



March 4, 2019

Memo to: Board of Commissioners

From: Josh O'Conner, Recreation Services Director, and Jim Holland, Assistant County Manager, via George Wood, Interim County Manager

Re: Recommendation on Enka Recreation Destination Project and Associated Agreements

As you are aware, on September 2, 2014, Fletcher Partners presented, via part owner and board member Martin Lewis, plans to the County, acting by and through its duly elected Board of Commissioners, for a proposed sports complex and a greenway on a portion of the old American Enka plant site. At the time, the Board of Commissioners agreed to make \$1.3M in funding available to Enka Youth Sports Organization ("EYSO") upon the stipulations documented in Appendix A.

Since 2014, EYSO, Asheville Buncombe Youth Soccer Association (ABYSA), Fletcher Partners, Enka Partners, TDA and the County have worked together to further the sports complex and greenway projects. In July 2018, Bob Lewis Park held its grand opening and hosted nearly 50 womens softball teams from across the southeast. Additionally, in October 2018, the TDA announced its award of grant funds for the Enka Recreation Destination Project. The project further improves the existing sports complex by adding field lighting and turf, while also creating the Enka Heritage Trail, a greenway in accordance with the Master Plan that highlights the cultural significance of the region.

At this time, Buncombe County staff are requesting Board of Commissioners approval to continue moving forward with this ambitious community project. This requires board approval of each of the agreements listed below and posted to the public agenda.

- **TDA Grant Agreement:** establishes reimbursable grant funding relationship between TDA and Buncombe County.
- **Ball Field Usage Agreement:** establishes operating guidelines and public use for ball fields to be improved.
- **Greenway Easement Agreement:** establishes operating guidelines and Buncombe County's option to take possession of greenway parcels via easement, lease, or fee simple.
- **EYSO Easement Agreement:** establishes EYSO's intent to grant Buncombe County the option to take possession of greenway parcels via easement, lease, or fee simple.
- **MUSCO Lighting Contracts:** two purchase agreements establishing specifications and costs associated with purchase and installation of field lighting at Bob Lewis (PA193969) and BC Sports Park (PA193869).

Enka Recreation Destination Project Overview

The Enka Recreation Destination is a unique project that includes improvements to the Buncombe County Sports Park (BCSP) and the Bob Lewis Ballpark while also creating the Enka Heritage Trail which will provide unique infrastructure that allows for ease of access between the two parks and nearby amenities (see Appendix C for Project Map). The \$12M project is funded by local, Federal, TDA, and private funds (see Appendix B for Funding Sources). Specific improvements include:

- Addition of lights on soccer and softball fields to allow for nighttime play;
- Addition of turf to three soccer fields (two existing and one new);
- Creation of a recreation-quality multi-purpose community field; and
- Construction of increased parking and restroom facilities.



The project creates connectivity between the Bob Lewis Ballpark and BCSP while adding a major spoke of the Buncombe County Greenway system. The Enka Heritage Trail includes construction of an ADA-compliant bridge infrastructure over Hominy Creek and two miles of paved interpretive trail/greenway that connects to Sand Hill Road and allows for neighborhood connectivity while also featuring unique aspects of the area including an area of river cane, of historical importance to the Cherokee.

The project will kickoff in phases beginning in March 2019 pending board approval. The high-level phases and estimated kickoff dates are provided below. The project phases and timeline are iterative so that public access can increase overtime, rather than waiting until the project is fully completed.

- **Bob Lewis Light Installation:** May 2019
- **Sports Park Light and Turf Installation:** ideal October 2019, secondary June 2020
- **Greenway Construction:** TBD 2021
- **Enka Recreation Destination Project Complete:** TBD 2022

Community Benefits

This project will have a significant impact on Buncombe County by providing first-class recreational facilities that can be enjoyed by our community, as well as build on Asheville’s reputation as an outdoor recreation, sports, and athletics destination. Below are a few of the anticipated community benefits.

- Increased playable hours of **field availability** due to installation of lights (estimated 3-5 hours daily);
- Increased **resiliency of soccer fields** due to installation of turf;
- **Preservation of cultural and historical** features of Enka including River Cane and the Enka Clock Tower;
- Increased **regional tournament recruitment ability** (estimated 30%); and
- Increased **pedestrian connectivity** for adjacent neighborhoods, Enka Intermediate, and recreational facilities.

Overview of Agreements

In order to move forward with this project, several agreements require approval from the Board of Commissioners. Each agreement, its purpose and estimated value is provided below. The approval of these agreements at the March 5th meeting will allow the project to move forward without any major disruption of previously scheduled events.

Agreement	Purpose	Estimated Value (if applicable)	Entities
TDA Grant	Establishes reimbursable grant funding authority for the project	\$6M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TDA • Buncombe County
Ball Field Usage	Establishes operating guidelines and public use for ball fields that are improved using the TDA grant funds	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EYSO • Buncombe County
Greenway Easement	Establishes operating guidelines and Buncombe County’s option to take possession of greenway parcels via easement, lease, or fee simple.	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EYSO • Fletcher Partners • Enka Partners • Buncombe County



Agreement	Purpose	Estimated Value (if applicable)	Entities
EYSO Easement Agreement	Establishes EYSO's intent to grant Buncombe County the option to take possession of greenway parcels via easement, lease, or fee simple.	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EYSO Buncombe County
Musco Lighting Agreement - Bob Lewis (PA190969)	Establishes specifications and costs associated with purchase and installation of ball field lighting for Bob Lewis Ball fields (PA190969).	\$1.3M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Musco Buncombe County
Musco Lighting Agreement – Sports Park (PA190869)	Establishes specifications and costs associated with purchase and installation of ball field lighting Buncombe County Sports Park (PA190869).	\$595K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Musco Buncombe County

Each of the above agreements has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate external parties, as well as County Finance and Legal staff. Further, the Greenway Easement agreement is supported by additional agreements between EYSO and Fletcher Partners which convey all necessary parcels to EYSO who will subsequently provide easements to Buncombe County, at the County's option, by December 2020 (see Appendix D for Parcel Layout). This option is in place to allow for additional due diligence to be performed by a third-party engineer over the next 18 months.

Recommendation

Our recommendation is to move forward with the Enka Recreation Destination Project by approving each of the agreements provided to the Board. County staff from Departments, including Finance, Legal, Recreation Services and Inter-Governmental Projects, have worked closely with our external stakeholders to develop agreements to mitigate County financial and legal risk while delivering high quality recreation facilities. This project has been many years in the making and could not be possible without continued partnership between public, private and non-profit sectors. We are eager to get started on this project and believe that the end result will be an undeniable benefit to our community, and a truly unique recreational experience.



Appendix A: EYSO Stipulations

Please see the below for stipulations regarding the Board of Commissioners agreement to make \$1.3M in funding available to Enka Youth Sports Organization ("EYSO") upon the following stipulations:

- The sports park be open for recreation and/or public purpose and adequate public access;
- EYSO to receive the approximately 90 acre site donation from Fletcher Partners;
- EYSO to secure \$2.4M from TDA;
- EYSO to secure \$1M from private donors;
- EYSO commits to complete greenways as depicted in the 90 acre portion of Master Plan; and
- EYSO to provide docs of environmental due diligence.

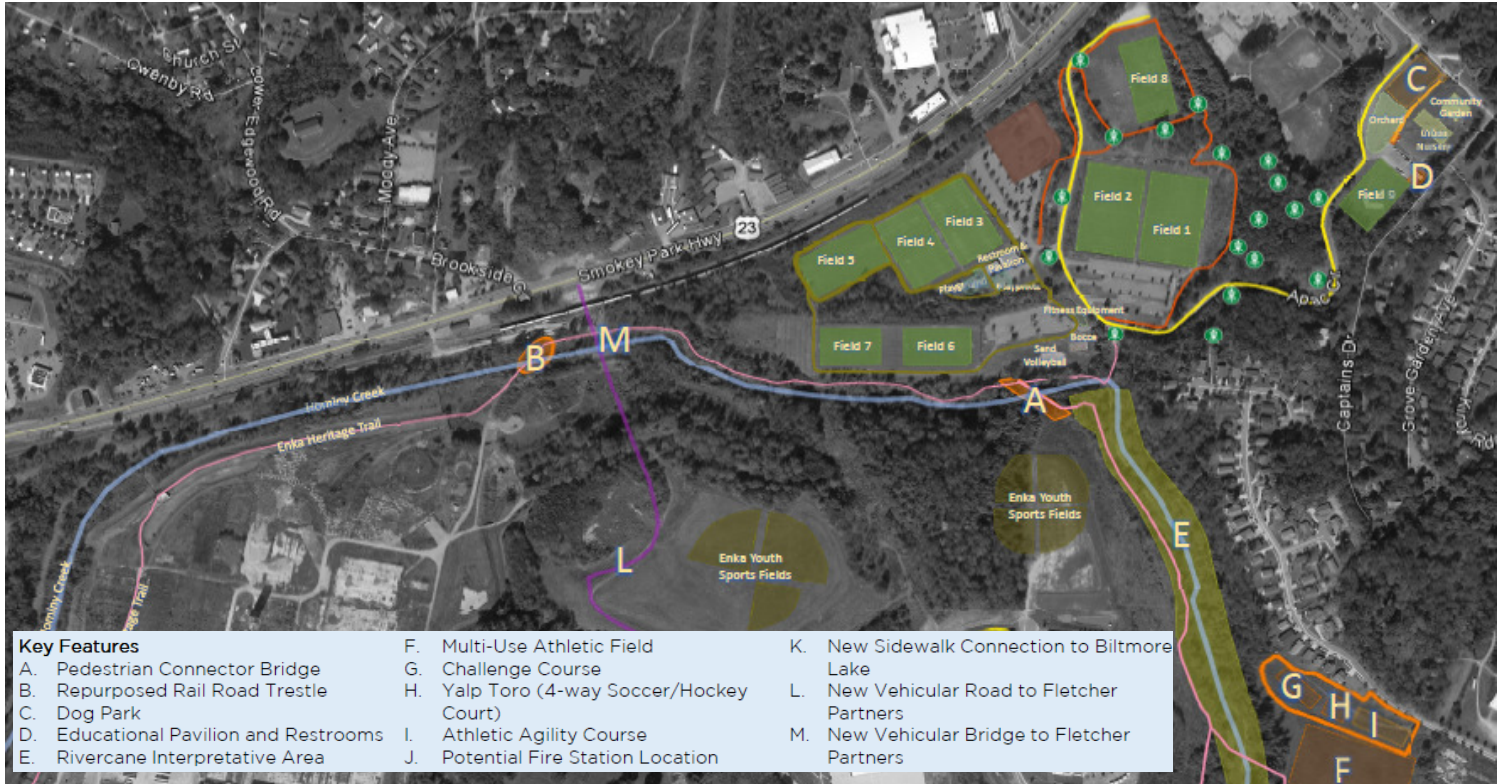
Appendix B: Funding Sources

The County's current contribution of \$1.3M is leveraged to gather an additional \$10.7M in grant funding. A listing of funding sources is provided below. Note that this does not include additional sources of funding from prior related projects.

Source of Funding	Amount
TDA TPDF	\$6M
Federal Highway Administration	\$4.7M
Buncombe County	\$1.3M
Total	\$12M

Appendix C: Enka Recreation Destination Map

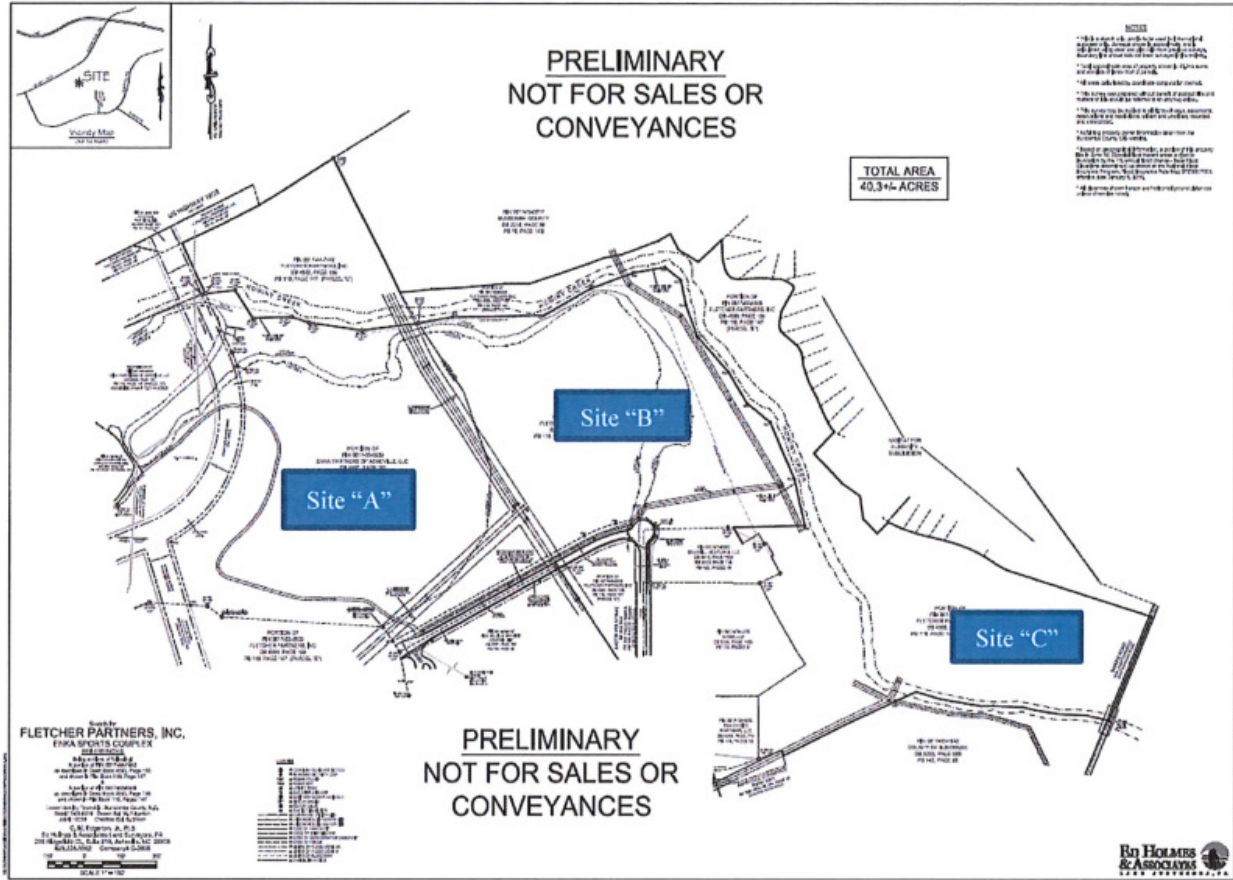
Please see the below map for an overview of the Enka Recreation project.



Appendix D: Parcel Layout

The map below provides a layout of parcels impacting the greenway corridor.

SURVEY OF ENTIRE 95.12 ACRES – INCLUDING EXCESS LAND FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT



Site No.	LOCATION	ACRES	TYPE LAND	USABLE LAND (AC)	COMMENT
A	Interior Parcel	26.91	Brownfield	Brownfield	Actual area contaminated is approx. 14 ac., but the entire brownfield is 26.19 ac.
B	Interior Parcel	27.91	Industrial	17.01	Not contaminated & buildings can be placed on site.
C	Sand Hill Rd.	40.30	100% Floodway	23.60	Flat land - usable for ballfields, etc. only - no buildings
Total Acres		95.12			However, a sporting field can be placed on the site.

The entire tract of 95.12 acres is being appraised as a single parcel. This larger parcel has been broken out into three sites for better analyses in our appraisal process.