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## West Branch greenway ready for May 21 opening

Posted By David Boraks  
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A May 21 grand opening is in the works for the **West Branch Rocky River Greenway**, a new 1.1 mile public walking and biking trail in the River Run neighborhood.

The Town of Davidson, Mecklenburg County, and Davidson Lands Conservancy are collaborating on a grand opening on Saturday, May 21, from 1 to 4 p.m., at the new greenway's east end off Shearer Road, according to a town press release.

The opening event is to include guided tours of the trail by conservancy volunteers, a scavenger hunt with prizes, and nature walks on the nearby West Branch Wetland Nature Preserve with Mecklenburg County Parks & Recreation naturalists.

Mecklenburg County Parks & Recreation received \$1.1 million in federal stimulus funds through the N.C. Department of Transportation last year to build the trail, which is part of the [Carolina Thread Trail](#), a planned network of greenways in the county and region.

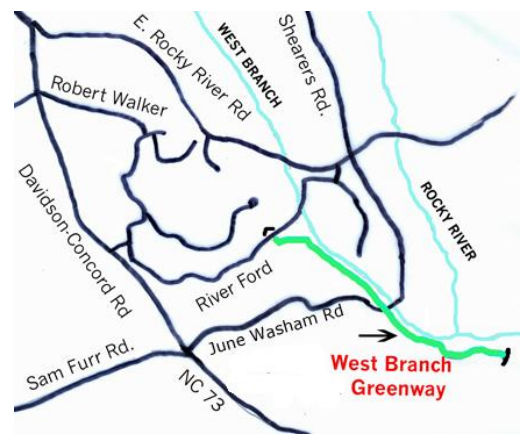
River Run Property Owners Association also chipped in \$8,000 to help spruce up the trailhead off River Ford Drive, according to the association's president, Mickey Pettus.



The new trail runs east from River Ford Drive near the 13th tee of River Run Country Club and along the West Branch of the East Rocky River. Until more trails are developed in the future, it will end just east of the new bridge over the river at Shearer Road, in the planned River Run Phase 5. The greenway won't connect directly with the Southeast Greenway or other off-road greenways in Davidson, but it will be reachable via local streets.

Blythe Development Co. cleared and paved the trail, and built a wooden boardwalk along the river's edge in the middle of the curving greenway. County officials say Davidson Parks & Recreation will operate and maintain the greenway.

"We have sought to build this section of greenway for over a decade," Davidson Planning Manager Lauren Blackburn said in an announcement on the Davidson Lands Conservancy website Wednesday, and issued by the town Thursday.



"The West Branch Greenway reaches an area of the town that was previously underserved by public greenways. The overall trail network will reach regional destinations in Cabarrus and Mecklenburg County when built out as part of the vision of the Carolina Thread Trail," she said.

**WANT TO GO?**

The new greenway will formally open on Saturday, May 21, from 1 to 4 p.m. You can reach the east end of the trail via East Rocky River Road. Head south on Shearer Road and park near the the barricade to the new (and still closed) bridge across the river, leading to River Run Phase 5. Town officials say if you're on foot or on a bike, you'll be able to use the bridge to reach the trail head.

<http://davidsonnews.net/2011/05/12/west-branch-greenway-ready-for-may-21-opening/>