



**DRAFT RESOLUTION SUPPORTING
THE ISOTHERMAL REGIONAL BICYCLE PLAN**

WHEREAS, cities, towns, and regions around the country are increasingly recognizing the benefits that bicycle-friendly communities offer in terms of quality of life to residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, representatives from counties, municipalities, transportation agencies, planning agencies, bicycling clubs, trail organizations, and multiple NCDOT divisions in the Isothermal region of North Carolina have worked cooperatively for over a year on the Isothermal Regional Bicycle Plan (the Plan) in order to make bicycling a safe and accessible form of transportation and recreation; and

WHEREAS, there were 86 reported bicycle crashes from 2007-2014 that have resulted in 45 or more injuries and three fatalities in the region; and

WHEREAS, the Plan will improve the quality and safety of bicycling through new and improved infrastructure, policies and programs, for all types of bicyclists; and

WHEREAS, the Plan will increase transportation choices by improving connectivity of the bicycle network while increasing accessibility to key destinations throughout the region; and

WHEREAS, BlueCross BlueShield North Carolina has stated that every \$1 investment in trails for physical activity can save about \$3 in medical expenses; and

WHEREAS, the Plan will improve health and wellness by increasing access to bikeways, thereby offering more opportunities for recreation, active transportation, and physical activity; and

WHEREAS, a study from a neighboring county to the Isothermal region (Greenville County, SC) has demonstrated that the Swamp Rabbit Trail's economic impact in the county is approximately \$7 million per year; and

WHEREAS, an East Coast Greenway Alliance study has demonstrated that the 70-mile segment of the East Coast Greenway in the Triangle region of North Carolina generates a baseline economic impact of approximately \$27 million per year; and

WHEREAS, the Plan promotes bicycle-related tourism and economic development for communities in Polk, Rutherford, McDowell and Cleveland Counties; and

WHEREAS, this Plan included an open and participatory process, with over 400 public survey and online mapping comments, with in-person public outreach opportunities in each county; and

County Commissioners

Bryan A. King, *Chairman*
Alan Toney, *Vice Chairman*
Michael Benfield

Eddie Holland
Greg Lovelace

Steve Garrison, *County Manager*
Hazel S. Haynes, *Clerk to the Board*
Richard Williams, *County Attorney*

WHEREAS, 91% of survey respondents said they would be very likely to bike more often if more bicycle lanes physically separated from roadways were available; and

WHEREAS, it is envisioned that a more bicycle-friendly Isothermal region would offer multiple quality of life benefits to residents and visitors by increasing public safety, supporting health and the environment, expanding choices for mobility, and growing the economy and tourism in local communities throughout the region, and;

WHEREAS, supporting this resolution does not replace any local plans nor dedicate any funding, but rather indicates a willingness to support the Plan.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rutherford County Board of Commissioners hereby support the Isothermal Regional Bicycle Plan.

This the 7th day of May 2018.

BY: _____
Bryan A. King, Chairman

ATTEST: _____
Hazel Haynes, Clerk to the Board