

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF THE CAROLINA THREAD TRAIL



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Econsult Corporation, in conjunction with Greenways, Inc., was retained by Catawba Lands Conservancy and the Trust for Public Lands to identify and estimate the potential economic impacts of the Carolina Thread Trail to the local region. Econsult examined both quantitative and qualitative impacts which were developed using standard economic methodology, area-specific base data, and various other economic assumptions. Our study involved the analysis of indicators such as property values and property tax revenues, tourism statistics, willingness-to-pay (WTP) survey data, direct and indirect expenditures from the construction investment of the proposed trail, national evidence of the effects of a greenway on air and water quality, and information from industry professionals on the effects of a greenway on the business community.

Econsult Corporation found the potential economic impacts of the Carolina Thread Trail to be significant. The total dollar gain in property was forecast to be significant in the affected zone. We also estimated that the fully built-out trail could annually generate a notable amount in new tourism spending for the local economy and in additional state and local tax revenues.

From an environmental standpoint, the trail will become a strategic and attractive way to mitigate the negative environmental consequences of the region's explosive growth.

Econsult also estimated the economic impact of the actual construction of the trail, which, over the 15-year construction period, was expected to generate a significant amount in total direct, indirect, and induced economic activity, as well as support many new jobs.

Map A.4: 2006 Median House Values in the Trail Impact Zone

