

Public Engagement Plan

Last Update: May 30, 2024

Introduction

The Big Branch Greenway Connector (BBGC) Public Engagement Plan (PEP) outlines the process of involving the public in the decision-making process. It describes engagement goals and objectives, identifies key stakeholders, and outlines specific approaches and tools used to accomplish those goals. The PEP describes the public's role in the process, proposed engagement methods, performance measures, and the approval process. It will guide the implementation of public engagement activities for all stages of the decision-making process that require public input. The PEP will document the roles and responsibilities of the City of Raleigh and the Consultant Team and identify the preferred communication protocols requested by the City.

The PEP consists of the following elements:

- Background
- Goals and Objectives
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Public Engagement Program
- Engagement Activities
- Engagement Schedule

Background

The Big Branch Trail project includes the planning and construction of portions of a trail corridor generally running parallel to Big Branch. The corridor will consist of six segments, some with trail facilities that will be designed and constructed as part of this Parks Bond project, some that will utilize trails or sidewalks constructed by other departments or outside entities, some that will utilize existing sidewalks along nearby roads and some segments where feasibility will be completed as part of this project, but further design and construction will occur at an undetermined point in the future.

Segment 1 will run between the Crabtree Creek Trail on the south and Wake Towne Drive on the north. The exact alignment, either along Big Branch, along adjacent roadways, or a combination of both, will be determined during the design process.

Segment 2 will utilize the Midtown Multimodal Bridge currently being designed by the City of Raleigh Department of Transportation. The timing of this project is unknown.

Segment 3 will be designed and constructed by The Exchange, a mixed-use development being planned and constructed by Dewitt Carolinas, and will run from the Midtown Multimodal Bridge on the south to St. Albans Dr on the north. The timing of this project is also unknown.

Segment 4 will run along Big Branch, between St Albans Dr on the south and Hardimont Rd on the north.

Segment 5 will utilize existing sidewalks along Quail Hollow Dr between Hardimont Rd on the south and Millbrook Rd on the north. No additional improvements to Quail Hollow Drive are planned.

Segment 6 will run between Millbrook Rd on the south and Cedar Hills Park on the north. Portions of this segment may run along Big Branch while others may utilize existing sidewalks along nearby roads. Section 6 will be studied only for feasibility currently. No final design is currently planned.

The Big Branch Trail project will include the planning, design, and construction of Segments 1 and 4. The project will include a feasibility study for Segment 6 while further design and construction of Segment 6 will be completed at an undetermined time in the future. No improvements will be evaluated, as part of the Big Branch Trail project, for Segment 5 since existing sidewalks are in place along the entire segment. The timeline for the design and construction of Segments 2 and 3, being completed by other departments or outside entities, is undetermined. When all 6 segments are complete and connected, the Big Branch Trail will form an approximately 4-mile-long connection between the Crabtree Creek Trail on the south and Cedar Hills Park on the north.

The BBGC proposes to construct a 12-foot wide (maximum) multi-use asphalt path that will traverse generally along existing City of Raleigh easements. However, some sections adjacent to Big Branch, as well as areas that do not follow Big Branch, will necessitate new temporary and permanent easements from private property owners for construction and maintenance. The design will include different alignment alternatives and the City desires to engage with the public to determine the preferred alignments along the project. The PEP efforts are limited to Sections 1, 4, and 6.

The engagement efforts outlined in the PEP will support the City of Raleigh's commitment to advancing an equitable community and its aspirations of being a model for equity in local government.

While the PEP is intended to guide the public engagement process, it is also a living, dynamic document. The contents of this PEP are intended to provide an overview of public engagement efforts, but in some cases does not demonstrate the full extent of work.

Project Team

The roles outlined below show the key staff on the project team.

City of Raleigh

Project Manager	Dale Tiska (Construction Management - Parks Division)
Project Manager	Kris Nikfar (Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources)
Supervisor	Kelly Ham (Construction Management - Parks Division)
Supervisor	Lisa Schiffbauer (Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources)

Consultant Team

Project Manager	Jeff Moore (Kimley-Horn)
Deputy Project Manager	Ben Crawford (Kimley-Horn)
QC/QA Manager	Greg Brew (Kimley-Horn)
Engagement Lead	Kristina Whitfield (Kimley-Horn)
Professional Facilitator	Rachel Thompson (Daring Studios)

Define the Decision Process

This project will follow the standard decision process for City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation and Cultural Resource projects. Below is the general process for decision-making to be followed on this project:

- Project Team will review the project and analysis options.
- Setup On-Line Survey using publicinput.com as the platform and conduct In-Person Open House to gather input from the public regarding analysis options.
- Project Team will consider this input and implement changes where deemed appropriate. These efforts will be included in the Schematic Design plans.
- A series of On-Line Public Open Houses will be conducted to share the Schematic Design with the community.
- Greenway Committee will consider the project for informational purposes only.
- Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board (PRGAB) and Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) will review and recommend any decisions.
- City Council will review and approve any decisions.

Define Public Engagement Goals and Objectives

The PEP will ensure that the public participation process is incorporated into the decision-making process. The proposed PEP level of participation is *Involve* on the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum. The *Involve* level allows for more discussion with community members as well as flexibility for alternative outcomes in the project. However, it is important to be transparent with the public about the final decision making process before expectations are formed.

The *Public Participation Goal* is to work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. The *Promise to the Public* is to work with them to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decisions, while also being transparent as to why some aspirations may not be carried forward.

Objectives:

- To work directly with the public throughout the project development process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
- Engage with the community to learn their thoughts about the Big Branch Greenway Connector project.
- Present ideas to the community and gather their feedback about specific alternatives and approaches.

Identify the Public's Role

The community plays a vital role in the Public Engagement process. The role of the public includes but is not limited to the following:

- Engage with the Project Team at the multiple opportunities identified in this document.
- Influence decision-making.
- Assist with making informed choices by helping to define the problems.
- Generate alternatives to consider.
- Assist with evaluation criteria.
- Make recommendations.

The public engagement program is organized around two phases of engagement. A high-level timeline and key themes or outcomes are provided for each phase.

Phase 1: Inform, Consult, Involve

June – October 2024

The first phase of the PEP aims to educate the public on alternative options, allow more discussion with community members, and provide flexibility for alternative outcomes in the project. The key themes and outcomes will include:

- Research and collect data
- Review past planning efforts and stakeholder lists
- Inform the public of alignment limitations and options
- Seek public input on alignment options and solutions
- Reflect public input in the final recommendations

Phase 2: Report Back and Inform

October 2024 – June 2025

The second phase of the PEP will document and report back to the public on the input received and how it was used in the decision-making process. The key themes and outcomes will include:

- Compile and manage engagement data
- Report survey results
- Develop outreach summaries and draft Engagement Summary
- Select final alignments
- Communicate construction timelines, impacts, etc.
- Finalize Engagement Summary

Identify Potential Stakeholders

Below are the key external and internal audiences and stakeholders to engage with for the BBGC.

External Audiences

- Greenway Committee, PRGAB, and BPAC Members
- Homeowners and Neighborhood Groups
- Kane Realty (North Hills East)
- Dewitt Carolinas (The Exchange Raleigh)
- Midtown CAC
- Bicycle Advocacy Groups
- Pedestrian and Running Groups

- Multimodal bridge stakeholders
- Wake County School System (Safe Routes to School)
- District A and E citizens
- Greenway users
- Adjacent residential areas
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Populations

Internal Audiences

- Raleigh City Manager's Office
- Raleigh City Council
- Raleigh City Attorney
- Raleigh Department of Communications
- Raleigh Department of Equity and Inclusion

City of Raleigh Interdepartmental Team

- Raleigh Department of Engineering Services – RDC/Stormwater
- Raleigh Department of Transportation – Planning/Bike-Ped
- Raleigh Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources – Greenway Maintenance and Center Directors
- Raleigh Department of Planning & Development – Plan Review, Real Estate, and Urban Projects Group
- Raleigh Office of Community Engagement
- Raleigh Water Department
- Raleigh Fire and Police Departments

Select Engagement Tools and Techniques

The engagement activities are more specific touch points with the community. Each activity includes a brief description, timing, intended audience, and major objectives.

On-line Survey

<u>Description</u>	A structured list of questions to obtain specific information from a particular group of people using publicinput.com as the platform. Inform the public of alignment limitations and options and get their feedback. Target areas are Sections 1, 4, and 6.
<u>Timing</u>	Beginning of Phase 1
<u>Audience</u>	Stakeholders identified in this document.

Pop-Up Outreach

<u>Description</u>	A booth or table at a high-density location to provide information and get quick feedback. Conduct one pop-up event. Target areas are Sections 1, 4, and 6. Events to be staffed by City of Raleigh project managers and supervisors and Kimley-Horn project manager, public engagement lead, and professional facilitator.
<u>Timing</u>	Phase 1: Share alignment options and ask for input. Phase 2: Share schematic design and engagement results and seek final input.
<u>Audience</u>	Stakeholders identified in this document.

In-Person Public Open House

<u>Description</u>	Informal public setting where participants can rotate through designated sections or walk around and ask questions to the project team. Conduct two in-person open houses, one per phase. Target areas are Sections 1, 4, and 6.
<u>Timing</u>	Phase 1: Share alignment options, ask for input, and direct attendees to online survey. Phase 2: Share schematic design and engagement results and seek final input.
<u>Audience</u>	Stakeholders identified in this document.

On-Line Public Open House

<u>Description</u>	An on-line meeting with project information and/or updates posted for a set period of time to allow for participation. Target areas are Sections 1, 4, and 6. Each phase is anticipated to include two Online Public Open House events – one on a weekday afternoon, and one on a weekend day.
<u>Timing</u>	Phase 1: Share alignment options and ask for input. Phase 2: Share schematic design and engagement results and seek final input.
<u>Audience</u>	Stakeholders identified in this document.

Select Communication Tools

Social Media Posts

<u>Description</u>	Text, images, and/or video content posted to a social network to reach followers. Target areas are Sections 1, 4, and 6.
<u>Timing</u>	Phases 1 and 2
<u>Audience</u>	Stakeholders identified in this document.

Emails

<u>Description</u>	Electronic correspondence that can include project information, announcements, files, and links. This will include the City's GovDelivery tool. Target areas are Sections 1, 4, and 6.
<u>Timing</u>	Phases 1 and 2
<u>Audience</u>	Stakeholders identified in this document.

Website

<u>Description</u>	A digital information repository on the Internet for project information and updates. Updates and content are anticipated to occur at major milestones, or otherwise quarterly. Target areas are Sections 1, 4, and 6.
<u>Timing</u>	Phases 1 and 2
<u>Audience</u>	Stakeholders identified in this document.

Develop Performance Measures

To monitor and evaluate the success of the engagement strategy set forth in this PEP, a variety of measures are defined below. These measures will be evaluated during each of the engagement phases and included in the Engagement Summary for the study.

- Number of participants in in-person public open houses.
- Number of participants in on-line survey.
- Geographic distribution of on-line survey participants.

Engagement Schedule

The project schedule highlights the overarching project schedule as it relates to stakeholder and community engagement.

Phase 1	Completion
Alignment Option Exhibits	June 2024
Online Survey	July – October 2024
Pop-Up Event	August 2024
In-Person Open House	August 2024
On-line Open House	September 2024
Draft Engagement Summary	October 2024
Phase 2	Completion
Schematic Design	October – December 2024
In-Person Open House	December 2024
Online Open House	January 2025
Refine Engagement Summary	January 2025
Greenway Committee	February 2025
Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board	March 2025
Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Commission	April 2025
City Council – Schematic Design Approval	May 2025
Provide Website and Social Media Content	June 2025

Engagement Summary

A summary report will be written at the completion of each engagement phase. The summaries will include a summary of key takeaways and themes based on comments, a brief analysis of the performance of outreach activities, and graphics and charts to illustrate public input. All summaries will be combined into one document to be included in the final Engagement Summary. The final Engagement Summary will also include an explanation of how public input influenced decisions during the process, as well as the final recommendations.