

THE ARARAT RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT

The Ararat River Restoration, Greenway and Parks project provides water quality improvements and recreational opportunities along the Ararat River. The Ararat River flows through the quaint downtown of Mount Airy in Surry County North Carolina. As a major open space linkage between the City's existing and proposed park facilities, the

Ararat River Corridor provides a unique opportunity to incorporate new and expanded recreational uses into the city's public recreation system. The Ararat River Restoration and Greenway project has received support and funding from the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund, Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (2007 and 2008), the Division of Water Quality and the Resource Institute. When complete, the project will begin at Riverside Park and connect to Mount Airy Middle School and Tharrington Elementary School. It will provide nearly 2.5 miles of greenway, HB Rowe Environmental Education Park (MA Middle School), canoe access and take out areas, nature trails and open space and improvements for additional recreational activities.

In 1991, planning efforts began as leaders recommended a Riverside Park Greenway Project in a Land and Water Conservation Grant application. In 2001, a Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan was developed and again identified and recommended additional planning efforts for the Ararat River Corridor. In 2001, Phase 1, of the Emily B. Taylor Greenway located on the west side of town, was opened. Phase 2 of the Emily B. Taylor Greenway opened in 2004 and continues to be one of the most used recreational

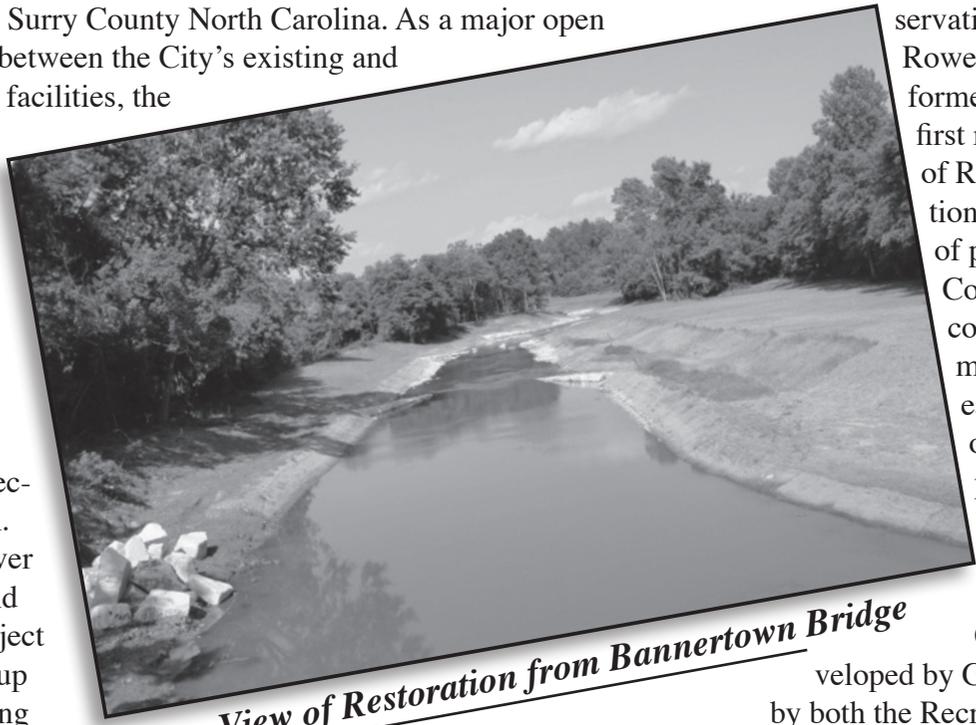
venues in Surry County, therefore establishing that multi-use greenway projects are well received by our community. In 2004, the Ararat River Corridor got the attention of the Pilot View Resource Conservation and Development along with input from the HB Rowe Environmental Park Task Force, and a partnership was formed. In January of 2005, the city developed Mount Airy's first recreation department and assumed the responsibility of Reeves Community Center (built in 1951) and additional facilities and programs. In September 2006, a series of public meetings were held regarding the Ararat River Corridor to gain public input and a hand written public comment form was distributed. The planning department made appointments with land owners and would obtain easements over the next two years. Without the support of the landowners, this project would not have been possible.

The results of the public meetings and information were reflected in the recommendations in Ararat River Greenway Comprehensive Recreational Master Plan developed by Greenways, Inc. in January 2007. This plan was adopted by both the Recreation Commission and the Board of Commissioners.

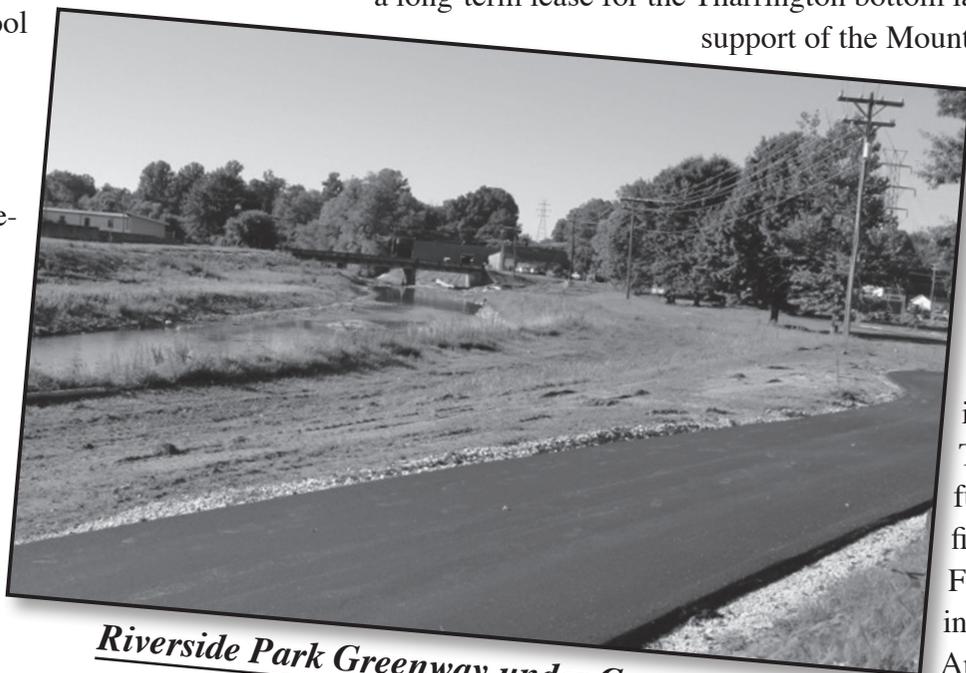
In December of 2008, upon receiving multiple grants from the aforementioned sources, bids were received for the project. A partnership for a long-term lease for the Tharrington bottom land was initiated with the support of the Mount Airy City School Board.

With all that being said, construction began on April 30th, 2009 at Riverside Park.

Now, on July 16, 2009, the project is 37% complete with plans to open in the early spring 2010. The contractor is hopeful, weather permitting, to finish ahead of schedule. For pictures and additional information, check out the Ararat River Project link on www.mountairy.org



View of Restoration from Bannertown Bridge



Riverside Park Greenway under Construction