

Greenway Master Plan for York County Communities

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Town of Fort Mill
York County Council
York County Regional Chamber
Lake Wylie Marine Commission
Olde English District Tourism Commission

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Executive Summary

This report outlines a means for long-term coordination of greenway and trail development within the county, cities and towns in York County to help promote the preservation and continued improvement of the residents' quality of life. It presents a first-ever plan to integrate all existing and proposed municipal and county trails with additional greenway/trail segments that will together create a comprehensive multi-use network for connecting people, places and destinations to each other and surrounding counties.

This plan is the outcome of a year-long public process spearheaded by the Carolina Thread Trail initiative and supervised by a steering committee of representatives from municipal and county governments as well as interested organizations, businesses and individuals. The Carolina Thread Trail's mission is to bring resources to the 15 county region in the south-central piedmont of North Carolina and the north-central portion of South Carolina in order to create an interconnected trail system with major regional trails designated as The Carolina Thread Trail.

The outcome of the planning process is a map that includes all trails recommended to local governments for inclusion in their trail and greenway plans, as applicable (See Figure A). Trails displayed in purple are those recommended for the Carolina Thread Trail designation and trails in yellow are presented for consideration by local communities wishing to augment or create trail plans to further tie together the people and destinations of York County communities. Together, this map includes 225 miles of existing and potential trails. The routes featured on these maps are $\frac{1}{4}$ mile wide because actual trail alignment will depend upon existing conditions, including the availability of land, rights-of-way, landowner interest and future opportunities.

It is well understood that building a trail system of this scale is no small undertaking. Segments will likely appear one-by-one, and adjustments will be made to the proposed routes as circumstances change and more information becomes available. Similarly, trail development will follow through various arrangements with multiple funding partners. Nevertheless, the following actions are recommended to take this plan from concept to reality in an intentional, coordinated, fair and transparent way, consistent with the planning to date:

- 1) Adopt the plan.** Local governments can adopt this plan to serve as a guideline for developing future proposed connections without committing themselves to funding plan implementation themselves. The adoption procedures vary from community to community depending on existing plans and policies. In each jurisdiction, the planning board (as applicable) should review and recommend to the governing bodies, which in turn must consider, make additional adjustments as needed, and officially incorporate the trail into their land-use plans. It is recommended that regulations be amended to have developers set aside land for trails whenever a development proposal overlaps with the proposed routes, as adopted.
- 2) Build public support for trail implementation.** Advocacy from individuals with a personal and professional interest in these topics is essential. A Trail Advisory Committee should be formed for these leaders to discuss and celebrate progress with public events, share resources/tools, and otherwise coordinate trail planning and development activities. Other organizations can assist in identifying viable trail

opportunities and working with willing landowners to build support and interest in trails and greenways. For example, early collaboration with the arts community as well as county schools and colleges will encourage more partners to become vested in local greenways and the Carolina Thread Trail project. Local public arts councils should be aware of the opportunities inherent in the community trail system and can initiate public / private partnerships for support.

- 3) Complete top priority segments.** With an eye for “readiness,” the steering committee suggests York County communities work on completing segments of trail where there is broad support and access to land. With a caveat that more research is needed into feasibility and that circumstances can change, the committee suggests that the following offer opportunities for priority implementation: (1) Cherokee County line through Kings Mountain State/National Park to the Gaston County line, (2) Lake Wylie Dam to Highway 21 bridge, crossing bridge, then continuing south of the bridge to River Park, and (3) Nations Ford Greenway along Sugar Creek to the Lancaster County line. Communities that are not listed may become priorities as they build support and identify opportunities to work with landowners.
- 4) Knit together funding from a variety of public and private sources.** Trail networks are generally funded by piecing together funding from multiple sources, creating a “funding quilt.” This plan lists local, state, federal and other funding sources, many of which local communities will need to acquire land, construct trails, and operate and maintain these facilities and amenities. The Carolina Thread Trail organization, housed within the Catawba Lands Conservancy, can provide assistance with funding strategies, as well as potential catalytic seed funding for planning and implementation from its private capital campaign.
- 5) Evaluate land or right-of-way acquisition options.** Where public land is not already available or private developers are not already building trails along the planned trail route, conversations with private landowners are recommended to assess their interest in trails through their communities. This will assist with route feasibility and alignment.
- 6) Design, construct and maintain trails.** Communities should work through a public process to determine intended use of the particular segment at issue, and design with that in mind, as well as safety and affordable maintenance.

The University of North Carolina Charlotte Urban Institute recently found that the 15-county region surrounding Charlotte and including York County is losing open space at a rate of forty-one acres per day. There’s not only a risk but also a reality of losing public open space and recreational opportunities. The time is now to create trails that will provide recreational, educational and economic development opportunities, and promote healthy lifestyles while engaging citizens in York County communities through public access and increasing the community’s connection to the region’s vital natural resources.

Chapter 1- Introduction

With oversight provided by a steering committee of municipal, county and interested non-governmental organizations, residents in York County, South Carolina, participated in a locally-driven process to create this Greenway Master Plan. This plan is meant to serve as a guiding document for greenway and trail development within the county, cities and towns in York County.

The Master Plan includes an introduction to the benefits of greenways and trails, a description of current conditions in York County, a summary of the planning process undertaken, a concept map for a network of greenways and trails throughout the county, introduction to the Carolina Thread Trail (CTT) and proposed route, and a description of recommended implementation steps. These action steps are intended to provide ideas for local governments to fund segments and expeditiously put them on the ground.

The Carolina Thread Trail initiative, which has helped to spur the development of this plan, is an effort to encourage 15 counties in the south-central piedmont of North Carolina and the north-central portion of South Carolina to create a large, interconnected trail system that will preserve and increase the quality of life within the local communities. This plan presents a conceptual route for trails throughout the county, some of which will receive the CTT designation. Lands to be incorporated can include prime farmland, wildlife habitat, environmentally fragile lands, open fields and forests.

In general, a greenway is a linear corridor of undeveloped land preserved for recreational use, transportation or environmental protection. A trail is a linear route on land or water with protected status and public access typically for recreation or transportation purposes. For the sake of brevity, the word “trail” will be used throughout this plan to encompass both types of amenities.

Carolina Thread Trail

The Carolina Thread Trail is a regional network of greenways, trails and conserved land that will reach approximately 2.3 million citizens. It will link people, places, cities, towns and attractions. The Thread will help preserve our natural areas and will be a place for the exploration of nature, culture, science and history, for family adventures and celebrations of friendship. It will be for young, old, athlete and average. This is a landmark project, and creates a legacy that will give so much, to so many, for so long.

The scale of The Thread’s connectivity is unparalleled and is based on certain guiding principles and core values: Collaboration, Community Self-Determination, Connectivity, Inclusivity, Leverage, and Respect for the Land and Respect for the Landowners.

- **Collaboration and Self-Determination** – Collaboration and communication among the York County Communities is almost as important as connectivity. The Master Plan aims to encourage a collaborative process by which greenways are conceived and designed in cooperation with adjoining communities in such a way that a regional asset is created out of a series of interrelated local decisions and actions.
- **Connectivity & Inclusivity** – Creating connections between communities and historical, cultural and recreational attractions is important. The Carolina Thread Trail

seeks to create a region known for its “ribbons of green” connecting people to each other and to their heritage. In offering the vision of greater community interaction, the program seeks to build bonds among diverse neighborhoods, as well as afford all residents greater access to our natural surroundings. Through this Master Plan, these goals are established.

- **Leverage** – The Plan’s success depends upon generating additional investment of outside capital in the region’s natural resources. Funding sources at the local, state and federal level are included in **Chapter 5**.
- **Respect for the Land and Landowners** – During the planning process, York County Communities determined the location of their segments of The Thread by having alternative routes to consider that included public lands or property owned by willing landholders, including developers who want to offer this amenity to their neighborhoods. The broad corridors featured present multiple opportunities and adjustments to the route can be incorporated as more landowners are engaged. Expert trail builders indicate that trails are built by assimilating parcels over time in this fashion and that eminent domain is very rarely used.

Through an inclusive, collaborative process, each county and the communities within that county decide where their local trail systems will connect and become part of The Thread. However, not all local trails and greenways will become part of the Carolina Thread Trail. Analogous to our highway systems, The Thread will develop as a "green interstate" focused on linking local trails and regionally significant attractions. Other trails will continue to exist or be planned but may not receive the Carolina Thread Trail designation. Local trails will retain their own identities, whether or not they are designated as part of The Thread.

The look and feel of the Carolina Thread Trail may vary from community to community and county to county. Designation as the Carolina Thread Trail will signify that a particular trail is part of a plan to create an interconnected system, a plan created by local communities working together with their neighbors to identify connection points and to build trails that will grow together over time.

Chapter 2- Greenway Benefits

Trails not only encourage friends, families and communities to interact with each other and nature, they also provide a venue for physical activities such as walking, jogging, running, skating and biking. The benefits of these activities are significant and far reaching.

Health

A landmark report by the U.S. Surgeon General found that "Americans can substantially improve their health and quality of life by including moderate amounts of physical activity in their daily lives." It also found that "health benefits appear to be proportional to the amount of activity; thus, every increase in activity adds some benefit." Several studies have found that access to public green spaces increases physical activity levels.

A growing body of research suggests that mere contact with the natural world improves psychological health. Green settings have been shown to relieve feelings of anxiety and improve our ability to cope with stressful situations. In some cases, natural spaces provide therapy for conditions such as Attention Deficit Disorder and improve cognitive function and work performance. In addition, greenways, trails and parks provide safe places for kids to play, which is vital in the brain development of young children.

Trails also provide safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists to travel. This separation from traffic can reduce the number of vehicle-pedestrian and vehicle-bicyclist related accidents.

Economic

The economic benefits of The Thread to York County will be numerous. According to an economic impact study completed by Econsult, Inc. and Greenways, Inc. in February 2007 (with funding from the Women's Impact Fund), homes in the affected area of the Carolina Thread Trail are estimated to increase at least 4 percent in value. York County trails are expected to not only bring new visitors and tourists to the region and inject new dollars into the local economy, but also promote connectivity between tourist destinations for visitors, as well as local residents.

Including development costs, the construction investment over the next 15-year period throughout the 15-county region for The Thread alone is estimated at over \$100 million. This investment will generate significant economic benefits, including jobs for the local communities and the region.

Information from industry professionals and site selection firms supports the significance of greenspace and trails for business development and attraction. York trails will create a strong draw for young professionals choosing to reside in or relocate to the area.

Environmental

The establishment of trails can restore natural corridors within already densely populated regions and preserve them in areas soon to be developed. This is particularly important in rapidly growing areas like the Charlotte region where substantial growth can be positive from an economic standpoint, but it places a very serious strain on the area's natural resources such as water and air quality, open space and wildlife habitats.

If current growth trends continue, treasured natural areas will disappear as vast tracts of land are developed into urban areas in the next twenty years. It is critical that our communities band together now to help preserve natural areas for the health and sustainability of future generations.

Green space created by these natural corridors helps to mitigate storm-water runoff and encourages water table recharge. It also serves as a natural filter, trapping pollutants from urban runoff, eroding areas and agricultural lands in order to keep our water supplies healthy.

Tree cover provided by these trails contributes to air quality by removing substantial amounts of particulate matter and carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Trails also encourage non-motorized means of transportation, which can significantly reduce air pollutants derived from mobile sources. Eastern York County is currently within a non-attainment area for ozone pollution under the federal Clean Air Act. Reducing overall vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) will

help to decrease the amount of pollutants emitted that contribute to formation of ozone in the atmosphere. Projects like the Carolina Thread Trail will enhance the pedestrian environment and facilitate walking and biking, which is a critical component to meeting our emissions reductions target. The net benefits to the community are the reduced levels of VMT, which leads to reduced pollutants, thus making the air safer to breathe.

Greenways, trails and conservation corridors help to preserve habitat for many plants, insects and animals that are so important and unique to this region. Creative interpretation of specific environmental attributes throughout the trail system will educate the casual visitor and inspire continued environmental stewardship. Conserving the natural environment that surrounds us is an important piece of the legacy that we will leave behind for our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Cultural

Because the emphasis is on empowering local communities and weaving them together, The Thread could be considered a "civic engagement project dressed in greenway clothes" and will help to build stronger communities in many ways.

The Thread will provide connections for adjoining neighborhoods and social centers such as schools, churches, cultural institutions and other community facilities. It will help to reinforce the identity of neighborhoods through greenway design by incorporating public art, recognizing local history, and creating landmark open spaces.

As a free, accessible community asset, The Thread will offer opportunities for recreation and exercise to everyone, including children, youth and families who might not be able to afford them elsewhere. They also provide a safe place for people to experience a sense of community and create stronger social and familial ties.

By preserving green spaces from development, The Thread will provide safe places for our children to play outside with others from surrounding communities and create awareness of each other, as well as of the natural world.

As a tangible project that links people and places, The Thread will encourage communities, leaders and municipalities to build partnerships. It will provide a framework and "pathway" for future regional initiatives and will encourage communities to act locally while thinking regionally.

Transportation

Trails serve as highways for alternate means of transportation. As gas prices continue to rise, commuters are looking for transportation alternatives. If given the option, more people would use trails and greenways to commute. The Carolina Thread Trail and local York County trails will give citizens this option.

According to a 1990 National Personal Transportation Survey, more than half of all commuter trips and three out of four shopping trips are less than five miles in length (ideal for bicycling), with forty percent of all trips being less than two miles. Persons who would ordinarily drive to these places will be presented with another mode of travel, thus helping to keep cars in driveways instead of on the road.

Chapter 3- Existing Conditions

Geography of the Study Area/Land Cover

The county is centrally located within the Carolina Piedmont region. The northern border is considered part of the Charlotte Metropolitan Area. Overall, the county is rural in character and is divided by two major drainage basins and their tributaries; the Broad River Basin, which is located on the western border, and the Catawba River Basin, which is on the eastern border. Within the county there are four basic land types; grasslands, rock lands, wetlands, and woodlands that make up the diverse habitat. York County’s stretch of the Catawba River is rich with wildlife, as much of the land bordering it remains wooded and natural.

Population

Census estimates show that between 2000 and 2007 York County’s population increased by 26 percent. Between 2006 and 2007 it increased by 5 percent, making it the fastest growing county during this time period.¹ This trend is expected to continue for the next 20 years, especially along major highways and incorporated areas.²

| | York,SC | Union,NC | Mecklenburg,NC | Gaston,NC | Cabarrus, NC |
|-----------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Population | 208,827 | 175,272 | 827,445 | 199,397 | 156,395 |
| Population Growth since 200 | 26% | 42% | 19% | 5% | 19% |
| Hispanic/Latino Population | 3% | 9% | 10% | 5% | 8% |
| White Population | 77% | 82% | 60% | 79% | 81% |
| Black or African American | 19% | 12% | 30% | 14% | 15% |

Source: US Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

Between 2000 and 2005 the Cities of Fort Mill, Clover, and Rock Hill all had population rate increases of over 7 percent. Fort Mill grew the most with a 27 percent increase and the city of Rock Hill followed with a rate increase of 10 percent.³

| | 2000 | 2005 | % Change |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Clover | 4,014 | 4,309 | 7% |
| Fort Mill | 7,587 | 9,632 | 27% |
| Rock Hill | 49,765 | 54,617 | 10% |
| York | 6,985 | 7,128 | 2% |

Economy

¹ South Carolina Association of Counties – County Profiles

² York County 2025 Comprehensive Plan, Open Space Element, p. 1-4

³ US Census Bureau

York County has evolved from a manufacturing economy into a warehousing-oriented, finance, insurance, real estate and service economy.⁴ The top 10 largest employers in the county are Rock Hill, Clover and Fort Mill School Districts, Wells Fargo Bank N A, AMISUB of South Carolina Inc (healthcare), Duke Energy Corporation, BoWater Incorporated (paper and pulp producer), Winthrop University, CitiFinancial Inc, and INA USA Corporation (manufacturer).

The municipalities of Clover and York were once known as textile centers. However, there is only one mill still operating. Many localities have a growing interest in economic development that will increase the standard of living and increase heritage tourism. The hospitality tax supports heritage tourism, downtown revitalization, and gateway development.⁵

Between 2005 and 2006 the county job growth rate was 5.2 percent. The unemployment rate in 2006 was 6.4 percent, higher than neighboring areas, (Table 3) and is projected to increase, although it may be curbed as a result of new industry coming to the area.

| | York, SC | Union, NC | Mecklenburg, NC | Gaston, NC | Cabarrus, NC |
|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Poverty-Rate | 8.4% | 5% | 8.4% | 9.9% | 8.4% |
| Median Household Income | \$45,739 | \$59,125 | \$51,945 | \$42,410 | \$49,562 |
| Unemployment Rate | 6.4% | 4% | 4.5% | 5.5% | 4.1% |

Source: US Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey and the S.C. Association of Counties and the N.C. Department of Commerce - 2006 Unemployment figures

York County’s median household income is lower than Cabarrus, Mecklenburg and Union Counties, however it is larger than Gaston’s and the state of South Carolina, which is \$41,400 (Table 3).

Development Trends

The University of North Carolina Charlotte Urban Institute, a non-partisan applied research and community outreach center, found that the 15-county region surrounding Charlotte and including York County is losing open space at a rate of forty-one acres per day.⁶ The county projected that by 2025 the housing stock will more than double that of 2004, creating approximately 60,000 additional housing units.⁷ Much of the development occurring from these growth pressures can be characterized by low-density, single-family subdivisions and isolated rural settlements. As a result there has been an increase in traffic congestion and a loss of air and water quality as well as the development of rural, agricultural and vacant lands.⁸ Traffic congestion and lack of public open space and recreational opportunities are highlighted in the planning documents for the following cities: Fort Mill, Tega Cay, Rock Hill and York.

Also, a common trend throughout the county is the need to keep development out of floodplain areas, which are currently major drainage systems. As a result, these areas have been highlighted as opportunities for developing a greenway system. In its Comprehensive Plan, the county suggests that stream buffers and floodplains could provide a framework for developing greenways and that public access could be obtained through the development of a trail system.

⁴ York County 2025 Comprehensive Plan, Economic Development Element, p.3

⁵ City of York Comprehensive Plan, 2005; p. 18-24

⁶ IBID, Natural Resources Element, p. 11

⁷ IBID, Housing Element, p.2

⁸ IBID, Open Space Element, p.1

Existing Parks and Trails

Park and recreation needs are currently being met largely through facilities and resources offered by municipalities. The county operates only one park, Ebenezer Park on Lake Wylie. In interviews conducted by the County, residents noted that when parkland is compared to state and national standards York is short “on availability and virtually all types of active recreation facilities.”⁹ Municipalities operate the following:

The Town of Clover’s Community Park features a playground, ball fields, walking trail and a basketball court. Roosevelt Park features two basketball courts, a picnic shelter, a playground and ball fields.

The City of York has one mile of paved trail connecting downtown to the York Recreation Complex, and a one-mile trail around City Park. In addition, there are seven neighborhood parks totaling fifty acres.¹⁰ Near York, in historic Brattonsville 720 acres of natural area are preserved.

The City of Rock Hill’s existing trails run approximately 21.24 miles and are dispersed throughout the city.¹¹ The longest contiguous trail is the Airport Loop Multi-Purpose Trail at 4.2 miles. In addition, there is a canoe trail along the Catawba River, covering approximately six miles.¹² Rock Hill’s 2008 Trails and Greenway Master plan proposes another 26.55 miles of greenway trails, 31.64 miles of multi-purpose trails and 20.85 miles of sidewalk.¹³

The Town of Fort Mill’s primary trail system is the proposed Nation Ford Greenway, a 30-mile loop envisioned around Fort Mill, bordering Sugar Creek and the Catawba River. Fort Mill operates five park and recreation facilities: Harris Street Park, Steele Street Park, Confederate Park, Doby Bridge Park, and the Spratt Building. The Anne Springs Close Greenway (see below) is also in Fort Mill. A new museum is planned to be built on the banks of the Catawba River. It will have connections to the Nation Ford Greenway and the Carolina Thread Trail.

The City of Tega Cay operates approximately eight miles of paved trails and is planning to extend the trail system to the new museum property and to connect to the Nation Ford Greenway. There are three parks with baseball and soccer fields and four waterfront parks with boat launching areas. A new park is planned on the Catawba River that will connect to the Gardendale subdivision of Tega Cay.

The ***State of South Carolina*** operates Kings Mountain State Park, which encompasses land in York and Cherokee Counties. It is adjacent to the Kings Mountain National Military Park.

The federal government operates Kings Mountain National Military Park and has jurisdiction over the Catawba Indian Reservation. Kings Mountain National Military Park is managed by the National Park Service and is located in the Clover/Kings Mountain planning sector. It is the third largest military park in the nation. The State Park is adjacent to the

⁹ IBID, Community Facilities Element, p.1 and p. 38

¹⁰ City of York Comprehensive Plan, p. 33 and 36

¹¹ *City of Rock Hill 2008 Trails and Greenways Master Plan Update*, Adopted April, 2008, p. 15.

¹² Id., p. 17.

¹³ Id., p. 42.

National Park. The Bureau of Indian Affairs has authority over the Catawba Indian Reservation, which is located in the Rock Hill planning sector of the county.¹⁴

Privately owned but open to the public, the *Anne Springs Close Greenway* consists of 2,300 acres located north of the Town of Fort Mill. The property contains oak-hickory dogwood forests, lakes and rolling pastures, which provide hiking trails for cycling and horseback riding, picnic and campsite areas, a fishing reservoir and a nature center. There are several historically significant buildings, including “Springfield” (c.1806) built by John Springs on land leased from the Catawba Indians. Members of the public can rent facilities for both formal and informal events, as well as recreation and educational events.

This plan seeks to highlight York County’s tremendous resources and rich history, and take advantage of its existing trails as described in this section, to connect people to special places within the county and to neighboring counties.

Community Plans

Planning documents from local municipalities and York County share many of the same goals for open space and trails. One is the desire to integrate existing public facilities and infrastructure with new trails into communities. Several documents identify floodplains as key areas for linking a trail system and often mention the Nation Ford Greenway and the Anne Springs Close Greenway as additional opportunities. In addition, many communities mention re-writing regulations. The City of York, for example, anticipates amending regulations in the near future to add open space and greenway dedication requirements.

Destinations

Citizens of York County currently drive, walk or bike to numerous destinations throughout the community. Whether it be from home to work, school or shopping, it is important to make these connections by way of the proposed county-wide greenway system. Through public input sessions that were held during this planning process, the following destinations were mentioned most frequently. A full list can be found in **Appendix I**.

A. Specific Destinations:

- Historic Brattonsville
- Museum of Life and the Environment (anticipated)
- Kings Mountain
- Crowder’s Mountain
- Nanny’s Mountain
- Worth Mountain
- Catawba River
- Anne Springs Close Greenway
- Catawba Indian Reservation

B. General Destinations:

- Historical/cultural sites
- Parks and recreation centers

¹⁴ York County 2025 Comprehensive Plan, Cultural Resources Element, p. 4

- Schools
- High population areas/services
- Business parks
- Waterways
- Cemeteries

Chapter 4- Proposed Trail Networks

Planning Process

What follows is a description of the planning process chronology for York County communities that resulted in the recommended conceptual route featured in this plan.

January 2008: A steering committee with representation from the county; local cities and towns; and local environmental and cultural resource conservation organizations met to agree upon a process for developing cross-county trail connections and a preferred Carolina Thread Trail route in York County that would maximize community input.

March 2008: There were four community listening sessions across York County. Residents identified destinations they wanted to connect, explained what they'd like to see along trails, and voiced concerns. Namely, they were interested in maximizing outreach and putting safe trail legs on the ground at a low cost and with willing landowners. **Appendix I** contains a summary of public input received.

April 2008: A technical team of local experts used GIS software to map alternative routes for trails. They sought to develop scenarios that would minimize concerns identified by residents, maximize connections identified in the community listening sessions, and provide equitable trail access to people of all backgrounds.

June 2008: Representatives from the surrounding counties were invited to view alternative scenarios and advise on the best way for trails to cross into neighboring counties.

Meanwhile, volunteers worked in teams to groundtruth proposed segments where impediments and opportunities were not well known,¹⁵ to assess whether these segments were aesthetically pleasing and physically feasible.

July 2008: Alternative scenarios were unveiled in two public open houses and participants were asked to recommend segments for inclusion in the CTT route through York County. Members of the public were also invited to view these scenarios by appointment at the York County government building. Community survey results are summarized in **Appendix II**.

¹⁵ Groundtruthing is the practice of physically walking sections of land to observe any characteristics that might not be reflected in the GIS data and record any obstacles or reasons that the specific route (or routes, as multiple routes are often available within the ¼ mile wide swath that appears on the concept maps) might not be suitable or that alternative alignments may be necessary.

September 2008: The York County steering committee evaluated community input and agreed upon preferred Thread Trail connections and other trails for York County to recommend in this plan.

Greenway Master Plan

Figure A represents all of the trails designated during this planning process. This map includes 225 miles of existing and potential trails to create a comprehensive network across York County.

Carolina Thread Trail Routes

Figure B represents the trails that were considered to be regionally significant, therefore qualifying for the Carolina Thread Trail designation. Analogous to our highway systems, The Thread will develop as a "green interstate" focused on linking local trails and regionally significant attractions.

The proposed conceptual route featured in **Figure B** is the ¼ mile wide purple line that weaves 127 miles through the county and connects north to Gaston County; south to Chester County; east to Lancaster and Mecklenburg; and west to Cherokee County. The trail itself will be narrower, but this conceptual route includes an "opportunity" swath in recognition that as communities determine the exact location of their segments of The Thread, they will need alternatives that include public lands or property owned by willing landholders, including developers who want to offer this amenity to their neighborhoods.

The trail connects eleven regional destinations, including: Kings Mountain National Military Park, Camp Cherokee, Henry's Knob, Worth Mountain, Nanny's Mountain, Allison Creek Boat Landing, Glencarin Gardens, Museum of Life and the Environment, the Anne Springs Close Greenway, and the Catawba Indian Nation. The Trail also serves about 25 percent of the schools in York County (is within ¼ mile of 14 out of 54 schools).

This conceptual route includes about 8 miles of existing trails, and it incorporates 50 miles of trails that were already proposed by local governments in York County.

In sum, this map features about 70 miles of new proposed trails. These are trail routes that are brand new to the county and municipalities within York County. About 50 percent (34/70) would be along rail corridors, 10 percent (7/70) would be along road rights-of-way, 20 percent (14/70) along streams and river corridors, and 5 percent (4/70) along utility rights-of-way.

Six of the ten municipalities in the county would be connected by The Thread. Twenty-five percent of residents live within ½ mile of the proposed trail route (50,000 out of 200,000). About 25 percent of seniors and children live within that service area, and about 29 percent of low-income households (defined as households with combined income of less than \$35,000 per year, based on 2007 census projections).

Chapter 5- Recommended Actions For Implementation

Adopt the Plan

The adoption procedures vary from community to community depending on existing plans and policies. In each jurisdiction, the planning board (as applicable) should review and recommend the plan to its governing body, which in turn must consider, make additional adjustments as needed, and officially incorporate the trail into its land-use plans.

An analysis of the planning documents shows that the local governments repeatedly mention adopting policies to create incentives and regulations to promote the development of greenways. It is recommended that local regulations be amended to ensure that, as developments are planned and reviewed, adequate open space and greenway corridors identified by this plan are protected. This would entail amending zoning or subdivision ordinances to have developers set aside land for trails whenever a development proposal overlaps with the proposed routes, as adopted. The trail dedication language should require dedication of trail easements that reinforce the contiguous route identified on adopted trail maps (while also encouraging them to construct the trails), and may permit payment in-lieu for certain circumstances. As an example, see Rock Hill Zoning Ordinance, Article 6 (Development and Design Standards), Section 6-60o: General Open Space Standards.

| Phase I (Plan Adoption) | Priority |
|---|----------|
| Review and recommendation(s) by any municipalities' advisory board(s) | High |
| Review and adoption of the Greenway Master Plan by the governing board(s) | High |
| Consider reviewing and amending the current zoning or subdivision ordinances to require dedication of trail easements for new development | Medium |
| Consider reviewing and amending the floodplain ordinance to strictly limit the construction of structures in floodplains | Medium |
| Consider reviewing and amending the zoning or subdivision development ordinance to protect riparian buffer corridors | Medium |
| Consider reviewing the current open space and land dedication requirement(s) and payment in lieu policies/ordinances | Medium |

High Priority- Within 1 Year

Medium Priority- Within 2-5 Years

Low Priority- Within 6-10 Years

Build Public Support

Leadership from individuals in York County communities during the adoption and implementation campaign is essential to move the trail from concept to reality. These individuals will help advocate for the trail, and in their professional and personal capacity will seek out opportunities to utilize synergies with other projects, individuals and organizations to keep the trail as a priority in the ever-present competition for resources.

It is advised that the steering committee for the planning process be reconstituted as a Trail Advisory Committee and new leaders be invited to join, with an eye towards accomplishing the tasks that lie ahead. The Trail Advisory Committee should be a forum for leaders to convene periodically to discuss progress, share resources/tools, and otherwise coordinate trail planning and development activities. The group should brainstorm specific benchmarks to track, and honor their completion with public events and media coverage. These benchmarks should be revisited and revised periodically. A subset of the group should coordinate a public information

campaign to assist in celebrating these successes and otherwise raise awareness of the trail system and its benefits.

These leaders and other municipal and county participants are also encouraged to form partnerships with organizations that can assist in identifying viable trail opportunities and working with willing landowners to build support and interest in trails and greenways. For example, the Gaston Arts Council can be a significant partner as it already helps facilitate programming through a variety of member organizations, linking the community to the county's history and natural resources.

| Phase II (Build Public Support) | Priority |
|--|----------|
| Building off the existing steering committee developed to create this master plan, establish a Trail Advisory Committee to promote greenway development and advise the governing group on related issues | High |
| Conduct a public information campaign to advertise trail successes and future trail plans | Medium |
| Form partnerships with regional non-profit organizations that can move quickly to procure open space and trail opportunities | Medium |

High Priority- Within 1 Year

Medium Priority- Within 2-5 Years

Low Priority- Within 6-10 Years

Complete Top Priority Segments

Once adopted by the county, towns and cities through which the proposed Carolina Thread Trail weaves, CTT staff can assist communities as they develop implementation funding strategies, including potential catalytic Thread grants. The first step is determining which segment to focus on. The Steering Committee suggests a prioritization, based on its understanding of trail creation readiness throughout the county as of the fall of 2008. With a caveat that more research is needed into feasibility and that circumstances are likely to change, the committee offers this list only as a first attempt to evaluate current opportunities across the study area.

With these caveats in mind, the committee encourages communities, as they adopt the Carolina Thread Trail into existing and new related plans, to consider focusing resources on developing the following segments:

Segments to consider for implementation in years 1-4 (12.3 miles total) in no specific order:

- Cherokee County line through Kings Mountain State/National Park to the Gaston County line
- Lake Wylie Dam to Highway 21 bridge, crossing bridge, then continuing south of the bridge to River Park
- Nation Ford Greenway along Sugar Creek to the Lancaster County line

Segments to consider for implementation in years 4-8 (26.6 miles total) in no specific order:

- Clover to Gaston County line
- McConnells to Chester County line
- Rock Hill city limits to York
- Rock Hill NE past the airport to the city limits

- CSX line to Chester County

| Phase III (Prioritization) | Priority |
|---|----------|
| Review priority segments identified in the plan | High |
| Identify and maximize local trail opportunities through the development plan review process, open space acquisition, and floodplain regulations | Medium |
| Review current and future utility corridors/easements for local greenway opportunities | Medium |
| Establish criteria for trail priorities (i.e. cost, length of trail, location, conservation benefit, etc.) | Medium |
| Discuss and rank greenway priorities based on agreed upon criteria | Medium |
| Consider developing and recommending a multi-year, dedicated funding source to support greenway acquisition and stewardship | Medium |
| Consider developing an acquisition plan based on priority segments and the current Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) | Medium |

High Priority- Within 1 Year

Medium Priority- Within 2-5 Years

Low Priority- Within 6-10 Years

Identify Funding

A funding quilt is the combination of funding sources — federal, state, local and private — that are brought together to help achieve trail acquisition and development. Eventually, a funding quilt will be needed to achieve the objectives outlined in this plan. This can include both public and private funding.

1. Private Funding

Private funding from individual donors and foundations may be available to supplement public funding sources. The Carolina Thread Trail organization, housed within the Catawba Lands Conservancy, is spearheading a private fundraising campaign to make seed dollars available to communities in the form of grants for not only trail planning, but also design, acquisition, and construction of individual trail projects that follow in the heels of the planning process. These, along with other potential local funds, can provide catalytic dollars that communities will weave into a funding quilt.

2. Public Funding

a. Federal Funding Options:

Federal programs are described in **Appendix III**. Trail-related programs appear at the top of the list, and many other programs are included that do not relate directly to trails but may be used to help fund trail creation in certain instances. They are all administered by federal agencies but vary in how funds are delivered for on the ground trail projects. For example, some of these program funds are directed to the states,

which in turn decide what projects to fund, while other program funds are granted by a federal agency through a competitive process. In still other cases, Congress may “earmark” funds for individual projects. The descriptions provided are meant to provide a broad overview of funding sources.

b. State Funding Options:

Most statewide conservation funding provided to local governments comes through the state’s real estate transfer tax, which is allocated between the Heritage Trust Program and the Conservation Bank Act.¹⁶ The state receives \$1.30 per \$500; approximately eight percent of the real estate transfer tax is allocated to the Heritage Trust. The Conservation Bank Act receives \$9 million per year from the real estate transfer tax and is the only grant program that provides funding to local governments for trail acquisition. However, the bank is not set up so that specific amounts are allocated for trail development. Below is a more detailed description of both programs.

Other conservation funding provided in South Carolina is through the Conservation Incentives Act and the Park and Recreation Development Fund. Under the Conservation Incentives Act, landowners may qualify for an income tax deduction and credit if the land or conservation easement donation qualifies for a charitable tax deduction under federal tax law. In addition to the state income tax deduction, The South Carolina Conservation Incentives Act allows a state tax credit of 25 percent of the fair market value of the donation, with a cap of \$250 per acre and an annual limit of \$52,500. Any unused portion may be carried forward indefinitely. The landowner may sell, gift, or transfer the credit with written approval from the South Carolina Department of Revenue.

The Park and Recreation Development Fund was established by the General Assembly in 1987 and is administered by The Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism. It is a non-competitive program that provides grants to local governments for the improvement of public park and recreation facilities. This does not include funding for land acquisition. Local governments are required to provide a 20 percent match for all projects.

South Carolina Heritage Trust Program

The South Carolina Heritage Trust Program was created in 1976 to help prevent habitat loss by protecting critical endangered species sites through land acquisition. Enabling legislation directed the Department of Natural Resources, in concert with other state agencies, to set aside a system of heritage preserves to be protected for the benefit of present and future generations.¹⁷ The program succeeded initially through a combination of property donations and federal grants. In subsequent years, federal funding decreased. State funding for acquiring heritage preserves was added to the act in 1986, using part of the real estate transfer tax¹⁸ to create the Heritage Land Trust Fund.

Land Conservation Bank Act

¹⁶ South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism also provides grants through the Recreation Trails Program, which is a federal funding program described in Appendix III.

¹⁷ (Sec. 51-17-20, 1976 S.C. Code of Laws)

¹⁸ (Sec. 51-17-115)

In 2000, South Carolina began the Land Legacy Initiative, which established the need for a dedicated funding source to acquire environmentally sensitive lands. Many citizens and elected officials realized a need to preserve greenways, open space, and parks in urban areas in order to promote balanced growth as well as the importance of preservation of, and public access to wildlife habitats, natural areas, historical sites, sites of unique ecological significance, forestlands, farmlands, watersheds, open space, and urban parks as an essential element in the orderly development of the State. The initiative also aimed to encourage cooperation and innovative partnerships among landowners, state agencies, municipalities, and non-profit organizations to work together in order to meet these objectives.

The South Carolina General Assembly, in a bipartisan effort, passed the South Carolina Conservation Bank Act. The Act was signed and ratified by the Governor in April 2002. Though the Act was passed in 2002, funding, derived through the real estate transfer tax, did not begin until July 2004. The Bank established a grant application process in fiscal year 2004-05 and funded its first projects in 2005. A local match is encouraged but not required.

c. Local Funding Options:

For this section, discussion is focused primarily on opportunities at the county level, and cities and towns are also encouraged to investigate methods for raising dollars locally for trail projects.

York County currently dedicates 1 tax mil to York County Forever (a local land preservation organization), and raising the amount of revenue dedicated would be a boon to open space initiatives in the county. York County could increase the amount of dedicated revenue for the existing York County Forever program. Based on taxable valuation for fiscal year 2006-2007, a 5 - mill increase would generate approximately \$4.6 million per year and would cost the average homeowner about \$29 per year.¹⁹ This funding option can provide a significant revenue stream for land acquisition as well as ongoing costs of operations and maintenance, but it does not guarantee a long-term source of funding as budget priorities could change over time.

Another option for local governments is bonding. One benefit of a bond issue is that it provides up front funds that allow for the immediate purchase of land and distributes the cost of acquisition over time so that future beneficiaries also share in the cost burden of acquiring land. For example, York County has capacity under existing debt limits to issue general obligation bonds for parks and trail purposes. Based on an analysis performed in 2008, if the county passed a general obligation bond referendum, a \$70 million bond for trail creation would add about \$5,616,981 million to the county's annual debt service and cost the average homeowner roughly \$35 per year in additional property taxes over the life of the bond. **Appendix IV** contains examples of recent local bond measures in South Carolina.

It is possible that York County could also use sales tax revenue to develop trails. State law also allows voters to approve a 1 percent Local Option Sales Tax and a 1 percent

¹⁹ Figures in this section are estimated based on information available in 2008.

special local sales tax.²⁰ York County’s current Capital Projects Sales and Use Tax Program is called “Pennies for Progress.” All program revenue is presently used to improve the road system in York County. Because the county currently imposes a capital projects sales tax it does not have the authority to use another special local sales tax to finance land conservation and trail development until after the current capital projects sales tax expires in 2010. ²¹ The next Pennies for Progress program will likely come up for a referendum vote in 2009, and it is possible that the program could include funding for trails and greenways if worded accordingly and approved by voters.

At the municipal or county level, capital improvement dollars may also be raised for trails through a park impact fee program. Impact fees are commonly used to help defray costs of new roads, water and sewer treatment, schools, parks, and other infrastructure necessitated by new development. Under this type of program, impact fees are charged against new development to generate revenue to pay for the particular type of capital improvement, in this case park and trail infrastructure. Under South Carolina law, the local government or special purpose district must have a comprehensive plan or a capital improvements plan to impose impact fees. There are a number of state laws related to establishing impact fee programs, including guidance (and limitations) on how to calculate the fee.²² In FY 2000, municipalities in South Carolina generated about \$12 million in impact fees.²³

| Phase IV (Identify Funding Sources) | Priority |
|--|----------|
| Pursue all avenues of grants from local, state, federal and non-governmental funding sources | High |
| Consider local bonds to pay for greenway acquisition, design, construction, and maintenance expenses | Medium |

High Priority- Within 1 Year

Medium Priority- Within 2-5 Years

Low Priority- Within 6-10 Years

Evaluate Land or Right-of-Way Acquisition Options

Methods of land acquisition could include any of the following:

- **Donations** – land or easements (the right to use a portion of land for certain purposes, as defined in a contract, while fee simple ownership is retained) can be donated to a local government or a local land trust by private citizens or business owners, which in turn can generate a tax reduction for them. See Conservation Incentives Act in funding section above for a description of incentives for landowners in South Carolina to provide easements. Details should be confirmed with a qualified tax advisor.

²⁰ S.C. Statutes. § 4-10-20.

²¹ SC Code 4-10-10 through 4-10-100.

²² See Article 9 of Title 6 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, which contains the “South Carolina Development Impact Fee Act.”

²³ Holley Hewitt Ulbrich, “Funding Government in South Carolina: Fees and Charges,” from Public Policy and Practice, USC Institute for Public Service and Policy Research, January 2003, available at: <http://ipspr.sc.edu/ejournal/assets/fees%20and%20charges.pdf>, p. 6.

- **Purchase** – this method is probably the most common method of acquiring land, and land trusts can often help acquire land at less than fair market value.
- **Zoning/Development Regulations** – buffers along certain stream corridors in South Carolina are already protected in order to prevent building intrusion into sensitive areas which in turn may be used for some trail corridors. Additional development regulations can also be adopted that create building restrictions and dedication requirements. Examples of these requirements include, but are not limited to, setbacks from perennial streams, flood plain development restrictions and open space/trail dedication requirements.
- **Developer Contributions** – Once the conceptual route in **Figure A** is officially incorporated into community plans, it can be included in GIS layers for local governments. As discussed previously, if a developer applies for a permit for a development and it overlaps with any of the proposed trail connections, local governments can require or offer incentives for an open space set aside or for that portion of the trail corridor to be developed as part of the subdivision approval process. The trail will be a marketing benefit to the developer and will in turn allow them to charge a higher premium for the homes adjacent to the trail. This sets up a win – win situation for everyone involved.
- **Abandoned Rail Corridors** – Discussions will need to be held with the rail corridor owners as well as SC DOT Rails Division. The cost of trail construction is typically lower along abandoned rail corridors because a graded corridor with gradual slopes is already established.

| Phase V (Acquisition) | Priority |
|--|----------|
| Approach property owners about potential voluntary easement(s) or property donations based on the established priorities | Medium |
| Negotiate with property owner(s) | Medium |
| Retain control of the desired trail corridor | Medium |

High Priority- Within 1 Year

Medium Priority- Within 2-5 Years

Low Priority- Within 6-10 Years

Design, Construct & Maintain Trails

Once a trail segment is selected and land acquired, trail design typically follows. It will be essential for communities to determine the intended use(s) of a particular segment and design with that in mind. Designing for safety and for affordable maintenance is also highly recommended.

Intended uses of the trail will dictate the surface material to be used and will have a direct bearing on the construction and maintenance costs. The York County communities' planning process revealed that in general, people are most interested in walking, biking, hiking, seeing historic sites, and enjoying quiet time (in that order). A subset of folks who participated were

also very interested in equestrian-friendly trails. So, if the trail segment were going to be a multi-purpose trail for walkers, bikers, and horseback riders, then a surface material of either crushed limestone or granite screening would be the preferred choice.

Trail construction costs will vary, and until a project is put out for competitive bid, there is no way to accurately determine local prices. A competitive bid process should ask for the cost of trail construction using the three most common trail construction surfaces (granite screening, asphalt, and concrete) in order to fully understand the costs and potential savings when making a decision between one building material over another.

Preliminary site plans should be reviewed by all staff members, including emergency service personnel, so they can offer suggestions, guidance, and have their voices heard from the very beginning. There is sometimes a disconnect between the designer and operating staffs. Designs that are pleasing to the eye are not always conducive to good and inexpensive maintenance. Therefore, it is imperative that cost saving should be a part of any design with a thorough review of the plans while they are still in a preliminary stage.

Security starts in the design phase as well. There is much that can be done in designing a trail system that greatly reduces the risk of crime. Security experts such as the local police chief or county sheriff should be consulted early on in order to seek their advice and to alert them that the trail will be built and that they need to plan for it as well. Well placed lights, wide-open spaces along the trail, removal of underbrush, and easily accessible trailheads all add to the security matrix. Routine patrols and staff members in uniform will alert people that the trail is being watched. Security tips and procedures can be conveyed on bulletin boards, on brochures and in informal gatherings by park staff along the trail.

| Phase VI (Design, Construction, and Beyond) | Priority |
|---|----------|
| Coordinate with local law enforcement and emergency services on the trail design and safety | High |
| Develop a long-term maintenance plan | High |
| After the corridor is acquired proceed with the following steps: | |
| Survey the desired trail segment | Medium |
| Complete and approve construction drawings | Medium |
| Bid the trail project and select the contractor | Medium |
| Oversee completion of work by contractor | Medium |
| Consider planning and executing a trail ribbon cutting/Grand Opening | Medium |
| Coordinate with volunteer groups to maintain the trail facilities | Medium |

High Priority- Within 1 Year

Medium Priority- Within 2-5 Years

Low Priority- Within 6-10 Years

Chapter 6- Conclusion

Through a collaborative planning process community members in York County articulated a sense of place and showed excitement about honoring special landscapes and destinations for

economic, psychological, cultural and health reasons by connecting them and interacting with them on foot, on horseback, on bicycle and other modes. Given the rate of growth in York County, this proposal is not for a luxury good but a necessary good.

This report outlines an ambitious plan for developing a comprehensive network of trails across York County. The many community partners who have been involved in the planning process recognize the urgency of starting a county-wide and region-wide linear park system now, while opportunities still exist for making connections and linking important places. They also recognize that this plan will not be implemented overnight, and that while segments should begin appearing soon, it will take years, if not decades, to link them all together. The time to start is now.

APPENDIX I: Carolina Thread Trail Public Meeting Summary

York County public listening sessions for the Carolina Thread Trail were held March 31, April 1, and April 2 (two meetings) in York County. The sessions were hosted at the following locations: The Spratt Building in Fort Mill, The Larne Building in Clover, Manchester Meadows in Rock Hill, and The McCelvey Center in the City of York.

Meeting notice was achieved through the following: advertising on the public television information station; distribution of 500 flyers around the county at gas stations, restaurants, post offices, and other civic buildings; additional flyer distribution via the steering committee members; notice posted on the county website; email invitations to people suggested during a workshop held in advance of the listening sessions to help plan for them; and an article in *The Herald*.

Over 80 members of the general public participated in these initial listening sessions. Input from the sessions is summarized below. Items mentioned most frequently appear near the top of each list. This public input will help guide our steering committee in selection of alternative routes, shape the development of portions of the greenway plan (e.g. statement of priorities/identification of themes and concerns), and provide ideas for design guidelines and other Carolina Thread Trail activities.

Questions and responses:

1. How do you want to use trails now or in the future?

A. Active on the trail: (one group described it as "four legs, two legs, two wheels")

- walk
- horseback riding (and carriage mentioned)
- bike (mountain bike mentioned specifically by a few)
- hike
- run
- dog walking
- bird watching
- fishing

B. Active or passive:

- transportation alternative (note this comment: "Getting people from home to where they are employed with an alternative to the vehicle....")
- access to rivers
- enjoy environment, nature-beauty, nature interpretation
- handicap access
- exploration and adventure
- quiet time
- cultural development for underprivileged children

C. As host/venue for:

- overnight camping (in appropriate spots, primitive and electrical mentioned)
- sporting events (local and professional)
- homes for wildlife/habitat

- charitable events (“-athons”)

D. Other uses/benefits:

- linking commercial, recreational and residential destinations; expand existing recreational opportunities
- conservation and environmental education (outdoor classrooms)
- connecting important destinations and connecting communities
- close access to the water (e.g. not just referring to views of river but also portage trail for canoes right near the dams/along rivers/around lakes.)
- tourism promotion
- conservation/preservation
- having a trail with a beginning and an end (a destination trail)
- economic development
- open space preservation
- connecting rivers
- further a sense of history and culture
- networking

2. What important places ought to be part of a connected trail system?

A. Specific:

- Historic Brattonsville
- Museum of Life and the Environment
- Nanny’s Mountain (trails)
- Kings Mountain
- Anne Springs Close Greenway
- Crowders Mountain
- Worth Mountain
- Catawba River
- Catawba Indian Reservation
- Connectivity to other regional trails (e.g. Palmetto and Mountains to Sea trails)

B. General:

- historical/cultural sites
- parks (city parks, state parks)
- schools
- high population areas (e.g. homes and neighborhoods/communities)
- business parks/center
- existing railroad beds
- fishing spots/swimming/boat launches/water trails
- water: lakes, streams, rivers
- cemeteries
- utility easements (one group noted that sewer rights of way may be a good way to connect, note that there are some along the Catawba River)
- sports complexes and recreational facilities
- open space
- both sides of the river (will need bridges)

- geology/soil/earth
- flora and fauna
- natural areas
- small mountains
- light rail connection (LYNX) and other mass transit connections
- restaurants (ice cream!)
- hotels
- farmers markets
- connecting to subdivision trails and other neighborhoods trails
- RV parks need to connect to trails
- to existing lake access
- scenic routes/vistas
- playgrounds and tot lots
- scenic secondary roads
- existing places for overnight camping
- farm trail/church trail linking old churches

3. Not just what do you want to connect, but what do you want to see along the way?

A. Amenities:

- shelters (“comfort stations”)
- restrooms
- benches and tables
- grills, picnic areas
- emergency call stations
- camping
- parking
- lighting (where appropriate)
- playgrounds
- drinking fountains
- trash/recycle cans
- water access for fishing, kayaking
- maps/informational kiosks
- environmental education signs/identify flora and fauna
- dog watering/waste disposal
- cigarette disposal
- exercise stations/equipment
- team building/ropes course
- bags for picking up trash
- hitching posts and mounting stumps
- bluebird houses
- lean to’s
- overlook areas

B. Signage:

- historical/cultural/nature information signs
- mile markers
- trail etiquette guidelines
- designated uses (and illegal uses)
- something to draw attention and street crossings (bollards, etc.)
- "you are here" maps showing the entire trail system

4. What are your community's attitudes and concerns about greenways generally and about the CTT concept specifically?

A. Design/Location

- width and surface of trail to accommodate multiple uses, including horse-related uses
- access points and parking on and off the trail
- assure opportunity for as many people to participate as possible
- assure minimal impact to ecologically sensitive habitats
- design compatibility as well as consistent rules between jurisdictions
- careful outreach to landowners
- accessible for emergency safety and medical needs.

B. Ownership considerations

- questions about who would own and maintain the trail
- concerns that private property shouldn't be condemned or landowners otherwise forced to share land or accept liability for the trail
- concerns about privacy and possible illegal parking on private property to access the trail

C. Safety

- law enforcement will need to be involved in patrolling for general safety and to be sure that trail rules are followed

D. Cost/maintenance

- questions about how the trail will be paid for in the short and long-term when maintenance is needed
- who will bear any liability associated with trails
- interest in having the trail cleaned and well maintained throughout its length

E. Timing and outreach

- many participants are eager to see legs of the trail constructed or otherwise designated and want to raise awareness about the trail before county is further built out

F. Other

- excitement for expanding upon existing trail system that is already popular and for connecting with additional destinations
- would like to capitalize on tourism potential
- enthusiasm for making parks, recreation and conservation a priority.

5. Additional ideas/suggestions offered by participants that did not fit into the categories above:

- could have benches and tables sponsored by individuals and families
- structure in a way that people don't need cars to get to the greenway
- open areas at trailheads for possible use in fundraising events
- consider separate use, horses and others, but also consider how they can be combined where appropriate
- need signage from the roads so people know where they can access the trails, connect to scenic byways. Could do self guided driving tours that could help to launch the CTT concept
- need a map along the trail, consider including topographical information and ratings for different trails, give credit to "friends of the trail" and identify surfaces
- consider grading trails for different levels
- consider working with developers on trails, they may be willing to build if it will expedite development
- the CTT master plan needs to become part of the RFATS transportation plan
- create a "passport" program where you can get a stamp after you've been across a specific part of the trail. Could relate to designated rides

APPENDIX II: Carolina Thread Trail Public Open House Summary

York County open houses for the Carolina Thread Trail (CTT) were held between 4:00 and 8:00 pm on July 16th and July 22nd at Manchester Meadows in Rock Hill and The McKelvey Center in York. Members of the general public were also invited to review open house materials by appointment at the York County Planning Department between July 23rd and July 31. Over 100 people attended the open houses.

These sessions were designed to give the public an opportunity to view preliminary concept routes for where the CTT might cross York County and offer input and comments. CTT staff, The Trust for Public Land staff, and York County CTT Steering Committee members were present to explain the process to date and introduce visitors to the map showing alternative routes. All visitors were asked to fill out a short survey. Ninety-three (93) surveys were received, and they were analyzed to inform route selection and other aspects of the Gaston County Communities' Master CTT Plan. The survey responses are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Communications and outreach

The first survey question was: "How did you find out about the Carolina Thread Trail?" Respondents could check all that applied. Thirty-six (36) people learned of CTT through the newspaper, 30 had attended a previous related meeting, and 35 selected "other." The "other" explanations included:

- learning through the Rock Hill Bike Club Forum (11),
- hearing from a York County CTT Steering Committee member or Catawba Lands Conservancy staff(8),
- finding out from a family member, a co-worker or a friend (6),
- receiving emails (5),
- already being in the building when the open house was occurring (2), or
- seeing a posting on the internet (1).

Familiarity with greenways and trails

Eighty-seven (87) people responded to the question asking whether they had ever been on a greenway/trail before. (There were 6 non-responses.) Eight respondents (9 percent) had never been on a greenway or trail. Note that only two people who took the survey indicated that they believed the Thread might decrease quality of life for the community, and those were two of the same folks who had never been on a greenway/trail before.

Segment popularity

Eighty-eight (88) people responded to this question: "The Thread is intended to be the backbone for the city, town and county trail system. With that in mind, which of these segments is most important as part of the Thread? Please check up to 5 from this list of 17." (Five respondents left this question blank or their responses were disqualified because they selected more than 6 segments.)

The most popular segment by a wide margin was B, and the top 6 overall were A-E and I. See attached map highlighting the segments most frequently perceived by respondents as “most important.” More than 1 in 3 respondents voted for these six segments, with details as follows:

- B received 63 votes (72 percent voted for B).
- A came in second with 47 votes (53 percent picked A).
- D was next with 39 (44 percent picked D).
- I had 38 votes (43 percent selected I).
- C garnered 34 votes (39 percent voted for C).
- E received 33 votes (38 percent voted for E)

The rest of the segments received 24 or fewer votes, which means that *less than 27 percent* of those surveyed considered them to be the “most important” segments. Three legs of the “highlighted scenario” received few votes (this is the draft route for a CTT designation):

- the east-west connection from the center of the county to Worth Mountain and on to Cherokee County (H received 8 votes and G got 21),
- the leg through Kings Mountain that connects to Cherokee County (F received 23 votes), and
- the segment along the Catawba River and down to Chester County (J garnered 13 votes).

Analysis for steering committee consideration:

The surveys confirm strong public support for the highlighted segments in northeastern quadrant of the county that would connect to Gaston, Mecklenburg, and Lancaster Counties.

It is important to observe that several highlighted connections, including Worth Mountain and the connection to Kings Mountain State Park, did not receive much public support based on these surveys. In addition, alternate route M running to Brattonsville and then dropping south to connect into Chester County received 24 votes, versus the highlighted segment J with only 13. Note, however, that open houses were not held in these areas of the county, which could explain the lower popularity of these particular segments. Indeed, our analysis show a bias that respondents typically selected segments closest to where they live for CTT designation (see below), and the open houses naturally drew people from the area where they were held.

Likely Trail Use

The survey asked respondents to select (from a list that was generated in the previous community listening sessions) the 5 activities they would enjoy doing the most on The Thread and rank them from 1 to 5 with 1 being what they would do most often. 79 people responded to this question (We received 14 non-responses). Fifteen (15) of those who answered the question did not rank their selections (in those instances, all responses were coded as a “5”). The most frequently selected activities were:

- Walking (56 votes; 71 percent),
- Biking (51 votes; 65 percent),
- Hiking (40 votes, 51 percent)
- Seeing historic sites (33 votes, 42 percent)
- Enjoying quiet time (also 33 votes, 42 percent)

The three least frequently selected activities were: rollerblading/skating (2 votes); fishing (10 votes); and horseback riding (10 votes).

Only 10 people selected horseback riding, but they tended to put it among their top choices in ranking. Respondents often ordered the following activities at the top of their lists: walking, biking, and hiking.

Proximity to trail

All but three people indicated how far they live from one of the proposed CTT segments (highlighted in purple or yellowish-green on the map). Answers were as follows:

- 14 respondents live adjacent,
- 35 live between ¼ mile and 2 miles,
- 31 live 2-5 miles from a segment,
- 7 live 5-10 miles away, and
- 3 live more than 10 miles from any segment.

Bias analysis for steering committee consideration:

To test whether people selected trail segments that were closest to where they live, we specifically asked them to identify which segment was nearest their home and then cross-referenced this answer with their “important segment” selections. Three (3) people did not identify the closest segment. Out of 87 respondents, 70 (80 percent) identified the segment closest to their residence as among their most “important” segments.

Responses to these questions confirmed our hypothesis that people tend to favor segments closest to where they live for CTT designation, reminding us to be careful when considering the value of the “important segment” portions of the surveys, since they are biased by where we held the open houses and the convenience interests of those who participated.

CTT Sentiment

When prompted with a yes/no question, only two people indicated that they believed The Thread would decrease the quality of life in their community. Another wrote “not sure” and the other 86 respondents (there were 4 non-responses) indicated that they thought it would increase quality of life.

The two who were opposed to the trail articulated these concerns:

- “Not properly policed - will depreciate our property adjacent to our orchards which are sprayed regularly with chemicals, some poison.”
- “Have land around pond that is within 30 yards of old railroad. Lots presently are \$40,000 - \$50,000, with the trail, these lots will decrease in value.”

Another person said they were concerned about landowner liability.

Many people articulated the common benefits of trails: recreation, health, nature, economic, community interaction, alternative transportation, etc. What follows are some direct excerpts from the surveys as to why the CTT would increase the quality of life in the community:

- “The trail will promote an active lifestyle and the history of York County.”
- “Great for the growing population of York County - families moving to area would like to see this and it may help make the decision to move to York County.”
- “It will provide safe routes for bike riding which is good for personal health as well as the environment.”

- “Provides alternative to vehicle, exercise, people get a chance to talk and meet, which we are not able to do when we are in an automobile. It also gives us a chance to actually see our environment close up.”
- “You shouldn't have to travel far to breathe the fresh air and enjoy the outdoor beauty of our area.”
- “It will create excitement in the community because of the opportunity to take part in healthy activities with neighbors and friends for no cost and any time. We all will probably meet new friends from areas we might never enter without the trail.”
- “It is a great opportunity for me to help connect my family (kids) to the outdoors. Get the kids out of the home and become active w/ the outdoors and nature.”
- “Attractive areas for walking, hiking, etc. Helping people pursue healthier lifestyles. Trail system will become major selling point for economic development. Ecotourism entrepreneurs will find ways to generate revenue.”
- “I imagine that people who are not outdoor folks now will become regular customers of the trail.”
- “This is a terrific idea and fits well with our collective desire to re-connect with nature and each other. NJ, my home state, lost its opportunity years ago. I'd like to work to make this become a reality.”
- “Great for connectivity, not only across local county but across state lines and it opens the door to explore a lot of what this region has to offer.”

Additional Comments

Some people gave opinions as to which segments should be prioritized or how they should be developed, including the following:

- “Chester is a very charming historic town, and even though I have roots in York County, I want to promote the charm and uniqueness of Chester. Brattonsville route will be most beneficial to Chester.”
- “We would like to see route P continue to Chester. This seems to be a York County project and parts of NC, Lancaster and Chester counties seem to be afterthoughts.”
- “I love the idea of connecting all the counties and the attractions. The Catawba Indian Nation/Cultural Center is an important historical part of this entire area. I am so glad to see it included on the map!”
- “Re: segment B - put smaller bridge for walking or biking at river park.”
- “Very impressive concept. I look forward to using more segments as they are developed. Please think about Brattonville - a jewel for York County (My limit of 5 segments did not identify this because of the distance and number of people on the trail - but I would use it)”
- “Connection of parts of trail to interstate rapid transit/lynx system would be beneficial in high-development areas (Fort Mill/Rock Hill, Indianland, Pineville, etc.)”
- “Make the Hwy 21 bridge connecting Rock Hill and Fort Mill a recreation node on the trail. Use old bridge for bikes, hikers, create fishing and paddling access to the river.”

APPENDIX III: Summary of Recommended Action Steps for Implementation

| | |
|--|----------|
| Phase I - Plan Adoption | Priority |
| Review and recommendation(s) by any municipalities' advisory board(s) | High |
| Review and adoption of the Greenway Master Plan by the governing board(s) | High |
| Consider reviewing and amending the current zoning or subdivision ordinances to require dedication of trail easements for new development | Medium |
| Consider reviewing and amending the floodplain ordinance to strictly limit the construction of structures in floodplains | Medium |
| Consider reviewing and amending the zoning or subdivision development ordinance to protect riparian buffer corridors | Medium |
| Consider reviewing the current open space and land dedication requirement(s) and payment in lieu policies/ordinances | Medium |
| Phase II - Build Public Support | Priority |
| Building off the existing steering committee developed to create this master plan, establish a Trail Advisory Committee to promote greenway development and advise the governing group on related issues | High |
| Conduct a public information campaign to advertise trail successes and future trail plans | Medium |
| Form partnerships with regional non-profit organizations that can move quickly to procure open space and trail opportunities | Medium |
| Phase III - Prioritization | Priority |
| Review priority segments identified in the plan | High |
| Identify and maximize local trail opportunities through the development plan review process, open space acquisition, and floodplain regulations | Medium |
| Review current and future utility corridors/easements for local greenway opportunities | Medium |
| Establish criteria for trail priorities (i.e. cost, length of trail, location, conservation benefit, etc.) | Medium |
| Discuss and rank greenway priorities based on agreed upon criteria | Medium |
| Consider developing and recommending a multi-year, dedicated funding source to support greenway acquisition and stewardship | Medium |
| Consider developing an acquisition plan based on priority segments and the current Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) | Medium |
| Phase IV - Identify Funding Sources | Priority |
| Pursue all avenues of grants from state, federal and non-governmental funding sources | High |

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Consider local bonds to pay for greenway acquisition, design, construction, and maintenance expenses | Medium |
| Phase V - Acquisition | Priority |
| Approach property owners about potential voluntary easement(s) or property donations based on the established priorities | Medium |
| Negotiate with property owner(s) | Medium |
| Retain control of the desired trail corridor | Medium |
| Phase VI - Design, Construction, and Beyond | Priority |
| Coordinate with local law enforcement and emergency services on the trail design and safety | High |
| Develop a long-term maintenance plan | High |
| After the corridor is acquired proceed with the following steps: | |
| Survey the desired trail segment | Medium |
| Complete and approve construction drawings | Medium |
| Bid the trail project and select the contractor | Medium |
| Oversee completion of work by contractor | Medium |
| Consider planning and executing a trail ribbon cutting/Grand Opening | Medium |
| Coordinate with volunteer groups to maintain the trail facilities | Medium |

APPENDIX IV: Federal Funding Options

Recreational Trails Grants Program US Department of Transportation

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/index.htm>
<http://www.scprt.com/our-partners/Grants.aspx>

The Recreation Trails Program is a federal transportation program that provides monies for the maintenance, development, acquisition and construction of new and existing trail facilities for both motorized and nonmotorized recreational trail uses. Funds are distributed to the states according to a formula. Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations, municipal agencies, state agencies, federal government agencies and other government entities (regional governments, port districts, etc.). Eligible projects include:

- (1) maintenance and restoration of existing trails,
- (2) development and rehabilitation of existing trails,
- (3) construction of new recreation trails, and
- (4) acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property.

Grants are distributed annually and require a twenty percent match.

In FY 2008, South Carolina is receiving \$1,247,798, which is administered by a section of the Division of Parks and Recreation for South Carolina. Funds from this program have been used in the past for trails and improvements.

Transportation Enhancements (TE) US Department of Transportation

www.enhancements.org
<http://www.scdot.org/community/tep.shtml>

The federal Surface Transportation Program provides states with funding for highway projects. States are allocated funds based on a combination of population, transportation systems, miles of roads, and other factors. Each state must reserve at least 10 percent of its Surface Transportation Program dollars for transportation enhancement activities. These enhancement projects include historic preservation, rails-to-trails programs, easement and land acquisition, transportation museums, water pollution mitigation, wildlife connectivity, and scenic beautification. All projects must be related, in some way, to transportation.

In each state, TE projects are selected through a competitive process. Applications are submitted by local government entities, often in partnership with nonprofit organizations. The federal government provides 80 percent of the funds and the municipalities need to contribute a 20-percent match.

Since 1992, the SCDOT Commission has elected to allocate a portion of available funds for the Transportation Enhancement Program. The program facilitates and provides a greater opportunity for local governments to collaborate with the agency to pursue a broad range of non-traditional transportation related activities such as bicycle and pedestrian facilities, streetscaping, scenic and landscaping programs, and historic preservation. The Transportation

Enhancement Funds are provided by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (also known as TEA 21 and formerly known as ISTEA) and allocated by the South Carolina Department of Transportation.

**Safe Routes to School Program
US Department of Transportation**

<http://www.scdot.org/community/saferoutes.shtml>

SAFETEA-LU created a new program called Safe Routes to School. The goal of this program is to encourage children to walk to school by providing accessible and safe trails connecting schools to neighborhoods. 70% of the funds are used for infrastructure, 10% for education and enforcement, and 20% can be used for either category. Matching funds are not required.

For the 2008 funding cycle, each applicant school selected in South Carolina was eligible to receive a maximum of \$200,000 for funding Safe Routes to School projects and programs. Any school with grades K – 8, school district, municipality or other government entity could apply. According to the FY2008 application guidelines, “An application for funding must represent only one eligible school.”

**Transportation and Community and System Preservation Program (TCSP)
US Department of Transportation**

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tcsp/>

The Transportation and Community and System Preservation Program (TCSP) was established to help communities address the linkage between transportation, land use, and quality of life. Its goals are to improve the efficiency of transportation systems, reduce transportation’s environmental impacts, reduce the need for costly future public infrastructure investments, and plan for development.

After the initial competitive funding rounds, Congress began to earmark this program for a wide variety of transportation projects, including trails. To gain access to these funds, it has been necessary for a member of the congressional delegation to request a project during the congressional appropriations process. There was one competitive round of grants in FY 2007, when Congress failed to earmark any appropriations. In FY 2008, Congress earmarked the programs entire allocation again.

When there is a competitive process, the Federal Highway Administration will issue an RFP. Eligible entities include states, metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, and tribal governments. Nongovernmental organizations are encouraged to partner with a government agency. A 20 percent match is required. Grant proposals should address how proposed activities will meet the following:

- Improve the efficiency of the transportation system.
- Reduce the impacts of transportation on the environment.
- Reduce the need for costly future public infrastructure.

- Ensure efficient access to jobs, services and centers of trade.
- Encourage private sector development patterns.

TCSP's authorized funding level in FY 2009 is \$61.25 million. Planning grants are also available under this program to help communities achieve integration of transportation programs with community preservation and environmental activities.

A total of \$53.4 million were appropriated for the TCSP Program under the FY 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act. The Act designated TCSP Program funding for 102 projects in 36 States. In FY 2008, several TCSP earmarks were provided by Congress to the Carolinas. For example, Johnson County received \$360,150 for the Clayton Pedestrian Grade Separation and US 17 in Beaufort County received \$367,500. In FY 2006, South Carolina received \$1,076,625 for I-73 improvements.

**Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
Department of the Interior (varies by agency)**

<http://www.nps.gov/nrcr/programs/lwcf/>

Created in 1965, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is the largest source of federal money for park, wildlife, and open space land acquisition. Specifically, the LWCF provides funding to assist in the acquiring, preserving, developing and assuring accessibility to outdoor recreation resources, including but not limited to open space, parks, trails, wildlife lands and other lands and facilities desirable for individual active participation.²⁴ The program's funding comes primarily from offshore oil and gas drilling receipts, with an authorized expenditure of \$900 million each year, while federal recreation fees, sales of federal surplus real property, and federal motorboat fuel taxes fund also contribute to the LWCF. Under this program, a portion of the money is intended to go to federal land purchases and a portion to the states as matching grants for land protection projects.

**LWCF – Federal
Department of the Interior
Department of Agriculture/US Forest Service**

The federal side of the Land and Water Conservation Fund provides funding for federal agencies (Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, National Park Service, and the Bureau of Land Management) to add land to existing recreation areas, parks, forests, refuges and other federal units. LWCF funding provides the bulk of the money available for this purpose and is typically provided through the annual federal appropriations process, with Congress making the determination of what federal land units will receive LWCF funding each year.

In South Carolina, there are two national forests, several national wildlife refuges and national park units such as Fort Sumter and Congaree National Park that qualify. Funding levels for federal land acquisitions are determined by Congress or the relevant federal agency and are related to the property's value.

²⁴ <<http://www.iac.wa.gov/iac/grants/lwcf.htm>>.

LWCF--Stateside National Park Service

http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/fed_state.html

<http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/lwcf/home1.html>

<http://www.discoversouthcarolina.com/agency/grantslandconservation.asp>

The stateside LWCF program provides a 50 percent match to states for planning, developing and acquiring land and water areas for natural resource protection and recreation enhancement.

Funds are distributed to states based on population and need. Once the funds are distributed to the states, it is up to each state to choose the projects, though the National Park Service has final approval. Eligible grant recipients include municipal subdivisions, state agencies and tribal governments, each of whom must provide at least 50 percent matching funds in either cash or in-kind contributions and a detailed plan for the proposed project. Grant applications are evaluated based on the technical merits of the project, the public/private partnerships, and how the project addresses the identified needs and priorities of a statewide comprehensive plan. Annual appropriations to the fund have ranged from a high of \$369 million in 1979 to four years of zero funding between 1996 and 1999.

In FY 2007, \$27.9 million was provided for stateside grants. In FY 2007, South Carolina received \$425,922. The program is administered by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Forest Legacy Program (FLP) US Forest Service (USFS)

www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/aboutflp.shtml

The Forest Legacy Program was established in 1990 to provide federal funding to states to assist in securing conservation easements on forestlands threatened with conversion to non-forest uses. Fee transactions are also used under the program, either for the whole transaction or combined with easements to achieve a state's highest conservation goals. A state voluntarily enters the program by submitting an Assessment of Need (AON) to the Secretary of Agriculture for approval. These plans establish the lead state agency, the state's criteria for Forest Legacy projects, and Forest Legacy areas within which proposed Legacy projects must be located. Once the AON is approved, the state lead agency can submit up to three grants each year for projects within the FLAs. The federal government may fund up to 75 percent of project costs, with at least 25 percent coming from private, state or local sources.

In FY 2008, the Forest Legacy Program was funded at \$59.8 million, providing grants to states for 35 forest conservation projects. Both North Carolina and South Carolina are participating in the program and have protected approximately 6,500 acres with \$8.5 million in FLP funds and 32,250 acres with \$26.7 million in FLP funds, respectively, since joining the program.

Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

<http://federalasst.fws.gov/sfr/fasfr.html>

The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act, commonly referred to as the Dingell-Johnson Act, was passed in 1950, to create a program for the management, conservation, and restoration of fishery resources. The program is funded by revenues collected from an excise tax paid by the manufacturers of fishing equipment. Appropriate State agencies are the only entities eligible to receive these grants and funds are apportioned to each State on a formula based on the percentage of licensed anglers in the state and the percentage of states' land and water area. The program is a cost-reimbursement program in which the state applies for repayment of up to 75 percent of approved project expenses. The state must provide at least 25 percent of the project costs from non-federal sources.

In FY 2008, South Carolina received slightly over \$5.4 million in funding through this program.

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (Pittman-Robertson Act) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

<http://federalasst.fws.gov/wr/fawr.html>

Implemented in 1938, the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, more commonly known as the Pittman-Robertson Act, provides funding for the selection, restoration, rehabilitation, and improvement of wildlife habitat as well as wildlife management research. Funds are derived from an excise tax on sporting arms, ammunition, and archery equipment as well as a percent tax on handguns. Funds are apportioned to state agencies on a formula based on the total area of the state and the number of licensed hunters in the state.

The program is a cost-reimbursement program in which the state applies for repayment of up to 75 percent of approved project expenses. The state must provide at least 25 percent of the project costs from non-federal sources.

In FY 2008, South Carolina received almost \$2.7 million in funding through this program.

Migratory Bird Conservation Fund

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

<http://www.fws.gov/realty/mbcc.html>

Each year, duck stamp (migratory bird and conservation stamps) revenues are deposited into the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund along with appropriations from the Wetlands Loan Act of 1961, import duties from arms and ammunitions, receipts from refuge admission fees, receipts from the sale of refuge-land crops and refuge rights-of-way, and Federal Aid funds. Administered by the USFWS, the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund is used to acquire waterfowl breeding, wintering, and migration habitat needed for maintaining optimum migratory bird population levels and to achieve desirable migration and distribution patterns. The habitat areas, acquired in fee, easement, or other interests such as leases or cooperative agreements, become units of the National Wildlife Refuge System or Waterfowl Production Areas. The Service focuses its acquisition efforts to benefit waterfowl species most in need of

habitat protection. Over 5 million acres have been protected with funds from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund. Savannah NWR in South Carolina has acquired lands with funds provided through this program.

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

<http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/index.shtm>

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) was passed in 1989 to provide matching grants for the acquisition, restoration, and enhancement of wetland ecosystems for the benefit of waterfowl and other wetland dependent migratory species. Administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, grants are available to nonprofit organizations, state and local agencies, tribes, and private individuals in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Two types of grants are awarded; small grants for up to \$75,000 and standard grants for up to \$1 million. There is a 1:1 non-federal match requirement for each grant although the average match of successful proposals is over 2:1.

In December 2002, Congress reauthorized the Act and expanded its scope to include the conservation of all habitats and birds associated with wetlands ecosystems. Congress also increased the appropriation authorization of the grant program to \$55 million for FY 2003, with \$5 million increases to occur annually until FY 2007, when the appropriation cap will be \$75 million. The Congressional appropriation to fund the grant program in FY 2008 is approximately \$40.3 million. Additional program funding is expected to bring the total funding available to approximately \$84.4 million in FY 2008.

Since 1990, over 3,500 partners have been involved in over 1,650 NAWCA standard and small grant projects, affecting 23.8 million acres of wetlands and associated uplands across the continent.

In FY 2008, South Carolina had one grant of \$1 million approved through this program.

State Wildlife Grants U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

<http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/SWG/SWG.htm>

Created by Congress in 2001, the State Wildlife Grants Program is a matching grant program available to every state in support of cost-effective, on-the-ground conservation efforts aimed at restoring or maintaining populations of native species before listing under the Endangered Species Act is required. In order to maximize the effectiveness of this program, Congress required each state to develop a comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy for the conservation of the state's full array of wildlife and the habitats they depend upon. These plans identify species and habitats of greatest conservation need and outline the steps necessary to keep them from becoming endangered. The State Wildlife Grants Program provides matching funds that are to be used to implement the conservation recommendations outlined in these state wildlife action plans.

Funds appropriated under the SWG program are allocated to every states according to a formula based on a state size and population. Since its inception in 2001, South Carolina has received over \$6 million in matching funds from this program.

**Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund:
Recovery Land Acquisition Grants
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/grants/index.html>

Grants offered through the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (authorized under section 6 of the Endangered Species Act) fund participation in a wide array of voluntary conservation projects for candidate, proposed and listed species. Recovery Land Acquisition Grants provide funds to States for the acquisition of habitat, through both fee and easement, for federally listed threatened and endangered species in support of approved recovery plans. These funds must contribute to the implementation of a finalized and approved recovery plan for at least one listed species. South Carolina hosts 42 threatened and endangered species. Land acquisition projects that support the recovery of these species are eligible for funding under this program.

**National Fish and Wildlife Foundation- Keystone Initiative Grants & Special Grants Programs
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation**

<http://www.nfwf.org/programs.cfm>

In 1984, Congress created the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to benefit the conservation of fish, wildlife, plants, and the habitat on which they depend by attracting diverse investments to conservation and encouraging locally supported stewardship on private and public lands. Through their Keystone Initiatives Grant Program, NFWF funds projects to conserve and restore bird, fish, and wildlife populations as well as the habitats on which they depend. The Foundation awards matching grants to projects that address priority actions laid out by their strategic plan, work proactively to involve other conservation and community interests, leverage funding, serve multiple objectives, involve strong partnerships, and fit into a larger ecosystem approach to conservation. The most successful applications will display the long-term environmental benefits of a project that yield high quality conservation returns.

Eligible grantees include federal, tribal, state, and local governments, educational institutions, and non-profit conservation organizations. Grants can range from \$50,000 to \$300,000 and typically require a 2:1 nonfederal match.

In addition to the Keystone Initiative matching grants, the Foundation administers a variety of special grant programs with specific conservation objectives, programmatic guidelines, and timelines. (See the Foundation's website for more information on these numerous grant opportunities or call NFWF's Eastern Partnership Office(202) 857-0166.)

Brownfields Program U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/applicat.htm>

If a property identified for acquisition or redevelopment is or might be a “brownfields” site, many programs and other benefits at the local, state and federal levels encourage its redevelopment. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Brownfields Program provides direct funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, and environmental job training. In addition, legislation signed into law in 2001 limits the liability of certain contiguous property owners and prospective purchasers of brownfields properties, and innocent landowner are also afforded liability benefits to encourage revitalization and reuse of brownfield sites. EPA’s brownfields program provides several types of grants:

- **Assessment Grants** provide funding for a grant recipient to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct cleanup and redevelopment planning and community involvement related to brownfield sites. \$200,000 grants (or to \$350,000 with a waiver).
- **Remediation grants** are available for remediation of brownfield sites. These grants are limited to \$200,000 per site, with no more than three applications per entity. There is a 20 percent cost-share. NGOs are eligible to apply, but must have site control of the property. One site may qualify for two grants if pollutants include petroleum and non-petroleum contaminants.
- **Revolving Loan Fund grants** (RLF) provide funding for a grant recipient to capitalize a revolving loan fund to provide sub grants to carry out cleanup activities at brownfields sites. \$1 million per eligible entity, with a 20 percent cost share.

Annual grants are announced in approximately October of each calendar year.

In an example of this funding, TPL received an EPA brownfields grant to assist in the capping of a landfill in Providence, R.I. on a 1.5 acre property that is now part of the Woonasquatucket River Greenway.

Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR) National Park Service

<http://www.nps.gov/uprr/>

The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program was developed as the urban component to the Land and Water Conservation Fund in 1978. UPARR grants are given to eligible cities and counties and are meant to assist disadvantaged areas. The grants fund rehabilitation (capital funding for renovation or redesign of existing facilities), innovation (funding aimed to support specific activities that either increase recreation programs or improve the efficiency of the local government to operate recreation programs), and planning (funding for development of recovery action program plans) for recreational services in urban areas. From the program’s inception in 1978 to 2002, it has distributed approximately \$272 million for 1,461 grants to local jurisdictions in 43 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. A local match of at least 30 percent is required for most grants. This program, however, has not been funded for the past six fiscal years.

Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

<http://www.epa.gov/OWM/cwfinance/cwsrf/index.htm>

<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/dwsrf/index.html>

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is charged with implementing both the Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act, two landmark pieces of legislation whose respective goals are to clean up America's waterways and to ensure that we have safe water to drink. Conservation is an eligible activity under both laws. Both programs utilize "State Revolving Funds" or SRFs to fund projects that better water quality and enhance our drinking water supplies. Every year, Congress appropriates funds that are apportioned out to the states on a formula basis to fund the SRFs.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF)

Through the CWSRF program, each state maintains a revolving loan fund to provide a source of low-cost financing for a wide range of water quality infrastructure projects. In FY07, Congress appropriated \$1.083 billion for the CWSRF, distributed among the states. Pennsylvania has received \$968 million for this program from 1989-2006. Federal funds must be matched by 20 percent non-federal funds.

The CWSRF program is available to fund a wide variety of water quality projects including all types of nonpoint source, watershed protection or restoration, and estuary management projects, as well as more traditional municipal wastewater treatment projects. Nationwide, 95 percent of these funds go toward infrastructure projects, but watershed protection projects are increasing.

CWSRF programs operate much like environmental infrastructure banks that are capitalized with federal and state contributions. CWSRF monies are loaned to communities and loan repayments are recycled back into the program to fund additional water quality protection projects. The revolving nature of these programs provides for an ongoing funding source that will last far into the future.

States have the flexibility to target resources to their particular environmental needs, including contaminated runoff from urban and agricultural areas, wetlands restoration, groundwater protection, brownfields remediation, estuary management, and wastewater treatment.

Land or easement acquisition is permitted with CWSRF funds as a method to reduce nonpoint source pollution. For example, California has already used \$112 million of its CWSRF funds to acquire over 29,000 acres of land for water quality benefits.

South Carolina's FY 2007 allotment of CWSRF funds was \$11 million.

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)

The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program was established by the 1996 Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments, under which EPA provides grants to States to establish revolving loan funds from which they provide loans and other types of financial assistance to public water systems for eligible infrastructure improvements. Since its inception, Congress has directed \$4.2 billion for the DWSRFs. In FY 2007, states were awarded \$822.933 towards their DWSRFs. Conservation easements and fee simple acquisition are permitted with these funds.

Since its inception, only \$2.7 million has been for acquisition to protect less than 2,000 acres of land under the DWSRF. However, EPA has begun a concerted effort to focus more attention on protecting “source water,” which they roughly define as “untreated water from streams, rivers, lakes, or underground aquifers which is used to supply private wells and public drinking water.” There is growing recognition that protecting the source from contaminants is often more efficient and cost-effective than treating drinking water later.

Loans under the DWSRF are typically low interest and can be repaid over 20 years. There is some flexibility given to the states to allow them to waive the principal repayment, offer negative interest rates or extend the loans to 30 years in specific hardship cases.

Up to 31 percent of these capitalization grants can be set-aside to administer the SRF and state source protection programs and to fund source water protection activities, including land acquisition. Up to 15 percent of the set-aside can be used for land conservation and voluntary, incentive-based protection measures, with no more than 10 percent used for a single type of activity, such as land protection.

South Carolina’s FY 2007 DWSRF allotment was \$8,229,000.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development

<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/entitlement/>

The Department of Housing and Urban Development provides Entitlement Communities Grants for the principal cities of Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), other metropolitan cities with populations of at least 50,000; and qualified urban counties with populations of at least 200,000 (excluding the population of entitled cities). CDBG funds may be used for activities that include, but are not limited to acquisition of real property; relocation and demolition; and construction of public facilities and improvements, such as water and sewer facilities, streets, neighborhood centers, and the conversion of school buildings for eligible purposes.

South Carolina received a direct allocation of CDBG funds of \$21,829,088 in FY 2008, while another 15 cities received individual allocations. For specifics on which community received CDBG funds, go to <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/about/budget/budget08/> and click on the relevant state.

An additional HUD program is the Economic Development Initiative program (EDI). Projects within this program are earmarked directly by Congress and are generally awarded under \$300,000. Funds may go towards park acquisition and improvements, but directly compete with other economic, social, housing, and cultural development projects.

Department of Defense Buffer Program

<https://www.denix.osd.mil/portal/page/portal/denix/range/Compatible:REPI>

The Department of Defense’s Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI) provides funding for the military to work with state and local governments, non-governmental

organizations and willing land owners to help prevent encroachment from adversely impacting military facilities.

The military services are authorized to enter into agreements with conservation organizations and public agencies to acquire land or easements on land around military installations. The intent of the REPI program is (1) to limit development or property use that is incompatible with a military installation's mission and (2) to preserve habitat off base to relieve current or anticipated environmental restrictions that might interfere with military training on base. The Department of Defense can share real estate acquisition costs for projects that support these purposes. The legislation does not authorize land acquisition for active military use.

In FY 2008, \$46 million was appropriated for this program. The military services are also authorized to use existing operations and maintenance funds for this purpose. In FY 2005, MCAS Beaufort in South Carolina received \$1,000,000 under this program.

APPENDIX V: South Carolina Conservation Finance Measures

| South Carolina Conservation Finance Ballot Measures | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|--|-------------------|-----------------------------|--------|--------|
| Jurisdiction | Date | Description | Finance Mechanism | Conservation Funds Approved | Status | % Yes |
| Beaufort County | 11/7/2000 | Bond issue to purchase open land, development rights, and conservation easements | Bond | \$40,000,000 | Pass | 72.87% |
| Beaufort County | 11/2/2004 | 5-year, 1 cent sales tax for capital improvements, a portion of which will address park and open space needs of county residents | Sales tax | | Fail | 49.87% |
| Beaufort County | 11/7/2006 | Bond to preserve natural land, farmland and water quality | Bond | \$50,000,000 | Pass | 75.55% |
| Charleston County | 11/7/2000 | Bond issue for parkland acquisition | Bond | | Pass | 50.39% |
| Charleston County | 11/7/2000 | Sales and use tax increase to fund farm, forest lands and open space protection, and mass transit and roads | Sales tax | | Fail | 49.49% |
| Charleston County | 11/5/2002 | Question 1; 25-year, .5 ¢ sales tax for roads, public transportation, parks and greenspace | Sales tax | | Pass* | 60.03% |
| Charleston County | 11/2/2004 | 1/2 cent sales tax increase for transportation, roads, open space, and parks | Sales tax | \$221,571,200 | Pass | 58.71% |
| Greenville County | 11/5/2002 | 1-year; 1% sales tax increase for parks | Sales tax | | Fail | 41.08% |
| Hilton Head Island | 11/3/1998 | Bond for land acquisition and parks | Bond | \$12,000,000 | Pass | 80.18% |
| Hilton Head Island | 11/7/2000 | Bond issue to purchase land for public use, parks, and to manage growth | Bond | \$9,500,000 | Pass | 77.82% |
| Hilton Head Island | 11/4/2003 | Bond for land acquisition, preservation of historic sites, open space | Bond | \$15,000,000 | Pass | 83.48% |
| Hilton Head Island | 11/4/2008 | Bond for the preservation of beaches, open space and parkland | Bond | \$17,000,000 | Pass | 74.88% |
| Mount Pleasant | 12/5/1995 | 4-mill property tax increase for conservation easements and preservation of strategically located wooded and open lands | Property tax | | Fail | 48.41% |

*Measure was subsequently overturned

Source: The Trust For Public Land's LandVote Database

SECTION II – County/City Tabs

Section 2: Adoption Proposals for Communities in York County

This section includes one tab for each local and regional government recommended for adopting the Greenway Master Plan in Section 1.¹ Each tab contains an explanation of how adopting the plan (or portion thereof) will be consistent with existing plans and regulations; suggestions for how the particular jurisdiction can integrate the plan into their policies and regulations; and a map of the trails proposed for that jurisdiction.

These adoption proposals will first be vetted with steering committee member(s) or other planning staff from the applicable town/city/agency to make adjustments, as applicable, and confirm the best approach.

¹ Adoption analysis was not performed for the following communities because the York County Greenway Plan did not identify ample segments within their borders: Tega Cay, Lake Wylie, and Smyrna. They are encouraged to adopt the Greenway Master Plan as they deem appropriate.

York County

The *2025 York County Comprehensive Plan* is currently the guiding document for park and greenway planning across the county. There is not yet an adopted greenway/trail master plan nor a separate master plan for parks and recreation. **It is recommended that the county adopt this *Greenway Master Plan for York County Communities* (“*York County Greenway Plan*”) in its entirety to serve as the countywide plan for greenways and trails.**

This would be consistent with the goals and objectives outlined in the *2025 York County Comprehensive Plan*, which references the need for more parks, open space and recreation. According to the comprehensive plan: “Development growth has ... increased the need to provide recreational space, in the form of parks and trails, for the local population. The natural resources and recreational opportunities of York County contribute greatly to the superior quality of life enjoyed by the local residents and should be protected in order to ensure York County remains an attractive location for future generations.”² York County Planning Department staff (and many others) provided proposed trail segments that have been incorporated into the *York County Greenway Plan*. The *York County Greenway Plan* identifies where new trails will be most desirable and where they will best integrate with existing and proposed trails of the cities and towns within York County.

Existing York County development regulations already require open space set-asides within multi-family and industrial developments, and the Traditional Neighborhood District floating zone requires conservation of fifty percent of the property of large mixed-use developments.³ These requirements are not specific to trails or greenways. The York County Comprehensive Plan suggests requiring developers to donate a fee-in-lieu of open space dedication for developments not located along a proposed greenway and offering a density bonus to developers in exchange for open space.⁴

The proposed **trail dedication requirements** outlined in Section 1, Chapter 5 of the *York County Greenway Plan*, if adopted, would help assure that new developments include trails according to this plan, which means that ultimately the trail network will be integrated and cohesive. This county-wide plan will give developers specific guidance on where they can build trails that would eventually connect with other trails beyond their properties.

The county’s comprehensive plan also says the county seeks to ensure adequate funding for “construction and maintenance of bicycle facilities, sidewalks, and trails as important components of the transportation system.”⁵ It says that in order to achieve this there must be close coordination between the Department of Transportation and Parks and Recreation plans. Adopting this plan and sharing it with RFATS and SCDOT should assist in coordination.

² “2025 York County Comprehensive Plan,” Open Space Element, p. 1.

³ Small recreational space is also required for single-family subdivisions in accordance with the density and size of the development. There are no open space set-asides for agricultural, and rural subdivision developments. “2025 York County Comprehensive Plan,” Open Space Element, p. 5, 6.

⁴ IBID, Open Space Element, p. 14-15.

⁵ IBID, Transportation Element, p. 14.

Rock Hill-Fort Mill Area Transportation Study (RFATS)

RFATS is a regional planning authority that helps plan and prioritize transportation needs for the eastern half of York County. The *York County Greenway Plan* identifies where new trails will be most desirable and where they will best integrate with existing and proposed trails within the RFATS study area. **It is therefore recommended that the York County Greenway Plan text and map within the RFATS study area be included in the update to the 2030 Long range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Further, priority segments for implementation should appear as priority projects in RFATS' LRTP Bike/Pedestrian Element.**

RFATS' most recent plan is the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (Adopted May 2005). To support ongoing planning and project programming detailed in the Long Range Transportation Plan, federal planning and programmatic funds that are earmarked for the South Carolina portion of the Charlotte Urbanized Area are allocated by SCDOT directly to RFATS. Under federal law, the plan must be updated every three years.

Incorporating the *York County Greenway Plan* is consistent with several 2030 LRTP objectives. For example, it will help meet the transportation conformity requirement (the RFATS study area is in non-attainment under the federal CAA for ozone) since it encourages alternative forms of transportation. Please see Section 1, Chapter 2 for more on this.

Also, it promotes the Bicycle and Pedestrian goal of “Promot[ing] development of an integrated bicycle and pedestrian network”⁶ because it lays out precisely such a network that utilizes both on-roadside and non-roadside for cyclists and pedestrians. Similarly, it furthers the Environmental goal of “Develop[ing] a transportation system which preserves and enhances the natural and built environments” because the *York County Greenway Plan* states a goal of respecting and incorporating natural features as it provides safe routes.⁷

Proposed funding for projects in the York County Greenway Plan is also consistent with that proposed in RFATS 2030 LRTP. RFATS 2030 LRTP mention many of the same state and federal grant programs, local funding options, ideas for private funding and the “Possibility of renewal of 1-cent tax, with some portion of it going to build new roads with the inclusion of pedestrian and bicycle trails.”⁸ It is understood that the local government sponsors such as Fort Mill, Tega Cay, Rock Hill and York County make applications and funding recommendations.

⁶ Rock Hill-Fort Mill Area Transportation Study, “2030 Long Range Transportation Plan,” p. 4

⁷ IBID, p. 4.

⁸ IBID, p. 53.

City of York

The guiding document for developing trails and greenways in the City of York is the *1996 City of York Bicycle Plan*. Although there are currently no protected natural areas in the York City Planning area,⁹ the *City of York Comprehensive Plan* (2005) introduces the possibility of having greenways in the city and specifies that the interior trail system should be updated to connect to existing arteries and to preserve natural resources, especially creeks. **It is recommended that the City of York adopt this map and the text portions of the York County Greenway Plan that apply to York as an update to the City of York's Bicycle Plan.**

Adopting the applicable routes and text from the *York County Greenway Plan* would be consistent with the vision already articulated in the Comprehensive Plan. For example, the Land Use Plan chapter contains this observation: "The City of York has greatly expanded the public recreation opportunities for its citizens in the past few years. The Plan recognizes this fact and recommends continued provision of public open space for active and passive recreation.... The Plan also recommends that a system of hiking trails and biking trails be implemented in the York area....As the area develops more fully, the provision of greenways and corridors of open space will help to maintain the small town character...." (p. 105) This also shows that the City of York's update to its bicycle plan would be consistent with existing plans: the Comprehensive Plan says the city should: "Continue to implement the plan for a system of hiking and biking trails in the City, connecting parks and other green spaces, and connecting with trails and open spaces in the County."¹⁰ The *York County Greenway Plan* envisions trail connections through the city that will help accomplish those objectives.

The City of York's Subdivision Code outlines open space requirements in Article 5, s. 8.3. A dedication of 10% of the property for open space is required. There is a menu of typologies for how that space may be used: recreation, natural, or greenway/trails. **It is recommended that the code be amended to specify that when developing property containing trail corridors identified on the plan map (reference the *City of York's Updated Bicycle Plan*), developers are required to dedicate the trail to meet the 10% set-aside requirement. This provision could be added to Section V-8.3.2.**

Adopting the proposed trail dedication requirements outlined in Section 1, Chapter 5 (above) would not just encourage, but require subdivision developers to make connections by sharing the updated bicycle plan that explains roughly where segments should be constructed so that they can eventually be linked together. There is broad language in the comprehensive plan supporting adoption of a subdivision ordinance to require park dedications. For example, the Implementation Strategy section recommends that the city: "Continue implementing regulations to conserve green spaces utilizing flood plains, wetlands, natural areas, etc." and "Apply innovative land use regulations which would provide opportunities for new types of residential development patterns... and alternative lot arrangements to maximize common open space."¹¹

⁹ "City of York Comprehensive Plan," (2005), p.38.

¹⁰ IBID, p. 115.

¹¹ "City of York Comprehensive Plan," (2005), p. 116 and p. 132.

City of Rock Hill

The trails proposed in the *York County Greenway Plan* correspond with those in the *Rock Hill Trails and Greenways Master Plan* (last amended April 2008). This plan serves to simply enhance what is already included in Rock Hill's plan. Nevertheless, **to accommodate the Carolina Thread Trail segments, it is recommended that the Rock Hill Master Greenway Plan be amended to include these segments within its borders and ultimately reflect the network on this map.**

The *Rock Hill Trails and Greenways Master Plan* (adopted 2003) was developed by a citizen group that focused on connecting existing trails to destinations including schools, neighborhoods, and recreational facilities. The plan also created a permanent Trails and Greenways Committee with three-year staggered terms. *The Rock Hill Trails and Greenway Master Plan Update* (adopted in April 2008) includes an inventory of existing trails, a proposal for new segments that considers connectivity beyond its borders, and an implementation plan.

Amending the Rock Hill Master Greenway Plan to include the Carolina Thread Trail segments from the *York County Greenway Plan* would be consistent with *Rock Hill's Comprehensive Plan* (2000), which mentions the importance of greenways and trails, and integrates them into its vision. This *York County Greenway Plan* helps Rock Hill meet its Community Facilities Planning Goal of coordinating with neighboring jurisdictions to make sure that the facilities are consistent and mutually supportive since the *York County Greenway Plan* is the result of a process that incorporated all of the neighboring cities and the county.¹²

The Rock Hill Zoning Ordinance (last modified May 2008) has already incorporated provisions for the dedication of and creation of trails that appear on adopted trail plans for the City of Rock Hill. See Rock Hill Zoning Ordinance, Article 6 (Development and Design Standards), Section 6-60o: General Open Space Standards. This closely tracks the recommendations from the *Rock Hill Trails and Greenway Master Plan Update* that says: "Developers shall be required to construct and dedicate trails when developing property containing trail corridors that have been identified on the plan map.... Another option the City may want to consider in certain situations is fee-in-lieu. When immediate trail construction is not advisable due to imminent construction in the area or specific factors, the City, at its discretion, may want to consider the acceptance of an approved fee-in-lieu of the trail construction – to be allocated for trail construction at a later date. The associated easement or right-of-way for the trail segment would still be dedicated."¹³ **Rock Hill has already met (and exceeded) the trail dedication provision recommendations from the *York County Greenway Plan*.**

¹² IBID, Community Facilities Element, p. 45

¹³ "Rock Hill Trails and Greenway Master Plan Update," April 2008, p. 31.

Town of Fort Mill

The *Fort Mill Comprehensive Plan: Fort Mill Tomorrow* (2007) is currently the guiding document for park and greenway planning for Fort Mill. There is not yet an adopted greenway/trail master plan or a separate master plan for parks and recreation. A Town Recreation Commission was established by ordinance and holds regular public meetings to gather input or educate on recreation matters. The commission also advises town council, distributes an annual report, recreation plan, budget, inventory of capital facilities, and recreation policy to outline the town's role in recreation life.¹⁴ **It is recommended that the Town Council, pending approval from the Town Recreation Commission, adopt applicable excerpts from the *York County Greenway Plan* and this map to serve as the town's plan for greenways and trails OR that the town amend its comprehensive plan to incorporate applicable excerpts from the *York County Greenway Plan* and this map.**

The comprehensive plan highlights the town's desire for more natural resource protection and recreation opportunities as Fort Mill continues to grow. It mentions the need for a "Plan for greenway, pedestrian and bicycle paths linking neighborhoods through an interconnected network of riparian corridors, utility easement corridors and within road rights of ways."¹⁵ The plan suggests, among many other strategies related to this recommendation, developing a greenway plan that will connect to regional trails and evaluating a fee in lieu and/or land dedication provision for acquiring and developing greenways.¹⁶ This is also mentioned separately as a strategy for promoting less intense development patterns. The plan suggests that an effort be made to "Determine the amount of open space that the community finds acceptable and require developers to dedicate that percentage of land for open space and/or connectivity to the larger regional greenway initiative."¹⁷ Adopting the York County Greenway Plan supports both of those strategies, and others detailed in the comprehensive plan.

There are currently no trail dedication provisions. The proposed trail dedication requirements outlined in Section 1, Chapter 5 of the *York County Greenway Plan*, if adopted by the Town of Fort Mill, would help assure that new developments include trails according to this plan, which means that ultimately the trail network will be integrated and cohesive. This town-wide plan will give developers specific guidance on where they can build trails that would eventually connect with other trails outside of their properties.

¹⁴ Fort Mill Code of Ordinances, Chapter 26, Article II.

¹⁵ "Fort Mill Comprehensive Plan: Fort Mill Tomorrow," 2007, p.34.

¹⁶ IBID, p. 34- 36.

¹⁷ IBID, p. 55.

Town of Clover

Besides a comprehensive plan, the Town of Clover has a trails plan that details the location of existing trails and proposed new trails.¹⁸ **It is recommended that the Town of Clover Comprehensive Plan (2005) be amended to include mention of the Carolina Thread Trail and that the Town of Clover Trails Plan be updated to reflect: (1) two additional legs of proposed trails in Clover (one is near Neely Road and the other is near Willow Oaks Road) and (2) indicate which of all the proposed Clover trails would receive the Carolina Thread Trail designation.** This map (next page) indicates the route suggestions discussed above that came out of the greenway master planning process for York County communities. The Clover Trails Plan could be expanded by adopting applicable language from the *York County Greenway Plan*.

These recommendations are supported by language in the comprehensive plan, which envisions a system of trails for Clover: “In order to enhance the quality of life in Clover, additional public improvements are recommended, such as increased facilities for pedestrians, a system of trails for hikers and bikers, and continued public landscaping and streetscape efforts.”¹⁹ This section of the comprehensive plan could be augmented to include mention of the Carolina Thread Trail.

There are a few other implementation strategies from the comprehensive plan that will be advanced by the changes proposed here. They are as follows: (1) Increase beautification efforts, including hiking and biking facilities, to help attract new businesses and expand quality of life opportunities; (2) Begin development of a bike trail and walking trail system in the Town; (3) Consider the development of a greenway plan to preserve open space, connect public land uses, provide a trail network, and connect areas which retain a natural character; and (4) Encourage the reservation of open spaces within new developments and encourage contiguous open space areas along creeks and other natural features.²⁰ This last strategy would be best advanced by a zoning code update to include trail dedication requirements as suggested in the York County Greenway Plan, Section 1, Chapter 5.

¹⁸ The Town of Clover Trail Plan is a one page GIS-based map.

¹⁹ “The Town of Clover Comprehensive Plan,” 2005, p. 80.

²⁰ IBID, pps. 85, 87, and 96.