



Empowering people, transforming lives

WNCSource.org

U.S. Department of Transportation
The Honorable Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C., 20590

December 19, 2024

RE: FY2025 USDOT RAISE Grant Application – City of Hendersonville - Above the Mud: Creating Connections, Promoting Small-Town Economic Growth, and Strengthening Resilience

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of the City of Hendersonville & WNCSource, a local non-profit working with communities and partners, to improve people's living by creating pathways to self-reliance and healthier living by giving people the power to transform their futures and live more fully in their community. I am writing to express our full support for the City of Hendersonville's RAISE Grant Application to the U.S. Department of Transportation. We believe this project represents a critical opportunity to promote small-town tourism and economic development, respond to Hurricane Helene flooding impacts, enhance the quality of life in our region, and provide a solution for connecting the 4-mile existing City-owned Oklawaha Greenway with the RAISE-funded 19-mile Ecusta Trail, which is under construction and nearing completion.

The proposed project is essential to creating a multimodal network for the community. This will not only benefit the residents of downtown / 7 th Avenue and the Barker Heights community but also positively impact residents as far-reaching as the county line. The greenway will also have a tremendous impact on rural job growth, promoting tourism and economic development for the City and the region, and responding to the devastating impacts of Hurricane Helene and other recent floods.

We strongly believe that the City of Hendersonville's *Above the Mud* project is an exemplary model of collaboration and problem-solving and we fully support their efforts. We hope the U.S. Department of Transportation will recognize the significance of this project and award funding to enhance the safety and connectivity for residents and visitors to the City of Hendersonville and Henderson County.

Thank you for your attention to this important initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. White". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each name being capitalized.

David White, CEO

CHILDREN'S SERVICES • HOUSING • TRANSPORTATION • OLDER ADULT SERVICES

Working with communities and partners, WNCSource improves people's lives by creating pathways to self-reliance and healthier living

220 King Creek Blvd. • PO Box 685 • Hendersonville, NC 28793-0685 • Ph. 828-693-1711 • Fax 828-697-4277