



**NC DEPARTMENT**  
**of COMMERCE**  
**RURAL ECONOMIC**  
**DEVELOPMENT**

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Secretary Pete Buttigieg  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, NC 20590

October 3, 2022

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing in support of the City of Brevard's Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP) grant application for the fiscal year 2022 appropriation which is in partnership with Henderson County and in collaboration with the City of Hendersonville. Brevard was designated a North Carolina Main Street community in 1993 and over the past 29 years, the community has generated over \$49.6 million in public and private investment and created more than 588 new jobs and 166 businesses in their downtown district. These investments were made by highly committed leaders that effectively worked together to create positive community economic development change.

Brevard is a model Main Street program in North Carolina, leveraging public and private partnerships for each initiative that the community embarks upon. The NSFLTP grant is no exception as it outlines how this grant will leverage these dollars in partnership with neighboring governmental jurisdictions as well as collaboration with the City of Hendersonville another model North Carolina Main Street community. All are a part of a larger scope of planning from more than 10 years ago. The public improvements outlined in their NSFLTP application will complete the vision of interconnectivity, access, and creating a unique, safe outdoor recreation economy as well as provide commuters an alternative to driving to their jobs.

The Brevard application outlines the development of the Ecusta Trail within Transylvania County, connecting it to Henderson County and the City of Hendersonville. Once the Ecusta Trail is built out this will connect and enhance both Brevard and Hendersonville's existing assets, including the abandoned Ecusta Trail corridor, Pisgah National Forest, Dupont State Park, the Bracken Preserve, downtown, and many of the community's best historical, cultural, commercial, and service assets. It will also run into the City of Hendersonville, terminating in the vicinity of two key intersections eventually connecting with their future "Above the Mud" city-owned greenway. This project is integral to the continued economic growth that these counties, municipalities, and both downtown Brevard and Hendersonville has been experiencing. USDOT would make a very sound investment in funding the Ecusta Trail project.

As a partner with the City of Brevard and Hendersonville in their Main Street program and downtown initiatives, our office is also pledging our support and assistance in this project. Feel free to call on my staff as needed.

I encourage USDOT to fully fund the City of Brevard's grant application request at \$15,400,000.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth H. Parham, CMSM  
Director, NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center