
Town of Elkin

• community profile & recommendations •



December 2016 - Draft



Table of Contents

Background	6
Existing Plans	6
Town of Elkin and Town of Jonesville CTP (2012).....	6
Recreation, Parks & Greenway Plan (2014)	8
Elkin Greenway Master Plan (2007).....	9
Mountains-to-Sea State Trail Plan	10
Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor Plan	11
Existing Conditions	13
Parking Inventory	13
Pedestrian Facilities	14
Bicycle Facilities	14
Public Transportation.....	14
YVEDDI	14
PART	15
Public Art.....	15
Farmers Markets.....	16
NC Main Street Program	16
Façade Improvement	16
Small Business Development	16
Streetscape Business Surveys	16
Recommendations:	20
Works Cited	23



Figures

Figure 1: Demographic Profile	4
Figure 2: CTP Bicycle Map	7
Figure 3: CTP Pedestrian Map	8
Figure 4: Greenway Master Plan.....	9
Figure 5: MST Subsection - Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain State Park.....	10
Figure 6: Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor	11
Figure 7: Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor Municipal Wayfinding.....	11
Figure 8: Crater Park to Municipal Park Trail Connectors.....	12
Figure 9: Existing Facilities	13
Figure 10: Downtown Elkin Bicycle Rack	14
Figure 11: Existing Amenities	15
Figure 12: Survey Results	18
Figure 13: Stop Sign at Standard Street	20
Figure 14: 268 and Main St. Rendering (PTRC).....	20



Figure 1: Demographic Profile

Elkin

demographic profile

OVERVIEW

Elkin

has a population of **4,188**



is approximately 6.55 square miles

and has a population density of 629 per square mile.



AGE DISTRIBUTION



18 - 24 (7%)	25 - 34 (16%)	35 - 44 (19%)
45 - 54 (17%)	55 - 64 (16%)	Over 65 (25%)

RACE & ETHNICITY



White (72%)	Hispanic or Latino (24%)
African American (3%)	

13% OF THE POPULATION IS DISABLED



Under 18 with a Disability (14%)
18 - 64 with a Disability (52%)
Over 65 with a Disability (34%)

HOUSING & INCOME

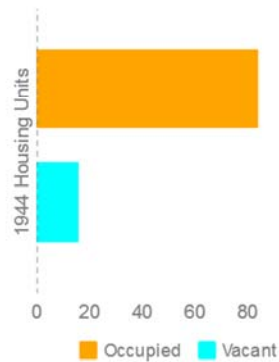
Median Household Income

\$34,819



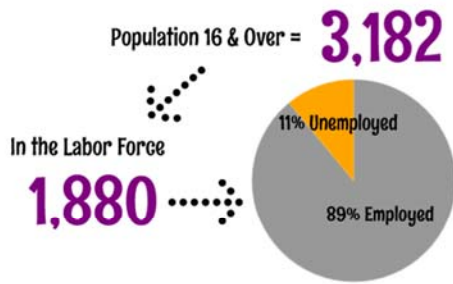
Poverty Level

Percent in Poverty (11%)
Above Poverty Level (89%)

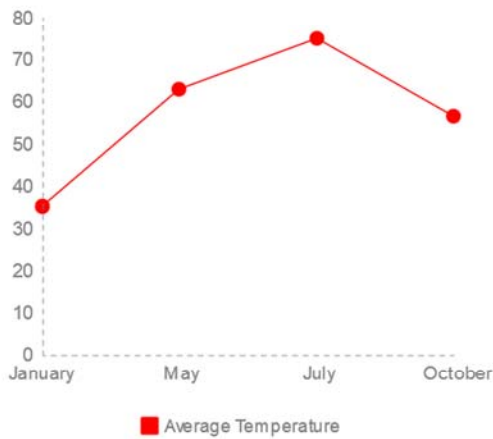




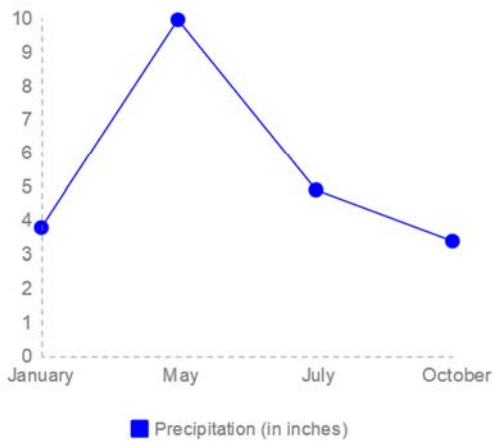
LABOR FORCE



CLIMATE



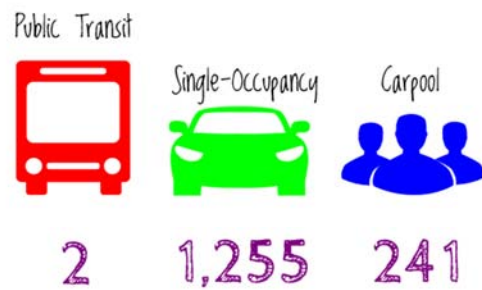
PRECIPITATION



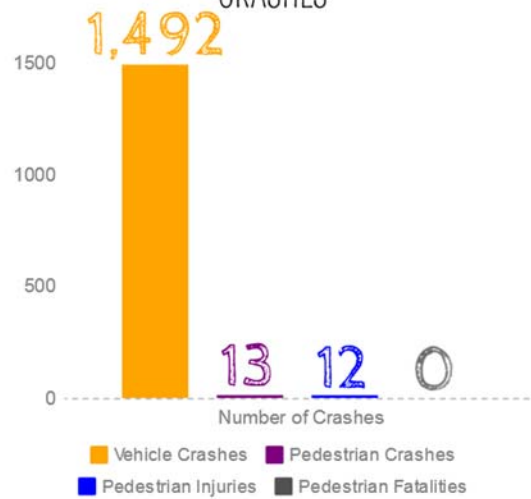
RECREATION



COMMUTING



CRASHES



Sources:

ACS 2008-2012 (DPO5)

ARC GIS

NOAA (Mount Airy Station)

NCDOT (2001-2012)

Town of Elkin



Background

Elkin is located on Interstate 77 in Surry County, North Carolina. This area, known as the Foothills of the Appalachians, is a traditional manufacturing area as the rolling rivers were perfect for traditional hydro-electricity needed for historic manufacturing. Elkin is located at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains with the mountains bordering to the west, Town of Jonesville to the south and the Yadkin River acts as a divider between both Jonesville and Elkin.



PHOTO: ELKIN HISTORICAL COLLECTION AND THE SURRY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Elkin is home to a strong arts community, two annual festivals, award-winning vineyards & wineries, medical facilities, and a thriving historic downtown shopping area. The Town has numerous recreation opportunities and serves as the eastern trailhead for the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail. Elkin's small town charm makes it a unique and desirable place to live, work, play, and visit.

Existing Plans

Town of Elkin and Town of Jonesville CTP (2012)

In July of 2010, the Transportation Planning Branch of the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the towns of Elkin and Jonesville initiated a study to cooperatively develop the Elkin/Jonesville Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). This is a long range multi-modal transportation plan that covers transportation needs through 2040. Modes of transportation evaluated as part of this plan include: highway, public transportation & rail, bicycle, and pedestrian. All recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian facilities were identified through the Elkin Greenway Master Plan, the 2010 Jonesville Land Use Plan, input from the Northwest Piedmont Rural Planning Organization, and local stakeholders. Final recommendations were coordinated with the local governments and the NCDOT division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. (NCDOT, 2012).



Figure 2: CTP Bicycle Map

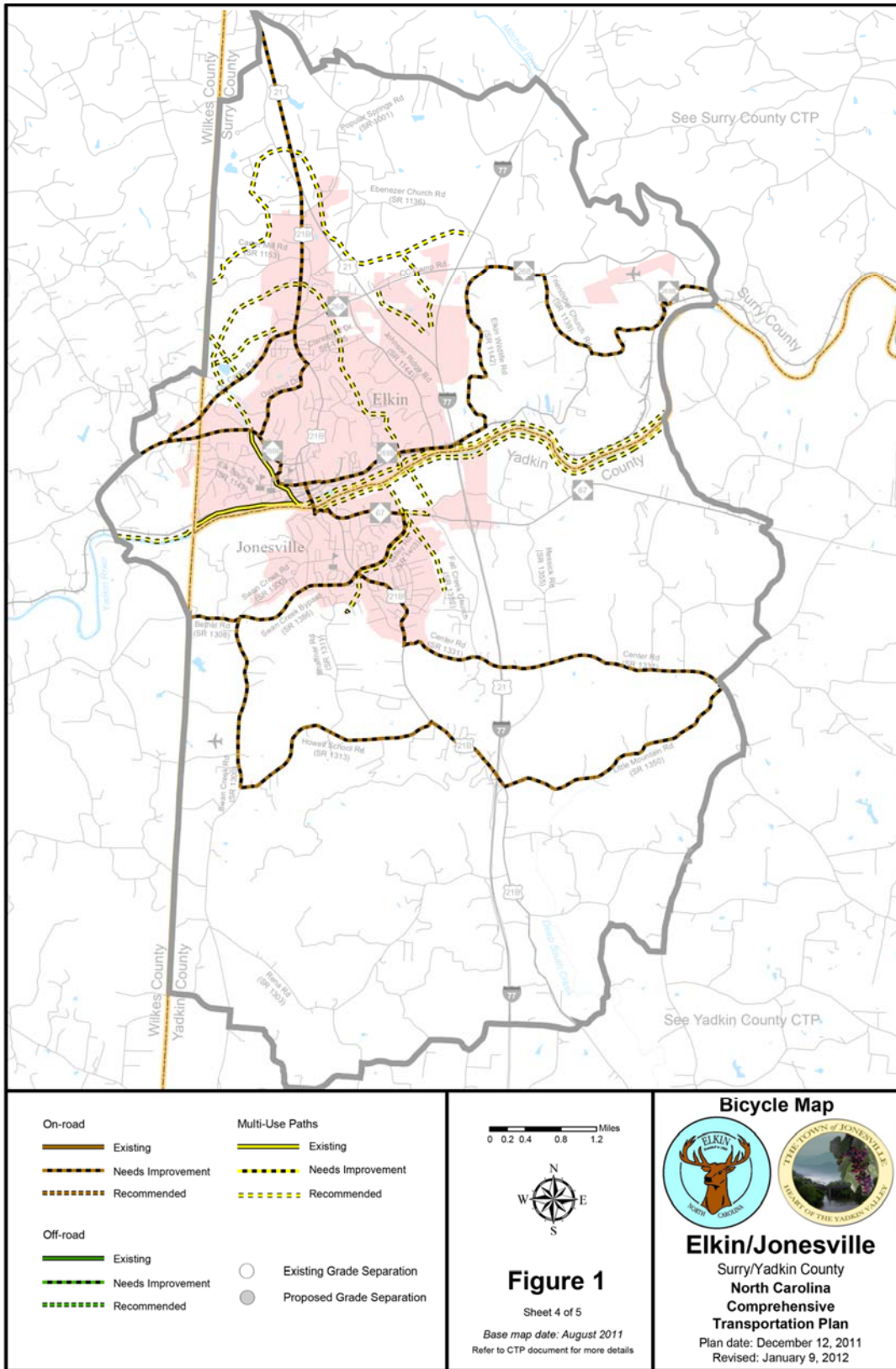
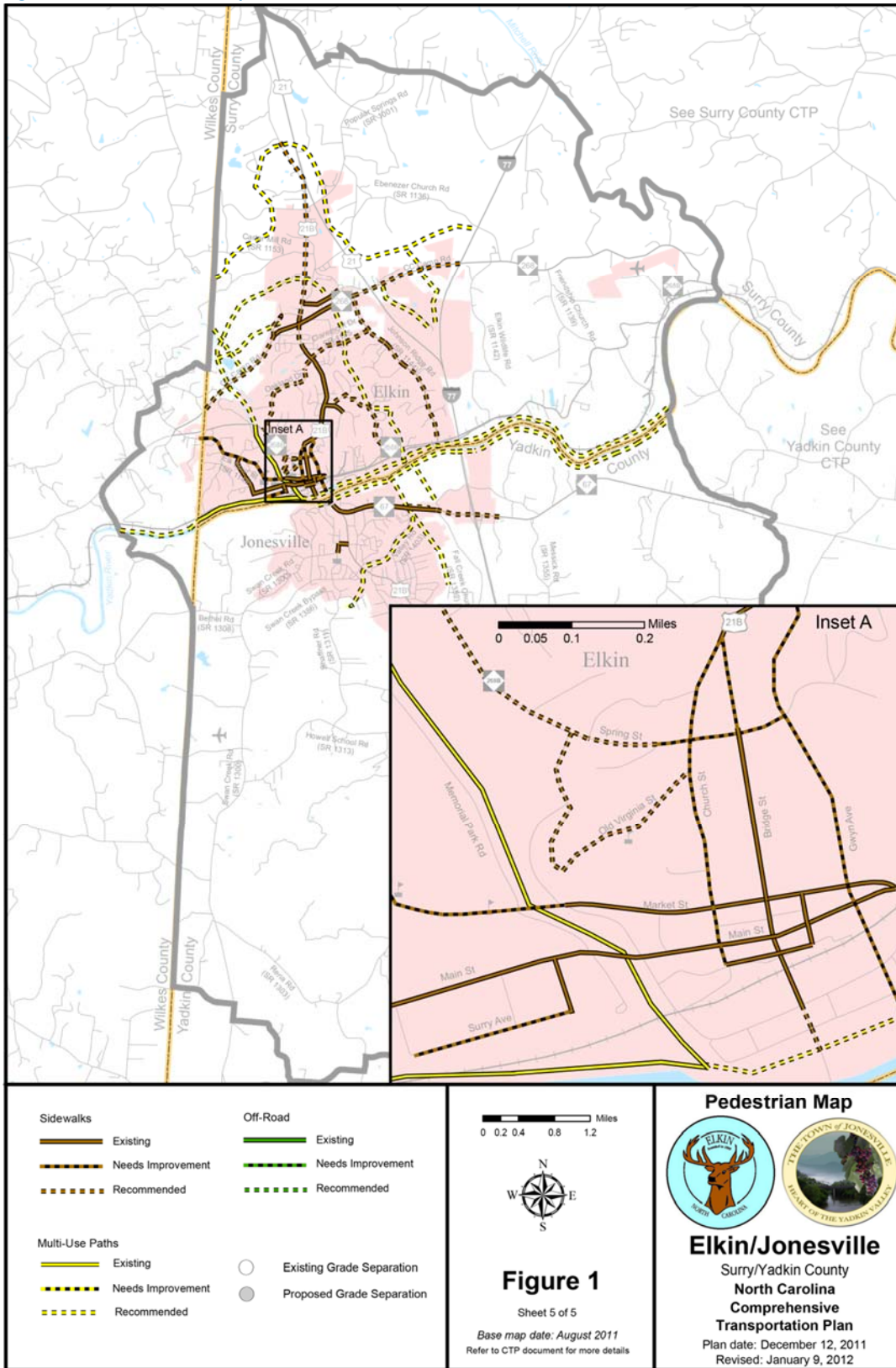




Figure 3: CTP Pedestrian Map





Recreation, Parks & Greenway (2014)

The Recreation, Parks & Greenway plan provides a comprehensive snapshot of existing parks, recreation, trail assets, and needs in the town of Elkin. The plan identifies creative strategies to address community recreation needs by prioritizing capital improvements, developing inclusive programming solutions, and developing funding resources. The Elkin Valley Trail Association in collaboration with the Town of Elkin has been shepherding the implementation of the Overmountain Victory Trail and the Big Elkin Creek Greenway. These trails connect to the downtown area which has an extensive system of sidewalks (Town of Elkin, 2014).

Elkin Greenway Master Plan (2007)

The Town of Elkin Greenway Master Plan serves as a guide for public and private greenway development based on a thorough assessment of community needs and desires; as well as, recreational programming philosophies established by staff and elected officials within the town. The plan specifically identifies the importance of extending greenway trails into the Town center through on-road facilities such as multi-use trails, sidewalks, and bike lanes to provide opportunities to connect everyday uses such as schools, parks, shopping, neighborhoods, work and businesses. The Plan also identifies the importance of furnishings such as lighting, shelters, pocket parks, overlooks, rest areas, trash cans, benches, picnic areas, bicycle racks, sign, and public art (Town of Elkin, 2007).

Figure 4: Greenway Master Plan





Mountains-to-Sea State Trail Plan

The Mountains-to-Sea Trail (MST) is a footpath linking Clingman’s Dome in the Great Smokey Mountains National Park to Jockey’s Ridge State Park located in the Outer Banks. More than 600 miles of the 1,000 mile route are complete and open to use with temporary routes on backgrounds and bicycle paths for the remainder of the trail. The Mountains-to-Sea State Trail – Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain State Park Master Plan is a comprehensive trail plan designed to guide local trail section managers as they locate, design, and implement the MST throughout the region (NC State Parks, 2014).

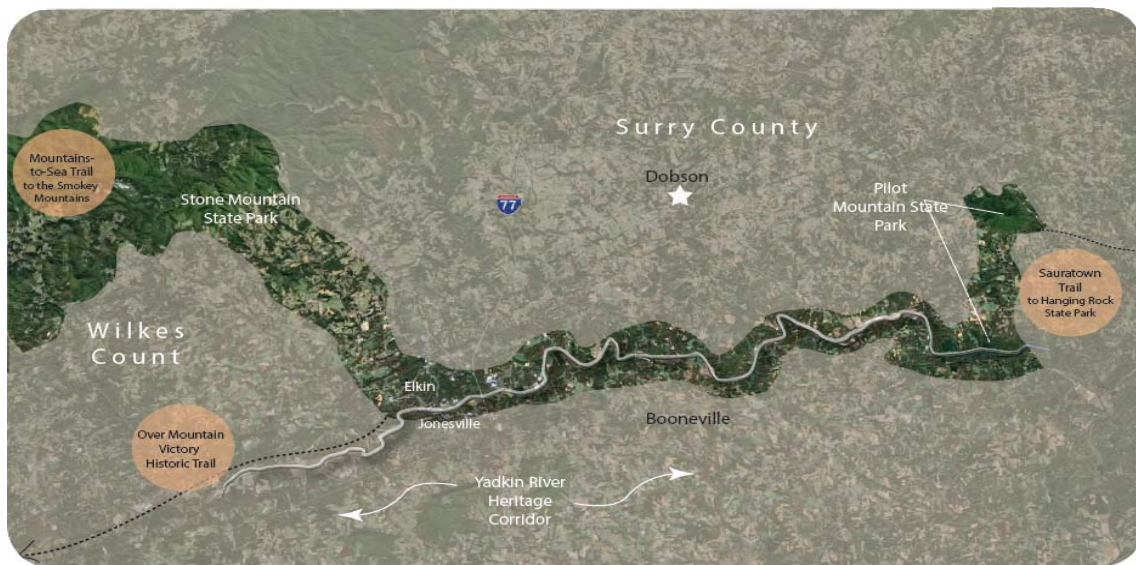
As the MST continues to grow, the Town has the opportunity to significantly benefit economically from thru-hikers. Table 1 identifies characteristics related to how successful Elkin can be as a “Trail Town”. Successful trail towns are hospitable towards “section” and “thru” hikers. The MST travels directly into Elkin along Main Street and the Town will host the Friends of Mountains to Sea Trail Annual Conference in spring 2017. Local governments, community organizations and businesses work together to ensure hikers have access to the goods and services needed to make their journey a success (NC State Parks, 2014).

Table 1: Trail Town Attributes

	Elkin
General Access & Signage	Trail runs through business district, though wayfinder signage needs improvement.
Safety	Downtown is very pedestrian friendly, however additional bike lanes are necessary.
Parking	Parking is plentiful and secure; there is a sufficient amount of bike racks.
Food Services	Wide variety of food services ranging from grocery stores to family style restaurants.
Retail Services	Retail services exist, but few cater to the needs of trail-users
Services and Amenities	There is a park, public restrooms, nearby camping, and a B&B to stay overnight.

Source: NC MST Stone Mountain Sub-section

Figure 5: MST Subsection - Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain State Park



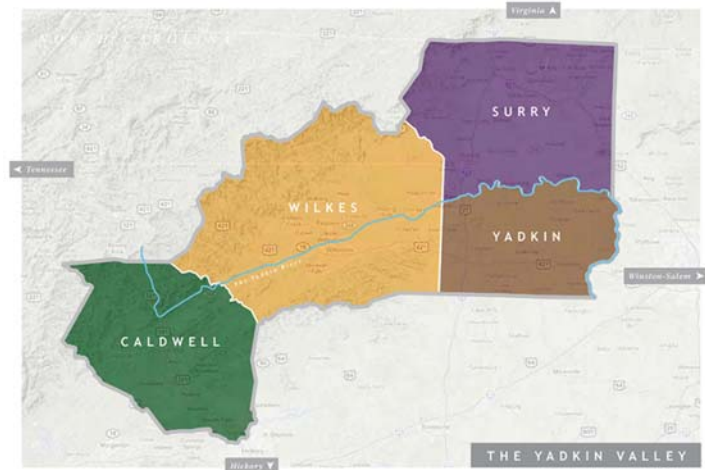
Mountains-to-Sea State Trail – Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain State Park



Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor Plan

The Yadkin River Heritage Corridor Partnership developed a multi-county regional trail plan in 2009 covering Caldwell, Wilkes, Surry and Yadkin Counties. The Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor study area includes 129 miles of the Yadkin River, and a half-mile on either side. The study, however, includes the entire Yadkin Valley region.

Figure 6: Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor



An economic impact study estimated that the corridor could result in approximately 75 new jobs in recreation and cultural heritage and have an annual economic impact of between \$4.17M and \$6.5M. Since the study, the Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor has launched a significant marketing campaign including a website, gateway signs, kiosks at visitor centers, brochures and maps, vehicular signage to wineries and other destinations and municipal wayfinding (Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor Partnership, 2009).

Figure 7: Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor Municipal Wayfinding

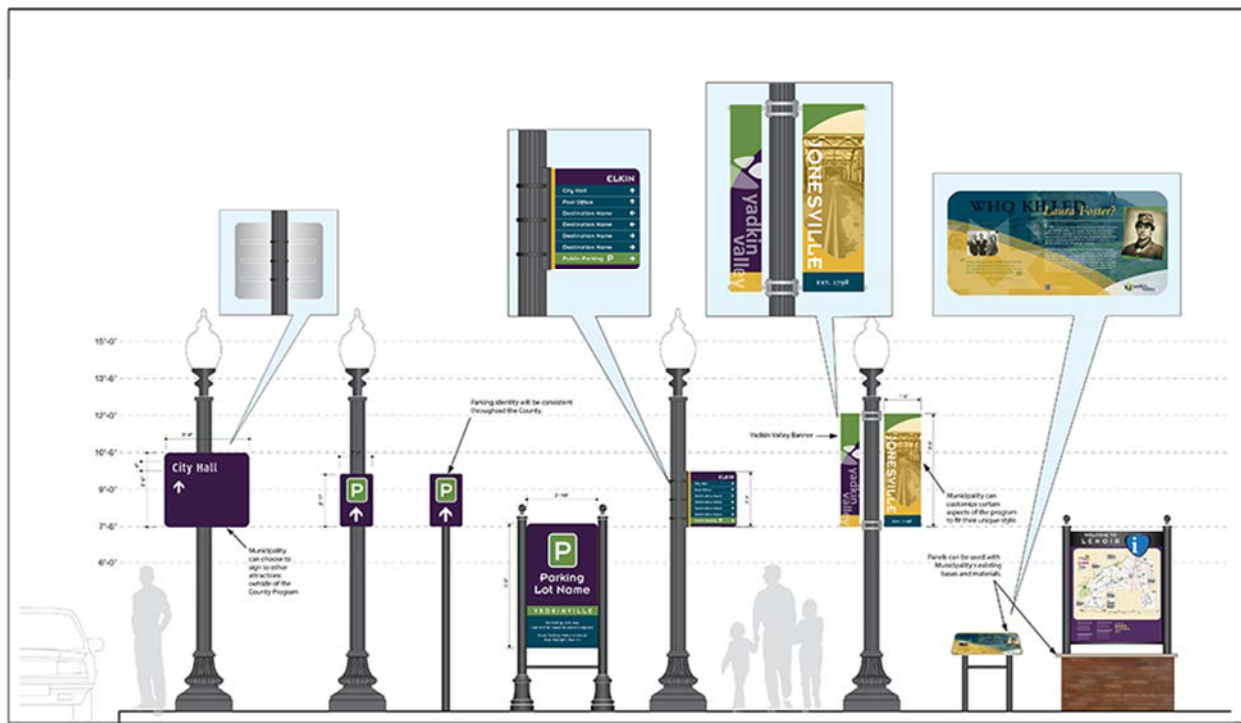
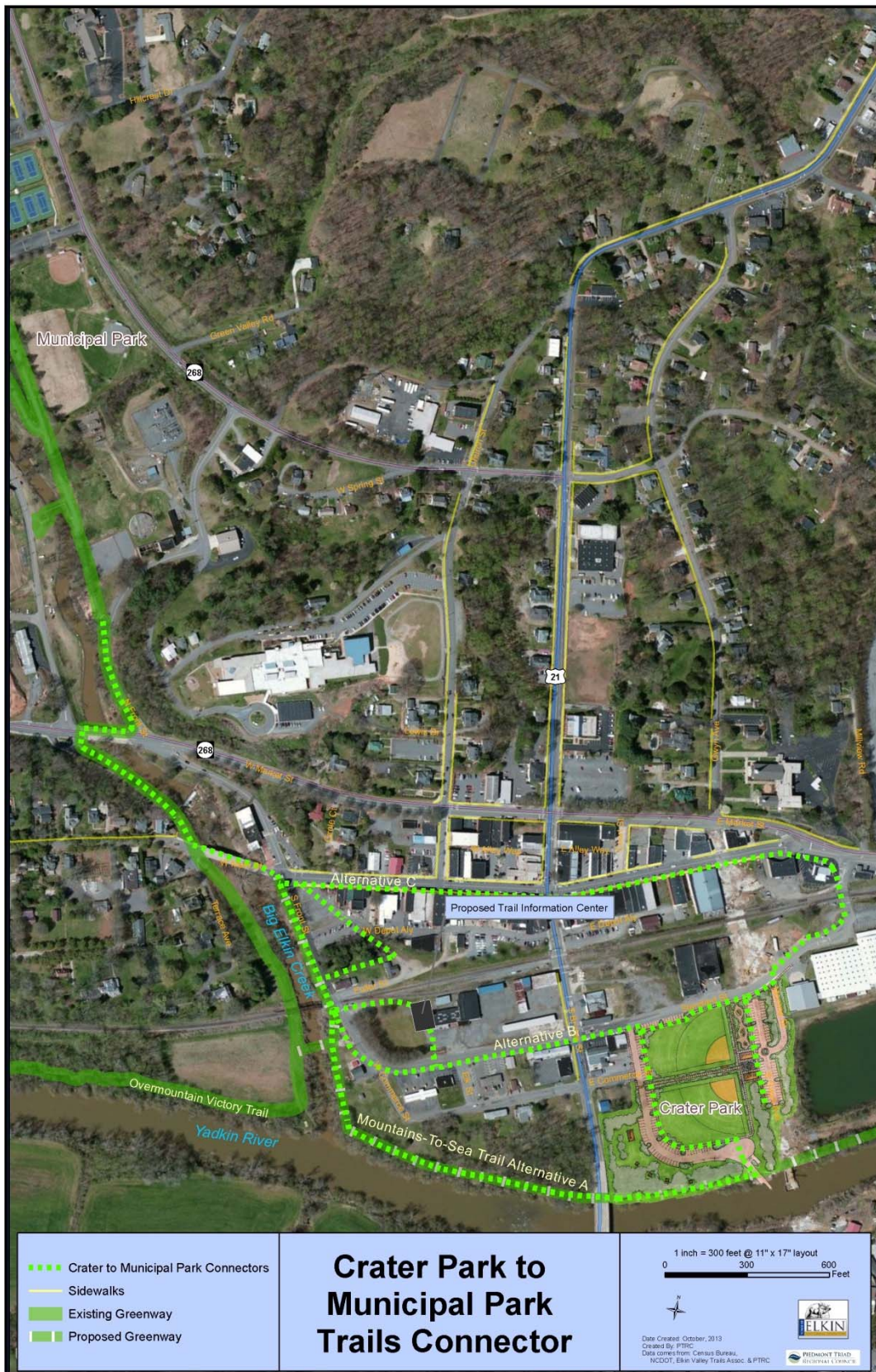




Figure 8: Crater Park to Municipal Park Trail Connectors





Existing Conditions

Parking Inventory

As part of this project, the PTRC digitized the parking inventory completed by the Town of Elkin. The inventory included off street, parallel, angled and handicapped parking. Elkin staff identified 384 parking spaces open to the public (including all Town Hall parking spaces), including 140 on street spaces plus 410 privately owned lots.

Figure 9: Existing Parking

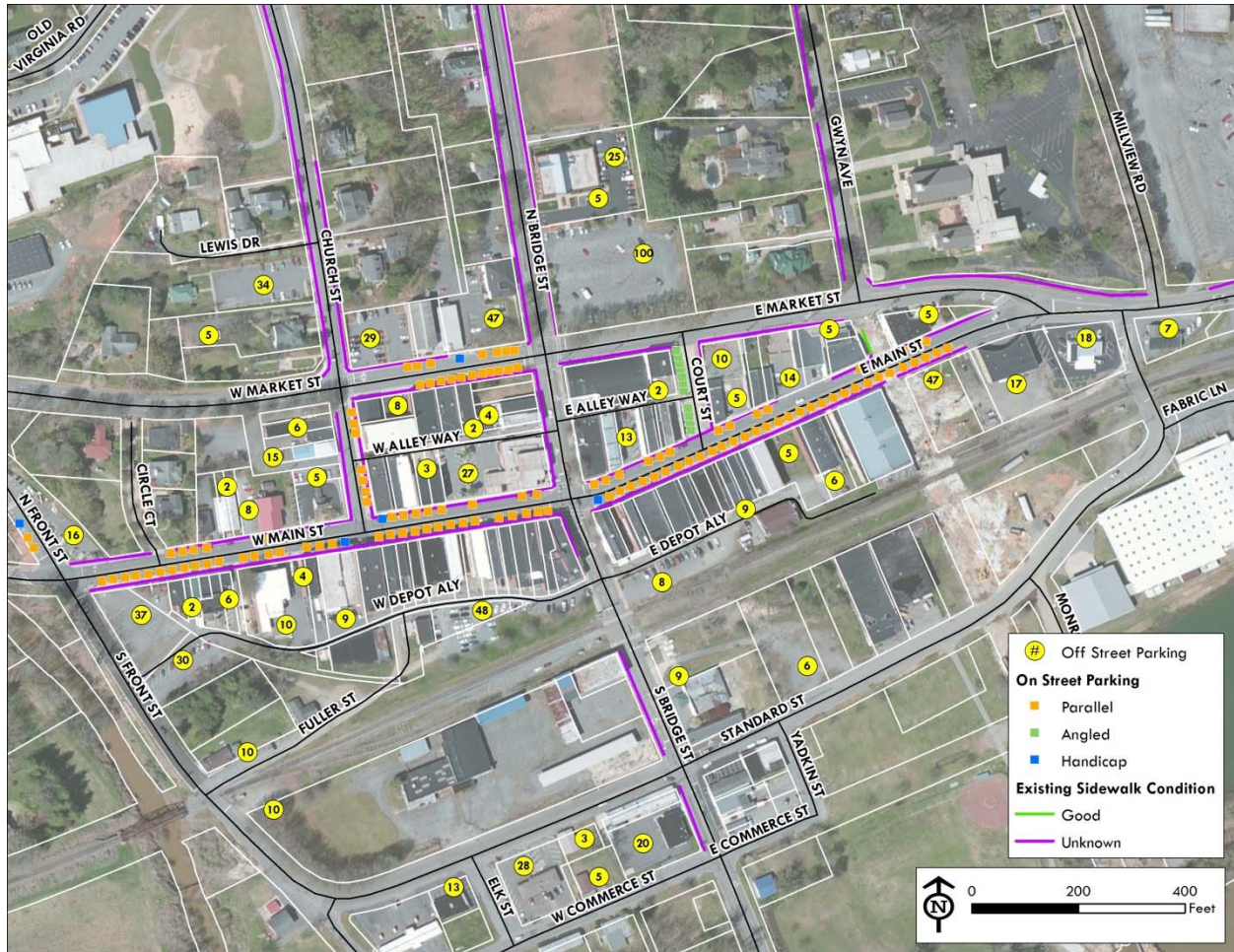
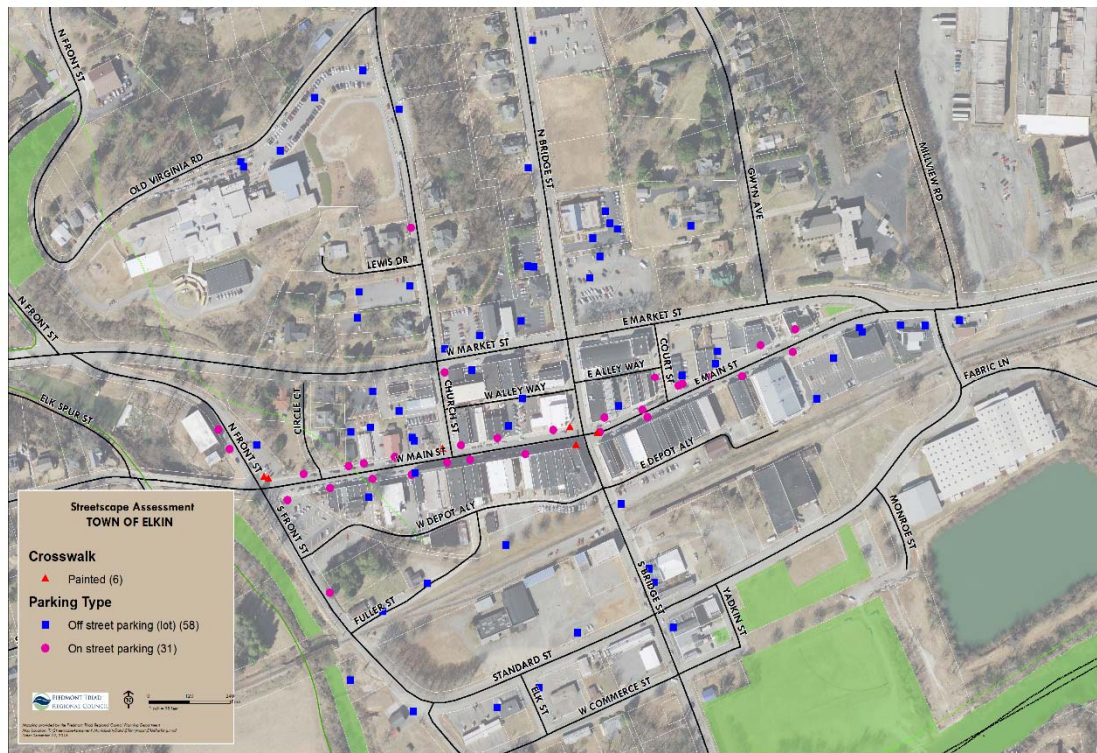




Figure 10: Existing Parking Lots



Pedestrian Facilities

Figure 9 indicates the condition of sidewalks in the streetscape study area. Downtown Elkin walkers enjoy Heart Smart walking trails identified by plaques embedded in the sidewalks of Main Street and Market Street to help gauge the distance you are walking when downtown.

Bicycle Facilities

Downtown Elkin incorporated public art into their bicycle rack. The rack is located on the eastern end of downtown but easily accessible to the Town. The Town does not currently have any designated bicycle lanes but the Yadkin Valley in itself is a popular cycling destination with many options for on road and off road adventure.

Figure 11: Downtown Elkin Bicycle Rack



Public Transportation

YVEDDI

YVEDDI Public Transportation is a regional transportation system operated by Yadkin Valley Economic Development District, Inc. and the North Carolina Department of Transportation/Public Transportation Division. They provide community and public transportation services in Davie, Stokes, Surry and Yadkin Counties. YVEDDI provides the following services in Elkin (YVEDDI, 2016):



- Rural General Public Transportation
- Services for the Elderly and Disabled
- Elkin Circulator
- Yadkin Surry Connector

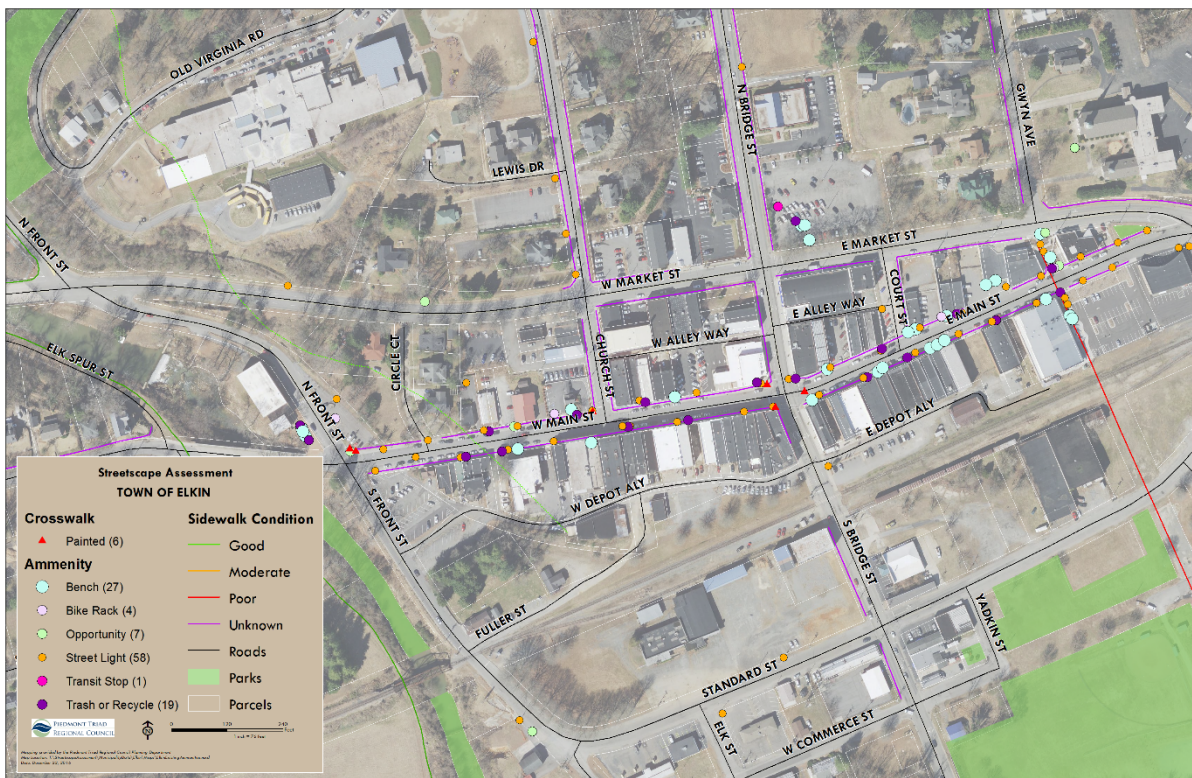
PART

The Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART) promotes alternative transportation options to the single occupant vehicle by encouraging people to carpool, vanpool, bike, walk, telecommute, or ride transit instead of driving alone. While there is no direct regional service to Elkin, PART offers a number of services for Surry County residents. There is a vanpool providing service from the Elkin area to downtown Winston-Salem and another route to Mooresville. A vanpool lease is available to commuters who live at least 10 miles from their workplace and agree to share their daily commute to and from work and requires a monthly fare. PART also provides a number of resources for residents to reduce dependence on a single occupant vehicle (PART, 2016).

Public Art

Downtown Elkin is home to the Foothills Arts Council, providing visual and performing arts and supporting the work of local artists, artisans, writers, musicians and performers. The Arts Council is also an economic driver in downtown Elkin providing an attractive setting for weddings, showers, receptions and other special events. The Piedmont Triad Regional Council identified and located downtown streetscape amenities in the spring of 2016.

Figure 12: Existing Amenities





Farmers Markets

The Elkin Farmers Market is located in the Elkin Town Hall parking lot. The market is open Saturdays, 9am-noon and offers delicious, fresh, local produce and goods direct from local farmers.

NC Main Street Program

Elkin has been an accredited member of the NC Main Street program since 1998. The N.C. Main Street Center works to stimulate economic development within the context of historic preservation, using a comprehensive approach to downtown revitalization developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and utilized by the National Main Street Center to assist communities across the country. The Center incorporates four elements to create a well-balanced program: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring.



Elkin has a Main Street Advisory Board comprised of 8 board members and representatives from the Town of Elkin, including a dedicated Main Street Manager, the Yadkin Valley Chamber of Commerce (President), Downtown Elkin, Inc. The board determines how to best use Municipal Service District tax funds to revitalize downtown through banners, landscaping, façade and mural grants, and funding events along Main Street.

Façade Improvement

Elkin offers a 50/50 matching grant, up to \$1,000 for downtown merchants or business owners. These are offered in the spring and the focus for improvements can change annually. In the past, back alley wall improvements, murals, or other front facades have been funded.

Small Business Development

Elkin was chosen by The Rural Center as one of seven towns to offer entrepreneurs the opportunity to apply for a microloan program with \$100,000 in funding for Elkin. The Microenterprise Loan Program will support small business development by working with start-up or expanding small businesses. The initiative will provide community coaching, technical assistance, and leaderships for entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Streetscape Business Surveys

A streetscape survey was distributed to various local downtown businesses and visitors in the summer of 2016. There were 19 responses to the survey. Summary results are shown on the following pages with top answers shown below:



1. What is your connection to downtown?
58% of respondents were business owners.
2. How do you access businesses or services in downtown?
17 respondents access businesses via automobile.
3. What existing elements of downtown do you find favorable and worthy of keeping in the future development of downtown?
Sidewalk design, street furniture, lighting, and public art were rated most favorable.
4. For merchants, where do your delivery trucks usually park?
Double parked vehicles made up 47% of delivery parking.
5. I believe downtown is...
37% of respondents think downtown is improving.
6. What do you consider the most important streetscape elements? Pick your top three.
On-street parking was rated the most important streetscape element, followed by furniture (benches, garbage/recycling bins), and lighting.
7. What type of activities or features would draw more people to downtown? Check all that apply.
79% of respondents believe filling empty storefronts/more retail will draw people to downtown.
8. What is your highest priority for improvement in this area?
61% of respondents ranked economic development as their highest priority.
9. Describe downtown in one word.
Words included: complicated, unique (x2), clean, likeable, declining (x2), friendly, work-in-progress, unpredictable, empty, peaceful, depressed, improving, dead, and nice.

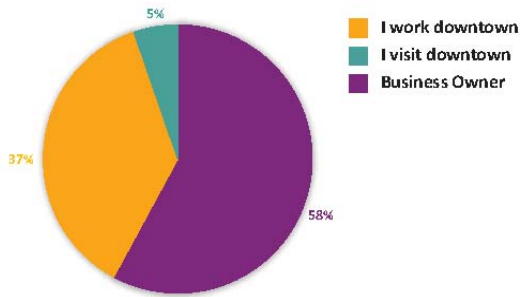


Figure 13: Survey Results

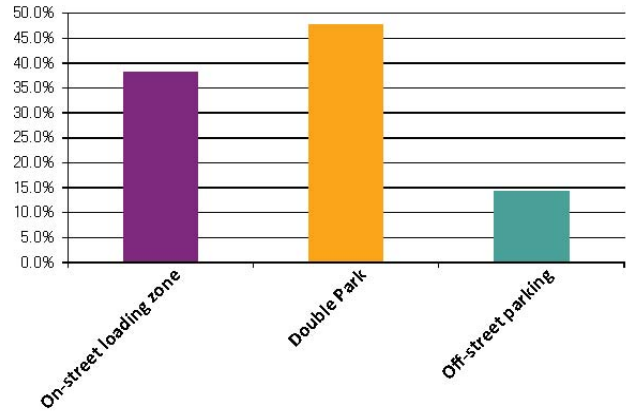
Elkin

Streetscape Survey

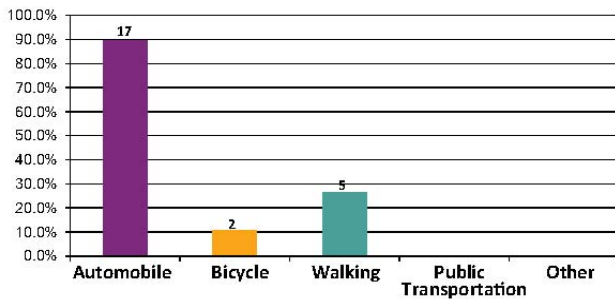
WHAT IS YOUR CONNECTION TO DOWNTOWN?



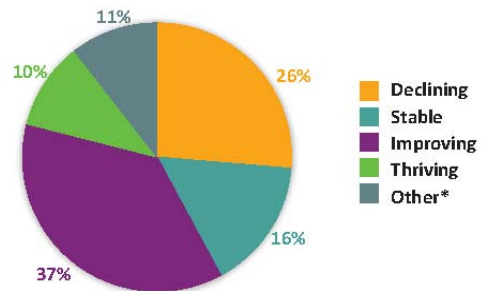
FOR MERCHANTS, WHERE DO YOUR DELIVERY TRUCKS USUALLY PARK?



HOW DO YOU ACCESS BUSINESSES OR SERVICES IN DOWNTOWN?

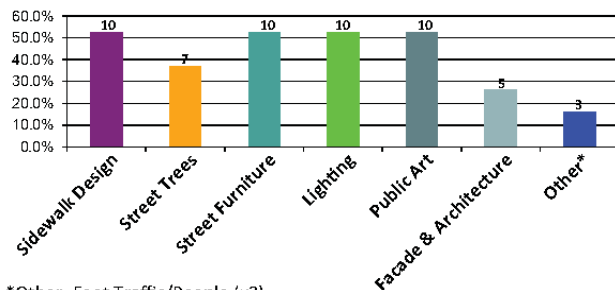


I BELIEVE DOWNTOWN IS...



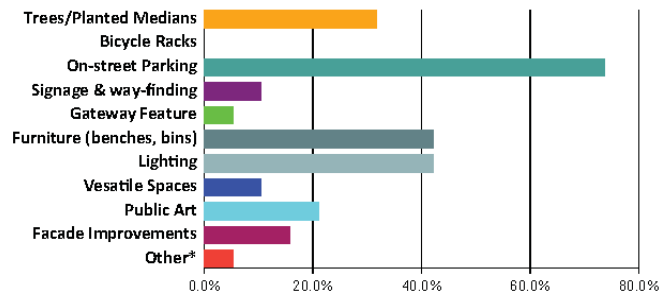
*Other: Stagnant, Rapidly Declining

WHAT EXISTING ELEMENTS OF DOWNTOWN DO YOU FIND FAVORABLE AND WORTHY OF KEEPING IN THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF DOWNTOWN?



*Other: Foot Traffic/People (x3)

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST IMPORTANT STREETScape ELEMENTS? PICK YOUR TOP THREE.



*Other: Shoppers



Recommendations:

1. Gateway Signage

Gateway signs welcome visitors and reflect the character and attractions the town has to offer. Effective gateway treatments are an important mechanism to convince travelers to spend time and money in your town. The gateway should be an attractive area comprised of landscaping and signage and reflect the culture, history, attractions or natural features the town has to offer.

2. Mini-Roundabouts & Crosswalks

Improvements to the intersection at 268 & Main St. would improve pedestrian safety and traffic flow, and provide an aesthetically pleasing entrance into town. These improvements would also improve access to the Yadkin Valley General Store.

Figure 15: 268 and Main St. Rendering (PTRC)



Figure 14: Stop Sign at Standard Street



3. Relocate Stop Sign

The stop sign located at Standard Street and East Main Street is potentially dangerous, particularly with foot traffic crossing to the Yadkin Valley General Store. Consider moving the stop sign to improve safety and visibility.

4. Convert Main Street to One Way and Evaluate Parking

Converting Main Street from Bridge Street to 268 to a one-way street would allow for additional street parking, improve conditions for bicycle and pedestrians and potentially allow for additional outdoor dining, pocket parks and other amenities.

Investigate eliminating parallel parking on north side of Main St. and converting parking on the south side of Main St to angle parking.

Evaluate additional off street parking opportunities and partnerships.



5. *Convert Intersections to 4-Way Stops*

Work with NCDOT to convert stoplights on Bridge Street at Main St. & 268 to 4-Way Stop Signs or other traffic calming measures. Traffic volume and speeding down Bridge Street poses a significant danger to bicyclists and pedestrians.

Town of Elkin

Streetscape Plan



Easiest → Hardest



Works Cited

- NC State Parks. (2014). *Mountains-to_Sea State Trail: Stone Mountain to Pilot Mountain State Park Master Plan*. Boone, NC: Destination By Design. Retrieved January 2016
- NCDOT. (2012, July). *Comprehensive Transportation Plan, Towns of Elkin and Jonesville*. Retrieved January 2016, from NC Department of Transportation, Transportation Planning Branch: https://connect.ncdot.gov/projects/planning/TPBCTP/Elkin-Jonesville/ElkinJonesville_Report.pdf
- PART. (2016, January). *Commuting Options*. Retrieved from Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation: <http://www.partnc.org/commuting-options/>
- Town of Elkin. (2007, October). *Greenway Master Plan*. Retrieved January 2016, from Elkin Parks and Recreation: <https://elkin.recdesk.com/RecDeskPortal/Portals/146/greenway%20master%202007.pdf>
- Town of Elkin. (2014). *Recreation, Parks & Greenway Plan for the Town of Elkin*. Retrieved January 2016, from Elkin Parks and Recreation: <http://elkin.recdesk.com/RecDeskPortal/Portals/146/masterplan1.pdf>
- Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor Partnership. (2009). *Yadkin Valley Heritage Corridor*. Retrieved January 2016 , from <http://yvcg.org.temp.realssl.com/pdf/nws9.pdf>
- YVEDDI. (2016, January). *Public Transportation*. Retrieved from Yadkin Valley Economic Development District: <http://www.yveddi.com/yveddi-public-transportation/>