

Two towns seek greenway grants

Statesville, Troutman apply for similar \$150,000 grants from Carolina Thread Trail.

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By David Vieser

Officials from both Statesville and Troutman are seeking private grants that would help pay to extend their greenways.

The money is made available by the Carolina Thread Trail, a regional network of greenways and trails that organizers say will eventually reach 15 counties and 2.3 million citizens.

The funding the two municipalities are seeking would come from the Trail's annual implementation grants, which offer up to \$150,000 per project. No local match is required for the grants, which are funded by private donations.

Statesville

City officials are seeking \$150,000 to complete construction design drawings for an extension of Statesville's 2.2-mile greenway from Free Nancy Avenue to Museum Road.

"This section includes the U.S. 21 underpass at Chili's," Parks Director Brent Cornelison said. "Once the design work is completed, we can begin to plan for future funding options." When completed, the new section will give the city about five miles of continuous greenway.

The greenway trail now runs from Free Nancy Lane past the Statesville Fitness and Activity Center and Statesville Soccer Park to East Broad Street. Last year, a \$550,000 grant from the N.C. Department of Transportation paid to pave the 2.2-mile section.

In a separate request, Iredell County also is seeking money to complete corridor design for a segment that would connect Statesville's greenway to Fort Dobbs State Historic Site.

Troutman

Town officials are seeking \$150,000 to extend the 0.9-mile Richardson Greenway almost a mile from its current terminus at Main Street and Old Murdock Road northward to Grannis Lane at the Barium Springs Complex.

"This would just about double the length of our greenway," Town Planner Erika Martin said at the Jan. 24 meeting of the town's Park Committee. The extension also would connect the north end of the greenway to a quarter-mile-long asphalt trail on campus of the Barium Springs Home for Children, she said. That would open access to an extensive trail network on the campus, including a safe passage under Main Street/U.S. 21.

The trail would follow the route through Troutman adopted by the town board. The greenway is 15 years old and runs from the business district to the Food Lion shopping area. It is a concrete ribbon surrounded by grass, built on the former Statesville-to-Charlotte Norfolk Southern rail line right-of-way.

The Carolina Thread Trail is a two-state initiative to create a regional network of trails, paddling routes and conservation corridors. The Catawba Lands Conservancy is the lead agency.

Next week officials from the Carolina Thread Trail are expected to decide which applicants qualify for the grants. Final awards are expected to be announced in September.

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