



Why Greenways?



Here are some reasons why communities across the United States and the world are investing in improvements for bicycling, walking, and trails.

The Many Benefits of Greenways

According to North Carolina's Great Trails State Coalition, the benefits of greenways include:

RECREATION

- Make communities better places to live by preserving and creating free and open spaces for recreation.
- Provide new opportunities for outdoor recreation and non-motorized transportation.
- Serve a diverse population of a community that may otherwise have limited opportunities to access natural areas due to financial or transportation constraints.

TRANSPORTATION

- Provide neighborhood and community connections.
- Are an integral part of a multi-modal transportation system.
- Facilitate and contribute to positive health and environmental outcomes as active transportation networks.

HEALTH

- Provide a dedicated space for physical activities, such as walking, hiking, mountain biking, paddling, and horseback riding.
- Increased physical activity improves physical and mental health and an individual's sense of well-being.
- Free to users, trails are an inexpensive and safe avenue for regular exercise.

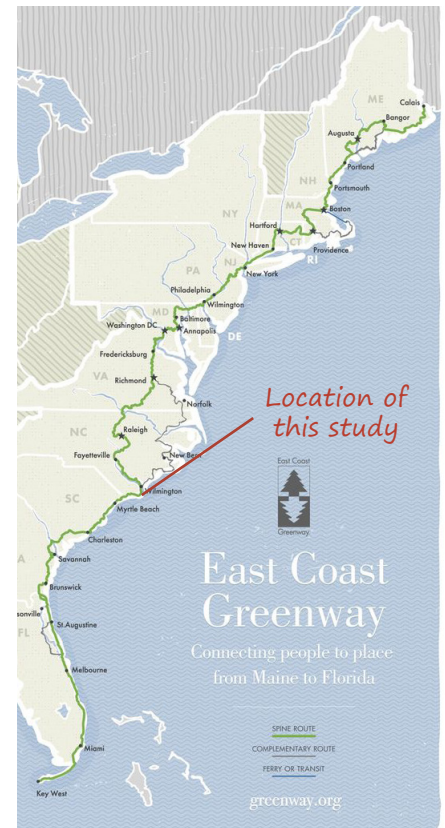
ECONOMIC

- Enhance the ability of a community to attract and retain business and residents; this is why trails are considered a quality of life amenity.
- Benefit businesses located nearby as trail users spend money on equipment, food, lodging, and entertainment.
- Proximity to trails and greenways can increase property values, attract buyers, and make property easier to sell.

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Preserve natural areas, protect habitats, and provide wildlife corridors.
- Encourage human-powered forms of transportation, which improves water and air quality.
- Serve as hands-on environmental classrooms.

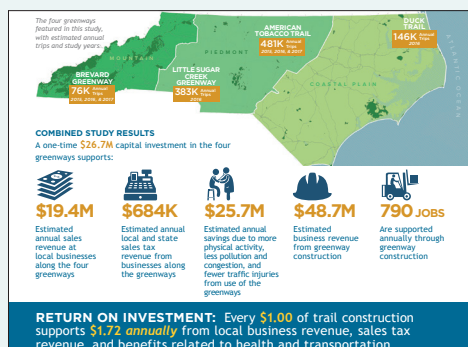
TRAIL TALK: A greenway or trail typically refers to a paved linear path for walking, biking, rolling, skating, and using other non-motorized modes of transportation. You might also hear them called **shared-use paths**, **multi-use paths**, and **sidepaths**.



Source:
North Carolina 2023 Year of the Trail Community Toolkit.

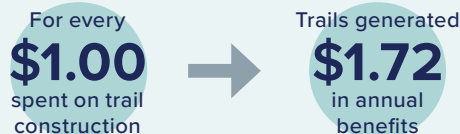
Measuring the Impacts in North Carolina

Support for walking and biking trails is growing in NC as their benefits become clear. Studies of existing greenway trails in our state have demonstrated a range of health, transportation, environmental, and economic benefits.



ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS FROM GREENWAYS ACROSS NC:

This 2018 study of four paved greenways in NC found a **positive return on investment** for every dollar spent constructing the greenways.

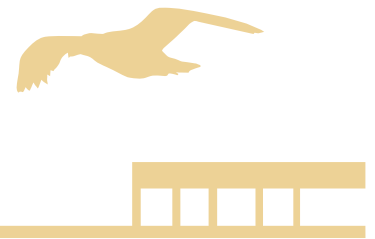


East Coast Greenway

The East Coast Greenway (ECG) is a continuous **3,000-mile route for biking, walking, and other active modes from Maine to Florida**. Kure Beach is part of the planned ECG route through North Carolina.

The ECG is envisioned as an accessible route that connects major cities, small towns, and nature on facilities that are completely separated from motor vehicle traffic. Currently, about 35% of the ECG route is protected from traffic, and the remaining sections are on-road. The completed ECG will support local commutes and long adventures alike, fostering healthy, sustainable, and prosperous communities throughout the Eastern Seaboard.

Visit www.greenway.org to learn more.



Common Questions

It's natural to have questions about how a new greenway could affect your community. Looking to other communities with successful greenways provides examples of trail features that address concerns and enhance the trail experience.

Safety, Security, and Privacy

Trail users and people who live near proposed trails may have concerns about safety and security.

TRAIL FACT: Studies of existing trails, such as the American Tobacco Trail, have shown that **crime rates on trails tend to reflect the crime rates of the surrounding community**; in other words, trails do not typically have an effect on crime. Trail users provide “eyes on the street”, which can often contribute to reduced crime rates.

Privacy is a key concern to many along the proposed trail on the eastern edge of the MOTSU boundary. **Distancing the greenway from private property and having a vegetated buffer are ways to create privacy. These design details will be worked out further in the next stage of design in years to come.** MOTSU has not officially approved any specific trail option, buffer, or design detail and cannot weigh in until that next stage of a design and when an environmental study has been performed.

Conflict between Modes

Where greenways are heavily used, it may be challenging for a variety of user types to comfortably and safely share the space. 12+ foot wide paved greenways are recommended to reduce conflicts.

Stormwater Impacts/Wetlands

When greenways are built in floodplains, there may be concerns about the added impervious surface contributing to existing stormwater or flooding issues. Greenways are a way to activate otherwise undevelopable flood-prone areas, allowing users to access and enjoy these natural areas. Wetlands are abundant in the study area. **All measures will be taken to avoid or minimize wetlands due to their critical ecological functions and permitting restrictions. Boardwalks may be considered in special exceptions and typically minimize impacts.**

Maintenance

A common question is how the trail will be kept in a state of good repair and cleanliness. Regular upkeep and timely removal of any trash, obstacles (such as fallen trees), graffiti, and vandalism are key to a positive trail experience. Typically local jurisdictions will be responsible for maintenance. **Typical maintenance cost varies but can vary from \$1,000-3,000 per mile annually.**

HOW HAVE OTHER COMMUNITIES ADDRESSED IT?



FENCING is used when required by neighboring properties (appearance can range from decorative to more secure).



LIGHTING along the trail and good **VISIBILITY** for trail users.



SIGNAGE with trail rules to reinforce expectations for trail user behavior.



SUFFICIENT TRAIL WIDTH (>10 ft) reduces conflicts when passing, and allows faster traffic to pass slower traffic.



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE such as bioswales, bioretention planters, rain gardens, and permeable pavements can help manage stormwater.



TRASH RECEPTACLES and pet waste stations discourage littering along the trail.



VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS allow community groups to help with trail maintenance and provide a way to report larger maintenance needs to authorities.