



Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: USDOT- *Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects Grant*

Honorable Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of Conserving Carolina, a land trust nonprofit whose mission is to protect, restore, and inspire appreciation of the natural world, I am writing to express our full support of the City of Brevard's Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP) grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Transportation. The proposal, *The Ecusta Trail: A Multimodal Gateway to the Pisgah National Forest and the Blue Ridge Parkway*, includes plans for what will be a 19-mile greenway connecting Hendersonville and Brevard. Along the way, the trail will pass through Laurel Park, Etowah, Horseshoe, Penrose and Pisgah Forest. It will link to the City's Estatee Trail, thereby providing direct pedestrian and bicycle access to Pisgah National Forest, one of the most visited national forests in the United States.

This project represents a potential transformational change for our region. Conserving Carolina strongly supports the Ecusta Trail Project because it will improve environmental sustainability, quality of life, community connectivity, and active transportation options to jobs and schools. It will also create tourism related economic development and provide opportunities for neighborhood revitalization within the City of Brevard and surrounding communities. Finally, it will facilitate alternative transportation access to Pisgah National Forest at the Forest's most heavily used access point in the community of Pisgah Forest.

We appreciate the steps the City of Brevard is taking to provide for a healthier and happier quality of life for residents and visitors of all ages and all walks of life. We hope the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administrator will recognize the significance of this project and award funding to enhance the safety and connectivity for residents and visitors to the City of Brevard.

Sincerely,

Kieran Roe, Executive Director