

# PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES PLAN

## Introduction

Over the past 20 years, the trend towards walking has returned to the forefront. Whether for recreation, for improved health, for exercise or to just meet neighbors, citizens in the Winston-Salem Urban Area have taken to sidewalks, greenways, other pedestrian facilities, and sometimes to the street itself to get in our daily walk. Just as important, with rising gas prices and concerns for our urban area's increasing traffic congestion and air quality problems, people are choosing to walk to work, to the grocery store, and to schools, and are demanding that a good system of sidewalks and pedestrian facilities be provided.



Sidewalk with Planting Strip

Most of the existing sidewalks are in the urban core of our city and town centers: Winston-Salem, Kernersville and Rural Hall. The Town of Lewisville and the Village of Clemmons began installing sidewalks in the mid 1990's and Walkertown has recently started installing sidewalks.

For the past several decades Forsyth County has experienced a dispersal of development and a division of land uses that offered little or no pedestrian connectivity. Roads were designed and built to accommodate this sprawling type of development most without sidewalks. Citizens have moved farther away from the urban core,

away from the existing infrastructure, jobs, services and shopping areas, and this has made it more difficult to provide sidewalks at the same level as in the urban core. Over time we have increased our dependence on the automobile and reduced our dependence on other modes of transportation.

Because of our need for more accessible modes of transportation, planning for pedestrian facilities is on the rise. In 1994, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) realized the need to add pedestrian planning to its multi-modal planning program. They created a Bicycle Program in 1974, and subsequently added pedestrian planning to its bicycle program. In November of 1996, the NCDOT adopted the first *The Bicycle and Walking in North Carolina, Long-Range Transportation Plan*. Most municipalities in the State have been doing sidewalk planning since their incorporation.

With the adoption in 1999 of the *Winston-Salem/Forsyth County 2025 Multi-Modal Long-Range Transportation Plan*, the goal has been to enhance and improve the pedestrian infrastructure throughout the county. All nine Forsyth County municipalities have adopted the county's comprehensive plan the *Legacy Development Guide* that supports more wide spread pedestrian accommodations. A well-planned pedestrian transportation system provides for a more balanced overall transportation system. *Legacy* provides a framework for detailed land use plans within the county, area planning and the development guide process. The LRTP Pedestrian Facilities Plan also recommends using the area plan process as the framework to build the pedestrian system along local streets. Since the area plan process is citizen driven, it offers the most appropriate avenue for the evaluation of existing and proposed pedestrian facilities.

With the adoption by the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) of



Trees provide a safe buffer

the Winston-Salem Urban Area *Sidewalk and Pedestrian Facilities Plan* in July 2007, a series of goals, policies and standards were adopted to improve the safety, efficiency and convenience of the area's pedestrian facilities. Through the planning process, involving multiple interested parties and extensive public outreach, the *Sidewalk and Pedestrian Facilities Plan* culminates in the community's goals and objectives for a pedestrian friendly community.

### **Vision Statement**

**“The Winston-Salem Urban Area is a pedestrian friendly community where sidewalks offers mode of transportation that provides access for all, promotes healthy lifestyles, and improves air quality.”**

### **Goals and Objectives**

#### **Goal 1: Facility Quantity**

**To increase the number of pedestrian facilities: Sidewalks, crosswalks, pedestrian safety improvements at intersections, and other related amenities.**

**Objective 1:** New sidewalk construction should be a top priority, especially to produce connectivity. In addition, pedestrian crossings, signals, crosswalk treatments, signage, furniture and streetscaping elements should also be a top priority in areas with high pedestrian usage because they significantly increase the use of the pedestrian system.

**Objective 2:** Funding new pedestrian facilities is a capital intensive task and needs to be a coordinated effort between both the private and public sectors, with the local government taking a strong lead role in aggressively funding, providing matching funding and undertaking policy initiatives to ensure completion of a seamless pedestrian system.

**Objective 3:** Provide good connectivity between other modes of transportation

**Objective 4:** Connect neighborhoods to resources, such as, schools, parks, libraries, greenways, bikeways and recreational facilities.

**Objective 5:** Provide connections to commercial areas and retail centers.

#### **Goal 2: Facility Quality**

**To improve the quality of both future and existing pedestrian facilities, especially in those areas that are suffering from poor conditions.**

**Objective 1:** Pedestrian facilities should be kept in a safe and accessible condition in the entire MPO.

**Objective 2:** Connect current sidewalk network.

**Objective 3:** Promote walk-able communities.

#### **Goal 3: Safety and Security**

**To enhance real and perceived pedestrian safety while increasing pedestrian activity.**

**Objective 1:** Eliminate all pedestrian barriers.

**Objective 2:** Provide disabled accommodations at all intersections.

**Objective 3:** Provide grade separations where possible.

**Objective 4:** Provide safe crosswalks and signaling.

#### Goal 4: Coordination

To assure that those people and agencies responsible for providing transportation and land use options assume pedestrian considerations in their everyday policies and practices.

**Objective 1:** Capital Improvement Programs and Transportation Funded projects should include coordinated pedestrian projects which optimize limited resources to maximize connectivity and safety benefits.

**Objective 2:** Land development and policy should include pedestrian considerations as a core concern in every instance, including during preliminary project scoping. New development should be required to provide sidewalk connections to the nearest continuous sidewalk segment, just as would be required for water, sewer, or street connectivity.

#### Goal 5: Quality of Life

To encourage healthier lifestyles.

**Objective 1:** Provide a means of physical activity and exercise.

**Objective 2:** Use sidewalks to reduce vehicle trips and improve air quality.

The goals and objectives are grounded in realistic expectations of funding levels and other variables that may influence implementation, but also aggressive enough to inspire confidence that the Vision of the Pedestrian Plan will be achieved.

Municipality	Length (Miles)
Winston-Salem	425.4
Kernersville	47.7
Clemmons	12.3
Lewisville	4.2
Rural Hall	2.6
King	1.5
Bethania	1.0
Walkertown	0.6
Sidewalks outside of a Municipality	13.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>508.8</b>

#### Sidewalk Information

The *Sidewalk and Pedestrian Facilities Plan* identifies the following street classifications for sidewalk location: major/minor thoroughfares shall have sidewalks based on cross sections in Thoroughfare Plan; collector streets shall have sidewalks on both sides; local streets shall have sidewalks on one side. The Plan also identifies specific locations for sidewalk beyond street classification: all streets within .5 mile radius of a school, along public transit routes, and pedestrian generators; such as recreation facilities, retail/shopping and libraries.

#### Summer of 2007 Miles

## Sidewalk Recommendations

The recommendations in this section include stand alone projects. Local bonds or other revenues will continue to fund the construction of pedestrian facilities. Federal funds will be made available for continuing investment by the MPO and its local government partners in pedestrian system over the life of the plan.

See the following page for the Pedestrian Project Lists for 2007 through 2015.



**Improve pedestrian access to bus shelters**



**Sidewalks to crossings**

The communities of Kernersville and Rural Hall have adopted a pedestrian plan that applies to their respective communities. The recommendations of those plans have been included in the *Sidewalk and Pedestrian Facilities Plan* for the entire MPO.



**Informal pedestrian paths need sidewalks**



**Safe routes to school**

## Public Involvement/Participation

A steering committee consisting of City of Winston Salem staff, town managers for our local municipalities, county health department staff and local non-profits that aid the disabled met on a regular basis during the drafting of the *Sidewalk and Pedestrian Facilities Plan*. As part of the plan process, multiple public meetings were held to receive citizen input regarding pedestrian facilities in the MPO. The steering committee continues to meet on a regular schedule to plan for pedestrian facilities.

The *Sidewalk and Pedestrian Facilities Plan* is included in the Appendix of this report and can be viewed on the City of Winston-Salem website.

# GREENWAY PLAN

## Winston-Salem and Forsyth County

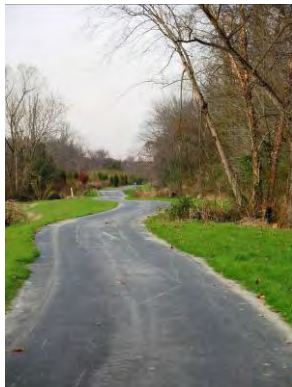
The goal of the Greenway Plan is to improve the quality of life for residents of Forsyth County by expanding coverage of the existing greenway system thus providing recreational opportunities, protection of our natural environment and open space, and opportunities for walking and bicycling to a variety of destinations.

Forsyth County and its municipalities adopted the countywide Greenway Plan in 2002. The existing greenway system totals 19 miles. The Plan recommends all major creeks with an identified flood zone to be designated as a greenway corridor and include greenway connectors along minor creeks, utility corridors and sidewalks. The Plan also recommends a minimum 40-foot easement be acquired along creeks as part of the subdivision and re-zoning process.

The Greenway Plan calls for the construction of 34 miles of trails by the year 2015. The major greenway construction will happen along Brushy Fork Creek, Muddy Creek, Little Creek, Salem Creek, Piedmont Regional, Mill Creek, Tomahawk Creek and Grassy Fork Creek.

The Greenway Plan is included in the Appendix of this report and can be viewed on the City of Winston-Salem's website.

See the following page for the Greenway Project List for 2007 through 2035.



Muddy Creek Greenway



Salem Creek Greenway at the S.E. Gateway Y

## Greenway Planning outside Forsyth County

No adopted greenway plans existing for the remainder of the MPO outside of Forsyth County. Davidson County is working on a comprehensive greenway plan which is scheduled for completion in winter 2008-09.

The entire MPO is actively participating in the planning for the Mountains-to-Sea Trail. This is a proposed route that starts at the east coast of North Carolina and extends west ending in the mountains. Two primary routes have been identified through the Winston-Salem Urban Area MPO: a northern route through Stokes County and a southeastern route utilizing the Piedmont Regional Greenway and Muddy Creek Greenway.

The Mountains-to-Sea Trail can be viewed on the North Carolina State Parks website and the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments website.