Chapter 1

Introduction
1 Introduction

1.1 OVERVIEW

This Winston-Salem Bicycle Master Plan (Plan) is an update to the 2005 Winston-Salem Bicycle Master Plan, presenting a renewed vision, current analysis, and concrete implementation guide for active transportation projects throughout the city. Community input from residents in the City of Winston-Salem informed the priorities and recommendations of the Plan. The development of this action-oriented guide was led by the City of Winston-Salem, with AECOM Technical Services of North Carolina, Inc., Stewart Inc., and Simon Resources providing technical support.

The Winston-Salem Bicycle Master Plan proposes a diverse set of recommendations, ranging from infrastructural and facility-focused to educational and programmatic improvements intended to create a holistic and comprehensive vision for the city’s bicycle network. The Plan’s content structure is indicative of this holistic approach. Key chapters include a summary of existing conditions (Chapter 3), which describes demographic conditions and bicycle-friendly features and infrastructure for bicycle use; a needs analysis (Chapter 4), emphasizing safety needs; bicycle facility vision and recommendations (Chapter 5); implementation, phasing, and funding (Chapter 7); and programmatic recommendations (Chapter 6).
1.2 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Plan is to help the City of Winston-Salem prioritize needed bicycle initiatives that will enhance bicycle connectivity and safety for bicyclists and encourage active transportation for Winston-Salem residents and visitors. The analysis and recommendations outlined in this Plan will be used by the city as a guide to support effective and efficient project implementation.

1.3 VISION AND GOALS

The vision statement was developed to help provide a road map for the Winston-Salem Bicycle Master Plan.

**Vision Statement:**

“Winston-Salem is a place where people of all ages and abilities bicycle comfortably and safely for transportation and recreation. The City will work to extend bicycle infrastructure, educational opportunities, and promotional events to all neighborhoods and households, striving for equitable and affordable mobility options that improve city-wide public health, support the local economy, and reduce automobile dependency in Winston-Salem.”

In addition to the vision statement, goals and objectives were identified to guide the development and implementation of the Plan. The goals are organized around the following six Es of creating a bicycle-friendly city.

- Equity
- Engineering
- Education
- Encouragement
- Enforcement
- Evaluation

The goals described in this section provide the strategic framework for developing and improving bicycle travel in Winston-Salem.

**Goal 1:**

The city will create a safe, comfortable and convenient network of bicycle facilities that aid and encourage cycling for people of all ages, abilities, and interests in all areas of Winston-Salem. *(Equity and Engineering)*

**Goal 2:**

Reduce the number of short vehicle trips in the city by making cycling a more attractive alternative to driving. *(Engineering and Encouragement)*

Bicycling is frequently considered limited to small groups who are willing to bicycle on virtually any street, regardless of whether bicycle facilities are present. Improvements should be directed towards the safety and comfort of bicyclists of all ages and abilities. In addition, infrastructure investments should be directed at areas where underserved populations reside in the interest of providing equitable transportation opportunities to all residents.

**Goal 3:**

The city will foster a culture of safety and accountability on Winston-Salem’s streets through the enforcement of traffic laws. *(Enforcement)*

Keeping cars parked for short trips that are less than one mile can offer many benefits to the community that include health benefits and lower driving costs for the individual, as well as improved air quality and reduced congestion for the city overall. To achieve this goal, providing safe and adequate bicycle facilities and bike-friendly features will increase the number of opportunities for people to replace short vehicle trips with trips made with a bicycle. One of the purposes of developing encouragement programs is to promote the benefits and the practicality of making these short trips by bicycle to replace short vehicle trips.
Bicycle-friendly cities ensure that cyclists feel safe and protected on their streets. Most residents do not typically find it easy or safe to bicycle on city streets due to poor road safety and a lack of knowledge of traffic laws. Distracted driving, speeding, and failure to yield are some of the challenges when bicycling on the city’s streets. Enforcement initiatives can include partnering with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) in a Watch for Me NC campaign which is aimed at reducing the number of pedestrians and bicyclists hit and injured in crashes with vehicles.

Work with new community partners to rebrand and relaunch the current Walk & Roll Winston-Salem “Open Streets” events in Winston-Salem to encourage residents to bicycle (and walk) on streets that they normally would not by closing a number of linked streets to vehicular traffic for a day. Open Street events allow residents to experience the city in ways that are not possible in cars. Finally, establish training and encouragement programs that target specific groups of potential cyclists who are traditionally not bicyclists.

**Goal 4:**
The city will plan for and evaluate Winston-Salem’s progress in becoming a bicycle-friendly community. *(Evaluation)*

As part of this planning process, a series of action steps, performance measures, and phasing strategies are provided to help the city in implementing the recommendations made in the Bicycle Master Plan.

**Goal 5:**
Launch/participate in programs that educate both bicyclists and automobile drivers on bicycle safety, and encourage bicycling in all areas of Winston-Salem. *(Equity, Education, and Encouragement)*

**Goal 6:**
Attain designation as a “Silver Level Bicycle Friendly Community”.

This goal falls outside of the six Es and speaks to the city’s dedication to growing its status as a bicycle friendly community. Winston-Salem was again awarded the bronze-level status for bicycle friendliness by the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) in 2017. The report card provided by the LAB includes steps required to attain silver status, including updating the 2005 Bicycle Plan as well as other elements contained in this Plan that address elements of the six Es.

**1.4 PLAN DEVELOPMENT**
The planning process for the Winston Salem Bicycle Master Plan began in December of 2017. Throughout the planning process, the public was engaged and encouraged to provide input on all aspects of the Plan. The city formed a steering committee that included local officials, representatives from local organizations, and community members that provided input on the planning process. Other outreach efforts included public meetings held in February and August of 2018 and April 2019, small group meetings with neighborhood organizations, pop-up events at festivals, and surveys. In addition, a website was maintained throughout the life of the planning process that provided public input opportunities and information on meetings and other relevant planning activities.