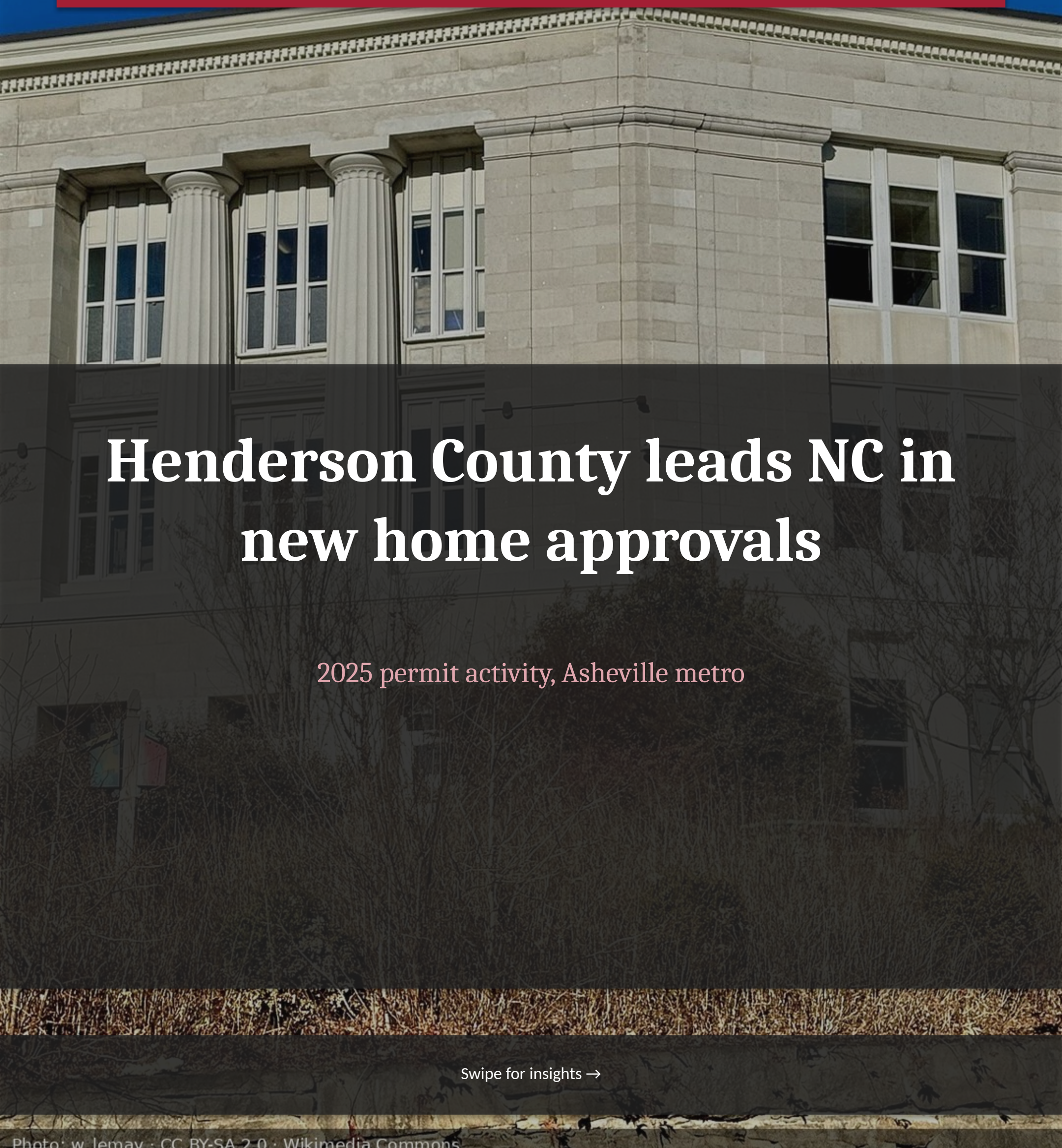
#1 of 5: Ratio of Highest to Lowest County Permit Rate per 1,000 Residents (2025



Henderson County leads NC in new home approvals

2025 permit activity, Asheville metro

Swipe for insights →

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THE DATA

1.60x

Ratio of Highest to Lowest County Permit Rate per 1,000 Residents (2025)

Henderson County's permit rate is 1.60x higher than Buncombe County's, the lowest in the metro.

This disparity reveals a deepening split in housing development momentum across the Asheville region. While Henderson County sees robust construction activity, Buncombe County — despite its urban core — trails significantly. The gap reflects not just policy divergence, but differing land availability, infrastructure readiness, and long-term planning priorities.



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Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Building Permits Survey, county annual totals, 2025; population from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2024 · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-26-asheville-permits-county-spread

01

Growth is decentralizing

The housing boom is no longer confined to Asheville’s city center. Henderson County’s leadership in permits signals a broader trend: development is shifting toward suburban and exurban areas with lower density, more available land, and fewer regulatory hurdles. This decentralization is reshaping the region’s economic geography, drawing in new residents seeking space and affordability — even as urban prices remain high.

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02

Buncombe’s lag could strain supply

With Buncombe County posting the lowest permit rate in the metro, long-term supply constraints loom. As demand persists — fueled by migration and limited inventory — the region risks a sustained supply-demand imbalance. Without a policy shift to accelerate approvals in the core county, affordability may continue to erode, pushing buyers toward the periphery and deepening regional inequality in access to new housing.

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