

ROANOKE VALLEY

**GREENWAY
COMMISSION**

Annual Report
1997

What is a Greenway?

A greenway is a corridor of protected open space managed for conservation, recreation and non-motorized transportation. Greenways often follow natural geographic features such as ridge lines, stream valleys, and rivers, but may also be built along canals, utility corridors, or abandoned rail lines. Widths may vary from thirty to a thousand feet. Most greenways include a trail or bike path, but others may be designed strictly for environmental or scenic protection.

Greenways, as vegetated linear parks, provide tree cover, wildlife habitat, and riparian buffers to protect streams. The environmental benefits include reduced storm water runoff, flood reduction, water quality protection, and preservation of biological diversity. The trails within the greenways provide access between neighborhoods and destination points, opportunity to travel without an automobile, outdoor education classrooms, and close-to-home paths for walking, jogging, bicycling, and roller skating. Tree cover and use of bicycles instead of cars provide for better air quality, fewer hard surfaced parking lots, and reduced energy costs.

Greenway benefits improve the quality of life in a community and translate ultimately into economic stability. Businesses want to locate in communities their employees will like. Wellness and fitness promotion reduce corporate health costs. Outdoor recreation facilities draw tourists and tourists spend money.

History of Roanoke Valley Greenways

The effort to initiate a greenway program began in 1993 when local citizens of the nonprofit Valley Beautiful Foundation became interested in projects they had seen in other states. They met with government officials to encourage development of greenways in conjunction with replacement of sewer lines. Bringing in such speakers as Ed McMahon, Director of the American Greenways Program, and Sam Rogers, Tennessee Greenway Founder, they began an effort to educate officials and the public on the benefits of greenways.

In the spring of 1995 these citizens persuaded the four local governments to appoint representatives to a Greenways/Open Space Steering Committee, which was supported by the regional Fifth Planning District Commission. This Steering Committee began by taking field trips to North Carolina and Tennessee to see other communities' efforts. Convinced that a greenway plan was needed, they persuaded the localities to fund services of a professional greenway planner.

The summer of 1995 was a busy one as the Steering Committee, assisted by Greenways, Inc., a consulting firm from Cary, N.C., moved to involve the public in greenway planning. A luncheon for 100 elected officials and civic leaders and three public workshops with over 200 people convinced administrators that support for greenways was growing. Using public input on routes and priorities, Greenways, Inc. completed the Conceptual Greenway Plan for the Roanoke Valley in December 1995.

In January of 1996 the Steering Committee began implementation of the Plan's recommendations by selecting a pilot project. An application for funding under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) was filed by Roanoke City for Mill Mountain Greenway, a cross-jurisdictional route from the City market to rural Explore Park. The Committee also convinced the four jurisdictions to fund a staff position to assist with greenway efforts around the Valley. In August 1996 a greenway coordinator began work out of the Fifth Planning District Commission office.

The Greenways Steering Committee, originally appointed for one year, initiated organization of several groups to carry on the greenway effort. The Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission was established by the signing of an Intergovernmental Agreement on Earth Day, April 19, 1997. The Greenway Commission is an advisory body with appointed citizen and staff representatives from each of the four Valley jurisdictions. The Commission's role is to facilitate coordinated planning, development, and maintenance of the greenway network.

A second group for citizens, called Pathfinders for Greenways, was incorporated to be a nonprofit, volunteer organization to assist with construction, maintenance, and fund raising. In addition, the newly formed Western Virginia Land Trust made greenway protection one of its priorities. These three groups work with the four local governments, which retain responsibility for oversight of construction and management within their jurisdictions.

Message from the Chairman

As chairman of the Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission, I am pleased to present our first annual report. This report is intended for individuals and organizations with an interest in the development of greenways in the Roanoke Valley. It includes the history of the greenway program and accomplishments of the Commission in 1997. The progress reported is the result of efforts by many individuals and groups dedicated to greenways.



ROANOKE VALLEY
GREENWAYS

Roanoke Valley since 1907 when John Nolen drew up one of the first community plans for the City of Roanoke. More recently, the 1987 concept for Explore Park included a Roanoke River greenway extending from Montgomery to Bedford County. It has taken the aggressive efforts of visionaries to generate the current interest in Roanoke Valley greenways, resulting in the organization and commitment that exists today.

The development of a greenway consciousness and implementing framework is described in this annual report. I hope it will encourage others to recognize the many economic and environmental benefits of greenways and join with the Greenway Commission to see the Valley's visions become reality.

*Lee B. Eddy
Chairman*

The highlights of 1997 include:

- * the establishment of the Greenway Commission*
- * the incorporation of Pathfinders for Greenways;*
- * the opening of Garst Mill Greenway*
- * the receipt of \$75,000 in operational grants and over \$400,000 in capital grants*
- * the approval of bicycle/pedestrian facilities on the new I-581 interchange.*

Greenways have been a factor in planning for the



TABLE OF CONTENTS

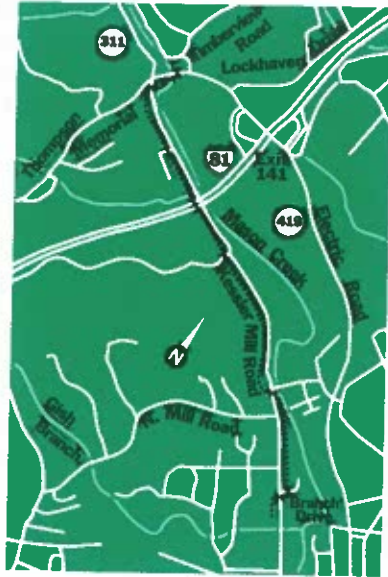
<i>History Greenway Definitions Inside Cover</i>	
<i>Chairman's Message</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Greenway Commission Greenway Partners</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Pathfinders Valley Partners</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Greenway Projects</i>	<i>4-5</i>
<i>Greenway Funding Grants & Donations</i>	<i>6-7</i>
<i>Volunteers Technical Assistance Public Relations Planning</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Internet Web Site</i>	<i>9</i>

GREENWAY PROJECTS' PROGRESS

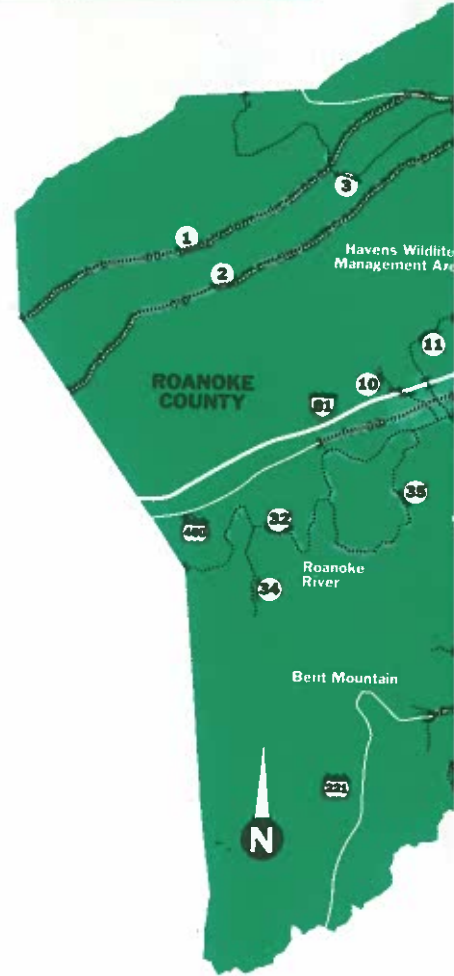
Garst Mill - The first half mile of greenway through Garst Mill Park was completed and opened in August. It is being heavily used.



Roanoke River
The Roanoke River greenway has been called the backbone, or interstate, of the Valley system. Because the river covers over 20 miles through Roanoke County, Salem, Roanoke City and Vinton, the greenway will be developed in sections. The easiest sections will be built first, with connections through more difficult areas developed over time.

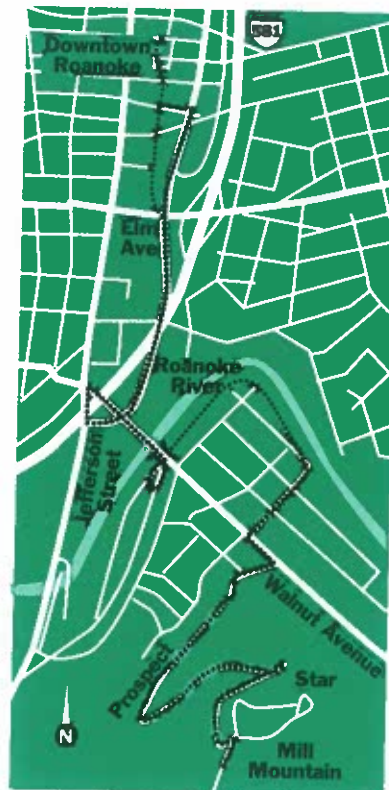


Hanging Rock - Hanging Rock Battlefield & Railway Preservation Foundation received additional ISTE funding of \$200,000 for the bridge across Masons Creek. A test track utilizing a donated American Electric Power byproduct was installed in the spring. Results of different mixtures and Dept. of Environmental Quality approval are expected soon. Final trail designs have been submitted to VDOT and are awaiting approval. Construction is anticipated in 1998.



In the fall of 1997 Roanoke City let a contract for construction of the first portion of the greenway along Wiley Drive through Smith Park. This portion will be built between the two low water bridges in conjunction with replacement of the sewer line. The City will extend the greenway in this area as part of the flood reduction project.

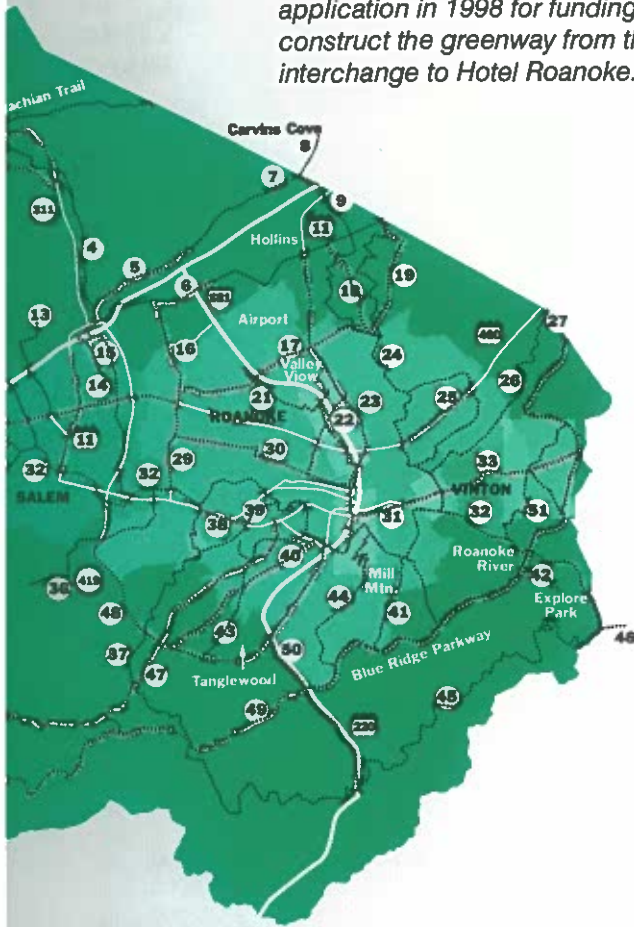
Mill Mountain - Roanoke City received additional ISTE funding of \$150,000 and included \$250,000 in the successful bond referendum. The project is now completely funded, based on initial estimates. The City agreement with VDOT has been signed and environmental analysis is underway.



Tinker Creek - Roanoke City obligated \$15,000 for design and engineering of the first mile from Wise Avenue to the railroad trestle at the Roanoke River. A public input workshop was held in October to review plans, and designs are being finalized in 1998.

The Greenway Commission received a grant from Virginia Environmental Endowment for a Roanoke River Greenway Implementation Plan, to be done in 1998. The Commission voted to focus limited funds on the portion of the river in Salem and west County.

Lick Run - Roanoke City Council approved construction of a bicycle/pedestrian lane on the new I-581 interchange, at a cost of \$516,950, to connect Lick Run Greenway to Valley View. Faison Realty is donating greenway construction from the interchange to Valley View Mall. A corridor study completed in September is being used as the basis for an ISTE A Enhancement application in 1998 for funding to construct the greenway from the interchange to Hotel Roanoke.



Wolf Creek - Vinton was awarded a Virginia Recreational Trails Fund grant of \$30,000 for one mile of Wolf Creek Greenway from Hardy Road to Washington Avenue. This will connect to the new bicycle lanes with the Hardy Road improvements and the existing trail from Goode to Stonebridge Parks in Roanoke County. Construction is expected in 1998.



Conceptual Greenway Plan Routes

1. Rte 785/Blacksburg Rd
2. Rte 622/Bradshaw Road
3. Appalachian Trail
4. Mason Creek
5. Timberview Road
6. Wood Haven Road
7. Horse Pen Branch
8. Rte to Appalachian Trail
9. Carvin Creek
10. Paint Bank Branch
11. Horners Branch
12. Roanoke River Tributary
13. Red Lane
14. Gish Branch
15. Hanging Rock Battlefield Trail
16. Peters Creek/Green Ridge Road
17. Hershberger Road
18. Plantation Road
19. Hollins Road
20. Main Street (Salem)
21. Lick Run
22. 10th Street
23. Williamson Road
24. Tinker Creek
25. US 460/Challenger Ave
26. Glade Creek
27. Glenwood Horse Trail Link
28. Roanoke River Tributary
29. Peters Creek Road Extension
30. Lynchburg/Salem Turnpike
31. Dale Avenue
32. Roanoke River
33. Stewartville Road
34. Dry Hollow
35. Route 639/Harbourwood Road
36. Barnhardt Creek
37. Mudlick Creek
38. Brandon Road
39. Grandin Road
40. Colonial Avenue
41. Garnand Branch
42. Rutrough Road
43. Murray Run
44. Mill Mountain Park Spur Road
45. Back Creek
46. Rte to Smith Mtn Lake
47. US 221/Brambleton Ave
48. Route 419/Electric Rd
49. Blue Ridge Parkway
50. US 220
51. Wolf Creek

GREENWAY COMMISSION FUNDING

Funding for the Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission pays for salary of a greenway coordinator and operation of a Commission office. The Greenway Commission itself has no fiscal authority, but utilizes services of a government entity as fiscal agent. In its first year, FY 96-97, the Commission office was located at the Fifth Planning District Commission. In October 1997, the office moved to Roanoke County, which now serves as fiscal agent.

In FY 96-97, the Greenway Commission was funded by the four local governments, with contributions on a per capita basis. In FY 97-98 the Commission reduced its request to the localities by half, funding the rest of costs with grants. The Commission was also able to use grant monies to focus on specific greenway projects. With no dedicated source of funding, the Commission continues to use volunteers and pursue grants and donations to supplement locality administrative and capital expenditures.

Fiscal Year 96-97 Budget

Revenue	\$ 60,000
Roanoke City	\$ 28,800
Roanoke County	\$ 21,600
City of Salem	\$ 7,200
Town of Vinton	\$ 2,400

Expenditures	\$ 60,000
Staff & Operations	\$ 56,000
Pathfinders for Greenways	\$ 1,000
Wolf Creek Greenway Survey	\$ 3,000

Fiscal Year 97-98 Budget

Revenue	\$ 78,196
Roanoke City	\$ 14,400
Roanoke County	\$ 10,800
City of Salem	\$ 3,600
Town of Vinton	\$ 1,200
Valley Beautiful Foundation	\$ 400
Dept. of Environmental Quality	\$ 25,842
Va. Environmental Endowment (one half of \$30,000 grant)	\$ 15,000

Expenditures	\$ 71,242
Staff & Operations	\$ 54,242
Wiley Drive Greenway Study	\$ 5,000
Lick Run Greenway Study	\$ 5,000
Brochure Development	\$ 5,000
Professional Services	\$ 2,000

GRANTS & DONATIONS

In 1997, the localities and Commission received, or were notified of award of, the grants listed below. In addition to these grants there have been substantial private and public investments in the greenway program. Roanoke City and Faison Realty are providing bicycle/pedestrian facilities across the new Valley View interchange to connect Valley View to the Lick Run Greenway. Roanoke City also included \$250,000 for Mill Mountain Greenway in its successful bond referendum in November. Landowners Jim Roberson, David Radford, and Henry Faison have donated rights-of-way for greenway development.

Recipient	Source	Project	Value
Roanoke City	ISTEA Enhancement	Mill Mountain	\$150,000
Hanging Rock Btffd Fndtn	ISTEA Enhancement	Hanging Rock	\$200,000
Roanoke County	Va. Dept. Conserv/Rec.	Garst Mill	\$ 25,000
Vinton	Va. Dept. Conserv/Rec.	Wolf Creek	\$ 30,000
Greenway Commission	Nat. Parks&Cons. Assn./Ga.-Pacific	Roanoke Mtn. Cmpgr.	\$ 10,000 (materials)
Fifth Planning Dist Comm	Va. Dept. Environ. Quality	Planning	\$ 25,842
Greenway Commission	Va. Environmental Endowment	Roanoke River	\$ 30,000
Valley Beautiful	Va. Dept. of Forestry	Greenways	\$ 10,000
		Total	\$480,842

Land and Construction Donations

Jim Roberson	Easement for Garst Mill	- Not appraised
Don Gross	Easement for Wolf Creek	- Not appraised
Radford and Co.	Easement on Mudlick Creek	\$ 47,850
Radford and Co.	Easement along Rt. 419	\$ 37,475
Faison Realty	Lick Run: Land from interchange to Valley View	\$ 100,000
Faison Realty	Lick Run: Additional land at interchange	\$ 75,000
Faison Realty	Greenway construction: Overpass to Valley View	\$ 58,900
Total		\$319,225

Calendar Year 1997 Greenway Investments

This investment table provides a breakdown of the \$1,487,510 in federal, state, and local funds allocated for greenways throughout the Valley during calendar year 1997. Some of these funds were received and spent in 1997, others were obligated, and others were awarded but have not yet been received. The investment table does not reflect the volunteer hours and substantial in-kind services which have been contributed by the Valley's citizens and agencies in support of the greenway program. Also excluded are donations of land and easements, with the investment table representing actual cash contributions. Volunteer hours are shown on page 8.

GREENWAY PROJECT	ROANOKE CITY	ROANOKE CO.	SALEM	VINTON	TOTALS
LICK RUN					
Dept. Environ. Quality	5,000				
Valley Beautiful	2,000				
Roanoke City	516,950				
Faison Realty	58,900				
	\$ 582,850	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 582,850
WOLF CREEK					
Dept. Conserv/Rec. (awarded)			30,000		
Greenway Commission				3,000	
	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$33,000	\$ 33,000
ROANOKE RIVER					
Va. Environ. Endow. (awarded)		10,000	20,000		
Valley Beautiful	2,000	1,000	1,000		
Dept. Environ. Quality	5,000				
Roanoke City	60,000				
	\$ 67,000	\$ 11,000	\$21,000	\$ 0	\$ 99,000
GARST MILL					
Valley Beautiful		3,000			
Roanoke County		36,500			
Dept. Conserv/Rec.		25,000			
DuPont		1,000			
	\$ 0	\$ 65,500	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 65,500
TINKER CREEK					
Roanoke City	\$ 15,000	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 15,000
HANGING ROCK					
Test Track		4,000	4,000		
ISTEA (awarded)		200,000			
	\$ 0	\$ 204,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 0	\$ 208,000
MILL MOUNTAIN					
Roanoke City Bond (passed)	250,000				
ISTEA (awarded)	150,000				
	\$ 400,000	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 400,000
PLANNING/DEVELOPMENT					
Dept. Environ. Quality	7,600	5,705	1,900	635	
CITYgreen	7,200	5,400	1,800	600	
Valley Beautiful		4,000			
Localities	23,670	17,755	5,920	1,975	
	\$ 38,470	\$ 32,860	\$ 9,620	\$ 3,210	\$ 84,160
TOTALS	\$ 1,103,320	\$ 313,360	\$34,620	\$36,210	\$1,487,510



Technical Assistance

The Commission and its Standards Committee have provided technical assistance on greenway and trail design and riparian and urban environmental protection. Staff and Commissioners have worked with designers, developers, attorneys, engineers, parks departments and agencies to provide information on easements, trail building, regional standards, tree planting, and riparian protection. Commission member Charlie Blankenship was instrumental in bringing CITYgreen analysis of urban vegetative cover to Roanoke. Staff have attended the national Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Design workshop and state Methods of Riparian Restoration and Stream Protection training. Draft Greenway Design Guidelines distributed for review in '97 will be finalized in '98.

Volunteers

The greenway program continues to be heavily dependent upon the efforts of volunteers for professional services, labor, and administrative expertise. While fund raising at the individual and corporate level will not be launched until 1998, donations of time, service and land have been significant. In 1997 the following volunteer contributions were recorded. Time of paid staff is not included.

Volunteer Time	Service	Donation
Greenway Commission	Board meetings	288 hours
Pathfinders for Greenways	Board meetings	254 hours
Commission and Pathfinders	Committee meetings	331 hours
Commission/Board members	Other coordination	55 hours
Supporting Organizations	Board meetings	606 hours
<i>(Western Va. Land Trust, Valley Beautiful, R. Urban Forestry Council)</i>		
Supporting Organizations	Committee meetings	1082 hours
Citizen volunteers	Public meetings and input sessions	81 hours
Citizen volunteers	Special events	62 hours
Citizen volunteers	Trail work days	261 hours
Professional soil scientists	In-kind service: Garst Mill	10 hours
Landscape architects	In-kind service: Co.parks, Wolf Creek, signs	160 hours
Foresters	CITYgreen coordination	180 hours
Marketing specialists	WEB and newsletter production	<u>200 hours</u>
Total Volunteer Hours		3570 hours
Pro Bono Service		
Katie Wallace Design	Logo, newsletter design	\$ 2,415
Robert Claiborne Agency	T-shirt production	\$ 535
Coleman and Massey	Pathfinders incorporation	<u>\$ 3,663</u>
Total		\$ 6,613

Public Relations

In 1997 a Marketing/Public Relations Committee was organized to coordinate communication and promotional efforts. This committee is composed of Commission members, Pathfinders directors, and marketing professionals who have volunteered their time for the program.

Activities and accomplishments include: Walk for Greenways on Earth Day; Dedication of Roanoke Mtn. Campground Amphitheater; Opening Day Celebration for Garst Mill Greenway (Roanoke County event); Table at the AEP Expo/Festival Race; Logo design; Newsletter production quarterly; T-shirt and sticker production with greenway logo; WEB site, www.greenways.org established; Expanded media coverage: radio, TV, newspaper, regional publications; Coordination and education with over 40 groups and agencies; Reproduction of the Conceptual Greenway Plan for distribution to interested parties.

Planning and Public Input

The Greenway Commission and supportive citizens continue to provide input critical to planning and decision making by local governments. The Conceptual Greenway Plan was adopted by all four localities in 1997. Greenway input has been important to Roanoke City's Visioning process and CIP priorities, VDOT road design hearings, the Roanoke Valley Bikeway Plan, Roanoke County's comprehensive planning, and design at the new I-581 interchange.

**For more information
visit our web site at
WWW.GREENWAYS.ORG**

Roanoke Valley Greenways



"A greenway is a corridor of protected open space managed for conservation, recreation and non-motorized transportation."



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[Web Site Comments](#)

"Before the path existed, one always had to be in an automobile to get anywhere in the community. Now people meet on the path to walk side by side and talk. The path has given the town something to be united about, which has cut across all brackets of income, age, place of residence, and at the same time has preserved the spectacular, previously private riverbank for all to enjoy all seasons of the year."

Stowe, VT Resident

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead



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