

## **Carolina Thread Trail Public Meeting Summary**

York County public listening sessions for the Carolina Thread Trail were held March 31, April 1, and April 2 (two meetings) in York County. The sessions were hosted at the following locations: The Spratt Building in Fort Mill, The Larne Building in Clover, Manchester Meadows in Rock Hill, and The McCelvey Center in the City of York. Over 80 members of the general public participated in these initial listening sessions.

Input from these sessions is summarized below. Items mentioned most frequently appear near the top of each list. This public input will help guide our steering committee in selection of alternative routes, shape the development of portions of the greenway plan (e.g. statement of priorities/identification of themes and concerns), and provide ideas for design guidelines and other Carolina Thread Trail activities.

### **Questions and responses:**

#### **1. How do you want to use trails now or in the future?**

- A. Active on the trail: (one group described it as "four legs, two legs, two wheels")
- walk
  - horseback riding (and carriage mentioned)
  - bike (mountain bike mentioned specifically by a few)
  - hike
  - run
  - dog walking
  - bird watching
  - fishing
- B. Active or passive:
- transportation alternative (note this comment: "Getting people from home to where they are employed with an alternative to the vehicle....")
  - access to rivers
  - enjoy environment, nature-beauty, nature interpretation
  - handicap access
  - exploration and adventure
  - quiet time
  - cultural development for underprivileged children
- C. As host/venue for:
- overnight camping (in appropriate spots, primitive and electrical mentioned)
  - sporting events (local and professional)
  - homes for wildlife/habitat
  - charitable events ("-athons")
- D. Other uses/benefits:

- linking commercial, recreational and residential destinations; expand existing recreational opportunities
- conservation and environmental education (outdoor classrooms)
- connecting important destinations and connecting communities
- close access to the water (e.g. not just referring to views of river but also portage trail for canoes right near the dams/along rivers/around lakes.)
- tourism promotion
- conservation/preservation
- having a trail with a beginning and an end (a destination trail)
- economic development
- open space preservation
- connecting rivers
- further a sense of history and culture
- networking

## **2. What important places ought to be part of a connected trail system?**

### **A. Specific:**

- Historic Brattonsville
- Museum of Life and the Environment
- Nanny's Mountain (trails)
- Kings Mountain
- Anne Springs Close Greenway
- Crowders Mountain
- Worth Mountain
- Catawba River
- Catawba Indian Reservation
- Connectivity to other regional trails (e.g. Palmetto and Mountains to Sea trails)

### **B. General:**

- historical/cultural sites
- parks (city parks, state parks)
- schools
- high population areas (e.g. homes and neighborhoods/communities)
- business parks/center
- existing railroad beds
- fishing spots/swimming/boat launches/water trails
- water: lakes, streams, rivers
- cemeteries
- utility easements (one group noted that sewer rights of way may be a good way to connect, note that there are some along the Catawba River)
- sports complexes and recreational facilities
- open space
- both sides of the river (will need bridges)

- geology/soil/earth
- flora and fauna
- natural areas
- small mountains
- light rail connection (LYNX) and other mass transit connections
- restaurants (ice cream!)
- hotels
- farmers markets
- connecting to subdivision trails and other neighborhoods trails
- RV parks need to connect to trails
- to existing lake access
- scenic routes/vistas
- playgrounds and tot lots
- scenic secondary roads
- existing places for overnight camping
- farm trail/church trail linking old churches

**3. Not just what do you want to connect, but what do you want to see along the way?**

A. Amenities:

- shelters (“comfort stations”)
- restrooms
- benches and tables
- grills, picnic areas
- emergency call stations
- camping
- parking
- lighting (where appropriate)
- playgrounds
- drinking fountains
- trash/recycle cans
- water access for fishing, kayaking
- maps/informational kiosks
- environmental education signs/identify flora and fauna
- dog watering/waste disposal
- cigarette disposal
- exercise stations/equipment
- team building/ropes course
- bags for picking up trash
- hitching posts and mounting stumps
- bluebird houses
- lean to’s
- overlook areas

B. Signage:

- historical/cultural/nature information signs
- mile markers
- trail etiquette guidelines
- designated uses (and illegal uses)
- something to draw attention and street crossings (bollards, etc.)
- "you are here" maps showing the entire trail system

**4. What are your community's attitudes and concerns about greenways generally and about the CTT concept specifically?**

A. Design/Location

- width and surface of trail to accommodate multiple uses, including horse-related uses
- access points and parking on and off the trail
- assure opportunity for as many people to participate as possible
- assure minimal impact to ecologically sensitive habitats
- design compatibility as well as consistent rules between jurisdictions
- careful outreach to landowners
- accessible for emergency safety and medical needs.

B. Ownership considerations

- questions about who would own and maintain the trail
- concerns that private property shouldn't be condemned or landowners otherwise forced to share land or accept liability for the trail
- concerns about privacy and possible illegal parking on private property to access the trail

C. Safety

- law enforcement will need to be involved in patrolling for general safety and to be sure that trail rules are followed

D. Cost/maintenance

- questions about how the trail will be paid for in the short and long-term when maintenance is needed
- who will bear any liability associated with trails
- interest in having the trail cleaned and well maintained throughout its length

E. Timing and outreach

- many participants are eager to see legs of the trail constructed or otherwise designated and want to raise awareness about the trail before county is further built out

F. Other

- excitement for expanding upon existing trail system that is already popular and for connecting with additional destinations
- would like to capitalize on tourism potential
- enthusiasm for making parks, recreation and conservation a priority.

**5. Additional ideas/suggestions offered by participants that did not fit into the categories above:**

- could have benches and tables sponsored by individuals and families
- structure in a way that people don't need cars to get to the greenway
- open areas at trailheads for possible use in fundraising events
- consider separate use, horses and others, but also consider how they can be combined where appropriate
- need signage from the roads so people know where they can access the trails, connect to scenic byways. Could do self guided driving tours that could help to launch the CTT concept
- need a map along the trail, consider including topographical information and ratings for different trails, give credit to "friends of the trail" and identify surfaces
- consider grading trails for different levels
- consider working with developers on trails, they may be willing to build if it will expedite development
- the CTT master plan needs to become part of the RFATS transportation plan
- create a "passport" program where you can get a stamp after you've been across a specific part of the trail. Could relate to designated rides