



NASHVILLE

CREATING OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMIES

STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2030



Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Executive Summary	3
Background	4
Setting	5
Existing Plan Review	8
Planning Process	10
○ Situational Analysis	
○ Local Work Group Establishment and Involvement	
○ Asset Mapping	
○ Public Engagement	
○ Economic Positioning Statement & Development	13
○ CORE Strategic Plan Adoption	13
CORE Strategy and Implementation Plan	14
Plan Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation	18
Appendix(Separate Document)	

Acknowledgments

The Creating Outdoor Recreation Economies (CORE) program is made possible by a U.S. Economic Development Administration State Tourism Grant, which awarded \$6 Million to the State of North Carolina's Supporting and Strengthening Resiliency in North Carolina's Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Sectors Initiative. As a component of this Initiative, the North Carolina Department of Commerce's Rural Economic Development Division (REDD) developed the CORE program. The CORE program offers strategic planning and technical assistance to help rural communities leverage North Carolina's abundant outdoor recreation assets to bolster local economic vitality.

The REDD announced the technical assistance program offering Outdoor Recreation Economy Strategic Planning and Asset Development services in late 2022. Communities from across the state applied to engage with strategic planning services and 34 local governments were accepted to participate. Main Street & Rural Planning (MS&RP) staff, who is responsible for facilitating strategic economic development planning and implementation services, worked with local government staff to communicate the goals of the program, identify local opportunities, and assemble a planning work group.



**NC DEPARTMENT
of COMMERCE**
RURAL ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



This plan was prepared by the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Rural Planning Program, using Federal funds under award 04-79-07689 from the Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Economic Development Administration or the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Nashville Town Council

Brenda Brown, Mayor
Larry Taylor, *Mayor Pro Tempore*
Kate Burns
William “Bill” Lumpp
Xavien Harrison

Randy Lansing, Town Manager

Nashville Outdoor Recreation Economy Planning Committee

Amy Beasley, Downtown Strong Advisory Board/Southern Bank
Kate Burns, Nashville Town Council/Nashville Resident
Barbie Crews, Parks Recreation & Cultural Resources Advisory Board/Nashville Resident
Thomas Gillespie, Nash County Recreation
Barbara Green, Nash County Tourism
Sandy Hall-Stacy, Nash County Cooperative Extension
Rashawn King, Triangle Trails Initiative
Susan Phelps, Nash County Economic Development
Luke Whitehead, Nashville Methodist Church, Nashville Resident
Thomasine Jones, Planner/Code Enforcement, Town of Nashville
Shawn Lucas, Director, Town of Nashville Planning
Ashley Hamlet, Assistant Director, Staff, Parks Recreation & Cultural Resources
Koy Worrell, Director, Nashville Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources
Randy Lansing, Town Manager, Town of Nashville

N.C. Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division Staff:

David McRae, *ARC and SCRC Assistant Program Manager*
Karen C. Smith, *AICP, NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center, Rural Planning Program Manager*
Bruce Naegelen, *Community Economic Development, North Central Region*
Glen Locascio, *GIS Specialist*
Michael Dougherty, *Downtown development Specialist*

Plan Adoption

Nashville Town Council on March 4, 2025

Executive Summary

Through CORE, the Town of Nashville collaborated with N.C. Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division staff members and local stakeholders through a strategic planning process to identify and develop outdoor recreation assets that present economic growth opportunities. Strategy development focused on leveraging outdoor recreation assets to increase tourism, encourage small business development, enhance quality of life for residents, plan for outdoor recreation asset and infrastructure development, and position communities to grow and attract outdoor gear manufacturing industries. The planning process was tailored to meet the specific needs, goals, and opportunities that local stakeholders identified.

The plan proposes strategies, goals, objectives, and actions that communities can take to increase economic vitality by leveraging outdoor recreation. For the purposes of this strategic planning program outdoor recreation is defined as all recreational activities undertaken for leisure that occur outdoors with an emphasis on those activities that involve some level of intentional physical exertion and occur in nature-based environments. Furthermore, other community assets and economic institutions that benefit from or complement the outdoor recreation economy are addressed in the plan.

The plan provides three strategies, six goals and sixteen recommended objectives. These strategies, identified by the local work group, include:

Strategy 1: Outdoor Infrastructure (Outdoor Recreation Meets Community)

Strategy 2: Communication & Activation (Network of Trails)

Strategy 3: Economic Impacts (Agricultural Roots and Heritage)

These strategies, goals and objectives will serve as guideposts for Nashville as it considers future development efforts and will work in collaboration with other planning efforts undertaken by the county, municipalities, and related jurisdictions.

Background

There is a long tradition of outdoor recreation in North Carolina. From the mountains to the coast and everywhere in between there are incredible landscapes and unique places to pursue a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities. Participation in these activities generates a large economic impact. In recent years statistics show that participation in outdoor recreation is increasing, particularly in the wake of COVID-19. Continued growth in participation leads to the opportunity for the increased economic impact of outdoor recreation, particularly in rural locations where many of the state's outdoor recreation assets are located. Also, there is great potential to expose and engage people that have historically not participated in outdoor recreation activities at the same rate as others. It is important for all individuals to have the opportunity and access to enjoy recreational pursuits, and to have an opportunity to benefit economically from outdoor recreation. These factors, combined with other on-going outdoor recreation initiatives across the state, make it an ideal time to think critically about how this sector can continue to be leveraged to benefit local economies.

Economic Impact

Outdoor recreation activity and associated expenditures generate a large economic impact. This is a broad economic sector that comprises a diverse range of industries including manufacturing, retail, arts, entertainment, and recreation, as well as many supporting activities such as construction, travel and tourism, accommodation, and food service and many more.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis' Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, nationwide, in 2023, the outdoor recreation economy represented \$639.5 billion in current-dollar gross domestic product (GDP), or 2.3 percent of the United States' total GDP. "Inflation-adjusted ("real") GDP for the outdoor recreation economy increased 3.6 percent in 2023, compared with a 2.9 percent increase for the overall U.S. economy, reflecting a deceleration from the increase in outdoor recreation of 10.2 percent in 2022. Real gross output for the outdoor recreation economy increased 3.2 percent, while outdoor recreation compensation increased 9.0 percent, and employment increased 3.3 percent." Overall employment in the outdoor recreation industry increased in 49 out of 50 states during 2023.

At the state level, outdoor recreation contributed \$16.1 billion in total value-added economic impact to North Carolina's GDP. North Carolina ranked as the 11th highest state nationally in "Total outdoor recreation value added of current-dollar gross domestic product" in 2023. This included employment for over 145,000 individuals that resulted in over \$7.7 billion in total

compensation. Employment in key industries within the outdoor recreation sector includes 6,930 in manufacturing, 2,439 in retail, 30,082 in accommodation and food service, and over 29,917 in arts, entertainment, and recreation.¹

Outdoor Recreation Participation

According to the 2022 Outdoor Industry Association ‘Outdoor Participation Trends Report’, “outdoor participation continues to grow at record levels. More than half (54%) of Americans ages 6 and over participated in at least one outdoor activity in 2021, and the outdoor recreation participant base grew 2.2% in 2021 to 164.2M participants. This growing number of outdoor participants, however, did not fundamentally alter long-term declines in high frequency or ‘core’ outdoor participation.”²

Studies show that approximately 56% of North Carolinians participate in some form of outdoor recreation each year³. This includes more than 20.1 million visitors to North Carolina state parks in 2023. This is a 4% increase, representing more than 755,000 visitors, from 2022.⁴ Many parks, national forests, and other public recreation areas report increased visitation as well. These numbers represent a solid base of individuals participating in outdoor recreation and contributing to associated economic activity. But there is still room to engage more individuals and continue to increase participation in outdoor recreation, particularly among populations that have not historically participated in outdoor recreation at levels comparable to others. Also, people increasingly want outdoor recreation opportunities that are convenient to where they live so they can participate on a regular basis without the need to travel long distances.^{5 6}

Setting

The Town of Nashville is located on the western edge of the Inner Coastal Plain, just off US-64. It is the county seat of Nash County, North Carolina and is part of the Rocky Mount North Carolina Metropolitan Statistical Area. It is also a member of the Rocky Mount Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Raleigh, Goldsboro, and Greenville, North Carolina and Emporia, Virginia are located within a

¹ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, U.S. and States, 2023.

<https://www.bea.gov/data/special-topics/outdoor-recreation>

² Outdoor Industry Association. 2023 Outdoor Participation Trends Report. <https://outdoorindustry.org/resource/2023-outdoor-participation-trends-report/>

³ The Citizen-Times. North Carolina outdoor recreation is a \$28 billion industry, poised for further growth. October 11th, 2019.

<https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/2019/10/11/outdoor-economy-conference-asheville-highlights-28-billion-industry/3923846002/>

⁴ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, U.S. and States, 2022.

<https://www.bea.gov/data/special-topics/outdoor-recreation>

⁵ Headwaters Economics. Recreation Counties Attracting New Residents and Higher Incomes. <https://headwaterseconomics.org/economic-development/trends-performance/recreation-counties-attract/>

⁶ Outdoor Foundation. 2023 Outdoor Participation Trends Report. <https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2022-Outdoor-Participation-Trends-Report.pdf>

one-hour drive of the Town of Nashville. Its central location along US 64 and I-95 makes the Town a crossroads between major North Carolina cities and a gateway into Virginia. Its positioning relative to major urban centers has enhanced economic and commercial opportunities while still fostering and preserving its small-town charm. While the Town has experienced significant growth, it is occurring at a slower pace than surrounding cities.⁷ Nashville has a certified population of 5,871 as of July 1, 2023.⁸

Economic Impact – Visitor Spending in Nash County

Nash County ranked 46th in growth (4%) statewide, but 3rd in the region for Visitor Spending⁹ in 2023. That's behind Franklin (10.6%), Wilson (6.3%), and Johnston (4.9%) counties.

The breakdown includes Lodging: \$78.56M (*includes 2nd home spending*); Food & Beverage: \$112.89M; Recreation: \$46.33M; Retail: \$27.74M; and Transport: \$82.61M (*includes ground and air transportation*). Total visitor spending was \$348.14. In 2022 Airbnb shared a breakdown of total Airbnb host income in rural NC counties, and in Nash County the approximate income was \$744,000.¹⁰

Demographics – Nash County

The population in Nashville is estimated to have changed from 5,632 to 5,716 resulting in a 0.10% growth rate between 2020 and 2023. By 2028, Nashville's population is projected to grow by 5,812 or 0.33%.¹¹ Within a 15-minute drive time of the 800 block of E Washington Street, the population is estimated to have changed from 60,210 to 60,479 resulting in a growth of 0.4% between 2020 and 2023. Over the next five years, the population is projected to grow by 0.6%.¹²

Nashville's median age in 2023 was 42.6. In 2028, the median age is expected to be 43.6.¹³ Within the 15-minute drive time, the median age is a little older, at 44.4. Five years from now the median age is projected to be 44.6.¹⁴

⁷ Nashville Comprehensive Plan, October 2021, prepared by WithersRavenel

⁸ NC Office of State Budget & Management, State Demographer, <https://www.osbm.nc.gov/facts-figures/population-demographics/state-demographer/municipal-population-estimates>

⁹ VisitNC Data 2022 <https://partners.visitnc.com/>

¹⁰ According to internal Airbnb data for the period of January 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022, within NC rural counties as defined by the NC Rural Center

¹¹ Esri Community Profile - Forecasts for 2023 and 2028 US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010 decennial Census data converted by Esri into 2020 geography

¹² Claritas Pop-Facts® Premier 2024)

¹³ Esri forecasts for 2023 and 2028. U.S. Census Bureau 2000 and 2010 decennial Census data converted by Esri into 2020 geography November 2023

¹⁴ Claritas Pop-Facts® Premier 2024

Of Nashville's 2023 estimated population, 50.6% are White, 42% are Black or African American, 2.9% are Hispanic or Latino, 0.8% are American Indian, 0.6% are Asian.¹⁵ Within the 15-minute drive time's estimated population, 44.9% are White, 45% are Black or African American, 5.8% are Hispanic or Latino, 0.8% are American Indian, 1.3% are Asian Alone.¹⁶

In Nashville, it's estimated that 9.2% of the population aged 25+ have earned a graduate or professional degree, 19.2% have earned a bachelor's degree. Currently, it's estimated that 1.6% of the population aged 25+ in the 15-minute drive time have a graduate or professional degree, and 15.4% have earned a bachelor's degree.

Median household income in Nashville in 2023 was \$64,779 and projected to increase to \$75,184 by 2028. Average household income was estimated to be \$83,000 in 2023 and is projected to increase to \$95,452 in 2028. Per capita income was \$36,093 in 2023 and projected to increase to \$42,323 in 2028. Median disposable income for 2023 was \$53,254 and Average disposable income was \$64,651. *The average household income in the 15-minute drive-time area is estimated to be \$85,659 for 2023 and is projected to increase to \$99,146 by 2028.* Per capita income was \$36,335 in 2023 and projected to increase to \$42,659 in 2028. Median disposable income for 2023 was \$53,000 and Average disposable income was \$64,125.

Employment status for the civilian population within the 15-minute drive-time area, age 16 and over, is 59.8% white collar, 17.3% service and farm workers, and 22.9% blue collar, with a September 2024 unemployment rate of 4.3%, which is down from July and August 5.6% and 5.7% respectively.¹⁷

Retail Snapshot¹⁸ shows a Total Retail Gap of \$96,398,429 within a 15-minute drive from downtown Nashville. The retail gap shows potential category opportunities in Family Clothing Stores, Electronics Stores, Full-service Restaurants, Grocery Stores, Women's Clothing Stores, Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores, and Furniture Stores. The complete Retail Analysis can be found in the Appendix.

¹⁵ Esri Community Profile - Forecasts for 2023 and 2028 US Census Bureau 2000 and 2010 decennial Census data converted by Esri into 2020 geography

¹⁶ <https://claritas.easpotlight.com/Spotlight/About/3/2024>

¹⁷ U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, not seasonally adjusted

¹⁸ Downtown Nashville Retail Marketplace Snapshot, May 2024 (NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center)

Existing Plans Review

To complement and build upon subsequent community planning efforts, staff assembled and reviewed other relevant plans and documents. This review provides valuable insight and helps avoid duplication or contradictions of past planning proposals. The following documents were reviewed and considered during the CORE planning process.

Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments Community Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Nashville is located within the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments (COG) is a designated Economic Development District (EDD). The Upper Coastal Plain Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) identified **Vision 1 – Social Foundation, Initiative 2 “Create healthy and connected communities”** as one of nine regional Initiatives. Recommended strategic activities relating to the CORE plan include: #4. *Map the region’s parks and recreation resources to determine areas that need additional investment or lack adequate connectivity and seek funding to improve the quality and accessibility of parks and recreation facilities.* #5. *Work with appropriate state and local agencies to establish local and regional bike and pedestrian trail networks, encouraging the utilization of existing rights of ways (sewer, stormwater, rail, etc.), and seek ways to implement the local components of the Great Trails State network.*

Town of Nashville Comprehensive Plan 2021

Three of the five Topic Sections under Chapter 4: Implementation and subsequent objectives, actions and tasks in the 2021 Town of Nashville Comprehensive Plan are directly related to or peripherally relate to Outdoor Recreation. **Community Character & Land Use: Objective C1: Develop the Town to Attract Young Professionals**¹⁹ – recognizes gathering spaces and outdoor amenities will help to attract young professionals to Nashville. This objective also notes, “the Town has the capacity to develop an extensive system of trails and greenways that increases the attractiveness of the Town, and also expands multi-modal infrastructure.” Specific tasks under this objective related to outdoor recreation include: C.1.A, C.1.B, C.1.F; **Objective C.5: Create and Employ Wayfinding**; Tasks C.7.C, C.7.D; C.10.A; **Parks & Recreation: Objective P.4: Establish a Town-Wide Trail System**²⁰ – “The Town of Nashville should develop a trail system that weaves throughout the Town, connecting residents to local amenities and the regional trail network of Nash County. A paddle trail is a feasible amenity that can be established along Stoney Creek.” Tasks P.4.A & B. **Transportation: Objective T.1: Prepare Downtown Nashville to Host Community Events**²¹ Tasks include T.1.A-C; **Objective T.3: Develop Infrastructure to**

¹⁹ Town of Nashville Comprehensive Plan (2021), Implementation Items, Objective C.1 Develop the Town to Attract Young Professionals, page 52

²⁰ Town of Nashville Comprehensive Plan (2021) Implementation Items, Objective P.4 Establish a Town-Wide Trail System page 62

²¹ Town of Nashville Comprehensive Plan (2021) Implementation Items, Objective T.1 Prepare Downtown Nashville to Host Community Events page 64

Enhance Bicycle & Pedestrian Trips²² Task T3.A, B, C; Economic Development: Objective ED.3: Promote Tourism, farming & Culture-related Businesses Within the Town.²³

Downtown Nashville Economic Vitality Study (2019)

This study was cited in the Comp Plan, which provided several relevant recommendations.²⁴ While not directly related to outdoor recreation, they are peripheral to developing an outdoor recreation culture. The recommendations include *special events*, *public art*, *brewery recruitment*, *retail incubator* (that could help develop new outdoor recreation products) and *pop-up shops* (that could be helpful in test-marketing products). Also cited, was a series of reports and studies conducted by students at East Carolina University in 2008, which included a *Nashville Paddle Trail Study*, which involved creating a paddle trail along Stoney Creek.

Town of Nashville Parks & Recreation Master Plan (2022)

The Town completed the Nashville Parks, Recreation + Cultural Resources Comprehensive Master Plan in July 2022 in response to Nashville's projected population growth and re-envisioning of parks and recreation's role in the community. Nash County is located within two river basins – Tar-Pamlico River Basin to the north and east, and the Neuse River Basin to the south and west. Stoney Creek, a tributary of the Tar River, flows through the northern section of Nashville. Stoney Creek is considered a significant natural heritage site – an area of special biodiversity significance. This significance may be from the presence of rare species, unique natural communities, important animal assemblages, or other important ecological features.²⁵ Throughout the plan, references are made to trails and greenways, and a survey conducted showed strong support (68%) for developing an interconnected trail/greenway system. Nash County ranks 96th out of 100 NC counties in terms of developed miles of greenways and trails, which are a combination of park and transportation infrastructure. They often serve both goals. The plan recommends the Town of Nashville collaborate with Nash County, Rocky Mount, and an outside consultant to develop a greenway and trails plan. Additionally, the plan recommends the Town construct no less than five miles of trails.

Nashville Bicycle – Pedestrian Plan (2023)

The purpose of this Plan is to evaluate the existing pedestrian and bicycle conditions within Nashville and recommend programmatic and infrastructure projects to improve safety, connectivity, and wellbeing. The preservation of recreational resources and dedication to

²² *Town of Nashville Comprehensive Plan (2021) Implementation Items, Objective T.3: Develop Infrastructure to Enhance Bicycle & Pedestrian Trips, page 66*

²³ *Town of Nashville Comprehensive Plan (2021) Implementation Items, Objective ED.3: Promote Tourism, farming & Culture-related Businesses Within the Town, page 74*

²⁴ *Town of Nashville Comprehensive Plan (2021) Recommendations by Timeline, page 21*

²⁵ *Nashville Parks, Recreation + Cultural Resources Comprehensive Master Plan (2022), Community Context, Natural Resources, page 3*

quality of life are common themes in past planning efforts. This contributes significantly to the dedication the Town of Nashville has to the protection of its natural resources and to promoting active transportation. Nature-based and/or green infrastructure is recommended for all large, shared use paths to address flooding and promote resiliency in the community. Wayfinding signage and lighting are also recommended throughout the Town as a strategy to encourage walking and bicycling by making the Town easier to navigate. It would also enhance the Town's brand and identity and perceptions of safety.²⁶ Additional recommendations include *Following sidewalk specifications (page 53); Shared use paths along Stoney Creek Trails and other locations (4.0 Recommendations, Table 4-6, page 59); Spot Projects, page 61-63; Amend minimum front setback requirement in Highway Business Districts (B1) to 15 feet. Require new commercial buildings to be placed close to the sidewalk and require either rear or side parking (4.5 Recommended Active Transportation Policies & Programs, Table 4.8 Recommended Policy Updates, page 75-77); Consider enacting other policy recommendations related to signage, road upgrades, new construction, lighting and sidewalks.*

Town of Nashville Municipal Service District Plan (2022)

Design concepts of the MSD Plan embrace the use of multi-use/shared paths, wider sidewalks, and connectivity throughout downtown. Main component features of the plan include Public Spaces, Enhanced Landscaping, Pedestrian Amenities/Safety, Multi-Use Paths, and Connectivity and Activation of Downtown Core. Streetscape and Corridor plans include Barnes Street, Church Street, Boddie Street, and Washington Street.

Planning Process

Under the REDD, MS&RP Center staff facilitates the CORE strategic planning process with participation from the local government and an established local work group. This work group is comprised of individuals who have a vested interest in leveraging outdoor recreation to enhance economic development. The planning process employs established planning methods, including presenting economic and associated data, asset mapping, economic driver identification, SWOT analysis, stakeholder interviews, business questionnaires, local work group discussions, and more. The planning process was tailored to meet the specific needs, goals, and opportunities that local stakeholders identified.

Situational Analysis

REDD Staff met with Koy Worrell, Director, Nashville Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources following receipt of an initial application for participation in the *Creating Outdoor Recreation*

²⁶ *Nashville Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan 2023, Executive Summary, page ES-4*

Economies (CORE) on November 17, 2022. A Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) and Resolution for the Nashville CORE Strategic Plan was developed by REDD staff and adopted by the Nashville Town Council at their meeting on December 5, 2023. REDD staff was given a guided tour of selected recreational assets by Assistant Director, Ashley Hamlet in November 2023 and a more detailed tour of all Nashville recreational assets was conducted in July 2024 with Mr. Worrell and Planning Director, Shawn Lucas.

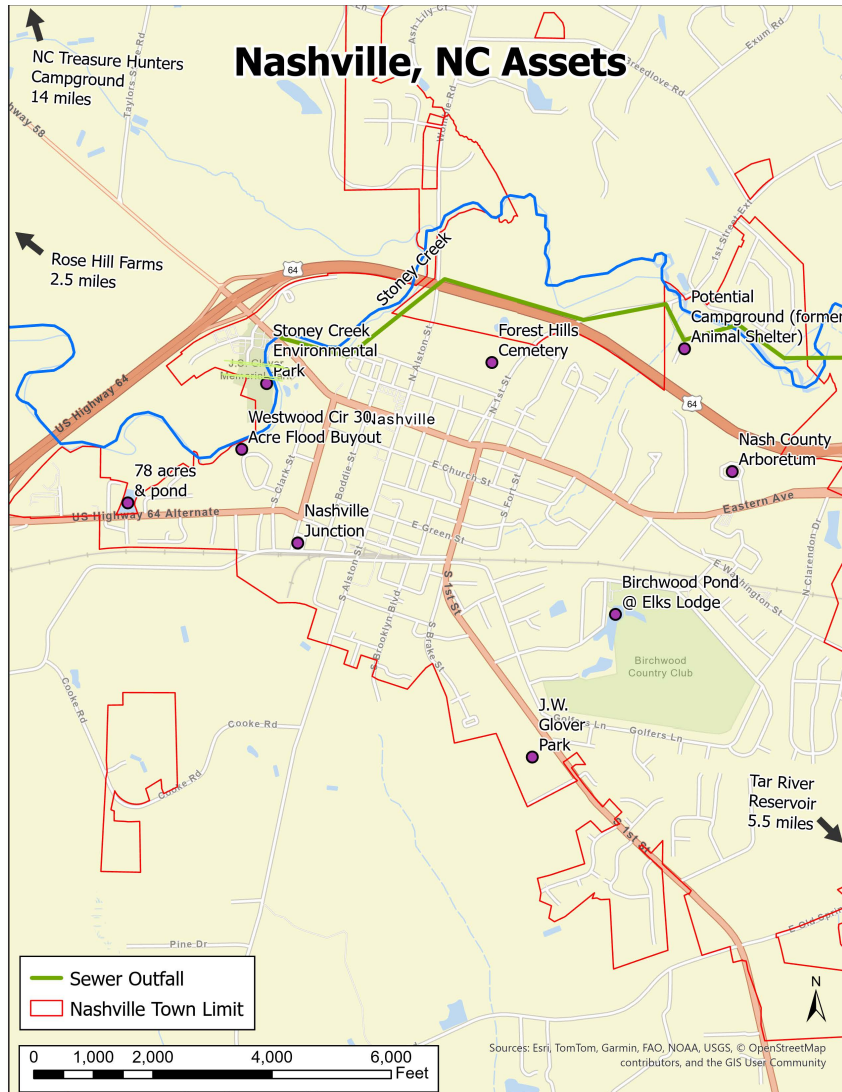
Local Work Group Establishment and Involvement

Community members with an interest in Outdoor Recreation were asked to participate in the local work group. Beginning May 2024, the Rural Planning team met with the local work group for a series of five sessions to gather and share information and ideas. The local work group was comprised of business owners, residents, staff and others representing Nashville Parks, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Resources Department, and the Advisory Board, Nash County Recreation Department, Downtown Strong Advisory Board, Nash County Tourism, Nash County Cooperative Extension, Town of Nashville staff including, Planning Department, Town Manager and Town Council member, and the Triangle Trails Initiative. During these sessions the work group reviewed data collected by REDD staff, completed a Work Group survey, SWOT analysis, economic positioning statement and established goals and strategies for the Implementation Plan.

The local work group will be encouraged to remain as a unit to assist the Town to implement the strategic plan. **The Town of Nashville Town Council is encouraged to adopt the existing work group as a standing or ad hoc Outdoor Recreation Committee of the Town of Nashville.**

Asset Mapping

The Nashville Outdoor Recreation Asset map highlights publicly controlled properties in Nashville at the Federal, State, and local levels, as well as major trails and waterways.



Public Engagement

We used an online survey to receive input from our CORE Work Group, described above, as well as five two-hour meetings to develop the economic positioning statement and develop strategies and the implementation plan.

Economic Positioning Statement

A community economic positioning/vision statement provides a forward-looking strategic framework to help guide local government and the community make disciplined, tactical, and incremental decisions on community issues as they arise. The local work group was led through an exercise to develop an Outdoor Recreation Economic Positioning Statement for the Town of Erwin.

The CORE work group met several times to develop the proposed economic positioning statement, first by creating individual statements, identifying key words, phrases, and developing a draft statement. This final statement was crafted by the group from which they developed the implementation plan.

Where outdoor recreation meets community: Discover the Original Nashville, where our network of trails leads you to fishing, splashing, playing and dining. From our agricultural roots and heritage to natural wonders, come explore our backyard!

Plan Review and Adoption

The Nashville CORE Strategic & Implementation Plan was reviewed by the Work Group on November 14, 2024, at which time they voted to recommend the Nashville Town Council consider the plan for adoption. The Nashville Town Council received the report and presentation by REDD staff on March 4, 2025. The plan was adopted by the Town Council on March 4, 2025.

Nashville CORE Implementation Plan 2025-2030

Outdoor Recreation Economic Positioning Vision

Where outdoor recreation meets community: Discover the Original Nashville, where our network of trails leads you to fishing, splashing, playing and dining. From our agricultural roots and heritage to natural wonders, come explore our backyard!

Strategy 1: Outdoor Infrastructure (*Outdoor recreation meets community*)

Strategy 2: Communication & Activation (*Network of trails leads to fishing, splashing, playing & dining*)

Strategy 3: Economic Impacts (*Agricultural roots and heritage*)

Strategy: Outdoor Infrastructure (*Outdoor Recreation Meets Community*)

Goal 1: Incorporate Outdoor Recreation with the Community

Objective 1.1: Maintain a (work) group that meets regularly and is dedicated to advancing the goals of this plan.

Actions/Projects:

1. Formalize a dedicated group of stakeholders invested and engaged in Nashville's outdoor recreation space to champion the Town's goals and projects and to increase networking and support in outdoor recreation.
2. Identify group membership
3. Determine appropriate organizational and administrative structure for this group. Outline roles, responsibilities, and administrative structure of group and members

Objective 1.2: Establish town-wide trail (minimum 5-miles) and greenway system (Nashville Trail Network) with connections to residential neighborhoods, local amenities and businesses¹

Actions/Projects:

1. Support Nash County Comprehensive Plan with emphasis on Trails & Greenways
2. Utilize the County plan to help develop Nashville's own greenway & trails plan (*P&RMP, Goal 5, Obj.5.2.1*)
3. Incorporate connectivity to Nash County arboretum trails

Objective 1.3: Increase Stoney Creek navigability to Rocky Mount and connections to "Nashville Trail Network"

Actions/Projects:

1. Map entirety of Stoney Creek within Nashville town limits to Rocky Mount town line.
2. Engage consultants and other experts to assist in the mapping and navigability of Stoney Creek
3. Identify infrastructure and amenity improvements needed to make paddling activities more accessible along Stoney Creek

Objective 1.4: Activate Stoney Creek Environmental Park, 78-acre parcel & 30-acre parcel as part of trail & greenway system

Actions/Projects:

1. Engage consultant(s) to develop master plan connecting all three sites
2. Include and identify opportunities to create amenities, trails and fishing access. *(Described as high priority in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan (Goal 2 Obj. 2.2))*

Objective 1.5: Develop Infrastructure to Enhance Bicycle & Pedestrian Trips¹

Actions/Projects:

1. Develop comprehensive network of sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use paths that builds upon the recommendations of the Rocky Mount CTP and improves last mile connectivity for these modes
2. Look for opportunities to build a consultant/expert team to combine Objectives 1.4 & 1.5 to achieve the goal.

Strategy: Communication & Activation *(Network of Trails)*

Goal 2: Enhance Marketing, Communication, Branding

Objective 2.1: Create Sense of Place for Outdoor Recreation in Nashville

Actions/Projects:

1. Develop a Wayfinding Signage Master Plan *(P&R MP Goal2, Obj.2.4.)*
2. Develop digital videos to distribute content & create messaging *(P&R MP, page 114)*

Goal 3: Establish/Update Development & Street Design Policies & Standards to Promote Walkable New Development & Capital Projects

Objective 3.1: Encourage pedestrian activity and economic development

Actions/Projects:

1. Adopt policy updates as listed in table 4-8 in Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan *(4.0 Recommendations, 4.5, page 75)*

Objective 3.2: Prepare downtown Nashville to Host Community Events.

Actions/Projects:

1. Reconfigure W. Washington St. between Barnes and Boddie streets to create a space more conducive to community events. *(CompPlan Task T.1.A, pg 64)*
2. Continue to explore parking needs between Barnes & Alston streets. *(CompPlan Task T.1.B)*
3. Provide pedestrian crosswalks at intersections and evaluate potential mid-block crosswalks *(CompPlan Task T.1.C)*

Objective 3.3: Expand internet service throughout town

Actions/Projects:

1. Work with internet providers to identify areas of insufficient internet access throughout town.
2. Encourage a fiber line, or conduit for a future fiber, be placed during roadwork or repairs.

Goal 4: Create gathering spaces and activities to attract younger people to Nashville.

Objective 4.1: Identify potential public/private space in commercial downtown area for events and activities

Actions/Projects:

1. Attract and support development of a downtown brewery and/or distillery
2. Encourage at least 1 business to sponsor and/or host a recurring (weekly, monthly, etc.) activity such as a run club, group cycling outing, or a walking group. (Ideally, the activity would be at a location participants could gather and socialize “after the ride.”
3. Create outdoor recreation pop-up events with biking, hiking, boating and fishing business vendors

Objective 4.2: Encourage entrepreneurs to start outdoor-recreation related businesses

Actions/Projects:

1. Inventory all commercial buildings, businesses and property to determine condition and availability
2. Identify existing outdoor recreation businesses in Nashville with potential expansion and recruitment opportunities

Strategy: Economic Impacts *(Agricultural Roots and Heritage)*

Goal 5: Activate & preserve historic and agricultural assets

Objective 5.1: Promote tourism, farming and culture-related businesses within the Town²⁷

Actions/Projects:

1. Encourage continued development (and expansion) of farmers market where residents can buy locally sourced products
2. Continue supporting existing businesses by holding a seasonal small business vendor festival
3. Encourage schools to take field trips to visit local farms (and related industries) in the Town of Nashville

Objective 5.2: Improve economic impacts of existing in-town and town-sponsored festivals, cultural, historical, and tours by 5% annually

Actions/Projects:

1. Assist with event coordinators to establish baseline attendance and current economic impacts
2. Encourage event organizers to develop growth strategies for each event/festival
3. Review impacts annually and make changes accordingly
4. Incorporate outdoor recreation-related activities (bike-ride, paddling, youth fishing exhibition, etc.) into existing festivals or events as appropriate
5. Develop workshops and trainings to teach businesses to capitalize on events.

Objective 5.3: Promote Economic Growth & Vitality of Downtown²⁸

Actions/Projects:

1. Encourage building reuse and renovation for new businesses
2. Conduct parking study of downtown Nashville to identify areas where additional parking can be located.

²⁷ Ibid. Economic Development, Objective ED.3, Tasks ED.3.A, B, C, page 74

²⁸ Ibid. Economic Development, Objective ED.4, Tasks ED.4.A, B, Page 74

Goal 6: Develop Nashville and Nash County as an ideal location for outdoor recreation product manufacturing

Objective 6.1: Working with Nash County Economic Development, recruit one new business annually to relocate/expand and cultivate four new start-up businesses over the next four years in the outdoor recreation sector.

Action/Projects:

1. Develop a marketing package for outdoor companies to consider growing or expanding in Nashville / Nash County.
2. Promote downtown for other recreation-related retail and service businesses such as bike rentals, and fitness centers

Objective 6.2: Encourage entrepreneurs to start outdoor-recreation related businesses/mfg in Nashville.

Actions/Projects:

1. Inventory all commercial buildings, businesses and property to determine condition and availability
2. Identify existing outdoor recreation businesses in Nashville with potential expansion and recruitment opportunities

Plan Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation

The Town of Nashville will be responsible for monitoring, evaluation, and reporting accomplishments on the objectives of this plan to the Rural Economic Development Division.

Plan Implementation

Maintaining a dedicated group to follow through after the planning process to begin addressing goals and objectives outlined in this plan is critical to attaining the potential economic impact of these strategies. This could be the same work group that helped develop this plan, or another similar group that is representative of the community and can advance the goals of this plan. The sustained presence of such a group builds ‘social capital’ within the group that improves their ability to work together and effectively address common goals. Furthermore, a dedicated group ensures continuity from planning stage through implementation, provides accountability to ensure that objectives are being met, and allows the community to react and respond quickly when an opportunity is presented. But this group should not be the sole entity responsible for implementing all the goals of the plan. Instead, the group should function as a convener and point of contact to connect to other individuals, organizations, and resources to help the broader community achieve these goals. Maintaining a regular meeting schedule will also help increase the effectiveness of the group, and the plan.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Regular monitoring and evaluation to review progress on the goals, objectives, and action steps in this plan, via regular review sessions with the Strategic Planning team and other community stakeholders, is critical to ensuring it remains a viable, living document. REDD staff will periodically communicate and provide assistance as needed to help advance the goals and document the outcomes of the plan.

See Separate Document for Appendix