



COMMUNITY + STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

03

OVERVIEW

In any planning process, active community engagement stands as a cornerstone. Plans achieve maximum effectiveness when they are deeply anchored in the realities and aspirations of the communities for which they are created. This study relies on a combination of input from community members, Steering Committee members, supporting agencies, and non-profit organizations to inform the feasibility study for the East Greensboro Greenway.

The following sections are included within Chapter 3:

- ◆ Community Engagement Plan
- ◆ Meeting Summaries
- ◆ Community Survey Summary

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

The community engagement plan serves as a flexible document throughout the project's lifecycle. At the beginning of the feasibility study, the project team developed a strategic community engagement plan to coordinate with landowners, host steering committee meetings, stakeholder meetings, and a public meeting at regular intervals throughout the planning process. It was also used to effectively coordinate with project partners. In addition to outlining future outreach events, this document ensured equitable public involvement throughout the duration of the project.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee for the East Greensboro Greenway Feasibility Study was composed of representatives from the City of Greensboro, Greensboro Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University (NC A&T), Greensboro Housing Authority, Action Greensboro, East Greensboro NOW, BIG - Bicycling in Greensboro, and community members. The Steering Committee provided key oversight and guidance throughout the duration of the study and assisted with community engagement efforts.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Elizabeth Jernigan, *City of Greensboro Parks + Recreation*

Shawna Tillery, *City of Greensboro Parks + Recreation*

Johanna Cockburn, *City of Greensboro Transportation*

George Linney, *City of Greensboro Transportation*

Deniece Conway, *City of Greensboro Transportation*

Craig McKinney, *Greensboro Urban Area MPO*

Mary Hayward, *Greensboro Urban Area MPO*

Chad Reimakoski, *NCDOT Division 7*

Joseph Furstenberg, *NCDOT Integrated Mobility Division*

Oliver Thomas, PhD, Mdiv, *NC A&T State University*

James Cox, *Greensboro Housing Authority*

Dabney Sanders, *Action Greensboro*

Mac Sims, *East Greensboro NOW*

Phil Barnhill, *East Greensboro NOW*

Nicole Lindahl, *BIG - Bicycling in Greensboro*

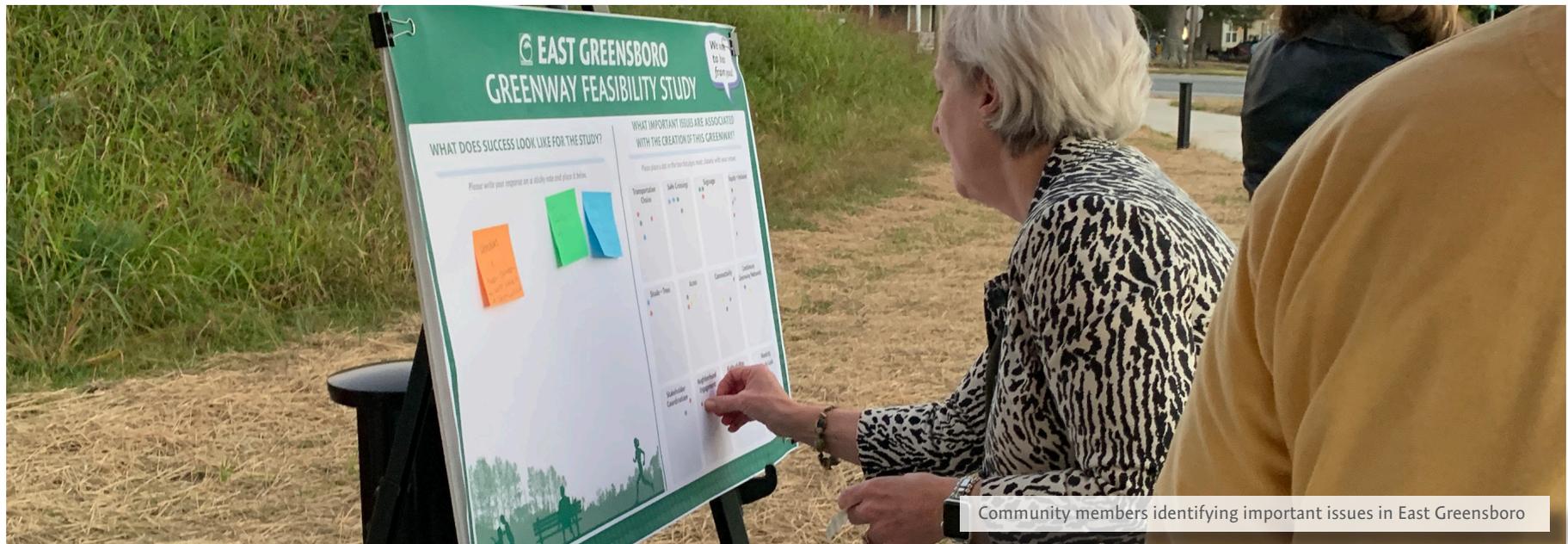
Roger Bardsley, *Local Greenway Advocate*

MEETING SUMMARIES

Several engagement events took place throughout the study process: Steering Committee meetings, public meetings, landowner coordination, interjurisdictional meetings, and a public survey. A Steering Committee supported the study and was composed of representatives from local cycling advocacy organizations, local agencies, and institutions who will be key in the implementation of the project. Steering Committee members met four times throughout the duration of the project and provided guidance for the study by reviewing and sharing feedback on relevant data, community engagement efforts, alignment recommendations, and implementation strategies. Members also supported the study by disseminating information and communication materials to the public.

The following meetings were held throughout the duration of this study:

- ◆ Steering Committee meetings
- ◆ Focus group meetings
- ◆ Private landowner + stakeholder meetings
- ◆ Pop-up events + public meetings



Community members identifying important issues in East Greensboro

OCT
05
2023

Steering Committee Meeting #1

The first Steering Committee meeting provided members with an overview of the East Greensboro Greenway Feasibility Study and an analysis of existing conditions along the project corridor. The project team facilitated discussions regarding definitions of success for the project, as well as opportunities and constraints within the study area.

KEY FINDINGS

- ◆ Attendees expressed a desire for meaningful and transparent engagement with the East Greensboro community.
- ◆ Attendees highlighted the need for an equitable approach to greenway planning so that the future alignment does not contribute to patterns of gentrification in East Greensboro.
- ◆ There are opportunities for safety improvements for future greenway users along E Market St (next to NC A&T University).
- ◆ Right of way, railroad crossings, and building setbacks in dense areas of the City may act as constraints for the greenway.

DEC
12
2023

Steering Committee Meeting #2

The second Steering Committee meeting gave members an overview of community engagement efforts to date, including focus groups, pop-up events, and the community survey. The meeting included a review of preliminary route alternatives and evaluation criteria as well as a discussion of greenway connections.

KEY FINDINGS

- ◆ Attendees expressed a desire to incorporate greenway design strategies such as lane markings that may prevent conflict between different trail users.
- ◆ Attendees have concerns with route segments in residential areas due to greenway design, anticipated impacts on private property, and support for the project.
- ◆ Parks are the most desired destinations for greenway spurs.
- ◆ The Committee prioritized Accessibility + User Experience and Community Priorities as evaluation criteria, while placing lower importance on Cost and Implementation Timeframe.

MAR
22
2024

Steering Committee Meeting #3

The third Steering Committee meeting gave members a summary of the four (4) route alternatives, the associated decision criteria and matrix, and the typical cross-sections and intersection treatments.

KEY FINDINGS

- ◆ Attendees expressed a desire to have continued coordination with NC A&T beyond the timeframe of this study.
- ◆ The Committee prioritized economic development, noting that there should not be political pushback if technical considerations and community feedback determine the preferred alternative.
- ◆ Alternatives 1 and 4 have the greatest challenges and the Committee showed a preference for Alternative 2 or 3.

JULY
09
2024

Steering Committee Meeting #4

Meeting yet to be held.

KEY FINDINGS
◆ To be completed following meeting.

SEPT
2024

Steering Committee Meeting #5

Meeting yet to be held.

KEY FINDINGS
◆ To be completed following meeting.

Focus Group Meetings

The project team conducted several meetings with area stakeholders to gather local insight and guidance on route development for the East Greensboro Greenway. Focus group meetings were held with City and County staff, schools and neighborhoods in the study area, as well as local organizations.

SEPT
18
2023

Collaborative Cottage Grove

The project team met with members of Collaborative Cottage Grove to introduce the project and gather preliminary feedback on opportunities and challenges in the study area.

NOV
29
2023

Local Organizations

Representatives from local organizations and businesses, including Bennett College, Historic Magnolia House, Greensboro Chamber of Commerce, Greensboro Redevelopment Commission, and the City of Greensboro Parks & Recreation Commission were invited to provide feedback on preliminary route development.

KEY FINDINGS

- ◆ Community input from past planning efforts found a need and desire for greenway facilities in East Greensboro.
- ◆ The City of Greensboro plans to install bike lanes on E Gate City Blvd and Willow Rd.
- ◆ The greenway should be planned by the community, incorporating residents' feedback to create a facility embraced by the community.
- ◆ Greenway safety and user experience are key concerns for community members.
- ◆ Greenway design strategies should be consistent with other nearby facilities to create a visually unified network.

NOV
30
2023

NC A&T University

The project team engaged with representatives from NC A&T State University to identify needs, opportunities, and concerns related to greenway development and preliminary route evaluation.

KEY FINDINGS

- ◆ The University has concerns with biosecurity around large agricultural research investments on its University Farm campus.
- ◆ E Market St is a key gateway to the main campus of NC A&T, and the University wants to ensure an attractive, dynamic, and safe entrance to campus as it continues to grow.
- ◆ Students and University staff who live across E Market St from campus often cross away from designated crossings, creating a safety hazard for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- ◆ Sidewalks will be installed on E Gate City Blvd.

DEC
08
2023

City + County Staff

Representatives from the City of Greensboro and Guilford County were invited to provide feedback on preliminary routes and identify opportunities and constraints.

KEY FINDINGS

- ◆ Connectivity is very important to Guilford County Schools, and several nearby school projects could be linked to the greenway, including a new Visual and Performing Arts Elementary School and a public-access facility at Gateway Research Park.
- ◆ A bridge replacement of Tuscaloosa St over US-29 may offer potential for a new bicycle and pedestrian connection.
- ◆ The City continues to work with NC A&T to address bicycle and pedestrian safety concerns on Lindsay St and E Market St, including where a fatality occurred at Benbow Rd.
- ◆ The Greensboro Transit Agency is updating its master plan and hopes to engage students at NC A&T to help achieve the City's goal of becoming a car-optional community by 2040.

JAN
08
2024

Collaborative Cottage Grove

The project team met with Collaborative Cottage Grove to gather feedback on route alternatives and identify opportunities and constraints.

KEY FINDINGS

- ◆ Collaborating with the community to design the greenway and amenities is critical to ensuring people will use it.
- ◆ A lack of accessibility accommodations is a challenge to transportation in the study area.
- ◆ The greenway should reflect the diverse cultural landscape of East Greensboro in the design of amenities such as signage and public art.
- ◆ There are opportunities to coordinate greenway design with community facilities such as park amenities and a social support center.



Community members from the Olde L. Richardson neighborhood attend a presentation for the project

Cottage Grove Fall Festival Pop-Up Event

City of Greensboro staff and the project team participated in the Cottage Grove Fall Festival on September 30, 2023. The community was notified of the project event via a flyer, the City of Greensboro website, and community groups including Collaborative Cottage Grove and East Greensboro NOW. At the event, the project team set up a tent where they shared information about the greenway study with residents of the community. The team distributed public surveys to further engage with the community and capture feedback on their needs, concerns, and priorities.



Community members sharing feedback with the project team



Pop-up event at the Cottage Grove Fall Festival

KEY FINDINGS

- ◆ Community members identified the need to consider a spur route connecting to James B. Dudley High School and Bluford Elementary School.
- ◆ E. Market St was highlighted as a key multimodal corridor where some people do not feel safe walking and biking.
- ◆ A facility that is safe and accessible for all members of the community is a priority.
- ◆ Connections to NC A&T State University, as well as local schools and parks, are desired.

EAST GREENSBORO GREENWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY



We want to hear from you!

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE FOR THE STUDY?

Please write your response on a sticky note and place it below.

Avoid interference w/ vehicle traffic patterns.

Blue Light security buttons

WHAT IMPORTANT ISSUES ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THE CREATION OF THIS GREENWAY?

Please place a dot in the box that aligns most closely with your answer.

Transportation Choice 	Safe Crossings 	Signage 	Equity + Inclusion
Shade + Trees 	Access 	Connectivity 	Continous Greenway Network
Stakeholder Coordination 	Neighborhood Engagement 	Right-of-Way Acquisition 	Meeting Study Goals



Interactive board at the pop-up event

An Evening Under the Star Pop-Up Event

The project team participated in the Evening Under the Star event on October 26, 2023, which was held on the City's new Downtown Greenway. This gathering served as a unique opportunity for the public to gain insights into the East Greensboro Greenway project. During the event, attendees had the chance to delve into the project's timeline, its central goals in connecting key destinations, and the various stakeholders who will be closely involved throughout its duration. Moreover, the community had an active role in shaping the project's direction. Members of the public actively participated in a community survey and offered their valuable input via an interactive board (see following page).



Radcliffe Bailey's public art piece "Ascension"



Attendees sharing feedback on the project

KEY FINDINGS

- ◆ Equity and inclusion were identified as the top challenges associated with the creation of the East Greensboro Greenway.
- ◆ Members of the public would like to see the greenway result in a facility that is pedestrian friendly and safe.
- ◆ The public would like to see vendors along the future greenway.
- ◆ Other attendees voiced preference for the creation of a seamless greenway system within the City.



EAST GREENSBORO GREENWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY

We want to hear from you

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE FOR THE STUDY?

Please write your response on a sticky note and place it below.

Vendors
&
Beer Garden
to help make it
a Destination

Ped
Friendly +
safe!

MAKE IT
SEAMLESS WITH
THE CONNECTIONS
to the Downtown
GREENWAY

WHAT IMPORTANT ISSUES ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THE CREATION OF THIS GREENWAY?

Please place a dot in the box that aligns most closely with your answer.

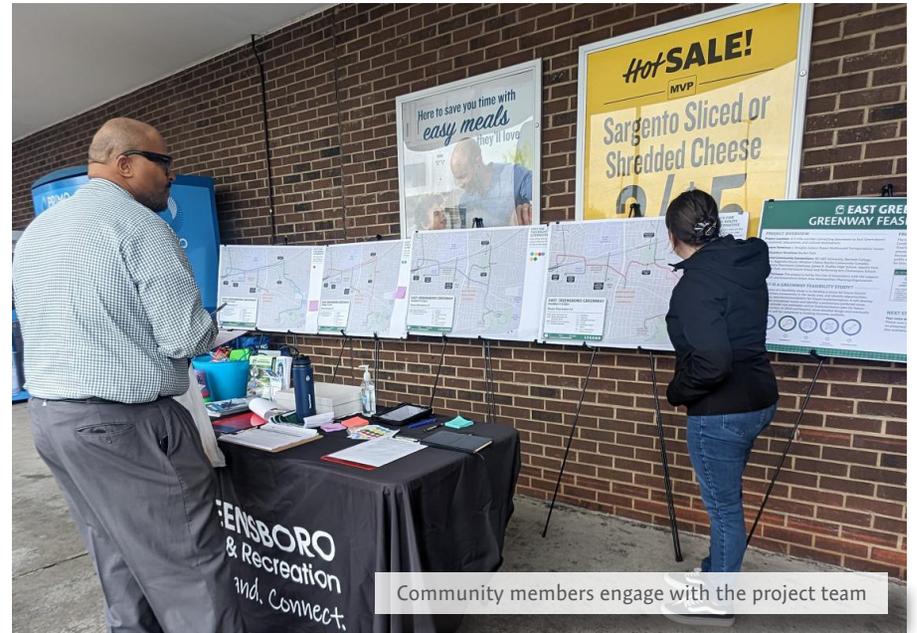
Transportation Choice 	Safe Crossings 	Signage 	Equity + Inclusion
Shade + Trees 	Access 	Connectivity 	Continuous Greenway Network
Stakeholder Coordination 	Neighborhood Engagement 	Right-of-Way Acquisition 	Meeting Study Goals

Interactive board at the pop-up event

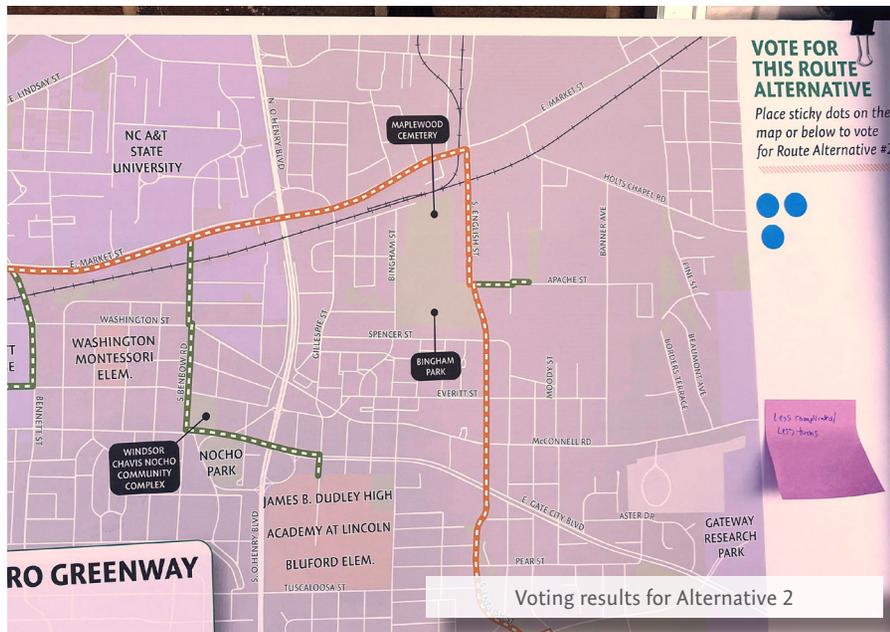


Food Lion Pop-Up Event

The project team tabled at Food Lion on E. Market Street on March 23, 2024. This pop-up served as an opportunity to gain further insights into the East Greensboro Greenway project. Participants were asked to review the four (4) route alternatives and select their preferred alignment. Roughly 35 members of the public stopped to learn about the project, and 51% of those participants provided either paper surveys to identify their preferred alternative or placed (see following page).



Community members engage with the project team

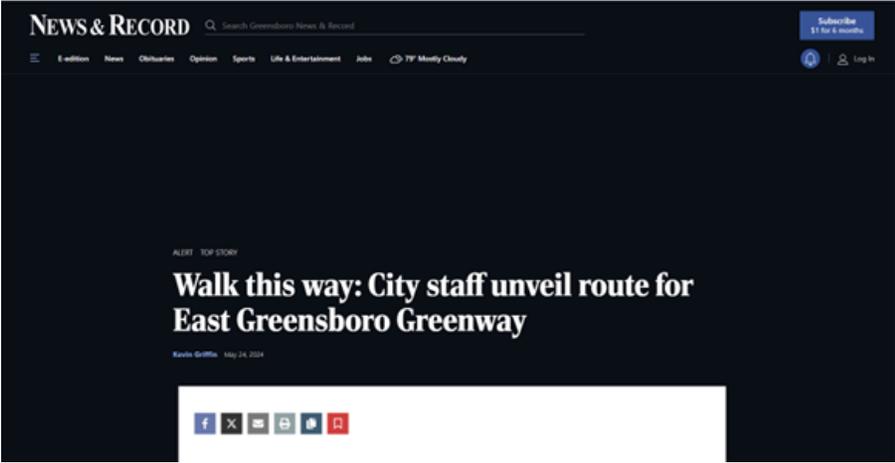


KEY FINDINGS

- ❖ The directness of the route and perceived safety of parallel roadways were key considerations for participants when selecting their preferred alternative.
- ❖ Members of the public showed support for the East Greensboro Greenway and excitement about more places to walk within the City.
- ❖ The public showed a preference for Alternative 3 and Alternative 2, while Alternative 4 was the route that received the least support.

Local News Coverage

The project received coverage in local media outlets, including a May 24, 2024 article in the Greensboro News & Record detailing a town hall meeting held by District 1 City Council member Sharon Hightower. At this meeting, Parks and Recreation staff presented maps of the project and provided an update on route selection.



COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY

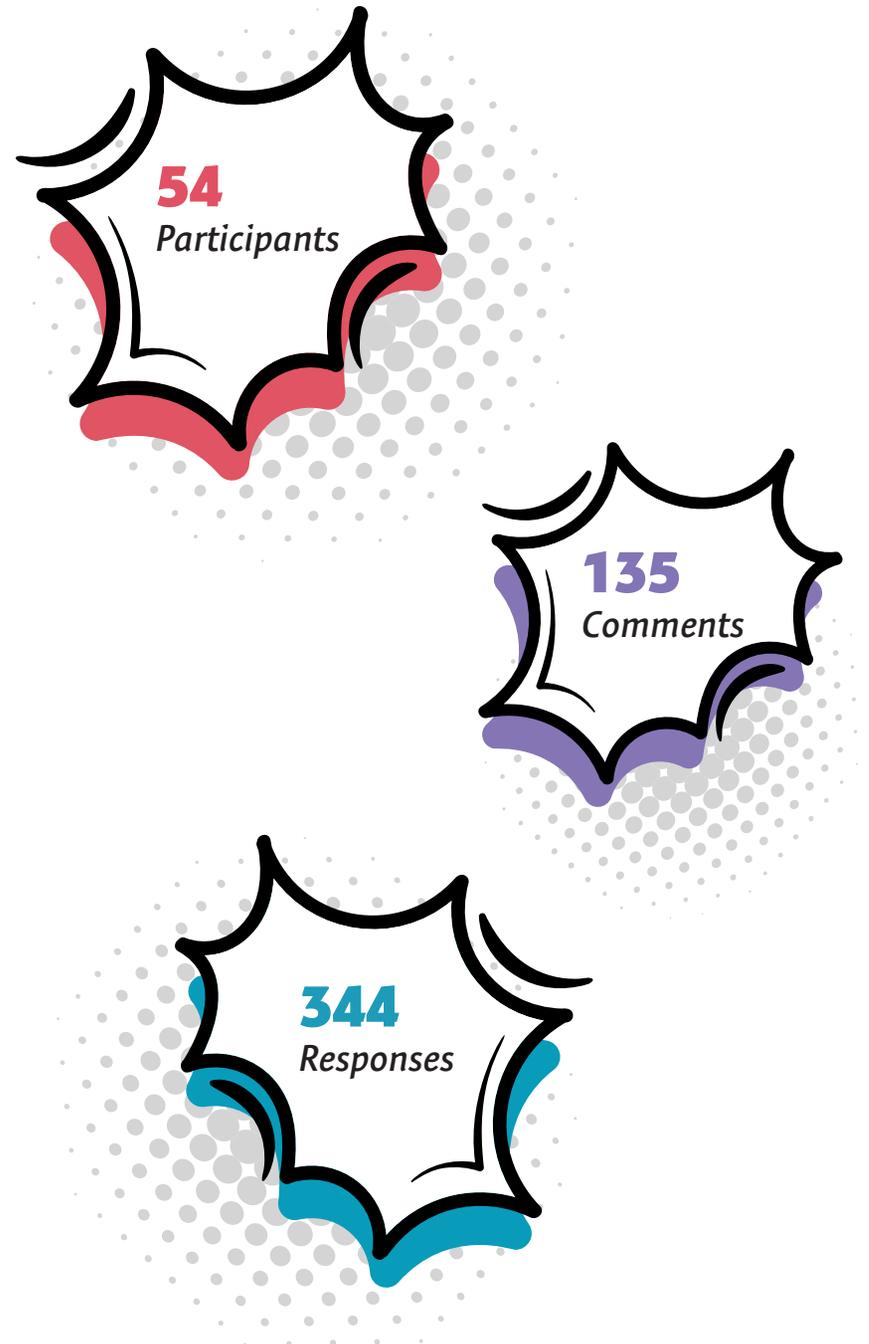
A community survey was conducted for the East Greensboro Greenway Feasibility Study between August 28 and November 2, 2023, via PublicInput.com. The survey attracted 54 participants, and they shared 135 comments and 344 responses.

The project team distributed the community survey to accomplish the following goals:

- ◆ Introduce the project and gauge public support.
- ◆ Solicit and compile public comment on destinations, opportunities and challenges, user preferences, and route preferences.
- ◆ Fulfill requests for information.
- ◆ Develop an email contact list for interested parties.

The survey contained two sections: project-specific questions with interactive mapping questions and optional demographic questions. Public feedback is summarized on the following pages by question. Key takeaways from the community survey include the following:

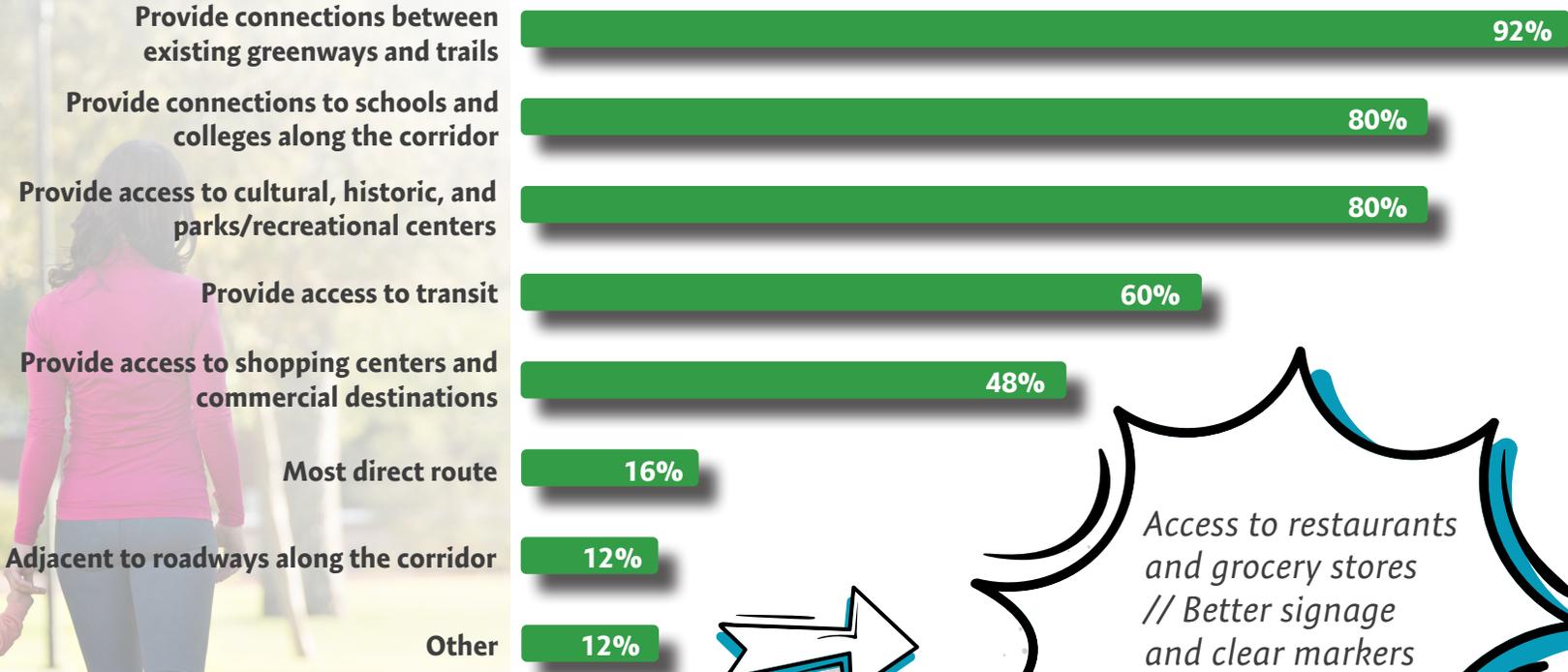
- ◆ Most respondents (92%) expressed desire for a greenway that provides connections between existing greenways and trails in Greensboro.
- ◆ The most discouraging factor from using greenways and trails in Greensboro are the lack of safe biking and walking connections to and from existing greenways and trails (74%)
- ◆ Barber Park emerged as a popular choice for desired greenway destinations, garnering repeated mentions among respondents.
- ◆ When asked to highlight areas in East Greensboro that are in need of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, locational responses were scattered throughout the study area.



What are your five (5) most important routing preferences for the proposed East Greensboro Greenway?

Select up to five (5) routing options.

The majority of respondents (92%) would like to see the East Greensboro Greenway provide connections to existing trails and greenway in the study area. Eighty percent (80%) of survey respondents prioritize a route that provides connections to schools and colleges along the corridor or offers access to cultural, historic, and parks/recreational centers. Sixty percent (60%) prioritize a greenway that provides access to transit, while 48 percent prefer access to shopping centers and commercial destinations. In contrast, a smaller portion of the respondents, comprising 16 percent, prioritize a direct route, while only 12 percent express a preference for a greenway that runs parallel to roadways within the corridor. Additionally, a minority of respondents have distinct preferences falling under "other reasons," which are highlighted below.

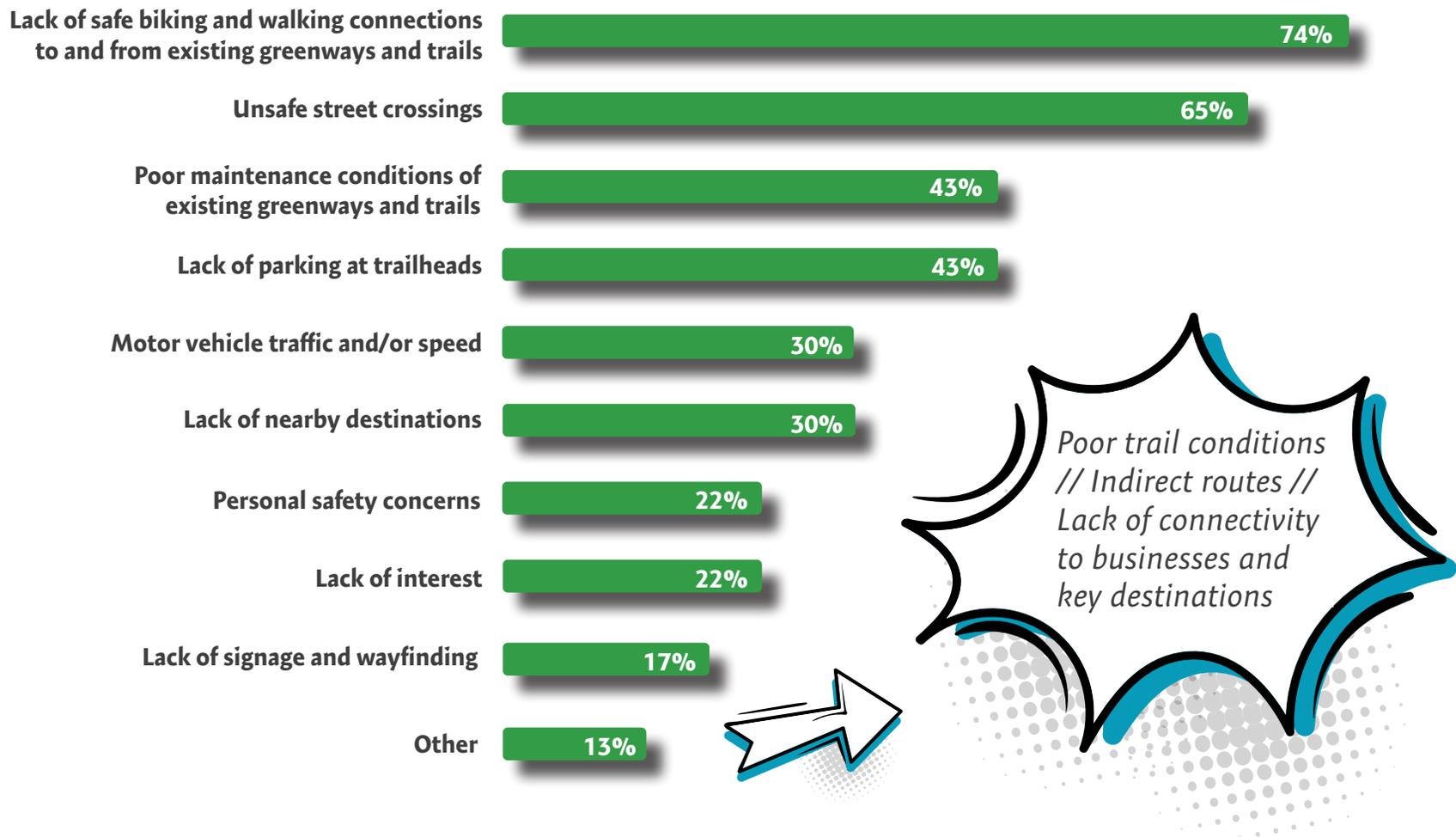


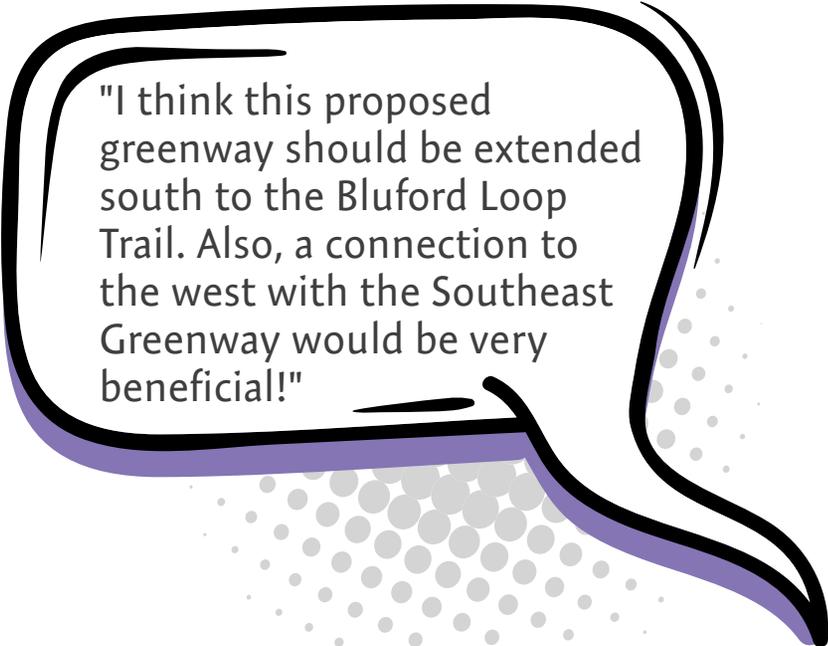
Access to restaurants and grocery stores // Better signage and clear markers

What factors discourage you from using greenways and trails in Greensboro?

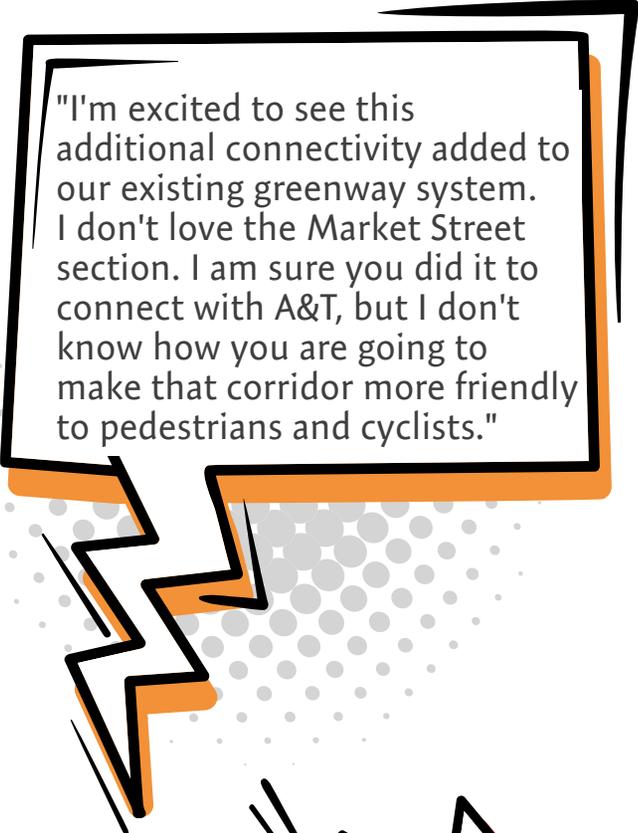
Select all that apply.

Seventy-four percent (74%) of survey participants highlighted the absence of secure biking and walking connections to and from existing greenways and trails as a primary deterrent. Following closely at 65 percent, unsafe street crossings ranked as the second most significant obstacle, while poor maintenance conditions of current greenways and trails, along with inadequate parking at trailheads, shared the third position with each representing 43 percent of responses. The survey also revealed that respondents did not perceive a lack of signage and wayfinding as prominently influencing their greenway usage patterns. Among the 13 percent who selected "other" as a response, cited factors included poor trail conditions, indirect routes, and a lack of overall connectivity as additional discouraging elements.





"I think this proposed greenway should be extended south to the Bluford Loop Trail. Also, a connection to the west with the Southeast Greenway would be very beneficial!"



"I'm excited to see this additional connectivity added to our existing greenway system. I don't love the Market Street section. I am sure you did it to connect with A&T, but I don't know how you are going to make that corridor more friendly to pedestrians and cyclists."

Please provide any additional comments or feedback for the East Greensboro Greenway Feasibility Study.

Survey respondents expressed desire for a greenway that prioritizes safety and offers a scenic escape in East Greensboro. They emphasize the need for safe walkways, especially for students, and suggest a spur to connect two schools (Lincoln Middle School and Bluford Elementary School). The public is optimistic about additional connectivity to the existing greenway system but expresses concerns about the Market Street section, suggesting improvements for pedestrian and cyclist friendliness. They also propose extending the greenway to the Bluford Loop Trail and connecting it to the Southeast Greenway. Additionally, the public highlights the importance of including neighborhood and business connections, along with bike parking near businesses. Overall, there is a strong emphasis on community well-being and thoughtful greenway planning.



"I definitely think we need more safe walkways for the communities and ones that students can interact with."

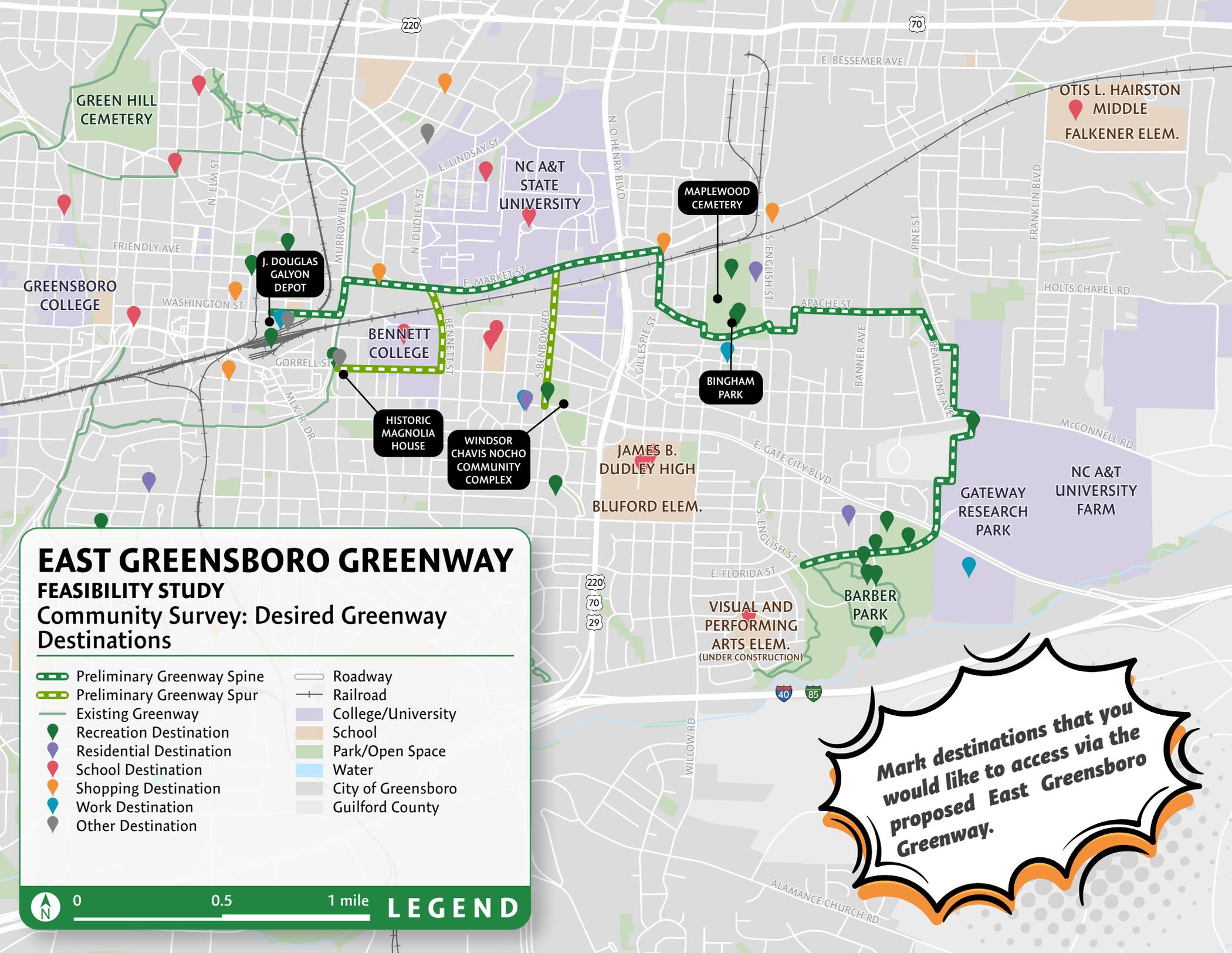
EAST GREENSBORO GREENWAY

FEASIBILITY STUDY

Community Survey: Desired Greenway Destinations

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Preliminary Greenway Spine |  Roadway |
|  Preliminary Greenway Spur |  Railroad |
|  Existing Greenway |  College/University |
|  Recreation Destination |  School |
|  Residential Destination |  Park/Open Space |
|  School Destination |  Water |
|  Shopping Destination |  City of Greensboro |
|  Work Destination |  Guilford County |
|  Other Destination | |

0 0.5 1 mile **LEGEND**



Mark destinations that you would like to access via the proposed East Greensboro Greenway.

Interactive Mapping Question #1

The first interactive mapping question invited participants to pinpoint their desired destinations for future access through the East Greensboro Greenway in Guilford County. These destinations encompassed their homes, workplaces, recreational facilities, schools, shopping areas, and more. The results are categorized and presented in the table below.

CATEGORY	PREFERRED DESTINATIONS
Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bingham Park • Barber Park • Windsor Chavis Nocho Community Complex • Warnersville Recreation Center
Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S. Benbow Rd • S. English St
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bennett College • NC A&T State University • James B. Dudley High School • Peeler Open Elementary School • Otis L. Hairston Middle School • Falkener Elementary School • Hairston Middle School • Kiser Middle School
Shopping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown Greensboro • Community Bike Shop at Barber Park • Mustard Seed Clinic • Food Lion • Walmart
Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown Greensboro • NC A&T University Farm
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magnolia House • Gorrell St bike bridge • Julian St pedestrian tunnel • J. Douglas Galyon Depot (Greensboro Station)



EAST GREENSBORO GREENWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY

Community Survey: Desired Infrastructure Improvements

-  Preliminary Greenway Spine
-  Preliminary Greenway Spur
-  Existing Greenway
-  Desired Infrastructure Improvement Location
-  Roadway
-  Railroad
-  College/University
-  School
-  Park/Open Space
-  Water
-  City of Greensboro
-  Guilford County

0 0.5 1 mile **LEGEND**

Mark areas that need the most pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements along the proposed East Greensboro Greenway.

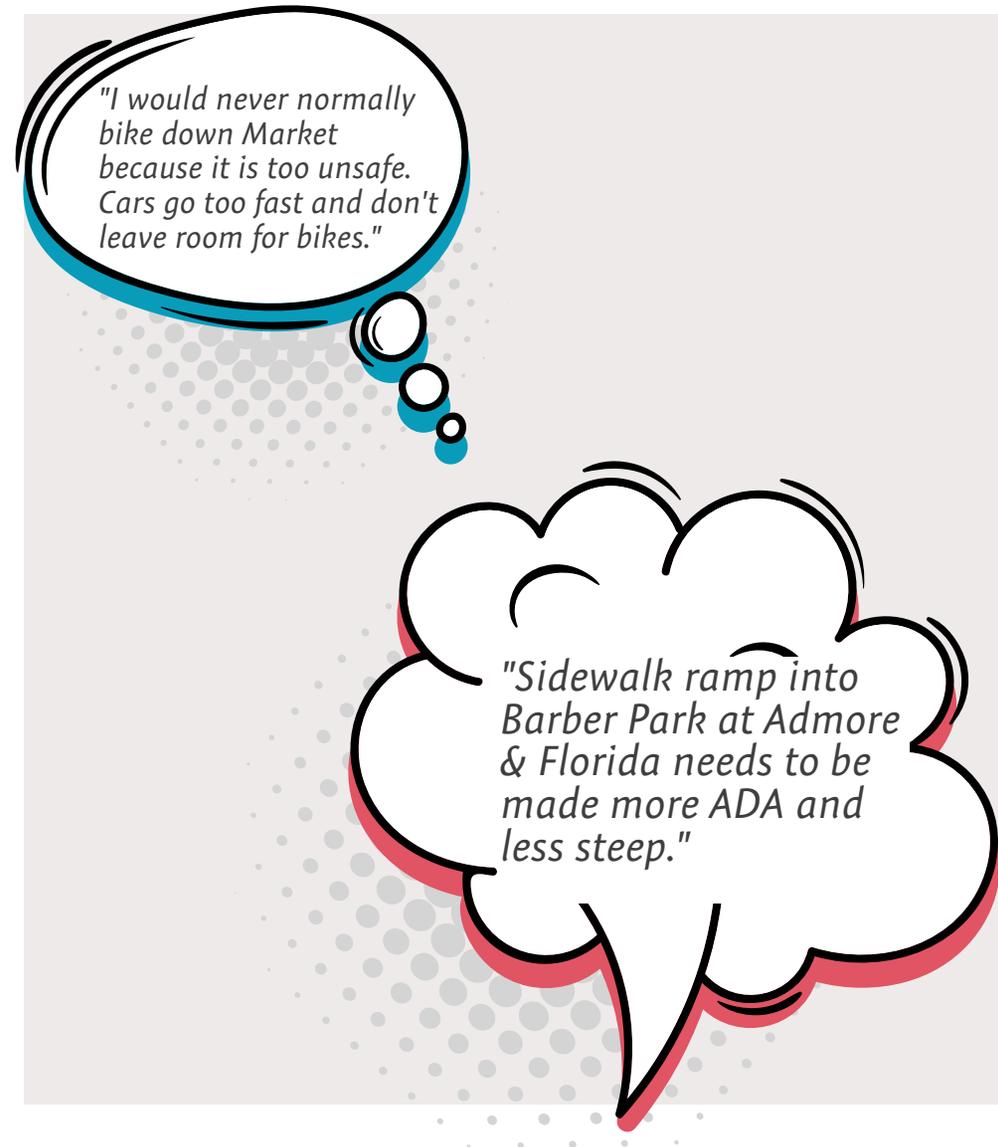


Interactive Mapping Question #2

The second interactive mapping question asked participants to mark areas (e.g., streets, intersections, neighborhoods, etc.) that need the most pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements within and around the proposed East Greensboro Greenway corridor.

The following were the top areas that survey participants identified as needing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure needs within the study area:

- Apache St
- E. Gate City Boulevard
- E. Market St
- English St
- Florida St
- James B. Dudley High School
- Martin Luther King Jr Dr
- McConnell Rd
- Murrow Blvd



ROUTE ALTERNATIVES SURVEY

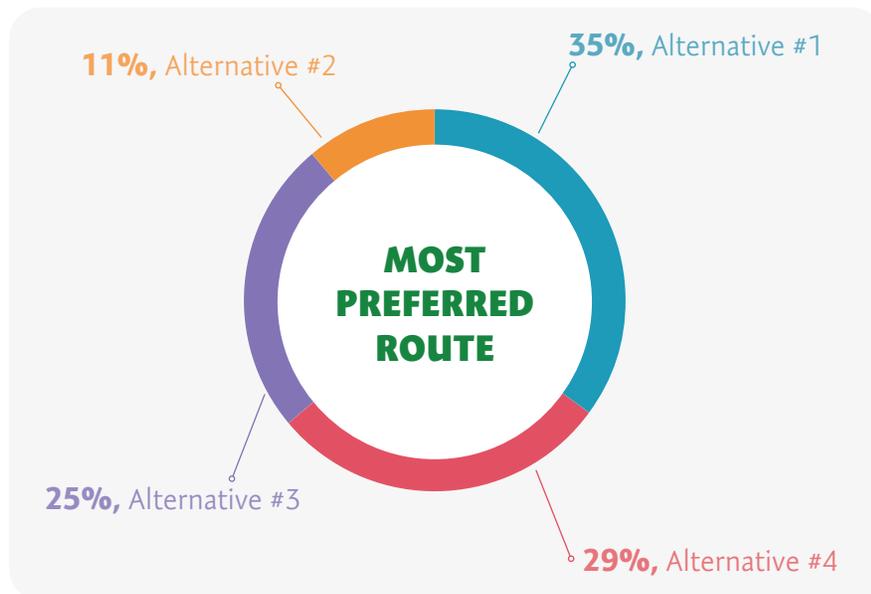
A survey was conducted for the East Greensboro Greenway Feasibility Study between March 23 and May 2, 2024, via Microsoft Forms. The survey attracted 61 participants and asked participants to provide feedback on the four route alternatives proposed.

The survey included questions to identify the most and least preferred route alternatives among community members, and obtain additional feedback on considerations for the selection of a preferred route alternative. Key takeaways from the community survey include the following:

- ◇ Route Alternative #1 was selected by 35% of respondents as their most preferred route.
- ◇ The least preferred route alternative by the community was Route Alternative #2, selected by 39% of respondents as their least favorite route.

Which route alternative of the East Greensboro Greenway corridor do you MOST prefer?

Route Alternative #1 was selected by 35% of respondents as their most preferred route, followed by Alternative #4 (29%), Alternative #3 (25%), and Alternative #2 (11%).

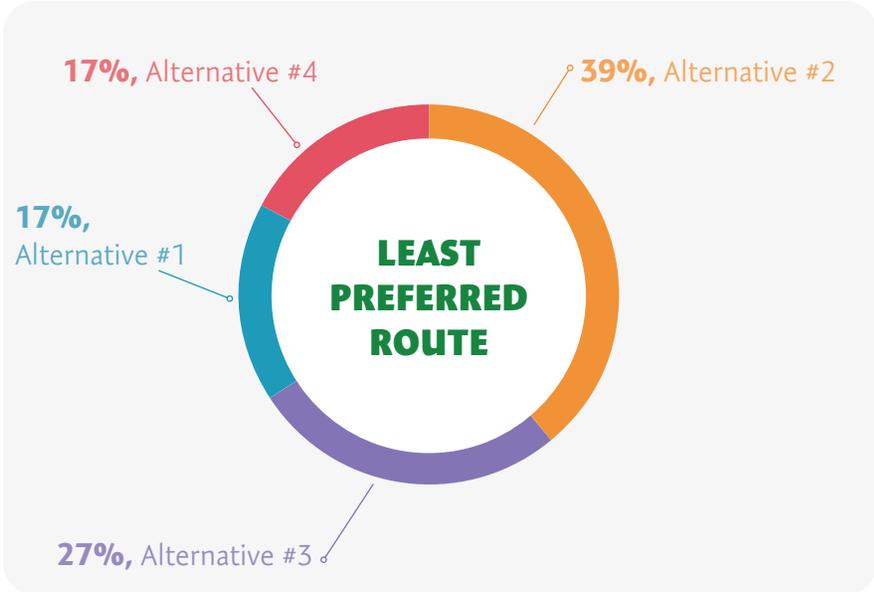


Why is this your MOST preferred route alternative?

- ◇ "Better connection to the Barber Park area. Better flow based on the streets used. More useful having a long stretch on East Market. Doesn't run as close to the elementary school, having a greenway near an elementary school is a bad idea."
- ◇ "Good connectivity to A&T and still appears to include a 'true greenway' (i.e. not just a chunky sidewalk) toward the eastern end of the route."
- ◇ "Creates a widespread route which would likely be accessible to more people, and that goes through less neighborhoods."

Which route alternative of the East Greensboro Greenway corridor do you LEAST prefer?

Route Alternative #2 was selected by 39% of respondents as their least preferred route, followed by Alternative #3 (27%), and Alternatives #1 and #4 (17% each).



Please rank the four route alternatives from 1 (MOST preferred) to 4 (LEAST preferred).

When asked to rank all four route alternatives, Route Alternative #1 received the greatest amount of support and the fewest votes for least preferred. Alternative #4 scored second, followed by Alternative #3. Route Alternative #2 received the fewest votes for most preferred and the most votes for least preferred among the four alternatives.

Why is this your LEAST preferred route alternative?

- ❖ "Too much walking on English Street, which is not particularly attractive and that path misses several pleasant east Greensboro parks."
- ❖ "E Market St alignment not close enough to existing neighborhoods to the south. A&T student use would be great, but most of these students do not live in Greensboro year-round."
- ❖ "Has the least possible combinations of connections opportunities (parks, Greenway, campuses) and a large portion of the path goes through campus, which makes it intimidating for families with small children or older persons. Especially if you want to use the path during busy in between class to times or university events. Also, it has no loop, so it has all of the negative components from each other plan."

