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**SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION**





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## **SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION**

### **VISION STATEMENT**

Winterville is rapidly growing as a bedroom community to Greenville. Winterville is nestled just east of Highway 11, which serves as a major transportation corridor between the cities of Greenville and Kinston. Bisecting the community is the CSX railroad which is graced on each side by historic Railroad Street, Winterville's "Main Street". Winterville's agrarian landscape is also very abundant. Swift and Fork Swamp Creeks envelop the community in pristine natural beauty. Resident demographics are diverse with the population consisting mostly of Caucasians and African Americans. Gender is evenly dispersed in proportion to the total population with the majority of residents below the age of 65. Poverty levels are relatively low with approximately ten percent (10%) of the population below the national poverty line.

Like other growing communities, Winterville is faced with the challenges of preserving its small town character while promoting economic development, balancing automobile dependency, and providing the quality of life new residents are seeking. These challenges will have to be confronted with new goals and strategies to keep up with changing times.

With the strong support of the public and governing body, Winterville's vision is to invest in the development of a comprehensive pedestrian plan to address opportunities for connectivity, programs, policies, partnerships, and funding to improve and sustain the pedestrian environment of the Town. The implementation of this vision will improve the quality of life for Winterville's citizens through increased health, social interaction, and accessibility.

### **HISTORY**

The [Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center](#) (PBIC) states "a transportation system that supports bicycling and walking enhances health, reduces traffic congestion, promotes economic vitality, and improves quality of living."<sup>i</sup> Individual citizens can strive towards these goals; although the greatest benefit will be realized when the community as a whole embraces the pedestrian initiative.

Prior to the emergence of the automobile, humans were a pedestrian oriented society. However, the automobile opened opportunities to expand our limits. Walking became more commonly recognized as a recreational endeavor, rather than a functional activity. History has a way of repeating itself and the recent movement towards pedestrian oriented growth has been spurred partially out of need. As gasoline prices continue to rise, people are seeking alternative forms of transportation, such as a safe, continuous pedestrian network.

Winterville leaders have recognized the benefits associated with a multi-modal transportation system and the importance pedestrian infrastructure plays in an effective comprehensive transportation system. The Town intends to expand and improve the pedestrian infrastructure, policies, and



programs to provide pedestrians with the ability to safely walk to work, school, and recreation, commercial, and service-oriented destinations. This Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan will guide future pedestrian facility installation, maintenance of existing facilities, and development of pedestrian programs and policies.

Educating the public on the numerous benefits of walking provides a vital start in developing a walkable community. The following provides a summary of the many benefits of a comprehensive pedestrian system.

- *Health* – Walking improves circulation and respiratory function, combats depression, bolsters the immune system, prevents heart disease, controls weight, and decreases risks of heart disease, diabetes, and osteoporosis.<sup>ii</sup>
- *Environmental / Energy* – Unlike walking, driving an automobile produces a substantial amount of air pollution. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), transportation is responsible for nearly eighty (80) percent of carbon monoxide and fifty (55) percent of nitrogen oxide emissions in the U.S.<sup>iii</sup> Automobile manufacturers are now producing models that are more environmentally friendly; however traffic continues to increase thus counteracting the possibility of air pollution reduction.
- *Transportation* – Walking can reduce traffic congestion and necessary parking spaces significantly when short distance vehicle trips are replaced with walking.
- *Economics* – The financial responsibility of automobile ownership is getting more expensive with the increasing costs of the purchase price, gasoline, insurance, license, registration, and maintenance. In multiple vehicle households, these costs can be higher than a mortgage or rent payment. However, the cost of walking is the price of a good pair of shoes.
- *Quality of Life* – Walking provides opportunities for social interaction within a community.

As Winterville continues to expand, many areas such as Downtown become underutilized, uninviting, and unsafe. This problem can be seen in communities across the country, not just in Winterville. Society in general has become less willing to walk due to inconvenience and inaccessibility. As energy costs continue to increase, these societal habits cannot be sustained. Communities must develop new strategies to promote alternative modes of transportation. As Winterville looks towards conserving its small town heritage, the opportunity to promote a walkable community is the first step. A walkable community will offer a wealth of social, health, economic, and environmental benefits.

The Town of Winterville is dedicated to expanding and improving pedestrian facilities. Along with these improvements, the creation of programs and policies will provide pedestrians the opportunity to safely venture to destinations such as school, work, recreation facilities, and commercial areas. This Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan will guide future pedestrian facility improvements, installation, maintenance of existing facilities and development of pedestrian programs and policies.



## OVERALL GOALS

As a guide to developing this plan, goals were determined based upon participation by Task Force members and the citizens of Winterville. Goals for Winterville are:

- Provide more walking opportunities to promote healthy lifestyles
- Provide safer walking environments
- Build a sense of community
- Improve connectivity and accessibility to allow for viable alternative transportation options
- Improve accessibility and safety for children, elderly, and disabled

## SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF PLAN

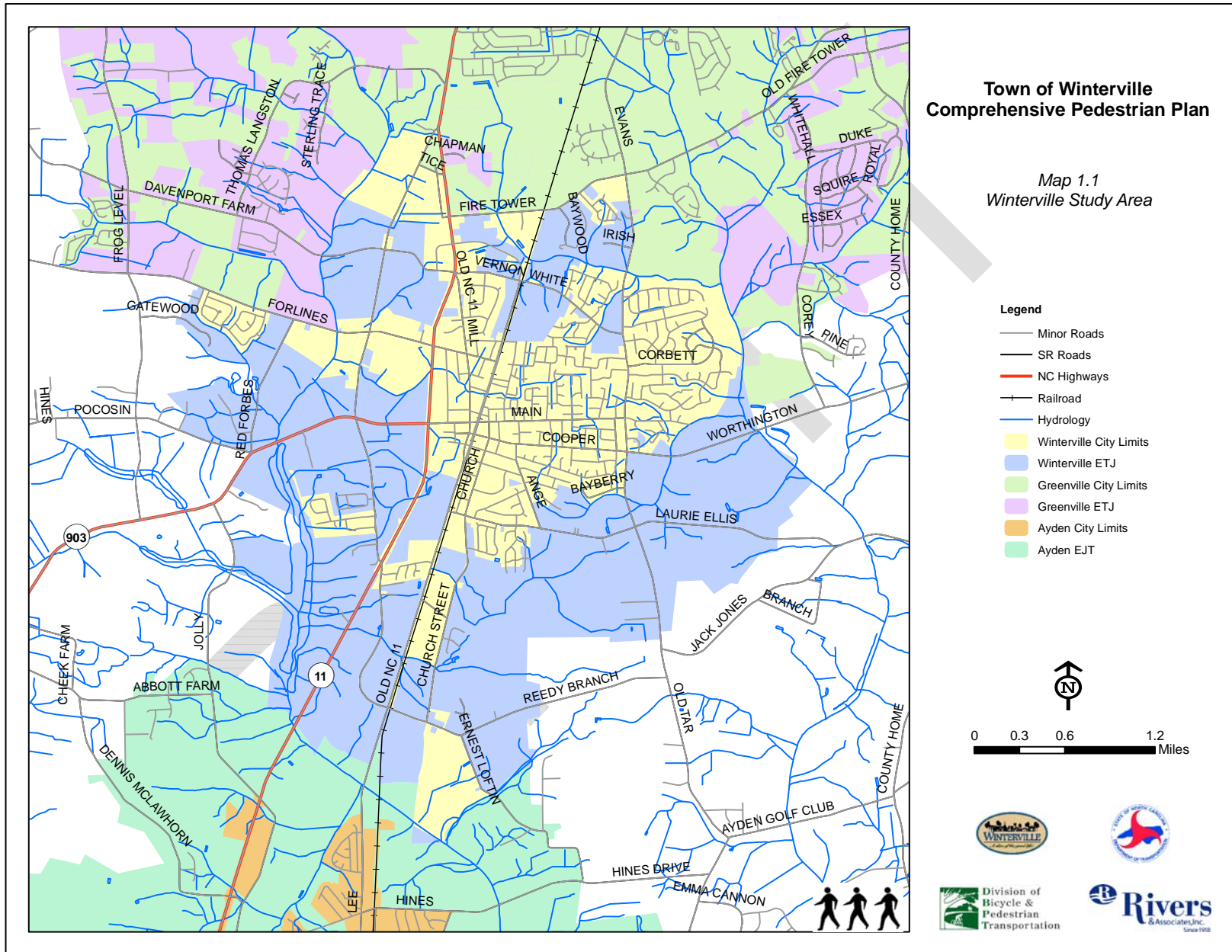
The purpose of the Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan is to make an accessible, safe, convenient, interconnected and functional pedestrian transportation system, ultimately contributing to a higher quality of living environment. Walking is more than a means of getting from one place to another; walking facilitates healthy living habits, conserves energy while improving air quality, and builds strong communities by increasing social interaction.

The scope and purpose of this plan is to conduct an assessment of Winterville's pedestrian system. Results yielded from this assessment, will help determine a strategy to improve the community's pedestrian connectivity and safety. The strategy identified is targeted towards increasing pedestrian traffic and providing accessibility to the entire community.

Winterville's incorporated and extra territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) serves as the project analysis area. To increase accuracy and efficiency of the community's analysis, major pedestrian corridors were identified and then the entire project area was divided into 4 sections. In each region, development districts, points of interests, and destinations were identified.

### ***Plan Assessment includes:***

- *Pedestrian Need*
- *Deficiencies*
- *Potential Improvements*
- *Pedestrian Routes*
- *Design Standards and Guidelines*
- *Pedestrian Projects, Programs, and Policies*
- *Viable Funding Sources*





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<sup>i</sup> Walkinginfo.org. September 2007. ([www.walkinginfo.org/develop/activities.cfm](http://www.walkinginfo.org/develop/activities.cfm))

<sup>ii</sup> The Department of Cambridge Community Development, Harvard Study.  
September 2007. ([www.ci.cambridge.ma.us/cdd/et/ped/ped\\_hlth.html](http://www.ci.cambridge.ma.us/cdd/et/ped/ped_hlth.html))

<sup>iii</sup> EPA.gov. September 2007. ([www.epa.gov/otaq/consumer/03-co.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/otaq/consumer/03-co.pdf))

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