**Greenway Facts**

**Greenways offer multiple benefits to communities:**

* Provide access to open space
* Link residential and commercial areas for bikers and pedestrians
* Reduce local vehicular traffic
* Provide more opportunities for physical activity
* Promote small business development nearby
* Increase property values for homes in adjacent neighborhoods
* Promote safe environments

**General Benefits**

The development of the Greenville Health System Swamp Rabbit Trail modified physical activity, recreation and transportation behaviors while contributing to local economies.  
*– Year 3 Findings, GHS Swamp Rabbit Trail study*  
  
Establishing the Swamp Rabbit Rail was a 10-year battle... financial issues, legal challenges and concerns over crime on the trail all presented obstacles that had to be overcome. Yet, if there were skeptics in 1999, there aren’t many left. “Now people just want to know how soon we can extend it,“ says Ty Houck, Greenways Director, Greenville County.  
*– from The Rabbit Revolution, Rails to Trails, Fall 2015*

**Small Business & Economic Benefits**

“No one knew how transformative the Swamp Rabbit Trail project would be. We have 40 new businesses in Travelers Rest and there is now interest in the residential district in and around Main Street,” said Dianna Turner, City Administrator, Travellers Rest, SC.  
  
Property values of houses along the Swamp Rabbit Trail have jumped 15% just because of the trail.  
*– Ty Houck, Greenway Director, Greenville County*  
  
Trails consistently rank in the top five important amenities in making real estate purchase decisions.  
*– Year 3 Findings, GHS Swamp Rabbit Trail study* “According to a 2002 survey of recent home buyers by the National Association of Home Realtors and the National Association of Home Builders, trails ranked as the second most important community amenity out of a list of 18 choices.”

**Health Benefits**

“Most people do not like to go to the gym. This is a much more fun way to get exercise. It’s so much more beautiful.”  
*– Greenville resident David Owens, in The Rabbit Revolution*  
  
“...creating and improving places to be active can result in a 25% increase in the percentage of people who exercise at least three times per week.”  
  
“Those with access to built and natural facilities are 43% more likely to exercise than those with poor access.”  
*– The CDC (US Center for Disease Control)*

**Safety**

“Data suggest that greenway-adjacent properties do not incur greater risk of crime than other properties within the same neighborhood statistical area. On the contrary, greenway-adjacent properties had lower crime rates 75 percent of the time and in one year, 2001, greenways actually appeared to be safer than the broader community.”  
  
Personal crime was so low in the 2004 Charlotte study that it was statistically insignificant, and so was not included.  
*– Preliminary Assessment of Crime Risk along Greenways in Charlotte, North Carolina 1994-2004*

**Environment**

The Gills Creek Watershed Association is focused on improving water quality throughout the watershed. As part of the greenway project, we are working on ancillary projects to improve stormwater runoff from businesses and neighborhoods. Access to less developed areas will allow for trash and invasive species removal, and conserve plant and animal habitat.