

## Connected and Accessible Spaces

Access distinctly shapes the way individuals view the community and their place within it. Without adequate transportation options to access services and amenities, an individual's health, social, and financial opportunities dwindle, particularly for young, old, disabled, and low-income residents. Winston-Salem once boasted a robust transit system and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, but post-World War II car-centric development has marginalized non-automobile methods of travel, disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations. Required automobile ownership burdens households financially, with transportation costs rivaling housing expenses. For low-income households, these transportation costs can be as much as 30 percent of their household income.

The emphasis on private cars has also fragmented neighborhoods and compromised overall community well-being. Infrastructure projects like U.S. Highway 52's construction in East Winston during the 1960s disrupted communities, perpetuating noise, pollution, and social disconnection. While some areas enjoy connectivity beyond auto-only infrastructure, overall transportation options need to be improved, connected, and expanded.

Reimagining land use policies is also necessary, as transportation and land development are interconnected. Walkable and bike-friendly environments foster community vibrancy, while strategic densification supports efficient transit systems. Winston-Salem and Forsyth County acknowledge transportation's pivotal role in community vitality. As our community continues to grow, providing multiple safe, comfortable, and efficient methods of travel is critical to creating a livable, equitable, and resilient community for all residents.

### **Goal 1: Establish a network of sidewalks, greenways, and bike lanes that provides residents with safe and convenient access to services, jobs, and community amenities.**

- Incorporate bicycle, greenway, and pedestrian infrastructure and safety improvements into all new and reconstructed road, bridge, and intersection projects.
- Construct sidewalks, greenways, and bike lanes where they can increasingly serve the daily transportation needs of our community.
- Prioritize pedestrian, greenway, and bicycle infrastructure projects that improve connectivity between existing routes before expanding the overall network.
- Ensure adequate funding for construction and maintenance of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Investigate joint funding mechanisms for pedestrian projects requiring multiple types of infrastructure installation, such as curb and gutter.
- Develop long-distance greenways and urban escape bicycle routes that showcase the county's natural beauty and historic significance.
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to allow for a safe and comfortable travelling experience for pedestrians and bicyclists of all skill levels.
- Strategically connect to state and regional bicycle trails and networks.

**Goal 2: Make our transit system an efficient and effective mode of transportation for residents and visitors.**

- Improve bus service by increasing the frequency to at least every 30 minutes for all routes, and every 15 minutes for priority routes.
- Improve transit rider comfort, convenience, and access to information.
- Investigate the development of a microtransit system for use in areas lacking transit availability.
- Improve the first- and last-mile travel for transit riders using bicycle, pedestrian, and micromobility options.
- Establish on-demand transportation services, a public equivalent of Uber or Lyft, to augment traditional transit service.
- Improve transit connections with nearby metros, including Greensboro, High Point, the Triangle, and Charlotte.
- Make the Clark Campbell Transit Center a safer place for transit riders and the larger downtown community.

**Goal 3: Create a built environment where all members of our community, regardless of age or ability, feel safe traveling to and from destinations and enjoying city and county amenities.**

- Improve roadway safety through better road designs, education and enforcement of traffic codes, and reduction of speed limits where necessary. Reconfigure major and minor thoroughfares where appropriate to ensure safe travel for drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users.
- Maintain all roadways in an above-average condition.
- Ensure safe street crossings for pedestrians, bicyclists, and people of all abilities at all major and minor intersections and at public facility entrances.
- Coordinate emergency planning efforts with regional partners to effectively handle any states of emergency and inform residents of safe exit routes.
- Enhance safety at public facilities and along public rights-of-way with improved lighting, removal of overgrown vegetation, use of directional and high visibility signage, and bicycle lanes and sidewalks that are free of physical impediments, such as poles, overgrown vegetation, and debris.
- Activate empty and abandoned spaces along pedestrian and bicycle routes to help create a comfortable and safe environment.
- Use innovative approaches to pilot transportation improvements.

**Goal 4: Ensure all residents, regardless of age, ability, and income, have access to public amenities and necessary services such as food providers, medical facilities, employment opportunities, internet, and educational institutions.**

- Improve existing public facilities to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and adhere to ADA regulations when developing new facilities. Ensure ADA compliance in the pedestrian environment and at key destinations.
- Implement programs that remove barriers to transportation to ensure all residents have access to public amenities and necessary services. Financially support outside agencies that provide transportation options for seniors and those with disabilities.

- Incorporate age-friendly elements into community planning designs for residents of all age groups, from the very young to older generations.
- Support programs that improve broadband and computer access for residents with limited means or knowledge of new technology.
- Investigate opportunities to provide improved access by rural residents to needed services and amenities such as microtransit, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure; designated transportation programs; and expanded technology access.
- Incorporate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure into the designs of mixed-use, commercial, and residential developments.
- Support incentives and expedited processes for grocery stores and fresh food markets locating in underserved communities and identified food deserts. (Also See Housing, Goal 4 and Sustainable Environment, Goal 6.)
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**Goal 5: Ensure land use and transportation decisions are mutually supportive to provide safe transportation for all residents while addressing changing demand and population growth.**

- Program transportation improvements to be responsive to population growth and development trends as well as changing preferences. Use the Piedmont Triad Regional Model for planning for future growth trends.
- Incorporate land use planning initiatives into long-range transportation plans to better accommodate population growth and transportation demand.
- Design inclusive and accessible neighborhoods in a manner that allows residents access to jobs, education, services, and amenities within a reasonable distance to promote a safe bicycle and pedestrian environment and minimize daily commuting times.
- Promote transit-oriented development (TOD) around public transportation hubs to maximize access to existing infrastructure and reduce reliance on private vehicles.
- Develop a mix of uses, services, and high-density residential types within activity centers and along growth corridors to support an enhanced transit, pedestrian, and bicycle network. Incorporate streetscape enhancements to provide a safe and enhanced experience for residents.
- Focus a mix of commercial and residential development along transit routes and trail corridors to support transit-oriented and trail-oriented development, which maximizes the amount of residential and commercial space within walking distance of transit or greenways.
- Focus affordable housing in areas with convenient and safe access to transit routes, services, and amenities.
- Promote and incentivize the redevelopment of older, underutilized commercial areas into mixed-use areas that take advantage of the existing transportation network and transit routes.

**Goal 6: Create a connected transportation network that allows residents and visitors to easily travel throughout the city and county.**

- Promote interconnectivity between neighborhoods to allow multiple travel routes, minimize congestion, and provide better emergency access to neighborhoods.

- Ensure that residential areas, commercial and mixed-use areas, public facilities, employment centers, and services are connected through safe pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicular infrastructure. **(Also See Strong Economic Opportunities, Goal 3.)**
- Assist developers financially with the cost of providing new roadway connections and creek crossings in areas lacking adequate connectivity or in identified priority areas.
- Prepare for changing technology, such as electric and autonomous vehicles, by incorporating such elements into future plans.

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