

# Pending bill includes \$4M for Southwest greenway

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**HIGH POINT** — A long-planned greenway project in the city is slated to get an infusion of federal dollars.

The INVEST in America Act pending in the U.S. House of Representatives includes \$4 million for the High Point Heritage Greenway. The city submitted the project to the office of Congresswoman Kathy Manning, who represents High Point.

Manning sponsored it for inclusion in the INVEST Act, which is a surface transportation reauthorization bill that passed a House committee last week.

"It's in the process, although it has not made it to a House vote. But it's certainly a positive that it's been included by Rep. Manning, and we thanked her for that," said Assistant City Manager Greg Ferguson.

The money would go toward the first phase of the greenway, which has long been championed by the Southwest Renewal Foundation.

It's planned as a 10-foot-wide walking and biking trail that would run 1.8 miles from the city's bus terminal downtown to the intersection of W. Ward Avenue and W. Green Drive.

Supporters tout the greenway for its potential to help redevelop the former industrial areas of southwest High Point, as well as its health and environmental benefits.

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# GREENWAY

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Phase one is the longest and most expensive to construct of the greenway's five phases, said Dorothy Darr, executive director of the foundation.

"We are so grateful that the city submitted phase one as an earmark. We lobbied Rep. Manning after the submission, and we couldn't be happier that it won the earmark," Darr said.

Much of the route follows the abandoned, single-track High Point Thomasville & Denton railroad bed, which was a connector line that went to the factories and mills in the area.

Some of the easements and right of way needed for greenway construction have been acquired by the city, Ferguson said.

Grants awarded to the foundation will also help cover these costs, with most of the \$4 million federal earmark to go toward construction.

The funding requires a

\$1 million local match.

Darr said the foundation plans to cover about \$900,000 of it using a \$500,000 gift from philanthropist David Hayworth and a \$398,087 grant from the N.C. Land and Water Fund.

In addition, the proposed state budget includes \$150,000 for the foundation, she said, which would be used for the remaining portion of the match.

If a state budget is not passed this year, she said she's hopeful the city will provide the \$100,000.

The city submitted two other projects to Manning's office that are pending for funding consideration in a separate process through the House Appropriations Committee.

One is for \$1.5 million for another greenway project called the "multi-modal connector," from Armstrong Park to the downtown area.

The other is \$3 million for a proposed shelter and day center for the homeless.

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