

The Green Way

The Newsletter of the Yadkin River Greenway Council, Inc.
Fall 1997


\$300,000 sought at Oct. 9 meeting

Wilkes to Ask DOT for Greenway Funds

Local support for the Yadkin River Greenway continues to swell.

The Transportation Input Committee of the Wilkes Chamber of Commerce threw its support behind the greenway Sept. 23. The committee will seek \$300,000 from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) for Phase 1 of the greenway.

Wilkes County Manager Gary Page will present the recommendation to the state Board of Transportation Oct. 9 for inclusion in NCDOT's Transportation Improvement Program, a seven-year blueprint of state transportation projects that is updated yearly.

 The greenway will be built in phases. It will eventually stretch from River's Edge Park south of Wilkesboro to Smoot Park in North Wilkesboro. The phase 1 route is about two miles long, and would link the Wilkesboros. It runs from the Reddies River bridge (near Bicycles Extreme) along the west bank of the Reddies to the Yadkin River and along the north bank of the Yadkin to the new Wilkes Regional Medical Center Wellness Center at West Park. A bridge across the Yadkin will take a spur of the trail up the hill into Wilkesboro near the Old Wilkes Jail, linking to a proposed town park on Main Street. Another spur of the trail will extend eastward to link with the Wilkes YMCA and Woodward Middle School.

When most folks think of NCDOT, they think of highways. But the state agency also funds alternative transportation projects statewide, including greenway systems.

The Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) provides funding for pedestrian and bicycle transportation enhancements. Mount Airy's greenway recently received \$300,000 in ISTEA money from NCDOT, said Wade Hoke, District 11 engineer. Bike lane projects in Boone and Blowing Rock are also utilizing ISTEA money. Unlike many neighboring communities, Wilkes has never received any alternative transportation funds.

The money can be used only for construction and no local match is required, Hoke said.

❖**Model Brings Greenway Idea to Life:** Want to see what a greenway looks like without leaving Wilkes? Check out the new **Yadkin River Greenway model**, constructed by local landscape architect Neill Dalrymple. The model made its debut at the Brushy Mountain Apple Festival in downtown North Wilkesboro Oct. 4th. Council members plan to take the model "on the road" as they meet with civic clubs, landowners and potential donors. **Thanks, Neill**, for your contribution to our efforts!

❖**Local Governments Provide Seed Money for Greenway**

Plans: The towns of North Wilkesboro and Wilkesboro and the County of Wilkes have now all provided seed money to assist in greenway development. **Each governmental body has provided \$5,000** for the Yadkin River Greenway, in response to presentations by council members Dr. Phil Carlson and Russ Ferree earlier this year. The \$15,000 will be used to develop a master plan for the greenway's first phase.

❖**Phase I Master Plan Readied:** The conceptual master plan for phase 1 of the Yadkin River Greenway is in its final phase of preparation. A draft of the plan was reviewed by the Yadkin River Greenway Council in September, and **final revisions are being made now**. The plan is being prepared by Greenways, Inc. of Cary, N.C., an architectural firm that specializes in planning greenways. Chuck Flink, head of Greenways, Inc., is a nationally-known expert in the field of greenway construction who's headed successful greenway development projects across the USA.

❖**Landowner Talks Continue:** Council members, headed by attorney Russ Ferree and CPA Jim Faw, continue to talk with the six landowners who own property along the proposed Phase 1 route of the greenway. **Two major landowners along phase 1 have already expressed verbal support** for the greenway. Landowners can reap significant tax benefits by donating conservation easements to the greenway.

❖**Greenway Plan Sneak Peek:** The conceptual master plan for phase 1 of the Yadkin River Greenway is still being fine-tuned by the architects and planners at Greenways, Inc. But some design elements are already set. Plans call for a **special dual-surface trail design** unlike anything else in Wilkes. The 14 foot wide trail will actually be two trails in one...a 10 foot wide asphalt trail for cyclists and skaters and a 4 foot wide compacted aggregate trail for foot traffic. A **80-foot bridge over the Yadkin River** will link the Wilkesboros near the site of a turn-of-the-century span across the Yadkin. **Wayside exhibits**, developed in cooperation with the National Park Service as a part of the Overmountain Victory Trail, are anticipated.

The Yadkin River Greenway Council, Inc. is a non-profit, non-governmental citizen group dedicated to making the greenway a reality for Wilkes.

Dr. Phil Carlson, Chairman

Members: Bill Albert, Dr. Ila Baugham, Don Birdsong, John Caplinger, Mark Church, James Faw, Russ Ferree, Jule Hubbard, Becky Mann, Freida Matthews, Joshua Mitchell, Tim Murphy, Ken Tremaine