

COMMUNITY SURVEY

A community survey was conducted for the Reed Creek Greenway Feasibility Study between August 21 and October 1, 2023, via Publicinput.com. The survey had 1,072 participants and received 1,948 comments.

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 three sections: project-specific questions, interactive mapping questions, and optional demographic questions. Public feedback is summarized below by question. Overall, the comments collected were generally positive and provided critical insight into community preferences influencing the development of the project.

Key takeaways from the community survey include the following:

- ♦ Most survey respondents (91% and 80%, respectively) responded that they currently use greenways for health and exercise or recreation purposes.
- ♦ Many survey respondents use trails and greenways on a weekly basis (47%) and plan to use the proposed segments of the Reed Creek Greenway a few times a week (45%) once the greenway is completed.
- ♦ Most survey respondents use greenways for walking (87%) and bicycling (66%).
- ♦ Respondents prefer a route that provides connections between existing greenways and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, safe crossings of major roadways such as Broadway St, Montford Ave, and US-70, and access to parks, recreational areas, and the Botanical Garden.
- ♦ Many respondents (45%) currently commute to work and/or school by car, and 22 percent work from home, but a sizable number also commute by bicycle (15%) or by foot (13%).
- ♦ Survey respondents would prefer to commute by bicycle (64%), walking (48%), and by working from home (26%) in the future.

Survey respondents enjoy using the Reed Creek Greenway for a variety of uses and would like to see it expanded to connect to other greenways and destinations. However, survey respondents also have concerns about impacts to neighborhoods and personal safety around high-speed roadways and the local unhoused population.

Key quotes:

"Let's make Asheville safe for pedestrians and bikers!"

"This would be an incredible addition to the greenway system. Anything that increases the length of our greenways and provides access to more areas of the city is a huge win."

"Broadway street is noisy and high speed. I don't feel safe biking on it in today's conditions."

How do you currently use greenways in Asheville?

Select all that apply.

Most survey respondents stated that they currently use greenways in Asheville for health and exercise (91%) and recreational (80%) purposes. An additional 29 percent use greenways to run errands and reach essential services, and 19 percent use greenways to commute to work or school. Fewer than five percent use greenways to travel to and from transit stops (4%), for other purposes (4%), or do not use greenways at all (1%).



91%



Use greenways for health and exercise



80%



Use greenways for recreation



29%



Use greenways to run errands and/or reach essential services



19%



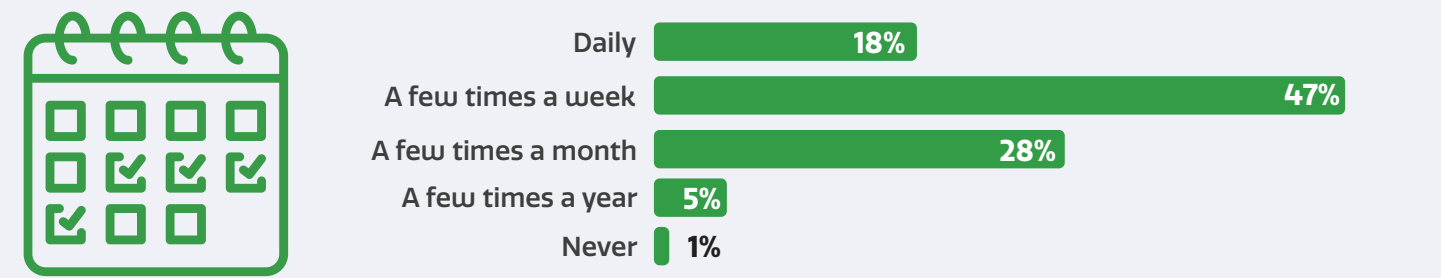
Use greenways to commute to work and/or school

Select Comments:

- ♦ "To access additional business districts safely without via foot or bike"
- ♦ "Doggos!"
- ♦ "For fun!"
- ♦ "As a means to get to various places"
- ♦ "I would use them [greenways] regularly for exercise and commuting, but there's not enough yet to do that."
- ♦ "To travel downtown and avoid parking fees."
- ♦ "Visit friends"
- ♦ "Dogwalking"
- ♦ "Stopped using due to vagrants and needles everywhere"

How frequently do you use greenways in Asheville?

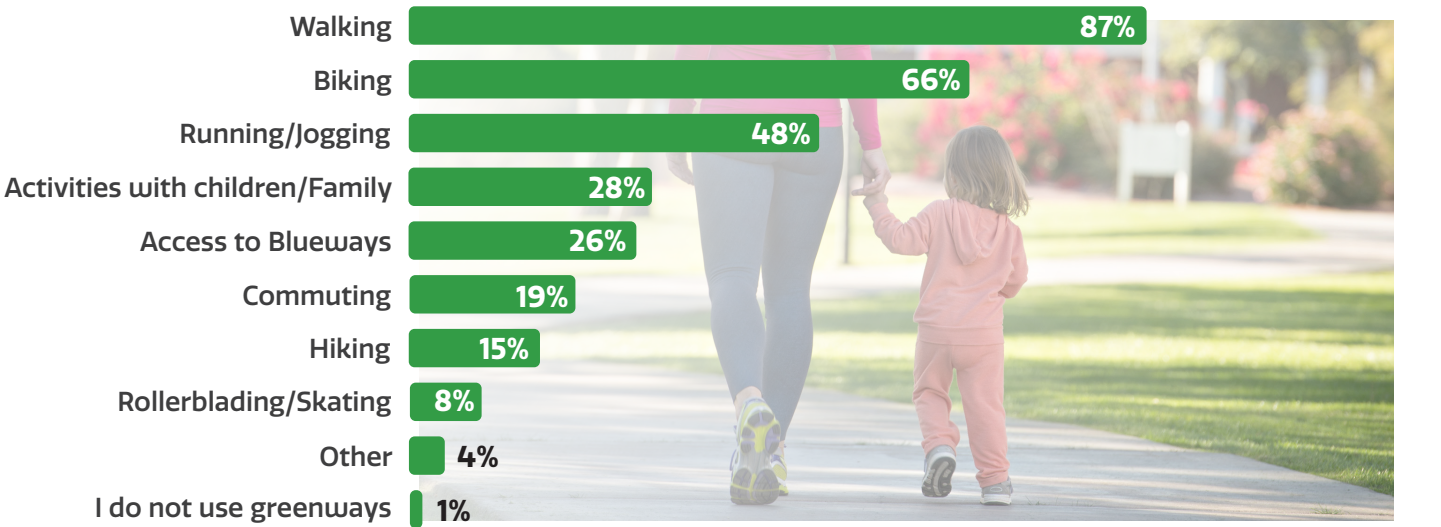
Survey respondents are active on Asheville greenways, with 47 percent using greenways a few times a week, 28 percent using greenways a few times a month, and 18 percent using greenways daily. Only five percent (5%) responded that they use greenways a few times a year, while one percent (1%) of survey respondents stated that they never use greenways.



What activities do you participate in along greenways in Asheville?

Select all that apply.

Walking (87%) and biking (66%) are the most popular activities for survey respondents while using greenways in Asheville. Other popular activities among survey respondents include running or jogging (48%), activities with children and family (28%), and access to blueways (26%). An additional 19 percent of respondents stated that they use Asheville greenways for commuting, and 15 percent use greenways for hiking. Eight percent (8%) of respondents use greenways for rollerblading or skating, while only one percent (1%) do not use greenways.



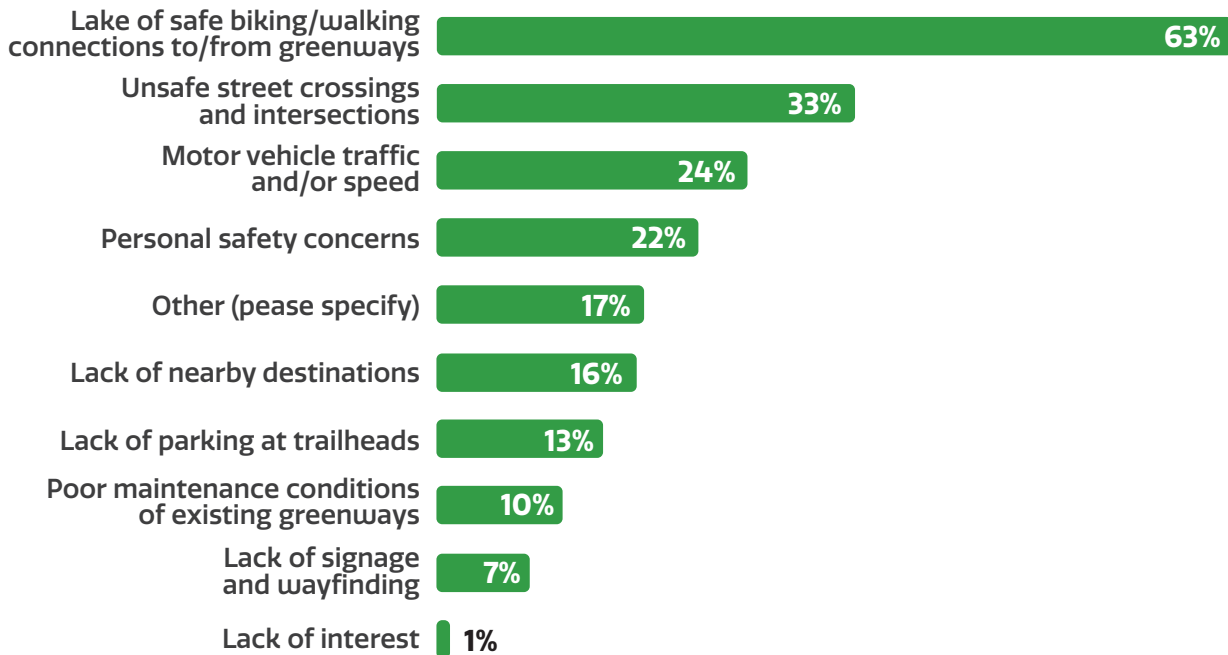
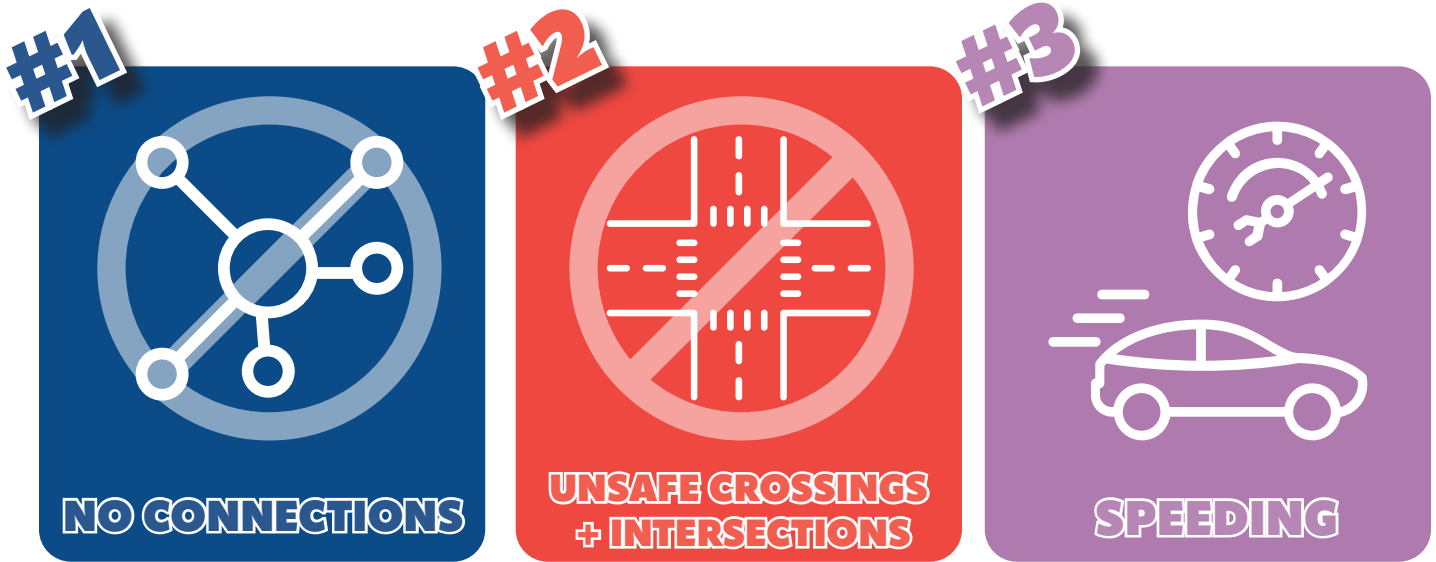
Select Comments:

- ♦ "Access to parks" (2)
- ♦ "Meditate outside"
- ♦ "Walking to grocery/errands. Commuting to restaurants, stores where possible"
- ♦ "Wheelchair"
- ♦ "Walking/training my dog" (7)
- ♦ "Stopped using greenways here"
- ♦ "Stopped using due to needles everywhere that would puncture my dog's feet"

What factors discourage you from using greenways in Asheville?

Select all that apply.

A lack of safe biking and walking connections to and from existing greenways was selected by 63 percent of survey respondents as a factor discouraging them from using greenways in Asheville, while concerns over roadway safety prompted survey respondents to select unsafe street crossings and intersections (33%) and motor vehicle traffic and/or speed (24%). Other key discouraging factors include personal safety concerns (22%), other (17%), lack of nearby destinations (16%), and a lack of parking at trailheads (13%). Only one percent (1%) indicated a lack of interest in using greenways.

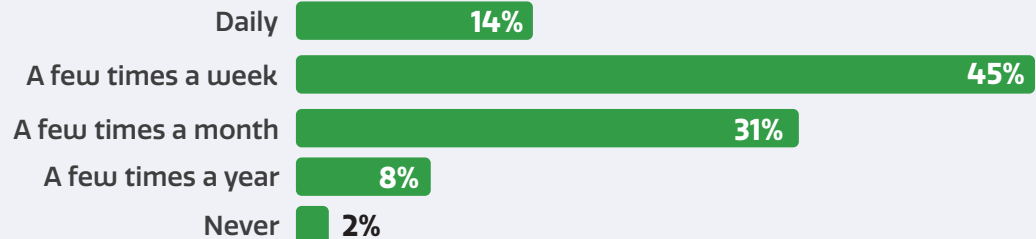


Select Comments:

- ♦ "Crowding during peak hours that isn't an issue at Biltmore Estate/NC Arboretum."
- ♦ "Disconnection"
- ♦ "Homeless encampments"
- ♦ "Motorized vehicles on the greenway traveling at fast speeds"
- ♦ "No pressing concerns."
- ♦ "I don't live near them, so it is a special trip."

How frequently would you use the proposed segments of the Reed Creek Greenway once they are constructed?

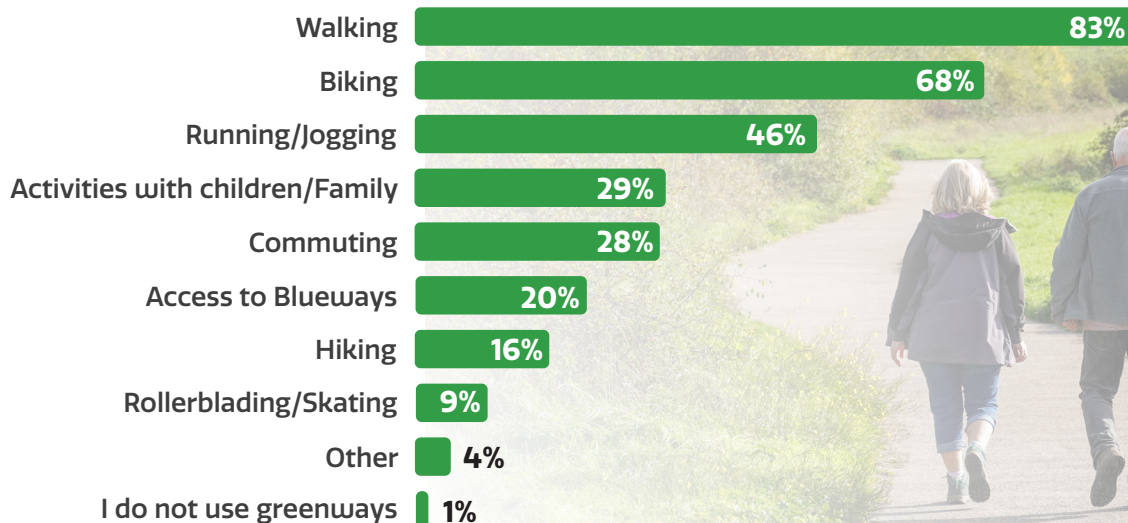
Approximately half (45%) of survey respondents indicated they would use the proposed segments of the Reed Creek Greenway a few times a week, and another 31 percent indicated they would use it a few times a month. The remaining survey respondents indicated they would use the greenway daily (14%), a few times a year (8%), or never (2%).



What activities would you participate in along the proposed segments of the Reed Creek Greenway once they are constructed?

Select all that apply.

The primary activities respondents plan to participate in along the proposed segments of the Reed Creek Greenway are walking (83%) and biking (68%). Approximately half (46%) of respondents plan to use the greenway for running or jogging, while others plan to use it for activities with children and family (29%), commuting (28%), access to blueways (20%), or hiking (16%). Nine percent (9%) of respondents plan to use the proposed greenway segments for rollerblading or skating, and one percent (1%) do not plan to use the proposed greenway segments.



Select Comments:

- ♦ "Access to parks" (2)
- ♦ "Shopping (if N connector to Broadway is done)"
- ♦ "Dog walking" (4)
- ♦ "To get to a fun location (i.e., restaurant/bar/coffee shop that might be along route)"

- ♦ "Learning about flora"
- ♦ "Run errands"
- ♦ "Wheelchair"
- ♦ "Going to the doctor and stores"

Rank the following routing preferences for the proposed segments of the Reed Creek Greenway?

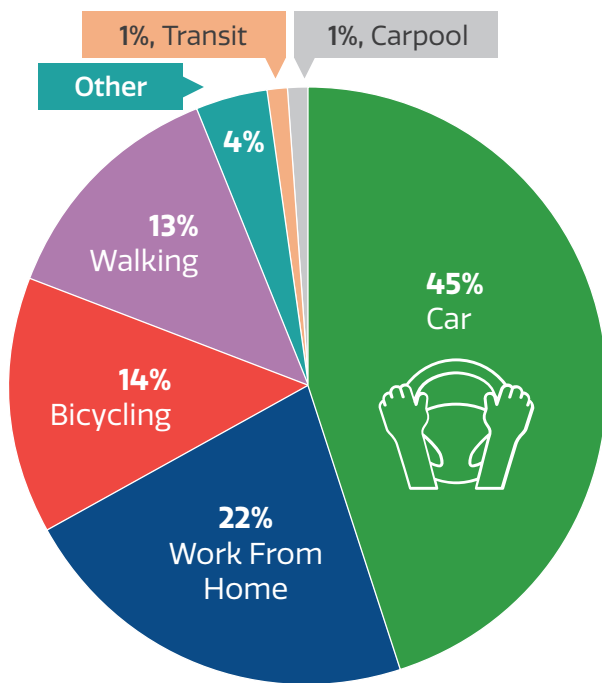
Rank responses from one (1) being most important to ten (10) being least important.

Survey respondents prioritize a route that provides access between existing greenways and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, followed by a route that provides safe crossings of major roadways and a route that provides access to parks, recreational areas, and the Botanical Garden. A route that provides access to neighborhoods and residential areas ranked fourth in the survey, while a route that provides access to Reed Creek ranked fifth. Survey respondents prioritized connectivity and safety over a route that is more direct (ranked 8th) or cost-effective (ranked least important).

- #1** Provide connections between existing greenways and bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- #2** Provide safe crossings of major roadways such as Broadway St, Montford Ave, US-70
- #3** Provide access to parks, recreational areas, and the Botanical Garden
- #4** Provide access to neighborhoods/residential areas along the corridor
- #5** Route along or provide access to Reed Creek
- #6** Provide access to commercial areas along the corridor
- #7** Provide connections to schools along the corridor
- #8** Most direct route
- #9** Adjacent to roadways along the corridor
- #10** Most cost-effective route

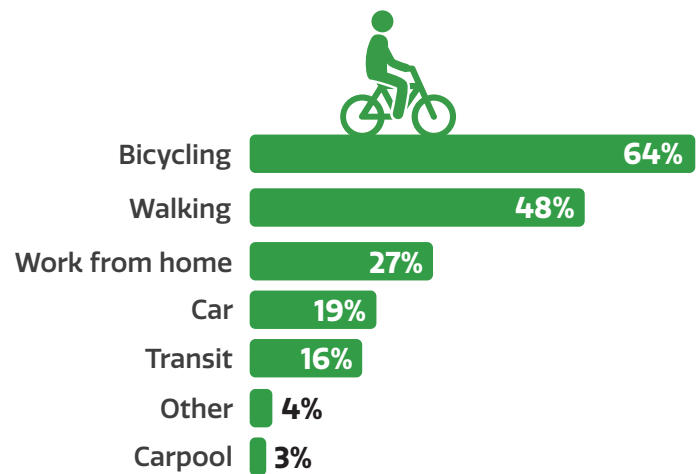
What is your primary mode of transportation for commuting to work and/or school?

Presently, approximately half (45%) of survey respondents commute by car, and another 22 percent of respondents work from home. Many respondents commute by active transportation modes, with 14 percent commuting by bike and 13 percent walk. The remaining four percent (4%) of respondents commute by other modes, in addition to using transit (1%) and carpooling (1%).



Now consider your desired commute in the future. Which modes would you like to use? *Select all that apply.*

In the future, most survey respondents (64%) would like to commute by bicycling, and 48 percent would like to commute by walking. Fewer respondents would like to work from home (27%), commute by car (19%), or commute by transit (16%). Four percent (4%) of respondents selected another mode, and three percent (3%) would like to carpool.



Select Comments:

- ♦ "Motorcycle"
- ♦ "Don't work or go to school" (2)
- ♦ "Work from home"
- ♦ "Stay at home mom"
- ♦ "Wheelchair"
- ♦ "Retired so do not commute" (14)

Select Comments:

- ♦ "Stay at home mom"
- ♦ "Retired so do not commute. Do walk to Drs. offices, grocery shopping"
- ♦ "Roller blading"
- ♦ "Don't commute"
- ♦ "Motorcycle"

What do you think would increase greenway usage or bring new users to the Reed Creek Greenway?

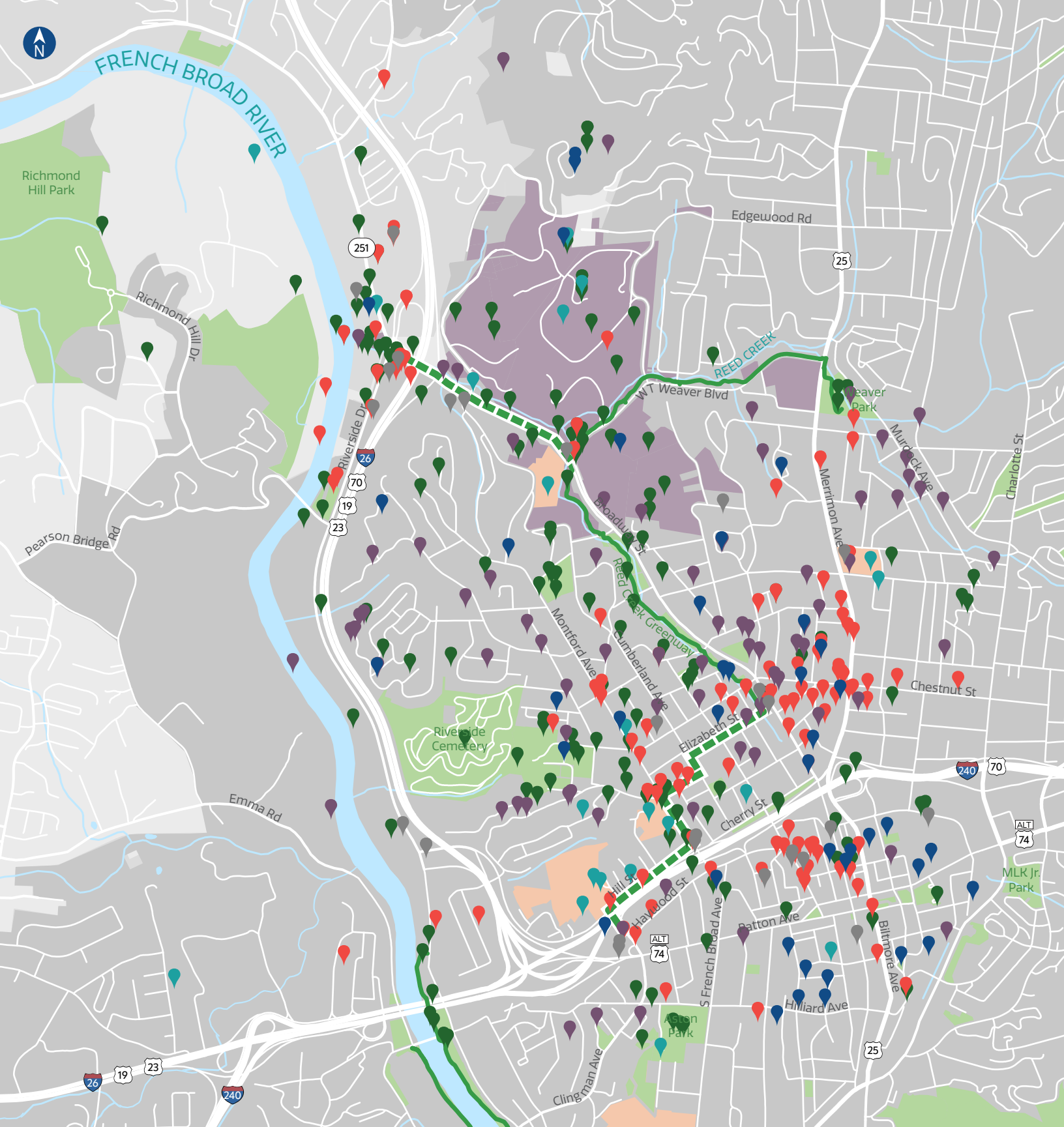
"Free, biking classes and free helmets, biking clubs, and information in schools maybe during gym, starting kids, young with biking in safe areas, making sure crossings are safe and the routes are safe so families feel comfortable."

"More destinations along the route, more bike racks, more signage advertising that it exists."

"Native plants, lighting, art from local artists..."

"Increased safety along greenways. The needles, trash, and encampments along existing greenways are pretty uninviting."

"Connect greenways! Take some lessons from the Swamp Rabbit Trail. I know people that drive all the way down to Travelers Rest just to run, bike, and rollerblade on that trail and then enjoy downtown Greenville. We can't do that in Asheville."



CITY OF ASHEVILLE

REED CREEK GREENWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY

Community Survey: Desired Greenway Destinations

0 0.5 1 Mile

LEGEND

- Preliminary Study Corridor
- Existing Greenway
- Recreation Destination
- Residential Destination
- School Destination
- Shopping Destination
- Work Destination
- Other Destination
- Railroad
- Roadway
- School
- UNC-Asheville
- Park/Conserved Land
- Water
- Asheville City Limits
- Woodfin Town Limits
- Buncombe County

List destinations that you would like to access via the proposed segments of the Reed Creek Greenway.

Survey respondents would like to use the proposed segments of the Reed Creek Greenway to access recreational destinations including the following:

- ♦ Existing segments of the Reed Creek Greenway
- ♦ Wilma Dykeman Greenway in the River Arts District
- ♦ Planned greenways near I-26 and Riverside Dr
- ♦ Montford Park
- ♦ Aston Park

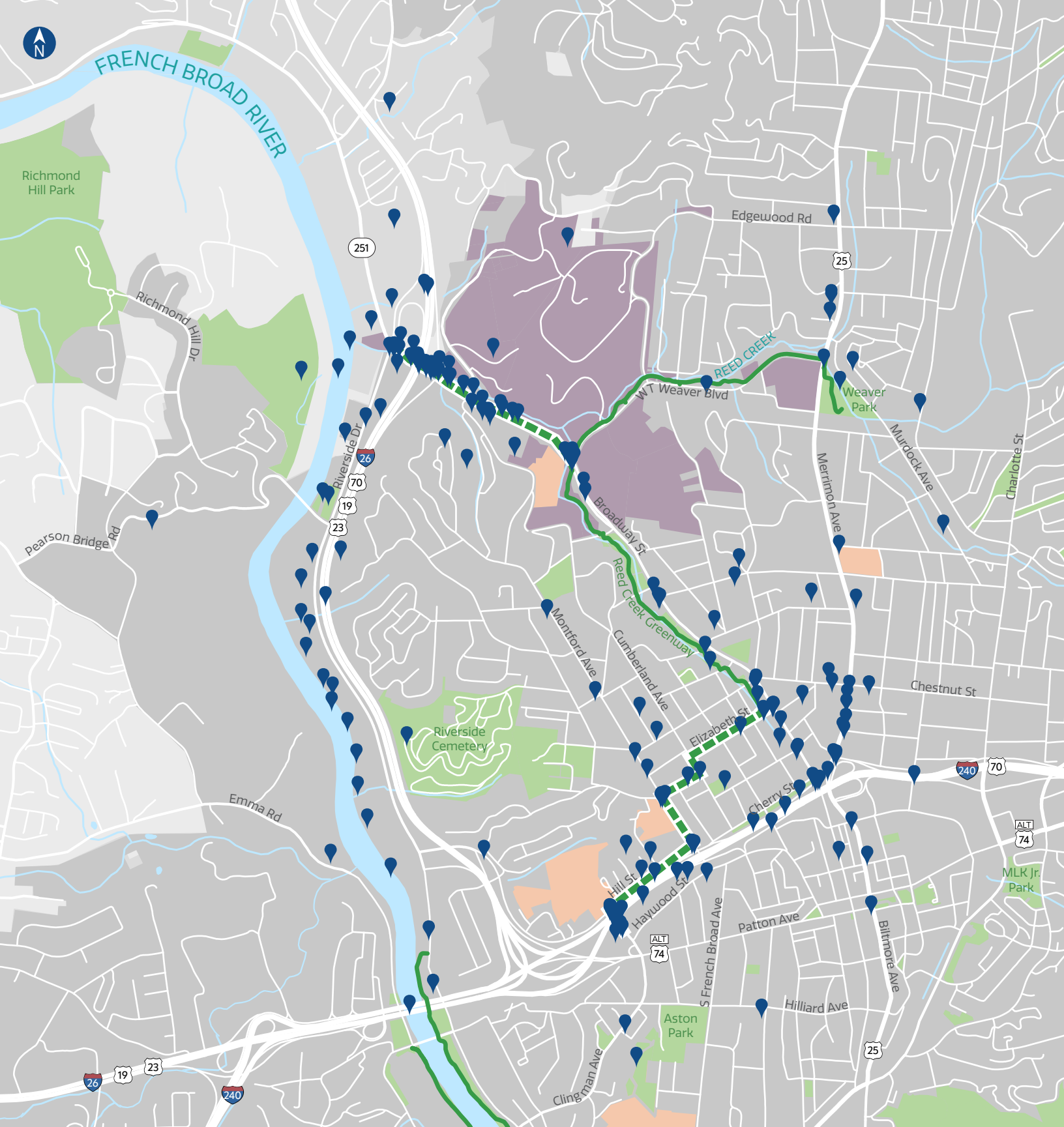
Work destinations are clustered in the south and east sides of Downtown, and school destinations are identified at Isaac Dickson Elementary School, Claxton Elementary School, and UNC-Asheville. Respondents identified residential destinations across the Montford, Five Points, and Murdock-Linden neighborhoods. Desired shopping destinations were marked in Downtown Asheville, Five Points, along the French Broad River, and along Montford Ave. Other destinations marked include churches, restaurants, and a barbershop.

Select Comments:

- ♦ "I live within a few minutes of the Weaver Blvd greenway and use it daily, along with its extension across to Reed Creek greenway"
- ♦ "Need access across Broadway Street"
- ♦ "It would be great to have access to existing businesses like High 5 and Whole Foods"
- ♦ "I walk the botanical gardens several times a month"



Terminus of Reed Creek Greenway at Elizabeth St



CITY OF ASHEVILLE

REED CREEK GREENWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY

Community Survey: Desired Infrastructure Improvements

0 0.5 1 Mile

LEGEND

- Preliminary Study Corridor
- Existing Greenway
- 📍 Desired Infrastructure Improvement Location
- Railroad
- Roadway
- 🏫 School
- 🏰 UNC-Asheville
- 🌳 Park/Conserved Land
- 💧 Water
- 🏙 Asheville City Limits
- 🏘 Woodfin Town Limits
- 🌄 Buncombe County

List areas (streets, intersections, neighborhoods, etc.) that need the most pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements along the proposed segments of the Reed Creek Greenway.

Survey respondents identified many locations along the project corridor in need of bicycle and pedestrian improvements, with a significant cluster of comments identifying the segment of Broadway St between WT Weaver Blvd and I-26. Merrimon Ave and Broadway St in the Five Points neighborhood received many comments citing a need for bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and comments were also clustered around the pedestrian bridge across I-240 between Clingman Ave and Hill St. Additionally, many comments were placed along Riverside Dr and the French Broad River citing the need to continue the French Broad River Greenway north toward UNC-Asheville and Woodfin.

Select Comments:

- ♦ "Need a sidewalk that connects to the River Arts District greenways"
- ♦ "Build the connection to the River."
- ♦ "The Riverside Dr. / Broadway intersection is dangerous on a bicycle, especially coming south on Riverside and crossing to Broadway. Drivers continuing south on Riverside often cut off cyclists."
- ♦ "Need a crosswalk to get across Broadway to the Greenway."
- ♦ "The new right turn only lane from Merrimon onto Weaver is dangerous – if you're crossing from Luella's/weaver park to the greenway along Weaver, the drivers in the right only lane do not stop at red lights, and walkers cannot see around the cars in the go straight lane."
- ♦ "Northern segment should be on the west side of Broadway because it avoids the unsafe intersection with I-26 which is on the east side of Broadway."



Broadway St along westside of Reed Creek at WT Weaver Blvd