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### Planner says county can use more greenways

*Paths generate \$3 in revenue for each \$1 invested, expert says*

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Chuck Flink says he knows how Greenville County can control flooding, reduce health care costs and increase property values.

Build more greenways, he says.

A greenway is a strip of land left undeveloped, except for walking and biking trails.

Flink, one of the nation's leading greenway planners, told a crowd of about 300 at Furman University on Tuesday night that Greenville has made a start but could use

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"The cupboard isn't bare," he said. "But it's not quite as visionary as it could be."

Greenville has pieces of a greenway completed. The grand plan is for it to run along the old Swamp Rabbit railway from Lake Conestee near Mauldin to an area north of Travelers Rest.

Other communities have paid for their greenways with impact fees, sales tax, hurricane-recovery funds and a federal land sale program, Flink said.

For every dollar invested in greenways, a community can expect \$3 return in revenue, he said. They raise property values, can get residents out of floodplains and give them better access to paths where they can walk and bike, Flink said.

Still, greenways can be a tough sell.

When Flink polls Americans, they say "yes, yes, yes" to more trails and parks. But he said the answer is "no, no, no" when the question is "would you like to pay for those?"

Flink said he's contracting with the City of Greenville to develop a trail system. He said he has also spoken with officials from the Greenville County Recreation District.

The Greenville area's planned greenway could give a boost to businesses along it, including Mary's Restaurant and RiverPlace in downtown Greenville and Sunrift Adventures in Travelers Rest, Flink said.

-- Paul Alongi can be reached



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