

# Trail and Error: Greenway Trail Success

## Piedmont Transportation Professionals

October 4, 2023



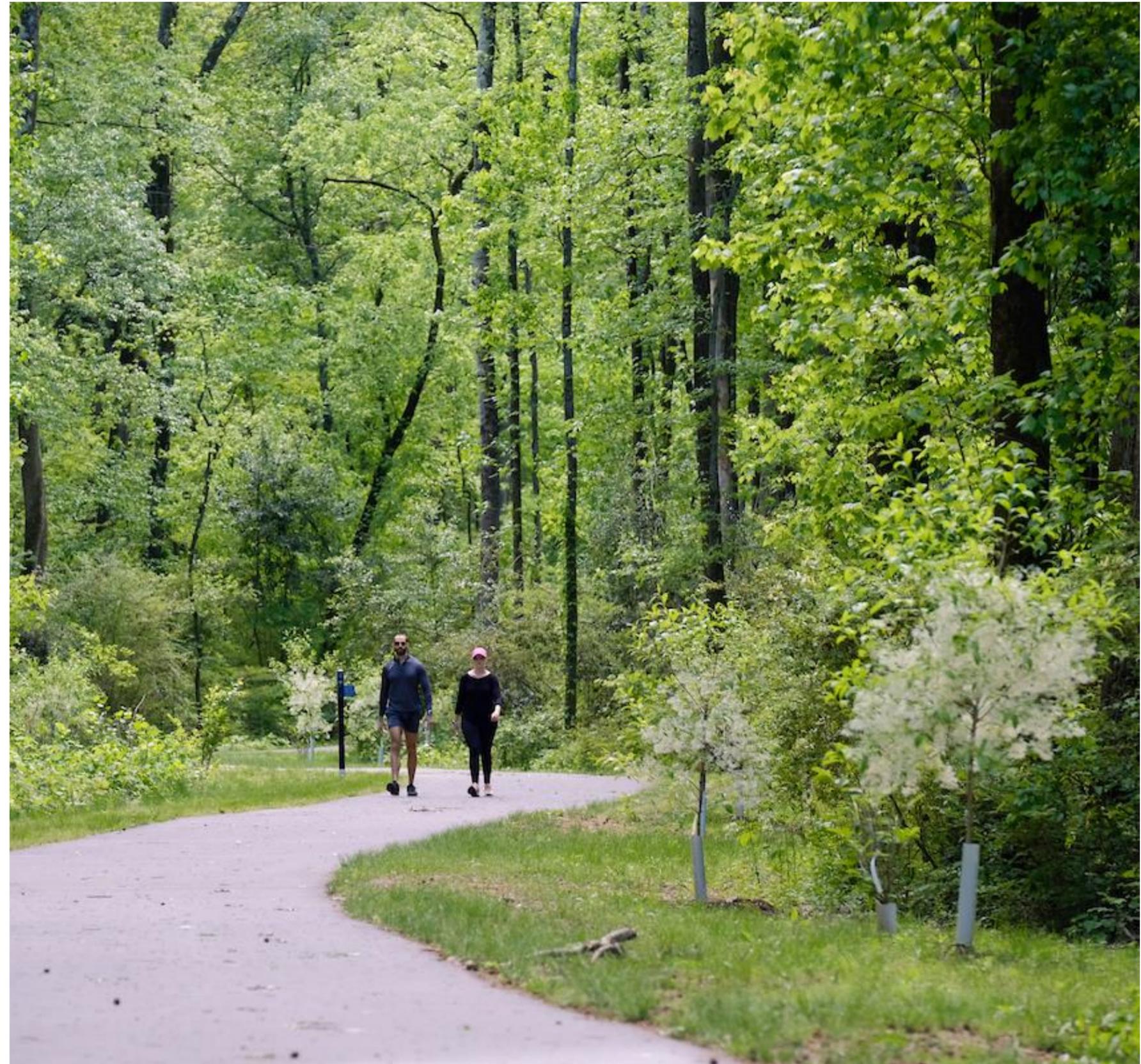
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# Overview

- Planning Pitfalls to Avoid
- Patience is Critical
- The Other Things
- Maintenance Lessons Learned
- If I Could Change One Thing



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# Greenways in Mecklenburg County



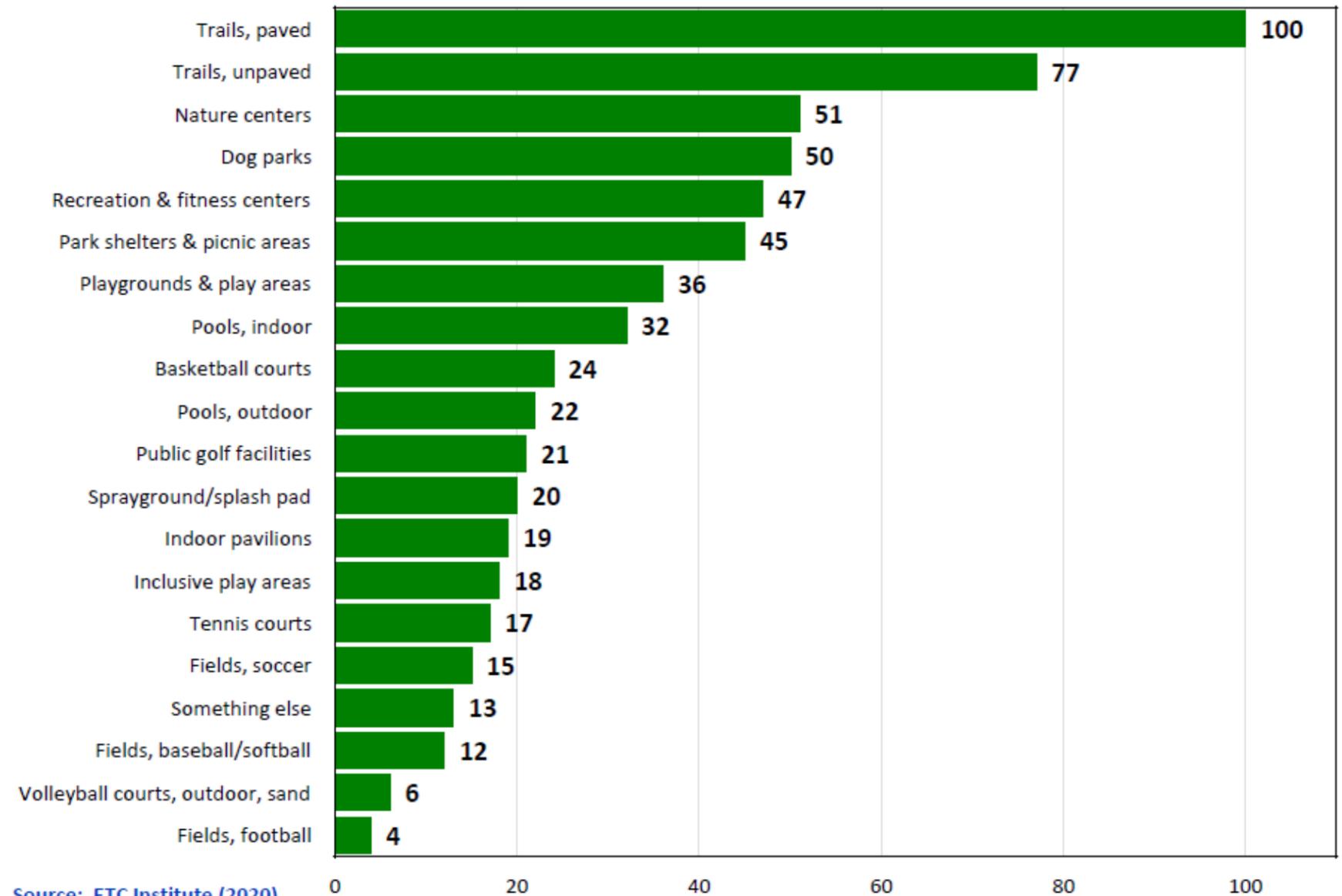
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- In 1966, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Master Plan for recreation recommended greenways “as logical natural elements useful in creating a sense of physical form and order within the city.”
- First Greenway Master Plan completed in 1980
- **#1 Amenity** requested by the residents today
- Greenway Master Plan includes **344 miles** of greenway trails and **280+** miles of urban trails

## Importance Rating for Facilities

the rating for the item rated as the most important=100

the rating of all other items reflects the relative level of importance for each item compared to the item rated as the most important

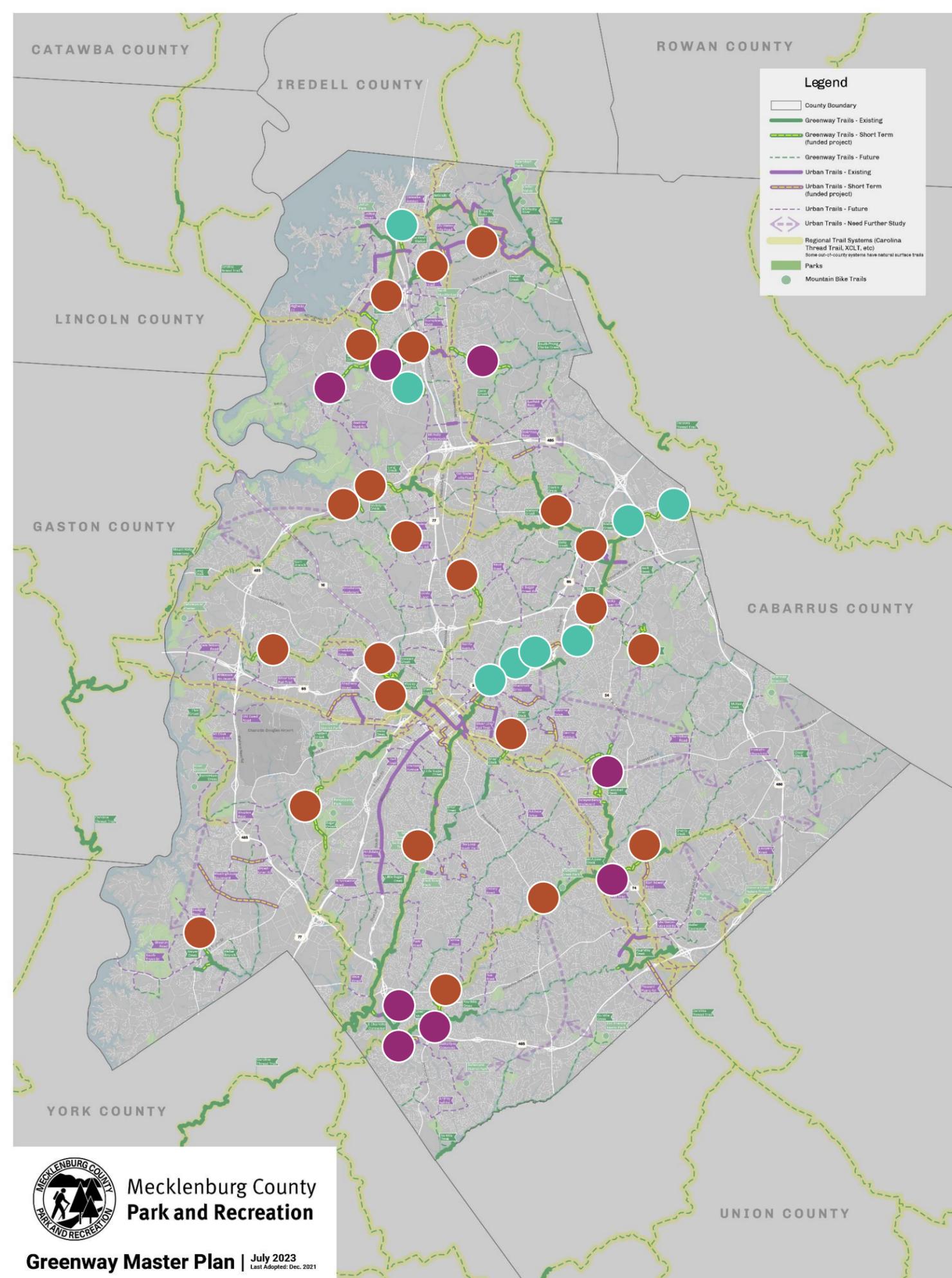


Source: ETC Institute (2020)

# Greenway Projects

Miles	Greenway Development Status
68	Existing/Developed (+ 20.4 miles of access trail)
14.9	Funded – In Construction
17.0	Funded – In Design
5.0	Funded – Future
11.3	Funded – By Others (Includes City + Town projects)
~116	Total Greenway Miles

- <FY23 CIP Projects
- New FY 24-28 CIP Projects
- City/Town Projects



# Planning Pitfalls to Avoid



# Planning Pitfalls to Avoid



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- Destinations: Begin/end at a destination to create meaningful connections and creating an amenity, not a nuisance

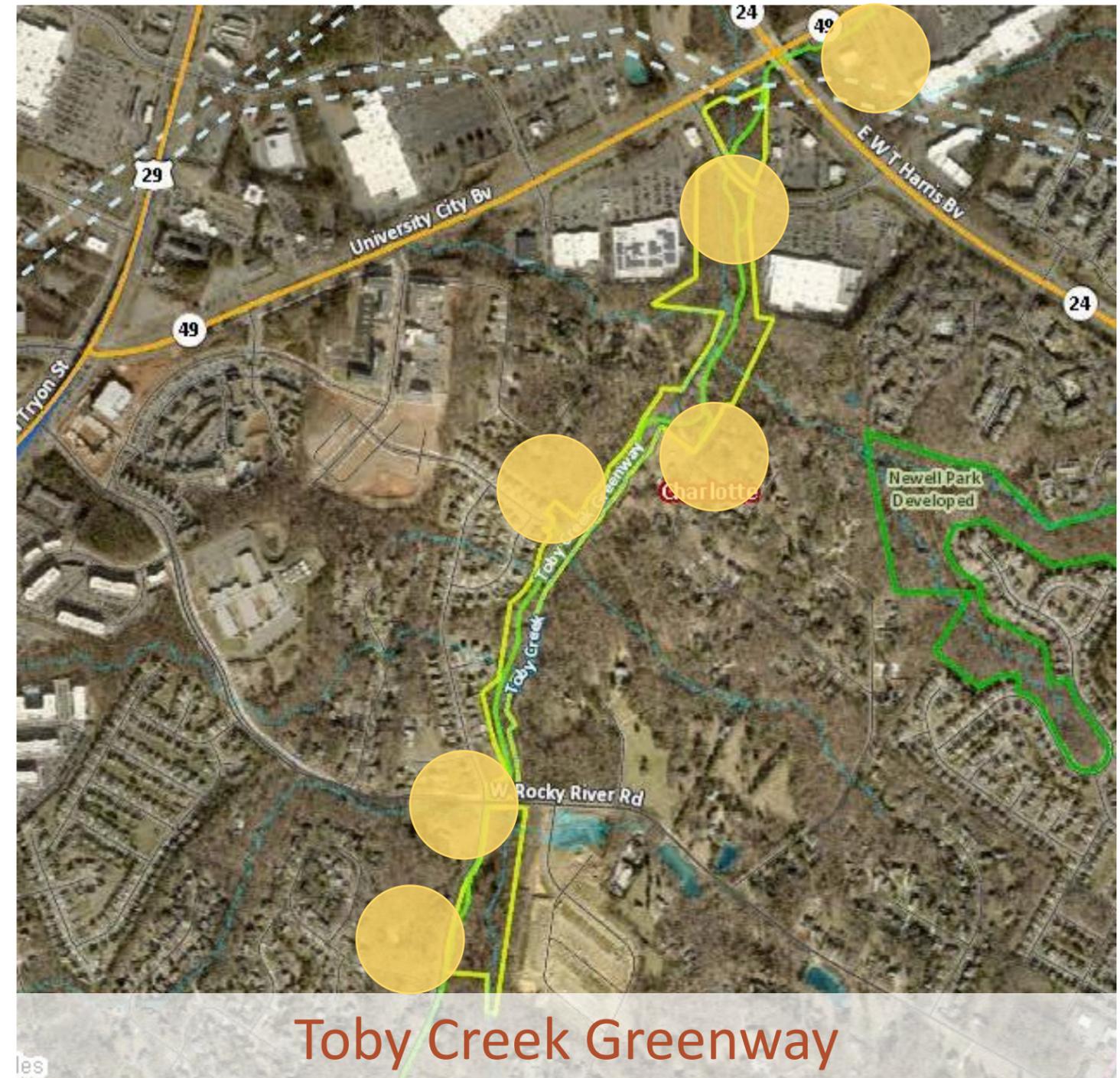


# Planning Pitfalls to Avoid



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- Access & Visibility: Maximize access points, integrate into built environment. Visible trails improve eyes-on security and invite users to the trail.



# Planning Pitfalls to Avoid



- Bridge Land Uses: Numbers and types of trail users change dramatically when connections area made between land uses.



# Planning Pitfalls to Avoid



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- 'Joy' Factor: Pay attention to trail environment, shape of trail, curb appeal, and amenities along the trail



Toby Creek Greenway



Plum Creek Greenway

# Patience is Critical



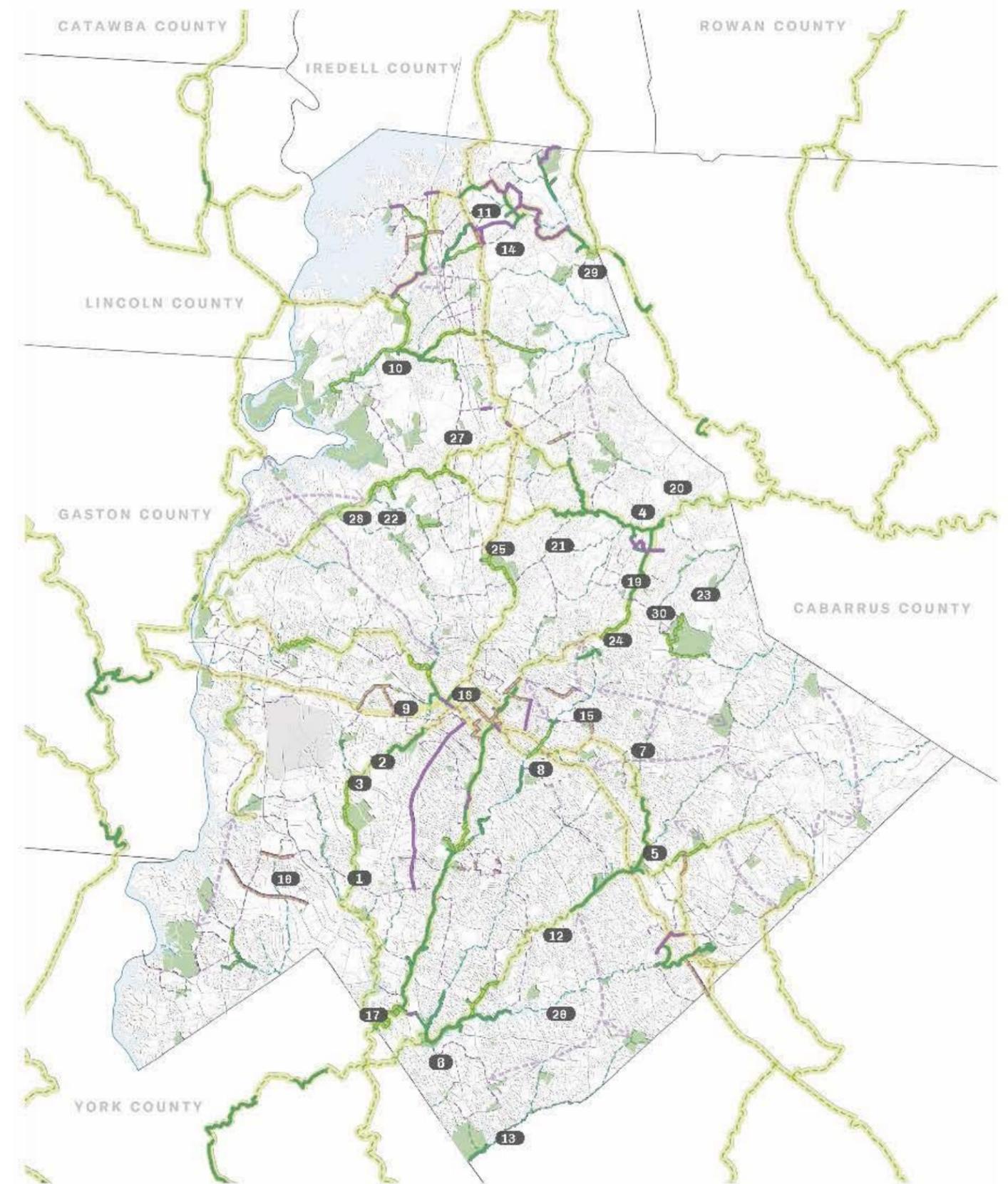


# Meck Playbook Greenway Priorities

## Tier One Greenway Projects

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Sugar Creek                                     | 16 Steele Creek                     |
| 2 Irwin Creek                                     | 17 Sugar Creek                      |
| 3 Irwin Creek                                     | 18 Irwin Creek                      |
| 4 Mallard Creek                                   | 19 Toby Creek Trib                  |
| 5 Irvins Creek                                    | 20 Mallard Creek                    |
| 6 Ballantyne Connector                            | 21 Doby Creek Tributary             |
| 7 Campbell Creek                                  | 22 McIntyre Creek                   |
| 8 Briar Creek/ Edwards Branch                     | 23 Back Creek Tributary             |
| 9 Irwin Creek/ Stewart Creek / Stewart Creek Trib | 24 Toby Creek                       |
| 10 McDowell Creek                                 | 25 The Seam Trail                   |
| 11 South Prong Rocky River                        | 26 Four Mile Creek                  |
| 12 McAlpine Creek                                 | 27 Dixon Branch/Dixon Branch Trib 1 |
| 13 Six Mile Creek                                 | 28 Long Creek                       |
| 14 South Prong West Branch Rocky River Tributary  | 29 West Branch Rocky River          |
| 15 Briar Creek                                    | 30 Back Creek                       |

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| County Boundary                               | Urban Trails - Future                                     |
| Greenway Trails - Existing                    | Urban Trails - Need Further Study                         |
| Greenway Trails - Short Term (funded project) | Regional Trail Systems (Carolina Thread Trail, XCLT, etc) |
| Greenway Trails - Future                      | Parks   |
| Urban Trails - Existing                       | Mountain Bike Trails                                      |
| Urban Trails - Short Term (funded project)    |   |



6.7 The top 30 greenway investment priorities are identified above.

# Greenway Priority Ranking



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## Connectivity

- Does the project connect to and expand the existing Bike-ped network?
- This criterion was strongly requested by the GAC.

## Land Needs

- How many parcels need to be acquired to complete this section of greenway?
- Greenway sections with the fewest parcels remaining to be acquired are given the highest priority.

## Equity

- Two characteristics identified in Meck Playbook:
  - Priority Communities
  - Park and Recreation Gap Areas

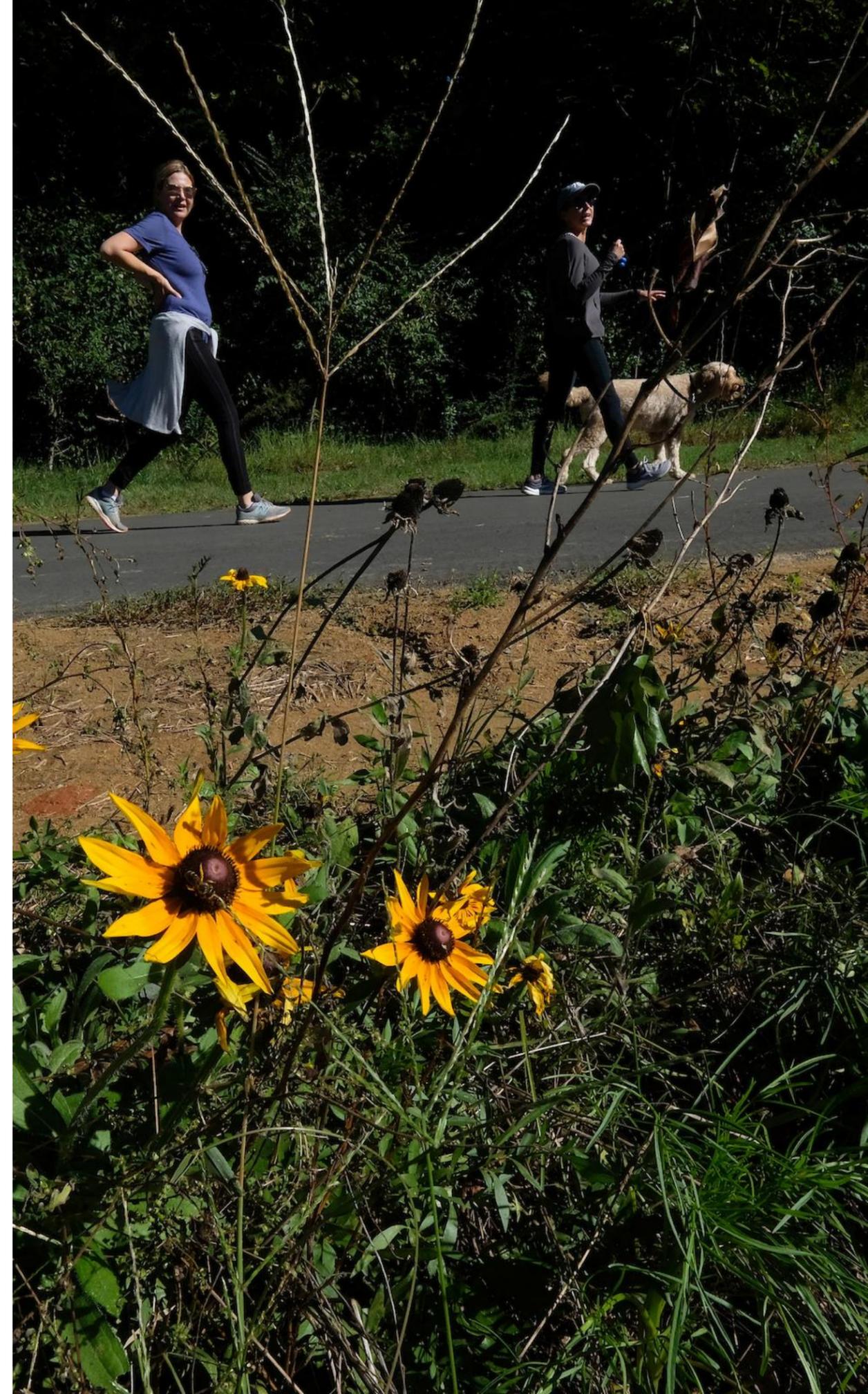
## Project Partnerships

- Does work by others provide a benefit other than providing funding to the greenway network?
- Ex: Road underpasses for greenway, trail built, traffic improvements, design.

# Patience is Critical

## Typical Development Requests

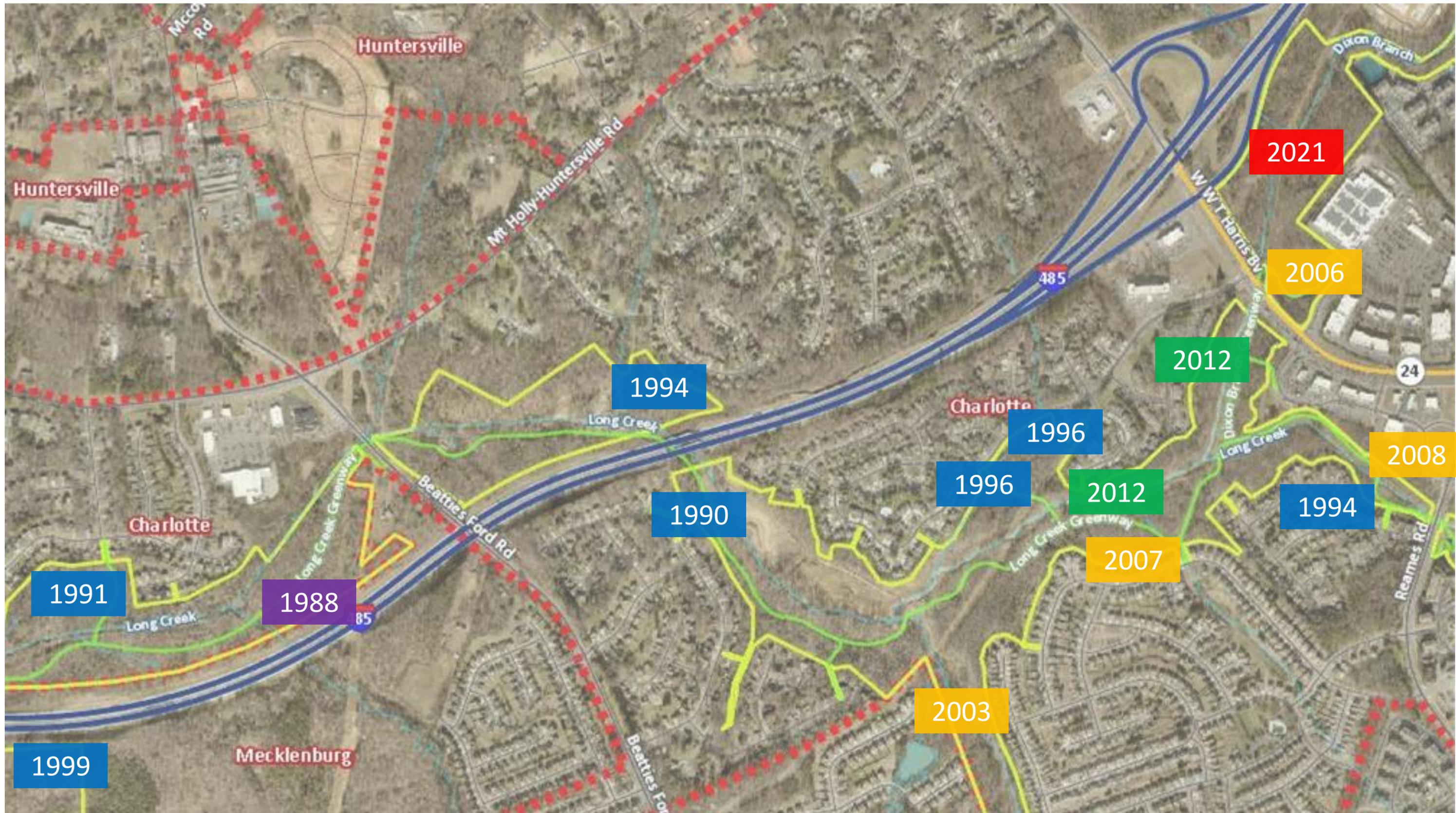
- **Dedication for Future Greenway Trails**
  - For all future trails on the greenway master plan
  - Preferred minimum 100' wide easements
  - Additional easement for access/connections
- **Dedication for Neighborhood/Local Park Land**
  - For developments over 20 acres
  - Minimum of 1 acre park land requests
- **Access Trail connections to Park Property and Greenway Trails**
  - For developments directly adjacent to park properties and greenway corridors



# Patience is Critical



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# The Other Things



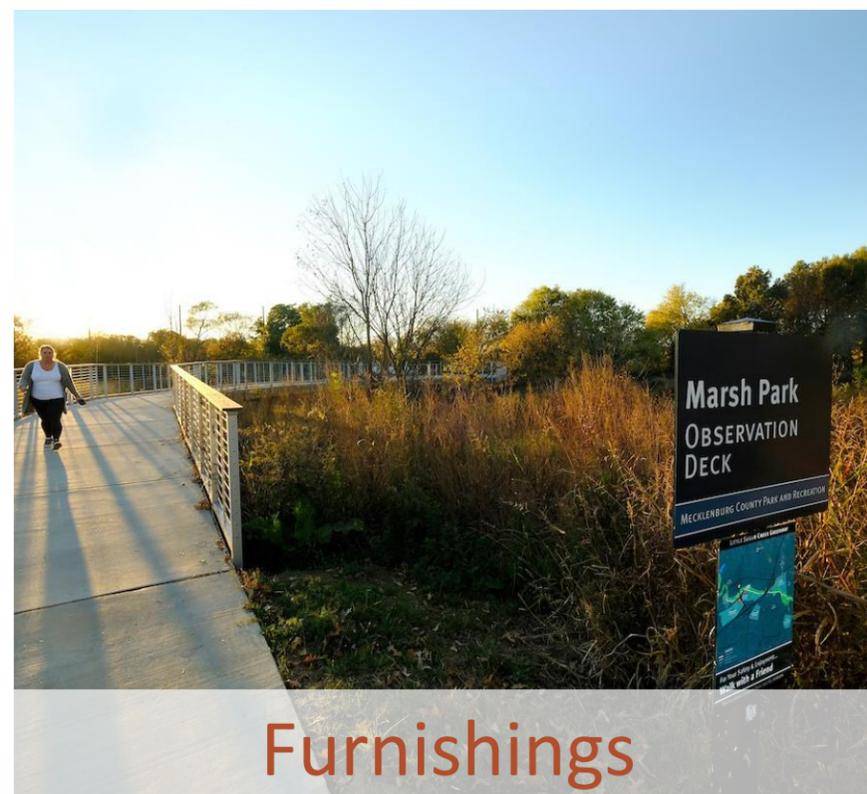
# The Other Things



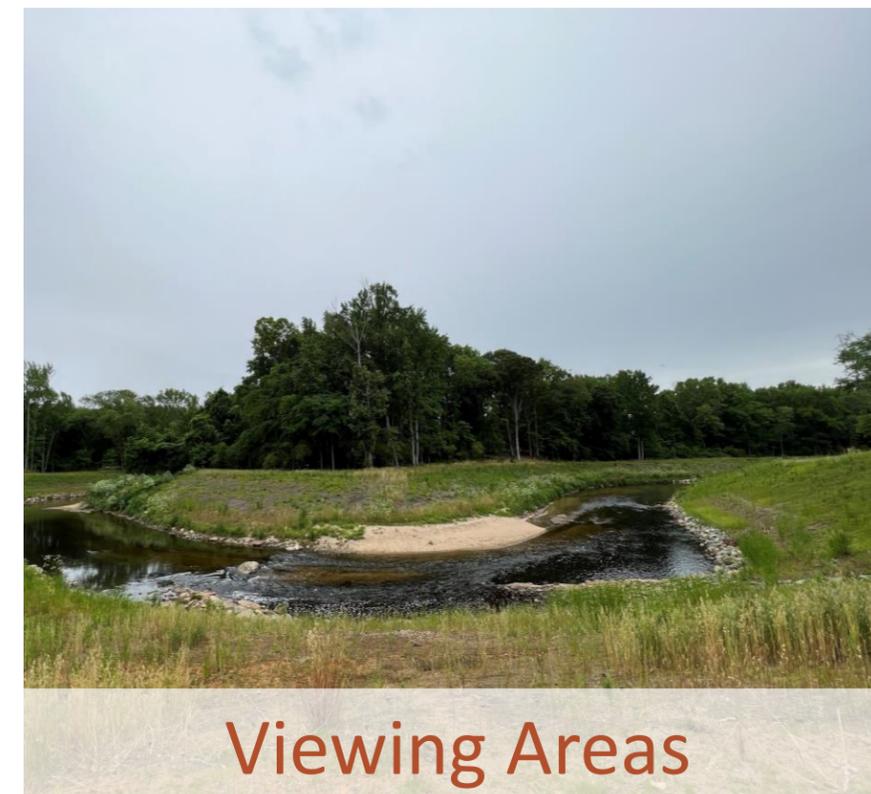
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Benches



Furnishings



Viewing Areas



Public Art



Parking and Restrooms

# Maintenance Lessons Learned





# Maintenance Lessons Learned

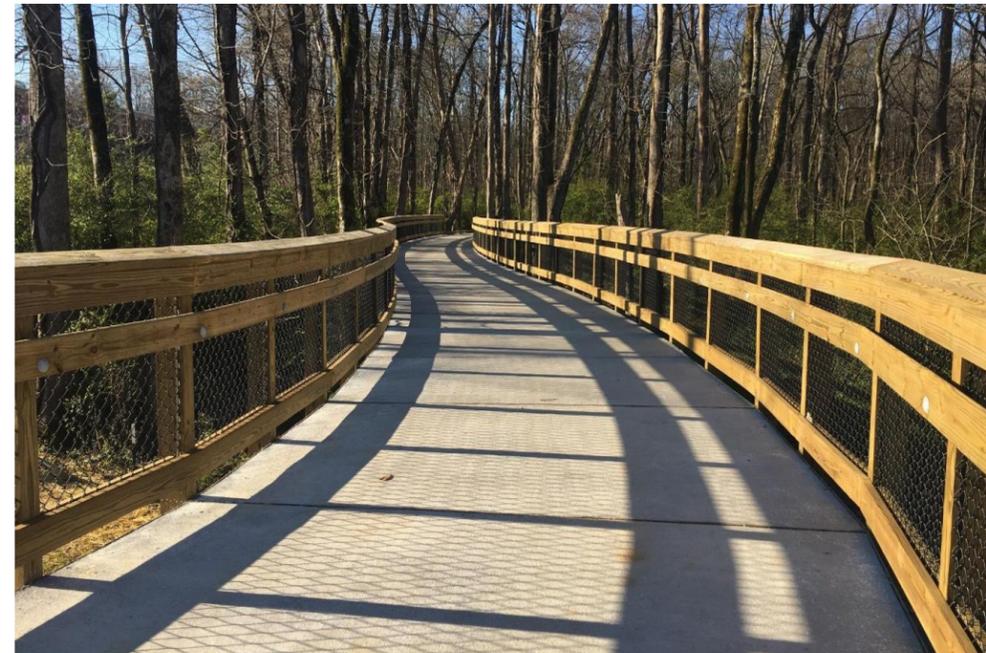


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## Prefabricated Steel Bike/Ped Bridge

- Weathering steel, fully assembled off site, low maintenance, 5-ton to 20-ton loading



## Boardwalk

- Used for deeper channels, wetlands, steep cross slopes, and floodplain areas in lieu of grading.
- Built on site with 5-ton loading.



## Concrete Low Water/Swale Bridge

- Matches trail width, 10' long.
- Poured in place concrete with 5-ton loading.
- Minor crossings.

# Maintenance Lessons Learned



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- Boardwalks: All wood structures replaced with wood/concrete hybrid or fully concrete structures.

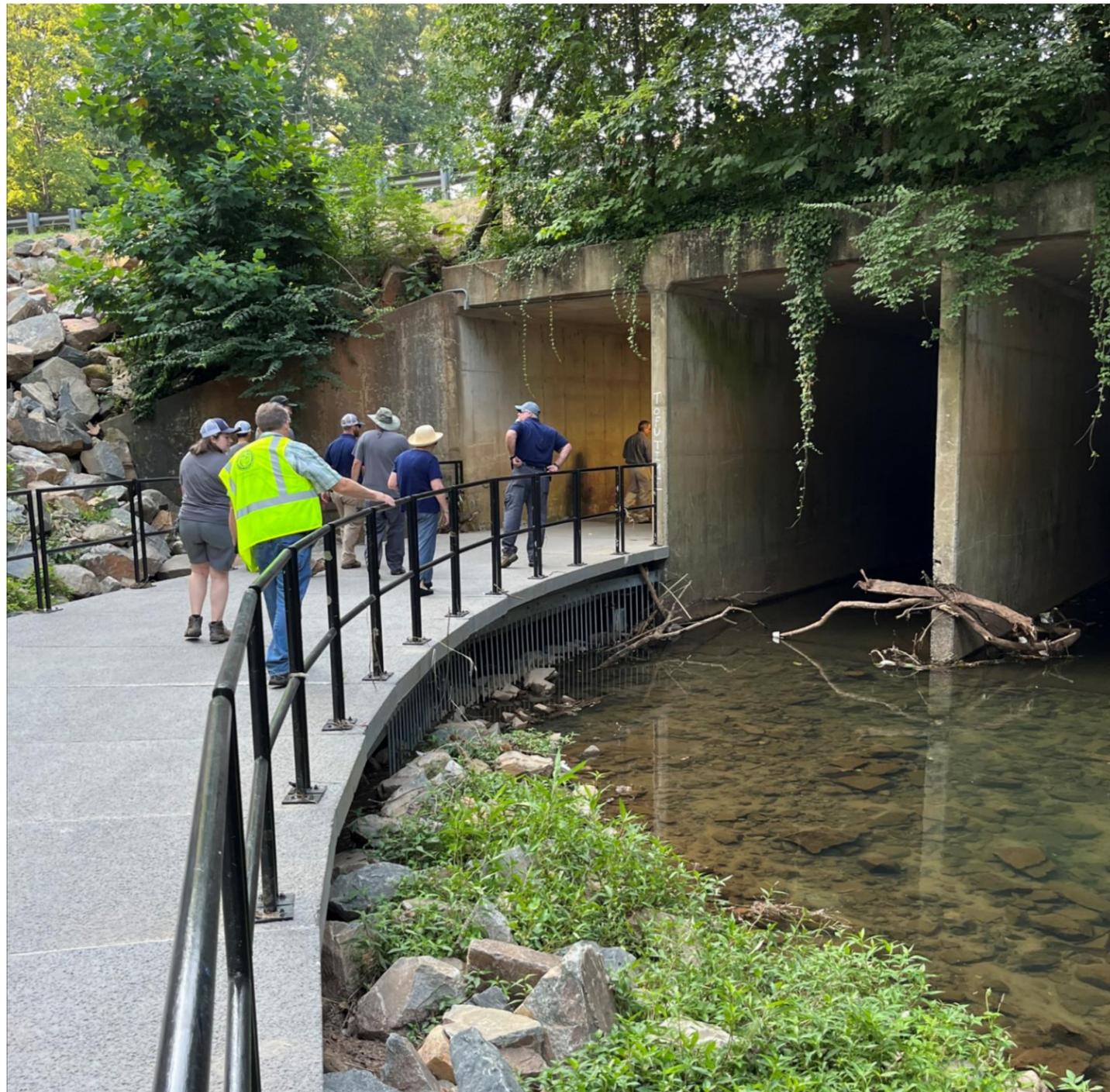


# Maintenance Lessons Learned



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- Post-construction Walks: Design and maintenance staff visit projects at substantial completion, 6-12 months from completion, and beyond.



# Maintenance Lessons Learned



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- First Things First: Experience helps staff understand areas to address first following storm events.



# If I Could Change One Thing



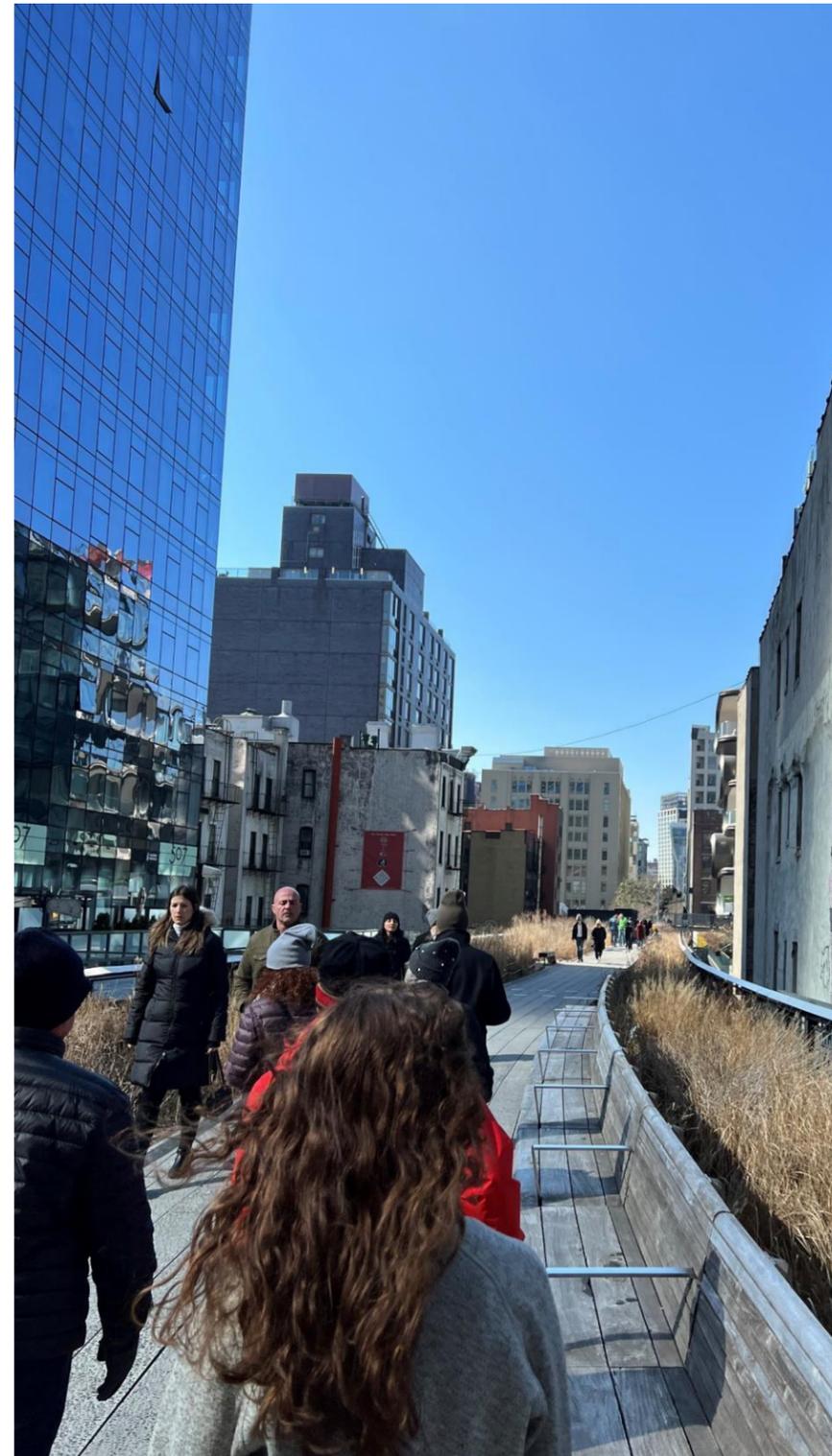
# Change One Thing



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606 Trail- Chicago



The High Line- NYC

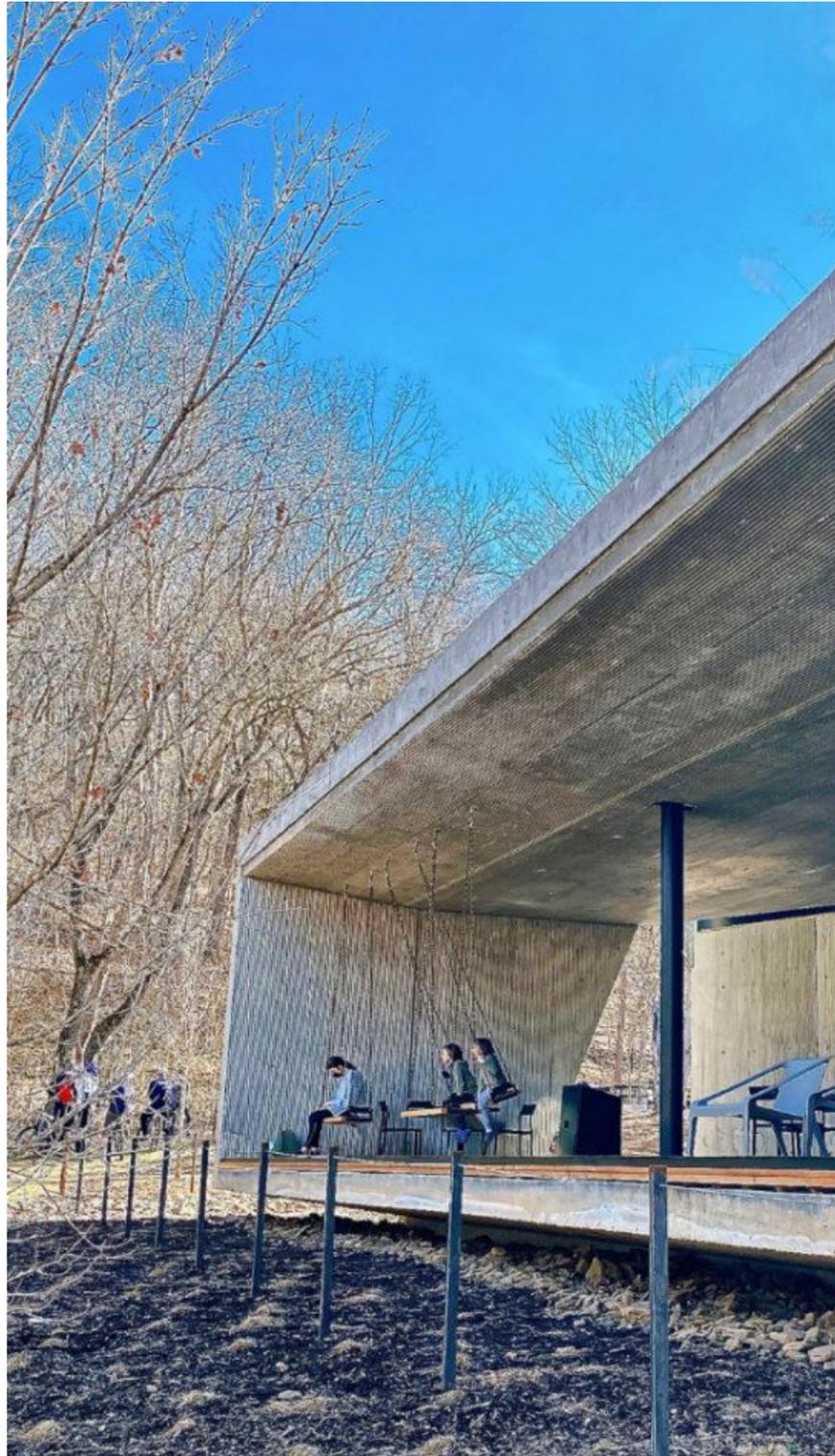


Atlanta Beltline

# Change One Thing



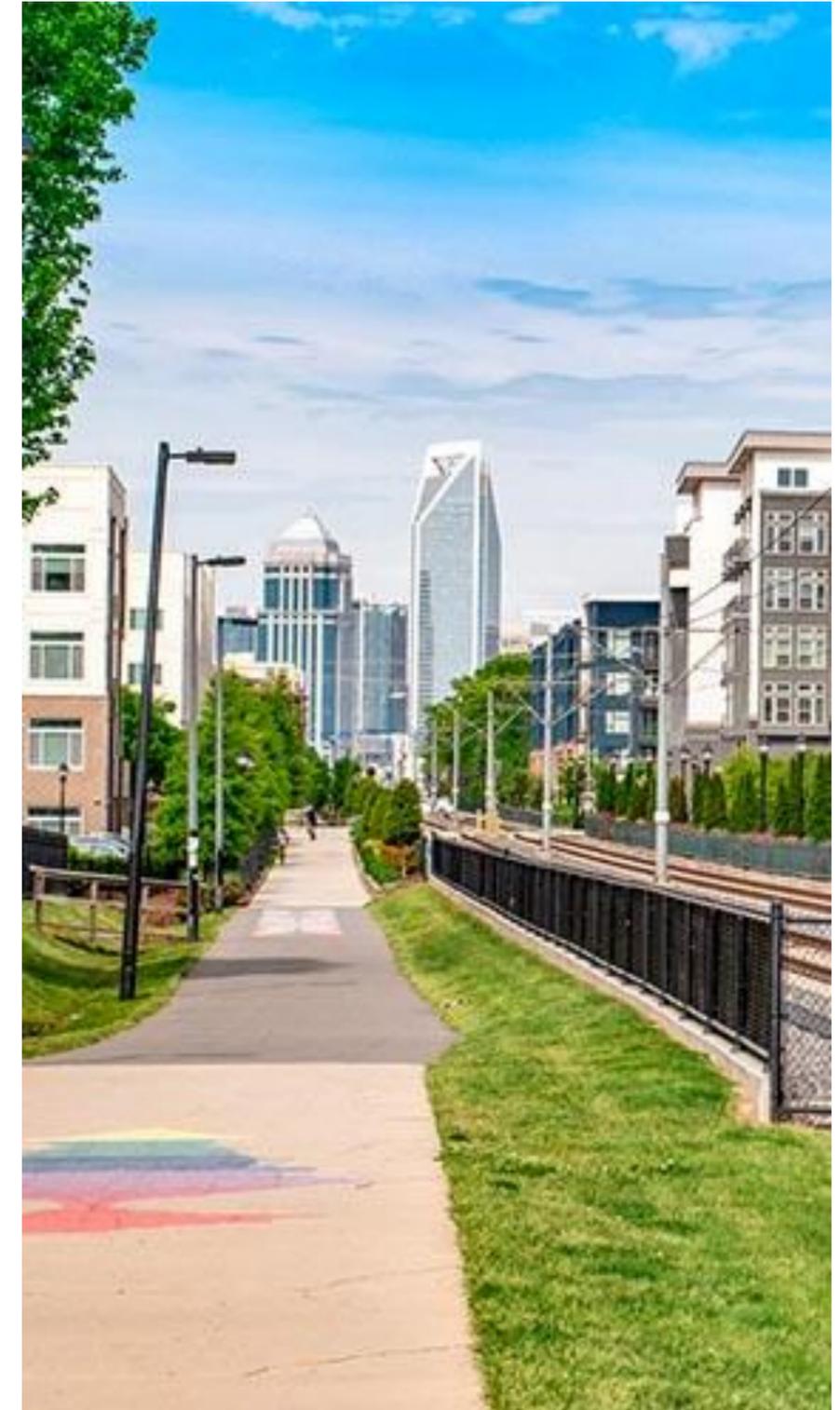
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Bentonville, Arkansas



Swamp Rabbit Trail-  
Greenville, SC



Rail Trail- Charlotte

# Contact

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[Parkandrec.com](http://Parkandrec.com)

Public Input Hub

[www.PublicInput.com/MeckParkRec](http://www.PublicInput.com/MeckParkRec)



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