



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

1/30/2026

RE: FY2026 BUILD Grant Application – Hendersonville Downtown Streets  
Modernization Project: New Streets for New Business

Dear Secretary Duffy:

Friends of Ecusta Trail strongly supports the BUILD grant application “Hendersonville Downtown Streets Modernization Project: New Streets for New Business,” which is the result of a collaboration between the City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT, and other local stakeholders.

The Hendersonville Downtown Streets Modernization 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 new and existing trails to form the southern core of the regional greenway system.

By supporting this effort, USDOT can showcase a project that aligns closely with the Trump Administration's objectives, including:

- Creating a safer local transportation system,
- Increasing quality of life for local families and individuals, and visitors,
- Providing improved accessible, affordable, and connected transportation options while maintaining vehicular roadway capacity,
- Creating local jobs and supporting local businesses, increasing tourism, and promoting economic opportunity

We strongly believe that the Hendersonville Downtown Streets Modernization 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.

Sincerely,

Laura Rice  
Executive Director  
Friends of Ecusta Trail