



Open Space Bond: Greenways Evaluation Criteria

Presented by

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Open Space Bond Process

\$30M Passive Recreation Lands

Greenways

Conservation Easements

1 Selection Criteria Development & Approval

2 RFP Development & Launch

3 Application Support

4 Internal Review Process

5 Project Selection & Announcement

6 Ongoing: Project Support & Oversight

7 Ongoing: Community Outreach



Status Update

Conservation Easement

- ✓ Criteria adopted by BOC
- First project selection expected Summer 2023

Passive Recreation

- ✓ Public Engagement Underway
- Criteria presentation to EESS in July 2023
- Criteria presentation to BOC in August 2023
- RFP development & Application Window Open

Greenways

- ✓ Public Engagement Complete
- ✓ Criteria Refined
- ✓ Criteria approved by Recreation Advisory Board
- Criteria presentation in June 2023
- Shovel Ready Projects preparing for development

**All evaluation
criteria expected
to be complete
by end of
Summer 2023**



Greenway Project Funding

Locally Funded	Funded Through MPO
Mainly funded by Local Government but may also include local grant funds	80% State and Federal, 20% Local Match
Fewer restrictions, regulations & requirements	More regulations and state and federal approvals are required. (NCDOT)
Quicker process from planning to complete construction	Lengthy approval processes make for a significantly longer overall process from planning through to construction
Can be locally prioritized projects	Prioritized by the STIP and MPO MTP



Current Greenway Projects

EB 5774 A – Hwy 251 Section of the Woodfin Greenway

EB 5774 B – Beaverdam Creek Section of the Woodfin Greenway

EB 5824 – Enka Heritage Trail

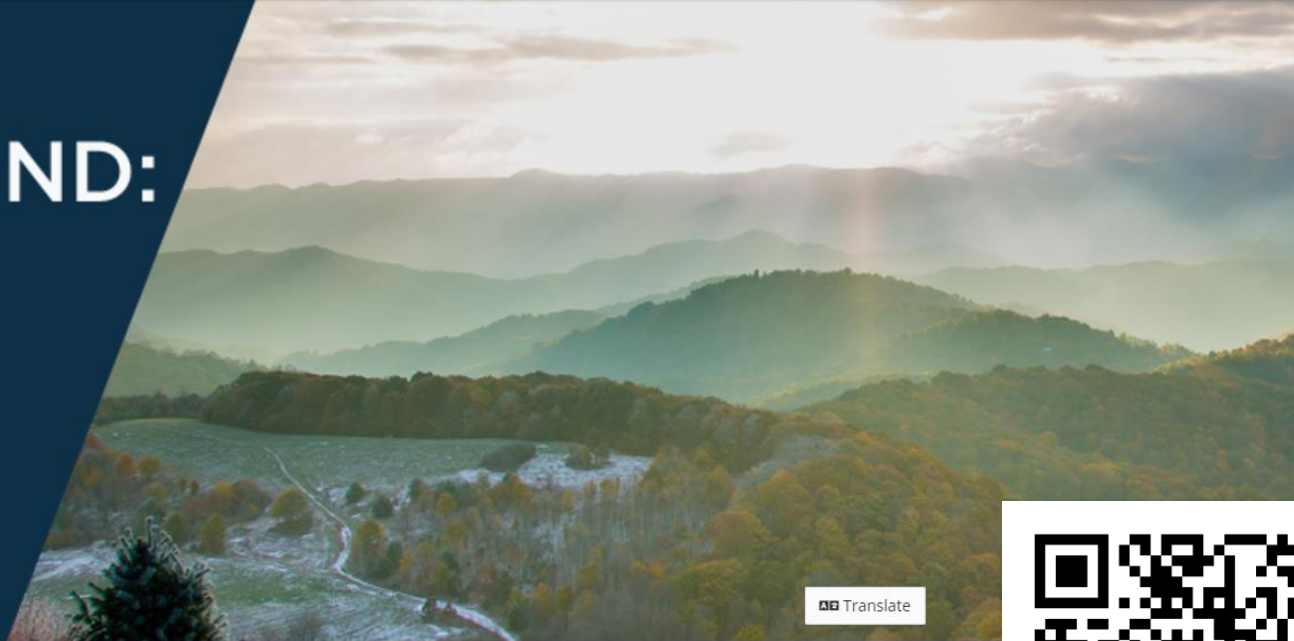
Current Cost Estimates indicate that around 5 million in Greenway Bond Funds will be needed to complete these projects in the fourth quarter of 2025.

**All Current Greenway Projects Funded
Through the MPO**



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN

OPEN SPACE BOND: GREENWAYS, CONSERVATION, & RECREATION



 Translate

- Overview
 - Greenways**
 - Conservation
 - Passive Recreation Lands
 - FAQs
 - Get Involved: Meetings
 - Boards and Oversight
 - News
- Documents and Presentations

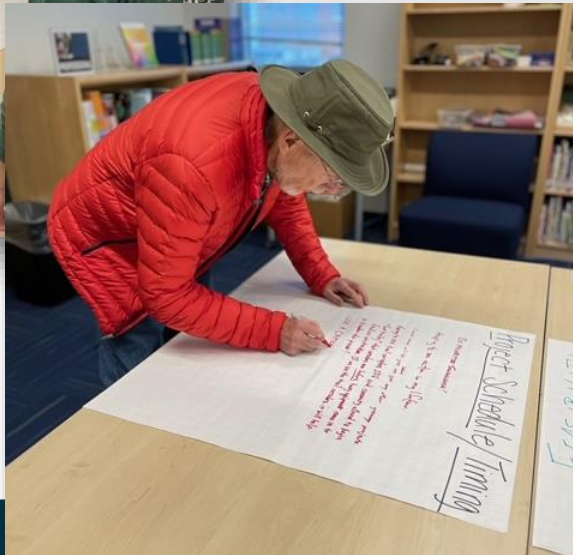
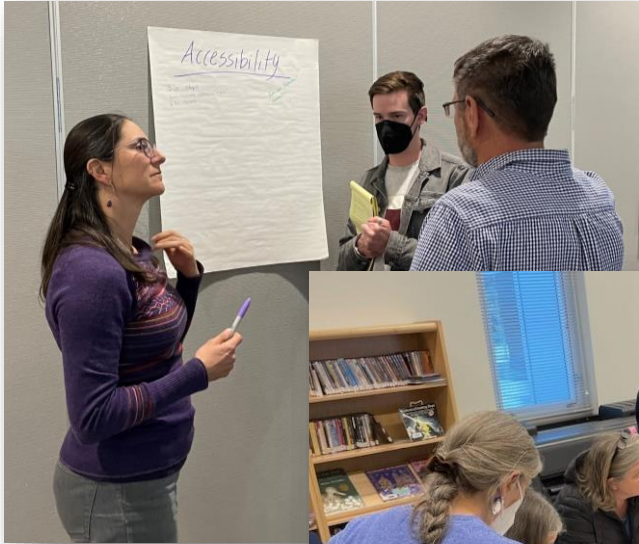


Open Space Bond: Greenways, Conservation, and Recreation

In November 2022, Buncombe County voters had the opportunity to vote on the Open Space Bond, a funding project that would increase conservation of



Community and Stakeholder Events



Groups

- General Public
- Stakeholder Organizations
- Recreation Advisory Board

Engagement

- Public Meetings
- Advisory Board Meetings
- Online Survey
- Email Correspondence



Greenway Criteria Development & Approval Process

- Staff drafted criteria process and initial criteria (Jan)
- Staff met with Recreation Advisory Board to solicit criteria input and feedback (Feb)
- Open Space Bond Project Manager Hired (Feb)
- Staff met with stakeholders to solicit criteria input and feedback (Mar)
- Held public meeting to solicit criteria input and feedback (Mar)
- Staff revised criteria based on input and feedback received (Mar)
- Stakeholders received updated criteria for final input (Mar/Apr)
- Recreation Advisory Board final review and recommendation (May)
- Present Greenway Criteria to Commission (Jun)



Greenway Criteria

Qualifying Criteria

- Leveraging of Bond Funds
- Project Scheduling/Timeline
- Feasibility Study
- Geographic Location

Weighted Criteria

- Connectivity – 20%
- Environmental Impact – 20%
- Accessibility – 15%
- Feasibility – 15%
- Identified as Countywide Need/Opportunity/Priority – 10%
- Equity – 10%
- Leveraging of Bond Funds and Project Costs – 5%
- Safety – 5%



Qualifying Criteria

- **Leveraging of Bond Funds**

Will bond funds be leveraged to utilize other funding sources effectively?

- **Project Scheduling/Timeline**

Will the project be completed within the time limits established by Bond Requirements?

- **Feasibility Study Complete**

Is there a completed feasibility study for the project?

- **Geographic Location**

Is the project located within Buncombe County?



Weighted Criteria

CONNECTIVITY – 20%

- Connectivity to other greenways, regional trail systems, and state trails (Fonta Flora, MST, FBRST)
- Connections between jobs, schools, commerce, community services, parks, and neighborhoods
- Connections along transit corridors/commuter routes
- Connections made within multimodal transit systems (bus routes, sidewalks, etc.)
- Connect neighboring municipalities
- Connecting people with cultural resources such as museums, libraries, and public art
- Connect to blueways



Weighted Criteria

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT – 20%

- Minimize stormwater runoff. Incorporate SCMs & raingardens
- Land management/maintenance plans. Invasive plant mitigation and management
- Interpretation and education opportunities (educational signage, programming)
- Respect sensitive ecosystems and wildlife corridors
- Low-impact development techniques
- Opportunities for pollinator gardens, rain gardens, and community gardens along the alignment
- Consideration of river ecosystems
- Consider project's impact on the reduction of vehicular traffic



Weighted Criteria

ACCESSIBILITY – 15%

- ADA accessible trailheads and access points
- Greenways are safe and accessible for wheelchair users, strollers & cyclists
- Accessible to traditionally underserved communities
- Accessible transitions from bus stops to trailheads (multimodal connections)
- Adequate parking with ADA spaces
- Bathroom facilities and potable water are available
- Safety is a critical factor in being genuinely accessible to all
- Access points provided to/from blueways



Weighted Criteria

FEASIBILITY – 15%

- Partners/Stakeholders along the greenway corridor willingness to participate
- Environmental status of parcels along greenway corridor
- Topography, hydrology, and geographic features that may present opportunities or obstacles along the greenway corridor
- Percentage of Design, ROW, and Construction funded
- Right of ways, bridges, railroads, roads, and other crossings



Weighted Criteria

IDENTIFIED AS COUNTYWIDE NEED/OPPORTUNITY/PRIORITY – 10%

- Identified in the Buncombe County Greenways and Trails Master Plan
- Identified in a regional greenway or multimodal master plan
- Identified in a state trails or greenway
- Identified in a municipal greenway master plan
- Not identified by any existing plans as a countywide need but recognized by Recreation Advisory Board and county staff as a new countywide need



Weighted Criteria

EQUITY – 10%

- Directly serves traditionally underserved communities
- Prioritize unincorporated communities that are traditionally at a disadvantage in funding
- Prioritize adjacency and connection to existing and planned low-income and senior housing
- Design for safety and have an action plan for safety so that all are welcome
- Community engagement and inclusion throughout the design process
- Connections to all neighborhoods along the greenway corridor
- How were communities engaged before and during the feasibility study?



Weighted Criteria

LEVERAGING OF BOND FUNDS AND PROJECT COSTS – 5%

- Project cost estimates up to date
- Project costs include planning level contingencies
- Percentage of the project that is funded, including Buncombe County Open Space Bond Funds
- Grants and other funding sources utilized (MPO, TPDF, PARTF, NC Land and Water Fund)



Weighted Criteria

SAFETY – 5%

- Design for safety to mitigate potential pedestrian and vehicular conflict
- Design for safety to mitigate crime
- Post-construction maintenance plan and litter management
- Emergency call kiosks
- Public information campaigns and signage for greenway etiquette



Advisory Board Recommendations

05/02/2023 – Recreation Advisory Board

Voted to recommend the proposed greenway criteria for the bond funds.



TENTATIVE NEXT STEPS & TIMELINE

- ❑ **JUNE:** Criteria brought to Board of Commissioners
 - ❑ **June 06:** Briefing
 - ❑ **June 20:** Request for Adoption
- ❑ **SUMMER/FALL 2023:** Greenways Public Education Campaign
- ❑ **2025:** Estimated Completion of Shovel-Ready Projects
- ❑ **2026:** Launch of Greenways Application Window





Next Step

Request
Subcommittee to
Vote to Approve
Criteria

