

**Winston-Salem Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Transportation Advisory Committee
Action Request**

Meeting Date: February 21, 2019 **Agenda Item Number:** #5

Action Requested: Consideration of Resolution of Support for the Piedmont Legacy Trails Initiative

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION: **Attachments:** Yes No

The Piedmont Legacy Trails Initiative is a regional collaboration led by the Piedmont Triad Regional Council and the Piedmont Land Conservancy to establish a regional network of connected bicycle and pedestrian trails. The 12-county region represented by the Piedmont Legacy Trails Initiative includes the entire Winston-Salem Urban Area MPO.

The Piedmont Legacy Trails Initiative includes a steering committee representing agencies from across the 12-county region, which meets on a regular basis to share information about projects and coordinate accordingly. The organization is also working to brand and market trails across the region to provide a consistent user experience and to educate officials and residents about trail efforts and opportunities through activities, such as the annual Piedmont Legacy Trails Summit. The initiative is also helping communities identify and secure funding for trail construction and maintenance.

The Piedmont Legacy Trails Initiative recognizes the benefits that a well-connected regional trail system can provide, including health, quality of life, a strong, diverse economy, and a healthy environment and is working with member jurisdictions to bring those benefits to the region.

The resolution of support for the Piedmont Legacy Trails Initiative requires no financial commitment from the MPO or member jurisdictions.

Recommendations From:

TAC Vote: Motion by: _____ **Second by:** _____

Vote: For _____ **Against** _____

Motion Description:

**RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT
FOR THE PIEDMONT LEGACY TRAILS INITIATIVE**

A motion was made by TAC Member _____ and seconded by TAC Member _____ for the adoption of the following resolution, and upon being put to a vote was duly adopted.

WHEREAS, greenways and trails provide important transportation facilities and substantially enhance travel choices; and

WHEREAS, greenways and trails improve quality of life and economic competitiveness; and

WHEREAS, greenways and trails provide key amenities to neighborhoods and safe areas for people to travel, exercise, play, and connect with nature and communities; and

WHEREAS, the more extensive and interconnected the network of greenways and trails, the greater these benefits to the community and region; and

WHEREAS, the MPO's commitment to expanding and supporting the network of greenways and trails is clearly reflected in the planning, programming, and implementation efforts of the MPO and its member jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, MPO and member agency efforts can be complemented, connected to, and extended through regional collaboration on coordination of development of greenway and trail systems in the larger region; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Piedmont Legacy Trails initiative, coordinated by Piedmont Land Conservancy and the Piedmont Triad Regional Council, is to help create, maintain, manage, and promote a regional network of greenways and trails; and

WHEREAS, enacting this resolution of support will establish the MPO's support for the Piedmont Legacy Trails Initiative and related regional efforts for the expansion, maintenance, management, and promotion of the greenway and trail systems.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Transportation Advisory Committee of the Winston-Salem Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization supports Piedmont Legacy Trails as a partner in the effort to implement a system of regional trails that connects our communities, people, and regional points of interest for years to come.

Adopted on this the 21st day of February, 2019.

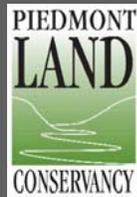
Larry T. Williams, Chairman
Transportation Advisory Committee

Margaret C. Bessette, Secretary
Transportation Advisory Committee



PIEDMONT
LEGACY
TRAILS

Connecting Communities Across Our Region

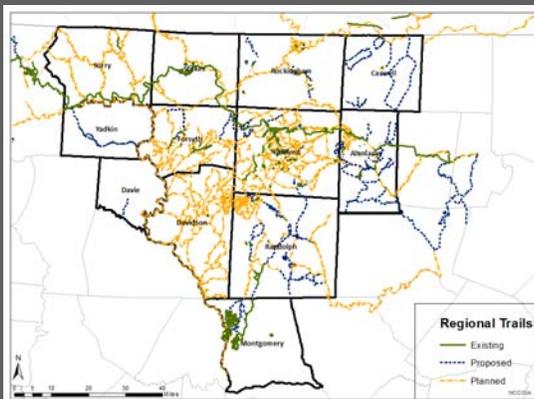


IMAGINE...

*A regional network of connected trails
across the Piedmont*



PIEDMONT
LEGACY
TRAILS



EXISTING TRAILS IN OUR AREA



▪ Our region already has hundreds of exceptional trails.

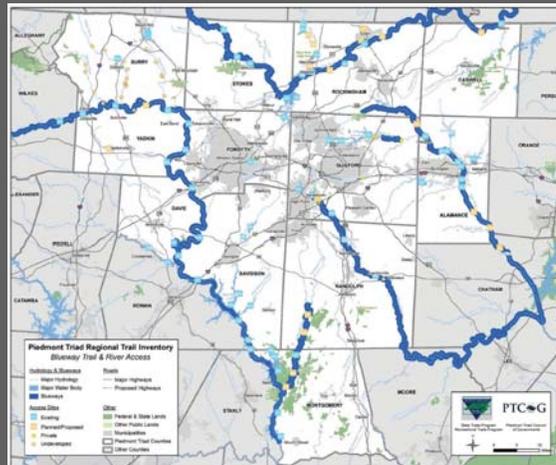
- ✓ State Parks
 - ✓ Pilot Mountain
 - ✓ Hanging Rock
 - ✓ Haw River
- ✓ Urban Greenways
- ✓ Uwharrie Trail
- ✓ Deep River Trail



BLUEWAYS



- Blueways are an important part of the Piedmont's trail systems.
- Many people prefer the variety that a blueway offers with beautiful waterfront views and the opportunity to kayak, canoe, or even fish.



PIEDMONT LEGACY TRAILS



Mission:

Piedmont Legacy Trails advances regional connections and branding of trails through technical assistance, education, and resource support for trail projects throughout our region.



WHAT PIEDMONT LEGACY TRAILS DOES



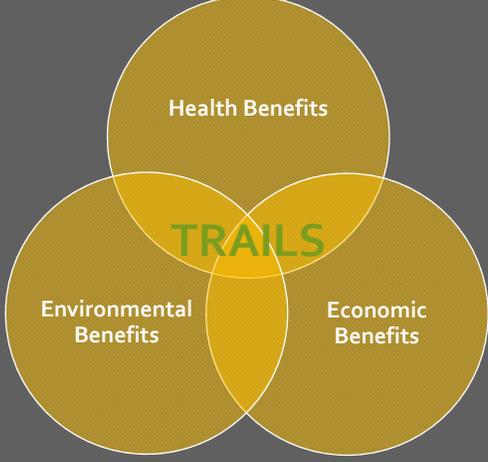
- Local and regional trails advocacy
- Regional branding of trails
- Annual trail summits
- Web-based sharing of trail information
- Working towards an interactive regional trail map



WHY TRAILS?



- Investments in trail infrastructure produce remarkable returns and have transformative effects for communities.



HEALTH BENEFITS



- Trails encourage an active lifestyle
- Provide free and accessible recreation
 - In NC, walking for pleasure is #1 reported recreation activity, 61% of people participate in walking and 59% participate in hiking trails (SCORP, 2015-2020)
- East Coast Greenway Example
 - Changed the ability of residents to get out and live active lifestyles.
 - A boost in wellness has saved over \$1.4 million in healthcare costs per year.





of increased bike trips, walk trips per year. Health care cost savings.
Source: The Impact of Greenways in the Triangle

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS



**PIEDMONT
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- Habitat protection**
 ✓ Trails protect important habitats, protect clean freshwater, and provide corridors for people and wildlife.
- Greenways serve as natural floodplains**
 ✓ Potential to remove up to 50% more nutrients and pesticides.
- Education**
 ✓ Opportunity for education experiences for both young and old.
- Pollution prevention**
 ✓ By reducing vehicle trips AND promoting growth of trees.

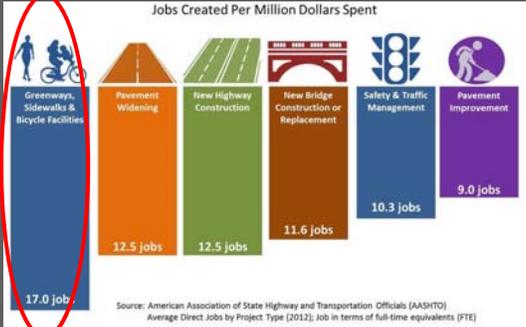


ECONOMIC BENEFITS



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- Studies confirm that every dollar spent building multi-use trails returns a multiple of that yearly.
- Trails provide an opportunity for new businesses to develop and allow current businesses to grow and thrive.



Project Type	Jobs Created
Greenways, Sidewalks & Bicycle Facilities	17.0 jobs
Pavement Widening	12.5 jobs
New Highway Construction	12.5 jobs
New Bridge Construction or Replacement	11.6 jobs
Safety & Traffic Management	10.3 jobs
Pavement Improvement	9.0 jobs

Source: American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) | Average Direct Jobs by Project Type (2012). Job in terms of full-time equivalents (FTE)

TOURISM BENEFITS



- **Enhanced tourism**
 - Opportunity for events to create revenue streams (paddles, outdoor festivals, 5k's, triathlons, bicycle rides, nature hikes)
- **Stimulate economic development**
 - Trail users need equipment related to recreational activity (equestrian, bicycling, running)
 - A trail system can brand an area as a "trail town" or trails destination.



COMMUNITY BENEFITS



- Trails are a community asset.
- Trail communities attract younger, professional, motivated citizens.
- **Trails are the new "town square"**
 - ✓ People naturally congregate here, meeting family and friends away from the TV.
 - ✓ Trails help make connections between neighbors, foster pride in the town, and build a better community.



COMMUNITY BENEFITS



Enhance quality of life

- ✓ Trails are #1 desired neighborhood amenities.
- ✓ Communities that have trails and greenways often experience increases in property values and revenue (NCDOT, 2016)
- ✓ A study in Colorado found that \$1 invested in open space provided \$6 of public benefits (The Trust for Public Land)



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Evaluating the ECONOMIC IMPACT of SHARED USE PATHS in North Carolina

MARCH 2018

Shared use paths, also known as GREENWAYS, provide a shared space for bicycle and pedestrian travel outside of the roadway. This project's objective was to design and test an approach for measuring the economic contributions of greenways in North Carolina.

The four greenways featured in this study, with estimated annual trips and study years:



COMBINED STUDY RESULTS

A one-time \$26.7M capital investment in the four greenways supports:



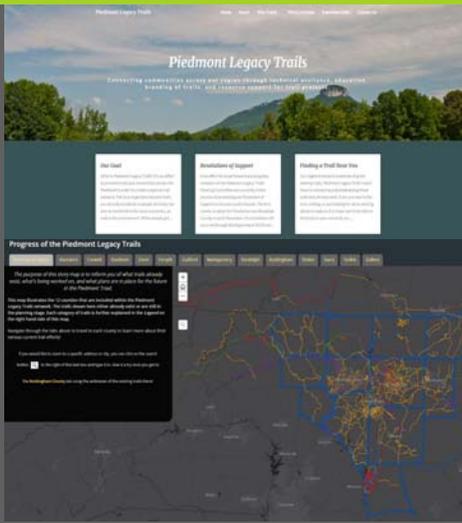
RETURN ON INVESTMENT: Every \$1.00 of trail construction supports \$1.72 annually from local business revenue, sales tax revenue, and benefits related to health and transportation.

CASE STUDY: ELKIN AREA ECONOMIC IMPACTS



- Building a network of trails in Wilkes, Surry and Yadkin Counties.
 - ✓ (1) E & A Rail Trail, (2) Stone Mountain Trail, (3) Overmountain Victory Trail and (4) Yadkin River Trail
- Visitation on the E & A Trail
 - ✓ October 2013 = 50 October 2014 = 2,200
- Other Impacts
 - ✓ 16 new business in the last 3 years in Elkin (examples include bike shops, restaurants, etc.)
 - ✓ Increase in paddling outfitter businesses
 - ✓ Start of birding program and hatchery supported trout stream in the area

WHY PIEDMONT LEGACY TRAILS?



- Branding
- Education
- Regional Trails Summits
- Interactive trail finding maps
- Help with leveraging resources
- Guided by 12 county steering committee

ADOPT OUR RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT



**PIEDMONT
LEGACY
TRAILS**

RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT

Whereas _____ is committed to enhancing the quality of life for its citizens and recognizes that supporting Piedmont Legacy Trails will help create a regional network of trails, including greenways and blueways; and

Whereas, trails provide key amenities to neighborhoods and safe areas for our citizens and children to travel, exercise, play and connect with nature and communities; and

Whereas, trails have significant impact on the economic viability of the region through increased tourism, enhanced property values, as well as the ability to attract and retain businesses to the region due to improved quality of life; and

Whereas, committing to this Resolution may help leverage funding from federal, state, local and private sources for trails; and

Whereas, Piedmont Legacy Trails is coordinated by Piedmont Land Conservancy which is dedicated to preserving important natural areas, and Piedmont Trail Regional Council, which is a regional planning organization.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that _____ supports Piedmont Legacy Trails in partnership with neighboring communities to implement a system of regional trails that connects our communities, people and regional points of interest for years to come.

Name _____ Date _____
Title _____

Piedmont Legacy Trails
A project of Piedmont Land Conservancy and Piedmont Trail Regional Council
www.piedmonttrails.org

