

## Chapter 3: Priority Greenway Corridors

The public and stakeholder involvement efforts for the Buncombe County Greenways and Trails Master Plan yielded a myriad of new ideas for greenway corridors connecting communities across the county and to adjacent counties. The ideas for placement of new trail connections generated by citizens and organizations were closely aligned with the key tenets of the vision for Connect Buncombe and the Parks, Greenways, and Recreation Services Department.

The challenge for County staff, planning partners (known as the Active Oversight Committee) and the consultant team overseeing the Plan was to then organize the ideas for new greenways and trails into conceptual corridors. The concepts outlined in this chapter are intended to prepare Buncombe County for further study along Priority Corridors conceptualized for implementation over the next 20 years. They reflect a combination of ideas, field assessments and consideration of known constraints for the areas in which they are proposed.

The 102 miles of Priority Corridors identified in this chapter are not in priority order to allow Buncombe County capitalize on any available opportunity to construction feasible segments of these corridors. The variety of funding sources, current economic conditions, and land ownership will impact the priority of these corridors.

### Evaluating Proposed Greenways

Ideas and concepts for greenways planned throughout the region were conceived in efforts by Buncombe County, municipalities, Land of Sky Regional Council, state trails plans, the Blue Ridge Parkway and the input of numerous agencies and organizations. From these efforts, a map of past ideas and concepts for greenways was established to be re-

fined through public and technical processes.

Three sets of completed studies and plans provided the foundation for this analysis:

- ◆ Land of Sky Regional Council's Regional Trails & Open Space Plan (2008), which also yielded the initial 2009 Buncombe County Greenways and Trails Plan;
- ◆ Municipal greenway planning efforts in Asheville, Black Mountain, Montreat and Woodfin; and
- ◆ Three detailed corridor studies: The Wilma Dykeman RiverWay Plan; The US 70 / Swannanoa River Greenway (Exhibit 1-1); and the French Broad River / Highway 251 Greenway.

Several new greenway corridor ideas were then posed by the public and stakeholders in 2011 and 2012 via public meetings across Buncombe County; a September 2011 stakeholder workshop; numerous festivals throughout the County and the online survey. Some ideas confirmed past planning efforts while others established new ideas for greenway connectivity.

Maps of the ideas for future corridors were produced for analysis and reviewed by the project team, County staff and the Plan's Active Oversight Committee. In general, the corridor ideas generated during the outreach process followed logical routes along rivers and streams as well as primary and secondary roadways to connect major destinations such as town centers, schools, parks, and natural areas. From these corridors emerged a set of primary alignments that were vetted through the Active Oversight Committee to confirm their relative importance in the proposed greenway system.



*Destinations, such as Karpen Fields / Park near Weaverville (above), were part of the process to identify Priority Corridors for future greenways.*

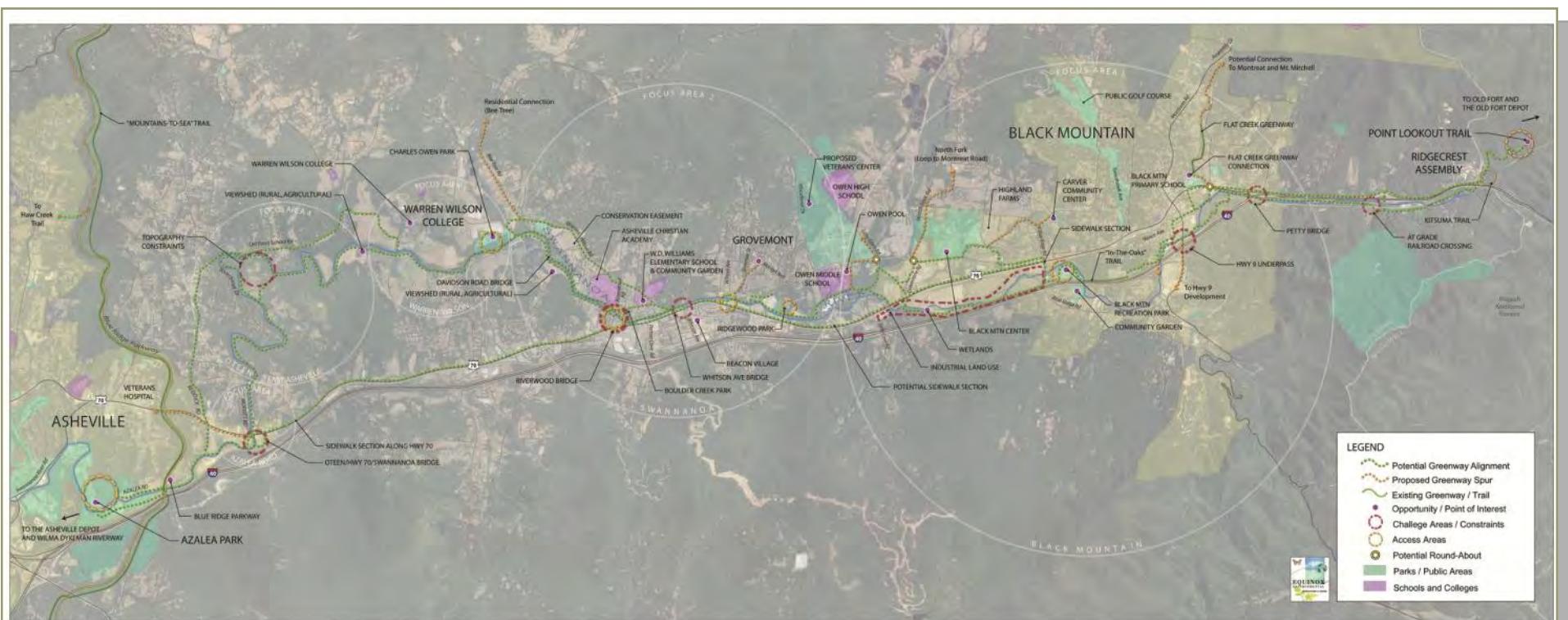
Photo Credit: Fred Grogan

*Exhibit 3-1: A Map of Possibilities from the US 70 / Swannanoa River Greenway Feasibility Study. Similar studies are recommended for Priority Corridors identified in the Plan*

The factors that led to establishment of new Priority Corridors for further analysis were:

- ◆ Linkages to existing or planned greenways within municipal boundaries or the already-completed corridor studies for the French Broad River and Swannanoa River, as well as the Wilma Dykeman RiverWay Plan;
- ◆ Opportunities to provide the greatest degree of connectivity to existing communities and destinations;

- ◆ Emphasis on already-populated or urbanized areas of unincorporated Buncombe County;
- ◆ Locations where new development was likely to occur and impact future corridors;
- ◆ Strong likelihood for maximizing usage of the greenway based on these factors;
- ◆ Identified areas for cultural and recreational destinations; and
- ◆ Realistic prospects for detailed planning, design and construction of these corridors within 10 years.



## The US 70/Swannanoa River Greenway Feasibility Study

years of adoption of the Plan.

The resulting analysis revealed five new Priority Corridors for study within the plan in addition to the three already-completed studies. Greenways identified in locations other than these Priority Corridors were not evaluated beyond conducting basemap analyses and a scan of constraints for placement on a countywide map of planned greenways.

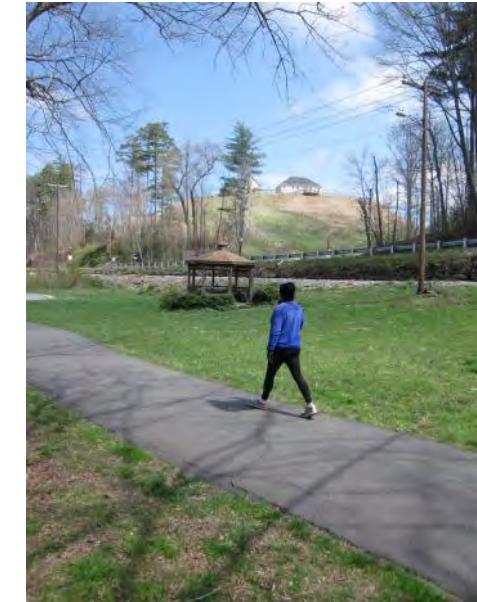
## Step-by-Step Planning for Greenways

The analysis conducted on Priority Corridors in this Plan is the first step in defining a future network. The efforts to fully implement a new greenway trail require several planning and design steps before construction can take place. These steps are defined as:

- ◆ **Identification of conceptual greenway corridors and connections:** The primary focus of this Plan is to identify which corridors will be the focus of efforts over the next 10-plus years. Identification includes high-level evaluation of the corridor concepts, potential design features, major constraints and logical termini. Corridors should not be viewed as strictly linear as they may encompass a variety of connections, spurs, micro-paths or alternative routes emanating from a mainline greenway.
- ◆ **Corridor Plan, feasibility study or conceptual design:** Buncombe County has already completed two studies at this level of analysis—the US 70 / Swannanoa River Greenway and the French Broad River / Highway 251 Greenway. These studies include in-depth field work to define location-specific constraints, cost estimates and parameters to guide the generation of design drawings in future analysis phases.

Some design drawings may be generated through this analysis to help guide estimates for further design or assist the County in preserving the corridor.

- ◆ **Alternative analysis and detailed design:** This phase is where detailed surveying, location-specific analysis and evaluation of design options are conducted, resulting in design drawings to guide the acquisition of property and construction of the greenway. Alternative analyses may be conducted for locations where constraints require a deviation from findings generated in previous phases.
- ◆ **Land acquisition:** As outlined in Chapter 5: Land Acquisition, there are several methods employed to secure property for greenway construction. Some acquisition is likely to occur prior to this phase or detailed design. Other land necessary for the greenway will be obtained once detailed design drawings are established and specific routes are identified. Acquisition that occurs pre-design will likely dictate where the corridor can be routed and will impact acquisition on adjacent properties.
- ◆ **Construction:** The building of the greenway occurs once design and acquisition are complete. Where there are constraints or property is unable to be acquired for greenway use, intermediate route options may be part of construction while other processes are undertaken to build the corridor along a preferred route.
- ◆ **Maintenance:** Maintenance of the corridor begins at ribbon-cutting for the new greenway and cannot be over-looked as a critical component in supporting the efforts that pre-

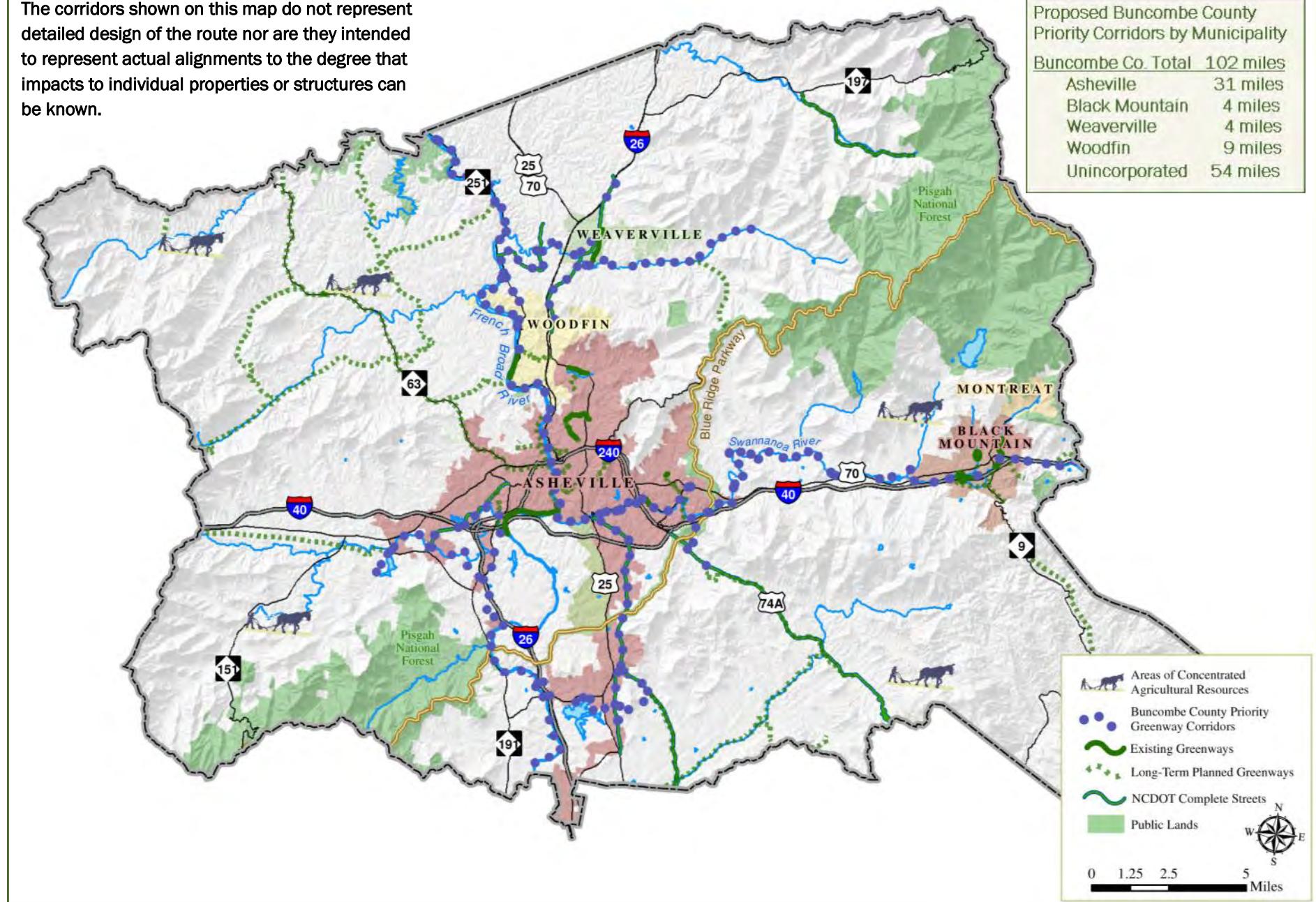


*Woodfin's Riverside Park already includes a greenway along the French Broad River. Other planning efforts have identified routes to connect north and south of the park from Asheville to the Madison County line.*

Photo Credit: Don Kostelet

## Exhibit 3-2: Buncombe County Greenways &amp; Trails Overview

The corridors shown on this map do not represent detailed design of the route nor are they intended to represent actual alignments to the degree that impacts to individual properties or structures can be known.



ceded construction to make the trail a reality. Chapter 8 addresses maintenance needs and expectations in more detail.

## Priority Corridors

The following pages illustrate the findings of the planning efforts to evaluate five “Priority Corridors”, as well as incorporation of the findings from the Wilma Dykeman RiverWay Plan and the US 70 / Swannanoa River and French Broad River / Highway 251 studies. Collectively, these eight corridors represent the highest priority for Buncombe County to pursue for detailed planning, design, land acquisition and construction in the short-term (up to 10 years from adoption of the Plan) to develop a countywide network of greenways and trails.

To the greatest extent possible, the routes were evaluated to identify acceptable corridors along rivers and streams or existing utility or sewer easements; within the boundaries of publicly-owned properties; and situated where they appear to have least impact on private property. Corridors will bisect a variety of contexts that will influence the ultimate cross-section or require evaluation of how to fill gaps through off-road and on-street connections. The options for these typologies and ideas for implementation of Complete Streets concepts are outlined in Chapter 4: Design Features.

**These Priority Corridors profiles do not represent detailed design of the route nor are they intended to represent actual alignments to the degree that impacts to individual properties or structures can be known or cost estimates fully derived.**

Exhibit 3-2 illustrates a countywide perspective on the proposed greenway trails with Priority Corridors, both those already-studies and those identified as new concept in this Plan, and shown in **BLUE**. The

routes identified in this and other plans that are not part of the Priority Corridor analysis are shown in solid (existing) or dotted (proposed) **GREEN**. Areas of Concentrated Agricultural Resources were those general areas identified by the public, stakeholders and property owners as locations where agricultural preservation and agritourism are of interest



**Greenway Corridor:** The Priority Corridor that is the subject of that particular profile, identified through this Plan or past studies.



**3-5 ft Walking Trail:** Connectors to corridors that are intended as a hiking trail with natural surfaces. May be alternate routes to Priority Corridors.



**Other Greenway Corridors:** Priority Corridors that are not the subject of the profile.



**Long-Term Planned Greenways:** Corridors that should be studied in future plans or required if new development influences them.



**Existing Greenway:** Built corridor.



**NCDOT Complete Streets:** Corridors or connecting routes that are best suited for sidepaths or sidewalks to connect to a Priority Corridor. See Chapter 4.

**User Types.** The user types highlighted for each Priority Corridor (legend in Exhibit 3-3) represent the likelihood of a particular type of user to regularly patronize the Priority Corridor. The user types helped inform design recommendations and potential connections destinations near the trail.

## Exhibit 3-3: Understanding Corridor Profiles

### Priority Corridor Map Legend



Schools



Parks



Community Centers



Farmer's/Tailgate Markets



Public Lands

### User Types Legend for Corridors



Pedestrians



Schoolchildren



Bicyclists



Rafters/Kayakers



Hikers



Anglers



Recreation/  
Exercise



Library Patrons



Cross-Country  
Skiers



Transit Patrons



Equestrians



Faded Icon:  
Not a likely user

## Wilma Dykeman RiverWay

The RiverWay Plan, adopted in 2004, is a multi-faceted master plan for the urban river-front of the French Broad River and Swannanoa Rivers in the City of Asheville. The Plan includes concepts for a greenway tracing the rivers, as well as environmental management goals, redevelopment concepts and parks. Sections of the RiverWay are in place in several areas.

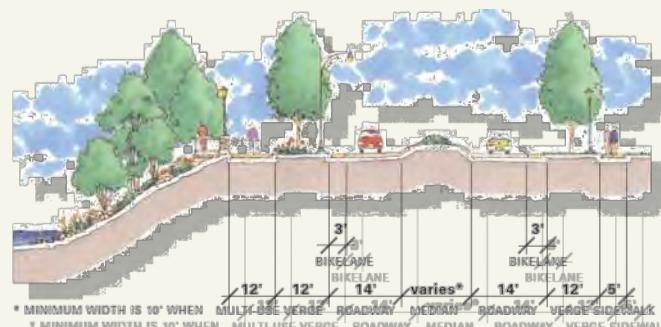


**Influences:** The RiverWay is located primarily within a developed corridor along the rivers. Several opportunities and constraints exist, including:

- River Arts District & Biltmore Village
- UNC Asheville & AB Tech
- Asheville neighborhoods
- Azalea Park & WNC Nature Center
- Biltmore Estate
- Development along rivers

Portions of the greenway are constructed through Carrier Park, French Broad River Park and in some private developments along the rivers. Design and environmental analysis is also in progress for sections of the RiverWay east of the French Broad River in the River Arts Districts. Most of the 7 other Priority Corridors in the Greenways & Trails Master Plan have direct linkages to the existing or planned sections of the RiverWay. The RiverWay is the most heavily-developed greenway corridor in Buncombe County in terms of land use.

**Typology:** The RiverWay plan designates a 12' wide pathway for its entire length to account for the potential for heavy use. Adjacent roadways were included in the design concepts to include sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and landscaped medians and sidewalk buffers.



### Likely Users



**The User Experience:** The RiverWay was planned with a heavy user interface in mind, linking nearby places such as the WECAN neighborhood, River Arts District and Biltmore Village to the corridor. New parks and recreation facilities were master-planned along the route as well as facilities to access the river for fishing, canoeing and kayaking, and other recreation. Plans for residential development and other major redevelopment were also a key component to the RiverWay Plan. Several events occur along the RiverWay each year.

### Potential Partners:

- City of Asheville
- RiverLink
- NCDOT, Utilities & Railroad
- Landowners / Developers
- Business organizations



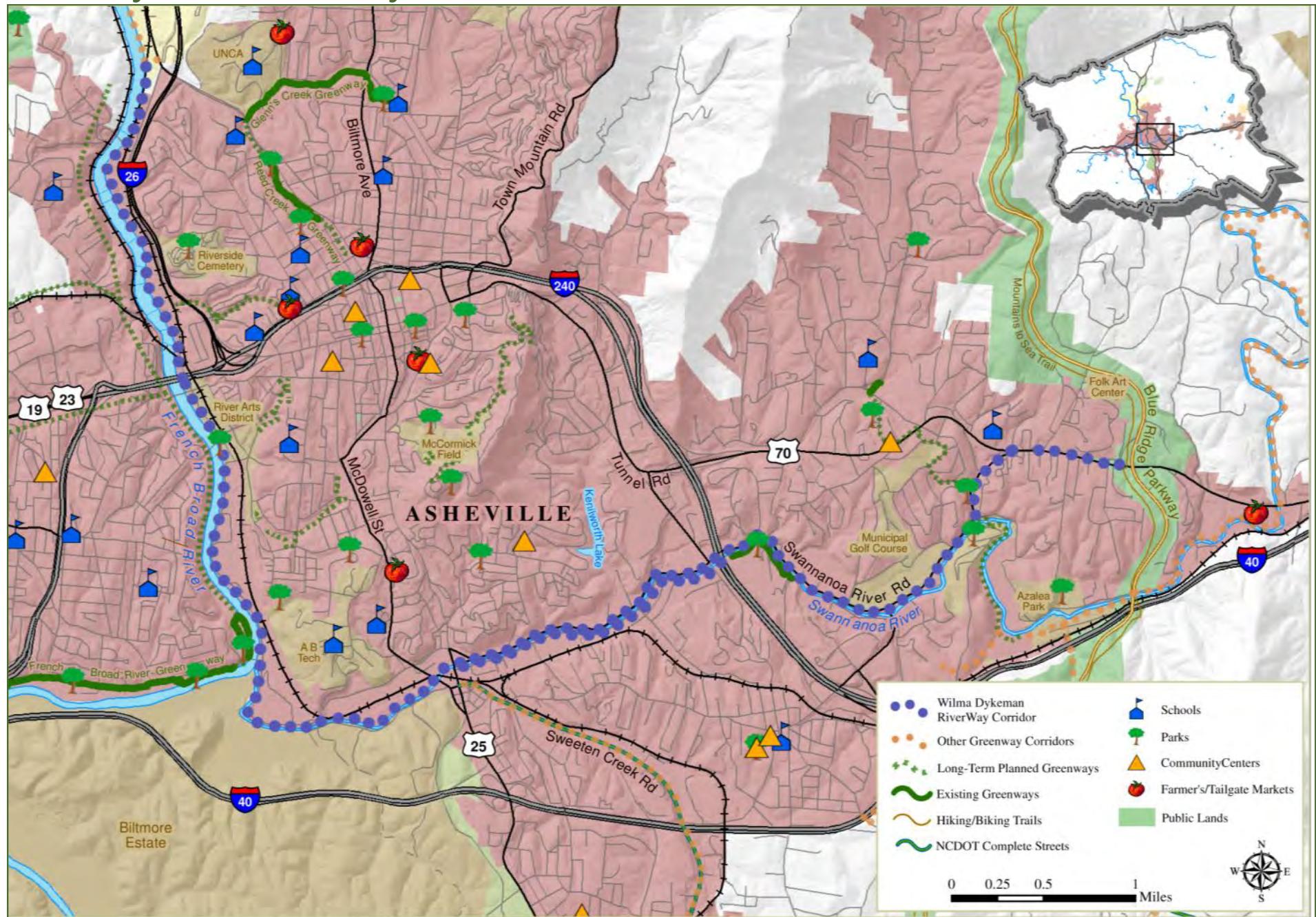
*The RiverWay corridor is already utilized for a variety of activities on the trails and the river, which supports usage of the greenway.*

### Major Challenges

**Topographic/Natural Landforms:** Much of the corridor is planned or exists between the river, streets and development. Development is typically in commercial or industrial use, with some residential properties. Other segments run near utility easements or railroad.

**Existing Infrastructure:** Portions of the RiverWay are constructed through Carrier Park and French Broad River Park, as well as in some private developments. River access points are also along the corridor. Adjacent streets are in need of upgrades or additional pedestrian & bicycle facilities.

# Wilma Dykeman RiverWay Corridor



## US 70 / Swannanoa River Greenway

The greenway proposed along the US 70 and Swannanoa River Corridor is an 18-mile route with an eastern terminus at the Point Lookout Trail in McDowell County and a western terminus at Azalea Park in East Asheville—the eastern terminus of the Wilma Dykeman RiverWay Plan. A detailed corridor study was completed in 2010.

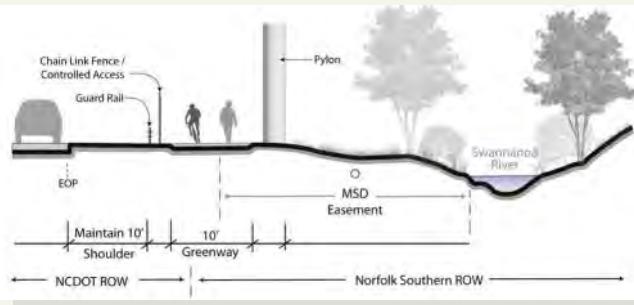


**Influences:** The trail generally runs along the Swannanoa River with section adjacent to US Highway 70. Key communities along the route include:

- Ridgecrest & Black Mountain
- Warren Wilson College
- Azalea Road Connection / Azalea Park
- Swannanoa Community
- Oteen/East Asheville
- Blue Ridge Parkway

The US 70 Swannanoa River Greenway has the potential to connect to population centers, public schools, Warren Wilson College, surrounding neighborhoods, several parks, other greenway trails, business, and shopping. In addition, pedestrian and bike safety has plagued certain areas within this corridor. This corridor would provide options for future users to safely and easily access the greenway offering a non-motorized transportation alternative. The planned greenway also crosses the Mountains-to-Sea Trail at the Blue Ridge Parkway.

**Typology:** The proposed route bisects diverse natural and manmade environments, which prompted the corridor study to recommend 6 cross section options based on constraints and opportunities. In general, a 10' asphalt trail (sample cross-section above) was the preferred treatment, with the exception of the area near Warren Wilson College



### Likely Users



**The User Experience:** The proposed route traverses a diverse set of natural features along the Swannanoa River and makes connections to existing hiking trails at Warren Wilson College, the planned greenway within the City of Asheville to Azalea Park, numerous existing & planned greenways in Black Mountain, and the Point Lookout Trail in McDowell County. Potential exists for day trips taken from one end to another with incorporation of local farming, restaurants and brewpubs.

### Potential Partners:

- Municipalities
- Warren Wilson College
- RiverLink
- NCDOT, Utilities, & Railroad
- Ridgecrest Assembly
- Blue Ridge Parkway



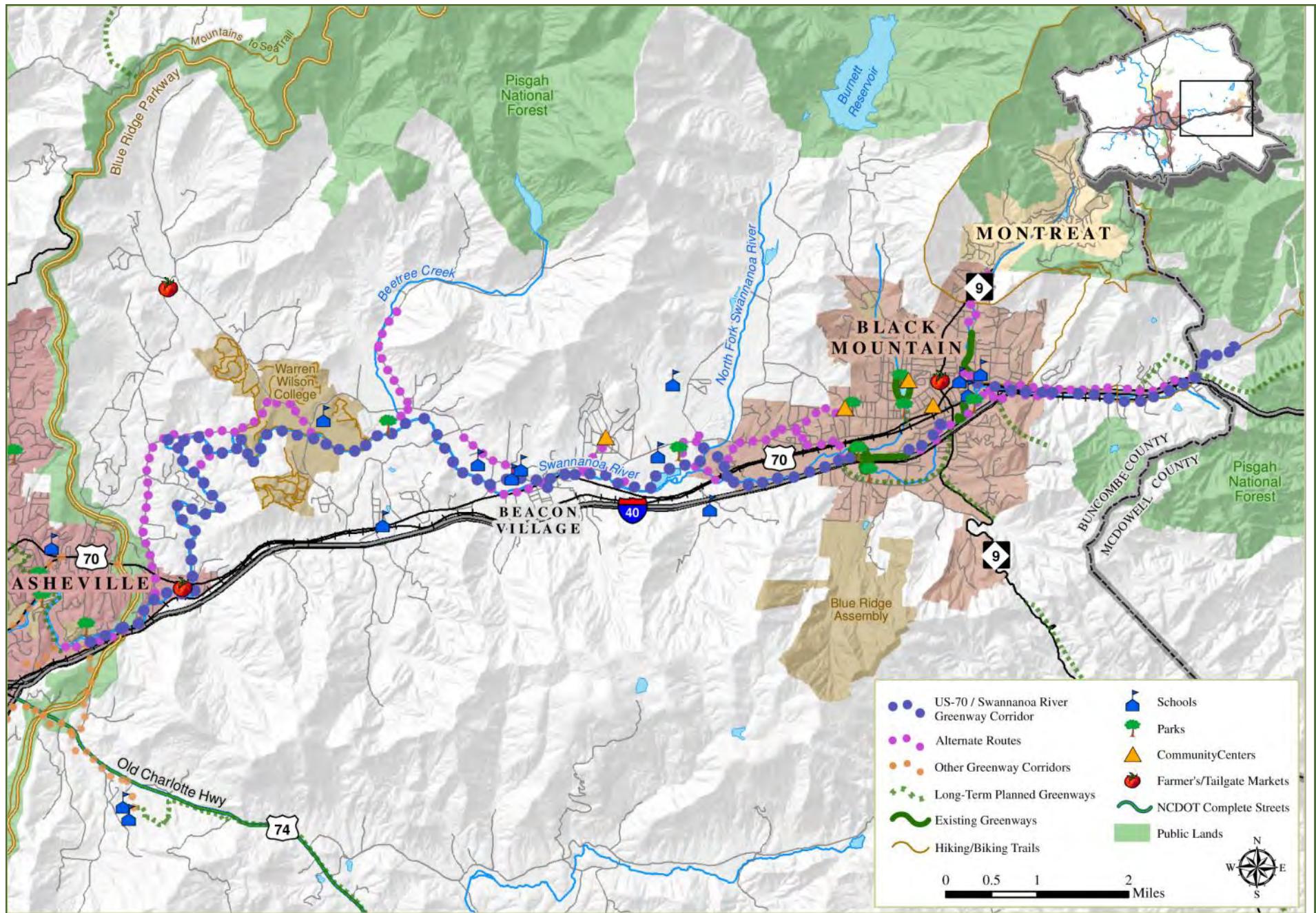
Fields at Warren Wilson College (left) and US Highway 70 (right) were major influences in the US 70 / Swannanoa River Greenway study.

### Major Challenges

**Topographic/Natural Landforms**, including steep terrain, and floodway impacts, such as river and tributary crossings. These features create right-of-way constraints in sections that are adjacent to US 70 or other roadways.

**Existing Infrastructure** forms physical barriers for development, including existing roadways and buildings, an active railroad, utility lines (wire-based, sewer & water), and drainage structures .

# US 70 / Swannanoa River Greenway Corridor



## French Broad River / Highway 251 Greenway

The greenway along the French Broad River & Highway 251 is planned from the northern city limit of Asheville to the Madison County line. The planned 15-mile corridor follows the historic route of the Buncombe Turnpike and Drovers' Road, with a connection to the planned Wilman Dykeman RiverWay. A corridor study was completed in 2010.

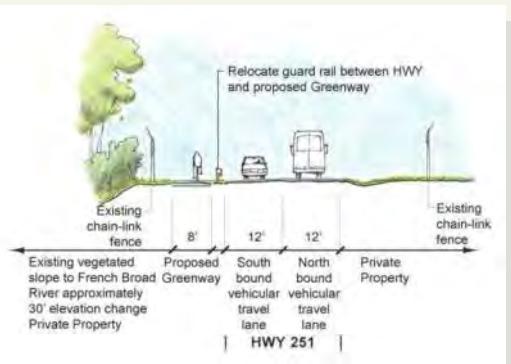


**Influences:** The corridor is a gorge carved out of the mountain landscape by the river. Key communities and influences along the route include:

- Asheville & Woodfin
- Reed Creek Greenway
- Alexander River Park & mountain bike trails
- Alexander Community
- Ledges Park & Walnut Island Park

The river has created a narrow gorge within the corridor that varies slightly in width with the wider section located in the south end of the study corridor.

These influences along with the Norfolk Southern Railroad along the west bank of the river prompted the study to recommend the corridor follow the east bank. Land uses within the study corridor include industrial, commercial, institutional, residential, and park/open space. In recognition of the scenic and historic qualities of the corridor, Highway 251 is designated as a Scenic Byway.



**Typology:** A 10-foot asphalt trail was designated as the preferred cross section, however constraints along the corridor make the construction of this design difficult in some locations without blasting. Existing development patterns, topography, elevation between the shoulder of Highway 251 and the river's edge are a few of the constraints.

### Likely Users



**The User Experience:** Lengthy section of the proposed route remain in a natural setting with the trail and highway sandwiched between the river and rock outcroppings. Mountain bikers and road cyclists currently use the highway corridor due to its scenic value and low weekend traffic volumes. Connections to parks, campgrounds, landings for canoes/kayaks/rafts, and fishing areas will likely drive users to the corridor.

### Potential Partners:

- Municipalities
- Craggy Prison Property
- NCDOT, MSD & Railroad
- RiverLink
- Campgrounds
- Madison County



Norfolk Southern Railroad (left) and NC Highway 251 (right) were major influences in the French Broad River / Highway 251 Greenway study.

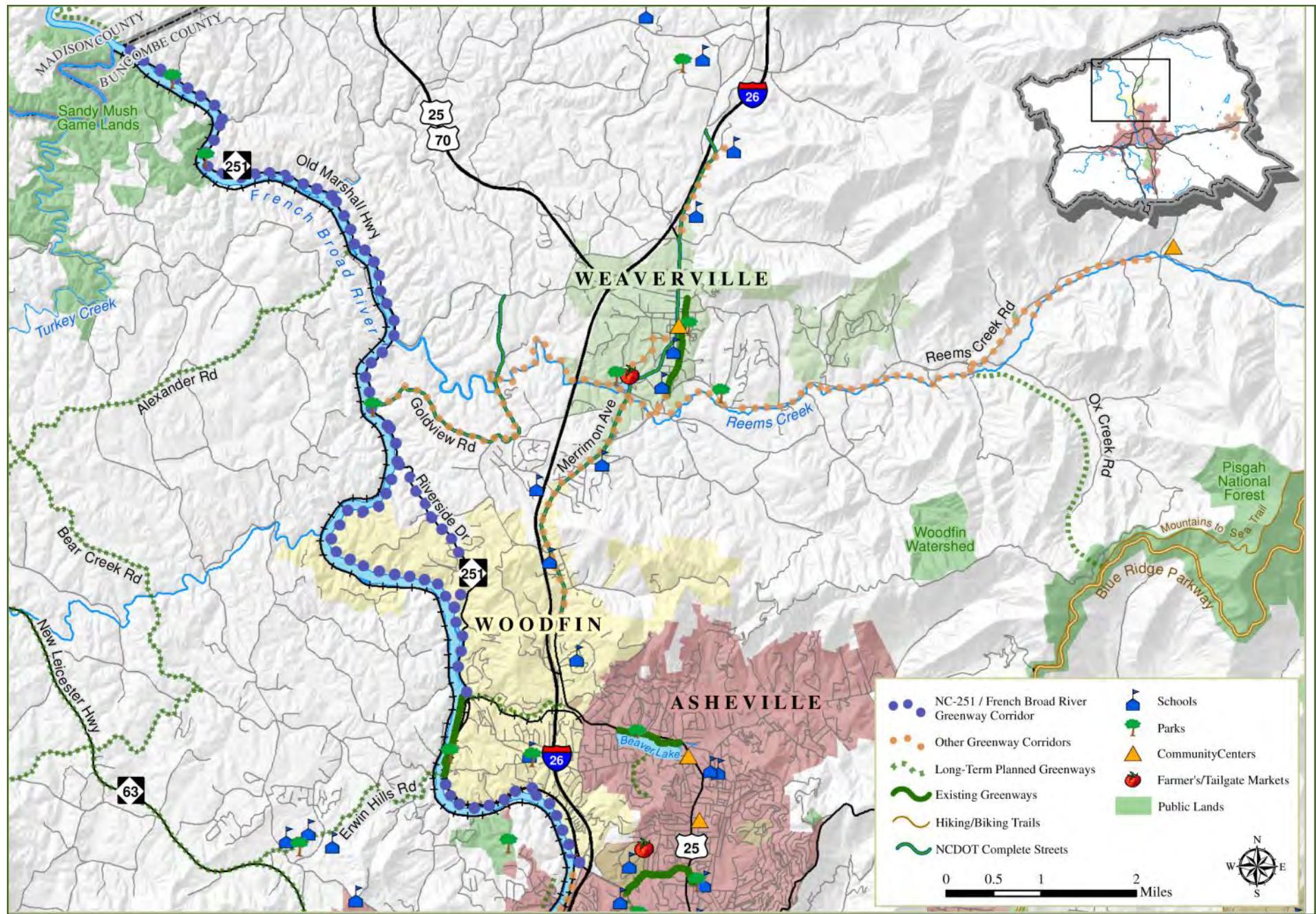
### Major Challenges

*Space & grade between river & Highway 251 creates numerous constraints along the corridor and will impact transition areas to parks connecting streets and other destinations.*

*Private property* is also located in the narrow strip of land between the highway and the river.

*Bridges* linking other roads to Highway 251 across the river or crossing creeks draining into the river create height restrictions for greenway underpasses.

## French Broad River / Highway 251 Greenway Corridor



## Bent Creek Greenway

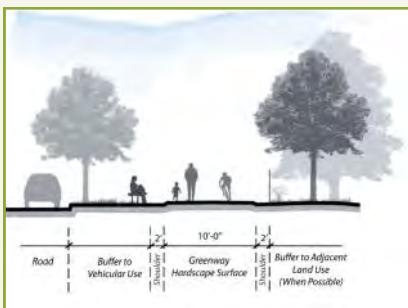
West Asheville, the NC Arboretum and Bent Creek were some of the top destinations identified through the public process. This proposed route makes those connections from mountain bike and hiking trails at Bent Creek and the Arboretum as well as greenways in West Asheville. The 8-mile route requires careful consideration of the area around the Farmers Market and Brevard Road.



**Influences:** The planned greenway would begin at the current terminus of the greenway at the confluence of Hominy Creek and the French Broad River that is part of the Wilma Dykeman RiverWay. Influences along the route include:

- West Asheville & Bent Creek
- Biltmore Square Mall / Business Park
- I-26, Brevard Road interchange
- Wilma Dykeman RiverWay
- Bent Creek / Arboretum Trails
- WNC Farmers Market
- MSD Easement along I-26
- Blue Ridge Parkway

There is an existing walking trail within the Ridgefield Business Park between Brevard Road and I-26 south of Biltmore Square Mall. The southern terminus at the Arboretum links to the planned Arden/Lake Julian corridor to provide a connection from central Buncombe County to communities in southern Buncombe County. The project would also cross near the Mountains to Sea Trail.



**Typology:** This corridor has the potential to serve both as a utilitarian connection by providing access from the City limits to Bent Creek Recreational Area, and lunch time exercise users within the business park. Mountain bikers prefer unpaved trails, but that may not be as practical or desired north of the I-26/Brevard Road interchange.

### Likely Users



**The User Experience:** A greenway linking Bent Creek to Hominy Creek could provide exceptional opportunities for connectivity, tourism, Blue Ridge Parkway connection and West Asheville linkages. Extensive discussions have occurred about greenway potential in this corridor for many years. Initially, it is possible the route will link Bent Creek to the Mission Hospital Satellite offices campus in Broadpointe Business Park.

### Potential Partners:

- City of Asheville
- NC Arboretum
- RiverLink
- NCDOT, MSD & Utilities
- Business Association
- WNC Farmers Market
- Blue Ridge Parkway

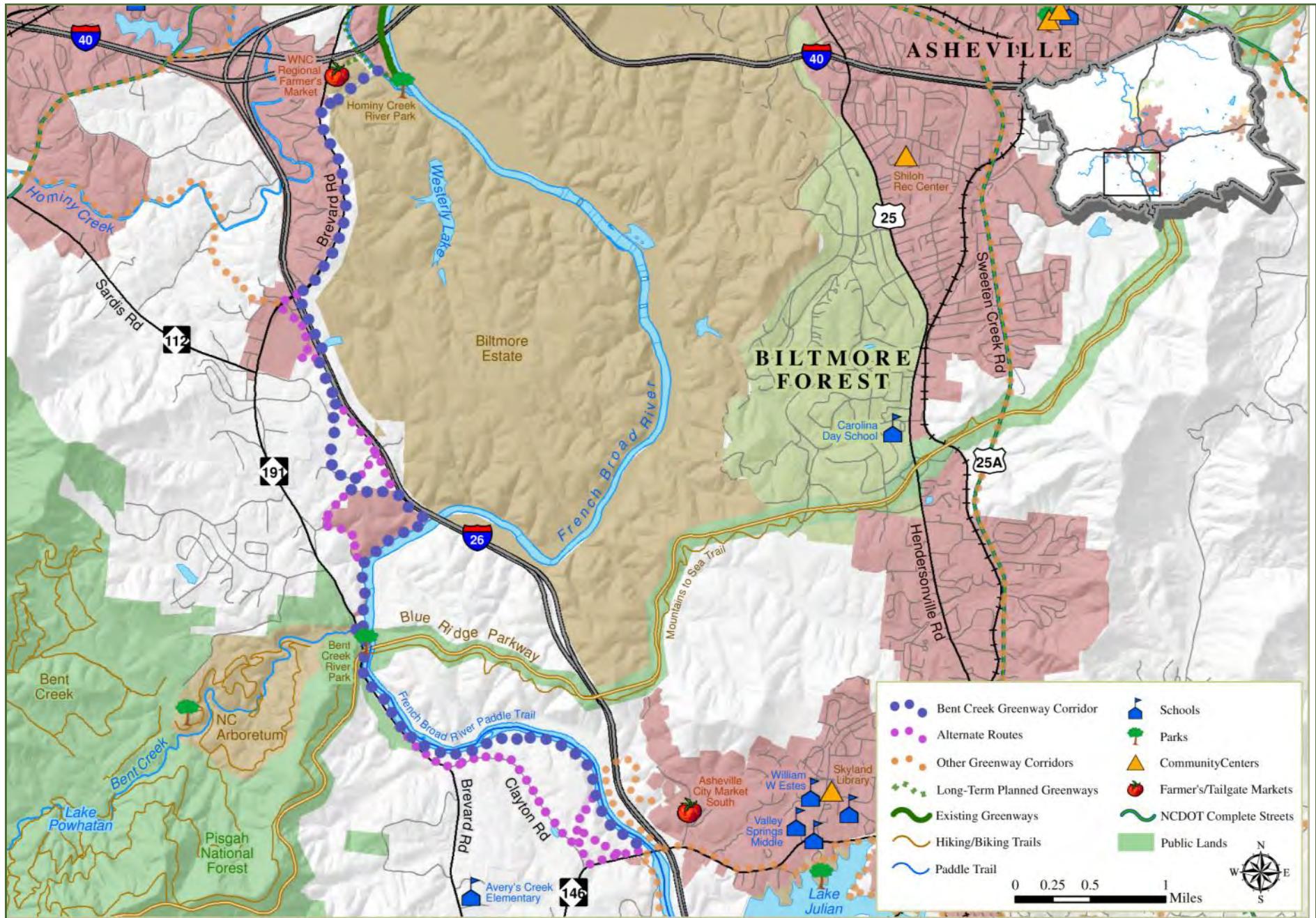


*The French Broad River Floodplain (left) offer opportunity for greenway corridor development. Terrain near the Farmers Market (right) will likely require special considerations and partnerships for trail construction.*

### Major Challenges

The interchange at I-26 and Brevard Road (NC 191) is a major constraint depending on how the interchange re-build can be configured. There is potential to follow I-26 right-of-way between I-26 and the Biltmore properties to a culvert and MSD lift station south of the interchange near the business park. Connections to Bent Creek trails will offer other challenges if users are expected to travel on existing streets, which are narrow and have sight distance issues. Complete Streets applications may need to be pursued, if possible within existing right-of-way.

## Bent Creek Greenway Corridor



## Hominy Creek Greenway

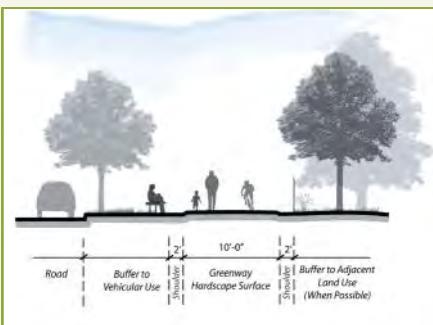
This proposed 7-mile corridor could serve as a utilitarian connection by providing access from the Hominy Creek Greenway/Park to Buncombe County Sports Park. Initially, this focus area begins in West Asheville near Sand Hill Road and terminates near the AB Tech Enka Campus with a spur to Enka High School and nearby public use areas.



**Influences:** The planned corridor connects urbanized areas of unincorporated Buncombe County to existing greenways in West Asheville and the Wilma Dykman RiverWay. A new development is proposed with the old BASF plant site near AB Tech, which will construct a segment of greenway through the property. Communities and influences along the route include:

- West Asheville
- AB Tech Enka Campus
- Enka-Candler Library
- I-40 / Sand Hill Road
- Enka High School
- National Forest
- Enka, Candler & Biltmore Lake
- Buncombe County Sports Park
- Sand Hill-Venable Elem. School
- Asheville School
- Hominy Valley Elementary School

Beyond the terminus of the mainline at AB Tech, a long-range greenway corridor is identified paralleling Hominy Creek to the Haywood County line.



**Typology:** Greenway design should be consistent throughout much of this corridor in off-street segments, with a 10-foot asphalt greenway. On-street section or stream crossings will require Complete Streets applications. The spur to Enka High School could be considered as a natural surface 10-foot trail.

### Likely Users



**The User Experience:** The proposed corridor connects heavily utilized sections of existing greenways in West Asheville and has the potential to be a commuter corridor to and from this area and for AB Tech students. The Hominy Valley area is popular for long-distance recreational cyclists who start their trips in the Enka community or West Asheville.

### Potential Partners:

- City of Asheville
- AB Tech
- RiverLink
- NCDOT
- MSD & Utilities
- Buncombe County Schools

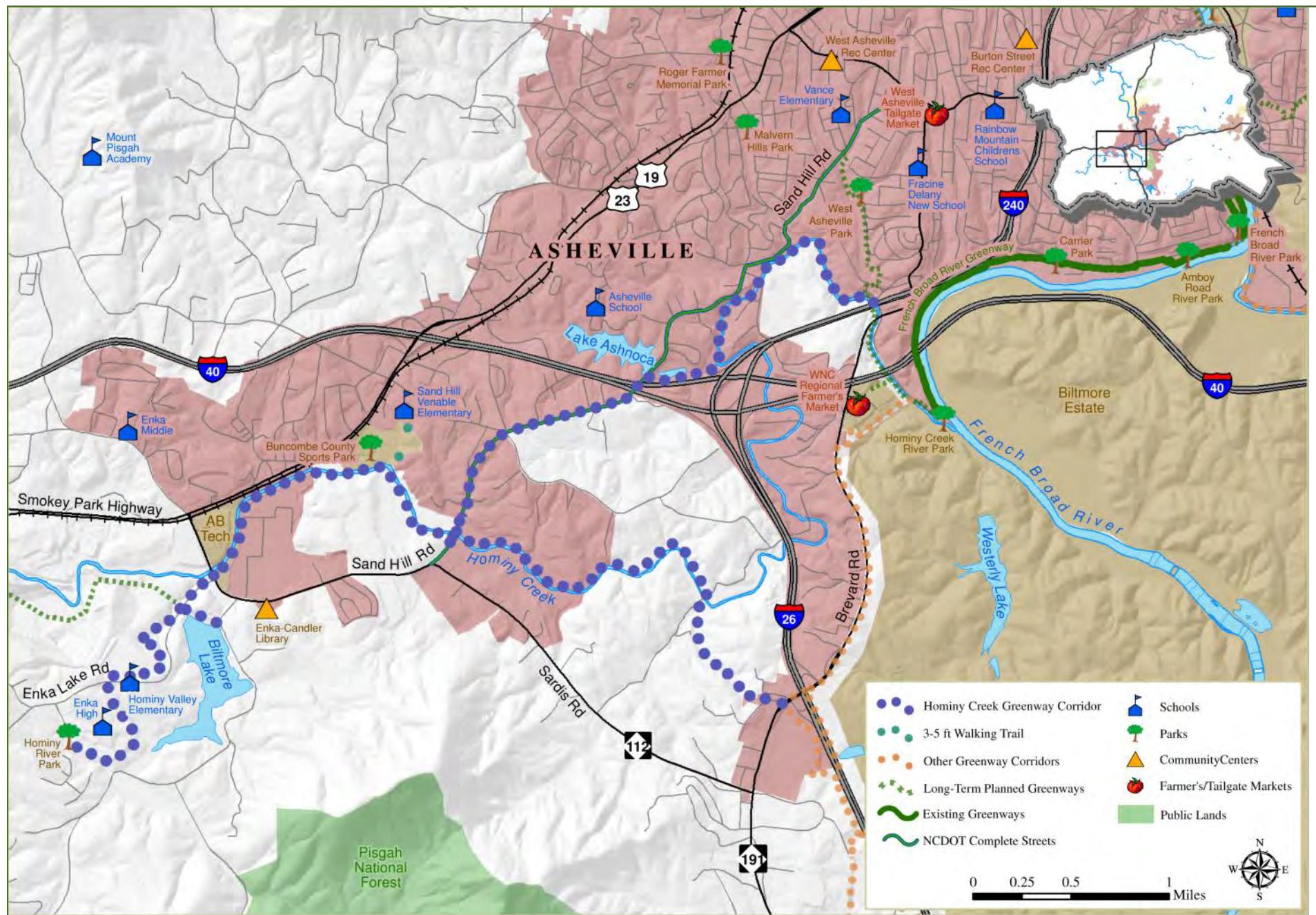


*Interstate crossings (left) and filling gaps in Complete Street applications (right) will help make connections to off-street trail near Enka .*

### Major Challenges

The constraints of built out areas, I-40, I-26/I-240 and topography presents limited options for this corridor. The meandering nature of Hominy Creek also requires considerable evaluation as to the best placement of the greenway. The value of the connections it provides however should not be underestimated when considering how these constraints need to be addressed when design commences.

# Hominy Creek Greenway Corridor



## Lake Julian Greenway

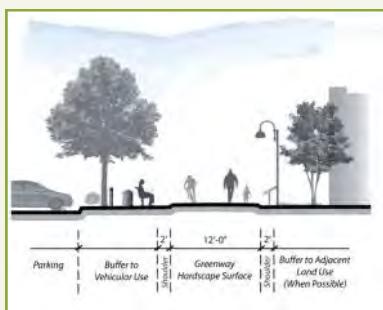
Planned greenways linking Mills Gap Road to Bent Creek provide exceptional opportunities for connectivity, tourism, retail support, and the 6-mile French Broad River corridor in this area. Biltmore Park and Lake Julian are primary destinations with linkages planned to the Bent Creek Greenway and long-term trails along Cane Creek.



**Influences:** West of the French Broad River, the trail follows the alignment of river and roadways. Long Shoals Road will require upgrades for Complete Streets features. A powerline easement east of Lake Julian provides the primary route linking Royal Pines. Influences include:

- NC Arboretum & Bent Creek
- Lake Julian
- Small parks throughout the study area
- Several schools
- Biltmore Park Town Square
- Arden Community
- Royal Pine Community

Biltmore Park can be easily accessed via existing sidewalks located along Long Shoals or the construction of an off-road trail near the road. Utilization of the newly improved I-26 interchange has been identified as an alternate route. In both cases, sidewalk connectivity via the newly constructed bridge can be used to span the French Broad River. RiverLink also holds conservations easements in the area.



**Typology:** The route will likely have high usage connecting development to recreational areas and the National Forest. A combination of 10' hardened surface in addition to a section of Complete Street improvements along Long Shoals Road is likely. From Lake Julian to Mills Gap Road the typology may range from improved neighborhood streets to 4' wide trail systems along the powerline corridor through Rosscraggon Park.

### Likely Users



**The User Experience:** The proposed route bisects a variety of development types and there are several properties along the west side of the river that could be poised for development. Users will have to navigate a corridor where the character and design changes in order to make necessary connections and provide access to schools, shopping areas and natural features. The powerline easement will also be a factor in the user experience.

### Potential Partners:

- City of Asheville
- NC Arboretum
- NCDOT
- RiverLink
- MSD, Utilities & Railroad
- Homeowners Associations
- Major Property Owners

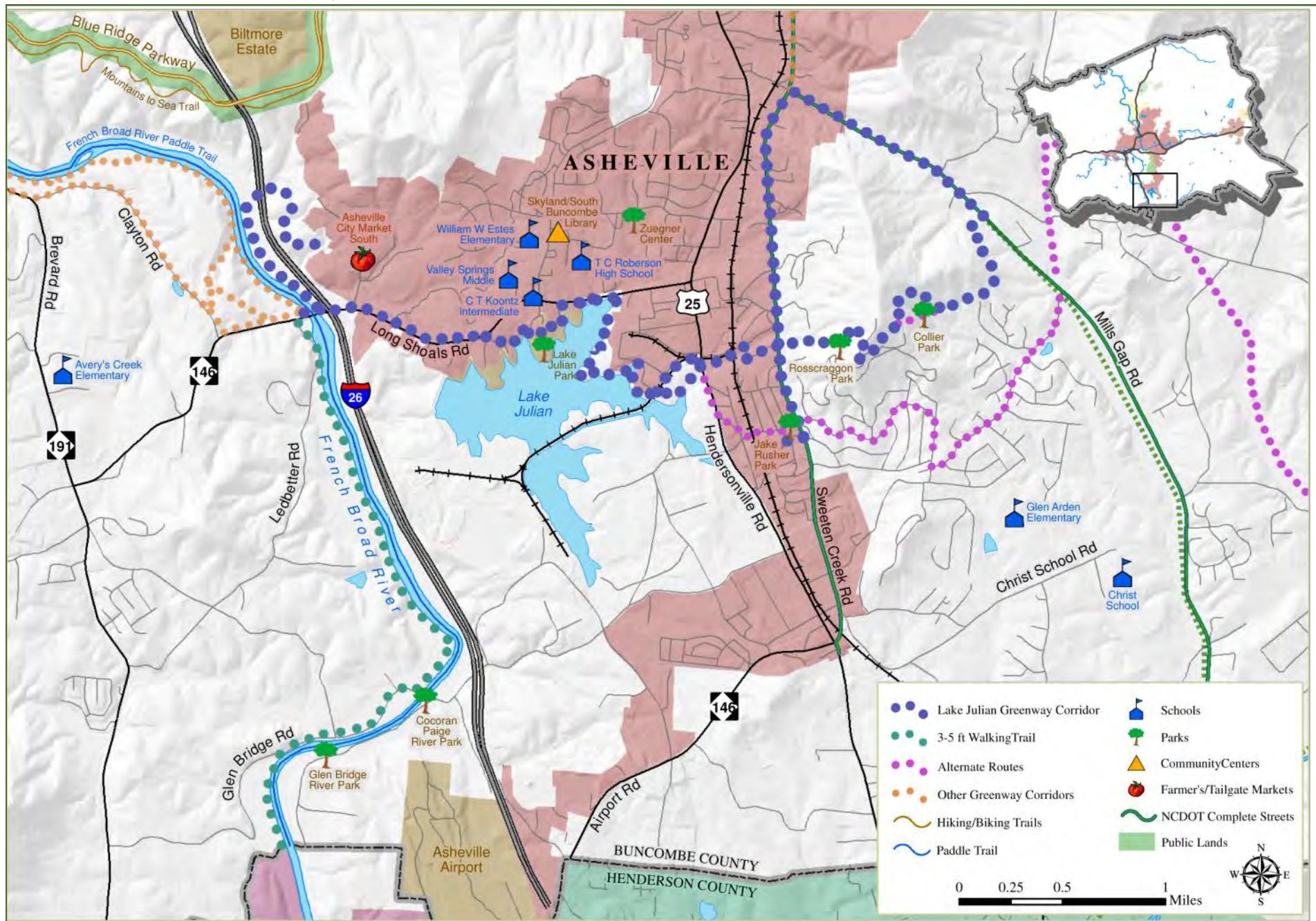


*The Royal Pines area (left) has shown interest in greenways; proximity of the corridor the French Broad River (right) is a notable constraint.*

### Major Challenges

It is preferred that the floodplain be utilized to connect to the Bent Creek Recreational Area. Multiple private properties will need to be traversed if this route is followed, however, large tracts, specifically Biltmore Baptist Church, Biltmore Farms, Asheville Firefighters Association, and the UNCA property could be linked together to create this opportunity. Topographic challenges exist from areas between Hwy 191 and the French Broad River. Topographic challenges also exist along the powerline corridor east of Lake Julian.

# Lake Julian Greenway Corridor



## Reems Creek / Weaverville Greenway

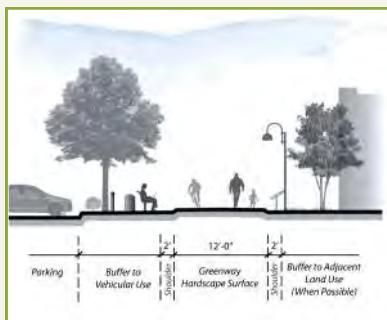
The proposed greenway would connect the French Broad River to Weaverville and points east toward the Vance Birthplace & Beech Community with a southern spur along Merrimon Ave. to Woodfin and North Asheville. The 6.5-mile main corridor has 3 distinct sections: French Broad River to Weaverville; Weaverville to Beech Community; & Weaverville to Woodfin/North Asheville.



**Influences:** The planned greenway will connect to the planned French Broad River / Highway 251 Greenway and bisect the Town of Weaverville with a connection to Lake Louise and the Nature Park. Users following the French Broad River would be able to link the Wilma Dykeman RiverWay in Asheville to reach Weaverville. Other influences and communities along the route include:

- Reems Creek Valley
- Vance Birthplace
- Karpen Soccer Fields
- Woodfin & North Asheville
- Downtown Weaverville & Parks
- Several schools

Beyond the focus of this corridor are connections to Ox Creek and the Blue Ridge Parkway further east, which are used by recreational bicyclists. The Town of Weaverville owns property adjacent to the proposed trail within town limits that would be suitable for a joint-use maintenance shed.



**Typology:** Within the city limits of Weaverville, a 12-foot paved section is preferred where constraints are not as prevalent. In the Reems Creek valley there may be sections that necessitate a narrower walking path with signage directing bicyclists to nearby street routes. A Complete Streets section is preferred for the Merrimon Avenue link to Woodfin and North Asheville.

### Likely Users



**The User Experience:** The proposed route will connect Weaverville to the French Broad River and build upon downtown Weaverville as a destination. On-road bicycle connections from Highway 251 to Weaverville are limited and this route would provide an alternative to busy roads. The connections to the downtown Nature Park in Weaverville and the Vance Birthplace have the potential to drive tourism use.

### Potential Partners:

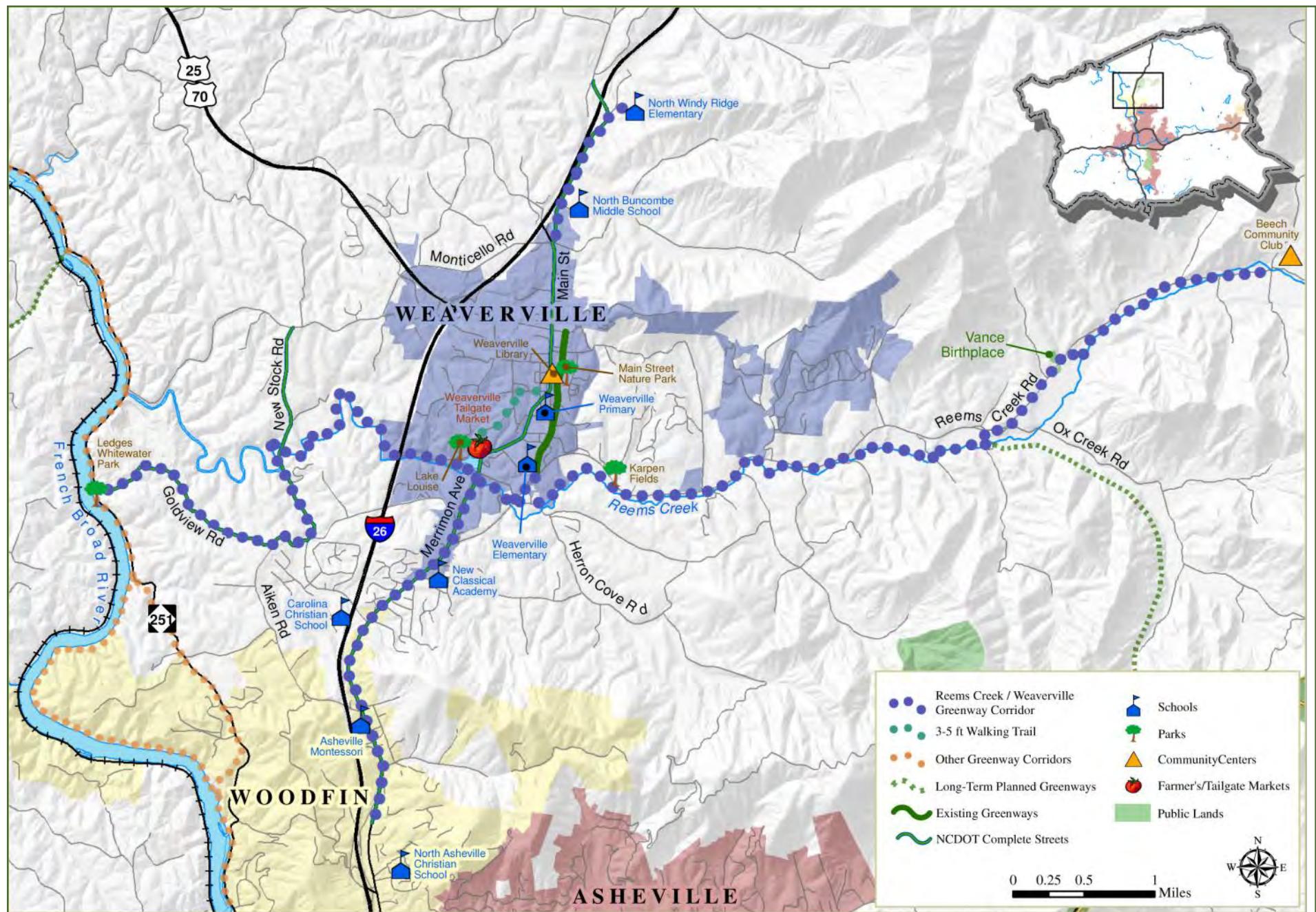
- Municipalities
- NCDOT
- Buncombe County Schools
- MSD & Utilities
- Business Association



Merrimon Avenue (left) and an I-26 underpass (right) present contextual challenges for greenway and Complete Streets implementation.

**Major Challenges.** Topographic challenges exist as the Reems Creek gradient increases and becomes constrained significantly as the corridor drains to the French Broad beyond the Pinebrook Farms Neighborhood. Connectivity to Asheville will be challenging due to commercial development constraints and heavy vehicular traffic. The use of the sewer right-of-way which either parallels or runs within the roadway for a majority of the length can be explored. Established land uses with large tracts are present throughout the Reems Creek Valley which will need to be traversed. Hydrology should be noted as a consideration as considerable crossings and wetlands may be encountered along this corridor.

## Reems Creek / Weaverville Greenway Corridor



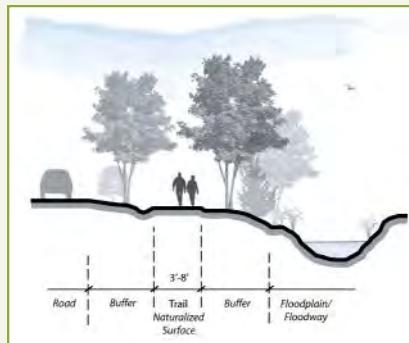
## Reynolds Greenway

Azalea Park has become a hub for Asheville and County Greenway planning efforts. This proposed corridor leads south from Azalea Park with primary destination being the Blue Ridge Parkway and AC Reynolds Schools. The 6-mile route would link to long-term greenways planned for connections to Fairview, Cane Creek and Henderson County.

**Influences:** Connectivity from Azalea Park, the planned termini of the Wilma Dykeman RiverWay and the US 70/Swannanoa River Greenway, to points south of Asheville is an opportunity to introduce users to National Forest and Asheville City Park. Key destination and communities along the route include:

- Asheville, & Oakley Neighborhood
- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Azalea Road Connection / Azalea Park
- AC Reynolds School Complex
- Fairview Community
- Mountains-to-Sea Trail

Next step planning efforts should explore creating a node within the Fairview community that radiates from the Cane Creek intersection with US 74A. Future connectivity includes linking Fairview and Reynolds as well as a potential connection into Henderson County and south. The area has cultural significance and has been identified as a destination for agri-tourism. Cane Creek valley has tremendous opportunity for users to experience rural, long range view settings.



**Typology:** To minimize disturbance with the Mountains-to-Sea-Trail, a 5-8' foot trail / foot path would allow for access from Azalea Park to the Blue Ridge Parkway. Connections through Parkway property to AC Reynolds Campus would be paved and sections south of the school may be constructed of natural surfaces.



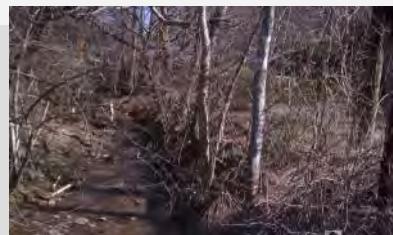
### Likely Users



**The User Experience:** There is strong demand for bicycling connections from East Asheville and the Oakley Community to the Blue Ridge Parkway as the transition of I-240 to US 74A presents numerous challenges. This proposed route would allow bicyclists to connect from the Azalea Park area to the Parkway along local streets and pathways. Individuals wishing to hike the Mountains to Sea trail can also begin their journey at Azalea Park.

### Potential Partners:

- City of Asheville
- Blue Ridge Parkway
- RiverLink
- NCDOT
- Buncombe County Schools
- Mountains-to-Sea Trail

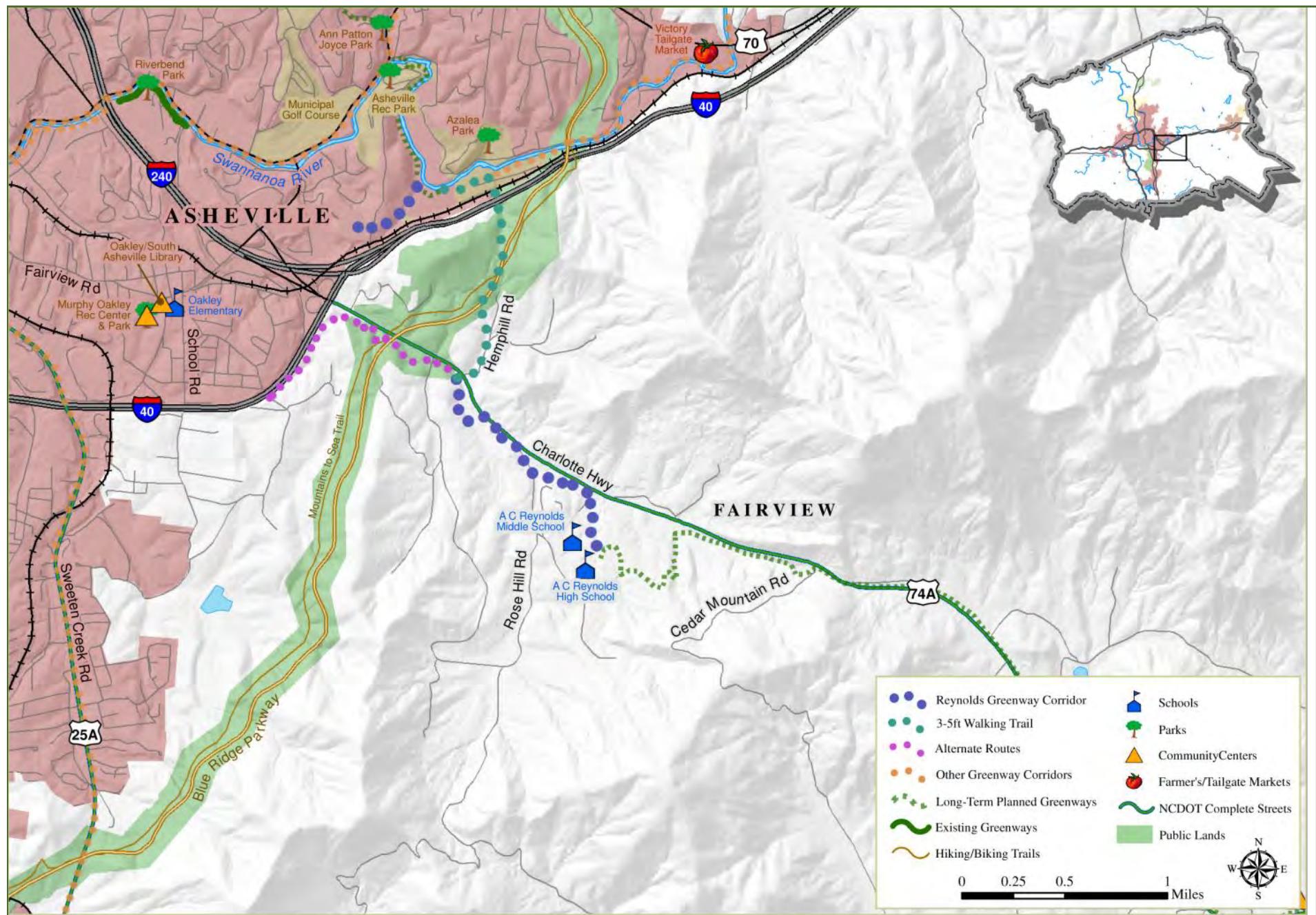


*The Fairview greenway corridors would meander through commercial areas along US 74A (left) and natural areas (right) near the highway.*

### Major Challenges

Crossing I-40 to connect the Parkway to Azalea Park will require exploration of alternatives, whether using local street connection, culverts or an overpass to make the connection. Constrained sections between commercial development, hydrology, and topography from the Blue Ridge Parkway to AC Reynolds High School will also influence the corridor design. Coordination is required with the Parkway regarding acceptable access onto National Park Service land to ensure proposed access is in line with recent planning efforts.

## Reynolds Greenway Corridor



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