

SOVEREIGN OAKS COMMUNITY HANDBOOK



1st Edition - December 2020

sovereignoakshoa.com

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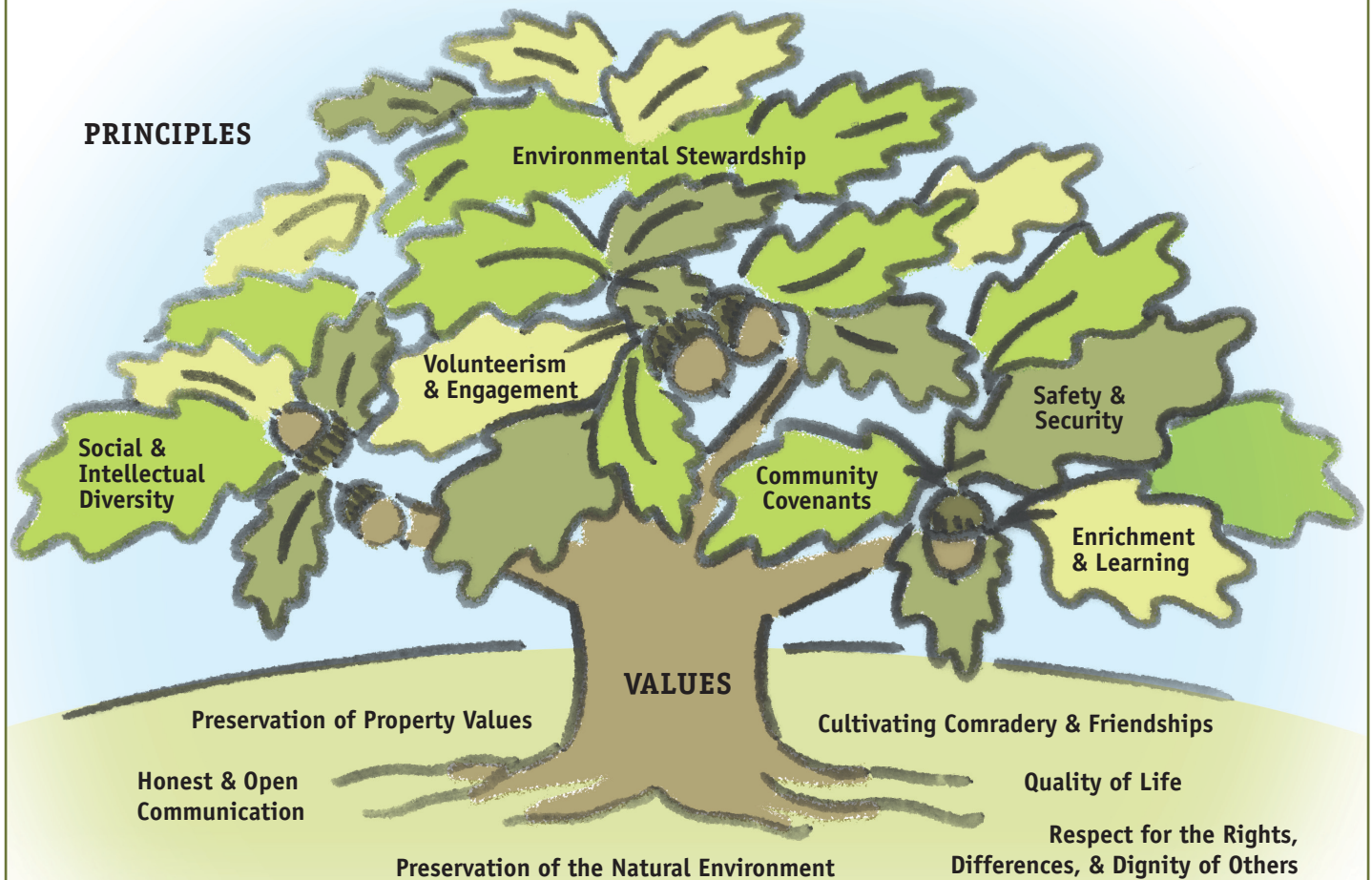
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SOVEREIGN OAKS

COMMUNITY VALUES AND PRINCIPLES



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

We are a neighborhood that cares for the environment. We protect and celebrate the farmland, forests, and wildlife that share this land with us. We are mindful that these resources are worth preserving for ourselves and future generations.

COMMUNITY COVENANTS

We honor Sovereign Oaks' legal covenants in shared responsibility for adherence to architectural and building guidelines, maintenance and preservation of property we hold in common, and being committed to what is best for all members of the community.

THE PRINCIPLES—OUR VALUES IN ACTION

SOCIAL & INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY

We respect our neighbors and are aware that fostering an atmosphere of belonging, inclusivity, diversity, caring, accountability and honest and open communication is everyone's responsibility.

SAFETY & SECURITY

We respect community and personal property as well as personal privacy and we care about the safety and security of our neighbors and take appropriate action when needed to ensure that safety.

ENRICHMENT & LEARNING

We value and support continuous learning for intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and community growth. Our lives are enriched by the proximity to Warren Wilson College, Asheville, and Black Mountain and the programs, services and social engagements made available to us.

VOLUNTEERISM & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We believe that the talents and contributions of every person make the community stronger. Participation in volunteer activities and social events and service on the HOA board and committees strengthen our mutual bonds and commitment to the community.

Community Spaces

Online:

Sovereign Oaks Website

sovereignoakshoa.com

Here you will find event information, minutes to board meetings and community documents. On your first visit to this website, you will have to enter “sovereignoaksHOA” into the password field, before registering as a new user.

SLACK Community Board & Forum

sovereign-oaks.slack.com

In an effort to make it easier for all of us to communicate, check in with each other, and share information, we’ve created a community forum on Slack.com. It’s simple to join and participate. Slack is like a chat room with more features and ease of use. It allows for real time group conversations around topics, or private messages between individuals. By providing a space where we can all stay connected, we hope to foster a cohesive and caring community.

How to join SLACK?

Request an invite/link from one of the following:

- community member
- secretary@sovereignoakshoa.com
- board@sovereignoakshoa.com

NEXTDOOR

<https://nextdoor.com/neighborhood/hawcreek--asheville--nc/>

Nextdoor connects nearby neighbors (and neighborhoods) to each other and local businesses, services, news updates, recommendations, and stuff for sale from the people nearby. Building connections in the real world is a universal human need. That truth, and the reality that neighborhoods are among the most important communities in our lives, have been guiding principles for Nextdoor since the beginning.

Common Space & Amenities Use

The Shelter/ Entrance Hut – Located at the entrance to Sovereign Oaks along Old Farm School Rd, this structure was originally conceived for the dual purpose of bus shelter for school children and/or for neighbor use to sell produce/flowers from community gardens.

The Greenhouse – Located a short walking distance down the path marked “Greenhouse”, on Wandering Oaks Way, is a large glass building with landscaped surroundings. The Greenhouse is used for both community and individual resident gatherings. Inside the Greenhouse includes a lounge area, dining area and potting table. Outside features include a fire pit, grill, and picnic tables. There are several community gatherings held every year at the Greenhouse. Occasionally, it is also used for HOA meetings.

Neighborhood Gardens - On the grounds surrounding the Greenhouse there are several tall, raised, garden beds, all of which were constructed from timbers milled from the property. The raised beds are available annually, to residents only, on a first come/first serve request basis. Requests should be directed to the Greenhouse Committee.

Hiking Trails – An extensive network of internal, community trails provide connectivity between the amenities. The footbridge at Bull Creek provides access to Warren Wilson’s 25+ miles of trails. The Sovereign Oaks HOA makes an annual donation to Warren Wilson College, which allows us to benefit from the use of their trails.
(Reference pages 18-20 for all trail and hiking information)

Bamboo Grove/Tree House/Enclosure – Located on one of the hiking paths, along the edge of Bull Creek is a beautiful, serene environment nestled into our bamboo grove. The structures there include a screened porch, picnic area and treehouse platform. This is a great place to enjoy the sound and peacefulness of a running creek or, to have a fun hangout with the whole family.

Bull Creek Swimming Hole – An area along the banks of Bull Creek which provides residents and/or the family dog an opportunity to cool off in the summer months.

Directions to the Bull Creek Swimming Hole:

*Coming from the front gate...*At the 4 way intersection go right on Trail Top Drive and follow it to the cul-de-sac (don't go right on Brookridge Lane). Look for the Hiking Trail sign just past 50 Trail Top. Take it down toward Bull Creek and look for the retention pond to the left. Follow the rim of the retention pond to the left (pass one set of steps down to the right) and look for the clearing at the water just beyond. The swimming hole has a small beach with cut logs on which to sit and a deep section in the bend of the creek for cooling off.

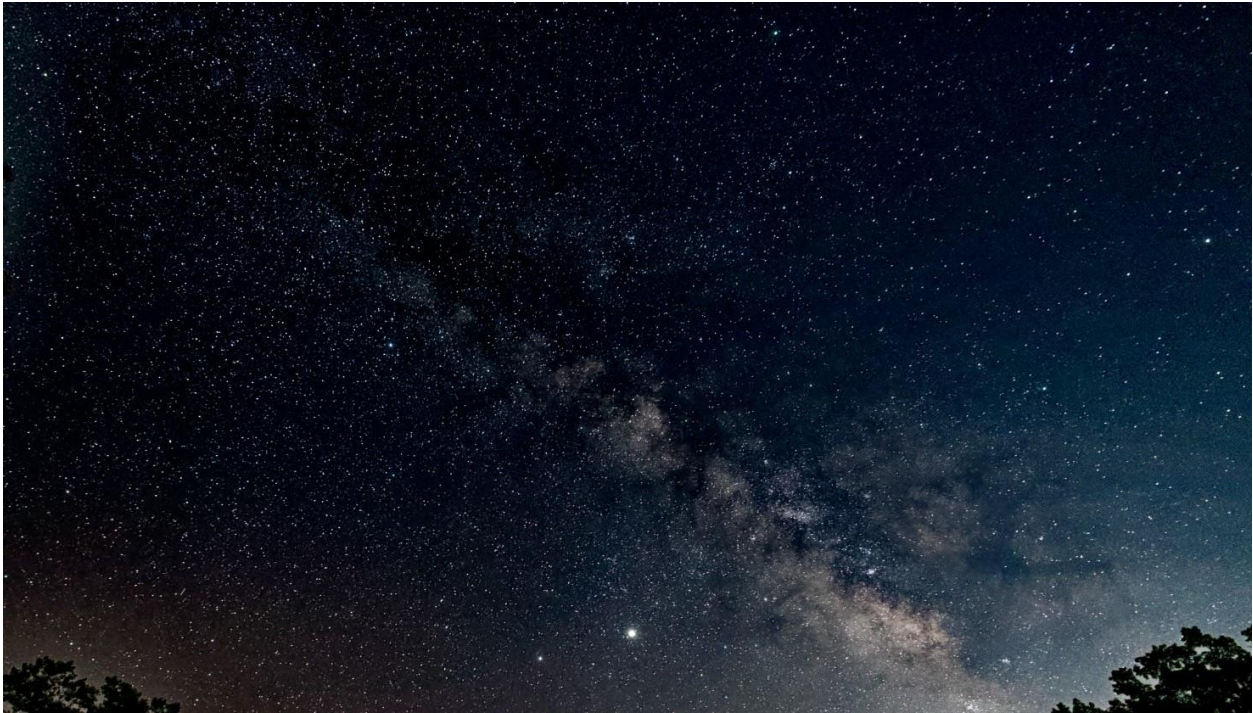
Apiary – The community teamed up with an incredibly talented beekeeper to create an aesthetically pleasing and productive apiary. This important collection of hives house honeybees that greatly assist with the pollination of the community’s flora and fauna. And some years residents are able to become beneficiaries of the amazing, fresh honey.

Viewing Platform – Located just below the peak of our community, on Wandering Oaks Way, is the Viewing Platform and seating area.

Please contact the Social Committee to reserve any of the above spaces for a private event.

**And remember, when enjoying our common areas:
Be mindful of your neighbors & wildlife
Leave the space as you found it**

Dark Sky Observance & Principles at Sovereign Oaks



MILKY WAY VIEW FROM SO

Brightest star is Jupiter with Saturn below and to the left. Photo credit: Randolph Richardson

DARK SKY denotes a location or place where darkness of the night sky is relatively free of interference from artificial light

Why Dark Skies are valuable:

- Keep wildlife safe
 - Nocturnal animals can be harmed by light pollution because they are biologically dependent on an environment with a certain number of hours of uninterrupted daytime and nighttime. The over-illumination of the night sky affects these animals - most especially migrating birds
- Reduce energy usage and light pollution
- Stargazing! You don't have to pack up your telescope and head for a dark-sky site. You live in one!

Principles:

- Minimize amount of illumination – number of fixtures and lamp wattage
- Minimize the area of illumination – only light areas that are needed, minimize glare by directing all light downward, do not allow light to trespass on to adjacent properties
- Minimize duration of illumination – use photo sensors or timers. Motion sensors can also be used but can be challenging with pets and tree motion from wind and may not be allowed in some instances.

Sovereign Oaks HOA Board, DRC & Other Committees

Home Owners Association (HOA):

Monthly Board Meetings: The Board of Directors meets monthly, usually on the first Monday of the month. All HOA members are welcome to attend the meetings and should contact the Board via email, to confirm date and time of the meeting they wish to attend.

Minutes from the meetings are posted on the community website.

Annual Meetings: These meetings for the entire HOA are scheduled to occur in October each year.

Board of Directors

board@sovereignoakshoa.com

Mark Jordan – President

president@sovereignoakshoa.com

Kirsten Kern - Vice President

VP@sovereignoakshoa.com

Art Mandler – Treasurer

treasurer@sovereignoakshoa.com

Brad Allen – Secretary

secretary@sovereignoakshoa.com

Mike Newton – Director

director@sovereignoakshoa.com

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## Design Review Committee (DRC)

drc@sovereignoakshoa.com

**Resident Volunteer Members:** Mike Newton, Margot Ammidown, Harry Koolen

**Compensated Positions:** Aaron Wilson (architect), Jerry Snow (landscape architect), Valerie Hale (coordinator non-voting)

### **Design Review Committee Key Operating Principles:**

1. **Consistency** in how guidelines are applied
2. **Responsiveness** to lot owner requests
3. **Practicality** in process application
4. **Balance** between lot owner & community interests

### **Design Review Process:**

**Step 1: Concept Review** - \$750 fee

**Step 2: Preliminary Design Review** - \$750 fee. This step includes builder approval, if necessary

**Step 3: Final Design Review** - \$2500 Construction Impact Fee and \$10,000 Builder Deposit Fee

**Step 4: Final Landscape Plan Review** - 60 days prior to construction completion

***Tips for a stress-free design review process:***

- ✓ *Have entire project team read the Design Guidelines*
- ✓ *Submit all documents per checklists in advance*
- ✓ *Have your design/construction team attend the review meetings*

**An important note from the DRC to owners & builders re: Storm Water Drainage:**

As development proceeds in the community, storm water runoff will become a bigger challenge for everyone

1. Storm water drainage control measures must be installed after initial grading and before construction begins
2. Drainage control measures must be monitored weekly by the builder and after each rainstorm
3. Damaged drainage control measures must be repaired promptly
4. Accumulated sediment trapped behind control barriers must be removed and disposed of properly

**DRC IMPORTANT APPROVAL REMINDERS**

- **Before beginning construction**, Final Design Review approval must be obtained, and all fees paid
- **Plans for any additions to a lot (accessory buildings, fences, etc...)** Must be approved by the DRC
- **Removal of any tree greater than 4 inches in diameter must first be approved by the DRC through the following process\*:**

Apply to DRC by email ([drc@sovereignoakshoa.com](mailto:drc@sovereignoakshoa.com)) and include:

1. Reason for requesting tree removal
2. Photos of the trees to be removed marked with tape
3. Site plan highlighting trees to be removed
4. Tree replacement plan, if any

\* Opinion from one or more arborists may be required



## **Social Committee:**

**Julie Brown**, Sally Klippel, Art Mandler, Evie Edwards & Amanda Galvin

The Social and Communication Committee's goal is to facilitate and foster relationships and camaraderie in the community either through organizing fun neighborhood-wide events or through organizing smaller groups of people who share similar hobbies or passions.

It is also tasked with keeping the community informed of upcoming events and/or disseminating any other community-wide information via email, Slack or newsletters. The Social Committee welcomes everyone to become involved.

## **Greenhouse Committee:**

Harry Koolen, Amanda Galvin, Nancy Hoer, Kirsten Kern, Lori Schroeder

Our greenhouse is located off Wandering Oaks Way. The building is original to the community and is evolving into a social venue, as well as a gardening space. A volunteer committee was formed in the summer of 2020 to work on improving the area around the greenhouse. There are raised beds for growing, a firepit, a book library, a charcoal grill, picnic tables and a trail to Musterfield creek. Work is ongoing with the goal to make this a place for all to enjoy year round. The Greenhouse Committee welcomes everyone to become involved.

## **Trails & Landscape Committee:**

Mark Jordan, Jim Hoer, Matt Kern, Dave Werle

The primary responsibility of the Trails & Landscape Committee is administration of the landscape maintenance contract for the front entrance area and select common areas within Sovereign Oaks. As Sovereign Oaks is a volunteer-dependent community, the Committee periodically coordinates volunteer workdays to complement the contracted work. In addition, the Committee monitors the condition of the common areas and trails, arranging for required maintenance as needed. The Trails & Landscape Committee welcomes everyone to become involved.

## **Facilities Committee:**

**Mike Newton**, Charley Remsen, Brad Allen

The **Facilities Committee** handles maintenance and repair of all assets on common or community land. This includes, but is not limited to: gates, fences, structures, retention/detention ponds and their drains, streets, footpaths and Sovereign Oaks signage. Trees on the community right-of-ways are also part of the responsibility. The Facilities Committee can *a/ways* use an extra hand, if anyone is interested – per need, or as a committee member.

# Mailbox Keys, Gate Schedule & Codes

## Mailbox Keys

All mail for SO addresses is delivered to the cluster of mailboxes, located at the front entrance. There are boxes available to accommodate delivery for larger packages, as well as outgoing mail slots.

Mailbox keys may be requested by contacting the Oteen Post Office. However, check with the HOA board [board@sovereignoakshoa.com](mailto:board@sovereignoakshoa.com) first to see if an original set is already available for your property.

## Entry/Exit Gate

The single entry/exit point for the Sovereign Oaks neighborhood (on Wandering Oaks Way) has working gates that operate as follows:

- **When you approach the entrance gate and it is closed, stop at the keypad and enter the gate code: **1353**** Wait for the gate to fully open and then proceed through the gate without stopping.
- **When you approach the exit gate and it is closed, stay right and pull up so your front bumper is about even with the maple tree.** Gate will open automatically. If you pull up too far to the left, your presence will not be sensed and the exit gate will not open.
- **A timer on the controller of the entrance gate is currently set to keep it in the open position between 6 AM and 6 PM, Monday through Friday (times are approximate).** This is to avoid traffic backups during the day when construction traffic is the heaviest. After 6 PM weekdays and on Saturday and Sunday, the entrance gate will be set closed and you will need to use the gate code to open it. The HOA Board, based on input from the HOA membership, may elect to change this schedule for when the entrance gate is set open.
- **Both gates will be set to the open position when there is ice on Wandering Oaks Way.** This is to minimize the risk of a skid when braking.
- **The gates work during a power failure.** A battery backup provides for a fairly large number of opening cycles. This has managed to get us through extended power failures in the past.
- **Emergency vehicles have the capability to open the entrance gate with a yelp from a siren.**

**We ask that you please follow these commonsense guidelines in regards to using the front gate:**

1. Only enter through the entrance gate. Only exit through the exit gate. This will minimize the risk of hitting another vehicle or having a gate close on your vehicle. Encourage others, including contractors you have hired, to do the same.
2. Both gates swing out. Do not dwell in the swing path of the gate. Do not drive into the swing path of the gate until the gate is in the fully open position.
3. Take care entering the gate code. Entering the wrong code several times will trigger a lockout for a short period of time. Continuing to enter the wrong code several times will trigger a lockout for a longer period of time.
4. Do not force open a gate or tamper with the gates, actuator arms, or controls in any way.
5. Do not allow children to play on the gate or in the swing areas of the gate.
6. Observe the 25 mph speed limit when entering and exiting Sovereign Oaks. Please remember that when you are driving south on Wandering Oaks Way, the exit gate will likely be in the closed position and you cannot see it until you get over the crest in the road at Majestic Oak Circle. Please slow down and do not hesitate to ask others to slow down and to observe the speed limit.

Please any direct questions or comments about the gates to the HOA Board at [board@sovereignoakshoa.com](mailto:board@sovereignoakshoa.com)

# BUNCOMBE COUNTY SCHOOLS

## **Public schools zoned for Sovereign Oaks district:**

### **Charles C. Bell Elementary**

90 Maple Springs Road, Asheville 28805

828-298-3789

<https://ccbes.buncombeschools.org/>

### **AC Reynolds Middle School**

2 Rocket Drive, Asheville 28803

828-298-7484

<https://acrms.buncombeschools.org/>

### **AC Reynolds High School**

1 Rocket Drive, Asheville 28803

828-298-2500

<https://acrhs.buncombeschools.org/>

## **Buncombe County Board of Education**

175 Bingham Road, Asheville, NC 28806

828-255-5921

## **Asheville City Schools**

Out of district students who wish to attend Asheville City Schools must complete the [Discretionary Admission Application](#) process.

Fees for residents of Buncombe County = \$300 (per family)

85 Mountain Street

Asheville, NC 28801

828-350-7000

<https://www.ashevillecityschools.net/>

## **For more information, including private, charter schools and area colleges:**

### **Buncombe County's Charter schools & Private Schools**

<https://www.buncombecounty.org/transparency/buncombe-government/newcomers/education.aspx>

# UTILITIES, TRASH & RECYCLING, POST OFFICES, BANKS

## UTILITIES

### ELECTRIC

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**Duke Energy**

555A Brevard Rd  
Asheville, NC. 28806  
800-452-2777

### PROPANE

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**Blossman Gas**

170 Sweeten Creek Rd  
Asheville, NC. 28803  
828-667-0437

**Suburban Propane**

12 Malveney St  
Asheville, NC. 28803  
828-252-4733

### WATER

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**Asheville Water Resources Department**

70 Court Plaza  
Asheville, NC 28801  
828-251-1122

## TRASH & RECYCLING PICK-UP

**Waste Pro**

138 Tavistock Rd  
Arden, NC 28704  
828-684-7790

*Trash pick-up: Every Wednesday*

*Recycle pick-up: Every other Wednesday*

*Cans need to be curbside by 7am*

<https://www.wasteprousa.com/residential-services/>

## Hard2Recycle

**Asheville Greenworks**

828-254-1776

*Drop-off program*

<https://www.ashevillegreenworks.org>

Accepts many items not accepted at curb-side pickup such as electronics, appliances, computers and peripherals, TVs, monitors, Styrofoam and more.

## U.S.POST OFFICES

(closest) 1141 Tunnel Rd  
Asheville, NC 28805

(or) 2311 US 70 (Tunnel Rd)  
Swannanoa, NC 28778



## **BANKS**

**Bank of America**  
162 College St  
Asheville, NC. 28801  
828-251-8233

**BB&T**  
1327 Tunnel Rd  
Asheville, NC 28805  
828-298-3936

**First Citizens Bank**  
1201 Tunnel Rd  
Asheville, NC 28805  
828-257-5850

**Hometrust**  
1011 Tunnel Rd, Ste 180  
Asheville, NC 28805  
828-259-8000

**SunTrust**  
771 Tunnel Rd  
Asheville, NC 28805  
828-333-6954

**Wells Fargo Bank**  
912 Tunnel Rd  
Asheville, NC 28805  
828-255-2455

## **Urgent Care (Human) & Emergency Care (Pet)**

**Mercy Urgent Care East Asheville**  
1272 Tunnel Rd  
Asheville, NC 28805  
(828) 210-2121  
[mercyurgentcare.org](http://mercyurgentcare.org)  
**Hours vary**

**MedVet**  
677 Brevard Rd  
Asheville, NC 28806  
(828) 665-4399  
[MedVet Asheville.com](http://MedVetAsheville.com)  
**OPEN 24/7**

## Grocers



- ★ ★ Aldi 480 Swannanoa River Rd 28805
- ★ ★ The Fresh Market 1378 Hendersonville Rd 28803
- ★ ★ The Fresh Market 944 Merrimon Ave 28804
- ★ French Broad Food Co-op 90 Biltmore Ave 28801
- ★ Harris Teeter 136 Merrimon Ave 28801
- ★ Ingles Market (closest) 1141 Tunnel Rd 28805
- ★ Ingles Market 2299 US-70, Swannanoa 28778
- ★ Ingles Market (many other locations)
- ★ Publix 1830 Hendersonville Rd 28803
- ★ Target 115 River Hills Rd 28805
- Trader Joe's 120 Merrimon Ave 28801
- ★ ★ Whole Foods Market 70 Merrimon Ave 28801
- ★ ★ Whole Foods Market 4 S Tunnel Rd 28805
- ★ ★ Whole Foods Market 1856 Hendersonville Rd 28803

- ★ Delivery with Amazon Prime
- ★ Instacart eligible
- ★ Order online for curbside pickup

# WIFI & Cable Options

## Internet

The only telecommunication service in SO is Skyrunner, a local Internet provider that offers high speed fiber optic service.

<https://skyrunner.net/>

## Television Streaming

The Skyrunner fiber optic Internet connection gives you live stream TV at the highest available resolutions, on multiple devices. This is a much higher quality than what satellite can provide. With your smart TV, or with the addition of a Roku, Amazon Firestick or Apple TV device, you can stream tons of content from Netflix, Hulu, and all the major networks. If you want live TV with multiple live channels for local news and so forth such as you would get with cable TV, Hulu + Live TV is a good streaming option. You will get the local channels plus all the additional Hulu content for less than the cost of the satellite service (about \$55/month). You can look at other Live TV streaming options here: <https://www.cabletv.com/blog/best-streaming-services>. You may also be able to use the Spectrum live TV service, which provides an app for streaming. <https://www.spectrum.com/cable-tv/spectrum-tv-app>. That would give you identical channels to cable TV, but streaming over your Internet connection.

### CableTV.com

#### [Best Live TV Streaming Services for 2020 | CableTV.com](#)

Switching to streaming TV? [CableTV.com](#) has reviewed 15 of the best live streaming and on-demand services currently available to potential cord-cutters.

### spectrum.com

#### [Stream TV App - TV Shows, Live TV, & Movies | Spectrum TV App](#)

Stream TV with the Spectrum TV App and enjoy shows and movies at home or on-the-go. Watch TV shows live or On Demand.

## Satellite TV

Satellite dishes are also an option if you want local, real-time stations. There is little difference between the two satellite TV companies (DISH and DirecTV) regarding monthly rates and package selections.

### **DRC Guidelines:**

- **Satellite dish location should be inconspicuous and unobtrusive**
- **Final placement is subject to DRC approval**

## **Antenna**

An antenna is another option if you have a place to mount one without signal interference. There are both interior and exterior antennas available. You cannot have a metal roof between the antenna and the signal source. Also, you will need a coax cable between your entertainment center and the antenna location.

For an exterior antenna, you need to get out from under metal roofs and outside of any steel studs or other steel structural members. The signals we get are coming from a quadrant between 122 and 233 degrees (between approximately SE and SW). You can enter your location at the following website to see what you can expect: [rabbitears.info/searchmap.php](http://rabbitears.info/searchmap.php)

With a good signal, you can get many local channels including ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX and PBS.

## **Landline Telephone**

Skyrunner provides telephone service over the fiber if you want a landline telephone.

## Wildlife in Sovereign Oaks

While walking or hiking, gardening or sitting on your porch, there are endless opportunities to experience the abundant, beautiful wildlife that call our community home. Only a few years ago (2015) construction began on our Sovereign Oaks community, converting what was once a 170 acre farm into our beautiful neighborhood. There were (and still are) many species of wildlife living here, all of which greatly contribute to our unique environment and experiences. Adding to our beauty and serenity are Bull Creek and Musterfield Creek (which bookend our east and west boundaries), and the many acres of conservancy property owned by Warren Wilson College, attached to our east boundary, just across Bull Creek.



Our wildlife neighbors/residents include: black bears, bobcats, coyotes and birds of prey (including redbird and sharp-shinned hawks, great horned and barred owls), along with numerous smaller birds (many of which are colorful and vocal song birds), wild turkeys, deer, foxes, turtles, snakes (including copperheads\*), raccoons, opossum, rabbits, bats, grey and flying squir-



rels. Should you possibly come across one of these animals that has been injured, inadvertently snagged/caught or acting strangely, please call/contact the most appropriate number below.

- **NC Wildlife Helpline at 866-318-2401** to obtain the name and telephone number of a licensed rehabilitator in your area
- **Wildlife Enforcement** should be contacted for any injured deer or black bear at **800-662-7137**
- <https://www.ncwildlife.org/injured-wildlife>

\* During the warmer months, the local 24 hr veterinary service [MedVet Asheville](#), (formerly REACH Veterinary Specialists), treats multiple cases of copperhead bites to dogs every week, mostly due to dogs poking their heads into (or walking through) tall, weedy, grassy areas.

## About Our Bears

Our location in East Asheville is recognized as having a larger black bear population, than other surrounding areas. Sovereign Oaks, as the name suggests, is abundant with large, mature red and white oaks which produce lots of acorns in the fall - providing a significant food source for black bears. Bears consume the acorns from either grazing below these oak trees (when they have fallen) or climbing high up into the tree canopies before the acorns ripen and fall. The black bears in our area do not fully hibernate during the winter. This means that the information provided above should be considered all year long. Although it is not common, there have been bear sightings in Sovereign Oaks during the winter months.

***Please*** take the time to read all of this important information about our black bears:

[BlackBear072309:Layout 1](#)

[Bears Don't Shelter in Place - Bearwise.org](#)

### **Tips to avoid attracting bears to your property**

- **Do not install birdfeeders** of any kind (including hummingbird feeders) on or near your property - including decks (bears are incredible climbers). Alternatives for attracting birds include:
  1. Water features (eg; bird baths)
  2. Nesting boxes (especially for bluebirds!)
  3. Flower gardens (especially for hummingbirds!)
  4. Shrubs and smaller, bushy trees (excellent nesting sites)
- **Bear-proof trash cans** are available from Waste Pro.

**DO NOT FEED BEARS (OR ANY OTHER WILDLIFE).** Feeding a bear ultimately results in the bear habituating itself to people and/or the residence that is feeding it. The saying, here in Western North Carolina (WNC), is *'a fed bear is a dead bear'*. If authorities are called about a nuisance bear, it is possible that the bear will be put down vs. relocating it.

The bears in our area are extremely healthy, naturally well fed and their breeding reflects that. Their diet does not (and should not) include any supplemental food items from human sources.



MOTHER BEAR WITH HER THREE CUBS

Both bear photo credits: Ona Cavey

## HIKING IN & NEAR SOVEREIGN OAKS

Western North Carolina is blessed with an abundance of hiking for all skill levels. On the following pages of this handbook, we have tried to come up with a good starter list of hiking areas that are within a 30 minute drive of Sovereign Oaks. If you are more eager to dive into the area's outdoor scene in greater detail you may wish to buy a more comprehensive book with maps and specific trail descriptions. Each listed hiking area has a link to a map, to get you outside quickly. Lastly, there is a refresher on *hiking etiquette* as the end of this section.

You will note in this list there are usually two links. The first takes you to an overview of the area. The second takes you to a map page that you can either download to your phone or print on a larger scale. If there is only one link that means both info and maps are found there.

- **Sovereign Oaks**

We have a number of wooded trails in the community which connect different roads throughout the neighborhood. If you walk down Brookridge Lane toward Bull Creek you can make a left at the intersection. This will take you to the footbridge that accesses part of the Warren Wilson College Trail system. See the following section for information on those trails. [[Sovereign Oaks Trail System Map Link](#)]

- **Warren Wilson College**

The college has 1100 acres and 25 miles of trails. The most convenient area is accessed by our footbridge off Parkland Grove. There are several different areas to hike, some of which may more easily accessed by driving and parking closer.

<https://www.warren-wilson.edu/student-life/outdoors>

<https://www.swangathering.com/downloads/WWCTrailMap.pdf>

- **Shope Creek**

This 1700 acre hiking area is about a 10 minute drive from Sovereign Oaks. Very pretty forest with streams and small waterfalls.

<https://www.hikewnc.info/trailheads/shope-creek>

- **Bent Creek**

Hikers, bikers and horses can be found in this heavily used 6000 acre forest with roughly 44 miles of trails. Note that bikes and horses are not allowed on all trails.

<https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/bentcreek>

<https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/bentcreek/docs/bent-creek-trail-map-2008.pdf>

- **Montreat**

Home to Montreat College and the Montreat Conference Center. The MCC put 2460 acres in conservation in 2004, calling it the Montreat Wilderness. There are roughly 40 miles of gorgeous trails in the Montreat Wilderness.

<https://montreat.org/visit/wilderness>

<https://montreat.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/MCCTrailMapv4-10-2019.pdf>

- **Mountains-to-Sea Trail**

Runs from the Great Smoky Mountains to the Outer Banks. In the Asheville and surrounding areas it runs along the Blue Ridge Parkway, often cross-crossing it. Look for the white blazes along the parkway for access points. In many cases a gravel pull-off indicates an access point to the trail.

<https://mountainstoseatrail.org/>

<https://mountainstoseatrail.org/the-trail/map/>

- **NC Arboretum**

Requires a membership or daily fee to use the main gate and parking. You may walk in from various gated points in Bent Creek and visit any building or exhibit. It is, however, roughly a 25 minute walk to the visitor's center from any of these points.

<https://www.ncarboretum.org/>

[https://www.ncarboretum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Map\\_Guide\\_2018\\_web.pdf](https://www.ncarboretum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Map_Guide_2018_web.pdf)

- **Biltmore Estate**

The estate grounds have 22 miles of hiking/walking trails. A day ticket or year-round pass is required to get onto the property. If you have a year-round pass you can access the house, restaurants and other activities offered on the estate throughout the year.

<https://www.biltmore.com/>

<http://greatruns.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Biltmore-Trails.pdf>

## **FARTHER FLUNG HIKING AREAS OF NOTE:**

- **Dupont Forest (Brevard, NC)**

10,400 acres of forest with 80 miles of dirt roads/trails and 4 major waterfalls

<https://www.dupontforest.com/>

<https://www.dupontforest.com/explore/>

- **Pisgah National Forest**

512,758 acres of forest with 3 designated wilderness areas. Some of the areas listed above are a part of the Pisgah National Forest but there are many, many more to explore.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/nfsnc/recarea/?recid=48114>

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/nfsnc/maps-pubs/?cid=stelprdb5193036>

## **HIKING ETIQUETTE**

- Know your right of way. Check signage for the trail you are hiking, and follow the correct right of way yields. Signs may vary from park to park, but these are the general guidelines of yielding on the trail
  - Hikers coming uphill have the right of way. If you're descending the trail, step aside and give space to the people climbing up.
  - Bicyclists yield to hikers and horses or other pack stock. Come to a full stop and step to the side to give the right of way. Be mindful of the plants or animals that are near the trail if you must step off the trail. Bicyclists should always ride within their abilities. Before your visit, check individual park regulations to see if biking is allowed.
  - Hikers yield to horses and other pack stock. Slowly and calmly step off to the downhill side of a trail. If you approach from behind, calmly announce your presence and intentions. Horses and other pack stock can frighten easily, so avoid sudden movements or loud noises.
- Make yourself known. When you encounter other hikers and trail users, offer a friendly "hello" or a simple head nod. This helps create a friendly atmosphere on the trail. If you approach another trail user from behind, announce yourself in a friendly, calm tone and let him/her know you want to pass.
- Stay on the trail. Don't step off trail unless you absolutely must when yielding. Going off trail can damage or kill certain plant or animal species, and can hurt the ecosystems that surround the trail.
- Walk or bike through the mud or puddle. Do not go around it unless you can do so without going off trail. Widening a trail by going around puddles, etc. is bad for trail sustainability. Just because it looks easy to cut the corner off a switchback doesn't mean it's a good idea. Preserve the trail by staying on the trail.
- Always practice Leave No Trace principles. Leave rocks, vegetation, and artifacts where you find them for others to enjoy.
- Do not disturb wildlife. They need their space, and you need yours, too. Keep your distance from the wildlife you encounter. Some parks require you to stay a certain distance from wildlife, so check park regulations before your visit. Never leave the trail to try and get a closer look at an animal because it can hurt the habitat and the animal and put you in danger.
- Be mindful of trail conditions. If a trail is too wet and muddy, turn back and save the hike for another day. Using a muddy trail can be dangerous, damage the trail's condition, and damage the ecosystems that surround the trail.
- Make less noise. When hiking in the great outdoors, let nature do all the talking. Be respectful of both nature and the other hikers by keeping the noise from electronic devices at bay. Not only will other visitors appreciate the peace and quiet, but so will the wildlife. Many wildlife species rely on natural sounds for communication purposes and disrupting those sounds can hurt their chances of survival.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Always be aware of your surroundings. It will help keep you and any members of your group safe, and it will help keep wildlife and their habitats safe and healthy. Know the rules for what to do when encountering our different types of wildlife on the trail.



**APPENDIX A**

**Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions**

[Declaration: August 28th, 2015](#)

[Amendment: February 14, 2020 \(Section 8. Signs\)](#)

[Amendment: December 3, 2020 \(Article VII, Section 1;  
Article VII, Section 21\)](#)

**APPENDIX B**

**DRC Guidelines**

[DRC Guidelines \(version 5/2017\)](#)

[DG Addendum 1 \(Forms update 3/2020\)](#)

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