



SCOTLAND NECK

CREATING OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMIES

STRATEGIC PLAN

2023 - 2028



Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	iv
Scotland Neck Outdoor Recreation Economy Planning Committee	iv
N.C. Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division Staff	iv
Executive Summary	v
Background	1
Economic Impact.....	1
Outdoor Recreation Participation	3
Existing Plans Review	4
Upper Coastal Plain Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2023-2027.....	5
Roanoke River State Trail Plan 2022-2027	5
Ecotourism in the Roanoke River Region: Impacts and Opportunities 2016.....	6
Planning Process	7
Assets	7
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT).....	8
Strategic Planning Process	8
Scotland Neck Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028.....	9
Focus Areas	10
Encourage Pedestrian Activity	12
Country Roads Bike Tour Event	16
Small Business Development	16
Downtown Revitalization	17
Outdoor Recreation Product Manufacturing.....	18
Plan Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation.....	19
Plan Implementation.....	19
Monitoring and Evaluation.....	19
Appendix	21
References	40

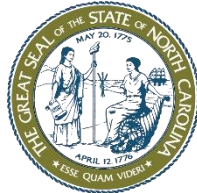
List of Figures

Figure 1. Economic Impact of Outdoor Recreation in Scotland Neck.....	3
Figure 2. Activities That Make Up Scotland Neck’s Outdoor Recreation Economy	4
Figure 3. Roanoke River Paddle Trail, Western Section	6
Figure 4. Assets	7
Figure 5. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT).....	8
Figure 6. Strategic Planning Process	8
Figure 7. Map of Game Land Property Within 15 Miles	11
Figure 8. Walking Trail to Sylvan Heights, Potential Routes.....	13
Figure 9. 4 Mile River Corridor for Potential Paddle Access	15
Figure 10. Scotland Neck Country Roads Bike Tour Course Maps	23

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.

Acknowledgements

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.



NC DEPARTMENT
of COMMERCE
RURAL ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

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.

Scotland Neck Outdoor Recreation Economy Planning Committee

Mayor Eddie Braxton

Gloria Cofield

Nancy Dempsey

Brent Lubbock

Nancy Winslow

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

Lee Padrick, Community Economic Development Planner, Northeast Region

David McRae, Appalachian Regional Commission Assistant Program Manager

Karen C. Smith, AICP, NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center, Rural Planning Program Manager

Cover Photo Credits: Sylvan Heights Bird Park

Executive Summary

Scotland Neck, NC 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 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.

Scotland Neck’s location within the rural landscape of the Roanoke River valley provides a great opportunity for both residents and visitors to enjoy the great outdoors. Continued collaboration and communication among the CORE work group and other vested partners is key to successfully implementing the strategies outlined in this plan.



The plan crafts a Vision for the next 5 years and makes recommendations on Strategies, Goals, Objectives, and Actions/Projects that local stakeholders can take to help accomplish the purpose of increasing economic vitality through leveraging outdoor recreation.

Vision: Scotland Neck, home of the Sylvan Heights Bird Park, is a premier destination for outdoor enthusiasts, offering a diverse range of sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities that showcase the town's natural beauty and unique character

Two (2) strategies emerged from the Vision Statement:

1. Premier Destination for Outdoor Enthusiasts
2. Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Four (4) goals (two for each strategy) were developed:

Strategy 1: Premier Destination for Outdoor Enthusiasts

1. Provide access to the town's abundant natural resources and encourage healthy, active lifestyles; and
2. Create and maintain high quality facilities.

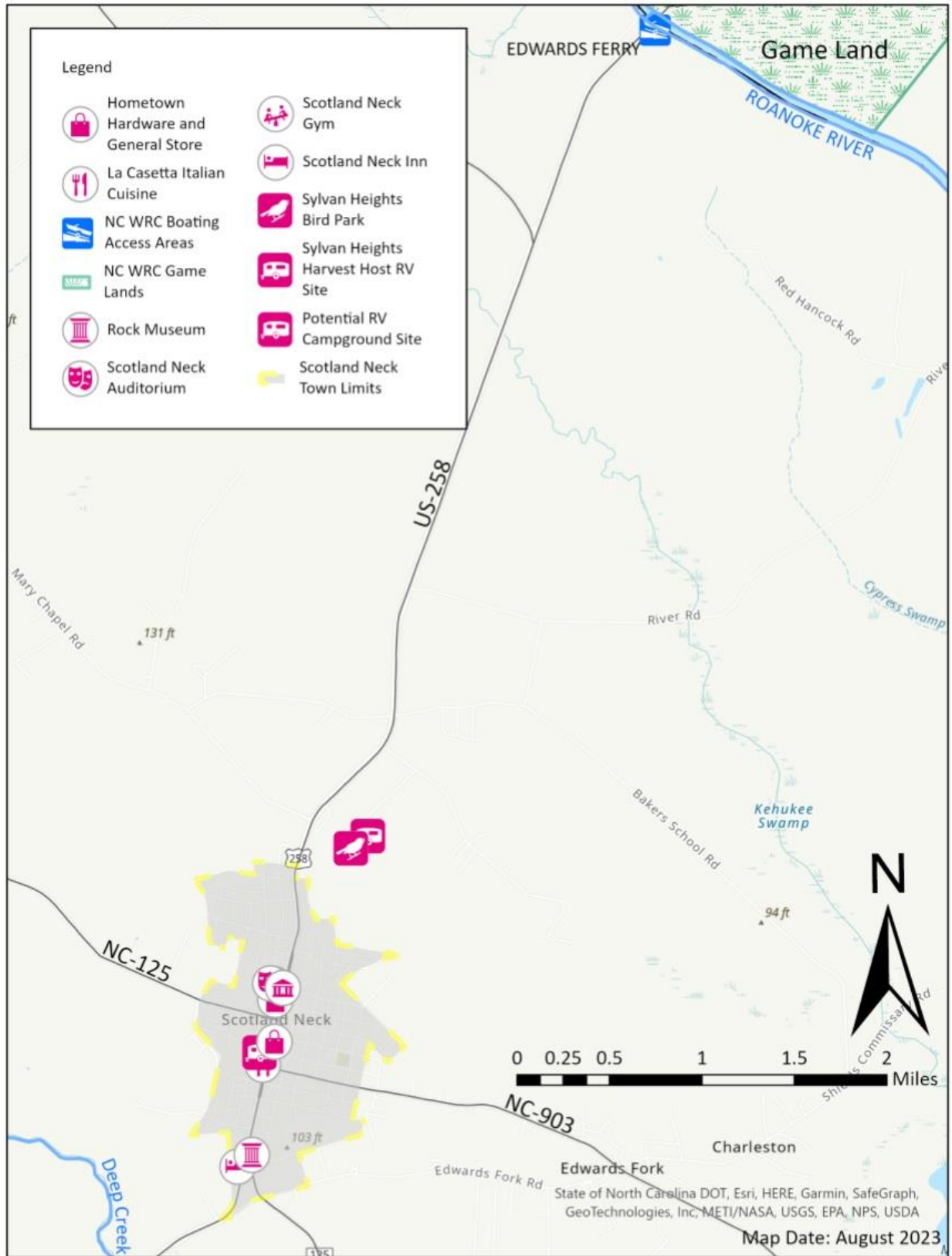
Strategy 2: Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

1. Value and promote sustainable outdoor recreation; and
2. Retain and attract existing and new outdoor recreation activities and small business development.

Objectives to measure goal progress were developed, and Actions/Projects are associated with three levels of responsibility.



Scotland Neck Asset Map



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 2021, the outdoor recreation economy represented \$454 billion in current-dollar gross domestic product (GDP), or 1.9 percent of the United States' total GDP. The outdoor recreation sector of the economy is growing at a faster rate than the overall economy. "Inflation-adjusted ("real") GDP for the outdoor recreation economy increased 18.9 percent in 2021, compared



*\$11.8 Billion in total
Outdoor Recreation
Value-Added economic
impact within North
Carolina in 2021. How to
capture a larger portion*



with a 5.9 percent increase for the overall U.S. economy, reflecting a rebound in outdoor recreation and the decrease of 21.6 percent in 2020. Real gross output for the outdoor recreation economy increased 21.7 percent, while outdoor recreation compensation increased 16.2 percent and employment increased 13.1 percent. Employment in the outdoor recreation industry increased in all 50 states during 2021.

At the state level, outdoor recreation contributed \$11.8 billion in total value-added economic impact to North Carolina's GDP. North Carolina ranked as the 11th highest state in "Value-Added Outdoor Recreation in Total Outdoor Recreation Activities" in 2021. This included employment for over 130,000 individuals that resulted in over \$5.9 billion in total compensation.

Employment in key industries within the outdoor recreation sector includes over 8,000 in manufacturing, 44,000 in retail, 27,000 in accommodation and food service, and over 23,000 in arts, entertainment, and recreation.¹

To establish a baseline for progress and determine the economic impact of outdoor recreation on the town's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), certain local economic statistics were generated. The minimal level of statistics to gather for a town or county's outdoor recreation economic impact was the following:

- County Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
- 2020 North Carolina, County or Municipal Population (certified by North Carolina State Demographics)

Using these numbers, an estimate of the economic impact results of recreational boating, equine, wildlife watching, fishing, hunting, bicycling, and kayaking based on a per capita ratio of that activity's impact on the county Gross Domestic Product after all measurable activities' impacts were calculated.

A recommendation for planning is for the local committee to consider surveying visitors for spending in the community. This is important for developing more localized and accurate economic analyses. This will be helpful in more accurately understanding the role of each outdoor recreation activity in the total economic impact. Surveying visitors and users of local outdoor recreation will also provide objective quantitative measurements to gauge the progress and success of the identified goals and projects.

Scotland Neck, known as a regional outdoor recreation location for many years, not surprisingly exceeds the state proportion of GDP (1.8% of state's GDP, versus 4% of the Scotland Neck GDP). Recreational boating has the highest economic impact activity with over \$1 million in impacts, with Equine sports in second with \$376,914 in impacts. Wildlife watching contributes \$200,880

to the town’s GDP, with hunting (\$145,311), fishing (\$109,876), bicycling (\$37,346), and kayaking (\$10,017) contributing the remainder.

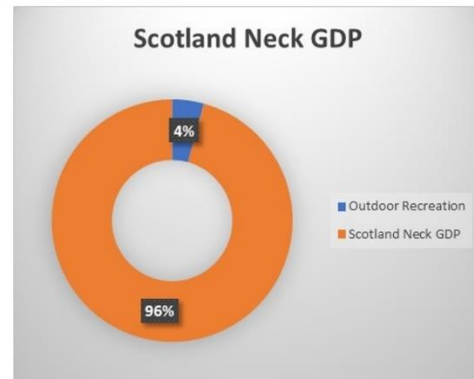
Figure 1.

Economic Impact of Outdoor Recreation in Scotland Neck

Recreational Boating	\$1,062,439
Equine	376,914
Wildlife Watch	200,880
Hunting	145,311
Fishing	109,876
Bicycling	37,346
Kayaking	10,017

Total Outdoor Recreation Economy \$1,942,783

GDP is the value of goods and services produced within a county or town



Scotland Neck GDP \$ 43,852,140

Halifax County GDP \$ 1,300,109,000

Source:
Scotland Neck – derived by per capita of county GDP
Halifax County - Bureau of Economic Analysis
www.bea.gov/sites/default/files/2022-12/lagdp1222.pdf

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 22.8 million visitors to North Carolina state parks in 2021 — three million more than any other year on record. 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.^{4 5}

Figure 2.

Activities That Make Up Scotland Neck's Outdoor Recreation Economy



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. There are several local and regional plans pertinent to Scotland Neck that address outdoor recreation. REDD staff reviewed the plans, and identified goals, objectives, and actions that align with the purposes of this plan.

Upper Coastal Plain Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2023-2027

The [Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy \(CEDS\)](#) is designed and required to bring together the public and private sectors in creating a comprehensive and performance-based plan to strengthen the regional economy. A CEDS is required for a region to be eligible for assistance through Economic Development Administration (EDA) programs.

- Vision 1 – Social Foundation, Initiative 3 is to “Establish, maintain, and expand an accessible public infrastructure.”
- Vision 3 – Thriving Economy, Initiative 1 is to “Improve the region’s ability to foster a diverse, thriving economy.”
- Vision 3 – Thriving Economy, Initiative 2 is to “Define and promote the region’s sense of place.”
- Vision 3 – Thriving Economy, Initiative 3 is to “Build on the region’s competitive advantages and leverage the marketplace.”

All the actions identified in the Scotland Neck CORE Plan meet these extracted goals and objectives.

Roanoke River State Trail Plan 2022-2027

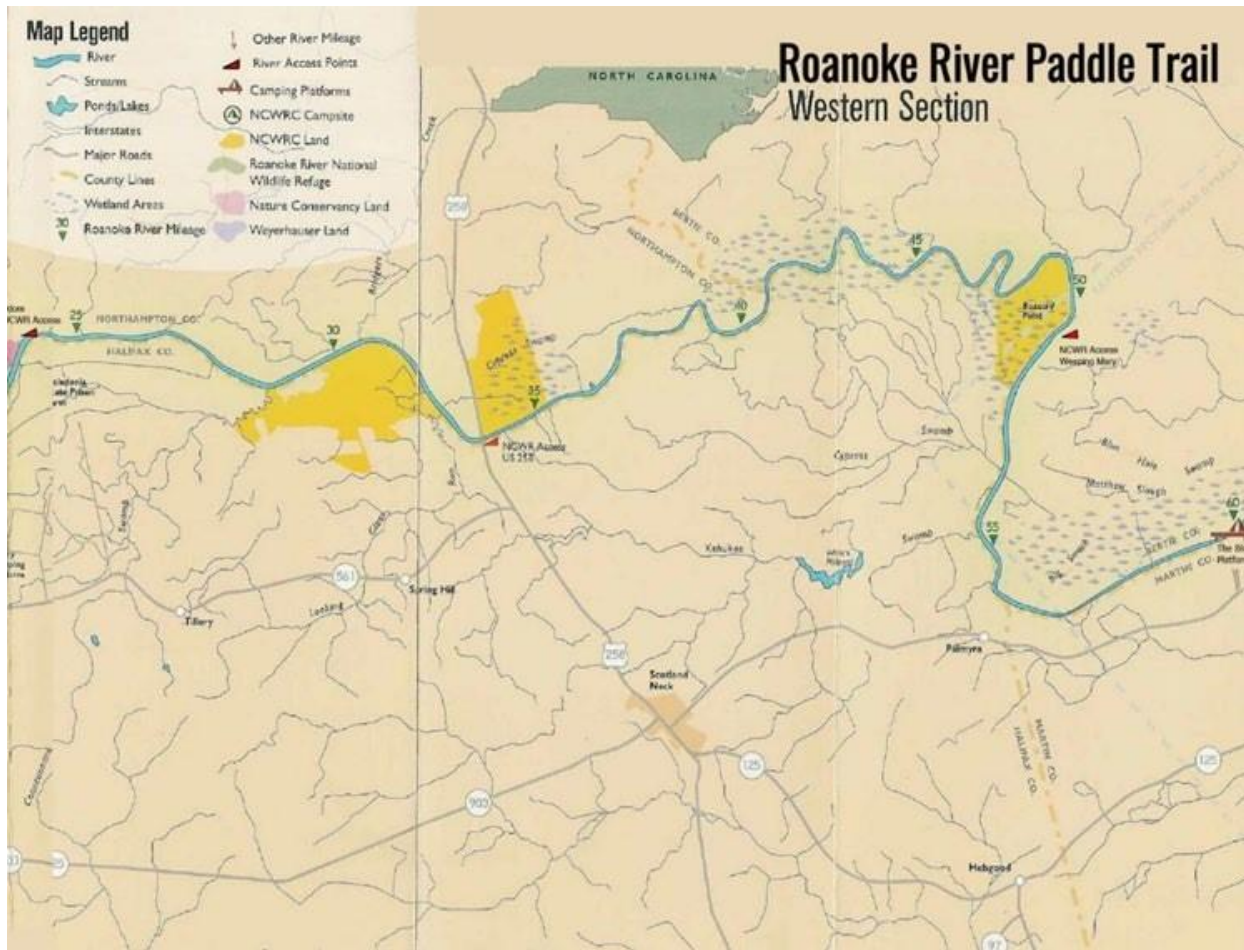
The Roanoke River State Trail is a paddle trail extending from Weldon to the Albemarle Sound. Despite meandering through the coastal plain of North Carolina, this paddle trail offers a unique wilderness experience to all who venture along its length. As part of the North Carolina State Parks’ *Complete the Trail Program*ⁱ, each state trail partner organization was required to submit a five-year plan, outlining priorities and goals until 2027 for their trail. The [Roanoke River State Trail Plan](#) contains 10 segments of trail development.

Of particular interest to Scotland Neck are the Segment 3: Tillery to Palmyra projects.

- Campsite(s) needed at RRP Mile Marker 27 – need further information from Northampton County on their treehouse proposal at Odom for above site);
- Campsite(s) needed at RRP Mile Marker 35 – \$30,000;
- Campsite(s) needed at RRP Mile Marker 44 – \$30,000;
- Campsite(s) needed at RRP Mile Marker 50 – \$30,000; and
- Proposed access Bertie County

Figure 3.

Roanoke River Paddle Trail, Western Section



Ecotourism in the Roanoke River Region: Impacts and Opportunities (2016)

NCGrowth, in partnership with Roanoke River Partners (RRP), analyzed the annual economic impact of the Roanoke River Paddle Trail. It should be noted that the Paddle Trail is just one of Roanoke River Partner’s initiatives; the organization has a broader impact on the region not reflected in this report through a variety of collaborative partnerships and activities such as marketing and promotion of partner events, reoccurring partner meetings, and attracting and hosting regional, state, and national events.

This analysis, [Ecotourism in the Roanoke River Region: Impacts and Opportunities](#), found that the Paddle Trail is a unique asset that can be leveraged to boost the economic growth of the five-county Roanoke River region (inclusive of Bertie, Halifax, Martin, Northampton, and Washington Counties). The current annual impacts of the trail include:

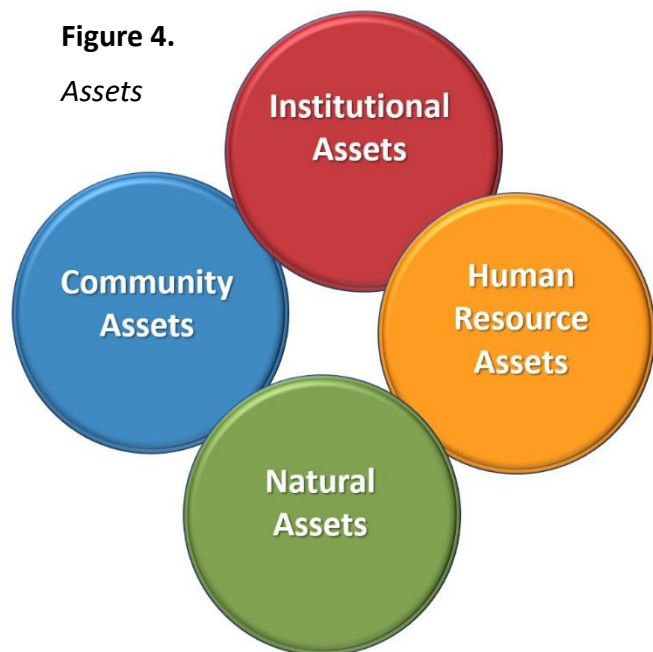
- **Employment:** The Paddle Trail supports approximately 7 jobs in the region over the course of each year.
- **Income:** On an annual basis the Trail contributes \$175,680 of personal income to workers in the region.
- **Economic Growth:** Each year the Trail contributes \$553,270 to the growth of the regional economy.
- **Multiplier Effect:** For every dollar spent because of the Paddle Trail \$1.64 is generated in the regional economy. This result is comparable to other rural ecotourism attractions that have been studied across the country.

These economic impacts are driven by two primary activities: the operational spending of the Roanoke River Partners organization and spending by Trail users on groceries, equipment, lodging, and other needs. RRP’s efforts can boost the economic impact of the Paddle Trail by increasing visitor spending while they are in the region – either through marketing efforts to grow the annual number of overnight visits or through efforts to grow complementary attractions such as guided tours and unique dining experiences that enhance visitors’ experiences. Encouraging visitors to shop at locally owned businesses, versus chain retailers, will also increase the impact of their spending as this reduces leakage out of the local economy. Strategies to increase the impact of the Paddle Trail are covered in the report.

Planning Process

In February 2023, the Scotland Neck Outdoor Recreation Planning Committee began meeting to identify strategies, goals, objectives, and actions/projects that can grow the local outdoor recreational economy. The first step was to identify the types of outdoor recreation activities that are available within Scotland Neck and its surroundings.

While most activities fall within the normal definition of “outdoor recreation,” other traditional recreational activities (such as ball sports, gardening, agritourism, and the local gymnasium) also make up Scotland Neck’s outdoor recreation economy.



The time horizon for the process is approximately 5 years and is intended to identify fundable projects that will increase the community’s value for investment and put the community in a sustainable economic development position regarding outdoor recreation.

The Planning Committee undertook the traditional steps of strategic planning, the first steps were to identify the outdoor recreation assets and to acknowledge the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (S.W.O.T.).

After determining the assets and the S.W.O.T., the committee determined their vision, strategies, goals, objectives, and actions/projects.

Figure 5.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)



Figure 6.

Strategic Planning Process



The following is the Scotland Neck Outdoor Recreation Plan 2023 – 2028.

Scotland Neck Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan 2023 - 2028

Vision: Scotland Neck, home of the Sylvan Heights Bird Park, is a premier destination for outdoor enthusiasts, offering a diverse range of sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities that showcase the town’s natural beauty and unique character

STRATEGIES

Premier Destination for Outdoor Enthusiasts	Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities
<p>Goal 1: Provide access to the town’s abundant natural resources and encourage healthy, active lifestyles</p> <p>Objective: Increase numbers of people accessing outdoor recreation, maintain current number of Market on Main events and increase health and economic benefits, add additional river access point</p> <p>Actions/Projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to support the Country Roads Bike Tour event by promoting overnight camping, restrooms, and showers on town properties 2. Continue the Market on Main events 3. Work to incorporate more participation from farmers to offer farm goods and produce at market 4. Develop an additional river access point upriver from NCWR Access US 258 	<p>Goal 3: Value and promote sustainable outdoor recreation</p> <p>Objectives: Increase marketing efforts, update social media and website regularly, add camping platform along Roanoke River, increase awareness and participation in Scotland Neck Historic Walking Tour</p> <p>Actions/Projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop daily itineraries to inform visitors of things to do in Scotland Neck 2. Expand social media presence with emphasis on outdoor recreation to implement the marketing plan 3. Collaborate with Halifax Community College Small Business Center on “Great Outdoors” and “Destination Businesses” 4. Develop an approach to attract minority outdoor recreation users 5. Promote the Scotland Neck Historic Walking Tour
<p>Goal 2: Create and maintain high quality facilities</p> <p>Objectives: Develop a walking trail, measure participation at town gymnasium, develop a RV campground plan, add camping platform</p> <p>Actions/Projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generate feasibility study for a walking trail from north of town to Sylvan Heights Bird Park 2. Promote the town gymnasium as a primary source of recreation 3. Explore development of a Recreational Vehicles campground on town property 4. Add a camping platform near Scotland Neck on the Roanoke River Paddle Trail and implement Segment 3 of the Roanoke River State Trail Plan 	<p>Goal 4: Retain and attract existing and new outdoor recreation activities and small business development</p> <p>Objectives: Facilitate two new or existing outdoor recreation businesses, develop 2 short-term lodging options, measure impact of historic tax credits, develop 3 murals, work with Senior Center, Senior Games, and Lakeland Center</p> <p>Actions/Projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Measure the number of outdoor recreation businesses 2. Explore the development of more short-term lodging options by promoting state and federal historic tax credits 3. Coordinate activities with the Senior Center, Senior Games, and Lakeland Center to promote dinner, theater, and concerts 4. Engage local artists and designers to create three distinct mural designs that reflect Scotland Neck's unique character, culture, and natural surroundings that will be visually striking and serve as a memorable backdrop for visitors' photos

Focus Areas

Strategy development focuses on leveraging outdoor recreation assets to increase tourism, encourage small business development, enhance quality of life for residents, plan for asset and infrastructure development, and/or position communities to grow and attract outdoor product manufacturing industries. Within these focus areas, broad strategies specific projects are identified. Each topic below provides supplemental information about a specific goal, objective, or action item identified in the plan’s strategy chart.



Photo Credit: Sylvan Heights Bird Park

Wildlife Watching

Scotland Neck is near world-class wildlife viewing destinations, particularly for birds and waterfowl. The nearby Roanoke River bottomlands are “considered to be the largest intact, and least disturbed, bottomland forest ecosystem remaining in the mid-Atlantic region. The area supports the highest density of nesting birds, especially songbirds, anywhere in North Carolina.”⁶

There are over 17,000 acres of Wildlife Resource Commission (WRC) game lands and other public lands that are ideal locations for wildlife viewing within 15 miles of Scotland Neck. These world-class birding areas, in addition to the Sylvan Heights Bird Park, make Scotland Neck a destination for individuals seeking an experience to encounter rare and unique wildlife. This creates great potential to leverage the presence of SHBP to attract visitors with an interest in wildlife viewing. Packaging the variety of wildlife viewing experiences available locally, ranging



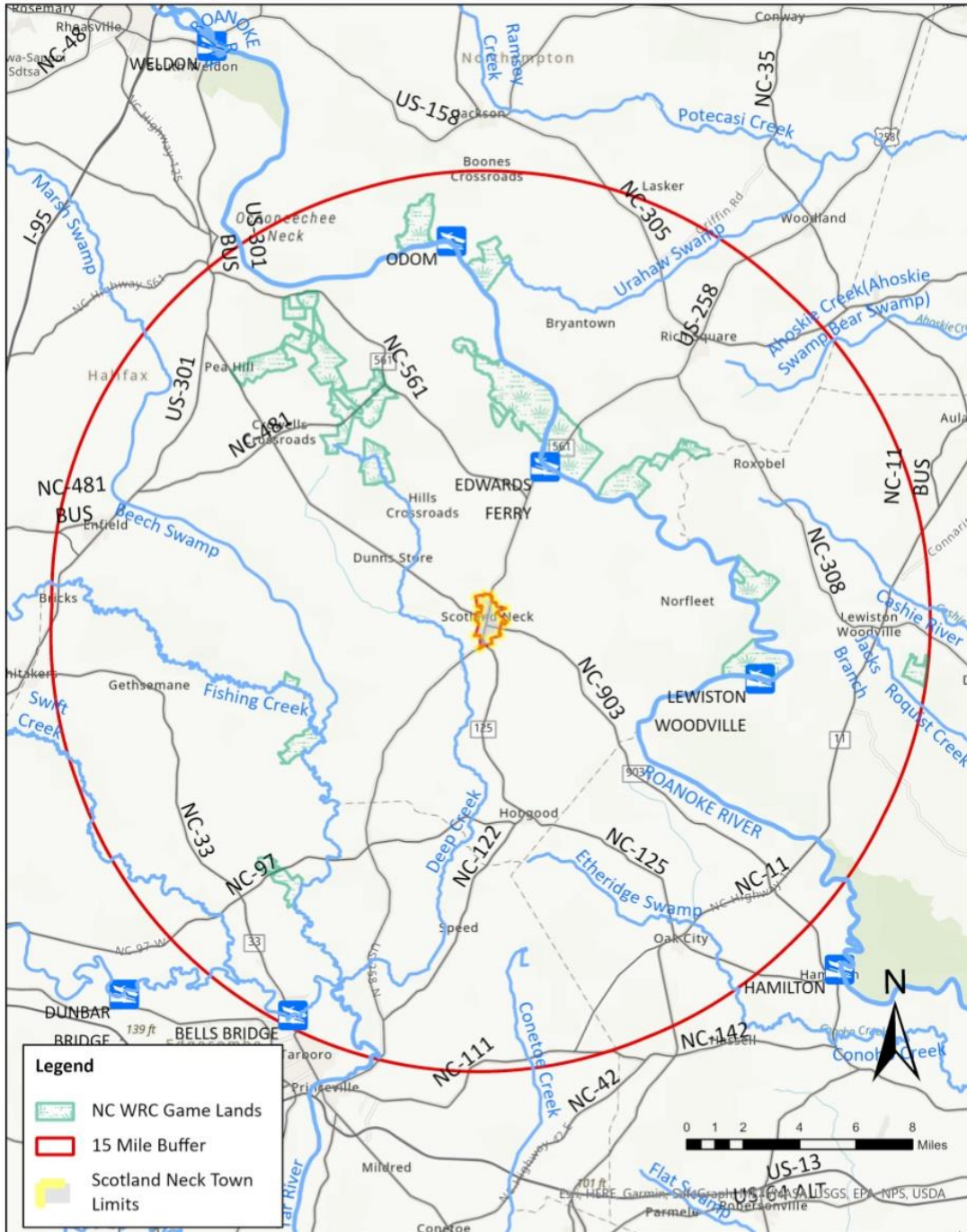
“The area supports the highest density of nesting birds, especially songbirds, anywhere in North Carolina, including rare species such as Swainson’s warbler, cerulean warbler, and Kentucky warbler.”⁶



from exotic species in captivity at Sylvan Heights Bird Park to the diverse resident and migratory bird populations in the wild, could be a substantial draw to wildlife viewing tourism opportunities. Additionally, better engaging the local population and providing educational opportunities about the outstanding wildlife viewing in the area could increase broader participation in this activity.

Figure 7.

Map of Game Land Property Within 15 Miles



Encourage Pedestrian Activity

According to the CDC, physical activity is one of the most important things an individual can do to improve personal health and discourage chronic health conditions.⁷ Walking regularly, even short distances and time periods, is one of the most accessible forms of physical exercise available that promotes positive impacts on physical and mental health. Two actions identified in this plan support goals of increasing walking as exercise.

The Scotland Neck Historic Walking Tour is an existing community asset which guides visitors throughout town to admire historic properties. This tour route serves as a tourist attraction but could also be viewed as a existing walking route that residents could use to get daily exercise, all while observing local history along the route. There are various implementation strategies that could be undertaken to support the action to promote the Scotland Neck Historic Walking Trail, including website improvement, delineate an exact route of the tour, provide wayfinding signage, and increase marketing and promotion of the tour.

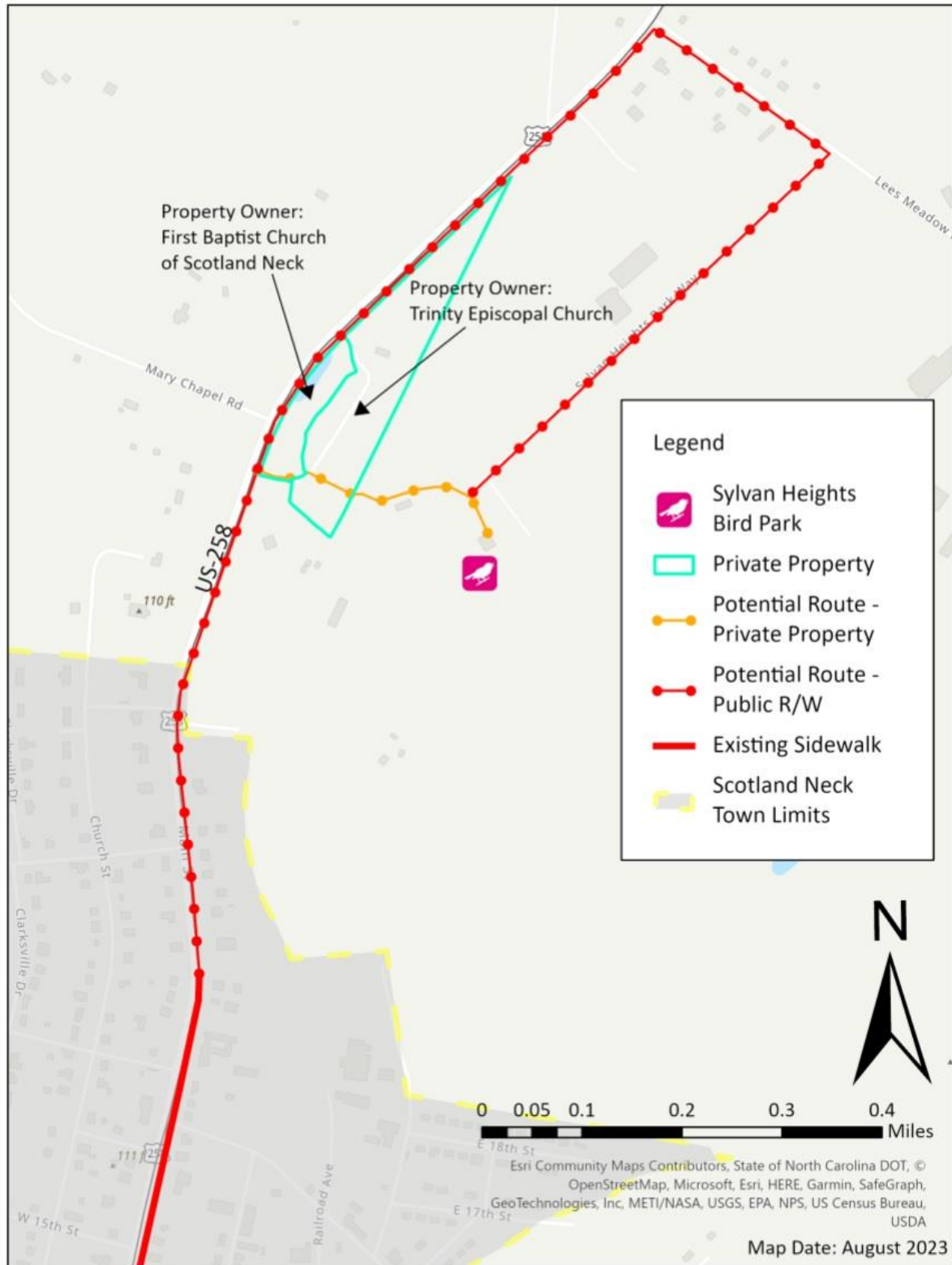
Another key objective identified in this plan is to develop a safe walking route from the town center to Sylvan Heights Bird Park. The maps on the next pages depict potential routes that could accomplish the objective and action items recommended in this plan.

- **Option 1:** This potential pedestrian route would utilize the existing public right-of-way along NC 258, Lees Meadow Road, and Sylvan Heights Park Way to extend sidewalk or other improved pathway to allow for a designated walking route to the SHBP. This route would utilize the existing sidewalk extending north through Scotland Neck along Main Street/NC 258 until the property addressed as 1719 Main St, Scotland Neck, NC. From there new sidewalk could be constructed within the existing public right-of-way along NC 258, turning right onto Lees Meadow Road, and then traveling along Sylvan Heights Park Way until reaching the facility.
- **Option 2:** This potential pedestrian route would also utilize the existing sidewalk and extend a new improved path within the public right-of-way along NC 258 as referenced above, but would leave the public right-of-way, follow an existing improved surface route across two privately owned properties, and enter the SHBP. This route option would be shorter in length and require less public improvement. But it would require all legal and other requirements associated with the route crossing privately owned property.

Further feasibility studies, and all other necessary pre-construction planning will need to occur prior to this project being undertaken.

Figure 8.

Walking Trail to Sylvan Heights, Potential Routes



Note: Option 1 is depicted in red, Option 2 is depicted in orange

Roanoke River Access and Roanoke River Trail Camping Platforms Near Scotland Neck

Currently, there is one Wildlife Resource Commission Boat Access Area along the Roanoke River in the proximity of Scotland Neck. The Edwards Ferry Boat Ramp along NC 258 is approximately five miles north of town. This is an excellent asset to the town that allows residents and visitors public access to the Roanoke River. But there are limitations associated with this single river access point. Other than the Edwards Ferry Boat Access Area, the nearest public river access points are nearly 9 miles upstream (Odom) and approximately 17 miles downstream (Lewiston Woodville). This severely limits the practicality of individuals utilizing the river for paddle-oriented activities (canoe, kayak, standup paddle board, etc.).

There are no official camping platforms in the vicinity of Scotland Neck. In relation to the Wildlife Resources Commission Edwards Ferry Boating Access Area, the nearest camping platforms are approximately 9.5 miles upriver (Tillery) and approximately 13 miles downstream (The Bluff) creating 22.5 river miles between RRP campsites. The Roanoke River State Trail Plan 2022-2027 calls for additional campsites within the section of river near Scotland Neck. The recommendations in the State Trail Plan propose four new campsites along the section of the trail near Scotland Neck, one campsite upriver from Scotland Neck and three campsites downriver from Scotland Neck. It would be most beneficial to Scotland Neck to have a camping platform upriver from the WRC boating access area. This would allow for campers to get on and off the river at Scotland Neck thereby increasing accessibility to recreation in the area and encouraging engagement with businesses in Scotland Neck.

The Scotland Neck CORE Work Group indicated that an additional kayak and canoe launch, and additional camping platform(s) within a four-mile zone upstream of the Edwards Ferry Boat Ramp would be the most impactful strategy to advance the goals of this plan. It is worthy to note that all property within the four-mile upriver zone on the Halifax County side of the river is owned by the State of North Carolina and managed as a designated NC WRC Game Land. This presents an opportunity to partner with government entities to help Scotland Neck achieve this objective.

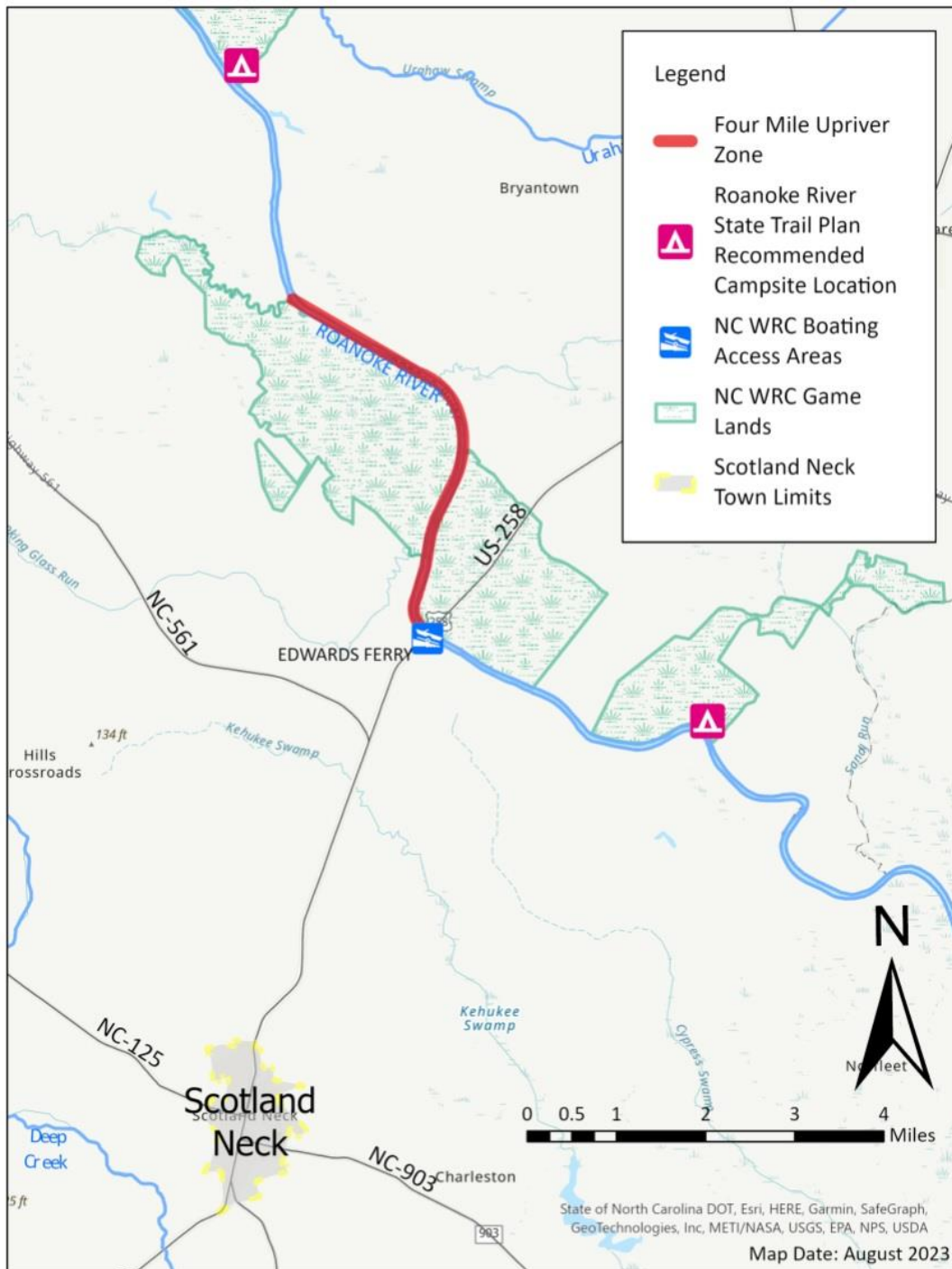
The successful accomplishment of this action item will produce multiple benefits, including:

1. Improve public access to the Roanoke River and increase accessibility to a variety of outdoor recreation activities.
2. Provide more “leisurely” and accessible paddle opportunities for residents and visitors.
3. Provide a “take out” point at Scotland Neck which would increase the potential for individuals to venture into town and patronize local businesses.
4. Open potential for business development by providing opportunity for manageable, and relatively “entry-level” paddle trips along the river.

- Will benefit the continued development, increased usage, and economic impact of the Roanoke River State Trail. This action item compliments other stated objectives to increase the number of individuals recreating and the number of camping platforms along the state trail.

Figure 9.

4 Mile River Corridor for Potential Paddle Access and Camping Platform Development



Country Roads Bike Tour Event

Scotland Neck hosts an annual road bike tour event with several distances, 25k, 50k, and 85k, that riders can compete in. This event draws riders to Scotland Neck to enjoy less heavily trafficked routes through the scenic rural countryside. This event is an asset to Scotland Neck and could be further leveraged to create a broader economic impact for the town. Local leaders, event organizers, and the business community should continue to engage with the bike tour and think of new ways to capture increased economic value from participants and spectators of this event. Also, actions to engage the local population in this event could lead to increased participation in cycling activities.

See Appendix for maps of the Country Road Bike Tour routes.

Small Business Development

In early 2023 the Halifax Community College (HCC) Small Business Center (SBC), in collaboration with the Scotland Neck Business Association, hosted an entrepreneurship workshop presentation entitled 'The Great Outdoors' to promote business opportunities within the outdoor recreation sector and related activities. And they continue to host similar events throughout the HCC service network promoting opportunities for rural entrepreneurs within the "experience economy". These events serve to promote the entrepreneurial mindset, strengthen local business networks and the entrepreneurial ecosystem, and connect people to the available network of business supports. Continued engagement between the Scotland Neck Business Association and the HCC SBC would be beneficial to help advance the goals of this plan. The SBC offers a variety of services and assistance for start-ups, early stage, and established businesses.



According to VisitNC, Halifax County had total visitor spending of over \$119 million in 2021, an increase of over 38% from the previous year.¹⁰



Downtown Revitalization

Several strategies to promote downtown revitalization with the goal of economic development were identified during this planning process.

Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits are a tool that can be utilized to assist and encourage redevelopment. Projects using this tool have produced substantial economic impacts throughout North Carolina and lead to “job creation, downtown and neighborhood revitalization, improved community appearance, and greater community pride.”⁸ This tool can be applied within Scotland Neck, and leaders should promote this as a strategy to encourage redevelopment.



Redevelopment could lead to short term lodging within town which would further the objective to increase lodging options, increase overnight visitors and occupancy tax revenues, and provide an avenue to earn income for local entrepreneurs. Currently there are few, if any, short-term lodging opportunities in the proximity of Scotland Neck.

Murals and other public art are a catalyst to downtown revitalization and investment. These art displays demonstrate something of importance to local culture and an important component of “placemaking”, or encouraging “people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community.”⁹ Work group members identified murals as an objective that will enhance the visual appeal of downtown as well as provide the opportunity for photos or “selfies” for tourists and residents, with the hope that this encourages people to spend more time and increase the overall vibrancy of downtown, and lead to increased economic activity.

Marketing and Promotion Improvements

Improving marketing and promotion could increase and add value to the economic impact of tourism in Scotland Neck. The town and surrounding areas have a variety of activities that can be leveraged to bring in visitors from out of town and with the proper promotional strategies local businesses can capture increased expenditures from these visitors.

According to VisitNC, Halifax County had total visitor spending of over \$119 million in 2021, an increase of over 38% from the previous year.¹⁰ Improved engagement and sustained collaboration with the Halifax County Tourism Development Authority, the entity tasked with promoting the growth of tourism in Halifax County, is a key step to increase visitor spending in Scotland Neck. Businesses should also be engaged because they can have a broader impact beyond their individual company through marketing to provide promotion to an increased audience for the town and community at large. Marketing training for businesses is provided through business development resources such as the HCC SBC.

The Sylvan Heights Bird Park attracts approximately 60,000 visitors per year. This is a significant tourism asset that the town can build from, and other area businesses can benefit from this established attraction. Critically thinking about how these assets are packaged within marketing, and how the various attractions complement each other can help Scotland Neck ensure it most fully captures the value of its tourism sector. The bird park should be promoted as a primary tourist draw and leveraged to augment economic benefit for other local businesses.

Outdoor Recreation Product Manufacturing

The Scotland Neck CORE work group did not identify “encouraging potential for outdoor recreation-oriented product manufacturing” as a primary goal of this strategic planning process. But increasing understanding and education regarding the potential for outdoor recreation-oriented product manufacturing should be encouraged among all local leaders, particularly those seeking to advance economic development within the outdoor recreation space.

There is potential for increased manufacturing of outdoor recreation products, including supply chain materials, across the state of North Carolina. Attention should be paid both from the perspective of attracting an existing company to locate their operations in the community, or for a local startup business to emerge. Of the \$11.8 Billion impact that outdoor recreation contributes to the state’s GDP annually, more than \$1.7 Billion of that is contributed from manufacturing. This sector also employs over 8,000 people.¹¹

Plan Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation

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

Constant evaluation of the goals, objectives, and action steps in this plan, via regular review sessions with the Strategic Planning team and other community leadership, is critical to ensuring it remains a viable, living document. Scotland Neck will continually monitor progress on how well and successful the region is at managing projects, meeting deadlines, communicating internally and to multiple external audiences, and utilizing the resources available.

The Scotland Neck Outdoor Recreation Plan is a living document used to prioritize the needs of the community and outline the region's objectives. The value of the plan lies with the ability of Scotland Neck to set realistic goals — and implement innovative strategies — against which progress can be measured. It also allows the community to gauge the ongoing product of its local government.

Implementation, evaluation, and modification will be continuous for the plan and Scotland Neck to remain relevant, responsive, and proactive. This strategic effort will provide greater accountability and represents an organization-wide approach to the preservation and enhancement of the quality of life the community enjoys.

The most successful strategic planning efforts approach implementation from a network-based model, versus a more traditional hierarchical model (top-down approach). An Implementation Committee should be appointed to oversee the Town's efforts and to reach out to partners. By working with economic partners such as NC Department of Commerce, Halifax County, and the Upper Coastal Plain Council of Government, Scotland Neck's outdoor recreation plan can leverage resources and capacity. The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center (NC MS&RPC) division of NC Department of Commerce has yearly Actions & Tasks templates to assist the area in measuring progress, and the Implementation Committee should reach out to the Northeast Community Economic Development Planner (NC Commerce) once a year to help evaluate success.

The Implementation Committee will revisit the plan twice yearly (at budget time, and in November) to mark progress and amend the plan as necessary.

Appendix

Implementation Schedule: Actions and Projects with Delineated Tasks

Strategy: Premier Destination for Outdoor Enthusiasts				
Goal 1: Provide access to the town's abundant natural resources and encourage healthy, active lifestyles				
Objective: Increase numbers of people accessing outdoor recreation				
Action 1. Continue to support the Country Roads Bike Tour event by promoting overnight camping, restrooms, and showers on town properties				
Scotland Neck annually hosts the Country Roads Bike Tour, an event held in May that travels along tranquil county roads through pristine farmland and gives participants an amazing view of the Roanoke River Valley. The Bike Tour offers 25-, 50-, and 100-kilometer routes. All courses begin and end in Scotland Neck at the Town Hall. Overnight camping is available on the town grounds and restrooms and showers are available in the auditorium.				
Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Develop a Country Roads Bike Tour website				
2. Evaluate the existing infrastructure on the identified town properties and determine if additional facilities such as restrooms and showers need to be installed or if any upgrades are necessary				
3. Design and implement a marketing and promotional campaign to raise awareness about the camping facilities available on town properties				
4. Request feedback from participants who utilize the camping facilities to gather insights for improvement and use their suggestions to enhance the camping experience and address any concerns				
5. Assess the success and impact of the camping facilities on the Country Roads Bike Tour event. Measure metrics such as participant satisfaction, camping facility occupancy rates, and economic benefits to the town				

Strategy: Premier Destination for Outdoor Enthusiasts

Goal 1: Provide access to the town’s abundant natural resources and encourage healthy, active lifestyles

Objective: Maintain current number of Market on Main events

Action 2. Continue the Market on Main events

Scotland Neck and the Scotland Neck Rising organization host the Market on Main event at the Town Commons every second Thursday of each month. Local vendors who make, bake, grow, and create are encouraged to participate.

Tasks	Responsibility	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Identify and understand the target audience for the Market on Main events by considering demographics, interests, and preferences to tailor marketing messages effectively				
2. Seek feedback from event attendees, vendors, and the community to evaluate their experiences and identify areas for improvement				
3. Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the success of your marketing efforts and track attendance numbers, website traffic, social media engagement, vendor participation, and other relevant metrics to assess the effectiveness of marketing campaigns				
4. Regularly review and adapt your marketing strategies based on the insights gained from data analysis and feedback and stay updated with emerging marketing trends and adjust the approach to maximize the impact of marketing efforts				

Strategy: Premier Destination for Outdoor Enthusiasts

Goal 1: Provide access to the town’s abundant natural resources and encourage healthy, active lifestyles

Objective: Increase health and economic benefits

Action 3. Work to incorporate more participation from farmers to offer farm goods and produce at market

Scotland Neck hosts a Farmers Market that offers fresh, local vegetables, eggs, baked goods, and crafts. The goal of the Farmers Market is to support local small businesses and farmers.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Reach out to the identified farmers through phone calls, emails, or in-person visits to introduce them to the market and discuss the opportunity for their participation				
2. Collaborate with local agricultural organizations, such as farmers' associations, agricultural extension offices, or community-supported agriculture groups by seeking their assistance in connecting with farmers and promoting the market as a viable platform for showcasing their products				
3. Organize educational sessions, cooking demonstrations, or tastings at the market to educate customers about the benefits of locally grown produce and farm goods				
4. Continuously engage with participating farmers, gather their feedback, and address any concerns or challenges they may face by maintaining regular communication to foster a sense of community and ensure their continued participation in the market				

Strategy: Premier Destination for Outdoor Enthusiasts

Goal 1: Provide access to the town's abundant natural resources and encourage healthy, active lifestyle

Objective: Add additional river access points

Action 4. Develop an additional river access point upriver from NCWR Access US 258

Along the Roanoke River, access points are spaced approximately 17 miles from each other. While having several river access points is a strength for the community, many paddleboat users will not be able to participate in a half-day excursion on the river and its tributaries. Developing another access point approximately 5-7 miles northwest of NCWR Access on US 258 would provide users to make shorter paddling trips and increasing the numbers of people using the river.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Conduct a survey of the riverbank to identify suitable locations for the additional river access point and consider factors such as accessibility, available space for parking, proximity to the existing access point, and safety considerations				
2. Conduct a feasibility study to assess the potential usage and demand for the additional river access point by considering factors such as the number of boaters or paddlers in the area, recreational activities available on the river, and the economic impact on the community				
3. Work with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission on funding for the new river access point by showing the economic impact on the community and the increase in river users and visitors				

Strategy: Premier Destination for Outdoor Enthusiasts

Goal 2: Create and maintain high-quality facilities

Objective: Develop a walking trail

Action 1. Generate feasibility study for a walking trail from north of town to Sylvan Heights Bird Park

Along the east side of US Hwy 258, the town sidewalk ends just north of Living Water of Life church. A walking trail from the end of the town’s-maintained sidewalk to Sylvan Heights Bird Park (approximately a mile in length) would have a transformative impact on the citizens’ and visitors’ quality of life in the community. Walking is one of the most popular outdoor recreation activities in the Town.

A feasibility study depicting a couple of alternative routes, along with cost estimates, would greatly enhance the Town’s ability to secure funding from state and federal funders.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Develop a one-page project proposal to share with potential funders				
2. Create a list of potential funders and contact them regarding upcoming grant application cycles and hold pre-application meetings				
3. Work with Sylvan Heights Bird Park to establish the best routes that work for the Town and the Bird Park				
4. Leverage Scotland Neck’s participation in the Peanut Belt Rural Planning Organization to enhance the project’s viability and efficacy				
5. Submit walking trail project for consideration in the State Transportation Improvement Plan				

Strategy: Premier Destination for Outdoor Enthusiasts

Goal 2: Create and maintain high-quality facilities

Objective: Measure participation at the town gymnasium

Action 2. Promote the town gymnasium as a primary source of recreation

Located behind the Hattie Staton Senior Center, the town gymnasium has recently been renovated and upgraded for recreational use. The Town desires to increase usage of the facility by all age groups.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Develop a targeted marketing strategy for the town gymnasium to engage residents, schools, community organizations, and businesses				
2. Promote gymnasium features, amenities, and affordability to attract users				
3. Collaborate with local schools, sports teams, fitness trainers, and wellness groups to establish partnerships and encourage their members to utilize the gymnasium				
4. Feature member testimonials and success stories across multiple platforms to showcase the positive impact of the gymnasium on individuals' fitness goals and overall well-being				

Strategy: Premier Destination for Outdoor Enthusiasts

Goal 2: Create and maintain high-quality facilities

Objective: Develop a Recreational Vehicles campground plan

Action 3. Explore development of a Recreational Vehicles campground on town property

The Town of Scotland Neck permits camping on town property during the annual Country Roads Bike Tour event. Campers use the facilities at the nearby Town Auditorium. The Town wishes to explore the development of a Recreational Vehicles campground on the site used for camping for the Bike Tour, to provide a unique amenity to encourage visitors to stay in town overnight.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Conduct a comprehensive market analysis for RV camping by studying local and regional trends, existing campground occupancy rates, and preferences of RV enthusiasts				
2. Perform a thorough feasibility study to assess the viability of establishing an RV campground on town property and evaluate key factors including land availability, necessary infrastructure, potential demand from RV enthusiasts, and legal/regulatory considerations				
3. Consult with relevant stakeholders, including town officials, community members, and local businesses, to gather input and assess the level of support for an RV campground and address any concerns or considerations raised during these discussions				
4. Collaborate with architects, landscape designers, and engineers to develop a comprehensive campground plan, considering elements such as site layout, road access, RV hookups, restroom and shower facilities, recreational amenities, and landscaping				

Strategy: Premier Destination for Outdoor Enthusiasts

Goal 2: Create and maintain high-quality facilities

Objective: Develop a camping platform

Action 4. Add a camping platform near Scotland Neck on the [Roanoke River Paddle Trail](#) and implement Segment 3 of the Roanoke River State Trail Plan

The [Roanoke River State Trail Plan 2022-2027](#) includes 10 segments along 132 miles of the paddle trail. Segment 3, from Tillery to Palmyra (27 miles in length), includes 4 campsites along the river and a proposed access in Bertie County. Scotland Neck seeks \$30,000 to include a camping platform at Roanoke River Partners' Mile Marker 35.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Conduct a site survey along the Roanoke River near Scotland Neck to identify potential locations for the camping platform, including factors such as accessibility, scenic views, proximity to the paddle trail, and availability of amenities such as restroom facilities and potable water				
2. Research and navigate the permitting and approval processes required for constructing the camping platform				
3. Identify and pursue funding opportunities to support the construction of the camping platform. Explore grants, sponsorships, partnerships with local businesses or organizations, and fundraising initiatives to cover the costs associated with design, construction, and maintenance				

Strategy: Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Goal 3: Value and promote sustainable outdoor recreation

Objective: Increase marketing efforts

Action 1. Develop daily itineraries to inform visitors of things to do in Scotland Neck

Daily itineraries provide visitors with a structured plan and suggestions for activities, attractions, and points of interest in the town. By offering curated itineraries, the town can ensure that visitors make the most of their time and have a fulfilling and enjoyable experience during their visit. Visitors often have limited time to explore a town or destination. Daily itineraries help them optimize their time by suggesting a well-planned sequence of activities that are conveniently located and efficiently organized. This way, visitors can make the most of their visit and cover key attractions within their available timeframe.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Identify the main attractions, landmarks, historical sites, natural areas, cultural experiences, and unique features of Scotland Neck				
2. Determine different visitor interests and demographics to create targeted itineraries				
3. Determine the ideal duration for each itinerary, such as half-day or full-day options, depending on the time visitors typically spend in Scotland Neck. Ensure the itineraries are realistic and allow for a comfortable pace				
4. Design user-friendly maps and provide clear directions to guide visitors between attractions. Consider including landmarks, street names, public transportation stops, or any other relevant information to help visitors navigate the town easily				

Strategy: Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Goal 3: Value and promote sustainable outdoor recreation

Objective: Update social media and website regularly

Action 2. Expand social media presence with emphasis on outdoor recreation to implement the marketing plan

The action aims to expand the town's social media presence with a focus on outdoor recreation as part of the marketing plan. This involves increasing the town's visibility and engagement on various social media platforms, highlighting the outdoor recreational opportunities available. By sharing captivating content, collaborating with local enthusiasts, promoting events, and actively engaging with the online community, the town aims to attract and connect with individuals interested in outdoor activities. Through this expansion, the town aims to effectively market its outdoor recreation offerings and inspire visitors to explore and enjoy the natural attractions it has to offer.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Identify the specific target audience for the outdoor recreation focus of the marketing plan. Determine their demographics, interests, and preferences related to outdoor activities to effectively tailor the social media content				
2. Assess the current social media presence of the town, including platforms, followers, engagement metrics, and content strategy. Identify areas for improvement and opportunities to incorporate outdoor recreation content.				
3. Develop a content plan that emphasizes outdoor recreation and showcases the town's natural attractions, parks, trails, waterways, and outdoor events. Include visually appealing photos and videos, informative and engaging captions, and use hashtags and location tags to increase discoverability				

Strategy: Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Goal 3: Value and promote sustainable outdoor recreation

Objective: Increase marketing efforts

Action 3. Collaborate with Halifax Community College Small Business Center on “Great Outdoors” and “Destination Businesses” and Halifax County TDA

The action involves collaborating with Halifax Community College Small Business Center and Halifax County TDA (Tourism Development Authority) on initiatives related to "Great Outdoors" and "Destination Businesses." The collaboration aims to leverage the expertise and resources of these organizations to support small businesses in the outdoor recreation sector and enhance tourism in Halifax County. By working together, they aim to provide valuable assistance, guidance, and resources to businesses in the outdoor industry, fostering their growth and success. Additionally, the collaboration aims to promote Halifax County as a desirable destination for outdoor enthusiasts, showcasing its natural beauty and recreational offerings. Through this partnership, the organizations seek to stimulate economic development, create new opportunities, and attract visitors to explore the great outdoors of Halifax County.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Clearly define the objectives and desired outcomes of the collaboration and determine how the partnership can benefit small businesses in the outdoor and destination sectors, as well as Halifax County's tourism development				
2. Identify specific areas where collaboration can be beneficial, including the sharing of resources, expertise, or conducting joint workshops, training programs, or events focused on supporting small businesses and promoting the "Great Outdoors" and destination businesses				
3. Create a referral system between Halifax Community College Small Business Center and Halifax County TDA and determine how small businesses can be referred to appropriate resources, funding opportunities, or mentorship programs available through these organizations				

Strategy: Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Goal 3: Value and promote sustainable outdoor recreation

Objective: Increase numbers of minority outdoor recreation users

Action 4. Develop an approach to attract minority recreation users

This approach aims to create opportunities and initiatives that specifically cater to and engage minority communities in outdoor activities. The goal is to promote inclusivity, diversity, and equal access to outdoor recreation experiences. By implementing this approach, the intention is to bridge any existing gaps and encourage more participation from minority groups, ensuring they feel welcome, represented, and empowered to explore and enjoy the outdoors.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Conduct research and surveys to understand the barriers that prevent minority communities from participating in outdoor recreation and identify the cultural, socioeconomic, geographic, or accessibility barriers that may exist				
2. Design and develop outdoor recreation programs and activities that cater to the interests and needs of minority communities. This could include nature walks, cultural heritage tours, outdoor skill-building workshops, or community led events that celebrate diversity				
3. Identify and address any accessibility challenges that may hinder minority communities from participating in outdoor recreation				
4. Ensure that marketing materials, websites, and social media content reflect the diversity of the target audience and feature diverse individuals and stories to create a sense of inclusivity and inspire minority communities to engage in outdoor activities				

Strategy: Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Goal 3: Value and promote sustainable outdoor recreation

Objective: Increase awareness and participation in Scotland Neck Historic Walking Tour

Action 5. Promote the [Scotland Neck Historic Walking Tour](#)

The Scotland Neck Historic Walking Tour is a self-guided tour that takes participants on a journey through the rich history and cultural heritage of Scotland Neck, North Carolina. The tour highlights significant landmarks, architectural treasures, and important historical sites within the town. Participants can explore at their own pace, following a designated route while learning about the town's past and the people who shaped its development. The Scotland Neck Historic Walking Tour offers a unique opportunity to immerse oneself in the town's history, appreciate its architectural beauty, and gain a deeper understanding of its cultural significance.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Maintain and improve brochures, flyers, and maps that highlight the key features, historical significance, and route of the walking tour. Include engaging visuals and compelling descriptions to attract interest				
2. Partner with local businesses, such as hotels, restaurants, and shops, to display promotional materials and provide information about the walking tour to their customers and offer cross promotion opportunities to encourage participation				
3. Organize a guided tours to create buzz and generate interest in the walking tour and invite residents, visitors, and media representatives to participate and share their experiences				
4. Track the number of participants, website visits, social media engagement, and visitor feedback to assess the effectiveness of promotional efforts				

Strategy: Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Goal 3: Retain and attract existing and new outdoor recreation opportunities

Objective: Facilitate two new or existing outdoor recreation businesses

Action 1. Measure the number of outdoor recreation businesses

The action involves measuring the number of outdoor recreation businesses. This task aims to quantify and assess the presence of businesses that provide outdoor recreation-related services or products. By gathering this data, it becomes possible to gain insights into the outdoor recreation industry's size and scope within a specific region or area. This information can be valuable for various purposes, such as economic analysis, tourism planning, identifying growth opportunities, and developing strategies to support and promote outdoor recreation businesses.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Clearly define the types of businesses that fall under the category of outdoor recreation. This may include adventure outfitters, equipment rental companies, tour operators, campgrounds, marinas, fishing guides, paddling trail operators, and similar establishments				
2. Develop a survey or interview questionnaire to gather information directly from outdoor recreation businesses				
3. Generate reports and insights based on the collected data to provide a comprehensive overview of the outdoor recreation business landscape. This information can be used for economic analysis, tourism planning, policy development, and supporting the growth and development of the outdoor recreation industry				

Strategy: Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Goal 3: Retain and attract existing and new outdoor recreation opportunities

Objective: Develop 2 short-term lodging options and measure impact of historic tax credits

Action 2. Measure the number of outdoor recreation businesses

The action involves exploring the development of more short-term lodging options by promoting state and federal historic tax credits. This task aims to encourage the utilization of tax credits available for the renovation or restoration of historic properties, which can then be converted into short-term lodging accommodations. By promoting these tax credits, the intention is to incentivize property owners to invest in the preservation and revitalization of historic buildings, while also addressing the need for additional lodging options. This action can contribute to the enhancement of tourism, the preservation of cultural heritage, and the overall economic development of the area.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Identify historic properties within the area that have the potential for conversion into short-term lodging accommodations. This could include buildings with architectural significance, historical value, or cultural relevance				
2. Organize workshops, information sessions, or seminars to educate property owners about the benefits of utilizing historic tax credits for short term lodging development. Highlight successful case studies and demonstrate the positive impact on preservation, tourism, and economic growth				
3. Highlight successful projects that have utilized historic tax credits for short-term lodging development. Share these success stories through marketing materials, local media, websites, and social media channels to inspire other property owners and generate interest in the initiative				

Strategy: Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Goal 3: Retain and attract existing and new outdoor recreation opportunities

Objective: Develop three (3) murals

Action 3. Engage local artists and designers to create three distinct mural designs that reflect Scotland Neck's unique character, culture, and natural surroundings that will be visually striking and serve as a memorable backdrop for visitors' photos

The action involves engaging local artists and designers to create three distinct mural designs that reflect Scotland Neck's unique character, culture, and natural surroundings. These murals are intended to be visually striking and serve as memorable backdrops for visitors' photos. By involving local artists, the goal is to celebrate and showcase the town's identity while enhancing its aesthetic appeal. These murals will not only add beauty to the community but also attract visitors, encourage engagement on social media, and contribute to the overall visitor experience.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Collaborate with community members, stakeholders, and tourism representatives to define the themes and objectives for the murals. Discuss the aspects of Scotland Neck's character, culture, natural surroundings, and outdoor recreation opportunities that should be represented, ensuring they resonate with both locals and visitors				
2. Create a call for proposals, detailing the project requirements, themes, and expectations. Distribute the call widely among the local artistic community through social media, art networks, local or regional art galleries, and community centers				
3. Identify potential funding sources to support the mural creation and installation. Explore grants, sponsorships, or collaborations with local businesses or organizations				

Strategy: Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Goal 3: Retain and attract existing and new outdoor recreation opportunities

Objective: Work with the Senior Center, Senior Games, and Lakeland Center

Action 4. Coordinate activities with the Senior Center, Senior Games, and Lakeland Center to promote dinner, theater, and concerts

The action involves coordinating activities with the Senior Center, Senior Games, and Lakeland Center to promote dinner, theater, and concerts. The goal is to create collaborative partnerships and leverage existing platforms to promote and offer engaging events. By coordinating efforts with these organizations, it becomes possible to provide opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy dinner outings, theater performances, and concerts. This action aims to enhance the social and cultural experiences of residents and visitors, promote community engagement, and support local venues and artists.

Tasks	Responsibility (Name)	In-House or Outsource	Cost / Time	Partners / Assistance
1. Reach out to the Senior Center, Senior Games organizers, and Lakeland Center management to establish partnerships and collaborations. Discuss the shared goals of promoting entertainment and cultural activities				
2. Collaborate with the partners to handle logistics such as venue arrangements, ticketing, reservations for dinner outings, and transportation arrangements if needed				
3. Seek feedback from people who attend the events to assess their satisfaction and gather suggestions for improvement				
4. Establish a framework for ongoing collaboration and coordination with the Senior Center, Senior Games, and Lakeland Center. Regularly communicate and plan future events together, ensuring a continued focus on providing enjoyable and engaging activities				

References

- ¹ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, U.S. and States, 2021. <https://www.bea.gov/news/2022/outdoor-recreation-satellite-account-us-and-states-2021>
 - ² Outdoor Industry Association. 2022 Outdoor Participation Trends Report. <https://outdoorindustry.org/resource/2022-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-28billion-industry/3923846002/>
 - ⁴ Headwaters Economics. Recreation Counties Attracting New Residents and Higher Incomes. <https://headwaterseconomics.org/economic-development/trends-performance/recreation-counties-attract/>
 - ⁵ Outdoor Foundation. 2022 Outdoor Participation Trends Report. <https://outdoorindustry.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/2022-Outdoor-Participation-TrendsReport.pdf>
 - ⁶ NC Complete The Trails Program. <https://trails.nc.gov/state-trails/nc-complete-trails-program>
 - ⁷ U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/roanoke-river>
 - ⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “Physical Inactivity.” <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/factsheets/physical-activity.htm>
 - ⁸ NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office. Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits. <https://www.ncdcr.gov/about-us/history/division-historicalresources/state-historic-preservation-office/restoration-services/historic-rehabilitation-taxcredits>
 - ⁹ Project for Public Spaces. “What is Placemaking.” <https://www.pps.org/placemaking>
 - ¹⁰ VisitNC. 2021 County Level Visitor Expenditures. <https://partners.visitnc.com/economic-impact-studies>
 - ¹¹ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, U.S. and States, 2021. <https://www.bea.gov/news/2022/outdoor-recreation-satellite-account-us-and-states-2021>
-