

Razorback Greenway Corridor Plan

3. Six Projects for the Region

fieldoperations



HR&A

Razorback Greenway Corridor Plan

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Six Projects for the Region

3.1 Introduction

Over the past decade, Northwest Arkansas transformed segments of local trails into a more than 40-mile long continuous greenway that now connects seven cities. This is a remarkable accomplishment and is reflective of the region's continued investments in outdoor recreation, as well as other amenities such as arts and culture institutions, new parks, and bicycling infrastructure.

Today, accelerating population growth continues to reshape the region. Resulting high living costs, uneven wage growth, and

sprawling auto-oriented development have created burdens on housing, transportation, and natural systems.

The region has an opportunity to leverage the Razorback Greenway for smart growth, using its corridor to concentrate new, more compact neighborhood development, while preserving critical open space and supporting multi-modal communities.

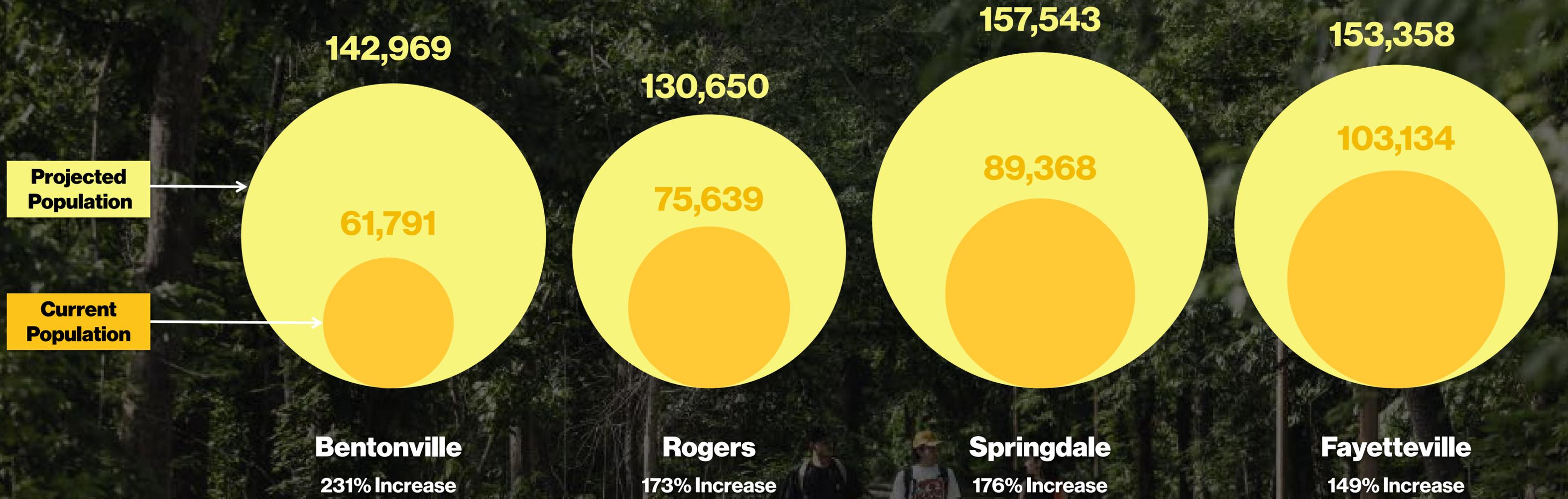
A GROWING REGION

Population and employment growth between 2012 and 2022 have dramatically exceeded national rates.



PROJECTED GROWTH IN THE COMING DECADES

Growth is projected to continue over the next two decades. This growth will dramatically change the size of the region's four largest cities.



Source: Forward2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, NWARPC, 2025.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

Due to rapid urbanization and climate change, NWA faces several environmental challenges including (1) habitat fragmentation, (2) creek erosion, (3) surface and groundwater pollution, (4) rising temperatures and (5) increased flooding.

As the region grows, these challenges will become increasingly acute. Preserving open space, enhancing natural systems, and building green infrastructure will build resilience and support smart growth across the region.

Habitat Fragmentation

1

Creek Erosion

2

Surface & Groundwater Pollution

3

Rising Temperatures

4

Flooding

5



REGIONAL NEEDS FOR SMART GROWTH

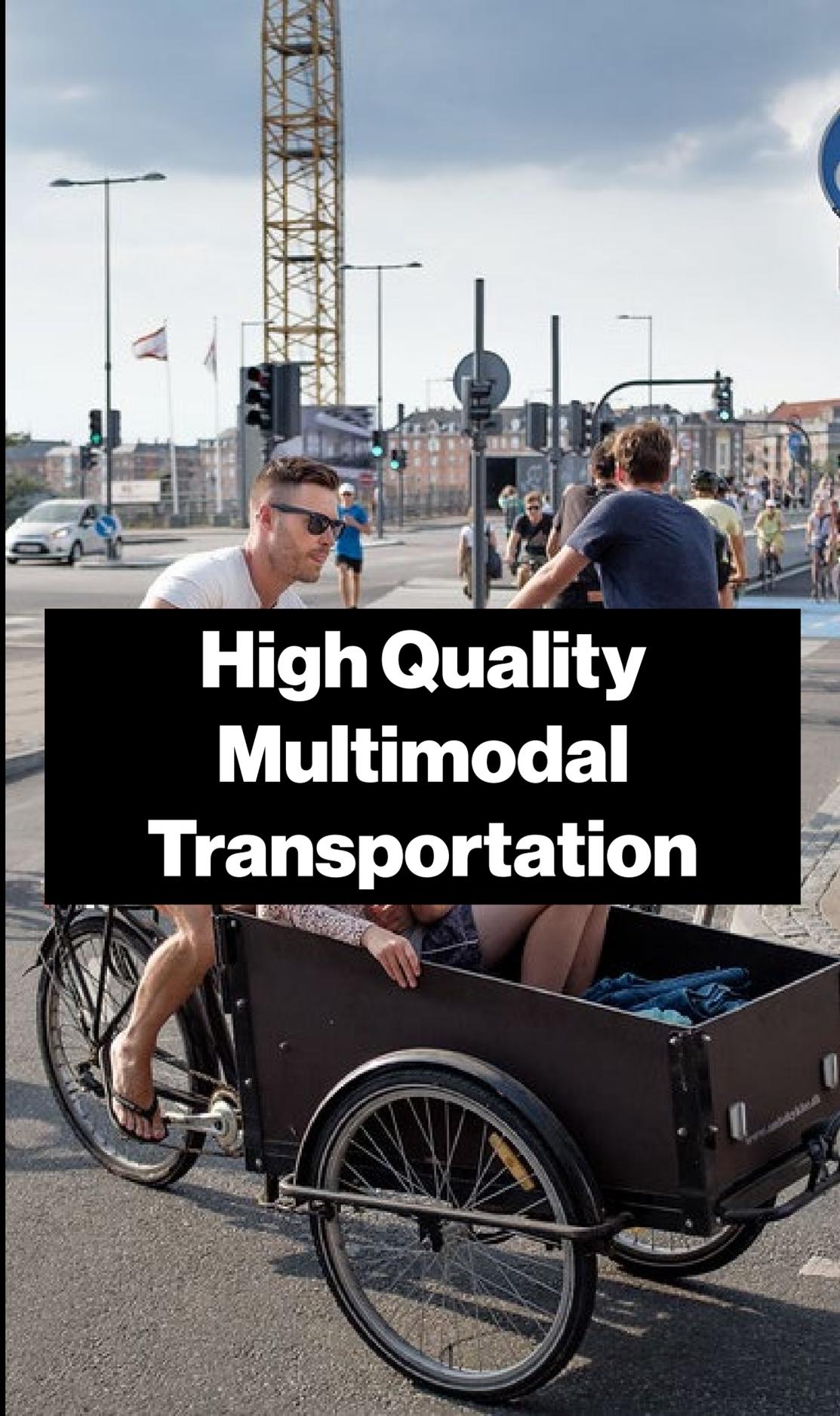
Given rapid development, environmental challenges, and rising costs of living, Northwest Arkansas must address the following needs through a framework for smart growth.



Green Infrastructure Investments



Affordable Housing Near Job Centers



High Quality Multimodal Transportation

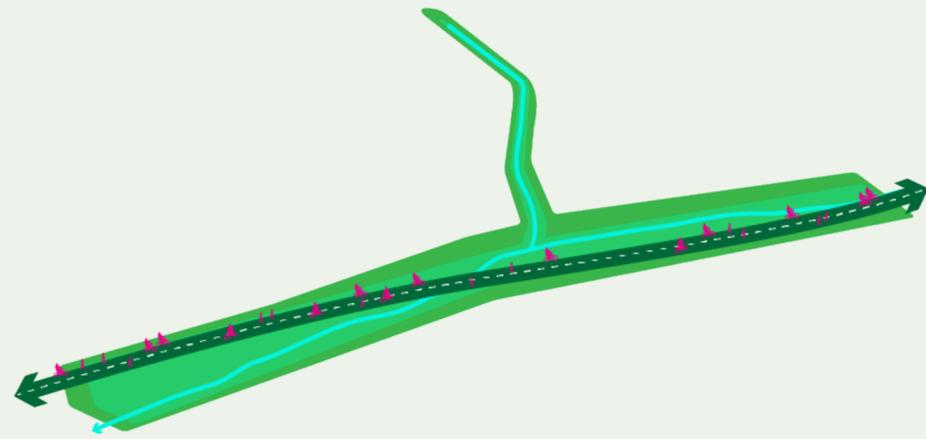
SIX PROJECTS FOR THE CORRIDOR

Achieving smart growth in Northwest Arkansas requires strategic investments in three key areas: green infrastructure, affordable housing, and multi-modal transportation networks.

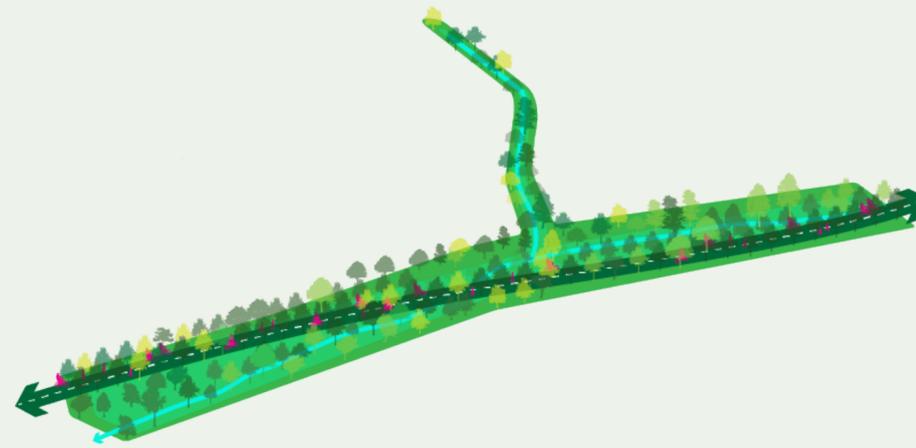
Through community engagement and detailed analysis of existing conditions along the Razorback Greenway Corridor, six regional projects have been identified to guide this smart growth:

- 1. Protect & Restore Creek Corridors**
- 2. Re-wild the Greenway**
- 3. Grow New Neighborhoods Along the Greenway**
- 4. Manage Stormwater in Sponge Parks**
- 5. Complete A Commuter Bike Network**
- 6. Connect Destinations and Experiences**

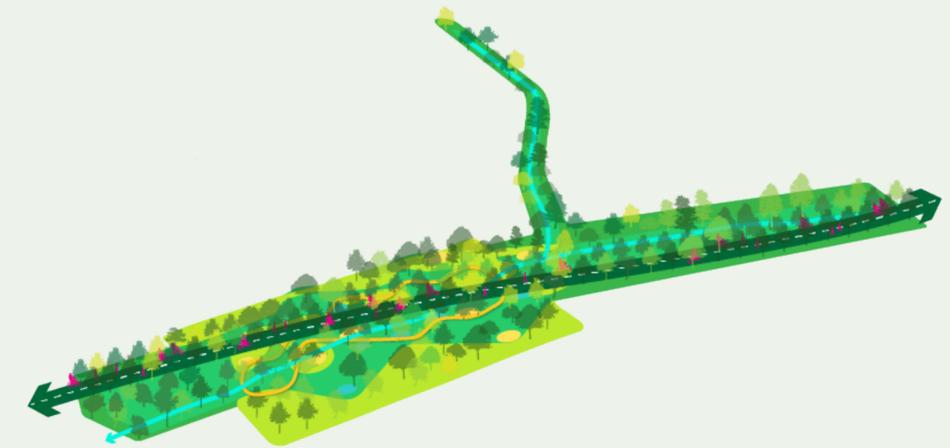
Protect & Restore Creek Corridors



Re-Wild the Greenway



Manage Stormwater in Sponge Parks



Grow New Neighborhoods Along the Greenway



Complete a Commuter Bike Network



Connect Destinations & Experiences



Six Projects for the Region

3.2 Engagement Process

The Corridor Plan led a multi-faceted engagement process that gathered input from the region's residents as well as city representatives and key stakeholders.

Public engagement for the Corridor Plan centered on meeting people directly along the Greenway, with online surveys provided at spring and fall Square-to-Square rides.

A monthly Advisory Committee—composed of representatives from all seven cities—served as the primary forum

for reviewing concepts, building consensus, and guiding key decisions.

NWARPC staff and the design team also held targeted one-on-one meetings with city staff and elected officials to address city-specific priorities and define sub-area boundaries. Additional stakeholder interviews and a joint site visit to the Atlanta Beltline helped ground the planning process in real-world lessons and informed a shared understanding of opportunities for the Razorback Greenway corridor.

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES



2 Square-to-Square Rides



2K Total Survey Responses



18 City One-on-Ones



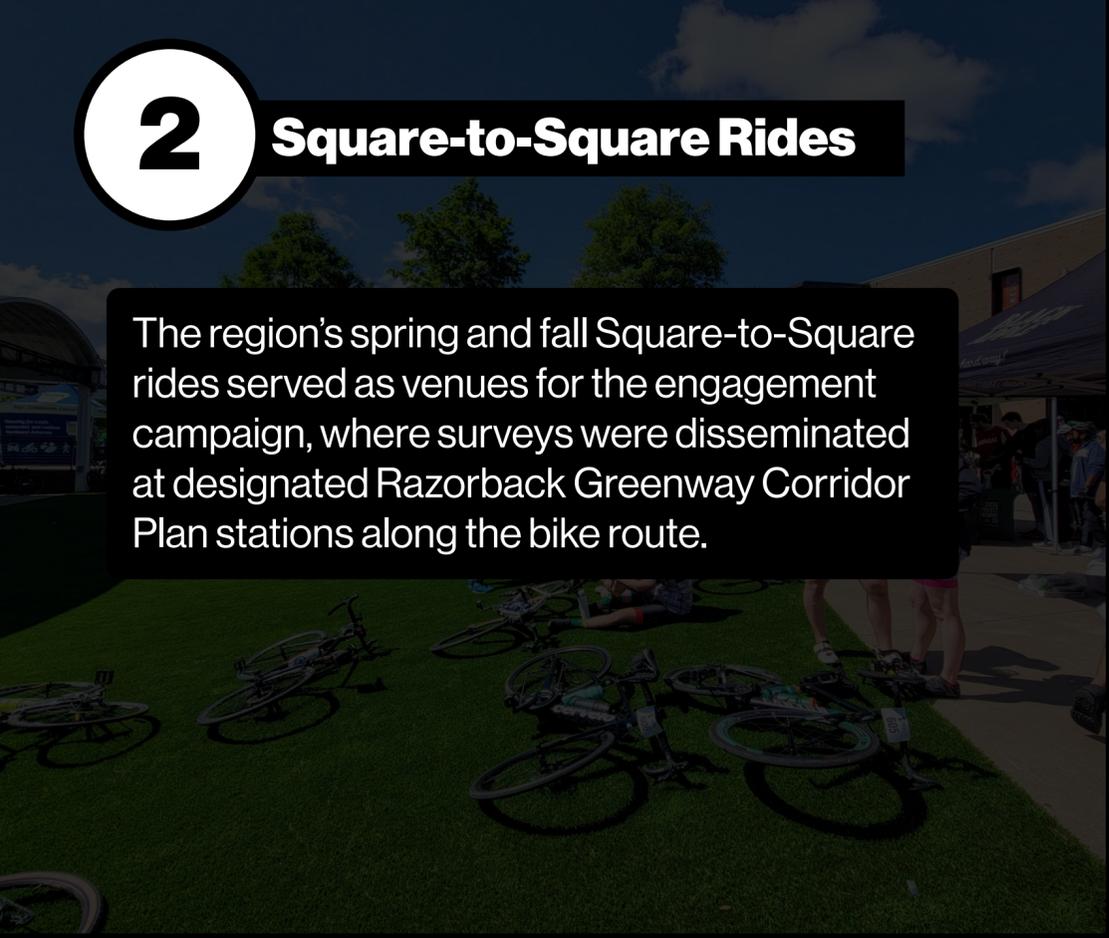
10 Advisory Committee Workshops



11 Stakeholder Meetings

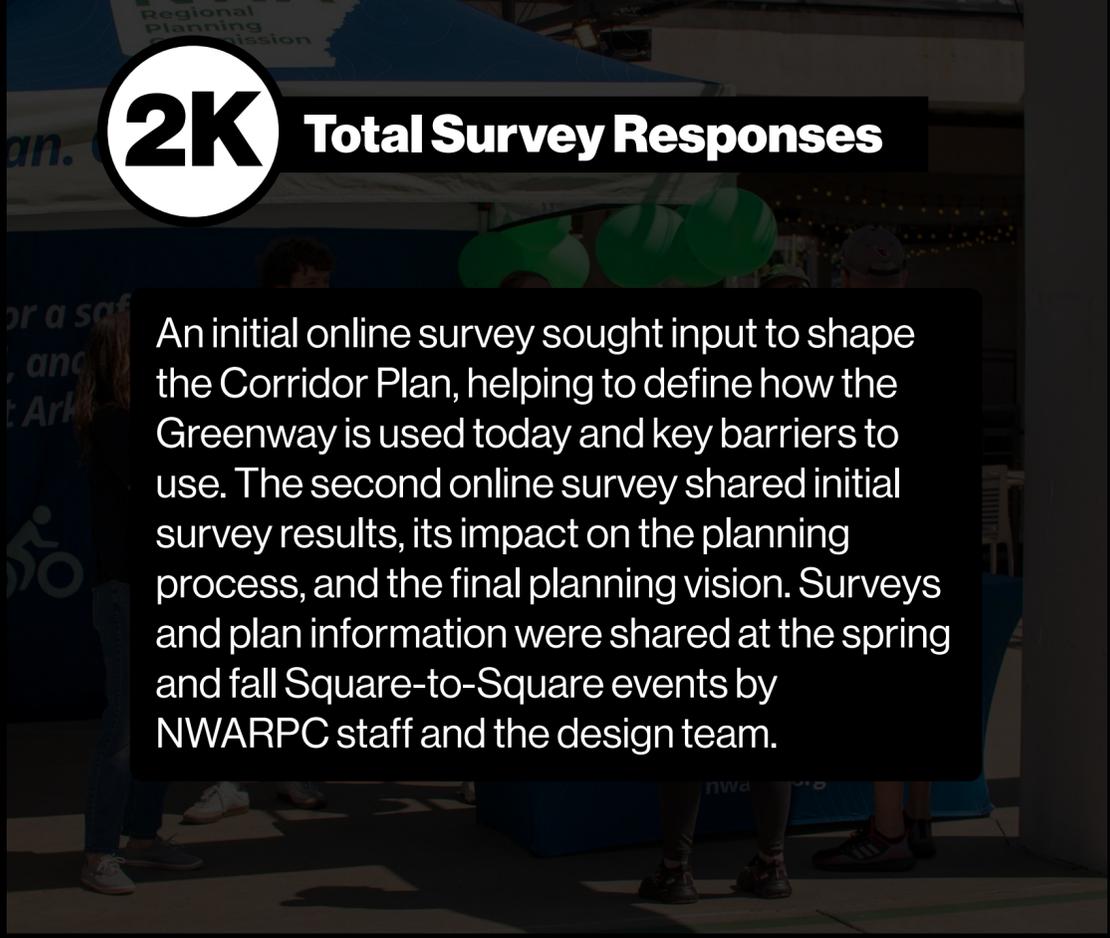


1 Beltline Research Trip



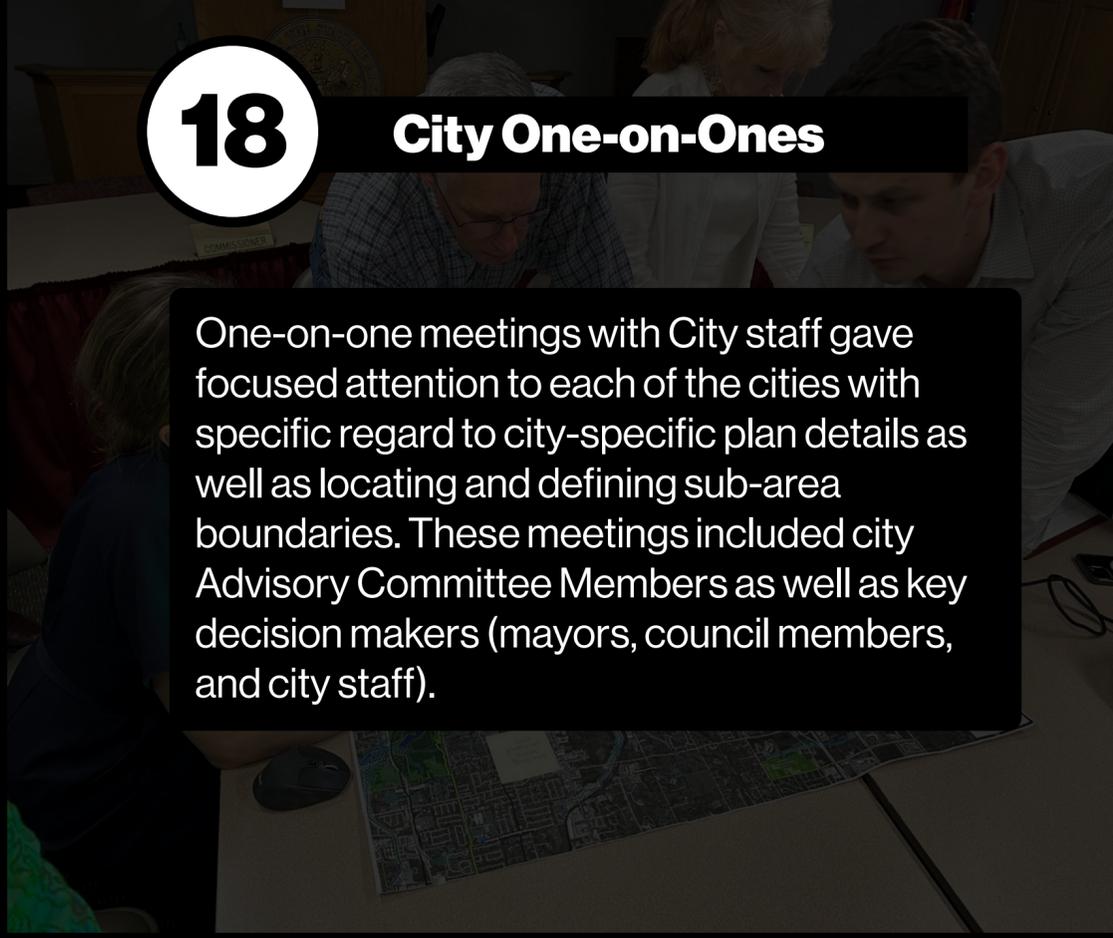
2 Square-to-Square Rides

The region's spring and fall Square-to-Square rides served as venues for the engagement campaign, where surveys were disseminated at designated Razorback Greenway Corridor Plan stations along the bike route.



2K Total Survey Responses

An initial online survey sought input to shape the Corridor Plan, helping to define how the Greenway is used today and key barriers to use. The second online survey shared initial survey results, its impact on the planning process, and the final planning vision. Surveys and plan information were shared at the spring and fall Square-to-Square events by NWARPC staff and the design team.



18 City One-on-Ones

One-on-one meetings with City staff gave focused attention to each of the cities with specific regard to city-specific plan details as well as locating and defining sub-area boundaries. These meetings included city Advisory Committee Members as well as key decision makers (mayors, council members, and city staff).



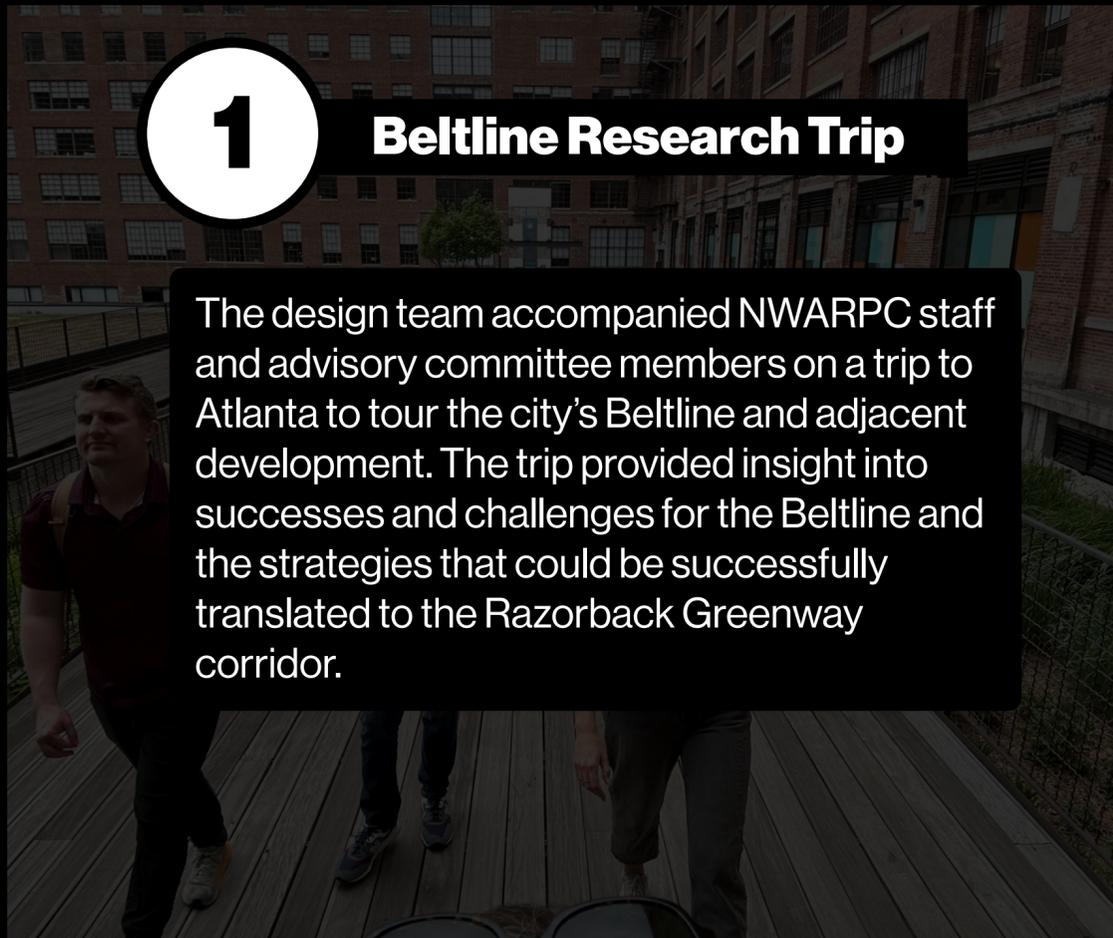
10 Advisory Committee Workshops

The Advisory Committee is composed of NWARPC staff and key representatives from each of the 7 cities. The workshops occurred monthly and served as the project's main venue for decision making and building consensus among the cities.



11 Stakeholder Meetings

The design team held numerous in-person and virtual stakeholder interviews to share the project vision and refine key framework details.



1 Beltline Research Trip

The design team accompanied NWARPC staff and advisory committee members on a trip to Atlanta to tour the city's Beltline and adjacent development. The trip provided insight into successes and challenges for the Beltline and the strategies that could be successfully translated to the Razorback Greenway corridor.

SURVEY RESULTS: HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THE GREENWAY

Close to 60 percent of respondents use the Greenway less than a few times per week.

A few times per week



A few times per month



A few times per year



Rarely/never



Daily



SURVEY RESULTS: WHAT ARE YOUR PRIMARY USES OF THE GREENWAY?

The overwhelming majority of Greenway riders today use the trail for recreation. The Greenway is underutilized for commuting and bike transit

Recreation



Socializing or Community Events



Commuting to Work or School



Shopping, Dining or Running Errands



I Don't Use the Greenway



**SURVEY RESULTS:
WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST
BARRIERS TO USING THE
GREENWAY?**

Lack of connectivity to and from home is the greatest barrier to using the Greenway.

Lack of connectivity to my neighborhood



It's too far from where I live/work



Road safety concerns



Personal safety concerns



No adjacent destinations or attractions I am interested in



Other



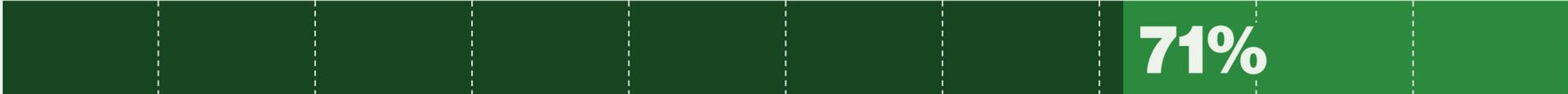
SURVEY RESULTS: WHAT TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE ALONG THE GREENWAY?

Survey respondents indicate a desire for more open space, retail, and art along the Greenway. These elements can be strategically coordinated with new housing and mixed-use development.

Parks & Public Space



Restaurants, Coffee Shops, Breweries



Cultural and Art Spaces



Housing and Mixed-Use Development



Grocery Stores & Markets



Small Business & Co-Working Spaces



Six Projects for the Region

3.3 Protect & Restore Creek Corridors

Northwest Arkansas features numerous creek corridors, many of which currently experience significant erosion and water-quality challenges that are intensified by rising impervious surfaces and more frequent, intense flooding events. Because the Razorback Greenway sits along the watershed ridgelines and crosses or runs parallel to ten major creeks, it is uniquely positioned to help address these challenges.

The Plan explores how the corridor can function as a framework for preserving floodplains as open space, improving stormwater management, and catalyzing creek and stream restoration.

Strengthening these natural systems supports broader ecological goals, from expanding continuous habitat networks to improving groundwater recharge and watershed health.

At the same time, restored creek corridors support region multi-modal connectivity goals, providing opportunities to establish new east-west trail connections for linking neighborhoods to the Greenway. These interventions can support the corridor as a tool for both environmental resilience and a more connected, accessible trail network across the region.

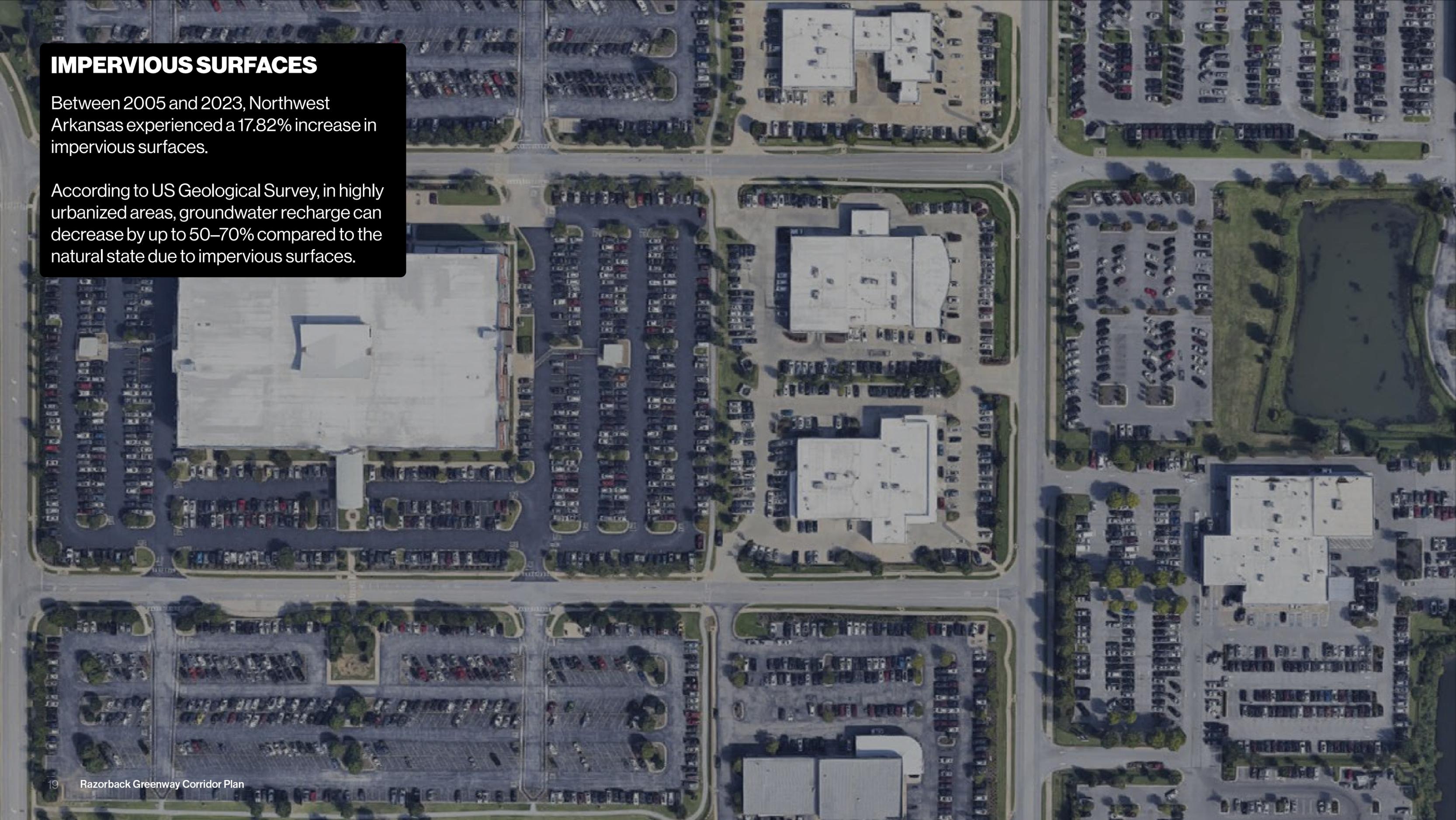
MILL RIVER PARK AND GREENWAY Stamford, CT

Precedent: Mill River Park transformed a once-dammed and sediment-choked creek corridor into a restored ecosystem and a vibrant public space. Removing the dams and softening the floodplain reduced flood risk, revived habitat, and enabled the return of native species. The restoration also reconnected downtown Stamford to its waterfront, anchoring new public spaces and catalyzing broader community redevelopment.

IMPERVIOUS SURFACES

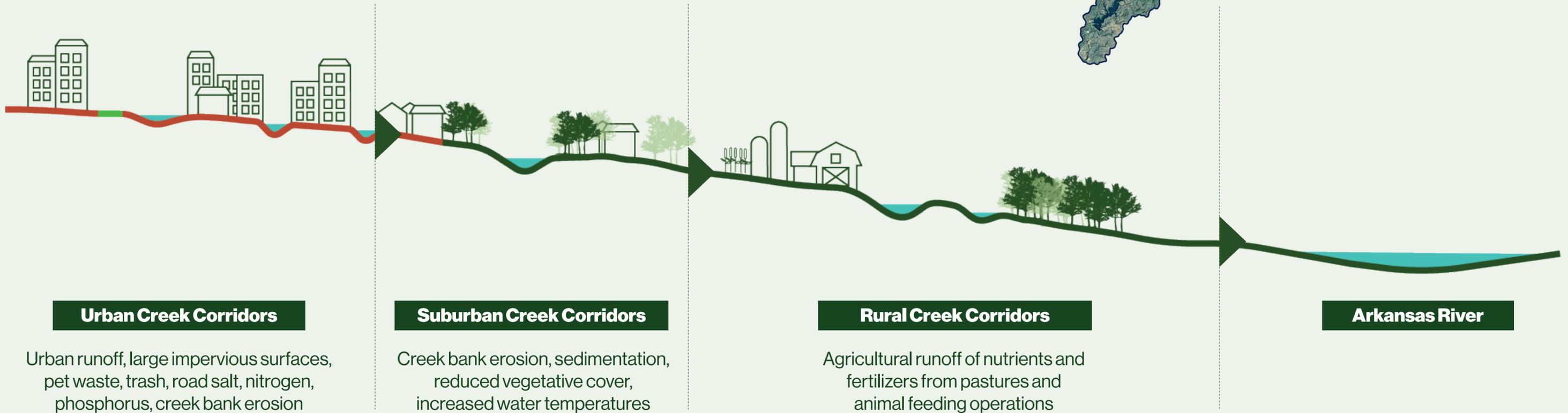
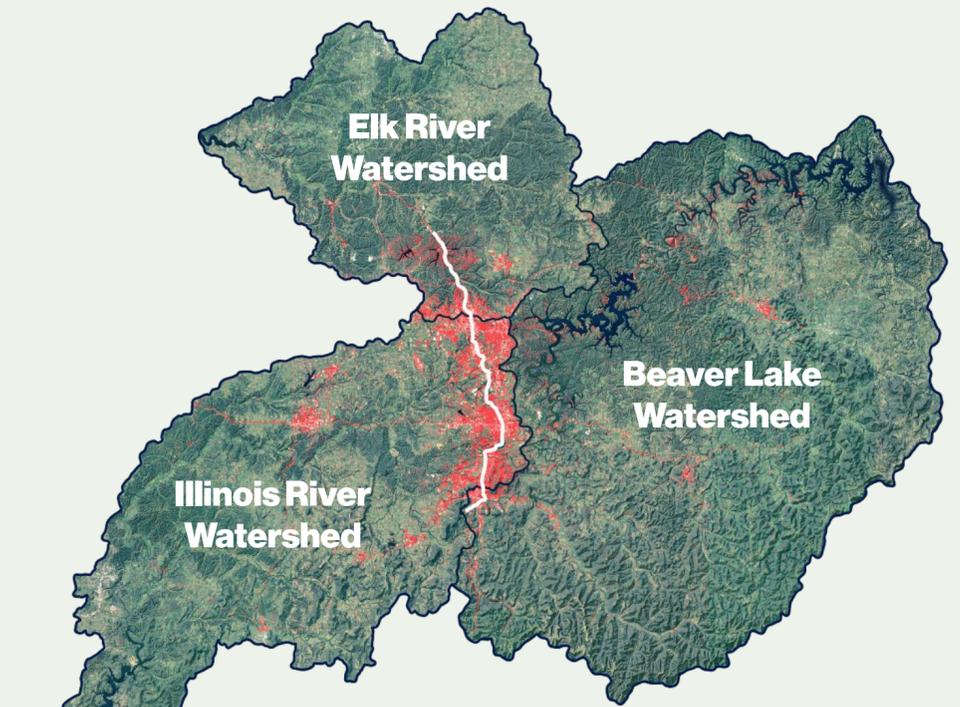
Between 2005 and 2023, Northwest Arkansas experienced a 17.82% increase in impervious surfaces.

According to US Geological Survey, in highly urbanized areas, groundwater recharge can decrease by up to 50–70% compared to the natural state due to impervious surfaces.



NWA WATERSHEDS

The Razorback Greenway sits at the top of the Illinois River, Elk River, and Beaver Lake Watersheds. This ridgeline position means the NWA region has an outsized impact on water quality downstream, affecting millions of acres across Arkansas, Missouri and Oklahoma.



Urban Creek Corridors

Urban runoff, large impervious surfaces, pet waste, trash, road salt, nitrogen, phosphorus, creek bank erosion

Suburban Creek Corridors

Creek bank erosion, sedimentation, reduced vegetative cover, increased water temperatures

Rural Creek Corridors

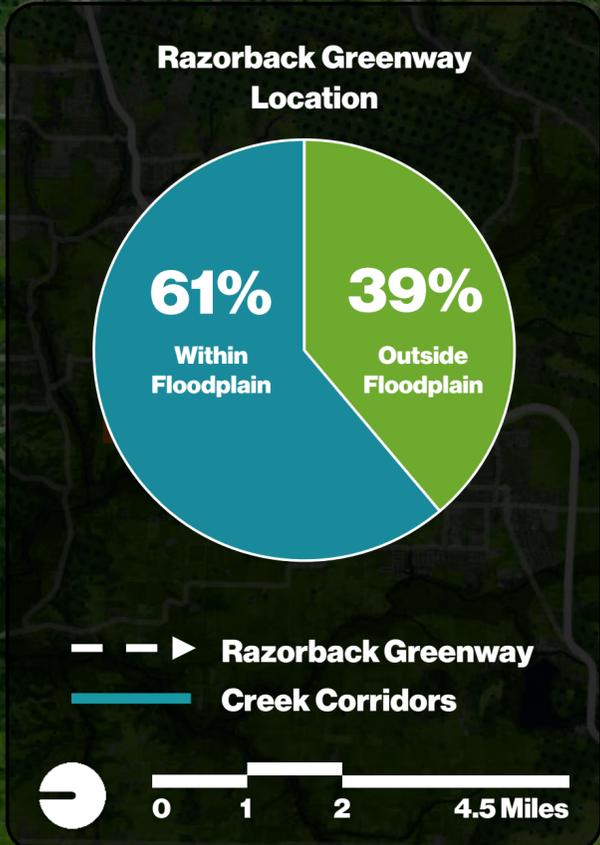
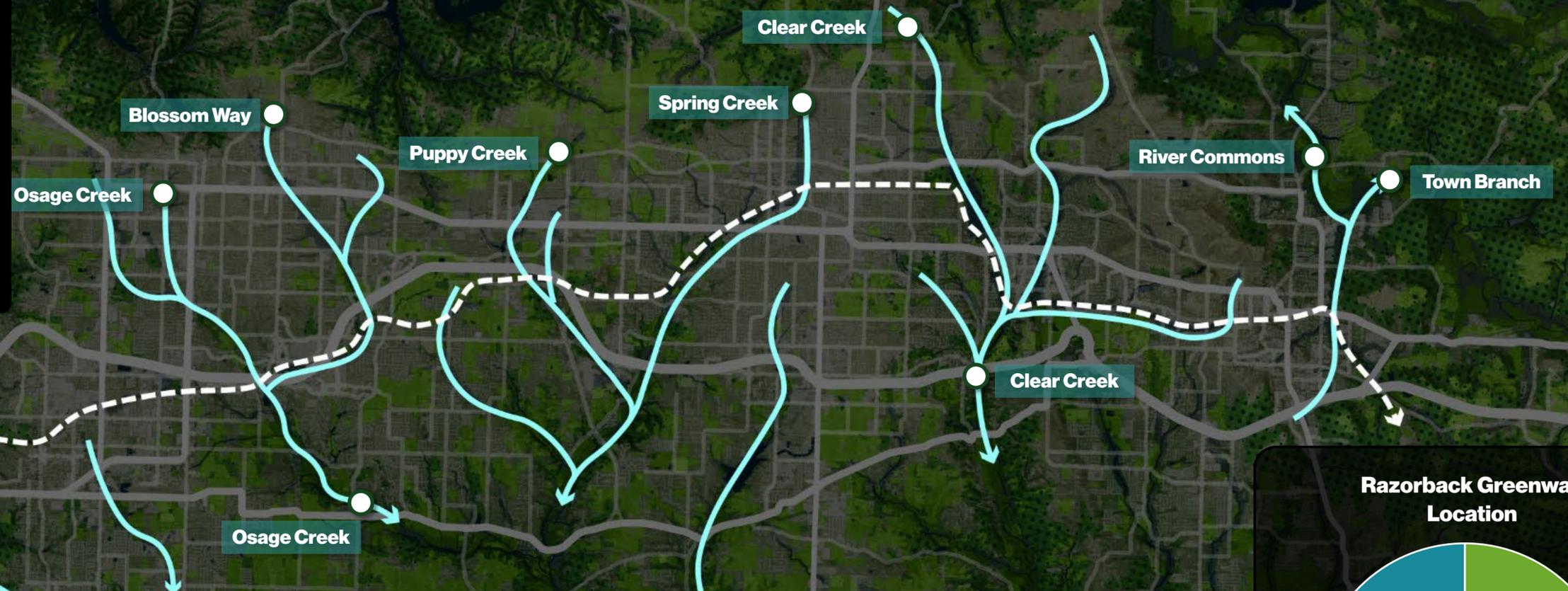
Agricultural runoff of nutrients and fertilizers from pastures and animal feeding operations

Arkansas River

THE GREENWAY & THE FLOODPLAIN

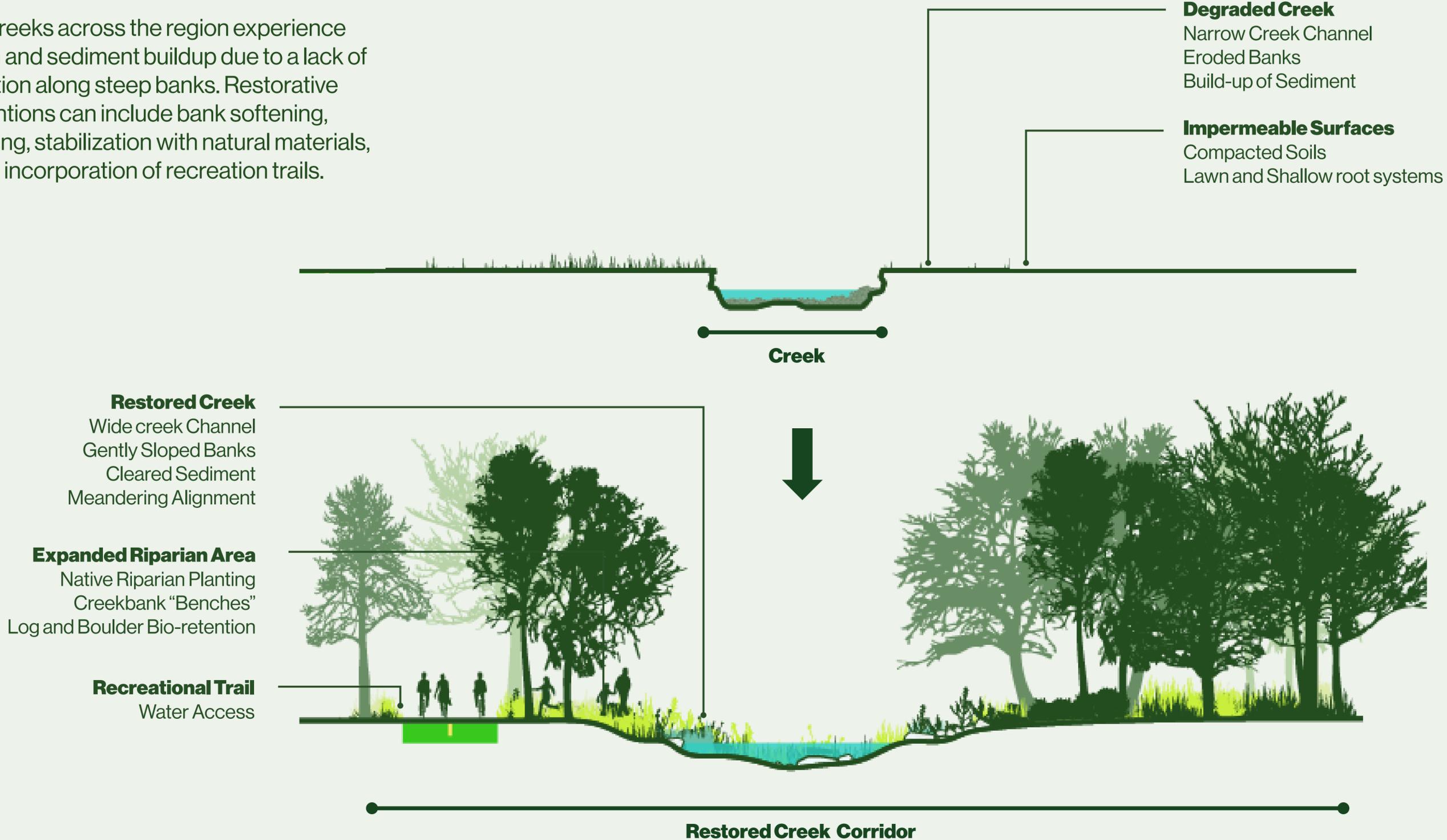
Along its 40-mile length, the Razorback Greenway crosses 10 creeks. Approximately 61% of the trail sits within floodplains.

This presents an opportunity to use the Greenway Corridor as a tool to preserve the floodplain as open space and catalyze the restoration of creeks across the region.



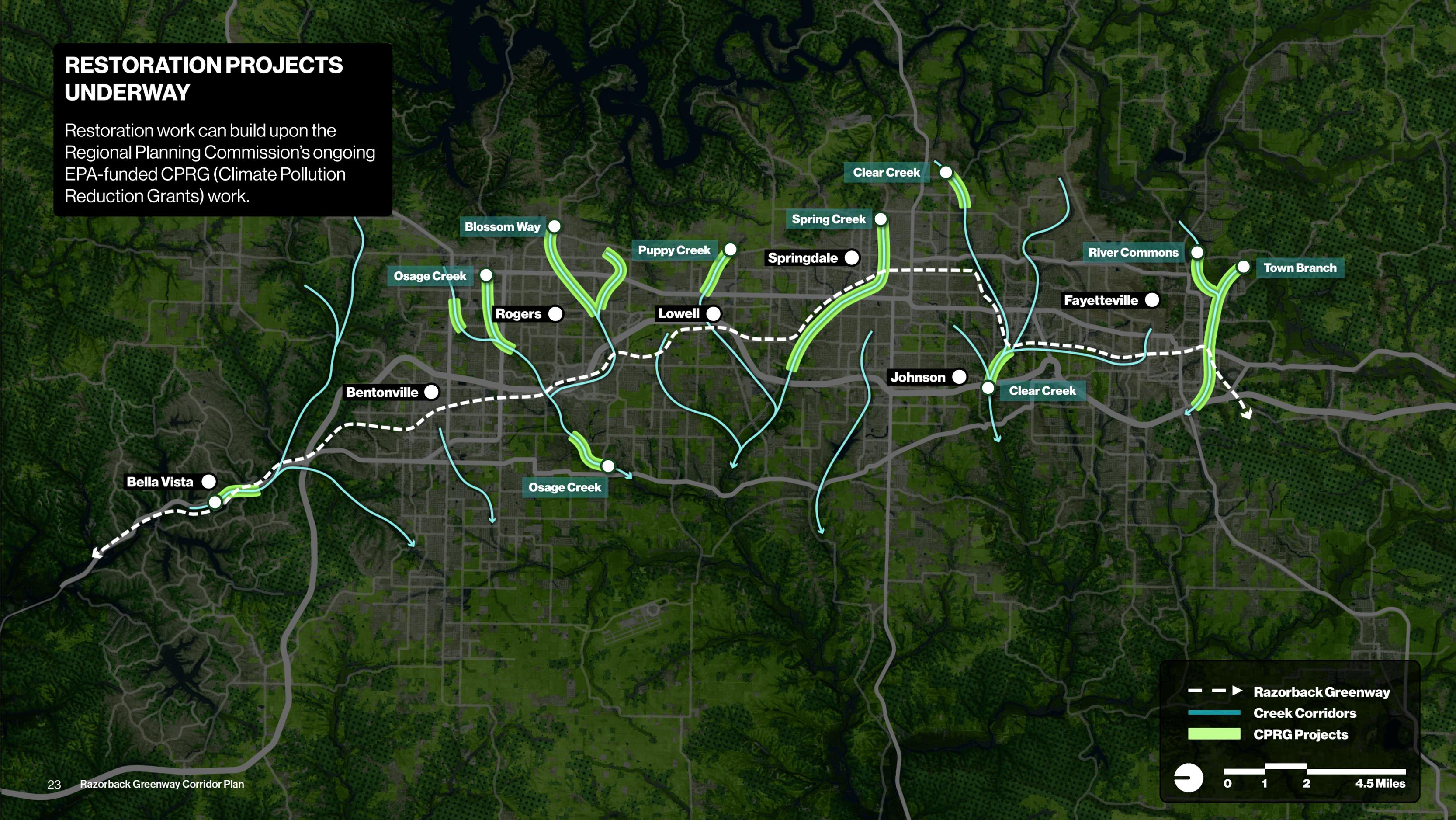
CREEK RESTORATION

Many creeks across the region experience erosion and sediment buildup due to a lack of vegetation along steep banks. Restorative interventions can include bank softening, replanting, stabilization with natural materials, and the incorporation of recreation trails.



RESTORATION PROJECTS UNDERWAY

Restoration work can build upon the Regional Planning Commission's ongoing EPA-funded CPRG (Climate Pollution Reduction Grants) work.



— — ▶ Razorback Greenway
— — — Creek Corridors
— — — CPRG Projects

0 1 2 4.5 Miles

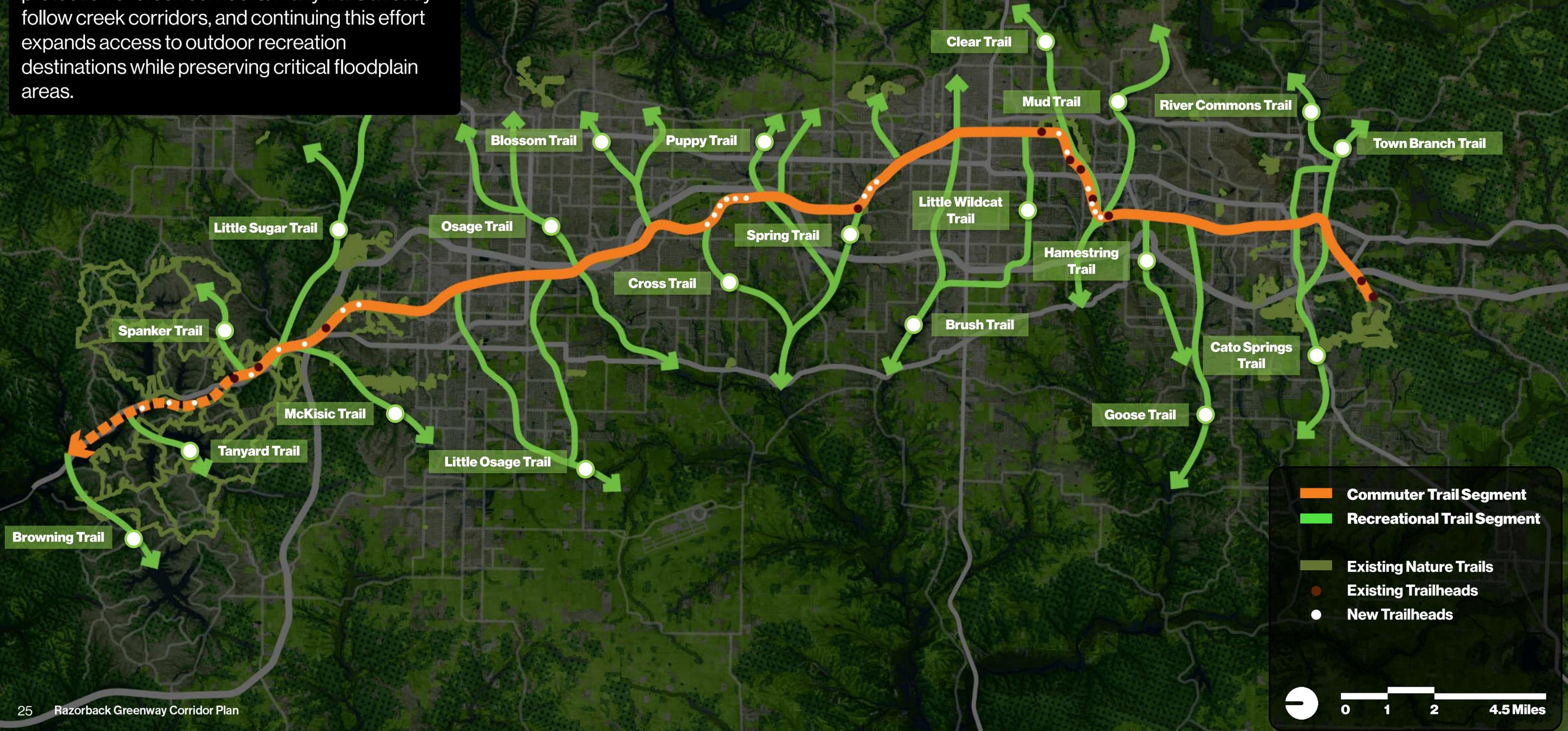
A BLUE-GREEN NETWORK

The Greenway Corridor can be a tool to preserve the floodplain as open space and catalyze the restoration of creeks across the region.



A RECREATIONAL NETWORK

Expansion of the recreational trail network can lead and further encourage restoration and protection of creek corridors. Many trails already follow creek corridors, and continuing this effort expands access to outdoor recreation destinations while preserving critical floodplain areas.



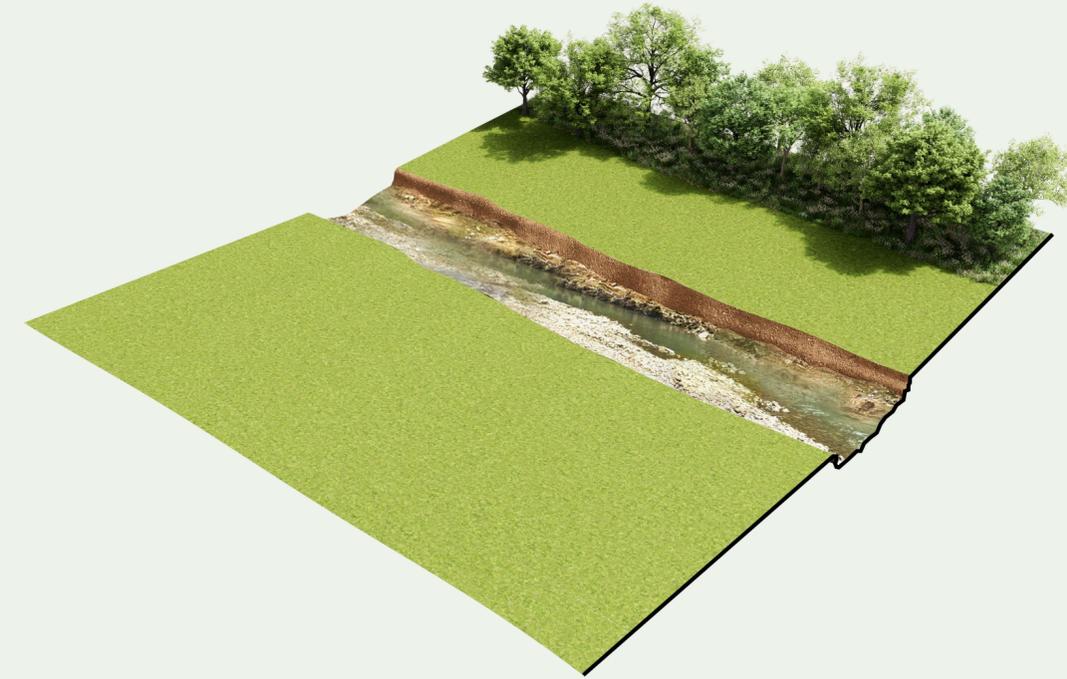
CREEK CORRIDOR CHALLENGES

Creek corridors span diverse contexts and face varied ecological pressures. Concrete channels eliminate riparian habitat, storm events drive severe erosion where vegetation is sparse, and urban reaches are tightly constrained with limited room for regrading or replanting. Nutrient runoff from fields, lawns, and outfalls further degrades water quality, making some creeks and water bodies unsuitable for human use.

Channelized Creek



Eroded Creek



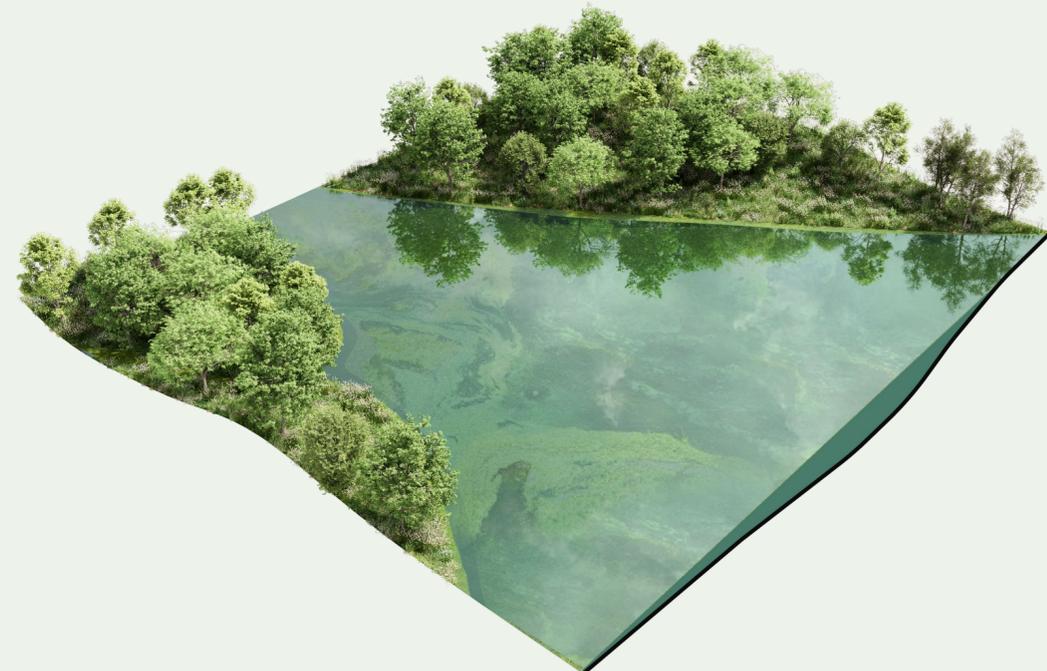
Urban Creek



Polluted Creek



Polluted Creek-to-Lake Inflow



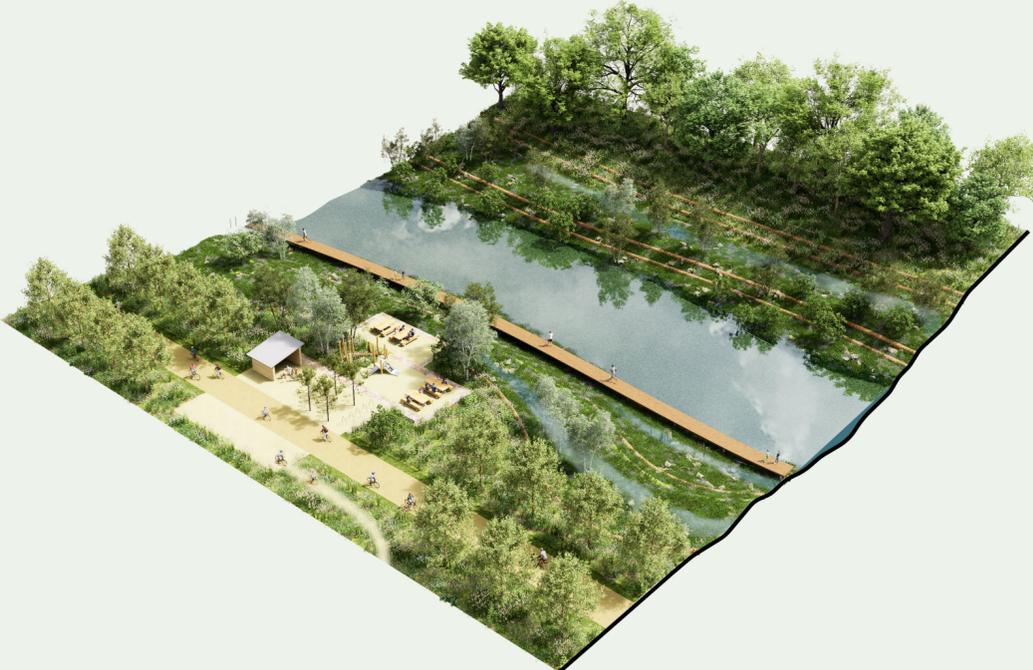
CREEK CORRIDOR RESTORATION

Restoration strategies for these conditions include reshaping hardened channels into resilient creek corridors that manage water and support access. Relaxing banks slows flows, stabilizes slopes, and reduces erosion. In concrete or constrained reaches, selective de-channelization and terracing restore ecological function while creating safe, usable public spaces. Vegetated buffers, wetlands, and bioswales filter nutrient runoff and double as community amenities.

Channelized Creek



Eroded Creek



Urban Creek



Polluted Creek



Polluted Creek Inflow



RESTORED CREEK CORRIDORS & PRESERVATION OF THE FLOODPLAIN

Restored creek corridors will provide multiple benefits to the region including green stormwater management, reduced flooding, continuous habitat corridors, improved water quality, and access to nature.



Six Projects for the Region

3.4 Re-Wild the Greenway

While extensive and fully connected, the Greenway lacks the robust planting needed to create a comfortable, ecologically resilient public space. “Re-wilding” aims to transform land adjacent to the Greenway into an ecological corridor with continuous green infrastructure that provides shade, absorbs carbon, strengthens biodiversity, and improves air quality.

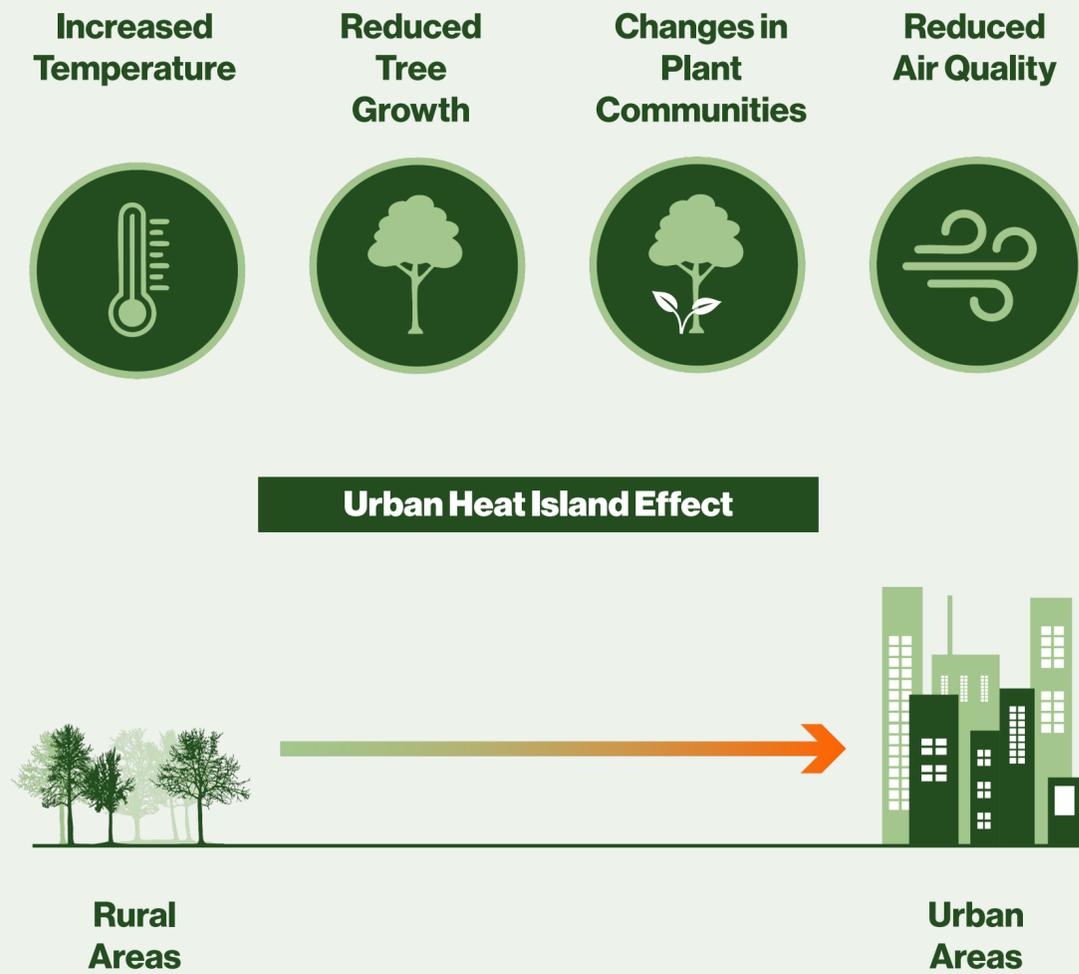
Through an ambitious tree planting program, the corridor can deliver major ecosystem benefits and economic gains by improving air and water quality, mitigating stormwater runoff, and enhancing biodiversity—all contributing to a healthier environment and more sustainable economy.

GALLOWAY CREEK GREENWAY **Springfield, MO**

Precedent: The Galloway Creek Greenway in southeast Springfield, Missouri is a multi-use trail that connects urban neighborhoods, parks, and the James River corridor. Dense forested buffers along the greenway reflect the surrounding Ozark Plateau landscape, species such as white oak, hickory, and shortleaf pine which are characteristic of the regional forest type.

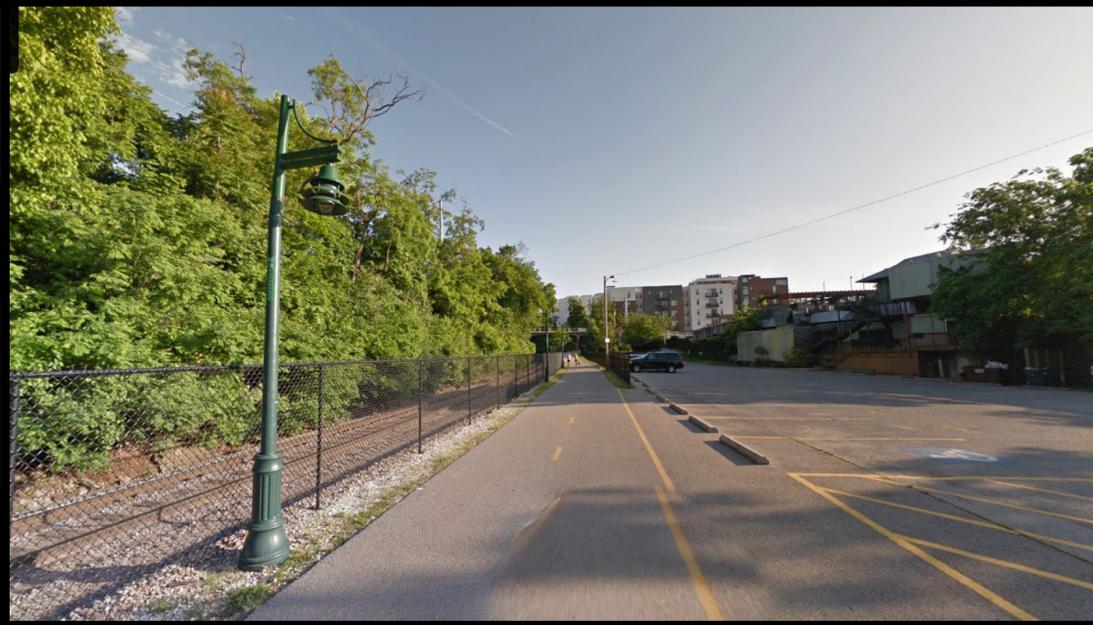
TREES AS A PUBLIC GOOD

The urban heat island effect is caused by heat-absorbing surfaces and reduced vegetation, which raise temperatures in developed areas. Planting trees counteracts this by providing shade, cooling, habitat, and air quality improvements.



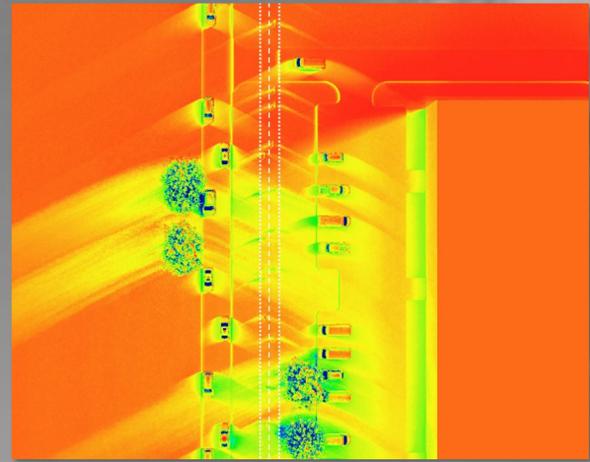
THE GREENWAY EASEMENT TODAY

Very little of the Greenway's easement is planted with trees today. This lack of tree canopy creates hot and uncomfortable conditions for much of the year, decreasing trail usage. These conditions will worsen as temperatures continue to rise.

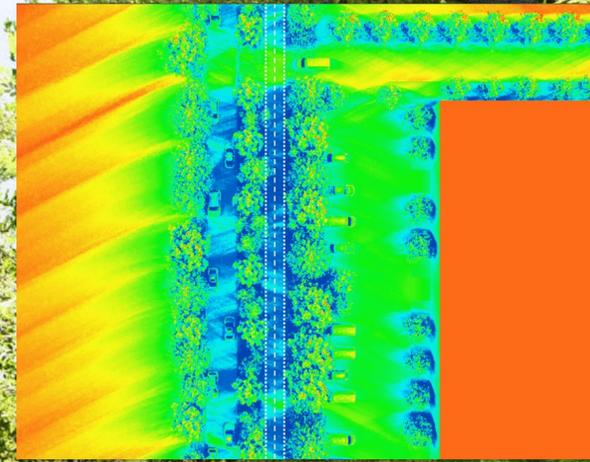


'RE-WILDING' THE GREENWAY

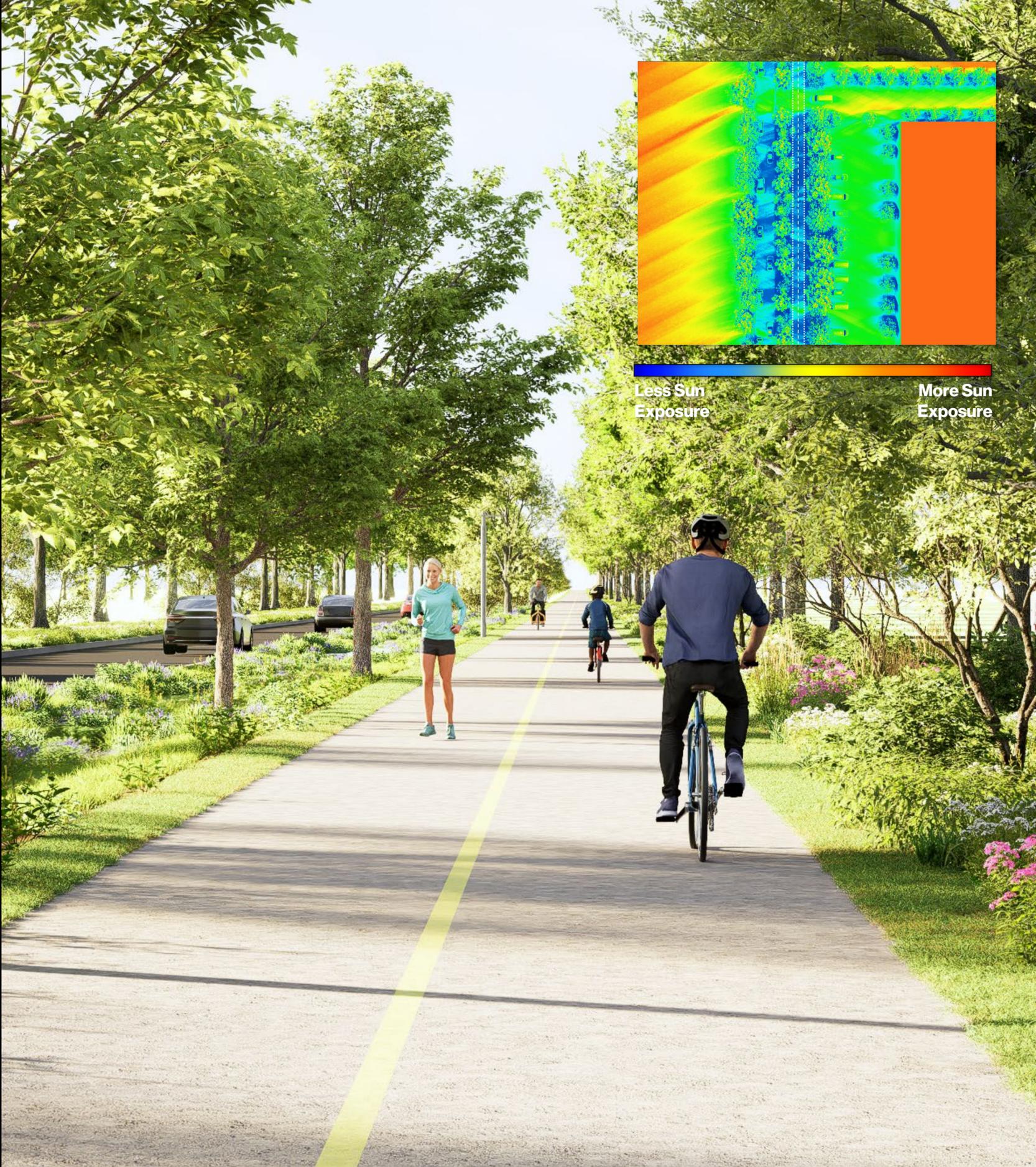
The Greenway offers the opportunity to undertake a large-scale 're-wilding' effort, adding native trees, plantings, and stormwater management along the trail and roadways to create ecological corridors. The diagrams to the right show before and after simulations of sun exposure, demonstrating the impact of tree canopy on thermal comfort for users.



Less Sun Exposure More Sun Exposure

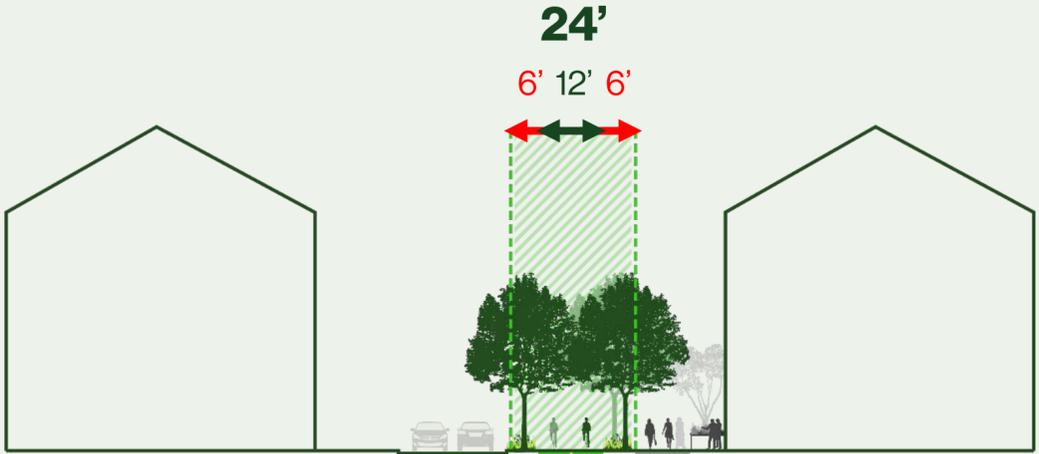


Less Sun Exposure More Sun Exposure

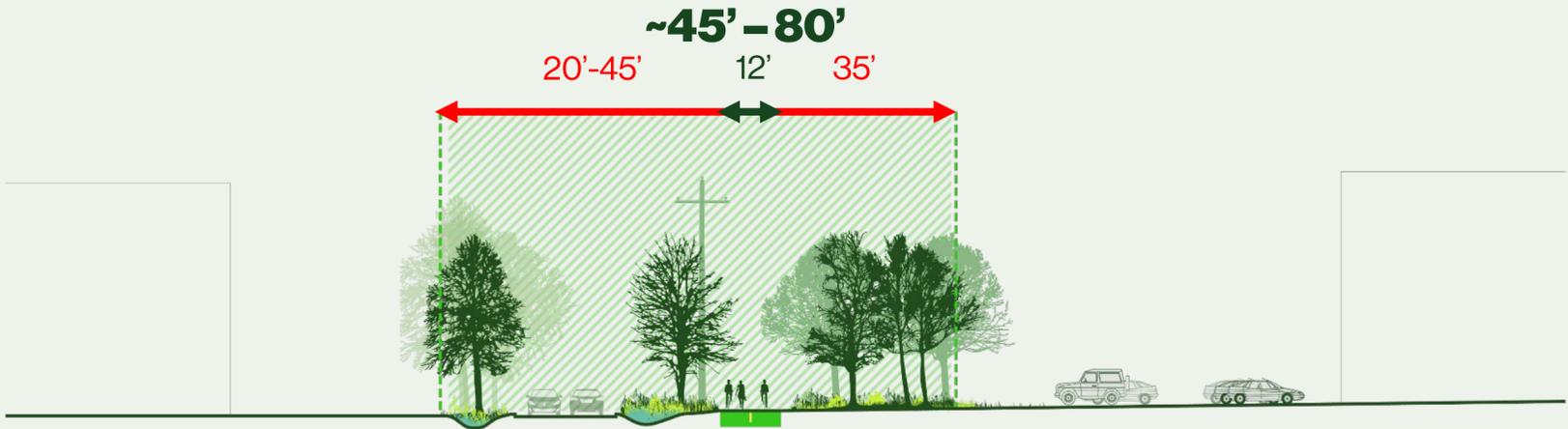


A VARIETY OF EASEMENT TYPES

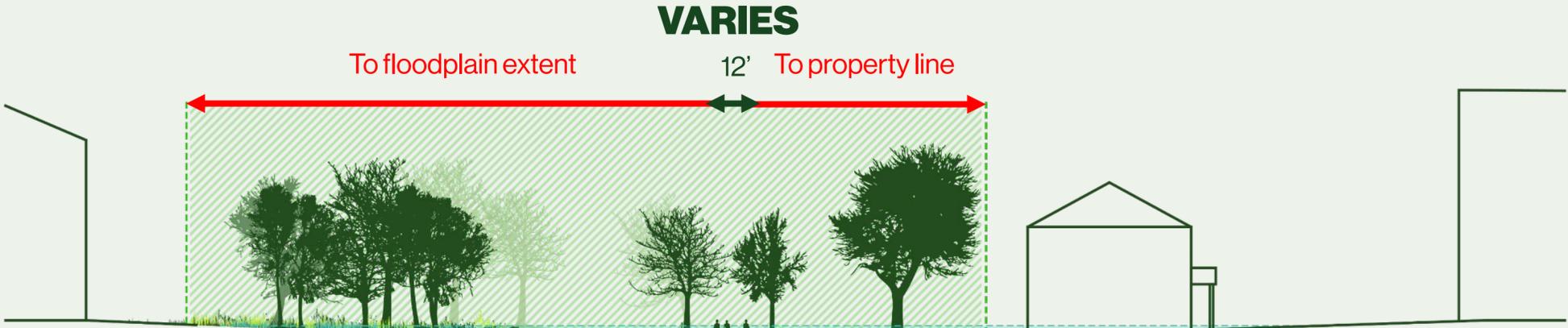
The Greenway runs through a range of easement types. General categories are shown to the right, but within each category is a large amount of variation in existing conditions. Re-wilding strategies are applicable at all scales of space.



URBAN SEGMENTS



SUBURBAN SEGMENTS

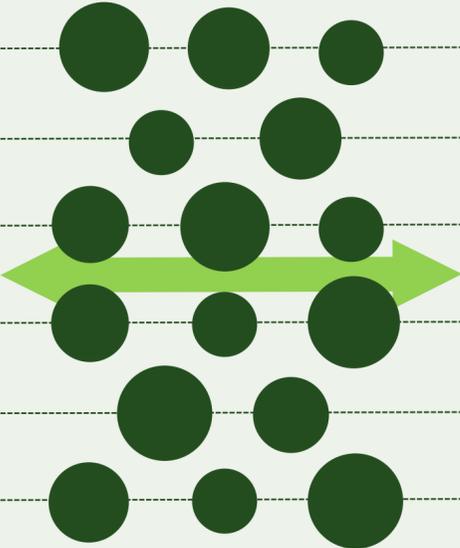


FLOODPLAIN SEGMENTS

SCALE AND IMPACT OF GREENING

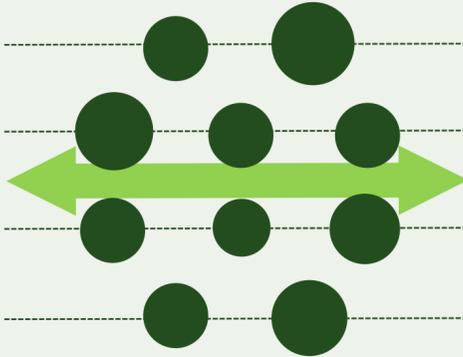
High-level calculations estimate the potential to add 60,000 trees along the Greenway Corridor, which could provide up to \$3M of ecosystem benefits to the region and create a cooler and more comfortable trail experience for users.

Rural Trail
 63.4% = 134,000 ft
 0.33 tree/lf



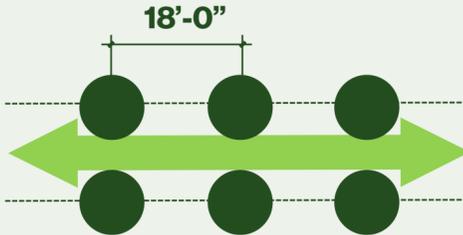
~45,000 trees

Suburban Trail
 29.4% = 62,000 ft
 0.22 tree/lf



~13,300 trees

Urban Trail
 7.2% = 15,200 ft
 0.11 tree/lf



~1,700 trees

60,000 Trees

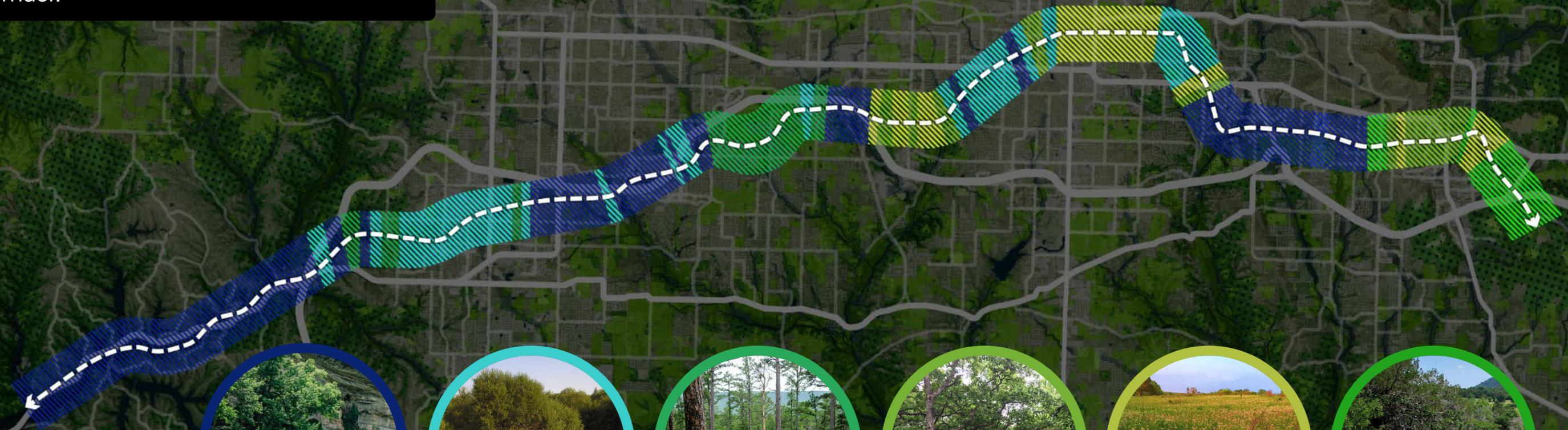
ECOSYSTEM BENEFITS	AVG. PER TREE	TOTAL
Overall Monetary Benefit	\$49.68	\$2.96 million
Air Quality Monetary Benefit	\$0.96	\$57,150.72
Carbon Monoxide Removed Monetary Benefit	\$0.003	\$178.60
Nitrogen Dioxide Removed Monetary Benefit	\$0.004	\$238.13
Ozone Removed Monetary Benefit	\$0.45	\$26,789.40
Particulate Matter (2.5 microns) Removed Monetary Benefit	\$0.49	\$29,170.68
Sulfur Dioxide Removed Monetary Benefit	\$0.000004	\$0.24
Carbon Sequestered Monetary Benefit	\$1.34	\$79,772.88
Stormwater Monetary Benefit	\$0.56	\$33,337.92
Carbon Dioxide Storage Monetary Benefit	\$45.87	\$2.73 million

Source: Fayetteville Urban Forestry Management Plan, 2024

\$3 M Benefits

BIODIVERSITY ALONG THE CORRIDOR

Re-wilding the Greenway can take inspiration from the region's distinct landscapes. Varying moisture and elevation along the Greenway can be reflected in native planting that brings beauty and ecological performance to the Corridor.



Riparian Forest



Alluvial Meadow



Oak-Hickory-Pine Forest



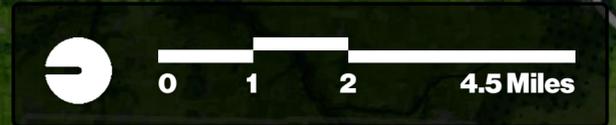
Oak Woodland/Savanna



Upland Grassland



Glade



Alluvial Meadow



Oak Woodland / Savanna



Upland Grassland



Riparian Forest



Glade



Oak-Hickory-Pine Forest



Six Projects for the Region

3.5 Grow New Neighborhoods on the Greenway

Accelerating population growth continues to reshape Northwest Arkansas, straining housing supply, raising living costs, and pushing affordable development farther from existing population centers. Over the last decade, median home values along the Greenway have risen in every city.

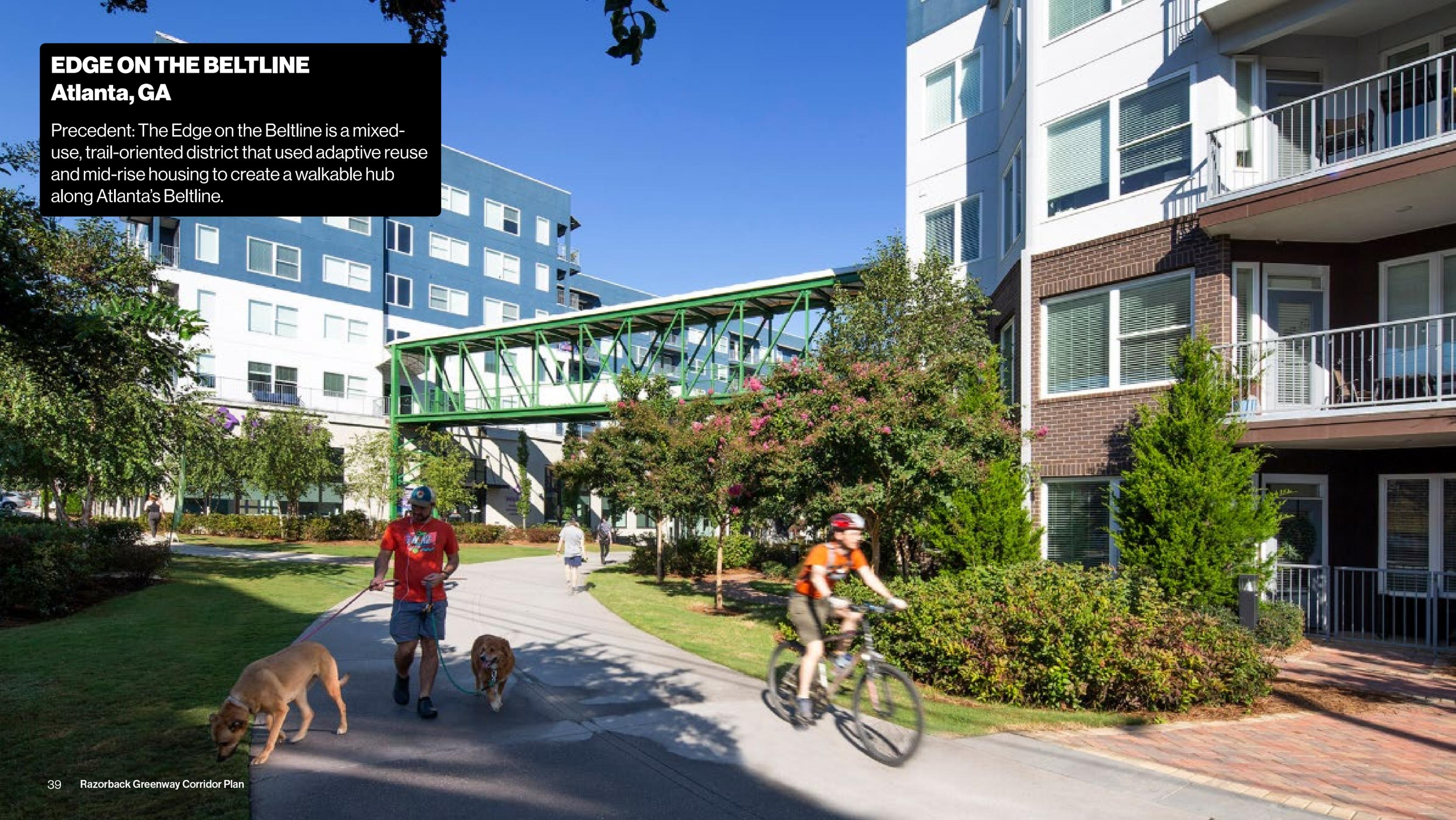
The Corridor Plan evaluates how land along the Razorback Greenway can support the region's next generation of affordable housing and mixed-use growth, using parcel-level analysis within a half-mile of the Greenway to show that the future housing strategy will depend on a

combination of dispersed infill on small residential lots and the conversion of larger commercial parcels to mixed-use. See Appendix for detailed regional lot analysis.

With strategic zoning updates and targeted infrastructure investments, the region can unlock a network of compact, connected neighborhoods that expands housing choices and leverages the Greenway as a critical regional amenity.

EDGE ON THE BELTLINE **Atlanta, GA**

Precedent: The Edge on the Beltline is a mixed-use, trail-oriented district that used adaptive reuse and mid-rise housing to create a walkable hub along Atlanta's Beltline.



EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

The team developed a contextual cross-section of existing development patterns along the corridor. The diagram records existing building types, land uses, frontages, and open space systems, and organizes these conditions into a 'transect'. The transect is a framework that organizes different types of places—from rural to urban—into a continuous spectrum to guide context-appropriate design and development.



TRAILSIDE TRANSECT

The team then proposed an alternative pattern based on future growth patterns and the committee's preference for walkable urbanism. The diagram recommends expanded use of missing middle housing, and higher quality frontage along both the greenway and ecologically sensitive areas. See the following page for transect definitions.



T1 Blue-Green Reserve



T2 Parks & Pasture



T3 Creekside Neighborhood



T4 Urban Neighborhood



T5 City Center



T6 Regional Center



Corridor Plan Trailside Transect Zones

T1 – Blue / Green Reserve

- Areas along the greenway where creeks, floodplains, and habitat are protected as a connected blue–green system. Trails and overlooks make these natural areas accessible without compromising their primary roles in ecology, water management, and conservation.

T2 – Parks and Pasture

- A landscape-first zone of parks, fields, and working pasture that hosts recreation, mountain bike trails, and productive agriculture. These spaces act as shared community backyards while keeping large areas pervious, open, and flexible over time.

T3 – Creekside Neighborhood

- Existing suburban neighborhoods retrofitted to face the creek and greenway with better walking, biking, and trail connections. New neighborhoods feature connected blocks, front doors on the trail, and a more sensitive approach to floodplains and creekside ecologies.

T4 – Urban Neighborhood

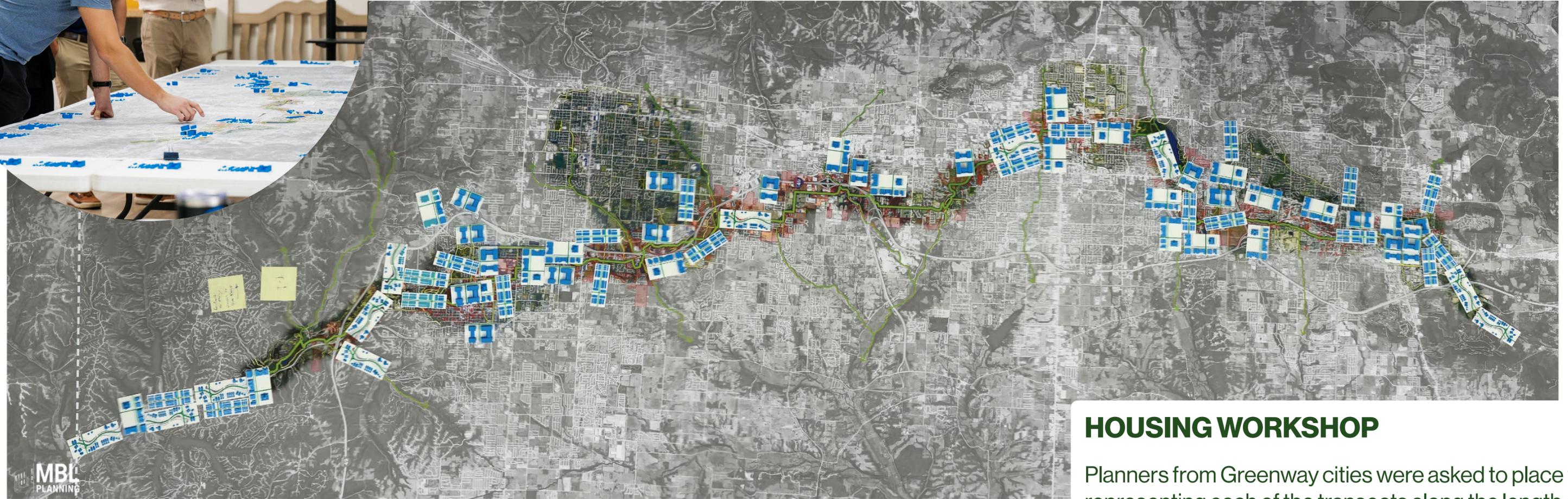
- Older, walkable neighborhoods near town centers that can add gentle density with incremental development, leveraging small, attached housing types and mixed-use corners. On-street bike routes and short blocks plug these areas directly into the greenway and nearby centers.

T5 – City Center

- Historic and emerging town centers where commercial, civic, and residential uses come together in a compact main-street or town-square environment. Public spaces, plazas, and streets are designed as a coherent, high-quality network that extends to and from the greenway.

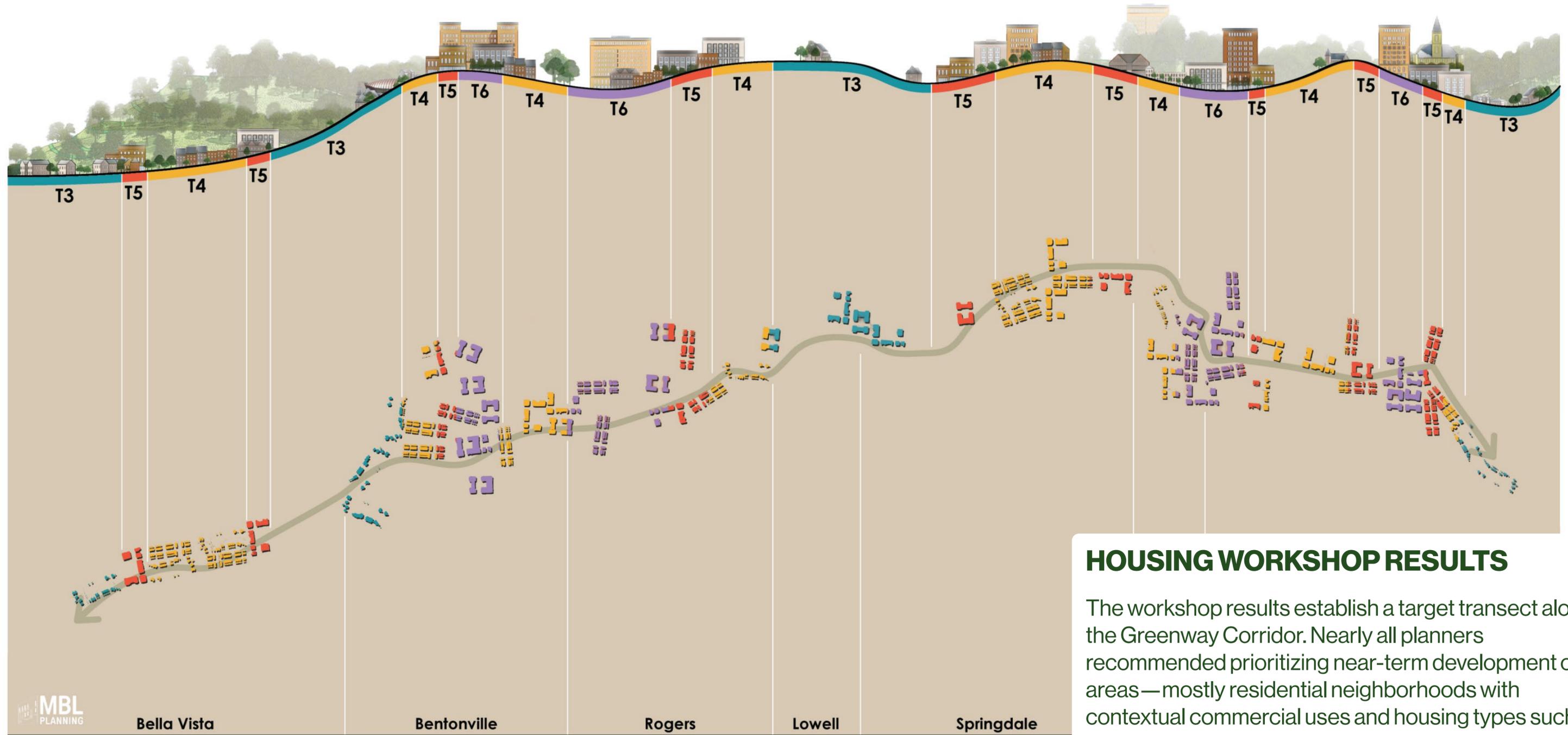
T6 – Regional Center

- Large-format commercial and institutional districts that are currently auto-oriented but poised for more urban, mixed-use redevelopment. New projects here leverage bigger sites to deliver regional-scale amenities, structured parking, and direct greenway connections in fewer, bolder moves.



HOUSING WORKSHOP

Planners from Greenway cities were asked to place tiles representing each of the transects along the length of the corridor. In a first round, planners acted as developers and were asked to place tiles in other jurisdictions. In a second round, planners critiqued and adjusted their individual community's tile placements. Finally, planners were asked to prioritize each transect type for resource allocation in the next five years.



HOUSING WORKSHOP RESULTS

The workshop results establish a target transect along the Greenway Corridor. Nearly all planners recommended prioritizing near-term development of T4 areas—mostly residential neighborhoods with contextual commercial uses and housing types such as townhouses and small apartment buildings. This process sets the stage for efficient discovery and development of Sub-Area Plans.

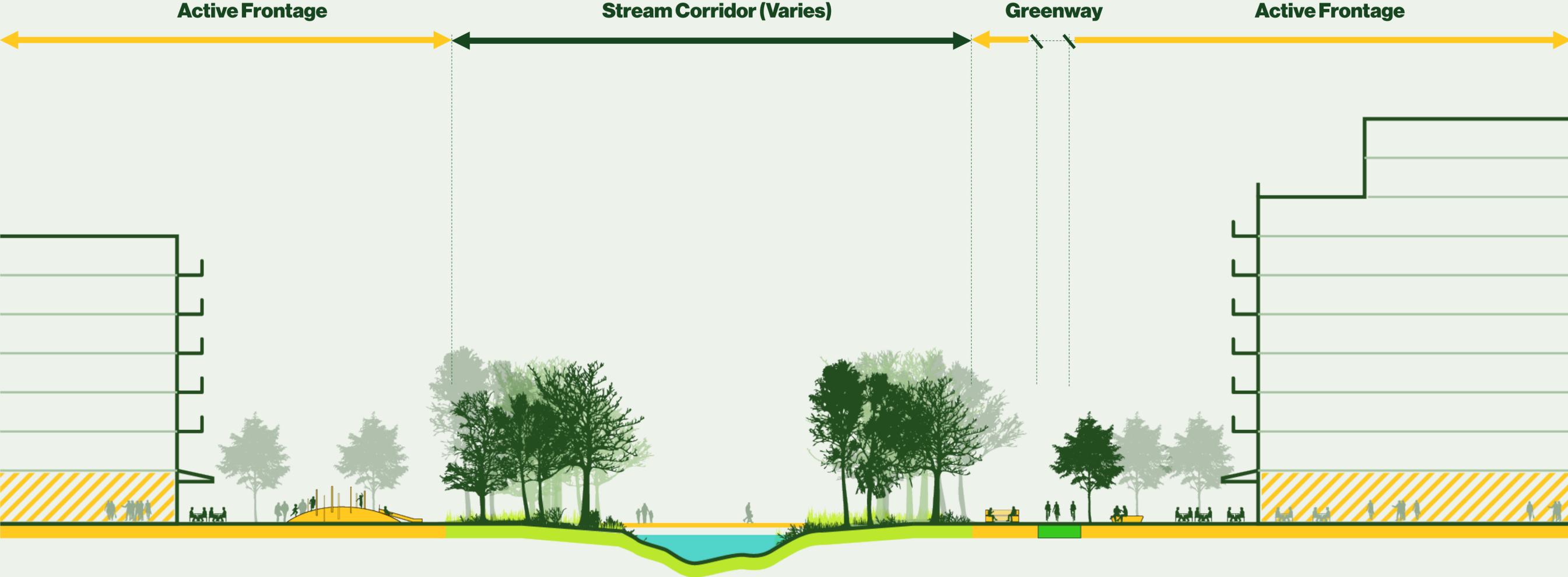
FRONTING THE GREENWAY

To best leverage the Greenway for smart growth, new developments should front the Greenway to create a lively edge that draws vibrant activity throughout the day. This strategy and orientation will strengthen neighborhood connections, support local businesses, and ensure the Greenway functions as both transportation infrastructure and a social destination.



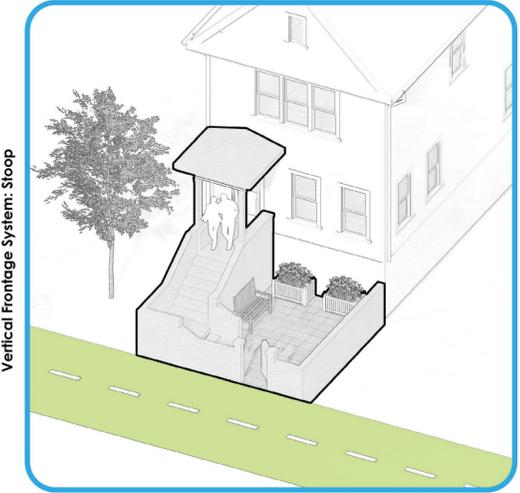
FRONTING THE GREENWAY

Active frontages will appear as occasional trailside destinations in lower-density areas, but become more continuous as density increases. In mixed-use or higher-density settings, both sides of the Greenway can support activated ground-floor uses—whether new construction or repurposed commercial and light-industrial buildings.



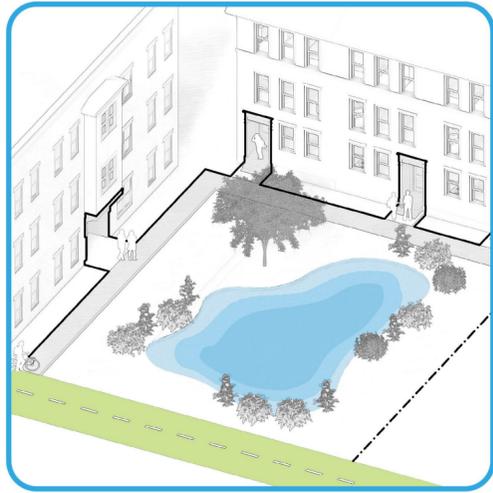
GREENWAY FRONTAGE MATRIX

The matrix describes how horizontal frontage systems (forecourt, promenade, plaza, etc.) can be multiplied by vertical frontage systems (porch, balcony, storefront, etc.) to create a large menu of appropriate greenway frontages. Transect zones appropriate to each frontage strategy are indicated by colored bars on the horizontal axis, while building types are similarly indicated on the vertical axis.



Horizontal Frontage System: Forecourt

Selected Example: Single Family - T3



Horizontal Frontage System: Sponge Park

Selected Example: Townhouse - T4



Horizontal Frontage System: Promenade

Selected Example: Multi-Family - T5



Horizontal Frontage System: Promenade

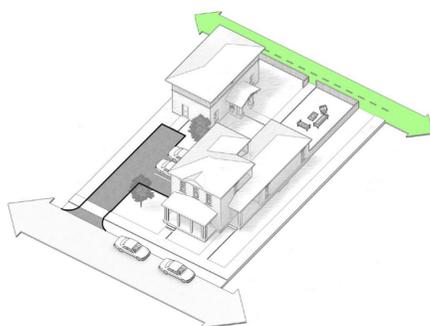
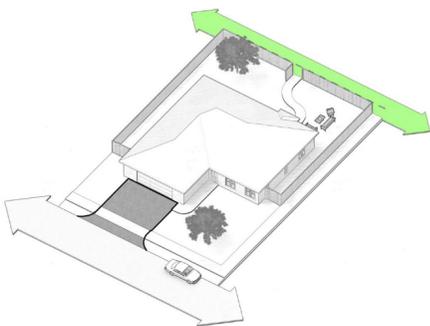
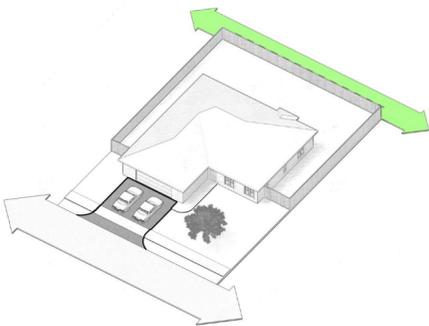
Selected Example: Multi-Family - T5

LOADING TRANSITION DIAGRAMS

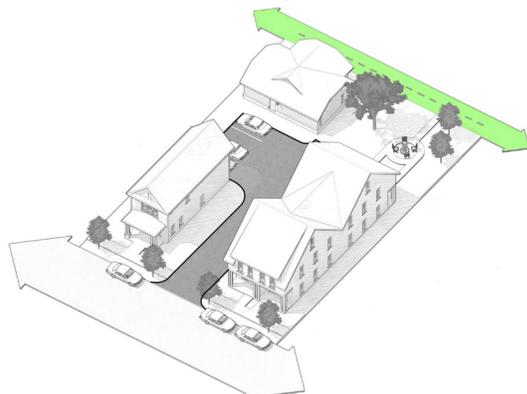
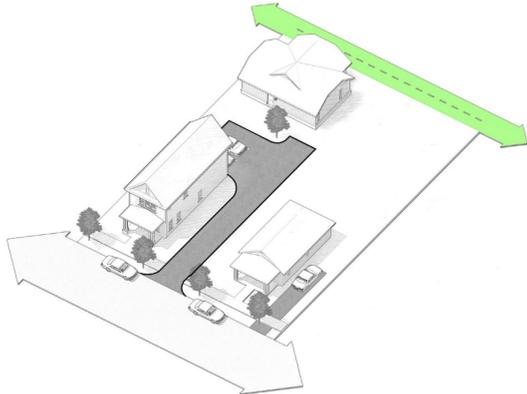
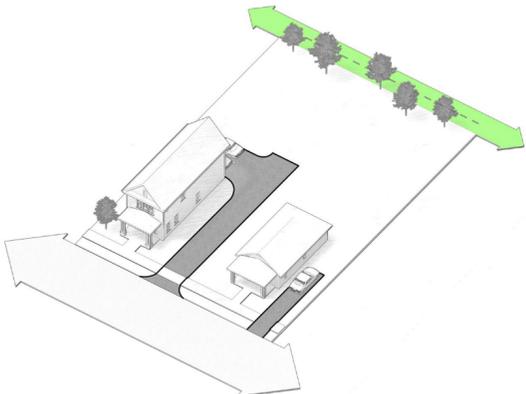
For each trailside transect zone, the team developed transitional diagrams showing how automobile and pedestrian circulation could be improved on existing developments, and how ideal conditions might work in new developments.

See Appendix for further details.

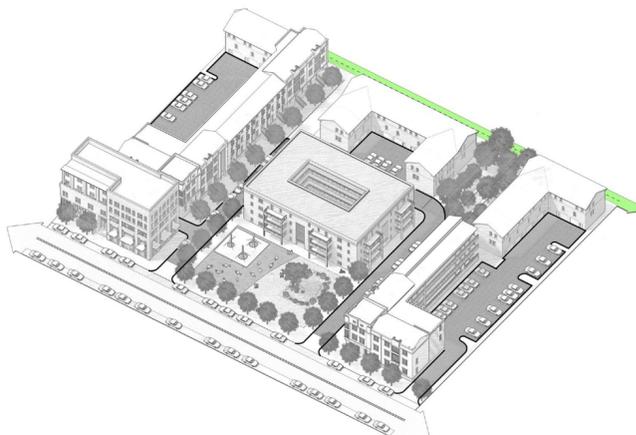
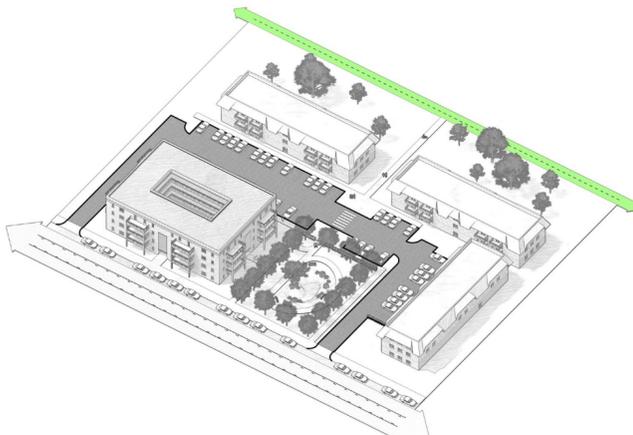
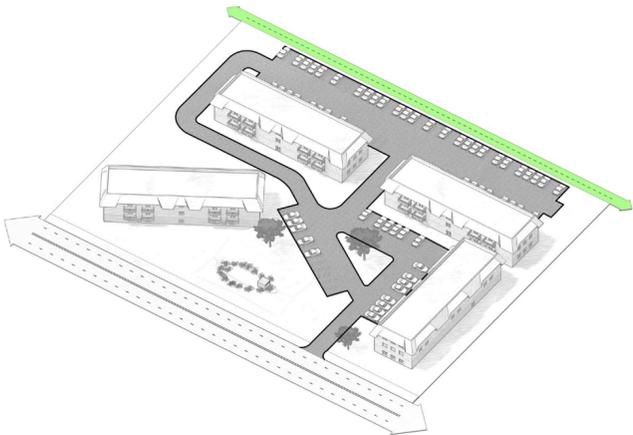
T3 Creekside Neighborhood



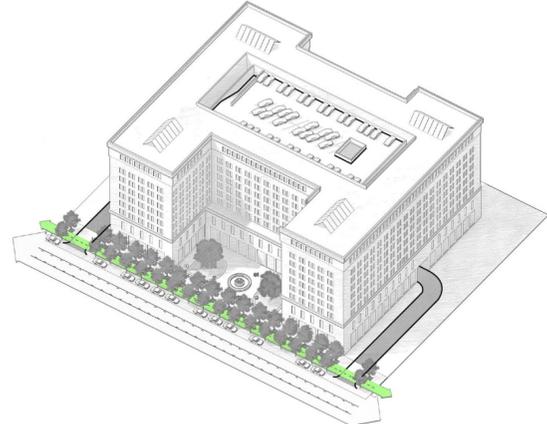
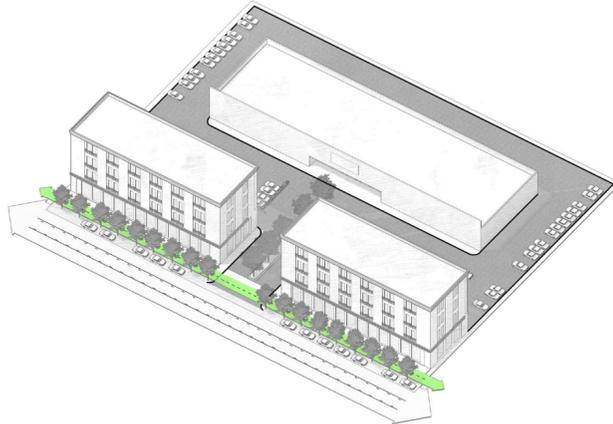
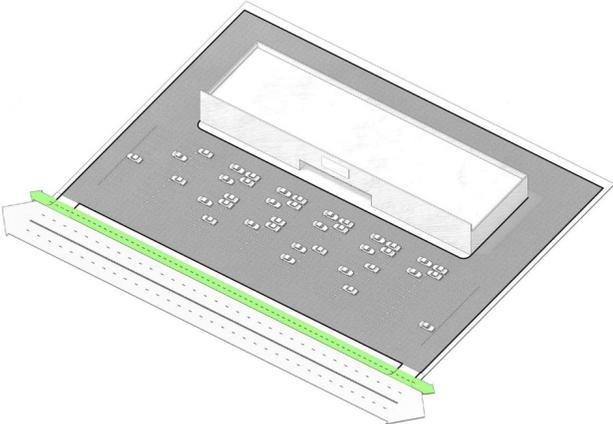
T4 Urban Neighborhood



T5 City Center



T6 Regional Center



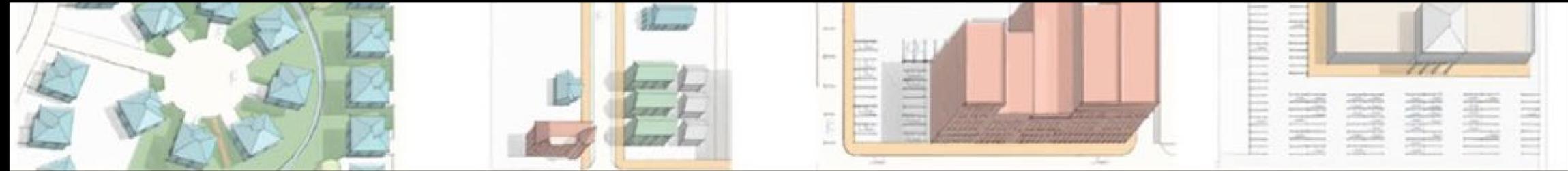
Existing

Improved

Optimal

TRANSITIONAL POLICIES

These transitional policies bring key benefits in increasing both the quality and supply of attainable housing.

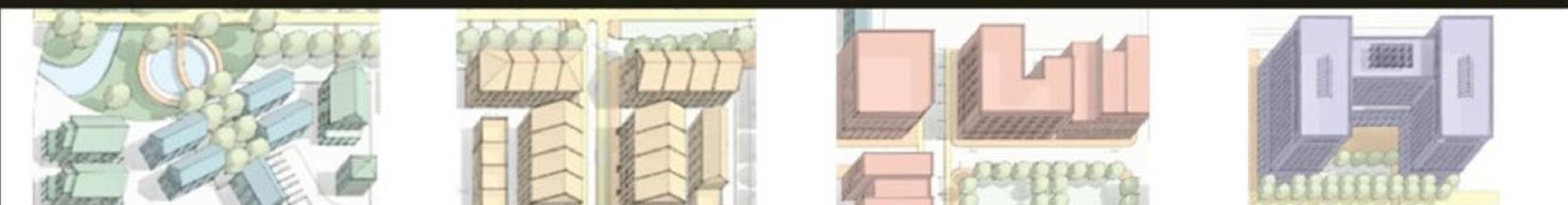


	Existing 3: Suburban Neighborhood		Existing 4: Legacy Urban		Existing 5: Town Center		Existing 6: Auto-Oriented Commercial	
Existing Housing Types	Single-Detached Large		Single-Detached		Townhouses		No Housing Allowed	
Average Unit Size (sqft)	2,800 - 4,000		1,500 - 2,500		1,800	1,000	-	
Market Demand	<u>High</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Median</u>
For Sale	\$667,000	\$456,450	\$460,000	\$395,000	\$850,000	\$500,000	-	-
Monthly Rent	\$3,850	\$2,300	\$2,300	\$1,350	\$4,800	\$2,500	-	-



	Cottage Court		Townhouses		Mixed-Use		Large-Scale Apts	
Introduced Housing Type	Cottage Court		Townhouses		Mixed-Use		Large-Scale Apts	
Modeled Lot Size (SqFt)	12,000		17,500		20,000		150,000	
Number of Units	6		4		52		120	
Units per Acre	22		10		113		35	
Unit Size (sqft)	1,300		1,800	1,000	500 - 1,300		500 - 1,000	
Market Demand	<u>High</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Median</u>
Avg Sale Price	\$465,000	\$320,000	\$773,000	\$434,000	\$340,000	\$284,000	-	-
Monthly Rents	\$3,300	\$2,400	\$4,200	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$1,800	\$1,863	\$1,600

Trailside 3: Creekside Neighborhood **Trailside 4: Urban Neighborhood** **Trailside 5: City Center** **Trailside 6: Regional Center**



Target Place Type

TRANSITION TO THE TRAILSIDE TRANSECT

Transition from the existing automobile-oriented context to the trailside transects will require careful calibration of policies and incentives for each zone within each municipality. However, common themes are already emerging.

POTENTIAL POLICY LEVERS BY TRANSECT ZONE

Existing Condition	E3: Suburban Neighborhood	E4: Legacy Urban	E5: Town Center/Aging Corridor	E6: Auto-Oriented Commercial/Big Box
INFILL/SMALL SCALE REDEVELOPMENT				
Policy or Regulatory Lever				
Tweak - "0" Story Fixes				
<i>Look for locations within existing development pattern to create ped/bike access to trail (add gates where needed)</i>	X	X	X	X
Housing Affordability				
<i>Permit multiple (detached) principal units per lot (cottage courts)</i>	X	X		
<i>Permit ADUs at higher level than new state requirements</i>	X	X		
<i>Reduce minimum lot size</i>	X	X		
<i>Reduce minimum lot width/street frontage</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Reduce minimum setbacks</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Permit buildings to front trails, alleys, and other public spaces</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Permit fee-simple townhouses</i>		X	X	X
<i>Increase maximum lot coverage</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Establish maximum SF lot size adjacent to trail</i>	X	X		
<i>Reduce minimum parking</i>	X	X	X	
<i>Increase maximum heights - at least 4 stories</i>		X		
<i>Permit mixed-use</i>		X	X	X
<i>Permit residential</i>			X	X
<i>Increase maximum heights - at least 6 stories</i>			X	X
<i>Remove minimum parking/permit shared parking</i>			X	X
<i>Remove minimum lot sizes</i>			X	X
<i>Encourage/require district-level stormwater management</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Support building code changes regarding fire sprinklers and single-stair small apartments</i>		X	X	X
Qualitative/Placemaking Changes				
<i>Require public ped/bike access to Greenway in all future development</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Prohibit privacy fences in future development abutting Greenway</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Require building frontage, especially in mixed-use zones, within XX feet of Greenway</i>		X	X	X
<i>Prohibit building "backage" along the Greenway</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Establish wider easements to provide more publicly accessible trailside space</i>		X	X	X
<i>Permit (small scale) trailside retail</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Encourage active uses/frontages in designated key locations</i>			X	X
<i>Prohibit parking lots abutting trail except for publicly accessible trailhead parking</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Require "trailscapeing" in future development abutting the Greenway</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Permit mixed-use within XX feet of Greenway</i>				
DISTRICT-LEVEL - GREENFIELD OR LARGE SCALE REDEVELOPMENT				
<i>Establish subdivision or large scale development standards for creating an interconnected network of streets and blocks, maximum block lengths, and range of building and/or frontage types</i>	X	X	X	X
Target: Aspirational Condition	T3: Creekside Neighborhood	T4: Urban Neighborhood	T5: City Center	T6: Regional Center

Six Projects for the Region

3.6 Sustainably Manage Stormwater in Sponge Parks

New compact neighborhoods concentrated in the Greenway Corridor will require innovative infrastructure strategies, including the management of stormwater. Today, development projects, in addition to growing most rapidly in suburban peripheries, are required to individually manage stormwater on site, or pay a fee in lieu of treatment.

‘Sponge Parks’ —public spaces that collect, retain, detain, and treat stormwater from multiple lots and development--could serve the corridor’s need for new stormwater management.

Moreover, these parks could also provide a distinctive landscape with ecological

performance designed for a mix of publicly-accessible program and stormwater collection. These places can become destinations in and of themselves, further driving the growth of vibrant new neighborhoods.

The Greenway’s unique location in low-lying creek corridors can be leveraged to promote the creation of ‘Sponge Parks’ at key points throughout the corridor. These parks would be coordinated with a regional stormwater management approach that incentivizes development projects by handling their stormwater collection needs.

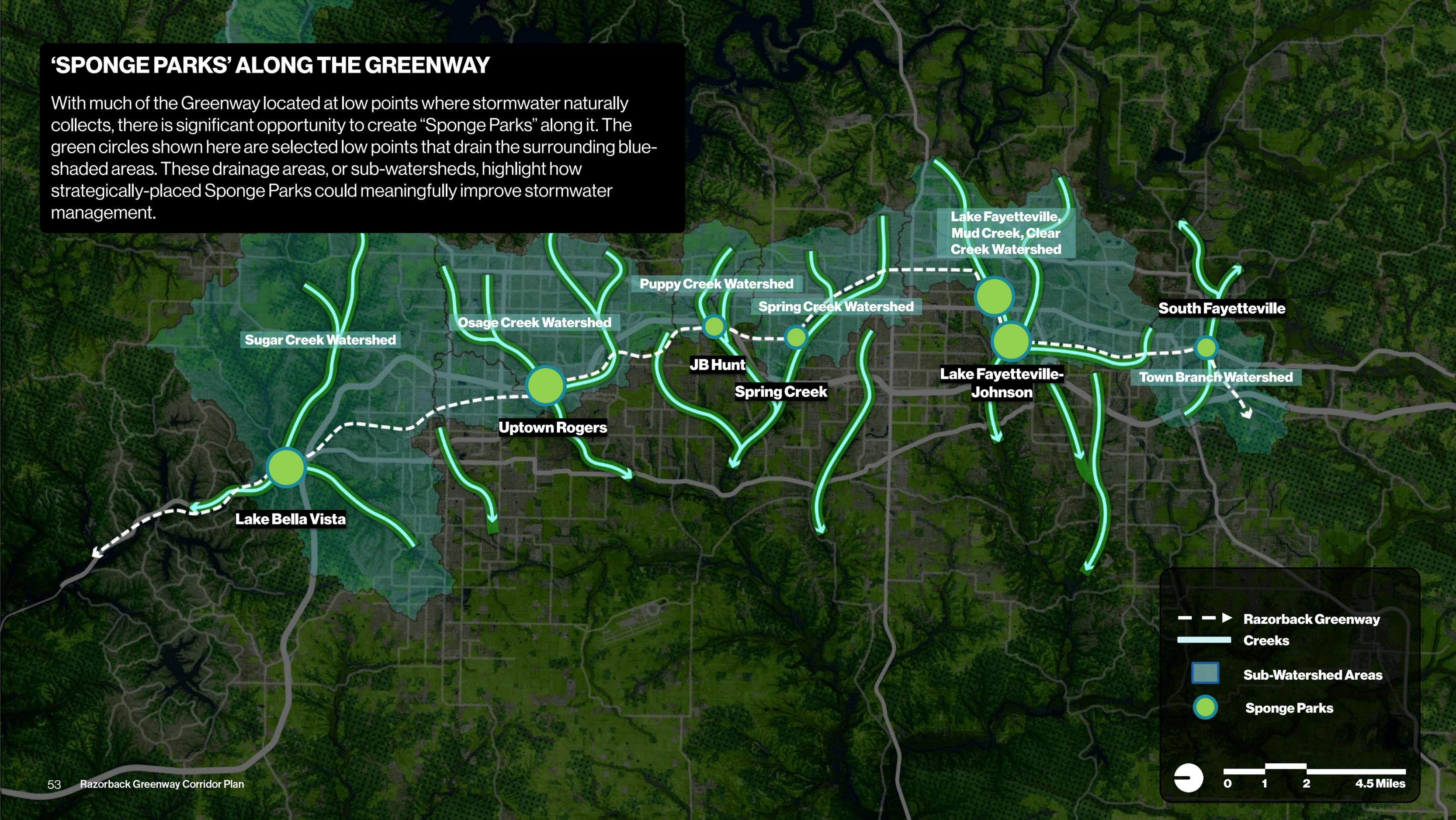
'SPONGE PARKS' THAT MANAGE STORMWATER AND INCENTIVIZE LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Precedent: At Old Fourth Ward Park in Atlanta, a two-acre detention and retention facility manages stormwater runoff for the surrounding 125 acres of mixed-use development and multi-family housing. Originally built by the city of Atlanta, the project enabled and incentivized high-density residential development--the same type of housing needed in Northwest Arkansas to accommodate the region's growth.

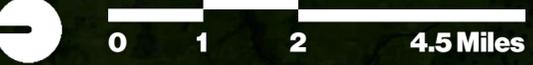


‘SPONGE PARKS’ ALONG THE GREENWAY

With much of the Greenway located at low points where stormwater naturally collects, there is significant opportunity to create “Sponge Parks” along it. The green circles shown here are selected low points that drain the surrounding blue-shaded areas. These drainage areas, or sub-watersheds, highlight how strategically-placed Sponge Parks could meaningfully improve stormwater management.



-  Razorback Greenway
-  Creeks
-  Sub-Watershed Areas
-  Sponge Parks



CASCADES PARK TALLAHASSEE, FL

Disguised as a public park with trails, a playground, and an amphitheater, Cascades Park functions as a stormwater system for nearly 1,500 acres. The park's opening catalyzed investment around Gaines Street, including an adjacent transformative \$160M mixed-use development.

Site Details	Implementation	Impacts	Funding	Challenges Faced	Success Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park Size: 24 acres • Opened: 2014 • Total Cost: \$34 million (\$47M in 2025\$) • Sources: 95% public (local sales tax), 5% private 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site of a previous park; contamination discovered in 1989. • Designated as the city's first Brownfield Area in 2000, launching a major environmental cleanup effort. • Intergovernmental agencies established regional stormwater goals that ensured area could accommodate greater development. 	<p>The park has successfully stimulated redevelopment in the surrounding area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaines Street Corridor, home to the Cascades Project, a large-scale phased mixed-use development. • New construction and renovation of existing retail along FAMU Way south of the site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormwater component funded primarily through local penny sales tax dollars (approved by voters in 2000). • ~\$4M in other park amenities funded through grants and donations (about 25% nonprofit or private, and 75% from other local government agencies). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long remediation timeline • Time and cost overruns • The vision for the park shifted from being truly passive to a regional centerpiece. Rather than a stormwater retention facility, it was re-envisioned as a tourist destination, with programming toward activation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency, a joint city-county entity, oversaw planning and construction • Leveraged a brownfield opportunity to catalyze economic development. The park's opening spurred \$400 million in private investment.

RODNEY COOK SR. PARK ATLANTA, GA

Cook Park captures and stores up to 10 million gallons of stormwater to prevent neighborhood flooding. It has also revitalized the Vine City neighborhood and led to several nearby multifamily residential developments.

Site Details	Implementation	Impacts	Funding	Challenges Faced	Success Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park Size: 16 acres • Opened: 2021 • Total Cost: \$40 million (\$48M in 2025\$) • Sources: 65% public (City of Atlanta), 35% private (raised by Trust for Public Land) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage from a 2002 tropical storm spurred the project. • A coalition of organizations — including the City of Atlanta, Trust for Public Land, Invest Atlanta, and the National Monuments Foundation — collaborated to design and fund the park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The park is credited with initiating a revival of the Vine City neighborhood, driving increased real estate values. • The construction of Mercedes-Benz Stadium in 2017 further drove neighborhood investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$27 million from City of Atlanta revenue bonds and the Department of Watershed Management's capital budget. • \$13 million from philanthropy raised by the Trust for Public Land. • Lead gifts of \$5 million and \$2.5 million from major foundations. • Additional contributions from foundations and donors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdated infrastructure complicated construction • Property acquisitions • Lead-contaminated soil • Power transmission lines limited design flexibility 	<p>Multi-agency collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest Atlanta helped acquire and assemble flood-prone land for redevelopment • Department of Watershed Management funded and built the stormwater infrastructure. • The Trust for Public Land led design and fundraising for above-ground amenities

Six Projects for the Region

3.7 Complete a Commuter Bike Network

Northwest Arkansas has built one of the country's most celebrated regional trails, yet its full potential as daily commuting infrastructure remains untapped. National and international precedents show that protected, well-connected bike networks can dramatically increase everyday ridership in a short period of time.

To understand how the Greenway could evolve into a full mobility corridor, it is essential to view it not as one 40-mile facility but as a series of segments that serve residents differently depending on their proximity to jobs, schools, and neighborhood centers. Furthermore, very

few people experience it's entire length. The Plan explores where those high-opportunity segments are located, where gaps limit everyday use, and how strategic investments could create a connected network. Urban loops—building on the success of the Rogers Railyard Loop as a clear and legible idea--can knit together city centers, complete streets, and future transit along 71B.

The Greenway can evolve as not only a beloved recreational trail, but as critical infrastructure for daily travel.

COPENHAGEN SUPERHIGHWAYS

Copenhagen, DK

Precedent: Copenhagen's Bicycle Superhighways are regional, high-comfort bike routes that make cycling a fast, safe option for daily travel. Their success shows how continuous, well-connected corridors can shift travel behavior. They offer a model for Northwest Arkansas as it strengthens the Greenway and builds a unified bike network.



IMPACT OF PROTECTED BIKE LANES

Protected bike infrastructure separated from vehicular traffic increases comfort and safety, encouraging a wider range of users.

In the two U.S. cities that first started building modern protected bike lanes, New York and Washington D.C., bike commuting doubled from 2008 to 2013.

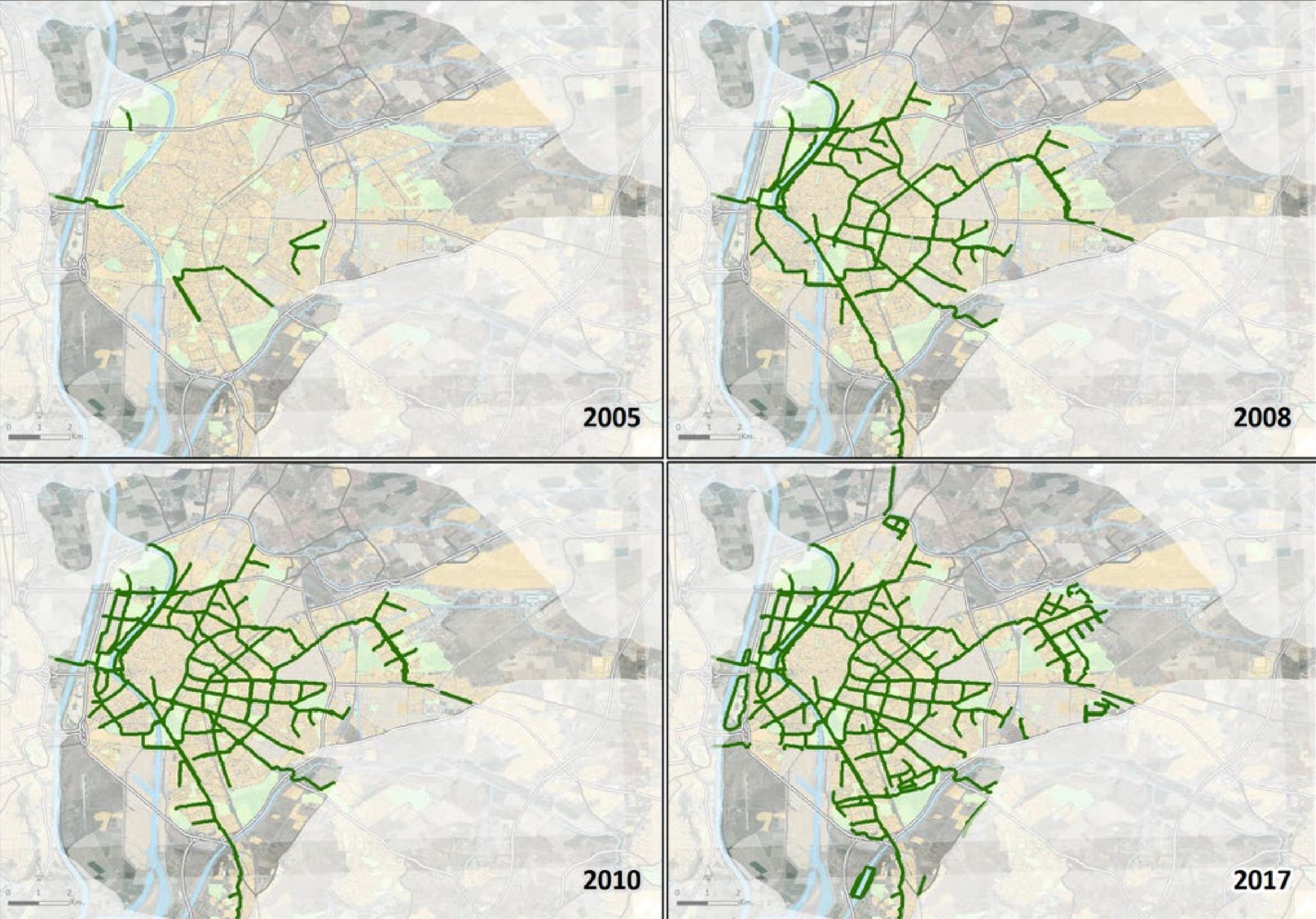
Source: US Census - NYC and DC, protected lane pioneers, just doubled biking rates in 4 years



COMPLETE NETWORKS

In 2007, the city of Seville, Spain, rapidly connected a network of protected bike lanes. They grew the bike network from 7.5 miles of protected bike lanes in 2006 to 94 miles in 2013. During the same time-period the number of bike trips grew 435 percent from 3 million in 2006 to more than 16 million in 2013.

Source: R. Marqués and V. Hernández-Herrador - On the effect of networks of cycle-tracks on the risk of cycling: The case of Seville



Barter, Paul. "Parking and Seville's Network of Segregated Bicycle Lanes." Parking Reform Atlas, 20 May 2021, www.parkingreformatlas.org/parking-reform-cases-1/parking-and-seville-s-network-of-segregated-bicycle-lanes.

40 MILE GREENWAY

Most users do not experience all 40 miles of the Greenway at one time. Some may only experience certain segments on a day-to-day basis. It is therefore important to conceptualize the Greenway in segments that reflect the experience of users.



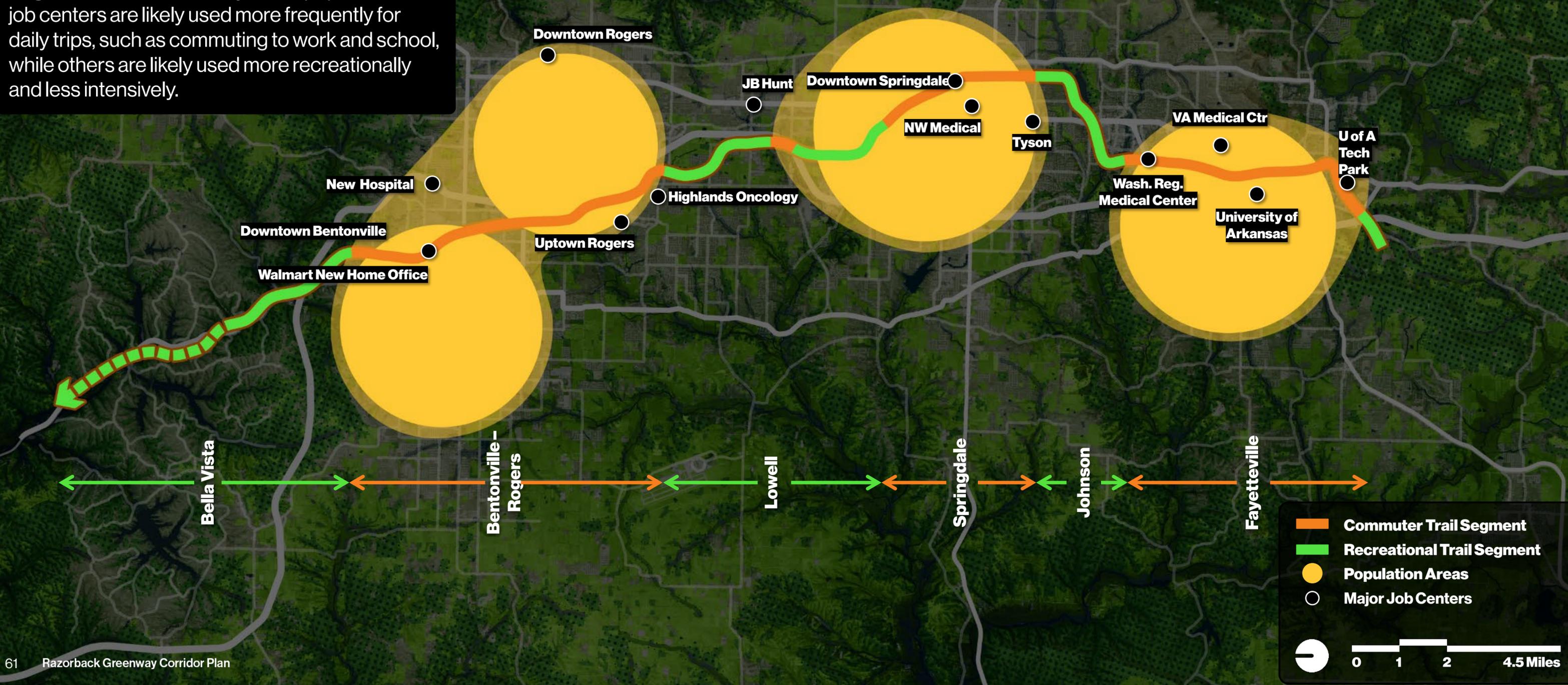
-  Razorback Greenway
-  Major Job Centers



COMMUTER & RECREATIONAL TRAIL SEGMENTS

By overlaying population and job centers, we can see segments of the Greenway.

Segments of the Greenway within population and job centers are likely used more frequently for daily trips, such as commuting to work and school, while others are likely used more recreationally and less intensively.



CITY LOOP TRAILS

Greenway cities can build 'City Loops' that facilitate high-quality bike connectivity, emphasizing proposed commuter segments of the Greenway which target the areas of most intense use. The 'City Loops' will build on the success of the Rogers Railyard Loop and link existing and planned bike infrastructure. These improvements are an essential next step towards a fully protected and connected commuter network.

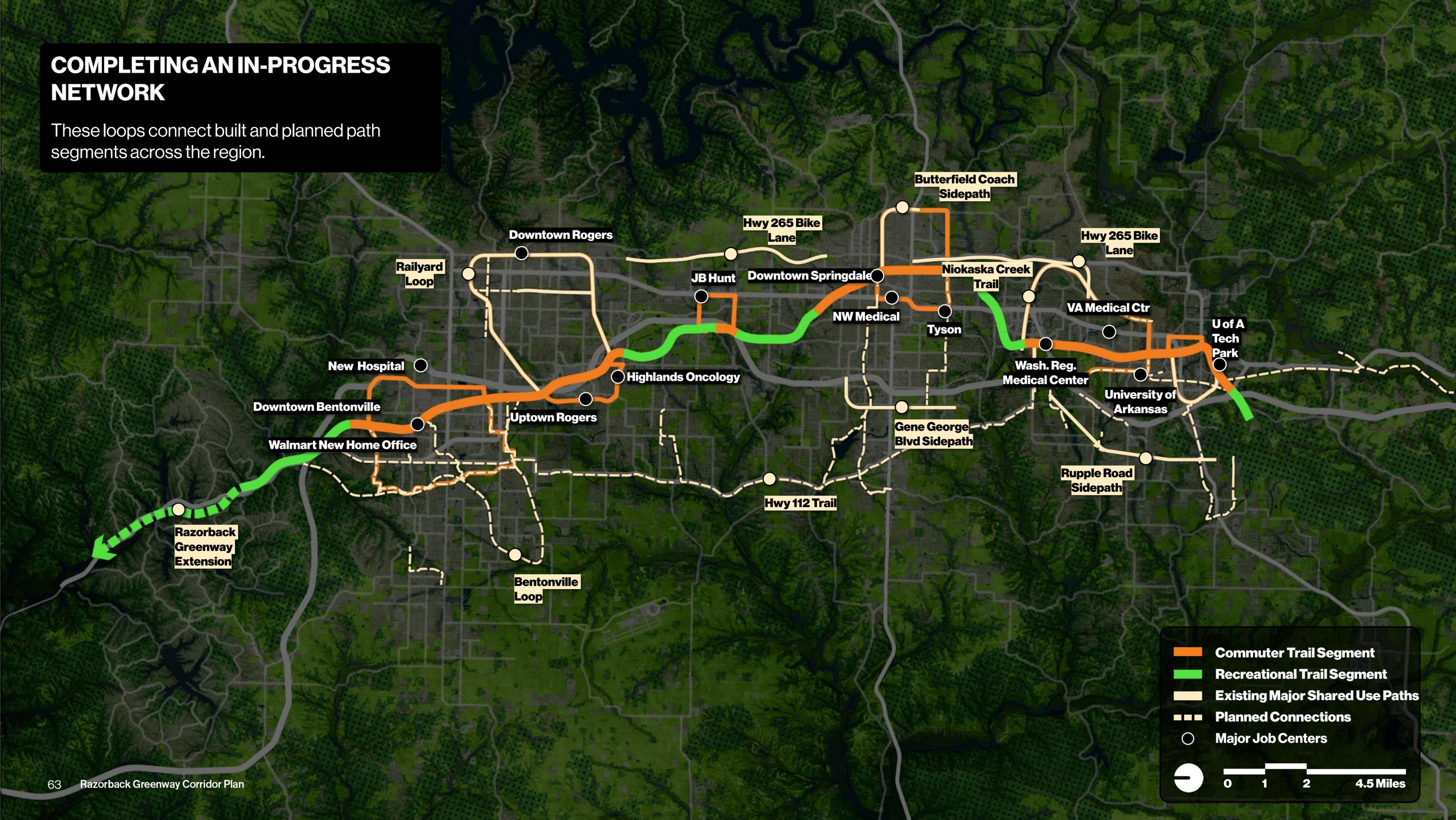


Commuter Trail Segment
Recreational Trail Segment
Major Job Centers

0 1 2 4.5 Miles

COMPLETING AN IN-PROGRESS NETWORK

These loops connect built and planned path segments across the region.

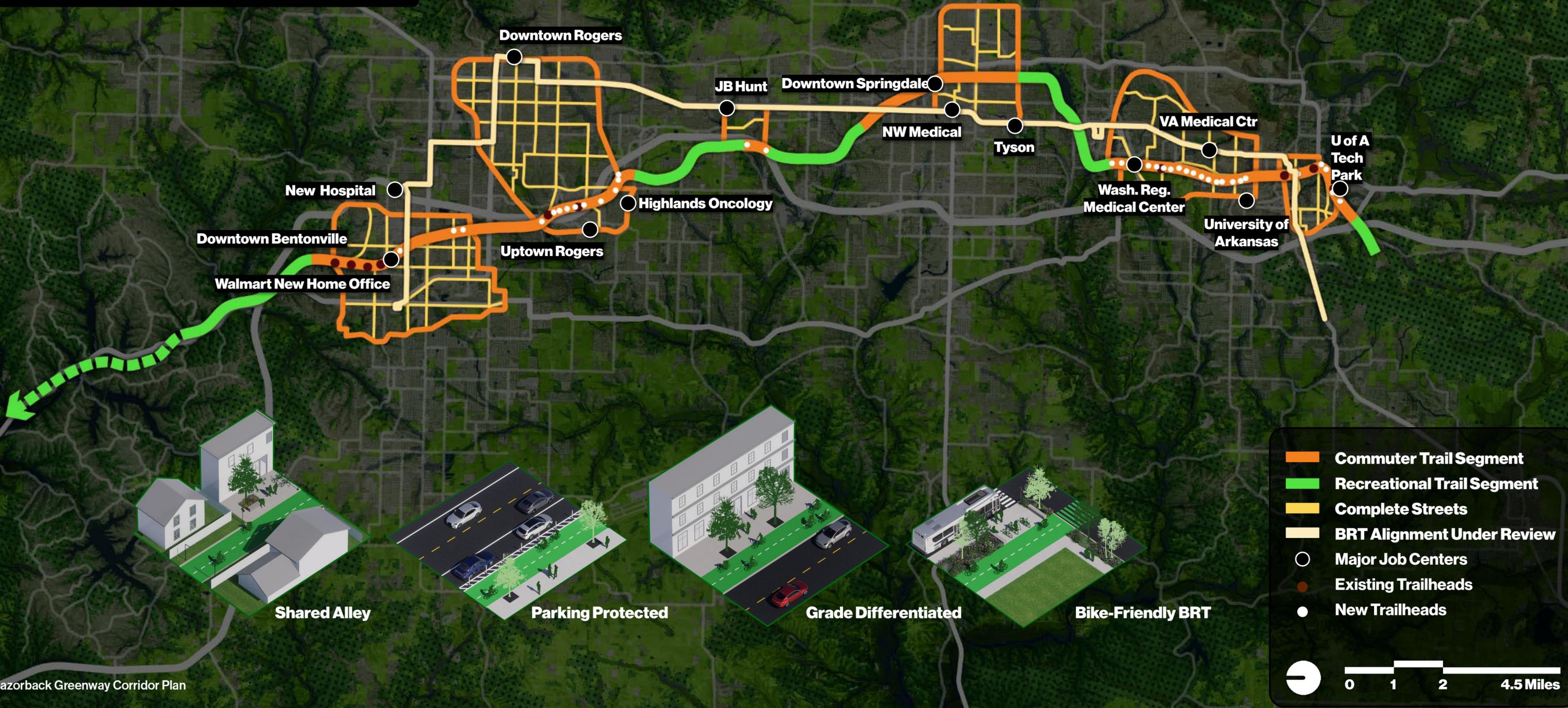


- Commuter Trail Segment
- Recreational Trail Segment
- Existing Major Shared Use Paths
- - - - - Planned Connections
- Major Job Centers

0 1 2 4.5 Miles

A COMMUTER NETWORK

Considering the interface between the City Loop system, complete streets, and a potential BRT route along 71B, the region has an opportunity to greatly increase multi- and inter-modal travel, connecting people between home and work.



- █ Commuter Trail Segment
- █ Recreational Trail Segment
- █ Complete Streets
- █ BRT Alignment Under Review
- Major Job Centers
- Existing Trailheads
- New Trailheads

0 1 2 4.5 Miles

A COMMUTER CORRIDOR

Commuter corridors can be fronted with neighborhoods that provide direct, easy access. In key areas, widening the trail or adding a parallel path can reduce congestion and support more users traveling between population centers and job hubs.



Easement

8' Secondary Path

Stormwater Swale

12' Shared-Use Path

Stormwater Swale

12' Shared-Use Path

Creek Corridor

Six Projects for the Region

3.8 Connect Destinations and Experiences

The Razorback Greenway has become one of Northwest Arkansas's most recognizable regional assets, yet many stretches remain under-activated and disconnected from the cultural energy transforming the region's cities.

As neighborhoods grow, the Greenway is poised to play a larger role as a connector of experiences—linking arts, retail, open spaces, and community life across the seven cities. According to survey results,

residents desire more places to gather, shop, and experience local culture along the trail, signaling a clear opportunity to shape the Greenway with continuous activation.

Ultimately, the Greenway can evolve into a dynamic cultural asset with destinations that complement adjacent uses, including vibrant neighborhoods, recreational areas, and employment centers.

THE BELTLINE Atlanta, GA

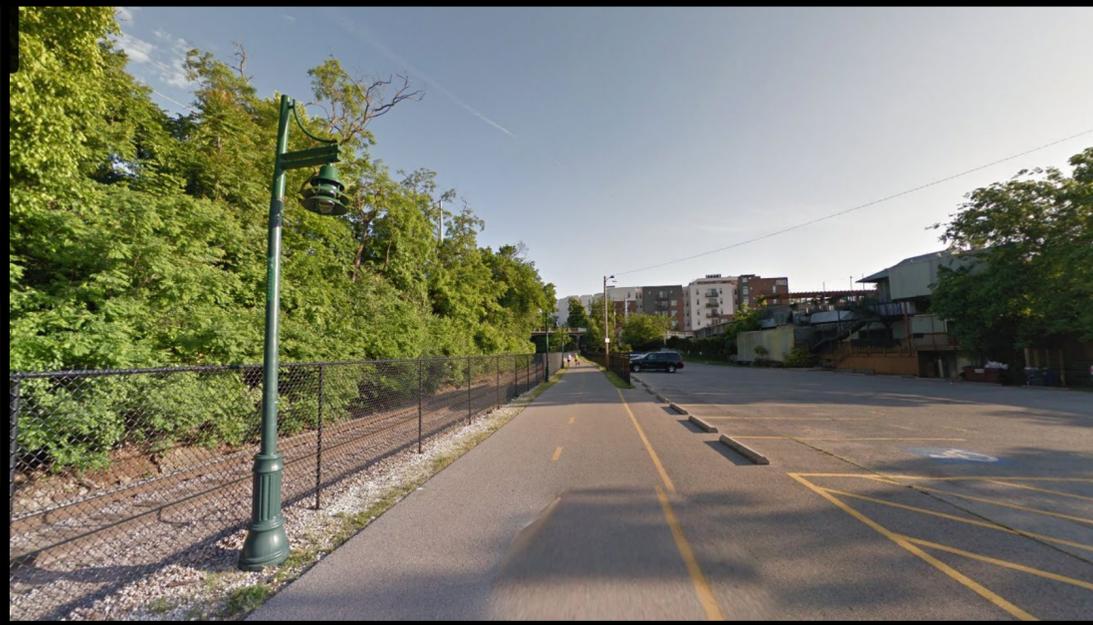
Along the Beltline, companies, businesses, and communities see benefits from adjacent high-quality bike infrastructure. The Beltline has driven the creation of new urban destinations, and these destinations in turn have created year-round vibrancy and activity along the corridor.

A third of Mail Chimp's employees bike to work, and a third of visitors to Ponce City Market arrive on foot or by bike.



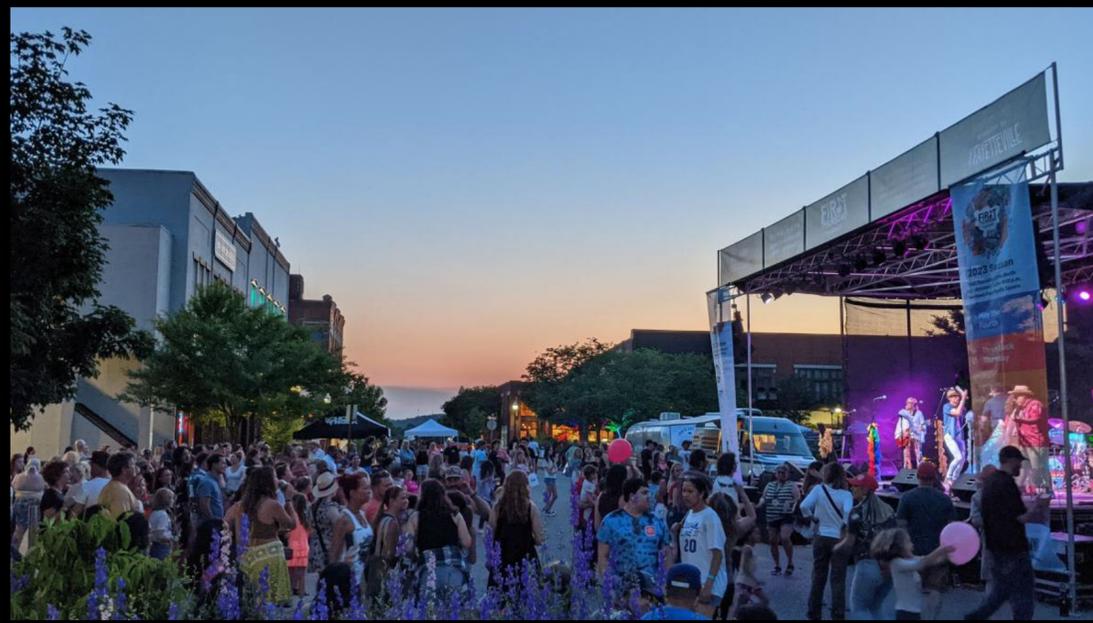
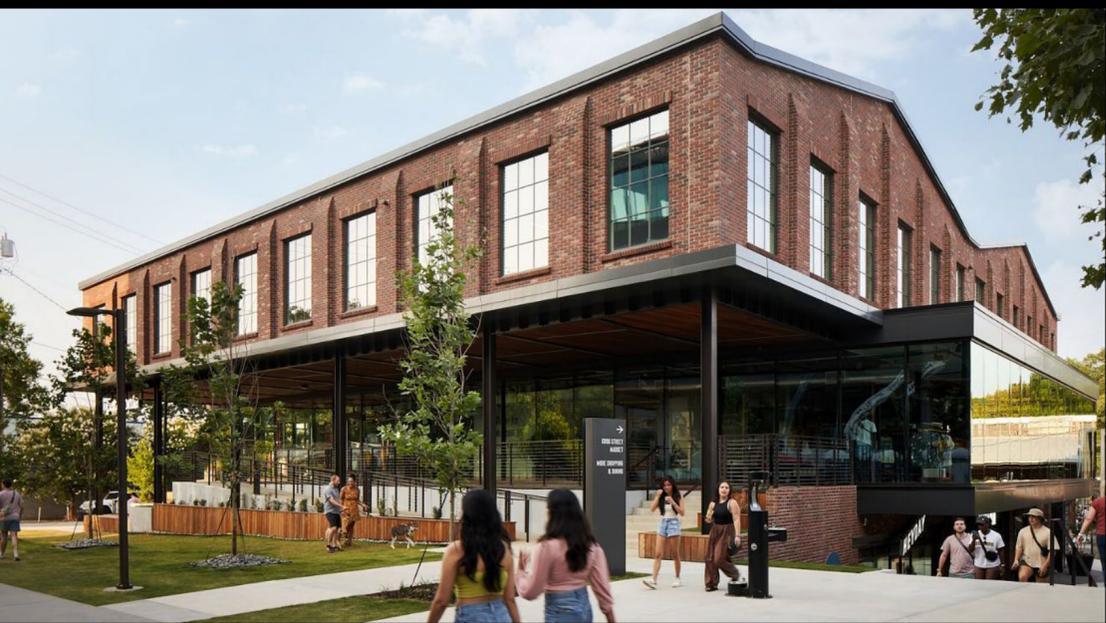
THE GREENWAY TODAY

While the Greenway does provide direct access to some local and regional destinations, there are large stretches of trail, both within and outside population centers, with very few sites for recreation, entertainment, retail, or cultural energy.



FUTURE GREENWAY DESTINATIONS

The region has an opportunity to site a range of destinations with diverse program along the length of the Greenway, with the goal of achieving vibrancy at varying intensities and scales.



DOWNTOWN INVESTMENTS

Recent economic growth and significant philanthropic support has spurred downtown investments across the region that support cultural, civic, and community activity.



Sources, clockwise from top left: Architect Magazine, Talk Business & Politics, Rogers Historical Museum, ABC5 News, Architectural Record, Northwest Arkansas Democrat Gazette. Image sources, clockwise from top left: Walton Family Foundation, Visit Bentonville, Walton Family Foundation, Timothy Hursley via Architectural Record, Walton Family Foundation.

NWA DESTINATIONS

Place-based investments in and near downtowns are supporting growth in tourism and visitation to NWA.



**Growth in NWA
Visitor Spending**
(2019-23)

+26%
(+\$410M; compare
to 24% statewide)



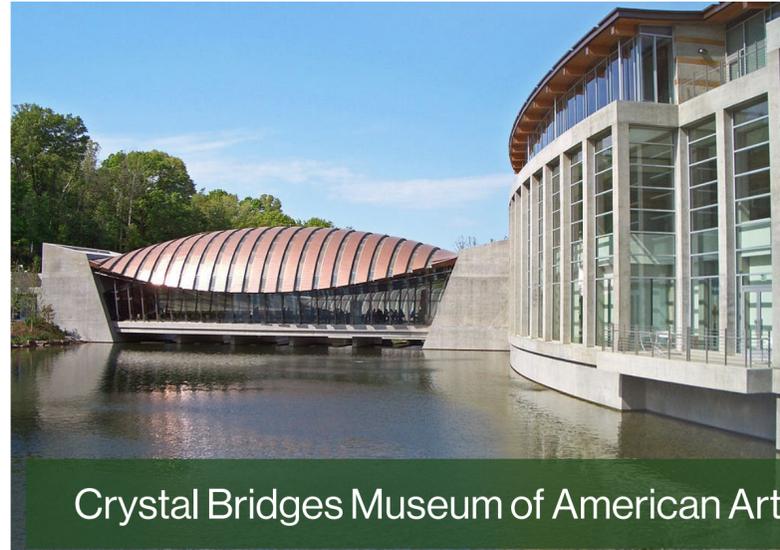
**Growth in XNA
Passenger Vol.**
(2019-24)

+26%
(compare to +6% at
LIT - Little Rock, +5%
nationally)



**Growth in NWA
Hotel Revenues**
(2019-24)

+38%
(compare to +31%
statewide)



Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art



Luther George Park



Coler Mountain Bike Preserve

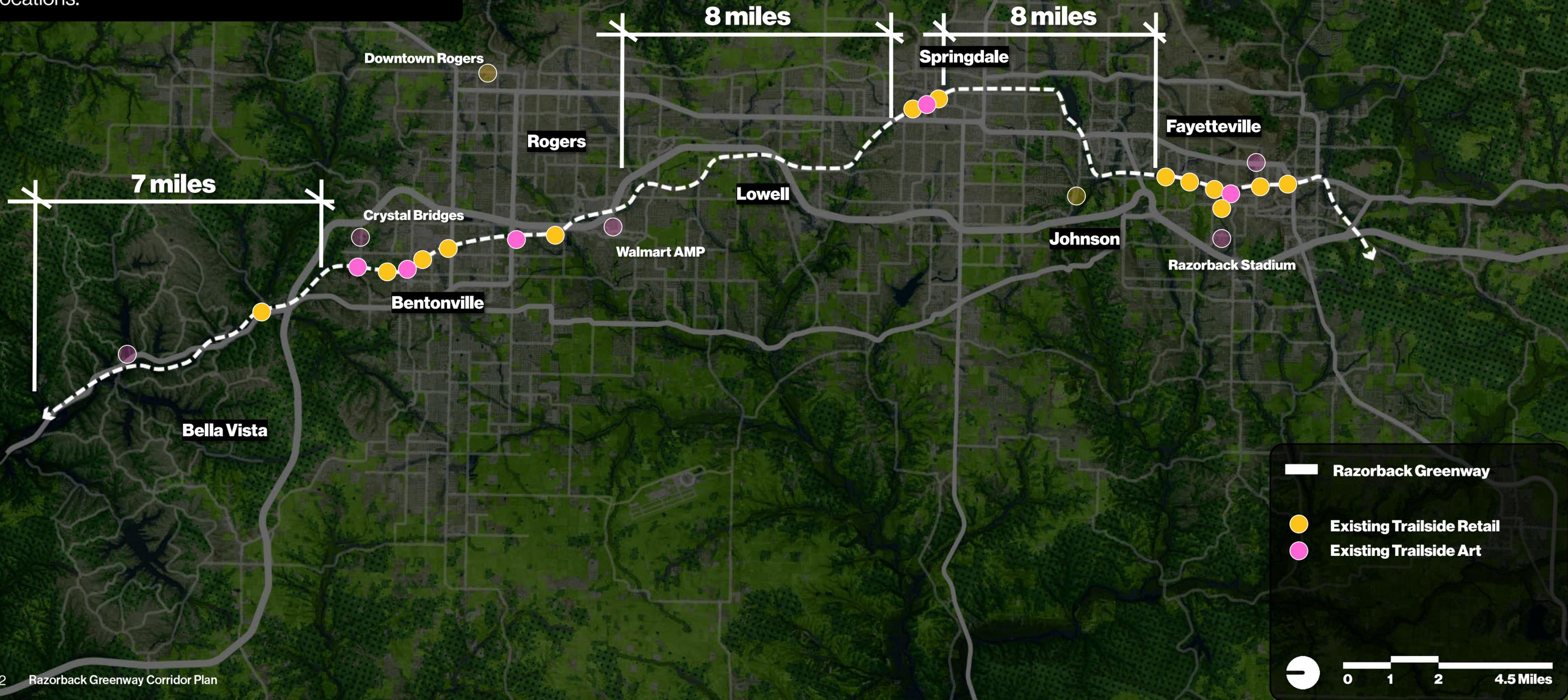


TheaterSquared

Sources: Arkansas.com interactive Economic Impact of Tourism reports accessed March 24, 2025; Bureau of Transportation Statistics; CoStar. Image sources, clockwise from top left: Wikimedia Commons/Charvex, Wikimedia Commons/Brandonrush, Razorbackgreenway.org, Flickr/Granger Meador.

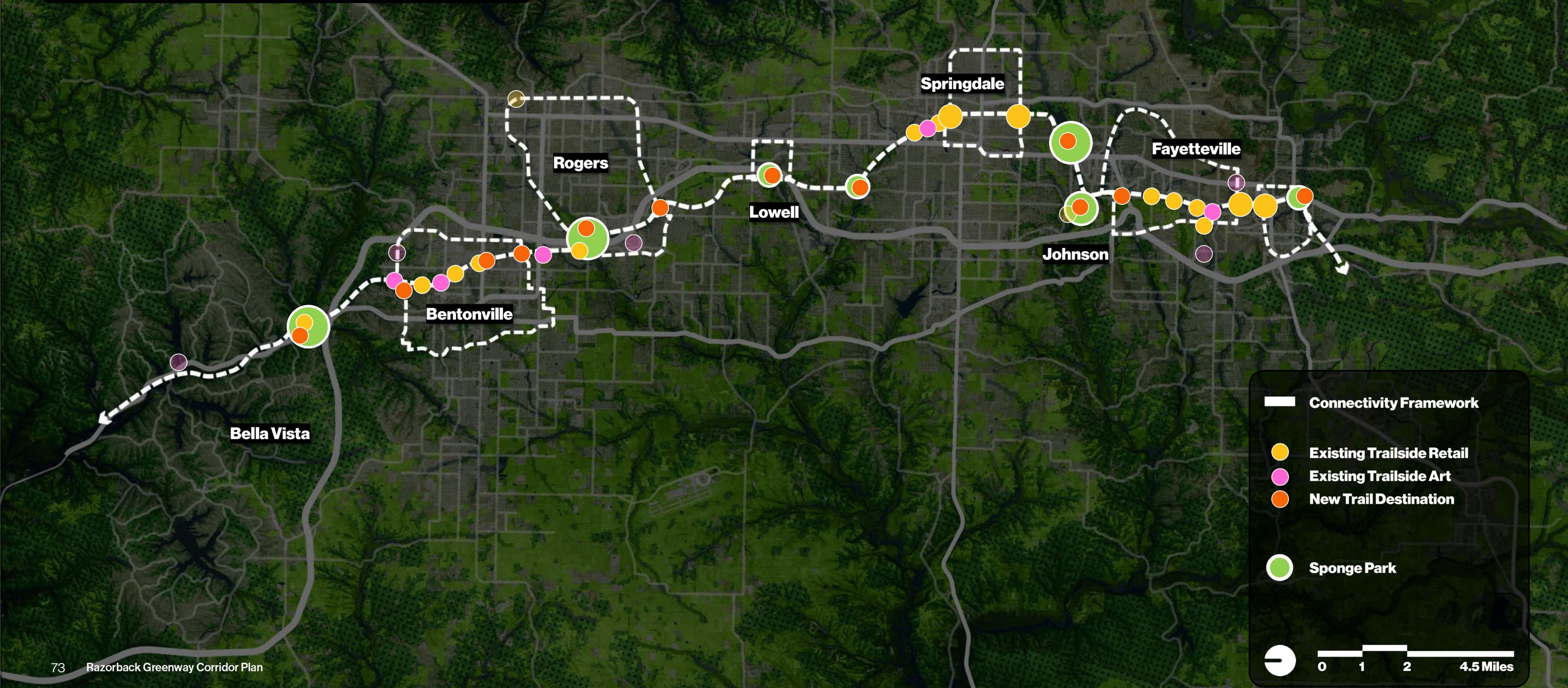
MAJOR ACTIVATION GAPS

Despite the recent investments in the area, the retail and art destinations directly fronting the Greenway are sparse. Stretches of the Greenway without trailside activation are up to 8 miles long in some locations.



CONTINUOUS ACTIVATION

Future destinations should be co-located with Sponge Parks, trailheads, and new developments to connect pockets of activity along the Greenway.



— Connectivity Framework

● Existing Trailside Retail

● Existing Trailside Art

● New Trail Destination

● Sponge Park



TRAILSIDE DESTINATIONS

Development fronting the Greenway should be strategically mixed with community-oriented open spaces and amenities that become signature neighborhood destinations for flexible programming, gathering, and outdoor activity.

Outdoor cafes in parks and public spaces



Pop-up & travelling beer gardens



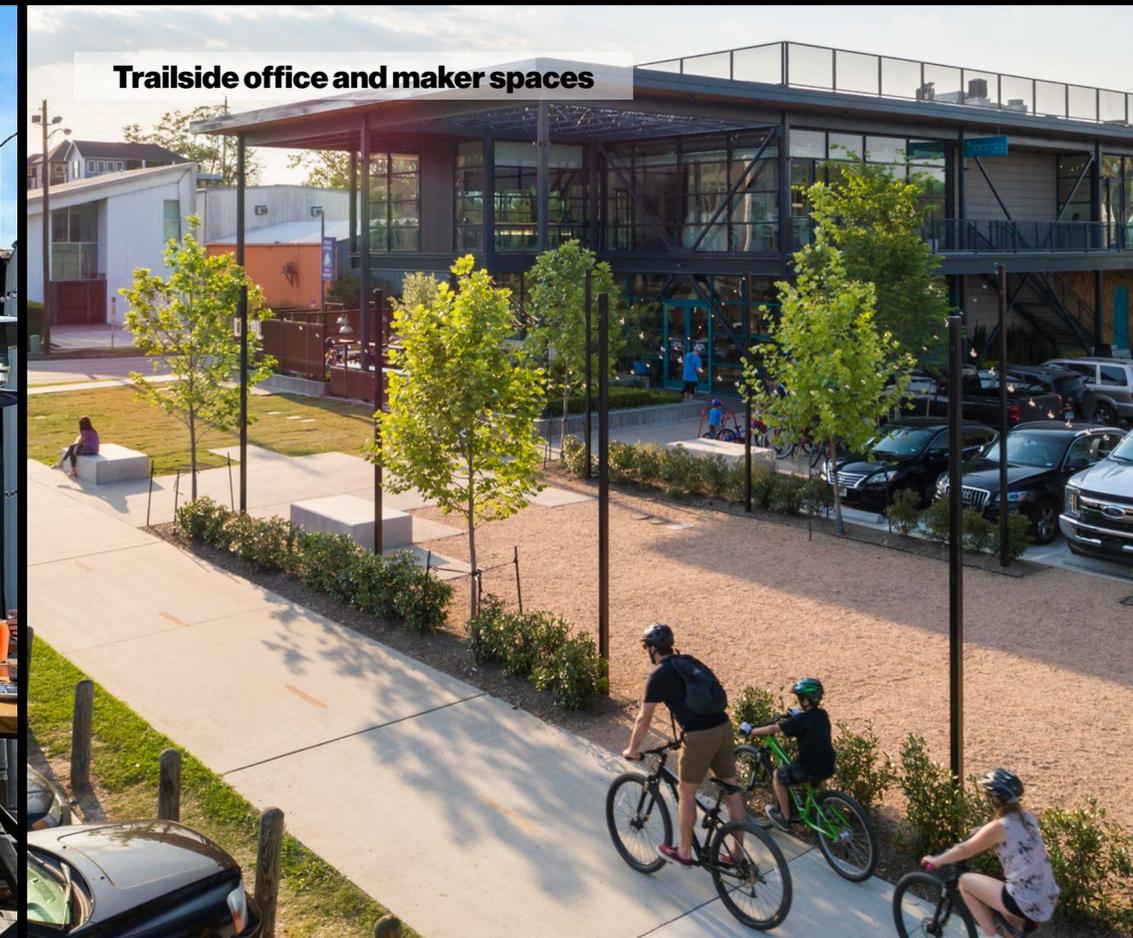
Hospitality



Trailside restaurants and breweries

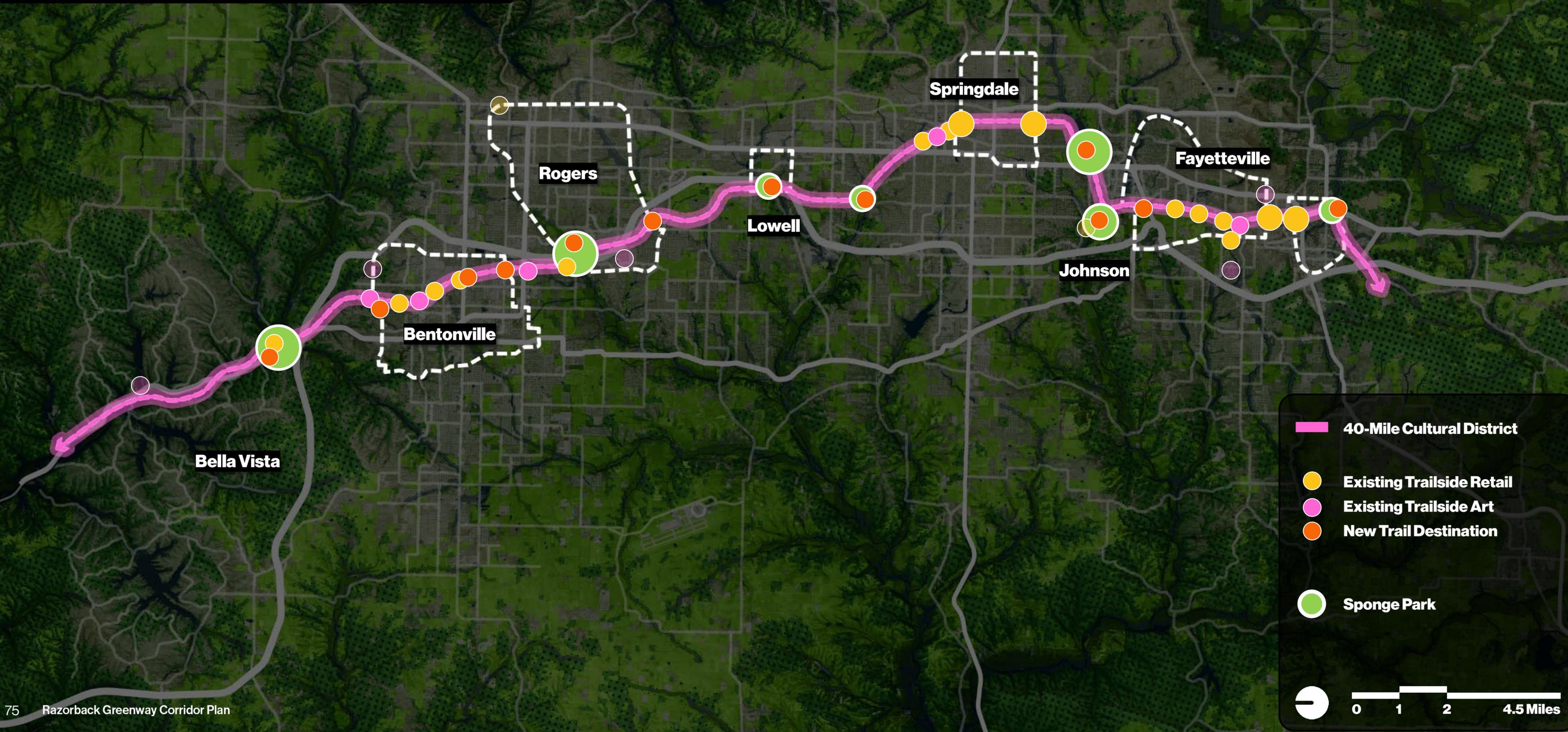


Trailside office and maker spaces



40-MILE CULTURAL DISTRICT

New arts and culture programming, coordinated by cities and organizations, can contribute to a continuously vibrant and engaging corridor.



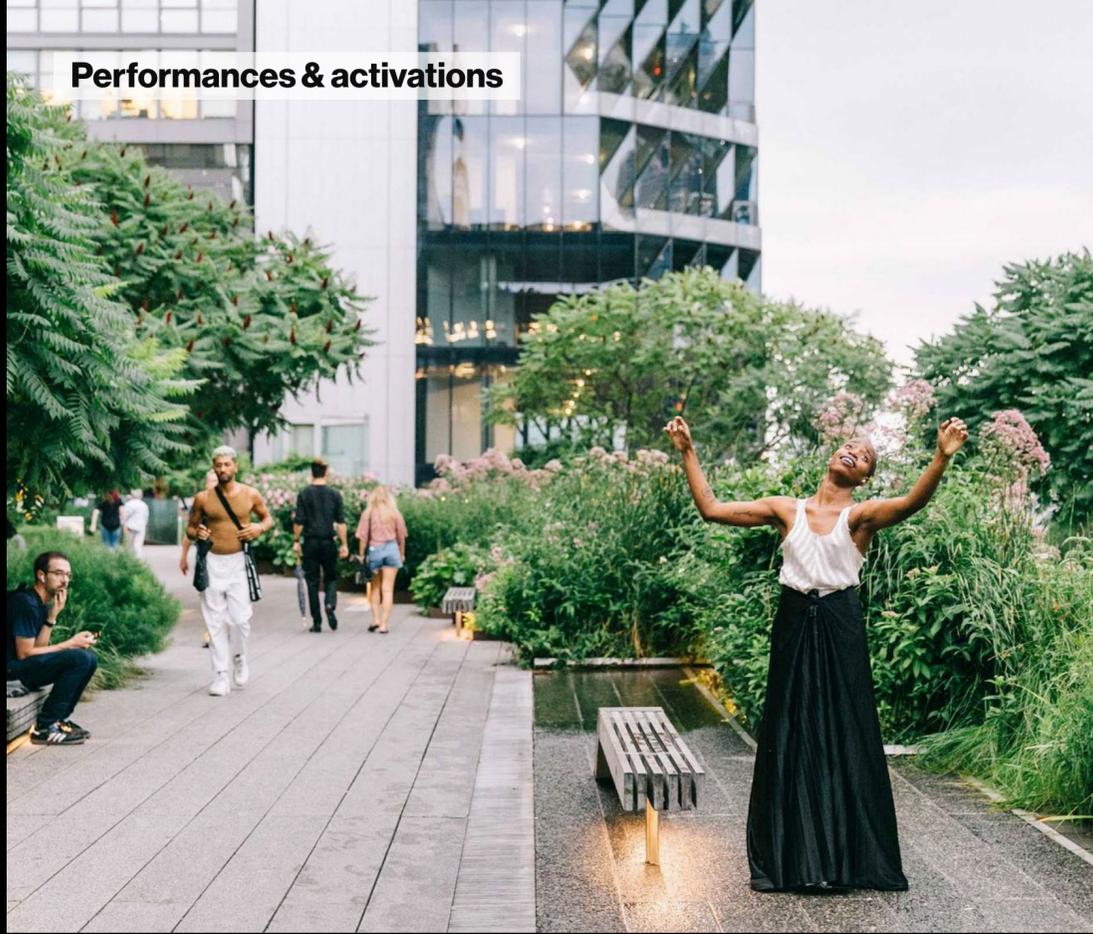
- 40-Mile Cultural District
- Existing Trailside Retail
- Existing Trailside Art
- New Trail Destination
- Sponge Park

0 1 2 4.5 Miles

ARTS CORRIDOR

The Greenway can become an arts and culture corridor by incorporating installations, performances, and year-round activations co-located with key destinations, or dispersed along more recreational segments. Trailheads, parks, and mixed-use areas can host events and programming that enliven the corridor and support local artists.

Performances & activations



Cultural events



Murals and site-specific installations



Temporary and rotating exhibits



Collaborations with local institutions



Six Projects for the Region

3.9 Transforming a Trail into a Corridor

Northwest Arkansas has transformed fragmented local trails into a 40-mile regional spine, anchoring a decade of investment in outdoor recreation, arts, parks, and bike infrastructure.

As growth accelerates and pressures on housing, transportation, and natural systems intensify, the Greenway offers a powerful starting point for imagining a future corridor with innovative compact neighborhood development, multi-modal commuting, creek restoration, and regional stormwater solutions.

Positioned along watershed ridgelines and intersecting major creeks, the Greenway can strengthen ecological resilience while expanding east-west connections that support everyday mobility. With targeted zoning updates, coordinated infrastructure, and cultural activation, the corridor can unlock new mixed-use districts and expand housing choices.

The Plan's proposed strategies position the Greenway to evolve from a 12-foot wide recreational asset into a unifying corridor for smart growth.

THE RAZORBACK GREENWAY CORRIDOR



ADDITIONAL REGIONAL PRIORITIES

There are many challenges along the Greenway that require regional strategies beyond the Six Projects to ensure smart growth across Northwest Arkansas.

The table below details these additional key regional priorities. Plans being developed in parallel with the Corridor Plan, including Northwest Arkansas Council’s Regional Growth Strategy and the NWARPC’s Forward 2050 Plan offer additional guidance at the regional scale.

Housing	Economic Development	Infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Regional Housing Trust Fund • Demonstrate Successful Development on Public Land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer Diversification • Bolster workforce development programs for regional needs • Technical assistance for local tourism councils • Corporate attraction • Corporate involvement in entrepreneurship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wastewater Capacity Expansion • Regional Stormwater Management Strategies • Floodplain Protection • Public transit integration

