

OPINION

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Greenway won't affect other funding needs

By TRIP BROWN, CHUCK CORNELIO
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An Oct. 24 Short Stack brings attention to an important economic development project in our community. The Downtown Greenway has been a topic of conversation in the candidate forums held in recent weeks and for good reason.

This project will spur economic development, provide jobs and increase the city's tax base. In addition, it will set Greensboro apart from our competitors, provide a wellness and fitness vehicle, connect our trails and neighborhoods, and offer alternate, low-cost transportation as gas costs rise. But there were misleading statements in the item that deserve clarification.

The greenway is a public/private partnership that has raised more than \$14 million from local, state and federal

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sources. The public portion of more than \$7.8 million includes grants from the N.C. Health and Wellness Trust Fund, National Endowment for the Arts, federal Department of Transportation and a local Street Improvement Bond Referendum.

These funds were directed specifically for the greenway and, if not used, would not increase available funding for libraries or police. While we all agree that these deserve adequate funding, this project does not stand in the way of that.

Many sites are ripe for development along the four-mile loop. Already, we enjoy Arbor House Condominiums. We look forward to new developments, including the North State Chevrolet property, Deep Roots Market and the South

Elm Street redevelopment project. With their success, the economic vitality of the city will improve.

We are leading a campaign to raise an additional \$2.5 million to add to more than \$6 million already secured from private donors. This is not a "path not yet built," as the Short Stack suggests. By spring 2012, a half-mile section will be open. With continued release of bond funding, we expect an additional \$2.8 million in federal transportation dollars and will be able to construct additional sections with close to two miles of the greenway completed by the end of 2013.

This is an outstanding public/private partnership that will reap great rewards for our community.

The writers are co-chairpersons, Downtown Greenway Major Gifts Campaign.