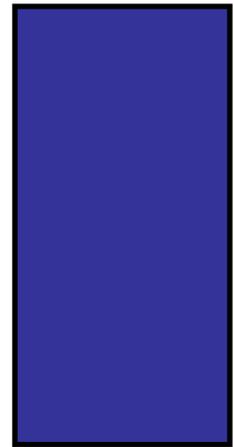
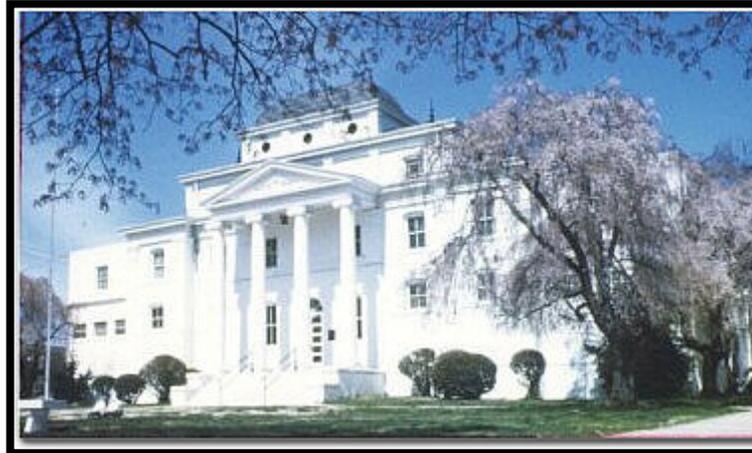
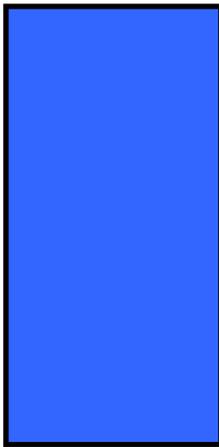


# Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan 2007



## Town of Wilkesboro, North Carolina

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# Acknowledgements

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# Table of Contents

## **Section 1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Scope and Purpose
- 1.2 Benefits of Walking
- 1.3 Planning for Pedestrians in Wilkesboro
- 1.4 The Planning Process

## **Section 2 Existing Conditions**

- 2.1 General Overview
- 2.2 User Demographics/Current Usage
- 2.3 Community concerns, Needs, and Priorities
- 2.4 Staff and Agency Concerns and Issues
- 2.5 Identify Private Sector Concerns/Perspectives
- 2.6 Pedestrian Friendliness of Local Transportation System
- 2.7 Street and Highway System Access
- 2.8 Pedestrian System Access
- 2.9 Inventory and Assessment of Existing Facilities
  - Map 1 Existing Pedestrian Facilities – West Side
  - Map 2 Existing Pedestrian Facilities – East Side

## **Section 3 Existing Plans and Policies**

- 3.1 Overview
- 3.2 Transportation Plans
- 3.3 Local Plans and Initiatives
- 3.4 Regional Plans
- 3.5 Land Use Plans
- 3.6 Programs and Initiatives Currently Planned
- 3.7 Policies and Institutional Framework
- 3.8 Pedestrian Statutes and Local Ordinances
- 3.9 Key Findings from Existing Plans and Policies

## **Section 4 Pedestrian Network Plan**

- 4.1 Overview
- 4.2 Pedestrian Network Methodology
- 4.3 Recommended Pedestrian Facilities
- 4.4 Special Focus Areas
  - Map 3 Proposed Pedestrian Facilities – West Side
  - Map 4 Proposed Pedestrian Facilities – East Side

**Section 5      Design Guidelines**

- 5.1 Overview
- 5.2 Pedestrian Facility Elements

**Section 6      Program and Policy Recommendations**

- 6.1 Overview
- 6.2 Policy Recommendations
- 6.3 Other Policies
- 6.4 Program Recommendations

**Section 7      Implementation**

- 7.1 Overview
- 7.2 Opportunities and Strategies
- 7.3 Plan Adoption
- 7.4 Action Steps
- 7.5 Pedestrian Network Prioritization and Phasing
- 7.6 Staffing
- 7.7 Implementation Strategies
- 7.8 Review Funding Opportunities
- 7.9 Develop Evaluation/Monitoring Process
  - Map 5 Proposed Facility Priorities – West Side
  - Map 6 Proposed Facility Priorities – East Side

**Appendices    Appendix A**

NCDOT Pedestrian Policy Guidelines

**Appendix B**

Contact Lists

**Appendix C**

Survey Results

**Appendix D**

Proposed Facilities Priority List

**Appendix E**

Land Development Code

**Appendix F**

Town of Wilkesboro Zoning and ETJ Map



# Section 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Scope and Purpose

The purpose of the Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan is essentially to create a document to guide the Town of Wilkesboro in the (1) planning, (2) design, (3) financing, (4) implementation, and (5) maintenance of the Town's pedestrian system. The plan is designed to enhance and prioritize capital improvements and maintenance projects for the Town with special consideration for addressing critical pedestrian transportation and safety and addressing Americans with Disabilities Act compliance issues.

**The goals of the Wilkesboro Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan are to:**

- **Enhance the pedestrian environment and increase opportunities to choose walking as a safe mode of transportation;**
- **Improve the health of citizens in the Town of Wilkesboro;**
- **Develop standards that enhance livability, economic opportunity, safety, and quality of life; and**
- **Promote pedestrian activity as a viable alternative to automobile use.**



Until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, walking was the primary method of traveling between destination points. The development of the automobile changed the mode of transportation from “pedestrian” to “vehicular”. The Town of Wilkesboro was no exception to this transformation. The post World War II era evolved from a pedestrian-oriented to a vehicular environment. Over the past decade however, communities throughout North Carolina have reversed the

trend and have recently begun providing facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists. The development of these facilities was largely due to the demand by local communities for better alternative transportation opportunities. This proactive approach of implementing bicycle and pedestrian facilities has led to the focus (by municipalities) on developing planned bicycle and pedestrian transportation systems. The North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) Division



of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation (DBPT) has recognized the importance of this comprehensive planning effort.

McGill Associates, P.A., was contracted by the Town of Wilkesboro to prepare the Pedestrian Plan as a guide for identifying and prioritizing safe pedestrian linkages which create a viable pedestrian network. Wilkesboro is a thriving community and is experiencing significant growth. While many areas within the Town lack sufficient pedestrian facilities, the Town recognizes the need to plan for the future and develop a pedestrian network that provides connectivity for the users. Using the proactive approach will establish priorities for future pedestrian facilities, reduce construction costs, and implement facilities in a logical manner.

The study area spans the Town of Wilkesboro “town limits” and surrounding areas. Although the research will be focused primarily within the Town limits, it is important to understand the existing areas of growth, which are beyond the town’s jurisdiction, and their future impact.

The Wilkesboro Pedestrian Plan is designed to implement goals and objectives and prioritize capital improvements and maintenance projects for the Town, while addressing issues for pedestrian transportation and safety. The long-term goals and objectives for the Plan are to provide the Town of Wilkesboro with a safe and efficient alternative to vehicle use. Providing pedestrian corridors to desired destinations is vital in developing a pedestrian network that is efficient and user-friendly. The long-term goals of creating a successful pedestrian network include, but are not limited to:

1. Public Awareness
2. Education
3. Accessibility
4. Connectivity

In addition to the long-term goals, it is critical to address the short-term goals and objectives. These include:

1. Identifying the Critical Facility Needs
2. Implementation Plan
3. Identify Improvement Costs
4. Funding Opportunities
5. Prioritizing the Improvements/Projects



## 1.2 Benefits of Walking

Walking is the oldest form of transportation known to mankind. The most affordable method of transportation, it also has the lowest negative impact on the environment. The following results are generated in a “walking” community:

### Community Health

There are numerous benefits to be gained by walking – the most prevalent being the acquisition of healthier lifestyles. Unhealthy eating habits – primarily due to the increased consumption of “fast food” - continue to contribute to rising obesity rates in Americans of all ages. Walking can also help prevent heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and mental health diseases. “Walkable” communities encourage people to walk; thereby, increasing physical activity and decreasing television or computer time, which promulgates sedentary lifestyles.



By providing accessible, inviting pedestrian facilities, the Town can provide equal opportunity for everyone to improve health and prevent disease through exercise. This, in turn, saves government and local employer’s money in health care cost and lost productivity due to sick days.

### Walking Increases....

- Energy, stamina, and metabolism;
- Wellness, fitness and psychological well-being;
- The prevention of risk factors such as Coronary Artery Disease, some cancers, and other diseases;
- HDL – the “good” cholesterol; and
- Muscle development and bone density.

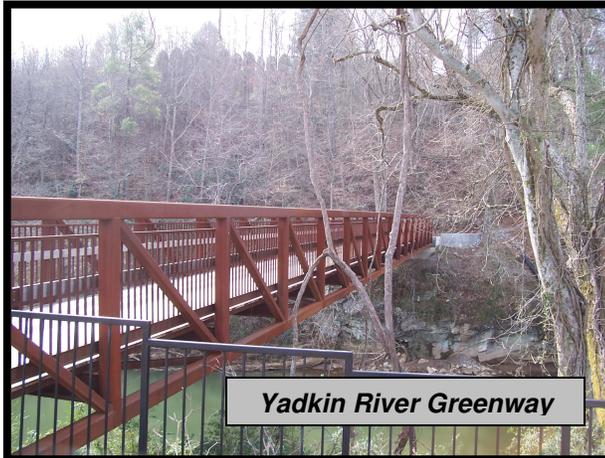
### Transportation Alternatives

Walking also creates an alternative to vehicular transportation. Nationally, traffic congestion in urban areas is getting worse and costing more. Pedestrian facilities are necessary to provide a means whereby people may choose to walk instead of drive, reducing the number of cars on the road. It is also essential to support a user-friendly and accessible transit system. When coordinated, transit and pedestrian infrastructure can provide a seamless means for citizens to move throughout the Town without necessarily utilizing a vehicle.



### **Environmental Benefits**

Not only does walking decrease traffic congestion, but it also improves the environment. Choosing to walk to destinations as an alternative to using a vehicle will reduce air pollution. Improving air quality is a major concern



across the United States. During the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, some roadways in the area were closed to vehicular traffic in order to relieve congestion. During this period of time, air quality monitoring was conducted and the results indicated a significant decrease in air pollutants as compared to the normal amount of traffic in the same areas. Air pollutants will

increase in direct proportion to the increase in the number of vehicular miles, which are traveled each year in this country. Walking – as opposed to driving vehicles - will also positively impact the availability of our natural resources. Reducing the consumption of petroleum (specifically in cars and asphalt) will be increasingly beneficial in the years to come.

While sensitive populations should avoid walking during ozone action days, more walking by everyone on a regular basis could reduce mobile emission and decrease ozone. Facilities such as greenways are often developed along rivers and streams. These facilities create buffers between drainage ways and development that help improve water quality for watersheds. In addition, greenways help provide connectivity for wildlife habitats and natural ecosystems.

### **Community Benefits**

Pedestrian facilities offer an important public realm for maintaining and enhancing the public and social interaction of a community. Sidewalks provide space for walking, outdoor dining, window shopping, bench areas for social interaction, engagement with businesses, and tourism.

## **1.3 Planning for Pedestrians in Wilkesboro**

We are all pedestrians. For centuries the pedestrian has been a constant presence in the human environment. Each day almost every individual walks to some destination – whether near or far. The environment, which facilitates walking, is different for every pedestrian - being as varied as ‘urban settings within center cities’ to ‘linear parks running along creeks’. Pedestrian environments are created either by being planned initially or they develop as a result of landscape



characteristics - with no particular thought towards the pedestrian. To better understand what makes a “pedestrian-friendly environment”, it is necessary to study and analyze places where people travel comfortably as pedestrians. The addition of a sidewalk alone may not encourage people to walk, unless it connects pedestrians to places they want to go. These connecting pedestrian corridors need to be conveniently located in proximity to homes, schools, entertainment, shopping, and places of employment.

Walking is a cost-effective means of transportation. There are no fees, taxes, and/or licenses required as compared to the average annual cost of operating a car, which exceeds \$5,000. Economically speaking, walking is – by far - the most affordable mode of transportation available to anyone.

The pedestrian environment should provide good places to walk such as open space, parks, downtown, convenient retail, and other places – all of which enhance the pedestrian environment. In addition, the ideal pedestrian environment should possess amenities such as landscaping, benches, specialty paving, safety, and other elements, which create an environment that pedestrians enjoy.

The “walking” community needs to be safe and comfortable. Any area, which seems dangerous or has obstacles, discourages people from walking and they resort to other methods of transportation. Pedestrian routes need to be designed to minimize vehicular conflict by providing pathways, which are safe and free of hazards. Essentially, this is what the plan is about.

## 1.4 The Planning Process

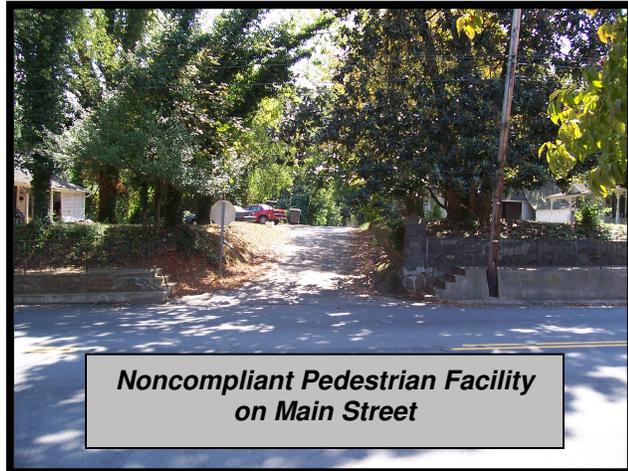
In order to better understand the existing conditions, identify the user needs, and make recommendations for the pedestrian plan; logical steps in the planning process consist of:

- 1. Conduct an inventory of the existing pedestrian system:** Provide existing sidewalk, greenway, and crosswalk inventory for the Town’s pedestrian facilities as well as identify existing safety issues.
- 2. Perform an assessment of needs of the pedestrian:** Identify and evaluate pedestrian needs and areas lacking connectivity to destination areas.
- 3. Formulate objectives and recommendations:** Provide guidelines for future development and for repair of existing facilities with probable costs associated with both.
- 4. Prepare action-oriented method for implementation of improvements:** Identify and prioritize key pedestrian linkages, sidewalk needs (through an equitable and on-going process), and identify key funding sources for the Town to pursue.



These components provide justification for eventual proposed improvements. Also, priorities for improvements must be established. Implementing all of the proposed improvements over a small period of time would be overwhelming; therefore, it is important that the most immediate needs be recognized as capital improvements begin.

Identifying the critical facility needs of the Town of Wilkesboro includes improvements such as sidewalks and safety conditions. The safety of pedestrians is the most important component of the pedestrian facilities. Damaged sidewalks, unmarked crosswalks, and inappropriate signage are important areas that need to be addressed in the near future. In addition to facility needs, an implementation plan is an



important short-term goal in establishing long-term objectives. The improvements recommended in this Pedestrian Plan are intended to be implemented over a period of time and will require creative funding mechanisms. Therefore, another significant short-term goal will be to identify improvement costs and funding opportunities, as well as prioritizing the improvements/projects.

Pedestrian facilities will be the primary focus of this plan – in particular, sidewalks (located on Town streets and state roads) and pedestrian safety. In addition, off-street pedestrian facilities such as greenways and multi-purpose trails will be examined. The Wilkesboro Pedestrian Plan will delineate the location, implementation, and maintenance of the proposed facility improvements; thereby creating a pedestrian network, which allows for connectivity within the Town as well as with neighboring communities.

**- END OF SECTION -**



# Section 2

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### 2.1 General Overview

The Town of Wilkesboro was founded in the early 1800's on a hill above the Yadkin River as the "county seat" of Wilkes County. The fifty acres of land, which were originally acquired, were divided into a grid of streets and lots - with the courthouse being located on a public square in the middle of the grid. In 1847, the Town of Wilkesboro was chartered by the North Carolina General Assembly. Today, the Town is



comprised of approximately 5.5 square miles and 600 persons per square mile. The municipality remains the hub of industry, government, culture, and recreation for Wilkes County. A significant transportation project, which was completed in 2004, was the four-laning of US Highway 421 around Wilkesboro thus creating a defined "freeway" from Boone to Winston-Salem (with Wilkesboro in between).

### 2.2 User Demographics/Current Usage

According to the US Department of Commerce/Division of the Census, the population of the Town of Wilkesboro in 2000 was 3,159 – composed of 45.2% male and 54.8% female. The census revealed a significant population characteristic - nearly 24% of the people were over the age of 65, compared to the state average of 12.0%. This fact was unique, when compared to other census data across the state and impacts the increasing demand and desire for pedestrian facilities. Within the Town's population figure, three (3) groups were somewhat evenly distributed, with 22.5% being under the age of 19; 53.6%, between the ages of 19 and 64; and 23.9%, being 65 years of age or older. The median age was 42.3 years. The median age is expected to increase over the next ten (10) years.

The population trends for residents of Wilkesboro vary somewhat (within the age groups noted above), but are relatively similar in pedestrian needs. According to the *North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Plan for 1995-2000*, children and senior



citizens comprise two of the fastest growing groups, who are in need of more recreation. The senior population is expected to have significant impacts throughout society because of income levels, population, and unique recreation needs.



In addition, the *Outdoor Recreation Plan* indicates that the number of children between the ages of 5 and 14 will continue to increase. This phenomenon is known as the “Eco-boom”: the parents of these children have delayed childbirth until a later age – in favor of pursuing careers.

New, evolving trends are impacting the need for additional services for Wilkesboro residents. The national elderly population continues to increase and transportation implications should be considered. With adults living longer, there will be increased demands for “walkable” communities. In general, pedestrian-friendly environments indicate that the sense of “community” is strong and active. The Town and surrounding communities will continue to increase in popularity as destinations for visitors nationwide. The trends consist of – but are not limited to:

- (1) Healthy lifestyles;
- (2) Alternative transportation; and
- (3) Reduction of environmental impacts.

Based on the survey results, which can be found in Appendix C, many residents value the pedestrian amenities. Most of the respondents appreciated the existing pedestrian facilities and commented on specific areas that need additional sidewalks.

### **2.3 Community Concerns, Needs, and Priorities**

The leadership of the Town of Wilkesboro is supportive of pedestrian planning. The Town Board unanimously passed a resolution to endorse the opportunity provided by the NCDOT grant – the formulation of a Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan.



In order to ensure a successful study, it is vital that the public user of pedestrian facilities be able to share their issues, needs, and desires. The methodology used in establishing a Pedestrian Plan for municipalities should always include citizen input.

To better understand the needs of facility users, several methods were conducted to identify specific concerns/demands of Town residents. The variety of methods not only offer options to local citizens but also presents additional information than cannot be assessed from one method. These methods consisted of (1) establishing a Steering Committee, (2) conducting a public meeting, and (3) distributing a mail-out survey.

## Developing public involvement and community awareness strategies

### (1) Steering Committee

To establish a group to act as a *guide* for the development of the Pedestrian Plan, a Steering Committee was formed during the initial planning process to identify the needs and priorities of pedestrians. The Steering Committee was composed of Town staff, Town Council, NCDOT Representative(s), the local transit authority, and the Yadkin River Greenway Council. The names of Steering Committee members can be found in the Acknowledgments section at the beginning of this document.

The Steering Committee acted as the principle advisory body to the Pedestrian Plan project. In addition, several meetings were held to evaluate the planning process at various stages. The Steering Committee members participated in the planning process by collecting data and conducting an inventory of existing conditions. Members of the Steering Committee were given specific investigative tasks - such as safety, transit, planning, recreation, etc. - which would eventually be assessed and evaluated as part of the plan.

### (2) Public Meeting

A public meeting was held offering Town residents the opportunity of giving input with regard to facilities, traffic, and safety. It is always imperative that the public be involved in the planning process in order that they may fully understand all of the different perspectives that evolve. The active participation of residents in the Town was crucial in developing a pedestrian plan that truly reflected the needs of the Town.

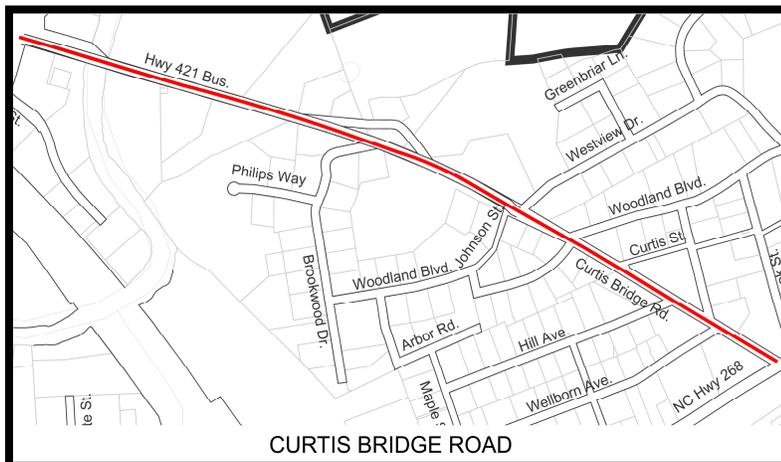




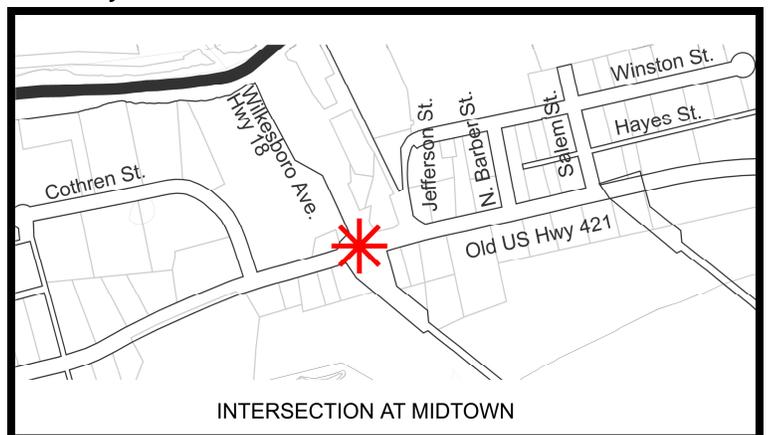
This public meeting was conducted early in the planning process – on October 11, 2005. Held at the Town Hall, this meeting allowed community residents an opportunity to voice their opinions on the topic of a pedestrian community. As part of the meeting, participants were asked to discuss the improvements that they deemed necessary for existing pedestrian facilities as well as needs for additional facilities. To encourage participation in the public meeting, the local newspaper advertised the upcoming meeting and the town staff contacted area business owners. Flyers were also distributed throughout the Town to notify local citizens and neighbors – offering them the opportunity of commenting on the needed improvements to pedestrian facilities and expressing their desire for the future addition of facilities.

Many of the local residents noted areas that were lacking in pedestrian facilities. The following is a list of areas of concern:

- (1) Curtis Bridge Road was considered a higher priority for pedestrian facilities than other areas within the Town limit.

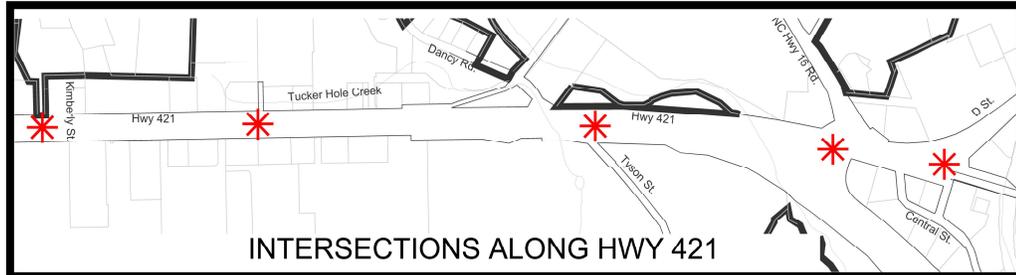


- (2) Intersection of Main Street (Old US Hwy. 421) and Hwy. 18 - known locally as Midtown. This major intersection is a trailhead for the Yadkin River Greenway (located nearby) and has limited pedestrian access. The intersection is very dangerous due to the lack of pedestrian facilities, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals.





- (3) The Intersections along Hwy. 421 at Commercial/Retail areas  
The 421 corridor was identified as dangerous due to lack of pedestrian facilities, particularly at traffic intersections where pedestrian typically attempt to cross Highway 421.

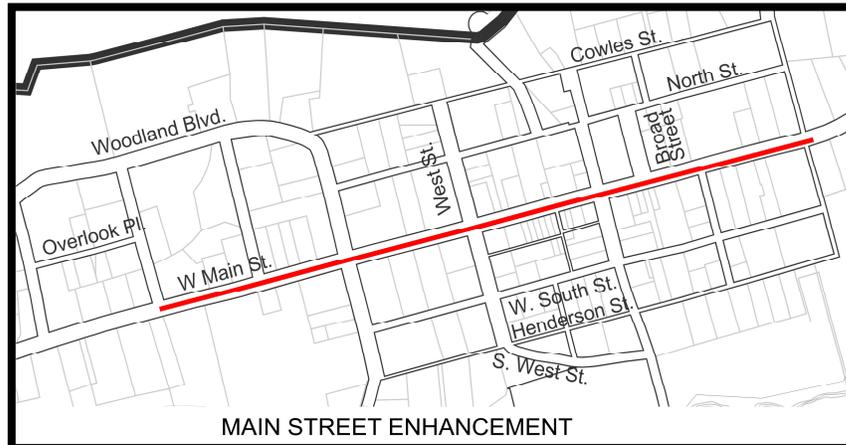


- (4) The Intersection of Hwy. 16 and Westwood Lane was discussed as needing pedestrian improvements due to the existing shopping center which is a major pedestrian generator.





- (5) Main Street Enhancement - Main Street in the downtown district is considered to be the “center” of the Town for many residents. The general public expressed the need for enhancing this area with more pedestrian-friendly sidewalks, improving the parking facilities, and slowing vehicular traffic. Given the current and future opportunities in the downtown area, an enhancement of the Main Street corridor would greatly improve pedestrian conditions.



### (3) Mail-Out Survey

A mail-out survey was also distributed to Town residents. This type of correspondence was used to solicit input from the citizens of Wilkesboro, in addition to conducting the public meeting. The survey results can be found in Appendix C of this document. In summary, the survey results indicated that several areas within the Town needed additional facilities, while some areas only needed repairs. The survey also asked for sidewalk needs to be identified – with the responses being the following:

- Main Street
- Curtis Bridge Road
- Oakwood Road
- College Street
- Highway 268
- Highway 421
- Yadkin River Greenway
- Woodland Boulevard

## 2.4 Staff and Agency Concerns and Issues

The Town staff plays a major role in the development of the Wilkesboro Pedestrian Plan. Input from the Town’s departments is *critical* in understanding particular concerns and issues that exist. In addition, the collaboration *between* departments gives a better “total” understanding of issues and concerns that are present. The



following are issues, problems, and/or concerns, which were identified by specific municipal departments - as they relate to pedestrians and the planning process.

### Planning Department

The Planning Department recognizes there is a need to improve the “connectivity” of the Town’s pedestrian facilities. Although the Town’s *existing* pedestrian system functions well, there are several areas that lack pedestrian facilities. Many of the local streets and roads may have sidewalks on *portions* of the street but the sidewalks do not continue the entire length that is needed and/or connect to other sidewalks. Additionally, the Planning Department recognizes the need to address pedestrian facilities for future development. The following are areas of concern, which need addressing - High Pedestrian Walking Areas, Major Retail/Commercial Areas, and Connectivity Issues.

#### High Pedestrian Walking Areas:

- College Street
- Main Street
- South Bridge Street
- Wilkesboro Ave./Oakwood Rd.
- West Street
- South Street
- Henderson Street
- South Cherry Street
- NC Hwy 268
- Curtis Bridge Road
- Woodland Blvd.
- School Street
- Collegiate Street
- Old Hwy. 421
- Yadkin Valley Greenway

#### Major Retail/Commercial Areas:

- 421 Corridor (Highway/Business)
- Highway 268
- Main Street (Downtown)

#### Identify Connectivity Issues:

- Intersection of Main Street/Wilkesboro Ave./Old Hwy. 421
- S. West Street to Cub Creek Park
- College St. and Corporation St. Intersection w/ S. Cherry St.
- Oakwood Road
- Westwood Park to Westwood Hills

#### Concerns/Issues that affect Pedestrians:

- Insufficient marked crosswalks
- Wilkesboro Comm. College
- Wilkesboro Elementary School
- Tyson Foods Complex
- Cub Creek Park
- Social Services/Health Depart.
- Episcopal Church
- Main Street
- ADA Compliance
- Insufficient Signage





### Public Works Department

The Public Works Department maintains existing sidewalks as well as constructs new pedestrian facilities. The Public Works Department has identified several areas that require improvement to existing sidewalks. These improvements are of several different varieties – general repairs and the installation of ADA-compliant structures and devices. The majority of these areas requiring improvements are located in Downtown along Main Street. Broad Street and South Bridge Street were also noted as needing sidewalk improvements.

### Parks and Recreation Department

Connectivity to existing parks is a main objective addressed by the Parks and Recreation Department. Currently the Town's parks have limited pedestrian access to park facilities - not only from other destinations, but also locally (where it is necessary for pedestrians to cross streets in order to access the parks). An area of concern for the Parks and Recreation Department is the pedestrian crossing at South Bridge Street which bisects Cub Creek Park



### Police Department

The main concern for the Police Department is to ensure that pedestrian facilities are safe for all users. The top priority for the department is to make improvements at dangerous street intersections. In addition, the staff has noted other departmental concerns such as speeding, high traffic areas, and a lack of sidewalks on specific streets. The following are areas of concern:

- Midtown Intersection
- Intersection of Hwy 16 and Westwood Lane



Safety should be a major factor in the enhancement of the walking community. Although it is impossible to prevent all injuries from occurring, countermeasures can greatly reduce the risk. The most significant injuries incurred from walking are vehicular in nature. Most pedestrian corridors travel parallel to a roadway and/or intersect with it at some point. It is important to recognize hazards and potential conflicts with the driving public - thereby mitigating the possible injuries. Pedestrian



facilities should also meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. These pedestrian facilities should accommodate all users - including those with mobility impairment, sensory deficits, and/or cognitive impairments. Due to the continual increase in the elderly population, sensory deficits – particularly partial loss of hearing or vision – are more and more common.

## 2.5 Identify Private Sector Concerns/Perspectives

Wilkesboro and the surrounding community is a growing, thriving area. Residential and commercial developments have a major impact on the pedestrian environment. To develop an effective pedestrian plan, connectivity in residential neighborhoods and pedestrian connections to commercial development help create a pedestrian network that encourages people to “walk” to a destination rather than use an automobile. In order to develop a more functional, pedestrian network, the perspectives of the private sector were identified.

Downtown business owners understand that pedestrian traffic is an important component of successful businesses. The recent improvements at the former courthouse have enhanced the appearance of the downtown area and created a pedestrian-friendly environment. The private sector desires to continue the enhancement of pedestrian facilities to include pedestrian connections to



residential areas, downtown parking areas, and an aesthetically pleasing streetscape along Main Street. Commercial corridors such as Hwy. 421, have been noted as lacking in pedestrian facilities, which is a concern for the Town. These areas are generally considered “suburban sprawl” which historically has been vehicular oriented versus pedestrians. These areas, as well as suburban residential areas, are acknowledged as being deficient in regards to pedestrian facilities.

## 2.6 Pedestrian Friendliness of Local Transportation System

Every year there are pedestrians, who are injured in automobile accidents. 4,808 pedestrians were killed in traffic accidents in the nation in 2002. Many of these fatalities were due to unsafe conditions (such as poor surface conditions), inadequate signage, or high traffic intersections. Each year, NCDOT releases pedestrian accident data, which identifies location, traffic speed, road type, and

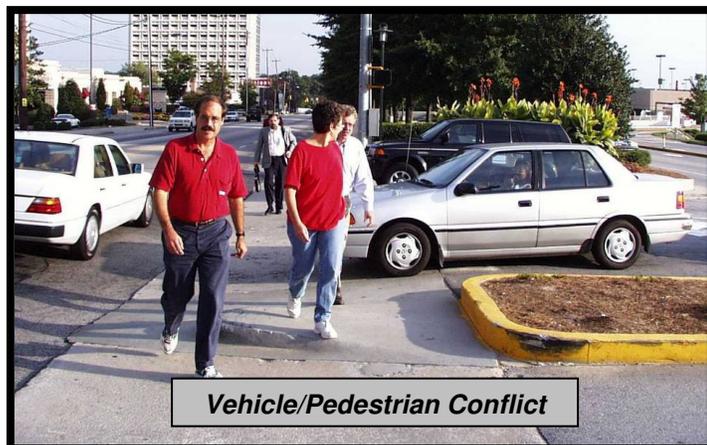


accident type. The following summary identifies areas in Wilkesboro where pedestrian fatalities (involving automobiles) have occurred. This data is used to prevent future pedestrian accidents in these problematic areas. Rather than using data from one year, this summary is from 1997 through 2003. By accumulating data over a period of years, accident patterns can be developed.

Over the past seven (7) years, there have been twenty-four (24) recorded, vehicular-related, pedestrian crashes in Wilkesboro. Most of the crashes occurred in parking lots and non-roadway locations. However, during the preparation of this document a fatal pedestrian crash occurred along Hwy 16 South of Hwy 421. The summary of pedestrian crashes obtained from NCDOT is described below:

- Fault: (14) motorists' fault, (3) pedestrians' fault, (2) both at fault, and (5) neither at fault or unknown
- Location: (2) intersections, (19) non-roadway locations, and (3) non-intersection locations
- Condition: (5) crossing/in roadway, (6) off roadway, (8) unique vehicle type/ vehicle action, and (5) unusual circumstances
- Speed Limit: (3) 10 mph, (3) 15 mph, (3) 25 mph, (3) 35 mph, and (12) unknown
- Road Type: (5) local city streets, (18) parking lots, and (1) private property
- Rural/Urban Location: (24) rural
- Number of Lanes: (1) six-lane road, (1) four-lane road, (1) three-lane road, (4) two-lane roads, and (17) unknown
- Crash Type: (1) assault with vehicle, (8) backing vehicle – parking lot, (1) dart out, (1) dash, (1) motorist failed to yield, (2) motorist turn/merge – direction unknown/other, (1) off roadway - other, (5) off roadway – parking lot, (3) other – unusual, and (1) vehicle-vehicle/object

The fatality data indicates that the majority of vehicular-pedestrian accidents occur in parking lots. These accidents may be due to the lack of sidewalks for pedestrians to utilize. The National Center for Statistics and Analysis indicate that more than two-thirds of all pedestrian fatalities occur in urban areas; and, in many urban areas, pedestrian accidents account for between 30 and 40 percent of all traffic fatalities. Almost half of fatal accidents involving pedestrians occur between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and midnight.



Children between the ages of 5 and 15 have the highest pedestrian rate of injury in the United States; however, pedestrian accident data for the state of North Carolina  
*October, 2007*



indicates that adults between the ages of 30 and 39 are the highest percentage age group for vehicular-related pedestrian accidents – an age group with greater mobility. (A high rate of child injuries can be partly associated to uneducated pedestrians in this age group). The elderly population also has a high number of pedestrian injuries and is more likely to suffer fatalities from vehicular-related injuries than other age groups. The fatality rate for the elderly population is nearly *double* as compared for people in other age groups; and, it will continue to grow in population (due to “baby boomers” reaching retirement age).

## 2.7 Street and Highway System Access



Many of the streets and roads in Wilkesboro were originally designed to meet NCDOT standards, which is typical of state municipalities. Although many of these roadways were developed using NCDOT standards, the requirements have changed over the years. In addition, some of the roadways have changed usages. Areas that were once rural and undeveloped may now be residential communities or have commercial uses.

More consideration is given to “pedestrian design” now than it was thirty years ago. Traffic calming devices and intersection treatments have been modified to create better traffic safety. And, as mentioned earlier in this section, many of the intersections need marked crosswalks to meet current requirements. Other than special circumstances, the Town should continue using these standards. In some cases, topography, property lines, or existing utilities may require deviation to meet minimum requirements. These exceptions should be evaluated on a case by case basis.

## 2.8 Pedestrian System Access

Although limited in the amount of pedestrian corridors within the Town, the existing sidewalks are mainly located in areas that produce a high trip generation. Major destinations such as the downtown area, community college, and local public buildings provide pedestrian corridors resulting in good connectivity.



The destinations which are unsuccessful in providing connectivity are primarily strip shopping centers which were developed in the last 20 years. Although the lack of sidewalks prevents many from walking to these areas, there is still a demand to provide such facilities.

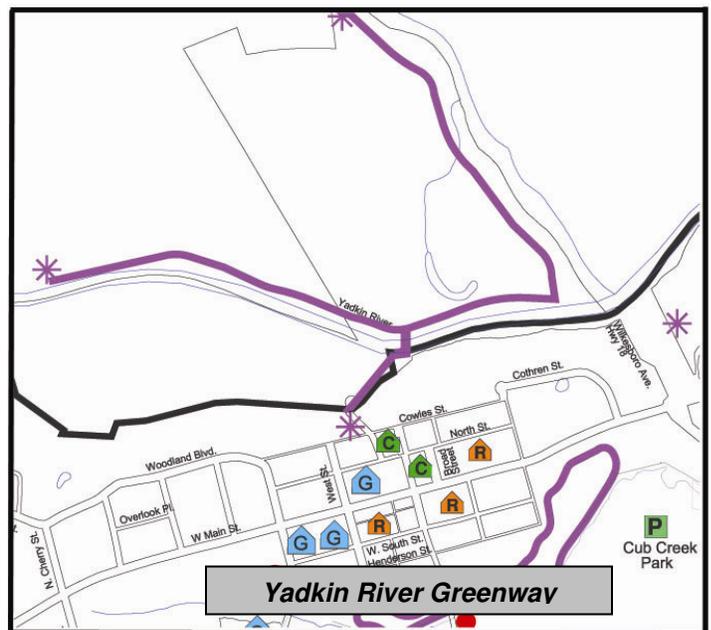
As with many towns and cities across the country, recreational walking trails have become a major component of a pedestrian system. Many of these facilities do not provide connectivity but are very popular due to the natural setting they offer. Cub Creek Park is an excellent example of such a facility. The park attracts many residents, who desire a walking experience that an urban sidewalk cannot provide.

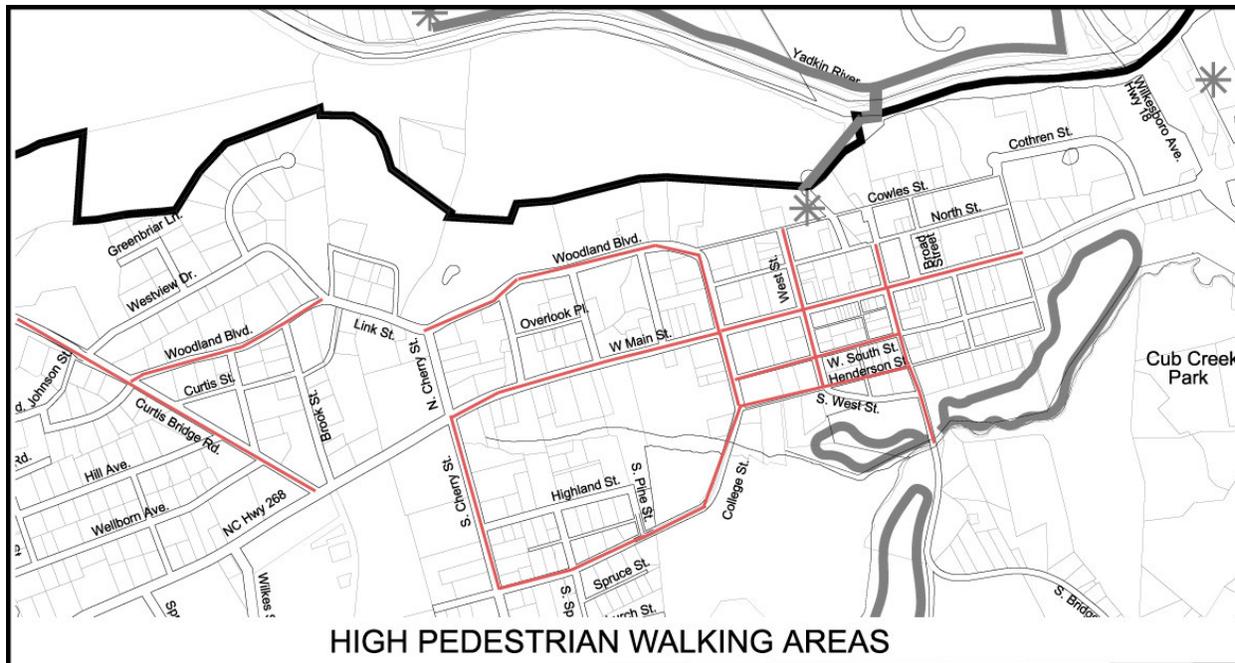
### ***Walking trip characteristics***

The main characteristic of the typical pedestrian's "walking trip" is the use of the sidewalks within the Town. As expected, the most widely-used sidewalks are located in the downtown district. In addition, there are areas such as Curtis Bridge Road, where portions of the road have no sidewalk; yet, have daily pedestrian activity. Westwood Lane is heavily used by the residential neighborhood to access the local park and shopping center. Although many consider the Yadkin River Greenway a recreation trail, it serves as a local amenity for pedestrians - either for exercise or access to destinations. The following is a list of pedestrian facilities that have high pedestrian activity:

#### **High Pedestrian Walking Areas**

- College Street
- Main Street (east and west)
- South Bridge Street
- West Street
- South Street
- Henderson Street
- Wilkesboro Ave./Oakwood Rd.
- Curtis Bridge Road
- Woodland Blvd.
- Westwood Lane
- School Street
- Collegiate Street
- Old Hwy 421
- Yadkin River Greenway
- Wilkes Community College
- South Cherry Street
- NC Hwy 268





“Walking trips” are typically broken down into two main categories – recreational walking and destination walking. Many walkers, who are walking for recreation and/or physical activity, utilize the trails at Cub Creek Park, Wilkes Community College, and the Yadkin River Greenway. These facilities are in excellent condition and are very popular among community residents. Other primary users of pedestrian facilities are traveling to and from particular destinations – such as shopping centers, downtown, and/or public buildings.

The degree of connectivity varies according to location - with the downtown area providing more sidewalks than other areas, which are detached from the central downtown core.

US Highway 421, which is west of the downtown area, features major retail and commercial businesses; but, it currently has no pedestrian facilities along the roadway and is a major obstacle to connectivity.



Another shopping area (located at US Highway 16 and Westwood Lane) is a pedestrian generator without any pedestrian facilities. There are many other public

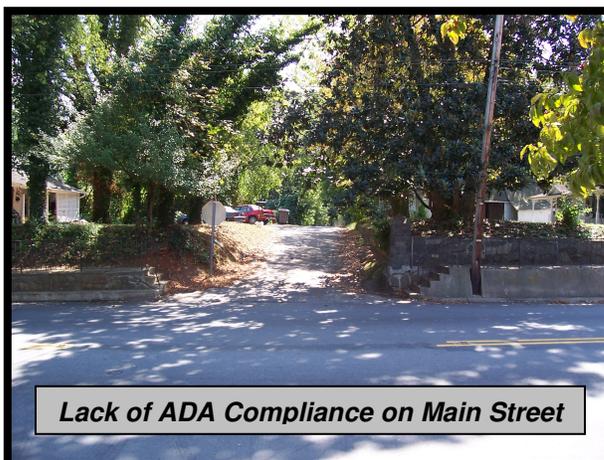


facilities and residential neighborhoods that need sidewalks, in addition to the previously mentioned areas. These destination points need pedestrian facilities as an alternative to vehicular transportation. These corridors include:

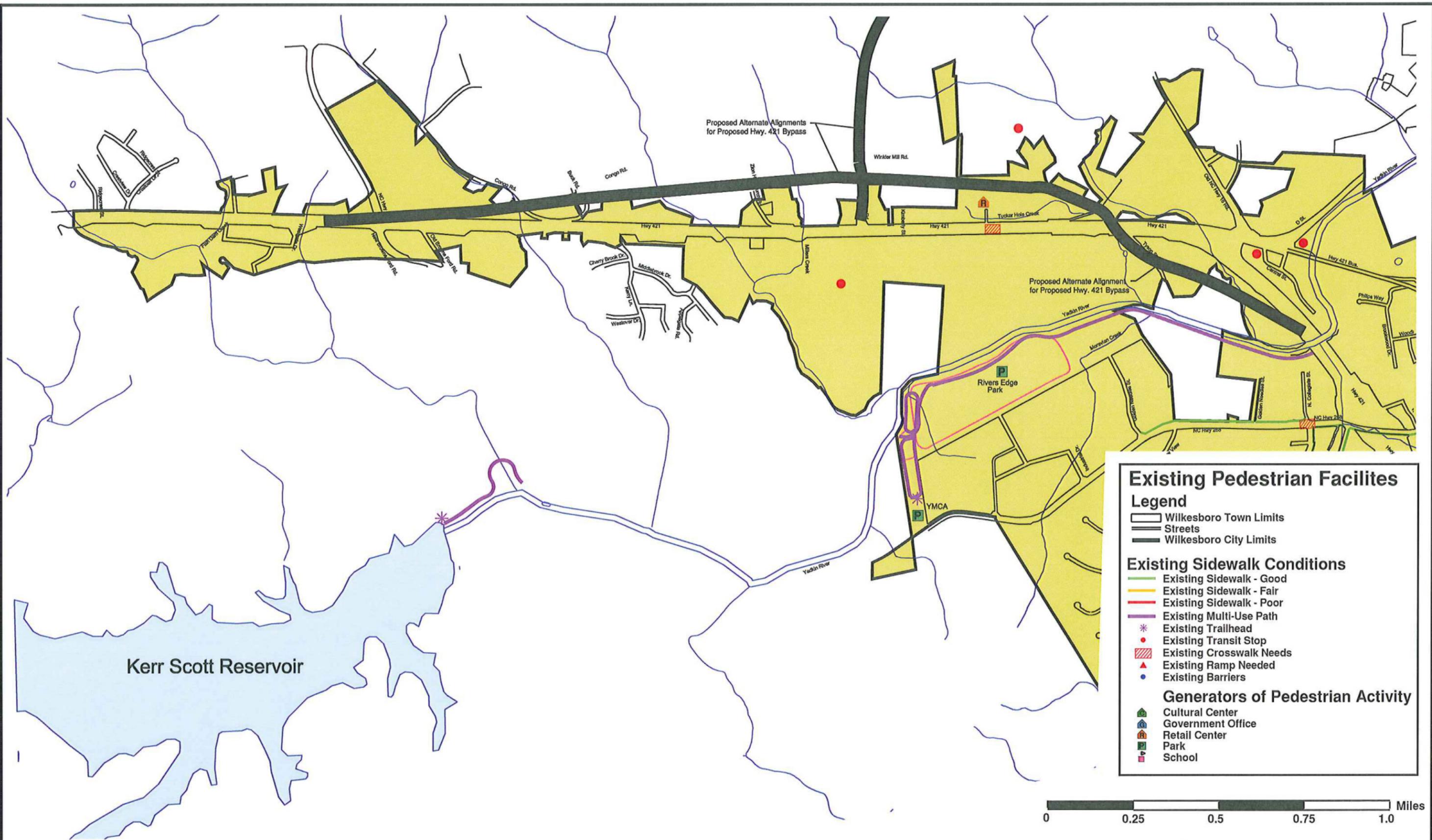
- Main Street/ Highway 268
- Curtis Bridge Road
- South Cherry Street
- Westwood Lane
- Woodland Boulevard
- Yadkin River Greenway (See map on page 12)

## 2.9 Inventory and Assessment of Existing Facilities

The Town of Wilkesboro is committed to improving the opportunities for pedestrian transportation. The current pedestrian system in Wilkesboro consists primarily of sidewalks many of which were built in the downtown area prior to World War II. The Town of Wilkesboro Steering Committee and McGill Associates underwent a process of creating a pedestrian facility inventory. This inventory delineates not only the location of existing sidewalks but also the condition of the facilities, as shown in *Map 1 (West) and Map 2 (East): Existing Pedestrian Facilities* found at the end of this section. This inventory includes condition of sidewalks, crosswalk needs, existing barriers, transit, and intersections (that required curb ramps). This inventory was utilized to identify needed linkages that would improve connectivity and ADA needs to be addressed as part of the adopted Pedestrian Plan.



This inventory was made to assess both the condition of facilities and whether they are ADA compliant. The maps show that the inner, older neighborhoods and the Hwy. 268 corridor of Wilkesboro provide more sidewalks than the outer, residential neighborhoods. The accessible ramps are more concentrated in business districts and along transit routes. The following is a list of these areas.



**Existing Pedestrian Facilities Legend**

- Wilkesboro Town Limits
- Streets
- Wilkesboro City Limits

**Existing Sidewalk Conditions**

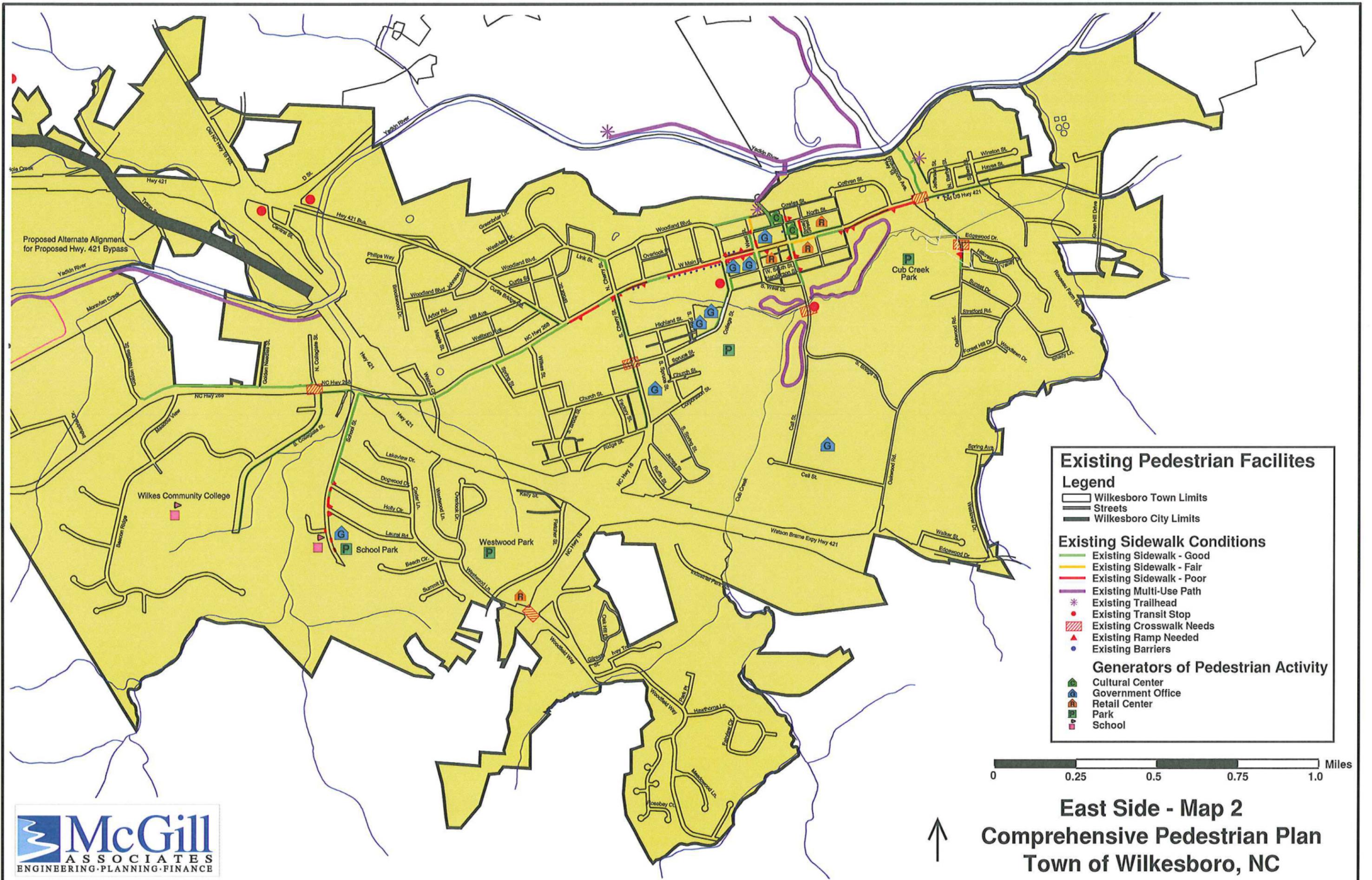
- Existing Sidewalk - Good
- Existing Sidewalk - Fair
- Existing Sidewalk - Poor
- Existing Multi-Use Path
- \* Existing Trailhead
- Existing Transit Stop
- ▨ Existing Crosswalk Needs
- ▲ Existing Ramp Needed
- Existing Barriers

**Generators of Pedestrian Activity**

- 🏠 Cultural Center
- 🏛️ Government Office
- 🏪 Retail Center
- 🌳 Park
- 🎓 School



**West Side - Map 1**  
**Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan**  
**Town of Wilkesboro, NC**



### Existing Pedestrian Facilities Legend

- Wilkesboro Town Limits
- Streets
- Wilkesboro City Limits

### Existing Sidewalk Conditions

- Existing Sidewalk - Good
- Existing Sidewalk - Fair
- Existing Sidewalk - Poor
- Existing Multi-Use Path
- Existing Trailhead
- Existing Transit Stop
- Existing Crosswalk Needs
- Existing Ramp Needed
- Existing Barriers

### Generators of Pedestrian Activity

- Cultural Center
- Government Office
- Retail Center
- Park
- School





## Sidewalks

The majority of sidewalks in Wilkesboro are located in the downtown business district and along the western portion of Town near Wilkes Community College. Most of the sidewalks are in fair or good condition within the Town limits, however the Town is insufficient in the amount of sidewalks compared to the amount of roads.



### Sidewalks in Poor Condition

Main Street/Hwy. 268  
Broad Street  
Oakwood Road  
West Street  
School Street

## Pedestrian Intersections

Crosswalk and signal needs are also shown on the Map 1 and Map 2. There are many intersections that require pedestrian signals, crosswalks, areas of refuge, or a combination of these needs. The following are intersections and/or corridors that lack pedestrian facilities or are in need of improvements.

### Existing Crosswalk Needs

Intersection of Oakwood St. and Edgewood Dr.  
Intersection of S. Bridge St. and Greenway Trail  
Intersection of S. Collegiate St. and Hwy.268  
Intersection of NC Hwy 18 and Westwood Lane  
Intersection of Wilkesboro Ave. and Hwy 268

### Existing Ramp Needs

Main Street/Hwy. 268  
West Street  
Oakwood Road  
School Street





### **Barriers**

In addition to the sidewalks and curb ramps, the inventory delineates noncompliant sidewalks and sidewalk obstacles. Although many of the existing sidewalks are in good condition, there are non-compliant sidewalks. These areas consist of walks which require repair, replacement, and/or ADA compliance, or have barriers.

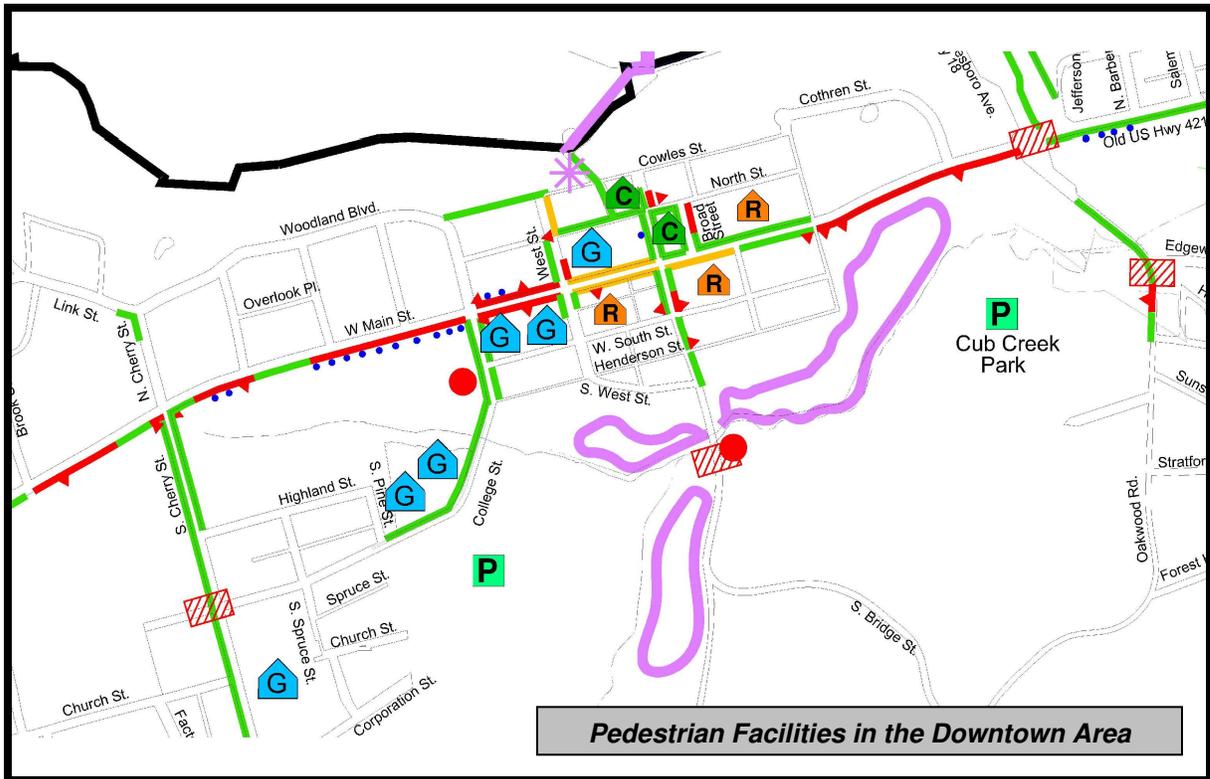
Barriers consist of objects located on sidewalks which prevent a safe lateral clearance. The Existing Facilities Inventory Map locates these sidewalk obstacles including barriers such as utility poles or fire hydrants. These conditions are typical of downtown neighborhoods areas - particularly older downtown districts. For example, areas along Main Street have utility poles, decorative light poles, signage, and other obstacles, which create barriers for pedestrians.

Other barriers, which limit pedestrians on sidewalks, include – but are not limited to - steps and traffic signal controllers. The obstacles created by these barriers are difficult to resolve as compared to other tasks, such as repairing damaged sidewalks. The power poles located on Main Street can be very expensive to relocate; similarly, traffic signal controllers require a qualified person to operate/relocate the equipment. There are several solutions to these problems – one being to widen the sidewalk - thus providing adequate width for pedestrians. But there are still drawbacks to this solution, particularly in the downtown district, where existing buildings and property lines can limit the widening of sidewalks. Therefore, it will be important to evaluate *all* the different options regarding sidewalk improvements.

### **Downtown Area**

The downtown area has a mixture of sidewalks varying from good to poor condition. Main Street has the majority of poor sidewalks, while streets such as College and Bridge are in good condition. In many areas, the sidewalks may be adequate, but issues such as power poles, lack of accessible ramps, and unmarked crosswalks create unsafe conditions for pedestrians.

Another issue is the lack of sidewalks in many areas of Downtown. There are many pedestrians that walk along streets that provide no pedestrian facilities. Roadways such as Curtis Bridge Road, Woodlawn Blvd. and Westwood Lane carry a high volume of pedestrian traffic, but provide no sidewalks.



### Greenways

The recent completion of the Yadkin River Greenway has provided an extremely vital connection from the Greenway to Downtown Wilkesboro, which many new multi-use trails lack.

The majority of the Greenway is located on the north side of the Yadkin River between the Town of North Wilkesboro and the Town of Wilkesboro. This connection allows pedestrians to walk from Downtown Wilkesboro to Downtown North Wilkesboro along a pedestrian-friendly route.

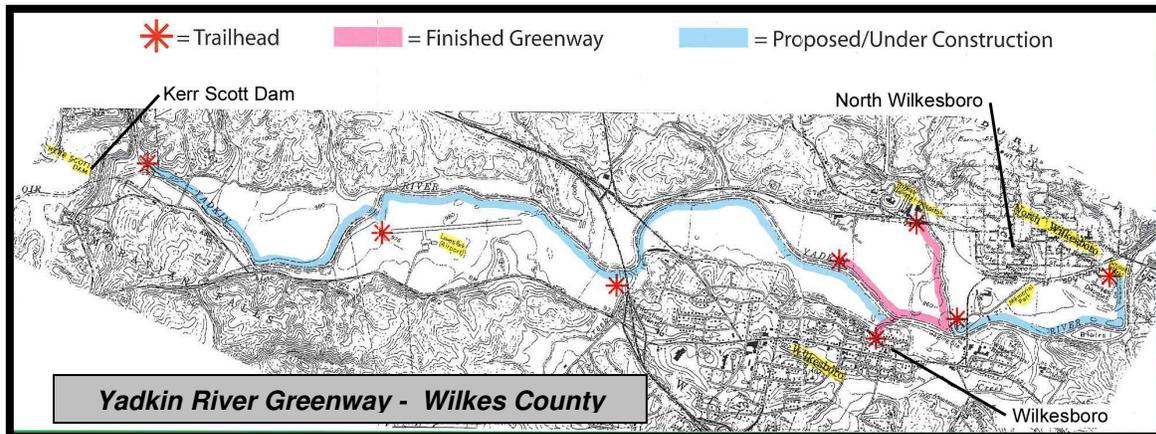


This Yadkin River Greenway has become very popular among citizens within the Town and nearby communities. The success of this linear park has generated funding for future phases, which would propose the continuing of the greenway along Yadkin River within Wilkes County. From a regional perspective, adjacent



counties are also implementing greenways along the Yadkin River. In particular, Yadkin and Caldwell Counties have been planning trails along the Yadkin, which could significantly increase regional tourist attraction.

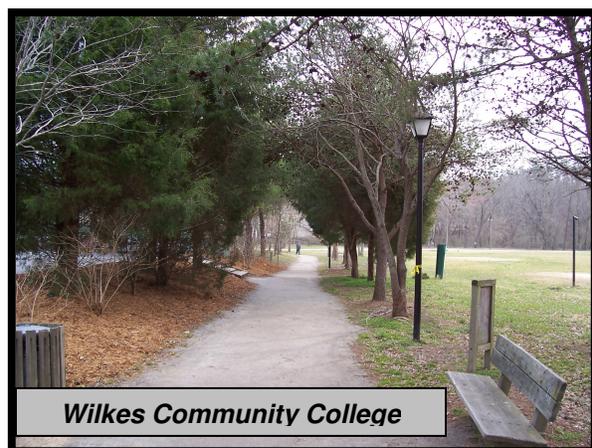
Future plans for the Yadkin River Greenway include a western extension along the Yadkin River toward the W. Kerr Scott Reservoir. Pedestrian connections to the YMCA and Rivers Edge Park are also planned as a part of the Yadkin River Greenway extension.



The Yadkin River Greenway Council is a private, non-profit organization, which began in 1995, and involves citizens from the Town of Wilkesboro and the surrounding area. The Town has supported the Yadkin River Greenway through in-kind contributions, the pursuit of easements, and financial contributions. In addition to the financial support of the Greenway, the Greenway Council stresses safety. The Yadkin River Greenway Council has funded the purchase of signs and literature, which delineate safety and etiquette expectations of trail users; thereby, ensuring more enjoyable experiences for all participants.

### **Wilkes Community College**

The sidewalks near Wilkes Community College are mainly located on Hwy 268, S. Collegiate Street, and School Street. These pedestrian facilities are not as old as many are in the downtown area and are in good condition



**- END OF SECTION -**



# Section 3

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## EXISTING PLANS AND POLICIES

### 3.1 Overview

Numerous planning documents and recommendations have been previously prepared relating to issues addressing current and future pedestrian facilities for the Town of Wilkesboro. Such reports and documents are important efforts and need to be addressed and incorporated into this pedestrian plan. Many of these planning documents, which address greenways, transportation, public transportation, capital improvements, and land use planning, provide valuable insight and background toward future decisions made for the Town. The following are key documents and studies, which should be reviewed in their entirety.

### 3.2 Transportation Plans

#### **Projects within 2006-2012 NCDOT**

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation (DBPT) encourage comprehensive pedestrian planning by counties and municipalities – statewide. As aforementioned, DBPT coordinates its planning efforts with the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is a state program that serves as a guide in establishing long-range goals for improving pedestrian transportation. As a result, the Town of Wilkesboro was awarded a grant in 2004 for the development of a Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan. NCDOT has been instrumental in the partial funding of the Yadkin River Greenway and will continue to play a major role in future extensions to that pedestrian corridor.

#### **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

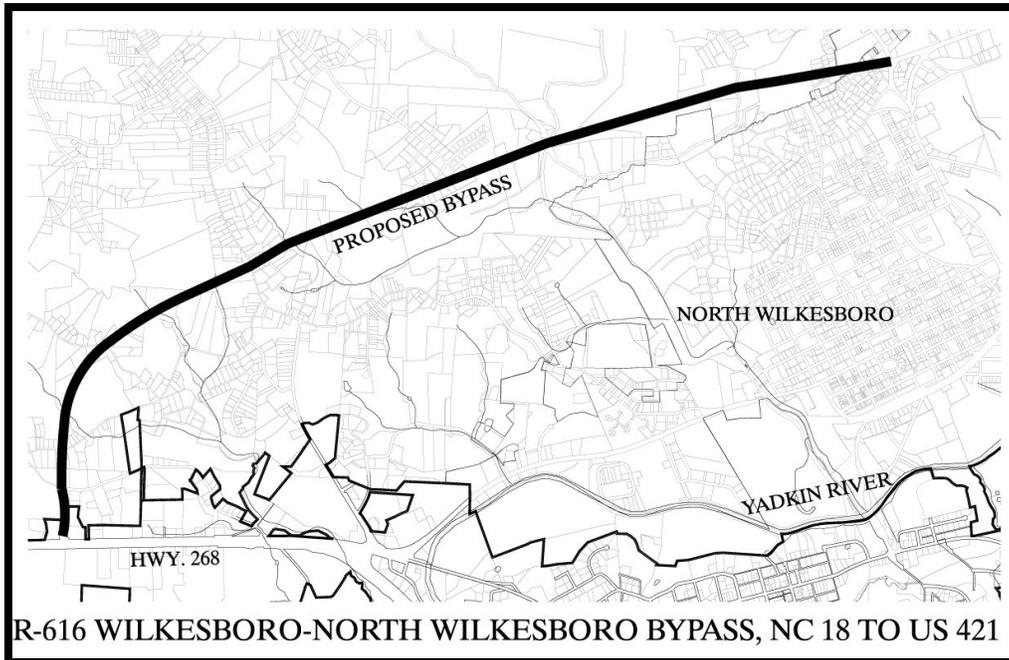
It is important to evaluate other existing initiatives of the Pedestrian Plan in order to appropriately incorporate current proposed improvements into the pedestrian plan. NCDOT has established priorities, which are addressed in the 2006-2012 Traffic Improvements Program (TIP). The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a statewide program used as a guide for NCDOT in establishing long range goals for improving pedestrian transportation. Numerous transportation, bridge, and enhancement projects are being partially funded by TIP – currently and/or in the future. These proposed projects are identified within the “Region D” thoroughfare plan, which includes Wilkes County (as published in September, 1993). The following projects (with location, stage, and schedule) are currently being planned and, although long-range, should be taken into consideration in the formulation of the master pedestrian plan.



**NC 18/NC 268 (Wilkesboro-North Wilkesboro Bypass)**

TIP Project ID# I-616, majority on new location.

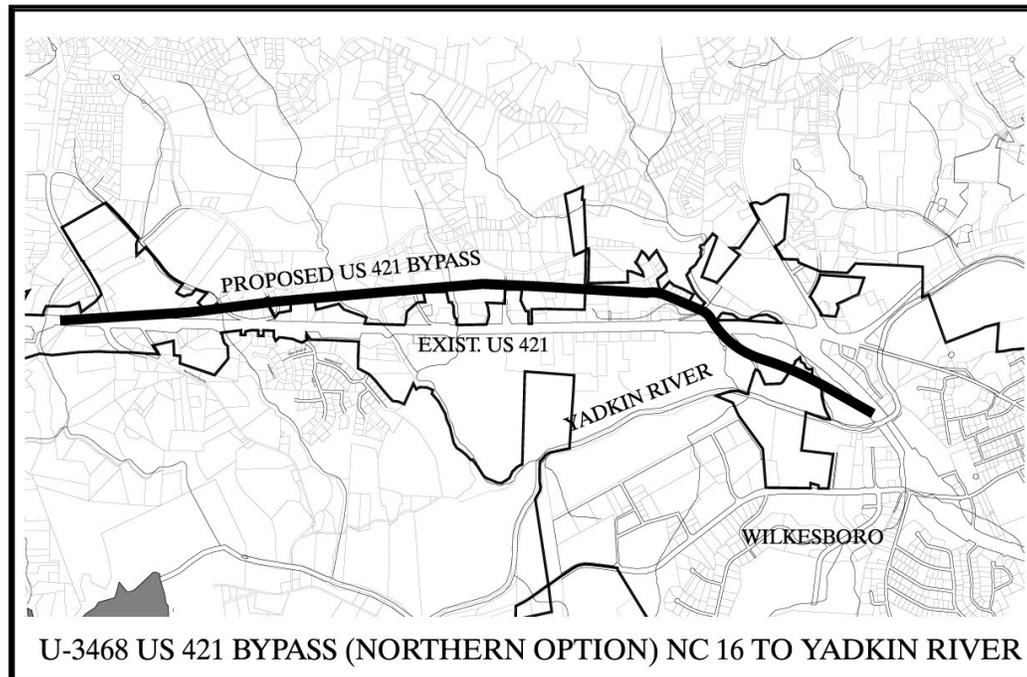
Status: Planning/Design in progress; R/W Acquisition to begin in 2010



**US 421 Bypass (Northern Option) –  
from NC 16 to Yadkin River Overpass**

TIP Project ID# I-3468, majority on new location

Status: Planning/Design in progress; R/W Acquisition to begin in 2010



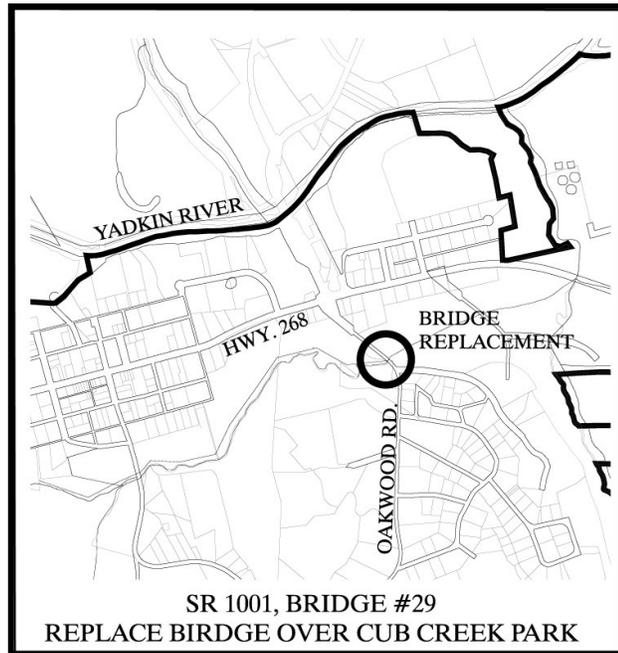


**Federal Bridge Projects**

**SR 1001 (Oakwood Road),  
replacement of Bridge #29  
over Cub Creek**

TIP Project ID# B-4676; actual placement location unknown at this time.

Status: Conduct Feasibility Study to evaluate the geometric needs of Oakwood Road.



**Enhancement Projects**

**Rehabilitation of the Old Wilkes County Courthouse for  
Transportation Museum/Visitors Center**

TIP Project ID# E-4826

Status: Under Construction

**Yadkin River Greenway: Phase 2:  
South Bank Yadkin River to Curtis Bridge Road  
and US 421 Segment 1A and 1B**

TIP Project ID# E-4987

Status: Scheduled for Feasibility Study

**Thoroughfare Plan**

Candidate roadway projects for possible future improvements are identified within the "Region D" thoroughfare plan, which includes Wilkes County (as published in September, 1993). Although listed projects are for long-range planning purposes only, consideration should be given to noted projects specific to the Town of Wilkesboro within the Pedestrian Plan.



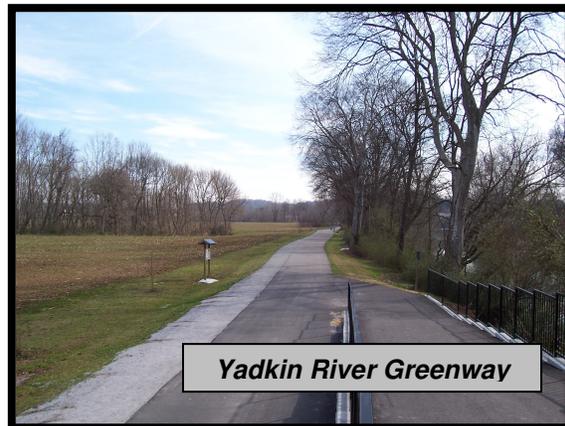
### 3.3 Local Plans and Initiatives

#### **The Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Initiative**

DBPT has coordinated its planning efforts with TIP in the integrating of bicycle and pedestrian improvements. DBPT developed *The Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Initiative* in 2004 as a means of providing financial assistance to local municipalities in developing comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian transportation. In 2004, the Town of Wilkesboro was awarded a grant by NCDOT to develop a Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan. This grant program was developed by the DBPT and the Statewide Planning Branch (SWP) as a means of encouraging the development of comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian plans.

#### **Greenway Plans**

The Yadkin River Greenway constitutes more than a mile of contiguous multi-use trail, which is located primarily along the Yadkin River. The Town of Wilkesboro recently completed a trail spur connecting the greenway to the downtown district. A major portion of the greenway was funded through NCDOT with Town's intentions being to continue seeking funding from this entity for future improvements. The Yadkin River Greenway has become a great pedestrian asset for Wilkesboro and the surrounding community. Future greenway phases will include a connection to Kerr Scott Reservoir (to the west) and Smoot Park in North Wilkesboro (to the east). Once this greenway is realized, it will create a major connecting corridor - not only for the Town and community - but also, for the region.



The Yadkin River is an excellent source of cultural and natural resources in the region. The headwaters of the river flow from northern Caldwell County through Wilkesboro and continue to the eastern seaboard. Caldwell, Wilkes, Surry, and Yadkin County are now in the planning process of developing a greenway (along the Yadkin River), which would eventually connect Wilkes County to neighboring counties creating a multi-jurisdictional greenway corridor

#### **Public Transportation**

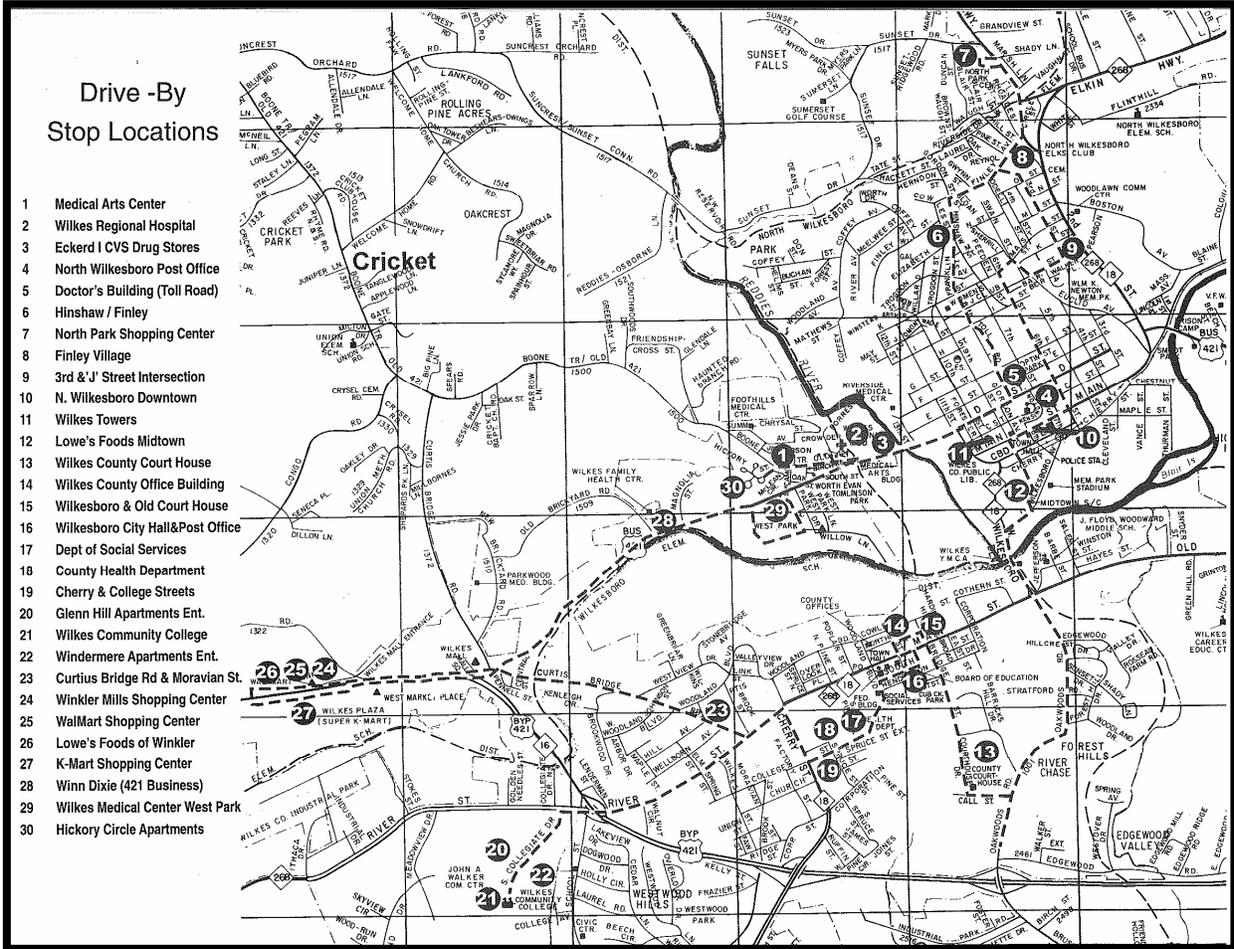
In addition to projects proposed within TIP, local public transportation "transit" is another entity offering an alternative to private, vehicular transportation. The "Wilkes Express" is operated by Wilkes Transportation Authority, a non-profit organization, which provides bus transit within the Town of Wilkesboro and the surrounding area. The shuttle is safe, convenient, and gives the user an alternative to using of their private vehicles. The Wilkes Express has standard



scheduling and bus stops to provide user-friendly service. The locations of additional, proposed stops have been coordinated with the proposed pedestrian facilities. The proposed bus stops can be found on Map 3 and 4 (Proposed Pedestrian Facilities Maps).



**Public Transportation within Town Limits**

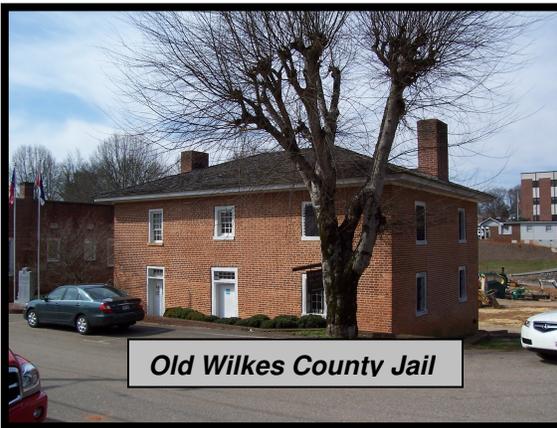


**Wilkes Transportation Authority Transit Stop Locations**



The Wilkes Transportation Authority (WTA) promotes the public to use transit by means of the Wilkes Express Bus Shuttle. This system has been active for many years and is vital to many local residents as a means of transportation. Not only does the system provide an alternative mode of transportation, but it is also beneficial for other reasons. Choosing to utilize the shuttle over driving their vehicles reduces the impact on the environment and road systems. In addition, to have a successful public transportation program, one needs a good pedestrian system.

### 3.4 Regional Plans



#### Blue Ridge National Heritage Area

The Blue Ridge Mountains and National Forest were identified in 2003 by Congress and President George W. Bush as the nation's 24<sup>th</sup> National Heritage Area. This "national heritage" in western portion of North Carolina was earmarked as a developmental area where the natural resources must be preserved. The program offers funding for innovative projects, which incorporate the preservation and protection of natural assets, while promoting the heritage of the area. Wilkesboro has partnered with Wilkes County to share in heritage planning. Projects proposed for funding (which relate to pedestrian facilities within the Town) include the Yadkin River Greenway, the Revitalization Study of Wilkesboro, and the Completion of the Wilkes Heritage Museum.

### 3.5 Land Use Plans

The Town of Wilkesboro's land use plan is of a traditional variety - composed of residential, commercial, and industrial areas – all of which are zoned separately. The downtown area is primarily zoned Central Business, General Business, Single Family Residential, and General Residential. The Yadkin River, which borders the northern Town limits and downtown area, functions as a natural divider for neighboring North Wilkesboro. The majority of the southern portion of the Town is a mixture of residential zones. This is typical for most towns. As a community grows and expands, the former agricultural areas become fertile ground for residential sprawl. The western portion of the Town is mainly General Business. Highway 421 is the primarily stimulate that has generated a mixture of retail shopping center, car dealerships, restaurants of other business. The Town of Wilkesboro Zoning and ETJ Map can be found in Appendix F.



### 3.6 Programs and Initiatives Currently Planned

#### Yadkin River Heritage Corridor Partnership

Wilkes County recently received a grant from The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area for feasibility and economic impact study of the multi-county Yadkin River Heritage Corridor Partnership Initiative. In addition, the National Park Service (NPS) is assisting with this effort with planning in this effort. NPS Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program works collaboratively with the Partnership in developing a corridor master plan to conserve natural resources and create outdoor recreational opportunities.



#### Encouragement Programs

Several annual (town and community) events have begun to attract large pedestrian populations – in particular, Merlefest. Thousands of people travel to Wilkesboro in the spring of each year to attend this seasonal outing. Pedestrian corridors become extremely necessary during events such as this in that they relieve traffic congestion and reduce air pollution. As pedestrian connectivity increases, the area may see an increase in the number of functions (which attract additional visitors/tourists).

*Annual events attract the pedestrian population*

Wilkes Transportation Authority is an important entity that promotes pedestrian transportation. The Wilkes Express is a daily transit system, which operates within Wilkes County and provides an alternative to vehicles.

#### Piedmont Authority of Regional Transportation (PART)

PART is a regional public transportation system based in the Triad area, whose focus is to enhance the quality and of all forms of transportation for all citizens through efficient use and protection of natural, economic, and human resources. PART has recently expanded its system into provide transportation for Wilkes and Watagua Counties. – called the Western Piedmont Regional Transportation Authority. This public system will provide more opportunities and options for transportation for residents and visitors of these counties.

#### Yadkin River Greenway

Wilkes County, as a whole, has recently invested in providing additional pedestrian facilities. The Yadkin River Greenway has been very successful within the County and other adjacent counties have desired to implement similar amenities. The Yadkin River flows from Caldwell County (which is west of Wilkes County). Neighboring County Governments have begun preliminary planning to establish a Greenway along the Yadkin River from Caldwell to Yadkin and Surry County. This would create a *regional* greenway and would be a main attraction, once completed. The Yadkin River creates a natural connection - linking the two counties (Wilkes and Caldwell) in addition to bordering Yadkin County (located



east of Wilkes County). This is a great model for inner-governmental partnerships that include municipalities, local counties, and non-profit agencies.

### **3.7 Policies and Institutional Framework**

*Funding* for pedestrian improvements is of vital importance to the Town of Wilkesboro – from the planning stage to the final implementation. The proposed improvements will cost millions of dollars - funds that Wilkesboro cannot feasibly commit to providing upfront. Developing creative financing - to include various funding sources such as grants, foundations, and partnerships - will help in the development and completion of successful projects. Powell Bill monies are particularly useful for pedestrian facilities. These monies are given annually to municipalities for roadway improvements such as spot repairs, paving, sidewalks and intersection improvements.

As mentioned in Section 2, requirement of sidewalks for new and redeveloped projects within the new development requirements will reduce the future capital improvements for the Town of Wilkesboro. This should not only include residential subdivisions, but also commercial, industrial, and other development. This movement has become fairly prevalent among many municipalities across the state of North Carolina. The guidelines addressing pedestrian facilities can be flexible in exceptional circumstances; but, they should not be adjusted to exclude the *intent* of the recommendations established for the Town.

Implementing these guidelines amid local ordinances can be – at best – difficult, at times. There are always differing views in any county or municipality on the responsibility of the developer verses the county/municipality. It will be important to build consensus among elected/appointed officials in order to have a (development) ordinance that is in the best interest of the Town of Wilkesboro and the surrounding community.

### **3.8 Pedestrian Statutes and Local Ordinances**

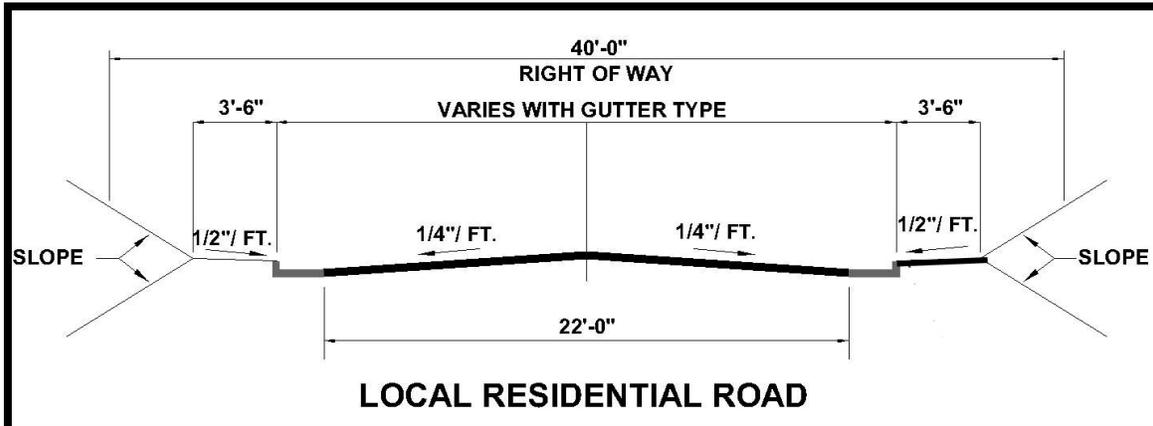
Most existing facilities were designed and constructed using the following as guidelines:

- *Wilkesboro Subdivision Ordinance*
- *North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and North Carolina Division of Highways (NCDOH) design manuals.*
- *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Guidelines, and the Guidelines for Curb Ramps for Disabled Persons*



## Street Design Guidelines

The Town of Wilkesboro ordinance currently requires all streets to be designed meeting NCDOT standards. NCDOT standards are typically adopted for municipalities which do not provide specific engineering standards for streets. The following detailed cross sections are the most prevalently used for local streets.



The Town of Wilkesboro has recently amended the Subdivision Ordinance to required sidewalks. The requirements can be found in Section 5.4 (B) of the Subdivision Ordinance and listed below following a detailed road cross section.

### Section 5.4 (B)

- (4) **Sidewalks.** For subdivisions with a majority of the lots one (1) acre or smaller in size, five (5) foot sidewalks, five inches in thickness shall be required along one side of all residential streets. Sidewalks shall conform to ADA requirements and the Town of Wilkesboro installation and maintenance requirements.
- (a) Sidewalks shall be provided along any existing public road directly accessed by the proposed subdivision as follows:
1. Sidewalks shall extend the length of the property adjacent to the roadway on the same side as the proposed subdivision.
  2. The subdivider shall provide any additional right-of-way needed for the sidewalk to either the town or NCDOT, as appropriate.
  3. When the adjacent road is an NCDOT facility, the sidewalk shall be built to NCDOT standards.

The State of North Carolina follows a standard set of basic pedestrian laws, outlined in a guidebook published by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

The Americans Disability Act (ADA) states that cities and municipalities must construct, modify, or adapt pedestrian facilities to accommodate individuals with disabilities and accessibility limitations. The following are some basic topics that must be addressed for sidewalks to comply with ADA requirements.



### **ADA Topics**

- *Overgrown, broken, root laden, or otherwise rough conditions are not suitable*
- *Curb ramps provide entry and exit to sidewalks*
- *Ramps also provide alternate routes around staircases*
- *Cuts in medians at crosswalks allow travel across divided roadways*
- *Slopes must be realistic for traveling*
- *Ramps provide access to buildings that are not ground level*
- *Adequate width provides sufficient passing*
- *Historic district exemptions should be taken it account*
- *Adjusted crossing times allow for safe travel across wide intersections*
- *Cuts in medians at crosswalks allow travel across divided roadways*

### **Capital Improvement Plans**

The Town currently does not have a capital improvements plan, which addresses pedestrian facilities (other than for minor repairs and improvements). The intent of the Wilkesboro Pedestrian Plan is to identify the needs of pedestrians for future implementation of improvements by the Town.

### **3.9 Key Findings from Existing Plans and Policies**

The key findings for review of existing plans and initiatives are as follows:

- 1) Wilkesboro has been very active in not only developing partnerships with local governments from a local to a regional level. These partnerships not only help in implementing a project of this magnitude but also increases grant opportunities.
- 2) The Town has recently amended the Subdivision Code requiring sidewalks for newly constructed subdivision streets. This will reduce the financial burden for the Town in the future, but more importantly this requirement will enhance the pedestrian system.
- 3) NCDOT has improvement plans that could have a significant impact on the transportation system in Wilkesboro. It will be vital to incorporate pedestrian facilities in the planned improvements.

**- END OF SECTION -**



# Section 4

## PEDESTRIAN NETWORK PLAN

### 4.1 Overview

Based on the evaluation of the existing conditions and community input in Section 2, review of existing plans, and documents in Section 3, and the objectives established in Section 1, McGill Associates has prepared recommendations for a Pedestrian Plan for the Town of Wilkesboro. Section 4 describes these recommendations and proposals to expand and create a cohesive, safe, and usable pedestrian network.

This section is separated into individual components including types of recommended facilities, specific recommendations, and users of the pedestrian facilities. The methodology used to develop the recommendations is described in Section 1.4, page 5.

Section 4 and following sections will range from recommendations to establishing priorities and implementation for the proposed pedestrian facilities. Section 4 outlines the proposed pedestrian network and identified areas of need as well as opportunities. Section 5 demonstrates guidelines for specific areas of concern in regards to pedestrian facilities while Section 6 outlines programs and policy proposals. Section 7 delineates priorities for development, timelines for implementation for proposals and recommendations.

### 4.2 Pedestrian Network Methodology

As mentioned in previous sections of the Pedestrian Plan, the Town of Wilkesboro has very good pedestrian facilities in some areas, but also has areas that need improvements. Section 4 identifies both *general* and *specific* areas that need to be addressed. "Connectivity" is a recurring theme within this portion of the comprehensive plan. Connecting pedestrian facilities to eventually forming a network of sidewalks and multi-use trails is a long-range project, which requires extensive time and funding.

To create and develop a practical and feasible pedestrian transportation system for the Town of Wilkesboro, a network of pedestrian-friendly facilities should be implemented. The system should be part of the urban fabric of the Town, with the essential element being "connectivity", which allows pedestrians to reach their destinations. The pedestrian system must also be 'safe' for users. If pedestrians have to risk their lives in order to walk/bike to a destination, they will choose to travel by different modes of transportation. The pedestrian network needs to be safe and accessible for all users.



In addition to connectivity, *repairing* existing dangerous pedestrian areas is also a major concern with the system. Hazardous areas are priorities that need to be addressed immediately. The safety of pedestrians is one of the main concerns the Town of Wilkesboro. As new projects are developed, connectivity and safety should be some of the primary goals and/or objectives.

A number of factors were used to develop the pedestrian recommendations. The previous sections describe topics such as community input and planning documents were used as information sources. In addition, the Steering Committee, Town staff input, and field work were also in integral part of the plan development.

#### ***Wilkesboro Pedestrian Plan Input***

- *Input from and community workshop*
- *Survey/Questionnaire Results*
- *Input and recommendations from Steering Committee*
- *Site visits*
- *Review of existing planning documents*
- *Evaluations of existing pedestrian facilities and gaps*
- *Evaluation of pedestrian trip generators (destination areas)*

Based on Community input, Steering Committee input, and existing conditions, several goals and objectives were established as a guide for recommendations was established. The following are the predominate themes for deriving the proposals:

- *Increase connectivity from residential to destination areas*
- *Improve existing conditions and expansion of the pedestrian system in the Downtown areas*
- *Improve and repair existing non-compliant ADA pedestrian facilities*
- *Implement safety improvements for pedestrians where dangerous situations occur*
- *Future development should be taken into consideration in regards to pedestrian facilities*
- *Connectivity of pedestrian facilities where gaps and barriers exist*



## 4.3 Recommended Pedestrian Facilities

Numerous methods are involved in developing recommendations and proposals for the Wilkesboro Pedestrian Plan. The process can be broken down into basic tasks, as follows:

- Population/Trends
- Existing Facilities
- Needs Inventory
- Goals/Recommendations
- Implementation

Contained in each of these tasks is detailed information used to help develop and justify the proposals within the total document. Numerous meetings and site visits were conducted to better understand the needs and issues regarding pedestrian improvements. Many of the proposals within the plan are typical of most pedestrian plans, such as ADA compliance and safety concerns. In addition to these *general* recommendations, the document identifies and makes proposals regarding issues that are *specific* to the Town of Wilkesboro. "Site-specific" proposals will be made for such unique entities as future land use, special events, atypical traffic intersections, and special populations.

Many of the proposals generally recommend connectivity, repair of existing facilities, and enhancement of future improvements; however, many of the future projects may not be facilities, such as sidewalks or multi-use trails. Rather, the proposals may be goal-oriented - establishing creative partnerships, instituting safety programs, and coordinating special events – to name a few. Proposed programs such as these will promote pedestrian use within the Town, but are not 'project based' recommendations. Other ancillary facilities are street furniture, landscaping, and bus shelters.

The pedestrian plan proposes a basic network of non-vehicular corridors to allow more users the opportunity to an alternative means of transportation other than a vehicle. The network will consist of new corridors, and the existing corridors will be evaluated, as well. Many of the existing pedestrian facilities within the Town are currently in need of repair or improvements. The Town has improved many of these areas over the years but many areas still need improvements. Map 1 (West) and Map 2 (East) – Existing Pedestrian Facilities, which delineate the existing conditions, can be found at the end of Section 2.

### 4.3.1 Pedestrian Crossing Projects

There are numerous unsuitable pedestrian crossings that have been identified in Wilkesboro. Currently pedestrians are faced with a number of barriers and gaps in numerous areas of the Town. These conditions range from striping crosswalks at traffic intersections to pedestrian signals at high volume traffic areas.



Correcting dangerous intersections will not only encourage pedestrians to use the facilities but also reduce potential injuries. Several intersections have been identified as spot improvements which are isolated areas needing repair or additional upgrades. These areas were developed through field observation, public input, and steering committee input. The following list is intersection areas in need of improvement or spot repair. Intersection improvements are areas that consist of major improvements which may include pedestrian signals, traffic signalization, or intersection reconfiguration. Spot Improvements include minor improvements that may consist of crosswalk striping, sidewalk repair, removal of barriers, or installation of an accessible ramp.

**Intersection Improvement**

- Highway 268 and S. Collegiate Street
- S. Bridge Street at Cub Creek Park
- Edgewood Drive and Oakwood Road
- Westwood Lane and Highway 18
- College Street and Highway 18
- Highway 421 and Highway 18
- Highway 421 Bypass at Walmart

**Spot Improvement**

- Intersection of S. Cherry Street and Highway 268
- Main Street Corridor in Downtown
- Intersection of Henderson Street and S. Bridge Street
- Intersection of West Street and North Street
- Intersection of W. South Street and S. Bridge Street
- Highway 268 at Tyson Foods
- Intersection of School Street and Laurel Road
- Intersection of School Street and Holly Circle

**4.3.2 Sidewalk Projects**

Sidewalk projects primarily range from replacement of unsuitable facilities to implementation of new sidewalks for connectivity to destinations or existing sidewalks. By implementing these recommendations, the Town of Wilkesboro can provide a more safe, accessible, and usable pedestrian network. Improvements are intended to connect to areas of high pedestrian volumes such as park, schools, shopping centers, greenways, and existing sidewalks. All sidewalks, whether existing or proposed should have marked crosswalks, and accessible ramps at intersections and driveways as a minimum requirement. Intersections where there is a high volume of vehicular traffic should possess pedestrian traffic signals. These facility improvements should also be evaluated has future widening and roadways projects are constructed.



Sidewalk Projects should include the following pedestrian facilities:

- *Minimum of 5' in width*
- *ADA compliant curb cuts and ramps at all driveways and intersections*
- *Marked crosswalks at all intersections*
- *Pedestrian crossing signals at high volume traffic intersections*
- *Sidewalks on a minimum of one side of street*

Pedestrian Corridors contain numerous sidewalk projects that extend to multiple areas within Wilkesboro. Their roadway components are outlined on listed below. These components consist of not only expansion of pedestrian facilities but also replacement. A detailed outline describing the location, priority, and construction cost can be found in the Appendix D.

### **Sidewalk Project Roadway Components**

Arbor Road	Maple Street.
Beacon Ridge	Meadow View Drive.
Beech Street.	North Street.
Broad Street.	North Bridge Street
Brookwood Drive	North Cherry Street
Call Street.	Oakwood Road
Cedar Lane	School Street.
Church Street.	South Bridge Street
College Street.	South West Street.
Cothren Street.	Wilkes Street
Cowles Street.	Wellborn Avenue
Curtis Bridge Road	West Main Street
East Main Street	West Street
Fletcher Street.	Westwood Lane
Forest Hill Drive	West South Street.
Golden Needles Street.	Woodfield Way
Henderson Drive	Woodland Blvd.
Laurel Road	Hwy 268
Link Street	Hwy. 421 Bypass

### **4.3.3 Greenway Pedestrian Projects**

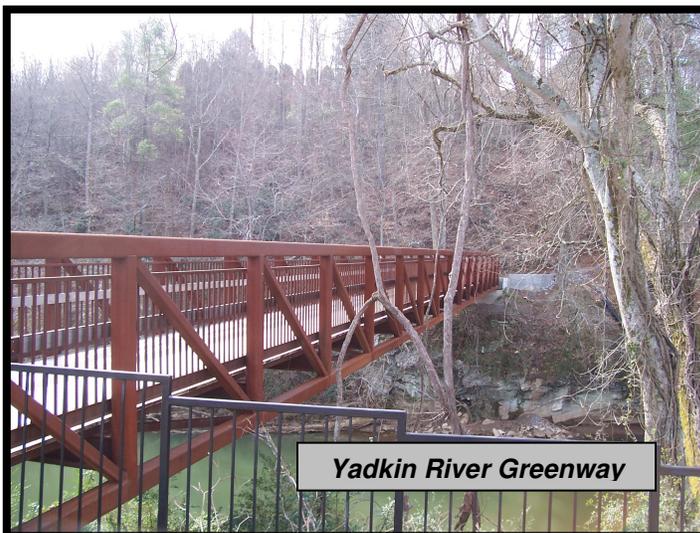
Greenway Corridor Projects include off-road pedestrian facilities, typically taking advantage of linear stream corridors, easements, and other open space areas. Trails and greenways are very popular among residents and visitors. Visitors appreciate and often return to communities that provide places for bicycling and walking safely removed from busy roads and streets. Trails offer scenic recreation opportunities suitable for a wide range of ages and abilities. These trails can have a tremendous impact on the economy – potentially providing additional tourist dollars. Where popular trails exist, lodging providers can encourage extended stays among their guests, thereby increasing occupancy.



For residents, investment in trail and greenways can increase property values and improve the overall livability of a community. The following describes the benefits that can be generated from greenways:

### **Benefits of Greenways**

- *Encourage people to enjoy the area from an outdoor perspective*
- *Provide opportunities for families to safely enjoy a healthy activity together*
- *Encourage walking or bicycling to locations within a reasonable distance – such as school, work, and recreational areas – rather than driving.*
- *Enhance the safety and convenience to travel to major residential and commercial areas, beach access sites and other points of interest.*
- *Provide benefits to all road users by reducing congestion and enhancing motorists safety*
- *Reduce parking congestion at popular destinations*
- *Increase safe and affordable option for recreation and exercise, helping to improve the health of visitors and residents alike.*
- *Increase economic benefits such as increased tourism, increased property values, additional residential and business growth, and job growth.....*



### **Yadkin River Greenway**

The Yadkin River Greenway is also a major corridor and will increasingly be utilized as future expansions connect to additional destinations. The greenway provides a vital link to Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro - allowing for walking and biking.

For Wilkesboro, the focus of these greenway corridors will be to provide access to them and connectivity between

residential and commercial areas. These corridors were chosen based on existing and design-phase along the Yadkin River. A primary project currently in the planning and developmental stages is the Yadkin River Greenway. This project has developed in multiple phases over recent years. As this project and others continues to develop, it will provide connectivity to other pedestrian facilities.

The existing segments of the Yadkin River Greenway are located along the Yadkin River and extend into North Wilkesboro. Wilkesboro has recently constructed a segment which connects the greenway to Downtown Wilkesboro.



This connection provides a vital link for the residents and visitors to utilize the greenway with safety and convenience.

A majority of the proposed greenway facilities recommend continued expansion along the Yadkin River from Kerr Scott Reservoir to the eastern portion of the Town limits near the Town's utility treatment facility. This proposal creates a natural corridor existing to each end of the Town. In addition, the Town's utility treatment facility is also used as a camping area during Merlefest, which is held at Wilkes Community College. This would allow visitors to use the greenway as an alternative in traveling to Wilkes Community College.

### **Middlebrook Greenway Connector**

Located in the western Town limits of Wilkesboro, the Middlebrook Greenway Connector provides a linkage from the Yadkin River Greenway to a residential community. In addition, this half mile long greenway will provide a viable connection to Wilkes County's Rivers Edge Park and the YMCA. The Yadkin River Greenway has not been completed to this area which will make this a long term project. Once the greenway has been constructed, the Town should begin planning and a budget for construction of this greenway connector. Easement acquisition should coincide with the development of any property.

### **Cub Creek Park Greenway**

Cub Creek Park is located near Downtown and is a primary pedestrian generator for the residents and visitors by providing playgrounds, athletic fields, a dog park, and walking trails. Currently a number of users come to the park with a primary desire to walk for enjoyment and exercise. Providing a greenway along Cub Creek would provide a feasible means of traveling to



the park without requiring a vehicle. This pedestrian facility would connect to the County government complex, a multi-family development, and a recently completed retirement complex which are primary users of greenway. This facility will provide a tremendous resource for the Town and visitors and should be constructed as funding opportunities come available. In the future, Cub Creek could provide connectivity to the neighborhood south of the Hwy 421 corridor.

### **Future Planning Efforts**

As for future planning efforts, existing and future utility easements should be assessed to determine if they can be used for possible pedestrian connections. Town utility lines are often located in floodplain areas which create a network of connective to neighborhoods. The associated public easements should include



recreation and alternative transportation as uses for the right-of-way allowing trails to be constructed in the future.

#### 4.3.4 School Pedestrian Projects

There are two educational institutions in the Town limits of Wilkesboro – Wilkesboro Elementary School and Wilkes Community College. While sidewalks line some area of each school’s vicinity, emphasis should be placed on filling any remaining gaps or connections to adjacent neighborhoods. Sidewalks should flank all edges of school property where feasible, and along roads leading to schools from surrounding areas. In addition, crosswalks should be constructed at each intersection at these schools.



#### Intersection Improvements Projects:

- NC Hwy. 268 and Collegiate Street

The community has expressed the need for improvements at the intersection listed above. This area is a high volume traffic generator and also is a major corridor for pedestrians. Establishing pedestrian signals at this intersection would allow pedestrians to cross the road in a safer manner.

### 4.4 Special Focus Areas

Many different users groups will make use of Wilkesboro’s pedestrian facilities. A segment of this population will be visitors while the vast majority will be seniors, retirees, and families with children that live and work in the Town. It will be imperative that new and existing facilities provide safe, pedestrian-friendly corridors for all users to navigate within the Town, particularly for senior adults and children.

#### Senior Citizens

Senior adults are special populations that need particular consideration in future projects. As the number of retirees in the Wilkesboro population continue to increase, the need for ADA compliant facilities will be even more imperative. In addition, senior adults typically have more time to walk after retirement. With the promotion of healthy lifestyles, this population will need safe facilities offered by the Town. A recently completed retirement facility has been constructed adjacent to Main Street in the Downtown area. This facility will primarily be occupied by senior adults, who have been identified as a special population which desires and utilizes pedestrian facilities. Priorities should be given to completing sidewalks, which are adjacent to these areas and are ADA-compliant.



**Increased numbers of seniors and children require additional needs**

### **Children**

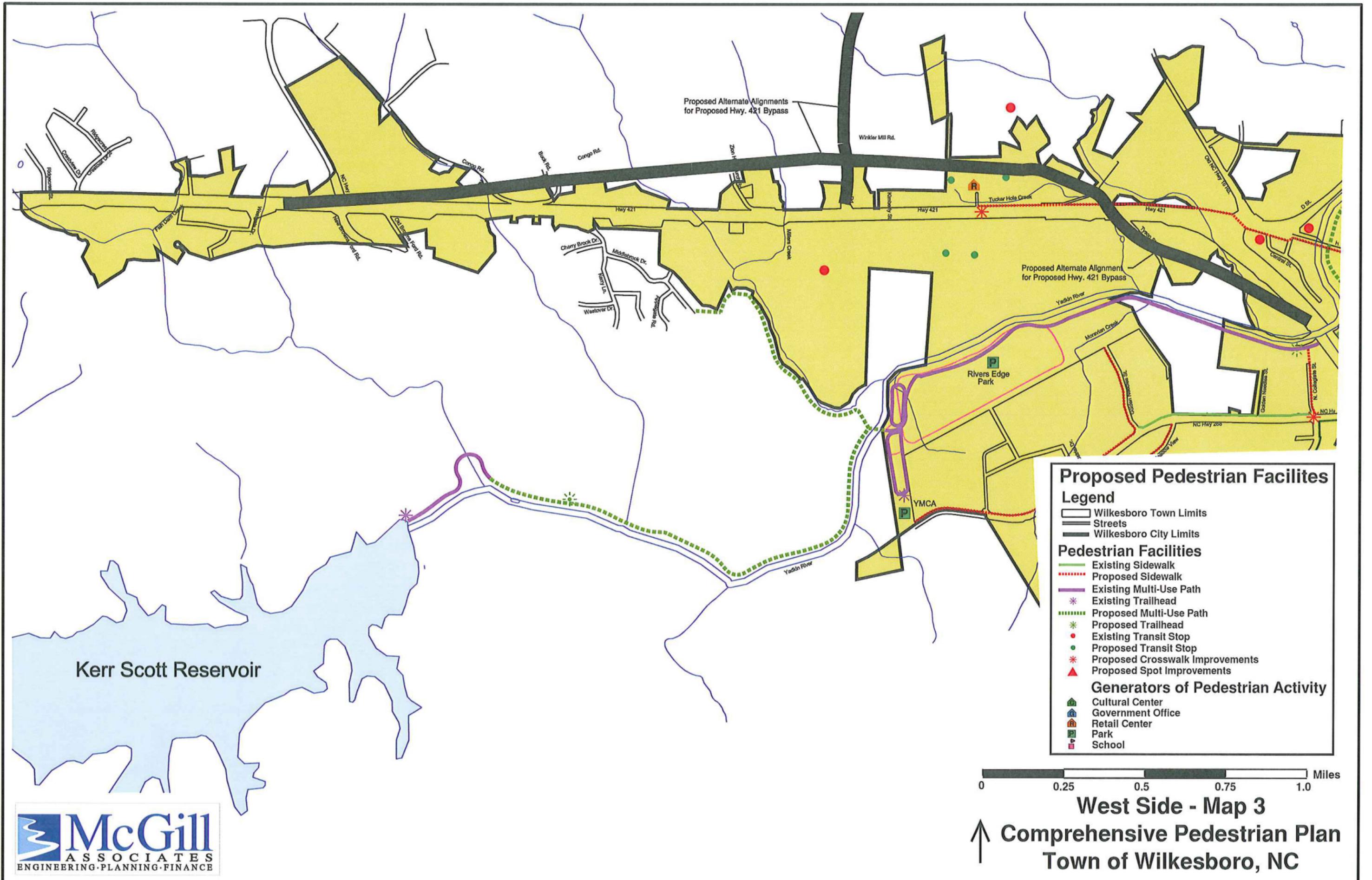
Children also require special safety procedures with regards to public safety. An equally important component in this equation is *safety education*. Many children are injured every year due to their lack of understanding of the utilization of a pedestrian system. Education programs such as *Safe Routes to School* should be promoted to assist children in learning how to cross a street and walk in safe areas. Promoting healthy lifestyles for children will encourage physical activity and the use of

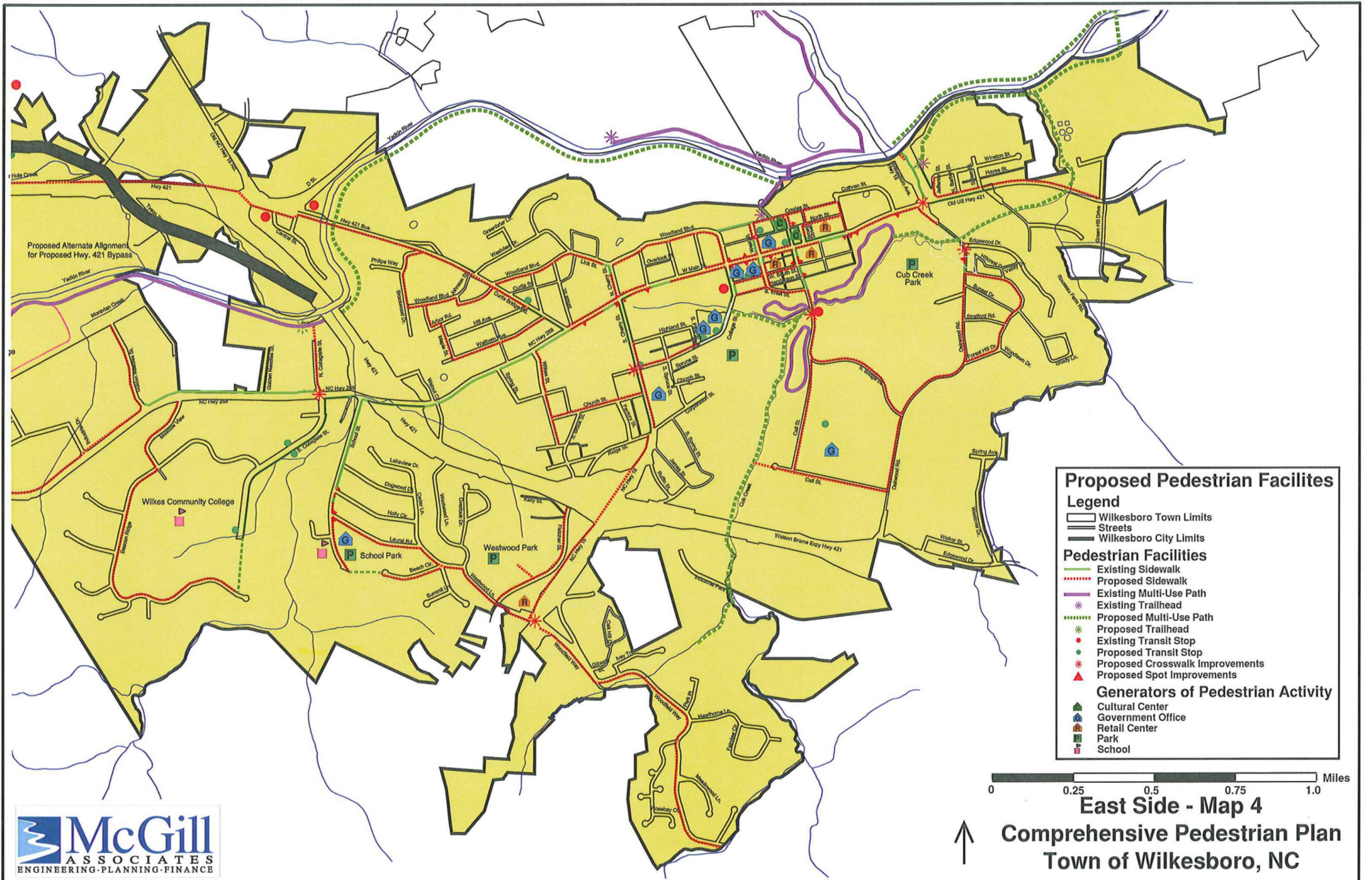
sidewalks for exercise. The encouragement of walking is very important; but at the same time, the pedestrian facilities must also be user-friendly.

### **Hispanic Population**

Wilkesboro and the surrounding community have a growing Hispanic population. This growing population is a primary user of the pedestrian system. The Town should evaluate this special population to better understand the pedestrian generators and travel patterns to make considerations for this unique populace as well as other diverse groups.

**- END OF SECTION -**





**Proposed Pedestrian Facilities**

- Legend**
- ▭ Wilkesboro Town Limits
  - ▬ Streets
  - ▬ Wilkesboro City Limits
- Pedestrian Facilities**
- Existing Sidewalk
  - ⋯ Proposed Sidewalk
  - Existing Multi-Use Path
  - \* Existing Trailhead
  - ⋯ Proposed Multi-Use Path
  - \* Proposed Trailhead
  - Existing Transit Stop
  - Proposed Transit Stop
  - \* Proposed Crosswalk Improvements
  - ▲ Proposed Spot Improvements
- Generators of Pedestrian Activity**
- 🏛️ Cultural Center
  - 🏛️ Government Office
  - 🏪 Retail Center
  - 🌳 Park
  - 🎓 School



**East Side - Map 4**  
**Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan**  
**Town of Wilkesboro, NC**





# Section 5

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

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### 5.1 Overview

The guidelines in the Pedestrian Plan were developed through assessment and documenting existing practices that were observed or informed through site observation, community input, or steering committee comments. These guidelines derived from and adhere to national and state design standards as defined by the NCDOT, Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Federal Highway Administration. Should the national or state standards result in discrepancies with the guidelines in this Section, the national and state standards should prevail for all design guidelines. In addition, the cost associated with proposed improvements is relevant only at the date of the document was prepared (2007). A qualified landscape architect or engineer should be consulted for the current probable construction costs.

The following descriptions and typical details are intended to be used as design standard and alternative treatments for pedestrian facilities. The treatments are important and should be designed and constructed to meet the minimum standards for implementing a safe pedestrian and vehicular facility. Being that many of the local streets are NCDOT roadways, the Town should obtain the proper approvals and permits from NCDOT prior to implement projects on subject roads.

### 5.2 Pedestrian Facility Elements

#### 5.2.1 Sidewalks and Walkways

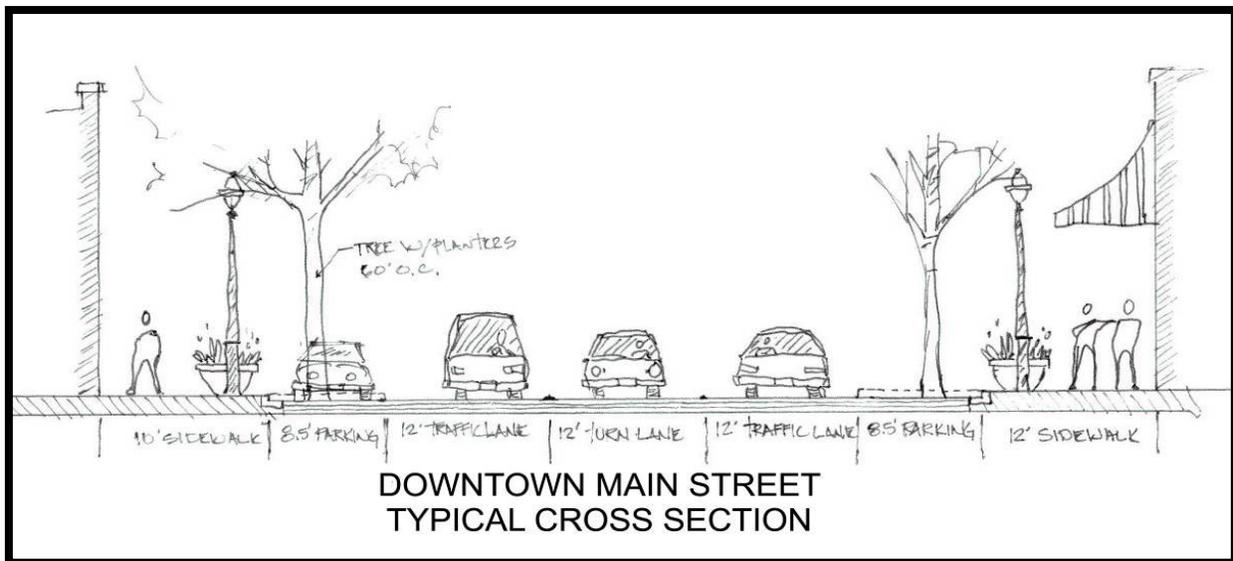
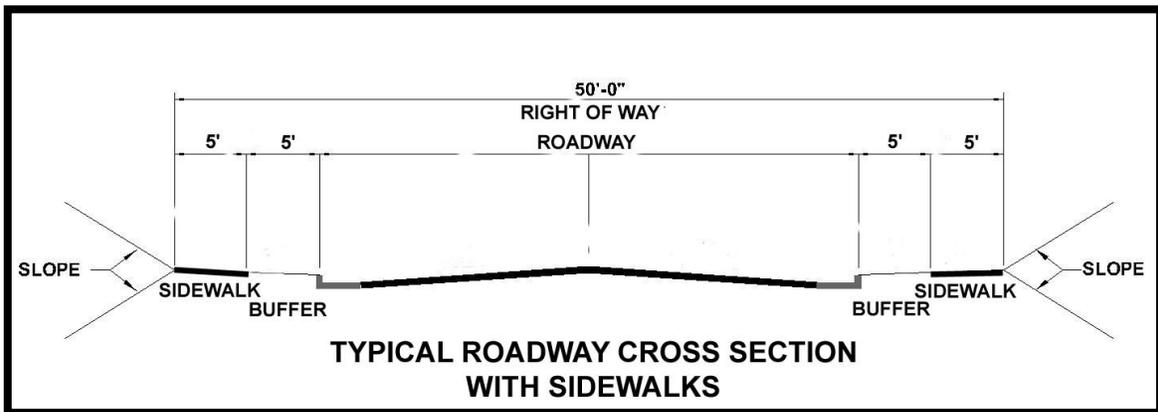
Sidewalks make up the majority of pedestrian facilities and are the most important component of a pedestrian network. The amount of pedestrians using a particular facility will determine which type of sidewalk should be implemented. Sidewalks are the primary connector for residential areas, shopping centers, and businesses. They create opportunities for people to meet, areas for shopping, children to play, and a facility for people to get to work.

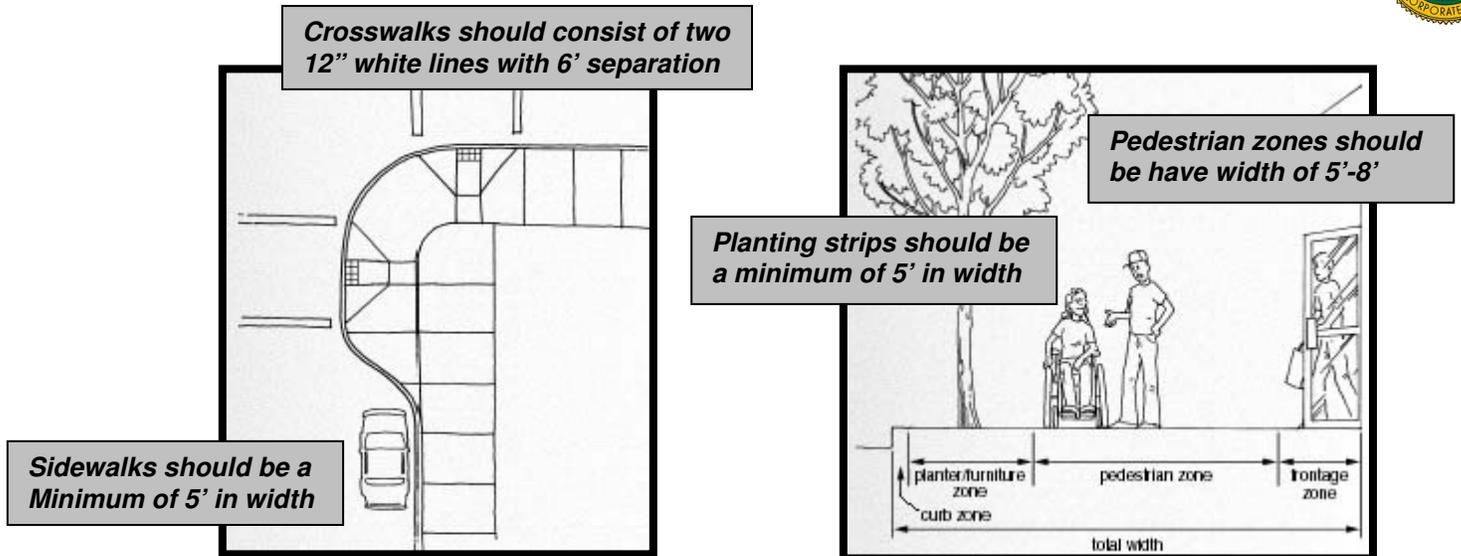
Most of the sidewalks located in Wilkesboro will be five (5) feet in width – thereby providing an adequate facility for pedestrians to walk to their destinations. Where adequate right-of-way is available, a buffer can be utilized in order to separate the sidewalk from the roadway. Sidewalk areas along Main Street and in the downtown district should be wider to allow for a denser population, street furniture, and other amenities.



Sidewalks shall be constructed within the street right-of-way in accordance with Town Standards. Any location in which a sidewalk is not within the dedicated street right-of-way must have a sidewalk easement dedicated to the Town of Wilkesboro. Sidewalks shall be installed at the time of roadway construction or widening unless otherwise approved by the Town. The Town may allow the developer a fee (in lieu of) constructing the sidewalk in appropriate locations. In addition, sidewalks shall be provided along streets within new developments as well as existing development expansion which are non-residential, multi-family, or single family residents as required in the Subdivision Ordinance.

The following cross-sections exemplify the different standards that should be applied for the various applications.





All sidewalks shall be constructed in accordance with the standard detail found in the NCDOT Construction Manual. The following describes the design guidelines for sidewalk construction.

- The minimum thickness of a sidewalk shall be 4 inches. At locations where a driveway crosses a sidewalk, a 6-inch depth is required.
- Sidewalks shall have a uniform slope toward the roadway of  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch per foot.
- If a 5-foot wide buffer or planting strip is provided between the sidewalk and back or curb, the slope shall not be less than  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch per foot nor greater than 18 inches toward the roadway unless approved by the Town. In some cases there may not be sufficient width to provide the planting strip.
- The design and construction shall conform to ADA standards.
- Where no curb and gutter exists on a road that requires sidewalks, the Town may require curb and gutter installation in addition to the installation of the sidewalk. The design of the sidewalk shall be such that pedestrian safety is provided and the usability of the sidewalk is not affected.
- All sidewalks shall be constructed of concrete unless otherwise approved by the Town. Sidewalks shall typically be a minimum distance of five (5) feet off the back of curb with a minimum width of five (5) feet. This requirement may vary upon the approval of the Town depending on site constraints.
- Where sidewalks and/or greenways intersect any section of curb and gutter or street section, a wheelchair ramp shall be installed per Town standards.
- Pipes, drains, or other concentrated stormwater devices shall not discharge across a sidewalk, but be piped or flumed under the sidewalk.
- All marked pedestrian traffic crossings must be approved by the Town or NCDOT Traffic Engineer prior to installation
- All mid-block pedestrian traffic crossings shall be designated as a crosswalk with pavement markings and signage in accordance with MUTCD and must be approved by the Town or NCDOT Traffic Engineer prior to installation.

### Sidewalks/Walkways Costs

The cost of a 5-foot wide concrete sidewalk is approximately \$25/linear foot



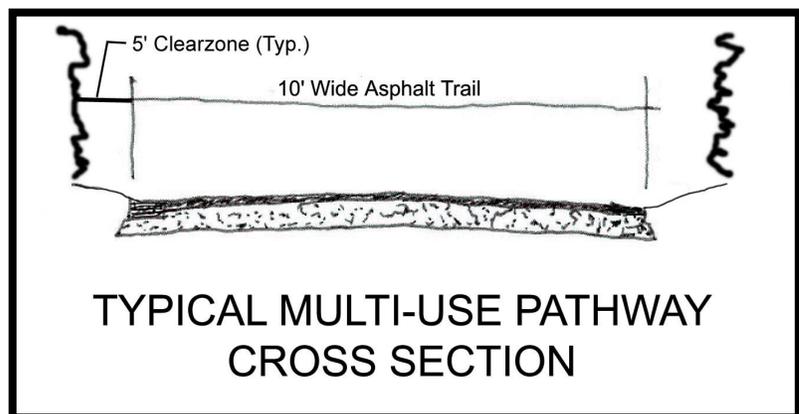
The cost of curb and gutter is approximately \$22/linear foot. Asphalt walkways are much less expensive in terms of construction cost but more difficult to traverse and more expensive to maintain.

### 5.2.2 Greenway Trail

As sidewalks have different standards for various applications; greenways vary due to such factors as space, existing conditions, and usage. The pedestrian facilities, which have been proposed, are different in variety and purpose. The Yadkin River Greenway is a great example of a pedestrian facility, which offers much versatility. The Yadkin River Greenway is a multi-use facility, which is located off-street, and offers multiple opportunities for different users - such as walking, in-line skating, and biking. Special considerations of safety should be made when these facilities are located near a roadway. Adequate separation or barriers should be implemented between the roadway and the multi-use path. The following cross-sections identify standards that should be implemented for each application.

A greenway is defined simply as a trail corridor on primarily undeveloped land, as along a river or between urban centers, that is reserved for recreational use or environmental preservation. As the greenway movement has experienced tremendous popularity, these facilities have been developed on abandoned railroad beds, utility corridors, and through residential communities. Most multi-use trails are wider than sidewalks and for a variety of reasons. The minimum width for two-directional trails is 10', however 12'-14' widths are preferred where heavy traffic is anticipated. Due to many of the facilities being off-road, the larger width provides access for maintenance and emergency vehicles. A majority of greenways are constructed using asphalt as the surface. This application is used primarily due to the lower cost compared to concrete.

To create an aesthetically pleasing greenway, design techniques should be considered. Clearing of vegetation should be limited to clearing for construction and underbrush to increase site lines and safety for the trail user. Meandering the greenway helps create opportunities for landscaping and sightlines particularly for long and straight corridors.





### Greenway/Multi-Use Trails Costs

The cost of a 10-foot wide asphalt trail is approximately \$400,000/mile. This consists of a 6" stone base and 2" of asphalt.

Typical pavement design for a paved, off-road, multi-use trail should be based upon the specific loading and soil conditions for each project. These asphalt or concrete trails should be designed to meet loading requirements including maintenance and emergency vehicles.

Concrete: In flood prone areas, concrete should be used due to its durability versus asphalt which can wash away or heave. In addition, concrete trails will withstand subgrade failure, root intrusion better than asphalt surfacing.

Asphalt: Asphalt is predominately used on greenways primarily due to cost. It requires more maintenance than concrete due to its flexibility which can cause movement of the trail. It's also important to construct a 2' stone shoulder on both sides of the asphalt edge to help prevent the edges from failure and erosion.

### **5.2.3 Marked Crosswalks**

Pedestrians are legitimate users of the transportation system and they should be able to use the local pedestrian system safely and without unreasonable delay. Providing marked crosswalks is one of many ways to facilitate crossings. A marked crosswalk is any crosswalk, which is delineated by white painted markings placed on the pavement. Crosswalks consisting of pavements, materials, or colored concrete are 'unmarked' crosswalks unless white paint is also present. A crosswalk may be marked with special paint, thermoplastic materials, plastic tape, and other approved materials.



NCDOT follows the national guidelines outlined in the federal Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), the Traffic Control Devices Handbook, and other references. These references cover all aspects of the placement, construction and maintenance of all approved traffic control devices.

All traffic devices including crosswalk markings and signs must conform to all state and federal standards and regulations for dimensions, color, working and graphics. Uniformity of traffic control devices protects the clarity of their messages and ensures that signs or paint markings convey the same meaning at all locations. Legal crosswalks should exist at all public street intersections whether marked or



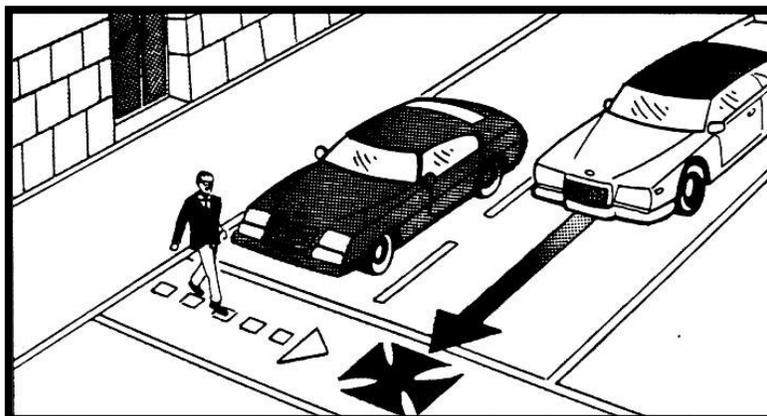
unmarked. However, the only way a crosswalk can exist at a mid-block location is if it is marked.

Research indicates that on multi-lane streets with more than 12,000 vehicles per day, pedestrian collisions are higher at marked versus unmarked crosswalks at uncontrolled locations. This appears to occur because pedestrians expect a motorist to stop for a pedestrian in a crosswalk. However, drivers frequently fail to stop and a collision results.

#### **Guidelines for Crosswalks**

- *Should not be installed in an uncontrolled environment where speeds exceed 40 mph.*
- *Crosswalks alone may not be enough and should be used in conjunction with other measure to improve pedestrian crossing safety, particularly on road with average daily traffic (ADT) above 10,000*
- *Width of marked crosswalks should be at least six feet wide; ideally ten feet or wider in Downtown areas.*
- *Curb ramps and other sloped areas should be full contained within the markings*
- *Crosswalk making should extend the full length of the crossings.*
- *Crosswalk markings should be white per MUTCD*
- *The 'continental' pattern is recommended for intersection improvements in the Downtown area of Wilkesboro for aesthetic and visibility purposes: Lines should be one to two feet wide and spaced one to five feet apart.*

Another frequent cause in pedestrian crosswalk crashes is when the driver of a vehicle in the lane nearest to the curb stops for a pedestrian, but the motorist in the next vehicle passes the stopped vehicle and hits a pedestrian.

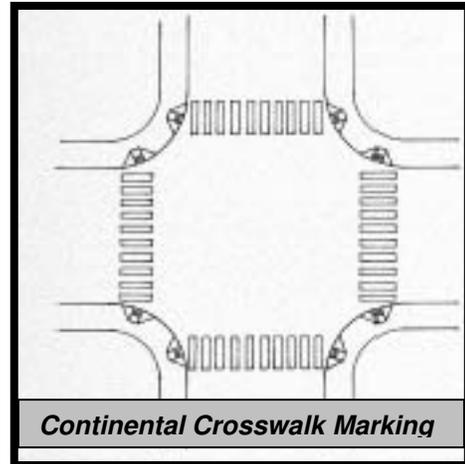


Making a decision as to the appropriateness of a crosswalk is complex and many issues must be carefully analyzed. An engineering study is normally completed prior to approving a marked at a new location.



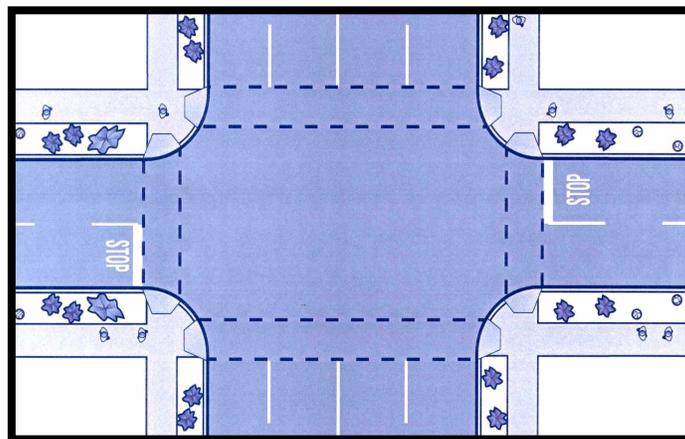
Some of the typical items reviewed include:

- The number of pedestrians being served
- The function of the highway
- The volume and speed of vehicles
- The width of the road
- Both current and future predicted conditions
- The typical abilities of the pedestrians that would use the crosswalk
- Who will pay for and then maintain the crosswalk



Crosswalks Costs

Regular striped: \$100  
Ladder crosswalks: \$300  
Pattern Concrete: \$3,000

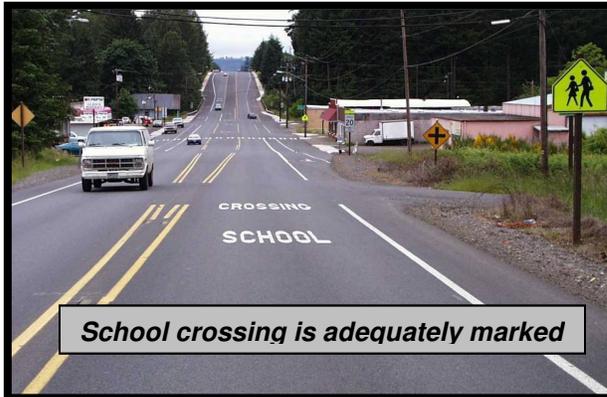


Maintenance cost varies according to region and pattern used. Generally, the guidance for approving a marked crosswalk recommends that a minimum of 20 pedestrians should be crossing the roadway during the peak traffic hour before considering the installation of a marked crosswalk. Where the highway speed is in excess of 40 mph, additional devices such as traffic signals and beacons should be added. Mid-block crosswalks on state highways are not desirable.

While state laws require a motorist to yield to a person within a marked crosswalk, on highways with moderate to higher speeds and traffic volumes, such behavior is very rare. Crosswalks are not considered safety devices and are primarily used to assist and direct pedestrians along the safest route rather than to 'stop' traffic.

Crosswalks are marked at intersections where there is substantial conflict between vehicle and pedestrian movements, where significant pedestrian concentrations occur, where pedestrians could not otherwise recognize the proper place to cross, and where traffic movements are controlled. Examples of such locations are:

- Approved school crossings
- Signalized intersections
- Four-way stop intersections



### **Schools Crosswalks**

Marked crosswalks for schools follow somewhat different criteria. Besides crosswalks at the immediate school site, other marked crosswalks may be approved if certain criteria is met and the nearest point of the crosswalks is not more that 600 feet from a school building or grounds.

Crosswalks should be marked at all intersections along the suggested route to school where the volume of children reaches about 40 in a two per hour period. They should also be marked where there is conflict between vehicles and students trying to cross the street and where students may be permitted to cross between intersections. The best safety measure is to educate children on how and where to safely cross the street.

### **5.2.4 Advance Stop Bars**

Moving the vehicle stop bar 15-30 feet back from the pedestrian sidewalk at signalized crossings and mid-block crossings increases vehicle and pedestrian visibility and reduces motor vehicle/pedestrian conflicts (near collisions). The effects of advance stop line bars are designed to influence motorists to stop further back from the crosswalk when yielding right of way to pedestrians. The advance stop bars are 1-2 feet wide and extend across all approach lanes at intersections.



#### Advance Stop Bar Cost

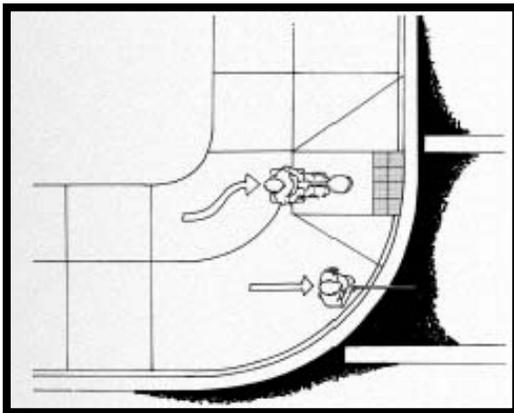
Signage: \$50-\$150 plus installation

No additional cost if new line is installed in new paving



### 5.2.5 Curb Ramps

Curb ramps are critical to providing access between the sidewalk and the street for people who use wheelchairs. Curb ramps are most commonly found at intersections, but they may also be used at other locations such as on-street parking, loading zones, bus stops, and midblock crossings. The implementing regulations under Title II of the ADA specifically identify curb ramps as requirements for existing facilities, as well as all new construction. Curb ramps for existing facilities must be included in Transition Plans. According to the Title II implementing regulations, priorities for the installation of curb ramps in existing facilities should include access to government facilities, transportation, public accommodations, and for employees to their place of employment (U.S. Department of Justice, 1991a).



For many people with mobility impairments, curb ramps are not critical to access. In fact, in some situations curb ramps make it more difficult for some people with mobility impairments to navigate. Crutches and canes are sized to fit the individual user so that the energy required for ambulation is minimized on a hard, level surface. Use of these types of walking aids is more difficult on sloped surfaces such as curb ramps. Widening the crosswalk to allow people to use either the curb or the curb ramp will

enhance access for cane and crutch users who are not comfortable traveling on a sloped surface.

The curb is the most reliable cue that people with vision impairments use to identify the transition between the sidewalk and the street. The installation of curb ramps removes this cue and replaces it with a ramp which is much more difficult to detect. Therefore, it is important that as curb ramps are installed to create access for people who use wheelchairs, they are installed in such a way as to maximize detectability for people with vision impairments. Where gradual slopes are desirable for wheelchairs users, a detectable warning at the bottom of the curb ramp can provide the information blind pedestrians can rely on.



### **Guidelines for Curb Ramps**

- Provide a level maneuvering area or landing at the top of the curb ramp.
- Clearly identify the boundary between the bottom of the curb ramp and the street with a detectable warning.
- Design ramp grades that are perpendicular to the curb.
- Place the curb ramp within the marked crosswalk area.
- Avoid changes of grade that exceed 11 percent over a 610 mm (24 in) interval.
- Design the ramp that doesn't require maneuvering on the ramp surface.
- Provide a curb ramp grade that can be easily distinguished from surrounding terrain; otherwise, use detectable warnings.
- Design the ramp with grades of  $7.1 \pm 1.2\%$ . [Do not exceed 8.33 percent (1:12).
- Design the ramp and gutter with a cross slope of 2.0 percent.
- Provide adequate drainage to prevent the accumulation of water or debris on or at the bottom of the ramp.
- Transitions from ramps to gutter and streets should be flush and free of level changes.
- Align the curb ramp with the crosswalk, so there is a straight path of travel from the top of the ramp to the center of the road to the curb ramp on the other side.
- Provide clearly defined and easily identified edges or transitions on both sides of the ramp to contrast with sidewalk.

### Curb Ramps Costs

The cost is approximately \$1,000 to \$1,500 per curb ramp (new or retrofitted).

### **5.2.6 Raised Medians**

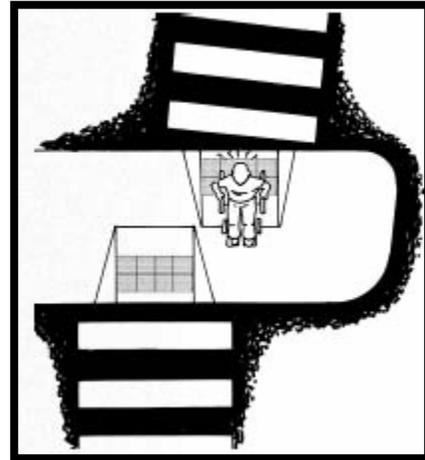
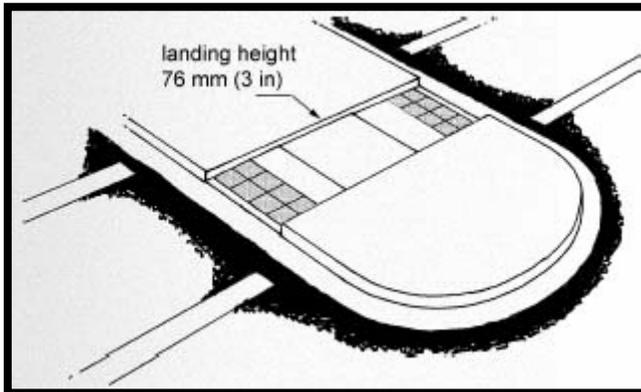
Medians (also known as refuge islands) are the portion of a divided roadway that separates traffic flows heading in opposite directions. At roundabouts, these are called splitter islands. Medians help pedestrians cross intersections by reducing the crossing distance from the curb to a protected area. This allows pedestrians to cross during smaller gaps in traffic. For this reason, medians are especially helpful for pedestrians who are unable to judge distances accurately. In addition, medians also help people with slow walking speeds to cross wide intersections during a short signal cycle. Medians are also useful at irregularly-shaped intersections, such as sites where two roads converge into one.

In commercial districts, medians provide pedestrians with valuable protection from oncoming traffic. In residential areas, they serve as traffic calming devices and green space.

Whenever possible, medians should be raised to separate pedestrians and motorists. Raised medians make the pedestrian more visible to motorists and they are easier for people with vision impairments to detect. Raised medians should be designed with a cut-through at street level or a ramp. This provides



pedestrian access to individuals who cannot travel over a curb. Detectable warning surfaces should be placed at the edge of both ends of the median in order for the streets to be recognized by pedestrians who are visually impaired. If the corner includes a pedestrian actuated control device, one should also be located at the median.



#### Raised Medians Costs

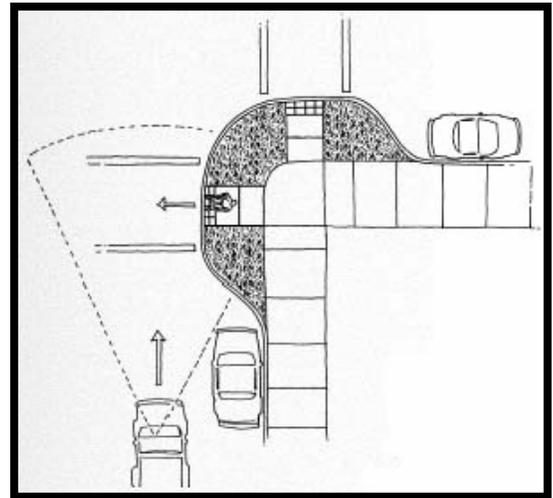
The cost is approximately \$15,000 to \$30,000 per \$100 feet

#### **5.2.7 Curb Extensions**

Curb extensions improve visibility between pedestrians and motorists and make it easier to install perpendicular curb ramps with level landings. They also reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians. Regulations that prohibit parking at the corner can also improve blocked sight lines.

The best way to improve pedestrian visibility at an intersection is to install curb extensions to prevent parking at intersection corners and improve the visibility of pedestrians to motorists. Low landscaping or grass can be added to the curb extension to clarify the appropriate path of travel for individuals with vision impairments. In addition, the following steps should be considered:

- Trim vegetation, relocate signs and utilities, and eliminate visual clutter;
- Prohibit parking near the intersection corner;
- Provide raised medians and crosswalks; and
- Provide an advance stop line before a marked crosswalk on a multi-lane road.



#### Curb Extensions/Bulb-outs Costs

The cost is approximately \$2,000 to \$20,000

Cost can increase depending on the amount of infrastructure relocated

#### **5.2.8 Roundabouts**

Roundabouts require vehicles to circulate counterclockwise around a center island. Roundabouts may eliminate the need for traffic signals for motorists. Unlike many other forms of traffic calming, roundabout benefits are aimed primarily at motorists. The installation of roundabouts prioritizes improving traffic flow, maximizing vehicular capacity, and eliminating the need for stop signs and traffic signals. When designed correctly, roundabouts include raised splitter islands to channel incoming traffic approaching from the right. Although roundabouts are gaining popularity in the United States, they can be problematic in pedestrian areas until designs can include cues needed by pedestrians with vision impairments and cognitive disabilities.

#### ***Impact on Pedestrian Access***

Roundabouts significantly complicate travel for people with vision and cognitive impairments. For example:

##### Negative impacts

- *Motorists exiting the roundabout are often not required to yield to pedestrians. This is a particular problem at designs where exiting design speed is increased;*
- *If properly designed, the crosswalk locations are set back from the intersection, to enhance pedestrian visibility and to prevent drivers from stopping at the entrance of the roundabout. This design has safety benefits for most pedestrians at the entering leg because vehicles are required to yield to vehicles in the roundabout. Pedestrians crossing the*



- existing leg may be at a greater disadvantage because exiting speeds are usually increased. Setback crosswalks are difficult for people with vision impairments to identify because they are not at the roundabout itself;*
- Busy roundabouts provide very few gaps long enough to cross. This can be especially problematic and unsafe for pedestrians such as children, elderly with mobility and cognitive impairments, and people with vision impairments;*
  - Pedestrians with vision impairments experience difficulty seizing the right-of-way from exiting drivers due to the lack of pedestrian to driver eye contact;*
  - For persons with vision impairments, vehicles exiting the circle sound the same as motorists continuing around the circle;*
  - Due to the wide turning radii at the corner, pedestrians with vision impairments may fail to identify the intersection;*
  - Roundabouts are confusing for people with cognitive impairments due to the irregular design of the intersection. People with cognitive impairments may not be able to travel independently if these intersections exist in routes that are traveled in order to conduct daily functions and activities; and*
  - When a crosswalk is setback from the intersection, pedestrians have to walk longer distances out of their way to cross the street.*

### ***Design Recommendations for Roundabouts***

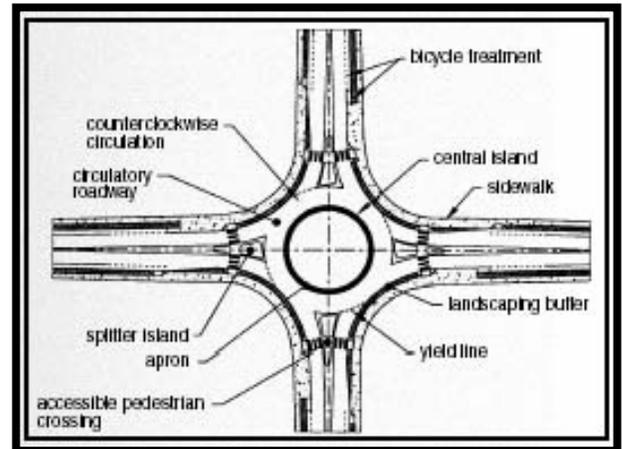
Designing roundabouts for people with vision impairments is a topic that warrants significant future research. Some smaller roundabouts may prove to pose few problems for people with vision impairments, but that depends on how busy or quiet it is. Some smaller roundabouts in quiet or isolated environments may prove to pose fewer problems for people with vision impairments. However, other roundabouts, in busy and noisy environments, may be identified as unusable by people with vision impairments regardless of the additional treatments used. The following recommendations could potentially improve conditions for pedestrians at roundabouts:

#### ***Roundabout Guidelines***

- Install setback, highly-visible crosswalks with detectable warnings and tactile indicators to identify the crossing for pedestrians with vision impairments and accessible pedestrian signals (including locator tones) to enable pedestrians to have sufficient crossing time. An accessible pedestrian signal can be provided to initiate the crossing phase;*
- Install single lane roundabouts with single entry lanes, rather than multi-lane roundabouts, to shorten the crossing distance and enhance pedestrian visibility at the entry and exiting lanes;*
- Add accessible medians and splitter islands to reduce crossing distances and allow pedestrians to negotiate one direction of traffic at a time; and*



- Add rumble strips or some other noise-generating device to increase the sound of cars making them more detectable and reduce the speed of cars as they exit the roundabout. Use slip resistant material for bicyclists.



### Roundabout

The cost for a landscaped roundabout varies widely and can range from \$60,000 to \$250,000 for neighborhood intersections and up to \$350,000 for arterial street intersections (not including additional right-of-way acquisition). However, once constructed, roundabouts have *lower* ongoing maintenance costs than traffic signals.

### 5.2.9 Pedestrian/Countdown Signals



Pedestrian signal heads should be used at all signals where pedestrians are permitted to cross unless pedestrian volumes are extremely low. The use of WALK/DON'T WALK pedestrian signal indicators at signal locations are important in many cases including: when vehicle signals are not visible to pedestrians; when signal timing is complex, e.g., there is a dedicated left turn signal for motorists; at established school zone crossings; when an exclusive pedestrian interval is provided; and, for wide streets where pedestrian clearance information is considered helpful. In addition, Countdown signals offer an additional safety measure by informing the pedestrian the amount of time remaining to safely cross at a pedestrian crossing.



The international symbol pedestrian signal head is preferable and is recommended in the MUTCD; the "WALK" and "DON'T WALK" word message is an allowable alternate<sup>1</sup>. Pedestrian signal heads should be clearly visible to the pedestrian at all times when in the crosswalk or waiting on the far side of the street. Larger pedestrian signal heads can be beneficial in some circumstances. Signals may be supplemented with audible messages to assist trained visually impaired pedestrians. These should be used judiciously, because they can become a noise problem.

#### *Guidelines*

- *Pedestrian signals should be placed in locations that are clearly visible to all pedestrians.*
- *Larger pedestrian signals should be utilized on wider roadways, to ensure readability.*
- *Pedestrian signal pushbuttons should be well-signed and visible*
- *Pedestrian signal pushbuttons should clearly indicate which crossing direction they control.*
- *Pedestrian signal pushbuttons should be reached from a flat surface, at a maximum height of 3.5 feet and be located on a level landing to ensure ease of operation by pedestrians in wheelchairs.*
- *Walk intervals should be provided during every cycle, especially in high pedestrian traffic areas.*

#### *Pedestrian Signal Costs*

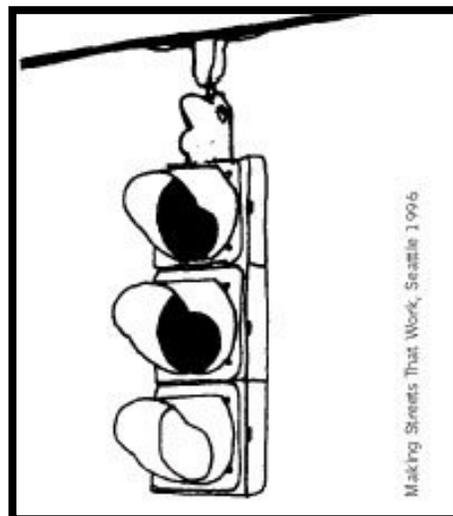
The cost ranges from \$20,000 to \$40,000.

#### *Pedestrian Signal Timing Costs*

The cost ranges from \$20,000 to \$40,000.

### **5.2.10 Traffic Signals**

Traffic signals create gaps in traffic flow allowing pedestrians to cross the street. They should allow adequate crossing time for pedestrians and an adequate clearance interval based upon a maximum walking speed of 4 feet per second. A lower speed of less than 4 ft/sec should be used in determining pedestrian clearance time for areas where there is a heavy concentration of elderly or children. Signals are particularly important at high use, mid-block crossings on higher-speed roads, multi-lane roads or at highly congested intersections. National warrants from the "Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices" based on the numbers of pedestrians and vehicles crossing and





intersection are usually used in the selection of traffic signal sites<sup>1</sup>. However, judgment must also be used on a case-by-case basis. For example, a requirement for installing a traffic signal is that there are a certain number of pedestrians present. If a new facility is being built - a park or recreational path, for example - there will be a new demand, and the signal should be installed in conjunction with the new facility based on projected crossing demand. There may also be latent demand if a destination is not currently accessible but could become so with new facilities or redesign.

In downtown areas signals are often closely spaced, sometimes every block. They are usually spaced further apart in suburban or outlying areas. When high pedestrian traffic exists during a majority of the day, fixed-time signals should be used to consistently allow crossing opportunities. Pedestrian actuation should only be used when pedestrian crossings are intermittent.

***Purpose:***

- *Provides intervals in a traffic system where pedestrians can cross streets safely.*

***Considerations:***

- *Where pedestrian traffic is regular and frequent, pedestrian phases should come up automatically. Pedestrian actuation should only be used when pedestrian crossings are intermittent.*
- *Signal cycles should be kept short (ideally 90 seconds maximum) to reduce pedestrian delay. Pedestrians are very sensitive to delays and a 30 second maximum wait time is ideal.*
- *Marked crosswalks at signals can encourage pedestrians to cross at the signal and help dissuade motorists from encroaching into the crossing area.*

**Traffic Signal Costs**

The cost ranges from \$20,000 to \$140,000.

**Pedestrian Signal Costs**

The cost ranges from \$5,000

**5.2.11 Landscaping/Enhancement**

A network of safe, comfortable, esthetically pleasing pedestrian corridors with connectivity to desirable destinations creates and promotes a livable community. Without each of these elements present, the walking community is incomplete. Safety, beauty, connectivity – all play important roles in a comprehensive pedestrian plan and each basic fundamental should be considered throughout the entire planning process.

Main Street in the downtown area has been identified as a roadway corridor the Town desires to implement streetscape improvements. This enhancement should include elements such as decorative paving, street trees, pedestrian signals, and bulb out intersections. Not only do these improvements produce an inviting street for pedestrians but it also creates traffic calming measures.



Landscaping can provide aesthetic improvement into a place that is otherwise hardened by buildings, concrete, and streets. It can also be used to provide a buffer and separation from pedestrians and motorists, reduce the width of the roadway, calm traffic, and help to develop a desired aesthetic appearance.

Street trees can make an immediate impact to a street by breaking up the visual hardscape often found in an urban downtown environment. In addition, trees and plantings can improve the environment by shading the street and providing cleaner air quality.

Tree islands, if designed correctly, can help collect and filter vegetative swales from nearby streets and buildings. These areas, called bioretention ponds, act as a sponge collecting oils, fertilizers, and detergents and releasing the stormwater. These practices are encouraged, not only to improve water quality, but also to reduce storm flows during rain events.

The landscaping requirements typically falls on local municipality though there are some instances where community groups assist with installation and funding for landscaping and maintenance. Native plants are often preferable being that they can adapt to the local habitat. Growth of the plant material should be a consideration to allow for growth to prevent cracking and heaving of sidewalks.

#### *Guidelines*

- *Buffer zone plantings should be maintained at no higher than three feet to allow sight distance for motorists and pedestrians*
- *Trees with large canopies planted between the sidewalk and street should generally be trimmed to keep branches at least seven feet above the sidewalk.*
- *Plants and trees should be chosen to match character of area*

#### Landscaping Costs

Landscaping costs can vary greatly. They may be supplemented by funds from community organizations or homeowners associations.

### **5.2.13 Roadway Lighting Improvements**

Proper lighting quality, placement, and sufficiency can greatly enhance a nighttime urban experience as well as create a safe pedestrian facility. Two-thirds of all pedestrian fatalities occur during low-light conditions. Particular attention should be addressed at crosswalk conditions so there is adequate lighting for motorists to see pedestrians.

In many cases, street lighting can be implemented along roadways to light the roadway and the sidewalk allowing for adequate lighting for the motorist and pedestrian. In urban areas such as Downtown areas, low level lighting can be implemented through decorative streetlights which offer pedestrian-scale lighting.



This type of lighting should be placed where there is high pedestrian volumes to offer improved aesthetics. A variety of streetlight choices include mercury vapor, incandescent, or high pressure sodium. High pressure sodium is more cost effective but does not have the best light quality. Roadway streetlights can range from 20-40 feet in height while pedestrian-scale lighting is typically 10-15 feet.

When planning for lighting, it will be important to have sufficient lighting but also prevent light pollution and glare. A qualified lighting expert should be consulted in order to properly plan for placement and wattage for area lighting.

### Guidelines

- *Ensure pedestrian walkways and crosswalks are sufficiently lit*
- *Consider adding pedestrian level lighting in area of higher pedestrian volumes, Downtown, and at key intersections.*
- *Install lighting on both sides of street in commercial areas.*
- *Use uniform lighting levels*

### Roadway Lighting Improvements Costs

The cost varies - depending on the type of fixtures and the service agreement with the local utility company - from \$10,000-\$20,000 per pole.

### **5.2.14 Street Furniture and Walking Environment**

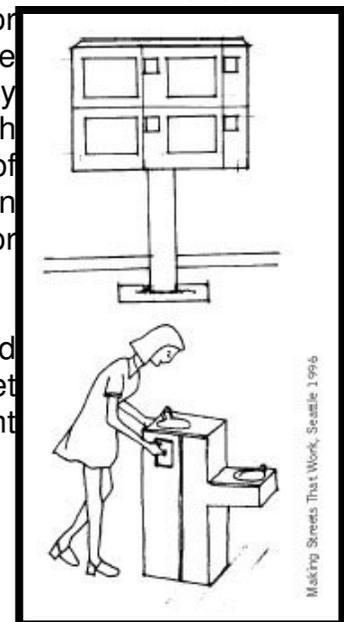
Sidewalks should be continuous and be part of a system that provides access to goods, services, transit, and homes. Well designed walking environments are enhanced by urban design elements and street furniture such as benches, bus shelters, trash receptacles and water fountains.

Sidewalks and walkways should be kept clear of poles, sign posts, newspaper racks, and other obstacles that could block their paths or become a tripping hazard. Benches, water fountains, bicycle parking racks and other street furniture should be carefully placed to create an unobstructed path for pedestrians. Such areas must also be properly maintained and kept clear of debris, overgrown landscaping, tripping hazards, or areas in which water accumulates and causes problems for pedestrians.

Walking areas should also be interesting for pedestrians and provide a secure environment. Storefronts should exist at street levels and walking areas should be well lit and have good sight lines.

#### **Purpose:**

- *Enhance the pedestrian environment.*
- *Enliven commercial districts by fostering community life.*





**Considerations:**

- Good-quality street furniture will show that the community values its public spaces and is more cost effective in the long run.
- Include plans for landscape irrigation and maintenance at the outset.
- Ensure proper placement of furniture; do not block pedestrian walkway or curb ramps.

Street Furniture Costs

Benches (\$600-\$1000),  
Trash Receptacles \$500  
Water Fountains \$1,000  
Bus Shelters \$2,200

**5.2.15 Transit Stop Treatments**

Good public transportation is as important to the quality of a community as good roads. Well-designed transit routes and stops are essential to a usable system. Bus stops should be located at intervals that are convenient for passengers. The stops should be designed to provide safe and convenient access and should be comfortable places for people to wait. Adequate bus stop signing, lighting, and a bus shelter with seating and trash receptacles are also desirable features. Bus stops should be highly visible locations where people can reach them easily on foot. Convenient crossings are also important.

Proper placement of bus stops is a key to user safety. For example, placing the bus stops on the near side of intersections or crosswalks may block pedestrians' views of approaching traffic, and the approaching drivers' view of pedestrians. Approaching motorists may be unable to stop in time when a pedestrian steps out into traffic from behind the front of the bus.

Relocating the bus stop to the far side of the intersection can improve pedestrian safety since it eliminates the sight distance restriction caused by the bus. Placing bus stops at the far side of intersections can improve motor vehicle operation but should always be placed where pedestrians can cross the roadway safely.

The bus stop location should be fully accessible to pedestrians in wheel-chairs, and should have paved connections to sidewalks where landscape buffers exist. Adequate room should exist to operate wheelchair lifts.

**Purpose:**

- Provide safe, convenient and inviting access for transit users.

**Considerations:**

- Ensure that access to and from stops is provided for when transit stops are created.
- Ensure adequate room to load wheelchairs.



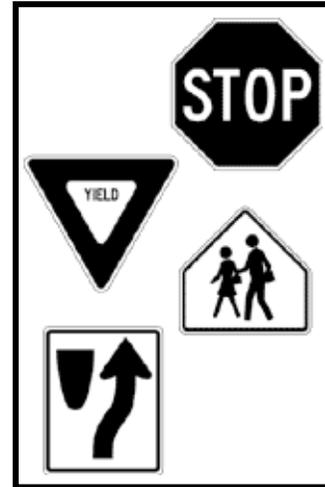
- Ensure a clear and comfortable walking path for passing pedestrians when placing transit shelters
- Locate transit stops on the far side of marked crosswalks

### Transit Stop Facilities Costs

The cost ranges from \$1,000 to \$10,000, depending on the type of facility or facility improvement.

### **5.2.16 Pedestrian Signs and Wayfinding**

Signs can provide important information that can improve road safety. By letting people know what to expect, there is a greater chance that they will react and behave appropriately. For example, giving motorists advanced warnings of upcoming pedestrian crossings or that they are entering a traffic calmed area will enable them to modify their speeds. Sign use and movement should be done judiciously, as overuse breeds noncompliance and disrespect.



Regulatory signs, such as STOP, YIELD or turn restrictions require certain driver actions and can be enforced. Warning signs can provide helpful information, especially to motorists and pedestrians unfamiliar with an area. Some examples of signs which affect pedestrians include pedestrian warning signs, motorists warning signs, NO TURN ON RED signs, and guide signs.

Advance pedestrian warning signs should be used where pedestrian crossings may not be expected by motorists, especially if there are many motorists who are unfamiliar with the area. A new fluorescent yellow-green color is now approved for use on non-motorized warning signs. This bright color attracts the attention of drivers because it is unique.

In some cases, signs may be used to prohibit pedestrian crossings at an undesirable location and re-route them to a safer crossing location, or warn pedestrians of unexpected driver maneuvers. All signs should be periodically checked to make sure they are in good condition, free from graffiti and continue to serve a purpose.

#### **Purpose:**

- Provides regulations or information to road users as to what to expect and how to behave.

#### **Considerations:**

- Overuse of signs breeds non-compliance and disrespect. Too many signs can lead to visual clutter with the result that a driver is not likely to read or pay attention to any of the signs
- Traffic signs must be in compliance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).



## Pedestrian Signing and Pavement Markings

### Purpose

Signing is governed by the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*, which provides specifications on the design and placement of traffic control signs installed within public right-of-ways. Signs should only be installed when they fulfill a need based on an engineering study or engineering judgment. In general, signs are often ineffective in modifying driver behavior, and overuse of signs breeds disrespect. Used judiciously and located with consistency, signs and markings can be effective. Jurisdictions should develop clear guidelines for use and should avoid overreliance on signs and paint to control motorist behavior. This may mean altering and/or relocating existing signs and markings. It may be best to eliminate markings and signs that have proven to be ineffective or deleterious to pedestrian safety.

The MUTCD outlines guidelines governing signs and pavement markings. At the same time, it does not prohibit creative regulatory design. The MUTCD does not define criteria for crosswalk location or striping options. Much is left to engineering judgment. As a result, there is leeway in adapting guidelines to specific signing and marking policy needs.

Colors for signs and markings should conform to the color schedule recommended by the MUTCD to promote uniformity and understanding from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. For the background color of signs, use:

- **YELLOW** - General warning.
- **RED** - Stop or prohibition.
- **BLUE** - Service guidance.
- **GREEN** - Indicates movements permitted, directional guidance.
- **BROWN** - Public recreation and scenic guidance.
- **ORANGE** - Construction and maintenance. warning
- **BLACK** - Regulation.
- **WHITE** - Regulation. For pavement markings, use:
- **YELLOW** - Centerline stripes.
- **WHITE** - All other pavement stripes and markings, including edge stripes, lane markings, and crosswalks.





## **Regulatory Signs**

These signs are used to inform motorists or pedestrians of a legal requirement and should only be used when the legal requirement is not otherwise apparent. Many motorist signs, including stop signs, yield signs, turn restrictions, and speed limits, have a direct or indirect impact on pedestrians.

The NO TURN ON RED sign may be used in some instances to facilitate pedestrian movements. *The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* lists six conditions when "no turn on red" may be considered, three of which are directly related to pedestrians or signal timing for pedestrians.

The use of NO TURN ON RED signs at an intersection should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Less restrictive alternatives should be considered in lieu of NO TURN ON RED. Also, supplementary signs, such as WHEN PEDESTRIANS ARE PRESENT or WHEN CHILDREN ARE PRESENT may be placed below the NO TURN ON RED sign.

There are occasions when no-turn-on-red restrictions are beneficial, and specific recommendations relating to pedestrians include:

- *Part-time restrictions should be discouraged; however, they are preferable to full-time prohibitions when the need only occurs for a short period of time.*
- *Universal prohibitions at school crossings should not be made, but rather restrictions should be sensitive to special problems of pedestrian conflicts, such as the unpredictable behavior of children and problems of the elderly and persons with disabilities. Pedestrian volume, as such, should not be the only criterion for prohibiting right turns on red.*

There are a number of regulatory signs directed at pedestrians, which include:

- *Pedestrians prohibited signs to prohibit pedestrian entry at freeway ramps.*
- *Pedestrian crossing signs are used to restrict crossings at less safe locations and to divert them to optimal crossing locations. Various alternatives include the USE CROSSWALK (with supplemental arrow) sign, which may be used at signalized intersection legs with high conflicting turning movements or at mid-block locations directing pedestrians to use an adjacent signal or crosswalk. The signs have most applicability in front of schools or other buildings that generate significant pedestrian volumes.*
- *Traffic signal signs include the pedestrian push-button signs or other signs at signals directing pedestrians to cross only on the green light or WALK signal. Pedestrian push-button signs should be used at all pedestrian-actuated signals. It is helpful to provide guidance to indicate which street the button is for (either with arrows or street names). The signs should be located adjacent to the push button and the push buttons should be accessible to pedestrians with disabilities.*



Other signs may be used for pedestrians at traffic signals to define the meaning of the WALK, DON'T WALK, and flashing DON'T WALK signal indications. The decision to use these signs (or alternatively, stickers mounted directly on the signal pole) is strictly engineering judgment and is primarily for educational purposes. As such, their use may be more helpful near schools and areas with concentrations of elderly pedestrians-two high-risk areas. This information may also be effectively converted into brochures for distribution and ongoing educational purposes.

*Pedestrians are restricted from continuing straight and are encouraged to cross to the left to avoid a vehicular merge lane.*



### **Warning Signs**

Warning signs are used to inform unfamiliar motorists/ pedestrians of unusual or unexpected conditions. Warning signs predominantly fall under the permissive category ("may" condition), and when used, should be placed to provide adequate response times. Warning signs are generally diamond-shaped with black letters or drawings on a yellow background and shall be reflectorized or illuminated. Overuse of warning signs breeds disrespect and should be avoided.

The warning sign predominantly used to warn motorists of possible pedestrian conflicts is the Advance Pedestrian Crossing sign. This sign should be installed in advance of mid-block crosswalks or other locations where pedestrians may not be expected to cross. This significantly minimizes their use at most urban intersections since pedestrian crossings are an expected occurrence. This sign may also be selectively used in advance of high-volume pedestrian crossing locations to add emphasis to the crosswalk.

Where there are multiple crossing locations that cannot be concentrated to a single location, a supplemental distance plate may be used (NEXT XXX FEET). The advance pedestrian crossing signs should not be mounted with another warning sign (except for a supplemental distance sign or an advisory speed plate) or regulatory sign (except for NO PARKING signs) to avoid information overload and to allow for an improved driver response. Care should be taken in sign placement in relation to other signs to avoid sign clutter and to allow adequate motorist response.



***Pedestrian warning sign is fluorescent yellow green (FYG) - to be more visible.***

The Pedestrian Crossing Sign is similar to the Advance Pedestrian Crossing sign, but has the crosswalk lines shown on it. This sign is intended to be used at the crosswalk, which is the only warning sign not used in advance of the condition being warned (except for large arrow signs and object markers). Because of its placement and the motorist's inability to distinguish and comprehend the subtle difference between the two signs, its usefulness is limited. When used, it should be preceded by the advance warning

sign and should be located immediately adjacent to the crossing point. To help alleviate motorist confusion, a black-and-yellow diagonally downward pointing arrow sign may be used to supplement the pedestrian crossing sign.

The Playground sign may be used in advance of a designated children's play area to warn motorists of a potentially high concentration of young children. This sign should generally not be needed on local or residential streets where children are expected. Furthermore, play areas should not be located adjacent to high-speed major or arterial streets, or if so, should be fenced off to prevent children from darting into the street.



According to the *Traffic Control Devices Handbook*, CAUTION-CHILDREN AT PLAY or SLOW CHILDREN signs should not be used since they may encourage children to play in the street and may encourage parents to be less vigilant. Such signs also provide no guidance to motorists in terms of a safe speed, and the sign has no legal basis for determining what a motorist should do. Furthermore, motorists should expect children to be "at play" in all residential areas, and the lack of signing on some

***Flashing lights, school crossing signs, and a 20-mph speed limit give motorists plenty of advance warning of the crossing area up ahead.***

streets may indicate otherwise. The signs are unenforceable and act as another roadside obstacle to pedestrians and errant motorists. Use of these non-standard signs may also imply that the involved jurisdiction approves of streets as playgrounds, which may result in the jurisdiction being vulnerable to tort liability.

School Warning signs include the advance school crossing signs, the school crossing sign, SCHOOL BUS STOP AHEAD sign, and others. School-related traffic control devices are discussed in detail in Part VII (Traffic Controls for School Areas) of the MUTCD. A reduced speed limit sign with flashing lights can



be installed ahead of the actual crossing. The lights are set to flash during school hours, alerting drivers that a lower speed limit is in effect when the flashers are operating. Another sign and light combination is SCHOOL SPEED LIMIT XX, where the speed limit is illuminated during school hours.

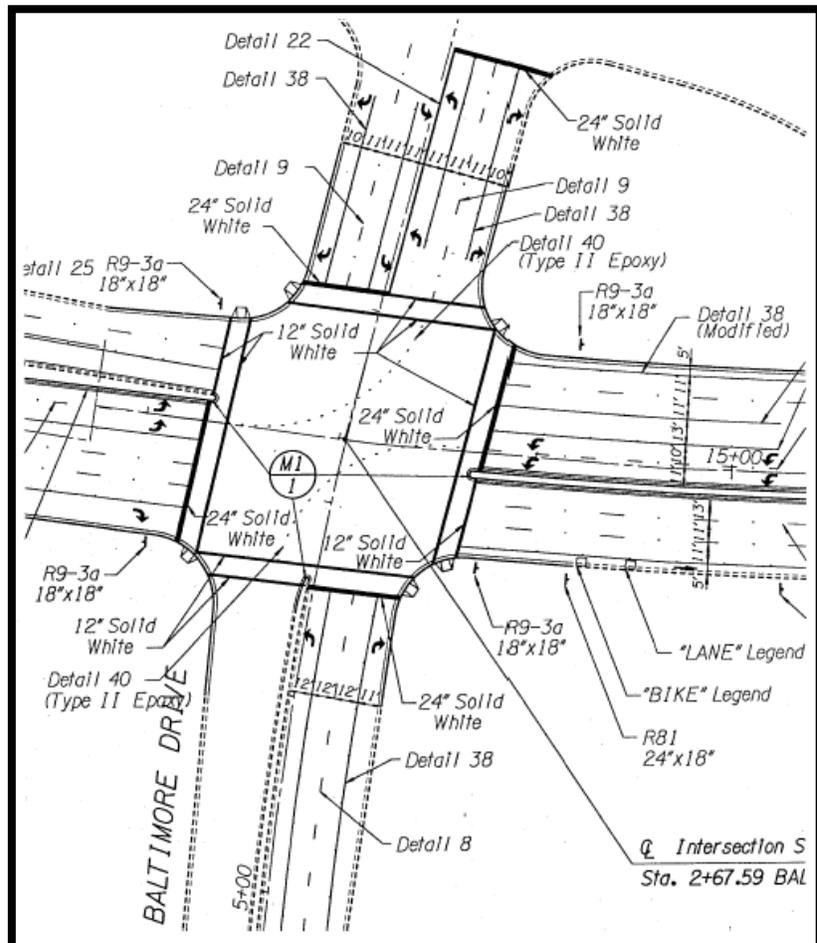
The MUTCD allows for the development of other specialty warning signs based on engineering judgment for unique conditions. These signs can be designed to alert unfamiliar motorists or pedestrians of unexpected conditions and should follow the general criteria for the design of warning signs. Their use should be minimized to retain effectiveness and should be based on engineering judgment.

### **Directional Signs**

Directional signs for pedestrians are intended to assist people who are new to the area or to assist residents who may not know the most direct route to a destination by foot. Use distances meaningful to pedestrians, such as the number of blocks or average walking time.

### **Pavement Word and Symbol Markings**

The MUTCD allows for the use of pavement word and symbol markings such as SCHOOL XING or PED XING, as motorist warning devices. These may be helpful on high-volume or highspeed streets with unusual geometrics (such as vertical or horizontal curves) in advance of a pedestrian crossing area. Markings should be white and placed to provide an adequate motorist response. Their use should be kept to a minimum to retain effectiveness.



**- END OF SECTION -**



# Section 6

## PROGRAM AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Overview

This Section outlines local measures to increase walking and to promote pedestrian safety. It provides the goals and objectives for a pedestrian network, noting Wilkesboro's role in addressing pedestrian issue and needs. In addition, actions and policies are listed to help integrate the pedestrian system into the transportation system.

In order for the pedestrian network to be most effective, it is important for the necessary policies, ordinances, funding, and staffing infrastructure to be in place to manage, maintain, and promote pedestrian transportation in Wilkesboro.

Previous planning efforts have outlined pedestrian goals and needs for Wilkesboro. The emphasis on pedestrian considerations parallels new policies within the region and state as well. The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT)'s Board of Transportation Resolution (2000) explains that "bicycling and walking accommodations shall be a routine part of the NCDOT's planning, design, construction, and operations activities" and that "bicycling and walking are a critical part of the state's transportation activities."

The following describes policies, programs, and action items, in Sections 6.2 - 6.4. These elements were developed using and evaluating existing planning documents mentioned in Section 3. The Steering Committee also assisted in developing the overall goals, which included the following:

- Enhance the pedestrian environment and increase opportunities to choose walking as a safe mode of transportation;
- Improve the health of citizens in the Town of Wilkesboro;
- Develop standards that enhance livability, economic opportunity, safety, and quality of life; and
- Promote pedestrian activity as a viable alternative to automobile use.



## 6.2 Policy Recommendations

The design and planning of pedestrian facilities are important components of roadway design. Fundamentally, both modes of transportation (pedestrian and vehicular) should acknowledge each other in matters of safety, accommodation, and relationship. Pedestrian movement has become an important focus for the Town of Wilkesboro and the surrounding community. The public demands connectivity, safer routes, and more opportunities. Many of the survey results identify the needs within the Town - ranging from site-specific areas to system-wide planning. Although public meetings do not capture a *complete* synopsis of the Town's pedestrian needs, they do identify concerns and issues that surveys do not necessarily reflect. Based on information from the general public, there is positive feedback regarding pedestrian facilities, such as the Yadkin River Greenway. Many residents want this initiative to continue - promoting pedestrian facilities in other areas, as well.

Town staff and the Steering Committee also recognize other important issues. Traffic and safety are of utmost importance to the Town of Wilkesboro. Many areas (within the Town) were acknowledged as safety concerns, which need to be addressed with regard to reducing potential pedestrian accidents. Increasing public safety (with devices such as pedestrian signals, signage, and the removal of existing barriers) will create a user-friendly pedestrian network and thereby, increase the number of pedestrians.

### Land Use

The Town's Draft Comprehensive Plan states that the Town of Wilkesboro should require coordination of development to allow for more efficient planning and utilization of its infrastructure. Among the Town's goals are the reduction of dependence on the automobile; the development of a balanced, affordable and efficient transportation system; development within Downtown/Main Street which encourages pedestrian activity; and the preservation of the quality of Wilkesboro's transportation system. Wilkesboro recognizes the need to concentrate on promoting downtown pedestrian facilities that are convenient for the pedestrian, rather than just for vehicular traffic. The revitalization of downtown (with improved pedestrian facilities) will continue to encourage a mixed-use environment in the downtown district - impacting its economy very favorably, which will result in further improvements in the downtown corridor.

As part of the Wilkesboro Pedestrian Plan, the Town should continue to promote pedestrian facilities - particularly with new construction. Sidewalks should always be required for new streets, improved streets, or street extensions. Although developers may argue that this requirement increases development costs, this requirement would continually enhance and promote the pedestrian network established by the Town. Also, it is less expensive to install sidewalks and curb ramps during site development, rather than trying to retrofit these facilities after the project is complete.



This master plan also recommends regulations that require sidewalk facilities for new construction, renovations, and additions to existing structures. As urban infill properties re-develop, sidewalks should be constructed with these projects. In some instances, these sidewalks may still be disconnected, but over time - as these developmental projects continue, they will enhance pedestrian connectivity and reduce costs for the Town.

Alternatives may be offered to developers by the Town - due to anticipated future thoroughfare improvements. The Town of Wilkesboro can offer the developer the opportunity of paying a fee – in lieu of – the actual construction of pedestrian facilities. This allows the Town to have control over current and/or future construction and maintenance of the pedestrian facilities and allows the Town to develop facilities in a continuous and efficient way, thereby preventing the pedestrian facilities from being removed by the developer. The requirement of sidewalk construction of “fee in lieu of construction” should be included in development regulations and the subdivision code.

Although the Town should be flexible with development opportunities, it must require the developer to provide right-of-ways or easements for pedestrian facilities. All development approved by the Town must include the accommodation of pedestrians by the developer(s).

### **Access, Connectivity, and Barriers**

Most of the pedestrian facilities are located along existing roads. These areas are typically more accessible than off-road, multi-purpose trails and are primarily used for transportation. Therefore, these types of facilities will require the most safety considerations due to the proximity of vehicular traffic. Main Street is the primary pedestrian corridor in Wilkesboro (due to the locations of local businesses). The sidewalks on Main Street (as well as neighboring streets) have some deficiencies - such as utility pole barriers, damaged sidewalks, and unmarked street crossings. In other areas, inadequate lighting has created unsafe conditions for pedestrians as well as vehicular traffic. As development and redevelopment occur in these areas, Town policies could require repair and reconstruction of these facilities.

The Yadkin River Greenway is primarily used for recreation although it provides a great transportation link to North Wilkesboro. In addition, as the Greenway develops, new transportation alternatives will be available. The Greenway will serve as a link from residential areas to parks, businesses, and the downtown district. Other recreation trails - such as those at Cub Creek Park and Wilkes Community College – are located in park-like settings and are very popular. The connectivity of these facilities with transportation facilities will create an important linkage. It will allow the user to access these destinations without a vehicle.

The predominate barriers within the pedestrian system in the Town of Wilkesboro varies. Limited right-of way, steep topography, and significant drainage features



will limit the options for the system. The purchasing of property and/or easements can be expensive and there can be difficulty in establishing agreements with landowners. In addition, the crossing of major tributaries and working with steep terrain can be very costly (in the development of pedestrian facilities). Therefore, the Town will need to prioritize these items and determine priorities in the connecting of facilities. The major manmade barrier to pedestrian facilities is US Hwy. 421/Watson Brame Expressway, which currently blocks north/south pedestrian transportation. As development and construction occur, efforts should be made to improve pedestrian access.

The following have been identified as major safety hazards within the pedestrian network:

- Curtis Bridge Road
- Connecting walkway / greenway crossover at Highways 18 and 268
- Corridor through Westwood Hills and along Woodfield Way at the intersection of Highway 18 and Woodfield Way

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION ITEMS**

### **Pedestrian Network**

Create and maintain a pedestrian route network that strengthens the local communities of Wilkesboro by connecting to existing and future schools, parks, shopping centers, and businesses.

***Recommendation #1*** - The pedestrian transportation plan shall require sidewalks on one side of all residential streets and two sides along all thoroughfares and collector roads within walking distance of schools, libraries, parks, shopping centers, or similar facilities. Exceptions may be considered on a case by case basis due to difficult terrain, inadequate width, or exponential costs as an example.

***Recommendation #2*** - Update Town ordinances and plans to reflect pedestrian plan recommendations and proposals.

***Recommendation #3*** - Provide connectivity along proposed thoroughfares such as Hwy. 18, Oakwood Road, and Hwy. Business 421.

***Recommendation #4*** - Develop a system of way-finding signage for pedestrian facilities and greenways.

***Recommendation #5*** - Continue to construct greenways as identified on the Proposed Pedestrian Facilities Map.

***Recommendation #6*** - Maintain and repair existing sidewalks ensuring that facilities are safe and free of obstacles and debris.

***Recommendation #7*** - Repair all noncompliant pedestrian facilities and ensure all new facilities should provide ADA accessibility to the maximum extent possible.

***Recommendation #8*** - Coordinate planning efforts with local and surrounding jurisdictions to provide regional pedestrian facility connectivity

***Recommendation #9*** - Require developer to provide pedestrian connectivity to adjacent developments and destination areas.



### **Safe Routes to School**

The Town should develop projects and programs which improve safe connected routes to schools.

**Recommendation #10** - Sidewalks should be implemented along roads which are within walking distances to schools. Ensure all intersections provide pedestrian signals at signalized intersections.

**Recommendation #11** - Pedestrian projects, which are located near schools, should be prioritized.

**Recommendation #12** - Partnerships should be formed with the local school systems to initiate and implement school safety programs for school children.

### **Safety**

Create, implement, and maintain safe pedestrian facilities which allow for a “walkable” community.

**Recommendation #13** - Install and/or replace all damaged and noncompliant pedestrian facilities as noted in the network recommendations, Items 6 and 7.

**Recommendation #14** - Prioritize sidewalk implementation where gaps are located and where there is a high volume of pedestrian activity.

**Recommendation #15** - Ensure that all sidewalks are extended across driveways at safe and usable cross slopes.

**Recommendation #16** - Create a maintenance program which monitors existing sidewalks for damage and filling in gaps of the pedestrian system.

**Recommendation #17** - Establish a budget for sidewalk repair and expansion to obtain connectivity.

**Recommendation #18** - Provide pedestrian scale lighting at regular intervals where there is pedestrian activity at remote areas and traffic intersections.

**Recommendation #19** - Connect local businesses to the public sidewalk system.

**Recommendation #20** - Ensure that new construction projects are installed and meet all design requirements

### **Crossing Safety**

Improve and construct all pedestrian crossings in areas where there is a high volume of pedestrian activity or where safety is an issue.

**Recommendation #21** - Install marked crosswalks at all intersections

**Recommendation #22** - Evaluate traffic intersections for possible design elements such as extended curbs and refuge islands for pedestrian safety.

**Recommendation #23** - Update local traffic intersection guidelines to meet current state and federal requirements.

**Recommendation #24** - Implement lower speed limits where there is a high collision rate with and high volume of pedestrian activity.

**Recommendation #25** - Ensure that traffic intersections are well lit.



**Recommendation #26** - Evaluate pedestrian facilities which contribute to unsafe movement traffic intersection for appropriate solutions.

### **Traffic Signals**

Implement traffic signals at unsafe and dangerous intersections which improve pedestrian conditions

**Recommendation #27** - Install pedestrian signals at all major intersections.

**Recommendation #28** - Seek funding opportunities which help with design assistance and implementation of traffic and pedestrian signals

**Recommendation #29** - Review the signal timing to ensure that pedestrians have adequate crossing times at intersections.

**Recommendation #30** - Consider audible pedestrian signals in near schools, senior centers, and other high volume pedestrian attractors.

**Recommendation #31** - Consider using "countdown" pedestrian signals near high pedestrian volume locations such as Downtown.

### **Community Strengthening**

Provide amenities and elements that enhance the pedestrian environments and create a desirable place to live and work.

**Recommendation #32** - Implement streetscape improvements in the Downtown which include design elements such as decorative paving, street trees, and furniture.

**Recommendation #33** - Develop environmental education and interpretative facilities particularly along greenway corridors.

**Recommendation #34** - Provide a planting strip between sidewalks and roadway for street trees and low plantings.

## **6.3 Other Policies**

### **6.3.1 Identify Countermeasures**

National statistics indicate that nearly one-third of all pedestrian-related vehicular accidents occurred within fifty (50) feet of a street intersection. Even though crosswalks at intersections may be properly marked with appropriate signage, accidents still occur. Many times the pedestrian does not take the proper precautions when crossing intersections. Sometimes the driver is at fault by failing to yield to pedestrians. Drivers and pedestrians should both take a defensive attitude toward pedestrian/vehicular safety when approaching intersections. NCDOT has published the handbook *A Guide to North Carolina Bicycle and Pedestrian Laws: Guidebook on General Statutes, Ordinances, and Resources*. This document serves as an educational tool for pedestrians, drivers, and the general public.

Statistically, less than ten percent of fatalities in the nation involved a pedestrian walking along a road and/or not on a sidewalk. Most of these incidents involved the



pedestrian walking “with” the traffic and being struck from behind, while safety guidelines suggest that pedestrians “face” the traffic when walking. Over one-fourth of pedestrian accidents occurred at mid-blocks. This type of accident is typically associated with a pedestrian *darting* across the road. Prior to establishing a marked mid-block crossing, proper evaluation should be done to ensure the safety of the public.

The two (2) noted types of pedestrian accidents represent over 65% of pedestrian fatalities in the nation. Over the past several years, countermeasures have been developed to mitigate pedestrian accidents. Countermeasures are generally “site-specific” improvements, which hopefully provide immediate solutions. The most effective countermeasures include roadway design, intersection design, traffic calming, traffic management, signals & signage, and pedestrian facility design. These planning and engineering methods are instrumental in reducing pedestrian accidents. Education and enforcement are also countermeasures that must be implemented in the prevention of pedestrian accidents. The following are examples of countermeasures, which are related to pedestrian safety in Wilkesboro.

Roadway Design

Roadway Narrowing  
Lane Reduction  
Driveway Improvements  
Raised Medians  
Curb Radius Reduction  
Improved Right-Turn Slip-Lane Design

Intersection Design

Roundabouts  
Modified T-Intersections  
Intersection Median Barriers

Traffic Calming

Curb Extensions  
Chokers  
Crossing Islands  
Chicanes  
Mini-Circles  
Speed Tables  
Raised Intersections  
Raised Pedestrian Crossings  
Gateways  
Landscaping  
Specific Paving Treatments  
Serpentine Design  
Woonerf

Traffic Management

Diverter  
Partial Street Closure  
Pedestrian Street/Malls

Signals and Signage

Traffic Signals  
Pedestrian Signals  
Pedestrian Signal Timing  
Traffic Signal Enhancements  
Right-Turn-on-Red Restrictions  
Advanced Stop Lines  
Signing

Pedestrian Facility Design

Sidewalks and Walkways  
Curb Ramps  
Marked Crosswalks and Enhancements  
Transit Stop Treatments  
Roadway Lighting Improvements  
Street Furniture/Walking Environment

Education and Enforcement

School Zone Improvements  
Neighborhood Identity  
Speed-Monitoring Trailer  
On-Street Parking Enhancements  
Pedestrian/Driver Education  
Police Enforcement



### **6.3.2 Maintenance**

Safety consideration should be a high priority with existing and new facilities. Continual maintenance will be required to have a functional pedestrian network. Pedestrians typically aspire to use a facility that is in a good and safe condition; otherwise it will not be used effectively. In addition to sidewalks, crosswalks at traffic intersections and mid-block crossings need to conform to the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Currently, there are numerous areas within the Town that have no handicap ramp or crosswalk signage; therefore, they are not ADA compliant. With an increase in the population of senior citizens, it is imperative that accessibility and user needs be addressed in these areas. In order to affectively address these issues, it is recommended that the Town Staff conduct an inspection of existing pedestrian facilities within the Town on a quarter annual basis to not only address previously identified maintenance issues, but also to inventory any additional areas that have occurred recently.

### **6.3.3 Signage**

Maps of existing facilities in the Town of Wilkesboro can be found at the end of Section 2. The maps are divided into the eastern and western sections of the Town. Not only do the maps delineate the conditions of existing pedestrian facilities, they also address barriers, crosswalk needs, and lack of accessible ramps. Major destinations areas such as business districts, schools, and parks are featured – in order to better understand the relationship of existing pedestrian facilities to their uses.

Proper signage is an important part of any transportation system – whether it is pedestrian or vehicular in nature. Just as signs in schools zones, parking areas, etc., communicate driver awareness of pedestrians in the area(s). Signage for pedestrian facilities is equally as important as signage for roadways. Often, pedestrian facilities lack signage due to the lack of awareness of pedestrian systems on the part of the responsible entities. It is hard to imagine having to walk to a specific destination without knowing the exact route to use; but this is often the case with pedestrians - especially visitors, who are in the area.

Pedestrian facilities should be made available to visitors and residents, who want to utilize the pedestrian system in the Town of Wilkesboro. This will (not only) assist pedestrians in walking to particular destinations, but will also encourage and promote “walking” in the community. As mentioned in previous sections, this Pedestrian Plan will be implemented into the NCDOT Traffic Improvements Program. NCDOT has taken a proactive approach in promoting safe bicycle and pedestrian routes across the state. This approach consists of user friendly method of signage informing pedestrians of safety and information awareness. These way finding techniques are not standard traffic control signage that are typical for MUTCD, but another method to provide safe, attractive, and usable signage system.



### **6.3.4 Spot Improvement Programs**

The Town of Wilkesboro will *be responsible for most of the spot improvements within the Town*. NCDOT's Spot Improvement Program also has funds available for spot improvements that are less than \$250,000. *Spot improvements* are small projects such as the maintenance of accessible ramps, the repair of damaged sidewalks, and the removal of debris. These improvements should be performed on a case by case basis with special consideration give to hazardous areas. The Town should inventory and inspect areas requiring spot improvements annually, prioritize these locations, and proceed with the proper implementations.

### **6.3.5 Traffic Calming Initiatives**

There are many areas within the Town where traffic speed is a problem. These areas may meet standard roadway criteria; however, they are dangerous locations from the perspective of the pedestrian – creating unsafe situations. Main Street in downtown (and other high pedestrian traffic areas) necessitates safe traffic speeds, thereby reducing possible accidents, while enhancing these areas at the same time. Pedestrians want to be in *secure* areas where they feel comfortable and vehicular traffic is controlled.

There are many simple and effective methods used to achieve traffic calming. These techniques can be as simple as “lane striping” or “on-street parking”. Subconsciously, a driver feels the need to travel slower in areas where the traffic lane is *visually* narrower. Methods such as street trees, bulb-outs, and crossing islands may not narrow the actual traffic lane but will create a constricted visual corridor of the roadway. Other techniques such as speed tables, raised crosswalks, and specialty pavement – all attract the driver’s attention – causing an immediate slow down. Although many speed tables and similar measures have been used successfully throughout the state, it is imperative that proper planning, evaluation, and engineering occur before these devices are implemented. (Photographs and diagrams of traffic calming devices were illustrated in Section 5.)

### **6.3.6 Transit Interface**

The Wilkes Transportation Authority (WTA) operates the Wilkes Express Bus Shuttle, which is extremely important for many residents in the Town. The Wilkes Express has designated transit stops that are accessed by existing sidewalks. The stops are located in strategic areas - such as popular destinations and/or densely populated areas – both of which locations draw high utilization of the transit system. As the system continues to evolve, it will be necessary to provide additional and/or new sidewalks to existing and proposed transit stops The Town should continue to work with the WTA to provide adequate facilities and promote mass transit transportation.



In addition, shelters and street furniture should also be implemented at bus stops. The Town will need to coordinate this effort with the Wilkes Transportation Authority. This Pedestrian Plan reflects proposed transit stops and connectivity of pedestrian facilities. Local pedestrians will (typically) only use transit stops that are safe, protected, and user-friendly as they travel to their respective destinations.

## **6.4 Program Recommendations**

Education, encouragement, and enforcement programs should be in place to teach and promote safety and ensure the success of Wilkesboro's pedestrian network for the future.

The recommended programs will be successful in serving the Town's need through support for pedestrian activity built through proper programming. The following programs were suggested by members of the Steering Committee and by the NCDOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation.

### **6.4.1 Safety Education Programs**

Currently the Town does not sponsor safety education programs. School-based programs, which stress safety, should be implemented regularly, particularly to young children. The promotion of "walking to school initiatives" will raise public awareness of child safety and instruct children in the proper usage of sidewalk and other pedestrian facilities. The local police departments typically provide such programs as this. Police officials go to the neighborhood schools and educate children on the proper use of sidewalks and street crossings. In particular, young pedestrians need instruction on how to cross streets safely and how to interact properly with vehicle traffic.

### **6.4.2 Encouragement and Promotion**

There are many initiatives that can be implemented by the Town of Wilkesboro to promote pedestrian activity. Likewise, health-based organizations, employers, and civic organizations should offer incentive programs to encourage walking and physical fitness, in general. Programs such as 'walk to school days' and 'visiting area walking facilities' can not only encourage walking, but also allow residents to use areas they may not know are available.

Special events also help promote walking. These activities, which typically bring the community together, are usually in the form of annual festivals and/or celebrations. The Overmountain Victory Trail and other historical events offer the Town multiple opportunities to interject "walking" in other venues.

Other means to encourage and promote Wilkesboro as a walkable community include:



- Publish and distribute a Wilkesboro walking guide brochure that covers the area's history, safety tips, suggested walking routes, and pedestrian rights and responsibilities
- Promote neighborhood walks, clean up sidewalks, and nature walks
- Promote walk-for-health programs with local schools, businesses, and recreation centers.
- Organize walk-to-work and walk-to-school days and weeks.
- Walk to Merle Fest program.

Wilkesboro should also tap into existing national encouragement programs:

- National Walk a Child to School is usually held in October with the objective to encourage adults to teach children to practice safe pedestrian behavior, to identify safe routes to school, and to remind everyone of the health benefits of walking.
- Safe Routes to School is a national program that promotes the improvement of health and well-being of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk and bicycle to school.

#### **6.4.3 Enforcement Programs**

One of the more prominent issues that the Town of Wilkesboro has with *vehicular* versus *pedestrian* traffic is with enforcement of the laws. For many decades, the law has stated that pedestrians have the right-of-way; but many drivers ignore this law. To ensure safety, this law must be enforced. The enforcement of speed limits is another important issue related to pedestrian safety. Studies have proven that motorists' speeds are directly proportional to the number of pedestrian deaths that occur. Reduced speeds provide more opportunity for pedestrians to see and react in a timely manner. Pedestrians will feel unsafe and will be reluctant to use sidewalks in areas where traffic laws are not enforced.

**- END OF SECTION -**



# Section 7

## IMPLEMENTATION

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### 7.1 Overview

This section describes how the Town of Wilkesboro can implement a safe and usable pedestrian network through the execution of its established goals in the Pedestrian Master Plan. The strategy for achieving goals involves the recommended pedestrian facilities discussed in Section 4, as well as new policy and program considerations, which were delineated in Section 6. This section deals with strategies and opportunities, key implementation steps (implementation policies), phasing of the pedestrian network, necessary staffing, and methods for developing facilities. Together, these sections fit together to form the implementation program.

### 7.2 Opportunities and Strategies

Among the opportunities to promote the Plan recommendations available to the Town of Wilkesboro is the opportunity to build upon an already committed and active base of citizens, pedestrians, and Downtown leaders and enthusiasts in the area. Through their organizations, institutions, publications, and networks, the Town can get the word out about improved or new pedestrian facilities and programs.

Second among the opportunities is the availability of the existing pedestrian facilities (Downtown sidewalks, existing trails, etc.). Though some changes are being suggested in the short-term and a much expanded network is suggested for the long-term, the presence of an existing network provides a strong foundation from which to build. Residents are already accustomed to seeing pedestrians on sidewalks and trails and should become used to seeing pedestrian walkway and trail signs. Building on their existing awareness is much easier than building on no awareness.

The final category of opportunity is building upon the existing patchwork of destination points. The Downtown, schools, parks, and residential and commercial areas are all places pedestrians currently travel to or would like to travel to. Short connectors between destinations connect with other connectors to the next destination. In the end, long corridors are created from this distribution of linked destination points. The addition of crosswalks and signage will make these destinations more attractive to pedestrians.

From these opportunities comes the framework for an initial implementation strategy:



- 1) Use the base of pedestrians to expand the awareness of the benefits of a walkable community.
- 2) Expand and modify the existing pedestrian route network to a comprehensive, connected, safe system so that it better meets the needs of the community, provides access to all, and enhances the current transportation infrastructure.
- 3) Begin making the critical connections between destination points that will allow for continuous growth of and improvement in the pedestrian transportation network.

These three steps represent the core of the implementation strategy. As the individual policy recommendations and physical recommendations are addressed, they should each fit with one of these three primary strategies.

### **7.3 Plan Adoption**

The first step in implementation of the Pedestrian Plan is adoption of the plan by the Town of Wilkesboro. By adopting the Pedestrian Plan, the community is able to shape larger regional decisions so that they fit within the goals of the plan. The Town also gives itself greater authority in shaping local land use decisions so that they achieve the goals and vision of this plan.

The Plan has been submitted to the Town of Wilkesboro staff for internal review and comments. In addition to the Town, NCDOT will also review the plan for additional comments. Upon initiating any changes or addressing any comments, this revised plan will need to be presented, approved, and adopted by the Town of Wilkesboro.

### **7.4 Action Steps**

After the plan is adopted, implementation of specific recommendations can begin. Many of these will occur simultaneously and include policy and facility improvement changes. The key steps are:

- Create the necessary governance capability and administration (staffing) capability to support and oversee the implementation of this plan and the proper maintenance of the facilities that are developed; for example, the Town may designate or hire an employee to oversee this task.
- Secure the funding necessary to undertake the short-term projects and develop a funding strategy that will allow the community to incrementally complete each of the suggested pedestrian facility improvements over a 10 year period. Opportunities are listed below:



1. *Consider Town bond referendum for monies allocated towards pedestrian walkways.*
  2. *Expand local capital improvements program for yearly appropriation for greenway and sidewalk development.*
  3. *Set aside money for construction and maintenance of pedestrian facilities in the annual operating budget.*
  4. *Pursue and request roads within Town be added to NCDOT's TIP program for sidewalk and greenway development/improvement.*
  5. *Apply for monies from North Carolina Safe Routes to School Program to make infrastructure improvements within 2 miles of schools.*
  6. *Pursue Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) that provide money for capital improvements (including sidewalks and greenways) in low-income neighborhoods.*
  7. *Apply for PARTF Grants for trail projects related to parks.*
  8. *Seek other sources of Town funding for pedestrian improvements that may include local assessment districts, developer exactions, local bonds, and code enforcement.*
  9. *Pursue funding from other sources listed in this section.*
- Add signs to the recommended network routes so that functional, safe, and updated pedestrian routes and greenways are immediately available to the community. Where worn, used foot paths exist and further greenway development is anticipated, add signs to promote use and safety. Develop a unique, consistent, and well-defined signage system throughout the Town.
  - Develop and implement education and awareness programs such as public events, which can be used to announce new pedestrian routes and some of the upcoming projects.
  - Begin working on the proposed facilities that are categorized as short-term phasing projects.
  - Ensure that pedestrian planning is integrated with other transportation planning efforts at the state and local levels, as well as with long-range and current land use, economic development, parks and recreation, environmental, and community planning.



- Coordinate pedestrian improvement projects with scheduled street re-paving, streetscapes, and other utility work.

## **7.5 Pedestrian Network Prioritization and Phasing**

The Proposed Facility Priority Maps and Project List can be found at the end of this section. The maps suggest priorities for the construction of pedestrian facilities located within the Town limits. In addition to prioritization, the list delineates the location, length, cost, and potential funding means for each project. As mentioned earlier in this section, sidewalk improvements make up the majority of project costs for the proposed improvements. The priorities established are primarily based on need and demand and priorities are separated into five (5) and (10) year time frames, as well as long-range goals. The spot improvements will require immediate attention because they involve safety issues as is typical.

The areas of highest priority are predominately located in the downtown areas. Many of the areas are new construction where no sidewalks exist; while some involve the renovation of existing sidewalks. Some of the improvements - such as the Main Street Corridor and Hwy. 421 (Business) are considered the primary pedestrian systems, often described as 'arterial' facilities. Projects with lesser priority, which are located on secondary, neighborhood streets, are 'feeder/collector' facilities.

In recent years the Town has discussed initiating a streetscape project along Main Street. This would continue the enhancement of the downtown area. Other priorities consist of the Yadkin River Greenway, Curtis Bridge Road, and Westwood Lane.

The Town of Wilkesboro and NCDOT are the primary agencies that will be involved with these pedestrian improvements. Many of these facilities are located on NCDOT public right-of-ways and are eligible to receive funding for DOT improvements. As new development or redevelopment occurs, it will be important for the Town to require the owner(s) to implement the appropriate pedestrian facilities, as necessary.

### **7.5.1 Prioritization of Projects**

The priorities of the pedestrian plan are subdivided into three different categories of priorities – high, medium, and low. Sidewalk improvements are the highest priority and will consist of new sidewalks, spot improvements, and repairs, which are scheduled to be implemented within the next five years. The majority of the high priority areas are in the downtown district, on the Yadkin River Greenway, or in the Westwood Lane improvements.

Moderate priority areas for sidewalks are those which provide connections to public services and other existing sidewalks within the Town. They are needed,



but do not have pedestrian demands as compared to the high priority areas. A 10-year time frame has been established for the implementation of the moderate priorities.

The final category is the low priority areas. These areas are important to the Town but due to economic factors, it is not feasible to implement the facilities within a 10-year time period. These facilities are located primarily in residential neighborhoods and connect to other existing/proposed sidewalks that are of high or moderate priority. A long-range time period will be allowed for the implementation of pedestrian facilities in the low priority areas. As different areas in and around the Town of Wilkesboro develop, priorities may change in the coming years.

The proposed improvements incorporate other planning initiatives, which relate to the Town of Wilkesboro's long-term objectives. NCDOT, Wilkes Transportation Authority, and the Yadkin River Greenway planning initiatives are reflected in this Pedestrian Plan. It will be essential to continue cooperation with these and other entities, which can enhance the pedestrian network within the Town of Wilkesboro and the surrounding communities. As additional needs are identified in the future, communication with these agencies will help with the coordination of future projects.

The Wilkesboro Pedestrian Plan proposes numerous pedestrian projects composed mainly of sidewalks, multi-purpose trails, and spot improvements. To develop an action plan that is manageable, the recommendations have to be separated into multiple projects, which will be implemented on an annual basis. Each fiscal year, the Town should identify specific projects and allocate funding for them. There are numerous funding mechanisms to assist with costs. This will be an important component in the completion of the identified projects.

### **7.5.2 Sidewalk projects**

The majority of the proposed improvements for the Wilkesboro Pedestrian Plan consist of repair and/or construction of concrete sidewalks. These are considered to be *on-road construction projects*. A priority list identifying sidewalks can be found in Appendix D. Many of the sidewalks will be constructed within public right-of-ways. Where terrain and right-of-way is available, the sidewalk should contain a planting strip between it and the roadway. The standard width of the planting strip should be five (5) feet wide. In some areas - if no curb and gutter exists - a vegetative swale, which increases the separation distance between the roadway and sidewalk, will be required. Where the right-of-way is too narrow and/or the terrain limits feasibility, alternate methods may be required. Alternatives such as wide paved shoulders will allow for minimum pedestrian facilities. These areas should have appropriate signage and be striped per MUTCD requirements. As these new projects are constructed, it will be important to implement appropriate facilities at traffic intersections. As many of the proposed facilities are located on NCDOT



roadways, the Town of Wilkesboro will need to receive an approval for all permitting and construction document for this work *prior* to construction.

Sidewalk improvements are proposed for Call Street, which will require improvements to the roadway where it crosses Cub Creek. This NCDOT roadway will require the necessary approvals. As mentioned in previous sections, there are also numerous spot improvements, which have been earmarked for repair and/or additional construction. The spot improvements are located primarily along existing sidewalk corridors. Many of the repair efforts will consist of removing damaged areas and replacing them with new concrete applications. (Refer to Section 4, page 4, for Spot Improvements.)

The cost of the sidewalk applications will vary - depending upon the choice of contractor, the scope of the project, and the costs of materials. The probable cost associated for implementing this work is approximately is \$2,346,460 for all sidewalk improvements. A total of \$746,210 of this estimate is associated with high priority sidewalk projects.

The following road segments are listed as high priority pedestrian facilities. A more detailed description can be found in Appendix D.

Road Improvement Segments

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <i>North St.</i>                                      | <i>South West St.</i>             |
| <i>South Bridge St.</i>                               | <i>Broad St.</i>                  |
| <i>West Main (south side)</i>                         | <i>Westwood Lane</i>              |
| <i>West Main (north side)</i>                         | <i>Cedar Lane</i>                 |
| <i>North Bridge St.(north of Main St. (east side)</i> | <i>Laurel Road</i>                |
| <i>North Bridge St. (west side)</i>                   | <i>Oakwood Road</i>               |
| <i>School St. (east side)</i>                         | <i>Fletcher St.</i>               |
| <i>West St.</i>                                       | <i>Connector to Westwood Park</i> |
| <i>South West St.</i>                                 | <i>West St.</i>                   |
| <i>West South St.</i>                                 | <i>School St. (east side)</i>     |
| <i>Henderson Drive</i>                                | <i>South Bridge St.</i>           |

**7.5.3 Greenway Corridors**

The improvements, which are designated as *off-road construction projects*, are mostly multi-use trails or greenways. The Yadkin River Greenway is the most well known multi-use trail within the Town's pedestrian network. These trails are typically 8 to 10 feet wide. The wide trails allow for biking, which is not permitted on sidewalks. The surface treatments used for this application are usually asphalt pavement and a combination of aggregate stone with screenings. The Yadkin River Greenway is a phased project, which will take a number of years to complete. This pedestrian plan proposes neighborhood connectors, some of which are multi-use pathways, which will tie into the Yadkin River Greenway.



The approximate cost for construction of the proposed multi-use paths in this document is \$3,113,700. This is a significant figure; however, this popular amenity can come to fruition by partnering with other agencies and investigating creative funding

### **Yadkin River Greenway**

The Yadkin River Greenway is the primary off-road facility, which has improvements that are proposed. The cost for expanding this greenway is expensive; but fortunately, the project has received funding which has paid for most of the improvements to date. This greenway is a short-term priority, with a proposed completion dated within the next six (6) years. In addition there are other off-road multi-purpose pathways, which are proposed. These projects typically connect to other pedestrian facilities, which are generally located along water features and flood prone areas (where building is not permitted). Most of the improvements (other than the Yadkin River Greenway) are in a ten (10) year or long-range time frame.

The proposed Cub Creek Greenway is primarily located along Cub Creek and will provide connections to neighboring residential areas and the downtown area. The greenway will travel through Cub Creek Park which already has any existing walking trail system that very popular for local residents. The long range plan includes connecting the greenway to the existing Town utility treatment facility which is used as a camping area during Merlefest. In addition to the Cub Creek Greenway, the Middlebrook Greenway Connector will also provide a viable connection for local residents. This connector will provide a greenway spur from the Yadkin River Greenway to Middlebrook Drive which is part of a local residential area. The connection will provide an important greenway corridor to the Downtown area.

In addition to the Town of Wilkesboro, the Yadkin River Greenway Council will be an important partner in completing the expansion project along the river. NCDOT has assisted with financial support for previous phases of the greenway and is a vital component in funding continued construction. The Town will need to use other funding mechanisms, as well, to help fund this and other proposed projects. There are numerous grants available through state and/or federal agencies that can be of assistance in the funding of these off-road construction projects. It will be of utmost importance to incorporate user-friendly trails that comply with both ADA and Town standards.

### **Greenway Priorities**

*Cub Creek Greenway (Between South Bridge St. and College Street)*

*Yadkin River Greenway (From Hwy 421 Bridge to Western Town Limits)*

*Cub Creek Greenway (From Cub Creek Park Trail to Old US 421)*



#### **7.5.4 Ancillary facilities and programs**

The Town of Wilkesboro will be the primary agency for initiating the implementation of ancillary facilities and/or programs. As mentioned earlier in this section, spot improvements will be an immediate priority. Most of these projects are small and will not require a large work force. Many of the projects will take no more than a day for repairs and most will not require more than a week for completion.

Educational programs concerning health and safety will be an ongoing feature – performed on an annual basis. These programs are considered to be a short term priority and the Town will need to explore the possibility of partnering with various entities. Improvements, which involve the Wilkes Transportation Authority, will occur on a case by case basis. When new transit stops are proposed, the responsible parties will determine the appropriate needs for a user-friendly transit stop. Some of these needs include safe access, sidewalks, shelter, signage, and/or benches.

There are many ancillary facilities and programs that Wilkesboro can initiate. Many of these initiatives are relatively inexpensive. Signing/mapping projects, as well as safety/enforcement, can be performed through in-house services. Partnering with other organization such as the Wilkes Transportation Authority, Yadkin Valley Greenway, civic groups, and health-based companies will allow promotional programming and transit interface programs.

The most expensive cost item involved with ancillary improvements will be maintenance programs. Maintenance requires materials and skilled manpower. This Pedestrian Plan recommends that the Town's street department be primarily responsible for maintaining ancillary facilities and programs. This type of activity can generally take place during times when the Town forces are available.

It is difficult to gauge the costs for the ancillary programs because they are an ongoing process. A budget of \$15,000 to \$20,000 is suggested for the initial fiscal year. Thereafter, a determination can be made as to whether this amount is adequate to achieve the ongoing goals and objectives, which are established by the Town.

Numerous projects have been recommended for the Town of Wilkesboro. The projects vary in scope and scale with many consisting of new construction. New sidewalks and multi-use pathways are the main components that have been recommended. These projects are also the more expensive projects to implement. Thorough planning and design should be performed - not only as a guide for the contractor - but also to evaluate the most feasible and safe solutions(s) for the facilities. Any work performed should be inspected by the Public Safety and Public Works Departments to ensure the facility meets its intent and complies with required standards.

Safety and education initiatives are also recommended as part of this document. Educational programs will be performed primarily by the Public Safety



Department. There are a variety of different programs that can be offered to all age groups; but, in particular, to early age school children. In addition to educational programs, safety initiatives will be a long-term program, which will involve several departments within the Town. Planning, Parks and Recreation, Public Safety, and Public Works will all have major roles in ensuring that pedestrian facilities are in good condition

Public Safety will play an important role in enforcing laws pertaining to pedestrians and will raise awareness to both drivers and pedestrians. Not only is this an enforcement issue, but also an encouragement issue. Many pedestrians avoid certain areas because they feel vulnerable due to unsafe driving conditions or a threatening environment. By policing these areas, the public will be given confidence in using them. Other initiatives - including annual events and walking to work incentives - are recommended to encourage walking.

## 7.6 Staffing

The Town's Planning Director and supporting staff will be the central component for future pedestrian facility improvements. This department should guide the Town in the direction of transportation and planning. In addition, the Town's public works department will also be a vital component – involving the implementation of projects, which are manageable by the Town, and their associated maintenance. The Planning Board and Town Council will also be advocates of pedestrian planning. Each fiscal year the Town should implement pedestrian improvements as part of the Town's general budget.

An "appearance committee" composed of Town staff and residents can offer support in overseeing many pedestrian facilities within the Town. Maintenance issues and problems can often be addressed through this committee and it can assist the Town with complaints from local residents and visitors.

The Pedestrian Steering Committee was an integral component in developing recommendations for the Pedestrian Plan. It is recommended that an ongoing committee such as the Planning Board or other Town staff be assigned to evaluate the pedestrian facilities and programs on an annual basis. This will be difficult for one individual to perform and, therefore, requires a group to conduct the evaluation.

In order to implement the above listed projects and others, proper staffing will be essential to success. The Town's departments have implemented numerous pedestrian facilities recently and should continue to implement similar projects in a manner listed below.

**Planning and Implementation:** Planning Department

**Facility Construction and Maintenance:** Public Works Department

**Community Programs:** Planning and Parks and Recreation Department

**Enforcement:** Town Police Department



## 7.7 Implementation Strategies

The priority projects have been established in this document. It will be the Town's responsibility to select and implement the projects as needed. This plan is an action-oriented document, which should be used in determining future growth and development in the Town. As projects are constructed, the Town will need to revise the document, thereby reflecting the current conditions.

In addition to construction projects, spot improvements and programs will also need to be addressed. Repairs and improvement will be a high priority - in order to have a safe, user-friendly pedestrian network in the Town.

Incorporating the proposed recommendations regarding policies and procedures will help with enforcement. The Town cannot require developers to implement the recommendations if they are not incorporated in the local standards. This incorporation of policy needs to be one of the first steps taken by the Town of Wilkesboro.

Pedestrian systems are typically broken down into two main classifications – *primary and secondary*. Many of the primary corridors within the Town have existing pedestrian facilities. Pedestrian facilities are not as prevalent in the secondary corridors, which are primarily located in residential neighborhoods. The proposed pedestrian facilities map (located in this section) delineates all of the proposed and existing sidewalks, multi-purpose pathways, and spot improvements. The following is a list of Primary and Secondary corridors identified for Improvements

### Primary Corridors

Bridge St.	Laurel Road
Broad St.	Main Street
Cedar Lane	North St.
Connector to Westwood Park	Oakwood Road
Cub Creek Connector	School St.
Curtis Bridge Road	Yadkin River Greenway
Fletcher St.	West St.
Hwy 16	Westwood Lane
Henderson Drive	West South St.

### Secondary Corridors

Arbor Rd.	College St.
Beacon Ridge	Cothren St.
Beech St.	Cowles St.
Brookwood Dr.	Forest Hill Dr.
Call St.	Golden Needles St.
Cherry St.	Hwy. 421 Bypass
Church St.	



Hwy 268 from YMCA to Golden  
Needles St.  
Southeast Connector @ Treatment  
Facility  
Jefferson St.  
Link Street  
Maple St.

Meadow View Dr.  
Wilkes St.  
Wellborn Ave.  
Woodfield Way  
Woodland Blvd.  
Middlebrook Greenway Connector  
(Middlebrook Dr. to YMCA)

The Town of Wilkesboro should construct sidewalks on both sides of the primary corridors where opportunities exist. In many cases this is not feasible due to inadequate right-of-ways, difficult terrain, and/or construction costs. Secondary corridors - such as neighborhood streets - should have sidewalks installed on one side of the roadway (at a minimum).

Funding for the implementation of proposed projects can be overwhelming with rising construction costs. Therefore, prioritization will aid in the completion of the proposed tasks. The probable construction cost estimates for all the proposed projects is nearly \$5,460,160. A breakdown of these estimated costs can be found in Appendix D (Facility Priority List). With a very talented and capable Town staff, Wilkesboro has the ability to accomplish many of the proposed improvements in and of itself. Spot improvements - such as handicap ramps, damaged sidewalks, and small sidewalk projects - can be constructed by the use of Town forces and thereby, dramatically decrease the costs of these projects.

The high priority projects are primarily located in the downtown district of Wilkesboro, since the largest number of pedestrians live in this area and traverse existing, damaged sidewalks. Also, the Town of Wilkesboro has established (as a priority) – the enhancement of its downtown streetscape, Main Street. The probable construction costs for these projects are approximately \$2,729,510. Although this is quite a significant figure, the multi-purpose trail projects are included in this amount and have received funding from NCDOT (from a previous segment of the Yadkin River Greenway). The cost estimate for the multi-purpose trails is over \$1,983,300, while the cost estimate for sidewalk improvements is approximately \$746,210. In addition to using in-house forces, it will also be important to seek creative financing for the improvements. A list of funding mechanisms within this section will offer multiple opportunities for obtaining additional monies for these projects.

In many cases, “funding” will dictate *when* the improvements will be implemented. The improvements along Main Street will be very costly – when considering not only sidewalks; but also, storm drainage, underground/overhead utilities, and working within a high-volume traffic area.

Moderate priorities are proposed for development within the next 10 years. These type facilities are composed primarily of extensions of- and/or and



connections to existing pedestrian facilities. The probable construction cost for these moderate priorities is approximately \$816,525. These projects will also be realized by methods similar to the high priority projects.

The lowest priorities are long-range projects, which are most frequently located in residential areas of the Town. The connection of residents to commercial, recreational, and governmental areas will create a cohesive pedestrian network. The probable construction costs for this low priority is approximately \$1,914,125. Low priorities should be addressed *after* the other priorities are implemented. It should be noted that – although these areas are designated as low priorities - developmental opportunities and/or demands could change over the years. It is possible that the priority “range” be revised in the future.

## 7.8 Review Funding Opportunities

Funding will be a large component in developing many of the pedestrian facilities. The Town will need to be aggressive in applying for funding every year for individual projects. This can be a combination of grants, contributions, bonds, and other methods. Grants, in particular, will be an important mechanism for funding. The projects, which are considered to be submitted for grants, need to reflect the objectives specified with each individual grant. Grants are typically oriented toward connectivity to a particular objective such as schools, education, recreation, or safety.

A variety of funding opportunities are available to Wilkesboro as the Town prepares for future improvements/development of its pedestrian system. Following is a list of funding sources that have been utilized by other communities for pedestrian projects. Each of these will be addressed in this section.

- Taxation
- Bonds
- Grants
- User Fees
- Contributions
- Foundations

### **Taxation**

Traditionally, *ad valorem tax revenue* has been the primary source of funding for the pedestrian facilities of properties/facilities owned by municipalities and counties. “Pedestrian opportunities” are considered a public service and often are standard line items on general fund budgets. Creative financial opportunities are possible; however, *ad valorem* taxes will continue to be the major revenue source to support the system. As such, communities often vote to raise their local tax rate temporarily in support of their pedestrian systems.



## **Bonds**

Many communities issue *bonds*, which are typically approved by the shareholders, to finance site development and land acquisition costs. The State of North Carolina grants municipal governments the authority to borrow funds through the issuance of bonds - the amount of which are not to exceed the cost of acquisition or the cost for improvement of pedestrian facilities. Total bond capacities for local governments (for pedestrian facilities) are limited to a maximum percentage of assessed property valuation. Since the issuance of bonds relies on the support of the voting population, the implementation of awareness programs is absolutely essential *prior* to a referendum vote. This method can be used for specific projects, which relate to multi-purpose trails.

## **Grants**

State and federal agencies offer numerous *grants* to assist municipalities in the financing of their pedestrian projects. This source of funding should definitely be investigated and pursued by the Town of Wilkesboro for present and future improvements.

### **State Agencies**

#### **Traffic Improvements Program (TIP)**

NCDOT has established priorities, which are addressed in the 2006-2012 Traffic Improvements Program (TIP). The projects are identified within the "Region D" thoroughfare plan, which includes Wilkes County (as published in September, 1993). The program identifies long-range projects of varied scopes - small to multi-million dollar facility improvements. The projects identify location, phase, and schedule.

Pedestrian facility projects are divided into two categories within the TIP – independent projects and incidental projects. Independent projects are those which are not related to a "scheduled" highway project. Incidental projects are those related to a "scheduled" highway project.

#### **NCDOT Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - Independent projects:**

\$6 million is appropriated annually for the construction of pedestrian and bicycle improvements that are independent of scheduled highway projects in communities throughout the state. 80% of these funds are derived from Surface Transportation Program (STP) - Enhancement funds, while state funds make up the remaining 20%. Currently, \$1.4 million is appropriated annually for pedestrian hazard elimination projects in the NCDOT highway divisions. \$200,000 is allocated for the Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation for projects such as training workshops, pedestrian safety and research projects, and other pedestrian needs statewide.



NCDOT Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - Incidental projects:

Bicycle accommodations - such as bike lanes, widened shoulders, and safety-designed bridges are frequently included as incidental features of highway construction projects. In addition, bicycle-safe drainage grates are a standard feature of all highway construction. Most pedestrian safety accommodations built by NCDOT are included as part of scheduled highway improvement projects - and funded with a combination of federal and state roadway construction funds.

**Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP)**

GHSP funding is provided through an annual program, upon approval of specific project requests, to undertake a variety of pedestrian and bicycle safety initiatives. Amounts of GHSP funds vary from year to year, according to the specific amounts requested. The GHSP plans and supports several highway safety programs annually. "Click It or Ticket" began in 1993 and has become the national model for an enforcement and education campaign (bearing the same name), which is operated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. All funding from the GHSP is allocated for highway safety purposes only. The funding provided from this program has been described as "seed money", which is money that is needed to get programs started. The grantee is expected to provide a portion of the project cost and is expected to continue the program(s) after GHSP funding expires.

**North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF)**

PARTF was established for local governments and the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation in 1994 as a funding source for the development and/or improvement of parks and recreation facilities, as well as for the purpose of land acquisition. A state-funded program, PARTF matches monies spent by municipalities (on parks and recreation) – with each sharing 50% of the cost. In 2004, the fund request was elevated from a maximum of \$500,000 to \$1,000,000. The Recreational Resources Service should be contacted for additional information at (919) 515-7118.

**Eat Smart, Move More – North Carolina**

Eat Smart, Move More... is a statewide initiative that promotes increased opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating through policy and environmental change. The program advocates public awareness of the need for changing lifestyles in today's culture. This program assists in funding for projects such as walking facilities, interpretative trails, educational amenities, and master planning.



### **Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF)**

Created in 1996 by the North Carolina General Assembly, the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF), grants monies to local governments, state agencies, and not-profit conservation groups to help finance projects that specifically address water pollution issues. CWMTF will fund projects that contribute toward a network of riparian buffers and greenways for environmental, educational, and recreational benefits. There is no match (required of local municipalities), for CWMTF funds; however, the “suggestion” of a match is highly recommended.

### **Federal Agencies**

#### **Vision 2020**

In efforts to increase physical activity of North Carolina residents (thereby improving medical problems induced by nutritional habits), the Center for Disease Control and Prevention has initiated the “Start with your Heart” program. This program has the support of the Wilkes County Health Department, the Yadkin River Greenway Council, the Wilkes County Chamber of Commerce, and the NCDOT.

#### **The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act of 2004 (SAFETEA)**

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act of 2004 (SAFETEA), approved by the federal government in 2004, is a primary source for financing bicycle, pedestrian, and greenway projects throughout the country – both at local and state levels. Providing as much as 80% for development and construction costs, this grant is earmarked for facilities such as sidewalks, rail-trails, bike-lanes and greenways. Primarily municipalities use the Enhancement Program (a section of SAFETEA) – since this section focuses on bicycle and pedestrian corridors, environmental mitigation, historic preservation, and scenic byways. The applying requires 20% matching funds entity and applicants must meet several other criteria as well. Prior to applying for this grant, a through engineering assessment should be performed to determine construction costs.

#### **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**

The CDBG is an extremely flexible grant program that provides communities with funding resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. The program is administered through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Formed in 1974, the CDBG program is one of the oldest HUD programs in existence – having consistently prevailed since its inception. The CDBG program provides annual grants for facility and infrastructure improvements to assist in revitalization and job retention within communities.



### **Public Works and Economic Development Program**

This program is administered by the Economic Development Administration for the US Department of Commerce. Public Works and Economic Development investments help support the construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure and facilities necessary to generate or retain private sector jobs and investments, attract private sector capital, and promote regional competitiveness - including investments that expand and upgrade infrastructure to attract new industry, support technology-led development, redevelop brownfield sites, and provide Eco-industrial development.

### **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA)**

The National Park Service (NPS) is responsible for providing this program for advisory services and counseling in working with community groups and local/state governments to conserve rivers, preserve open space, and develop trails/greenways. No fixed amount is established for these services. Cooperators must demonstrate commitment of cost-sharing, which may include donations of time, cash, and services. NPS Rivers & Trails has played a major role in community conservation/recreation through citizen-led, partnership approaches to river protection, trail development, and land conservation.

### **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

A federally-funded program, LWCF, was established for local and state governments in 1965 as a funding source for outdoor recreational development and land acquisition. LWCF monies are derived from the sale or lease of nonrenewable resources – primarily, offshore oil/gas leases and surplus federal land sales. Acquisition and development grants may be used for a wide variety of outdoor projects such as city parks, tennis courts, bike trails, outdoor swimming pools, and support facilities (roads, water supply, etc.). Facility design must be rather basic in nature – rather than elaborate – and must remain accessible to the general public. No more than 50% of the project cost may be federally funded by LWCF, although all or part of the project sponsor's matching share may be obtained from certain other federal assistance programs. The federal government has proposed no funding for this program for the fiscal year 2006.

### **Recreation Trails Program**

The Recreation Trails Program (RTP) is an assistance program of the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). RTP makes recreation funds available for state allocation to develop and maintain recreation trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized recreation trail users. RTP funds are distributed to states by a legislative formula: half of the funds are distributed equally among all states and half are distributed in proportion to the estimated amount of



non-highway recreational fuel used in each state. (Non-highway recreational fuel is the type, which is typically used by snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, off-road motorcycles, and off-road light trucks.)

### **Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS)**

The Safe Routes to Schools Program is a Federal-Aid program of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Program was created by Section 1404 of the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users Act* (SAFETEA-LU). The SRTS Program is funded at \$612 million over five Federal fiscal years (FY 2005-2009) and is to be administered by State Departments of Transportation (DOT's).

The Program provides funds to the States to substantially improve the ability of primary and middle school students to walk and bicycle to school safely. The purposes of the program are:

1. To enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school
2. To make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age
3. To facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity (approximately 2 miles) of primary and middle schools (Grades K-8).

### **Watershed Protection and Flood Protection**

The USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) assists state and local governments in their operation and maintenance of watersheds, whose areas are less than 250,000 square acres. The NRCS provides both financial and technical assistance to eligible projects to the improvement of watershed protection, flood prevention, sedimentation control, public water-based fish and wildlife enhancements, and recreation planning. The NRCS requires a 50% local match for public recreation and fish/wildlife projects.

### **Contributions**

The solicitation of *contributions* is an acceptable method of fund-raising for recreation departments. These donations, typically in the form of land, cash, labor, and/or materials, could be solicited to assist the Town of Wilkesboro with the enhancement of its pedestrian system. Corporations, civic organizations, individuals, and other groups generally donate to a "specific" pedestrian project; however, donations may also be solicited for multiple project improvements and/or additions. The National Recreation and Park Association recommends



the use of private, nonprofit, tax-exempt foundations as a means of accepting and administering private gifts to a public entities.

### **Foundations**

*Foundations* are another source of financing that allows direct contributions to be made within communities, states, or the nation. These types of funds are usually described as special program foundations, general-purpose foundations, or corporate foundations. Foundations generally have very few restrictions and/or limitations, and are typically received from local entities. A listing of appropriate foundations can be found in the text entitled *Grant Seeking in North Carolina*, made available through the North Carolina Center of Public Policy Research, Post Office Box 430, Raleigh, North Carolina, 27602.

### **Partnerships**

To implement the recommendations contained in the comprehensive pedestrian plan, Wilkesboro will most certainly have to expand their partnership agreements with other public agencies and private-sector organizations. There are many different types of partnerships that can be formed to achieve the goals established by the Town. In fact, many local governments throughout the nation are utilizing partnerships with public and private-sector interests to accomplish community goals.

Listed below are the various types of partnerships that the Town should consider in its efforts for the improvement/addition of parks and recreational facilities:

- Programming partnerships to co-sponsor events and facilities or to allow qualified outside agencies to conduct activities on properties, which are municipally-owned.
- Operational partnerships to share the responsibility for providing public access and use of facilities.
- Development partnerships to purchase land and/or build facilities.
- Management partnerships to maintain properties and/or facilities.
- Elected officials should become advocates for pedestrian facilities and promote the development of future improvements.

The Town of Wilkesboro is currently “partnered” with several entities in other Town-related endeavors/functions; and, should evaluate forming additional partnerships, which address the needs of the pedestrian system. The Yadkin River Greenway Council is an excellent example of an existing partnership with the Town. This organization is composed of local citizens, landowners, and governments within Wilkes County. The organization has organized and developed multi-purpose trails along the Yadkin River with assistance from NCDOT, local governments, and the county residents.



In addition, NCDOT will be a very important partnership as more facilities are developed in the area. Many of the proposed improvements will involve NCDOT. Therefore, it will be imperative that this partnership has good communication and coordination with the implementation of projects. The direct requests should be made to potential partners, asking them to meet and evaluate the possible benefits of “partnering”. This step should be made to generate interest and agreement *prior* to solidifying any responsibilities for each participating party.

### **Land acquisition and development**

There are many different types of *land acquisition* available to the Town of Wilkesboro for the pedestrian system expansion and/or future development. Due to the land costs, as well as land availability, it is recommended that the Town prioritize the property to be acquired for facilities regarding multi-purpose trails, which are typically off-street facilities. Listed below are several methods for acquiring and developing multi-purpose trails:

#### **Local gifts**

Donations of land, money, labor, and/or construction can have significant impact(s) on the acquisition and development of pedestrian facilities. The solicitation of local gifts is highly recommended and should be organized thoroughly, with the utilization of very specific strategic methods. This often (untapped) source of obtaining funds requires the contacting of potential donors – such as individuals, institutions, foundations, service clubs, etc.

#### **Life estate**

A life estate is a gift – whereby a donor retains the land during his/her lifetime and relinquishes title of the property after his/her death. In return, the owner (or family) is relieved of property tax for the given land.

#### **Easement**

An easement is the most common type of “less-than-fee” interest in land. An easement seeks to compensate the property owner for the right to use his/her land in some way or to compensate for the loss of his/her privileges to use the land. Generally, the land owner may still use the land and therefore continues to generate property tax revenue for the municipality.

#### **Fee simple purchase**

Fee simple purchase is the most common method used to acquire municipal property for pedestrian facilities. Although it has the advantage of simplifying justification to the general public, fee simple purchase is the most difficult method to pursue – due to limited monetary resources.



### **Fee simple with lease-back or resale**

This method allows municipalities to acquire land by fee simple purchase - yet allows them to either sell or lease the property to prospective user(s) with restrictions that will preserve the land from future development. The fee simple with lease-back or resale method of development commonly results from situation(s) in which land owner(s), who have lost considerable monetary amounts in property value, determine that it is more economical to sell the land to the municipality (with a lease-back option) than to keep it.

### **Long-term option**

Long-term options allow municipalities to purchase property over a long period of time. This method is particularly useful because it enables the municipality to consider particular piece(s) of land that may have future value, though it is not currently desired or affordable at the time. There are several advantages to this method of property acquisition: the town can protect the future of the land without purchasing it upfront and meanwhile, the purchase price of the land will not increase, with the town having the right to exercise its option. The disadvantage to the town is that all privileges relinquished by the land owner require compensation in the form of securing the option.

### **Identify Special Funding Opportunities for High Priority Projects**

The funding sources listed above can be used for numerous projects proposed in this plan as well as future projects. Many of these projects can be funded as enhancement projects of the TIP. The improvements along the major corridors (that have substantial construction cost) should be strongly considered. Funding for mapping and signage can be allocated through the Governor's Highway Safety Program.

It will be important to also incorporate the future facilities with incidental highway projects. This document will be used by NCDOT to determine areas where pedestrian improvements should be incorporated into the proposed roadway improvements. Major construction projects may require more than grants. Although grant funding is a great resource, the amount of money available can limit the size of the project. A bond referendum may be a method to determine whether the Town's residents are willing to accept the cost for construction of major facilities.

The grants available for funding pedestrian facilities will evolve in the future. The funding amount for many grants may not be as much as others, while some may be very competitive because of the monies available. Partnering with other organizations typically lends more "project significance" when applying to funding agencies. Having multiple organizations applying for a grant shows unity within a community - which supports the cause. In addition, having multiple partners will allow for more monies to be used for matching funds.



### **Identify Supporting Policies/Guidelines**

The NCDOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation has published a guidebook on General Statutes, Ordinance, and Resources towards bicycle and pedestrian laws. This is a great resource pertaining (not only) to responsibilities for bicyclists and pedestrians, but also for motorists. This guide should be incorporated into the standards for the Town of Wilkesboro. It is particularly valuable for educating school children on public safety.

As mentioned in previous sections of this document, the street design guidelines will conform to NCDOT standards. This policy has been effective for the Town in the past and should continue to be used as the Town standard. In addition to NCDOT standards, the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) should also be a reference for projects - particularly existing roadways that have not conformed to these standards. Areas such as traffic intersections will need to incorporate these guidelines for future improvements.

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) has published the 'Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities'. The purpose of this guide is to provide assistance with planning, design, and operation of pedestrian facilities along streets and highways. Specifically, the guide focuses on identifying effective measures for accommodating pedestrians on public right-of-ways. This useful tool can be used to provide user-friendly pedestrian facilities along roadways.

## **7.9 Develop Evaluation/Monitoring Process**

Many of the facilities proposed in this plan would already exist if the policies (being recommended) were already established. It will be critical to incorporate policies, which promote pedestrian facilities within the Town. By incorporating these policies, the Town will continue to develop a pedestrian network, which links to all communities within the area. It is important to understand that municipalities evolve over many years and that environmental improvements impact them significantly.

As more initiatives develop, it will be important for the multiple governmental agencies to work together – coordinating their efforts. A large factor, which determines the success of pedestrian projects, is how effectively they link to each other. With proper planning in the early process, the agencies can develop a vision for the future, which will build creative partnerships. This type of planning process will (not only) create consensus building and buy-in; but also, invaluable funding opportunities.

Each year the Town should evaluate the progress made in implementing proposed improvements suggested in this Pedestrian Plan. This evaluation should not only include new facilities but also repair to existing facilities. At the

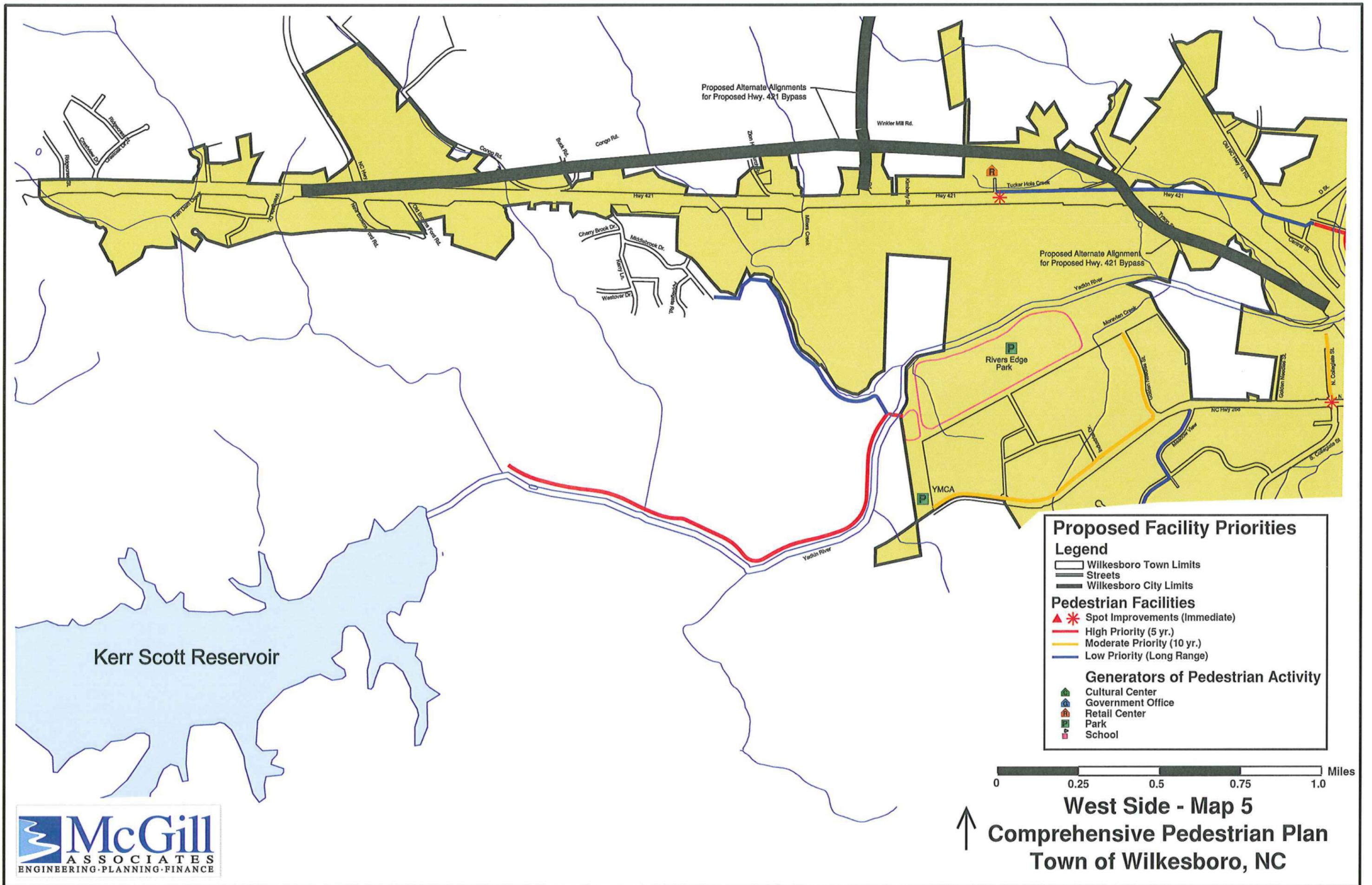


beginning of developing budgets for the next fiscal year, the Town should determine the projects to be implemented for that year. In some cases there may be large projects that will limit the number of tasks the Town can feasibly commit to implementing.

Although a significant amount of planning was performed in developing this plan, it is only a “guide” for the future. As new development occurs in Wilkesboro, there may be new, changing priorities that were unforeseen during the planning process. The Town should evaluate and determine what the primary needs are for the community to determine new projects.

As new projects are implemented, the Town should revise this plan to maintain an updated, current, pedestrian facilities map. This will eliminate confusion for employees that were initially involved with the creation of this document.

**- END OF SECTION -**



Proposed Alternate Alignments  
for Proposed Hwy. 421 Bypass

**Proposed Facility Priorities Legend**

**Legend**

- Wilkesboro Town Limits
- Streets
- Wilkesboro City Limits

**Pedestrian Facilities**

- Spot Improvements (Immediate)
- High Priority (5 yr.)
- Moderate Priority (10 yr.)
- Low Priority (Long Range)

**Generators of Pedestrian Activity**

- Cultural Center
- Government Office
- Retail Center
- Park
- School



↑  
**West Side - Map 5**  
**Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan**  
**Town of Wilkesboro, NC**



Kerr Scott Reservoir

Rivers Edge Park

YMCA

Winkler Mill Rd.

Hwy 421

Proposed Alternate Alignment  
for Proposed Hwy. 421 Bypass

Yadkin River

NC Hwy 200

S. College St.

N. College St.

Hwy 421

Hwy 421

Yadkin River

Moravian Creek

Marshall View

Golden Thread St.

Central St.

Hwy 421

Old NC Hwy 101 Rd.

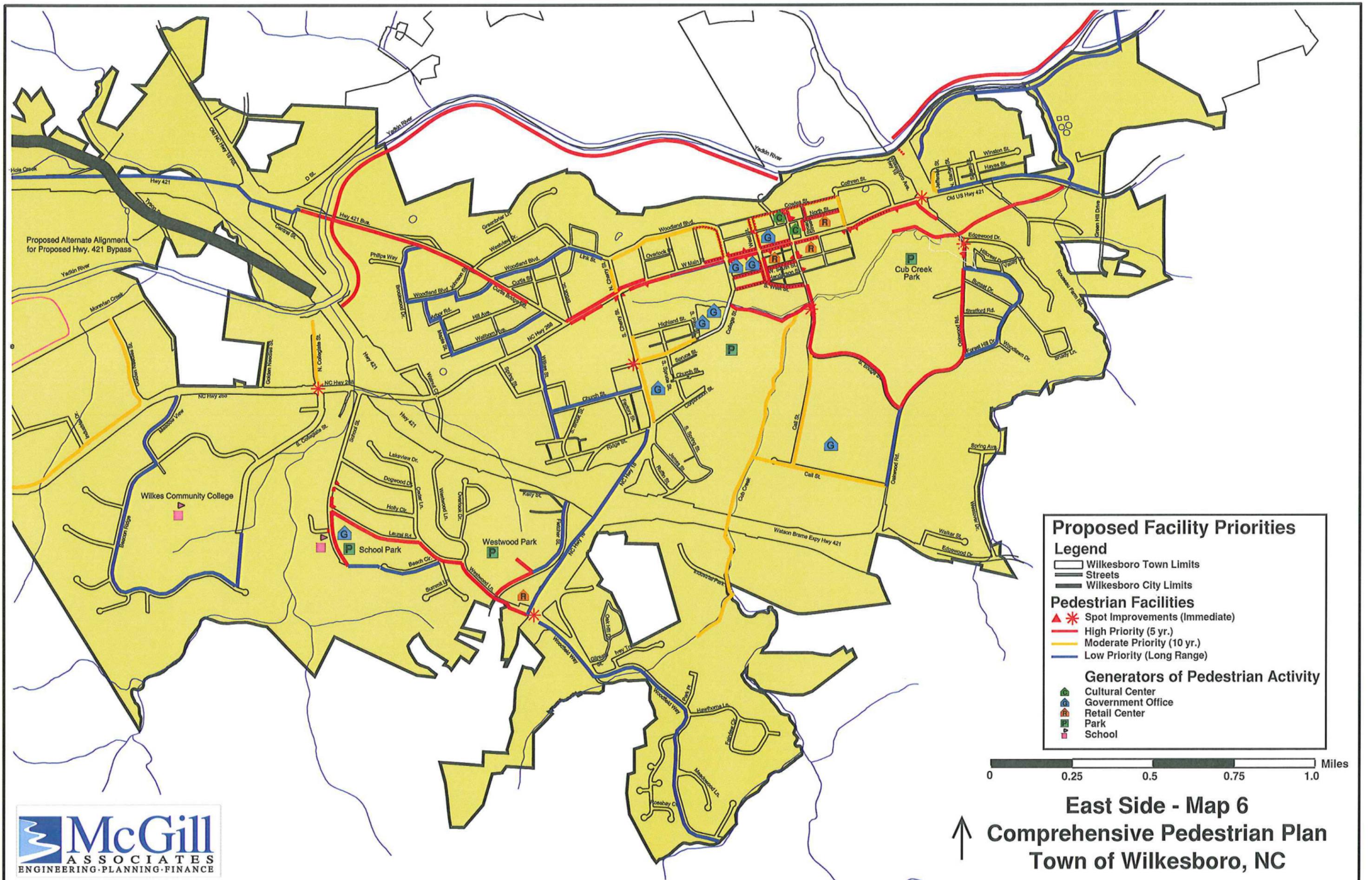
D. St.

Hwy 421

Cherry Brook Dr.

Middlebrook Dr.

Westlavor Dr.



**Proposed Facility Priorities**

**Legend**

- Wilkesboro Town Limits
- Streets
- Wilkesboro City Limits

**Pedestrian Facilities**

- Spot Improvements (Immediate)
- High Priority (5 yr.)
- Moderate Priority (10 yr.)
- Low Priority (Long Range)

**Generators of Pedestrian Activity**

- Cultural Center
- Government Office
- Retail Center
- Park
- School





# **Appendices**

- A. NCDOT Pedestrian Policy Guidelines**
- B. Contact Lists**
- C. Community Survey Results**
- D. Proposed Facilities Priority List**
- E. Land Development Code**
- F. Town of Wilkesboro Zoning and ETJ Map**



# **Appendix A**

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## **NCDOT Pedestrian Policy Guidelines**

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
PEDESTRIAN POLICY GUIDELINES  
EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2000**

These guidelines provide an updated procedure for implementing the Pedestrian Policy adopted by the Board of Transportation August 1993 and the Board of Transportation Resolution September 8, 2000. The resolution reaffirms the Department's commitment to improving conditions for bicycling and walking, and recognizes non-motorized modes of transportation as critical elements of the local, regional, and national transportation system. The resolution encourages North Carolina cities and towns to make bicycling and pedestrian improvements an integral part of their transportation planning and programming.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR DOT FUNDING:**

**REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING SIDEWALKS:**

The Department will pay 100% of the cost to replace an existing sidewalk that is removed to facilitate the widening of a road.

**TIP INCIDENTAL PROJECTS:**

DEFINED: Incidental pedestrian projects are defined as TIP projects where pedestrian facilities are included as part of the roadway project.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

1. The municipality and/or county notifies the Department in writing of its desire for the Department to incorporate pedestrian facilities into project planning and design. Notification states the party's commitment to participate in the cost of the facility as well as being responsible for all maintenance and liability. Responsibilities are defined by agreement. Execution is required prior to contract let.

The municipality is responsible for evaluating the need for the facility (ie: generators, safety, continuity, integration, existing or projected traffic) and public involvement.

2. Written notification must be received by the **Project Final Field Inspection (FFI) date**. Notification should be sent to the Deputy Highway Administrator - Preconstruction with a copy to the Project Engineer and the Agreements Section of the Program Development Branch. Requests received after the project FFI date will be incorporated into the TIP project, if feasible, and only if the requesting party commits by agreement to pay 100% of the cost of the facility.
3. The Department will review the feasibility of including the facility in our project and will try to accommodate all requests where the Department has acquired appropriate right of way on curb and gutter sections and the facility can be installed in the current project berm width. The standard project section is a 10-ft berm (3.0-meter) that accommodates a 5-ft sidewalk. In accordance with

AASHTO standards, the Department will construct 5-ft sidewalks with wheelchair ramps. Betterment cost (ie: decorative pavers) will be a Municipal responsibility.

4. If the facility is not contained within the project berm width, the Municipality is responsible for providing the right of way and/or construction easements as well as utility relocations, at no cost to the Department. This provision is applicable to all pedestrian facilities including multi-use trails and greenways.
5. A cost sharing approach is used to demonstrate the Department's and the municipality's/county's commitment to pedestrian transportation (sidewalks, multi-use trails and greenways). The matching share is a sliding scale based on population as follows:

MUNICIPAL POPULATION	DOT PARTICIPATION	LOCAL PARTICIPATION
> 100,000	50%	50%
50,000 to 100,000	60%	40%
10,000 to 50,000	70%	30%
< 10,000	80%	20%

Note: The cost of bridges will not be included in the shared cost of the pedestrian installation if the Department is funding the installation under provision 6 - pedestrian facilities on bridges.

6. For bridges on streets with curb and gutter approaches, the Department will fund and construct sidewalks on both sides of the bridge facility if the bridge is less than 200 feet in length. If the bridge is greater than 200 feet in length, the Department will fund and construct a sidewalk on one side of the bridge structure. The bridge will also be studied to determine the costs and benefits of constructing sidewalks on both sides of the structure. If in the judgement of the Department sidewalks are justified, funding will be provided for installation. The above provision is also applicable to dual bridge structures. For dual bridges greater than 200 ft in length, a sidewalk will be constructed on the outside of one bridge structure. The bridges will also be studied to determine if sidewalks on the outside of both structures are justified.
7. FUNDING CAPS are no longer applicable.
8. This policy does not commit the Department to the installation of facilities in the Department's TIP projects where the pedestrian facility causes an unpractical design modification, is not in accordance with AASHTO standards, creates an unsafe situation, or in the judgement of the Department is not practical to program.

### INDEPENDENT PROJECTS

DEFINED: The DOT has a separate category of funds for all independent pedestrian facility projects in North Carolina where installation is unrelated to a TIP roadway project. An independent pedestrian facility project will be administered in accordance with Enhancement Program Guidelines.



# **Appendix B**

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## **Contact Lists**

## ORGANIZATION CONTACT LIST WILKESBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Organization	Representative	Position	Address	City, Zip	Phone
Town of Wilkesboro	Ken Noland	Town Manager	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Megan Ledbetter	Planning Dir.	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Bud Molnar	Fire Inspector	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Jim Wyatt	Public Works Dir.	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
Town Board	Norman Call	Mayor	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Mike Inscore	Board Member	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Gary Blevins	Board Member	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Tommy Bumgarner	Mayor Pro Tem	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Jim Hartley	Board Member	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
Town Planning Board	Harry Baldwin	Chairman	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Ann Willardson	Vice-Chairman	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Colin Shoemaker	Secretary	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Joe Samuel	Planning Board	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Nellie Archibald	Planning Board	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Mike Reid	Planning Board	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Steve Walter	Planning Board	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Bruce Eilert	Planning Board	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Bud Smith	Planning Board	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Chris Steele	Planning Board	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
	Viki Taylor	Planning Board	P.O. Box 1056	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-3951
Wilkes Chamber of Commerce	Linda Cheek	President	P.O. Box 727	N. Wilkesboro, NC 28659	(336)838-8662
Wilkes Trans. Aut.	Bruce Eilert		235 Jefferson St.	N. Wilkesboro, NC 28659	(336)838-1272
Yadkin River Greenway	Bill Clifton		P.O. Box 191	N. Wilkesboro NC, 28659	(336)651-8967
NCDOT – Bike, Ped.	Bob Mosher				
NCDOT – Div. 11	Doug Tetzlaff	District Eng.	P O Box 250	N.Wilkesboro, NC 28659	(336)903-9146
	Wayne O. Atkins	Div. Operations Eng.	P O Box 250	N.Wilkesboro, NC 28659	(336)903-9122
	Dean Ledbetter	Div. Traffic Eng.	P O Box 250	N.Wilkesboro, NC 28659	(336)903-9129
High Country COG			P.O. Box 1820	Boone, NC 28607	(828)265-5434
Wilkes Co. Schools	Dr. Stephen Laws	Superintendent	613 Cheery St.	N. Wilkesboro, NC 28659	(336)667-1121
Wilkes Eco. Dev. Corp.	Robin D. Hamby	Assistant Director	P.O. Box 727	N. Wilkesboro, NC 28659	(336)838-1501
Wilkes Comm. College	Dr. Gordon Burns	President	P.O Box 120	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)838-6100
Wilkes County	Gary Page	County Manager	110 North Street	Wilkesboro, NC 28697	(336)651-7345



# **Appendix C**

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## **Community Survey Results**

## **SURVEY RESULTS FOR TOWN OF WILKESBORO MAIL OUT SURVEY**

### **Statement**

Overall I am satisfied with the parks of Wilkesboro

Overall, I am satisfied with recreation programs available in Wilkes County

I am satisfied with Wilkesboro's sidewalks/walking areas

I am satisfied with the street maintenance in Wilkesboro

I believe that Wilkesboro is a business friendly town.

I feel that the Town's officials do a good job at attracting new business

I think it is reasonable for town employees to get cost-of-living pay increases

Overall, I enjoy living in the Wilkesboro area

### **Where do you think Wilkesboro needs to add sidewalks or greenway?**

#### **Streets & Roads**

- On back streets.
- On back streets and Main Street
- On side streets
- Sidewalks down Bridge Street need to be extended to the park and courthouse.
- Bridge street all the way down to the walking track. Ball parks at Cub Creek Park
- Cherry Street up to the new Food Lion
- Sidewalk from Cherry Street on 16/18 to new Food Lion.
- College Street
- College Street and Woodland Blvd.
- Down Fletcher Street from Food Lion
- James Street
- Redo both sides of Main Street to Tyson and Reggie's Garage.
- Improve sidewalks along Main Street
- All the way down both side of Main Street to Brushy Mountain Road.
- Improve sidewalks on Maia Street and River Street. Greenway all the way to Lowes Park
- Main street/Curtis Bridge Road.
- Anywhere and everywhere possible, especially from Main Street to WCC.
- More on the other side of Main Street - Connect to Cub Creek
- Upgrade Main Street from Methodist Church to Tyson Corner
- Fix Main Street, both sides to end.
- Need to repair sidewalks. New ones all the way down Main Street to Burger King.
- Sidewalks on Curtis Bridge Road.
- At the upcoming proposed senior living housing on Main Street west of Wilkesboro United Methodist Church.
- Sidewalks all along Main Street and up to sewer plant.
- School Street and the street behind new Food Lion.
- Any street where pedestrian traffic is heavy.
- Curtis Bridge Road
- Curtis Bridge Road
- Curtis Bridge Road! Many people walk there and it is dangerous!
- Possible walkway along Curtis Bridge Road (Glenn's to Arby's).
- East side of Oakwood from Main to current football field, or place cross button to cross Oakwoods at Main
- Oakwoods Road, 16/18 between Food Lion and high school.
- Oakwoods Road, Brushy Mountain Road, Curtis Bridge Road.
- Along all major roads with bike paths.
- Woodland Blvd.
- Woodland Blvd.
- Woodland Blvd.
- Woodfield Way

- Woodfield, Westwood Hills
- Marked crosswalks at all intersections would provide a safer pedestrian/runner atmosphere

### **Residential & Schools**

- In the residential district
- Sidewalks in residential areas
- Add sidewalks in residential neighborhoods. Do away with greenways.
- Residential neighborhood sections for safe walking
- Sidewalks in neighborhoods so families can walk and play close to home without having to drive somewhere else or use roads.
- Sidewalks in subdivisions and greenways adjacent to subdivisions.
- In housing developments
- Ken Acres, Main Street, and any areas around Wilkesboro.
- Sidewalks in Westwood Hills
- Around schools
- In developments, especially school and church areas

### **Commercial Areas**

- Toward Compu Credit
- From Food Lion to across bridge
- Sidewalk needed from Tasty Freeze to Arby's all the way through. Sidewalk from park to Courthouse and sidewalk all through South College Street
- Independent Life Center will need safe walk to park to walk/enjoy.
- Run greenway through parking lot, alley way beside 50's, through park and under 421 to residential areas. Connect WCC and Westwood area to Moravian Creek Greenway.
- At new courthouse
- Near the YMCA and 115 toward North Wilkesboro.
- Brushy Mountain Road
- Greenway to YMCA
- Extend Greenway to go or adjoin the new YMCA.
- Bicycle lanes on 268 near new YMCA

### **At the River**

- I love the Greenway along the river. Whoever planned that should keep going. They have vision!!! We need God given vision.
- Complete that planned addition to the Yadkin River Greenway to the dam.
- Support the Yadkin River Greenway!
- Continue Yadkin River Greenway.
- Continue the greenway on the Wilkesboro side of the river.
- No, just continue to participate in the master greenway plan along the river.
- Our side of the Yadkin
- Finish the greenway from the dam to downtown asap.
- Plans for future greenway system to reservoir are great

### **To the West**

- To the West
- Western Wilkesboro
- Extend Greenway into mountain areas
- 268 West
- 268 West
- 268 West toward the W. Kerr Scott Reservoir
- Hwy. 421 west area

### **At the Park**

- Greenway to Lowes Park
- From Cub Creek Park and around courthouse

- Greenway to (?) Cub Creek Park to Bicycle path
- Park at Rivers Edge – make parking areas near the fields. Some of the playing fields are a long way from the parking areas.
- Restore our city park at Wilkesboro School and Westwood Hills. It is in bad condition now!

#### **Highway 421 & 16/18**

- Redo U.S. 421 median from Wilkesboro city limits
- South of 421
- Hwy. 16/18 is dangerous. Also, Brushy Mountain Road and Edgewood Road.

#### **Downtown/Town**

- Fix the sidewalks downtown
- Most all downtown sidewalks need upgrading and widening for pedestrian traffic
- In communities close to town where there is a lot of traffic

#### **General Areas Where Needed**

- Anywhere possible
- Along bridges that don't have walkways

#### **More Sidewalks/Repairs**

- Sidewalks
- Sidewalks
- Sidewalks
- Sidewalks, by all means
- More Sidewalks
- Wilkesboro needs to work on its sidewalks and streets
- Do a better job keeping up present areas
- We need to update the ones we have.
- An overall plan needs to be established to repair and upgrade
- Repair existing sidewalks
- Need to repair some sidewalks, instead of adding new ones
- No, I believe our sidewalks may need redoing, but not new ones.

#### **Concerns About the Need**

- Not any – they are not able to keep up what they already have.
- Neither – they can't keep up what they now have.
- Not a lot of space left
- That's hard to say – land would be hard to get.
- To walk to what?
- Stop wasting money. You can walk in the grass or on the gravel. It doesn't have to be fancy.
- There are more important issues to consider than places to walk!

#### **Currently Satisfied**

- Currently okay.
- See this area progressing well as officials are good at spotting trends of what areas are being used.
- Present plan
- Doing well on this.
- We have both and it is great!
- Adequate
- Adequate at present.
- I think it is adequate.
- Current greenway is very nice. Town not adequately planned for other sidewalks.
- I feel the greenways are nice.
- Enough greenways!

- I think we have enough already.
- There are enough
- They are sufficient.
- We have enough greenways
- Do not need any more.
- Don't need any.
- No real need for any more.
- None needed.
- Not at all.
- No where
- No where
- No where at this time



# **Appendix D**

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## **Proposed Facilities Priority List**

PROPOSED FACILITY PRIORITY LIST

TOWN OF WILKESBORO  
COMPREHENSIVE PEDESTRIAN PLAN

Item	Proposed Facility	Current Use	Priority	Street Name/Location	Length	Estimated Cost	Funding Status	Scheduling
1	Sidewalk	N/A	High	North St.	658	\$16,450	Unfunded	Sep-07
2	Sidewalk	N/A	High	South Bridge St.	323	\$8,075	Unfunded	Sep-07
3	Sidewalk	Sidewalk	High	West Main (south side)	1,227	\$30,675	Unfunded	Oct-07
4	Sidewalk	N/A	High	West Main (south side)	404	\$10,100	Unfunded	Oct-07
5	Streetscape	Sidewalk	High	West Main (south side)	500	\$60,000	Unfunded	Oct-07
6	Streetscape	Sidewalk	High	West Main (south side)	488	\$58,560	Unfunded	Oct-07
7	Sidewalk	Sidewalk	High	West Main (south side)	694	\$17,350	Unfunded	Oct-07
8	Sidewalk	N/A	High	West Main (south side)	492	\$12,300	Unfunded	Nov-07
9	Streetscape	Sidewalk	High	West Main (north side)	516	\$61,920	Unfunded	Nov-07
10	Streetscape	Sidewalk	High	West Main (north side)	494	\$59,280	Unfunded	Nov-07
11	Streetscape	Sidewalk	High	West Main (north side)	325	\$39,000	Unfunded	Nov-07
12	Sidewalk	N/A	High	West Main (north side)	1,465	\$36,625	Unfunded	Nov-07
13	Multi-Purpose Trial	N/A	High	Cub Creek Connector to College St.	1,434	\$71,700	Unfunded	Sep-08
14	Multi-Purpose Trial	N/A	High	Cub Creek Connector to Old US 421	3,026	\$151,300	Unfunded	Sep-08
14	Sidewalk	N/A	High	North Bridge St.(nort of Main St. (east side)	122	\$3,050	Unfunded	Sep-08
15	Sidewalk	N/A	High	North Bridge St. (west side)	85	\$2,125	Unfunded	Sep-08
16	Sidewalk	N/A	High	School St. (east side)	67	\$1,675	Unfunded	Oct-08
17	Sidewalk	N/A	High	School St. (east side)	163	\$4,075	Unfunded	Oct-08
18	Sidewalk	N/A	High	West St.	226	\$5,650	Unfunded	Sep-09
19	Sidewalk	N/A	High	South West St.	1,007	\$25,175	Unfunded	Sep-09
20	Sidewalk	N/A	High	West South St.	491	\$12,275	Unfunded	Sep-09
21	Sidewalk	N/A	High	Henderson Drive	496	\$12,400	Unfunded	Sep-09
22	Sidewalk	N/A	High	South West St.	387	\$9,675	Unfunded	Sep-09
23	Sidewalk	N/A	High	Broad St.	376	\$9,400	Unfunded	Oct-09
24	Sidewalk	N/A	High	Broad St.	176	\$4,400	Unfunded	Oct-09
25	Sidewalk	N/A	High	Westwood Lane	1,408	\$35,200	Unfunded	Oct-10
26	Sidewalk	N/A	High	Cedar Lane	804	\$20,100	Unfunded	Oct-10
27	Sidewalk	N/A	High	Laurel Road	1,554	\$38,850	Unfunded	Oct-10
28	Sidewalk	N/A	High	Oakwood Road	596	\$14,900	Unfunded	Jun-11
29	Sidewalk	N/A	High	Fletcher St.	718	\$17,950	Unfunded	Aug-11
30	Sidewalk	N/A	High	Connector to Westwood Park	347	\$8,675	Unfunded	Aug-11
31	Sidewalk	Sidewalk	High	West St.	260	\$6,500	Unfunded	Sep-11
32	Sidewalk	N/A	High	West St.	217	\$5,425	Unfunded	Sep-11
33	Sidewalk	N/A	High	West St.	259	\$6,475	Unfunded	Sep-11
34	Sidewalk	N/A	High	School St. (east side)	952	\$23,800	Unfunded	Sep-11
35	Sidewalk	N/A	High	South Bridge St.	2,724	\$68,100	Unfunded	Oct-11
36	Multi-Purpose Trial	N/A	High	Yadkin River Greenway (East)	6,456	\$322,800	Unfunded	2010
37	Multi-Purpose Trial	N/A	High	Yadkin River Greenway (West to 421)	10,067	\$503,350	Funded	2012
38	Multi-Purpose Trial	N/A	High	Yadkin River Greenway (West to Kerr Scott)	18,683	\$934,150	Unfunded	2009
						<b>\$2,729,510</b>		
39	Sidewalk	N/A	Moderate	Jefferson St.	364	\$9,100	Unfunded	Sep-12
40	Sidewalk	N/A	Moderate	Jefferson St.	364	\$9,100	Unfunded	Sep-12
41	Sidewalk	N/A	Moderate	College St.	1,004	\$25,100	Unfunded	Sep-12
42	Sidewalk	N/A	Moderate	Curtis Bridge Road	4,007	\$100,175	Unfunded	Oct-12
43	Sidewalk	N/A	Moderate	Hwy 268 from YMCA to Golden Needles St.	4,150	\$103,750	Unfunded	Nov-12
44	Sidewalk	N/A	Moderate	Cowles St.	1,412	\$35,300	Unfunded	Sep-14
45	Sidewalk	N/A	Moderate	Call St.	4,062	\$101,550	Unfunded	Oct-14
46	Sidewalk	N/A	Moderate	Woodland Blvd.	1,415	\$35,375	Unfunded	Sep-15
47	Sidewalk	N/A	Moderate	Golden Needles St.	1,062	\$26,550	Unfunded	Oct-15
48	Sidewalk	N/A	Moderate	Woodland Blvd.	847	\$21,175	Unfunded	Aug-16
49	Sidewalk	N/A	Moderate	Cothren St.	473	\$11,825	Unfunded	Sep-16
50	Sidewalk	Sidewalk	Moderate	West Main (south side)	919	\$22,975	Unfunded	Sep-16
51	Sidewalk	N/A	Moderate	South West St.	504	\$12,600	Unfunded	Oct-16
52	Sidewalk	N/A	Moderate	North Cherry St.	390	\$9,750	Unfunded	Oct-16
53	Multi-Purpose Trial	N/A	Moderate	Cub Creek	5,844	\$292,200	Unfunded	Oct-16
						<b>\$816,525</b>		
54	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Wilkes St.	1,570	\$39,250	Unfunded	Sep-17
55	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	East Main @ Jefferson St. to Green Hill Dr.	2,694	\$67,350	Unfunded	Sep-20
56	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Woodfield Way	5,642	\$141,050	Unfunded	Sep-20
57	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Oakwood Road	4,100	\$102,500	Unfunded	Sep-21
58	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Beacon Ridge	4,388	\$109,700	Unfunded	Sep-21
59	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Fletcher St.	1,378	\$34,450	Unfunded	Oct-21
60	Multi-Purpose Trial	N/A	Low	Southeast Connector @ Treatment Facility	4,804	\$540,200	Unfunded	Oct-24
61	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Beech St.	1,522	\$38,050	Unfunded	Nov-25
62	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Link Street	588	\$14,700	Unfunded	Nov-25

PROPOSED FACILITY PRIORITY LIST

TOWN OF WILKESBORO  
COMPREHENSIVE PEDESTRIAN PLAN

63	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Meadow View Dr.	1,300	\$32,500	Unfunded	Sep-26
64	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Arbor Rd.	531	\$13,275	Unfunded	Sep-26
65	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Hwy 16 (west side)	3,611	\$90,275	Unfunded	Oct-26
66	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Church St.	1,529	\$38,225	Unfunded	Oct-26
67	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Woodland Blvd.	2,891	\$72,275	Unfunded	Nov-26
68	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Hwy. 421 Bypass	5,322	\$133,050	Unfunded	Oct-28
69	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Maple St.	623	\$15,575	Unfunded	Sep-31
70	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Wellborn Ave.	1,666	\$41,650	Unfunded	Sep-31
71	Multi-Purpose Trial	N/A	Low	Middlebrook Trial 421 Connector to YMCA	4,292	\$214,600	Unfunded	Sep-36
72	Multi-Purpose Trial	N/A	Low	Old US Connector to Yadkin River Southeast Co	1,668	\$83,400	Unfunded	Sep-36
72	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Forest Hill Dr.	2,570	\$64,250	Unfunded	Oct-36
73	Sidewalk	N/A	Low	Brookwood Dr.	1,112	\$27,800	Unfunded	Nov-36
						<b>\$1,914,125</b>		



# **Appendix E**

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## **Land Development Code**

## **LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE:**

In the draft of the Town of Wilkesboro Comprehensive Plan it states the Town should require coordination of development to allow for more efficient planning and utilization of the infrastructure. (pg. 74) The Town should concentrate on downtown foot traffic rather than automobile traffic. Revitalization of downtown and pedestrian friendly paths will help promote a mixed used environment downtown creating a rise in the influx of money to the downtown area, which in return will help with downtown maintenance. (pg. 36)

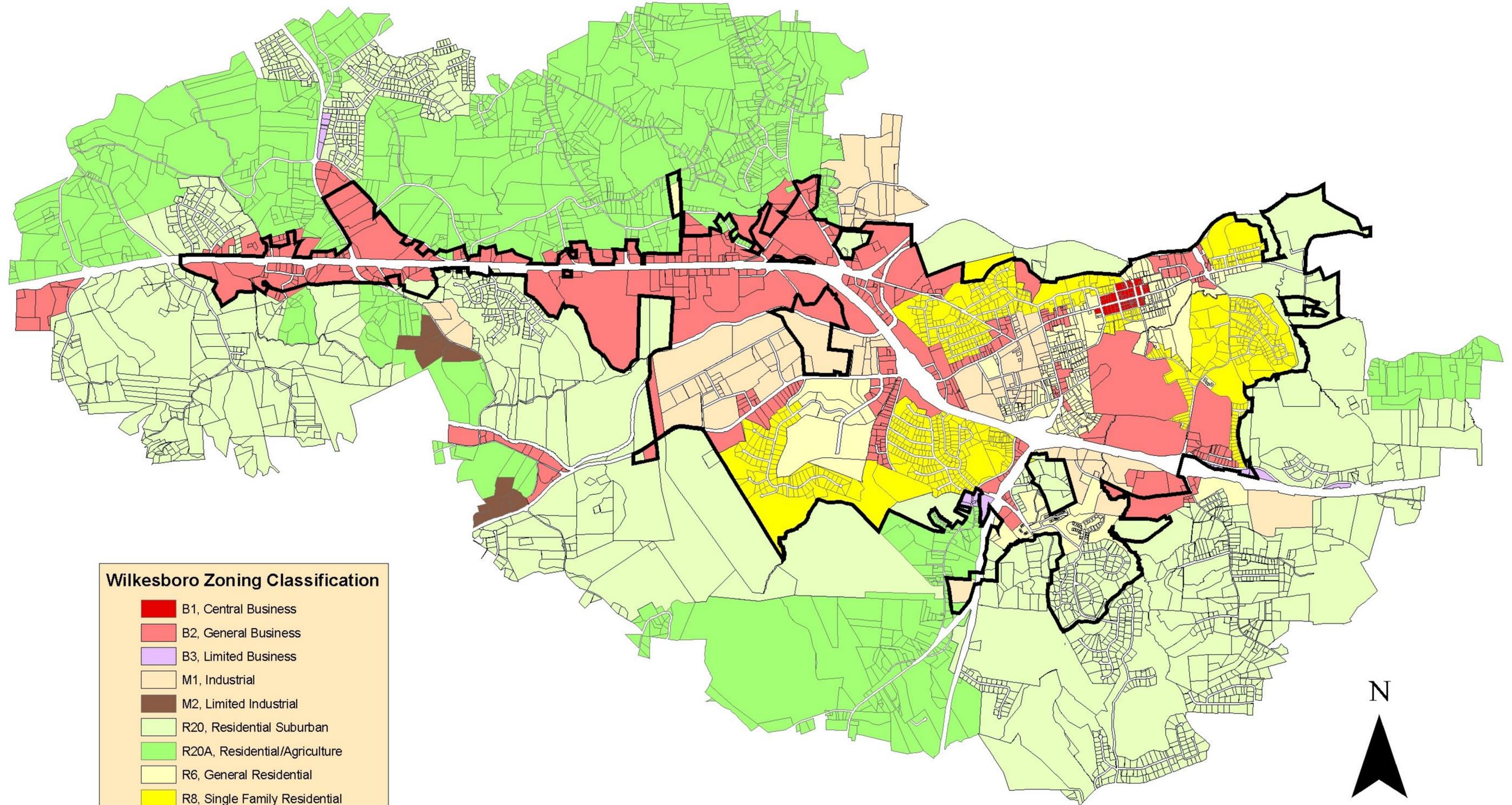


# **Appendix F**

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## **Town of Wilkesboro Zoning and ETJ Map**

# Town of Wilkesboro Zoning and ETJ Map



**Wilkesboro Zoning Classification**

	B1, Central Business
	B2, General Business
	B3, Limited Business
	M1, Industrial
	M2, Limited Industrial
	R20, Residential Suburban
	R20A, Residential/Agriculture
	R6, General Residential
	R8, Single Family Residential

