

## **Greenways – continued**

This planning process occurs only every few years. We have high hopes that with support by GreenPlay, LLC, a nationally prominent open space planning firm, it will yield a strong and compelling vision for the future of our community's greenways and open space. The greenway system our community needs and deserves will only become a reality, however, if we come together and find ways to support the effort!

With hopes that it will spur action, today the Asheville Greenway Commission announces a position statement as its input to the planning process. A detailed version of that statement is attached. In summary, the Commission stance is as follows:

Greenways are vital in the community interest because they mean better health, improved quality of life, valuable economic development results, opportunities for neighborhood connectivity, and as a means alternative transportation.

Greenways are important to the environment and for land conservation.

Asheville is behind schedule in greenways implementation given the community's earlier goals and as compared to similar cities.

The City should establish a goal of developing fifteen miles of greenways within five years, and thirty miles within ten years.

The City should establish long-term reliable funding source for greenways development, and should ensure optimum funding from public and private partners, all sufficient to meet the targeted development goals.

The City should integrate advancement in sidewalks and bicycle lanes as part of its planning and development of greenways.

The master planning process currently underway should embrace the above goals and should define steps necessary to achieve them.

What you can do:

- 1) Read, study, and share the attached Position Statement by the Asheville Greenway Commission. It provides a carefully considered and detailed approach as to how our greenways effort might progress.
- 2) Offer your own valuable comments to the planning process, and consider supporting the Greenway Commission position. Attend one of the meetings or alternatively provide your written comments into the process via email to [divester@ashevillenc.gov](mailto:divester@ashevillenc.gov)
- 3) Make sure your elected City Council members know of your interest.
- 4) Look for opportunities for you or your organizations to support provide leadership in the effort.

We think 2008 can and should be a watershed year for advancing the Greenways system. We look for strong leadership from the Asheville City Council this year, and we hope for

critically needed support from both public and private sector partners. Please find ways to join in! Sent in by Paula Robbins.