



October 4, 2022

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing to support the City of Brevard and Henderson County, North Carolina in their pursuit of a grant through the Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP) grant through the USDOT Federal Highway Administration. Brevard, NC and neighboring Henderson County NC are jointly requesting approximately \$21 million of NSFLTP funding to develop the Ecusta Trail. (*The Ecusta Trail: A Multimodal Gateway to the Pisgah National Forest and the Blue Ridge Parkway*)

This project represents a potential transformational change for our region, connecting multiple communities from Brevard to Hendersonville. The Ecusta Trail will provide recreational opportunities for users of all ages and abilities, active transportation options to job centers and schools, and opportunities for neighborhood revitalization and tourism-related economic development. The Ecusta Trail will ultimately connect the Cities of Hendersonville and Brevard, NC with many communities along its route.

SylvanSport has a unique position in supporting this project in that our manufacturing business sits not only on land adjacent to the trail system, but this land is also on the former site of the Ecusta Paper Mill which employed tens of thousands of persons from 1939 to 2004. The revitalization of this former industrial site is highly dependent upon the connectivity that this trail system provides. In fact, many of our associates will be able to commute via bicycle to their employment at SylvanSport via this trail system.

We wholeheartedly request your consideration for this proposal.

Sincerely,

Thomas Dempsey
CEO

SylvanSport.com