upstream). Specific legal statutes (NCGS 77-13 and 77-14) strictly prohibit property owners from blocking streams, drainage ways, or easements that move water from higher elevations. In short: if your property sits lower than your neighbor's, … (continued on next page)

Public Works Update

Stormwater Management in Biltmore Forest: Roles and Responsibilities - Continued

… you are legally required to accept their natural stormwater runoff. However, an upstream landowner cannot abuse this right. If a higher landowner *unreasonably* diverts the flow of runoff, drastically increases the flow, or contaminates the water in a way that causes material damage, the lower landowner may take legal action. Under Common Law, all landowners are treated equally—whether they are private citizens, corporations, or local governments.

The Power of Neighborly Communication

Before involving contractors or the legal system, we highly encourage residents to speak directly with their uphill or downhill neighbors about drainage concerns. Often, a gentle conversation can reveal mutually beneficial solutions—such as collaborating on shared landscaping adjustments, installing rain gardens, or coordinating minor drainage fixes—that protect both properties without the need for formal intervention.

Why Proving Fault is Difficult

In Biltmore Forest, the vast majority of our residential lots and Town roadways were established decades ago. Because these well-defined drainage patterns have existed for generations, legally proving that a neighbor has *unreasonably* diverted water is highly difficult. If neighborly communication does not resolve the issue, downstream owners have the right to seek formal recourse by consulting a drainage contractor, civil engineer, or attorney. However, please note that only the courts can make a final legal decision in a drainage dispute. To obtain a ruling, a civil action must be initiated by the damaged party.

Limits of Town Authority

The Town's authority over stormwater is strictly limited by law. To clarify what the Town can and cannot do:

- *Where we operate*: The Town only has jurisdiction over public infrastructure it explicitly owns and documented public rights-of-way. We do not have the legal authority to perform work on private property without a direct easement.
- *Ordinances*: The Town does not have its own independent stormwater ordinances. Instead, we rely on Buncombe County for regulation, which generally applies only to large projects disturbing more than one acre of land.
- *Road Maintenance*: Public Works actively monitors and maintains Town streets and drainage systems to ensure they function properly. However, Hendersonville Road is a state road maintained directly by the NCDOT. Private driveways and their drainage features remain the sole responsibility of the individual property owner.

We recognize the immense frustration that stormwater damage can cause. While many of these issues fall outside municipal jurisdiction and cannot be resolved by Town action, we take your concerns seriously. We remain fully committed to maintaining effective public infrastructure and pursuing appropriate corrective measures wherever the Town holds the legal authority to do so.

If you have any questions about this article, feel free to reach out to the Public Works Department at 828-274-3919, Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm.

Disclaimer: The core information, local context, and legal statutes in this article were provided by Town staff.

LEADS Update

Phase 2 of the Biltmore Forest Lyme Disease study is underway. Our public/private partnership is the first of its kind on Lyme Disease and gaining attention at a national level, including four universities as well as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

The LEADS effort, in conjunction with the UNC led university team (NC State, USC and now Western Carolina University), is in the planning and resource collection stage. August interviews of several excellent candidates should allow our new researcher to begin in September. The researcher will continue testing both ticks and abatement strategies in our area, as well as begin partnerships and collections in two more pilot counties in western North Carolina - Madison and Jackson.

Currently, fundraising for a multi-year effort is the focus. The Town has allocated $50,000, and our goal for private donations is $150,000. The University team is also applying for grants to fund the work in our other pilot counties. Together these funds will continue the research, test various remediation options, and raise awareness in western North Carolina the way we have been doing in Biltmore Forest. As part of Phase 2, a second round of surveys will be distributed by mail in the next few weeks.

The CDC is very interested in our work and the article on Phase 1 was just published by our University team in the well-known (MMWR, known as the "voice of the CDC"). [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report]. It is the primary weekly scientific publication used by the CDC to share timely and authoritative public health data, disease trends, and official clinical recommendations.

We have over $50,000 in pledges, and we now have the tax deductible mechanism for giving in place with UNC Health and MAHEC. [A special thank you to a Biltmore Forest town resident who has generously offered to match donations dollar for dollar]. We have an opportunity to not only help our Town, but raise awareness among the many unaware citizens of western North Carolina! Please give generously so we can fund this important work.

Donations can be made with the QR code below, the link below or a check. You will receive a tax deductible receipt. If you want to be anonymous, please note that. Otherwise only your name, not amount, will be listed.

QR Code For Donations

Scan the QR code above to donate, or use this link: http://www.unchf.org/biltmoreforest

If you prefer to send a check, here is the information.

Make the check out to:

UNC Health Foundation
Memo line- Biltmore Forest Lyme Disease Fund

Mail it to UNC Health Foundation and contact Holli by phone to alert her or for questions at 336-971-0823.

Attn: Holli Gall
123 W. Franklin Street
Suite 510
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

If you have questions, please contact Angela Newnam at 704-996-5035.

Police Department Awards Recognition

We are incredibly proud to recognize our Police Department members for their outstanding achievements, dedication, and hard work. Their commitment to serving and protecting our community does not go unnoticed. These awards are a well-deserved reflection of their professionalism, courage, and unwavering service. Please join us in congratulating these exceptional members of our department!



Sargeant Patrick Ridgeway

NCGHSP County Coordinator

of the Year



Officer Brandon Ball

LELA Graduation



Officer Sluder

Law Enforcement Excellence



Dispatcher Shelby Frady

LELA Graduation



Dispatcher Abbegale Vaughn

NC Telecommunicators Certification

Employee Birthdays

August

Michael Anton

Wayne Husko

Laura Jacobs

Kenny Merritt

September

Shane Burrell

October

Brian Barnette

Jeff Glover

Jess Hedrick

Aslyne Tate

November

Shannon Kimbrough

Daniel Rice

Lu Riley

Employee Anniversaries

Eric Anderson – 7 Years

Michael Anton – 5 Years

Brandon Ball – 2 Years

Gabriel Crespo – 21 Years

Jeff Glover – 5 Years

Laura Jacobs – 17 Years

Jonathan Kanipe – 12 Years

Patrick Ridgeway – 5 Years

Jay Turney – 2 Years

Chief's Corner

As we work through the end of summer and head into fall we become busy with school starting and our routine changes from relaxed to more hustle and bustle, more time deadlines and more traffic. As always this is not a time to let our self-awareness down even though we are focused on many more tasks. A criminals most opportune time to commit crime is while you are distracted. Statistically we are involved in many more accidents when we are distracted. We all have many things happening in our lives but we surely don't want to add becoming a victim to the equation.

This brings me to the most frequent complaint we receive at the police department: speeding traffic. Please make sure you are obeying all traffic laws and maybe slow down as there are more vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians on our roadways. Slower speeds allow greater reaction times and help prevent us from being involved in a collision.

We have also received many complaints and concerns regarding e-bikes and e-motos. North Carolina law has made several changes recently regarding these "vehicles". There is a lot of confusion of what is legally a bicycle, what is a motorcycle, what is a moped, and what is an e-bike. We are all learning this as well. Please remember, as a parent or young adult we need to utilize our common sense. If you are damaging property in the park this is a problem. If we are driving recklessly on a public street, this is a problem. We should wear all possible protective gear when operating any type of two wheeled device. Common sense goes a long way in preventing accidents. We are hoping to utilize education before enforcement action to keep everyone on the same page. As with anything, be a good neighbor and be observant.

If you see something, say something. We do our best but we can't be everywhere all the time. We need your help in keeping everyone safe and secure. As always if you have any questions at all please feel free to contact the police department at 828-274-0822. Make sure to download our police department application on your cellular device as well!

Thanks,

Chief Chris Beddingfield
Email: cbeddingfield@biltmoreforest.org
Phone: 828-274-0822



Social Updates

As a friendly reminder, all of the Town's social event information has moved to the town app: Biltmore Forest Connect. In addition to the app, you may also sign up for phone call and text alerts. Sign up today to stay up to date with all the happenings within the Town!

- Call: 828-220-6365
- Text: Text "Join" to 828-220-6365
- And don't forget to download the Biltmore Forest Connect app within the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store!

Town of Biltmore Forest
P.O. Box 5352
Asheville, NC 28813

New Town Hall Schedule

Please be advised that, beginning **September 8, 2026**, Town Hall will be closed daily from **12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.** to allow staff to take their lunch break. Regular Town Hall hours and services will resume at 1:00 p.m. each day. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we implement this new schedule.

Political Sign Regulations and Information

As this year's political season ramps up, please be advised of the Town's regulations. Most notably, political signs are allowed to be placed on a property thirty (30) days prior to the beginning of early voting. For this year, that means political signage may be placed out beginning September 15th. A full list of regulations is as follows. You may also find these, and all Town ordinances, online from the Town's website (www.biltmoreforest.org).

(1) Each sign shall not exceed four square feet in size and not contain any electrical component or be lighted in any way;

(2) The sign shall not be located within the town owned public right-of-way or on town property and must be set back at least 20 feet from the nearest edge of the paved road on which the house fronts or faces and shall not encroach on the public right-of-way;

(3) No portion of the sign is to extend more than four feet above the ground;

(4) A sign located on private property requires the owner's approval;

(5) Up to four political signs may be placed on private property beginning 30 days before the beginning of early voting for a primary or general election. Political signs should be removed within five days after the primary, general or special election; and

(6) Political and ideological signs are not allowed on town property.

Town Code, Section 93.05 (D) (1-6)