The Legacy Comprehensive Plan is a guide for shaping the future of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. The Legacy Plan was adopted in 2001 and is currently being updated. A diverse group of citizens participated in the planning process to establish a vision for Winston-Salem and Forsyth County to grow smarter and better by managing future development. This vision includes a more balanced, sustainable transportation system, concern for the environment balanced with economic development, and strengthening of downtown as a community focal point.

This local vision is supported by planning efforts at the regional, state, and national levels. These cooperative efforts to plan for housing, transportation and infrastructure investments will improve living choices and accessibility for people, while protecting the environment and helping ensure a sustainable future.

Building upon the 2006 Streetcar Feasibility Study, this Alternatives Analysis will further investigate opportunities to implement enhanced transit service (streetcar or bus) in downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. This study will consider a 3-mile corridor that extends east to west through downtown Winston-Salem and surrounding neighborhoods, from Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center through downtown to Winston-Salem State University. Previous studies identified this corridor as having the most activity centers and underutilized areas where development can be spurred. A north-south route connecting Wake Forest University, downtown, and the UNC School of the Arts has been identified as a longer-term goal. The study will result in a decision on the preferred transit route and technology for the initial corridor.

In order to accommodate 120,000 new people and 66,000 jobs over the next twenty years, we need a new paradigm, the recognition that one of the major purposes of our transportation system is to move people as well as vehicles. We need to have an integrated, multi-modal, sustainably-designed transportation system that offers choices among modes.

- Legacy 2030 Update
**WHY IS AN URBAN CIRCULATOR NEEDED?**

The Urban Circulator supports the city’s vision for growth by enhancing economic competitiveness and increasing mobility options in the urban core. As such, these themes are the framework for project goals.

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<th>Enhance Economic Competitiveness</th>
<th>Increase Mobility Options</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Focus development and coordinate investments to maximize economic return and minimize sprawl</td>
<td>• Connect key destinations in urban core</td>
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<td>• Encourage a mixture of uses including equitable and affordable housing</td>
<td>• Connect to local and regional transit to provide the “last mile” of service</td>
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<td>• Protect and enhance the City’s distinct character</td>
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<td>• Extend pedestrian connectivity</td>
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**ENHANCE ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS**

Winston-Salem is seeking a competitive edge for economic development, aiming to increase downtown densities, encourage new investment, and attract jobs. As part of a comprehensive development strategy, transit helps to focus growth in a sustainable, fiscally-responsible manner.

The city is ripe for this type of focused growth, and roughly 200 acres in downtown are being reclaimed to develop a new bio-medical campus known as Piedmont Triad Research Park. A wide range of employment, housing, and other uses are planned for the park and surrounding downtown area. Premium transit service would make the area more attractive to developers, helping to accelerate and focus growth.

**INCREASE MOBILITY OPTIONS**

An Urban Circulator could be a viable transit service circulating people to places within downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, supporting city efforts to develop downtown as a more vibrant and successful urban center. This transit service could connect:

- More than 11,000 Baptist Medical Center employees;
- An additional 20,000 employees and over 2,000 residents throughout greater downtown;
- Nearly 6,500 students attending Winston-Salem State University;
- Planned 6.1 million gross square feet of redevelopment space at Piedmont Triad Research Park;
- Downtown – regional business and arts center, home to special events venues;
- The Transportation Center, serving nearly 11,000 passengers per day; and
- Union Station, which is the planned destination for future commuter and intercity rail.

An Urban Circulator is not intended to be a regional transportation solution, but will instead function as a local mobility tool linking destinations within the central core of Winston-Salem. However, it also enhances regional connectivity as the "last mile of service" linking neighboring communities and regional transit services.

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*Left: Portland, Oregon’s Pearl District before streetcar operations. Right: Same area showing redeveloped properties after streetcar service began.*

Clustering development in the downtown area benefits the entire city. Redevelopment of underutilized property within the urban core takes advantage of existing infrastructure, and the significantly higher potential for property tax revenue helps to pay for police, parks and city streets to be enjoyed by the entire community.*
CONSIDERING BUS AND RAIL OPTIONS

Streetcars were specifically identified in the City’s *Downtown Plan* as a desired part of Winston-Salem’s transportation network. Both bus and rail technologies provide mobility benefits, but streetcars provide economic development and place-making benefits that have not been demonstrated with traditional buses. Existing streetcar lines in places such as Portland, OR; Tampa, FL; Little Rock, AR; Seattle, WA; and Kenosha, WI have proven that the certainty and “readability” of a fixed rail transit line makes them attractive to both customers and developers, supporting a vibrant urban environment. Urban Circulators complement other transit modes and can be an important part of an overall development and mobility strategy that integrates a variety of transit services.

Winston-Salem is now comparing the merits of streetcars and buses to identify the best way to shape the community by *enhancing economic competitiveness* and *increasing mobility options* as part of the overall effort to *grow smarter and better by managing future development*.

CONSIDERING ROUTE OPTIONS

Various transit route options have been identified based on the project goals, identified transit needs within the urban core, and public and stakeholder suggestions. Route options reflect current directional designations on one-way streets, although these designations may be re-evaluated in the future.
GET INVOLVED!
Your feedback is needed to help us advance transit in central Winston-Salem. Please visit our website for up-to-date information on study progress, upcoming meetings, and other important information.