Section 3: EXISTING POLICIES, PLANS & PROGRAMS

3.1 Current Ordinance

While existing physical conditions have the greatest impact upon the City's current biking conditions, the City's land development policy – which guides how the City grows and develops – will ultimately have the greatest impact as they influence future biking conditions. City land development policy is examined here in terms of how well it supports the bicycle-friendly goals recorded at the outset of this Plan. Those goals in summary are:

1. Target unsafe sections of roadway.
2. Provide connections to popular places.
3. Provide safe ways across gaps and barriers.
4. Provide both on-road and off-road bicycle facilities for commuting, recreation, exercise, and scenic enjoyment.
5. Create opportunities for economic development and community events.
6. Minimize the burden on city resources and make best use of available funding opportunities.

The various land development policy documents are examined with respect to the issues that most directly affect and pertain to bicycling conditions. These issues include:

1. Mixed-use development
2. Street connectivity
3. General multi-modal provisions
4. Lane and shoulder width
5. Driveway curb-cuts
6. Traffic speed, volume and heavy vehicles
7. Greenways, multi-use trails and parks

A brief explanation of each issue and how it affects bicycling conditions is provided in this section as each subject is explored within adopted City ordinances, including the Kings Mountain Zoning Ordinance and the Kings Mountain Subdivision Ordinance. The same issues are also examined in the City's existing plans in the following section. Specific recommendations for revisions to current policy to better support the goals stated above are provided in **Section 4.5: Policy Recommendations**.

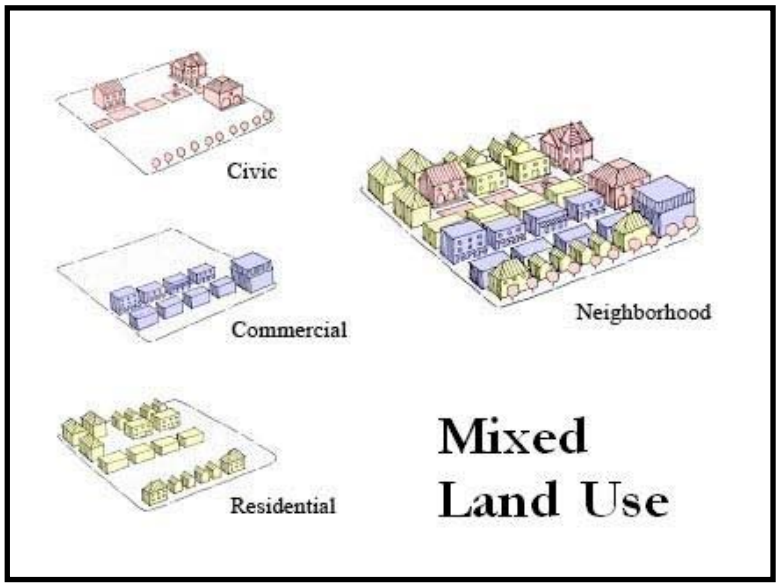
Kings Mountain Zoning Ordinance (KMZO) was adopted in 1996 and last amended June 30, 2009. The Ordinance provides descriptions of fourteen zoning districts and nine overlay districts. The KMZO standard district regulations primarily impact the City's bicycling environment through rules that govern land-use, building setbacks, and development densities. The overlay districts, however, contain additional provisions pertinent to the bicycle environment. In addition to an Historic District (HD) and a Flood Damage Prevention District, seven corridor districts are specified. These districts are intended to "protect and enhance the economic and aesthetic appeal and orderly development of properties adjacent to and within the vicinity of certain major thoroughfare corridors in the City, while at the same time maintaining traffic efficiency and safety." (Section 6.16 (3)a). The corridor overlay districts include:

(i) Kings Mountain Downtown Protection, Preservation & Enhancement District (KMDPPED)
(ii) US 74 Shelby Road Divided Highway Overlay District (74 SRDHOD)
(iii) US 74 Business King Street Gateway Protection Overlay District (74 KGSPOD) East
(iv) US 74 Business King Street Gateway Protection Overlay District (74 KGSPOD) West
(v) NC 161 York-Cleveland Business Overlay District (161 YCBOD)
(vi) York Road Gateway Protection Overlay District (YRGPOD)
(vii) Waco Road & US 74 Intersection Inclusive Overlay Protection District (WRUS74IOD)

For a map of these districts, see the zoning maps provided in **Section 7** and **Appendix A.12**.

Kings Mountain Subdivision Ordinance (KMSO) was adopted in 1996. The KMSO provides comprehensive guidance for new residential subdivisions in the City. The provisions of this ordinance most conducive to bicycle travel govern street connectivity.

POLICY ISSUES:



Issue 1: Mix-Use Concentrated Development

When various land uses are mixed together in close proximity – for instance: residences, commercial establishments and civic buildings – a greater number of destinations of various types can be reached without reliance upon automobiles, being within a reasonable cycling (or walking) distance of the areas where people live (One can quickly bike to the corner store, for instance). Conversely, lower-density, linear patterns of development - characteristic of urban sprawl - tend to discourage the use of bicycles as a means of transportation.

Fourteen Zoning districts are specified within the current Kings Mountain Zoning Ordinance (KMZO). Each of these districts is briefly described in the KMZO Article V, *Establishment of Zoning Districts*, Section 5.2. The Table of Permitted and Conditional Uses in Article VII (Section 7.1), provides a lists various uses and indicates which zones the use is permitted by right or by condition. The possible use classifications are based on 1987 SIC descriptions, which is organized by use then district.

The KMZO has a variety of districts that facilitate mixed-use, including commercial districts with housing components and office districts with housing components. The latter may be used for transitions from commercial uses and industrials uses into conventional housing uses. There are also provisions for mixed use developments under PUD special requirements.

Uses permitted in the overlay districts are all subject to being permitted by the underlying district (KMZO p. 53b).

See the zoning maps provided in **Section 7** and **Appendix A.12** for zoning districts and zoning overlays.

Issue 2: Street Connectivity

Connectivity is a measure of how well a roadway (or trail network) provides route alternatives between origins and destinations. In layman's terms, good connectivity means providing a variety of convenient ways to get from point A to point B. The traditional grid-style street layout of older towns, exemplified by Kings Mountain, provides an excellent degree of connectivity. Streets are highly interlinked, intersections are closely spaced between short blocks, and there are few dead-ends. Communities with high connectivity are more bike-friendly because destinations are within easier reach with more choices of routes. A connected network of streets also gives drivers more choices of vehicular routes, decreasing vehicular congestion by dispersing traffic. When more streets interconnect, local vehicular traffic can take shorter routes and avoid busy arterial roads, as can bicycles.

Street patterns near Atlanta, Georgia displaying extremely poor connectivity

Street connectivity can be compromised both by limiting access points into and out of subdivisions, and by limiting the number of opportunities that streets intersect within them. Block length provides one measure of connectivity, as longer blocks leads to a decrease in connectivity. Over the last few decades, many residential developments were designed with fewer street intersections in favor of incorporating more cul-de-sacs. Cul-de-sacs were initially used to avoid extreme terrain that would prohibit streets from connecting. However, development practices grew to rely upon them, even on flat land, as a way of discouraging traffic in front of individual homes. This practice turns public throughways into semi-private drives that dead-end into semi-private courts. While this arrangement does reduce non-residents cutting through the neighborhood, it also gives residents very limited options. Traffic can back up into the neighborhood during rush hour, as everyone tries to get out by the same street onto busy arterial roads. Emergency vehicle access and efficiency is also severely limited. Kids going to school, events, or just wanting to visit friends in neighboring subdivisions must travel much greater distances on bicycle or on foot - often along busy main thoroughfares - or be driven by an adult.

Street Connectivity is encouraged in the KMZO in its description of the Overlay Districts. These Districts call for sidewalks, street trees, and increased street connectivity.

In the KMSO Executive Summary, in its description of Article III on page 5, it states:

> "New streets are to be planned to extend both existing and projected streets KMSO that good functional streets are created. They must positively impact on the City's existing system (3.5). To that end the streets must conform with the Thoroughfare Plan and also with other streets in the subdivision and nearby. … Cul-de-sacs are permitted if necessary, but not encouraged."

Block lengths are addressed in Section 3.3 (p.13):

> "Blocks shall not be less than 400 feet not more than 1,320 feet in length."

However, the KMSO Executive Summary, as it refers to Section 3.3, sets the maximum block length at 1,200 feet. Both sections of the KMSO require blocks to be wide enough for two tiers of lots.
Section 3.5 of the KMSO prescribes Streets and Street Improvements. This section contains a number of requirements intended to promote connectivity. Specifically (on pp.14f):

3) Conformance with Adjoining Street System

The planned Street layout of a proposed Subdivision shall be compatible with existing or proposed Streets and their classifications on adjoining or nearby tracts.

4) Access to Adjoining Property

Where in the opinion of the City Council it is desirable to provide for Street access to adjoining property, proposed Streets shall be extended to the boundary of such property.

5) Reserve Strips, Half Streets and Private Streets

Reserve strips and non-access easements adjoining Street rights-of-way for the purpose of preventing access to or from adjacent property, (except those required to prevent access to Thoroughfares) and half-Streets shall not be permitted under any condition. Private Streets shall be permitted only in specific developments as may be permitted by the Zoning Ordinance.

7) Cul-de-sacs

a. Cul-de-sacs should not be used to avoid connection with an existing Street, to avoid the extension of a thoroughfare or collector Street, or to avoid connection to adjoining property.

b. Cul-de-sacs should not extend for significant lengths unless necessitated by such factors as topography, property shape, property accessibility and/or land use relationships.

The KMZO provides for increased and more intentional connectivity through its Thoroughfare Protection Districts (TPD).

Section 6.16 (3) (i) (b) vii) (p. 53-J)

vii) Public Street Connectivity. Proposed public streets shall be extended to the boundary of developments for connection to existing streets on the boundary of adjoining property or for future connection. Cul-de-sacs shall not be used to avoid connection to adjoining property. In general cul-de-sacs shall not be used to deny access to development on the boundary of property except where necessitated by topography or to provide separation of unlike or incompatible uses.

This same standard is included in the other corridor districts.

(i) Kings Mountain Downtown Protection, Preservation and Enhancement District (KMDPPED)

Issue 3: General Multi-modal Provisions

The City has established overlay districts in its downtown and along a number of its primary corridors. The City Zoning Ordinance (Section 6.16(3)) states that the Thoroughfare Protection Districts (TPs) are in place to "protect and enhance the economic and aesthetic appeal and orderly development of properties … while at the same time maintaining traffic efficiency and safety of travel."

The York-Cleveland Business Overlay District (YCBOD) and the York Road Gateway Protection Overlay (YRGPOD) (Section 6.16(3) e. (iv.) & (v.)) both include:

(x) Multimodal Provisions. Development shall be designed and shall provide for alternative means of transportation including pedestrian sidewalks and trails (where applicable) and bike facilities at the right-of-way. These shall be designed in accordance with NCDOT standards and installed accordingly as part of the development.

The Downtown Overlay District includes this statement of goals for its creation:

Design Guidelines for Downtown Kings Mountain

The Downtown Kings Mountain overlay district was adopted in order to meet the following goals:

Goal 1: Preserve the small-town, unique character of Downtown Kings Mountain
Goal 2: Complement the existing historic architecture
Goal 3: Encourage streetscape design that is inviting and on a human scale
Goal 4: Communicate the community's vision for the downtown area

The boundaries of the overlay district follow the borders of the Kings Mountain Municipal Service District.
Guidelines are intended to convey desirable elements. They are recommendations and not requirements, unless public financing is involved in the construction or rehabilitation of the building. Standards identified are requirements and enforced through the City's Zoning Administration Department.

The Downtown Overlay District includes specific guidelines for street treatment that favor bicycle use:

Streetscape Design

Objective: The streetscape should be uniform so that it acts to provide continuity throughout the downtown.

Guideline: When making improvements to private property, including the addition of benches, trash receptacles, fencing, bike racks, or trash enclosures, owners should match the surrounding styles.

Standard: When a redevelopment project disturbs existing streetscape elements those items must be replaced with approved Downtown Kings Mountain streetscape elements.

Issue 4: Lane & Shoulder Width

"Any roadway not specifically prohibited to cycling is a bicycle facility. But not all existing roadways necessarily make good bicycle facilities." (Richard C. Moeur, P.E., L.C.I. Bicycle Facility Design, April 2004, http://www.richardcmoeur.com/docs/bikepres.pdf). Road improvements specifically designed for bicycle use include bike lanes, wide outside lanes (also known as wide curb lanes), and paved shoulders. Typically, bike lanes and paved shoulders require four feet of minimum clear width; however, paved shoulders as little as 12 inches wide can still offer some degree of refuge for bicyclists. Wide outside lanes are appropriate on travel lanes of 14 to 16 feet.

The KMSO Section 3.5 2) states that "The final determination of classification of streets in a proposed subdivision shall be made by the City Council." The minimum standards for each classification are contained in Appendix II (p. A10) of the KMSO. Some of these street standards include lanes with

generous widths sufficient for retrofitting bicycle lanes (71-D2, 71 D-5) or wide outside lanes (71-D4), but none of the details depict any facilities specifically intended for bicycles.

Street design cross-sectional standards in the KMSO require shoulders of no more than ¼" per foot slope for all streets and roads. Minimum widths for shoulders required on streets with curb and gutter range from 4.0' to 6.5', with the single exception of the standard 71-D2 (14.5' lane width) which allows a shoulder minimum of 1.5'. For non-curbed and guttered roads, shoulders are required between the edge of pavement and the top of ditch. Collector streets require a 6' minimum, and minor streets a 5' minimum.

Issue 5: Driveway Curb Cuts

Activity at driveways and intersections presents an increased safety risk for bicyclists. "70% of bicycle/motor vehicle crashes occur at intersections and driveways." (Richard C. Moeur). Exercise of control and coordination of driveways and intersections is known as access management. The purpose of access management is to strategically and fairly provide vehicular and non-vehicular access to land development while, at the same time, preserving the safety and efficiency of the transportation system. Proper access management not only helps to reduce traffic congestion and improve the appearance of roadway corridors, it makes the roads safer for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

In the KMZO Article IV: General Provisions, Section 4.18 requires that all entrances and exits to public streets be placed and constructed in accordance with the NCDOT policy on Street and Driveway Access. Public street access to individual parcels is required in the KMZO according to Section 4.3:

Section 4.3 Street Access

No building, structure or use of land shall be established on a lot nor shall any lot be created that does not abut upon a public street as defined herein to which it has legal access for a distance of not less than forty (40) feet. Provided, the following exceptions shall apply to the access requirement:

(1) The access requirement shall not apply to lawfully existing lots of record with a minimum of thirty-five (35) feet of frontage on a dedicated but not maintained street.

(2) The access requirement shall not apply to developments exempt from the public street access by Article VIII.

(3) The access requirement shall not apply to lots created prior to June 25, 1996 which contain the minimum square footage for the zoning district, have minimum frontage of twenty (20) feet on a recorded easement and said easement provides permanent access between the lot and a maintained public street or a dedicated but not maintained street.

However, the KMZO places stricter standards on driveway locations in its Thoroughfare Protection Districts (TPD). Article VI, Section 6.16 (3) iv) requires minimum distances between new driveways.

iv) Vehicular Driveway Access to Kings Mountain Boulevard. Any lot of record in the Thoroughfare Protection District in existence on the effective date of this section shall be allowed one driveway access point notwithstanding the provisions of the section that my prohibit such access; provided, however, that two or more lots under common ownership shall be considered one lot and shall comply with the requirements of this section. The maximum number of driveway access points shall be as follows:

Thoroughfare Frontage	Driveway Access Points To Thoroughfare
0 – 299	1
300 – 999	2
1000 or more	3

53-H

(i) Kings Mountain Boulevard Thoroughfare Protection Districts. (KMBTPD)

Except where access would be denied, driveways shall be located at least 200 feet from the center of the line of any street intersecting the Thoroughfare and shall be located at least thirty feet from a side property line, except where a mutual joint access agreement exists which provides for a shared driveway for adjoining owners. Driveways on the same property shall be not less than 120 feet apart, measured along the right-of-way from center of driveway to center of driveway. Corner lots and tracts will be permitted one less driveway access points to the thoroughfare unless shared driveways are used on the thoroughfare access points or the frontage of the corner lot is less than 200 feet on the road intersecting with the thoroughfare road as measured from the edge of the thoroughfare's right-of-way.

In any case where residential development through the subdivision process would otherwise be eligible for three or more driveway access points and where the developer is willing to modify such access points through innovative design solutions, such development may be eligible for the density bonus as set forth in Special Requirement 8, Subsection 6 of Article VII.

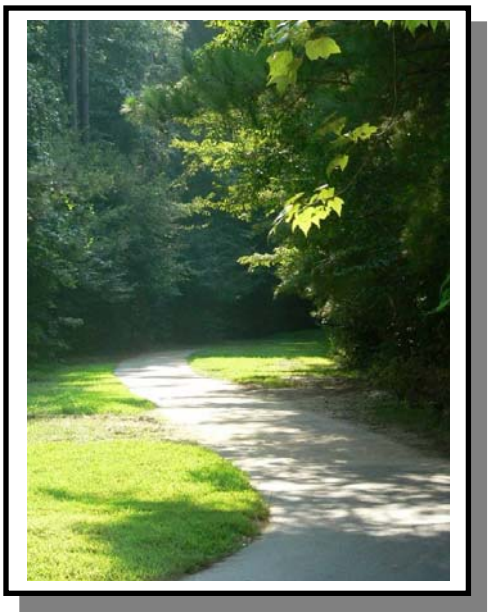
Section (ii) regarding the US 74 Shelby Road Divided Highway Overlay Districts (74 SRDHOD) is similar.

The reduced vehicular access means that bicyclists traversing these corridors will not be faced with as many potential points of conflict with motorized vehicles.

Issue 6: Traffic: Speed, volume and heavy vehicles

As described in the City's general Book of Ordinances, Kings Mountain has jurisdiction over the local (non-state) roads within its network. These roads and their attributes are depicted on the maps in **Section 7**. Neither the KMZO nor the KMSO contain any additional language affecting local posted speeds.

Issue 7: Greenways, Multi-use Trails & Parks



Typically, greenways and trails permit most non-motorized means of travel, including bicycles. These facilities help meet a broad scope of bicycle-friendly goals. They provide practical alternative connections as well as scenic and recreation opportunities. Greenways can increase adjacent property values and attract new business. They can serve as locations for civic events, and provide a transportation infrastructure at a fraction of the cost of roadways.

While the KMSO requires sidewalk installation as part of new subdivisions (Section 3.10), it does so only along street frontage within the street right of way to extend the existing sidewalk pattern. It contains no additional requirements for internal non-vehicular circulation improvements (sidewalks or multi-use paths).

Typical park area rules in Kings Mountain: No Bicycles.

The KMZO includes no related requirements as part of its standard zones. The overlay districts descriptions call for sidewalks, street trees, and increased street connectivity – features that directly favor pedestrian usage – they make no allowances for bicycle use. However, the NC 161 Overlay provides for trails (where applicable) and bike facilities at the right-of-way. It requires that these be designed in accordance with NCDOT standards and installed accordingly as part of the development.

Public parks within the City of Kings Mountain are currently posted as allowing no bicycles. These restrictions are also found in the Kings Mountain Family YMCA park rules. The City no longer has a recreation department.

3.2 Existing Plans & Proposed Projects

KINGS MOUNTAIN LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020

The Kings Mountain Land Development Plan (LDP), known as the 2020 Plan, is currently under development. It is scheduled for adoption by Summer 2011. The LDP covers issues directly influencing the bicycle environment, particularly in its sections on transportation and downtown development. There are many stated goals and strategies that could directly influence the bicycling environment in a positive way. These are broken out by topic similarly to the previous ordinance review.

Issue 1: Mix-Use Concentrated Development

The objectives described in the LDP promote mixed-use concentrated development:

> Use best development practices to ensure good community development, not sprawl, the achievement of public purposes, but not at the expense of market considerations.

The LDP strongly supports mixed-use development, stating in Section VII (p. 58):

> Zoning in the downtown area should promote a good mix of commercial, office and service uses to the public. Mixed uses within a particular building should also be allowed, such as residential uses above ground-floor retail space. But the zoning Ordinance should also protect the integrity and character of established single-family areas surrounding the retail core.

LDP Downtown Development Recommendations specifically advocate mixed-use:

- 7. Promote a convenient and economically viable central business district which provides a good mix of commercial, office, and service needs to the public.
- 16. Revise the Zoning Ordinance to allow mixed uses in the downtown area, where residential units could be allowed above ground-level retail or office uses.
- 62. Use this Strategy Plan to market infill sites to developers for housing and or mixed-use developments.
- 66. Mixed use and residential can be accommodated in infill sites and areas for new development. Residential should be developed in upper floors above existing businesses.

And in Section VII addressing transportation, p.48:

- Concentrate commercial development in compact centers or districts to reduce transportation miles and make the development more accessible by alternative transportation modes.

A number of the LDP's Key Issues (Section IV) concern higher density, mixed use land planning:

- Mixed uses are not planned.

- There is a general lack of green space and park sites preserved for future use as such; both of which could be developed together with adjoining residential, commercial or industrial development.

- The City lacks a plan to deal with the redevelopment of empty commercial large boxes.

Issue 2: Street Connectivity
Along with specific new road recommendations (p.48), the LDP Transportation Section (VII) makes many general recommendations to increase connectivity (p.46), including:

> Require subdivisions to have at least two means of ingress and egress. Every subdivision must allow access from/to the adjoining property to make connectivity better and cut down on the amount of driveways and roads connecting to the larger collector road. Access right-of-ways can be offered for dedication and then used in the future when property is developed.

The section recommends some related best development practices:

> Practice 1: Design the street network with multiple connections and relatively direct routes.
> Practice 2: Space through-streets no more than a half mile apart, or the equivalent route density in a curvilinear network."

Other specific recommendations include (p.48):

- Develop a "connector" road plan that would allow for the connection of large collectors and arterials in an incremental fashion as development in those areas progresses.
- Widen Phifer Road and improve its alignment between the school areas and the Kings Mountain Boulevard and include bike lanes and sidewalks

Issue 3: General Multi-modal Provisions (Includes Issue 4: Lane and shoulder width)
The commitment of Kings Mountain to a bicycle-friendly environment is clearly spelled out in the goals of the LDP. Among them:

> The City of Kings Mountain will promote an efficient and safe comprehensive transportation system that includes alternative transportation modes such as bike facilities, pedestrian improvements and trails to move people and goods through a well-coordinated transportation network in an environmentally sensitive manner.

In order to accomplish this, the LDP recommends:

> Review all development proposals with design standards in mind that promote the public's safety. Such standards need to cover lighting, visibility, shoppers, children, elderly, other pedestrians, and bicyclists.

LDP Section VII includes many provisions for multi-modal transportation helpful to bicyclists (pp. 46f). Best development practices listed include:

- Practice 9: Provide networks for pedestrians and bicyclists as good as the network for motorists.
- Practice 10: Provide pedestrians and bicyclists with shortcuts and alternatives to travel along high-volume streets.
- Practice 11: Incorporate transit-oriented design features.
- Practice 12: Establish Transportation Development Management programs at employment centers.

In addition, LDP Section VII recommends the following (p. 47):

- Create and implement streetscape plans on major arterial roads and other significant entrances to the city. Examples include York Road, Cleveland Avenue, Kings Street, Shelby Road, Battleground Avenue, North Piedmont Avenue, Sims Street and Cansler Street.
- Update the Comprehensive Greenway, Bikeway and Pedestrian Improvement Plan to include the revised locations of the Gateway trail system. Implement the plan to expand the existing … bike lanes from 8 miles to 16.5 miles.
- Improve the use of the transportation systems by installing appropriate way finding signs.
- Add demarcated bike lanes along NC 161.
- Develop incentives for the use of Traditional Neighborhood Development Street Design Guidelines promulgated by NCDOT for subdivisions to encourage and accommodate alternate transportation modes, make for safer movement and reduce vehicle miles traveled. This may mean also changing ordinance to accommodate trails, alleys, and lanes in new developments.
- Demarcate bike lanes where ever feasible and likely to contribute to a bike facility that connects a significant portion of transportation area.

Further recommendations in the Environmental Quality and General Planning portion of the LDP (p.90) include:

- Create a vicious or dangerous dog ordinance to protect pedestrians and bicyclists, thereby making it safer and more likely this type of transportation alternative will be successful.

Included among the specific road project recommendations in the LDP is found:

> (2) Widen Phifer Road and improve its alignment between the school areas and the Kings Mountain Boulevard and include bike lanes and sidewalks

Issue 5: Driveway Curb Cuts
The LDP recommends access management strategies to improve safety.

- Minimize curb-cuts on major traffic arteries to reduce traffic congestion and accidents.

Issue 6: Traffic Speed, Volume and Heavy Vehicles
The LDP suggests a number of best development practices in its Transportation Section (VII) that serve to lower traffic speed.

- Practice 3: Use traffic calming measures liberally.
- Practice 4: Keep speeds on local streets down to 25 mph.
- Practice 5: Keep speeds on arterials and collectors down to 35 mph (at least inside communities).
- Practice 6: Keep all streets as narrow as possible and avoid more than four travel lanes wide.

The LDP also makes specific recommendations in response to excessive speed conditions on certain streets.

- Reduce speed on Battleground Avenue in the downtown area from 45 mile per hour to 25 miles per hour.

Issue 7: Greenways & Multi-use Trails

The LDP encourages the development of greenways for transportation uses and many other benefits (pp. 47f):

> Use greenways to provide safe and efficient alternative transportation linkages between recreational stets, open spaces, residential areas, employment centers, educational and cultural facilities and other activity centers while at the same time encouraging citizen wellness, protecting environmental assets, maintaining a contiguous urban forest ecosystem, controlling storm water runoff, protecting cultural and historical resources, protecting open spaces, woodlands and wetlands and finally enhancing the beauty of the area to encourage tourism, economic development and improving the living environment of the citizens.
> Update the Comprehensive Greenway, Bikeway and Pedestrian Improvement Plan to include the revised locations of the Gateway trail system. Implement the plan to expand the existing sidewalk system form 12 miles to 19.5 miles and bike lanes from 8 miles to 16.5 miles and trails and greenways from 1 mile to 21.9 miles.

CONCEPT PLAN FOR REVITALIZATION OF DOWNTOWN KINGS MOUNTAIN, NC

This 30-page presentation study was prepared and presented by Arnett Muldrow and Associates et al. 2007. It addressed many downtown issues and made a number of recommendations affecting the bicycle environment, including:

- A "road diet" for Battleground Avenue with reduced lane widths
- Improving street lighting
- Improving connections across the railroad corridor
- Providing a greenway or bike lane link from downtown to the Gateway Trail on Battleground Avenue

KINGS MOUNTAIN LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN (1995)

This Plan was developed by Centralina Council of Governments. It was initiated by City Council in 1992 as an update to the City's Land Development and Community Facilities Plan, originally adopted by City Council in 1965, and updated in 1974 and again in 1977. The guiding vision for the Plan of the City was that of a "bedroom community with a balance of retail, industrial and residential development." Some of the needs cited that most directly affect the development of bicycle facilities (including multi-use trails) include:

- frontage roads along I-85
- widening of Phifer Road
- bikeways and trails
- historic preservation and historic districts
- natural buffers of farm land around the City
- balanced land use pattern
- revise zoning and subdivision ordinance
- support local small business in the Downtown area
- foster restaurant diversity and more shopping opportunities
- improve community recreational facilities
- more bikeways
- protect small animal habitat
- extend public sewer system to John H. Moss Reservoir area

KM COMPREHENSIVE GREENWAY, BIKEWAY AND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT PLANS

This Plan was initiated as a result of the Kings Mountain Gateway Community Project which envisioned the City as the "gateway" to a number of prominent regional attractions, such as the Kings Mountain State Park, the National Military Park, and Crowders Mountain State Park. The intent was to preserve open space, promote bikeways and walkways, enhance the quality of life, and attract business and industry. Its recommended bicycle improvements are intended to provide for both recreation and transportation needs, linking key "focal points throughout the city that ultimately connect to the parks to the south and eventually to regional sites." Among the Plan's stated goals are:

- Make travel safer for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Extend existing sidewalks and greenway / trail system.
- Create design standards and construction specifications.
- Link downtown to the parks and their trails.
- Link the neighborhoods to downtown.

The Plan includes guidelines for bicycle facilities, recommending widths for bike ways and multi-use trails. Strongly suggested among its measures for implementation, is the inventory of utility easements for possible shared use as a trail. It further recommends making changes to the zoning and subdivision ordinances in order to increase connectivity and provide safe transportation alternatives.

KINGS MOUNTAIN GATEWAY TRAIL

The City of Kings Mountain, Kings Mountain National Battlefield Park, the Crowders Mountain State Park, and the South Carolina Kings Mountain State Park initiated the Gateway Community effort with the River Trails Conservancy through the National Park Service. Out of this effort, trails connecting the City of Kings Mountain (downtown) to the parks were identified. Their effort was taken over by the Kings Mountain Gateway Trails Inc. when it was formed in 2005.

Kings Mountain Gateway Trail

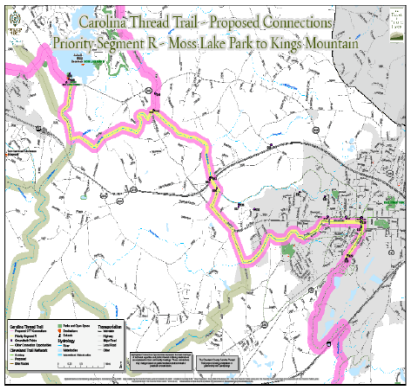
Plans for a 2.8 mile extension are underway to continue of the current facility to I-85. It is intended that the Kings Mountain Gateway Trail eventually connect the City of Kings Mountain to Crowders Mountain State Park, Kings Mountain State Park, Kings Mountain National Military Park, the Overmountain Victory Trail and the Appalachian Trail. According to the Kings Mountain Gateway Trail website (http://www.kmgatewaytrails.org/) the greenway will ultimately reach 8 to 10 miles, and become part of the Carolina Thread Trail. The facility will include a paved trail, soft-packed gravel trail and single-track mountain biking trails. It is intended that the Gateway Trail provide recreational opportunities to people in the surrounding region, enhance economic development for the local community, and provide a venue for citizens to link to one another and the rich history and natural wonder of the region. It will provide a venue for nature exploration, education in science and history and for community events.

CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL

The Carolina Thread Trail (CTT) is a proposed regional network of multi-purpose greenways, serving 15 counties and over 2 million people. This greenway system will eventually link communities and attractions throughout the region by connecting smaller trail systems throughout its bi-state area. The Trail will help preserve natural areas and be a place for exploration of nature, culture, science and history. The City of Kings Mountain is located on the proposed Carolina Thread Trail alignment in the approved Greenway Master Plans for both Gaston County and Cleveland County. See **Appendices A.3** and **A.5.**

The City of Kings Mountain and its Gateway Trail are cited in the Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan for Cleveland County Communities as one of seven regional destinations in the County connected by the proposed CTT. The Master Plan was adopted by the City of Kings Mountain in December, 2009. Two CTT segments in Cleveland County meet within Kings Mountain. Segment "R" comes from the direction of John H. Moss Reservoir and follows Potts Creek into the City, then follows Countryside, Shelby, and Crocker Roads to join Beason Creek. It reaches downtown by way of Phifer and Mountain, then turns south on Battleground until joining up with the Gateway Trail, which is designated as CTT Segment "S" in the Cleveland County Plan. The proposed Segment "S" crosses I-85 and continues on to the Ridgeline Trail.

FIGURE E - JOHN H. MOSS LAKE RESERVOIR TO KINGS MT. PRIORITY ROUTE



Map from the Cleveland Co. Greenway Master Plan

The Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan for Gaston County Communities was adopted in March 2009, and was most recently updated in February 2011. The Plan includes connections to Crowders Mountain State Park as well as nearby Bessemer City. It also recommends a route that reaches the Kings Mountain area by way of a utility corridor running parallel and south of I-85. The route crosses Canterbury Road and continues potentially on to York Road.

KEEP IT MOVIN' GASTON - 2035 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP)

The Gaston Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) adopted this comprehensive plan on March 23, 2010. While the City of Kings Mountain is not a member of the MPO, LRTP recommendations will nonetheless influence subsequent planning and construction in the immediate area of Kings Mountain.

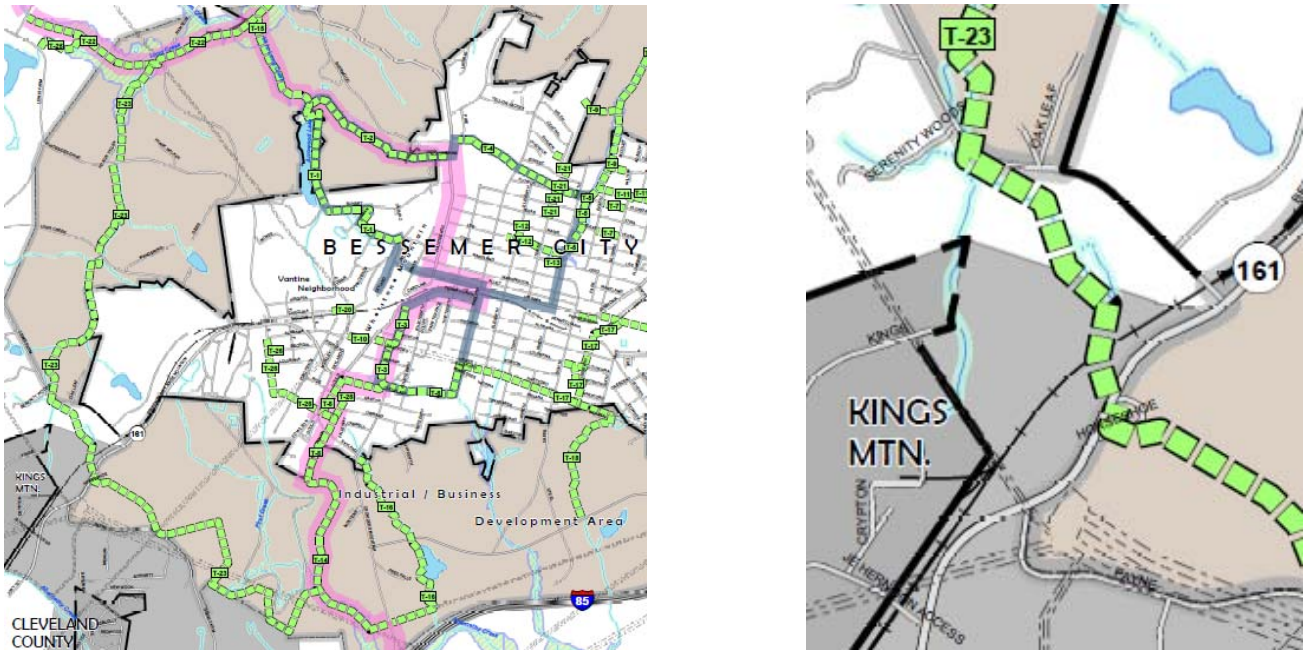
The LRTP addresses bicycle and greenway facilities. Section 7.2.3 Bicycle Facilities includes a map of recommended bicycle routes for Gaston County. This Bike Route Network map (Fig. 7-17), adopted in the September 2001 TAC meeting, indicates connections to Crowders Mountain from the east and north.

The Bicycle Plan section (8.1) of the LRTP recommends route connections to the Carolina Thread Trail to the northeast of the City. The Thread Trail connects with a proposed multi-purpose trail along the

southwest side of Bessemer City, which crosses into the Kings Mountain ETJ. This trail is part of a network of multi-purpose paths proposed in the 2010 adopted Bessemer City Pedestrian Plan.

BESSEMER CITY PEDESTRIAN PLAN

Bessemer City adopted its pedestrian plan in April, 2010. This Plan, by Centralina Council of Governments, includes a network of multi-purpose paths which encircle and intersect downtown Bessemer City. One such proposed path named - the "Furnace Trail", named for the historic furnace on Long Creek Road - runs along the southwest side of the City and briefly crosses into the Kings Mountain ETJ at Bessemer City Kings Mountain Highway (NC 161). The Furnace Trail (designated as project "T-23" in the BC Pedestrian Plan) intersects the Carolina Thread Trail at Crowders Mountain Road and Whitesides Dairy Road.



Bessemer City Pedestrian Plan – portion of proposed multi-purpose trail map with proposed "Furnace Trail" (project T-23).

THE GASTON COUNTY BIKE TRAIL NETWORK

The City of Gastonia Planning Department produced this plan of designated bike trails in 2001. The plan covers all of Gaston County. Five different bike routes are recognized, in addition to greenways and some "unmarked connectors". Various destinations of interest are also shown. Two of the five routes terminate in Kings Mountain. One connects the City to Mount Holly, the other to Crowders Mountain. An unmarked connector route circling about the northwest end of the County begins and ends in Kings Mountain. A number of destinations are designated in Kings Mountain, including a museum, schools and parks. See **Appendix A-4.**

In addition to municipal and county policy, a number of Federal and State guidelines apply to bicycle planning and facilities. See **Appendix A.24**.

Projects

Transportation Projects scheduled in the North Carolina Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for Kings Mountain included Kings Mountain Boulevard, which serves as a north-south connector from US 74 Business, at Dick Elam Road (SR 2031) to I-85 at Dixon School Road. This project was completed in 2006. Another TIP project, the automatic railroad warning devices at Hawthorne Road on the Southern Railroad Crossing was removed from the TIP list because the crossing was done away with because of liability issues for the City. York Road from King St. to I-85 is still on the TIP.

3.3 Current Programs, Events & Funding

A vision of Kings Mountain as a "gateway community" began in 2000 with a collection of local government officials, city staff, and park superintendents. Area stakeholders, including residents, local businesses, and the Chamber of Commerce were led by the River and Trails Conservancy staff. In 2005, **Kings Mountain Gateway Trails Inc.** was formed. The group orchestrated a feasibility study in 2006 for connecting downtown to area parks by a trail system. Conservation easement documents were signed the following year by area mining companies, Chemetall Foote and Martin Marietta, and by the Weir and Consortium Properties. This provided property for the trail head and Phase I of the project, and an additional four miles of trail and a bridge crossing I-85 for Phase II to be completed over the next two years. Three grants were received for the project in 2008, including a PARTF for $500,000, AAT for $5,000, and an RTP grant for $75,000. These were accompanied by gifts of materials, labor and monetary donations. Construction of the current facility commenced in 2009.

As a member government of the **Lake Norman Rural Planning Organization** (LNRPO), Kings Mountain participates in transportation planning initiatives for the region, and enjoys the benefits and resources available through the LNRPO. One of those benefits has been assistance in applying for the NCDOT Bicycle Planning Grant that funded the development of this Plan.

Gaston County and Municipal Planners (**GCaMP**) was formed in November 2002 as a cooperative group of planners, school officials, health department representatives and law enforcement officers from 15 jurisdictions within the County. They meet monthly, together and with other stakeholders, to coordinate planning efforts and discuss emerging issues. Kings Mountain's participation in GCaMP means they are part of a support system that shares best planning practices and information for more informed decisions at the local level.

The **Over the Mountain Triathlon** celebrated its 12th year in 2011 with a 30 mile bike ride from John H. Moss Reservoir to Patriots Park in downtown Kings Mountain. Endurance Magazine selected Over the Mountain as the "Best Olympic Triathlon Event" in the state. The course is described as both challenging and beautiful. It is the largest one-day sporting event in Cleveland County, with over 500 participants, bringing significant economic impact to Kings Mountain. For additional information, see:
http://www.shelbystar.com/articles/mountain-51800-triathlon-kings.html

"Press on Toward the Prize"
John Hargis, 2001