Greenway Expansion Advocacy

Advocate for using and continuing to develop greenways throughout the Charlotte Region and prioritizing construction of greenways that connect people with activity centers. Work to actively communicate the air quality benefits of greenway use as an alternative to driving.

Path Forward Priority: Now (2019-2021)

Status: In Progress

Accomplishments to Date:

- 2020: Presented Air Quality 101 to the Greenway Advisory Council.
- 2021: Final Meck-Playbook was published.

Next Steps:

- As Implementation for the Meck-Playbook begins, MCAQ will actively communicate the benefits of and promote the new greenways as an alternative to driving. MCAQ will continue to promote the use of existing greenways for recreation and transportation.
- The City of Charlotte is now in the design phase for the Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan projects which incorporates greenway expansion and park distribution. MCAQ will continue to act as Air Quality advisors for the plan.
- Incorporate racial equity into staff-to-staff discussions. Research existing racial equity efforts at Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation.
- Act as a bridge for our partners at Charlotte Area Transit and Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, integrating the Breathing Room strategy of “Transit Expansion Advocacy” into greenway expansion efforts.

Stakeholders: City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, Mecklenburg County Health Department, Carolina Thread Trail

Funding: Mecklenburg County Capital Improvement Program; N. C. Transportation Improvement Program, FHWA Congestions Mitigation and Air Quality funding, proposed local sales tax

Staff Contact: Victoria Jercich, Victoria.Jercich@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov, 980-314-3373

January 2022
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Advocate for using and continuing to develop greenways throughout the Charlotte Region and prioritizing construction of greenways that connect people with activity centers. Work to actively communicate the air quality benefits of greenway use as an alternative to driving.

Path Forward Priority: Now (2019-2021)

Status: In Progress

Accomplishments to Date:

- 2020: Presented Air Quality information to citizen Greenway Advisory Council.

Next Steps:

- Once the Meck-Playbook recommendations are final in 2021 and work begins to implement the plan, MCAQ will actively communicate the benefits of and promote the new greenways as an alternative to driving. MCAQ will continue to promote the use of existing greenways for recreation and transportation.
- The City of Charlotte is now in the design phase for the Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan projects which incorporates greenway expansion and park distribution. MCAQ will continue to act as Air Quality advisors for the plan.
- Evaluate the racial equity Impact of the strategy.
- Act as a bridge for our partners at Charlotte Area Transit and Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, integrating the Breathing Room strategy of “Transit Expansion Advocacy” into greenway expansion efforts.

Stakeholders: City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, Mecklenburg County Health Department, Carolina Thread Trail

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Existing Efforts:

- Previous Park and Recreation Master Plans have prioritized expansion and development of greenways due to public interest. Currently there are 50 miles of multi-use greenway trails and 200 miles of nature trails.
- Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation is working to acquire land and get zoning for parks and greenway use.
- Mecklenburg County Health Department is working on including public health priorities into built environment planning, for example, increasing active transportation, connecting greenways to business and entertainment centers (creating connectors), and equitable dispersion of greenway trails.
- The City of Charlotte is gathering public comment for the Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan which incorporates greenway expansion and park distribution.
- Kick-off of 2020 Park and Recreation Master Plan.
  - Meck Playbook has completed public outreach to get community input.

Stakeholders: Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County Health Department, Carolina Thread Trail

Funding: Mecklenburg County Capital Improvement Program; N. C. Transportation Improvement Program, FHWA Congestions Mitigation and Air Quality funding

Next Steps:

- Participate in Meck-Playbook Stakeholder Committee.
- Present Air Quality information and act as a resource to citizen Greenway Advisory Council.
- Act as a bridge for our partners at Charlotte Area Transit and Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation, integrating the Breathing Room strategy of “Transit Expansion Advocacy” into greenway expansion efforts.

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The Idea: Greenway Advocacy

- Greenways are protected, multi-use paths that connect people to parks, retail, neighborhoods and restaurants without the use of vehicles.
- Increasing citizens access to greenways can result in fewer vehicle miles traveled, less air emissions and less traffic congestion.

The Action:

- Advocate for using and continuing to develop greenways throughout the Charlotte Region.
- Prioritize construction of greenways that connect people with activity centers.
- Quantify and actively communicate the air quality benefits of greenway use as an alternative to driving.

The Pollution Source: 23% of NOx comes from passenger vehicles

The Cost-effectiveness: Unknown

The Factors:

- Greenways only reduces pollution if they are used to make trips that otherwise would have been made by motor vehicle.
- Particulate Matter – Low co-benefits
- Greenhouse Gases – Medium co-benefits

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1 19.37 tons/day of NOx. Passenger vehicles includes both passenger cars and trucks. Source: Revised Maintenance Plan For The Charlotte-Gastonia-Salisbury, North Carolina 2008 8-Hour Ozone Marginal Nonattainment Area (July 2018)