



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

12/10/2024

**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 Henderson County Council on Aging, an organization dedicated to promoting the well-being and independence of older adults in Henderson County, I am writing to express our full support for the City of Hendersonville's RAISE Grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation. This project aligns closely with our mission to improve the quality of life for all residents, particularly older adults, by fostering accessible, safe, and resilient infrastructure that benefits the entire community.

The "Above the Mud" project represents a vital investment in our region's future, offering solutions to challenges that impact walkability, bikeability, and connectivity. These enhancements will not only create a vibrant and inclusive community but also support small-town tourism, economic development, and environmental resilience. The project is essential to ensuring Henderson County remains a welcoming and livable community for residents of all ages.

Key components such as the S. Main Street Festival Street, the Above the Mud Trail, the Oklawaha Boardwalk improvements, and the 7th Avenue Bicycle & Pedestrian Improvements will create an interconnected multimodal network that promotes safe and accessible transit options. By linking the Oklawaha Greenway and the Ecusta Trail, this project will serve as a model for enhancing mobility and addressing the devastating impacts of Hurricane Helene and other recent flooding events in our area.

The Council on Aging is proud to support initiatives that prioritize equity, accessibility, and sustainability, and the Above the Mud project is a shining example of these values in action. We strongly encourage the U.S. Department of Transportation to recognize the transformative potential of this project and award the funding necessary to bring these improvements to fruition.

Thank you for considering this important initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Williams", with a long, sweeping underline.

Elizabeth Williams  
Executive Director  
Henderson County Council on Aging  
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