



New York

# COALITION-DRIVEN PATH TO AN EQUITABLE CITY-WIDE GREENWAY

Brooklyn, New York



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New York's greenways are pathways for commuters and recreational users alike.



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The technical assistance panel members toured the greenways surrounding the Brooklyn Navy Yard to see the greenway in action.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New York City is home to a vast array of some 300 miles of greenways, yet each segment of greenway is individually operated and maintained by separate organizations or jurisdictions. Historically, there has not been a unified greenway network for New York, but momentum is building and change is in sight. Under the inspired leadership of Brooklyn Greenways Initiative, disparate greenway organizations across New York City (the city) have come together to form the New York City Greenways Coalition (NYC Greenways Coalition or the Coalition). Their organized voice and advocacy has led to New York City municipal leadership recently passing legislation to require and to funding a centralized greenway master planning process to be completed in 2024. With the recent formation of the NYC Greenways Coalition and the greenway master planning process under way, a number of greenway organizations, led by Brooklyn Greenway Initiative (BGI), recognized that it is time to get the NYC Greenway Coalition to grow, change, and take a leading role in ensuring an equitable greenway can be built and maintained.

With a goal of leading the Coalition on an equitable and successful path from the start, Brooklyn Greenways Initiative (BGI), turned to the Urban Land Institute New York district council (ULI New York) for assistance in charting an equitable, efficient, and effective path forward for the new Coalition. Through the Urban Land Institute's Cohort for Park Equity grant program, funded by The JPB Foundation, ULI New York and BGI sought to better understand how the loose collection of greenways across New York City could be united in a citywide greenway network, creating an equitable network that supports a healthy, green, and connected city. Using its trusted technical assistance panel (TAP) program, ULI New York gathered real estate, design, and land use professionals from across the region to study the current system of greenways and the specific operational challenges posed by Brooklyn Greenway Initiative (BGI), the nonprofit organization initially leading the NYC Greenways Coalition.

The TAP panelists, meeting at Newlab in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, spent time touring the surrounding area to see the greenways in action. Following the tour, a series of stakeholders were interviewed to share their insights into the challenges and opportunities of a successful citywide greenway network. The panel's observations, their professional experience, and insights from the stakeholder interviews helped shape a series of recommendations that the greenways community and BGI can use to pursue a citywide greenway network for New York City.

### Equitable Greenways

At the outset, it will be important for the Coalition to define what "greenway" means, both for the Coalition's work and for reference across New York City. These connected series of trails and pathways attract users from all walks of life, from children to seniors, for all manner of use, from recreation to transportation. The varieties of current use, the speeds of movement, and the intention of future use impact greenways today and will need to be identified, addressed, and defined for the city going forward.

Creating an equitable greenway network will also require intentionality of actions today and into the future. Today's network of greenways have been built and are maintained by a series of jurisdictions and organizations with the resources needed for construction and maintenance of their respective greenway segments. This works well for some New Yorkers, while other, lower-income or under-resourced communities are left without a greenway in their community or with a greenway that was built to a minimum standard and/or lacks funding for proper ongoing maintenance. An equitable development plan will be required to ensure that all New Yorkers and visitors are treated to a baseline standard of access and quality across New York City's system of greenways.

This equitable greenway development must be guided by a unified vision of an equitable greenway network. Coalition members will need to agree upon this unified vision, understanding that elements and objectives may flex along the way depending on constituents and stakeholders, but the vision remains the same. This unified vision and speaking with one voice will help ensure that the greenway network is delivered consistently and equitably across the city, even when politics or funding would typically dictate otherwise.

### The Role of the Coalition

As a citywide leader, the NYC Greenways Coalition should take on the role of unbiased convener of the greenway organizations, sharing information with network members, promulgating the citywide greenway vision, and advocating for network funding. Its actions and activities must represent the entire network and the structure of the Coalition and its influence should speak with a unified and informed voice. This approach supports equitable outcomes and guards against reverting to the status quo, which is inequitable and outdated.

### Greenway Development

At present, a multitude of organizations and localities build and manage greenways, and a host of municipal agencies understand that they have a role in how and where those greenways are built. There is a critical need for centralized public-sector leadership for the greenways network. In December 2022, Governor Kathy Hochul and Mayor Eric Adams announced the creation of a new position within City Hall: the Director of the Public Realm. The purpose of this new role is to guide the collaboration of key agencies working in public spaces. It is important for New York City to have a city hall-level office or position to address the critical functions of an effective citywide greenways network. The Coalition should advocate for the city to either utilize this position focus on greenways or should advocate for a similar office or position. From ensuring accountability, to facilitating citywide coordination, to arbitrating decision-making log jams, this central figure or office will play a critical role in the success of a citywide network and the Coalition should prioritize meeting with them.

Citywide design guidelines and clear guidance around responsible entities or organizations for construction and ongoing operations and maintenance is likewise critical to a successful citywide network. Greenways – both in existence and those in the planning stages – wind through city streets, parks, waterfronts, and private development. Municipal agencies, such as the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Department of Parks and Recreation should work with the Coalition to support the construction and maintenance of the network through their jurisdictions.

### Greenway Funding

The wide range of greenway users, intentions, and agencies involved can serve as an open door to a wide variety of funding sources. From local and federal funding for green infrastructure, to philanthropic funding for health and wellness, to corporate sponsorships by e-cargo companies, the paths to funding are as variable as the neighborhoods through which the greenways travel. Funding for capital improvements and operations and maintenance, or both combined, can be pursued from public, private, and charitable sources. The centering of equity in the Coalition's work and in the greenway development can also unlock additional funding from those who are uniquely interested in seeing a more equitable approach to New York's development.

### Getting Started

The time is right to align the Coalition members around this equitable development framework and set the foundation for the organization well into the future. By establishing the mission and vision for the Coalition and attracting new members who are energized by that vision, the Coalition can continue to represent the widest variety of greenway users and friends. While the efforts of the Coalition will bend and flex as opportunities arise to prioritize equitable greenway development, its values will remain unchanged. This clarity of vision and foundation of values will provide public sector and elected leadership, Coalition representatives, and community members with a clear path forward and an understanding of how, where, why, and when greenway development occurs and that the greenways are built for everyone.

# INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Across New York City, community-based organizations and select city agencies have created an impressive landscape of greenways, segments of trails and open space that wind within jurisdictions and discrete geographies. As New Yorkers increasingly seek alternative modes of transportation, additional options for recreation, and new ways to improve health and wellness, greenways are seen by many as an important resource. Greenways across New York City provide people with access to recreation, mobility and commuting options, and open space. Greenways also play an important role in the city's pursuit of green infrastructure (rain gardens, infiltration basins, etc.) to support stormwater management efforts, climate and heat mitigation work, and improve the resiliency and adaptability of the surrounding environment.

For years, New York's loose collection of roughly 300 miles of greenways were used by those in the surrounding neighborhood or by those who could find and figure out their own series of connections between greenways to move more broadly around the city. Operation and maintenance was similarly siloed, operating only in the geography surrounding a segment and maintained by the sponsoring organization or jurisdiction. Other areas, lacking the resources to fund the construction, operation, and maintenance of a greenway, simply went without. This lack of connectivity and equity across New York's landscape of greenways, while recognized by many, fell through cracks in responsibility as there was no one agency or

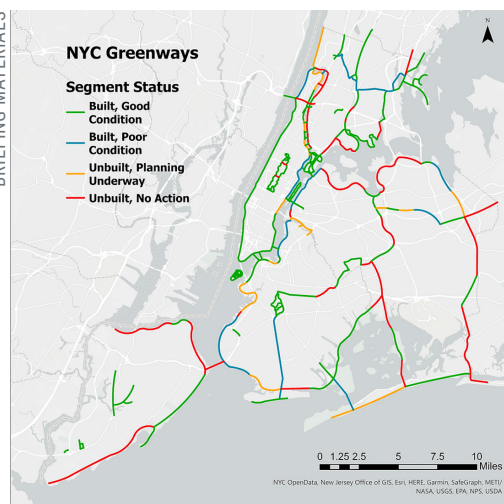
organization responsible for a citywide greenway network. The challenges posed by this amorphous organizational framework were highlighted when the opportunity for federal infrastructure grants arose – a central organization was required, spurring over 50 organizations to organize the NYC Greenways Coalition in 2021. Coalition members are committed to their respective missions and geographic scale while also supporting the broader goals and vision of the Coalition. Aligning with this new Coalition were the New York Department of Transportation and the city's Department of Parks and Recreation, both of whom were open to a conversation about a citywide greenway network.

BRIEFING MATERIALS



This historic illustration of the Ocean Parkway Bicycle Path in Brooklyn points to the long history of greenways in the city and the public's enjoyment of these open spaces.

BRIEFING MATERIALS



Presently, New York City's greenways are a series of unconnected paths that do not provide equitable access to New Yorkers and visitors.

## TAP Panel Scope

1. What role should advocates/operators have within the greenway planning process? (e.g., convening stakeholders, advising implementation agencies, etc.)
2. How should equity be defined, embedded, and measured in greenway network planning and implementation? (e.g. location, typology/form, phasing, engagement, governance)
3. How can Coalition members organize themselves to deliver a unified voice while supporting individual member organizational goals / missions?
4. How can the Coalition's structure or governance during the citywide greenway planning process build capacity and durable engagement throughout greenway implementation and operations?

Led by the Brooklyn Greenway Initiative (BGI), the Coalition has an opportunity to become the leader that New York City needs to advance greenway initiatives and ultimately deliver over 400 miles of greenways to city residents and visitors. Under the leadership of BGI and the NYC Greenways Coalition, New York City is more focused than ever on creating a citywide system of greenways, accessible by every New Yorker. This system, which will connect existing greenways and create new greenways in areas currently not served, will result in a citywide greenway network, providing the people of New York access to recreation, mobility and commuting options, open space, and green infrastructure.

There is momentum in the city, political will, and openness to “big picture” thinking around greenways. There is also a pipeline of projects organized by the public domain, in various stages of design and construction. The Citywide Greenway Plan, which should be informed by an equitable process, is designed to fill the gaps between these other plans and provide clarity around the best path forward.

To guide all of this work, the city needs an organizational body (the Coalition) with a governance structure that is informed by an equitable framework. To envision the equitable framework of such an organization, the role of BGI within that structure, and an equitable approach to greenway development citywide, BGI turned to ULI New York and its trusted technical assistance panel (TAP) program. The TAP process, objective by design, brings professional expertise to the table to assist the TAP

*“The greenway system is currently multi-jurisdictional and multi-agency with disparate power structures with overlapping capacity.”*

–TAP Panelist

study sponsor in tackling challenging land use decisions, ultimately delivering a set of recommendations that can be put to use.

To orient the TAP panel, which was comprised of real estate developers, architects, landscape architects, land use attorneys, and engineers, BGI provided comprehensive briefing material and led a tour of a nearby greenway. A series of stakeholder interviews, representing a wide variety of community leaders, public sector professionals, and leaders from greenway organizations, further informed the panelists’ understanding of the current landscape across New York. With the briefing information, the stakeholders’ insights, and their own professional expertise at the ready, the panel spent the evening and the following day analyzing the challenges of organizing an effective citywide greenway organization and the benefits to the community of employing an equitable approach to the greenway development, operations, and maintenance work.



# A VISION FOR AN EQUITABLE GREENWAY

Throughout the stakeholder interviews, it was clear that “greenway” meant many things to many people. From a place of recreation to a path to work, from a place to stroll with children on bikes and in strollers to a place for exercise and speed, the variety of users on New York’s greenways is broad, their intentions are varied, and their speeds of movement are very different.

## What is a greenway?

As the Coalition begins its work, it will be important to define “greenway” very early in the process. This foundational exercise, conducted for the benefit of Coalition members and the broader community, should consider all manners of access, including pedestrians, cyclists (using both manual and electric bicycles), and those in wheelchairs, and be grounded in equitable access across all modes of transportation. The ensuing work of the Coalition should be founded upon this agreed-upon definition of “greenway” for New York City.

**Outreach.** Once defined, the greenway definition should be part of the Coalition’s outreach efforts, elevating

the visibility of the network, its benefits, and access. This outreach will require sensitivity to communities’ needs, wants, and language, adapting and flexing as the greenway moves through New York’s wide variety of neighborhoods. This adaptability will help everyone understand how, where, and why they might like to enjoy the greenway. It is also important that members of the community begin to see themselves enjoying the greenway network, and this outreach work can support that inclusive messaging.

**Culture.** As the greenways wind through New York’s neighborhoods, the pathways should embrace and reflect the diversity of the wide variety of places touched. The look and feel of the greenway and the user experience should be influenced by the character of the surrounding neighborhood



This image shows Pike-Allen Malls, a section of greenway in New York City. Designed by Donna Walcavage, FASLA, the greenway effectively separates automobiles from bicyclists and pedestrians. Trees provide shade and nearby seating provides opportunities to gather, rest, and relax.

and project an image that is positive, supportive, and culturally responsive. This will support the messaging and educational efforts that should be designed to help people envision themselves on the greenway.

**Ecological design.** The design of the greenway, as infrastructure and open space, should follow ecological design principles and support stormwater management efforts. This approach, intentionally incorporating stormwater management capacity, will help the greenways play a net positive role in the neighborhood with features such as built-in catchment and filtration systems. The greenways can also play an important role in advancing climate resilience via design and landscape elements such as native plantings and shade trees lining the pathways.

**E-bikes.** The advent of electrically-powered scooters and bicycles (e-bikes) has made non-automotive transportation even more accessible. E-bikes are now a common mode of transportation around the city and the greenways provide a compelling route and alternative to city streets. Understanding the role of e-bikes in the city, and providing for their safe usage in the city, will likewise be important as the Coalition defines “greenway” and guides usage along the facility.

**Public health.** Greenways can and should also play an important role in the future of public health. The health and wellness benefits of exercise and the proximity of the greenways in many New York neighborhoods position the greenway network as a prime location for exercise, community-building, and the health benefits that come with being outside in an environment that is designed for movement. This is yet another factor in the story of a citywide greenway network.

**Connections.** Along every mile of the greenway, the goal of the network should be inter-community connection. Finishing greenways in process, connecting segments with missing pieces, and constructing greenways in communities currently lacking a segment or connection will support this inter-community connection and help drive the message and realization of equitable access across the city.

## What is equity?

Equity, as it relates to a citywide greenway system, should center on inclusivity and stand as a core value that informs the process of planning, designing, and building greenway facilities. Given the fraught racial history of land use and real estate development and the intentional exclusion of marginalized people from the benefits of development in the past, it will be critical to now prioritize the participation, perspectives, and goals of lower-income and marginalized neighborhoods into the greenway planning, design, construction, and operation. In practice, operational equity centers public safety for people of all ages and abilities. Equity of maintenance ensures a consistent quality of design and construction across the network. Equitable opportunity in the network looks like expanded job training efforts and workforce integration to uplift lower-income neighborhoods and reach specifically those who have been left out of the process and benefits in the past. Equitable practices should touch every aspect of the greenway.

**Preventing Gentrification.** Improvements to an area, whether through new construction, renovation, or the addition of transportation and recreational amenities like a greenway, have the potential to gentrify an area, raising property values and corresponding taxes, and resulting in the displacement of current residents. By embedding equity at the start of this citywide greenway, naming it as a guiding principle, Coalition members and partners hold one another and the process to a standard that will support residents’ opportunities to stay in place and begin to benefit from, and not be displaced by, the improvements associated with greenway development in their neighborhood.

**Community retention planning.** Community retention planning can also help prevent displacement. By identifying those most vulnerable to gentrification, policy makers and advocates can put policies in place early to support residents most at risk of displacement by greenway development and associated improvements. Creating and spreading the word about tools to help people take advantage of increases in their property values can support residents’ ability to remain in their homes. Tools like these





Workshops with the public, in the neighborhood, in places where community already gathers, can help build important relationships.



Engagement with a variety of people, from all walks of life, will support sustainable planning initiatives.



Greenways should be safe and inviting for all ages and abilities.

may inspire residents' excitement for the development rather than fear of what the greenway may bring.

**Community Outreach.** Community engagement and outreach, launched early in greenway planning and continuing throughout the design and construction phases, can help ensure that community members and related stakeholders are helping to guide the work and building their sense of ownership in the greenway network. Outreach should take into account the complexities of implementation and the need that the grassroots community has to communicate and engage. To truly advance equity, the Coalition will need to also prioritize outreach to those neighbors who do not attend public meetings, e.g., the single parent who does not have time to spare, those who are overwhelmed by public meetings, and those lacking WiFi access for Zoom meetings or online surveys. Neighborhood pop-up events can help reach these community members as they move between home, work, church, etc. The Coalition will need to be methodical and patient, supporting activities and programming that communities wish to create along the greenway, such that they are able to occupy and embrace the greenway space as their own and as another important place within their community.

## NYC Greenways Today

The New York City Council has passed legislation to fund a Greenway Master Plan with expected completion in 2024. The Coalition, in helping to inform the planning process, should acknowledge the status of development and the associated opportunities and challenges along each section of the network.

**Existing Greenways.** There are neighborhoods throughout the city where large segments of the greenway have been built. An evaluation of the completed greenways should include an assessment of the condition, future needs, and anticipated shortfalls inherent in each section. Close attention should also be paid to the opportunity to better connect each existing segment into a citywide system.

**Building.** For those segments that are currently under design or in some stage of construction, work completed to date should help inform the prioritization of future

segments, *i.e.*, investment has already been made in these areas and funding can therefore be directed to the areas that will most readily help achieve the greenway's equity goals. There are also opportunities to engage with and enlist community members in these under-construction sections to gather process and advocacy insights that can be leveraged more broadly across the greenway network.

**Planning.** The city's Greenway Master Plan, which embraces a citywide approach, will further support the greenway segments in the planning stage and those neighborhoods where greenways should be built but do not yet exist. This comprehensive plan should also address governance along the network and system-wide maintenance and operations obligations such that the entire system receives the required ongoing support. This long-term vision for the greenway network will be advanced incrementally and requires thoughtful advance planning.

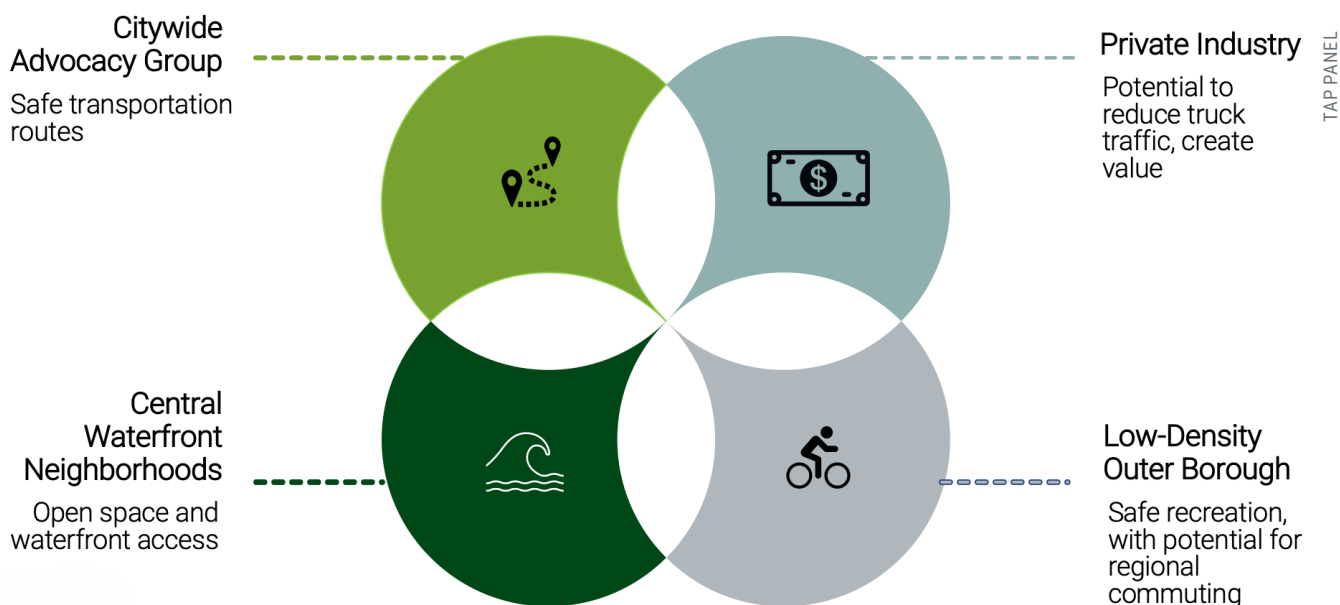
## A Unified Vision

The success of the ambitious citywide greenway network will require an expression of a unified vision that has the power to unite the Coalition members and a wide variety of community stakeholders. The Coalition will need to express this vision both internally, among coalition members, and externally, to politicians, the public, agencies and others.

A strong unified vision also has the power to sustain political attention and attract funding from multiple sources over time. This is a critical moment in the culture and messaging surrounding the city's greenways. With the federal Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant and the upcoming greenway master plan, it is critically important to shift from a paradigm of individual greenway segments to a single citywide greenway network. Viewing the citywide greenway as a single project means that the Coalition is committed to the work long term, and Coalition leadership will need to hold the group together via a sustainable vision over time.

**How do stakeholders envision greenways?** In developing a common vision, it is important to understand how stakeholders and potential users across communities envision greenways and a citywide greenway network. The panel identified four general user groups.

1. City-wide advocacy group. This group generally places safety first on the list of greenway priorities. This sentiment was echoed by a TAP stakeholder interviewee who worked on successful projects across the country and noted that, for urban areas, greenways provided a safe route to school, the market, and to other public transportation options.



TAP PANEL

Four key stakeholder groups can help define how users and potential users view their relationship with a greenway.





Four common themes around greenway usage and vision arose from the panelists' interviews and insights.

2. Central waterfront neighborhoods. For this user group, greenways provide much-needed open space and access to the waterfront.
  3. Low-density outer borough. For communities outside of the dense urban core, greenways provide safe spaces for recreation. These greenway users noted that their greenways could be improved by connections to transit hubs and local job centers.
  4. Private industry. New York businesses also have their eye on the greenways and see economic potential in their use. For businesses using small cargo transport, greenways offer an opportunity to take trucks off the street by using bike cargo transport, thereby reducing costs associated with operating a fleet of delivery trucks. A serious emphasis on safety will be needed when considering electronic modes of transportation.
- Equitable transportation and recreation network. Greenways should attract and distribute funds (tax dollars and otherwise) across neighborhoods, not just in wealthy neighborhoods or in those with sufficient volunteer capacity for maintenance or stewardship. A citywide greenway network should focus on connectivity between homes, places of employment, and the city's resources, regardless of a neighborhood's capacity to support the greenway financially or otherwise. That equitable connectivity builds and supports the messaging around importance of the greenway to the entire community.
  - Responsive to environmental justice imperatives. Greenways can provide valuable open space, link to additional open space, and celebrate community culture with public art. Resiliency, green infrastructure, and greenways are closely aligned, and the build-out of a citywide greenway network provides a compelling opportunity to incorporate green infrastructure improvements across the city.

**Common themes.** Although stakeholders emphasized different visions for the greenways based on their experiences and needs, several common themes emerged, which can be used to shape a unified citywide greenway vision:

- Inclusive and safe. All New Yorkers and visitors should feel welcome and safe within the greenway network. There is also value to the surrounding neighborhood, generated by the presence of the greenway. This value generation will attract additional residents and businesses to the area, including private developers and potentially additional interest and support from the New York City Economic Development Corporation.

**Tailoring the Common Vision.** A strong, unified vision will allow the Coalition to tailor conversations to the audiences at hand while remaining true to the vision for the network. By creating a vision broad enough to be flexible, but narrow enough to be strong and pragmatic, the Coalition can evolve within the mission statement, both over time and in response to the values of different Coalition members and decision-makers.

# ROLE OF THE GREENWAY COALITION

In a city home to dozens of greenway organizations representing specific geographies or greenway segments, the NYC Greenways Coalition should become the leader and unbiased convener of the greenway organizations, sharing information across network members, promulgating the citywide greenway vision, and advocating for network funding. The current piecemeal approach of greenway organization and management will only reinforce the status quo, which is fundamentally inequitable, with resource-rich areas building and expanding greenways while under-resourced areas lack quality facilities, and/or remain disconnected from the broader network.

A citywide greenway network needs a lead entity that is able to maintain a big-picture perspective, seeing the network in its entirety while still understanding (but not necessarily being responsible for) the minutia of daily greenway operations. This high-level vantage point will also help ensure that the Coalition is able to approach development and funding decisions in a manner that is in the best interest of the broader network and prioritizes equity as agreed upon by Coalition members.

## The Coalition Foundation

The bedrock of a successful coalition is a shared mission and vision. For the NYC Greenways Coalition, foundational work will be required to achieve internal consensus around a unified vision for the citywide greenway network. With that articulated vision and building on the foundation of consensus, the Coalition can then focus on detailing its shared values.

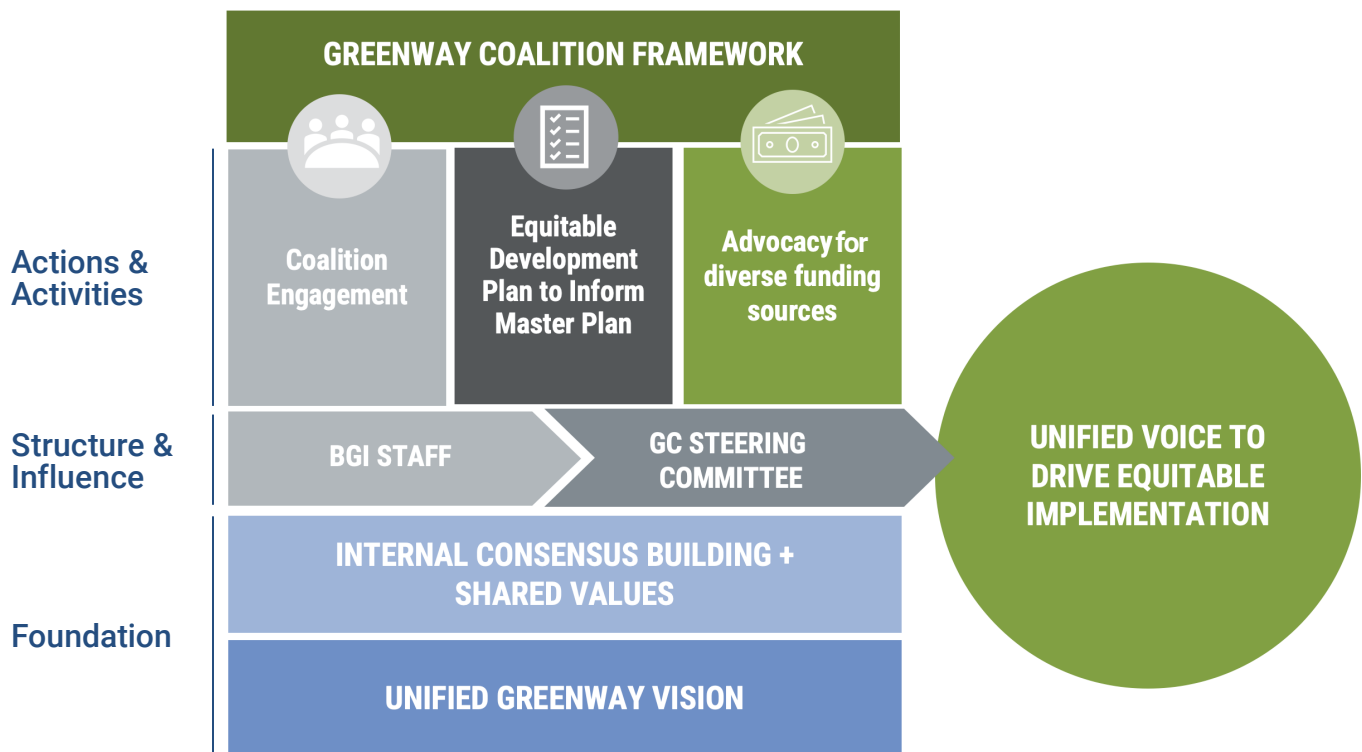
## Actions and Activities

**Coalition Engagement.** With an eye on representing the entire greenway network and all of its various constituencies, the Coalition will need to grow and expand in order to reach across all boroughs into every neighborhood. This big-tent approach will help spread the vision of and messaging around the citywide greenway. Routine connection points among Coalition members will strengthen the network and the broader system. Coalition

actions and activities should be centered on outreach, equitable development, and funding advocacy in support of the mission, vision, and shared network values.

**Equitable Development Plan.** The city's [NYC Streets Plan](#) may be a helpful resource when working to inform the citywide Greenways Master Plan. Leveraging the groundwork conducted for the NYC Streets Plan could help springboard the greenways planning work and help bring more community members to the planning table with the city. The Coalition should advocate for power at that planning table in support of an equitable development plan. An equitable development plan is a fundamental planning strategy that allows for the prioritization of certain projects, creates a process for the prioritization, and holds partners and implementers accountable for the impact of the projects going forward. This last point, accounting for the impact on community, embeds community retention planning into the work and informs where, when, how, and with whom those projects move forward.

**Advocacy for Diverse Funding Sources.** While implementing agencies are going about their work of designing, constructing, and maintaining greenways, the Coalition needs to be working together to identify potential funding sources, grants, and fundraising opportunities. The embedding of equitable development practices in the Coalition's work may also serve as a draw to funders who are looking to support projects that center equity in their efforts.



This diagram depicts a potential structure and operation of the NYC Greenways Coalition.

## Structure and Influence

It will be important to create a representative body that speaks with a unified and informed voice. This approach helps ensure equitable outcomes and guards against reverting to the status quo of today's fragmented system of greenways.

For BGI, its role as an initial leader and convener has been and will continue to prove helpful in the early days of the Coalition, yet the panelists are not suggesting that BGI evolve into the Coalition organization itself. Instead, BGI's role will be to bring along peer greenway organizations and help form a steering or governance committee. This new governance committee should guide the formation of the broader NYC Greenways Coalition who can then approach the city and potential partners with a strong, unified voice to drive equitable implementation.

On a very specific note, the Coalition should consider leading a conversation around the formation of citywide greenway design guidelines and recommend that the city create such guidance reflecting best practices in operations and maintenance.

## Unified Voice

All of this work is building toward a time and place where the Coalition can speak with a unified voice across the city, at community events, in meetings with the city and other public sector partners, and across the country as a part of a broader network of urban greenway networks. While the formation and message formulation takes time, it is an important investment that will create the foundation of the organization and serve as the touchstone for Coalition members today and well into the future.

# GREENWAY DEVELOPMENT

Throughout the panel's study, the need for an effective central organization for the network and a central point of contact within the public sector became increasingly clear. At present, a multitude of organizations and localities build and manage greenways, and a host of municipal agencies understand that they have a role in how and where those greenways are built. There is no one voice or central plan yet in place to guide the work citywide.

## Municipal Leadership

The Coalition should advocate for the creation of a city hall-level office or position – or create an overall obligation, perhaps through the newly created Director of the Public Realm position – to address the following critical functions in support of an effective citywide network.

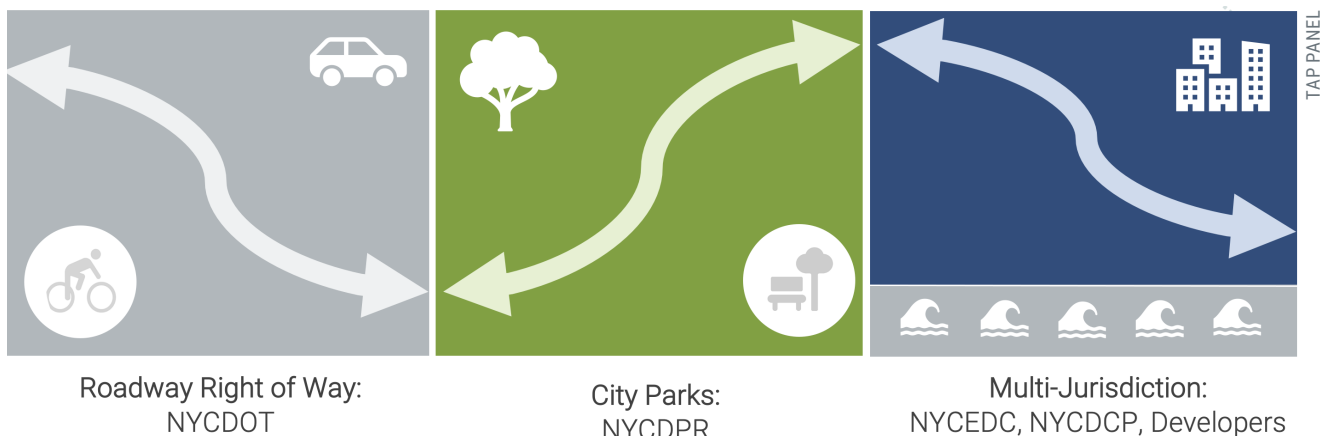
**Accountability.** This new city hall office or officer would be accountable to the Mayor of New York City, respective agencies involved with greenway development, the communities in which the greenways travel, and other related stakeholders to ensure the timely and effective planning, design, and delivery of greenway projects.

**Coordination.** Given the landscape of partners in this work, centralized coordination would be incredibly beneficial. The office would spearhead the greenway coordination across the multiple agencies and stakeholder groups.

**Arbiter.** There is a critical need to have someone in place

to break logjams, helping to advance projects and key decisions when respective parties are at an impasse. Without someone in place to make the final decision when interests compete, parties retreat to the status quo and projects sit in perpetual limbo, never advancing nor fully disappearing.

**A note on construction leadership.** Greenways pass through a multitude of neighborhoods, winding along city streets, through parks and private property, and along the waterfront. Given these various venues and land ownership configurations, the responsibility for the construction of a greenway might fall to the NYC Department of Transportation (NYCDOT), the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (NYCDPR), the NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), NYC Department of City Planning (NYCDPC), and even private developers. With this range of entities in the development mix, a central source and force at City Hall would be an important investment in systems-level leadership in support of the greenway network.



New York City's greenways travel through roadways, city parks, private developments, and along waterways, each locality represented by separate public agencies or private entities.



## Citywide Greenway Design Guidelines

With wildly varying quality in design, materials, and construction, the city's greenway system would benefit from a set of design guidelines to guide greenway development citywide. These guidelines would help establish a design baseline across the city and bring all of the players (public agencies, designers, builders, etc.) onto the same page with regard to the following items.

- **Best practices.** Best practices and existing technical guidance would be found in one place.
- **Value reflection.** The values and priorities from advocacy groups and communities would be appropriately reflected, particularly in neighborhoods that have been left out of these conversations in the past.
- **Design consistency.** A standard of high quality would be established and maintained consistently across the citywide network.
- **Clarity.** Jurisdictional rules would be clarified across different assets and ownership, creating a game plan that everyone will follow.
- **Operational and maintenance consistency.**  
A consistent set of operations and maintenance guidelines would be provided so that the greenways are well-maintained across the network, regardless of who has ownership.

## Greenway Construction

As the greenways pass through the various localities and are represented by a multitude of agencies, the panel recommends that the individual agency responsible for the land under improvement should be the agency in charge of the construction work. The city's new greenway office and the citywide greenway design guidelines would also be in place to help guide development.

- Greenways on city streets and sidewalks should continue to be designed by NYCDOT and constructed by NYC Department of Design and Construction.

- Greenways in parks should continue to be built by NYCDPR.
- Segments where the greenway will be complicated – by overlapping jurisdictions, unclear ownership, and/or involvement of private parties – will require builder flexibility, and the city's greenway office will help guide the process.

In all instances, regardless of the entity responsible for the construction, the greenway guidelines will ensure uniform design decisions across the network, and the Mayor's Office (*i.e.*, greenway office) will provide streamlined coordination and facilitate decision-making.

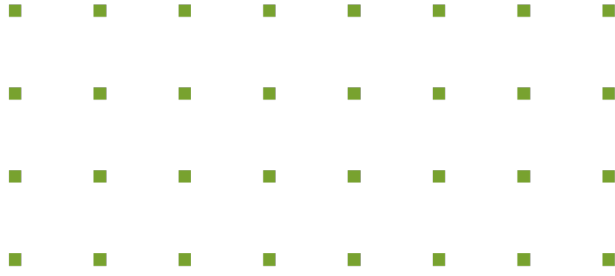
## Greenway Maintenance

In much the same way that the installation of greenways is currently inequitable across the city, the operations and maintenance of segments are likewise uneven. This disparity can often be traced back to the related operating agency's capacity and is typically based on the surrounding community's corresponding capacity and resources. This funding model is inherently inequitable and outdated.

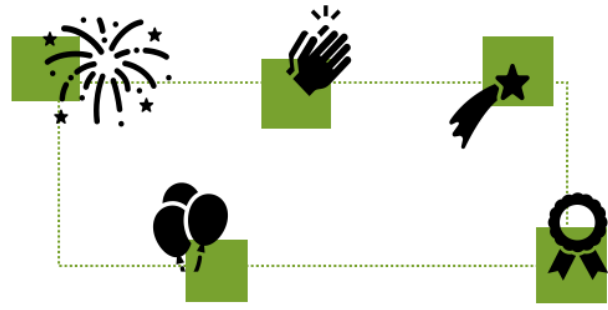
The Coalition should advocate for new and progressive models of funding, including:

- Assessment mechanisms, private funding, or a new value capture model that spreads funding beyond the point of generation (typically wealthy neighborhoods in the current environment);
- A mechanism and formula for more equitable distribution of revenues to address underfunded areas; and
- Equitable and needs-based allocation of resources for equitable outcomes.

This "Robin Hood" model of funding will be new for the city but will begin to provide equity – both financial and social – to areas of the city that have been historically left behind or that do not have the wealthy resident base to push for or fund efforts of this nature.



**Option A:**  
Evenly built, at minimum standard



**Option B:**  
High impact in selected high-impact areas

TAP PANEL

These two illustrations depict how funding could be deployed in the city's greenway system, either evenly distributed across each segment, delivering equal yet diluted funding, or strategic deployed in key segments of the greenway for deep impact in areas lacking resources.

## Funding Leverage

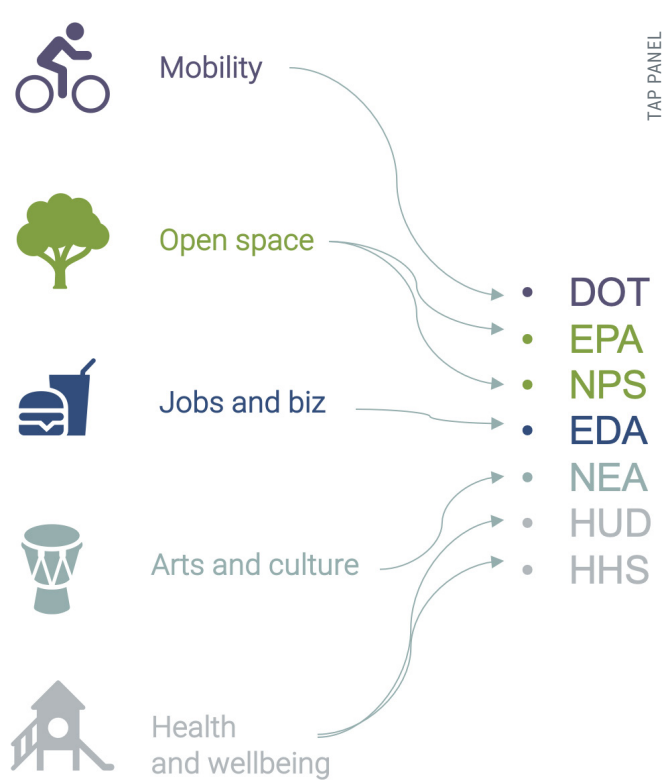
As the Coalition gains momentum and receives its first round of funding, it is encouraged to leverage that Phase 1 funding to demonstrate high quality and impact in specific areas. The Coalition will need to be realistic, as this initial funding will likely be limited, but the Coalition and the city can and should be highly strategic by making high-quality investments in early-action corridors first. These early-action corridors are those areas with limited neighborhood funding or organizational support yet rich in potential for greenway usage. Through the Coalition's demonstrated strength in consensus building, it can be trusted to reliably put equity at the core of phasing with the support of its network of members. It can also use its unified voice to detail the strategy behind the actions to ensure clarity of purpose and goals across constituent bases. It will also be important for the Coalition to be consistent and clear in its messaging across neighborhoods with regard to funding decisions and in its interactions with public and private partners.

These initial, high-impact funding decisions and construction projects can become touchpoints for the Coalition's future advocacy efforts in the public and private realms. The breadth of the impacts of the Coalition, again in early-action corridors across the city, has the potential to also unlock broad grant funding categories from a variety of public agencies and private organizations.

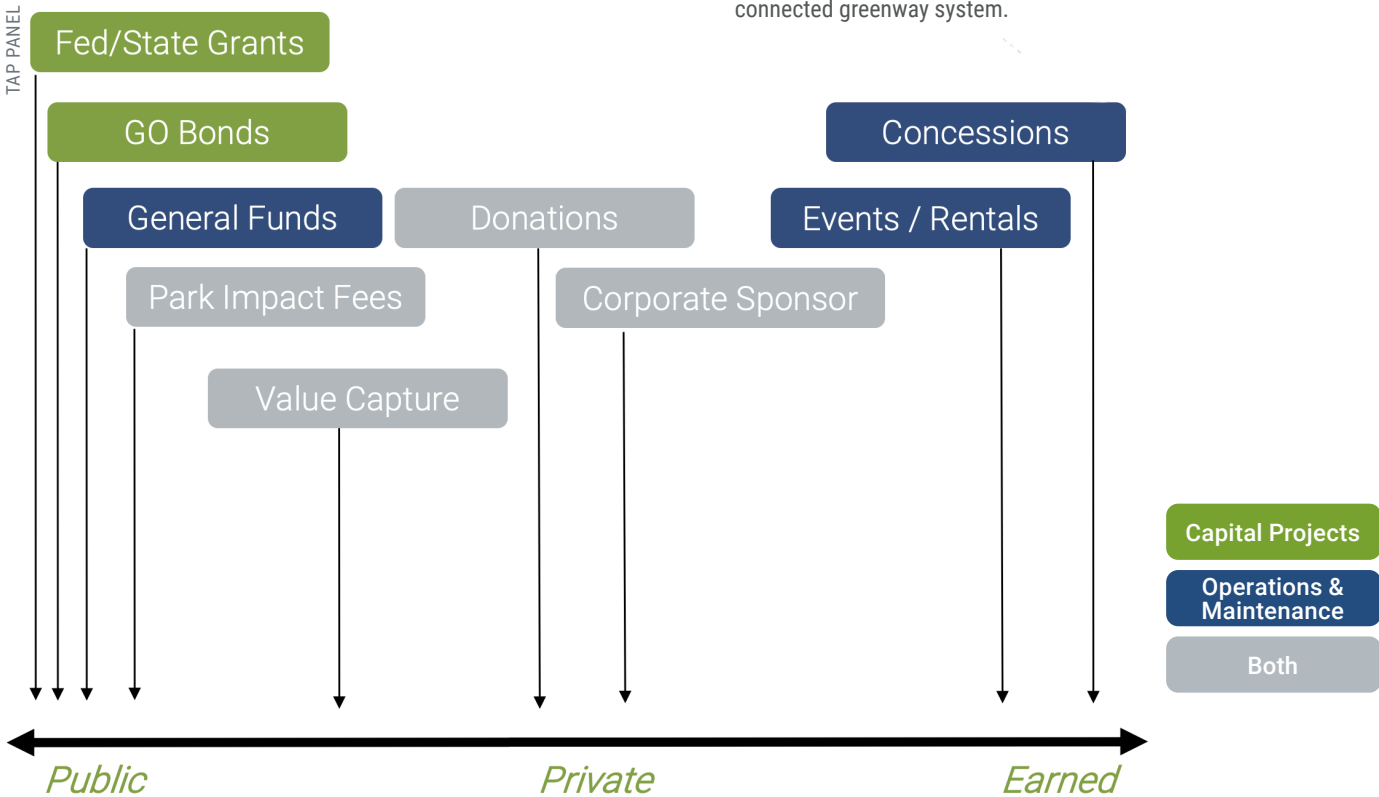
- **Diverse funding opportunities.** The fact that a greenway represents much more than a single-purpose project will position these construction improvements for diversified grant opportunities, guided by the Coalition's definition of equitable development. Similarly, there are a variety of funding resources that can support capital improvements along the greenway as well as ongoing maintenance and operations. Public resources, such as federal and state grants, can support capital projects while earned revenue from concessions and rentals will be well-positioned to support operations and maintenance efforts. Impact fees, donations, sponsorships, and new value-capture models can likely support both capital improvements and operations and maintenance work.
- **Funding utilization and efficiency.** Greenway usage by a diverse range of users (recreation, exercise, health/wellness, transportation, etc.) allows the Coalition to increase its efficiency of funding utilization. Improvements to a greenway segment increase access for a wide range of users/constituents, using the same dollars to positively impact transportation access, health/wellness opportunities, recreational access, green infrastructure improvements, etc.
- **Concurrent operations and maintenance opportunities.** The utility and efficiency of funding can also positively impact the ongoing operations

and maintenance of the greenway. By maintaining a parklet, for example, the green infrastructure elements found in that parklet are also maintained. By employing artists to create creative placemaking and placekeeping installations, the greenway is also supporting small businesses (i.e., the artists).

Cities across the country are implementing citywide and even regional greenway networks, and much can be learned from their efforts. As the Coalition begins to explore all of the potentially available funding and financing opportunities – including RAISE funding, FEMA’s [Building Resilient infrastructure and Communities](#) (BRIC) funding, small grants through the National Endowment for the Arts [OUR TOWN program](#), and opportunities through the [Land and Water Conservation Fund’s Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program](#) (ORLP) – it should connect with other greenway networks in other cities to learn what has worked well in those communities.



This illustration provides examples of how federal granting agencies can be pursued to fund the wide variety of benefits found in a connected greenway system.



Funding for capital projects and operations and maintenance can come from public, private, and earned income sources.

# Funding Scenarios

The following illustrative examples may provide inspiration as the Coalition considers funding for the citywide network.

## Example 1: Corporate Support

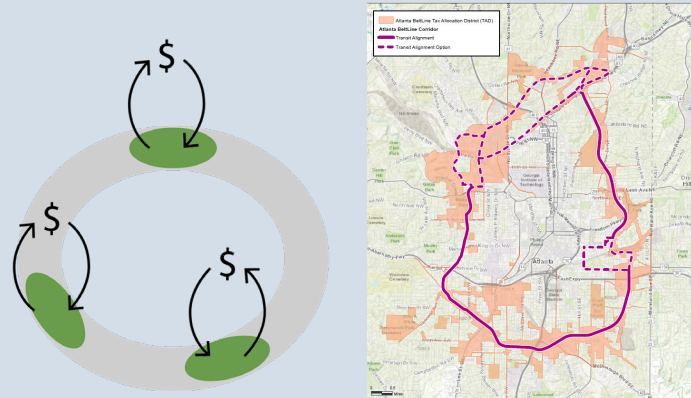
New York City business owners may be interested in sponsoring the greenway. To pursue this strategy, the Coalition will need to make the business case relating to the value of the sponsorship investment (e.g., marketing and public relations opportunities, as well as cost savings due to infrastructural improvement). Early identification of the parameters around sponsorship, such as branding opportunities, will also need to be established in support of the equitable and seamless delivery of sponsorships. The Coalition will require a unified corporate fundraising strategy complete with clear goals, benefits, limitations, and time horizons.



While a corporation may be hesitant to sponsor recreational biking, as seen in the left photo, e-cargo opportunities, on the right, may be more aligned with business goals and offer unique branding opportunities.

## Example 2: Equitable Real Estate Value Capture

There are a host of opportunities to capture the increased values of the greenway's proximate parcels. This approach should be used with equity and anti-displacement at the center, helping ensure that lower-income neighbors can enjoy positive financial benefits of property value increases, support the continuation of housing affordability, and be able to remain in place. Value capture methods could include ground leases, payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) arrangements, tax increment financing (TIF) opportunities, transferable development rights scenarios, or other special service districts. It should be noted that creating new modes of value capture and (re)distribution might require policy and legislative changes.



On the left, value created in an area cycles back into that same area and financial benefits are limited geographically. On the right, the BeltLine Tax Allocation District was created in 2005 to provide a local funding source for the implementation of this major revitalization project. In this way, it differs from the other tax allocation districts, because all increment collected goes to fund the infrastructure of the project.

## Example 3: Equitable Citywide Public/Private Funding Mix

There may also be an interesting opportunity to mix both public and private funding sources to establish an equitable citywide greenway funding plan. The Coalition would need to launch an assessment of the impacted neighborhoods, noting and cataloging differences in capital needs as well as anticipated operations and maintenance needs. The existing business improvement districts (BIDs) and conservancies should be encouraged to continue their work, which could

allow new funding to be dedicated to areas currently lacking organizational resources. A greenway-wide BID or conservancy, coupled with corporate capacity, could maximize funding vehicles as well as provide the greatest degree of participation from all parties. Allowing the city to concentrate maintenance funding in non-BID areas may potentially require policy and legislative changes but would provide a great deal of flexibility in the pursuit of equitable distribution of funds.

	Strong BID / conservancy /corporation	Weak or no BID / conservancy
Private Funding	Fully utilize existing BID / cons./corp.	
City / Foundation Resources	*	Net new public / philanthropic resources

\* Allowing the city to concentrate maintenance funding in non-BID areas potentially requires policy and legislative changes.



## Funding Alignment

The Coalition may wish to explore potential partnerships with the following organizations as it considers funding for the citywide network.



- Parks Opportunity Program (employment program)
- Potential new budget line



- Open Streets
- Plaza Program
- Potential new budget line



- BID Formation Grants



- All In Neighborhood Grants



- Capacity building workshops

## GETTING STARTED

As the city gets ready to launch its greenway master planning and capital planning processes, now is the time for the NYC Greenways Coalition to act. In the next 12-18 months, the Coalition should embark on four key action items: rethink the role of the Coalition in light of BGI's work to date and the additional stakeholders now at the table; refine the vision based on the stakeholder information gathered during this TAP process and other related work to date; conduct additional outreach to new Coalition members; and increase the visibility and credibility of the Coalition in order to pursue additional fundraising opportunities. This is not a pure linear process; as each step is taken, the Coalition is encouraged to revisit its structure, membership, outreach, and vision to ensure consistent alignment among members, alignment with the mission, and support of the overall goal of an equitable citywide greenway network.

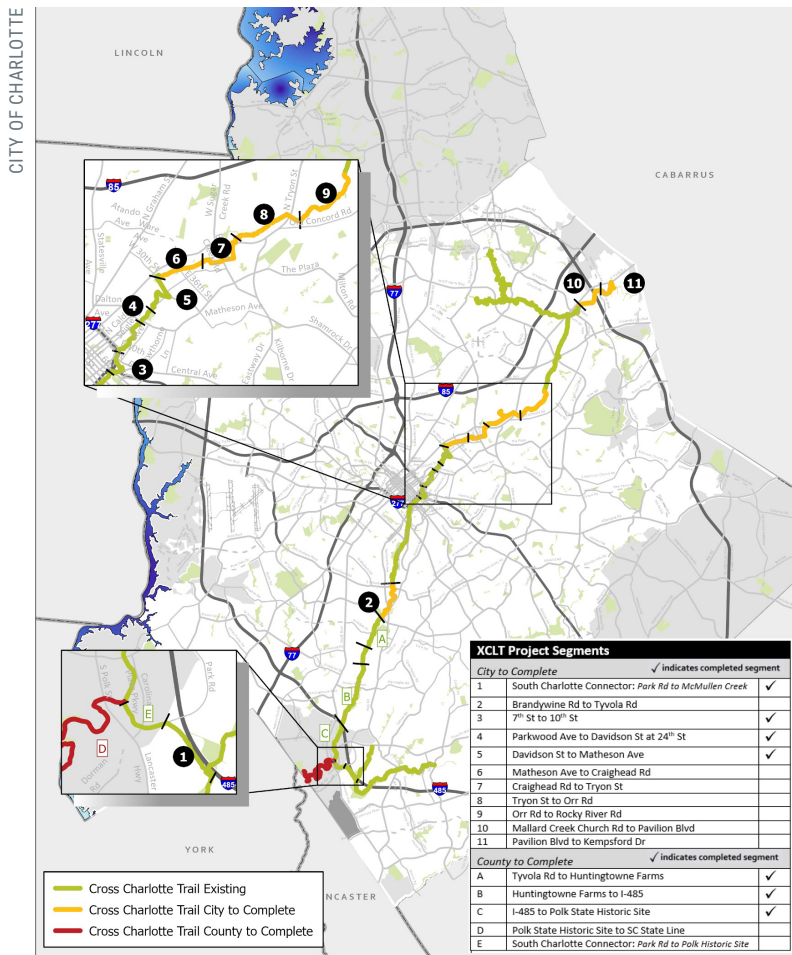


Building on the greenway work and funding to date, it is time to launch the NYC Greenways Coalition and tackle the following core topics.

**Establish the mission.** It is time to reconvene Coalition members and other stakeholders around the table that BGI has established to share information from this work and from across the network, ensuring that all Coalition members are informed and operating from the same set of goals and objectives. It is also time to promulgate a vision for the network that all members and stakeholders can identify and align with as well as share broadly in the community. It is also an opportune time to advocate for additional funding for the network. In early days, when everyone is newly excited by the vision and mission, funders can be approached with the opportunity to serve as a founding supporter of the work. This early-stage funding opportunity will only happen once, and there are those who

will readily come alongside and help fund the effort with the knowledge that their support is foundational to the launch of this exciting citywide network.

**Articulate shared values with one voice.** While members of the Coalition may not always agree and there will be differences of opinion along the way, it will be critical to establish early on the values that the members of the Coalition will share. This alignment of values will serve as the bedrock upon which the Coalition can build a citywide foundation. Knowing that members of the Coalition, represented neighborhoods, organizations, and community leadership, speaking with one voice will provide politicians with the support they will need when funding decisions are made and one neighborhood is prioritized over another. This will be the start of an equitable development plan that will permit and facilitate the collaborative prioritization of projects and evaluation of impacts throughout the greenway network.

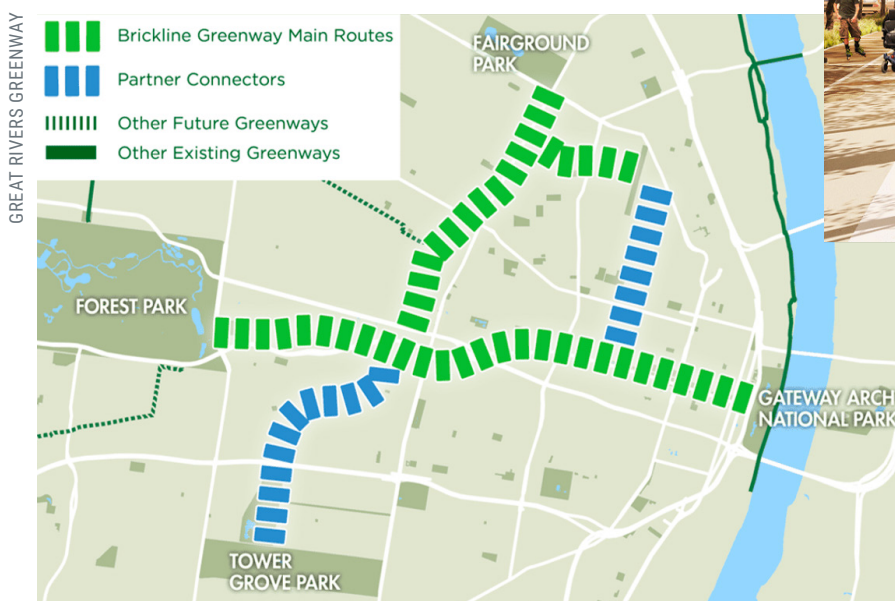


This map of Charlotte, North Carolina, depicts the city's greenway system, noting which entity is responsible for the construction and completion of new greenway segments. Charlotte's early prioritization of equity and consistent and effective community outreach has positioned the Cross Charlotte Trail as a community resource.

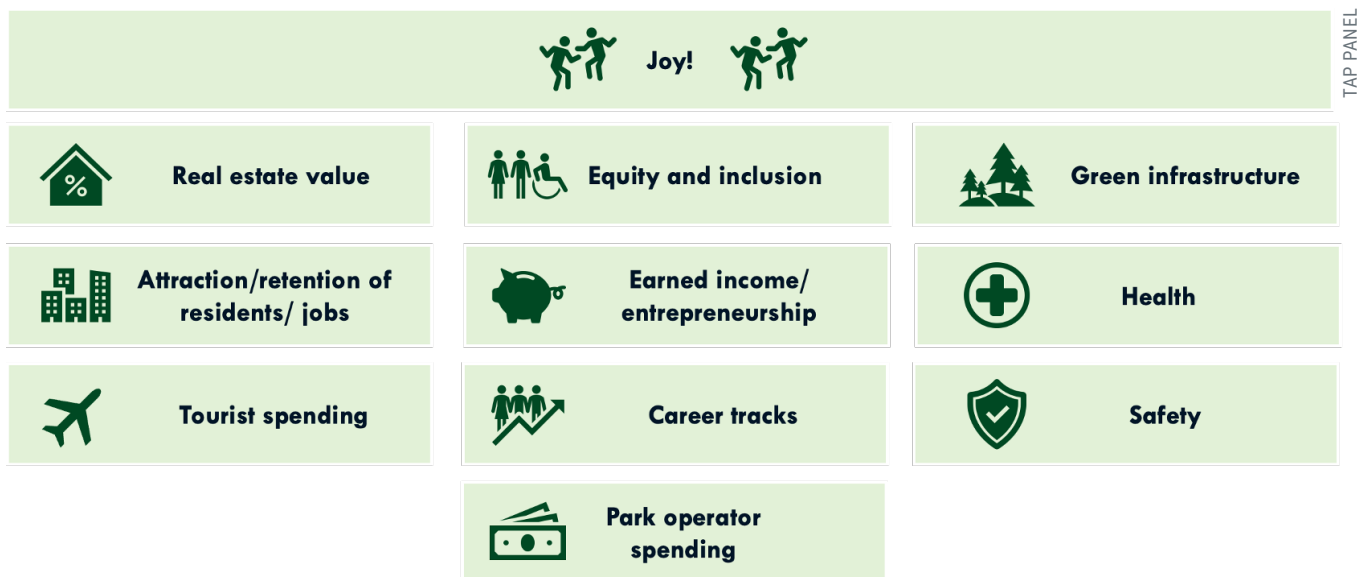
**Establish the structure.** During these early days, it would also be advantageous to consider the Coalition's organizational structure, governance processes, and division of responsibility among members. These discussions may prove easier at the formation of the network than later when potential conflicts or misalignments of agenda arise among members and require sorting.

**Embrace the vision.** The Coalition is encouraged to embrace a vision that is grounded in equity and joy AND encompasses multiple objectives. This multiplicity of objectives will permit Coalition members to speak directly to the needs of particular stakeholder groups and funders, addressing the value that those groups wish to see in the greenway system, yet still rooted in the same foundational vision of joy along the greenway and shared with a unified voice.

**Add members.** The Coalition should begin to prioritize growth by adding new members. Additional members will not only add strength



The Brickline Greenway, a part of the St. Louis, Missouri, Great Rivers Greenway (GRG) network, will connect the Gateway Arch National Park to three other major parks in the city and run through city neighborhoods that would not be able to fund such improvements with neighborhood resources. The prioritization of equity in GRG's work on the Brickline firmly supported the organization's pursuit of a federal RAISE grant, securing \$15 million to fund sections of the greenway through very low-income sections of the City of St. Louis.



TAP PANEL

Joy is the overarching objective of the greenway network, yet incorporated within are a host of other attributes that can be brought to the forefront when addressing various organizations and stakeholder groups across the city.

of voice to the Coalition's work, they can also begin to fill in the gaps in representation seen in the Coalition's current composition. In addition to ensuring that existing greenway organizations are members of the Coalition, care should be taken to attract and support participation by neighborhoods not currently represented by a greenways organization. Organizational assistance and capacity building may be required to assist these under-represented neighborhoods in gathering community leadership to serve in the Coalition. The organizations that participated in the city's Open Streets initiative in 2020-2022 might be likewise interested in joining the Coalition as the organizations share similar values around access and open space. Active participants in the city's NYC Streets Plan might likewise find interest in and alignment with the Coalition's work.

**Develop a business plan.** Early actions should also include the development of a business plan for the Coalition. The mission, values, structure, and membership of the organization will help inform the initial business planning function, which will require attention and updates as the Coalition grows in strength, influence, and action. A business plan will support Coalition member alignment and help secure vision-enabled organizational funding that will further the reach of the Coalition and network as well as

build advocacy capacity and allow for more frequent and broader programming in support of greenway usage.

**Build visibility.** While Coalition members may eat, drink, and sleep all things greenway, there are many New Yorkers and visitors who are unaware of the greenways and the emerging citywide network. In addition to marketing and media relations efforts, programming on and around the greenways can help build visibility with neighborhoods and potential users. Engaging with all of the generations who use – or could use – the greenway network can help support current use and build generations of future users and supporters of the network. For example, Green Up Vermont hosts an annual maintenance event, engaging with the very young, seniors, and everyone in between to take direct responsibility to keep Vermont green by challenging towns and residents to “Clean Every Mile.” Similar programming in New York City could encourage more people to get out on the greenways and play a role in helping to maintain existing assets. It will also be beneficial to create programming to address known and anticipated challenges and barriers to use and educate the public on the anticipated solutions. The voices of member leadership will be particularly important in these instances as trust is required before effective and constructive two-





Regular community events can help build visibility for the New York City greenway and also provide opportunities for maintenance support, educational enrichment, and even community-based commerce.

way communication can take place. In Los Angeles, the Frogtown Artwalk was created to elevate the artists in the LatinX community and engage with the community around the restoration of the Los Angeles River. The combination of the two has proved to be an inspiring and informational event that draws the community to the riverfront annually for over a decade.

Built on the foundation created by BGI, the NYC Greenways Coalition is off to a strong start. The timing of the Coalition's formation, to pursue critical federal funding and to now align with and help guide the city's greenways

planning efforts, could not be more advantageous. Steps taken today, in these early days, to define "greenway" for New York City and to center equity and equitable development in the Coalition's work, will set the stage for an impactful network in the long term. BGI has taken the early lead, convening greenway organizations around these efforts. As the network continues to form, BGI should remain a convener and supporter of the Coalition, helping it become a powerful citywide coalition whose goal is to promote equitable greenway development and funding, bringing joy to every borough and greenway across New York City.

## ABOUT THE PANEL



### **Candace Damon**

**Panel Chair**  
**Chair of the Board**  
**HR&A Advisors**

Candace Damon has devoted her 30-year career to crafting sustainable urban redevelopment

strategies for cities across North America. Her specific areas of expertise include supporting master planning efforts for large-scale revitalizations, ensuring the long-term viability of urban open space, leading organizational planning for non-profits and institutions, and addressing the financial challenges of making commercial and multifamily residential buildings energy efficient. Candace also specializes in engineering successful strategies for downtown and waterfront redevelopment across the country, including in Philadelphia, Boston, New York City, Minneapolis, Atlanta, Charlotte, San Diego, and Toronto. Candace's experience leading signature open space projects includes development strategy for Brooklyn Bridge Park, operations and maintenance planning for Shelby Farms in Memphis and Hance Park in Phoenix, and a revenue generation strategy for a major new waterfront park in Seattle. Candace is a member of the Board of the City Parks Alliance and the Urban Green Council, a founding partner of G. Works, a member of the New York City YMCA Real Estate Advisory Committee, and a member of the Advisory Board and President Emeritus of the Atlantic Avenue Local Development Corporation. She received the "Women of Influence Award" from the Real Estate Forum in 2008.



### **Jee Mee Kim-Diaz**

**City Executive, NYC Region**  
**Arcadis**

Jee Mee Kim-Diaz is a City Executive for Arcadis -- a global design and engineering firm that works with public and private

sector clients to develop sustainable solutions that improve quality of life. As City Executive for the New York metro area, Jee Mee oversees the firm's client relationships in the region, pursues new business development opportunities and partnerships, and shapes strategic growth initiatives.

Jee Mee brings 20 years of experience in managing complex urban development and transportation projects across the United States. Prior to joining Arcadis, Jee Mee was appointed by Mayor Bill de Blasio to serve as the Chief Strategy Officer for the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) where she oversaw the Policy, Intergovernmental Affairs, Press/Communications, and Safety Education teams. During her tenure at the NYCDOT, she advanced Mayor de Blasio's 2021 transportation commitments, developed a strategic plan for the BQE triple cantilever (including the conversion of the roadway from three lanes to two lanes), and helped author Delivering Green, a progressive vision for freight movement in the city. She is a recognized thought leader and practitioner on urban transportation and mobility issues, real estate and economic development, transit-oriented development, and infrastructure funding and financing. For nearly 20 years, Jee Mee led a range of complex transportation, land use, real estate, and community planning projects at consulting firms HR&A Advisors and Sam Schwartz Engineering. She began her career as a social justice leader, whose work ranged from organizing New York City's Asian immigrant communities around workers' rights and housing issues at CAAAV to advocating for clean water and recycling at the Natural Resources Defense Council's Urban Program.



## **Phu Duong, AIA, AICP, LEED AP**

### **Founder**

#### **Urban X Design LLC**

Phu is the founder of Urban X Design. Previously a principal at NBBJ Phu focused on the firm's

community-building agenda across multiple markets and geographies. He has twenty years of architecture and urban design experience and now specializes in integrating technology and placemaking to engender community benefits within large-scale commercial, workplace, institutional, cultural, entertainment and mixed-use projects. His current projects explore the role of innovation economies as drivers of transformational change in cities and district-scaled redevelopment. Phu is dedicated to the NBBJ's Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Design Justice programming initiatives.

Since 2003, Phu has been influencing the next generation of urban designers and architects through teaching appointments at Columbia University, Syracuse University and Parsons School for Design. He received a Master of Science in Architecture and Urban Design from Columbia University and a Bachelor of Architecture from Washington State University. Phu's global insights about city-making and multicultural urban living come home to Brooklyn, where he resides. He has served as a Board Member of Community District 8 (Prospect Heights, Crown Heights, Weeksville). He continues to advocate for healthy community outcomes across an engaged public and private sector. Phu co-chairs the Planning and Urban Design Committee of the American Institute of Architects, New York City Chapter and a member of the American Planning Association, New York Metro Chapter. He is an active member of the Urban Land Institute serving on the national Redevelopment and Reuse Council, Infrastructure Council, NEXT New York, and is a frequent volunteer with Urban Plan.



## **Yuxiang Luo**

### **Director**

#### **James Lima Planning + Development**

Yuxiang Luo is Director at James Lima Planning + Development, where he guides urban and

economic development strategies for public, private, and non-profit clients across North America. Yuxiang is committed to making cities and regions more competitive through economics, policy, and design.

At JLP+D, Yuxiang has worked on projects spanning 20 cities and counting, including open space and infrastructure investments in New York, San Jose, Jacksonville, Pensacola, and Asheville; economic development policies in Tennessee and Long Island; and real estate and district-scale planning in Texas, New York, Florida, and Alberta (Canada). Prior to joining JLP+D, Yuxiang worked at the New York City Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, overseeing the City's budget for constructing and maintaining parks and open spaces.

Yuxiang holds a Master of Science in Local Economic Development with Distinction from the London School of Economics and Political Science and a Master in Architecture with Distinction from Harvard University Graduate School of Design. He has spoken as a panelist at the Urban Land Institute and American Planning Association.



## **Rodney Milton**

### **Executive Director**

#### **Urban Land Institute (ULI) Colorado**

Raised in Denver, Rodney Milton is the new Executive Director of Urban Land Institute (ULI)

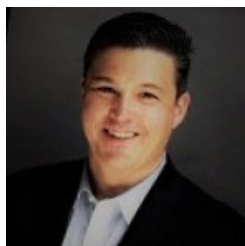
Colorado. Rodney holds two master's degrees from Florida State University and a B.S. in History from Florida A & M University. He served the City of Atlanta for nearly a decade advancing innovative approaches to place-keeping and place-making and cultivated strong



relationships with the development community through thoughtful policy and strategic decision making.

Following his time at the City of Atlanta, Milton joined the Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. (ABI) as a Senior Housing Policy and Development Manager. The nationally noted BeltLine seeks to connect 45 neighborhoods through transit, trails, economic development, and affordable housing. Milton established a model for equitable development without displacement piloting a legacy resident tax relief program and partnering with service providers to administer funding for rental assistance, estate planning, and small business assistance.

Rodney recently moved back to the Denver area to join the City of Aurora as its Manager of Community Development. There he was charged with the stewardship of federal funds and the implementation of the City's recently adopted Housing Strategy. He led a team that responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by deploying roughly \$15 million in emergency assistance to stabilize Aurora residents. Throughout his career, Rodney has been a public servant and is excited to serve the members of ULI Colorado as they shape the future of the built environment.



### Seth Myers

#### Vice President, NYC Planning WSP

Seth is an urban planner, leading the Planning and Environmental Planning group for WSP in New York City. Seth has spent his

career working in the public sector in New York City on a variety of projects with a focus on advancing large capital projects from inception to delivery and operations. He has experience leading a range of regulatory, environmental and transportation planning processes, project implementation (design, approvals, community engagement and construction), and resolving high-level financial or political challenges. From managing project specific teams, inter-governmental groups, to overseeing capital, transportation and real estate programs, Seth has established himself as an outcome oriented, objective and committed leader.

At WSP Seth has worked through a complicated phase of the Environmental Assessment for the MTA's Central Business District Tolling Program (aka - Congestion Pricing). This involved completing a major regional traffic model of multiple tolling scenarios and analyzing the results to evaluate potential adverse effects, ranging from traffic congestion and environmental justice to air quality and potential crowding on transit.

Coming from the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), Seth was central in delivering several priority projects, including the launch of the New York City Ferry system. Seth was responsible for overseeing the planning of the system, the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), a series of regulatory approvals and the design and construction of required infrastructure. Additionally, Seth worked on several large resiliency, healthcare, and open space capital projects, as well as a regional freight plan.

Before NYCEDC, Seth worked with a variety of different public entities, primarily focused on the recovery of Lower Manhattan following the 9/11 attacks. First working at the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (2005-2007) and later with the NYC Mayor's Office of Capital Projects (2007-2013), Seth helped advance a series of projects on the World Trade Center and in the surrounding neighborhoods. Working closely with the Port Authority, New York State DOT, and a variety of City Agencies, Seth helped open the Memorial Plaza for the tenth anniversary of 9/11. He also led federally funded environmental reviews for several large-scale capital projects including the East River Esplanade EIS and a security program around One Police Plaza, and coordinated regulatory, design and construction work on multiple heavy civil projects (street reconstruction, utility work, open space) across Lower Manhattan.



**Rachel Scall**  
Associate Attorney  
Cozen O'Connor

Rachel is an associate attorney at Cozen O'Connor. She focuses her practice on New York City zoning and land use. Rachel

has experience preparing and presenting applications at the NYC Department of City Planning and Board of Standards and Appeals, community boards, the City Council, and other city agencies. She regularly interprets and applies the NYC Zoning Resolution and CEQR Technical Manual and has negotiated development rights transactions, construction access agreements, and easements.

Rachel earned her bachelor's degree in journalism and political science from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Rachel earned her law degree from New York University School of Law. While in law school, she was the notes editor for the New York University Environmental Law Journal. She was also a legal intern for the New York City Conflicts of Interest Board.



**Donna Walcavage, FASLA**  
Principal, Landscape Architect  
Stantec

Donna has led key initiatives that have had a lasting impact on the social and physical fabric of New York City. Her belief that design-

ing truly resilient cities requires a broad, landscape-scale vision is evident in all her projects, whether a street-scape, urban waterfront redevelopment, public open space, bikeway or pedestrian facility. She thoroughly understands how cities work, from the design of essential infrastructure to the creation of social connections that encourage communities to come together.

She believes that public work demands public input, and that drives her dedication to ensure that community groups and public agencies play a critical role in her projects. Further, she has advanced the quality of public spaces by collaborating with artists to make art an integral component of Stantec's projects.

During the East Midtown Greenway project on New York City's East Side, our integrated team created a major in-water structure that fills in a critical missing link in the greenway that encircles Manhattan. The master plan, begun in 1995, envisioned this type of solution for this stretch, where the FDR Drive is directly at the water's edge. The design uses the structural system to help to provide enough topsoil for trees and the use of soil cells allows collection of stormwater to irrigate the native planting areas.



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WHERE THE FUTURE IS BUILT

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