THE GREAT TRAILS STATE
N★C

ONE HUNDRED COUNTIES. ONE GREAT TRAILS STATE.

The Great Trails State Plan will connect communities to the great outdoors while creating opportunities for active transportation, conservation, recreation, health, tourism and economic prosperity.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

VISION

The Great Trails State (GTS) is a planned network of shared-use trails of statewide significance connecting North Carolina's counties and population centers with state parks and important recreational assets. It is founded upon extensive local and regional efforts to plan and build trails. *The Great Trails State Plan will link communities to the great outdoors, while creating opportunities for transportation, conservation, recreation, education, physical health, environmental health, tourism, and economic prosperity.*

GOALS OF THE GREAT TRAILS STATE

The Great Trails State Plan and network seeks to connect all counties and key destinations throughout the state to a growing network of strategic greenways. Other principal goals of the plan include:

- Foster connections between urban and rural areas in all 100 counties
- Provide transportation options between where people live, work and play for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities
- Create opportunities for conservation, recreation, education, physical health, environmental health, tourism, and economic prosperity
- Identify resources needed to plan, design, construct and connect the system
- Facilitate multi-jurisdictional partnerships to support, develop, manage, and maintain the system

Prepared for the Integrated Mobility Division of the North Carolina Department of Transportation, with NC State Parks. Prepared by Alta and Stewart.

www.ncdot.gov/divisions/bike-ped/great-trails-state

KEY INPUTS

- Existing Trails
- Existing Trail Plans
- Key Destinations/State Parks
- Steering Committee Kick-Off Meeting
- Bicycle Level of Service Network
- Green Infrastructure Network

Preliminary Network

- 14 Division-Level Stakeholder Meetings
- Confirmation of Network
- Identification of Gaps and Alternatives
- Connecting Across Divisions

Draft Plan Network

- Review of Gaps and Alternatives by Steering Committee & Stakeholders
- Rail Division Meetings
- Public Input

PLANNING PROCESS

40 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

provided direction, representing NCDOT's 14 Divisions, 7 RPOs and MPOs, and relevant statewide departments and organizations.
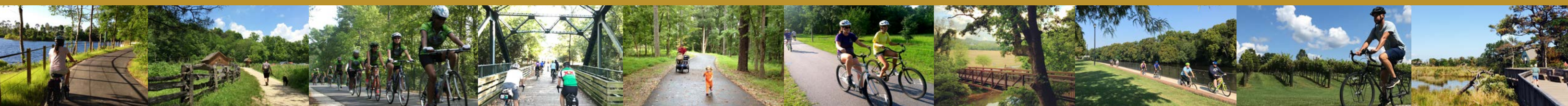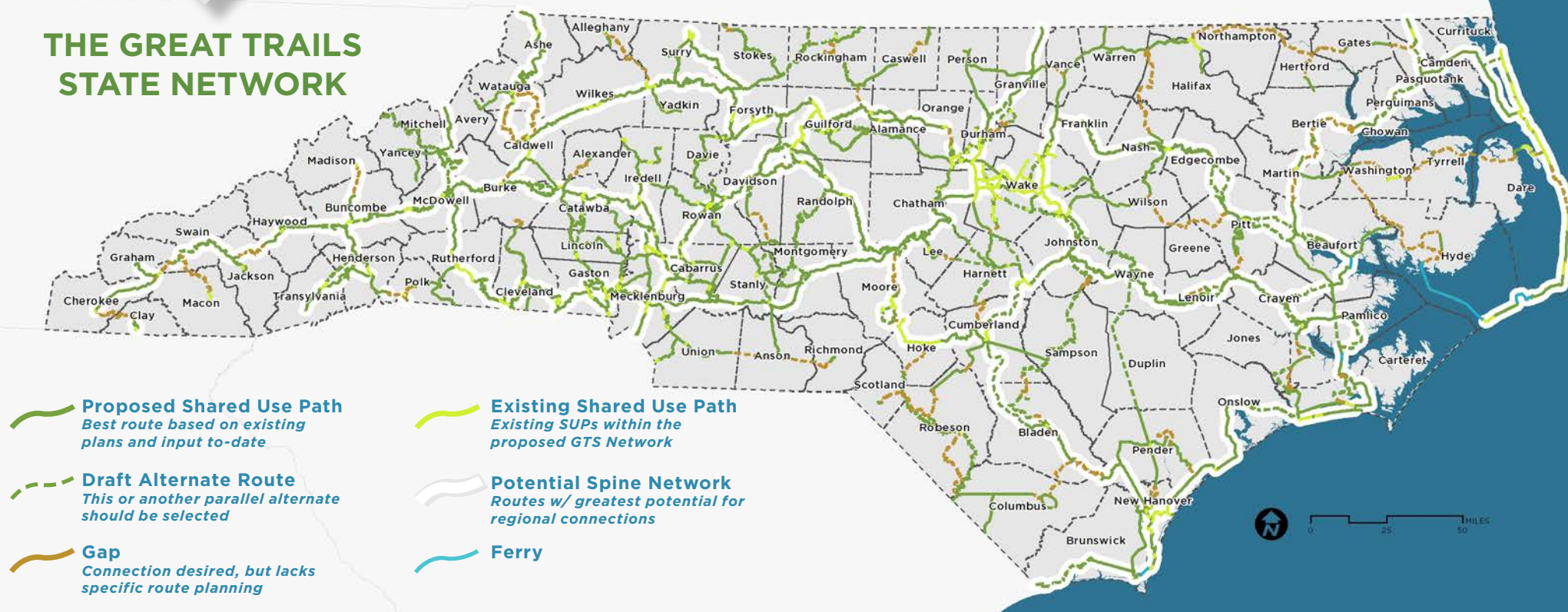
600+ STAKEHOLDERS

reviewed the proposed corridors, including town and county managers, planners, parks directors, land trusts, advocacy organizations, and many others.

11,000+ NC RESIDENTS

expressed support and shared ideas in public surveys, online input maps and plan review, including 850,000 of impressions on social media that generated awareness of the plan and process.

A VISIONARY PLAN FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Decades in the making, through hundreds of local plans and initiatives, the Great Trails State (GTS) is ready to become a reality. This plan, *for the first time in the state's history*, identifies a proposed network of trails that would:

- Connect all 100 counties throughout the state;
- Create lasting investments in rural and urban areas;
- Provide a return on investment of $1.72 annually, for every $1 of initial trail construction, from sales revenue at local businesses, sales tax revenue, and benefits related to health and transportation (source: NCDOT and ITRE, https://itre.ncsu.edu/focus/bike-ped/sup-economic-impacts);
- Provide opportunities for healthy, active transportation (responding to a surge in trail use during the COVID-19 pandemic);
- Provide infrastructure to support North Carolina's $28 billion outdoor recreation industry; and
- Improve health, safety, mobility, recreation, environment, and economic development, benefiting North Carolinians for generations.

The GTS Plan recommends recurring state funding for trail feasibility studies, right-of-way, design, and construction. A GTS Advisory Committee will be led by NCDOT and NC State Parks to implement the plan. To learn more, visit the plan web page and review the full plan at:

www.ncdot.gov/divisions/bike-ped/great-trails-state.

THE GREAT TRAILS STATE NETWORK

Proposed Shared Use Path
Best route based on existing plans and input to-date

Draft Alternate Route
This or another parallel alternate should be selected

Gap
Connection desired, but lacks specific route planning

Existing Shared Use Path
Existing SUPs within the proposed GTS Network

Potential Spine Network
Routes w/ greatest potential for regional connections

Ferry

2022

Integrated Mobility Division
N.C. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DRAFT Great Trails State Network

— Proposed Shared Use Path
--- Draft Alternate Route
— Existing Shared Use Path
··· Gap
◯ Potential Spine Network

State & National Trails
Overmountain Victory State Trail
Mountains to Sea State Trail
Northern Peaks State Trail
Appalachian Trail

Other Features
Municipalities
Managed Areas
County Boundary

THE GREAT TRAILS STATE
DIVISION 11
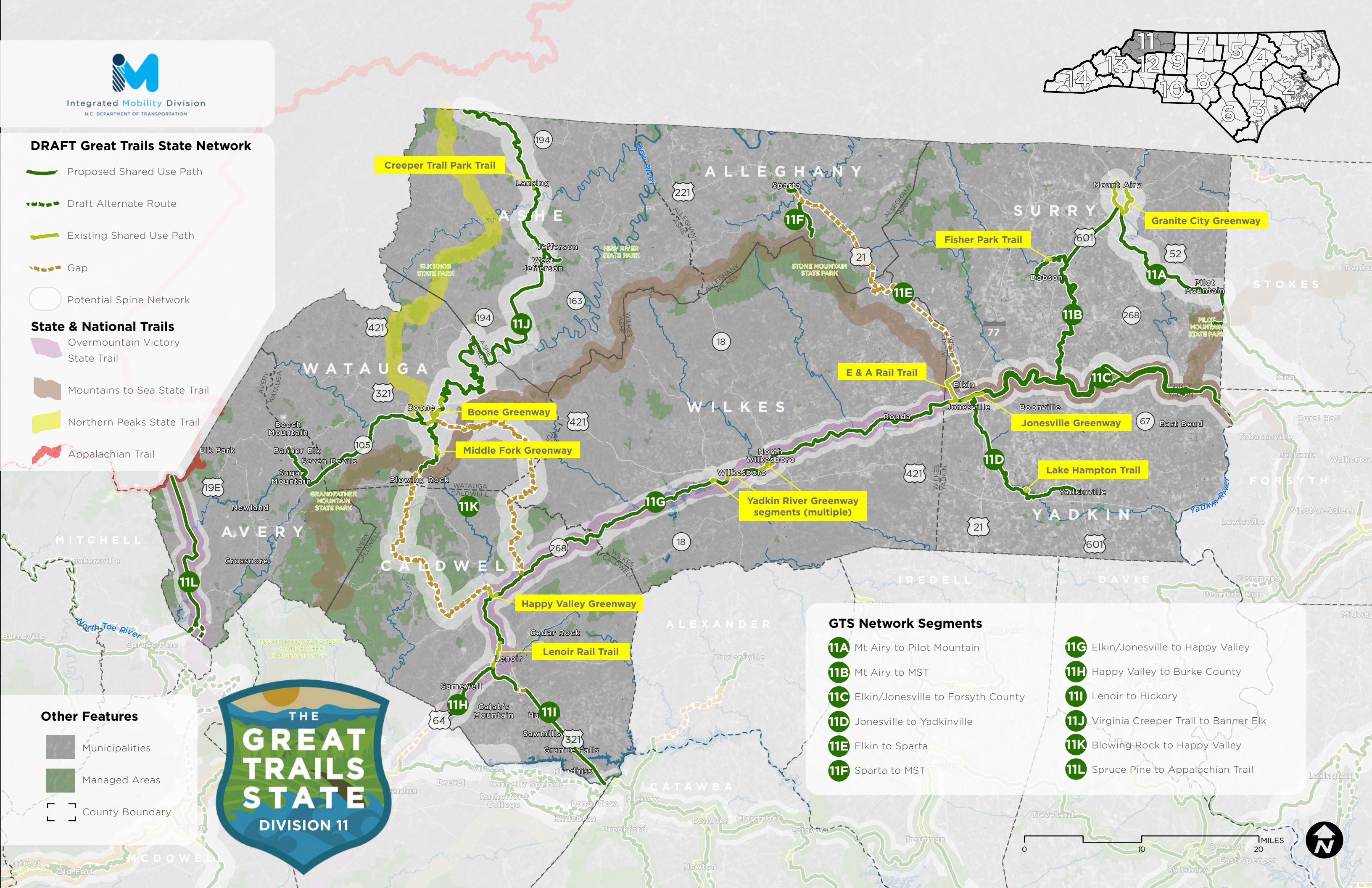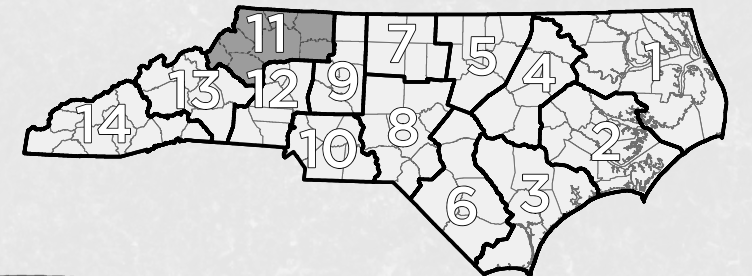
GTS Network Segments

11A Mt Airy to Pilot Mountain
11B Mt Airy to MST
11C Elkin/Jonesville to Forsyth County
11D Jonesville to Yadkinville
11E Elkin to Sparta
11F Sparta to MST

11G Elkin/Jonesville to Happy Valley
11H Happy Valley to Burke County
11I Lenoir to Hickory
11J Virginia Creeper Trail to Banner Elk
11K Blowing Rock to Happy Valley
11L Spruce Pine to Appalachian Trail

Trail Labels
Creeper Trail Park Trail
Granite City Greenway
Fisher Park Trail
E & A Rail Trail
Boone Greenway
Middle Fork Greenway
Jonesville Greenway
Lake Hampton Trail
Yadkin River Greenway segments (multiple)
Happy Valley Greenway
Lenoir Rail Trail

Counties
ALLEGHANY
ASHE
SURRY
STOKES
WATAUGA
WILKES
YADKIN
FORSYTH
AVERY
MITCHELL
CALDWELL
ALEXANDER
IREDELL
DAVIE
MCDOWELL
CATAWBA

MILES 0 10 20