TOWN OF FLETCHER

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Town Code Text Amendment
Entry Gates (Chapter 96)
(25-04-CTA)

Planning Department Staff Report
Tyler Morrow, Planning and Zoning Director

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Amendment Summary

The proposed amendment to the Town's Code is intended to establish clear standards for entry gates serving subdivisions and other communities, including multifamily and RV developments. This need was brought to staff's attention by Chief Robert Griffin, who noted that the Fletcher Fire Department has experienced challenges accessing gated developments when gates lack a backup power source or a siren-activated opener. Regulations of this type are common in other jurisdictions. In fact, many of the proposed changes are based on Henderson County's existing entry gate standards. Chief Griffin emphasized the importance of aligning our ordinance with a code already used locally so that first responders including EMS personnel who work throughout the County operates under consistent, familiar requirements. The final version of the ordinance presented to you reflects the outcome of discussions among Planning and Zoning staff, Town Administration, the Fletcher Police Department, and the Fletcher Fire Department.

Because the Town Code and Land Development Code are largely silent on gate regulations, this ordinance establishes an almost entirely new regulatory framework. While most of the language is newly introduced, the following sections represent the key provisions that warrant the most attention and review. However, the ordinance revisions in their entirety are included in your packet.

- **§ 96-02. Design** – This section outlines the required design standards for new gates. All new gated entrances must provide sufficient space to allow at least three vehicles to queue between the gate and the public roadway, preventing traffic from backing up into public streets while drivers enter their access codes. The section also requires a designated turnaround area so that any vehicle denied access can safely exit back onto the public road without obstruction.

- **§ 96-06. Access for Emergency and Law Enforcement Vehicles** – This section authorizes the Fletcher Fire Department and Fletcher Police Department to approve or deny access-control devices proposed for gated communities. These devices must allow immediate, unobstructed entry for emergency responders. In most cases, the device would be siren-activated, however in certain circumstances codes can also be permitted. A demonstration video showing how siren-activated gate access systems operate can be found here.

- **§ 96-05. Retrofitting of Existing Gates** – This section requires existing gated communities to retrofit their access control device to meet the new standards within six months of the ordinance's adoption. To date, staff has identified four communities with existing gates. Chief Griffin and the Fire Department have already begun inspections and outreach with these communities to explain the proposed amendments and discuss their potential impacts. Additional details and photos of each community's gates are provided later in this report.
    - The Groves at Town Center
    - The Seasons at Cane Creek
    - The Village of Windstone
    - Rutledge Lake RV Park

Communities with Existing Gates



The Groves at Town Center



The Seasons at Cane Creek

Communities with Existing Gates



The Village at Windstone



Rutledge Lake RV Park

The Groves at Town Center



This site photo shows the gate in its current configuration. The existing layout provides more than the required three-car stacking capacity.



This photo shows the siren-activated access control device currently installed on the gate. This gate appears to be in compliance with the proposed access control device requirements.

Seasons at Cane Creek



This site photo shows the gate in its current configuration. The existing layout provides more than the required three-car stacking capacity.



This photo shows the siren-activated access control device currently installed on the gate. This gate appears to be in compliance with the proposed access control device requirements.

The Village at Windstone



This site photo shows the gate in its current configuration. The existing layout provides more than the required three-car stacking capacity.



This photo shows the sign indicating the siren-activated access control device currently used on the gate. This gate appears to be in compliance with the proposed access control device requirements.

Rutledge Lake RV Park



This site photo show the gate in its current configuration. The sites current layout allows for more than the minimum 3 car stack.



Based on the signage, the control device, and information provided by both the Police and Fire Departments, there does not appear to be a siren-activated access control device in use at this location. Chief Terry indicated that his officers are familiar with a manual override for the gate system.

Land Use Plan Consistency:

The proposed development is consistent with the Land Use Plan's 9th goal "To develop a safe and efficient means of transportation that will provide ease of movement throughout the town."

The proposed amendment will enable emergency service providers to access gated communities more safely and efficiently, improving response times and overall ease of movement within these areas.

Additional Information



Example Siren Activated Access Control Device.

According to online pricing, the ability to add a Siren Activated Access Control Device to a gate costs approximately $200 to $1,100 dollars.

